

**Trip Report: The White Peak**

**Date:** 26th August 2011

**Group:** Jim G (Leader), Lynn, Jim W, Philip and Hugh (Jean not under starters orders)

**Route:** Leadmill Bridge, over Eyam Moor & Offerton Moor

**Total Distance:** 7.25 miles

**Total Ascent:** Not a lot

**Weather:** Overcast then heavy rain

**Time:** 3 hours 30 mins

8 am departure from Bunbury with Jean a no show due to hurting her back watching a film on TV (that must be up for an award this year) and we met up with Hugh, after another long drive from Luton, just north of Leadmill Bridge at 9.45. The weather looks anything but promising as we set out in the mizzle across Leadmill Bridge and head up a minor road until we reach Hazelford Hall a "former farmhouse with strong 17<sup>th</sup> century vernacular features" (Wikipedia: *smaller traditional buildings, which use local materials and methods*). Heading uphill now towards Leam, we pass a farm which claims to be the home of the Leam Simmental herd of pedigree cattle (the farm is for sale if you are interested). We then turn off the road onto a path leading onto Eyam Moor, first through dense bracken and then the wonderful blooming heather (Jim W threatens to break into some old Scottish lament, but fortunately we are spared this). We divert off the path for a coffee break at a series of small rock outcrops at Stanage (not to be confused with the more illustrious Stanage Edge) where we are directed to a large rock basin on the tallest of these. On the front of the rock are carved the initials "IB", Lynn speculates that this stands for "Iron Bowl" nobody understands why. Jim G and Jim W scale the rock and offer a hand to Lynn, who refuses assistance and promptly puts her foot straight in the sacred rock bowl! Lynn perches on the rock and drinks her coffee before throwing, first her rucksack, then her flask down to the ground before slithering back down under her own power.

We return to the main path which first follows the wall and then weaves through the heather and bracken to arrive at a stone step stile overlooking Bretton Clough. The path descends to Bretton Brook, which is crossed by a slatted plank bridge, we cross a small wood and pasture before emerging onto the minor road between Leadmill and Abney. We join a track then a path that takes us around Oaks Farm where we traverse Smelting Hill through dense bracken to arrive at a junction with

a green lane. The rain starts to fall heavily and we don waterproofs for the first time and head out across the heather covered Offerton Moor. We cross Siney Ditch (the name means drainage ditch) to Offerton Edge and then down through more dense bracken to Offerton Hall. The rain continues to fall heavily and we decide that, as we have not found any shelter, we will press on without a lunch stop. We follow a series of foot paths that drop down to the Derwent meadows and the river, we follow these back to Leadmill Bridge and the cars. Hugh departs for the nearest pub, for a coffee, and then off to Luton, we opt to eat our lunch in the car before heading back to the Dysart, where we arrive for rehydration therapy at 3.50pm. Hot off the press, rumours flying that the Blogmeister is turning into a Java Monkey!

Jim G