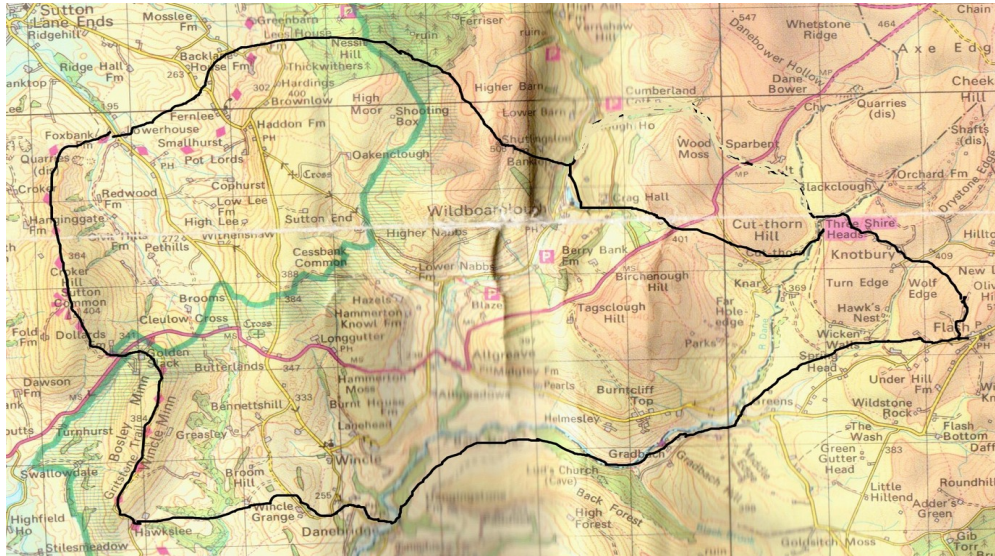


WALK 59.
Flash. 59.
21.4 miles.
Map White Peak.



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Start at Flash (025672). At 1525 feet, it is claimed to be the highest village in England, once the home of Pedlars trading in silk, mohair and buttons from Macclesfield. Walk W out of Flash, passing the old chapel dated 1784 and out into the wild country with long views over gritstone scenery, Shutlingsloe (1659 ft) Prominent to the NW. In just under a mile, at Spring Head (012668), go R off the road close to a well-built farm building, once inhabited, its pink gritstones neatly cut and built courses. There are some touches of taste in this building: quoins and dressings as well as a circular window high up in the gable. Drop steeply down to another building, this time dilapidated and with outside stone steps; then drop down close to wall on R to a stile at the bottom, a slot in wall but with wooden bars across. Go L for 10 metres, then cross the stream by means of substantial railway sleepers and commence a climb up NW through rough land to a wall on the L in 300 metres. Continuing would lead to Three Shires Head, but instead, go L through a wooden stile at 009671, then proceed towards Gradbach.

From the stile, go SW, passing a wooden stake in the field, then joining the angle of a wall and walking with the wall on the R to the first stile, stone steps over a wall in the corner, the stone on top being quite massive. Keep to the grit wall on the R, views to the Roaches ahead. The next stile is a slot against the wall. The next consists of poor stone steps over a wall in the corner. Go through a gateway and continue to a gate, then enter a small field. Go downhill, passing, on the R, a distasteful example of unsuitable building: an imitation black and white chalet. Come down to a sign at a low wall steps over then down into a field where to bear L, passing on the R an old stone building with neat dressings; it has outside stone steps. Go through a gate on the road near Manor Farm (002662).

Bear R and observe on the L the big buildings of Manor Farm, a new one being erected at this time. Walk but 50 metres or so, then go L through a broken wall into a flat field alongside the River Dane which flows on the R. Proceed to a slot stile, cross over a narrow footbridge, then go R along the road towards Gradbach. Soon pass the imposing stone piers of the old silk mill, once powered by a huge water wheel. It was rebuilt in 1785 after a fire and worked as a silk mill for 100 years. The waterwheel was scrapped in the 1950s, the end of a long life. There was a mill here in 1640 when it used to spin flax. Later, carpets were made in conjunction with a mill at Wildboarclough. Materials were made in conjunction with a mill at Wilboarclough. Materials were carried between the mills on packhorses. This explains the water troughs seen locally. The mill is now a Youth Hostel.

Do not go down to the Hostel, but continue uphill to the Peter Watson Scout Camp in about 400 metres. Go R down into the area in front of the Scout Building (994658), then L over a stile into a field to be faced with the sight of the wooded hillside of Forest Junction of Black Brook and the Dane 990658). Cross the footbridge near the lower footpath, going NW close to the river on the R, very pleasant walking through trees, some gentle climbing. Go R at a fork in 100 metres or so and continue on a path signed Danebridge.

Go over a wooden step stile on L of a gate and climb a little. the River Dane below negotiates a curve. Come to another wooden step stile, then go through a gap in a wall and walk with wall and fence on R, passing a cottage where the footpath once went. Fairly level walking now on short grass, the river now about 100 metres on the R. Go over a stile and soon join the former path: the deviation was due to path repairs. the path curves around to a gate and wooden stile; walk now to the SW and note how the Dane has cut sharply down to the gritstone to form a narrow valley. There are trees now; the scene is delightful, the path is wide and good. Pass now the River Dane Cottage whose stone has a pink tinge. The Dane approaches nearer on the R; pass old gritstone gateposts now no longer used. Over a wooden step stile and walk into some trees to leave by a wooden stile and walk on level ground alongside the Dane to another wooden stile, then enter a lane, getting a good view of the wide and high single arch dated 1869; note the bands of shale in the bank on the L and come to a road at Danebridge (965651).

Bear R and walk over Danebridge; pass a trout farm on the L and climb a hill passing old dwellings. The Ship Inn having mullioned windows, its doors and windows neatly dressed and all its pinkish stone tooled and coursed. The old inn retains some relics of the 1745 incursion of Bonny Prince Charlie. They include a flintlock of a Scottish Soldier and part of a newspaper he was carrying. The Inn sign once belonged to the "Nimrod" which took Shackleton and Sir Phillip Brocklehurst of Swythamley to the Antarctic. Much of the land nearby belonged to the Brocklehursts. It was sold in 1977, the roaches being purchased by the peak park Board for £185,000. On the hanging stone, there is a plaque to the brother of the last Brocklehurst of Swythamley Hall: he was Lt. Col. Brocklehurst who had been a game warden in the Sudan and who established a private Zoo on the Roaches. Descendants of deer and wallabies from that zoo at this time still roam these hills.

In 25 metres beyond the Ship Inn, there is a stile on the R leading to Allgreave, and one on the L: take that on the L; good stone steps to a holly bush and enter a field. Bear R and make for farm buildings via a good slot in a wall, then cross a farm drive to stone steps over a wall into a field, climbing with wall on L: the views S and E show deep cut valleys. In a corner above, there is a good stile to then enter steeply some trees, an interesting area, to a wall and stone steps into a field, still climbing gently to a wall on the R to a stile and onto a road (956653).

Bear L. Shutlingsloe is away N on the R. Go over a cattle grid and pass a pond, both marked on the map, then approach Wincle Grange, probably a genuine site of a monastic grange, an outlying farm run by the lay brothers for the Abbot of the Monastic Grange. Certainly the windows look interesting: cupped, flat headed four and three lights. Keep to the L of the farmhouse, a large building, and enter a field, walking a NWN down to a metal gate on the R is a step stile. Continue W through a field from which a hedge has been removed and come down to a fence on the R. Nettlebeds Farm away to the R. Come to a corner made by a fence which is marked on the map; there is here a wooden step stile to then go on short grass with striking views ahead and to the S. bear R and keep close to the hedge on the R and come to an old metal gate. Then go sharp L, to a stream, where, at this point (947653), it flows through a pronounced S bend. Cross here, no footbridge.

Continue W up a steep fern-lined bank to a wooden stile at the top from which turn and view your line of route hitherto and the tree lined valley going S. climbing now W up through this field, the land falling on the R to a treed valley. Go through a thin hedge, then bear L up to a gate in front, and enter a small area, hedge on R and trees on L and very muddy too. Go through a fence into a field near a farmers rubbish dump, a wooden farm building away to the R, and make for a caravan and stile in a fence then another in three feet, then bear R farm on R and walk through a field. Leave by a stile on the R of a gate; a sign states Barleyfield 2.7 km where the walk has come from and Croker Hill 3.8km ahead. This place is Hawslee (939653). it was originally worked by the Cistercian Monks of Wincle Grange.

Leave the farm on a good hard surface, walking now W, then N on the Gritstone Trail. Pass Hawkslee, notice a cottage roofed with the traditional stone tiles that neatly diminish in size as they near the ridge; the doorway has a Gibbs Surround and a hoodmould. The base of the cottage is painted black, sometimes the sign of a plinth. There is a circular window. Continue along the Trail and soon come to a farm gate with a wooden stile on its L and a Gritstone Trail sign. Climb up to a fine ridge views to the E and W. Dominating the view is the Post Office Tower, then proceed along a hard surface, easy walking, level going for much of the way, Macclesfield Forest to the N. eventually reach the A.54 at a cattle grid (941674) where a sign shows the way S to Barley Ford and N to Tegg's Nose.

Bear L and walk SW along the A.54 for about 400 metres then go R uphill at another sign to Tegg's Nose. Climb uphill on a hard surface, passing Dollard's Farm, to come then to the Post Office Telecommunications Mast on Sutton Common, 286 feet above Croker Hill's 1286 feet. It relays telephone calls and television signals to and from the NW. the views are immense. In 100 metres past the tower, cut off R, continuing to walk N, over marshy ground to a gate on the L is a wooden stile and a Trail Sign. Enter a field, level going with wall on L along a Packhorse trail down to a gateway with a stile on its L in a fence, still dropping through tufted grass for several hundred metres to a stile that leads to drier grass with a low wall on the R. In a few more hundred metres N come to a stile and another Trail sign, now dry going with wall on R, a fine view over Macclesfield Town. Continue on to next stile on the L of a gate and enter a lane with a wall on either side which leads down to a wooden step stile and a sign; go down the Hill of Rossencloves, wall on R in tandem with a line of trees, Shutlingsloe to the R, then come to a ladder stile then turn R to walk E back to gritstone country (932697).

Go E through a field double row of trees on the L, Fox Bank on the R. come to a wall on the L in which the stone is sandstone, sharper than gritstone. The house beyond the wall is Foxbank Farm, an old farmhouse dated 1691 but rebuilt in a plain C.17 stile. Walk close to the farm and to the R of it on a path above Rossendale Brook that leads down to the road via a stile at 939697. This is Lowerhouse. Bear R. On the L is a striking line of old cottages that look

attractive despite the fact that they are quite plain. A little further up on the R stands cottages that once were a dye works as there name suggests. On the L is residence which was once a chapel.

Just before the chapel, a sign directs to go L at a stile into a lane that overlooks the old chapel now much altered in the modern style. In several hundred metres, go somewhat to the L to the top of a bank, a field on the R and Rossendale Brook on the L. the path curves to the R through a pleasant wooded area, and enter a field, the stream on the L, level going, a farm to the L and a wooden stile in the far hedge which goes onto the farm drive. Go 10 metres to the L, then go R through a step stile (Trail Sign) into rough area, a tiny stream on the R, the farm away to the L. this is quite muddy; come to a stile near a Holly Tree and enter a field, going uphill to a hedge containing a short section of wall where there is good stone steps that lead to a well-worn drive, quite wide, hedge on L and still climbing. In front, a fridge of hills; the land falls away on the R to Rossendale Brook. In 500 metres, cut off L through a gap in the hedge to then walk uphill with stone wall on the R, farm buildings two fields away to the L, the path soon becomes a stony lane that goes to a road in 40 metres at 949698 near Fernlee Farm which dates from the C.17.

Go R 10 metres then L up good sole steps over a wall into a field, fence on L, walking E downhill, pleasant walking with good views ahead, Tegg's Nose prominent. Lose height gently to go through the fields and round the headland, crossing a small stream and coming to a stile in a fence, walk now at the top of a field to a gate, level going, fence on L which then comes to a building not unlike a cricket pavilion from its side: it contains hay. Here drop down to a gate with a slot on its R and come to farm with large outbuildings: Bollin Head Farm. Keep close to the farmhouse, again, a house with some history, and leave on a wide drive. In only 100 metres, where the drive goes off to the L and enter a narrow jitty, a building on the R, and leave by a stile into field, going N towards another stile, a wooden stile which drops one into a sunken lane. At this point, one leaves the interesting Gritstone Trail (952706).

Bear R and walk uphill past Lees House Farm on the L. Come to road junction: go L, level going, good views. Now enter Macclesfield Forest; the road turns sharp R at the bottom, walking E. Sign indicate that this is an area controlled by the NW Water Authority. In 400 metres, come to a road junction: bear R on to a wider road and go 400 metres to come to an amenities centre on the R. Just beyond this, on the R, a sign indicates a footpath to Wildboarclough via Shutlingsloe; go through a good stile in a fence, walking SSE uphill through pine woods beloved of water authorities everywhere. In about 1000 metres, go L walking E on more-or-less level ground where , in about 400 metres, come to a fence on the R to leave the woods by a wooden stile to be greeted by one of those marvellous metal signs erected by the peak District and Northern Counties F.P. Preservation Society. This one is No 143 and says: Public F.P. to Wildboarclough via Shutlingsloe Farm (971703).

Climb now SSE up through open moorland on a worn path that comes up to a fence, impressive views; but wait? Here is another of those metal signs erected by the society with the long name. This is NO 142. Walk S uphill wall on R to a ladder stile, then struggle up to the last bit to the top and a trig. Point at 976696. This is Shutlingsloe (1659feet). One of the mountain type hills in the area. The views are immense: must be one of the finest around.

Descend now to the SE see Crag Hall in a fine position, the property of Lord Derby. Drop down to a hard drive, passing another metal sign, Number 83, (1935), then down to a road at 982686. Bear L and walk N for 100 metres, then go R over a bridge over Clough Brook, walking E uphill to pass, on the L, the famous sub post Office which is housed in a disused textile mill, a building of stile, and the largest sub-post office in England. Continue uphill passing Crag Hall; in 300 metres beyond it, where the road curves to the R, leave the road, going straight ahead into a lane and here is yet another metal sign: number 132 to three shires head. Enter the open moorland and climb ESE up through rough grass to a large stone over a brook and then to a wall with a slot in it, a rare feature hitherto, and so on to a road at 996685.

Cross the road to a stile; a sign indicates Turn Edge; then walk SE over very rough ground, where every step is laborious over tufted grass, reeds and bog. Go through a gap in a high wall to enter a field to then walk SE to a farm building and gain a road by a stile (002681). Turn R but do not follow the lane. Instead, go L on to a hard track, level going along the hillside with good views S. this comes to Three Shires Head (009685).

Leave this historic spot where generations of Packhorsemen have met and crossed paths. Go over the bridge and go straight ahead to a gate. Then enter a lane and walk ENE. A stream on the R which is eventually crossed and go through a gate to proceed SSE uphill along a lane until it turns sharp L then sharp R at the top on to a tarmac lane, walking SE through Knotbury. The lane curves to the R and comes down to a junction at 018681. Go L for 30 metres, then R over a large stone over a stream, and then climb up steeply, wall on L. In 80 metres go L through the wall by stone steps then continue uphill SE, fence on R, to a slot stile, then a wooden stile and enter Wolf Edge. Go down an obvious lane; at the bottom go R and walk S, wall on R. this is Oliver Hill. Go through a few bars and enter a lane. In 100 metres, go L into a field and then over stone step in the next then 50 metres to more stone steps. Pass a building and enter a lane, and so to the start.

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