

# FALLS GOLD

DRINK IN THE DRAMATIC AYSGARTH FALLS ON THIS NEAR FIVE-MILE WALK IN NORTH YORKSHIRE. JO VAUGHAN IS YOUR GUIDE

**T**HE COUNTRYSIDE around the Club's Brown Moor site in Hawes has to be some of the most magnificent for the casual walker. It's not so hilly as to be out of bounds to all but the fittest, but is rolling enough to have dramatic scenery and stunning views. As I had already explored much of the site's immediate surroundings on previous visits, I drove to Aysgarth – a small village a few miles east of Hawes – for this month's walk.

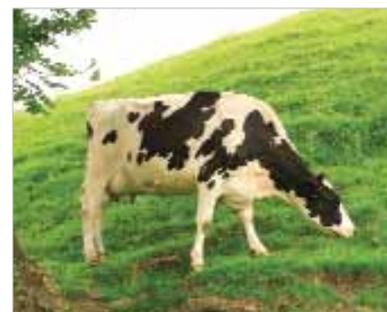
This route takes you past the spectacular Aysgarth Falls – a sight that has inspired the likes of Wordsworth, John Ruskin and J M W Turner. It's not the drop that makes these falls so special – it's the broad limestone steps that the water gushes over with a roar and the peaceful wooded gorge through which the river Ure runs. Although the lower falls aren't officially on our walk, you can take a detour along the well-marked footpaths down the valley as far as you choose before returning to our route. However, if you don't want to put in extra work, you do get a glimpse of the lower falls as you walk along the south side of the river.



Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 98

## DIRECTIONS

- 1** From the car park, cross the metal bridge over the river. At the wooden signpost, turn right, either through a red metal gate or over a stile situated over the bank a few paces on (sp. 'Aysgarth Falls').
- 2** Keep to the left of the field, following the electricity cables. At the third pole veer left up the bank then turn right along the disused railway line, across a stile. At the end of the field go through a small wooden gate and continue (follow yellow arrow sign), still following the line of the electricity cables. For the next stile and its gate you'll need to veer very slightly left as it's not quite in the corner of the field.
- 3** Follow the stone wall on your right, then just after the next pylon turn right through another wooden gate and follow the sign, again keeping to the right. Follow a wire fence at the next sign, and then go through another narrow metal gate, again keeping to the right of the field. Go through another narrow gate to the left of the pole, across the lane, and then up some stone steps to another gate. Keep



right and go through another such gate before turning sharp right, following the footpath sign.

**4** Go through a gap in the wall and follow the sign to Aysgarth through parkland, keeping to the right of a clump of fenced trees and crossing a stony track. At the field's far right corner pass through a gap next to a wooden fence and follow the track.

**5** Enter Aysgarth Falls (£1 fee) and explore the upper falls. Return to the gates and walk to the road, heading through a gate. Before you cross the stone bridge, follow the 'National Park Centre' signs to see the rest of the waterfalls. Go as far as you like before returning to the bridge. >

**6** Immediately after crossing the bridge, stand by the entrance to Yore Mill and the Traditional Tea Shop and follow the signpost (underneath the wooden balcony) to St Andrew's Church, up some steps. Pass through the black iron gate and immediately turn left through a small wooden gate (follow yellow arrow sign). At the tarmac path, either duck under the metal railing or go around it to continue ahead, following the yellow arrow.

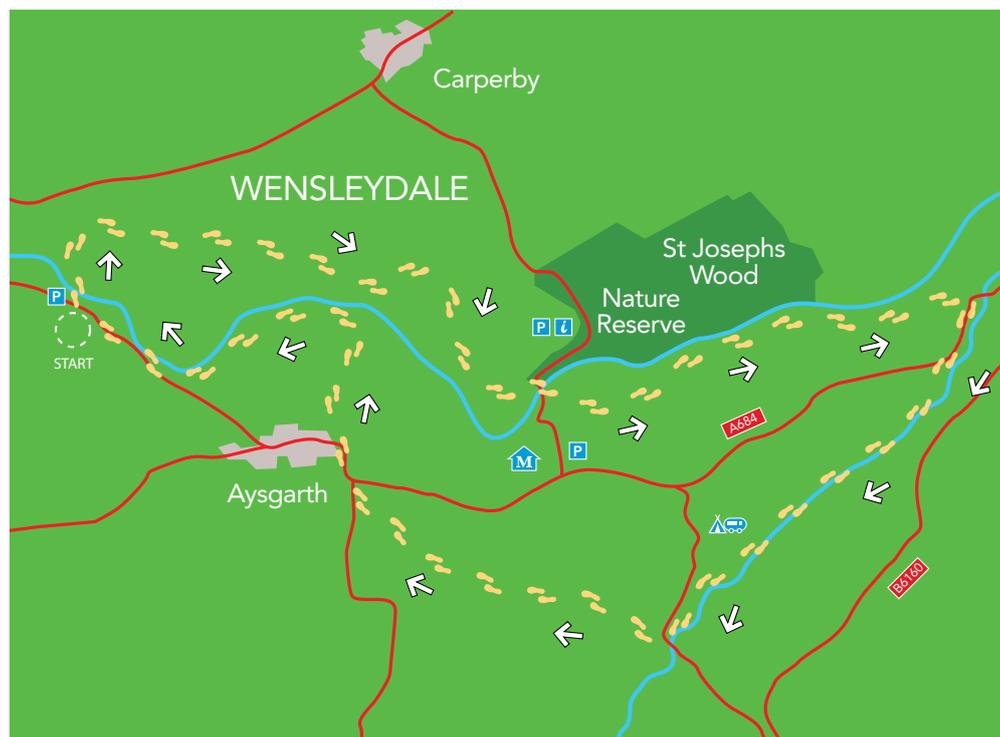
**7** Go through a wooden gate and then immediately left through another wooden gate, and follow the footpath sign across the field. Continue along the line of the river, passing over and through two stiles and four gates. Eventually, you'll see a footpath sign that directs you across a field, through a gate and onto the road.

**8** Turn right and walk along the road for a short distance. Just after the right-hand bend turn left through a wooden gate (sp. 'Eshington Bridge<sup>3/4m</sup>'). Continue ahead, keeping the river to your left at all times, passing through a wooden gate and then both sections of the campsite (a wooden bridge connects them). After three more wooden gates you will arrive at the road beside the bridge. Cross the road (but not the bridge) and continue up a narrow lane (sp. 'Thorlby via Eastfield Road 1m'). Continue ahead where the road bends through a narrow wooden gate (sp. 'Aysgarth Crossing<sup>3/4m</sup> - Dikehollin Lane'). Go through another gate and up the hill.

**9** Go through another metal gate and continue ahead. At the top left side of the field go through a gap left by a dilapidated gate and veer right, diagonally across the next field, heading for the electricity pylon. To the left of this pylon go through a gap in the stone wall. Pass through a wooden gate in the wall on your left, and follow the footpath sign to the right. Go through the wooden gate adjacent to the next footpath sign, and continue ahead where the second sign states 'Aysgarth'.

**10** As you approach the top of the hill turn right by a cow shed, through a gate in the dry stone wall. Veer slightly left to walk diagonally across the field, heading for a gate in the centre of the far wall. Go through the gate onto a lane, then turn left and almost immediately right through a gate (sp. 'Aysgarth 1/4m'). Go through two more gates, and head diagonally left across the field to a gap in the wall on your left. Pass through a gate in the far right corner of the next field then turn right down the lane.

**11** Pass the George and Dragon pub then, just past Cornlee Guest House, turn right and walk straight ahead, between Greystones and Stonecroft houses. Soon you'll see a signpost stating 'Old Mill 1/4m'. Go through a wooden gate before passing through another halfway along the wall on



your right. Turn left and pass through another gate before following the wall around to the right. Pass through another gate, and turn left following the sign. Pass through another gate.

**12** At the end pass through a bigger metal gate, and turn left along the track, following another footpath sign. Where the track bends sharply to the left, continue almost straight ahead passing over a stile next to a dilapidated signpost (sp. 'Harper Wath'). A short distance past the barn, cross a ladder stile over the wall on your right. Continue through woodland.

**13** Pass over a stile and continue before passing through a rusty gate on the left, onto the road. Turn right along the road and return to the car park.

**INFORMATION | GENERAL**

**CLUB SITE:** Brown Moor, Burnt Acres Road, Hawes, North Yorkshire DL8 3PS. Tel 01969 667338.  
 Open 27 March to 4 January 2010  
**DISTANCE:** 4.8 miles/7.7km  
**TERRAIN:** Mostly grassy footpaths  
**NUMBER OF STILES:** 8  
**ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:** OS Explorer OL30 - Yorkshire Dales, Northern and Central Areas  
**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY:** Moderate  
**REFRESHMENTS:** At Aysgarth Falls and in Aysgarth (the George and Dragon pub is fantastic)  
**DIRECTIONS AND PARKING:** Zero your trip meter as you leave the site entrance. Take the A684 towards Bambridge and Aysgarth. The car park, which is large enough for motor caravans but is unsigned, is exactly 8.4 miles on the left  
**TOILETS:** At the Aysgarth Falls National Park Centre

**INFORMATION | ATTRACTIONS**

- **Yesteryears at Yore Mill**, Aysgarth Falls, Leyburn DL8 3SR. Tel 01969 663399. Free. A three-storey high building that was once a water-powered cotton mill. Full disabled access with facilities for the visual and hearing impaired
- **Bolton Castle**, Leyburn DL8 4ET. Tel 01969 623981 or see boltoncastle.co.uk. Adults £6.50, seniors £5, children £4.50, gardens only £1. This medieval fortress boasts over 600 years of history, and was the scene of Mary, Queen of Scots' imprisonment in 1569. No disabled access
- **The Forbidden Corner**, Tuppill Park Estate, Coverham, Leyburn DL8 4TJ. Tel 01969 640638 or see theforbiddencorner.co.uk. Adults £9, seniors £8, children aged 4-15 £7. Family tickets available. Numbers are limited and are sold on a first-come first-served basis. A unique labyrinth of tunnels, chambers, follies and surprises created within a four-acre garden. Very limited disabled access

**INFORMATION | TOURISM**

Hawes National Park Centre and Dales Countryside Museum, Station Yard, Hawes, North Yorkshire DL8 3NT. Tel 01969 666210