

A walk on old Byways and Highways lead by Margaret Brown and Wendy Faulkner as part of the Pendle Walking Festival August 2015

Fact file – A 7 mile circular walk starting from the Youth Hostel in Birch Hall Lane, Earby. The walk has some hills and some areas that maybe muddy after wet weather. There are several stiles and narrow bridges to cross, but all footpaths are well marked. There is nowhere to buy refreshments on the walk, though Earby is well supplied with cafes and food shops. There is parking to the rear of the Youth Hostel via the track at the side of the Hostel. The nearest Bus stop is at the Bus station on Victoria Road, Earby.

Uses the O.S. map OL21 South Pennines or if you would like to see more old maps see the web site <http://maps.nls.uk> copies of maps can be viewed or purchased from this site it is run by the library service of Scotland.

The walk is mainly on 2 old routes between Colne and Skipton. These were the early roads travelling along the bank side avoiding the marshy valley bottoms. Earby is on what was once an important route joining the North/South route to the Aire Gap - the East/West route, one of the few low level passes over the Pennines. The valley was drained sometime in the mid 1700's by the Salterforth Drainage Board. The dike was dug out and the water course straightened to improve drainage. This would have had a huge impact on the land as prior to the draining most of the valley bottom would have been a large swampy lake, impassable during the winter months. The outward walk travels on the oldest route and would have been the packhorse track between Colne and Skipton, and the way people took their "corn" to be ground and their cloth to be fullled at the mill in Earby. Then up Harden Nick which was once a busy handloom weaving area, then picking up one of the many routes down to Kelbrook, the return journey travels along a foot route from Kelbrook to Earby. The walk covers just a small part of the many old routes in the area.

The corn mill was in the far end of the Hostel garden. There is evidence that milling of corn (which meant wheat, barley, oats, rye and peas and beans) took place here as far back as the early Middle Ages and maybe even earlier. Woollen cloth was fullled in the mill probably using the same water power. Before the mid 1800's there was a 30 foot water wheel with grinding stones, leets, dam, and a barn with drying kiln. This area of Earby was probably the earliest part of the village. The mill was owned by the Lister-Kay estate which was a continuation of the ancient manor of Thornton-in-Craven started soon after the Norman Conquest. There is some evidence that there was a very early settlement nearby, but at the time of writing this is still a research project and cannot be proven.

Most of Earby visible today was built in the late 1890's to the present day. Earby and District Local History Society are currently doing research into the history of the mill and of the early villages of Earby, Kelbrook and Harden. If you are interested in this project or for more information please contact us at www.info@earbyhistory.co.uk

To start the walk, leave the hostel via Birchall Lane.

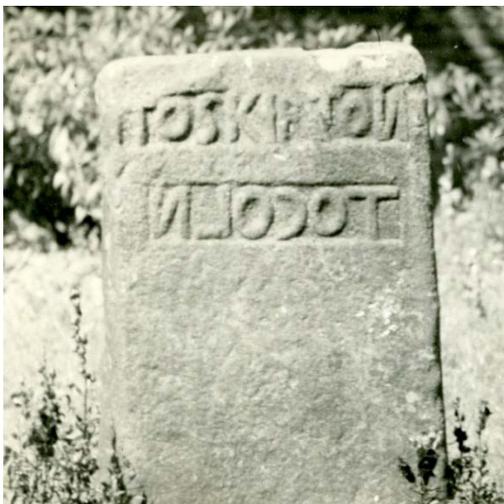
1. Turn left up the hill from the hostel then take the second turn on the right on to Mill lane, this is an ancient byway from Colne to Skipton, the walk will take you 2 miles or so along its route to Harden.
2. Follow the sunken lane westward and note how the land on either side is higher than the lane - this indicates an old route.
3. When Stoneybank Road is reached turn left, uphill for 25 yards then take the field path through the stile on the right.



In the wall just below the stile you will note a stone with lots of small holes drilled into it, it is thought that this was a “wuzzing hole” stone which was used in the drying process of preparing wool for weaving. (An early form of spin dryer)

You can still see evidence of the old lane in the path, this disappears a few times along the way as the route has been slightly changed over time but most of the way the old roadway is to be seen. Note the high fence to your left this was built by Earby’s Water Board and protected the gathering grounds for the drinking water supply, cows are not allowed to graze on land where drinking water is collected due to the risk of TB. This supply is no longer used.

4. Keep at the same height following the path, through a stile and past the topside of Moor Hall Farm, At this point there was an old route to Salterforth leading down to the “old lane” then over Salterforth Lane to Salterforth.
5. Follow the track through a gate then, follow the path to your right and on through an overgrown area, then the path rejoins a distinct trackway. Follow on keeping to the same level through a stile next to a gate - note the trackway here shows strong evidence of being a road suitable for carts.
6. At the site of 2 large Ash trees was the small hamlet of Bawhead where in the 1841 census 33 people lived though, by 1881 no-one lived there and by 1901 the properties had been demolished. The only evidence to be seen are a few humps in the ground and the small well/spring in the side of the track. It may have been at this site that the old Guide Stoope was originally sited, as this is where the old route to Salterforth via Spenhead, which would have been the main road to Blackburn, joined the Colne to Skipton Road. This is an important artefact and can be seen in the grounds of the Old Grammar School on School Lane Earby. It is thought to date from the mid/late 1600’s when Charles II decreed that all major junctions should be marked with directions to the next important place. For more information see the Earby and District Local History Society’s quarterly magazine “The Chronicles” Spring 2015 edition, item by Trevor Tattersall. This is available via the history Society. We will pass a replica on the return part of the walk.



Left – The guide stoope thought to have been photographed when in the 1930’s it was sited in the garden of Cowgarth Farm.

Right – the remains of the oven at Bawhead taken in 1912. The 1851 census gives the occupation of one of the women as – Bread Baker this could have been her oven



7. Continue again on the same level through the stile/gate across the next field then turning slightly to your right around the edge of the next field to join a sunken lane, (this can be muddy in wet weather), where this lane joins another lane take the left hand turn to Heads Lane which is tarmac'd, turn left uphill following Pendle Bridle way past Heads House and out into open grass land.



Harden Hall. This farm was demolished in the mid 20th century when it was bought by Earby Town Council, the land was resold and the farm house fell into disrepair

It was on the hill side above and to the North West of Heads House.

8. Continue following the Pendle Bridleway, turning right in front of Harden Old House, continuing to follow the BW until it meets a stile in the wall leading down to a wooden bridge. Cross the bridge and walk up hill to meet the signposted path going across the hill side - turn right at this path
9. Follow back down the opposite side of the valley past Harden New Hall and onto a farm track follow this down until it meets the road – (Cob Lane) turn right down the hill for 50 yards then take the track to The Knoll. Before you walk along the track turn 180° and you will see in the field across the road the old track way of a possibly older route to Colne, this was probably abandoned when the way became eroded. Taking the stile in the wall behind the first farm, - take care as it has a long drop on the other side. The path is almost hidden behind a high Lelandi hedge. Follow the path downhill through a stile in the diagonal corner of the field then downhill towards Kelbrook. Keeping the trees to your right.
10. Go through the gate continue downhill and into Dotcliffe lane. The large building on the left just next to the gate once was a wayfarers Inn “Halfway House” the Inn was in the top half of the building and stabling for pack horses was in the rougher built cottage at the lower end. For more information see below for where to look on the web site.
11. Walk down hill until there is a sharp left hand bend cross over the beck and walk down the far side of the beck until you reach Kelbrook Nursery School. The way goes through the side yard and behind the school there is a stile in the far left hand corner of the yard which leads into the Church graveyard, walk through the grave yard, and through the field keeping the hedge to your immediate left then into the lane turning immediately to the right and into a lane which in turn leads into a field path.
12. Follow the field path across the large meadow, half way across the field is a tarmac road. If you want to look at the old Sough Bridge which was once an important crossing, turn left and then onto the main road if you then cross the road and look over the wall at the far side the old bridge can still be seen. On the attached 1848 map you will note that the “turnpike Road” stops at Kelbrook, this section of the road was not completed until 1922 due to disputes over land ownership, so from the

“Scotsman’s Arms” the original name for the Craven Heifer pub the road follows the ancient highway to Thornton-in Craven, where the old Manor house was situated.



The old Sough Bridge as seen from the far side of the main road

To continue rejoin the path then through the stile into the top of Sough Park. Walk across the top of the park then follow the path towards Earby. When this leads into the “Old Lane”, a tarmac’d lane walk straight on to the junction with Barnwood Road and turn right up hill until, at the bend to your left a signposted footpath leads to your left, at the second house on your right note the Guide Stoope replica. This is here because when the house “Mile Stone House” was built the owner thought that this would have been the site of the original Stoope. Earby Town Council made 2 replicas and the other one is now sited in the Bus Station. Return to Barnwood Road.

13. Do not follow the path but continue up the hill following the road around a left hand bend then a right hand bend then half way up the hill there is a narrow path between the houses, this leads to a field continue on the same direction until the path goes through a stile into a narrow pathway this was once probably an old boundary note the bank and ditch to your right, continue to walk along this until you join Stoney Bank road Turn left downhill for 50 yards the take the narrow path to your right down hill.
14. Follow this over a small bridge in among trees then over a raised walk way and through a narrow path between high fences this then brings you out onto Red Lion St. Turn right and continue until you reach the Youth Hostel. Red Lion Street was called Main Street in the 1800’s it was used by traffic travelling from Skipton or Keighley over the top road to Thornton Manor, an important site being the administrative centre for the area since the Norman Conquest, until it was burnt down in a battle during the civil war in 1644.

For more information and pictures see www.earbyhistory.co.uk and click on “talks” there are 2 slide shows that look at this area and its history of travellers and road use - “A virtual pub crawl” and “Forgotten byways and Highways”. Copies of this walk leaflet are also available under “walks”

If you would like any further information about the history of Earby, Thornton-in-Craven, Kelbrook or Harden please email www.info@earbyhistory.co.uk

Earby and District Local History Society has a large archive collection of Documents, photos, family history and artefacts, these are held in the Community Centre, Earby. These are available for research please email

via the above web address for advice. Or please visit us, the Archive room is usually open Friday mornings 10am to 12 md.