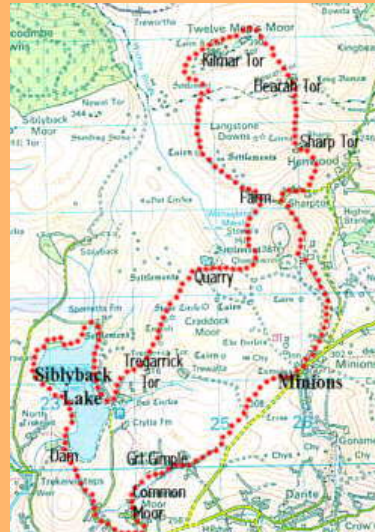


MINIONS TO TWELVE MEN'S MOOR, AROUND SIBLYBACK LAKE AND RETURN VIA COMMON MOOR START POINT GRID REF: 259 711

Wednesday 15th March 2000 was a beautiful day with a big high pressure moving in over Bodmin moor, the location of the walk. Pat, who lives just off the moor, knows the area like the back of her hand having walked over the moor countless times over the years. 15 of us gathered at the car park at the western end of Minions and at just gone 10.00 AM we were off at the start of the 12 mile walk around the area.



The route outline shown above shows that we headed north up to Twelve Men's Moor before swinging back south again to Sibblyback Lake. Having lapped the lake we then walked across fields to Common Moor before heading back north east to our start point. To follow the route in detail you are advised to relate the outline the route above to 1:25000 map of Bodmin Moor.



We made our way from the western village car park to the east end of the village and the second car park soon picked up the line of an old rail route heading due north. There are a large number of old mine workings in the area and many such railways lines linked the mines up on the moor to Liskeard 5 miles or so to the south.

We made quick progress along the old rail line and had some good views of the Cheesewring, a local beauty spot to our left and above us. We didn't visit the Cheesewring or another well known local landmark, the Hurlers on this walk.

Those were covered on an earlier visit to Minions in October 1999. We followed the railway line for a mile and a half and then swung off the line and made our way across to below a large Tor north of us.



We climbed up to the distinctive Sharp Tor and took a well earned coffee break. Some adventurous souls climbed to the top of the Tors before returning to continue the walk.

Almost due north of us and about a half a mile away was the next Tor, that of Bearah Tor. This tor is rather more spread out than Sharp Tor and therefore rather less distinctive.



We passed by it and made our way north west heading towards another long Tor less than half a mile away.

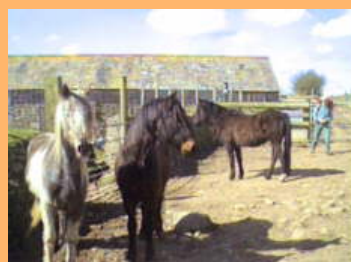
There was plenty of granite rocks to pick our way around as we made it to the eastern end of Kilmar Tor. The Tor is getting on for a half a mile long and we picked our way round a col near the eastern end of the Tor and were on the fringe of Twelve Men's Moor, our

most northerly point of the walk.

We turned south west and made our way along the long northern edge of Kilmar Tor and the high rocks. Ahead of us lay Withy Brook and Withybrook Marsh and we could feel the ground getting much damper below our feet. Pat indicated that it was virtually impossible to cross the brook and the marshy area to the south west so we were forced to swing more south.

Pat had done her planning well and had permission from a local farmer, Mr Hutton of Wardbrook Farm to use the path through his land.

We passed through a gate and made our way along the half mile track south east before walking right by the farm.



Pat revealed her fear of horses and was very pleased when we had made our way past the three lively horses on the path.

The horses enjoyed posing for the camera though.



Leaving the farm, we could see the remains of the quarry across the valley but Withybrooke Marsh stood between us and the quarry.

We had to head almost south for a further half a mile on the other side of the Cheesewring landmark before we could make our way west by a dry stone wall and then turn north west for a few hundred yards until we reached the Quarry for lunch.

On the way to the quarry we had to pick our way through the cattle munching away at the hay left for them by Mr Hutton perhaps. We reached the quarry and settled in under the large rocks for lunch.

Apparently the long disused quarry, now well flooded now is used as a water activities centre in the summer. To be honest with Sibleyback Lake only a mile or so away, why anyone should want to come to the quarry for their water based activities was beyond me.



As can be seen from the picture it does indeed have a large lake but the only water borne activities we could see were a pair of Canada Geese paddling around.

This was not our only brush with Canada Geese on the walk.



After a pleasant 20 minute lunch break, we were on our way again, heading south west across Craddock Moor towards a Tor about a mile away called Tregarick Tor.

We were soon making our way over the Tor and we had splendid views of Sibleyback Lake just below us.

We stopped to enjoy the view and then descended south west and down a track to the lake 500 yards below us.

We were soon lake side and we turned right and it soon became clear that we were not stopping for an ice cream in the restaurant but were about to walk anticlockwise around the lake, a good two mile walk. No problems for we intrepid ramblers, it made a change to have level walking across forgiving ground, particularly for my knees.



South West water had made the walking even easier by including walk ways across the wetter areas of the lake side so we were able to keep our feet relatively dry.



We saw plenty of Canada Geese as we made our way around the northern extremity of the lake but there were no windsurfers on the lake, mind you there wasn't a great deal of wind on this sunny day.

During the walk around the lake we only passed two people pushing a baby buggy in the opposite direction. Above us were a succession of Naval helicopters who were obviously using the Lake as a

turning point on the navex's.

Before long we were at the southern end of the lake and were crossing the dam.



At the other end of the dam we found a nice spot for our afternoon tea with seats and tables. After a ten minute break we were on our way again, still heading south up across fields and along a track.

After a half a mile we were at a junction and sure enough some of the frontrunners, no names no pack drill, but initials DT spring to mind, were ahead of the leader and headed off in the wrong direction. Pat was in front again, quite rightly too. After a short distance south along this narrow road there was a footpath to our left heading east towards the hamlet of Common Moor.

After a short distance along the footpath Pat warned us to watch out for a dangerous bird and sure enough just a few yards further along the enclosed track we were face to face with a goose and a canadian one at that. The goose was guarding the adjacent property and nipped the heels of Eric for a good fifty yards along the path before her apologetic owner rescued the goose and shooed her inside. I was going to write that Eric had been well and truly goosed !!!!

We made our way north and then picked up a footpath heading north east along a marshy area for a few hundred yards passing Gribblemill.

There were a few more animals for Pat to contend with including at least four very frisky horses who bounded around their paddock and of course the footpath. We managed to place ourselves between Pat and the horses and so the walk continued without too much of a delay.



We followed a track uphill passing Great Gimble, still north east and soon approached the moor again and the road we had come up from St Cleer to Minions a few hours earlier. The end was in sight, well almost, the Caradon Hill Transmitter was getting ever closer and obviously we would be seeing Minions before long.

We kept on the moorland away from the road and a mile later we could see Minions and the car park we had left some five and a half hours before.

It had been a glorious early spring day with good sunshine throughout the day. Those who had chosen to wear shorts this early in the year and surely made the correct decision in the circumstances.

It had been an excellent walk carried out at a good pace and we must have covered a good 12 miles during the day. Pat had led us admirably throughout the day and we all offered our grateful thanks for all her efforts in planning the route and in getting permission for us to cross the farmers land.

Pat had given up leading walks a year ago and although not a member of Plymouth Ramblers but of the moorland group, she had offered to take us over this area of Bodmin moor in thanks for the number of walks she has had with us on Wednesdays last year.

Thanks Pat and much appreciated.