



Welcome to OSWESTRY

Enjoy exploring our historic border market town

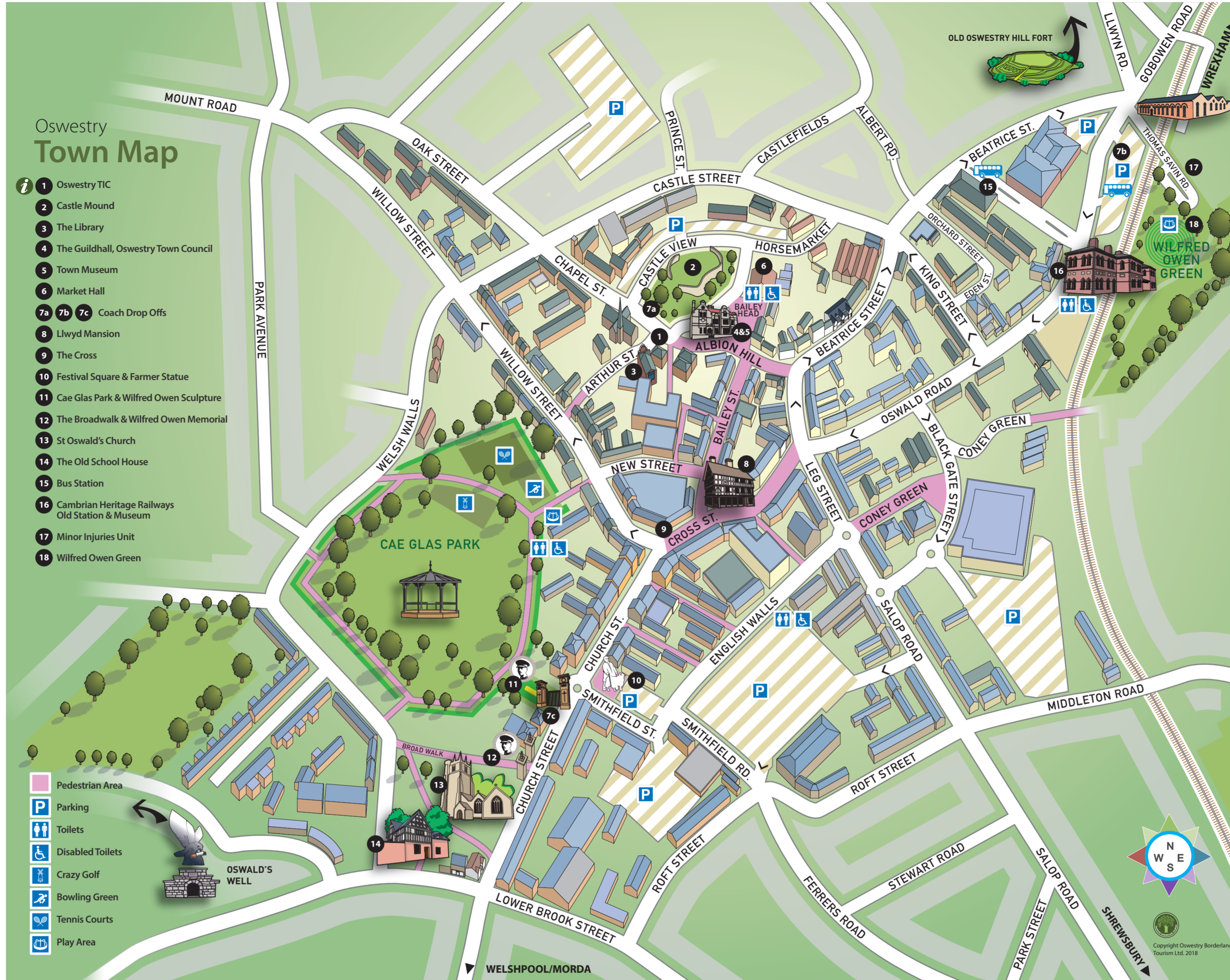
Begin at Castle Mound for great views over the town and call in at the TIC (Tourist information Centre). The staff know all the nooks and crannies of the town and will make sure you don't miss any of the highlights. Find out more of Oswestry's history by following either the Town Trail or the Wilfred Owen Trail.

Visit on market days. Browse for bargains as you discover the many independent shops and stalls. Find antiques and arts, indulge your inner MasterChef, be a bookworm or go on a discovery of local flavours in the speciality food shops.

Take a walk in the park - its "much loved" status says so much about how it brings together locals and visitors alike. Stroll past the stunning flowers in the memorial gardens, the life size bronze sculpture of Wilfred Owen the war poet, then on to the Victorian bandstand and children's play area. Enjoy ice creams and picnics all summer long and why not spend a sunny Sunday afternoon chilling - there might be a local band playing.

Relish the tastes and flavours of Oswestry - the café culture is scrumptious and the pub scene friendly. Many of Oswestry's oldest buildings are pubs and the town was said to have once had over 100! Now the pubs, cafes and restaurants are as lively or laid back as you could want. Enjoy local produce in the restaurants, add a cocktail or a locally brewed ale and don't miss the vibrant pub music scene.

Oswestry Town Information Centre
T: 01691 662753 www.visitoswestry.co.uk



Oswestry Town Map

- 1 Oswestry TIC
- 2 Castle Mound
- 3 The Library
- 4 The Guildhall, Oswestry Town Council
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- 10 Festival Square & Farmer Statue
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- 12 The Broadwalk & Wilfred Owen Memorial
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- 14 The Old School House
- 15 Bus Station
- 16 Cambrian Heritage Railways Old Station & Museum
- 17 Minor Injuries Unit
- 18 Wilfred Owen Green

- Pedestrian Area
- Parking
- Toilets
- Disabled Toilets
- Crazy Golf
- Bowling Green
- Tennis Courts
- Play Area

visitoswestry.co.uk

Historic - Friendly - Surprising

Trail
Wilfred Owen
INCLUDES:
OSWESTRY

FREE TOWN MAP



Further Information

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Oswestry Town Information Centre
Castle View, SY11 1JR
T: 01691 662753
www.visitoswestry.co.uk</p> | <p>Oswestry Minor Injuries Unit
Oswestry Health Centre SY11 1GA
T: 01691 663617</p> |
| <p>Oswestry Town Council
T: 01691 680222
www.oswestry-tc.gov.uk</p> | <p>Oswestry Police Station
Park Street Oswestry SY11 2HE
T: 101 or 999</p> |
| <p>Oswestry Markets
T: 01691 680222
www.oswestrymarket.co.uk
Market days: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday</p> | <p>Citizens Advice Bureau
34 Arthur Street SY11 1JN
T: 03444 99 11 30</p> |
| <p>Oswestry Business Improvement District One Oswestry
T: 01691 700365
www.oneoswestry.co.uk</p> | <p>Oswestry Library
9 Arthur Street SY11 1JN
T: 01743 250351</p> |
| <p>Oswestry Health Centre
Oswald Road, SY11 1RB
T: 01691 656882
www.qube-oca.org.uk</p> | <p>Qube - Shop Mobility and Wheelchair hire
Oswald Road, SY11 1RB
T: 01691 656882
www.qube-oca.org.uk</p> |
| <p>Oswestry Leisure Centre
Shrewsbury Road SY11 4QB
T: 0345 000 7006.</p> | <p>Defibrillator Locations</p> |



Information correct at time of print December 2020.
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The short trail from A - G approx 60-90 minutes

Accessible for wheelchairs and buggy users.



The Oswestry Wilfred Owen Trail

Explore aspects of Oswestry's rich history and heritage through the enthralling family story of Wilfred Owen, the true poet of the Great War.

The trail takes in many of Oswestry's buildings that Wilfred's family would still recognise nowadays. Wilfred Owen was born in Oswestry in 1893 and stayed until he was four, his family, however, had long connections with the town.



A. St. Oswald's Church



In 1891, Susan Shaw looked to marry the man she loved, Tom Owen. Family finances were ebbing away, her beloved mother Mary had just died, and there was a desperate need for some stability in the family. And so, on the 8th December, Susan, still in grief, wore black at the wedding and was married at St. Oswald's.

In the far right-hand corner of the church is St. George's Chapel dedicated to soldiers killed in wartime.

Leaving the church entrance, go right and follow the road past the car park, through the churchyard, taking the right fork around the side of the Parish Centre and through the entrance gate onto the Broadwalk (90m).

B. Plaque & Stone Bench



Commissioned by the Wilfred Owen Association in 1993 to mark the centenary of his birth, this beautiful steel plaque includes the Artists' Rifles insignia and is engraved with two of Wilfred's most famous poems: Anthem for Doomed Youth and Futility. The striking stone bench was designed and made by local stonemason, Mark Evans.

At the commemoration of the plaque, poet Ted Hughes - a great admirer of Wilfred Owen - read from Futility. The Broadwalk itself dates back to 1200 and is said to have been the grave site for local plague victims. It was laid out as an avenue of lime trees in 1710 by the vicar, Thomas Owen.

The insignia at the centre of the plaque was Wilfred's monogrammed design for his cigarette case.

Go left through the gate at the end of the Broadwalk and continue left along Church Street to the park gates of Cae Glas Park (60m).

C. WWI/II War Memorials



An extensive restoration of Oswestry's fine War Memorial was unveiled in August 2014. The front of the pillars commemorate those Oswestry men who died in WWI, with WWII commemorated on the reverse, just inside the gates. Also, inside, is a memorial to those men who worked for the Cambrian Railways killed in WWI. It's a most graceful work by sculptor Allen G. Wyon. The piece, originally sited at the Railway Station, was moved to the park and re-dedicated in 1975.

Go through the gates into the park. Straight ahead of you are the park gardens leading to the Wilfred Owen sculpture (50m).

D. Wilfred Owen sculpture



"Wilfred will know he has come home" - words written by Peter Owen, Wilfred's nephew, on the black granite plinth. The sculpture, by local artist Tim Turner, is the only life-size bronze sculpture of Wilfred Owen in the world and was cast at Castle Fine Arts Foundry in Llanrhaeadr-Ym-Mochnant commemorating his death on 4th November 1918. The sculpture stands in a dynamic pose of Owen on the front line. The book in hand contains words from Owen's poetry and that of local schoolchildren, the words cascading down a gnarled and broken tree onto the mud and sandbags at Owen's feet.

Return back through the park gates, going left along Church Street for 145m to the second zebra crossing. Cross over and continue on past The Cross monument (on your left), towards Llwyd Mansion at the bottom of Bailey Street (45m).

E. Llwyd Mansion



One of Oswestry's most impressive buildings, Llwyd Mansion dates to 1604, built by John Lloyd of Llanforda. Wilfred's relative, Joseph Salter (1726-1800), lived and worked here as a watchmaker and general dealer. He was reputed to have been the town's first printer. His eldest son Robert wrote The Modern Angler which was published by his son Jackson. So, it seems Wilfred was not the first writer in the Salter clan!

On the front of the building is a commemorative double-headed eagle. It was awarded to a Lloyd's ancestor who helped to recover an Austrian emperor's standard in 1190 at the siege of Acre in the time of the Crusades.

Walk up Bailey Street for 60m, keeping a look out on your right, for this next curious art deco building.

F. The Ironmongery



No. 16 Bailey Street was the ironmongery business taken over by Edward Shaw, Wilfred's grandfather. They made nails, tools and tinware. It was very successful. He'd arrived in 1850 from Shobden, near Leominster, and married Mary Salter. He was soon elected to the Town Council, becoming Mayor in 1869 and Justice of the Peace for the borough. He died in 1897 at Plas Wilmot.

Bailey Street would have been the family's main shopping route. 1849 saw the opening of both The Cross Market - the fine building next to The Cross monument - and the original indoor Powis Hall Market on the Bailey Head (replaced by the current market hall in 1963.)

Continue to the top of Bailey Street (75m), then bear left across Bailey Head to the Guildhall steps (25m). Go up the steps or around to the left of the building for wheelchair access.

G. Guildhall & Town Museum

www.oswestrytownmuseum.co.uk

Built in renaissance style, the new Guildhall of Oswestry Town Council was opened in 1892. At least three of Wilfred's relatives were Councillors, two of whom were Mayors: Jackson Salter and his grandfather, Edward Shaw.



Visit Oswestry Museum (3rd floor/lift is available) to glimpse Oswestry's rich history and heritage from pre-history through wartime to the modern day.

Through the main doors follow the corridor straight ahead, bearing left for 3m to see the brass panel of past mayors including Edward Shaw and Jackson Salter.

THIS COMPLETES THE SHORT TRAIL

Continue to H (above) for the longer trail

If time allows, visit the TIC which has books about Wilfred Owen and town library where letters from his mother can be seen. (Check opening hours before visiting.)

"Red lips are not so red as the stained stones kissed by the English dead."

from "Greater Love". Wilfred Owen

Wilfred Owen



Wilfred Edward Salter Owen was born on the 18th March 1893 in Oswestry at Plas Wilmot, an idyllic, stylish home, built in 1830 by his great grandfather, Edward Salter, the son of an Oswestry timber merchant.

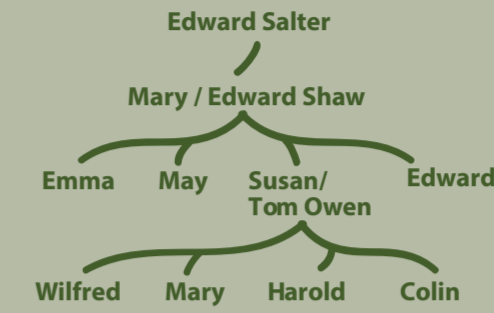
In 1897, following the necessary sale of a much-loved home, the family eventually settled in Birkenhead, with his father Tom being appointed stationmaster. A young Wilfred, aged 7, began attending the local institute. In 1907, the family moved once again to Shrewsbury following Tom's promotion.

After a brief time in Dunsden as a Vicar's lay assistant, Wilfred left to teach English in France, returning in 1915 to enlist with the Artists' Rifles; later commissioned to the Manchester Regiment.

In 1917, he fought on the front line in France. Sent home suffering shell shock, he was treated at Craiglockhart War Hospital, Edinburgh where he met established poet, Siegfried Sassoon. In August, he returned to France and was awarded an MC for bravery. Wilfred was killed in battle on 4th November 1918, just days before armistice. His family received the news on the very day the church bells were ringing to mark the end of the war.



BRIEF FAMILY TREE



Wilfred as a baby with his mother, Susan (seated), and Grandfather, Edward Shaw (with top hat)

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The longer trail from H - K

Continue from the Guildhall G (below) for the longer trail



To enjoy the longer trail - return to the Guildhall. From the Guildhall steps, return across Bailey Head to the top of Bailey St, but then bear left down Albion Hill for 40m. At the bottom of Albion Hill, go right along Leg St (65m) to the crossroads junction. Then, go left along Oswald Road for 200m - you will see Cambrian Railways Museum followed by the Old Station Building on your right.

H. Cambrian Railways



Born 1862, in Nantwich, Wilfred's father, Tom, left home at fifteen to find work. According to John Stallworthy, Wilfred's first biographer, he was taken on as a junior clerk by Great Western Railway (GWR) and posted to Oswestry. By 1864/65, an amalgamation of railways in the region had formed Cambrian Railways with Oswestry selected as the headquarters in 1866.

Late in 1880, Tom, aged 18, set sail on the SS Benalder from Liverpool bound for India, whereupon he soon joined the Great Indian Peninsular Railway. However, in 1891, he fell dangerously ill, and after some months recovering, received news from Susan, his fiancée, that her mother was dying. He immediately decided to return home. By the time he arrived, Mrs Shaw had died.

Visit The Railway Museum next door, for an evocative trip into the railway's rich history.

From the station, go back along Oswald Road for 110m and take a left along Black Gate Street towards Sainsbury's. After 50m, follow the road left along Coney Green toward and across the railway tracks (140m) to Wilfred Owen Green.

I. Wilfred Owen Green

The Green was opened and dedicated to the memory of Wilfred Owen on 23rd July 2010 by Peter Owen, his nephew, who spoke of Wilfred's "great love of children and nature". The site has stunning wildflower meadows, trees, footpaths, a play area and a 40m grass labyrinth, one of the largest in the world. Shelf Bank, now a Local Nature Reserve, once housed a Royal Observer Corps WWII look-out and Cold War bunker because of its superb views from the summit.

Returning over the railway track, bear left along Black Gate Street, until you come to Salop Road; turn left and continue for 140m along to the church, Holy Trinity, on your right.

J. Holy Trinity Church

www.holytrinityoswestry.org



Holy Trinity became a central pillar in the life of the Owen family, with grandfather Edward running the Sunday School. Tom got involved too, while Susan was an enthusiastic and strict evangelical. From an early age, Wilfred would sit with his mother to read the bible together. Wilfred, his sister Mary and mother, Susan, were all christened at Holy Trinity.

Follow the arrows along Roft St, then right along Lower Brook St, crossing over the traffic lights to Morda Rd. Walk about 420m along Morda Road, till you see the Marches School on your right. Take a left, just after the zebra crossing, along Weston Lane, keeping on this road for 335m till you reach Plas Wilmot on your right.

K. Plas Wilmot - Birthplace

NOTE: This is a Private residence with no public access, so please be respectful and do not trespass - thank you.



Built in 1830, this Grade II listed, classical villa was the dream of Edward Salter, Wilfred's great grandfather who died before its completion. Wilfred was born here on 18th March 1893. His mother, Susan had been born in the same room on 17th March (1 day before) in 1867.

Following the death of his maternal grandfather Edward Shaw, the house was auctioned on 16th March 1897, the day before Susan's 30th birthday. Whilst deeply upsetting for the family, they retained strong emotional ties to Plas Wilmot naming their house in Shrewsbury, Wilmot House.

English Heritage wrote of Plas Wilmot that, "It is clearly the place which meant most to him (Wilfred) from the period in which his imagination was being formed."

Retrace your steps back along Weston Lane, and go right along Morda Road, all the way back to the junction, go across the traffic lights onto Church St and along into the town centre.

THIS COMPLETES THE LONGER TRAIL

A visit to the Old Oswestry Hillfort

Not suitable for those with mobility problems.

If time permits, take a walk around one of the country's finest Iron Age hillforts, with breathtaking views across Shropshire and the Welsh hills. Just 15/20 minutes walk from the centre of town.

Follow the on the map. From the Old Station Building, go right along Oswald Road to the traffic lights junction (275m). Cross over to Beatrice St, then left onto Llwyn Rd - continue for 1km till you reach the entrance to the hillfort.

NOTE: Wheelchair access only to base of hillfort.

Old Oswestry Hillfort

Oswestry is one of the oldest border settlements in the country and a thriving market town whose ancient and wartime history came together on Old Oswestry Hillfort.

In the Spring of 1915, following the outbreak of war, Oswestry quickly became a key strategic military training facility with around 21,000 soldiers including 4,000 officers stationed there.

Thousands of soldiers were drilled in trench protocols using an extensive circuit of training trenches on top of the hillfort, prior to being posted to the battlefields.

In 1917, Wilfred returned to Park Hall Camp (which was located across the bypass from the hillfort) to attend a musketry course - he was a first class shot.



We suggest you check web sites to be sure all locations are open when you visit. This trail is also available to download from www.visitoswestry.co.uk

