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Stainforth to Giggleswick Scar and Feizor

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Stainforth – pay and display car park (SD 821673)
Ordnance Survey maps	OS Explorer OL41 – Forest of Bowland & Ribblesdale and OS Explorer OL2 – Southern & Western Areas.
Distance	8.2 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This walk from Stainforth initially follows the River Ribble, passing Stainforth Force, a pleasant set of falls, before climbing above Giggleswick Scar, eventually reaching Feizor. This is dramatic limestone country with impressive rocky outcrops. There are a number of caves along Giggleswick Scar beloved of potholers/archaeologists, not least Kinsey Cave.

Kinsey Cave is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a number of archaeological remains have been excavated.

There are great views from various sections of this walk, especially from above Giggleswick Scar, where sits Schoolboys' Tower. This huge cairn gets its name from a tradition where graduating students from nearby Giggleswick School would each put a rock on the cairn to celebrate the end of their time at school.

From Giggleswick scar, the route progresses to the quaint hamlet of Feizor, where there is the popular Elaine's Café! The route out of Feizor is via a "pass" with magnificent limestone scars alongside. At the head of the "pass" are a number of rocks which provide a good picnic spot with fine views.

The walk starts from the pay and display car park at Stainforth where there are public toilets. To get there, from the centre of Settle (just off the A65), take the B6479 for just over 2 miles to Stainforth. The car park is by the B6479, on the very edge of the village.

Start: From the car park (SD 821673), return to the B6479 and turn right. Walk along it for about 200 yards and take the next turn left (SD 819674), along a narrow road marked "Unsuitable for Caravans". Cross the railway bridge and keep straight ahead, following the finger post you will come to for "Pennine Bridleway and Little Stainforth.

Cross the packhorse bridge over the River Ribble, then turn left through the gap stile following the fingerpost for "Stackhouse 1¼ miles. Almost immediately, you arrive at Stainforth Force.

Keep to the footpath alongside the river for about one and a half miles until you reach a metal footbridge. Do not cross the bridge but turn right to follow the fingerpost for "Stackhouse" (SD 817655). At the road, turn left.

You now have the choice whether to just walk along the road to the next section of the walk or whether to “have a nosy” at Stackhouse itself. There is not much to see but there are some lovely old buildings. If you do want a look, take the first right, in the direction of the public bridleway sign for Stackhouse. Pass the gate to Abbeylands, keeping straight ahead on the obvious broad track. Go through a five bar gate then follow the stone wall effectively circling the hamlet anti-clockwise – see the green dotted route on the sketch map. Continue, until reaching a small walkers gate, to rejoin the road, where you turn right (SD 814655).

Continue along the road for a quarter of a mile and look out for a slightly elevated house on the right called The Ryddings. Its gateway is recessed. Go through the small walkers’ gate in the left of the recess, then through a gated stile (SD 814650). Follow the footpath across the field to the trees and go through another gated stile.

Turn right then, almost immediately, climb the ladder to the left, to reach a broad track. Turn right on this track. Stay on the track, passing through a metal gate, as it curves left then right, climbing to the wall by the quarry. As you climb, there are excellent views along Ribblesdale to Pen-y-ghent.

The track becomes a narrower footpath as it climbs to the top of the quarry. Follow the quarry perimeter.

As you round the top of the quarry, you will catch sight of the massive round cairn Schoolboys’ Tower. There are other cairns but there is no mistaking this one. Make your way to it, from where there are great views.

With Schoolboys’ tower at your back and the quarry to your right, walk straight ahead (approx. north) to meet a broad grassy path which bears left to Giggleswick Scar. You should come to a fingerpost indicating the footpath.

Along here, you pass Kinsey Cave (SD 804657).

Continue along the path and at a walkers' gate, go through it and bear right. The route is obvious.

After going through a five bar gate, where there is a small sheepfold alongside, the track splits. Keep left following the wall.

At a junction of tracks with a three-way fingerpost, follow the public bridleway for “Feizor ½ mile”.

At the outskirts of Feizor (SD 790676), meet the road at a three-way fingerpost and turn right to follow the “Pennine Bridleway” and “Little Stainforth” direction. Walk straight through the hamlet on the road, ignoring a right turn footpath for Stainforth (unless you want to shorten the walk) and passing the tearooms.

The road becomes a stony track, climbing gently past some impressive limestone cliffs. There are some good “picnic rocks” along here. Stay on the track until you meet a

collection of gates and a sheep pound (SD 790685). Turn right here over a ladder stile for “Hargreaves Barn 1½ miles”.

When the path forks, take the left fork and cross another ladder stile. The path passes along a shallow valley. The high ground to the right is Smearsett Scar. There is a trig. point up there and I have previously walked along this ridge, from which there are good views. On this occasion however, I remained on the valley path. The route to Hargreaves Barn is easy to follow with a series of ladder stiles. On reaching a road turn right for Little Stainforth.

In Little Stainforth, there is a cross roads with a three-way fingerpost. Turn left for “Stainforth ¾ mile”. After passing the camp ground, you will arrive at the packhorse bridge crossed on the outward journey. Cross it and retrace your steps to the car park.

