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Lands End to John o' Groats

In April of this year, Mr Piggon of North Drift undertook an amazing walk from Lands End to John O' Groats. The journey took him sixty-one days through every weather and terrain possible.

Here is a selection from his log book: "It seemed a good idea, the ultimate walk; Lands End to John O' Groats on foot- a total of 1200 miles. So after months of planning, the 15th April found me at the signpost at Lands End on a fine and sunny day. North along the coast to Sennen Cove, then inland to Penzance YHA, a distance of twelve miles. My rucksack is a very heavy 40lbs but I have weeks to get used to it!"

Mr Piggon took a route up through Cornwall to Truro, India Queens and St Breward via footpaths, byroads and some very spectacular scenery. Sometimes, his route took him to campsites that no longer existed as at Launceston where he was invited in by a farmer's wife for a meal and a bed for the night as she felt so sorry for him. This was in stark contrast to the unfriendly response he received at Drayton Manor Park where he was not allowed to camp as he was not part of a family group!

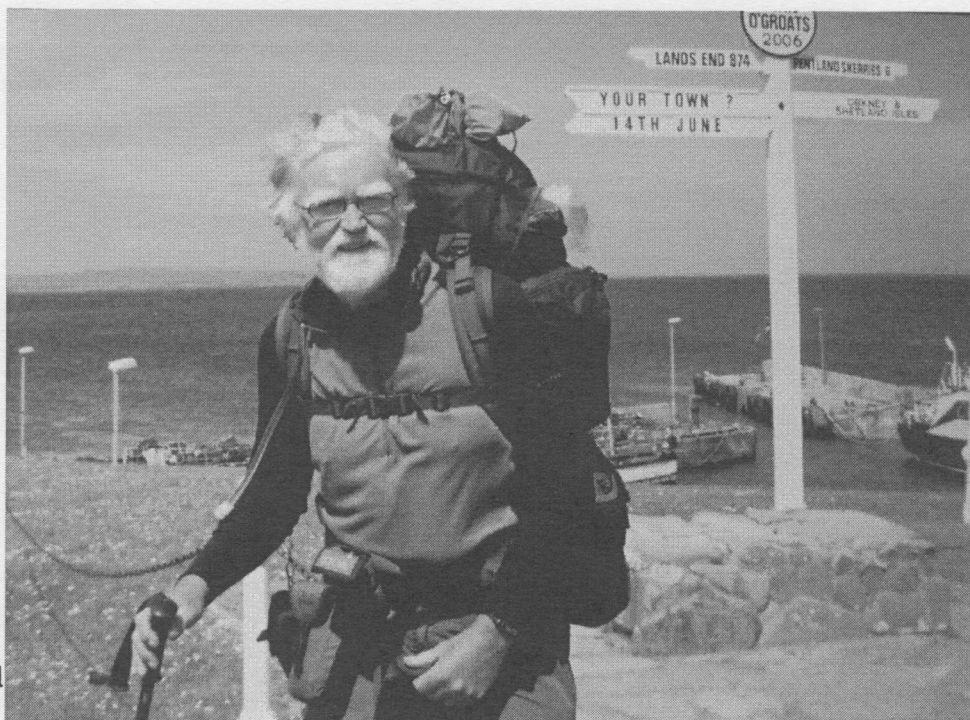
He picked up the 300 mile Macmillan Way, a footpath which stretches from Boston in Lincs to Chesil Bank in Dorset, following the route to Stow on the Wold via Castle Coombe, Avening and Cold Aston.

Mr Piggon continued north through Cannock Chase, following the Staffordshire Way and the Limestone Way to Edale at the start of the Pennine Way. As is often the case, the weather turned wet and windy over the moors, which was daunting for a lone walker. Camping behind the pub at Tan Hill, the highest pub in England was a "big mistake as it started to rain and blow a gale".

At Alston youth hostel he met up with another lone walker, Paul, who was taking a different route through the highlands. They decided to "walk together to the Pentland Hills where our route will split". From Alston to Hadrian's Wall where many other walkers were about, either walking the wall or the Pennine Way. They then ascended the Cheviots via Dere Street following the St Cuthbert's Way and the Southern Upland Way. At the Pentland Hills, he

parted company with Paul and came across a very strange sight of a tree festooned with pairs of boots, shoes and slippers, the meaning of which is unknown.

After this the walking got easier, as he joined the Union



Canal to Falkirk, and then to the West Highland Way, which uses some of General Wade's military roads, and eventually reaches Fort William. From here he took the Great Glen way, a long distance footpath, to Dingwall, where "I estimate I have walked 1000 miles so far". At the campsite he met up with Paul again, and they decided to walk the last stretch together. North of Inverness was "a bit of an anti-climax as it is mainly road". Finally on 21st June, after a 20 mile walk, they reached John o'Groats, 61 days after starting from Lands End, and, after a pint in the hotel, signing the register, and a quick picture, "I pitch the tent for the last time, and start thinking about getting home."

Source: Carlton News August 2006