

WHITSUNDALE and CLUMPSTONE HILL

FROM KELD 7½ MILES (12KM)

Some of Upper Swaledale's most spectacular scenery is revealed during this moderate hill walk. It follows a section of the 'Coast-to-Coast' footpath and the views are excellent throughout.

Our starting point is the charming village of Keld, the last settlement of any size in Swaledale. Its name comes from the Norse 'Kelda' which means spring or stream, but it was called Appeltrekelde until the late Middle Ages meaning 'the spring by the apple tree'. The Vikings certainly knew what they were doing when they settled at Keld. It is a perfect refuge, sheltered on all sides by rolling green hills. Nearby there are several waterfalls, including Catrake Force, East Gill Force, Wain Wath Force and the spectacular Kison Force.

Our route from Keld crosses the river Swale and climbs past the striking East Gill Force to arrive at East Stonesdale Farm. Two famous footpaths meet here; the Pennine Way heading north to Tan Hill and Scotland; and the Coast-to-Coast has reached its halfway point with 95 of its 190 miles completed.

The views from East Stonesdale are outstanding, with the High Seat ridge providing a magnificent backdrop. After passing the pretty Currack Force we continue above the limestone cliff of Cotterby Scar and into the peaceful valley of Whitsundale. The path takes us past the dramatic gorge of Oven Mouth, whose steep crags and sharp cleft provide fine views of Whitsundale Beck. Further on, we pass the narrow gorge at How Edge Scars where a waterfall plunges steeply through

the trees into the beck below. Approaching Ravenseat another attractive waterfall is revealed.

Ravenseat is Swaledale's remotest settlement, situated on the old jagger road to Tan Hill and Teesdale. Eleven families once lived here. Most of the men worked in the coal mines at Tan Hill and had to travel the jagger road twice each day in all weathers, often soaked and chilled to the bone. It has an ancient packhorse bridge with a high humpback and its original stone cobbled surface remains. The term 'jagger' was applied to the man in charge of a packhorse train. It derived from the German 'Jaeger' pony, one of the hardy packhorse breeds commonly used in the Dales. Packhorse trains consisted of between twenty and forty ponies, in the charge of a driver and one or two helpers. The leading pony had a bell, to warn travellers and other packhorse trains of their approach, so that a passing place could be found.

From Ravenseat we follow the road to Black Howe, where we descend through the fields to Hoggarth Bridge. During the descent the large farmhouse of Hoggarths can be seen to the right. It was rebuilt on this site after the first house had been washed away by flood in 1899. In that year a cloudburst on Great Shunner Fell caused

large volumes of water to rush down Great Ash Gill behind Hoggarths, which at that time was situated lower down, on the south side of the river Swale. The people in the farmhouse had just enough time to escape through a bedroom window, but when the floodwaters subsided the house was little more than a ruin.

Leaving Hoggarth Bridge we climb over Clumpstone Hill and drop gently down into Angram. During the early nineteenth century, an evening school was held in one of Angram's cottages. The teacher had to give his lessons with chalk on the flags of the kitchen floor. His pupils, all past childhood, travelled many miles for their 'bit of learning'. This education was not free, each pupil had to pay a small sum to the teacher.

The road could be followed back to Keld, but our route favours the little valley of Skeb Skeugh Beck. The river Swale flowed through this valley until the end of the last Ice Age. Debris left behind by the melting glacier formed a dam across the valley. The river created a new route, cutting the deep gorge on the eastern side of Kison, forming the isolated hill we see today.

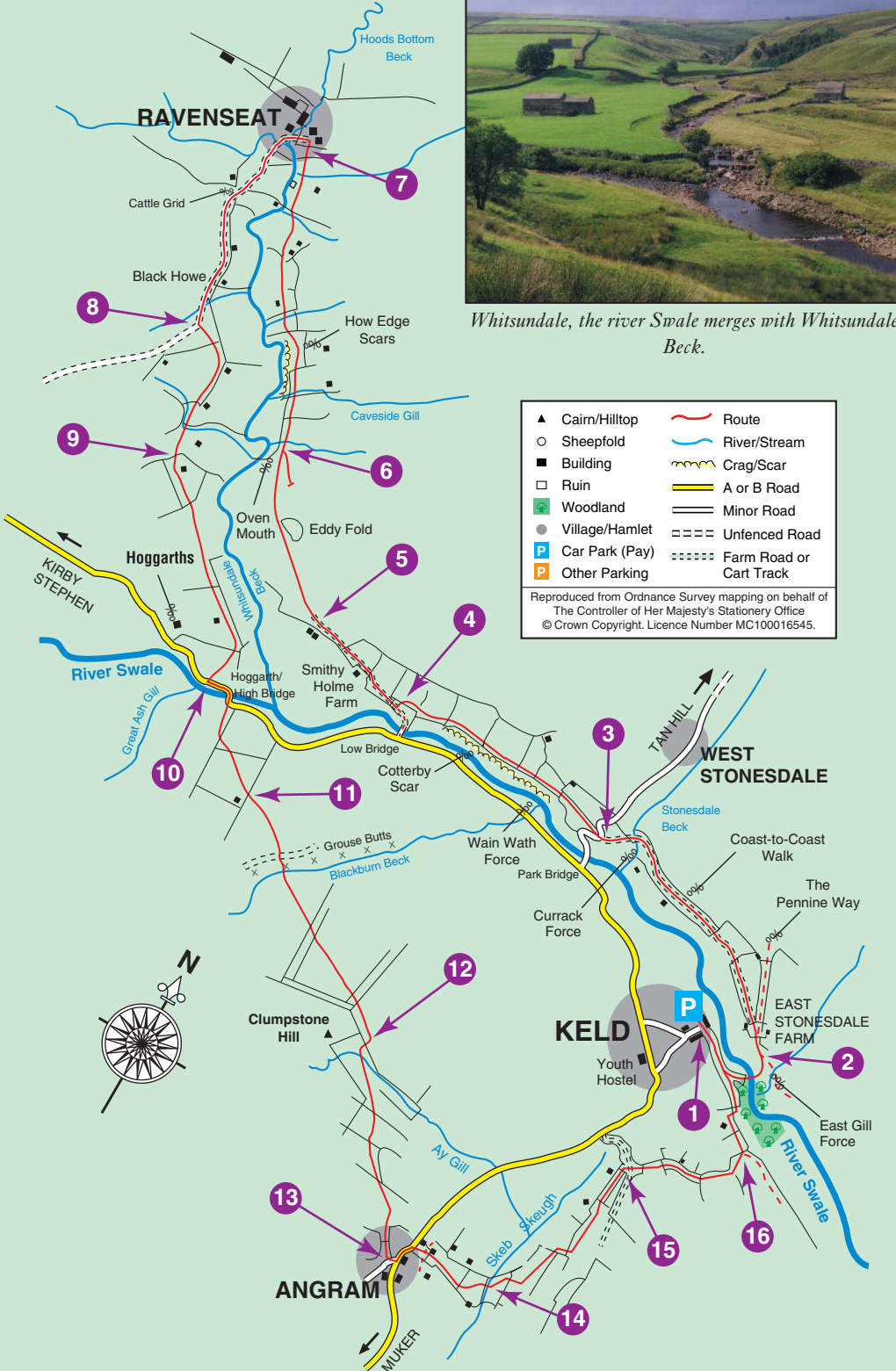
After crossing the valley we join the Pennine Way footpath which leads back into the village square at Keld.

Start/Parking:	Keld, there is a good sized car park at Park Lodge Farm just off the village square.
Location:	Keld is situated on the B6270 Richmond to Kirkby Stephen road 23 miles (37km) west of Richmond.
Grid Ref:	893 012.
Distance:	7½ miles (12km) circular. Allow 4 to 4½ hrs.
OS Maps:	Explorer OL30 (1:25,000) or Landranger 91 (1:50,000).
Refreshments:	Park Lodge Farmhouse at Keld.
Public Toilets:	Keld, between the road junction and the village square.
Other:	The United Reform Church, youth hostel, telephone, bus service.

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Whitsundale, the river Swale merges with Whitsundale Beck.



- 1 (GR: 893 012) Leave the car park and cross the square to an enclosed track (*SP Public Footpath to Muker*). Follow the track for about ½ mile (875m), turn left (*SP Pennine Way*) and descend a steep track. Go through a gate and cross the footbridge over the river Swale. Climb up along the track to the left, passing East Gill Force.
- 2 (GR: 896 011) At a junction of tracks (*PW and C to C*) take the left track climbing to East Stonesdale Farm. Take the left fork through the farmyard and follow the farm lane which leads to the road above Park Bridge.
- 3 (GR: 887 016) Cross the road, climb uphill for a few yards and go through the gate on the left, just above the bend (*SP Footpath*). Follow the right wall and go through a gate. Now continue with the left boundary along the top of Cotterby Scar.
- 4 (GR: 877 016) Pass through a gap in the left wall, turn right and follow a rough farm track. Keep right at a fork and continue past Smithy Holme via two gates.
- 5 (GR: 873 018) When the track fades out near a barn, head right towards a signpost on the hillside above (*Ravenseat ¾ - Keld 1¼*). Continue along a boggy path passing below a large sheepfold (*Eddy Fold*), to Oven Mouth.
- 6 (GR: 869 022) Follow the left boundary through three fields. After passing the How Edge Scars continue straight ahead, keeping to the higher ground and to the right of a barn. Pass to the left of two barns in the next pasture (*Ravenseat comes into view*). Continue via a gate and two gap stiles to enter the hamlet.
- 7 (GR: 863 033) Turn left and follow the farm lane down to cross the packhorse bridge. Continue along a tarmac road, over a cattle grid and past Black Howe.
- 8 (GR: 863 025) Turn left (*SP Footpath to Hoggarth Bridge*) cross a ladder stile and follow the left wall past two barns. Go through a gap stile, descend through a broken wall and climb back up keeping to the right of a barn.
- 9 (GR: 865 020) Go through a gap stile to the left of the gate. Follow the right wall and begin to descend via four more gap stiles to the road near Hoggarth Bridge. (*Hoggarth Bridge is also shown on some maps as High Bridge.*)
- 10 (GR: 870 014) Turn left and cross the bridge. Leave the road via a gate opposite (*SP Angram 1½ m*) and climb the steep bank to a ladder stile. Cross the stile and climb diagonally across two fields via two more ladder stiles.
- 11 (GR: 874 011) Continue across open moorland and descend to Blackburn Beck. Cross the beck near a line of grouse butts. Keep to the same heading and climb back up to pass through a step/gap stile combination. Cross a large pasture to another step/gap stile combination. Continue along a narrow path close to the wall.
- 12 (GR: 883 004) Go through a stile on the right and cross a stream. Climb to the far wall corner, bear half right and go through a gap stile. Cross a small hollow to another gap stile and follow the left wall to a gate. Descend via two gates to Angram.
- 13 (GR: 888 997) Turn left and continue to the main road, turn left and after about 50 yards (46m) leave the road via a gate on the right. Descend to a barn and pass through a gap to the right of it. Continue descending and go through an open gateway and bear left to cross Skeb Skeugh Beck via a bridge in the bottom corner.
- 14 (GR: 891 999) Head half left and go through a gap stile, climb steeply to a stile in the left corner of the field. Turn right and climb to a stile in the top wall. Turn left and follow the wall through two gates.
- 15 (GR: 894 005) Cross a broad stone track and climb up to a gate on the left. Go through the gate and follow a clear path over the hillside.
- 16 (GR: 897 008) Go through a gated stile on the left, continue to the right of a barn. Pass through a gate onto a broad track, turn left and go through a gate. Follow a clear enclosed track leading back to village square at Keld.