

To the Summit of England – Scafell Pike.

Wednesday 2nd July 2003.

Group Members. Roy, David, Trevor and Andrew.
Time Taken 11 hours 20 minutes. Distance 14 ¼ miles.
Height climbed 4900 feet. Average Speed 1.26 m.p.h.

The weather forecast was 'iffy', but plans had been laid down for the ascent of Scafell Pike, and if we demurred when would we get another chance ?

David & Trevor arrived at Lawkland just on 7.30.am. and we changed cars with Andrew driving us to Langdale for this epic day. Without any fuss we arrived at the Old Dungeon Ghyll car park and set off for the hills. We thought of you Cyril, before we left the car park ! We look forward to your return !

Our route was a circular one to 'collect' as many summits as possible, so we set off towards the Band and Bowfell. Just past Stool End Farm we met the farmer who was training two young dogs. He said that he had only had one for a couple of days, and it seemed extremely obedient. It made Roy wonder where he had gone wrong as Gwen, the springer spaniel still did what she wanted after 14 years of training. The farmer also gave us a useful hint that if ever you saw a dog licking its lips, it was likely to attack ! The farmer remembered Bill and asked us to pass on his regards !



Ascending the Band

As we steadily ascended, we decided to take the 'exciting' route along to Bowfell Crag, and then ascend by the side of the slabs to the summit. This was accomplished without too much effort and we duly reached the summit of Bowfell (2960 feet) after 2 ¼ hours after our departure from the car park. Until then the weather had been good but suddenly we saw the wonderful views were covered with cloud and we feared the worst for the remainder of the day. However someone was watching over us and in minutes it had cleared and for the rest of the day we had fine weather and excellent views.



Roy, Trevor, David and Andrew at the summit of Bowfell

Our next summit was Bowfell North (2825 feet), someone disrespectfully likened it to a railway station, and then on to Esk Pike (2903 feet) where a great debate took place as to the actual summit. Having resolved the situation we met a gentleman who had set off that morning from Black Sail Youth Hostel and was walking to his home at Torver, quite a trip. He gave us the disappointing news that Skiddaw House and Carrock Fell Youth Hostels have now closed; this is where Roy and Andrew spent a short holiday a few years ago.



Trevor, Roy, Andrew and David with Esk Pike in background

We continued our journey on to Esk Hause, and then met a small group from Sedburgh School enjoying the hills. We continued upwards to our next summit, Blunt Top (2950 feet), and Roy had trouble convincing the party that this heap of boulders was a true summit. On we went and approaching our objective for the day met a runner, who had started from Seathwaite about 2 ½ hours before and had already ascended Great Gable, Scafell and Scafell Pike. He made us look pedestrian, but we felt certain that he was one of the better ones and had 'won a few races', and knew the Bland family very well. Eventually we reached the large summit cairn and joined the queue to stand 'atop of England' before settling down to refreshments.



David, Andrew, Roy and Trevor at the summit of Scafell Pike

For the record, Roy had a pork pie and spam rolls, not the same tin of spam as last week, Andrew had a pork pie and tomato sandwiches, Trevor had ham sandwiches with French mustard, and David also had a pork pie, and corned beef sandwiches. It emerged that all the pork pies had come from Drake and Macefield, and we wondered if they might be interested in sponsoring us in the future ? I think David is looking into the matter !



Scafell from Scafell Pike

Trevor's knee / s were playing up, but after a dose of some magic pills he seemed to get renewed energy. The ascent of the boulders of Broad Crag (3054 feet) was accomplished on the route home, as was Ill Crag (3025 feet). Here misfortune nearly took a hand as Roy thinking that Trevor's knees had given way, grabbed him from the 2000 foot abyss below and dislodged a few of the stones from the summit cairn. However as Roy and Trevor were recovering from this ordeal, David put his local stone walling experience to the test and rebuilt the cairn. A suggestion that he might make another Thornthwaite Beacon was met with a stony silence.

Our next port of call and last stony walk was Great End (2984 feet) where once again we were able to see excellent views as we had done throughout the day. I mentioned to Trevor and David that we might like to ascend Allen Crag (2572 Feet), adding that Cyril always went up there. This reference had the desired effect and so we all strode up to this additional summit. There we attempted to contact the rest of the world, but without much success and we still did not find out how Tim Henman had done at Wimbledon. (We found out later that rain stopped play!)

We now travelled over the insignificant summit of Tongue Head (2250 feet), and then saw Angle Tarn, a wonderful sight in the late evening. We saw a couple of chaps preparing to camp on the fells, and one of them called over that he was looking forward to seeing the dawn next day. I think he would have been disappointed if he had the same weather as us, as early this morning it was pouring down. We finally reached our final and eleventh summit, Rossett Pike (2136 feet) and all that remained was to return to the car and civilisation over 5 miles away ! Throughout the day people we had met spoke about Rossett Gill with awe, and though I tried to shield Trevor from this information he approached the descent with some dread and trepidation.



At the summit of Rossett Pike

David however strode manfully on, spurred on with the thought of what was lying ahead, some special beer !!!! Andrew put his feelings and desperation down to the fact that at the time we were passing a lot of Black Sheep ! Finally we arrived back at the car park at 8.20.pm. after a long and hard day, much harder than last week even though we had done less mileage than on the High Street range.

It had been planned that we would have a meal in Langdale, sparing our spouses the task of preparing food for us late in the evening. We are forever thoughtful ! However someone said that arriving home late we would probably have been told to get our own food ! We had a couple of drinks, and the ordered food, Roy having (as usual) haddock and chips, Andrew chilli-con-carni, David gammon and chips and finally Trevor having steak pie and chips. We finally left Sticklebarn at about 9.30.pm. and Andrew duly deposited the Lawkland Group at around 11.00.pm. and the Settle/Giggleswick contingent left just afterwards.

The ladies had decided in the planning stage that they would not be left out and so arranged an alternative meal out at the Black Horse at Giggleswick. A good time was therefore had by all and we look forward to future events.

Due to group pressure I have been asked to provide the following walking statistics :-

There are 222 mountains listed on 'Roy's' master list, in the Lakes and Dales.

Cyril has climbed 206 mountains, and re-climbed 807 summits making a grand total of 1013 ascents.

Tony has climbed 171 mountains, and re-climbed 312 summits making a grand total of 483 ascents.

Bill has climbed 132 mountains, and re-climbed 70 summits making a grand total of 202 ascents.

Terry has climbed 138 mountains, and re-climbed 101 summits making a grand total of 239 ascents.

David has climbed 99 mountains, and re-climbed 16 summits making a grand total of 115 ascents.

Trevor has climbed 82 mountains, and re-climbed 9 summits making a grand total of 91 ascents.



Eskdale and Dow Crag from Ill Crag.