



Withnell Moor, Great Hill, White Coppice

5 miles (8km) Minimum time 2hrs

A glorious moorland hike: interesting farm buildings and the splendid views that they had, but more intimate woodland and valley sections too.

Leave the children's play area through the Snake Gate, turn right, crossing the culverted Goit as if aiming for Butterworth Brow ahead of you. Ignoring Butterworth Brow and also Quarry Road aim for Well Lane on your right hand side. Proceed up Well Lane and after passing Ripping Farm (see the 'Brinscall Woods' walk overleaf) continue to the top to a metal kissing gate. Our walk continues through this gate onto Wheelton Moor. On the left by far the largest and best preserved of all the ruins can be

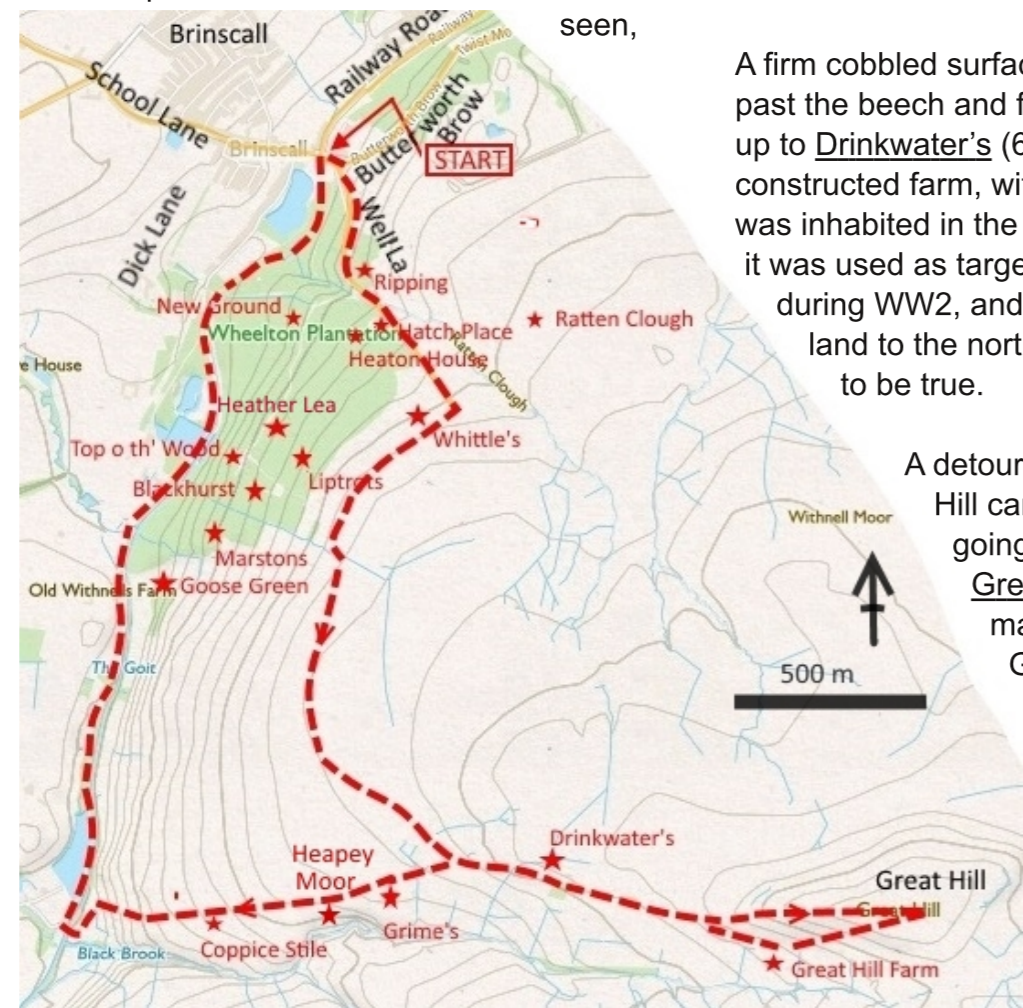
seen, butts that line the hillside, Whittle's (632206) ruins can be seen on the right with a large sycamore tree dominating what was the farm's garden area. The track eventually starts to bend left and a well known junction where a Ramblers' Association sign announces that Brinscall lies behind you and Belmont Road ahead.



A firm cobbled surface is reached that takes you past the beech and fir plantation on your right and up to Drinkwater's (636191), a large and well constructed farm, with cottages added later. It was inhabited in the 1930s, but reports say that it was used as target practice by the military during WW2, and many small craters on the land to the north of it suggest the reports to be true.

A detour from the path up to Great Hill can be taken on the right going down to visit the ruins of Great Hill Farm (642189), or make a loop to include Great Hill summit and Great Hill Farm as shown on the map. Turn back to the west down the track past Drinkwater's and at the Rambler's sign bear left and head downhill towards White Coppice. Grime's (632191) is another ruin that offers quite a bit to

see and it is easy to locate as it is very close to the main path. Heapey Moor Farm (630192) can be found off the



the barn of Ratten Clough (633208). Continuing on the good, moorland track that provides vehicular access to many shooting

beaten track. Continuing along the track towards White Coppice you will eventually reach a significant stone wall coming up from the Dean Black Brook valley on your left and crossing your path at a gateway. If you look closely at the wall you will see that the gateway is not very old, and that a few metres to your left it is possible to make out the now blocked previous gateway as referred to in the name of Coppice Stile (627191), which for centuries was a pub as well as a farm. Continue the walk down fairly steep open moorland until another steep but quite short section takes you past the former White Coppice Quarry workings. Descend the stony path, turn right through the kissing gate over the Goit bridge to reach the picturesque cricket field of White Coppice.

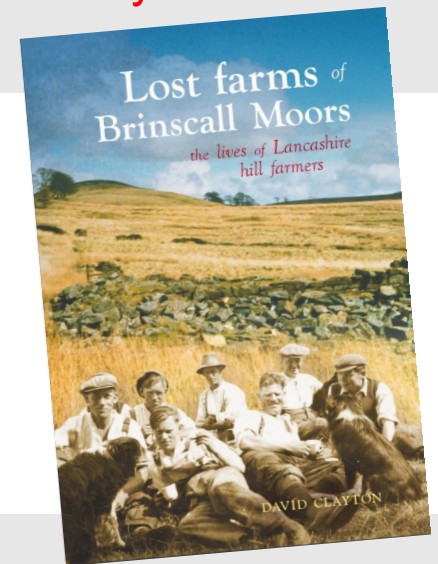
The 2km walk back to Brinscall is a leisurely one following a popular and well-walked bridleway running alongside the banks of the Goit that carries water for Liverpool from the Roddlesworth reservoirs to Anglezarke. Eventually Croft Lodge is reached and then the Snake Gate.

Paul



'Three Walks' has been prepared with generous financial assistance from both local Parish and Borough Councillors' funds; and we are grateful for Creative Commons licenced photos. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the route descriptions, the leaflet's publishers cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, or for changes in the details given, or even for inclement weather. Some shops in the village stock David's book, or Carnegie Publishing, 01524 840111, will gladly take orders.

Three walks inspired by the book



by David Clayton (1936-2014)

"...scattered heaps of stone, so thoroughly collapsed but still so numerous, mysterious & challenging ..."

...there used to be nearly fifty farms, upon which hundreds of men, women and children depended...

"...almost overnight, the march of 'progress' robbed them of their homes and livelihoods, leaving behind a landscape frozen in time, with crumbling buildings and lonely vestiges of human habitation."

Carnegie Publishing, Lancaster



All three walks start from The Snake Gate at the junction of School Lane and Railway Road, Brinscall, Lancashire, PR6 8QS.

Grid reference: SD628214
Bus Route: 24

The leaflet is sponsored by WITHNELL PARISH COUNCIL. It can be downloaded from <https://www.friendsofgreat.org/walks-leaflet> and/or at the barcode.





Brinscall Woods



3 miles (5 km), minimum 1.5 hours, this is a delightful, sometimes muddy, woodland ramble that changes with the seasons.

From the Snake Gate cross the bridge into Butterworth Brow and immediately bear right up Well Lane. The old wells can be spotted on your left, shortly after you have passed the second speed bump and another 100m or so further up close to the fourth speed bump.



As Well Lane bends to the left you will see the gate to Hatch Brook waterfall on your right. Immediately opposite is a stile to your first farm, Ripping (629210), the least 'lost' of all the Brinscall Woods' 12 farms. It's worth a walk round the ruins.

The complex of gates to the track on your right over the waterfall leads to several farm ruins in the woods, and is where this walk enters the woods. And it returns back down from these gates afterwards. Cross Hatch Brook bridge, admiring the (usual) torrent, walk a further 25m looking for a gap on the left. This is a grass covered

track which leads to Heaton House Farm (629209) about 100m in a south-easterly direction. Very close by, about 80m to the east is Hatch Place (630208), a smaller crumpled mass of stone. This is now adjacent to Edge Gate Lane, so follow the markers for another 100m SSEast and the OS marked path and stile.



From here, follow the well-worn path on a level contour in a SSW direction and following inside the fence line of the moors. After 500m you will come across the ruins of Liptrot's Farm (627203). A few metres further on through the gate posts is a short cobbled path but ignore a stile that leads onto the moor.

Follow the path close to the fence line. It soon bends to the right and downhill and then left when you reach the "bridge" (top of a wall) without parapets, over Sour Milk Brook. Cross this bridge and walk the path downhill, keeping in sight of the fence line. After 100m you will come across the clearly defined ruins of Marsden's Farm (625202).

Return to the path and continue downhill treading carefully through the muddy areas, especially when crossing the stream bed. After 150m you'll join Heaton's track, the main route through the woods back to the starting point of the walk. The path back North is clear and wide and uphill, passes some majestic fir trees and over Sour Milk Brook. Near the top of the track,



take the sharp left bend at the site of 19th century grand mansion Blackhurst (625204) on the right hand side. Once the home of a prosperous family, walk up its sweeping drive and imagine the Rock and Grotto garden, with paths and bridges and lawn. Just beyond and on the left side of the path, take a short diversion to the hidden, underground stables of the Top o' th' Wood Farm (625204).

Back on the path to the top of the rise, you'll see on the right, Heather Lea's (625203) garden wall. Explore these ruins of a Victorian gentleman's residence, which had tennis court lawns at the rear and large well stocked gardens. It was a 3 storey home with a cellar and 5 bedrooms. It was inhabited until the 1930s. Opposite, and across Carriage Drive, are the well preserved stables for the horses, see the photo above.

Another 100m downhill will lead you to New Ground Cottages (628209) on the left, but they will be almost invisible in the summer, now heavily overgrown. Nevertheless, there were 3 terraces each of 3/4 cottages built 6m below path level, on sloping ground. Come back late autumn if you want to explore the ruins safely, they stretch over 25m parallel with the main path. You will see a substantial farmyard retaining wall.

Only another 30m on the path and you will arrive at the point where you left it on the track to Heaton's. Cross the waterfall and head downhill retracing your steps to Brinscall village for Fish and Chips, a rest at the tea shop, or a pint at one of the two pubs higher up School Lane.



Barry

Brinscall Croft Lodge

with an extension past Brinscall Hall



1 mile (1.5km), minimum 20 mins, usually possible with a pram or wheelchair; or a walk of 2 miles (3 km), minimum 40 mins, round the village fringes.

Using the ginnel beside the Fish & Chip shop near the Snake Gate, go straight on to the bank of Croft Lodge. Turn left along the bank to join a footpath signposted 'White Coppice' with the Lodge on your right. After the Lodge there is a horse paddock on the right. Turn right at one kissing gate and go through another. At the tarmac drive turn right toward the village; there are houses on the left and then the Lodge on the right. After the



Lodge, turn right through the Baths car park to join up with the path you came on. To extend the walk – with some rougher parts – after the two kissing gates mentioned above, turn left along the tarmac, go over a cattle grid and, later on, cobbles. Turn right before the Drakes Head gates (private) and before the footpath gate. Go through two gates, either side of the old Blackburn-Chorley railway. Keep right, between abandoned Railway Lengthsman's Cottages up the lane to Victorian Brinscall Hall. As the lane bends round the Hall turn right at the Coach House into a long drive (Dick Lane) that was built for coaches to the Hall. On reaching the main road turn right past cottages and the tea room to get back to the start.

Dawn