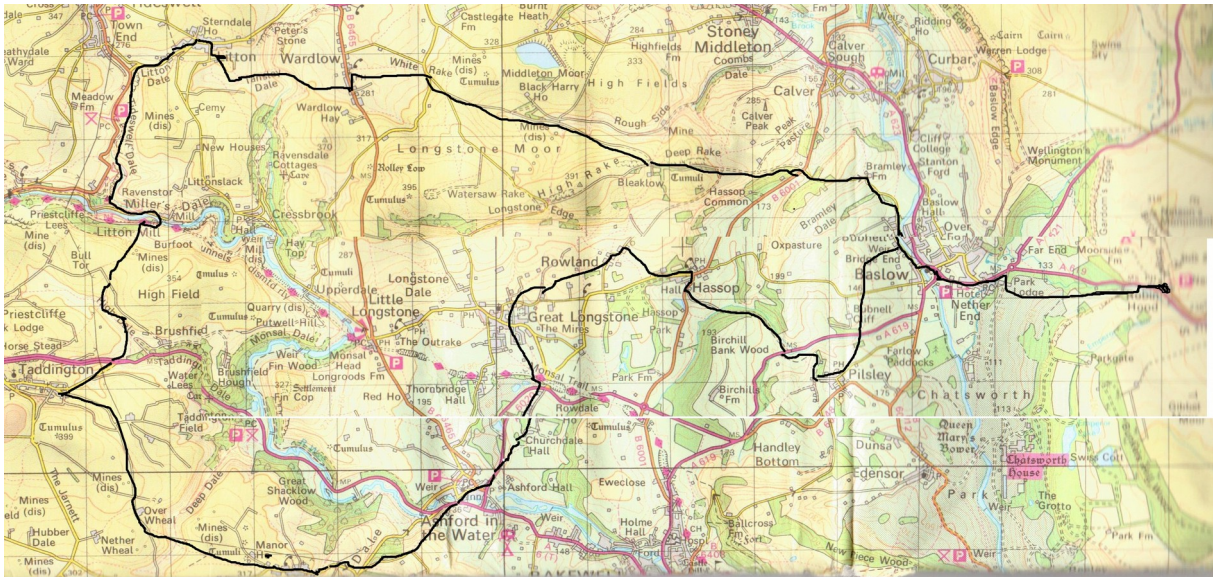


WALK 108.
ROBIN HOOD BASLOW 108.
27.6 miles. 7 hours 35 minutes.
Map White Peak.



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Start at Robin Hood Baslow (280721). Walk downhill W on A.619 for about a hundred metres, then go L over a wooden stile at a sign then drop down to stream on difficult steep steps, cross the stream by a footbridge then angle L to a wide track and gate, through the stile at the side of the gate, walking still downhill past climbing rocks on the L the over two high stiles at the side of two gates then enter Chatsworth Park.

Carry on downhill through the park on a grassy track through a fence with a stile at the L of a gate, then angle L over a park road to go by the side of a wall to leave the park by a swing gate (258718). Walk on the track to Baslow, then turn L on the A.619 past a traffic island, then the church on the L to come to a road on the L. turn L and walk over the old bridge note the pill boxes at the end of the bridge (made for the smaller people). Once over the bridge go straight across the road to a slot stile in a wall and enter a field. Follow a wall on the R to a gate where one is hard put to call the steps a stile; go forward on a worn path through the next field to a gate with a stile, level going; wall on the R to a prominent tree that indicates a stile with fine steps in a wall

Bear L and make for the next gate; this one has a slot on its side, come to a minor road at 244721. Bear R and walk 30 metres, then go L into a field through a slot, then walk S, wall on L, to a wall with a quaint stile of gritstones in strange positions; some walls have been removed here. Drop steeply down to woods where a wooden slot and stile leads out on to a road at 243716.

Cross the road, then Rymas Brook, then a wooden stile and face a steep bank to go to the R corner where there is a stile; on the L is a wall around a copse. Go L, walking S close to wall on L up to a step in a wall in front and out on to a road at 243712. Bear R through Pilsley, a Chatsworth estate village with C.18 and C.19 cottages and a school of 1849 by Paxton himself; the pub could not be other named but the Devonshire Arms.

Do not go L here, but walk forward W through village until the road becomes a muddy lane, at the far end bear R down a lane to a gate. This route from Pilsley was taken in the C.17 by Thomas Hobbes, the famous Philosopher, who was tutor to Lord Hardwick, later the second Earl of Devonshire. He was collecting material for his “Wonders of the Peak”. He went down the lane that

was called Thirteen Bends. Go L through a slot at a gate and drop steeply down a field, going through a broken wall to a stile in a wall. Bear L and follow Hobbes Route to the road he never knew at 234713.

Bear R, in 40 metres, go L off the road to a gate with a stile on the L, then walk on a farm drive, following Hobbes Route to Hassop. Go through a gate and walk with Toost Bank Wood on the R, soon enter a wood and a sign to Hassop then drop down to Rymas Brook. Walk through fields to a swing gate, then through a lane to a gate and so out on to the road at 223721.

The tiny village of Hassop was for centuries the home of the Eyres of Padley, a great Derbyshire family once owning 20 manors and 20,000 acres. They built the hall; they fought for the King in the Civil War and they paid for it. The Hall was a C.16 building but was re-built in 1827-33 with seven bays and three storeys. There are spectacular stables and coach-house.

The Eyres also built the Roman Catholic Church in 1816-18. It is designed in the strictest style of Classical Revival, having an Etruscan Temple front, Grecian Windows and Tuscan Pilasters. There is a coved and coffered ceiling inside.

Nearby, pass on the roadside, Dowager House, a big C.17 house with three gables. Proceed uphill to a point at 212722 to go off R through a slot in the wall, then a wooden slot in a fence to be greeted with signs stating the landowner welcomes caring walkers. Walk N to a single tree, then L diagonally to a wall with stile; then walk through a field with wall on L to a stile, then bear L to a gate, then R to a road at 213724 in Rowland.

Bear L, go 30 metres, then R through a stile into a narrow jitty to a stile in 20 metres, then walk W through field, level going to the next stile: Longstone Edge looms up. Continue towards a farm building in front on the L is a stile, to then go forward through a broken wall down to a gateway with a slot on its L. from this point, go L across a field to a high wall with a stile, then down to a wall which has a slot in it, and so out on to a lane at 205721.

Bear L and go down the road, then bear R and walk to a Chicken Factory where on the far side of the main entrance, a sign to the diverted footpath shows the way with a stile into the grounds of this busy premises, walking down a narrow jitty and so out on the road. Go 20 metres to the R then go L into an estate to a wall where to go L down a jitty then R through a slot and into a field at 203715. Go 40 metres to a wall where two massive uprights form a stile to go 200 metres to the far corner where to go through a slot and walk through parkland down to a stile in a wall just below the trail. Bear L and walk with trail above on the R to a stile and out on to the road at 206710.

Go R under the railway bridge to a road junction. On the R, massive gates now neglected show a former entrance to Thornbridge Hall, an impressive house rebuilt in 1876-1945, containing work by Burne-Jones and William Morris as well as Samuel Watson's Chatsworth Buffet Fountain and various items from other stately homes.

Go straight ahead up a road, that is, nevertheless, only a footpath and so marked. Pass Churchdale Farm on the R to walk through this well-kept parkland with estate fences down to the entrance of Churchdale Hall to go L down a farm drive via a ladder stile. In only 60 metres or so, go R through a gate, no stile, at a sign into a field and walk SSW to get a fine view of the hall standing behind its ha-ha fence. Churchdale Hall was built for the Duke of Devonshire early in the C.19 and used by his agent. A charming Tudor-Gothic house in Ashlar, it has mullioned windows with hood moulds, the roofline having varying heights with ornate chimneys.

Proceed to a slot in a wall with a ladder stile inside it, now walk towards Ashford, and see the ridge behind it cut by Kirk Dale. Take another ladder stile then drop through a field to a fence with wooden steps to then descend a bank to a small gate then climb up to a road and a slot between two stones which are elaborately tooled (199701).

Bear L and walk on the A.6020 for several hundred metres to stile on the R. proceed through this historic village of Saxon origin, passing the church which was rebuilt in 1868 leaving little untouched. Cross the River Derwent by the Sheepwash Bridge; one of the other two bridges is dated 1664. Cross the A.6, then go up to a farm gate and begin the steep climb SW up the hillside. The increasing height gives splendid views, keep to the wall on the L and come to a gate and sign at the road at 188690.

Bear R and walk SW passing Arrock Wood on the R through which a road climbs in the deep if tiny valley. Drop down to a road junction: go straight across the road to a slot in the wall, then climb steeply up a short bank to a slot between limestone uprights in a wall, then emerge at a road at 181687. Bear R then walk through the village of Sheldon. Its village hall called the Hartington Memorial Hall was named after William John Cavendish who was killed late in 1944.

Walk W through this tiny group of houses, follow the road around to the L, then take, on the R, steps in a wall at a sign, then walk W through the field. Look back at the Magpie Mine, one of the completest lead mines to survive in Derbyshire, with the remains of a Cornish engine house, chimneys, an ore-crushing circle with a large stone-lined drain.

The next stile is a slot in a wall backed by a wooden guard, then make for stone steps in a wall. Keep near to the wall on the R (which has an angle in it here), then avoid taking a stile in the wall; instead, keep to the wall on the R and go through a gate; this is a fork of footpaths. Keeping to the wall on the R, go through a series of fields, passing through three gates, then descending steeply into the head of Deep Dale.

Cross the dale, having lost height, gain it again by climbing NW steeply up the valley side to a broken wall, then a field to go NW to the R corner where there is no stile. Out on to a lane here at 157693; bear R, walk N past Over Wheel Farm with views down Deep Dale to a massive spur, with Monsal Head beyond it. On the L are mounds and depressions from former workings.

In about half a mile beyond the farm, go L up a lane at 154705, then bear R at a fork in a few hundred metres and continue down to Taddington. Do not enter the village, but bear R, going NE down to the A.6 which is crossed at 154713. Go up to a farm gate where stands a post and sign, then continue up a green lane; go over a broken wall into a field, then walk N across a field and drop into High Dale to take a path at the side of a fence and wall, walking NW through the dale to a pedestrian gate.

Continue to follow the wall when it eventually bear R, going uphill to arrive at a wall with stile to get into a lane at 153722. Go L, then, in only 100 metres, go R over a stile, wall on R, to a distant wall where steps have been cemented. From this point, walk through mounds and depressions from former workings, curving round to the L to get a good view over dales

Go over a slot on the R, and then drop precipitately down to the bridge over the trail; then over the river and so into Litton Mill at 158730. Bear L to walk along the road for a short distance of a few hundred metres to a sign indicating Tideswell Dale; go R here off the road and walk on a pleasant path through trees, the sides of the dale revealing limestone outcrop, adding strong character to a scene especially when trees grow out of the rock face itself. Continue up the dale to the car park and road at 154743.

Walk N on the road and in a few hundred metres at 159749 turn R and walk to Litton. Go R at a slot stile, then climb up steeply through a field to the top where a step has been cemented in a wall; there are two footpath signs here. Cross the road at a stile, then follow an arrow showing to go through a gap in a wall to cross another field to a stile in the wall on the R. Litton can be seen but not on the route. Follow the wall on the L to a wall in front where there is a stile. In the next field there is a concrete step in wall then into the next field with wall still on the Land so out on to the road at 163749.

Walk E for a few hundred metres to where the road curves to the L; leave the road here by going straight up a lane. On the L, the land rises up from Litton; the impressive outcrop near Peter's Stone dominates the view. In a few hundred metres, go R at a sign and a stile, then walk S through field, following wall on the L as at goes round the corner to a stile in a wall. A sign here states: Nature Reserve.

Drop steeply down a bank with steps, then walk E down the short Tansley Dale: This dale in season is full of Orchids. Walk E down the Dale. Ahead the huge bulk of hillside crowned with limestone outcrops; descend to a step stile a broken wall and another slot, then walk down Cressbrook Dale, soon to begin the climb up the steep bank on a worn path, admire the view down the wooded dale. At the top, make for a sign, then take the stile in the wall.

Walk E through a grassy lane between walls, comfortable walking at the foot of Wardlow Hay Cop (1200 feet), and the view is to the R. continue to the road at 182745, go and walk through Wardlow where prehistoric routes and packhorses went. This small quiet village has known its moments of terror when gruesome murders were committed and the murders hanged locally on a gibbet and it is stated locally left for the crows. Just beyond the church, go R at a sign and slot, then walk E over mounds and depressions from former workings, going through a slot and head for a road at 190748.

Bear R and walk along the road to a junction in 30 metres, then go L along a road which passes White Rake, walking SE. in several hundred metres, go L on an industrial road to see a lagoon ahead (not on map). Go down towards the lagoon, then, where the road curves to the L find a stile in the fence on the R. From this, walk SE across a field, fence on L and the lagoon on the L of that.

The way is now blocked by a wall which is surmounted by steps, then continue to a broken wall and post to indicate the way forward. Soon, after a gentle climb, come to a gate with a crude stile at its side. Go over this into an open area: this is Bleaklow Hollow; to the L, lie Brandy Bottle Mine and Black Harry House, the home of one of the notorious murderers. Go forward; to the R, a footpath goes up S to the end of High Rake; on the L, the dam holds back the turbid waters of the muddy lagoon. Nearby a post indicates the way, and make for a bridle path.

Go downhill to the L and arrive at a gate; on its R is a metal walkers gate, an unusual convenience. Go forward a few metres to a footpath sign and a gate at 207741. Go through the gate and walk ESE on a wide bridle path, on short grass. Go through one gate, then, soon after a second, then take the wide industrial road alongside Deep Rake (218736). Bleaklow Farm is on the R; on the L a path goes down to Coombs Dale.

Walk E along the rough road; all around, evidence of mining is seen; some of it is still going on. At 236736, cross the main road and walk upward on a better road, soon to drop steeply past Bramley Farm to level ground near the river, passing Bubnell Hall, a fine C.17 house. It was built on the site of a former house that belonged to the Basset family who were known for their devotion to the cause of liberty and justice. Consider that one of the family put his name to the Magna Carta.

Go over the old bridge in Baslow, note the small pill boxes, go R past the church then over the traffic island, then, at 256722, go R off the busy road, down stone steps and on a narrow jitty, over a bridge, then up to a metal gate to turn R and get to a high metal gate that leads into Chatsworth Park. Through this bear L and walk uphill cross a park road and head for a stile at the R side of a gate in a fence. Then go uphill on a wide track to a farm gate with a high stile on its L in the wall. Then on a farm track to another gate with similar stile. Carry on uphill past the climbing rocks on the R, then over a stile on the L of a gate, then angle L to go down to a footbridge over a stream. Then up the steep hillside with steps to help to get to the road. Then turn R to get back to the start.