

PENNINE CANOE CLUB

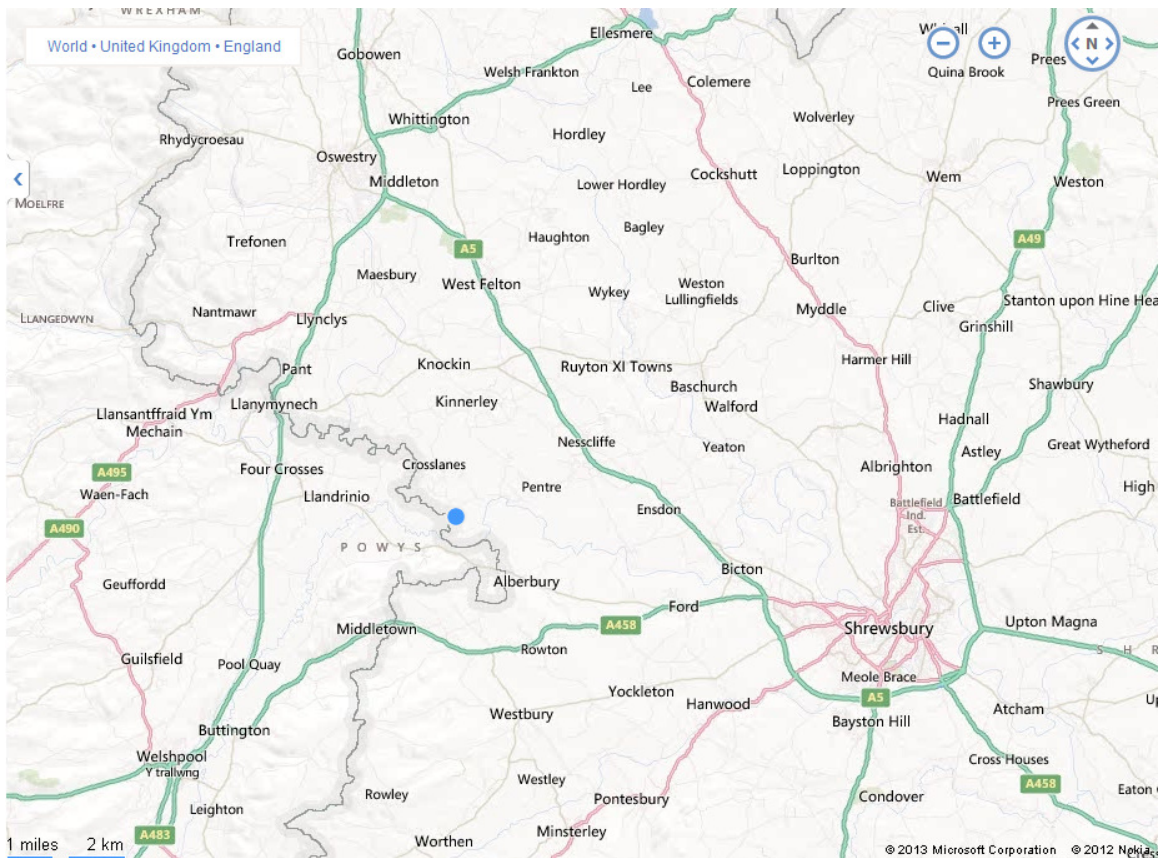
CAMPING TRIP 2013

The Severn and the Vyrnwy



Location

Melverley in Shropshire is at the confluence of the Vyrnwy and the Severn. It is 108 miles from Brighouse –approximately two hours drive away.



Church House Campsite in Meverley is right next to the River Vyrnwy. I have corresponded with the proprietor who says the following:

"We are directly on the River Vyrnwy just upstream of the confluence with the River Severn. Launching and landing are not a problem and camping would be right by your canoes."

The site can be seen here: <http://www.churchhousemelverley.co.uk/>

Itinerary

The location makes it possible to tour separate rivers on different days yet after each trip return directly to our campsite. Therefore the provisional schedule could be as follows:

Friday evening:

Arrive Meverley and pitch camp. (1)

Saturday:

Drive to Pool Quay (just north of Welshpool) – highest navigable point on the Severn. (2)

Launch and paddle downstream back to Meverley.

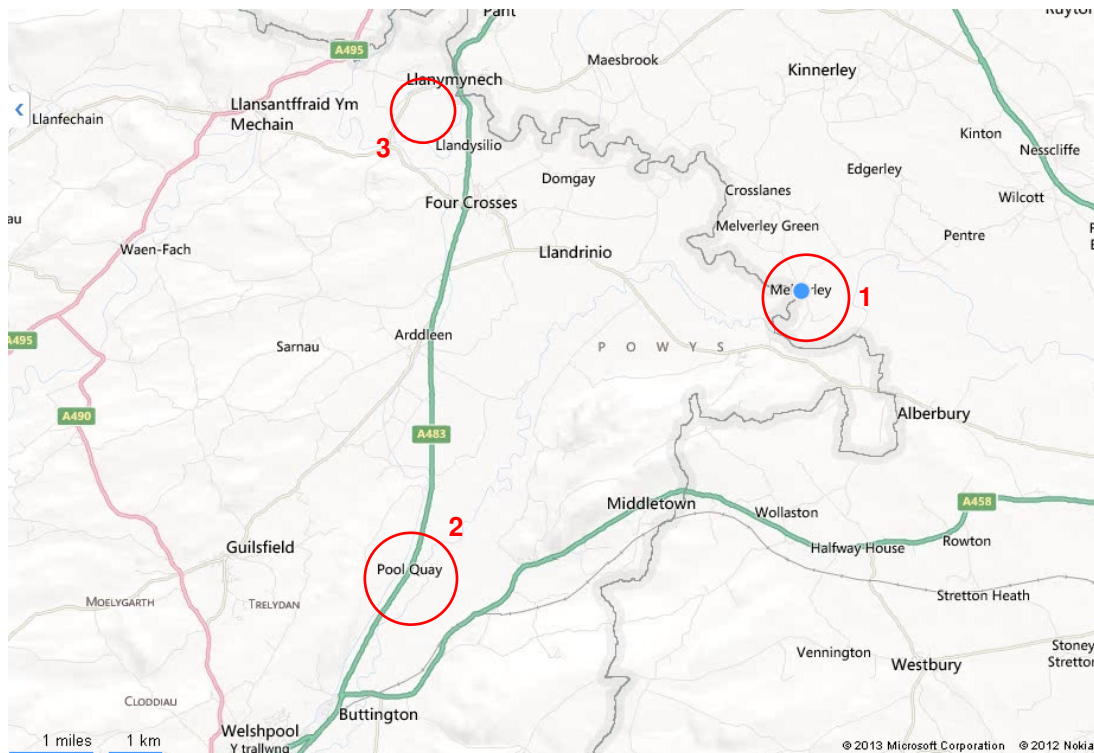
12.25 miles.

Sunday:

Drive to B4398 road bridge between Llanymynech and Bryn Mawr (yes... we are in Wales at this point) (3)

Launch and paddle downstream back to Meverley.

10.5 miles



The Rivers

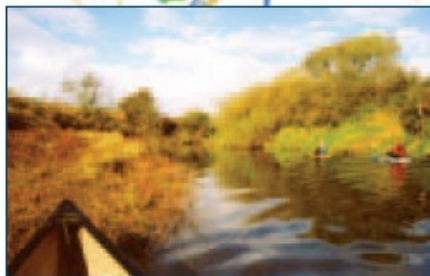
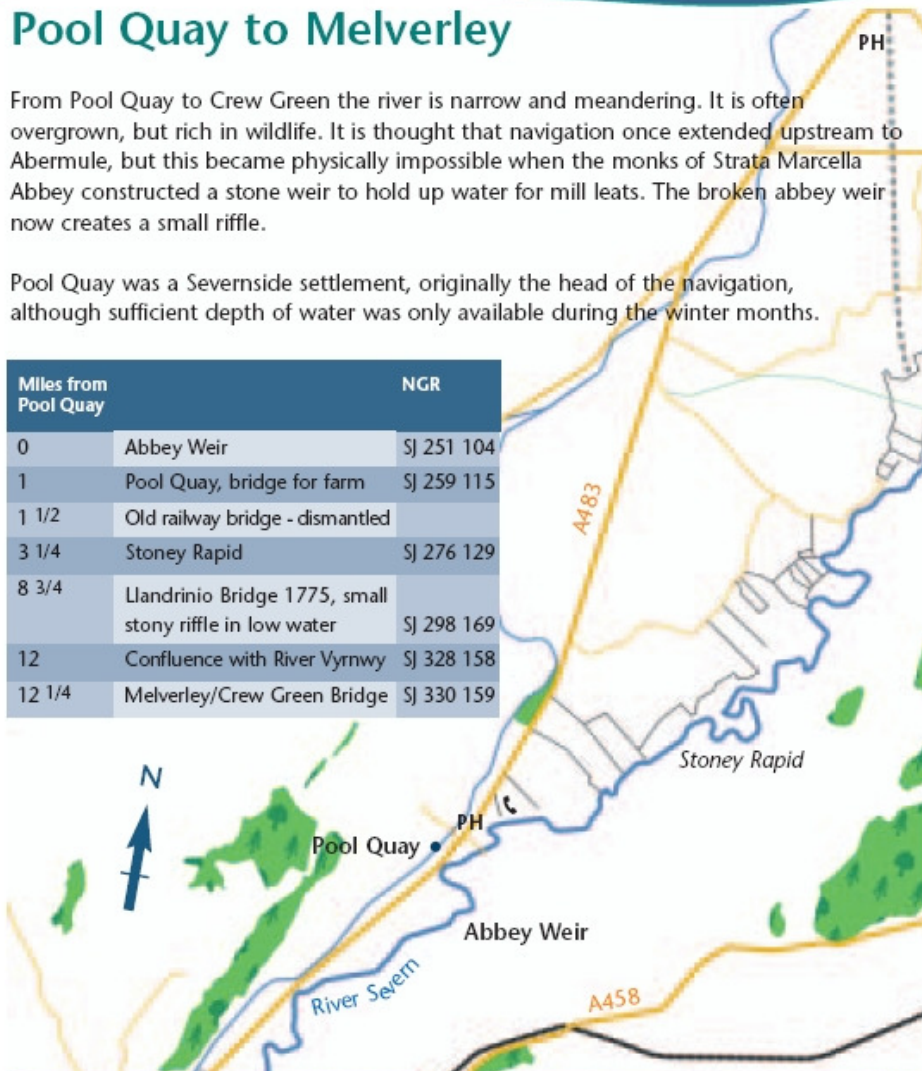
Paddling could be in either Canadians or kayaks according to personal preference. Information on this part of the Severn can be seen in the following extract from the Environment Agency's "Canoeists Guide to the Severn"

Pool Quay to Molverley

From Pool Quay to Crew Green the river is narrow and meandering. It is often overgrown, but rich in wildlife. It is thought that navigation once extended upstream to Abermule, but this became physically impossible when the monks of Strata Marcella Abbey constructed a stone weir to hold up water for mill leats. The broken abbey weir now creates a small riffle.

Pool Quay was a Severnside settlement, originally the head of the navigation, although sufficient depth of water was only available during the winter months.

Miles from Pool Quay		NGR
0	Abbey Weir	SJ 251 104
1	Pool Quay, bridge for farm	SJ 259 115
1 1/2	Old railway bridge - dismantled	
3 1/4	Stoney Rapid	SJ 276 129
8 3/4	Llandrinio Bridge 1775, small stony riffle in low water	SJ 298 169
12	Confluence with River Vyrnwy	SJ 328 158
12 1/4	Molverley/Crew Green Bridge	SJ 330 159



Narrow and meandering upper reaches of the River Severn



Pool Quay launching point

The lower reaches of the Vyrnwy can be read about on Canoe Wales' website here:
<http://www.canoewales.com/afon-efyrnwy--river-vyrnwy.aspx>

This says the following:

29 km grade I ★★★★★

A beautiful touring section suitable for groups and beginners alike. It is best done whilst levels are well within the normal banks, as in flood it would be very frightening because of trees etc. In fact as a touring-type river it can be paddled in all but midsummer lows. The bird and animal life along this section is fantastic - you may be lucky enough to see otters, heron, kingfisher, mink and stoat, to name but a few as you drift lazily down.

Access from the A490 bridge via the footpath on river right. As you drift lazily down try and spot the 'crocodile tree' on the left bank. A small white footbridge is passed under but, otherwise, the outside world is kept delightfully away until you approach Llansantffraid. There is a tiny broken weir before the road bridge which, at "surf-able water levels", gives a few play-able waves but you may not even notice its presence. After the Tanat joins (river left) the river sweeps around some huge bends known as 'the Islands'. Oxbows appear in the making, and this is a geographer's delight.

Good egress / access can be made at the B4398 road bridge [GR253196](#), right next to where the Shropshire Union Canal crosses the river. For a further 17 kilometres it is possible to paddle down to the Severn confluence.

There are no weirs or unpleasantries on this section, with the only real obstacles being trees (in flood), and bridge stanchions if you paddle into them. Just below Llanymynech the line of Offa's Dyke Path is crossed. Over the last five kilometres the river strengthens up and the banks appear almost tidal - though I'm sure they are not. A little way past the amazing 13th century church at Malverley and, almost without warning, the Vyrnwy empties into the Severn (or is it the other way round?). Egress at the next road bridge [GR329158](#). The choice is yours: Wales on the left bank, or England right, as the Vyrnwy has been separating both since Llanymynech.

Dates:

If taking place at roughly the same time as the Derwent trip in 2012, the weekend of **13th and 14th July** would seem reasonable. This would probably avoid the driest part of the summer which may make the Vyrnwy a little rocky.

Chris Halligan
Feb 2013