

Little Salkeld, Lacy's Caves and Long Meg

ID: 5081 **Distance:** 5.6 miles **Height gain:** 160 Metres **Map:** Explorer OL 5 **Contributor** Jim Grindle
Duration 2 Hours 31 Mins

Features Ancient Monument, Birds, Butterflies, Cafe, Flowers, Gift Shop, Good for Kids, Great Views, Industrial Archaeology, River, Tea Shop, Waterfall, Wildlife, Woodland

Description:

The Eden Valley must be one of the most underrated walking areas in the North of England and this walk not only includes one of the finest riverside sections open to walkers, but also several sites of interest.

Lacy's Caves were cut from sandstone in a cliff overlooking the Eden; the tiny St Michael's Church is a delight and also has a bridleway running right through the churchyard; Long Meg and her Daughters is one of the best of the many Cumbrian stone circles and completely accessible.

You can even have tea before you go home, at a water mill just on the edge of Little Salkeld.

Access info:

Leave the M6 at Junction 40 and take the A66 to Appleby. At the first roundabout leave the A66 for the A686. At Langwathby take a minor road to Little Salkeld at a sharp corner on the left. The road drops to a bridge and the cornmill and then climbs to a sharp bend right. On the bend, turn left and you will find parking for several cars. There is also parking by the stone circle.

SatNav: CA10 1NN

Additional info:

Long Meg and her Daughters is one of the finest stone circles in the north of England. The circle has a diameter of about 110m, the second biggest in the country and I have read, is the sixth largest in the world. Long Meg is the tallest of the 69 stones, about 4m high, with three carvings and stands about 20m outside the circle. The circle is between three and four thousand years old. Long Meg is made of local red sandstone, whereas the daughters are granite. There are various stories told about the stones: it is impossible to count them twice and get the same number; Long Meg was a witch who together with her daughters, was turned to stone for dancing on the Sabbath. William Wordsworth wrote: 'Next to Stonehenge it is beyond dispute the most notable relick that this or probably any other country contains'. Colonel Lacy of Salkeld Hall had five chambers carved out of the sandstone cliffs by the River Eden at a time when ruins were thought romantic. When you reach Waymark 3 you will be passing through the remains of a highly industrialised area and if you look, you will see that in places the path has sleepers from the narrow-gauge mineral line that ran here. This served a gypsum mine opened in 1896 and closed in 1976. Over five million tonnes were extracted and taken to the Settle - Carlisle Railway.



1

Grid ref: NY566362 **Lat:** 54.7190032 **Long:** -2.6746154

Turn towards the village green in the direction of the signpost; the parking area is on the left. Start by taking the right fork and in a few moments you will see a signpost for a dead-end with The Old Vicarage on your right. The road divides by a signpost.



2

Grid ref: NY563362 **Lat:** 54.7197435 **Long:** -2.6788193

Turn right, following the direction of the signpost to Lacy's Caves and Daleraven Bridge; just ahead there is a sign 'Private Road' etc. Follow this road for 1.5km until you reach the black gates of the former mine buildings, having passed a barn in ruins and on the ground nearby a plan, in brick, of the area.



3

Grid ref: NY562375 **Lat:** 54.7306964 **Long:** -2.6807882

Turn left and downhill here in the direction of the signpost to Daleraven Bridge. You will see an electricity substation on your left and then meet a barrier with a red disc.



4

Grid ref: NY562375 **Lat:** 54.7309171 **Long:** -2.6814907

The signpost here is still to Daleraven Bridge but, disconcertingly, it points back in the direction of Little Salkeld. This is temporary. An enclosed path goes around the substation and puts you back on course with the River Eden and the railway line on your left. As you walk, the remains of the gypsum mines will be on your right and gradually the path is accompanied by the river at close quarters. About 1km from the substation a low post with yellow arrow points uphill and if you look left, you will see the caves marked by a white warning notice.



5

Grid ref: NY564383 **Lat:** 54.7378555 **Long:** -2.6781903

From the caves the path climbs over the cliff in which they are dug and then drops to the river again. Only one path goes off to the right; ignore it and stay on the riverbank. A long section of boardwalk brings you to a stile and shortly to another at the end of the woods. Continue through fields, over stiles and up short rises until a flight of steps leads down to the road at Daleraven Bridge.



6

Grid ref: NY565395 **Lat:** 54.7487852 **Long:** -2.6762757

(You could start the walk here, as there is room to park). Turn right and follow the road steeply uphill and around two right-angle bends. When the road levels out, look for a track joining the road at a sharp angle from the right.



7

Grid ref: NY569392 **Lat:** 54.7464377 **Long:** -2.6701781

There is no signpost on the road, but when you have turned the first corner you will find on the right a signpost 'Public Path'. From here to the next waymark it is a distance of 1km. Ignore another track joining from the left. The track is enclosed and one section of about 100m is particularly muddy; additionally the hedge on the left has been cut and the branches left across the track. I did cut a way through this with folding secateurs and it must be a temporary obstruction, but if you feel uneasy about it, then you have only to follow the road to Glassonby Village and take the lane on the right to the church at Waymark 9.



8

Grid ref: NY569382 **Lat:** 54.7372283 **Long:** -2.670333

The track that you have been on joins another at right-angles with a signpost and a plaque with a picture of badgers. Turn left and follow the track to the gates of St Michael's Church.



9

Grid ref: NY574383 **Lat:** 54.7382121 **Long:** -2.6625095

Enter the churchyard and follow the sandstone slabs of a bridleway around the church to the entrance and then to a gate on the far side. Go through this gate into a field and without changing direction, cross the field to a lane with gates and signposts upon each side.



10

Grid ref: NY575381 **Lat:** 54.736242 **Long:** -2.6612349

Cross the lane into the field on the far side and keep on the right of the field until you see a bridleway gate to the right of the end of a small plantation.



11

Grid ref: NY575377 **Lat:** 54.7332313 **Long:** -2.6612635

Go through the gate and follow the bridleway, which is enclosed at first. Then keep to the right of the field until you come to a farm gate behind which is another.



12

Grid ref: NY573374 **Lat:** 54.7305634 **Long:** -2.6643257

Go through both gates and then keep to the left side of the field. This will bring you to a brideway gate. Go through it to a section of the stone circle.



13

Grid ref: NY571371 **Lat:** 54.72772 **Long:** -2.6666083

(Long Meg is on the other side of the farm access road that cuts through the circle). Continue the walk by turning left on the farm road, passing the brideway sign, which is close into the hedge. Follow the road until it bends sharply to the left where a signposted track goes straight ahead.



14

Grid ref: NY570367 **Lat:** 54.7242505 **Long:** -2.6683368

Leave the road and take the track ahead. This bends left by some gates and ends at a road.



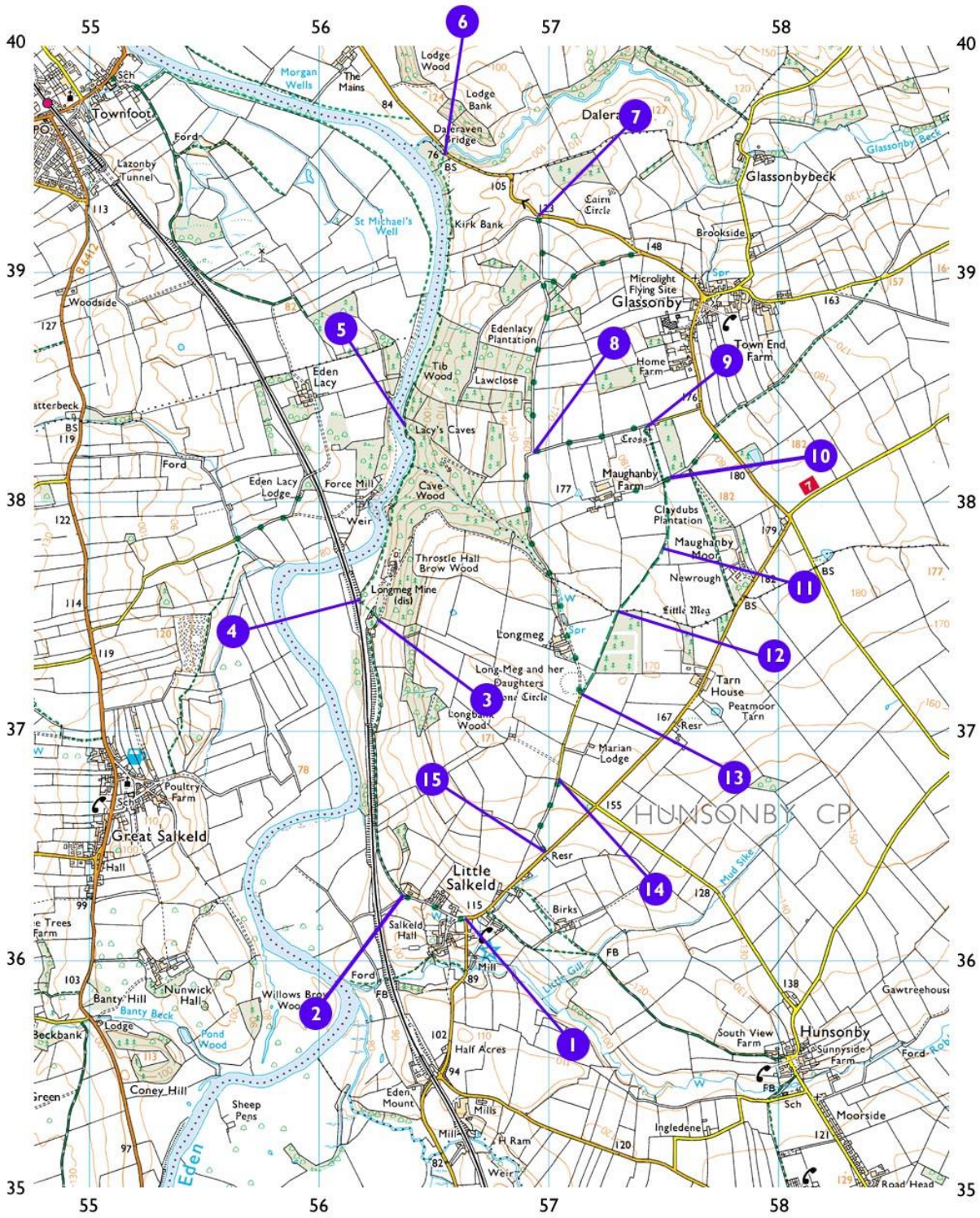
15

Grid ref: NY569364 **Lat:** 54.7215037 **Long:** -2.6693784

Turn right and follow the road, which leads downhill directly to Waymark 1.

1:25 000 (x1)

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