



**THE ROYAL AIR FORCES
ASSOCIATION**
Rutland Branch
THE FLYING HORSESHOE



Branch Newsletter

November 2012

Wainwright's Coast to Coast

Fred Burgess

This walk was devised by the legendary Alfred Wainwright in 1971 -72. It includes some of the best hill and fell walking in England and is recognized the world over as a challenge worth doing. In a search to find the 50 best walks in the world it was voted second, behind the Milford track in New Zealand.

Reasons given for its success were not just the variety of tracks and scenery, from lovely lakeside walks to challenging climbs over rocky crags in the Lake District and the rolling hills of the Yorkshire Dales and North Yorkshire Moors but also the camaraderie of the fellow walkers and the friendly locals one meets along the way.



The walk covers over 190 miles from St Bees on the Irish Sea to Robin Hoods Bay on the North Sea and crosses three of our National Parks. Total ascents on the route amount to over 6500 metres. It is permissible to do the walk from West to East, but that is against the prevailing wind which is ok when it's dry but very uncomfortable in heavy rain.

I have not always wanted to do a long distance walk so when my longtime friend Ian suggested we do this one I didn't hesitate, nor did another two members of our walking group, Rob and Dave. Rob had actually done this challenge once before. So the team was formed.

It is estimated that over 9000 people did the walk last year so the demand for B & B along the way is high and where you can get booked in dictates how far you have to walk each day. As the walk is so popular, there are now several tour operators who will book your B & B for you and transfer your luggage each day and we decided that was the way to go.

We opted for fourteen days walking and this worked out about right. There were days when we felt we could have comfortably walked further but other days when we were glad to get finished, especially when the weather was unkind. The walk itself was as good as the guide books say and everyday was different.

Day 1. Was on lanes, fields and some boggy bits, it started fine but ended in rain. Day 2. The rain continued unabated and didn't relent till we completed our climb out of Ennerdale against the torrent of rainwater draining from the hills. We dropped down into Borrowdale in welcome sunshine.



Day 3. An hour into our climb out of Borrowdale and we were back into full waterproofs again and our planned diversion along a scenic ridge seemed pointless, so it was straight on to Elterwater.



Day 4. Was windy but bright and showery but despite the strong wind Dave and Rob took the tough scenic route over St Sunday Crag while Ian and I played it safe down Grisedale to Nidderdale. Day 5. Was the hardest day in walking terms but it was perfect weather and the views from the highest point of the whole walk, on Kidsey Pike, was fabulous. Despite keeping up a good pace it was 7 pm before got to our hotel in Shap. Day 6. We walked 20 miles in continuous rain from Shap to Kirby Stephens in poor visibility and was probably our worse day. Day 7. Started wet as we trudged over the hills and through squelchy peat bogs but it was fair by the time we

came down to a hill farm where the farmer's wife served us cream teas. You may have seen this lady on television, she has a child almost every year and is a lovely jolly lass. Suitably sustained we headed on in to Keld which almost the halfway point.

Day 8. The weather was good as we made our way up past the remains of Crackpot Hall, and several lead mines and kilns, over the lunar like landscape which is the aftermath of the search for lead over a period stretching 600 years. Not attractive but an interesting day which ended in Reeth.

Day 9. Another beautiful day as we followed the River Swale down the valley to Richmond.

Day 10. On another showery day we headed under the A1 into the Vale of Mobray, enroute to Danby Frisk. The highlight of the day was to see the large memorial erected in the churchyard at Bolton on Swale to Henry Jenkins. Born 1500 and died 1670???

Day 11. We continue across the Vale to Osmotherly on the edge of the Cleveland Hills. Day 12. On a nice day we join the route of the Cleveland Way over the hills onto the North York moors to follow a disused railway track, a remnant from the ironstone working in that area, to our night stop on Blakey Ridge.

Day 13. Wet and windy again as we trudged over desolate moors to drop down into the lovely valley of Glaisdale and our hotel in Egton Bridge. On our last day the weather gods decided to show us what bad weather was really like. The wind changed to the East, strengthened and drove heavy rain into our faces for the whole day as we 'plodged' through a couple of inches of surface water to reach an equally wet Robin Hoods Bay. But the pub was warm and the beer was good.



Some people may think I'm a bit of a masochist to spend two weeks trudging the hills in dodgy weather, perhaps I am because I enjoyed every day and instead of being elated at having completed it, I walked into Robin Hoods Bay feeling slightly disappointed it was all over. Ian once said, "Good walking, good company and good beer, what more could you want?" I might add "Good weather would be nice."

To everyone who sponsored my walk and raised £160 for RAFA I would like to say "Thank you very much"



Remembrance Sunday

Remembrance Sunday was marked in Oakham with the usual parade and church service. The parade left from the Market Place at 2pm, and marched to All Saints Church for the 2.30pm service.



Derek Bury laid the wreath on behalf of RAFA. Amongst the other attendees who laid wreaths following the service was Dr Laurence Howard JP PhD, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Rutland; Inspector Kam Mistry Rutland LPU Commander, Leicestershire Constabulary and Oakham's Mayor Cllr Alf Dewis and Deputy Mayor Cllr Adam Lowe

After the ceremony there was the usual provision of refreshments at the drill hall and many attended but due to the considerable help from volunteers all were served promptly.

Thank you so much to all the ladies who willingly did all jobs, and also the men who helped too in clearing up. It was a superb team effort. Hard but worthwhile work, I hope everyone agrees?

Many thanks

Angie Humphreys

The Cenotaph

At the end of the Great War, the British War Cabinet determined that a day of celebration would be held to mark the signing of the peace treaty on 28th June 1919. A Peace Celebrations Committee was appointed chaired by Lord Curzon, Lord President of the Council. It first met on 9th May and began to organise a programme of festivities, the high point of which would be a victory parade. Sir Lionel Earle, Permanent Secretary of the Office of Works, wrote to the Earl of Derby, British Ambassador to France, to ascertain the precise nature of the celebrations the French would hold on 14th July. The committee met again and the minutes of this meeting show that Prime Minister Lloyd George had been told by President Clemenceau that the French, who were holding their Victory Parade in Paris had arranged for the troops in the parade to march past a 'great catafalque' erected beside the Arc de Triomphe, which they would salute, in honour of their war dead. Lloyd George attended the parade, 'he came back from France deeply impressed by the historical ceremony in Paris in which he had participated. The catafalque in honoured association with the Arc de Triomphe appealed to his sense of what harmonised with the solemn occasion. His inner self envisaged our need for a point of homage to stand as a symbol of remembrance worthy of the reverent salute of an Empire mourning for its million dead'. Upon his return to London he discussed this with Sir Alfred Mond, the First Commissioner of the Board of Works and convinced him that the work should be executed by 'some prominent artist'. Mond had already sounded out Sir Edwin Lutyens, the eminent architect was invited to design a non-denominational structure for the parade. After meeting with the Prime Minister, Lutyens met with Sir Frank Baines, Chief Architect of the Office of Works and there and then sketched a copy of the design for him.

The original drawings are in the collection of the Imperial War Museum, as is an original wooden model. The word cenotaph derives from the Greek words *kenos* meaning empty, and *taphos* meaning tomb. The origin of this type of memorial can be found in the importance the ancient Greeks attached to the proper burial of their dead, even if no corpse were available. If recovery was not possible, either because of defeat or because death took place at sea, the Greeks built a cenotaph or a *sema* to replace the body. A *sema* may be a piece of stone or a stone figure. This stone substituted for a dead person is 'both the external sign of the invisible dead... and the substitute person, especially kept alive in memory when written upon'. Not all of the Cabinet thought the project a good idea, and Curzon was afraid that the monument might be desecrated',

as it was a temporary structure erected for the parade. Indeed the Cenotaph was one of a number of temporary structures erected for the parade.

On the morning, 'Crowds began to assemble at dawn, many theatres were closed on account of traffic congestion and no less than 1,500 officers and 15,000 other ranks had to camp under canvas to enable them to take part in that memorable ceremony'. The temporary wood and plaster structure was unveiled on the morning of 19th July 1919. Later that day the parade was held. The troops of the victorious nations marched past the Cenotaph in solemn silence, led by the Allied commanders. It was saluted by them and the marching detachments. 'The King reviewed the parade from a temporary pavilion constructed for the purpose at Buckingham Palace, and an elaborate program of festivities and entertainments followed....The temporary Cenotaph was such a minor detail in the planning of the Peace Day Celebration and the winding down of the war effort that no one involved could have possibly imagined its becoming the official memorial. But it was the Cenotaph which had caught hold of the public's imagination. From then on, this understated and abstract monument became the symbol of England's grief'. The parade was barely over, before the question of making the Cenotaph a permanent structure began to attract attention. The Times newspaper printed a letter signed "R.I.P." which stated: "The Cenotaph in Whitehall is so simple and dignified that it would be a



pity to consider it merely as an ephemeral structure'. The paper subsequently wrote: 'The new Cenotaph erected in Whitehall to the memory of 'the glorious dead' was the centre of what was perhaps the most moving portion of Saturday's triumphal ceremony. The Cenotaph... is only a temporary structure made to look like stone; but Sir Edwin Lutyens's design is so grave, severe and beautiful that one might well wish it were indeed of stone and permanent'.

Captain Ormsby-Gore MP raised the question of the conversion of the temporary structure into a permanent one in the House of Commons. At the same time, he and 23 other MPs signed a memorandum to Sir Alfred Mond requesting that a permanent memorial to the fallen of the Great War be erected on the site. The immediate and overwhelming public acclaim for Lutyens' hurriedly prepared design afforded them a ready solution to a potential problem. 'Time passed and the plain fact emerged and grew stronger every hour that the Cenotaph was what the people wanted, and that they wanted to have the wood and plaster original replaced by an identical memorial in lasting stone. It was a mass-feeling too deep to express itself more fitly than by piles of fresh flowers which loving hands placed on the Cenotaph day by day. Thus it was decided, by the human sentiment of millions, that the Cenotaph should be as it is now, and speaking as the designer, I would wish for no greater honour, no more complete and lasting satisfaction'. 'In some mysterious way, the design of the Cenotaph embodied the nation's deep and terrible bereavement. It became the focus for four years of pent-up sorrow which had been waiting for victory, or some tangible signal, to be released. For the Government, this spontaneous wave of public approval solved the thorny task of defining a program and selecting a design for a permanent memorial'.

Sir Alfred Mond pressed the Cabinet for a decision on 'retaining in a permanent form the Whitehall Cenotaph'. He told them: 'Unless it was removed within the next nine or ten days it would probably crumble to pieces'. The Cabinet took the decision that it was to be re-erected in a permanent form on the same site. *The Times* reported: 'It is understood that the Cabinet were largely influenced in their decision to retain the Whitehall site by a moving letter from Sir Edwin Lutyens, which Sir Alfred read to the assembled Ministers. There were several alternative proposals before the Cabinet. The one which obtained most support was that the Cenotaph should be re-erected in permanent form in a spot to which traffic considerations did not apply - for preference in the Mall. The final decision was taken against any change of site on the ground that the Cenotaph in its present position had memories which could not be uprooted'.

The General Purposes Committee of Westminster City Council considered the notion put forward by *The Times* in their edition of 31st July, that the proposed siting of the Cenotaph in the middle of six lanes of heavy traffic was unsuitable and concluded that a better location would be Parliament Square. Mond read the minutes of the General Purposes Committee, minuted Earle and instructed him to consult the Treasury Solicitors to enquire whether the Board of Works could proceed without the Council's permission. Earle counselled caution. Mond then wrote to the Mayor of Westminster Council and explained what the nation required of him: 'Before the Council come to a final decision on this question I should like them to bear in mind that the erection of the permanent Memorial is the declared decision of the Cabinet supported by the House of Commons and public opinion. With regard to the Committee's suggestion that the Cenotaph should be erected in Parliament Square or elsewhere, I think it should be remembered that it was specially designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens for the position in which it stands and with the most careful regard for its surroundings. The spot on which it stands is now consecrated to the Memory of all those, whether belonging to the Empire or our Allies, who fell in the Great War, and it will thus be remembered for all time the spot containing the Memorial to the 'Glorious Dead' which was saluted by the representatives of the troops of the Empire and of our Allies on the day when Peace in the Greatest War in the World's history was celebrated in London'. 'The matter was finally settled at a meeting of Westminster County Council; a motion that Parliament Square was more suitable was defeated, and the Cenotaph left to stand where it now is in Whitehall'.

Taken from www.veterans-info.uk

- WHATS ON -

Forthcoming Events:

1. 13th December – ATC Presentation Evening at the Drill Hall, Penn Street Oakham

For further details on forth coming events Tel: 01572 755969 or email rafarutland923@yahoo.co.uk

Derek Bury

DATES for Your DIARY

Wed 9 th January 2013	Wing Commander Kevin Mackie MSc, BA(Hons) RGN, GS, PMRAFNS	"What ever happened to RAF Hospitals"
Wed 1 st May	DTUS RAF Student Cadets	

Branch Meetings are 1st Wed every month – Next Meeting Wednesday January 9th 2013

Venue: Cottesmore Sports & Social Club – 7.00 for 7.30pm

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