

Great Givendale Church and Back

Distance: 5 miles-ish

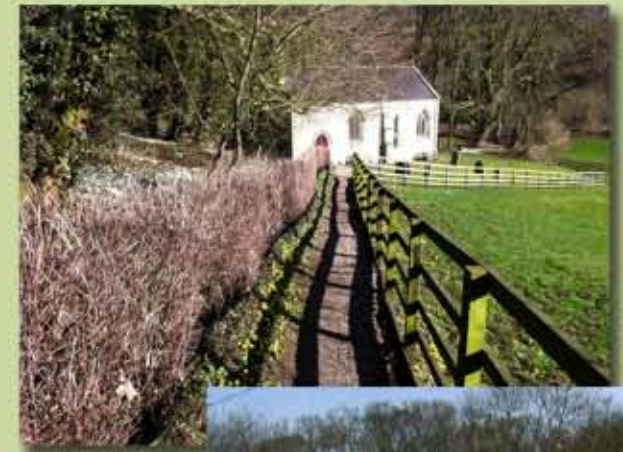
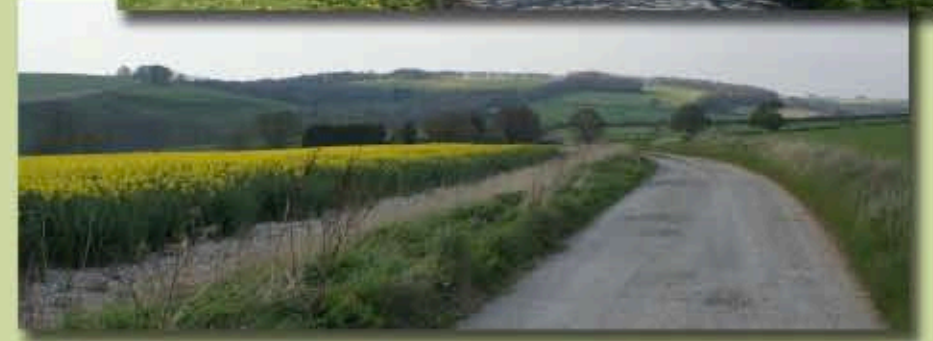
Time: 1 ½ hrs - 2 if you sit and daydream in the churchyard.

Going: moderate-strenuous: some rough track, some hilly bits.

Boots required if wet as field gate areas can turn into mini-swamps, especially if the cows have been there before you.

In hot weather, dogs will appreciate the stream which runs alongside the approach towards Great Givendale Church.

- Park in Millington, on the gravelled parking area to one side of the church.
- Take the Balk - the lane that leads uphill and away from the village - until it meets a crossroads (*signposted Little Givendale*). Cross here and take the stone track that leads past Little Givendale House, keeping the house on your left. Go through the open farm yard.
- From here the track is rough field-side path - continue until you reach a field gate on the left.
- Go through this gate and head (*steep*) downhill, keeping the fence line and the fenced area of woodland in Whitekeld Dale on your right.
- At the bottom is a double set of field gates with a wooden crossing over Whitekeld Beck. Go through both gates - the track follows the line of the valley and the stream at the bottom of Given Dale.
- Pass a green scout hut on your right before reaching another field gate - go through this gate and continue on this path with woodland (*Castlefield Plantation*) uphill to your right.
- As you walk, to your left is the still beauty of a lake - a frozen wonder in winter. Ahead the first glimpse of the stone church of St. Ethelburga at Great Givendale, a truly beautiful little church that hides itself away in woodland.
- The path will wind its way to the gate which leads into the church grounds, and you're welcome to sit on the wooden benches and picnic, or simply take in the beauty of the view. In late winter, the churchyard sparkles with yellow aconite and the pure white of snowdrops. The church is often open, so you can step inside and enjoy a moment of true peace.
- You can walk through the church grounds and return by road - walking down Grimthorpe Hill to the junction at the bottom and taking a left turn here to walk uphill (*Swineridge Lane*) and on to Millington. But why would you? Much better to simply retrace your steps, making the most of this glorious cross-country walk - it all looks totally different when you're heading the other way!



It's worth mentioning that this walk is just as beautiful if you start at the tiny stone church at Givendale and walk cross-country to Millington. Parking is available by the church. Look for the small gate that leads away from the road and out of the churchyard, downhill into a small copse then onto the track which bears right. Keep the lake on your right - you'll pass the scout hut on your left. Splendid with a halfway stop at the Gait Inn or the Ramblers' Rest in Millington, before ambling back!