

## Chapel-le-Dale, Scales Moor & Oddies Lane

We start at the car park for St Leonard's church in Chapel-le-Dale. This is easily found – take the B6255 from Ingleton toward Hawes. Pass the White Scar Caves, then 1500m (1 mile) later, look for signs to Chapel le Dale at a minor road on the left. Head down there, then just 100m after leaving the B6255 go left again into the carpark. The gate to the carpark may well be closed, but it is not usually locked, and this convenient site may be used in exchange for a donation which may be left at the honesty box at the church. For those using Satnav to get to the start, try the address for St Leonards – Roman Road, Chapel-le-Dale, LA6 3AR, or if your device uses what-3-words, the tag is **obeyed.aunts.fruits** whilst the OS grid reference is SD73837715.

From the car park head back to the minor road and turn left toward St Leonards, which was built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century as a chapel of ease – a church building subsidiary to the parish church, built for the attendance of those who cannot reach the parish church conveniently, generally due to geographical

Just beyond St Leonards there is a lane on the right – we take this and head up toward Ellerbeck. We pass signs for a number of properties on the way up but ignore all of them and stay on the road, which soon degrades into a rough track as it heads uphill. We pass a pothole, on the right, behind St Leonards - this is known as Hurtle Pot. Don't be surprised if you miss it, it's not particularly visible from the track, but it is clearly well-known to local miscreants, as they relocated a statue from a site next to the lane to the bottom of the pot in 1983.

The artwork was created by Charles I'Anson and is known as the Statue of a Warrior. It has stood at this location since the 1960s but was vandalised on Saturday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1983, and subsequently found in 30 feet of water at the bottom of Hurtle Pot. An enthusiastic team of divers managed a retrieval, and it has been re-erected, this time in a deeper foundation.

We continue up the lane through an atmospheric mossy woodland, and then exit the trees to walk along a flatter track toward the flank of Whernside – with views of the Ribbleshead Viaduct over to our right as well as of Whernside itself.

We are heading northwest now, and as we progress further, we catch sight of, and then approach, Ellerbeck Gill. We soon reach a point where we find a fingerpost offering us a choice of routes – to the right we could cross the gill, then head over to Deepdale, Whernside and Ribbleshead, or as we do today, we can go left and across Scales Moor toward Twisleton Scar End and Ingleton. Before we head left though it's worth looking further up the Gill – there is a waterfall that is well worth seeing – particularly when the flow is strong.

We are now walking on the Pennine Journey path, heading southwest, and continuing to climb gently. The route should be clearly visible – it's a popular path, but if in doubt stay below the steep flank of the hill, but above the limestone pavement, until the path takes a dogleg through the exposed limestone at Rantree Moss. We then continue southwest, and once at the highpoint, pass a curious and rather intriguing jaw like hole where water has eroded a route through the limestone pavement and through into caverns below. Our path soon reaches the end of the flat(ish) plateau, and we start our descent toward Twisleton Hall. Don't be concerned if you can see the hall over to the left whilst the path initially heads right – it soon changes direction as we head downhill.

We continue down and soon arrive at a track that is part of the Ingleton Waterfalls walk, although this section is a public right of way. We go left, through a wooden gate and down the lane toward

the hall. As we arrive at the buildings there is a track on the right – this heads down into Ingleton, and is worth exploring another time, but for now we carry straight on following the Waterfall Walk signage over a stile and down to the minor road – we are now at Oddies Lane.

Once we arrive at Oddies Lane, we turn left - the route back to our start is now very simple – we just stay on the Roman road for about 2 miles until we get back to St Leonards. As we make our way northeast, on the long side of what surely must be the most rectangular route we have ever devised, we have good views of Ingleborough with the River Doe in the valley bottom to our right. If you wanted to add a riverside picnic to this walk, there are four paths which head down from the Roman road to the river. Three of them promise stepping stones where the river might be crossed, although on the day of our walk, as you can see from the gallery, this is not always a good idea. If you do head down to the river, please keep to the permitted paths – the flower meadows here are particularly impressive and deserve protection.

Over to our left, we have the impressive Twisleton Scars, and along the base of them a number of springs where some of the rainwater falling on Scales Moor emerges having percolated through the limestone. These springs feed small streams, which head down to the Doe. Many of them completely disappear under dry conditions – although there are some which remain as reliable water sources all year and which are still used for drinking water supplies to the isolated farmsteads.

The valley here has a long history of habitation, although as we stroll through it, little is visible to the untutored eye. Documents from as far back as 1506 show that the Dale was once called Weysdale, whilst maps from 1755 show the river as the Wees. Aerial photography and old maps of the field boundaries show limestone terraces, and fields in the valley show signs of ancient parallel banks and a wood field - an agricultural practice in which trees were used to shade and shelter the animals. Primrose growth in striking abundance in an otherwise unremarkable area is often a good indicator of the site of this old practice – even when the trees have since been lost.

We press on northwest, and soon arrive back at Chapel-le-Dale – there are just a few houses in the hamlet, all of them attractive. Worth noting on the way through the village is the old well – no longer used but once the source of drinking water for the residents.

We arrive back at St Leonards – and in our case took the opportunity to look inside at the rather beautiful stained glass, before walking back down to the cars where the walk ends. At just under 12 km, this route just about stays within our “easy” category but be aware that it requires care in wet conditions.

- **Total distance 11.9 km (7.4 miles)**
- **Total Ascent 206 m**
- **Easy walk**