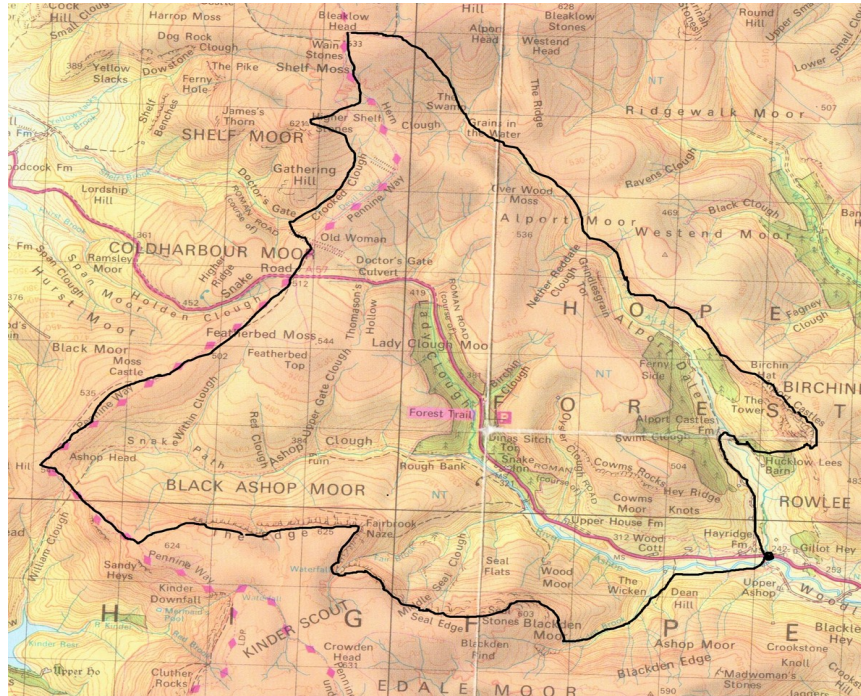


WALK 92.
BLEAKLOW and KINDER 92.
24.3 miles. 6 hours 54 minutes.
Map Dark Peak.



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Start at Alport Bridge (very little parking). S through a gateway and over The River Ashop on a bridge or a ford, angle R to get to a gate with a stile on its L, then continue to a sign open country, bear R here on a farm drive that comes to Upper Ashop Farm.

Do not enter the farm drive, but go L up a grassy bank and follow the wall around the farm. Then walk W on the contour for a considerable distance; the valley of the Ashop on the R; the path leads in and out of several small Cloughs to arrive at a corner (131892) where there is a footpath going to the A.57. In front is our destination Blackden Barn. Turn L and walk SE uphill close to wall on the R to enter Blackden Clough then drop down to stream level.

Blackden Clough, for the whole of its route, has something to catch the eye: the noisy stream sliding over stone slabs in small rills; striking outcrops of gritstone in the hillside. Always the steep sides of the Clough which close in giving an exhilarating scrambles ascending giving a feeling of escape as the Plateau is ascended. It is a Clough that is more interesting to ascend than descend.

Bear R and walk N then W along Seal Edge with views over the Ashop. Pass around Fairbrook Naze and continue to stride on a good path to a point at 067899 where the Pennine Way is reached. Drop down steeply NW and cross the Snake Path on its way down William Clough, then ascend to the sign post on Mill Hill. From now head down to the A.57. The route is a simple matter of following a worn path between stakes, going NE through peat whose consistency depends upon the weather. Eventually the road is reached; a N.T. sign states that this is Ashop Moor; another gives altitude at 1600 feet.

Cross the busy road and make for a ladder stile, then walk along the Pennine Way whose surface has been improved. In several hundred metres, go L at the Old Woman NW down Doctors

Gate. But leave this after several hundred metres to go R along the contour around Gathering Hill on a high path in White Clough (084940). Surprisingly soon come to the Clough Head. Cross over the small stream and climb upwards to Higher Shelf Stones with its Trig. Point at 089948, from which it is a short walk to Lower Shelf Stones; from here the view is superb...

Walk along the peaty grough E to the Pennine Way, passing the remains of a crashed plane, only the engines remain now: the plane was a Super Fortress that crashed just after the war; all the crew died; it is a shame that the remains can-not be left as a grave. Many years ago the tail and fuselage reared out of the peat it was an awesome sight in mist. Then bear L and walk N on the Pennine Way, passing Hern Stones and Wain Stones and on to Bleaklow Head 9092960). Go E now following stakes which help to give some direction in this predominately peaty scene. The effect in mist is eerie: mounds, far too many to count, rise one after another in their hundreds, their bases shrouded in mist. Come to, in less than half a mile, to what might be described as a lunar landscape, an area of small gritstones in white sand, an unusual feature in the boggy peat.

The object now is to leave the path and cut down S on a feint path. Pass Fork Stones on rough ground then NE along the contour, eventually reaching a good path that comes down from Bleaklow Stones. This path goes over the Ridge (112955) and into Alport Head and Dale. Walk SSE along the ridge until it drops down to a pass or col which allows access from Alport Dale to the Westend. Look out for a path that connects Alport Dale and Westend, then bear R and walk SE along it (magnificent view of Alport Dale). From this high point, bear L and walk SE on high ground.

In the early stages, see the characteristic shapes of interlocking spurs, deeply cut; they block the view ahead. The waterfalls now appear in the valley, then walk in and out of Miry Clough. Carry on then see a plantation and beyond it a glimpse of the flat valley base where the river meanders, it's cutting days now over.

Soon, this magnificent dale widens out to display a new character, in front the Castles stand up, their rugged shapes demanding attention. At 145911, drop down a steep bank to a sign open country (which is being left) and a gap in a wall through which pass and drop down, wall on R, to a ladder stile, then proceed downhill on a worn path, the Castles towering up on the R. come to a metal sign erected by the P.N. and N.C. footpath society number 107 erected in 1948.

Cross the river by a memorial footbridge and, rounding the corner to another metal sign number 108 erected in 1948. Go a few metres to a gate and pass through the Alport Farm buildings; one of which is a camping barn, and continue S along a farm drive, then going L to a double step stile, then a ladder stile and finally a slot stile where there is yet another metal stile, number 106 erected in 1948 thus on to the start.