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A Friendly Local Walking Group for 50 years



*Affiliated to H F Holidays
The Ramblers Association
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Chinley Churn

By Francis Aynsley-Smith

This walk is some 9 miles long with three sharp climbs. There are well defined paths for the most part, although one section needs the Dark Peak Ordnance Survey Map, Explorer OL1. Map Ref: [SK 03952 82641](#)

The walk begins from the station car park in Chinley, which has no charges and is not full on a Sunday. I would imagine that Chinley began as a village for the Quarrymen who quarried the summit for stone in the 19th century. We turned left out of the car park, onto Station Road. One of the streets is called "The Sidings" which hints at the former use of the site. We turned left again onto Green Lane (the B6062) and went over the bridge towards the war memorial. Then we turned right onto Maynstone Road, a narrow lane that runs uphill.

A few steps thereafter brought us to a marked footpath on the left that runs upwards between hedges and walls to the fields beyond. We crossed the stile and began the steep climb to the path at the top, where there is a gate and a wire fence. If you turn about, Chinley is below you and Eccles Pike lies on the other side of the valley. Mount Famine and South Head are visible the other way.

We turned right with the fence on our left and walked upward to the well known viewpoint that sticks out from the hill. From there, we turned sharp left towards the Churn itself and its quarries. We did not follow the usual path, which is narrow and has slipped, but took two successive climbs to the left, almost certainly meant for the quarrymens' wagons. This brought us to a path just below the summit, which is strewn with broken stone. It is the perfect place for a breather and a coffee - with privacy for those who need it.

On we went heading northwards. There are many tracks to follow, but we climbed a little more to find a stile and marked path that runs along the crest of the ridge. We walked over the short grass and boggy patches, with breathtaking views on either side. To the left was the Cheshire plain and the Cage in Lyme Park. We continued through a gate and over a stile to meet the path that runs eastwards to Peep O Day. For the most part it is downhill here along a winding path to the road itself. There are various versions of how Peep O Day came by its name. Care is needed to cross the busy A624 Chapel Road from Hayfield. We used the verge to take us left and found the lane on the right that runs up beside a house to the Pennine Bridleway. We did not follow the Bridleway but went through a gate, opposite our lane, that leads up to Mount Famine. We passed through three gates and turned right across some fields to find the steep short climb.

We caught our breath at the brow and followed the track with a wire fence to our right. Kinder Scout can be seen to the left. It is always blowy on this hill, so watch your hat and your specs. The descent to the Pennine Bridleway runs over an easy grassy slope and in front of you is South Head, the third steep climb. It is not as fierce as it looks, but is demanding after Mount Famine. There is a cairn on top with a view that goes in all directions. The descent on the other side is steep, but it can be run if you are young and confident. This brought us back to the Pennine Bridleway again. We turned right with stone walls on either side. It was time for a bite to eat and a coffee.

We walked South Eastwards along the Pennine Bridleway for a mile to find the gate on the right to Shireoaks Farm. The Bridleway is used by both cyclists and walkers alike; it is broad and stony, a running stream in wet weather. The path to Shireoaks Farm is a gentle descent over ground that can be muddy. The dry weather helped us on our way. The track is clear to the farm itself. We avoided the muddy farmyard by turning leftwards and going through two gateways to skirt round the house and come back to the main track on the far side. The farm lane took us Westwards to open ground.

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The path is marked on the map, but is not much used, so the map is important from here. It runs to the left under overgrown and wind blown trees. We followed this track until we came to a pair of stone gateposts where we turned half left down the steep slope to the corner of the field, where a stile is hidden in the holly hedge. Once over, we aimed for the arch under the railway line and the gentle slope to a little used road, which we crossed using two stiles. There is a lovely stream to follow and it is one of the best parts of the walk with wild flowers and birds. We negotiated a further stile and a simple bridge to the other bank. We kept close to the stream which was on our right, until we arrived at a collection of stone cottages called Wash.

At Wash we went over a stile, crossed the road, turning left and then almost immediately right down a tarmac drive, which is in fact the proper path. There is a garage and a stile at the end that takes you into the fields behind. These can be boggy as it is the valley bottom, but the track is well used and clear. It heads south westwards and we were aiming for Chapel Milton with its double railway viaducts - a good landmark to look for. There are several rickety stiles and gates to negotiate, with the map to help find the way. At one point the path goes through a small belt of trees. After this, the traffic on the A6 can be seen and heard to your left. We came down a grassy field, through a gate, to find a lane with a stream on the far side. We turned right and came to the A624. This must be crossed with care.

On the further side of the road are more stone cottages and the Tramway. This runs along the valley bottom to Chinley and is well signposted. The Tramway passes under the railway viaducts into fields then past an old Mill that has been rebuilt as flats and a packaging factory. We arrived at Charley Lane, turning left along this for 200 metres to pick the Tramway again along the bottom of the valley. It looks like the entrance to a sewage works but there are open fields to the left and it is signposted. The site of the old Forge Mill is well indicated and explained on a board. There is a new housing estate being built a little further on.

We followed the Tramway until it reached Green Lane, where we turned right for Chinley. The railway station is clearly indicated and it is road walking from here. We went over a bridge and up Green Lane. The station is still signposted and we turned left into Station Road again, to find the car park we had left 5 hours earlier.

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