

108 StagePath

STAGES 1 & 2

RIDE & STRIDE WITH THE PATERDALE BUS
the greenest way to walk



INTRODUCING the second dedicated walking route to a Lakeland bus service - in succession to the 555 StagePath Windermere to Keswick. Five walk stages link the regular bus stops for the **108 Stagecoach** bus between Penrith and Patterdale.

Forget your car, enjoy this inspirational health-giving walking experience. A rising crescendo of scenic delight from historic town to exquisite mountains, during the course of which you will wander the length of Ullswater, one of Lakeland's most beautiful lakes.

The walk includes such fascinating and scenically exciting locations as Brougham Castle, Arthur's Round Table, Mayburgh Henge, Yanwath Hall, River Eamont, Barton Church, Pooley Bridge, Ullswater, Gowbarrow Fell, Aira Force, Swinside Knott, Glencoyne Head and Keldas. Pure magic every step of the way, to enjoy with family and friends at any season of the year.

Only the first two stages are described on these two sheets, and only the out-bound walk, so that you need to wait at the intermediate points or Pooley Bridge for a Penrith-bound bus to make your return. However, when complete the whole walk will track the bus on reliable paths, taking advantage of the best views and best walking options and will be described in both directions from each bus stop for the 22-mile journey on foot.

It is always wise to carry a light daypack with a snack and drink, and wear comfy boots. Some measure of weather protective clothing will come to your rescue if the elements - wind, rain or intense sun - threaten to spoil your 'off-bus adventure'.

Ultimately images of the complete walk will be shown in a gallery on my website www.markrichards.info, clicking on Ride & Stride StagePaths, and 108 StagePath (*presently not set-up*).

Window-gazers can however, already reflect on the walk and mountain scenery with the aid of the unique guide to the ride leaflet 'From A to B to SEE' covering the journey of the 108 service and the continuing summer-only Kirkstone Rambler service to/from Bowness-on-Windermere.

Daytime Service Frequency/Intervals

Weekdays: 5 buses @ 2, 2, 3¾ and 4½ hours

Saturdays: 5 buses @ 2, 2, 3 and 4¾ hours

Sundays (& Bank Holidays)

during Spring/Summer : 3 buses @ 1¾, 2 and 4 hours

Penrith > Pooley Bridge **7½ miles 4½ hours**

A heritage laden start to your StagePath adventure leading through the historic town to Brougham Castle then upstream with the Eamont via Eamont Bridge, where encounter two regionally important monuments the ringwork of King Arthur's Round Table and amphitheatre of Mayburgh Henge. Wandering further upstream to Yanwath, Tirril and Pooley Bridge at the outflow of Ullswater - with all the comforts of a tourist honeypot.

STAGE 1 Penrith Bus Station > Yanwath

From Penrith Bus Station in Sandgate pass through the arch and cross the zebra-crossing slant right through the passage on the right side of The Grey Goat (PH). Go over the next zebra crossing to the Spar and bear left by Market Court, thereby wandering round into the churchyard. Spot the curious Giant's Grave and Thumb beside the north wall of St Andrew's church, two single shaft crosses with hogsback grave stones in between, they remarkably date from the end of the first millennium. Pass on along the passage into the Market Place, the architectural surround quite remarkable deserving of a moment's 360 degree admiration.

Follow the main road pavement left, along King Street this becomes Victoria Road and from which shortly bear left into Roper Street, this becomes Carleton Road. The foot and cycleway arriving at a pedestrian crossing with traffic control lights of the A686. Cross and pass The Cross Keys/Kyloes Grill (a handsome barn-style extension) following on with the old main road, now a cul-de-sac leading down to Frenchfield Sports Centre. Keep with the confined lane coming alongside the A66 embankment and the tall sports-field fencing to walk through the subway beneath the A66. A left-hand turn would give scope to visit English Heritage's impressive Brougham Castle (pronounced 'broom'). The Castlem beautifully observed from Castle Bridge, stands on the site of the Roman fort of Brovacum, at the confluence of the rivers Eamont and Lowther. Turn right and cross the stile (waymarked with Discover Eden kingfisher plates) entering the meadow following on with the river's edge path via a gated stream bridge, gance left at the weir, leading to a sequence of three stiles in woodland rounding a modern riverside house compound. Joining the access drive which leads to Eamont Bridge.

Notice the odd door lintel datestone on the house across the road facing right, to Nethan and Elisabeth COULL, surely the Roman numerals MMDCXXVIII tally to 2718? Eamont Bridge lies on a Roman Road and has been a significant ford and bridging point for many thousands of years. As a community it is far more ancient than Penrith, much as Stonehenge relates to the River Kennet, the two great monuments in the edge of the village relate to the River Eamont and on a comparable cultural timeline.

One may wander right with the footpath beside the river entering adjacent fields at a kissing-gate at the drive entrance to Bleach Mill advancing via stiles to the road at Southwaite Green Cottages. Alternatively, keep along the village street by the bus shelter passing The Beehive and Crown Hotels to turn right at the mini-roundabout. King Arthur's Round Table can be visited left by a kissing-gate adjacent to a bus stop. Some four thousand years old, the latterday link with the Regis Arthur myth the result of the 'lost in the mists of time' knowledge of its original purpose. Clearly a cultural gathering point, one may presume touching on ancestral spiritual seasonal connections. Follow the road to the next bus stop beside the impressive Millennium Stone, erected in the year 2000 as a modern

statement of the spiritual connectivity for the whole Eden district. Follow the cul-de-sac road signed to Southwaite Green, after the right-hand bend (caused by the M6 motorway) come by a brown Mayburgh Henge sign, where one may slip through a kissing-gate and wander round the high ring beckstone bank, at the centre of the amphitheatre stands a 3m high ceremonial megalith. The name suggests the dancing place of maidens, which in turn correlates to the calendar month and fertility rites... May this be true? In the C19th there were three further stones wantonly lost, and two pair flanking the eastern entrance, all wantonly lost. Might this be where maiden played fertility games? The relationship of this monument with the Round Table is perhaps beyond knowing. Gathering all that beckstone to create the bank was a colossal task, but obviated the digging of a bounding ditch.

Regain the road by the same kissing-gate. Passing Southwaite Green Cottages descend the access road to go under the motorway, with the River Eamont adjacent, having a separate underpass. With the caravan site office right and old mill building left take the footpath signed immediately left. Notice the two millstones, gritstone standing on the right, burrstone laying on the left, this latter was for milling hard grains, like wheat. The footpath rises to a kissing-gate entering pasture, go right along the field edge by a kissing-gate midway along the next field-edge notice a kissing-gate right. One may briefly step through here going down the steps to view the river, but be sure to backtrack to continue. A kissing-gate followed by stile as the enclosure widens keep with the left-hand fence with a line of mature trees to a hand-gate and short pasture passage to a wicket kissing-gate and confined path leading onto a drive by the Mews cottages, with the railway embankment ahead. Bear left to the railway bridge. If you wish to curtail the walk you can pass up the lane to swing left by the The Gate Inn to reach a bus stop at the junction with the main road beyond the cottages.

STAGE 2 Yanwath > Pooley Bridge

Otherwise go through the railway bridge (access to Yanwath Hall Farm) and slip through the wall-gap beside the gate following the field-edge footpath left quickly turning right at the field corner. Attention will be focussed upon the regular passage of trains and the massive castle-like C14th pele tower of Yanwath Hall. The place-name comes from the Viking settlement of the area and meant 'one ford'. Indeed, as the path comes to a stile, switching sides of the adjacent hedge, a footpath is signed at right-angles across the pasture which leads via the original ford to Red Hill, wet feet assured – you'll be relieved to know this is NOT the StagePath!

The footpath leads on with the hedge right to a stile in the wall-rounded corner. Now pursue the fence running along the top of the slope leading down to the river, with the retail mound of Rheged clearly in view in the middle distance, and left of this an area of medieval cultivation terracing. Cross a field-edge stile beneath a power line and advance to a hand-gate/stile, from where the path slips down a burdock-clothed slope to a further hand-gate/stile and plank footbridge. Bear right along the foot of the field to a hand-gate/long slated footbridge entering the riverside fringe wood. The path has been well-maintained, and pending a future landslip steps inserted to allow walkers the option of keeping up beside the top fence, where the path is most exposed to potential river erosion. The path emerges where at two hand-gates. The left-hand wicket-gate option is a footpath that crosses the rising pasture mid-course to a fence stile beside an ageing oak, continuing to a wall-stile onto the tiny green at Sockbridge/Tirril.

The same spot can be reached on a longer more attractive course prolonging contact with the river by going through the facing hand-gate a brief fence guiding right to the river's edge

and past a necessarily wide span footbridge (do not cross, but you may enjoy the view of the river from the middle). Spot the Environment Agency Bench Mark on the first step (EABM). Continue upstream signed 'Sockbridge Mill' via a stile, drift half-left via a mid-pasture stake-bridge to a stile. Rise up the paddock by the shed to a stile in the tapered tip joining the Sockbridge Mill access road. Turn left by the pony paddocks to enter Sockbridge (which appears to mean 'the marsh-draining board') a village integrated with Tirril. After The Cottage Pony Trekking Centre come by the narrow Green with Wordsworth House (lintel date-stone 1699) set back. William Wordsworth's brother Richard lived in Tirril and owned the Queen's Head Inn. At the junction turn right. One may reach the village bus stops by following Quaker Lane (indicative of the prominence of the Society of Friends in village life in the late C18th) left - there are two, one to the right and one left, beyond The Queen Inn.

Otherwise go forward beside Quakers Lane following the narrowing path (by-way) signed 'Thorpe'. Gaining a last view back on the sturdy Yanwath Hall, backed by Penrith and the wooded Beacon Edge, the lane passes Thorpe Farm and continues as a green lane. A footpath runs in the left-hand pasture in harmony, but the lane is a pleasure in any season. Reaching the main road go right along the accommodating verge passing the interesting vernacular farmhouse of Kirkbarrow. The porch headed by a medieval figure has a family shield and an old studded door.

Follow the side road signed Barton Church (bus stop 25m beyond) to visit St Michael's Barton parish church, an impressive Norman tower at the midst of a grand building set on a low mound in a large tree-shaded churchyard. The route follows the lane beyond, keeping left as the track forks, coming by an old farmhouse, with the following phrase over the door lintel 'LD NON MIHISED SVCESSORIBVS 1637:' - might this allude to the hope for the all-round success of future generations of the Dacre family? Bear right by the cottages to a green gate giving access through the barn-arch into the backyard of Barton Church Farm. Continue forward bearing left, see the modest wind turbine and the old farmhouse, partly C16th, partly of 1628, the upper windows suggest window tax bockage.

The waymarked footpath leads on by the poultry enclosure to cross a ladder-stile and by the open track via a gate. Drawing towards the end of the track bear half-left to reach the corner gate and ditch crossing. Follow the track as towards the barn coming to a three-way sign, bear obliquely right to a stile/gate and keep up beside the left-hand hedge to a gate continuing on the rised greenway to a gate into a confined path.

Watch for the hand-gate right where go through and turn left alongside the confined path a matter of 25m to a hand-gate, now follow the right-hand fence, this leads via a redundant stile in a lost fence to a gate at a fence junction, sheltering under a mature oak. Thereafter advancing to enter the concreted yard at the Hole House Caravan Park. Spot the evidence of naughty hens, who appear to have paddled in the wet concrete! Pass on through by Bank House and bear right down the path by a hand-gate, coming to the riverbank, with water-flow monitoring weir adjacent. Enter the big meadow at a hand-gate and follow on with the green track via two gates come onto the village street beside The Sun Hotel.

Turn right to reach the bus shelter with visitor information in the small Ullswater Steamer shop on the right, opposite the large black & white Pooley Bridge Hotel. There are several pubs and two tearooms, in this hugely popular tourist haunt, strategically situated close to the outflow of Ullswater with it the famous steamer.