

A WALK IN THE PARISH OF ST BREWARD ON THE NORTHERN FRINGE OF BODMIN MOOR START POINT GRID REFERENCE: 129747

Pat Sampbells had offered a walk up on Bodmin Moor, little did she realise just how wet Bodmin Moor would become after the wettest October/November for a century or more. Simply saturated, many of the routes once on dry land are now submerged or muddy bogs and the original route offered by Pat unfortunately fell into both of those categories.

Pat had no option but to change her route from one visiting some of the highest Tors on the northern moor to one mainly on the northern fringes of the moor where, although still very wet, the footpaths were walkable.

After several recces Pat had found a 10 mile walk in the county parish of St Breward on the Northern fringe of Bodmin Moor. The weather leading up to the walk even the night before was foul with 60 kt winds and heavy rain, resulting in the vast majority of the walkers deciding that the day would be just too wet and windy to contemplate walking. On the day they were quite wrong in their acceptance of the forecast.



The few, that did arrive, enjoyed a day which improved during the morning with moderate winds, not much rain and even some sunshine.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that Bolventor was only 45 mins drive from our car share point in Plymouth, closer than many of the points we walk from on North Dartmoor. Perhaps we should consider more walks up on this moor, as it really isn't that far from Plymouth.

An outline of the route we walked is given above. It should be related to the 1:25000 ordnance survey map of Bodmin such as the explorer map 109, in order to gain a detailed appreciation of the route we walked on the northern fringes of the moor.



We met in a by pass just beyond Jamaica Inn at Bolventor and then drove a few miles further down the A30 to park on the edge of the county parish on the fringe of the moor.

From the car park location on the edge of Manor Common, we could see the highest Tor on Bodmin,

Brown Willy with its strange outline of rocky Tors, in the distance.

Leaving the Common we turned right onto the unfenced road heading north west and walked along the road in that direction for a little under a mile. To our right we could see a rock outcrop called the Cheesewring on the edge of an old quarry site.



The road veered more westerly and shortly after passing a turning to Bradford we walked uphill past Moss Farm and then turned right onto Kerrow Downs and made our way along near the stone wall on a bearing of 340 degrees until we came across another narrow country road.

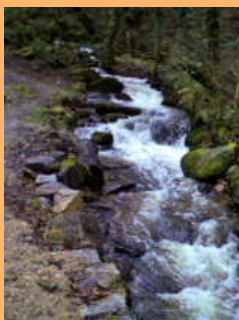


We walked along the edge of the road and crossed over the Delford Bridge which spanned the De Lank River. The road then swung more northerly, passing some buildings known collectively as East Rose. Pat advised us that in the summer some excellent cream teas are served from a restaurant in this complex of houses.

Just beyond East Rose, we climbed over a stile and onto a footpath heading north west across to Lady Down.

Just before Lady Down we turned left onto yet another road and headed along by the side of Lady Down on a bearing of about 250 degrees for just over a half a mile.

At the top of the hill we had good views of an estuary in the distance to the west of us. As we descended the hill, we could see a church and quite a few houses. A very modern looking marker stone showed us that we were on the outskirts of the village of St Breward.



We continued slightly further down the road and then turned right onto a signposted footpath which took us into the village. We made our way down away from the church in the distance down through two very narrow footpaths by some nice houses.

We continued along, passing a tumbling brook flowing very quickly down the steep descent and passed the home of a pack of foxhounds belonging to the North Cornwall Hunt.

Shortly after, we followed a footpath through fields and descended down towards Coombe Mill and a fast flowing river which I later found out was the River Camel.



Above the river we turned right and followed a footpath along through what seemed to be a newly designed tourist attraction consisting of a range of animals and birds.



We passed by a man made lake, all part of the attraction, pigs, deer and other animals and then left the development and continued to head north up along the eastern side of the valley with the river Camel below us to our left.

As we gained height, we had even better views looking up the valley with good views of the flood plain below us up to Gam Bridge which we could just pick out in the distance.

On we went, until we came across a large house called Fellover, a very strange name, I wonder what the history behind the name actually was.

In the garden of the house were some very modernistic statues and Pat and John can be seen standing in front of one of them.



From Fellover, we had the steepest climb of the day by far as we climbed out of the valley and up to the high ground and to Churchdown on the northern edge of St Breward.



Once, I imagine these, two villages were separate entities but now they have merged into one.

We stopped just before the road for lunch and after lunch walked along the road towards the church of St Breward.

Before we reached the church Pat pointed out one of the few remaining Automobile Association signs indicating locations and distances.

I haven't seen one of those for many years.

We continued onto the church and turned left just beyond the church, named St Brewards, even though it is in Churchtown.

Just beyond the church we took a footpath heading south west by some old farm buildings.

We soon emerged on a road again and we turned left and a few yards along the road to the east we came to a junction. We took the narrow lane heading north east up towards the moors. We could



see some big Tors in the distance and Pat advised us that the nearest one was Alex Tor.

After several hundred yards uphill along the narrow road, it swung sharp right and down again then left again and we were on Bodmin moor again over a cattle grid, marked as such on the OS 1:25000 map of the area. To our right was a field system and we skirted the fields and farms as we kept to the left of the outermost dry stone wall. As we skirted the wall, we passed a small farm named on the map as Irish and ahead of us to the south, we could see a large house shown on the map as Penwood House.

We kept a hundred yards or so to the right of the house and came to an unfenced road which led us away from the house heading south west. Further ahead of us, we could see Ladydown where we had walked earlier during the day.

We came to a cross roads and turned left and headed east for 50 yds or less before the road swung south again with hedges on either side.



We made our way down the road and passed East Rose on our left.

We could see Delford Bridge ahead of us but before we reached that, we turned to the south east and picked up a footpath over a little bridge and then up across 4 fields.

With the wet weather, there was a water hazard just before the first stile with up to a foot of water to get

across to get to the stile.

We managed it without getting wet feet, just, and the rest of the footpath up across the fields was OK although rather muddy in places.

We left the footpath and turned right onto a track which took us south and down towards another bridge over the De Lank river and then onto a small hamlet of a few houses, with the name of Bradford.



No curry houses here, but one of the inhabitants was a sculptor and he/she had many examples of the sculptures set up in the garden. We stopped for a quick look before continuing up to a wider road carrying traffic.

Just beyond a telephone box we turned left and headed back towards Manor Common again for the final half a mile back to the car.

On the way back, we turned off the road and headed up to the old quarry and the Cheesewring we had seen at the start of the walk.

It turned out to be a derelict quarry, now flooded and in the afternoon sun both the quarry and the Cheesewring rocks had a quality of their own.

When the sun shines it is amazing how much more attractive the landmarks appear.



From the quarry, we could see the car parked up on the downs and we were soon back to the car again with the afternoon sun picking out the Tors to the North East.



Once in the car, we made our way back to Bolventor and a chance for us to visit the very well known Jamaica Inn, a very popular tourist spot having been given 'immortality' in the Daphne du Maurier novel "Jamaica Inn".

The book was a classic and the Jamaica Inn real Ale was rather nice too.

We had travelled up to Bolventor via Callington and on up to the A30, we returned via the road which ran alongside the River Fowey and returned to Plymouth via Darite to return Pat to her home, and then back to Plymouth via Liskeard.

Despite the doom and gloom of the forecast for the day, it had turned out quite good and for once I didn't have to wear my over trousers at all. Thanks Pat for all your efforts to find a route we could do on the day, it was a pity that so many ramblers were put off by the forecast and the distance, which in the event were both quite reasonable.