

by Derek Morrison



Brockweir Quay –
the vestiges of what
was once a busy
port are just about
visible in centre
foreground.

Attribution: Roy
Parkhouse [CC-BY-
SA-2.0]

[Click to view larger
image.](#)

Over the two bridges that look like one
For a border weave is today's cycle run
On the other side we're through South Wales' gate
Onwards past Chepstow's outskirts, keep riding straight.



Wye Valley: A466
near Tintern
Attribution: Alby [CC
BY-SA 2.0]

[Click to view larger
image.](#)

On the A466 to St Arvans, we head
Now a small climb to the top, but no sweat need be shed
For follows the Wye Valley descent, down which we all zoom

Miles of gravity-powered energy, so our own we don't consume.



Tintern Abbey

Attribution: By

Saffron Blaze [CC-

BY-SA-3.0]

Click to view larger
image.

Soaring through Tintern with ruined Abbey on the right

Mentally preparing, for soon we climb great height

Passed Tintern Old Station – summer cafe on the Wye

But today keep riding – so no coffee here we'll buy.



Bridge over River

Wye just outside

Tintern (Wales) to

Brockweir

(England).

Attribution: Eirian

Evans [CC-BY-

SA-2.0]

Click to view larger
image.

Right turn at the next bridge – we've just left Wales

We're in Brockweir village – of past shipbuilding tales

But now comes the payback for the Wye Valley descent

Mill Hill needs low gears and all backs to be bent.



Brockweir Cafe and
Village Shop

Attribution: Derek
Morrison [CC-BY-
SA-3.0]

[Click to view larger
image.](#)

But the penance is broken at near third of the climb
An unexpected shop and cafe – welcome refreshment time
Award winning enterprise and open near all year
A community hub run by local volunteer.

Recharging batteries at such a pleasant cycle stop
Is a welcome respite before back on bikes we hop
Now comes the longer section of the Mill Hill ascent
But somehow feeling easier from pleasant time we spent.



The Old Wye Bridge
at Chepstow.

Attribution: Matt
Buck [CC-BY-SA-3.0]

[Click to view larger
image.](#)

Eventually we exit, but it is to Wales we must return
So brisk loop back to Chepstow as cranks begin to churn
A pause at the Old Wye Bridge for a reminder of times now gone
But once over this ancient viaduct it's back home we are drawn.



Severn Bridge cycle
path facing England

Awaits the Old Severn Crossing, the two bridges that look like one
Once again back in England all border weaving done.
More than 70 miles of pleasure, but weather best not too cool
For the Wye Valley in winter can to cyclists be really cruel.

[To listen to this verse select below]

<http://www.cyberstanza.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Brockweir.mp3>

Commentary

The ride from Bath to Brockweir is one of my favourite cycle routes for a day ride in my region. I've posted a couple of more conventional accounts in [previous VeloScience postings](#) that give more detail about the route plus satnav downloads. It was an interesting exercise, however, to put the journey into verse.

My concluding two lines are worth expanding, i.e.

*"More than 70 miles of pleasure, but weather best not too cool
For the Wye Valley in winter can to cyclists be really cruel."*

Outside peak times and weekends the A466 is usually a remarkably quiet piece of highway with an incredible descent of the Wye Valley starting just after St Arvans. But while the road can be frost/ice free in other parts of the journey the sheltered nature of this part of the A466 can keep the road surface colder than elsewhere. Rapid descents plus frost or ice (or perhaps fog) make for a bad combination, particularly for two wheeled travellers. The cold patch tends to extend all the way to Tintern. After that, however, once height is gained up Mill Hill things can improve completely considerably by the time the time you reach the [Brockweir](#)

[and Hewelsfield Village Shop and Cafe](#); although like all steep hills water runoff from fields can also freeze . In summary, this is probably not a good journey on a day when there has been early frost, ice or fog around.

As regards:

"Over the two bridges that look like one"

See [The Bridge](#) (VeloScience, 10 February 2015).