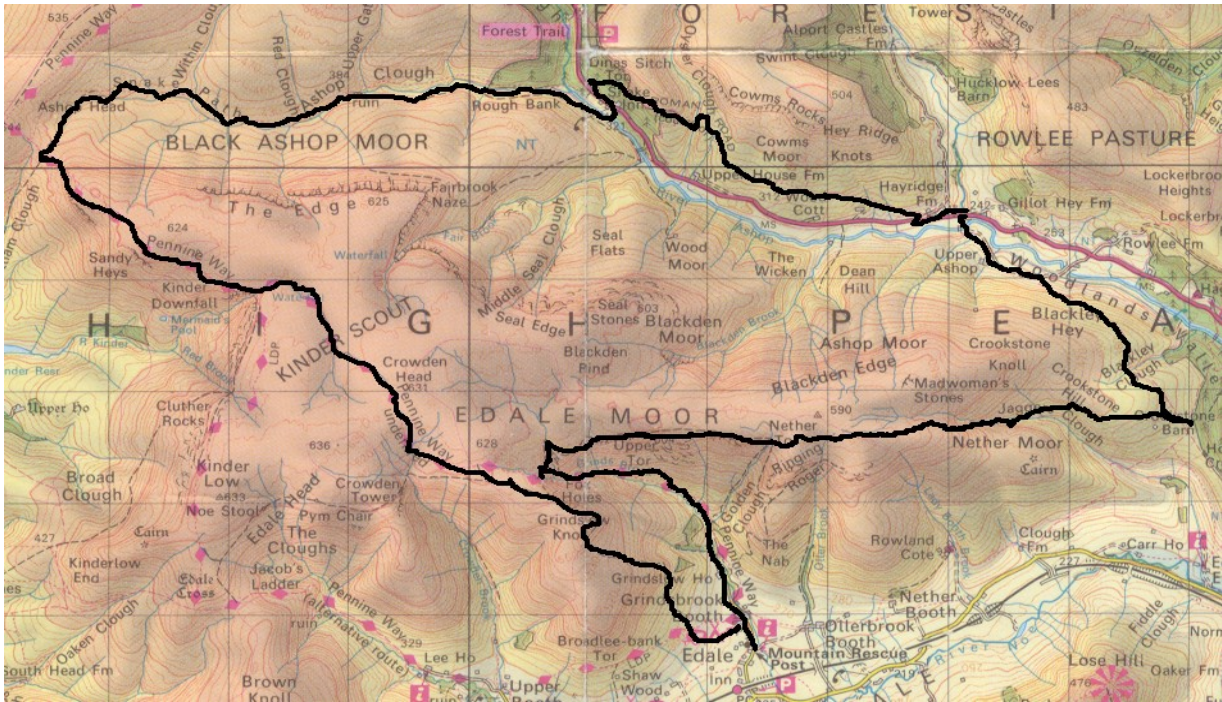


KINDER SCOUT. 31
WALK. 31.
20-8 miles.
Map Dark Peak



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Start at Edale (123875). Do not attempt this walk without the skill of using a compass. Good boots and clothing are also required as some of the areas are very boggy. Walk N, on the road making for the steps and Pennine Way sign, down the steps and over the footbridge, then L to follow the beaten track up the side of Grinsbrook Clough which is the Pennine Way. It gets steeper and rougher as the top is reached especially around Fox Holes, then at the summit take the N path for 150 yards to go around the headland then E to follow the edge path.

The views into the Edale valley are striking, the farm patterns, the triple ridge of Lose Hill Back Tor and Mam Tor. Carry on the level path E to come to Ringing Roger, which is a striking ridge going S; but that is another day. Carry on E over a section of flat moonscape type of with plenty of rocks to break up the scape. Soon after Lady Booth Brook and valley appear with its Youth Hostel. Then look out for Jagers Clough on the R; it must have been difficult for the Jagers ponies to navigate the top section of the Clough. Madwomen's Stones are to the left; I can only leave the name to your imagination, but to me it always seems to be a weird place not oneto linger in. Carry on E to Crookstone Knoll (145883) and you have the pleasure of standing on this point and seeing the Lady Bower Reservoir and Wooded Valley with the twin humps of Crook Hill behind.

Retrace the steps for 250 yards to 143881 to drop down through a rocky outcrop going first ENE then curve SE to go through a wall then over Crookstone Hill; two isolated trees ahead; the hillside covered with excellent grass. Lady Bower Reservoir to the L and Winn Hill to the R. The path is well defined so that you can easily get to a wall and gate at 158879. At this point a good track is reached that comes from Winn Hill and Hope Cross: turn L on this, to go NNW to get eventually to a ford at Blackley Clough and a wooden stile. Continue downhill on this stony path to the NW to get to the River Ashop where there is a substantial bridge for walkers and a ford for those who dare; cross this to go up to a gate and a road at 141895; this is the Snake Pass road.

Cross the A.57 road, which is not unusually the first road to be blocked by winter snows, then go over a stile in the wall opposite where there is another of the impressive metal signs erected by the Peak and Northern Footpath Preservation Society. This is No 106 of 1948 to Westend and Slippery Stones, Hazel Head and Langsett via Alport Hamlet; Hope and Edale. Go forward up to a ladder stile over a stonewall, then up a steep bank to a wooden step stile and bar. From this point, go uphill but keep to the L. then come to a worn farm drive: go L down to Hayridge Farm, passing on the way another sign of the P. N. F. P. S. No 71 erected in 1932 to Glossop via Oyster Clough, and to Alport Hamlet. Go through the farm; at two adjacent gates, go to the R into a compound, then in 15 yards to another gate, then climb uphill on a good grassy path. The A.57 is to the L under the forbidding Ashop Moor with Blackden Edge above. Take another ladder stile then 10 yards to a gate, and continue on a good path, the hillside climbing steeply above to the R, wall on L and good grass underfoot. Pass Blackden View Farm and note the buttress supports to the end wall; there are kneelers and a finial, which give an attractive air to this isolated farmstead. Soon there is another massive ladder stile into open country. Across the valley to the S there is the impressive great gash made by Blackden Brook. To the N, Cowms Moor rises up steeply. The path narrows: it goes over a wall and approaches a gate to the L of which there are concrete steps in a wall.

Continue on a good path to another sign to open country; the wall is still close to the L, still level going, but begins to rise away from the wall to a wooden stile in a fence, then curve around to the R (N). Cross a small stream by means of railway sleepers, then proceed to a farm gate and continue with a wall on the L to another stream. Climb a little then drop down to a bar stile. Cross a stream: Oyster Clough goes off to the N from this point; note how deeply cut it is. Turn to the L and follow the wall up a steep bank until it reaches a corner, where trees grow. Here turn R and walk uphill on a worn path, walking on a Roman Road (which went from Brough to Glossop) up to another metal sign, No 60 erected as far back as 1928 with directions to Oyster Clough, Alport Bridge and Hope; Doctors Gate and Glossop. The path levels out: there are trees on the L, then drop down to a corner and a sign to open country with a step stile over a fence leading into woodland. What a change on a sunny day to enter quiet, dark shelter of the trees, and fork L to walk downhill on a track with one's visibility limited to a few yards instead of the huge distances previously accustomed to on the heights above. And so cross the A 57 at 110907.

Cross the road to a metal sign PDNCFPS No 10 (altitude 1070 feet not normally included) 1947 These must have been made by somebody with good metal casting knowledge. Directions to Ashop Clough and William Clough to Hayfield 6-75 miles. Go down stone steps to a ladder stile. There is a sign erected by the Forestry Commission and one indicating boundary of open country. Go down on a worn path that bears to the R (NW), the River Ashop on the L, and come to a well-built wooden footbridge, erected by the Royal Engineers of Sheffield University. The path is level at first, passing along Saukin Ridge, the river close on the L, a charming picture of little rills where large stones create small waterfalls and the far bank climbs vertically from the water's edge. But as the path climbs the hillside and seeks the shade of overhanging trees, the river moves down below. To the S Fairbrook Naze 2000 feet sticks out of the Kinder Plateau. The views change their shape as the path goes around the spurs of the hillside. The dark gritstone is not easy to see in the shaded areas.

Carry on the track W, up Ashop Dale on the Snake Path, worn well by others before you, with the River Ashop on the L for 1 mile passing a ruined building on the L, and a slender plank across the river; continue slightly uphill as the valley slowly widens out on both sides. The path also passes through stretches of good, level grassland quite unlike the rough moorland around it; it then proceeds through a cutting and runs alongside the little stream in a small valley, which is quite deeply-cut in places. At Ashop Head go SSW. Ahead there is now on the horizon a scoop between Mill Hill on the R and the W end of the Kinder Plateau on the L; with a sign showing the walk along the Snake Path is over, a fine and enjoyable route.

Turn L at the sign (063902) and proceed SE to the formidable bank to climb; a test of fitness, then follow the Pennine Way to Kinder Downfall, a good stony path with views over Kinder Reservoir where the Snake Path, previously walked goes down to Hayfield, and to the S the bulk of Mount Famine and South Head sticks out. Also below the Mermaids' Pool; a funny place to see a

mermaid but one can imagine it From the downfall; which is a magnificent site after heavy rain, and on such days can be seen from miles away, follow the Pennine Way for 750 yards which goes SE over the plateau, proceeding along the watercourse of the River Kinder which can be impassable after heavy rain, until a point is reached at 088883. Turn left away from the river bed and follow a steep-sided grough which angles slowly to the R to a swampy open section where a compass reading needs to be taken SSE. At this point the watershed drains N to the Mersey and S to the Trent On dry weather other persons' tracks can be followed; but remember they may be lost as well. Continue on the compass bearing over the swampy area to enter another grough, which curves around first SSW then S, to Crowden Tower with its magnificent rocky outcrops. At this point turn left and walk E along a wide peaty track for 1050 yards to Grinsbrook Head at 107874 (this is the point the walk passed previously) but the other side of the river bed. Do not descend at this point, but walk SE up to Grinsbrook Knoll (1968 feet), a prominent point from which the views are extensive.

Drop steeply down the hillside on a good path mainly SE that goes down to a wall where there is a sign to open country and a step stile. Carry on down, now through a beautiful field, pleasant walking, wonderful views, to another step stile on the L of which is a huge gap which renders the stile redundant. Make for a lane in front, which is shaded over. Go over a bar stile then through a wooden gate and so out onto a road and back to the start.

CHECKED 11 March 2005