

## Baslow Edge Geocross V86



Baslow Edge should have a proper 'moor above', but Eaglestone Flat is mainly agricultural fields and therefore not typical of the other moorlands along the Eastern Edges.

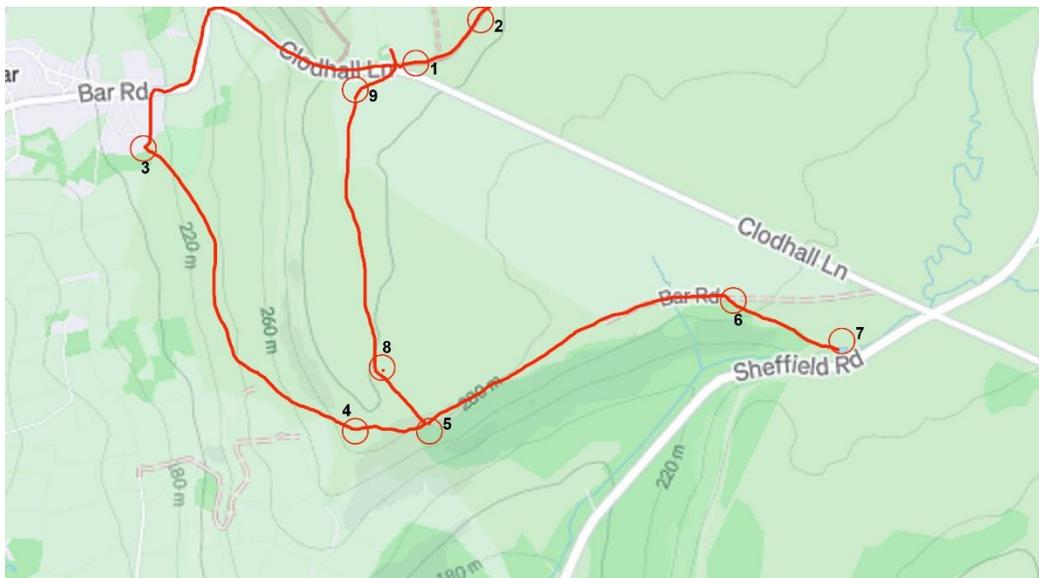
For rock climbers Baslow Edge is the smallest and least impressive of the Eastern Edges. It has just over 40 recorded routes. A single visit was enough for me back in the 1980s, whereas I've been to Stanage Edge hundreds of times.

Walkers and cyclists need to know that encounters with grazing cattle are likely. Eaglestone Flat is owned by the Eastern Edges Partnership and forms part of an 18km long distance trail which starts and finishes near the Fox House at Longshaw Estate. This trail visits Longshaw, Froggatt and Curbar Edges, Ramsley Moor and Big Moor.



In recent years the tenant farmer has been grazing Highland cattle on Eaglestone Flat. They are delightful to see but they do tend to congregate on the paths and can be difficult to pass.

The cows can be very protective of their calves and may be threatening to dog walkers.



Start and finish at Curbar Gap.

Location 1 OS ref SK 26266 74693

Curbar Gap Guidepost stone stoop

W3W slyly.noticing.pixel



Ancient Stone guide stoop at an important path junction at the top of Curbar Bar.

It was erected to indicate directions on the packhorse route that once passed through Curbar Gap. The stone is inscribed with place names like "Dron Field Road", "Shefe/ld Rd", "Tidsw/all Road", "Chester/Field Road". Also the name of "Humphery Gregory Supervisor 1709" who was involved in its construction: He did a good job. Its over 300 years old and still vertical.

The flat pillar is a Companion Stone. There are 12 Companion Stones located next to ancient guide stoops in the Peak District. Three of the Companion Stones are on Big Moor.

The sculptor has inscribed a short poem:-

*Before the stone, before the land, the running hare, the pointing hand, the rattled wheel, the bright idea, something else would lead us here*

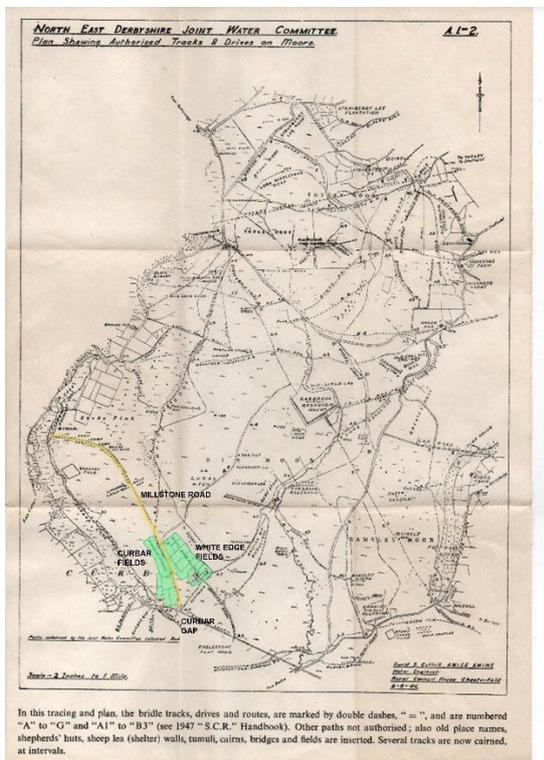
The main difference between the traditional guide posts and these modern sculptures is the longevity of the deeply set Guide Stoops and the temporary nature of the Companion Stones.

Oh, and that the traditional guide posts still deliver a navigational aid to travellers, whereas the Companion Stones leave them mystified!

Location 2 OS ref SK 26303 75028

White Edge fields

W3W height.lower.much



The old Millstone Road started from Curbar Bar and was the main path across the moor. At the south it ran between two sets of walled fields, Curbar Fields to the west and White Edge Fields to the east. Both are early 18<sup>th</sup> century 'Enclosure of Commons' and comprise eight fields. Siddall was a farmer from Curbar who cleared and enclosed White Edge Fields (8 fields) and then rented the land from the Duke of Rutland for £2 4s 6d a year.

These sets of walled moorland enclosure fields occur elsewhere on the Duke of Rutlands moorland. There are similar fields at the north of Froggatt at Stoke Flat (10 fields) and on both sides of the A625 around the Grouse Inn (11 fields). Eaglestone Flat has 10 fields.

During WW2 there was a Starfish Decoy near Curbar Gap. This was above and east of White Edge Fields. It is one of five Starfish Decoys intended to protect Sheffield's Don Valley steelworks from enemy bombing raids.

On the ground and on elevated platforms and wires would have been a very complex arrangement of tracks and ditches, designed by an artist who had seen Sheffield from the air at night. This was built to give enemy aircraft the impression that this was the Sheffield steelworks, and encourage them to drop their bombs on the moorland. At night paraffin fueled fire baskets were lit and 'streets' were lit to give the impression of furnaces glowing and the sparks of electric trams. It was set up in the early years of the Second World War. The equipment was controlled from an underground bunker.

The name given to these installations throughout Britain was Special Fire or SF sites. SF became StarFish.

There is no record that any bombs were dropped here, or on any of the other Starfish Decoy sites.

Location 3 OS ref SK 25574 74362

Cundy Graves - plaque

W3W chugging.receive.slimmer



The Cundy family graves are on moorland just outside the village of Curbar. All five family members died from the plague in 1632, 32 years earlier than the more famous Bubonic Plague which came to nearby Eyam in 1664. There were other plague deaths in Curbar at this time, and they are buried in the Wesleyan Reform Chapel graveyard further downhill in Curbar village. The plaque was erected in 1960.

Location 4 OS ref SK 26136 73662

Baslow Bar Quarry

W3W excusing.crawler.hesitate



Marker stone near the large Baslow Bar quarry. This quarry would have provided masonry stone for Baslow village, The cart track named Baslow Bar passes the quarry entrance. The lower part of Baslow Bar is a tarmac road.

Location 5 OS ref SK 26419 73685

Wellington Monument

W3W eradicate.deranged.summer



The Wellington Monument was erected in 1866, after the Duke of Wellington's death.

Eaglestone Flat is within sight of the Nelson Monument on Birchen Edge.

It is in memory of The Duke of Wellington's victory at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. A local army man and GP in Baslow, Doctor Wrench, erected the memorial to balance the Admiral Nelson Monument on nearby Birchen Edge.

Nelson's victory, and his death by a snipers bullet, was at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

The only meeting between Admiral Lord Nelson and Major-General Arthur Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) occurred in London on September 12 1805. The chance meeting of these war heroes took place at the Colonial Office at 14 Downing Street London.

Both were waiting to see Lord Castlereagh, the Secretary of State for War. Wellesley had recently returned from India, and Nelson was about to depart for the Battle of Trafalgar. They were kept waiting for a considerable time and during the wait, they discussed affairs of state, both domestic and continental.

Just five weeks later Admiral Lord Nelson died on the 21 October 1805 at the naval Battle of Trafalgar. Later Wellington remarked on Nelson's "good sense" and knowledge. This brief encounter remains notable because it was the only time these two British heroes of the Napoleonic Wars met. It was a pivotal moment as Nelson was on his way to Trafalgar and Wellington would later become a renowned general.

The meeting is significant not only for the individuals involved but also for the historical context. It highlights the key figures who led, and concluded, Britain's fight against Napoleon's France.

Location 6 OS ref SK 27441 74010

Baslow Bar stone guidepost stoop

W3W pancakes.publisher.prominent



Another ancient stone guidepost fromn 1709, still upright after hundreds of years. It has a nearby Companion Stone which looks like a sail.

The old sign will help you to find the road to Chesterfield. I'm not sure how the Compaion Stone could help you.

Location 7 OS ref SK 26419 73685

Bar Brook Lead Smelting Mill

W3W dissolves.stereos.develops



Easily seen from the A621 Sheffield Road is an overgrown millpond. Its been there for 400 years. To reach it you have to cross an impressive old arched bridge over the Bar Brook. Bar Brook drains a large area of moorland and flash flooding is a regular occurrence. The high arched bridge has survived 400 years of floods.

The millpond was part of Barbrook Lead Smelting Mill which was used for 150 years from 1618 until 1770. This smelting mill, together with a cottage for the person doing the smelting, was built by Robert Mower in 1618 for the Barker family, local lead-smelting businessmen. It closed in 1773.

Lead ore is heavy. The sooner it can be smelted and the heavy waste material removed, the cheaper it becomes to carry it on for sale as roofing and water pipes.

Traditional 'bole hill' smelters like this site were on the moorland edges, getting the benefit of the prevailing SW winds.

In the 15th century, lead smelting, a process of extracting lead from ore, was a relatively large and established industry in Europe, with significant trade volumes. Smelting involved heating lead ore (galena) to extract the metal, often using simple "bole" smelters relying on wind.

A bole smelter was a built up wall around a hearth on a slope. It involved building an open air fire on a slope, often on a hill, and layering it with ore and fuel like wood charcoal or coal. The wind provided the necessary draft. The molten lead would then run down to a collection area. Bole smelting was common before the arrival of bellows-driven furnaces.

Lead ore from the Eyam mines would have been hauled across the Bar Brook bridge and crushed using water power. A deep wheel pit hollow can be seen on the site. Bellows to increase the heat of the smelting fire would have been powered by a water wheel.

Fuel for the smelting hearth may have been timber or charcoal, named white coal, from local woods on Jack's Flat. Or more imaginatively, from bellpit mines over the Ringinglow seam. The nearest coal may have been at Bucka Hill near Owler Bar.

Or for those of you who have an interest in the drowned village on Leash Fen, this may be the nearest possible location for a small coal mining operation.

The lead smelting site was subsequently used as a watermill for grinding flour in the 19th century. The early OS maps show the cornmill with a millrace taken off the Bar Brook. The cornmill was three storeys high with an undershot waterwheel. The later 1897 OS map shows no buildings.

In the early 20th century the site was reused as a water supply pumping station by the Chesterfield Rural District Council. Their small building at the mill site was demolished by the Home Guard in 1940-41. The only obvious signs of a building on site today relate to this water supply building.

The most obvious feature on the site today is the mill pond, which still holds water. This long oval pond, now part-silted, is retained by an earth bank on its downslope side.



Location 8 OS ref SK 26253 73830

Eagle Stone

W3W means.shun.selection



The Eagle Stone is an impressive free standing gritstone tor. It has a similar height and mass to Mother Cap in the Burbage Valley.

Its about 6 metres high. Looked at from the west it might appear to be a side profile of a face.

Originally named the Aigle Stone after a Celtic deity who threw large stones.

Curbar and Baslow people have a legend that it would bounce around the moor at night.

It stands on the edge of a large cairnfield which has Bronze Age field boundaries and a cremation cemetery

Local custom was that young men of Baslow had to climb the Eagle Stone to prove their fitness for marriage to a local girl. There is no easy way up, or down, so friends of the hopeful groom might have been pressed into lending a helping hand. The easiest way up has chipped holds.

It is now popular with rock climbers for solo ropeless 'bouldering'.

Location 9 OS ref SK 25996 74569

Baslow Edge viewpoint

Contains "type"



The view over the Derwent Valley from Baslow Edge is very accessible, and an etched panorama viewpoint has been placed on top of the low wall.