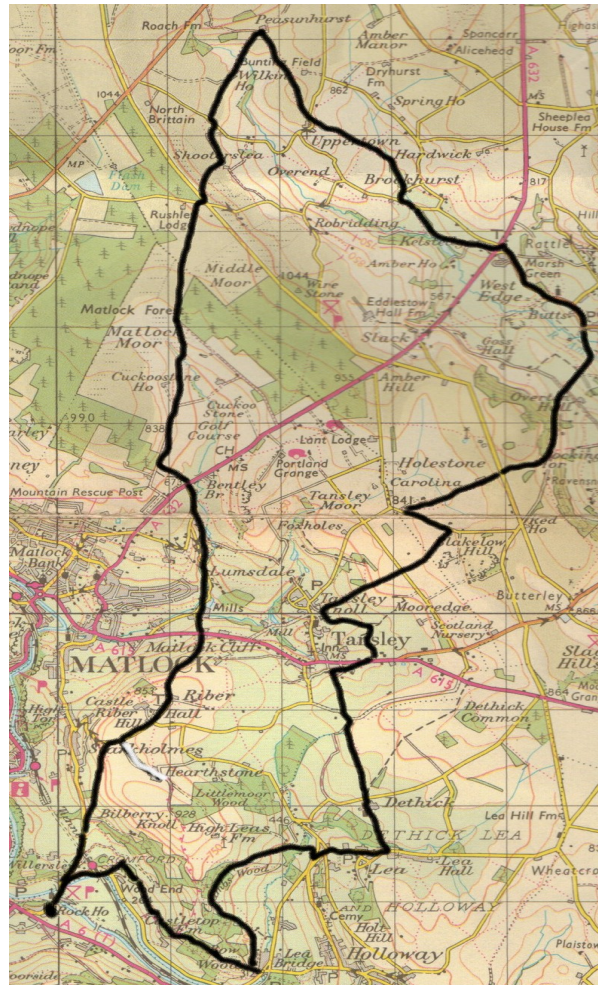


WALK. 55.
Cromford 55.
21 miles. 5 hours 45 minutes.
Map White Peak.



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Start at Cromford (301569). Turn R on road and walk over the C.15 bridge with remnants of a C.15 chapel and an early fishing pavilion. It has pointed arches on one side and three rounded ones on the other, evidence of widening. Some metres beyond the bridge, go L up the road Starkholmes for 400 metres, then go R through slot on the L of a gate. Take the track to Meadow Wood Farm; soon it passes the entrance of a tunnel down to the R all, most out of sight. In 500 metres, angle R off the track toward woods. Enter the woods by a slot in a wall preceded by three wooden bars across it and walk through woodland to a gate at the far end. Go through the stile and walk with hedge on the R. carry on down for a few metres with hedge still on R, then angle L to walk through a field, level going: good views to the R down the Derwent Valley, where river, canal, road and rail run together. Pass an old gritstone water trough on the L and make for a wall where there is a slot, then proceed down to a gate on the side of which is a stile leading on to a minor tarmac lane (308567).

Turn L and walk uphill for 200 metres, then where the road curves to the L, go R along a path which goes past the front of a house, level going to get to a gate with slot on its side and enter woods. Go along a wide track for 500 metres then bear L and walk uphill. Climbing and going N then NW around a spur of the hill. Pass the John Smedley works below on the R; the path then descends to a wall, then bears L and climbs uphill to a slot on the L of a gate: note the massive tooled gateposts. Continue uphill to a more modest stile and go through Coombs Wood to a gate with a stone step on its L, then go on to a section of a wall. Do not be tempted to take the very steep path uphill but go R into trees then climb a bank up to a stile to enter a rough field, passing a ruined stone building on the L to enter Hearthstone Lane (312572).

Walk N for 300 metres, trees and steep bank on the L. On the R, a wall containing huge gritstones. Go R up a rough step in the wall into a field and walk W, hedge on R. In the corner go R to continue with the hedge on the R. then before the facing hedge turn L and walk downhill; the view is of Dethick and Holloway. After the first stile bear slightly to the L going downhill to the bottom with the field corner now on the L. go through farm track with woods now on the R where in 100 metres go R through a slot and enter the wood. Keep the wall close to the L push through holly bushes to get to a stile to leave the woods. Go down to a stream (which is impassable in times of flood) cross this and walk uphill with hedge on the R to a stile and come out on to a road (323576).

Turn R and walk for 200 metres to a crossroad: go straight across and make for Holloway but in 100 metres or so, go L along a narrow path uphill through rhododendrons to a slot on the L of a gate. Turn R. Go 200 metres along a road then, at a sign go L through a gate and walk along a firm track with the boundary wall of Lea Green on the L. this comes out onto a lane: turn L and walk downhill past house then across a small recreation ground to a road at 328575. Turn R and in 25 metres, go L at a sign: go down steps, cross a stream by a bridge, then go steeply to a step stile and enter a field to be confronted by one of Derbyshire's memorial views: St John the Baptist Church, its fine tower built in 1530 by Anthony Babington his name conjures up a painful but very human story that links these old buildings with Wingfield Manor and Queen Elizabeth 1st herself; by trying to put Mary Queen of Scots on the throne and was eventually beheaded for the crime. Go through the church and to the R to go between a group of buildings that stand where the Babington Manor House stood. There is a fine 16.C. barn, and a massive stack. Through the buildings and down to a road at 327581

Cross the road; take good steps in a wall to the L of a gate, walk N close to a wall on the L through several fields with good stiles, eventually angle R through a stile and out into a lane, turn R and go a few metres to a road at 326589. Go L; Riber Castle stands in front, but in 100 metres go R through a slot and enter a field, walking N to a slot in-between two grit uprights, then continue to another slot to go into someone's garden, so go forward a few metres to get on to a lane; there is another slot here to another path. Go down Thatcher's Lane to a road at 325595 in Tansley.

Turn R. In 300 metres or so, go L between houses and note, in the house on the L, two striking and decidedly unusual consoles of carvings of female heads on the door case. Go through a slot between two old gritstones, then 40 metres to a hedge and a slot, then 40 metres to a hedge and slot with only one upright and so arrive at a gate with slot to enter a field. Walk downhill with hedge on the R to the bottom to enter a short lane on the R, in the next field, go L and walk downhill to a slot in a wall on the R.

Now enter Tansley. Walk N to a point at 322601 where turn R up into a wide lane at a sign indicating footpath to Ashover. This comes to a gate across the track bearing the sign: Whitelea Nursery. Just before this go R through a slot in a wall and walk ENE with a hedge on the L to a wall and a slot to walk in the same direction gently uphill to the steep ridge in front, first taking a stile, then going 15 metres to a slot to the L and climb through the next field, wall close on R,

to a corner where the approach to a slot is paved with flagstones. Now climb the steep but short bank to a slot, then further climb to a metal gate with a slot on its R, and then level going along a narrow path to a slot between gritstones. Level going through the next field with wall on R to the road at 331604.

Cross the road to a gate with a good half slot on its L and walk ENE with wall on L, level going towards Derbyshire Oaks Quarry, first taking a slot in the corner and thus entering rough ground, keeping the wall to the L to go to stone steps in wall in front. Bear L to the far corner where there is a gate with stile on R continue through two more step stiles to the R of gates and come to a road at 335609. Bear L and walk 500 metres NW then go R up a farm drive, but in only 10 metres, go R through a gap in wall and walk E through field, wall on L, to another slot between old gritstones and in 40 metres, stone steps in a wall. The next stile is a poor wooden one which precede a pair of gritstones that have, amazingly fallen over. Cross a minute stream, go over three metal cross bars, then take the next stile in a wall, then turn R and head for Holestonemoor Farm which is reached by going through a gap in a wall; leave along the farm drive to a road at 339614.

Cross the road to a sign and steps in a wall, then proceed with fence on R for 100 metres, then go sharp R to a stile labelled "footpath". Walk around cocking Tor down to a wide path below, then turn L and walk N into woods; a charming section in appropriate weather. The path is paved for part of the way with huge flags to come down to a junction of ways at 345623. To the R is Overton Hall dated 1699 with some mediaeval work in it. Here lived Sir Joseph Banks who sailed around the world with Captain Cook and later influenced Australian politics. Go straight over a drive and walk NE for 200 metres, then bear L and walk NW. this is a spectacular viewpoint for a fine view over Ashover whose church with tower and spire stand out above the roofs of houses; note the gritstones standing upright to serve as a fence on the R of the path. Bear R in 100 metres, then go downhill for 100 metres to a slot in a wall on the L and walk N through a field, hedge on R, level going to a fence with slot in it, then continue to walk with a fence on R, the ground falling away to the R. pass more gritstone uprights, then come to a slot on the R with a piece of rail to remind one of the former light railway that ran here. Go straight down a steep bank to the River Amber which runs through a picturesque valley, cross the river and come into Ashover at 346630.

Bear L and walk NW towards Kelstedge. On reaching the A.632, go L then cross the road to a sign to Robriding, then walk W for about 700 metres, entering woodland and coming to a massive slab over a small stream. In a few metres, at 332640, go R into woodland, there is no stile or gate here, the first of several difficulties. Walk NW through a narrow wooden area close to fence on the L, stream down to the R. at the end of this section, near stream at a rusty gate, on the L is a wooden stile to then come out on a minor road (331643). Turn L and walk NW for 100 metres then go R at a junction: in 100 metres more difficulties present themselves.

The first is to find an entry on the L; the entry should be a little further down the road, should be at a curve in the road. Having entered the area stream on the L, go forward to cross the stream by two wooden planks near a pond and building. Keep the Smalley Brook close to the R and fight through undergrowth and barbed wire to a point at a particular curve in the stream to go up a bank into a field and walk NW in more pleasant conditions, fence on R, to the far hedge where there is a (no stile). get into the next field; it is a shorter walk to the far hedge which is a huge holly tree, go R through a gap, then sharp L and walk up along a lane and so into a long field, going uphill to the far wall where there is a poor stone step. Continue with wall on L to a sign and poor stile (322651) and so out on to a road at Uppertown. Thorntree Farm on the L, What a poor and neglected section.

Turn R and walk N past the community centre for 100 metres to a sign on the L. Walk NW uphill through a field to a wall above and a slot stile. No stile in the next field but go

through a gateway into a field which levels out and drops to a good stile in a corner; Bunting Field Farm on the R. keep near to the wall on the L and come to a gate with a stile on its L. This leads to a field with wall on the R; in front, a hedge with a gap and again a wall on the R, from this towards a gateway, no gate or stile and so across a field to a slot in a low wall, then turn R and make for Peasunhurst Farm. Go L at a sign, but in only a few metres or so, go L into a field and walk SW towards Wilkin House which occupies a prominent situation in front. Walk with hedge on the L down to a rusty gate and go past a small dam on the R then up to a farm which is passed on the L, walking in the same direction across the farm drive to a corner in the far hedge where, at the side of a holly tree there is a slot. The next slot stile has only one upright; it leads into a field with deep ditch and hedge on the L, and in front, a gate that leads out on to a road at 343651. Cross the road, enter a field and cut the L corner, making for a slot in the wall on the L. Go around the perimeter of this field, then come out at a gateway, on to a drive that leads down to Shooters Lea Farm. Go through a gate, skirt an electric fence, to take a old step stile, then go R to a wooden step stile and enter a wide lane, overgrown, which goes SW to a barbed wire barrier, then up a bank to a gate and so out on to a road at 313643. Turn L and walk SE along a road while admiring the splendid views over the Amber Valley to the N. In only 100 metres, turn R at a road junction and walk W for 100 metres, then go L at a gate, sign and good slot between gritstone uprights.

Walk SSW across a flat field to a poor stile, then continue in a straight line across the next field to a corner and another wooden stile and warning, this time of gas. Keep in the same direction and cross a field to the far wall where a slot between gritstones, wooden constructions on either side. From this point, cut the R corner and go through a gap in a wall to another wooden construction protecting another gritstone stile; then walk across a large field to a gate in the far wall, on the L is wooden stile. Keep to the wall on the L, and in 20 metres, go L with wall to walk SE close to the wall and woods on the L, then cut diagonally across a field to the far corner and a wooden stile. Turn L; go down a steep bank to a footbridge, then up a bank and walk SW to a slot in the end of a wall, Cookoostone House Farm away to the R; then continue uphill to a wooden slot on the L of a gate that leads to a farm drive. Walk S for about 650 metres to a point to go L at a gate, no stile, and walk SE down a field with wall and prominent line of trees on the R. pass, on the L, a ruined building and go between the houses via a poor stile and so out on to a road through a slot stile at 311614.

Cross the road and walk S down past the comprehensive school on the R: keep L at a fork and proceed down through Lumsdale which is another of those once lovely dales now lost forever. It must have been quite busy when the buildings, whose ruins now stand, near an industrial chimney, were once in operation. Continue down the road then up a very steep hill to the A.615 at 312598 to turn R, go 10 metres only then cross the road and go through a slot into a rough lane climbing again. Continue up the lane as far as it goes then keep climbing through a field up to a wall on top to turn R and walk SW with wall on L and walk S along a jitty, level going at last, wall on L and fence on R, to a slot, then in the same direction to another slot between metal posts, specially cast. Go along a narrow jitty to a slot and down a drive from a house to road in Riber at 309591, the castle standing on the R.

Walk SW along a road passing on the R, Riber Hall Farm, dated 1661, its semi circular steps encroaching onto the path from rusticated gate piers with ball finials in an interesting balustraded wall behind which stands a gabled house with an massive external chimney; it has transomed and mullioned windows. Proceed along the road for half a mile; do not fork L until the road suddenly descends. At this point (303587), go L through a wooden slot at a sign post, mount the bank to walk S level going along a high path, the land falling away to Matlock Bath on the R; superb views. The path drops SW down the bank via four good slots, a fifth dropping down to a road at 302579. Turn L and walk downhill on the road back to Cromford and the start. **checked.**