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Fremington Edge and Langthwaite

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Reeth - parking on the village green (SE 038993)
Ordnance Survey map	OL 30 Yorkshire dales – Northern and Central
Distance	8.7 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: I am sure that many people who go to Reeth to walk are probably thinking of upper Swaledale, Gunnerside for their walking route etc but when I parked in Reeth, I found myself looking up at the ridge towering above (Fremington Edge) and wondering what was up there. This walk was the result. It gives good views of Reeth and Swaledale plus some of the ubiquitous mining remains in that part of the world but also ventures into a little known Yorkshire Dale of Arkengarthdale whose main claim to fame is that the bridge in Langthwaite featured in the opening credits of All Creatures Great and Small, the 1970s TV series based on the books of the vet James Herriot.

This walk starts in the centre of Reeth where there is parking on the village green (SE 038993). Note, market day is on Friday when it will be much busier with reduced parking. There are public toilets here. Reeth is the main town in Swaledale on the B6270.

Firstly it is important to note that the footpath route shown on the Ordnance Survey map as crossing the river near Town End Hall at SE 040997 is impassable. The route is marked with footpath arrows and a sign warns of a “difficult” river crossing but this is a gross understatement. I believe there once was a route across the dam but this has long since disappeared. I wasted time trying this route so do not fall into the same trap.

Start: To get to Fremington Edge therefore begin by following the main road B6270 south east out of the village (that is downhill from the centre of Reeth with the bus shelter on your left). Cross Arkle Beck by the road bridge and just after the bend immediately afterwards, take the footpath on the left indicated by a fingerpost, over a gated stile (SE 042992).

Follow the wall on the left. Through a gate, head for the right hand side of a stone barn. There is an orange arrow on the barn indicating the way. There is a gated stile straight ahead.

In the next field bear right and climb the small rise heading for the right hand corner of the field where a finger post points the way. The route is now clear and after a couple of stiles, there is another stone barn. Pass to the left of this to the gated stile at the top of the field. There is a three way finger post and you want the middle route straight ahead climbing the hill (NZ 041001).

The steeply climbing path meets a broad track. Turn left ignoring the strangely directed old green footpath sign. Climb the broad track and where it forks, keep left. You get to a fingerpost indicating Fremington Edge to the right following the main track but there is a grassy track here to the left which makes for a more comfortable route. There is a broad track and bridle way shown on the OS map at Fremington Edge Top but the continuation of the grassy track (NZ 044006) keeps you closer to the edge for the best views back to Reeth and up Arkengarthdale.

Follow this path until as the Edge starts to decline after almost 2 miles. There is a large stone cairn (NZ 025024) where the path turns away from the Edge amongst some old mining remains. Use the gash in the hillside opposite as the direction to follow and you will quickly join the broad Fremington Edge Top track (NZ 025025) which is marked at intervals with stone cairns. Turn left and follow this track. It swings left heading downwards for Arkengarthdale. It wends its way down below some old spoil heaps and eventually turns left through a wall (NZ 020024) signposted "Langthwaite".

At a 'T' junction of tracks by a farm, turn right (NZ 018022). Follow the concrete track slightly uphill from the farm and take the sharp right hand turn sign posted Sleil Gill (NZ 017021). Very shortly the path forks at a fingerpost. Take the left fork. At the top of the field, go through the right hand gate.

At the farm, pass through two gates close together and you are in the hamlet of Booze. I am assured this is pronounced Bose and is nothing to do with drink but comes from either the Old English for house on the bend of the road or a reference to "bousing", a process connected with lead mining which was prevalent in these parts. Turn left to climb the hill, passing Maple Cottage.

This track becomes a tarmac road which takes you to the small village of Langthwaite. The entry into the village on this route is particularly picturesque. Refreshments can be obtained at the Red Lion pub.

With your back to the pub, walk straight ahead and follow the path to the left hand side of the beck. At all junctions now, keep right following the course of Arkle Beck to Reeth **but do not cross it.**

You pass under an old bridge.

You arrive at a stone barn in a field with an orange arrow pointing left. This is where you join the same path on the outward journey. Keep right and return to Reeth.

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