

WELSH BORDER WALKS | HISTORIC TOWN CENTRES

2. EXPLORE THE LIFE OF A SHROPSHIRE HERO



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AT A GLANCE

WHERE: Shrewsbury,
Shropshire

DISTANCE: 3.4 miles

DIFFICULTY: Easy

START: Shrewsbury
Railway Station

GRID REF: SJ495128

POST CODE: SY1 2DQ

MAP: OS Explorer 241
Shrewsbury

1. From the railway station, turn left up Castle Gates to the library on your right, fronted by a statue of Darwin looking suitably distinguished. This was once Shrewsbury School, where Darwin was a boarder.
2. Turn left and left again down Meadow Place. Cross the road and keep ahead >

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with the bus station on your left. Climb the steps and cross the footbridge, then turn right along the riverside trail. The path skirts the edge of the cricket ground and tracks a tranquil and sylvan loop of the River Severn.

3. Pass a succession of interpretation boards (at the fifth one, look behind you for a glimpse through the trees to the house where Darwin was born) and keep to the path up steps, through terraced gardens and down steps again to a delightful area of unimproved meadows.

4. Take the footpath away from the river and up a slope



and steps between houses onto The Mount. Turn left, passing Darwin's former home, and follow the pavement path, dropping down steps to reach Franklin roundabout.

5. At the traffic lights, turn right over Welsh Bridge. Cross the road and keep ahead to the timbered Shrewsbury Museum, which is worth a visit to inspect its interesting collection of Darwin, >

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Victorian natural history and Roman artefacts.

6. Head uphill along Barker Street into Bellstone and cross the road to enter Morris Hall Yard through the iron gates. From the Yard, turn left and left again up Claremont Hill (look for number 13, where Darwin was educated by a Unitarian minister; he was christened at St Chad's at the top of the lane).

7. Cross into Quarry Park for a walk down to the Dingle, a landscaped garden where the infant Darwin fished for newts. Retrace your steps to St Chad's Terrace, turn right and walk along St Chad's Terrace into Murivance and the city walls.

8. At the major road junction, turn left up Wyle Cop to reach the Lion Hotel. Darwin made a desperate dash from this hotel to London by stagecoach, having changed

his mind and decided to accept an invitation to travel on The Beagle.

9. Cross the road onto Dogpole to reach St Mary's Church. Continue up the street and turn right into Castle Street to return to the train station, or left to spend more time exploring the centre of town.

Walk courtesy of The Ramblers (www.ramblers.org.uk) 🌿

POINTS OF INTEREST

● *In 1894 the spire on St Mary's Church collapsed, prompting a vicar to suggest it was a divine observation on Darwin's theories and on the decision to honour him with a statue.*

● *On a parapet on Welsh Bridge, have a look for the words 'COMMIT NO NUISANCE' chiselled into the stone. This was apparently to inform people not to urinate in public!*