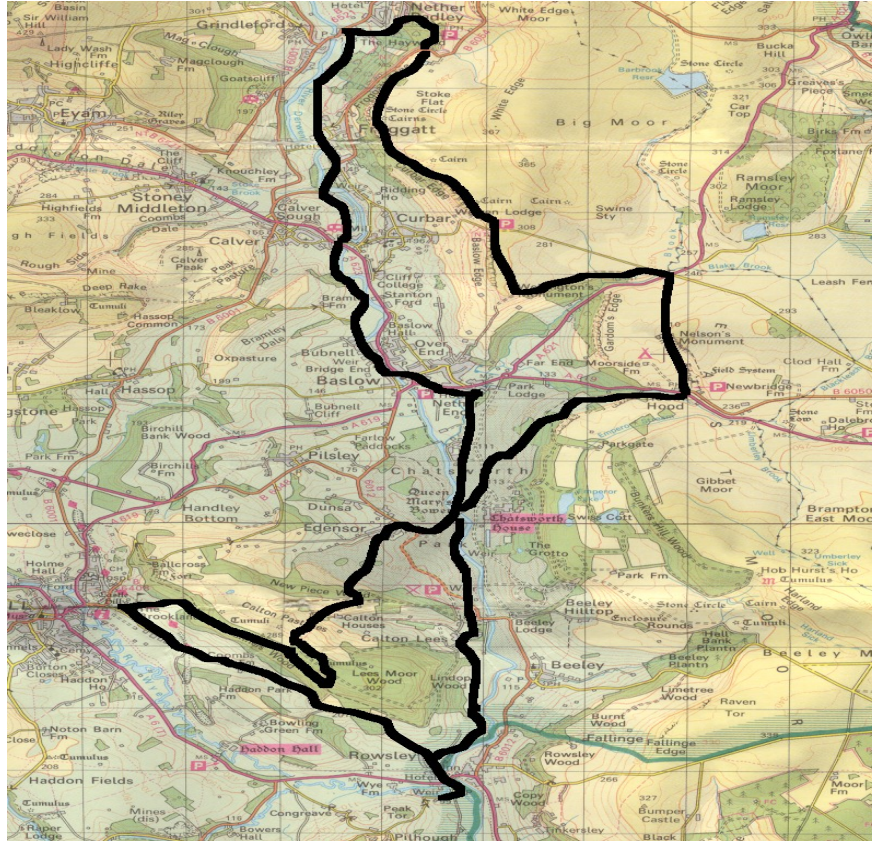


WALK.6.
ROWSLEY.6.
25.2 miles. 6 hours 50 minutes.
Map White Peak.



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Start in Rowsley near the football field behind the old mill (256656), and then proceed over the River Wye towards the Peacock Inn. Cross the A6 then ascend the hill at the side of the Peacock, past the Church on the right (which is not older than 1855), until it becomes a lane, which winds up through trees. It is well to recall that this was an important road from Rowsley to Bakewell before the turnpike days. When the road begins to drop downhill, continue in the same direction down Coombs Lane, woods to the right. Pass Coombs Farm: go under a railway bridge then go right through a slot at the side of a gate and up to the Monsal Trail. Follow the trail NW to the next bridge; leave the trail by going right up the bank to a wooden step stile. Bear left and walk uphill to a stile where you enter a golf course, then make for Manners Wood straight ahead.

Enter the woods and walk E, climbing gently at first. In about 200 yards, go left off the main path then steeply up a bank following a worn path. This brings you to a track going N to S. Go right for a few yards, then left up a steep bank to a ladder stile over a wall at the top (231688). Walk E uphill through a field towards a copse of trees. Proceed, to the fence where there is a wooden step stile; a yellow arrow points left to Chatsworth; close to your left is a pond. Go over the stile, cut the left corner and go 100 yards to another step stile in a fence, then walk S of E through a field, a plantation on the left. This brings you to a fence and a good wooden step stile to the left of a gate.

Continue in the same direction through the next field to a sign to Edensor and Chatsworth; go left here to New Piece Woods where you take a broken stone step in the wall next to a farm gate, at (247688). 200 yards down the lane brings you to another good stile over a wall, and a well-illustrated sign to the amenities of Chatsworth Park. Downhill again, to Edensor whose spire in the distance tops the trees. Access is gained by means of a swinging gate and stone steps. This remarkable village where every house is different from its neighbour, where gables, turrets and battlements may be seen, was all built between 1839 and 1842, when the sixth Duke of Devonshire wished to remove the old village out of sight from Chatsworth. He gave the task of planning it to his gardener Paxton who not only created the gardens at Chatsworth, and made the many plantations, but also went on to design the Crystal Palace. The church was built later by Sir George Gilbert Scott; it contains monuments to the Cavendishes, to the servant of Mary Queen of Scots, to Paxton himself, and, more recently to Katherine, the sister of President Kennedy who married a Cavendish.

Leave Edensor by its interesting revolving metal gate, cross the road and make for Chatsworth Bridge, built in 1760. Cross the bridge, turn left past Queen Mary's Bower, so-called because it is believed that Mary Queen of Scots used to rest there when she was a prisoner of the Earl of Shrewsbury at Chatsworth House. In the background there is always the magnificent Chatsworth, spectacular, rich in history, a splendid survivor from turbulent times, not least the present.

Walk N through the splendid park and leave by a tall metal revolving gate, another splendid design (258719). In 100 yards go left through a small metal gate into a field, go over a stream, cross another field into a narrow jitty, then down this onto the road in Baslow at (256721). Turn left and go W along the road, passing the church, which was restored in 1852-3 by the Duke of Devonshire. For this work he called in, again, his noted gardener, Paxton. Nearby is the bridge with its little stone shelter for the toll collector. No doubt he kept an eye open on the heavy loads crossing the bridge, for, in 1500 an order was made that "no one shall henceforth load or carry any millstones over the bridge at Basselowe under pain of 6s-8pence to the Lord for every pair of Millstones so carried."

Cross over the bridge, turn right, and walk N, passing Bubnell Hall, a seventeenth century building with mullioned and transomed windows, built to replace the former home of the Bassets, one of those distant families who played such a formative part in our long struggle for justice and liberty. One of them signed the Magna Carta; another went on the crusades with Richard the Lionheart; a third sat in our first Parliament.

Continue N to a slot stile on the right at (247732); about half a mile beyond Bubnell Hall, enter a field and walk N to a slot stile in the far wall. Continue N, the river away to the right, a bank rising steeply to the left, then through trees until the river snakes back again alongside the path. Follow the River Derwent to a group of houses: this is Calver. Go under the twentieth-century concrete bridge, and then over the old bridge, whose predecessor was mentioned in the fifteenth century. This bridge was built in the eighteenth century presumably to replace the bridge that was washed away in the great flood of August 1799. Near the bridge stood a cotton mill built in 1785-6.

Go R from the bridge to the Bridge Inn, go sharply left alongside the river, walking N. On the left stands Calver Mill built by Sir Richard Arkwright in 1803-4 to replace the former mill, (now exclusive and expensive flats). Later, a former employee, Horatio Mason took over the management of the mill. He was not only hard-working, but in an age of lack of childcare, was kindly and caring for those in his employ. He provided education and a Sunday school for his workers; conditions in his mill were less harsh than elsewhere. Sadly, Mason died bankrupt in 1839. History and natural beauty are to be found wherever you go in Derbyshire. In 300 yards, go left off the road into a field via a wooden step stile and continue in the same direction on a varied riverside walk up to an interesting stone bridge, then out by a slot stile on to the road. Cross the road to another gritstone stile then down some steep stone steps to follow the river again to the seventeenth century bridge, which crosses the river at Froggatt (244761).

Continue along the road passing the neat little chapel on one's right, straight on a lane, houses on the right, the lane being well paved. The stile ahead leads to a narrow field; walk around the wall on the right to an open gateway ahead on the L with a slot stile in the corner, then continue N, wall on left, to a paved path through a field, and a National Trust sign "Froggatt Wood" which you now enter (244770). The good path, paved in parts, takes you through the wood, which you leave by a gritstone stile into a field, wall on left, and come in 50 yards to a poor wooden gate on the left. Go through this and cross the field W of N to a wooden swing gate and out on to the road in Grindleford at (245778). Near the bridge, there is one of the Peak and Northern Footpath signs No34 erected in 1908.

Cross the road, bear right past a house which was a toll house, then go left through a stile into a field. Now begins an interesting river walk; cross a small field then another long field with a hedge on your right, the tree-lined river to your left. Go through a gate over a concrete bridge. Then follow the river on your left through another long field to Coppice Wood, which you enter at the side of a gate.

In about 400 yards of pleasant walking, leave the river, and go SE to your right, on a good hard track uphill, through the woods (241795). About 40 yards before a gate, go left at a sign, the path quite steep here, to a ladder stile over a wall into a field. Cut the left corner and go over a railway bridge (243792). Go straight ahead for several hundred yards until you meet a wide, hard track going N to S. Bear right and walk S until you pass houses on your right and arrive at the celebrated Padley Hall (247789).

The area of Padley came to the ubiquitous and powerful family of Eyre in the mediaeval period; it was here that Robert Eyre built Padley Hall, one of the many that the family owned. It passed through heirs to the FitzHerbert family, staunch Roman Catholics who faced persecution during the reign of Elizabeth. Two priests, Nicholas Garlick and Robert Ludlam were discovered hiding in the hall; they were taken to Derby, hung, drawn and quartered and impaled on Saint Mary's Bridge. FitzHerbert was executed and his estates forfeited. The hall gradually fell in to ruin leaving only the chapel, which stood, over the gatehouse it was used as a cow shed, then later lived in by navies who were building the Totley Railway Tunnel. It was purchased by the Roman Catholic Church in 1933 and consecrated as a chapel. Pilgrimages to commemorate the martyrs are held here on the last Thursday in July.

The chapel is a stone building with an ashlar front, the remainder coursed rubble. The railway removed the S and E ranges of this once large double courtyard house of the C.14. The foundations of the N and W and S (chapel) have survived, also, two original doorways but the windows are much altered. The W part of the upper floor may have been the solar.

Continue along the track that leads you to Burbage Brook, then past the old station, which is now a café. Cut up left, on a narrow steep path to a road (252787). Cross the road, turn right and walk downhill for 20 yards, then go up Tedgeness Road, a cul de sac in Nether Padley. Pass a green sign on your left to Froggatt Edge Road. Ignore it; but in 20 yards, a wooden footpath sign directs you to go up left to Haywood Car Park, and that is where you go.

Proceed up the grassy track through trees. Take a small gate at the left of a farm gate and pass a National Trust sign "Hay Wood" then continue along a pleasant track that always ascends but never steeply. You catch glimpses of Eyam Moor on your right. You soon come to an old Quarry, then a wooden stile. The National Trust car park is just to your left (256778). Take another step stile then drop down to a stream, then steeply up the other side to a road at (256775).

Turn right and go on road for 40 yards, then turn left through a gate, and so on the well-known and much-walked track Froggatt Edge where the views to the right are wide-ranging and extensive and include Derwent Valley, Burbage Moors, Higger Tor, Stanage Edge. White Edge is to the left. Pass a stone circle on your left. It is a very impressive two miles.

And so to Curbar Gap at (261747). From earliest times travellers have found their way through this pronounced gap in the gritstone edges. An act of Parliament in 1702 stated that guide stones must be erected where two trackways converged. There is a guide stone

nearby at Swine Sty (271750) showing “Sheffield, Dronfield, Chasterfield and Tideswell”, erected by Humphry Gregory, Supervisor 1709.

Cross the road and continue in the same direction past the Eagle Stone where young eligible men had to prove their skill at climbing it before they married, and so to Wellington’s monument at (265736). The views over the Derwent Valley and Chatsworth are impressive.

Go down the bank to a path at the bottom; turn left and walk with wall on right until it turns right, then follow it through fern and over many awkward stones to a ladder stile near a house, and so down a narrow jetty to a good packhorse bridge, (modern concrete bridge on L), then up the other side to the road (268733). Cross the road to a good stile at the side of a cottage, then via another stile. Make your way up the bank under Gardoms, going SE to the top on a pleasant track with views W, then past Moorside Farm on your left and down to the road at Robin Hood (278721).

Go down the road for a few yards then cross the road L to a sign, then descend to the stream by a series of steps. Cross the wooden footbridge, angle right and up to a good track. Walk SW on this, passing three stiles at the side of farm gates which takes you to Chatsworth Park, near to a sign to the amenities of the area.

Proceed down a track which takes you to a tarmac road (which goes R out of the park); cross the road and you come to an entrance to the park from Baslow and another amenities sign; turn left here and take the path to Chatsworth Bridge, which you crossed earlier.

Cross the bridge; turn left, walk through the park with the river on your left, passing the old mill and you come to another road bridge. 100 yards before this bridge, angle right and go up to the large car park. Walk S past the car park, past the garden centre on your left into Calton Lees, and into the village. In the village, bear left uphill, then immediately left to a good wooden signpost and stone steps in to a field. Go S with the wall on the left to a good wooden stile over a wall and so down through the field to an open gateway where there is another footpath sign, then continue S over level ground, pleasant walking. There is an open gateway in the wall ahead; the river comes close at this point. Go over a wooden stile on to a narrow path which is often overgrown, hedge on left, bank on right, and, in 200 yards, there is a step stile, which leads to a narrow area, river on left. This can be very muddy at times. Make for a fence ahead and a narrow slot with bars. More mud until you reach a disused railway bridge, and so out to the road; turn left; you are now back in Rowsley.

Checked. 21 Oct. 2002