

4. OAKRIGGSIDE AND BEATTOCK LENGTH: 7 Km.

All but 200 metres of this walk is on roads, but it is, nevertheless, a most enjoyable circular walk.

Leave Moffat on the A708, signposted Selkirk. Just past the fire station, turn right into Old Carlisle Road, and continue on this road past a mixture of fine old Victorian villas and much newer bungalows until you have left the town behind.

Just past the entrance to Coxhill Farm, which is on the left, turn right. This heads off towards the Annan Water at Oakriggside. At the next junction, turn right and cross the river by the bridge.

Pass Barnhill Springs and the traffic noise of the busy A74(M) will be apparent, but it is never obtrusive. This section of road is part of the Southern Upland Way and it crosses the motorway by a pretty underpass beside the Evan Water, emerging at the edge of Beattock village.

Here you should turn right again and follow the A701 back to Moffat. There is a pavement all of the way.

An interesting diversion can be made, adding little more than a kilometre to the journey, by going straight on instead of right at Coxhill Farm. At the next junction, beside the gate to Dumcrieff House, once the home of John Macadam (of tarmacadam fame) turn right. This is a most pleasant little road which goes via "Toot Corner" and meets the route described above at Oakriggside. A Southern Upland Way signposted shortcut avoiding "Toot Corner" is possible.

5. DUMCRIEFF AND MOFFAT WATER LENGTH: 7 Km.

Leave Moffat on the A708 signposted Selkirk. Just past the fire station, turn right on to Old Carlisle Road, and continue on this road until you leave the town. The road forks at Coxhill Farm. Take the main road which goes slightly uphill towards the sawmill, and then in less than a kilometre reaches the gate of Dumcrieff House and the bridge over the Moffat Water. Dumcrieff House was once the home of John Macadam of tarmacadam fame.

About 50 metres beyond the bridge, the Southern Upland Way is signposted to the left over a stile into an old beech wood. There follows a most delightful stretch through the wood, the path emerging by another stile to follow the river upstream along the side of a field. The section around this stile can be quite muddy.

At the end of the field, another stile takes the walker from the field to the road, where you should turn left and cross over the bridge. Across the road, the Southern Upland Way reaches out about 150 km. towards Cockburnspath on the North Sea coast.

The road veers to the right before meeting the A708 on its way to Selkirk. Turn left to return to Moffat. **This section of road can be very busy in the summer time and, as there is no pavement for about 2 km., extreme care should be taken.**



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TAKE 5 WALKS USING THE SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY AROUND MOFFAT



The Southern Upland Way wanders across Scotland for 212 miles from Portpatrick to Cockburnspath. For most of us, to walk it will for ever remain a dream, but short sections in the Moffat area can be used to provide most enjoyable walking for a day or part of a day.

NOT ALL OF THE WALKS IN THIS SERIES ARE ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, AND WALKERS SHOULD RESPECT THE COUNTRYSIDE AND PRACTISE THE COUNTRY CODE AT ALL TIMES. ALL DISTANCES ARE APPROXIMATE. THE SERIES IS WRITTEN BY ANDY ARMSTRONG

1. *OUT AND BACK - WEST* LENGTH: VARIABLE

Some walkers detest walking out-and-back, and much prefer a circular walk. Each has its merits, and on this stretch of the Southern Upland Way, the views in opposite directions are quite different and give little impression to the walker that it has all been seen before. The initial parts are done on roads, and some may prefer to drive and then park the car at Beattock or near Easter Earshaig where the Way leaves the road. It is main road with pavement to Beattock and then pleasant walking on a minor road as far as Easter Earshaig.

Leave Moffat on the A701 towards Beattock. On approaching the A74(M), go underneath the motorway and follow signs for Beattock, the second exit at the next roundabout. Then take the first turn to the right immediately after the bridge over the Evan Water. The road crosses the railway line by a bridge and then climbs steadily up the valley side. Those walking should turn round occasionally to admire the view. At the top of the hill, the road crosses rough grazing land, unfenced, and then enters the forest. At the roadside just before the forest, a stone tablet records the unfortunate death of Ben Wilson who was struck by lightning in 1897.

At Easter Earshaig, the Way leaves the road, first through a field, and then into the forest. It is most pleasant walking. The gradients are never steep and it is firm underfoot. There is a small loch on the left by the notice board, an excellent place for a picnic, and in one of the forest clearings there are several ponds which abound with dragonflies in the summer.

The Way is clearly marked and navigation should present no problems. Foy's Bridge, Rivox, or Brattleburn Bothy would make ideal points for turning back to return by the same route, the last of these making an overnight stay possible.

2. *OUT AND BACK - EAST* LENGTH: VARIABLE

The best route to reach the Southern Upland Way to the east of Moffat is by the A708, signposted Selkirk, until just past the Fire Station and then to turn right into Old Carlisle Road. The Way is reached in just under 2 Km, immediately past the bridge which takes the road over the Moffat Water beside Dumcrieff House. It goes off to the left into a beech wood before shortly emerging into pastureland beside the river. This stretch is very pleasant, although it can sometimes be muddy underfoot.

The Way then crosses the minor road, again beside the Moffat Water, and follows a track into a field, around a small wood and then into the forest on the north side of Craig Fell. The gradient is fairly gentle as the track follows the Cornal Burn and the experienced walker should not be troubled. Before reaching the forest, there are fine views up the Moffat Water valley.

The Way then continues to undulate steadily for just over 4 Km. on a well maintained track before striking off to the left up the valley of the Wamphray Water, at this stage just a small stream. At its source, open ground is reached and the climb is over at the cairn at Craigmichen Scar where rises the Selcoth Burn which flows almost straight in a north-easterly direction towards the Moffat Water.

After this the Way descends into the valley of the Ettrick Water, a quite different drainage system feeding the River Tweed.

There is a bothy at Over Phawhope, 4 Km. beyond Craigmichen Scar.

3. *THE APPROACH FROM THE EVAN WATER VALLEY* LENGTH: 6 - 8 Km.

This walk is simply a different approach to the section of the Way west of Moffat. It can be reached either by car or by taking the path from Moffat, over the golf course, to cross the A74(M) by the newly constructed underpass. (See Take 5 Gentle Walks, No.5)

If travelling by car, then leave Moffat on the A701 towards Beattock. Go underneath the motorway and at the next roundabout take the third exit, signposted to the Auchen Castle Hotel. Then take the first left turn, again signposted to the hotel, and you should be able to park once you have crossed the railway bridge. Follow the minor road as it wanders first left, then right, then left, to its end at Kiln Knowe, a little wooded knoll. Here turn right on to the unpaved track and follow it as it swings round to the left past the cottage. Shortly after, the track enters the forest as it approaches Holmshaw. There are several forest tracks which go off to the left. Any one of these will take the walker towards the Southern Upland Way on the stretch between Easter Earshaig and Rivox, and it is a matter of personal choice whether one turns left or right.

Return by the same route. However, if transport could be available at both ends of a walk, then it is a most pleasant walk to turn left and follow the Way towards Beattock. It passes several ponds which swarm with dragonflies in summer and joins the minor road at Easter Earshaig. This road is never busy, and descends to Beattock by what is known locally as "The Crooked Road" giving very fine views over the valley of the Annan Water to the valley of the Moffat Water.