

SEMER WATER WALK

From Bainbridge Plus Marsett and Wether Fell

Visit my website for full details: <https://www.paulbeal.com/semer-water-walk>

Introduction to the Walk

This superb circular route begins in the Wensleydale village of Bainbridge. The walk follows A Pennine Journey past Out Brough, with early views of Bainbridge, Askrigg Common, Abbottside Common, and the River Bain below. From there, it drops to the riverside and turns at the three-arched bridge to reach the peaceful northern shore of Semer Water, then follows the south-eastern shoreline past Thwaite End House and into the Semer Water Nature Reserve. After visiting the atmospheric ruins of the original Parish Church of Stalling Busk, the route continues across Raydale's fields and footbridges to the hamlet of Marsett, before climbing steeply onto the high ground around Wether Fell. A bridleway loops around the fell, leads back to the old Roman Road, and brings you along this wonderfully straight track all the way back into Bainbridge.

Highlights of the Walk

Along the way, there are countless highlights to enjoy. Early on, A Pennine Journey provides grand views over Bainbridge, the River Bain, and the surrounding commons, before the first distant glimpse of Semer Water from Bracken Hill. The route takes you down to the short River Bain in its charming Raydale valley and then to the northern shore of the lake, where two rocks shaped like hats sit in the water beneath the hills at the dale's head. Around the south-eastern shore, you pass Thwaite End House and enjoy wide views across Raydale, with stone barns, dry-stone walls, and gentle green fields creating a timeless landscape. The remains of the old Stalling Busk chapel and churchyard add a fascinating historical stop, while the climb from Marsett rewards you with superb panoramas over Semer Water, Addlebrough, Penhill, and distant fells such as Great Shunner Fell, Wild Boar Fell, and the Howgill Fells. The circuit of Wether Fell and the long, straight Roman Road back to Bainbridge round off a walk full of variety, scenery, and interest.

Additional Information

- **Distance:** 12¼ miles (19¾ kilometres).
- **Duration:** Approximately 6 hours (excluding stops and breaks).
- **Difficulty:** A long and moderately challenging route suited to walkers with a reasonable level of fitness. The distance and total ascent require stamina, and the climb from Marsett to the high ground around Wether Fell is steep in places, but the paths are generally clear and straightforward to follow.
- **Trail Conditions:** A mix of well-defined footpaths, grassy bridleways, stone tracks, and short sections of minor road. Some areas can be wet or boggy after rain.
- **Recommended Map:** OS Explorer OL30 – Yorkshire Dales Northern & Central Area.
- **Parking:** Parking is available in Bainbridge, around the large village green.
 - **Google Maps Link:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/J9g4ieiDm8YPjumf8>
 - **What3Words:** ///dots.lived.overlooks

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Thank you for your support!

Paul Beal



Step-by-Step Directions

Start your Semer Water walk in **Bainbridge (1)**, where you'll find parking around the large village green. From the village, head along the A684 towards Aysgarth and Leyburn. Cross the bridge over the River Bain, then continue slightly uphill as you leave Bainbridge. When the road bends to the left, turn right onto a **footpath signposted for Semer Water (2)**. This footpath follows the trail known as A Pennine Journey.

As you walk along the grassy path, you will begin to ascend onto **Out Brough (3)**. Here, you'll get your first view of Semer Water in the distance. Continue along A Pennine Journey as it crosses fields and stretches of open countryside, gradually descending towards the **River Bain (4)**. Follow the riverside trail for about two-thirds of a mile (1 kilometre) until you reach the three-arched **Semer Water Bridge (5)**.

Turn left here and walk along the tarmac road for about one-third of a mile (500 metres). Upon reaching **Low Blean (6)**, turn right and rejoin A Pennine Journey. The path crosses fields on the south-eastern side of Semer Water, eventually leading to **Thwaite End House (7)**. Stay on the trail as it briefly dips down to the shores of Semer Water, then gently rises again as you enter Semer Water Nature Reserve.

Leaving the reserve, you'll come across the ruins of the original **Parish Church of Stalling Busk (8)**, which is marked as a chapel on Ordnance Survey maps. After passing the chapel, the path splits. Take the right-hand trail towards Marsett, trekking across several fields for about half a mile (800 metres) as you slowly descend into the valley. You'll cross a footbridge over **Cragdale Water (9)**, and shortly after, another bridge over Raydale Beck. From here, continue on a stone track that becomes a narrow concrete road, then reverts to a stone track as you approach the hamlet of Marsett.

In Marsett, turn right when you reach the road and cross over **Marsett Bridge (10)**. Ignore the first two left turnings, and instead take the third, which is signposted to Burtersett and Hawes. Follow this country lane uphill for about a quarter of a mile (400 metres). As you near a farm, the route splits. Turn right onto a **stone track (11)** that ascends steeply, before transitioning into a grassy path. Continue climbing for roughly three-quarters of a mile (1.2 kilometres) until you reach a junction with another **grassy bridleway (12)**. Here, turn left.

Follow this bridleway for over half a mile (800 metres). You'll see a signpost for the Roman Road. Continue along this route to reach the **Roman Road (13)**. If you prefer a shorter version of this Semer Water walk, you can turn right at this point and follow the Roman Road back to Bainbridge. If you wish to complete the full walk, turn left and follow the Roman Road. This wide stone track climbs steadily uphill for about one mile (1.6 kilometres).

When you **reach a gate (14)**, turn right onto a grassy path marked simply as a bridleway. Follow this bridleway for more than a mile (1.6 kilometres) as it loops around the top of Wether Fell, staying close to the fence or dry stone wall. When you **arrive at a large gate (15)**, turn right again and follow the path along the wall until you reconnect with the Roman Road.

To finish your walk, turn left and follow the **Roman Road (16)** in a north-easterly direction for over three miles (5 kilometres). The Roman Road eventually merges with a **wider tarmac road (17)**. Follow this downhill for just under a mile (1.5 kilometres), bringing you back into Bainbridge and completing your Semer Water walk.

Map of the Walk

