

Bleaklow

*Where Doctor's Gate goes swinging down curving Crooked
Clough and Shelf Brook hurries singing 'neath bracken-covered
bluff there rises green and lovely in bold and rugged sweep the
rock crowned height of Shelf Stones that to the sky does leap.*

*Should you pass by Shelf Stones upon some lucky day and
see the mist dispersing and turn from sombre grey into a
thousand rainbows as the sun comes burning through then the
gods who made the mountains have been more than kind to you.*

*Now Yellow Slacks and Downstone make a gateway to the
top a gateway rough and stony where the gritstone rocks
outcrop the rushing stream comes headlong o'ver one deep carven
fall to send its spray a gleaming upon each mossy wall.*

*When the stream becomes a trickle and the top most hill
is found then look you to the eastward across the trenched
ground gaze long with joy and wonder let your heart be all a
glow as you drink in that stern beauty the glory of Bleaklow.*

*There shall you look at Wain Stones with Bleaklow Stones
outlined and Grinah Stones up rearing with Barrow Stones
behind and you may trace the valleys and where each river start
the Alport and the Westend and Derwent queen of hearts.*

*Two thousand feet of mountain that dark windswept and
torn yet on that high bleak mountain the curlew chick is born
where as you stand and marvel the mountain hare in fright
shall leap a score of gullies a bounding streak of white.*

*Sometimes is Bleaklow quiet and enchanting when the
curlew's lovely call is the only sound upon the ear to fall;
sometimes is Bleaklow savage in a raging howling gale when the
top is scourged and smitten by the blinding rain and hail.*

*Bleaklow can be bitter when the dark north eastern
blow while the stones stand out in blackness against the
blending white of snow oh it matters not how often o'er
Bleaklow's top you stride in bitterness of winter or summers
golden pride.*

*You'll find she never alters yet she's never twice the same
this paradox will lure you your tribute will she claim so you
who love high places where time goes sweet and slow will
always face the challenge and attraction of Bleaklow.*

C. P. Wells - 1957