

WALKING IN DERBYSHIRE

by
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CICERONE

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Front cover: Chatsworth House (Walk 23)

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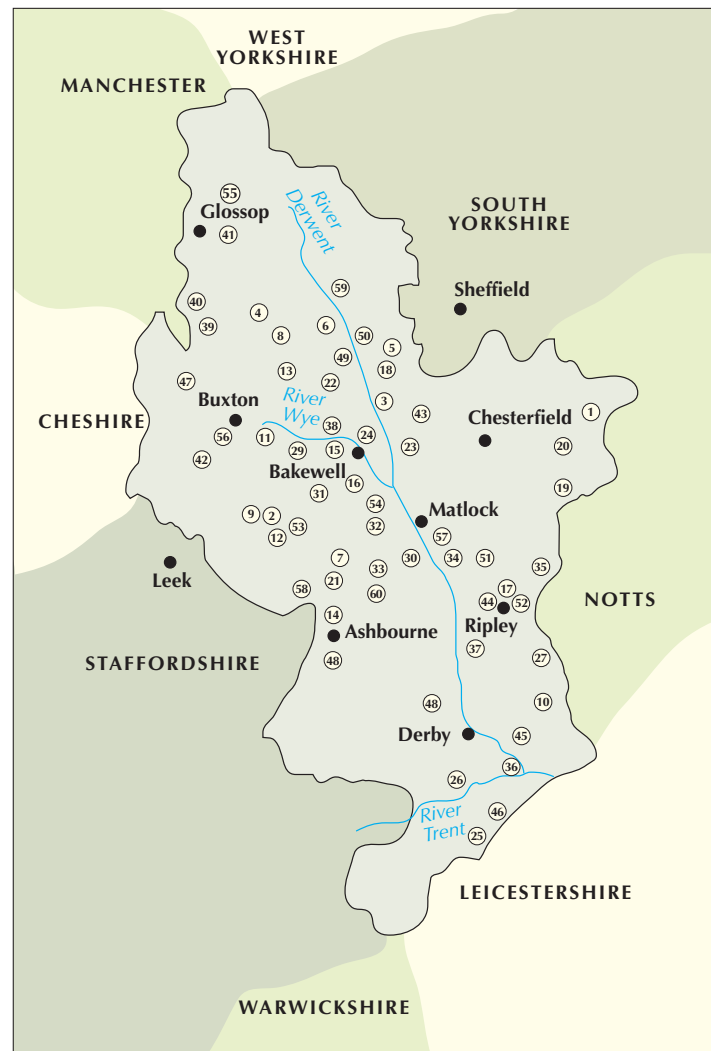
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PREFACE

Walking in Derbyshire is my third walking guide, following *Walking in Sherwood Forest and the Dukeries* (Cicerone) and *Discovery Walks in North East Derbyshire* (Sigma Press), which were both inspired by a desire to explore new local walks as an alternative to the Peak District, to which the majority of walkers living in Sheffield are automatically drawn. Although my husband, Andrew, and I currently live in South Yorkshire, we are only 200 metres from the Derbyshire border and very close to Nottinghamshire. Indeed, I have lived all my life in and around Sheffield and Manchester.

This search for a change led to a very pleasant surprise as I had simply not appreciated the scenic quality or historical interest sitting on my doorstep, and I wanted to share this with others and hopefully persuade them to dip their toes into fresh soil. So for several years I did not set foot in the Peak District, and I must admit I genuinely did miss it, and Andrew would often echo my thoughts. I was ready to return to some familiar favourite spots in the Peak District and to discover the hidden delights of south Derbyshire, which was virtually unknown to me.

Numerous walking books have been written on the Peak District, Britain's first and most visited national park, which covers roughly half of the county of Derbyshire. Comparatively few guides, however,

provide comprehensive coverage of the whole of the county or of south Derbyshire in isolation – a part of the county that adds an extra dimension in terms of scenery and completes a number of links in chains of tourist attractions identified in this guide.

All the walks in this guide are easy to moderate in terms of the difficulty of the terrain or length, as I have avoided the more challenging geography of the Dark Peak moorlands. This is partly due to my own scenic preferences and partly because I would describe myself as a Rambler rather than a serious hiker or mountaineer. In addition, this has enabled me to include with each walk various tourist attractions, to encourage families, new and infrequent walkers, and those seeking to explore more of what Derbyshire has to offer.

With this aim in mind I had little difficulty in compiling 60 walks set against the backdrop of the uniquely contrasting and outstandingly beautiful Derbyshire landscape and covering an extensive range of themes. Indeed, the problem was not what to include but what to leave out in the space permitted. For example, there are remnants of ancient civilisations, fine market towns and villages, Derbyshire customs and traditions, caverns and mines, castles, grand country houses and parklands galore, craft centres, factory shops, gardens,

Eagle Stone, Walk 3

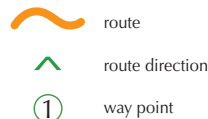


Georgian and Victorian spa resorts, industrial heritage and transport history, adventure and theme parks for the young and much more. All of this in the Heart of England with excellent accessibility from all parts of Britain and within an hour's drive for half the population of England.

Before I wrote this book my family and I already had a real love for the exceptional beauty of Derbyshire, but through my research our appreciation of the county has been greatly enhanced. It would give me great pleasure to share this with as many other families as possible. Happy walking.

Elaine Burkinshaw

Route symbols on OS map extracts
(for OS legend see printed OS maps)



SCALE: 1:50,000
0 kilometres 0.5 1
0 miles 0.5

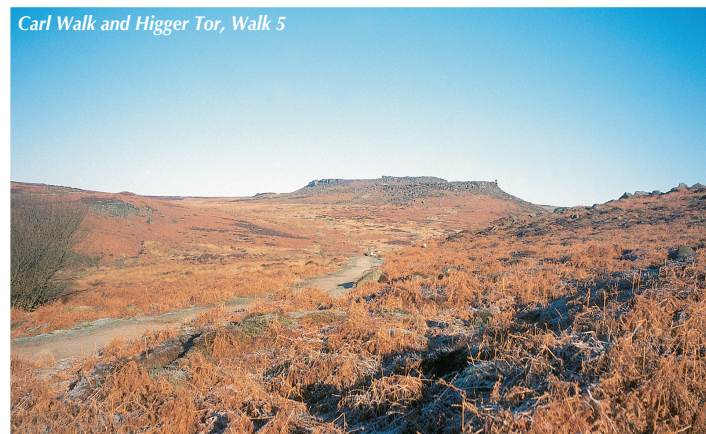
INTRODUCTION

Without doubt Derbyshire is one of the most picturesque counties in England, renowned for its varied scenic beauty ranging from wild sombre moorland in the north to sparkling rivers laced with delightful deep dales in the central area and gentle rolling countryside further south. Derbyshire has it all, except for a coastline and natural lakes. The poet John Ruskin, whose work was heavily influenced by his many visits to the county, described it as 'a lovely child's first alphabet' because 'in its very minuteness it is the most educational of all the districts of beautiful landscapes known to me'. Another poet inspired by Derbyshire's countryside was Byron, who in a letter to the Irish poet Thomas Moore said 'there are

things in Derbyshire as noble as in Switzerland or Greece'.

Derbyshire is situated at the crossroads of England where highland meets lowland. Many people tend to think of Derbyshire and the well-known Peak District (1437sq km/ 555sq miles, created as Britain's first national park in 1951) as virtually one and the same thing, but this is totally incorrect, as the bulk of the Peak District sits in the north of Derbyshire and overlaps into several other counties. Another popular misconception about the Peak District is that it is a region of 'peaks'. Surprisingly there are few hills over 610m/2000ft, and Kinder Scout, which is the highest at 636m/2088ft, is a plateau as opposed to a peak. The name is derived from

Carl Walk and Higger Tor, Walk 5



Anglo-Saxon times when a local tribe known as the Pecsætans called the area Peacland.

The Peak District National Park receives an estimated 22 million visits a year, which makes it the second most visited national park in the world after Mount Fuji in Japan. Its magnetic quality is assisted by the fact that half the population of England lives within 100km/60 miles of the Peak District borders, in areas including the conurbations of Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Stoke and Derby. The latter is the county city of Derbyshire, and home to the car and aero-engine manufacturer Rolls Royce and to Royal Crown Derby porcelain. The south of the county receives far fewer tourists and remains less well-known despite its outstanding natural beauty and a wealth of historic houses and parklands. This book visits many of these properties, including Hardwick

Hall, Bolsover Castle, Kedleston Hall, Calke Abbey, Wingfield Manor, Melbourne Hall, Shipley Hall and Elvaston Castle. Taken as a whole, Derbyshire has not only a memorable natural splendour but also a great array of tourist attractions spread liberally across the county and providing endless interest for all the family.

GEOLOGY

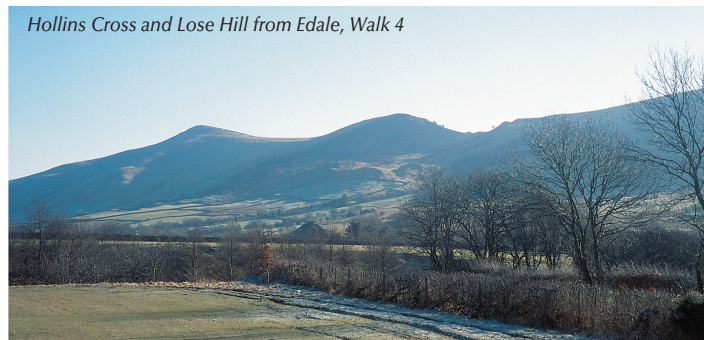
The changing topography of Derbyshire can be explained by its geology as the county has four main distinct regions. This varied geology is also reflected in the building materials and styles of architecture in the various towns and villages of the Peak District.

In the north of the county, in what has become known as the Dark Peak, there are sandstone moorlands. The sandstone, more commonly known as **gritstone**, forms a

Mam Tor, Walk 8



Hollins Cross and Lose Hill from Edale, Walk 4



horseshoe shape so that, for example, along its eastern edge there is a dramatic 20km/12 mile gritstone edge running along the Derwent Valley. Today these crags are often teeming with rock climbers, but in the past this rock was used to make millstones and grindstones and has become known as **millstone grit**. Examples of discarded millstones can be found in the Hathersage area below Stanage Edge and around Bolehill Quarry. Its most frequent use, though, has been as a building stone.

Millstone grit is insoluble but porous, so it absorbs water which often seeps through the grit to the less porous shales below, producing springs. Grit and shales are less hard than the limestone of the southern Peak District, known as the White Peak, so the rivers here have worn much wider valleys. The acid soil and harsher, wetter weather in the upland Dark Peak provide their unique landscape of bleak and windswept peat

moorland, gritstone escarpments and rugged gritstone tors.

South of the millstone grit of the Dark Peak is the **carboniferous limestone** of the White Peak, or the Derbyshire Dales as it is also known, which runs roughly from Ashbourne to Castleton. In the Dark Peak, as mentioned, shales underlie the millstone grit. Shale outcrops can also be found on the fringe of the limestone White Peak. Shale splits very easily when exposed to frost. As a friable material often interbedded with sandstone, it is vulnerable to landslip. Mam Tor is a good example of this problem, where the A625 has now been closed for a number of years due to landslip.

Limestone has fissures and is slightly soluble in water, therefore the rivers have been able to carve deep narrow valleys, which has resulted in some of the most spectacular riverside scenery in this country, such as in Dovedale. Sometimes the rivers have found a route underground,



View from Monsal Head, Walk 38

creating caverns and leaving dry valleys behind. At Winnats Pass near Castleton it is believed that a cave system has collapsed to produce a deep narrow gorge.

The limestone of the White Peak is all around you in the drystone walls dividing the fields, the crags along the deep dales, the weird rock formations in the valleys and the many quarries which have extracted (or still are extracting) stone for commercial use. Unlike the Dark Peak the much softer White Peak is able to support grassland used for farming, and an abundant range of flowers and plants.

Northeast Derbyshire has a belt of **magnesian limestone** running along its eastern edge by the Nottinghamshire border, which has resulted, for example, in the gorge and caves at Creswell Crags. Much of the remaining part of northeast

Derbyshire has developed as a result of its vast underlying coal measures and the growth of the associated industry during the Industrial Revolution. In the Peak District any coal measures found were only near the surface and the coal was of very poor quality, so all such mining activity had ceased here by the early 20th century.

South of Derby and Ashbourne is an area of **clay and sandstone**, providing a much more gentle countryside.

HISTORY

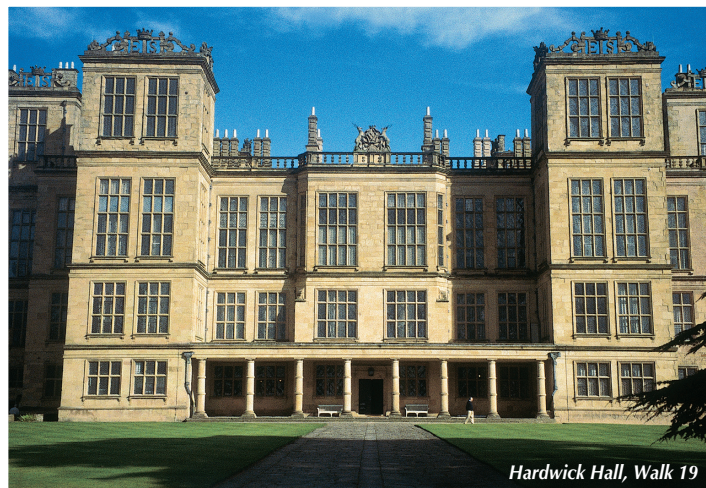
This outline of Derbyshire's history is designed to show how the various walks in this book fit into the overall picture of the county throughout the centuries, reflecting its changing economic activities and cultures over the years.

At the end of the Ice Age Britain was still connected to the continent, and nomadic man, who was a hunter-gatherer, would follow herds to Britain at certain times of the year. Creswell Crags on the Derbyshire/ Nottinghamshire border is recognised as the most northerly known inhabited place from the **Palaeolithic period (Old Stone Age)** between 45,000 and 10,000 years ago. As the ice melted, Britain became an island around 8000 years ago.

The years 8000 to 4000bc are known as the **Mesolithic period (Middle Stone Age)**. After the Ice Age nomadic man came in increasing numbers to the Dark Peak. By 4500bc man could be described as semi-nomadic, visiting the Pennine uplands in the summer and moving

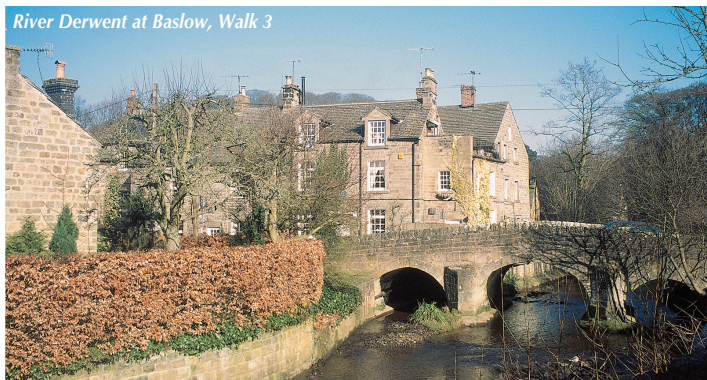
east in the winter. It is now believed that fires once thought to be accidental were in fact created deliberately to clear what was then forested land for grazing and crop growth. This land management may even explain the lack of trees in the Dark Peak and the development of the peat bogs at a later stage. Evidence of Mesolithic man can still be found in the Dark Peak today where it is possible to find microliths, which are tiny flakes of flint from hunting tools.

The final period of the Stone Age, the **Neolithic period (New Stone Age)** from 4000 to 2000bc, saw the gradual transition from hunter-gatherer to farmer, and permanent settlements began to appear in the White Peak around 3000bc. The fertile soil and abundance of springs provided an



Hardwick Hall, Walk 19

River Derwent at Baslow, Walk 3



ideal combination for growing crops and grazing sheep, cattle and pigs. During the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age, man built a number of stone circles in Derbyshire and also earthwork barrows, which usually contained a stone chambered tomb below it.

At this point it is worth mentioning one of the paradoxes of the Peak District, where tumuli carrying the suffix 'low', from the Old English *hlaw* meaning burial mound, actually denotes a high point. Derbyshire's most impressive Neolithic monument is Arbor Low, the 'Stonehenge of the North'. Minninglow provides an excellent example of a chambered tomb from this period.

The **Bronze Age** from 2000 to 700BC is known for its emergence of the Beaker people, whose culture is hallmarked by their highly decorated pottery and bronze. The Beaker people settled widely up the valleys of the Derwent, Wye and Trent. The

best-preserved remains are of a settlement on Stanton Moor in the Derwent Valley where the Nine Ladies Stone Circle can be seen. Another important site is on the opposite side of the Derwent Valley on the gritstone edges around Curbar, and more recently a site has come to light at Swarkestone on the Trent. Most of the stone circles and round barrows in Derbyshire relate to the early Bronze Age. It is estimated that there are some 500 barrows in the Peak District, many of which were somewhat clumsily excavated by Victorian archaeologists such as Thomas Bateman, although his collection has been saved and can be seen at Sheffield City Museum.

Until recently it was thought that the remains of hill forts scattered around Derbyshire's Peak District were mainly from the **Iron Age** period of 700BC to AD50 but it is now thought more likely that they date to the late Bronze Age. Mam Tor, Carl

Wark, Fin Cop and Burr Tor provide the main examples. It was also previously believed that they were entirely defensive structures for the Iron Age Brigante tribe who inhabited most of northern England but they were probably also used for other purposes. They may well have offered a summer place to watch over the herds of livestock and provide a tribal meeting place.

The **Romans** moved north of the River Trent to secure their northern border in early AD70, and this also allowed them to exploit and protect for themselves the rich lead deposits of the Peak District. They established two forts for military purposes at Brough (Navio) in the Hope Valley and at Melandra near Glossop at the entrance to the Longdendale Valley. A road network was also built across the Peak District linking these

two forts and other forts around the region. The centre of Roman lead production is thought to have been Lutudarum, and this name has been found on Roman pig or ingots of lead. The location of Lutudarum has always remained a mystery but is thought to be in the Wirksworth/Carsington area. When Carsington Reservoir was being constructed in the 1980s some archaeologists felt that they had uncovered the elusive site but the evidence is far from conclusive.

Military settlement by the Romans in Derbyshire was followed by an element of civilian settlement but there were no grand luxurious villas such as the ones established further south. Civilian settlements grew up around the two forts, and the Romans discovered the warm thermal waters at Buxton and established a spa resort





Dovedale, Walk 58

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This book is a collection of 60 circular, easy to moderate, day or half-day walks from across the county. They range in distance from 4km/2½ miles to 15.5km/9½ miles and are suitable for individuals and families. Each walk includes famed beauty spots and attractions and leaves plenty of scope to explore some of the less visited areas.

Each route is linked to a main historical theme, and the walks have been arranged in a rough chronological order according to the selected theme, so that you are literally walking through layers of history and treading in the footsteps of past generations. Information on the theme of the walk and other points of interest precedes the route instructions for each trail.

Where appropriate, telephone numbers and websites are provided for the tourist attractions so you can check opening times, ticket prices and so on.

A map of each route is included, taken from the OS Explorer 1:50,000 series and the distance, starting point, relevant published map to take with you and the terrain you will encounter along the way are described in the box at the start. It is strongly recommended that you read the whole of the route instructions before setting out on any walk so that you are aware of the precise nature of the route, including any steeper sections, stiles and so forth. There is also a route summary table in Appendix A to help you choose your day's outing.

WALK 1
Creswell Crags

Distance	9km/5½ miles
Start	Creswell Crags Visitor Centre off the B6042 which runs between the A616 at Creswell and the A60
Map	OS Explorer 270 Sherwood Forest
Terrain	Easy walking along fields, country lanes and tracks

Following the discovery of human remains by archaeologists in the late 19th century this 'miniature Cheddar Gorge' has become one of Europe's most important sites for palaeontology and archaeology, ranking alongside Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall, although from the public perspective it is not as well known. Creswell Crags Visitor Centre provides an interpretation and appreciation of the importance of the ravine in the evolution of man.

Creswell Crags is a dramatic magnesian limestone gorge honeycombed with caves, which bisects the Nottinghamshire/northeast Derbyshire border. The animal and plant remains found in the caves provide a unique time-capsule and tell the fascinating story of the origins of human life during the last Ice Age.



Creswell Crags

The entire gorge is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. From the first Victorian archaeologists, however, the crags have suffered from poor and inappropriate management, such as the use of dynamite to blast the caves and a road and sewage works built in the gorge. Over recent decades there has been substantial development in the gorge and surrounding area to implement the higher standards of management, conservation, infrastructure and interpretation that the site deserved to repair the damage done in the last century.

ROUTE INSTRUCTIONS

1 From the visitor centre car park, which is on the route of the Robin Hood Way, walk past the visitor centre and take the path off to the left signposted “To The Crags”. Turn left again over a bridge into Crags Meadow. The Crags are signposted to the right. There is a path down each side of the pond and either option may be taken.

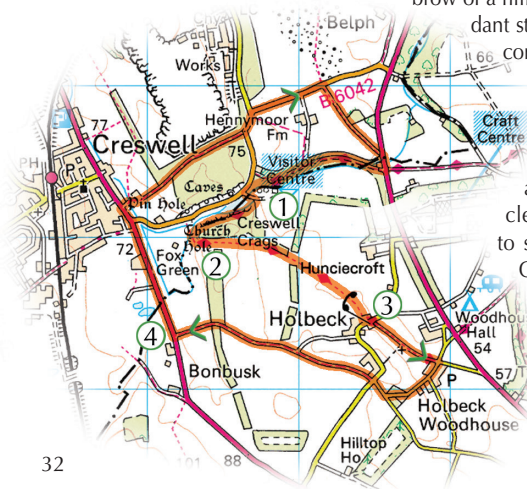
At the end of the pond turn left and climb a stile in a few metres. Continue uphill reaching the brow of a hill and look for a redundant stile in the far left-hand corner of the field.

2 Follow the wall edge on your left which later becomes a wire fence. The clear path then begins to swing right to a stile. Climb the stile and follow the waymarked path straight ahead across several fields until you reach the road in Holbeck.

3 Turn left and then immediately right at a signpost onto a surfaced tree-lined track. Halfway down this track on the right-hand side is St Winifred’s Church, which is the private church of the Portland family from nearby Welbeck Abbey. On meeting a road leave the Robin Hood Way by turning right. Walk through Holbeck Woodhouse and where the road forks bear to the right. At a T-junction turn right and walk to another T-junction. Cross over the road and follow the signposted track in front of you which is hedged on both sides. This clear track takes you to the A616.

4 At the road turn right and follow the footpath along the right-hand side of the A616 into Creswell. Shortly after crossing a road junction off to the right which leads to the Crags, turn right at a signpost and head up towards Bank House Farm.

Follow the track around the right-hand perimeter of the farm, which shortly becomes hedged on both sides. Turn left on reaching the B6042 and then right in 100m onto Henny Moor Lane. Continue past the driveway to Henny Moor Farm and 100m further on turn right onto a green lane and walk to the A60. Turn right onto this road and then right again in 30m onto a track by a lodge, which returns you to the visitor centre.



Refreshments	Creswell Crags Visitor Centre
Toilets	Creswell Crags Visitor Centre
Key Features	Creswell Crags and its visitor centre (www.creswell-crags.org.uk , 01909 720378)