

## **12. Stile-free over Selsley Common**

Distance about 2 miles, some steep slopes and rough ground

Opposite Selsley Church and War Memorial find a gate & signpost for the Cotswolds Trail. This leads into a steep climb up onto the Common.

For an easier route continue along The Grove road to find a broad cart track leading to the quarries.

Follow the track past the quarries to enjoy the **topograph**. There are seats along the route to take in the views. In the distance are fine trees in Stanley Park. One of the fields near the Marling family's fishpond contains a monument, the Stanley Park Column. It is made of Cornish granite and was bought by Sir Samuel Marling at the Great Exhibition, where he exhibited his woollen cloth.

In her book on the history of Ebley, Crystal Harrison suggests that "Evidence of Druid worship is found on Selsley Hill, where the great mound is named "the Toots" from Tentates, the Chaldean name for the god "Mercury", the worship of whom the Druids brought from their eastern home. Not only the mound, but the way leading to it is still visible." Another temple to Mercury was located at Uley, possibly because he was the favourite god of travellers.

She also writes that "the terraces on the western slope of the hill now known as the Banky Lotts are the lands cultivated by the late pit dwellers."

However, more recent research suggested that there is no evidence for pit dwellings or druids on Selsley Common.

Continue to **Jackdaw Quarry**, once called Leigh's Quarry after the Woodchester Park family who owned it.

Choose the next stage of your route:

**Either:** go through a **kissing gate** and follow the **Cotswolds Trail** steeply downhill to a broad, level track. Pass the erosion debris of **Selsley Gully** and follow the track around a large bend. Cross a tarmac drive and continue above two large houses. Continue along the edge of the wood, up a steep slope to a **signpost** at **Penn Lane**.

**Or:** From the quarry bear left uphill along the edge of the wood. Near the **cattle grid** is a gate onto a **permissive bridleway**. Turn left & follow this fairly level route past the start of Selsley Gully until you reach a tarmac drive and two tracks. Take the centre track and follow it on level ground until you pass the Scouts' campsite. The track slopes downhill until you to a **signpost** at **Penn Lane**.

Turn right down Penn Lane. The first 20 yards are steep, stony and narrow. In August you may pass a little shrine, which marks the spot where a much respected local man was shot dead. Join a tarmac road and continue downhill to a T-junction with the main road at a bus stop.

Turn left for King's Stanley.

**Without Stile over Selsley Common**

