

BURRATOR TO PRINCETOWN CIRCULAR WALK ON 15TH JULY 99

This walk was suggested by Dave Tromans as an alternative to my day sailing activities. Fine, a change is as good as a rest, but now that Dave has become a technofreak I'm surprised that he can afford to spend the time away from his new computer setup, particularly since he had only just returned from a two day course in how to be a NEBS assessor up in lovely London. As I heard on the walk he had enjoyed the London experience not a lot but it did serve to remind him of how lucky we are to have the grandeur and solitude of Dartmoor on our doorstep. In Dave's case it literally is his doorstep too!!

As you can see, he has acquired a fine piece of furniture in which to house his ultra fast PC and I took the time out to inspect the furniture and his handiwork, apparently over 100 separate components in the kit for him to assemble. shouldn't have been a problem for Dave though, after all he is a mechanical engineer. We made our way to the start point car park at Norsworthy Bridge just after 10 AM.



The intention was to walk up from here to Princetown and then across to the range of quarries about two miles west of Princetown before returning back to the car park. Joy and I had already walked a shorter variant of this route as a new years walk for 1999 so for photographs of the start and end of the walk then have a look at that walk. It was slightly warmer in the middle of July than in January!! That walk is described is at [Burrator to Crazywell/Cramber Pools winter walk](#)

Although no rain there was plenty of cloud cover and just the right temperature for walking. We left the car park and headed north east up the lane towards the popular Crazywell Pool. From there on to the Devonport Leat and we followed the leat east for a short while.

I suggested that we visit Cramber Pool to look at the flora and surprisingly Dave hadn't heard of it. We consulted the map and as it was only a half a mile due north we left the leat and continued our climb up through a girt. Surprisingly we found the pool without any difficulty. Yes there was some water plants surrounding the small pool but the range of flora wasn't as abundant as I had expected. A few sarcastic comments about the beauty of the lake came from our old engineer.



We continued climbing passing a triangulation point and the swung north east to South Hessary Tor about a mile across normally marshy ground. Luckily it had dried out and so we made it without any sticky moments. Daves' customary elevenses were taken in the lee of the Tor.

We then made our way along the Abbots Way towards Princetown which stood out in stark relief in the distance. We arrived at the

Plume of Feathers for our second break, we had covered getting on for six miles and it was only just midday.

The pub serves a range of pub grub and an excellent range of beers and so we had a non Plymouth ramblers activity of a pub stop for an hour for a couple of pints of Caffreys and a fine steak pasty each. The pasties were over £2 each so we are obviously paying a premium for eating at altitude, compared with the pasty shop produce at sea level at Oreston.

Leaving the Plume we made our way through Princetown. Passing through the the main car park we soon picked up the path of the old Plymouth to Princetown railway line which had the Beeching Axe getting on for 40 years before. The walking here is easy since they weren't using inclined plane railways and therefore the route couldn't be too steep.

Although I have walked this area a number of times it was to be the first time visit for me at Foggintor Quarries.

As we approached I was surprised to see lots of schoolchildren around. The reason became clear as we entered the quarries. It was now a centre for outdoor activities.



We found canoeing in the pool , with rock climbing and abseiling the steep rock faces of the quarries. With Plymouth and the Sound so close it seemed strange to see a group of canoes sitting by the edge of the pool inside the quarry. We wandered around the quarry for a while looking at the activities and then made our way out and across to the nearby SwellTor.

This was again a quarry and at the turn of the century this must have been one of the major granite quarrying areas on Dartmoor. Passing by the quarry

we continued across to Kings Tor and yet another large disused quarry.

At the far side of the quarry we saw the results of the Stonemasons craft since some eight large bridge supports planned for London had never been delivered and had remained here for many years.

We dropped down onto the clear defined route of the railway and continued our slow descent. There were quite a few stops in this section of the route to carry out the watering activities following the two pints of Caffreys. We followed the route of the railway as it curved down through these majestic Tors, it must have been a very impressive sight to see the train as it wound its way up from Plymouth right up to Princetown.



We stopped in the lee of a small bridge to consume yet more food and water and then we were off again. We left the rail track at this point and headed south west along the contours around Leedon Tor, the last of the Tors to pass on this walk. We soon crossed the main road linking Yelverton and Princetown and continued our descent towards Burrator.

Approaching the Devonport Leat downstream from the Aquaduct we were pleased but surprised to see a heron watching the water in the leat. We got within 50 yards of it before it flew off to safer ground. The leat now passed through a plantation and we followed it until we came to the turning south to get down to Lether Tor Bridge.

Just before Lether Tor bridge we passed an old farmers cache cave which I understand was used to store potatoes. At this fine example of a clapper bridge we swung almost due south and continued down a well used path. Before long we had exited the plantation and we were just above our starting point of Norsworthy Car Park.

It was now about 3.30 and we had covered getting on for 13 miles overall. We celebrated with some bottled beer . It had been a good walk but different in that the first six miles had been all uphill and the rest (unsurprisingly) down again!!!

Back to Daves house in Yelverton to look at the range of plants in Rosemarys' well maintained garden and the dragonfly larvae before my return to Plymouth.