



Stately progress

Starting from the manicured parkland of Cannon Hall, this five mile walk includes field paths and an attractive area of mixed woodland. Although not particularly high, there are extensive views at some points particularly near Deffer Hill.

Words and photographs: Paul Heaton (Fotocraft Images)

Cannon Hall, a well known visitor attraction some five miles west of Barnsley, is the starting point for this varied country and woodland walk. The hall itself stands in an elevated location, with attractive 18th century parkland before it. It was owned by the Spencer-Stanhope family, who earned their wealth from the South Yorkshire iron and coal industries. The hall was developed and

extended several times, and the gardens and park were landscaped by Richard Woods of Chertsey in the 1760s. The landscaping included constructing weirs on the Daking Brook to create a series of elongated lakes and cascades.

While the countryside is undoubtedly a highlight of this walk, the nearby countryside and woods are attractive in their own right, and provide a contrast to the manicured landscape of the park.

The walk starts at the bottom of

the Cannon Hall main car park by the Daking Brook. Turn left, downstream, and immediately pass one of the cascades constructed in the park, then along next to a lake, which leads to a second cascade with a stone footbridge. There are views across to Cannon Hall at the top of the hill on your left on this section of the route. Cross the footbridge and bear left, following a path past a second lake to reach a metalled footpath. Turn right along the footpath, then shortly

afterwards, left just before reaching a gate. Walk to another gate, with a gap on its right hand side. Continue through the gap and on in the same direction, past Cawthorne cricket pitch on the left. Pass through a wooden gate to reach a stone paved footbridge. Cross the bridge and turn left, following a footpath sign to High Hoyland. ▶

Above: Cannon Hall



Continue on where a path forks to the right, and shortly after reach a stone bridge. After crossing the bridge, the path runs between a field and stream and leads to a gate with a stile. Cross this stile and follow the right hand field boundary, then over two more stiles in the same direction. The path bends right and crosses another stile, passes a small stone barn to yet another stile. Cross this next field diagonally to a stile in the corner.

The buildings of Cannon Hall Open Farm can be seen on the left at this point, and further to the left is an attractive view towards the village of Cawthorne. The farm originally provided produce for Cannon Hall. It is now an award winning tourist attraction, allowing visitors to get close to farm animals and small animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs.

Follow the left hand edge of the next field, to a stile, partly concealed in a gap between two hawthorn trees. Two gates can be seen across the next field. Aim for the left hand gate and cross an elaborate wood and stone stile to reach a minor road. Cross this road and another similar stile on the other side. Follow a vehicle track, and continue along the field edge where it passes through a gate to reach a stile on the edge of Deffer Wood. The path continues into the woods passing through trees and rhododendrons to



Top: The walk crosses this attractive footbridge in Cannon Hall Country Park
Above: The Deer Shed on the Cannon Hall estate

emerge at a cross roads of forestry roads. Take the road straight on, and where the roads fork, bear left. Deffer Wood is an attractive mixed woodland with areas of oak, beech, silver birch and various conifers.

Where the forestry road reaches the top of a hill, leave the road on the right along a path between fields. This path reaches a minor road, where the route turns left, climbing gently up Deffer Hill. There are extensive views northwards at this point, with the Emley Moor TV transmitter prominent on the horizon.

At the top of the hill, turn left through a gate to re-enter Deffer Wood. Walk downhill on a broad gravel track and continue on to reach a fork in the forestry tracks located in a broad glade. Bear right at this fork. Ignore a second fork after about 25 yards, keeping right on the broader track. Carry straight on down a slope, over a stream and up the other side. After some time, reach another fork and bear left. This track leads down towards a wall. Bear right, and after a short distance cross a stone step stile on the left into a field. Walk



Top: Cascade at Cannon Hall **Centre left:** Cross this footbridge and then turn left
Centre right: Attractive mature beech trees in Deffer Woods **Above:** View from the terrace of Cannon Hall



Above: Cannon Hall Farm

across this field to the right hand corner of a wood ahead. Cross the next field to a gateway in the middle of the opposite fence. Proceed down a muddy farmyard track past a barn on the right to a gateway on the left hand side before the track bends to the right.

Walk through the gateway and straight across a field to reach a stile on the far side, then cross a series of stiles in the top corners of rather muddy fields to eventually reach a gate which gives access to a green lane. Follow this lane through the farmyard of Jowett House Farm. The green lane becomes a

metalled farm road, with the site of the Cawthorne maize maze visible on the right.

Turn right at the junction where the farm road meets a minor road to return to the car park. The Pavilion Cafe is located in the car park, and offers hot and cold drinks and snacks for the returning walker. For those with energy remaining after the walk, it is worth walking up to Cannon Hall itself. Although the museum in the hall is not open until Easter, the view from the terrace is extensive, and the walled garden and fairyland can be visited throughout the year. ■

Fact file

Walk length: 5 miles

Maps: OS Explorer 278 (Sheffield and Barnsley) and 288 Bradford and Huddersfield, OS Landranger 110 (Sheffield and Huddersfield)

Going: Some of the field paths can be wet and muddy after rain. No steep climbs, but several stiles along the route.

Start and finish: Cannon Hall Country Park car park. The cost is £3 per day.

Refreshments: The Pavilion cafe in the car park offers refreshments throughout the year.

Toilets: Public toilets are available at the Cannon Hall car park, and at the hall itself.

Public transport: The 92 service links Barnsley, Cawthorne (about 400 yards from joining the walk) and Crow Edge. On Sundays, the 92A service calls directly at Cannon Hall Country park.

GPX file: If you would like a free gpx file of the route for this walk, for your walking GPS unit, e-mail: paul@fotocraftimages.co.uk



Above: 1:50,000 OS walk map with the route in red
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