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Spekes Mill Mouth and Docton Mill

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Free car park in Hartland (SS 249245)
Ordnance Survey map	OS Explorer Map 126 - Clovelly and Hartland
Distance	6.6 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This is a short walk of only 6.6 miles. I did it to see the waterfall at Spekes Mill Mouth one the most famous waterfalls in North Devon but also to allow time to visit the garden at Docton Mill. If you are interested in gardens, do not miss this. The entrance through a nondescript door in a high wall belies the treat in store. There is also a tea room here.

There is interesting geology to see at Hartland Quay as well as a fascinating museum with lots of information about local wrecks.

The walk could be combined with my Hartland Point walk, picking it up from Hartland Quay.

There is a small amount of road walking to achieve a circular walk but this is on quiet lanes. You are only likely to meet a few cars on a short section of about half a mile near the village of Stoke as they pass through to Hartland Quay.

The walk starts in the village of Hartland where there is a free car park, public toilets and pubs were you could get a refreshment after the walk although you need to watch their opening times. There are other opportunities to obtain sustenance at Hartland Quay or Docton Mill. To get to Hartland, turn off the A39 Bideford to Bude road on to the B3248 just west of the Clovelly turn.

There are also toilets in, Stoke, Hartland Quay and Docton Mill (if you visit the gardens).

Start: From the car park (SS 249245), walk straight ahead passing the Hart Inn on the right. As you reach the end of 30mph speed limit sign, turn right down an unmade road – there is a finger post on the right indicating the way.

Walk along this road to the British Geological Survey Magnetic Observatory, a fairly non-descript site but worthy of mention for walkers because its data is used in calculating the magnetic variation shown on Ordnance Survey maps. The path passes down the left hand side of the observatory.

This path becomes a broad track through the trees. Follow this downhill and as it opens into a small clearing, cross a footbridge and bear left heading for a stile in the corner (SS 254248). There is a three way finger post.

Cross the stile and keep straight ahead on the broad main track ignoring any turns off. The track exits into a road close to the entrance to Hartland Abbey (SS 246248). Turn left on the road and at the 'T' junction, turn right for Stoke.

In Stoke, turn right (SS 236247) at the church then almost immediately left climbing the second flight of steps to the wide stone stile. Cross it and walk straight ahead keeping the church on your left. As you exit the churchyard, at first glance there does not seem to be a footpath straight ahead but there is, running in front of the row of houses on the right.

Follow this path until it enters a field then follow the left boundary until you reach a stone cottage (Rocket Cottage SS 226248). Walk round the right hand side of it and follow the footpath down to Hartland Quay.

From Hartland Quay, follow the coastal path designated by the acorn sign in a southerly direction following the finger post to Spekes Mill Mouth.

The path passes behind a large promontory St. Catherine's Tor. Here, the path splits into three. Take the middle path heading for the gate in the wall opposite where a fingerpost indicates the coastal path.

When you reach the impressive waterfall at Spekes Mill Mouth (SS 225236), after admiring it, turn inland and follow the broad track to Docton Mill. Ignore the right fork for the coast path and Welcome Mouth and stay on the main track signposted Lymebridge $\frac{3}{4}$ mile.

At the next fork, keep right and pass a bungalow called Appletrees and a footbridge on the right.

At the road junction (SS 225238), turn right to visit Docton Mill (about 250 yards) or otherwise turn left. At the crossroads with the thatched Spekes Valley Cottage, turn left. Stay on the road for just under half a mile to the cross roads at Kernstone Cross. Turn right signposted Stoke and Hartland.

As the road forks, the right hand fork goes to Hartland but the long way round for a walker. For the shorter scenic route, fork left.

At the next junction, turn left signposted Stoke and Hartland Quay and almost immediately right along a "no through road" (SS 246237) This road may have a sign at its end for "Leigh farm B & B" (it is a removable sign).

Ignore a farm track on the right and stay on the tarmac road descending gradually. As the road starts to rise and bends to Leigh farm, fork left following the fingerpost "Hartland $\frac{1}{2}$ mile".

As the track reaches woods, fork right over the stone stile and on meeting another track very shortly, turn right and follow it down through the trees.

At the bottom of the slope, turn right following the fingerpost for Hartland. Keep straight ahead on this track which emerges into the centre of the village between two large round gateposts.

