

Froggatt & Curbar Woods Geocross V46

FROGGATT AND CURBAR WOODS

The Derwent Valley Aqueduct passes beneath Froggatt and Curbar Edges, high above the River Derwent. It was completed in 1930. It is an impressive engineering achievement, delivering treated water from the Bamford Water Treatment Works to a reservoir at Leicester' by siphons and gravity, a distance of 60 miles.

From Leicester it serves almost 600,000 customers in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire. They need 200MI/d of drinking water every day. One Megalitre (MI) is 1 million litres, so 200,000,000 litres. That is about 11,000 tanker lorry loads every day.

All large water infrastructure projects, in this case using large diameter steel pipes and concrete and brick tunnels, will leak. It is now almost 100 years old.

Of the 28.1 miles of aqueduct, 17.4 miles are 45 inch diameter steel pipes in inverted siphons. These are for the eight sections of aqueduct which cross valleys.

Cut and cover gravity flow culvert (tunnels) are used for 7 miles. These are formed by digging a trench following the contours of the land to achieve gravity flow, then casting a semi-circular concrete pipe 9 inches thick, and lining this with blue engineering brick 4½ inches thick bedded on ½ inch of cement mortar, in a trench 6 foot 3 inches internal diameter. The process is then repeated to form the upper part of the tunnel, which is then backfilled with the excavated rocky soil.

Short tunnels through hills form 3.7 miles. There are five tunnels, lined with a ring of engineering brick and a backfill of concrete between brick and rock to leave an internal diameter of 6 foot 3 inches.

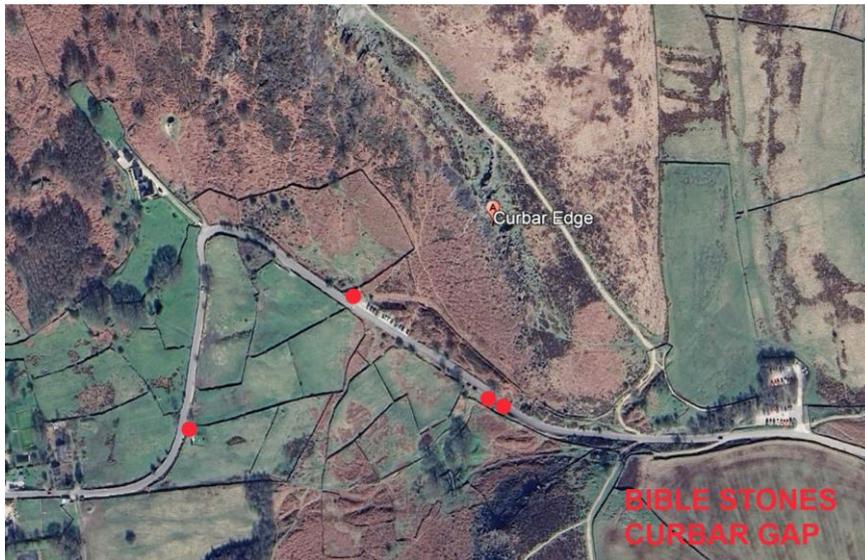
The fact that this huge aqueduct does leak is not surprising. Water will always escape downhill and try to join a river.

After passing below the Burbage Brook in Padley Gorge the Derwent Valley Aqueduct enters the woods above Grindleford Station and passes above Nether Padley, into The Haywood and then Froggatt Wood. It crosses beneath the Grindleford Road and continues through Froggatt and Curbar Woods to another road crossing below Curbar Gap.

The Derwent Valley Aqueduct which passes through Froggatt Wood is a cut and cover constructed tunnel 6 foot 3 inches diameter, backfilled with the excavated soil.

Curbar Gap has some interesting roadside religious carvings unique in the Peak District. There are known as the Bible Stones and were carved in the 19th century by Edwin Gregory, a local lay preacher for the Wesleyan Reform Church in Curbar Village and molecatcher for the Duke of Devonshire.

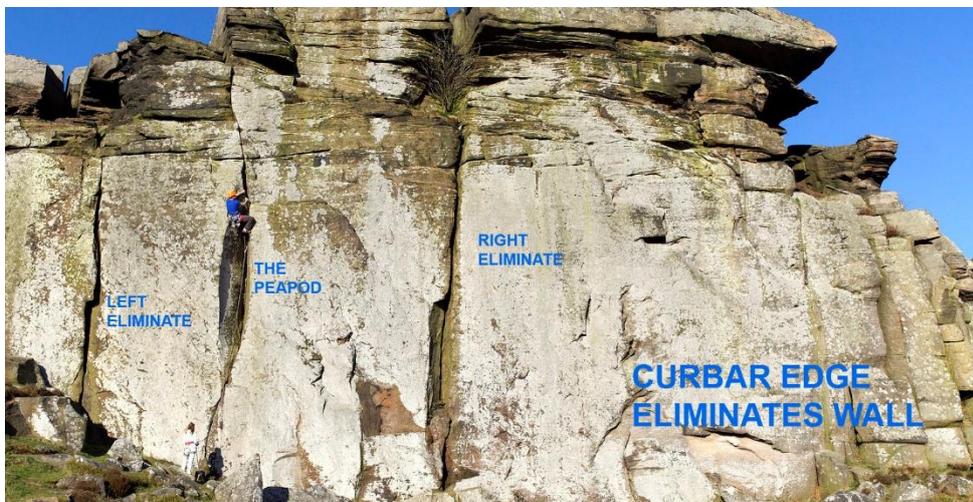
Moles, or rather a lack of them, was very important to the Chatsworth Estate where guests rode horses to chase game. An unfortunate horse putting a foot down a mole hole might mean disaster for rider and horse.



The very devout Edwin Gregory made the inscriptions in gratitude to God on his recovery from a serious illness. Curbar village, like nearby Eyam, had multiple outbreaks of the Bubonic Plague.

The historical Monument Record MDR 393 calls them 'Inscribed Stones Froggatt Edge' but describes them as Five Stones, three on the roadside and two are on the moors above the edge. I have found Four Stones on the roadside but none above the edge. The one I havent found is Acts 7.37

It is interesting to note that both Curbar and nearby Froggatt villages have Wesleyan Reform Chapels and no village pub. Wesleyans are not allowed to drink alcohol.



Close to Curbar Gap at the south end of Curbar Edge is the magnificent Eliminates Wall. The climbs here are not easy. I was very happy to celebrate these climbs in a pub. The Wesleyans would not have approved.

The current Rockfax climbing guide has this to say:-

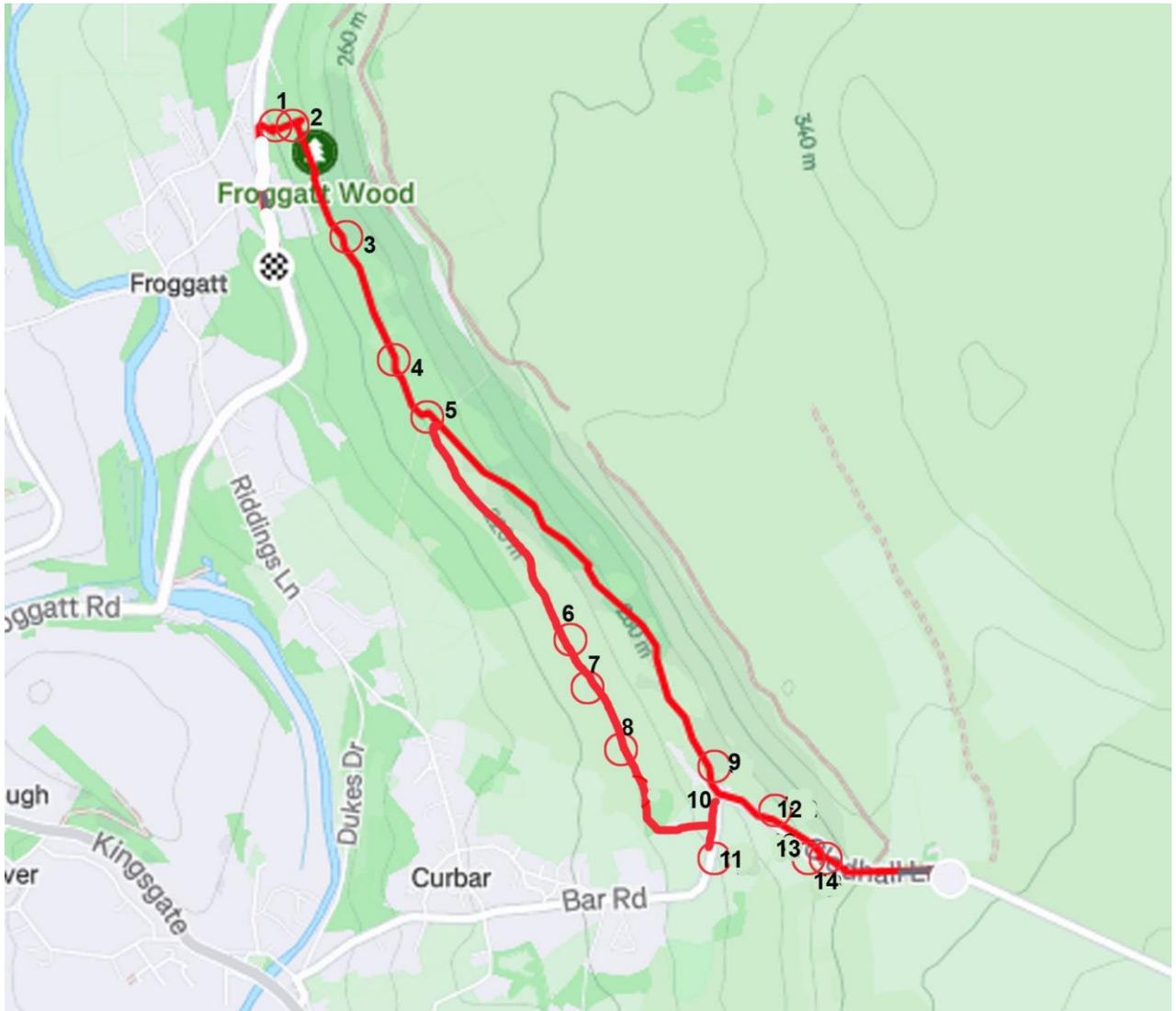
'The Eliminates Wall is one of the most intimidating bits of gritstone around. It is home to arduous crack climbs from the 1950s, and desperate face climbs from the 70s, 80s and 90s. Queues are unheard of (apart from the Peapod).'

There are three famous cracks:-, Left Eliminate, The Peapod and Right Eliminate, all first climbed by Joe Brown in 1951. And to their right, one famous face climb, Linden, which is very rarely climbed because it is so hard and the consequences of failure are unthinkable.

The Peapod is very well known in climbing circles, and one climbing wall has built a replica in an indoor gym. It requires skills in an old-fashioned technique called 'chimneying'.



Each of the locations can be found on the route below.



Start and finish at Froggatt village.

OS ref SK 24730 76481

Gate stoops

W3W dolphins.perfumed.speared



Above the Grindleford Road the footpath enters into Froggatt Wood. This well used footpath isn't shown on the OS map. It passes through two areas of 'gardened' woodland. There are clipped hollies, woodpiles and habitat management.

OS ref SK 24718 76481

Stile

W3W year.bedsread.rocked



Clearly a long established footpath down to Froggatt. I'm surprised the OS map doesn't show it.

However, the woodland owner is trying to discourage walkers from using it. There is a hand written sign warning of the dangers of walking on the busy road to reach The Chequers Inn.

Once over the stile look back and spot the 'Keep to the Footpath' sign.

OS ref SK 24758 76361

Aqueduct access chamber

W3W asks.jugs.sprinkler



The Derwent Valley Aqueduct runs south through Froggatt Wood and on to Curbar Woods. The aqueduct is buried deeply and its location is identified by the inspection chambers and valve houses. And by the unmistakable above ground high quality gates.

This is one of many access inspection chambers on the Derwent Aqueduct. They are positioned 440 yards (quarter mile) apart.

Water from the Derwent Valley reservoirs is carried in a buried concrete and brick-lined tunnel, passing through Froggatt & Curbar Woods, on the way to a distribution reservoir at Leicester before being sent on to the cities of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester.

Below Froggatt and Curbar Edges this tunnel flows by gravity at a low gradient.

The water passes beneath these rectangular access chambers. They don't appear to have been touched for years.

OS ref SK 24947 75921

Derwent Aqueduct gate

W3W noting.spark.scaffold



Derwent Valley Water Board was formed in 1899. The Howden Reservoir opened on 1 January 1912, and the Derwent Reservoir followed in 1916.

The Derwent Valley Aqueduct was completed in 1930.

This footpath follows the line of the buried Derwent Aqueduct and was established to be used by engineers to check the pipeline. This gate is on the north side of Bee Wood. There is a second gate out of Bee Wood into the now defunct Curbar Warren.

The DVWB did things properly, and built them to last. These fine stone gate-posts and the green painted iron gate are over 100 years old and lasting well.

The reservoirs and aqueduct are now owned by Severn Trent Water.

The gates are not locked and walkers are welcome. They are still used by water engineers to inspect their buried pipeline.

OS ref SK 25068 75694

Walled reservoirs – NW corner

W3W cove.prosper.pelt



Two abandoned drystone walled reservoirs, just above the line of the Derwent Aqueduct. The north pond was full in March 2021 and completely fills the walled enclosure. The south reservoir is lower and concrete lined, oval shaped with curving sides and is dry.

These may have been used to supply drinking water, one being a silt pond and the second being a clean water reservoir. The drystone walls would have kept animals out.

Or they might be part of the Derwent Aqueduct construction project which used steam cranes and would have needed a water supply.

OS ref SK 25487 74869

Curbar Woods sign

W3W bungalows.encoder.wiggling



This is part of what was once the vast Curbar Warren, some 30 hectares established for the Duke of Rutland for mass production of rabbits for shooting and for food. Warren Lodge on the Curbar Gap road was built in 1877 for the warren-keeper.

Traditionally the warrener was a nuisance to the local poachers. On one occasion they helped themselves to lots of rabbits by netting them at night while the warrener was out drinking. The poachers later delivered a large pile of rabbit skins to the Duke to let him know that the warrener wasn't doing his job properly. A new warrener was soon appointed.

The Derwent Valley Water Board were empowered to clear the area of all livestock and so by 1912 the warren was closed. They didn't want rabbits digging into their pipework.

Closing the warren didn't stop four game-shooting men bagging 712 rabbits in one day in 1933.

Whereas Froggatt Edge has dense woodland below, Curbar Edge was until 2000 much more open with large areas of bracken and sparse birch.

At the Millennium local people undertook to plant a native woodland on behalf of the Peak Park and Curbar Parish Council.

Curbar Wood has now been established and will last for hundreds of years. From tiny acorns....

OS ref SK 25454 75024

Memorial bench

W3W adopters.upset.superhero



One of several benches looking west from Curbar Wood over the Derwent Valley.

OS ref SK 25512 74851

Curbar Millennium Wood plaque

W3W picturing.acquaint.political



During the winter of 1999 – 2000 residents and Friends of Curbar planted oak trees to mark the Millennium.

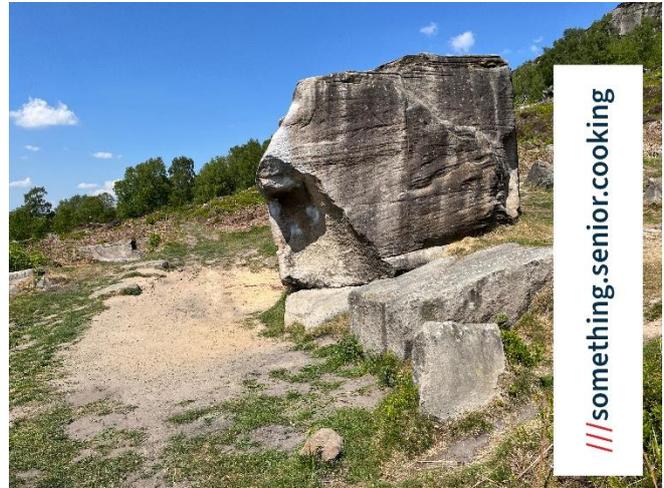
While all the rest of us were worried that our computers were going to self-destruct.

The good people of Curbar got it right.

9 OS ref SK 25695 74955

Trackside Boulder Warren Lodge

W3W invested.poses.kindness



This is the well-used Trackside Boulder at Warren Lodge. About 20 years ago when this first became popular with boulderers the ground became a muddy mess. Some well meaning person decided that a carpet of artificial grass should be laid down. It didn't last long. Wood chippings were then tried with poor results.

The current solution is crushed gritstone hardcore which has been successfully used in Stanage Plantation.

OS ref SK 25720 74873

Warren Lodge

W3W rephrase.point.allow



Built in 1877 for the Duke of Rutlands warren keeper, so that he was able to live on the 30 acre rabbit warren. The Duke of Rutland controlled the Longshaw Estates and eight nearby grouse shooting moors. Rabbit shooting was another entertainment for guests at shooting parties.

The Derwent Valley Water Board were empowered to clear the area of all livestock and so by 1912 the warren was closed. They didn't want rabbits digging into their pipework.

Closing the warren didn't stop four game-shooting men bagging 712 rabbits on Boxing Day in 1933.

The Eastern Moors Partnership was based here for a few years. It is now a private house.

OS ref SK 25700 74686

Bible Stone John

W3W oils.wished.swimsuits



This is the lower of four roadside Bible Text references which are carved on natural roadside stone below Curbar Gap. They were carved in the 19th century by Edwin Gregory, a molecatcher for the Duke of Devonshire. He made the inscriptions in gratitude to God on his recovery from a serious illness. This might have been Bubonic Plague.

Beside this Bible Stone is an in-situ carved stone drinking trough for horses, fed by a natural spring, and a blue Severn Trent Water capped pipe.

This is John 5.24.

Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.

The other three are Isaiah 1.18 and Hebrews 7.25 and Matthew 16.26. There might be a fifth carved stone with Acts 7.37.

OS ref SK 25855 74811

Bible Stone Matthew

W3W materials.cone.knee



This is Matthew 16.26

What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

OS ref SK 25972 74724

Bible Stone Isaiah

W3W hoot.barstool.royalty



Just a few metres downhill, near a gate leading to a footpath.

This is Isaiah 1.18

The Lord says, 'Please come, so that we talk about this together. Even if your sins are like a red stain, they will become as white as snow. Even if they are bright red, they will become like white wool.'

OS ref SK 25700 74686

Bible Stone Hebrews

W3W grapes.sculpting.spending



Near the top of the hill, near to Curbar Gap. On the right hand side of the road, looking south to Baslow Edge.

This is Hebrews 7:25

Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

OS ref SK 25819 75084

Eliminates Wall Curbar Edge

W3W defected.deliver.acre



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