

Today's Journey

BUBNELL, CALVER and BASLOW

Would we manage to get out, no problem. The weather was fine, sunny even, so it was that the crafty Cockney said "Righto mate, fifteen minutes." Denis had said he was going to Beeley Moor, a favourite place of his and we would be going with him. A lot can happen in fifteen minutes, you can boil three and three quarter eggs or you can get soaked. We dried off in the car.

Beeley Moor is a wonderful place to go just to take in the views. Way into the distance maybe some eighteen miles you can see the Hope Valley. The sun was edging the tops of the distant hills with it's own brand of gilded gold in a vista that seemed to go on forever. My what a beautiful county!

The rain that had hit Matlock hadn't touched Beeley Moor. The sun was shining but in the distance loomed dark clouds heading our way. Beeley Moor is not a good place to get caught in the rain not many shops open here on Saturdays basically because there are no shops. Even the ice cream man, a stalwart who usually makes it no matter how cold, has decided to give it a miss. So do we.

We head into the valley bottom and towards Beeley. On the way we saw Maggie, a friend of ours, who usually walks her dog around Matlock but there it was in the back of her car, taken there because she said "It wanted a change." The dog knew he was onto a good thing, I am sure I saw him pawing through a holiday brochure.

Further down the road a walker flagged us down frantically. With a worried look he asked us where Beeley was. He had just walked up the hill from Beeley but he wanted to know if the corner where the ice cream man usually is was further up the road. Yes, it was but there was no chance of an ice cream. That didn't bother him it's just that that was where he had left his car and he was totally lost.

We pass through Beeley, or side step it and cross the Derwent over the single track bridge and into Chatsworth Park. The house looking as stately as a stately house should. To our left and off the beaten track is the beautiful hamlet of Calton Lees, home in 1829, to **Hugh TRAVIS** and **William STEPHENS**. Mr Travis was a farmer there and William manicured the woods for the Duke of Devonshire.

Edensor is the next village we pass through with its houses all differing in style. It's a tight knit little place, almost just a cul-de-sac, which, in 1835

housed three tailors. **Jarvis** and **John BAMPTON** and **Thomas MOSLEY** supplying the sartorial elegance and **James PLEASANCE** the shoes.

We know arrived at the West End. Being a Cockney that was no problem for Den. Having dropped us of the Cockney sparrow with the wings of an eagle flew back to Matlock. West End, Baslow is over the river from Bridge End, Nether End and Over End. Before it all ends in tears we set off up Bubnell Lane.

Bubnell is bounded one side with the river Derwent. As we walk up the lane the old houses appear, Bubnell Hall, Bubnell Farm and other houses been here centuries it would seem. Bubnell was the home to many **FROGGATT** families, a name well known in this area. In 1692, **Robert BIRKET** made the short journey from Edensor to marry at Baslow **Dorothy FROGGATT**. Two years earlier Dorothy, the daughter of **James KITCHIN** of Bubnell, married Sheffielder **William OSBOURNE**.

Looking over the river, between the gaps in the houses,] on the Baslow side, one sees the ever running escarpments that make up the Edges in this area, stunning outcrops of rocks. Baslow Edge, Curbar Edge and Froggatt Edge visited by thousands yearly.

The lane now has no houses just walls clothed in a snooker table green. So much so that it looks as if the whole wall has disappeared under a cloth of soft green velvet. The road is a little muddy but we carry on, turn the corner and standing high on the hillside is Bramley Farm. An impressive building all on its own. **William SMITH** came from Ashover in 1666 to marry **Jane HARRISON** here at Baslow. She was from Bramley.

As early as 1604 Bramley girls were attracting men from far and wide, the apple of many a man's eye. **Robert EYRE**, from Hope, was one marrying **Ann ELLIOTT** that year. The number of names of people from Bramley in the Baslow registers would seem to indicate that in times past the place was bigger than now.

The road past Bramley Farm is steep and will not take us where we want to go. We turn back passing a stone filled trough overflowing with water running down the hillside. Bramley Dale is an unknown little dale that sadly has no rights of way. Maybe it should stay that way!

Rather than totally retrace our steps we take the fields to Calver.

We could see Calver in the distance, it was just a matter of crossing the fields. The water gushing over the stone trough should have been an indication where the water was going to. Everything was all right until we had passed the midway point of the first field, it sort of sucked you in. Sink or swim came to mind. We tried to stand on the biggest clump of grass above water level, when we did it promptly scuttled away like an octopus. This was more like the river Wild. Ever adventurous, or mad, we finally got through the bog.

We were now greeted with a lane alongside the river. Slightly higher than the field we had just treked through we felt this would have to be easier. The mud made sure progress would be slow, very slow. I turned round

and saw Patricia, looking for all the world like Margot Leadbetter in Tom Goods allotment. I shouted back to her to make sure she had two boots on her feet. We half expected to see a group of wallowing hippos. The perfect environment for them here. It was a long slog.

Just before leaving the lane, the river Derwent makes a large bend, the water here is very still, the banks steep, the track treacherous. If someone going home late is going to fall into the river this un-protected spot is it. Maybe it was here **Gilbert BARKER** met his end, he was buried in September 1634 having been found drowned in the Derwent. On this same corner, on the bank side above the lane, are masses of bluebells waiting for spring.

We climb over the last stile and into another field, this time we feel a bit drier, the land not so soggy. We can see our knees now when we walk. As if to emphasize this fact a mole pops up and takes off his wet suit.

We take a left turn and enter into a cul-de-sac; here a large building has been tastefully converted into a house. It is called the Old Corn Mill. In 1829, **John KITCHEN**, was the miller and he would have been pleased to see his old workplace.

We come out onto the main road to Stoney Middleton, with Newborough Terrace, six houses stretching out opposite. You could be forgiven for thinking you are in Calver village but, not so, the village lies tucked away from the main road. I have never been to Calver but Patricia was at one time going to move here so she knows it.

Amazingly it has changed, she doesn't recognize any of it. All she could remember was a stream at the bottom of the garden of the house where she was going to live. They all seem to have streams at the bottom of the garden. Cleverly they have been diverted and converted into ponds with free flowing water into the next garden stream-cum-pond. Very effective.

Around the corner the Primitive Methodist Chapel bears the date 1860 and an invitation to come and "fight the flab".

Up the road a house hosts the name "The Old Bulls Head"; once run by **Richard FROST**, in 1835. Other such establishments back in 1835 included the "Star" kept by **William MARSDEN**, **Sam GLOSSOP's** "Pack Horse" and **Matthew FROST** looked after the "Eyre Arms".

To keep the wagons rolling **John SOMERSET** was your local wheelwright and **John MOSELEY** was blacksmith. A **Matthew FROST** was also blacksmith but I can't tell if it's the publican with two jobs or maybe they were all at it? A **Richard FROST** kept a shop and **William MARSDEN** was a grocer and tea dealer. **Joseph SYKES** and **Bob COCKER** kept your feet shod. There is still a house called Sykes House in the village today.

Curbar View Farm looks out to the edge bearing its name. Tiny white specks are grazing just below the craggy face where an enclosed wall runs right up to the limit of its base in a twisting snake like way.

In the center of the village a lamp post tells us it was there for the Coronation of Victoria, as, no doubt, were the slate and moss covered

roofs of this well kept village. What is about to go is the Post Office, up for sale. I check my change, do I really want to buy a Post Office? I will have to think about it and put the four pence back in my pocket.

Above the houses on a hill a tall grey building stands proudly against the skyline. It is very distinctive and its architecture is totally different from the rest of the village.

We walk up Lowside, past Shippon Lane and arrive at the back of the "Derwentwater Arms", tucked away from this side of the village but seen from all angles from elsewhere. We leave the village and retrace our steps to the main road. I ask Patricia to describe Calver, she replied with all the streams, moss and ponds and mud it was like living in a swamp.

We cross the main road and Patricia spies a craft shop. Before I can divert her attention to the manhole cover made in Stockport we are inside. It's a pleasing shop, with an old black leaded oven hidden away from among all the art work. Patricia fails to see it only looking at the "pretty things".

This is going to be a disaster. There are lots of pretty things and only one wallet. I should have put a deposit on the Post Office. I need help. Just then the phone rings the crafty Cockney has come to the rescue. He half expects us to be at Edensor so is surprised when we tell him where we are.

I go outside and carry on the conversation, a subtle move brilliantly executed. Patricia follows later wondering where I am. The ruse works, slowly we walk towards Baslow

Baslow is one and a half miles away, there are shops in Baslow I assure Patricia as we make our way over Calver Bridge.

To our left is the cotton mill, **HEYGATE** and **MASON** running it in the late 1820's and still doing so in 1835. It must have been a welcome relief to the villagers many of whom were involved in lead mining and its associated dangers.

Way back in 1663 **Thurstan LONGDEN**, of Calver, was "kild with a great stone falling upon him in a mine" and three years later, "a young man," **Hugh HOLE**, also of Calver, was "kilt at Rowland in a mine". Of course, the mills also had their fair share of bad publicity but it wasn't as far to walk, it wasn't underground and at least it was warm, if uncomfortably so on occasions.

Half way across the bridge we find ourselves in Curbar, the river below us being a dividing line between the parishes. We watch as bubbles frantically swap sides and a duck changes allegiance by swimming into the Curbar half.

The Bridge Inn stands opposite the parish church of All Saints. Beyond that the road leads to Curbar village itself. Some distance from the village is Ridding House. The Baslow registers record that in 1692 Joshua the son of **George ELLIS**, of Ridding House, was baptised. It then notes George was a Quaker.

The Curbar Primary school stands next to the church and is enclosed by fields that seem to be waiting for action, as if limbering up for the big day.

In times past others like us made their way to Baslow. **Ann SHAW**, in 1775, left Curbar to make the short trip as did **Ann JARVIS** who had her own big day in 1802 to look forward to. She was pregnant!

We carry on past a large farm, Stanton Ford, with a track adjoining leading to Grislow Field, another homestead, set back off the road like Riddings House. In 1662, **Roland PLATTS**, of the Ford was buried. He may have lived at Stanton Ford, aged "about 68" when he died he was described as a "good ,quiet honest neighbour."

We move on and pass Baslow Hall situated up a long drive and now finding life as a restaurant. The time is four forty and we are now approaching Baslow Bridge End. If you listen you can hear the sound of the Weir which stretches across the river and cascades in silver streaks tumbling away on it's journey. One thing about a river it doesn't have to bother about getting wet, which is what we are about to be very soon. The sky has suddenly darkened but we are expecting Den at any time.

The Post Office was once run by **John STROYAN**, some of his family moved in later years to Canada. John was from Wigan in Lancashire, as well as being Postmaster he was also a Draper. He was there the same time **Elizabeth BESTWICK** came from Stockport carrying her yet unborn child. That was in 1829. **Joseph NOTON** came looking for work but he had with him his wife Hannah and they came on the straight road from Brampton, that was in 1790.

We take a walk up towards the school, built in 1876, Baslow Primary School is a typical village school without a bell, maybe someone stood there with the hand bell for roll call?

On the other side of the road Baslow House sports an ornate entranceway and the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School boasts a plaque dated 1822. Nearby is Sycamore Cottage and a house with the name ALMA 1854 in large stone letters shouts out to be seen,which isn't difficult.

It now begins to rain,and it is cold rain, we are fortunate we find a shop that is open. It is a grocer's shop and it is warm and doesn't have "pretty things". Just then the mobile rings, it's Den. I go outside where the cold has brought some snow rain and hail.

"Ere mate don't leave it to late, I don't want to pick you up in the dark."

We had been expecting Den at any time, instead he is still sat in front of the fire in Matlock. In Baslow it is very dark, in Matlock it is bright and light. He can't believe it is raining. We make our way to the Post Office where he will pick us up.

We look around at the village and wonder where exactly did **George BROOKES** and **Calton MARPLES** have their grocery shops in 1829? Where did **John COCKER** and **Joseph MARSDEN** have their tailors shops? A cape would come in handy right now. **Edward TIVEY** a

surname more associated to the south of the county than up here was a retailer of beer.

Across the road the large outline of St Anne's stands sentinel has it has done for hundreds of years. Within it's ground lie from 1666 **Robert BRUSHFIELD** from Grindleford Bridge, **Elizabeth LANE** from Chesterfield silent since 1679 and even earlier, in 1642, **Robert WOOD** from Eyam. Inside the building **Thomas** and **John**, twins sons of, **George GRUNDY**, were baptised in 1667 and the same year **John WARD** married **Ales JACKSON** from Taddington.

Just then the bus to Sheffield splashes its way past us, long ago it would have been the "Defiance" coach doing the same trip. Suddenly out of the dark a voice calls out.

"Here mate, get in quick it's raining!"

The eagle had landed.