

Nine Standards (Kirkby Stephen Circular)			Kirkby Stephen to Garsdale via High Seat		
1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check	1 st walk check	2 nd walk check	3 rd walk check
14 th Sep. 2023					
Current status	Document last updated Monday, 02 nd October 2023				
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Nine Standards (Kirkby Stephen Circular or to Garsdale)

Start: Kirkby Stephen Station

Finish: Kirkby Stephen or Garsdale Stations

Kirkby Stephen Station, map reference NY 762 066, is 360 km northwest of Charing Cross, 60 km southeast of Carlisle and 263m above sea level. Garsdale Station, map reference SD 788 918, is 15 km south southeast of Kirkby Stephen Station and 343m above sea level. Both are in **Cumbria**.

Length: 18.1 km (11.2 mi) or 29.5 km (18.3 mi).

Cumulative ascent/descent: 584m or 914/834m. For a shorter or longer walk, see below **Walk Options**.

Toughness: 6 out of 10 or 9 out of 10

Time: 5 or 8 ½ hours walking time.

Transport: Kirkby Stephen and Garsdale are stations on the Leeds - Settle - Carlisle Line, with eight trains per day Mon-Sat and seven on Sundays (six at Garsdale). Journey time to Kirkby Stephen is 55 minutes from Carlisle, 44 from Settle and 106 from Leeds. Garsdale is 12 minutes further from Carlisle.

Saturday Walkers' Club: The walk is not practicable as a daywalk from London.

OS Landranger Map: 91 (Appleby-in-Westmorland) & 98 (Wensleydale & Upper Wharfedale)

OS Explorer Map: OL19 (Howgill Fells & Upper Eden Valley)

Walk Notes:

This is relatively short excursion up to a magnificent viewpoint at the top of Hartley Fell, overlooking the North Pennines and the Upper Eden Valley, also with views across to the Howgill Fells and the Lake District, despite only reaching the modest height of 660m above sea level. The top is graced by nine enigmatic differently shaped cairns up to four metres high, the Nine Standards. They are at least 500 years old and believed to be markers of the historic boundary between Westmorland and the North Riding of Yorkshire.

En route you experience an exciting stretch of the Eden River, where the water noisily tumbles over exposed rock slabs, down rock faces and a tight gorge, where water and gravel have created holes, cup-shaped incisions and mini-gorges in the river bed. Further along, you follow a narrow woodland path along the rushing Lathwaite Beck, which speeds down a chute at the bottom of a high rock face and down a waterfall.

The route then joins the Coast to Coast Walk and heads to the top along a good track. The descent leads through some upland peat bog (on a decent path) before entering limestone country with shake holes and swallow holes and follows dry paths around the stunning Dukerdale and around or over Tailbridge Hill.

The final descent down Nateby Common provides for fine views across a patchwork of pastures to heathery commons and into the Eden Valley, before passing a tea stop in Nateby, about 30 minutes before the end.

An Alternative Descent leads through Kirkby Stephen town, cutting out Dukerdale and Nateby Common.

An Alternative Ending leads over exposed high ground along the British Watershed to Garsdale Station.

Walk Options:

An Alternative Descent off Hartley Fell part-reverses the ascent route and follows lanes and paths into Kirkby Stephen for its tea options: 20.1 km/12.5 mi with 611m ascent/descent, **6/10** rating.

An Alternative Ending in Garsdale follows the British Watershed between the Eden and Swale catchments across high ground, broadly along the Cumbria/Yorkshire Boundary. Cross High Pike Hill, High Seat, Gregory Chapel and Hugh Seat without much undulation to then descend through the upland moorland that is the source of the Eden River and pick up The High Way above the Mallerstang Valley by Hell Gill Bridge. Continue along a good track into the River Ure catchment: 29.5 km/18.3 mi, 914/834m ascent/descent, **9/10** rating.

On the Alternative Ending, you can cut out the last 1.4 km by taking the **Garsdale Station Shuttle Bus** (Mon-Sat) or the **Wensleydale Explorer 885** (summer Sundays only) from the Moorcock Inn.

On the Main Walk, the descent through Nateby Common can be varied by going over the top of Tailbridge Hill, an excellent viewpoint, rather than skirting around its flank.

A loop from Nateby to and through Kirkby Stephen links to the Alternative Descent and passes many tea places and some sights (add 3.6 km and 47m ascent).

Shortcuts:

- **Outbound and return route are never far away from each other**, so the middle bit of the route can be cut quite easily using straight forward rights of way, for example either of the two south westerly footpaths from Ladthwaite Farm or the south easterly bridleway from halfway up the ascent of Hartley Fell, from Faraday Gill across to Rollinson Gill;
- **Another obvious shortcut** is to follow the route only as far as the top of the tarmac lane north of Ladthwaite Farm, and descend from there along the Alternative Descent;
- **The Most Direct Descent from the Standards** is achieved by turning back down the route of the ascent and then picking up either the alternative descent through Kirkby Stephen (see below) or reversing all of the main ascent route from the station.

Lunch: Picnic

Tea Kirkby Stephen Ending (details last updated 25/08/2023)

The Black Bull at Nateby Nateby, Kirkby Stephen, Cumbria, CA17 4JP (01768 371 588, <https://www.nateby-inn.co.uk/>). The Black Bull is located 2.3 km from the end of the Main Walk. Open 12.00-14.00 and 17.00-20.30 Mon-Fri, 12.00-24.00 Sat and 12.00-22.30 Sun. Food served 12.00-14.00 and 17.00-20.30 Mon-Fri and 12.00-20.30 Sat-Sun.

Numerous options in Kirkby Stephen on an alternative route from the top to and through the town. See the walk directions for details.

Tea Garsdale Ending (details last updated 16/09/2023)

The Moorcock Inn Garsdale Head, Sedbergh, Yorkshire, LA10 5PU (01969 667 488, <https://www.moorcockinngarsdale.com/>). The Moorcock is located 1.4 km from the end of the Alternative Ending in Garsdale. It is a former inn now run as a 'Bed & Breakfast with a licensed tea shop' with kitchen and bar closing at 17.00 hours (earlier on Sundays) on the few days it is open to the public at all.

Northern Glossary

beck: *stream, brook*; brig(g): *bridge*; -by: *habitation*; cam: *bank, slope, ridge*; carr: *marshy woodland or shrubland*; clough: *narrow valley, cleft in a hillside, ravine, glen, gorge, cliff, rocky precipice*; crag: *steep rugged mass of rock projecting upward or outward*; currick: *cairn, pile of stones, often locations used to keep watch for Scottish raiders*; dale: *valley*; -ey: *island, dry area in a marshy place*; fell: *hill, mountain slope (especially rough moorland)*; firth/frith: *long, narrow inlet of the sea or estuary*; force/foss: *waterfall, rapids*; frith: *area of peace, protection, safety, security*; garth: *small grass enclosure adjacent to a house*; gate: *way, street*; gill/ghyll: *small narrow valley or ravine*; hagg: *part of an area of woodland, especially on a sloping bank*; holm(e): *island, inland promontory, raised ground in marsh, river-meadow*; how(e): *barrow, small hill*; hush: *(Roman era) mine on steep hillside, using dammed up water to wash away topsoil and boulders, revealing the underlying lead or ore veins*; ing(s): *meadow(s), especially water meadow near a river*; keld/kell: *spring or well*; kirk: *church*; laithe/leeath: *barn, agricultural building*; lang: *long*; ling: *heather*; lonning/lonnin': *lane or track, something less than a road, more rural than a street, usually short*; mell: *sand dunes*; mire: *bog*; moss: *bog, marsh*; ness: *headland, promontory*; nick: *shallow notch, cut or indentation on an edge or a surface*; pike: *spike, sharp point, peak*; rake: *slant, incline*; rigg: *ridge*; scar/scaur: *cliff, rocky outcrop with a steep face*; seat/set(t)/side: *summer pasture or dwelling place*; seaves: *rushes*; shaw: *hurdle, gate*; sike/syke/sitch: *small stream or gulley, gutter*; stang: *pole, shaft, stake, wooden bar*; stoop/stowp/stoup: *post, gatepost, distance marker (milestone), standing stone*; -sty: *ascent, ascending lane or path, narrow pathway or course*; tarn: *lake or pond (especially in an upland location)*; thorp(e)/t(h)rop: *village or small settlement*; thwait(e): *village or small settlement*; toft(s): *small farmstead with enclosed land, later applied to a village or small settlement*; wath: *ford*; whinny: *gorse, furze, thorny vegetation*; -wich/wick: *village or settlement*.

Notes

Kirkby Stephen

Kirkby Stephen is a market town in Westmorland and Furness, Cumbria. Historically part of Westmorland, it lies on the A685, surrounded by sparsely populated hill country, about 40 km from the nearest larger towns: Kendal and Penrith. The River Eden rises 10 km away above the Mallerstang Valley in the peat bogs below Hugh Seat and passes the eastern edge of the town. Kirkby Stephen serves as a base for tourism in the Upper Eden Valley area and is a 'Walkers Are Welcome' town on the route of the Coast to Coast Walk.

Geologically, the Upper Eden Valley is dominated by limestone to the south of Kirkby and in Mallerstang, but by red sandstone further north. The main rock from which most houses in Kirkby Stephen are built, is brockram: fragments of limestone in a cement of red sandstone. The river at the gorge in Stenkrith Park in the south of the town has carved this rock into many fantastic shapes, collectively known as the Devil's Grinding Mill or Devil's Hole. The circular holes have been created by pebbles swirling around in them for thousands of years. The Millennium Bridge and a road bridge span this fascinating spot.

Other nearby scenic features include the Nine Standards, a group of stone cairns high up on the ridge of Hartley Fell and visible from many spots in town, the romantically ruined Pendragon Castle as well as Croglam Castle, pre-historic earthworks on the southern edge of town.

The origins of the town's name are unclear, as the Parish Church is not dedicated to St. Stephen or any other saint. It is though referred to as The Cathedral of the Dales and serves both the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities and houses Kirkby's most famous relic, a 10th century (i.e.: Viking) Loki Stone, only two of which are known of in Europe, as well as many other Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Norman carved stones.

Settle – Carlisle Railway

The Settle – Carlisle line is a 117 km-long (73 mi) railway line in northern England. The route crosses the remote, scenic regions of the Yorkshire Dales and the North Pennines, running between Settle Junction on the Leeds–Morecambe line and Carlisle, near the English-Scottish borders. It was constructed in the 1870s and has several notable tunnels and viaducts. The line was built by the then Midland Railway to be able to run trains to Scotland, as the then London & North Western blocked access to a short bit of track linking Midland's network to the existing line to the North. The works needed over 6,000 navvies, who worked in remote locations, enduring harsh weather conditions. Large camps were established to house the navvies, most of them Irish, with many becoming complete townships with post offices and schools. They were named Inkerman, Sebastapol and Jericho. The remains of one camp – Batty Green – where 2,300 navvies lived and worked, can be seen near Ribbleshead.

In the 1980s, British Rail planned to close the line. This prompted a campaign to save it, led by the Friends of the Settle–Carlisle Line (FoSCL). The campaign uncovered evidence that BR had mounted a dirty tricks campaign, by exaggerating the cost of repairs and diverting traffic away from the line in order to justify its closure plans, a process referred to as 'closure by stealth'. In 1989, the UK government announced the line would be saved from closure. Since then, passenger numbers have grown steadily from less than 93,000 in the 1983 to 1.2 million in 2012. Eight formerly closed stations have been reopened and several quarries have been reconnected to the line and it remains one of the most popular railway routes in the UK for charter trains and specials. The railway's summit at 356m is at Aisgill, just north of Garsdale Station, and is the highest point reached by main-line trains in England. <https://settle-carlisle.co.uk/> <https://www.foscl.org.uk/>

Four of the railway properties are available as holiday lets:

<https://settlecarlisletrust.org.uk/stay-at-a-station/> <http://www.dentstation.co.uk/>

Yorkshire Dales National Park

The Yorkshire Dales National Park is a 2,178 km² (841 sq mi) national park covering most of the Yorkshire Dales (some to the south and east of the national park are located in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Most of the park is in North Yorkshire, with a sizeable area in Cumbria and a small part in Lancashire. The park was designated in 1954 being then entirely within Yorkshire, and extended in 2016 westwards into Lancashire and Cumbria - encompassing much of the area between the old boundaries of the park and the M6. Over 95% of the land in the park is in private ownership and there are over 1,000 farms in the park, as well as some 23,500 residents (as of 2017). A 2018 report estimated that the Park attracted over four million visitors per year. In 2020, the park was named as an International Dark Sky Reserve.

<https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/>

Nine Standards

The Nine Standards are a group of cairns, up to 4 metres high, located near the summit of Hartley Fell in the North Pennines (although the top is now mostly referred to as Nine Standards Rigg). Situated at a height of 650m above sea level, they offer a better viewpoint than the actual summit a few hundred metres to the south. Their age and original purpose are unknown, but they have been mentioned in documents for almost 500 years, and other documents imply their existence much earlier, possibly as far back as the 12th century.

It is likely that they marked the boundary between Westmorland and Swaledale, whose modern equivalent boundary (Yorkshire and Cumbria) is near but not close. Alternatively, it could have just been the work of some bored mine workers or shepherds. The cairns have to go undergo occasional repair and restoration; this was last done in 2005. <https://ninestandards.org.uk/>

River Eden

The River Eden is entirely in Cumbria and is one of the few large rivers in England that flows northwards. The source of the river is on the high limestone fells above Mallerstang Common, between High Seat, Yorkshire Dales and Hugh Seat. Here it forms the boundary between Cumbria and North Yorkshire. Two other rivers arise in the same peat bogs, within a kilometre of each other: the Swale and the Ure.

The Eden makes its way across eastern Cumbria, with the hills of the North Pennines to the East, and the fells of the Lake District to the west, to Carlisle. Here it merges with other rivers to form the great Solway Firth estuary, before reaching the open sea, 145 km (90 mi) from its source.

The river's name derives from the Celtic word *ituna*, meaning *water*, or *rushing*.

The Eden Valley is green and fertile but in medieval times the valley was vulnerable to Scottish raids, and the number of castles and Pele towers (small stone structures with walls from a metre thick, unique to the North of England) in the area are testament to a turbulent and often violent past.

Stainmore Railway Line

The South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway (SD&LUR) built a railway line in 1861 linking the Stockton and Darlington Railway with the West Coast Main Line at Tebay, via Barnard Castle, Stainmore Summit and Kirkby Stephen. It was built to take coke from the Durham coalfields to the Cumberland & Furness blast furnaces and iron ore back to Cleveland. It became known as the Stainmore Line but closed in stages from 1952 to 1962.

Poetry Path

Conceived by Dick Capel of the East Cumbria Countryside Project and installed in 2004, the Poetry Path celebrates a year in the life of a hill farmer and their ancient relationship with the stunning landscape in and around the Upper Eden Valley. Twelve short poems, one per calendar month, were written by local poet, Meg Peacocke, and have been carved by lettering artist Pip Hall into blocks of local stone incorporated into walls and stiles or positioned as milestones and installed at intervals along a circuital route either side of the River Eden. Route descriptions can be found online and a 12-page brochure is on sale at the Tourist Office.

A Pennine Journey

The Pennine Journey is a 391 km (243 mi) waymarked circular Long-Distance Path from Settle up through North Yorkshire, Durham, Northumberland and over to Cumbria and back to Settle. It was developed by the Wainwright Society and is a recreation of a solitary walk Alfred Wainwright made in 1938 through the Pennines, but adapted for today's roads and rights-of-way, i.e.: taking a route that Wainwright might have chosen today. The route traverses the Yorkshire Dales and Durham moorlands to follow Hadrian's Wall for a while and heading back south along the Pennines, up the Eden Valley and along the Howgill Fells. <https://penninejourney.org/>

Coast to Coast Walk

The Coast to Coast (or C to C), is a 292 km (182 mi) waymarked linear Long-Distance Path between the west and east coasts of Northern England. Devised by Alfred Wainwright, it passes through three contrasting national parks: the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales, and the North York Moors, leading from the Irish Sea at St Bees to the North Sea at Robin Hood's Bay. The C to C will become a National Trail, following a successful campaign by the Wainwright Society and will officially open as such in 2025, then 317 km (197 mi) long.

Shake Holes and Swallow Holes

Shake holes (or sinkholes or dolines) are a depression or hole in the ground caused by some form of collapse of the surface layer. Some are caused by karst processes, for example, the chemical dissolution of carbonate rocks or suffusion processes. They tend to occur in karst landscapes, which can have up to thousands of sinkholes within a small area, giving the landscape a pock-marked appearance. These sinkholes can drain all the water, so that there are only subterranean rivers in these areas.

Limestone Pavement

A limestone pavement is a natural karst landform consisting of a flat, incised surface of exposed limestone that resembles an artificial pavement. The term is mainly used in the UK and Ireland, where many of these landforms have developed distinctive surface patterning resembling paving blocks. Similar landforms in other parts of the world are known as alvars. Conditions for limestone pavements are created when an advancing glacier scrapes away overburden and exposes horizontally bedded limestone, with subsequent glacial retreat leaving behind a flat, bare surface. Limestone is slightly soluble in water and especially in acid rain, so corrosive drainage along joints and cracks in the limestone can produce slabs called *clints* isolated by deep fissures up to 6m deep called *grykes*. Pavements that develop beneath the topsoil usually exhibit more rounded forms.

Lady Ann's Way

Lady Anne's Way is a 160 km (100 mi) waymarked linear Long-Distance Path from Airedale, Wharfedale and Wensleydale in North Yorkshire into the Vale of Eden in Cumbria. The route links houses and towers once owned by the Clifford family, but is named after Lady Anne Clifford. She was disinherited from her father's estates upon his death by it passing to the next male heir. But 38 years later, it came to her when the last males in her family lineage died, and she became Baroness Clifford of Westmorland and Vecsey. She renovated and repaired the buildings and continually travelled between them taking her household retinue with her.

WALK DIRECTIONS

Alighting from the train at **Kirkby Stephen Station**, a stop on the **Settle – Carlisle Railway** in the **Yorkshire Dales National Park**, leave the station through a wooden gate from platform 1 from the direction of Carlisle (use an overbridge to get there from platform 2) into the station car park. In favourable weather, on the ridge ahead you can spot the **Nine Standards** (due E) and a little closer **Tailbridge Hill**; the return route will pass it. The route **continues along a tarmac path straight ahead, signposted for Kirkby Stephen both up here and** at the lower level. You get there **either** by bearing left to in 20m pick up a gravel path downwards to a lane and in 35m *turn right* along it to pick up the path, **or** by turning right through the car park and in 50m *turning left* along the Station Approach lane to pick up that path. Follow the tarmac path ('Station Walk') to the right of a drystone wall and to the left of a large field through a dip, with the noisy **A685** away to the left and lately **Whinny Hill** on the right.

In 830m you go through a wooden field gate and ascend further towards a house. In 30m you reach a concrete lane this side of **Halfpenny House** by a two-way metal signpost and a cattle grid on the left. Cross the concrete track to the right of the house and in 25m go through a wooden field gate with a bridleway marker into a large field and *turn left* along its boundary fence. You *curve to the right* with the field boundary fence then wall. **Wild Boar Fell** dominates the vista on the right (SWC Walk 417). In 130m in the far field corner, go over a stile and in 5m *turn left* with a high marker post through a wall gap with a wooden gate into a large pasture. You follow the boundary fence on the right, with the lightly wooded slope dropping down to the audible **River Eden**. In 200m go over a stile at the end of a drystone wall and follow a right-hand field boundary down to the water level.

The **North Pennines** are visible ahead and away to the left beyond **Kirkby Stephen**, including its highest top furthest left: **Cross Fell** (340°, often in clouds though) and **Great Dun Fell**. In about 100m you pass some picturesque rock slabs on the banks of the river and the noise of the rushing river increases. In 50m pass a mini-waterfall down a rock face and then some cascades and rock pools and in 40m in the far-right field corner *turn right* through a wooden gate (a signposted Permissive Path joins from the left). Go down some steps to *turn left* along a railed concrete path right by the river along its wildest section. In 20m *turn left* up some steps and follow the path to the right along a high garden wall. The rock here has been sculpted by thousands of years of water and gravel action into deep holes, channels and drops, followed by a deeply dropping gorge, which makes for a **great look and some cacophonous noise**. In 60m go up some steep steps to the left.

You emerge through a wooden gate by a footpath signpost ('Wharton' backwards) on to a road, now out of the National Park. *Turn left* along the un-paved road, but with some fast moving traffic. In 50m, where a road joins from the left, you *turn right* through a wooden kissing gate into **Stenkrith Park**. *Turn right* on the level parallel to the road just left. In 40m a narrow path joins from the left and you pass a bench and in 30m reach an info panel by the **Northern Viaduct Trust** about the **Eden Viaducts**. Cross the **Millennium Bridge** over the Eden, with the road bridge to the right above, and the roaring river falling down the gorge below, **a magnificent sight and sound**. On the far side, at a T-junction with a gravel path, *turn left* along a permissive path between trees. This is the track bed of the long dismantled **Stainmore Railway Line** and you will follow it for 830m.

In more detail: In 100m a path on the left leads to a rectangular block of red sandstone inscribed with a poem. This overlooks the River Eden rockpools and the **Eden Benchmark sculpture** on the far side of it, and itself is the **poetry stone** for the month of September as part of the **Poetry Path**. In another 60m you pass a bench and the **poetry stone** for the month of August on the left, a curved piece of sandstone, 250 million years old. In 80m

pass the **poetry stone** for the month of July on the right by a bench on the left, in 30m ignore a path forking up to the right (and the Poetry Path with it) and in 50m go under an overbridge. This carries the Long-Distance Path, **A Pennine Journey** (APJ), met again near the end of the route. In 160m you pass another bench on the left and in 10m go through a wooden gate to the left of a wooden field gate, crossing a farm track on a bridge. The railway path continues on an embankment high above the pastures to the side and in 110m you pass two benches facing the view to the left, 40m before a **Platlayer's Hut** on the left. [These were a working base and shelter for platelayers, whose job it was to inspect and maintain the track. This hut has informative displays on the wall, but is mud-prone inside.] In 20m ignore a stepped path forking up to the right and in 130m another path forks up to the left to a wooden kissing gate visible on the small rise.

The route continues that way, but it is worth the effort to walk a **short out-and-back** ahead under the overbridge 30m away and then on to the **Podgill Viaduct** spanning the **Ladtwaite Beck** Valley another 150m away. About 40m beyond the far side of the viaduct, there is an access path down to a **viewing and picnic area**. *Else, fork up to the left* to the gate and enter a pasture to *turn right and right again* across the arched bridge over the railway path, with another track to the left separated by a wall. On the far side, *bear up the left-hand boundary* to a stile to the left of a metal field gate visible on a rise 110m away. Go over the stile and continue along a tree-lined **lonning** (a local term for a track less than a lane or road, usually enclosed). In 130m you have fine views back into the valley to the railway viaduct and in 10m go over a stone slab stile to the left of a metal field gate and follow a grass path to the right of a wall, curving to the right with it. In 110m *turn left* over a stone slab stile in a drystone wall with a yellow marker. This is in fact a footpath fork and you *bear left* to in 15m go through a metal gate into **Podgill Wood**. Pass a low footpath marker post and go down some boulder steps and *turn right* along a drystone wall. In 20m you have the audible **Ladthwaite Beck** away to the left below.

You will now follow a narrow mud-prone path, occasionally blocked by fallen trees, for 550m through the wood before leaving it over a stile into a pasture's corner. **In more detail:** in 50m *fork right* (despite the marker pointing left); the path ascends and in 70m you pass another marker post; in 60m you are at the level of the beck, pass a low marker post and climb back up a bank immediately; in 50m curve up to the right (there is a **waterfall** in a gorge away on the left); in 65m pass another marker post; in 50m you reach a fork in the path, on the right leading to a difficult-to-spot stepped path; *do fork left* here for 30m to **the most steep and raging part of the waterfall** (this is more like a chute at the bottom of the **Ewbank Scar**, a high rock face visible to the left, and is **very dramatic** indeed after heavy rain); return to the fork and *turn up to the left*; you pass a marker post on the stepped section and curve to the right around a fallen tree at the top of the steps; you now follow a path high above the beck, still running in a chute-like channel at the bottom of the rock face, for a long stretch; pass a couple more marker posts, go up one short stepped section and over a railed plank bridge over a ditch to a stile.

You leave the wood over the stile to the right of a metal gate with a yellow marker into the corner of a pasture and *turn left* through a metal field gate into a neighbouring pasture. Head towards a marker post 70m away half way up a rise and *turn right* with the marker along the obvious path (**note:** in this section the marked path is different from the right-of-way shown on the OS map). In 60m you have risen high enough to spot parts of **Kirkby Stephen on the left behind** and in 20m *fork up to the right* (the left fork leads to a very mud-prone and churned section). You have the drop to the beck on the left and in 60m can briefly see the Nine Standards ahead (due E) and the path then curves gently to the left **towards a redundant stile** with a footpath marker in a collapsed fence line 300m away.

A footpath joins from the right behind along the flank of one of the two **Birkett Hills** as you **enter Access Land** and continue for 50m through some rough churned ground but then follow a clear smooth path through a beck side meadow (60°). In 260m the path *turns right* with the beck (170°) to rise up the grassy far end of Birkett Hill and in 200m you cross a tributary stream with stepping stones and go through a squeeze gap in a drystone wall and a small overgrown area. In 50m go through a wooden gate **out of the Access Land** into an arable field (**Ladthwaite Bottom**) and follow the left-hand boundary along the beck. In 150m pass a marker post on the left and in 25m, with **Ladthwaite Farm** visible ahead, you *turn left* across a concrete bridge over the **Ladthwaite Beck**. *Turn right* (with a footpath marker post on the left) and follow the beck to a double metal field gate and a gravel car wide track by a four-way footpath/permissive path signpost.

Turn left along the gravel track, away from the farmhouse ('Nine Standards or Hartley'). In 20m ignore a track leading up the slope on the right. The Ladthwaite Beck is across the field on the left, i.e.: you have turned hard left back on yourself from the previous direction. In 200m you pass a stone building on the left by some disused lead mine on the right, just before the (now tarmac) track veers up to the right (**note**: there is no sign on the ground of the right of way turning right up the hill, as the OS map suggests). The track keeps rising, with the other **Birkett Hill** ahead and curves to the right to the top corner of a drystone wall. There, *turn left* with the (deteriorating) tarmac, ignoring a gravel track higher up the hillside. In 20m go over a cattle grid and in 30m you reach a junction of the tarmac lane up from Hartley and Kirkby Stephen and a hard right running tarmac track (continues in 10m as a gravel track). The **Coast to Coast Walk** comes up the lane and continues to the right.

Here you have a choice:

For a Very Early Shortcut via Hartley hamlet and Kirkby Stephen town, *turn left* down the tarmac lane and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Alternative Descent through Kirkby Stephen** at the single asterisk *) there.

For the Main Walk, *turn right* uphill, in 10m along gravel. In 30m ignore a left fork up to a metal field gate ('Private - No Access') and in 25m go through a metal field gate into the **Access Land of Hartley Fell** (you can ignore the note about seasonally different routes on the Coast to Coast, this route turns off it before the split) and continue along the track for 1.5 km to a two-way signpost. You will **stay in Access Land** up to Nateby village.

In more detail: In 40m you pass a throne-shaped bench on the right, facing the view into the Eden Valley and in 170m go through a fence gap (a missing gate) with a well-weathered sign telling you to use a waymarked Permissive Path to the Nine Standards higher up the fell due to severe erosion of the previous main ascent route. You pass several disused mine shafts to the side of the track and in 350m it converges with a drystone wall on the right and follows it further uphill. The views in the back into the Eden Valley are dominated by the **Howgill Fells** to the south west and by **Wild Boar Fell** to their left. The valley down to the right is that of the **Ladthwaite Beck**, although upstream of Ladthwaite Farm it is called **Rigg Beck**. Higher up the Rigg Beck, the very picturesque **Dukerdale** is visible. The return route will circle around it.

The track momentarily veers away from the wall (the Nine Standards are aging dead ahead on the ridge) and then proceeds through an area called **Reigill** on the OS map, with some **limestone outcrops** visible away to the left (the 'Greyriggs'). A farm building and a subsequent **sheepfold** are integrated into the wall and in 90m the wall bears right to cross the beck out of Faraday Gill. In 130m you ford the beck using some stepping stones (can be submerged after heavy rain), by some large **exposed areas of shale** in the bank on

the left of the stream. You continue with the beck on the left and in 250m *bear right* with the track and wall by a marker post with two well-weathered markers. A bridleway bears left here across the beck to an area of disused mine shafts on the Greyriggs. In 220m you reach a two-way signpost on the left. The **Alternative Descent** route leading to Kirkby Stephen will approach along the path ahead along the wall (signed 'Rollinson and Hagsgs'). The path ahead is also a **Shortcut on the Main Route**, if you want to cut out the ascent to the Nine Standards and the following peat bog.

For the Main Walk up to the Nine Standards, *turn left* (signed 'Permissive Path, C to C, Direct Route to Nine Standards') up a clear car wide grass track. In 150m go between higher grassy ground on both sides and in 90m *turn left* with the track between cairns by some **Shake Holes** on the right and in 90m you *turn right* with the track, now with the **Faraday Gill** down on the left. In 150m one arm of the beck bears to the left, dropping scenically over a lip in the rock face, where there is a **Washfold** to the left of the beck. You can see two 610m cairns ahead, one being the 'Piles of Stones' mentioned on the OS map, and in 220m pass the other one which is more modern and has been built as a chair facing the view into the valley (this is at about 560m above sea level). In 60m cross a beck on a two-railed footbridge in a boggy/tussocky area.

[**Note: this bridge can be under water** even after just a little rain, as can be the stepping stones leading to and from its ends! **If some of the bridge planks are not covered by water**, then it is safe to use the submerged stepping stones, as they are non-slippery and stable in their position. **If all of the bridge is under water**, you will struggle to identify the stepping stones under the boggy water and it is best to look for a place to jump across the beck. The best chances are on the right-hand side of the stream at the far end of a peat hag, where it is running in a narrow channel. On the left-hand side you have to go about 100m upstream to find a carrying area within the tussocky boggy ground and then walk across to the right for 60m to the gravel path that is the continuation uphill.]

You follow a gravel path uphill (the Standards are out of view) and in 350m go over a brow by a pile of stones on the left (at about 610m above sea level), with the further ascent now visible ahead. Some of the Standards are back in view. In 160m *fork left* to stay to the left of a heavily eroded old path, now blocked by wooden planks, and in 40m those two paths rejoin. In 25m the path curves to the right, in 60m you pass a cairn marking the start of the descent off the ridge and in another 110m reach a last 'chair' built from loose rocks just before the line of the **Nine Standards**. In good weather, the views from here are formidable: **north** across the Stainmore Gap (the A66 connects Brough and Barnard Castle through it) to the North Pennines, with Great Dun Fell with its radomes and Cross Fell most prominent, **west** to the now familiar Howgill Fells and the Lake District, **south** down the Upper Eden Valley with Wild Boar Fell and the Mallerstang Edge and High Seat and Hugh Seat dominant (the route of the Alternative Ending in Garsdale).

You are on the **Great British Watershed**, so any runoff to the **Southeast** feeds into the **Swale River**, one of the prominent rivers of the Yorkshire Dales, eventually reaching the North Sea. The **County Boundary** to Yorkshire lies about 1 km south along the Coast to Coast Walk, marked by a boundary stone. There is a part-ruined sheepfold on the easterly side of the Standards at a slightly lower level, which is a **good windbreak and suitable picnic spot** in fierce weather. *Turn right* from the previous direction (190°) along a clear grass path to a toposcope visible 120m away at 659m above sea level. With a trigpoint now visible ahead another 300m away (on 150°), **do not** bear left towards the trigpoint, **but [!]** *fork right* at the toposcope along a clear descending grass path (205°).

The path meanders a little through part-soggy ground, in 150m it *veers to the right* (230°) and in 100m more you go through some minor groughs and *veer further right* (260°). The

ground is now more peaty, with the notorious **Rollinson Haggs** away to the left. Over the next 140m you go through some peaty dips (infant streams) with the last one being a little difficult to cross. In another 60m you have left the peat hags behind (and have lost sight of the Standards) and follow a bouncy grass path. A two-way signpost is visible ahead on 240°. Visible on the half left in the near distance are **High Pike Hill and High Seat**, part of the Alternative Ending to Garsdale. In 210m cross an infant stream, temporarily losing sight of the signpost. In 230m you reach the **Coast to Coast signpost** at a four-way path junction (a public bridleway crosses), where the left turn leads up to a disused quarry and mine (you can see some spoil heaps).

Here you have a choice:

For the Alternative Descent to and through Kirkby Stephen town, *turn right* (Coast to Coast route, Hartley 3 ½ m') along a clear grass path and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Alternative Descent through Kirkby Stephen**.

For the Main Walk as well as the Alternative Ending to Garsdale, continue ahead (Coast to Coast route, Nateby Road B6270 1¼ m') along a grass path towards a dilapidated farm or mine building 10m away. Pass to the right of the ruined building and follow a zig-zagging path steeply downhill. In 60m *turn left* with the path and in 100m *bear to the right* with it, where you can see a little waterfall of the **Rollinson Gill** away to the left. In 75m you ford the stream and continue gently uphill through a lightly boggy section. In 130m you follow a clear grass path again and can see a drystone wall away to the right. This wall runs around the top of the **Dukerdale** seen earlier from the ascent route, and the cairn-topped **Tailbridge Hill** rises beyond the dale (265°).

You converge with the line of the wall and in 210m pass its corner and in 20m *turn right* downhill with a grass path to in 100m pass a wooden gate in the drystone wall on the right by a shake hole on the left. In 75m cross the **Rigg Beck** on the path, using some stepping stones (can be part-submerged). This is collecting the runoff off **Lady Bog** away to the left, this side of **Dukerdale Head**. [Rigg Beck changes name to Ladthwaite Beck at Ladthwaite Farm.] High Dukerdale on the right is a **very scenic, perfectly U-shaped valley** with an exposed rock face rim, a bit like the more famous High Cup (SWC Walk 415), only that Dukerdale is green and has a meandering stream running through it. It also frames the view to the North Pennines rather nicely. In 15m, the uphill path forks.

Here you have a choice:

For the Alternative Ending to Garsdale over some exposed high ground along the watershed, continue ahead along a wide grassy path (255°) and pick up the directions at the end of this text under **Garsdale Ending**.

For the Main Walk, *fork right* (275°) towards the drystone wall corner higher up. In 60m pass the wall corner, in 160m (at 504m above sea level) the path forks on the flank of **Tailbridge Hill**, with its top dead ahead.

Here you have a choice:

For the direct route over the top of the hill, continue ahead (290°) along a narrow grass path and in 800m you reach the summit cairn, a brilliant viewpoint, at 547m above sea level. Descend a little to the right down the steep grassy slope and *veer right* towards a three-way wall junction where a perpendicular wall turns right downhill. 30m before the wall, *turn left* along a wide grass path and pick up the directions below at the asterisk *).

For the Main Walk, avoiding the top and the subsequent steep descent, *fork right* (320°) and follow the quad bike wide grass path contouring the flank of the hill. In 100m the path levels out and you can see the drystone wall parallel but somewhat below and get fine views into the upper part of the far side of **Dukerdale**. Continue along the track (335°) and in 420m (at 495m above sea level) cross a wide grassy track and continue along a narrow path very gently uphill. In 200m, with the crag face of Tailbridge Hill up on the left, continue along a wide grass track down to a drystone wall 170m away, at 478m above sea level. *Turn left* along the wall and in 130m pass a metal field gate on the right and ignore a left fork. The track continues 40m away from the wall and in 70m the route over the top of Tailbridge Hill joins from the left above.

*) You are at about 460m above sea level and descend through **Nateby Common** to the road down the valley 1.5 km away, at just above 300m above sea level. This is **Access Land** so you can take any route (the road is 600m away to the left but out of sight at this point), but it is tussocky and watery in places, so **a recommended route is described**, staying close to the wall where feasible:

The track curves to the left a little then back to the right and in 180m you cross an infant stream, flowing down to the right towards the Rigg Beck. Cross a couple more streamlets and in 130m pass some clumps of newly planted saplings. In 110m pass another metal field gate in the wall on the right, which is now only 20m or so away. Here, at about 440m above sea level, the land starts to fall away into the valley, and you get fine views, both back to **the cairn on Tailbridge Hill**, and straight down (in line with the wall) to **Nateby** village, to the right to **Kirkby Stephen**, and to the left over a patchwork of walled pastures with isolated farm buildings to the heathery **Rasett and Wether Hills** beyond. The geology is limestone and lower down there will be some disused pits as well as **shake holes and also some Swallow Holes** ('Blind Gill Holes' on the OS map). The path descends steeply to the wall over the next 100m, where a tussocky cut joins from the left.

From here, follow the wall through more tussocky grass along some quad bike tracks. The map shows disused pits away to the left. In 100m you pass a rusty metal field gate in the wall and the path then veers away to the left to skirt around a tussocky area passed in 110m. *Veer right* with the path back towards the wall but in 40m pick up a path coming in from behind to *veer left* again to skirt another tussocky area. In 75m cross another streamlet (on the OS map) flowing towards some swallow holes down below to the left. In 30m cross a soggy depression. The road is now visible to the left ahead and below. In 125m *bear right* with the path to converge with the wall in 30m and follow a grass track along it (at 355m above sea level). In 80m, *turn left* along a wide grass track joining from the right through a metal field gate and in 20m *curve to the right* with it to descend to a footpath signpost visible on the road (take either fork just before the left turn to the road).

Turn right along the **B6270 Nateby Road**, gently downhill, immediately crossing an occasional stream which disappears on the left into a swallow hole. There is very little traffic along this road and there are fine grassy verges to walk along anyway. In 300m pass a two-way footpath signpost on the right, one going to Ladthwaite Farm, the other via Lockthwaite Farm to Hartley and Kirkby. There is an often dry or hidden stream in the cut on the left (**Middleber Sike**). In 750m, just after passing a 'Nateby' road sign by a large farm, another signposted footpath joins from Lockthwaite Farm and you are **leaving the Access Land**. Soon, the road descends more steeply and in 230m a signposted footpath joins from the left along a lonning (**Gelderslack Lane**). The house on the right is called **Wellhead Cottage**. If you listen carefully, you can hear the sound of rushing water to the left of the road, and there is a fully formed stream emerging to the right of the lane.

This is the **Broad Ing Sike**, crossed early on in the walk (unseen) while walking along the dismantled railway line. This is a fine spot for **cleaning the boots**, as from here to the train station only tarmac, concrete and relatively mud-proof pastures beckon. Continue along the road, ignoring a minor lane forking right along the stream, and rise gently into **Nateby** and back into the National Park. In 240m you reach the small village green with a bench and a bin, a garage on the right and **The Black Bull at Nateby** ahead. Continue to the right of the pub through the car park with a low footpath signpost ('Wharton Hall') and in 35m go up some steps and along a paved path through grass past some pub benches. In 30m go through a wooden gate with a yellow panel attached to it in a wall gap into a large pasture and continue ahead to a stile in a fence line 130m away, also with a yellow panel attached to it. Over the stile, continue to another stile in a fence line 80m away.

From there *bear down to the left* off this raised field along a grass path to the **River Eden** 100m away. The **A Pennine Journey** Long-Distance Path joins from the right along the river. Continue through the riverside meadow and in 30m *turn right* with path and river. In 25m go through a wooden kissing gate to the left of a metal field gate and follow the river. In 90m *turn right* across a car wide bridge and go through a wooden gate on the far side and ascend a steep pasture to in 70m go through a wooden gate onto a concrete farm track, coming from **Wharton Hall** on the left by a four-way signpost. *Turn right* along the track, a bridleway signed for 'Kirkby Stephen $\frac{3}{4}$ ml'. In 720m you reach **Halfpenny House** on the right, where the concrete farm track leads over a cattle grid to continue as a tarmac lane and a tarmac path turns down to the left with a signpost for the train station. The Alternative Descent through Kirkby Stephen has joined from the right out of a field. [**Halfpenny House** is thought to be an old resting spot for cattle drovers en route from Scotland to market in Malham. A halfpenny was charged for grazing and accommodation.]

****)** You *turn left* with the tarmac **Station Walk**, in 25m going through a wooden field gate and then through a dip to re-ascend along the flank of **Whinny Hill** and to slowly converge with the **A685** away to the right. After the first steep bit of ascent, you get fine **views on the left to Little Fell and Wild Boar Fell**. By the station, at a T-junction with a lane leading to an industrial estate and the station car park, either follow the lane to the left and approach the platforms from the car park, or *turn right* and go up some steps to get there.

Carlisle bound trains depart from the far platform, reached via an overbridge, Settle bound trains from the near platform. Both platforms have waiting rooms with topical brochures.

Alternative Descent through Kirkby Stephen

The path is a public bridleway and used to be an access to a mine and quarry higher up the hill, so is mostly well defined, but in places may be soggy or boggy. Over 800m you converge with a drystone wall around the **Dukerdale** down on the left by a Shake Hole on the left and a **Swallow Hole** on the right and follow the path along the wall. In 300m *bear left* with the wall and the path and in 140m you pass the two-way signpost where the permissive direct path to the Nine Standards joins from the right. You now follow the outbound route downhill for 1.5 km along the path then the track walked up along earlier, and **leave the Access Land** through a wooden field gate. Continue along a car wide gravel track for 50m where it continues as a tarmac lane and in 10m ignore the drive from **Ladthwaite Farm** walked up along earlier.

Continue downhill along **Birkett Lane**, with one of the two Birkett Hills on the right. You go through a few turns and pass various parts of the very large **Hartley Quarry** (Breedon Aggregates) and in 2.2 km pass a small car park on the right and reach a three-way

tarmac lane junction. The lane from the left is the access drive to the quarry. **Well worth a look**, through a wooden gate ahead and just 20m up an ascending path is the **Merrygill Viaduct of the Stainmore Railway**, with fine views of the Hartley Beck Valley.

Turn right along the lane further downhill, now with a chance of **laden aggregate trucks** passing. You pass the railway bridge abutment on the right and in 60m pass Beech House on the left, this start of **Hartley** hamlet. **[!]** In 25m *turn left* off the road just before it narrows and goes through a bend, down a gravel path between stone wall and raised bank. In 40m *turn right* with the path, high above the **Hartley Beck**, and in 60m emerge back on the lane at a bend. In 40m *turn left* down a fenced tarmac path to cross the beck on a footbridge and *bear right* for 20m up to a tarmac lane on the far side. Continue along the lane past some more houses and in 70m by **Greystones** on the right, *turn left* along a car wide gravel drive between houses. In 30m continue along a tarmac path, soon between walls. In 140m go through a wooden kissing gate into a large pasture and *turn right* downhill with a C to C signpost along a tarmac path towards Kirkby Stephen.

Wild Boar Fell is visible on the hard left as you descend towards the level of the **Eden River** and 200m you pass a C to C signpost where a footpath joins from the left from Pod Gill. In 40m leave the field through a metal kissing gate and follow a gravel path along the river with a little waterfall on the left, with the modest **Hartley** and **Kirkby Hills** on the right and the **Skinner Dub Cricket Ground** town side of them. In 200m cross **Frank's Bridge** (thought to have been named after a brewer who lived and worked in the houses opposite, the bridge was on a **coffin route** and the stones at both ends were for resting the coffins!) and in 20m *turn right* up some steps with a fading 'Town Centre' sign. *Turn right* uphill along a tarmac lane (**Stoneshot**) and in 15m ignore a tarmac path between houses, despite another Town Centre sign pointing that way.

In 20m *turn left* with the lane along a narrow stretch with high walls that are leaning into the lane a little (this was by design to make this side of the village easier to fortify and defend against **incursions from the Scots**). In 30m the lane levels out and you pass a car park and toilet block to then emerge in the **Market Square** in the centre of **Kirkby Stephen**. There is a war memorial on the left, the red sandstone **Church Cloisters** are on the right (formerly a butter market, now the easiest route into the churchyard of **The Parish Church of Kirkby Stephen**, home to both the Anglican and Roman Catholic communities, aka **The Cathedral of the Dales**). Go ahead to **Market Street** (the **A685**).

Away to the right (along North Road), you find the **Buttercup of Kirkby Stephen** gift shop & café 50m away on the right, 40m further **The Taggy Man**, a CAMRA-recommended wet-led pub on the left and in another 30m **The Old Forge** micro-pub on the right. **Else, turn left along the road**. Over the next 230m you pass **The Pennine Hotel** and bistro, the tourist office, **The Kings Arms** (currently closed), **Berry Grape and Grain** wine bar and deli, **The Mulberry Bush** café, **Archway** fish & chips, **The Black Bull** hotel, **The White Hare Café**, a **Costa Coffee**, and **The La'I Nook** micro-pub. In a further 60m you get to a set of traffic lights by the left turn of **Nateby Road**. A **SPAR Market** can be found just a little further ahead. Notice the three-way metal signpost on the right, quoting distances in **miles and furlongs!**

Turn left along **Nateby Road**, signed 'Reeth, Swaledale 22m 0 fur'. You pass the **Temperance Hall** on the left with its impressive façade and ignore Mellbecks (road) turning left to Frank's Bridge. In 40m pass the large Baptist Church on the right and in 50m *turn right* with the road. There are houses on both sides of the road as it ascends the gentle slope of **Stenkrith Hill**. In 250m the road levels out with pavement on the left only. In 60m the pavement discontinues and you pass **Bollam Cottage**. In 20m *turn left* along a gravel path with a signpost ('Bridleway to Hartley/Nateby, Footpath to Stenkrith') with a

Poetry Path marker. In 50m you have open fields to the side and – in good weather – can spot the **Nine Standards** up on **Hartley Fell** in an easterly direction.

In 70m pass a marker post indicating a fork, with the bridleway interestingly going left down a stepped path, while the footpath turns right through a field gate into a pasture. Follow the footpath and *turn left* down the pasture, in the previous direction. You follow a line of trees and curve to the right with it along the left-hand flank of **Stenkrith Hill** (i.e.: stay a little higher than the oft-used-by-locals clear grass path). The Eden River is audible below on the left. In 240m (now close to the river) you go through a wooden kissing gate with a yellow marker and follow a wire fence on the left. In 70m *fork either way* as the paths rejoin in 30m and in 140m go down a few difficult steps over tree branches. In 30m go over a stile to the left of a wooden field gate with a faded 'Stenkrith Park (footpath to Nateby Road)' sign.

In 10m you find the **poetry stones** for the month of November on the right, two standing stones this time, and in another 10m pass a bench on the left overlooking some **rockpools and rapids** in the river. In 90m there is another bench on the right and in 10m a left-turning semi-circular path gets you close to the river itself (currently the far end of that path is blocked by a fallen tree though) where the **Broad Ing Sike** (crossed earlier near Nateby) joins the Eden. Continue along the main path and in 40m you cross a small spring-fed tributary. On the right you have the **poetry stones** for the month of October on the right, low slabs these, one sandstone and one limestone, the two dominant rock types around Kirkby Stephen. There is a **viewing platform** of sorts away to the left, by the **Stenkrith Rockpools** and the lower end of the upcoming gorge. In 5m *bear right* with the main path, ignoring a narrow path turning steeply up to the left towards the top of the gorge and a road bridge just about visible high above.

In 70m you reach a wooden kissing gate leading onto a road three-way junction by a footpath signpost. The outbound route turned left here to the **Millennium Bridge** over the Eden River. Go through the gate onto **Nateby Road** and *turn left* along it (with no pavement and with some fast moving traffic). In 60m, at the near end of the road bridge over the Eden, **[!]** *turn right* along a signposted public footpath ('Wharton') through a wooden gate and down some steps. *Turn right* with the gravel path along the river and follow it through a couple of turns and down some steps to the level of the swirling waters and back up. You leave the immediate riverside through a wooden gate into a pasture. *Turn left* along the field boundary, gently ascending with the roaring river away to the left, ignoring the signed **Permissive Path to Jubilee Park**.

There are still some **cascades and drops down small rockfaces** to admire along this stretch, as well as plenty of **picturesque rock slabs**. The path slowly veers away from the river and ascends away from the water level as well, eventually with trees to the left down the slope behind a fence. In 200m in the top-left field corner go over a stile and follow the next field's left-hand boundary. In 200m go through a wooden gate within a drystone wall gap and *turn right* with a high marker post in the next field, in 5m going over a stile and then follow the right-hand boundary wall towards a house (**Halfpenny House** as per the OS map). Away to the left you get fine views to **Wild Boar Fell and the Mallerstang Edge**. In 100m by the house, *veer to the left* along a barbed wire fence and in 30m *turn right* through a wooden field gate and continue to a concrete lane 25m away.

The Main Walk joins along it from the left. *Turn right* along it to the house, where the concrete track leads over a cattle grid to continue as a tarmac lane and a tarmac path turns down to the left with a signpost for the train station. Pick up the directions above in the main text at the double asterisk ******).

Garsdale Ending

You pass some shake holes and ignore any forks to the right and pass a small tarn on the left. From the brow, you can see a fenced-in area ahead and in 80m curve to the left with the path through **Lamps Moss**. There is another fenced-in area on the left and in 75m you pass the fence corner on the left and continue between the two fenced-in areas, in a southerly direction. You ignore a first gate on the right in the fence and continue to the left of a long and deep **limestone fissure**. In 100m pass a larger tarn on the left behind the fence (and behind a small bank, so may only be visible once past it) and in 80m *turn right* through a second gate into the fenced-in area. Follow a clear grass path through a large area of **limestone pavement**. In 180m leave the fenced-in area through a wooden gate and in 70m a path joins from the right behind (the continuation of the path through the first gate into the fenced-in area). In 20m *fork left* (the right fork leads to a car park area on the upcoming B-road identifiable by a couple of black and white **snow poles ahead**).

In 180m you reach the single lane **B6270 Nateby Road** at 510m above sea level. Cross the road in the same direction (185°) and follow a grassy path towards the hill ahead: **High Pike Hill**. In 80m another grass path joins from the right behind, also from the road and you gently curve to the right with the path and in 100m another grass path joins from the left behind. *Turn right* along its continuation (250°) and in 80m you arrive at some large deep shake holes with exposed rock boulders in its walls (at 495m above sea level). **[!]** *Bear left this side of the holes* along a clear quad bike wide grass path that in 25m passes a fenced-off shake hole on its left, by a large swallow hole on the left. The fence discontinues after 25m and you start ascending the flank of the hill. In 30m you have a small stream on the left in a depression and some peat hags to the left of it. In 30m *fork right* along the more prominent path and *veer to the right* with it (190°). There is a large tussocky area away to the right. In 140m, at 527m above sea level, you follow a tussocky depression (with an audible streamlet) on the right further uphill.

In 30m the tussocky depression veers to the right and in another 30m the path follows (200°). In 130m, by some spoil heaps just to the right, you *turn hard right* with the path along a ledge-like clear grass path (575m above sea level) to in 25m pass above the spoils and continue steeply uphill (280°). In 30m pass a tumble of rocks down the slope on the right (with a smaller one on the left) and in 20m the entrance to a **disused quarry** on the left (at 580m above sea level, on the OS map). The path *veers to the left* (205°) to stay to the left of the rim of the steeply dropping bowl to the right, the **Fells End** seen from the road below. In 100m you reach the featureless grassy plateau top (at 620m above sea), although some parts of it are being a little higher still. The path curves to the left and in 75m you cross another grass path and in 25m pass a very small tarn on the left and continue on a bearing of 220°. In 110m you ascend up the low rise that is the highest point of **High Pike Hill**, in 130m passing a **Pile of Stones** at 642m above sea level.

You follow an (almost straight) clear grass track on 210° for 280m, then continue through about 30m of bare earth/sand without a track, to pick up a path again on the far side (there is a lone chest-high peat hag about 70m away to the left in an otherwise flat and featureless stretch). In 50m pass a low cairn on the left and in another 50m pass a rather **large peat hag on the right, sitting on an earth and peat mound** surrounded by limestone boulders and the grassy plateau, a peculiar look. In 60m pass another cairn and stay **on a southerly bearing for 700m** with the path (clear where on grass, but with occasional swerves around soggy or peaty areas). You pass a couple more low cairns on this stretch. After a last large peat hag away to the right, heather starts to dominate and you pass through another sandy area (at 653m above sea level).

In 35m cross a streamlet flowing right-to-left. This is the furthest tributary of the **Uldale Beck**, which – via the Birkdale Beck – flows into the **River Swale**, one of the great rivers of the Yorkshire Dales. In another 80m the heather discontinues and the track curves to the right then loops to the left to stay to the right of a large raised area of peat with some soggy ground at its base. In 140m the track *bears right* to continue on the previous, southerly line, now gently ascending from the 660m above sea level mark to the grassy top plateau of **High Seat** 600m away (there are a couple more short stretches of sandy ground en route) by a **Pile of Stones**. The plateau is about 100m wide and you *veer right* across it along the highest ground. In 80m pass a low cairn at 709m above sea level, just after a concrete base in a 20cm deep hole, which may or may not have been a trig point's base. This is **the highest point of the walk**, and (in fine weather) you get very fine views across the Eden Valley to **Wild Boar Fell and Swarth Fell** and on the half left ahead to **Great Shunner Fell**, as well as ahead beyond this ridge to the core Yorkshire Dales hills, including **Great Knoutberry Hill, Whernside, Ingleborough** and **Pen-y-Ghent**.

Continue in the previous direction and in 160m pass another **Pile of Stones** on the left, marking the far end of the top plateau. In 80m the clear descending grass track curves to the left (150°), to stay to the left of some higher ground, and in 150m you have lower ground on the right again. By a soggy area in another 50m you have the **Steddale Mouth** away to the right, starting the furthest tributary of the **Outhgill Beck**, which flows into the Eden. In 50m *bear right* with the path (at 665m above sea level) and in 25m cross another soggy area flowing away to the right. You start a gentle ascent, getting a little steeper in the last stretch, and in 300m reach the top plateau of **Gregory Chapel** by a low cairn. In 20m pass another cairn and *bear left* with the path to in 90m go through a large sandy bouldery area for 75m to in 60m reach a **cairn on top of a heap of boulders** at 695m above sea level, which look like a collapsed man-made structure, the 'Chapel' perhaps?

Here you have a choice:

For an onwards option along the scarp of the Mallerstang Edge (steadily downhill), *fork to the right* of the cairn along a clear path (210°) along the **Archy Styrigg** ('track along the ridge' in Norse) and follow the path as shown on the route map. In 2.1 km, at about 540m above sea level, you meet the main route to Garsdale, coming up from the left below from the meeting of Red Gill and Little Grain, i.e.: the start of the Hell Gill Beck. Pick up the text below at the asterisk *).

For the onwards option further along the watershed along the top of the Mallerstang Edge, *fork to the left* of the cairn along a clear path (125°) along the **Gregory Band**. The area on the right is **Black Fell Moss** and its drainage creates the start of the River Eden. In 130m you go through an exposed sand/earth area for 40m then have a gentle drop on the left and walk through grass and heather mostly. In 200m, by some limestone boulders on both sides, the ground starts to descend through a shallow dip. In 120m you pass a more than man-high **currick**, followed by a storm shelter ('Cairns' on the OS map). In 100m pass a small tarn on the right and in another 110m a limestone outcrop on the left. In 200m you pass a 're-entrant' on the left (an intrusion-like mini-valley).

The obvious path curves a little to the right here and in 50m you pass a medium-sized tarn about 20m to its left (on the OS map). In 80m cross a small area of exposed earth with scattered boulders and continue on a bearing of 148° gently uphill for 300m to a cairn at a fence corner at 676m above sea level. *Turn right* along the fence (215°), with the ground to the right feeding the **Red Gill**, one of the three becks in this area that form the **Hell Gill Beck**, which – below Hell Gill Farm – **becomes the River Eden**. The path along the fence goes through a couple of soggy depressions and rises gently to the top of **Hugh Seat**, reaching a sharp left turn of the fence in 340m, at 689m above sea level.

Follow the path ahead for 80m to an old column of cut stones. This is **Lady Anne's Pillar**. An inscription of 'AP 1664' can be made out, it stands for Anne Pembroke (Lady Anne Clifford's married name), who had this pillar erected in 1664 to commemorate Sir Hugh de Morville, her predecessor as Lord of the Manor of Mallerstang. He was one of the four knights responsible for the murder of St. Thomas à Becket in 1170. **You could now stay on the watershed**, initially along the sheep fence, then **map-led** over Little Fell, Lunds Fell and Bubble Hill to link up with The High Way by Johnston Gill, where the route descends into the Ure Valley, **but the described route starts to descend from here**.

From the pillar, **two paths** fork down Black Fell Moss. **You can take either:**

- The right fork leads to Red Gill, the main tributary and follows it to the confluence with Little Grain to form the Hell Gill Beck. This is **map-led** at the moment.
- The left fork (210°) leads down the spur of land between Red Gill and Little Grain to the meeting of those streams. This route is **described here in more detail**.

Fork left with a clear grass path and in 250m you pass a cairn (at 655m above sea level), where the gradient increases a little. In the following slightly boggy and soggy section, the path *bears to the right* (235°) and if you stay on the highest ground of the spur, you will be able to see the cut caused by the Red Gill away to the right and the valley of the Little Grain to the left. The terrain becomes grassy again after 380m (at 620m above sea level). In 30m you descend a short steeper section and the ground is now dominated by heather and grass. Go through a little dip with exposed peat hags and then at just above 600m above sea level through a band of limestone boulders with a man-made cairn away to the right as well as a long collapsed man-made structure (a 'Currick' is shown on the OS map).

A discernible path can be picked up about 80m below the boulders and this then converges slowly with the **Little Grain** valley on the left (which drains this side of **Little Fell**). Soon the **Red Gill** valley becomes visible ahead and after 600m on the path you reach the meeting of the streams that form **Hell Gill Beck** at 520m above sea level. You can see a medium sized fenced area on the left, part of a tree replanting scheme. Up on the right ahead (310°) is a cairn (on the OS map), located on the alternative descent route along the scarp. Both Red Gill and Little Grain are already fully formed streams which makes the coming crossing of Red Gill potentially complicated: **ford or jump Red Gill** to its westerly bank and *turn left* up a grass bank to the upper corner in the fence. [The fording is easiest a little upstream where the beck splits into two arms with a green islet in the middle.]

Be careful at the fence corner (at 527m above sea level), as at least one of the watery patches is actually a half a metre **deep water hole!** A cairn half left up on Little Fell (150°) sits by a fence that runs down along the County Boundary, which then follows Hell Gill Beck into the Upper Eden Valley. You could now follow the fence scenically downstream to Hellgill Bridge, but there is mostly no path and the going is rough and the views are somewhat limited to the gorge itself. **Therefore**, *turn right* uphill (broadly westerly) and in about 300m you meet a clear quad bike wide grass track at 540m above sea level, down from the ridge and scarp. The alternative descent runs along it. *Turn left* downhill.

***)** You follow the track for 2.0 km to **Hell Gill Bridge** at 405m above sea level, where it crosses the Hell Gill in a deep and narrow gorge. The track meanders a little to avoid soggy patches but is always clear and soon veers left to shadow the reforestation fence following the beck. The hill ahead to the right is **Swarth Fell** and the one on the hard right is **Wild Boar Fell** (both: SWC Walk Wild Boar Fell), and the valley is the **Mallerstang Valley** up to the watershed with the Ure. The deep valley, then gorge of the **Hell Gill Beck** is visible at times to the left, with **Little Fell** and then **Lunds Fell** (source of the River Ure) rising beyond it. **Home Gutter**, **Capple Mere Sike** and an unnamed short stream join the Hell Gill Beck in deep cut valleys down Little Fell, and some small waterfalls are visible as well.

Eventually a wooded strip on the gorge becomes visible ahead, as well as a large grey roof, this is part of **Hell Gill Farm**. Aim for the lower end of that wood, ignoring any right forks. You meet a wide gravel track this side of the hill wall. This is the **Old Road (Track)** as per the OS map that used to be the main travel artery between Hawes and Kirkby Stephen until 1825, when the turnpike road in the valley was constructed. **A Pennine Journey, Lady Ann's Way** and **The Pennine Bridleway** run along it. *Turn left* along the track by a corner of the wall around the wood and in 10m ignore a public footpath turning right through a wooden field gate or a wall gap and wooden gate towards **Hell Gill Farm and Hell Gill Force** (a waterfall) and go through a wooden field gate with an APJ marker along a marked Public Byway to cross the Hell Gill running noisily in a deep and narrow gorge.

Go through a wooden field gate on the far side. You **have entered Yorkshire** but are still within the catchment of the River Eden. Follow the gravel track away from the bridge, with Lunds Fell rising up on the left and Swarth Fell on the right across the valley. In 230m the track forks by a Pennine Bridleway marker post with a National Trail marker. Ignore the gravel continuation gently downhill and **[!]** *fork left* gently uphill along a grass track, in 25m passing a (broken) 'No Cars – No Motorbikes' sign. The track is now referred to as **The High Way** and you will follow it for close to 4.0 km. There is an infant stream away to the right below, this still flows into the Eden, but you are now crossing the watershed into the Ure catchment, which becomes the (Yorkshire) Ouse, which empties into the Humber and the North Sea. In 220m pass a drystone wall corner and follow the wall.

In 140m cross an audible hidden stream (it can be seen away to the left before it goes underground), this is the most westerly tributary of the Ure. You *bear left* with the track and ford the **River Ure** in 35m (with stepping stones, which may be submerged, a jump is best entertained to the left), then *bear right* again and continue in the previous direction, without a wall to the right. In 280m you have walled fields down to the right, this is not Access Land. The track starts a long but gentle ascent and in 180m you cross **Birks Gill** (often dry) on an earth bridge and in 170m have the noisy **Washer Gill** down in a gorge on the right. In 50m, with the high-banked valley meandering higher up the fell, you *turn right* to ford the beck. In 35m *turn left* with the track by the ruined **High Hall**. Ignore a public footpath running to your right through the farm grounds.

In 300m pass a ruined farm building in the field on the right and in 120m a walled area ('**Horse Paddock**' as per a wooden sign) up on the left. In 50m pass ruined buildings on either side, then a lime kiln away on the left before crossing the **Grass Gill** (hidden at most times). The Ure is visible in the valley below as is the railway on the far side of the valley and a railway viaduct. In 300m go through a wooden field gate in a drystone wall coming down **Calf Moss**. You continue between a fence on the left and a wall on the right and in 20m ignore a marked public footpath turning right. In 170m pass metal field gates on either side and walk through a wooden field gate to then ford the **Scars Gill** (there is a two-railed raised bridge on the left). You pass a ruined building in the field on the right and in 200m a tussocky dry gill on the left. In 60m the track levels out for a while, with another, still higher, ruined building visible ahead though.

First though, the track *veers left* to drop down to a crossing of the **Keld Gill** in 180m in a deep gorge and then re-ascends, partly along an engineered path. In 100m from that path, go through a wooden field gate and in 160m cross the **Dove Gill** (often dry, but you can usually see some flow 30m or so to the left which then disappears to run under the large boulders stacking up in the stream). You pass the ruined **High Dyke**, apparently a former inn serving weary travellers, and then (at 450m above sea level) a two-way footpath signpost indicating a crossing right-of-way. In 350m *turn left* with the path to a ford over the **Johnston Gill**, coming down the hill in a dramatic gorge (stepping stones are present but the beck can be easily jumped). You follow a grassy track with a wall on the right.

In 110m, by a three-way signpost and a wooden field gate on the right at 460m above sea level, **[!]** *turn right* through the gate along a bridleway ('Moorcock Inn 1 ¼') with the Pennine Bridleway and the APJ, **leaving The High Way**. Still in **Access Land**, and with a large lime kiln away to the left, you *bear right* with the obvious grass path, passing a few marker posts until in 200m you meet a fence corner on the right, this protects sheep from falling into the **waterfall** on the Johnston Gill in a gorge that you can hear but not see. *Curve to the left* with the path, soon passing another marker post. In 200m a stream joins from the left down the fellside and then follows the path on its left. In 160m pass a marker post and in 200m *turn right* along a track along the fringe of **Cobbles Plantation**, while the stream continues ahead through the wood.

In 250m **leave the Access Land** through a wooden field gate and in 20m, by a three-way signpost at a T-junction with a public footpath and with the Ure River about 80m ahead and below, you *turn left*. In 50m *turn right* with the gravel track and in 40m ford the stream out of Cobbles Plantation that you walked along a few minutes ago by a four-way signpost on the right. A footpath crosses, leading on the left to **Yore House**. The upper reaches of the elongated **Ure Force waterfall** are on the right and in 100m you *turn right* with the PBW across the river by a three-way signpost at a track T-junction. There is an old arched bridge to the left of a modern car wide wooden bridge and the waterfall continues with a deep drop down a rock face to the left of both. In 100m *bear left* off the gravel track with a PBW marker post along a grassy track, initially along the river.

The river curves away to the left and in 150m from the turning, the path goes up a small rise from which you have fine views back to the bridge and waterfall. In another 130m go through a wooden gate by a signpost onto the **B6259. The Moorcock Inn** (a licensed tea room with limited opening hours) and a **bus stop for services to Garsdale Station** are 50m away to the left on the **A684**, but you cross the B road a little to the right and go through a wooden gate and *turn left* to follow a grass path along the field boundary with the road beyond a beck. In 40m *turn right* with the path, now with the A road on the left beyond the wall. In 80m go through a couple of wooden gates to cross the road and continue through a wooden field gate opposite and *turn right* with a signpost ('Garsdale Station 1') through a wooden field gate with some over-the-top warning notes about the dangers of the upcoming railway line to follow a grass path along the field boundary.

In 130m the track *bears to the left* away from the road and in 100m you pass a 'Welcome to Cumbria' sign on the roadside, as you also **re-enter Cumbria**. The track keeps climbing gently and in 70m you go through a wooden gate in a drystone wall and gently descend with the track towards the **Dandrymire Viaduct**. Up on the left across some fields you can see the course of the long dismantled Garsdale – Hawes railway line. In 140m cross an audible stream on the track and follow the fence on the right to in 100m *turn right* through a wooden gate in the fence line and go under the viaduct. On the far side go through a wooden gate and – with a still in use chapel visible to the right on a road bend – *turn left* along a fenced path. This leads over mildly undulating 800m to a road T-junction.

En route you cross the **Dandry Mire** and cross a bridge over the **Mud Beck Gill** which flows in a culvert under the railway embankment. Lastly you walk along a high wall between the track and the railway cottages by the station. Go through a wooden gate onto the road and *turn left* up along the tarmac, ignoring the hard left turn to the cottages. In 30m a gravel track turns left for **platform 2 for services to Carlisle**, while **for services to Leeds**, you have to follow the road under the railway and turn left on the far side. With time to spare, in the middle of platform 1 you find an interesting **memorial to Ruswarp** (pronounced 'Russup'), a Border Collie owned by Graham Nuttall, co-founder of the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line, who stayed at his master's side for 11 winter weeks after Nuttall had died on a mountain walk.