



The stepping stones at Dartmeet, in the second part of the walk

Walk 3 Hexworthy and Dartmeet

Length: 10.5km (6½ miles) Duration of walk: 3¼ hours

Character: Field and moorland paths, bridleways and quiet lanes. The views are magnificent. There is one steep ascent.

NB The second half of the walk has stepping stones and should not be attempted after heavy rain. Parts of the route are wet underfoot.

The Forest Inn

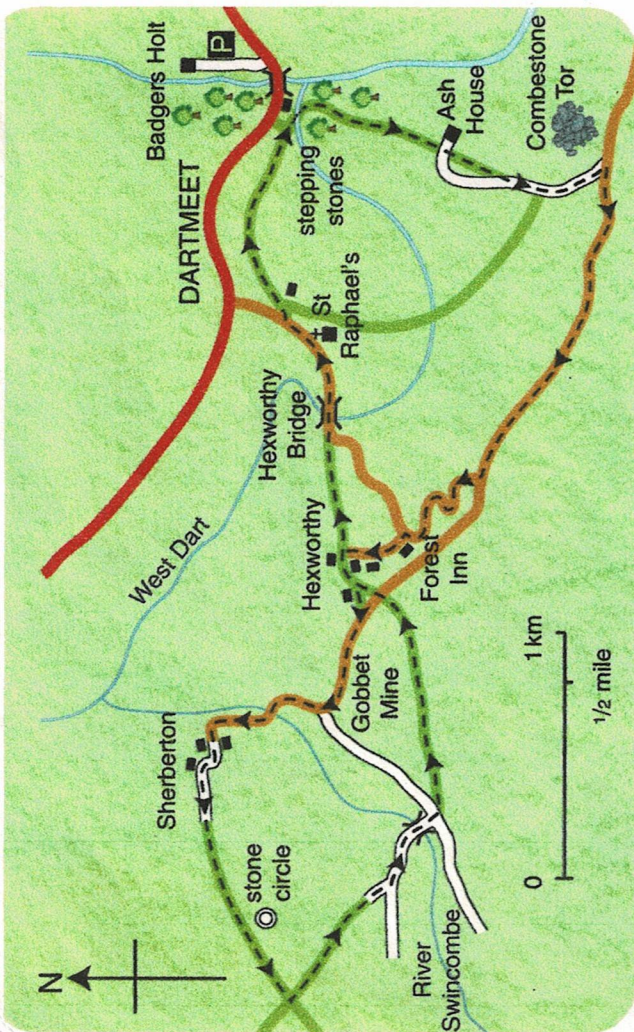
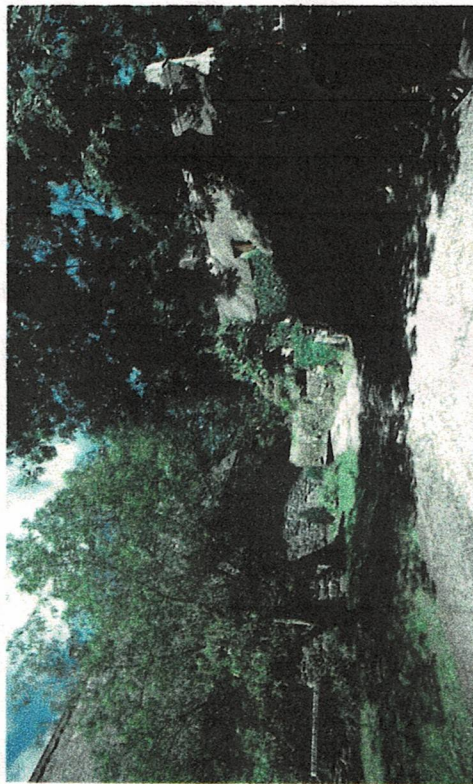
Tel (01364) 631211 (to check parking availability)

www.theforestinn.co.uk

The Forest Inn enjoys a splendid situation in the midst of Dartmoor's grandest scenery. It was a favourite haunt of Dartmoor author William Crossing, who knew the old thatched building before it was ravaged by fire. The inn as we see it was completed in 1916 and bears the Prince of Wales' symbol – a plume of three feathers. Inside is a restaurant, easy chairs and an open fire, as well as Dartmoor landscape paintings by local artist David Young. Walkers are welcome.

Parking opposite the inn (SW655726) is reserved for customers. Otherwise, park off-road on the lane leading uphill from the inn, or the lane branching right from this to Sherberton.

Thimble Hall
is on the left
of this
photograph



Take the lane in front of the inn with a No Through Road sign and follow it down to Hexworthy and then up. Immediately after Thimble Hall, turn left and walk uphill. Cross a tarmac access drive, then after 80m join a lane. Go through the metal gate signed SHERBERTON FARM and follow the lane down. On the left are the remains of the 19th century Gobbet Mine and a little further up the valley are the remains of older tin works.

Cross the bridge and walk up to Sherberton Farm. Take the PUBLIC BRIDLEPATH between the farm buildings; turn left in front of the sawyard into an enclosed track. Continue through the next gate onto the open moor.

Follow the BRIDLEPATH sign ahead, keeping the wall and fence on your left. The stone circle in the far left corner of the field is worth seeing, though most of its stones have been lost to the nearby wall. Don't take the gate here, but walk uphill for a further 150m, keeping the wall on your left.

Leave the field by the gate at the PATH sign and follow the well-beaten path to a junction. Turn left for R. SWINCOMBE. After 600m cross the stile at the end of the field, and after 60m keep left, following the BRIDLEPATH to a footbridge. Cross over and walk ahead as signed.

Continue to the lane, cross over and retrace your steps to Thimble Hall.

Either visit the inn now, or turn left opposite Thimble Hall on the PUBLIC FOOTPATH for the second loop of this walk. Go through the yard ahead and into the field. Follow the path sign and cross the stone stile at the far end of the field. Walk down to the tarred lane, cross Hexworthy Bridge and walk on to St Raphael's Church. Built in 1869 to serve this part of the huge Lydford parish, it was also used as a school. The children's desks are now pews – with inkwell holders still in evidence.

Take the next turning right, opposite Huccaby Farm. Do not take the gate in front of you but bear left uphill, to another gate with a warning about the stepping stones. Walk ahead following the yellow waymarks over the hill and down into an enclosed lane. The path leads into a field and down to a house. Follow the lane behind the house to visit Dartmeet, where Badgers Holt offers refreshments. The road bridge here is dated 1792 and belongs to the turnpike era; upstream a few metres is its predecessor, a clapper bridge which may be medieval in origin.

Retrace your steps to the path and turn left for COMBESTONE VIA STEPPING STONES. On the far side, take the well-beaten PUBLIC BRIDLEPATH uphill through the trees and on through fields. At Ash House, walk ahead for HOLNE ROAD AT COMBESTONE TOR, then join a farm track. Continue on this track at the next junction.

On reaching the road, turn left to visit Combestone Tor, a fine granite pile showing characteristic horizontal weathering and a rock basin. Turn right onto the lane and follow it down over the bridge, then up again. Fork right (PRINCETOWN 6) when the road divides and walk down to the Forest Inn.