

WALK 110.
ROBIN HOOD BASLOW. 110.
24-2 miles. 6 hours 45 minutes.
Map White Peak.



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Start at the Robin Hood (281720). Walk down the hill on the A.619 for about a hundred metres, then go L at a stile and go down a steep path with steps to a footbridge over a stream. Walk up on the track to a good wide track to a gate with a stile on its R. Do not go through but angle L just before the gate to go on a path which goes over the top of Climbing Rocks. Care is needed on a difficult step in the middle. Drop down to a wall then angle L through rough are to take a stile on the L to get to fields. Take a stile in a high wall then walk with wall on the L to a plantation, go over a wall then go L, then go R on a wide road into the Chatsworth Estate.

Come to a Tower that is the Elizabethan Hunting Tower and just before, turn L on a park road and walk past two reservoirs that feed the Fountain near Chatsworth House. Follow the road past the reservoirs then turn R past a farm on the L then look L for a gate down a lane off the park road that can be seen 100 metres through trees at (270691).

Walk up a bank for about 100 metres then look for a good track that angles R down through the heather and ferns to head for a farm that can be seen. Go through a wall with a gate and stile to walk through a field to a sign and stile to enter a lane. Walk R for a few metres. The farm now at is Beeley Hilltop Farm.

This was an important C.17 house with moulded string courses and mullioned windows. It seems to have been built by James Greave C.1600 and was originally called The Greaves, an old name, the family having been settled here under the Beeleys since the C.12. It was sold in 1687 to the Saviles. There are memorials to them in the Parish Church, and a stone in the Baptistry to John, the last of the Greaves. With these two families, the story of the village was linked for five and a half centuries. Go L off the lane through the farm yard then angle R to walk with the house on the R to a gate to enter a field, walk S with wall on the L through an open gateway. Drop down in the next field to angle L to a stile, go L to the next stile then drop down to hedge and stream at the bottom of the Hill, then go R to a stile in the corner to walk at the side of houses and out on to a road and enter Beeley.

Pass St Ann's Church on the R, over restored in 1882 but still retaining its Norman doorway. Just past the church turn L and walk downhill. The old hall is C.17 there are interesting features inside. Adjacent houses are dated 1791. Presumably, the ancient home of the Beeleys stood here; it passed to the Cheneys, then to the Vaux family who sold it in 1560 to Edwood Deane.

Walk through the Chatsworth Ducal Housing most of which is by Paxton (1838-41) to turn R to walk down to a stream. Cross a neat stone bridge to cross a field uphill then another on the level to a stile in a hedge. Cross a road to a door, then walk across a field to a gate, no stile, continue to a gate and stile. Go L for 10 metres, barn on the R to a slot stile under a holly tree. Go forward to a small slot in a hedge, farm on the R, passing a gate on the L through a slot in a hedge to the next field to come to a wall on the L, with a step stile. Over the stile and walk in the same direction as before, through a broken wall which still holds its stile; not now needed.

Rowsley Wood on the L, Lindop Wood on the R. pass a ruined building on the R, then a stile in front to then cross a narrow lane. Walk through the next field with a hedge on the R, to a wall in front. Head for woods in front to go over a stile, into the woods. Turn R and walk down to the road and stile at 262669.

Bear L and walk up the road, just past a house turn R at a sign and go down a bank to drop to the River side and walk through a dismal area of trees reeds and bushes to an allotment with a few vacancies to get to a jitty to walk through the retail park car part to the Grouse and Claret Inn and so out onto the road at 257659.

Bear R. Go over Rowsley Bridge which has been widened twice since the days of the packhorses (first in 1682). Pass on the R a famous old Inn, the Peacock, a Jacobean building of 1652 with symmetrical gables, mullioned and transomed windows. The door has a semi-circular pediment. Peep inside the door and see a ceramic peacock, one of five made by Minton of Stoke in 1850. This one went down with the ship Loch Ard in 1878 fourteen miles off the Australian coast; it was brought up in salvage operations and found its way back to England.

Turn R at the Inn and walk uphill to the Church. Then go L at a footpath sign and walk through houses through a garden and enter fields. Walk W through a field to a stile in the wall then a stile in a hedge and another to then angle L to a stile and a road.

Bear R for a few metres then R up a lane passing Aaron Hole Plantation on the R to come to a fork where the lane levels out. Bear R and walk to a junction of three tracks: R to Rowsley, L to Bakewell; but go straight on through the woods to go uphill to meet a track in front. Go L here and walk along a track through the Lady Manners Wood for about a mile. Where the track curves around to the R near the end near Ball Cross Fort, go L downhill, passing the Golf Club House and come out on to the road at 223690.

Go over the old railway bridge and turn R to go at the side of the station to enter the Trail. Note the fine work on the station building, the sandstone ashlar, the crisp carving of the small decorations and shield. It was the insistence of the duke of Rutland that the railway ran out of sight, through a tunnel at the back of his home Haddon Hall; the tunnel is now blocked off in this section. Turn R at the station and walk a few hundred metres, just before a bridge go L up a bank to a stile then go R over the bridge then walk down a lane to a road at 223686.

Take the most pleasing route to Bakewell Bridge; it is possible to walk at the side of the building that holds the cattle market. (My opinion it is the biggest monstrosity in the Peak District; it goes not fit with the gritstone and limestone buildings). Come to the road bridge over the River Derwent, with its cut outs for pedestrians to cross. Look for a metal gate at the E side of the bridge and walk alongside the river to a gate in a wall near Holme Hall. Now get a good view of the hall, built in 1626 with three bays and a square central projection with porch also with battlements: there seems to be no doubt that the design was inspired by nearby Haddon Hall. To the N there is an even older wing with a blocked C.14 or C.15 doorway. It is not surprising to learn that, in 1658, the property came into possession of the Eyres of Highlow.

Walk forward to the Holme Bridge opposite the Hall, a packhorse bridge with five segmented arches, two smaller arches, cut waters and recesses. Go R here up a lane alongside the hall, passing a stone works and climbing up to a gate, no stile, then continue up through a field to

arrive at a gate with a stile. A lane goes straight ahead; but go L through a gateway and walk through a field with wall on the L.

Walk NW through the field to the far wall to go through a stile. Carry on to pass Cracknowl House on the L; an isolated place. In the wall ahead, take two good steps, then enter Cracnowl Woods. The good path drops through pleasant woodland to a small gate, then goes across a field that resembles a small dale and wonder its origin. Go ahead to a sign, a wall with steps and a road at 208707. Bear L and walk past impressive wrought iron gates of Thornbridge Hall, then under the Railway Bridge; bear R and get on to the trail.

Bear L and walk WNW as far as possible. On the way, pass the former railway station at Thornbridge hall. Climb the steps to look at woodlands, a small house built in 1903 as the railway entrance for the Hall; originally one of the large recreation room over the archway. Thornbridge hall is a Georgian house altered in 1871 and 1897 with a very impressive neo-Tudor exterior; it is castellated with a tower. It had been owned by the Moorwoods who owned Alfreton Hall.

At a sign indicating the end of the trail, go R off the trail to walk several metres alongside the trail to a stile. Walk towards Great Longstone through a field. Go through a broken wall and continue to a wall with steps. Now level going with wall on the L and walk towards Little Longstone, a large house with a white bay facing. On the R are two gates each with a stile and a road.

Instead of going L into Little Longstone turn R and walk towards Great Longstone. Pass a post sticking up and go forward to a stile with two wooden steps leading into a narrow jitty trees either side. Go to a stile in 10 metres and walk diagonally through a field. Take a half slot in a wall and enter a lane to cross to a gate with slot on the L. cut the L corner in the next field, and, in 20 metres to a slot in a wall then walk through another level field with striking views. Go through a slot in a wall then come out on to a road at 199716.

Turn L and walk into Great Longstone, and get a view of the hall. It was built in 1747 of brick, an unusual phenomenon; it stands out among the stone cottages. The house was built by Thomas Wright whose ancestors had held the larger part of the village since C.14. Records show that a house stood on the site in 1300.

Pass the late mediaeval cross; go through the churchyard past St Giles Parish Church wherein lies the brass to Robert Eyre and his wife (1624), and come out to a back lane. Go forward a short distance then go L up a lane (201720) for a few metres, then R through a slot between gritstone uprights in a wall and enter a lane. Bear R, go to a stile in front and walk across a field to a slot in a wall, then climb up through a field on short grass, wall on L now walking towards Rowland.

Come to a wall, go through a slot and enter a lane, where stands a sign. Go straight across to a wall with a slot; walk now through a wide field to a high wall with a wide slot. Go to two gates: the slot is in the middle to go into a field with a wall on the R, and a farm building ahead with a slot in a wall on its R. again it is level going to a wall; go through a slot in it to a slot in a fence close by, go past a sign that states that landowners welcome caring walkers; go along a jitty out on to a road in Rowland (213723).

Go L 50 metres, then bear R down a short lane to a gate on the L with a slot on its L. cut the R corner and go 20 metres to a slot in a limestone wall on the R. go over wooden crossbars in a fence and walk E across a field, wall on the R to a slot in a wall in front, then go diagonally across a field towards the road, coming to a fence and slot, then a slot in a low wall and the road at 217722.

Bear L and walk downhill to the Catholic Church built just outside the gates of Hassop Hall which for centuries the home of the Eyres, a great Derbyshire family whose fortunes have waxed and waned through the years, once owning 20 manors and 20,000 acres in the county. They bought the house from the Foljambes in 1498. During the Civil War, they fortified the house for the King and fought the Parliamentarians at the very gates. In 1827, the house was eventually rebuilt. The church was built by the Eyres in 1816-18 in the Classical revival style with a correct Etruscan temple front, Grecian side windows and Tuscan pilasters.

Go E out of the hamlet, take the R turn at a fork in a few metres, signed Baslow and walk along the road, dropping steeply into a valley. The road climbs steeply up the bankside, passing on the L, a large house. The road levels out; there are two gates on the L and a narrow slot (232723). Enter a field and walk with trees and wall on the L up to the L corner to go over a stile. Now walk N along a track that is high above the valley, wall on R trees on the L. go over a wooden step stiles, three in number to approach the road to go over a stile on the R, then through a few trees to the road at 238734.

Go L to a footpath sign, then R through a gate to a narrow path through Bramley Wood for nearly half a mile walking on high level; with views either side. Struggle through rhododendron to a bar stile and come to another sign to then descend a very steep bank. When level head for a wooden stile, then forward to a house which allows to walk around a garden, then through some buildings and out onto the road at Caver.

Go R downhill past the Methodist Chapel then go R at a sign at 243745 to walk close to the house on the L then enter a field. Take a stile and proceed through the next, go over another stile then cross a lane and walk through a field to a stile in the corner of a field. Then head towards the riverside to head to Baslow. Head R for a road at 247732.

Walk towards Baslow passing Bubnell Hall, a C.17 house of three stories. It was also held by the family of the Eyres who came from Brookfield Manor in Hathersage. Previously, the Bassets lived here a family steeped in history. Walk into Baslow, the past the church and a road island, go R down stone steps at 256721. Enter Chatsworth Park via several swing gates. Then turn R and go through a high gate. Turn L and walk first with wall on L then angle uphill to a gate in a fence. Head uphill on a grassy track to a gate with a high stile in the wall on its L. then up a track to another gate and stile. Then walk past the climbing rocks on the R to get to another gate with stile on its L. then after a few metres angle L down to a bridge over a stream, then climb up a bank with steps to go over a stile, then turn L and walk back to the start.