

Today's Journey

BRASSINGTON TO BONSALL via IBLE

Just back from a jaunt into the Derbyshire countryside. Caught a bus to Brassington, a manyana bus, where the driver gets a call on his mobile and when in Wirksworth goes to the shops to get some goodies for home! We travelled via Kirk Ireton a beautifully kept village that had flags and bunting hanging across the street. The green beautifully manicured, not a grass out of place. All the locals standing at there doorways watching the world go by. Beautiful views from on top of Moorside with Alport Heights on our right and Carsington Water shimmering on our left. The old encloure fields now beginning to change from hedges to the grey limestone walls.

Turning left at Sycamore farm just below the wonderfully named Godfrey Hole. Past the **Gell** family home at Hopton surrounded still by red brick curved walls, through Carsington and turning right just before Knockerdown on into Brassington.

Called for a nice cold glass of cider at the Miners before the short walk to Hipley Farm to see if a long lost friend of Patricia's was still living there. An old man walked by carrying a scythe that looked much to big for him but no doubt he was a master at it as he went into a field and set to! Pat's school friend had long ago left unfortunately.

Back into Brassington where a group of Morris dancers, bells jingling gave the thumbs up sign to the fact the Gate Inn was open, still going strong from the seventeenth century.

Climb out of Brassington across a moor peppered with old lead mine shafts across paths trod for hundreds of years by our ancestors. Up and over the High Peak Trail just below Harborough Rocks. Climb the heights up to the top for one of the most stunning views of the day; sun shining on Carsington Water, a warm breeze blowing gently across the top of the outcrop covered with buttercups, daisies, blue birds eye dotted everywhere adding to a rainbow of colour.

Down past New Harborough farm and on toward Griffie Grange where the cows from Griffie Walk farm decided it was milking time and took an age before they let us through! Turn right past flocks of sheep and lambs, whose ancestors have grazed these granges for centuries through a wonderful hidden valley high above the Via Gellia, through a wood past Griffie Grange farm crossing the Via Gellia and up the twisting road to Ible, its roadside dotted with pale blue forget me nots and a solitary gooseberry bush trying to make a success of its presence. These places time has not changed it seems, but even Ible has to succumb sometime. For about 30 yds and for a width of three feet the road has been tarmacked! At Ible the cows there decide it is milking time, as they climb the hill leading into the hamlet they suddenly put on a spurt and come past us as they make there way to the water troughs that dominate Ible, all strung in a row, affectionately known as Ible Docks.

Through Ible and turn right passed the now abandoned Whitelow farm, in front of us the expanse of Bonsall Moor behind us the huge hole of Grange Mill Quarry. Passed the Blake Mere, scene in the nineteenth century of a child's death when the mother "could not go on", the mother knocked at the house of **Henry Spencer** in Bonsall and told him what she had done, late at night he recovered the body of the infant from the pond.

Onward past old stone barns and other buildings which have seen better days. Down then, over the rough stoney roads to Brightgate and the farms there each with its own dog, trying to bark the loudest and bite the hardest! Onward toward the village, past the old packhorse route the Cheshire salt carriers used, called aptly Salters Lane where the farmers were busy getting in the hay.

Finally to Bonsall past Abel Lane, past the famous market cross and steps close to the old Kings Head and on to the park looking at where the Fountain public house once stood. The whole area was one of peace and tranquillity, a glorious sunny day with majestic views at every turn. If your ancestors lived round here, well as one man once said to me, "Why did they ever leave?"