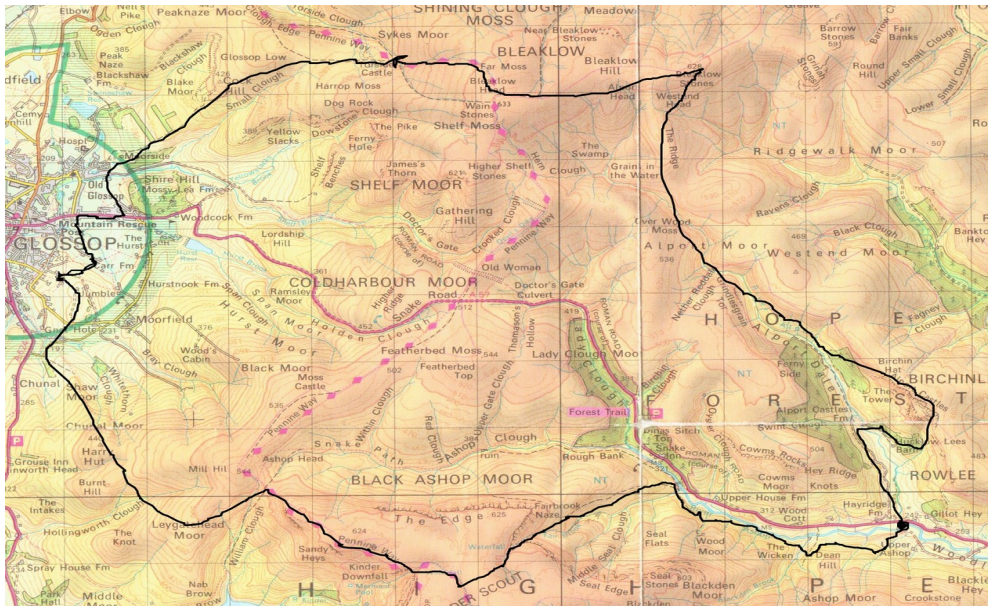


WALK 137.
ALPORT BRIDGE 137.
29-6 Miles. 8 hours 27.
Map Dark Peak.



“Reproduced by kind permission of Ordnance Survey”
Crown Copyright NC/02/30874.

Start at Alport Bridge (142895). Cross the river by a bridge or ford, then walk up a drive to a gate with a ladder stile on its L. Cut up to the farm above, then bear R and walk towards Upper Ashop Farm. Go L around the farm, keeping outside the garden wall, then climb up alongside the little stream. Follow the boundary wall close to the R, so then begin to contour the hillside, going W.

Go in and out of two Cloughs, the view on the other side of the valley familiar to the seasoned walker: the grand entrance to the peaks finest dale, and the river below cutting its way down through its own flat bed.

Arrive at a ladder stile at 131893 and get a view of Blackden Barn. Bear L and climb the hillside, wall on the R. when the wall eventually cuts down to Blackden Brook, follow it past a sign, then cross the brook; do not go up this fine Clough with its scramble near the summit. But bear R and contour around the hillside, wall on R, pass the Wicken, then Dunge Clough, then Gate Side Clough with Seal Flats Above.

Drop to a sheepfold, then to a pleasant spot where streams join forces; a tiny flat area in the midst of steep hills. Now commence the walk into Fairbrook Clough. At first there is room for the path which is level and easy going. A Clough like this always gives the walker pleasure; the delightful little rills in the gurgling stream; the few pathetic trees that survive and a gritstone outcrop that strengthens the hillside.

The path is easy for most of the way, and there is a welcome waterfall; as in most Cloughs in this area: in the higher reaches the area is strewn with massive boulders. From the top of the Clough, strike out on a bearing of 240 degrees on a short route to the bed of the River Kinder. Then angle R on the river bed to reach the Kinder Downfall (083889). The views from this celebrated point are known to most walkers: when in flood the waterfall can be seen from Stockport. Take the edge path and walk NE to descend the steep slope to pass the path to the Snake Path at a sign post. Carry on to Mill Hill (061904).

Then take a feint but worn path about b320 degrees that goes to Burnt Hill. About a quarter of a mile before Burnt Hill, a path leaves the track on the R and goes over moorland (3300 degrees) making for a Trig Point at 044907. From this point the view N to Glossop. The path is now hard wide and clear as it drops down the hillside (Worm Stones on the map). The views are now softened by the outline of green fields and hedges, with farm buildings to be seen.

A ladder stile over the wall, the path is now a concessionary path, on the L is Shaw Plantation; come down to a sign to open country, a ladder stile and a minor road at 037921.

Bear L but only go 10 metres, then go R at a footpath sign into woods, then come down to a road: cross it and go R for 20 metres to a poor stile, then turn L and walk 30 metres to a concrete footbridge. Then climb a steep bank to a wooden gate at the top, and then go forward along a lane, a black gritstone wall on either side, a view on the L across the valley just descended.

Pass a few houses; the road begins to drop a little, and come to a sign on the R through a slot in the wall (037930). Climb a bank into a field and walk diagonally to the far corner where good steps lead to the stile. Now walk on a narrow jitty between fences to a corner and stile. Continue along this narrow path through a field to come to a slot into a grassy lane, and then proceed past several houses.

Come to a fork where the lane curves to the L but go straight on along a grassy lane between grit walls. In about 30 metres, there is a gate on the R with a slot on the L of that. Drop through the field, wall on the L, and see Shire Hill where the walk will head.

Come to a wall with a good slot in it that leads into a green lane, bear R and walk down the lane, grit wall either side. Carry on past a gate on the R with a sign; continue downhill past a block of houses, then through a slot stile into a field. Keep to a worn path on the R and go through a housing estate and emerge on to the A.57 near Old Glossop (049942).

Bear R and walk about 30 metres, then go L off the road. In 40 metres, come to a footpath sign to Doctors Gate, then climb on a hard track, wall either side, and skirt Shire Hill itself. Do not take a step stile in 40 metres but continue as before to a gap in the wall. Go through, drop through a field down to cross a stream; a footpath sign here explains that the walk has come from Queens Drive.

Now walk on a hard drive from the Firth Nixon Works in Old Glossop. Were to walk R, the walk would have gone up Doctors Gate. Instead, go L back to the works then bear R and walk upon a track with the works close to the L. the track becomes a lane and passes house on the L. it bears L; in 100 metres, bear R up Charles Lane, house on the R, field on the L. Higher up, go through a double wooden stile, a sign to open country stands near (045951).

Now walk steeply up through disturbed land, wall on the L, to a good stile over a wall, and then continue on a rough track, a wall either side to another stile on the L. The track is quite straight; take another stile on the R, and note the interesting view on the L. A ladder stile near a sign to open country gives information to the walker.

Walk with wall on the L. go through a gap in it and come to a fence in front. Make the way up to a ridge of Cock Hill where stone has been quarried. There is a Trig Point at 059963. Small Clough lies on the R and Yellow Slacks beyond that. The thin path leads past a line of shooting butts to make the way to a point at 067067 where the map records a height of 1577 feet. Continue in the same direction but with-out the help of a path and descend over rough ground to hit the Pennine Way in Torside Clough. Then bear R and walk ESE along this great walker's highway to then drop down to low ground where streams join. It is marked on the map as John Track Well, continue on the path, going S along Wildboar Grain, then curving to go S untill Bleaklow Head is reached (092959).

The next section of the walk connects the two best-known points of the area: Bleaklow Head and Bleaklow Stones. In mist set off in the general direction of 80 degrees. In clear weather the path is aided by posts. In any case the path is up and down many peat dunes, (up and down small hillocks), passing patches of moonscape- gritstone sandy beds to eventually reach the outcrop of rocks strangely carved by the wind rain and frost, the best landmark on Bleaklow; Bleaklow Stones.

The next section after marvelling about the strange shapes of some of the stones in to walk down the long hill that lies between the Alport Dale and the Westend. First drop down the hillside

on a good path, then, keeping to the high ground, walk SE over the whale-back, negotiating a large lake of peat on the way. The views especially behind are exceptional.

Drop down the ridge, then climb the low hill in front, still going in the same direction. Then drop again between Miry Clough in Alport Dale and Raven's Clough in the Westend. Go forward on this pass, and climb gently the hill in front which turns left for a few hundred metres. The bear R off it to walk uphill SE on another path that continues down the middle of this long hill. The route can be checked by a Trig. Point at 129933.

Continue on high ground, a pleasant walk in fine weather and are surrounded by such striking views. In about half a mile from the Trig. Point, the path veers to the R to Fords Clough (133925). Now walk on the extreme SW edge of this long hill, the peat on the L forming a bank of about two feet in height and Alport Dale on the R. fossilizes tree trunks can be seen in places in the peat: showing a previous different climate.

The views down the dale show the dark green scar of the plantation on the opposite bank. The river now meanders in large loops on the flat base of the valley. Its energy expended in waterfalls in the higher reaches. Almost with the view of a bird, the buildings of Alport Hamlet can be seen. More dramatic are the castles of rock that rise up on the R. they cannot fail to interest the walker as he ponders the power of movement that produced such a convulsion. Just beyond the tower, at 145912, take a path that drops R down a bank. Go between gateposts where stands a sign to open country, then walk down a stony path to a ladder stile, then descend on a steep path. Pass a metal sign of the P.D. and N.C. Footpath society, number 107 erected in 1948, one of three linked signs in this area: these are now getting historical.

Cross the Memorial Bridge over the River Alport, to come to another metal sign number 108 dated 1948. Go through the hamlet with its camping bard and walk down the road, then angle L going over a double wooden step stile, then a ladder stile and so out onto the road and the start of the walk. Notice another of the metal signs of the P.D. and N.C. Footpath Society number 106 dated 1948 repeating former directions: these signs were at a time when footpaths over the area walked were only to traverse by trespassing and keeping out of the way of the gamekeepers. If only modern signs would last as long as these. Walkers now should praise the aims of this society.