

BURRATOR TO EYLESBARROW, DITSWORTHY AND MEAVY

GRID REFERENCE: 567694

This walk of about 11 to 12 miles, led by Norman Chynoweth on 27 Oct 99, was blessed by a beautiful late Autumn day with sunny skies and temperatures approaching 60 degrees F. 15 of us met at the Norsworthy bridge car park for a 10 AM start.

There were good views back towards Burrator almost as soon as we left the car park. The initial path was short grass and easy to follow but we could see Down Tor ahead which we would be walking around rather than over.



Even though we had a stiff uphill section we all started at a brisk pace and the first mile was uphill all the way and certainly got the lungs pumping well as we passed by Down Tor and continued our way up to the higher moors.

After a good mile or more of fast uphill walking we levelled off and continued on to the next point of Eylesbarrow.

This is an old burial site, hence the barrow. A short break here for a drink and we were off again dropping downhill as we skirted the Eylesbarrow mine workings.



I was rather hoping we would turn left here towards Plym steps and the mine workings so we could see the archeology, another walk will redress that though.

Continuing down, we soon passed by Higher Hartor Tor. This is a very flat Tor but a Tor nevertheless. The path here became rather more defined as we moved from the rough moorland to closely cropped Dartmoor grassland.

We followed the well defined path down past the large stone plinths which together with a number of exactly aligned smaller stones, mark this section. No doubt the archeology of these is interesting. I must try to find out just what it is! I cannot believe it simply marks a travellers route. There are quite a few burial barrows in the vicinity so perhaps there is a clue there.



We had two streams to cross and were in some danger of getting wet feet, some did!!

It is surprising that after such a well defined path there are no stepping stones across these streams.

The path became more defined once again as we followed our way down parallel to the path of the Plym. Soon we came across the Ditsworthy Cottage, once an old farm and now an accommodation base for Naval and Marine Dartmoor exercises.



We could see lots of backpacks in the enclosed section and sure enough the marines were around. We stopped here for lunch and during the break a platoon of marines plus guns came back and lined up outside the cottage. We had our own armed guard.

After comments such as you are the marines, we are the Home Guard, we were on our way again leaving the Plym and making our way up and over Ringmor Down.

There were splendid views in all directions from this vantage point, with a clear sight of the village of Meavy, which unbeknown to me at the time, we were heading for.



We left the moors and were on tarmac roads for a short distance, however we soon picked up a footpath which

led us down to a river and some large stepping stones which we duly all carefully crossed without any slips.

In wet conditions the stones are very slippery indeed and many people have ended up in the river, joined I understand by the lady in the photograph on her last crossing.

Into the edge of the village we turned right. A pity because there is an excellent pub here which serves good bar meals, should people wish to take a break at this point, it is well recommended.

However not for us this time. We were back on a footpath again which led up through a wooded valley up to Burrator Dam.

In the sheltered conditions and with the good sun and uphill section, top garments were being removed at a rapid rate, it really was quite warm and an excellent school half term week.



As we approached Burrator we found quite a few children around the ice cream van up by the dam.

A number of the group took the opportunity to join the kids for an ice cream, it really was that nice and so were the ice creams I understand.

Three of the lady walkers changed into shorts at this point, demonstrate what an excellent late Indian summer day for us to be out in.

We crossed the dam and followed the road for a short distance before taking a short cut across a footpath which skirted the corner of the reservoir. The water authorities had been making much use of the water and the reservoir was quite low and sandy banks were clearly visible. Doubtless over the next few months, it will be full to overflowing again.



We picked up the road again and turned in the opposite direction to the car park. After a short distance we could see that we were following a path just above the woods back to the car park. Norman obviously had planned the walk to minimise the amount of road walking and he had achieved his objective well.

We had a quick afternoon break and then we made our way down to the road through a very peculiar stile that taxed our ingenuity before the last few yards back to Norsworthy car park.

We had covered about 11 miles, in an excellent walk, with superb views of Dartmoor and the surrounding lower level countryside. Lucky with the weather we most certainly were, lets hope that we are as lucky in the months to come.