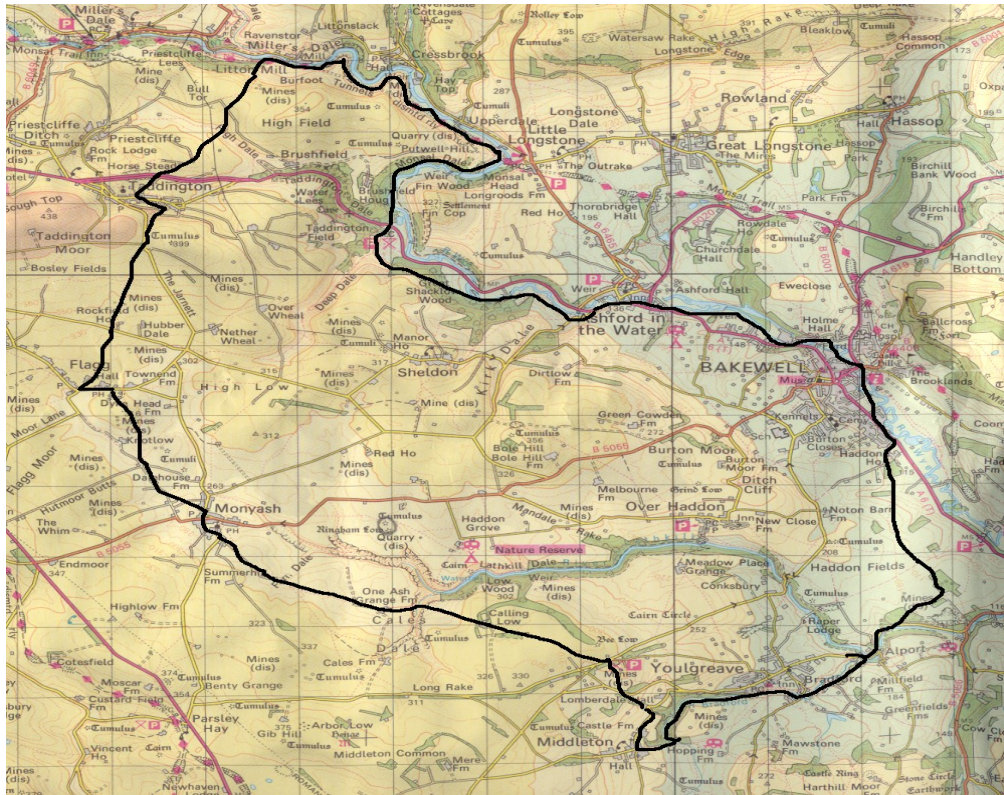


**WALK 24.
ALPORT 24
23 Miles.
Map White Peak.**



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Start at the roadside at Alport about 100 yards from where the River Lathkill flows under the road at 220645. Walk along the road W for 200 yards to a good gritstone slot stile on the left: enter a field and walk SW. Up on the right is a fine building, gabled and mullioned; to the left, the dale, and views to the S; the pinnacled tower of Youlgreave church to the right. In the far limestone wall, there is a gritstone slot stile. Reach the road at 214641; bear left and walk downhill to the river. Turn right through a slot stile on the left of a farm gate, which has huge gritstone gateposts. An interesting packhorse bridge crosses the river here. Walk W with the River Bradford on the left, the grass underfoot soft and short. The dale curves ahead; the houses of Youlgreave are perched riskily up on the right.

At 209640, go through two gritstones and out onto a road. Turn left and walk over a clapper bridge, then right to walk with the river on the right, the banks thinly treed, the dale curving around, the water low, mainly due to the lead mining soughs making the water table lower and thus denying the springs the water which used to feed the river. Weirs help to keep the water level high. A farm gate stands between two gritstones; the slot stile on its right. Pass a fine single arch bridge on the right and come up to a walled bridge with ruins on either side. Leave the river at 199633 to go right up to Middleton by Youlgreave through interesting limestone outcrops; the first farm building on the left has good gritstone dressings around the windows and an old water pump standing idle. Enter Middleton at 196632. Most of the houses have neat gritstone dressings around the windows and doors; some have dripstone hoods over the windows. One house is dated 1822. The disused chapel is dated 1826.

Leave Middleton on the road going N passing, on the left, next door to the old chapel, a sign to Thomas Bateman's tomb: he did many excavations of the tumuli and antiquities of the area. There is a museum of his findings in Bakewell and also Weston Park Museum, Sheffield. In 900 yards, at 199640, go left through a good slot stile on the right of a farm gate, enter a field and walk uphill, passing a circular copse with a wall around it. Away to the left stands Lomberdale Hall, a house of 1845 with prominent Gothic windows, once the home of William and Thomas Bateman. At the far wall above, go out onto the road by means of excellent stone steps set in the wall (199642).

Do not take the footpath which goes N to Over Haddon, but turn left and walk 80 yards to stone steps in the wall on the right which lifts you up into the fields above. Turn left; walk W uphill towards the woods above; go through a gap in a broken wall and continue climbing with a low wall on the right. There are trees away to the left. Make for the far corner where a tree overlooks a stile of a wooden step and bars, go into the next field to a farm gate, which has limestone steps on its right. With the wall on your right, go N forward through a picnic area and out onto the road at 194645.

Turn left: walk 150 yards to a road junction. Cross the road to a good slot stile in a limestone wall, then make for the far corner, walking diagonally across the field in an area threaded with characteristic walls. Go through a gap in a wall, walk W close to a wall on the right to the far wall where there is an old rusty gate leaning against the wall. Bee Wood is away to the right and Lathkill Dale just beyond that. The stile in the wall ahead is a strange mixture of a poor slot, a rusty gate, wooden bars and a wooden pallet. In the next field, cut the right hand corner, and, in 30 yards, come to good stone steps in a high wall, and so into a field, walking NW on what appears to be a raised pathway. This brings you to a signpost in a broken wall; bear left and continue to the WNW, to Low Moor Plantation before which is a slot stile. Enter the woods at the right corner and leave by a stile of fine stone steps on the right, then go to Calling Low Farm, neat buildings dated 1829. Go through the farm buildings to a wooden bar stile the other side, then walk W downhill to a gateway, no gate or stile. The views from this point are superb, especially when the snow lights up the distant hills. Just below is Lathkill Dale, and, in front, One Ash Grange. At certain times, when the sun is just right, the limestone bastions of Lathkill are lit up on one side, and the shadows black and sharp, go downhill WNW through 3 fields.

Take a good step stile and descend steeply into Cales Dale; there is a sign indicating that this is a Derbyshire Nature Reserve; go over a wooden step stile, then, still going W, climb steeply up the bank to the limestone outcrops which, if diminutive in size, are magnificent in effect. At the top, there is a stile: note the tremendous limestone gatepost. The footpath through the farm goes between two buildings, up some steps that bring you close to the hay barn on the right. The name "Grange" indicates a farm that once belonged to a monastery worked by the lay brothers. Proceed through the yard, passing an arched niche on the right, which is unusual. Further along are some stone built pig-sties complete with feeding troughs which used to be a common sight when many families kept pigs, but now alas! But no more. Go past a large new building on the left, walk along a lane of sorts at the top of which, you go right through a gate, no stile. Turn sharp left; walk close to the wall on the left in a W direction to the next wall where there is a gate. Before this, go left over stone steps in the wall into the next field then bear right and walk with wall on right to a broken stile in front. The views here are extensive not dramatic but with gentle slopes.

You come to a sign and a slot, then drop into an area of rough ground, Fern Dale to the right, before rising to the wall in front. There are stone steps in a wall on the right; with the wall now on the left, go 40 yards to some stone steps and enter a lane which goes to the village of Monyash, the broad spire and tower of the church rising above the roofs of this once busy village. Enter the village at 149665, walk N to a road junction where the walk passes over the B.5055. In 300 yards, there is a small car park on the left. Go left over some steps. The next place to head for is Flagg.

Bear right and, cutting the corner, arrive at more steps near cottages, and in 10 yards, go right around the last cottage to a step stile into a field. From this point, you are proceeding in a NW direction. Go to the far corner through a gap with a slot on its right, then cut the right corner and go to a slot stile in 40 yards, which leads to a lane. Cross this by another slot stile, then 30 yards across the field to steps in a wall. Proceed 30 yards across a field to a slot stile, then make for the next stile,

cutting the left corner, (farm away to the left). In 60 yards, come to a lane, which you enter by a good slot stile. Bear right along this lane: pass new farm buildings and come up to an open area (143672) where a lane goes off SW to the Bull I' the Thorn Pub.

Ignore this; on the left is a farm building. Ahead a choice of ways: go right along a short lane, 40 yards in fact to metal gate with a slot on its right, then in 20 yards across a field to a wall containing steps. In the next field, keep the wall on your left. This is an area of former lead workings; there are electric cables overhead (on the map). The next wall has steps, a slot and some wooden posts. To reach the next wall, go uphill to a stile with steps and a slot and continue uphill (electric cables overhead) to the far left corner and some rough steps and a slot. Still rising, but less pronounced in the next field. The next stile has been cemented in place. The wall is close on the left in the next field which brings you down to a low wall and after all those substantial stiles previously encountered, this one is merely some loose stones with a few pieces of rubbishy wood. You are now in a small area near a house. Turn right in a few yards go left through a slot in a corner, down some steps to enter someone's private? front garden, which contains a circular feature. Go down the drive and so out on to a road at 141683.

Turn left: walk 500 yards into Flagg, passing ornate gateposts to the Hall. At the road junction, go right up the farm drive, walking NE through interesting farm buildings, even the outhouses have mullioned windows. The hall has a prominent entrance bay. Leave by a farm metal gate, no stile, level going, fence on right up to a gateway and into a large, wide field, still level. How interesting is that single tree in this open landscape.

Go through the far wall by another open gateway, no gate, no stile, but excellent gateposts. The next field is equally extensive; go uphill to a gate and sign and get over the low wall to the road by a few loose stones: it cannot be called a stile (140692). Go right for 50 yards along the road to a stile and a sign on the left; the limestone steps go over the wall.

Go N past Rockfield House, walking along a narrow area for 300 yards to a stile on the right. Go diagonally left across the next field to a slot; the left upright is quite huge. Bear left and continue NNE to the far corner (cutting the left corner), but going through an open gateway on the right of the corner. There is no gate but the gateposts are, again, massive. In the next field, bear left and cut the left corner, making for an open gateway in the wall. Continue in the same direction to the far wall; there is an old building near. The slot has a huge left upright, and three cross bars. Enter the next field then go 20 yards to a low wall. N now through a long field, climbing a little to the middle of the far wall where there are limestone steps. In the next field, go around a mound to the right corner and an open gateway, then onto the next open gateway and so out onto a road at 143704.

Walk N for 200 yards towards Taddington before turning off to the right down a lane that leads into the village at 146710. Turn left and walk W through the village noticing the interesting limestone buildings dressed with gritstone. There are several places where you may turn off to the right, the object being to get to a back lane that goes to the A.6. It is possible to get to a lane near the church where it starts. Walk NE on this lane to the A.6 at 145714.

Cross over the dual carriageway to a lane the other side that climbs up gently then levels out. In 400 yards the lane curves to the left at a junction of three lanes: at this point, leave the lane by going straight ahead over a stile to the left of a gate into a field, walking NE to the far corner where you go through a gap into the next field.

Keep to the same direction, and go downhill gently, views of High Dale to the right. Go through a slot stile in 40 yards, then 40 yards again to a broken wall where it is just possible to see where a stile might have been. The next wall is also broken; continue down to the next stile which is much more elaborate: you mount stone steps, then walk on a high level wooden step, then jump down the other side. Climb a little, level out, go over a broken wall then descend into High Dale. Climb the other side, keep somewhat to the left and walking with wall on the up to a wooden step stile over the fence and wall into a lane at 152722.

Turn left and walk NW along the lane for 40 yards. At a tree on the right, go up steps into a field, pass a circular pond on the left then walk NE uphill with a row of trees on the left and a wall on the right to the top where there is a jumble of walls. There are steps in a wall in front, a slot on

top, then enter an area pitted with former lead workings, and, again striking views all around. Turn right and walk through this narrow area to a stile in a wall in front. Tideswell appears to the N, clinging to the sloping hillside. Tideswell Dale reveals its limestone scarps. Below is Litton and Cressbrook.

Go N then NE downhill through shrubbery to the bridge over the Monsal Trail. You now have a choice of two of the most dramatic scenes in Derbyshire: either take the old railway path high level route; which is the most dramatic outside the Lake District although not for the faint hearted as the paths are quite narrow and open, with drops into the dale below, or take the low level route along Millers Dale.

First, the high route. You are warned that it is dangerous and not a legal right of way. From the bridge, go on to the trail and walk E to the closed tunnel. Leave the trail and walk along the hillside. Exercise care especially in bad weather. Do not attempt it in the worst of weather. Keep to higher ground. The walker is entering upon one of Derbyshire's treasures: the views, though confined to a small area, are outstanding, the equal of anything in the country. So powerful are they that one must be careful not to be distracted when traversing the thin and uncertain path the limestone bastions down below rising out of the water have great visual power especially at Water Cum Jolly. There are two paths up here around the edge: but the top one is less open and so is safer to take. Traverse around the edge to reach the trail again at the entrance to a tunnel at 172724. Cressbrook Mill stands magnificently below to the left in its newfound glory Walk along the trail for 1200 yards to a stone bridge over the trail: leave the trail going down left to reach below an excellent footbridge over the river, which you do not cross.

Next, the low level route. From the bridge over the trail, descend to the trail then down again on a path through the trees to a footbridge over the river that brings you out at Litton Mill. (If the footbridge is closed for building work, then go to the next one not far back up the river.) Bear right and walk through the mill grounds close to the buildings, these, also, newly cleaned and restored to be sold as flats. Imagine as you go the children some only 12 years old working all the daylight hours at machinery in the mill. It is stated that they were treated very poorly at this Mill. Follow the riverside path which is wide and firm through Water-cum-Jolly to get a view of those massive limestone cliffs. This path is flooded in bad weather. It leads to Cressbrook Mill, another Mill that employed children but where they were treated much better. Go through the mill grounds and so on to the road at 173728.

Walk along the road for 800 yards, the river away to the right, passing on the right a hamlet; turn right at a house just before the road starts to climb up to Monsal Head and go to a footbridge over the river where you then join the high level which has come down to this spot. (See above).

Walk SE, river on the left, proceeding under the splendid viaduct of which Ruskin said in 1861: "The valley is gone – and now every fool in Buxton can be in Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell in Buxton." That is no longer true. (What witticism he would say now with our transport problems can only be imagined). Continue along an exquisite riverside walk so as to reach the A.6 at 170706 via one or two good stiles.

Cross the busy road, go through a picnic site and car park by a step and slot stile, then go 200 yards on a path that is in due season greasy and stony. This leads into a fascinating and mysterious entrance of what one might describe as a fairy dell with enclosed sides; with little sun reaching it, the rocks and sides are full of moss. Go through this and take a wish if you believe in fairies. The path goes up Deepdale; do not take this but go left over a low wall by a poor stile, then go S up a stony path, climbing steeply up the hillside. Look to the left and Finn Cop can be seen on the summit; it is an old Iron Age fort. Make for the woods that are entered by a large, wooden slot stile. The path descends through Great Shacklow Wood where the undergrowth often extends over the path. Having reached the riverside, the path goes past a scoop in the bank on the right and a sough on the left through which water flows into the river (179696). This quiet scene belies the history of attempts by lead miners to remove water from the Magpie Mine above (near Sheldon), by a sough from the Magpie to the river Wye. (A sough is a drainage tunnel to carry water). The sough

was blocked up when the Magpie Mine was shut hoping that extra water would flow into the Lathkill and Bradford Rivers. But in 1966 the pressure of water built up behind the stopping, and this normally quiet area was shattered by water bursting from the hillside causing the scoop. The accumulation of many tons of water produced an immense pressure that proved too much for the hillside to withstand. Hundreds of tons of earth poured down the hillside temporarily blocking the River Wye itself and removing the path. It was not until 1974 that the area was restored. Examine the new stone arch over the exit of the sough; you will see the dates 1873, 1881, and 1974. The two earlier dates were the period when the sough was built.

A pleasant riverside walk where the path is straighter than the meandering river goes past an old mill, then alongside a broken wall to a farm gate and a ladder stile into a lane at 189694, which goes up to a road. Go left down the road to the A.6 at 192694.

Turn right and walk E towards Bakewell for 800 yards, to 200695 to the famous Sheepwash bridge that is pictured on many a calendar, then continue on the road to a junction where the road goes L up to Monsal Head. Go past this for a short distance then through a metal gate on the left to enter a field; walk with the river on the left; in fact it is dammed into large ponds for reservoirs for power for the former mills. The path goes through several stiles, then through a narrow jitty between the gardens of houses. Cross the road and enter another jitty between the opposite side houses and proceed up to the A.6 via a stile on the left of a gate at 209691.

Turn left and enter Bakewell noticing the views all around. In 400 yards go left over a bridge at Fearnhough Works. Walk E past Holme Bridge, an interesting packhorse bridge of 1664. Holme Hall on the left is dated 1626; enter the field by stile on the right to walk with the river on the right to the road bridge of 1300. Cross over the bridge and walk through the park to regain the A.6 at 221681.

Turn left and walk for 250 yards to a lane on the right signed Over Haddon and proceed up it for 300 yards to a cottage on the left. Just beyond it is a slot stile through which you go left into a field walking S with Haddon House Farm on the left. Enter Burton Ashes Wood over two concrete circular steps and leave the woods through a wooden slot stile. Walk S through a field to Wigger Dale and cross a footbridge with handrail then continue S with woods close to the right, climbing steeply uphill to a good slot stile in the wall. The path then continues to ascend through a field to the wall ahead and a gritstone slot stile. It is possible to catch a glimpse of Stanton Village far ahead. Turn left here: map Plantation is to the right. Walk SSE up to the next stile, which can be seen long before it is reached.

Ahead, is the Derwent Valley. To the right is an old ruined farm building, its rafters bare to the sky, like ribs without flesh. The wall that is eventually reached has capping stones like battlements; the slot stile is made of two gritstones in limestone. Continue SSE across Haddon Fields; to the E across the valley stands Haddon Hall, magnificent, looking much as it did 500 years ago. Cross a footpath linking Over Haddon with Haddon as a wall is reached with a stile at 226658.

Go through the stile, then go SSE, make for Haddon Plantation at the corner of which are two concrete cylindrical steps. Walk SE with fence and trees on the left, but leave the fence and make for the far corner of the woods ahead just beyond which is an open gateway, with stone steps on its left. Enter a field and go WSW to the right to the far corner. Pass on the left, the massive hole in the ground called Shining Bank Quarry, though it cannot be seen from here. The stile is in the corner, then walk with wall on left to two gritstones in a limestone wall; turn left and walk with wall on right down to a pond, trees on right; enter these in 40 yards over steps in a wall on right, and go through Baltic Woods to an industrial road. Go straight over it to trees and keep somewhat to the left where there is a rough slot in a boundary hedge and wall into a field. Walk through this to the W, keeping fairly close to the edge of the steep, wooded bank below which is the road to Alport. In about 300 yards, you arrive at the head of a diminutive glen. Turn left and go steeply downhill through trees to a gate and sign at the bottom, with a slot at the left of a gate; and so out onto a road at 223649. Turn right and walk to the car.

Checked Thursday 23 October 2003.