

Country code

When you are walking, please follow the country code and remember you are walking across other people's land.

Please keep to public paths, leave gates as you find them, keep dogs under control, take your litter home and take care on roads. Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work.

Public Transport

Please use public transport as often as you can.

The Colne Valley has a regular train service (Huddersfield to Manchester Victoria) with stations at Slaithwaite and Marsden. For details contact the Northern Trains website at www.northernrail.org or phone Ticket Sales on 0844 241 3454.

The Colne Valley has frequent bus services. For details contact the West Yorkshire Metro website at www.wymetro.com or phone 0113 245 7676. (Metro also provide details of local train services) Most of the local buses are operated by First Bus. For details check the website at www.firstgroup.com/ukbus/calderdale_huddersfield or phone 0845 604 5460. Local timetables are also available in the Public Libraries in Slaithwaite and Golcar.

Food and Drink

There are many cafes and pubs available in Slaithwaite for refreshment before, after or during your walk.

Accommodation

Details of local accommodation are available from the Kirklees Council website at www.kirklees.gov.uk/visitors/accommodation or by phone on 01484 221 000

Disclaimer

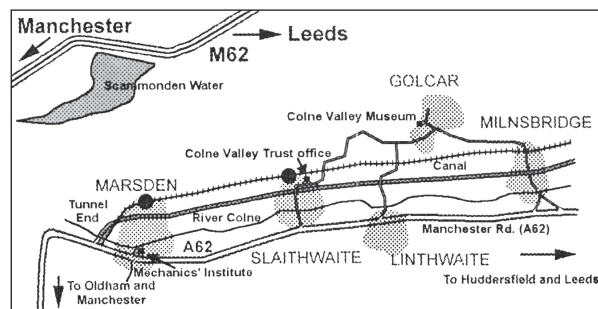
Golcar and Slaithwaite Walkers are Welcome, together with the original leaflet author and leaflet artist, have attempted in all good faith to provide adequate safety warnings and they cannot in any way be held responsible for any claims arising from damage to person or property. It is in the best interest of walkers to observe these safety warnings. Please note that the walking route as described in this leaflet does not imply a right of way. In some cases this walk takes advantage of permissive paths. The definitive guide to local rights of way can be accessed by contacting Kirklees Council website at www.kirklees.gov.uk or phone 01484 221 000

Acknowledgements

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The Colne Valley



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www.golcarandslaithwaitewalkers.org.uk

The Colne Valley Trail

A series of Countryside and Village Walks

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Exploring Old Slaithwaite



A short stroll which takes in many interesting and historic buildings around the village

Exploring Old Slaithwaite

This easy two mile walk complements Mary Freeman's booklet 'Slaithwaite a Saunter Round the Centre' which is locally available. This walk concentrates on buildings and covers areas of Slaithwaite not described in the booklet.

Slaithwaite's history since the 1400's has been shaped by its remaining in the hands of the Kaye / Dartmouth family. According to the Kaye's own early records, their major concern was to develop the potential water power of the river. When they became lords of the manor of Slaithwaite, there was a manorial corn mill already on the river near the bridge. On the other side of the River Colne, the area called Lingards, held by Kirkstall Abbey, had no riverside development. Arthur Kaye wanted Lingarthes (Lingards) because, to own both banks of a river meant undisputed waterpower.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, Abbey lands were for sale to the highest bidder. By 1544 Arthur Kaye's Court Rolls were headed Slagthwaite and Lingarthes.

It was not long before Kaye had made "both the walk mylnes (fulling mills) at Slagthwaite oot of the Hoole ground". The Nether or lower Milne was close to the Crimble brook which was the Golcar boundary. This area, on the river side of Spa Mills, was known as Waterside. The upper Milne was far enough upstream of the bridge not to interfere with the water power needed by the corn mill there.

Enough early records of the estate and the fulling mills have survived, (some still kept in Slaithwaite Manor House), to follow the growth of the of the woollen industry in the valley, from the upland sheep grazing / weaving farmholds of the fifteenth century to the busy clothing manufacturers of the nineteenth.

This walk takes you through places whose farmhold names appeared in the early estate records: some settlements grew and multiplied to become hamlets. When power mills in the valley undercut the market of the hand weavers, they had few options but to walk to the valley, work long hours at machines and walk back at nightfall.

The Walk

1. **Start the walk at the junction of Carr Lane, Britannia Road and Station Road, adjacent to the Commercial Inn. Walk up Station Road**

Notice on the right No. 24 (**A on the map**), the former egg-packing station. This was run for many years by a firm called Yorkshire Egg Packers. Eggs delivered from various farms in the area would be candled by hand for impurities, graded for size and packed by hand into boxes of 30 dozen. Eggs would come in sometimes with farmyard detritus still clinging to them.

2. **Turn right into Lewisham Road**



In Lewisham, London there is a Slaithwaite Road. Lewisham is a family name of the Dartmouth family.

Lewisham Road was once known as Brasshandle Street because of its elegance. During the First World War, Belgian refugees were housed at No. 12. Notice two buildings (B and C on the map), both built in the first half of the nineteenth century in a Tudor revival style.



3. **Where Lewisham Road joins Carr Lane, keep left. Opposite, the Wharfeside Inn, take an unmade lane (Kiln Lane) veering left**

Kiln Lane went to Hill Top before the railway was driven through Slaithwaite. Notice the block of three houses in the middle (**D on the map**). The variations in door and window patterns suggest the residents were declaring their independence.

4. **At the top of Kiln Lane turn right and continue down the road to re-join Carr Lane. Turn left and go under the railway viaduct**



There is a horse trough to the left of the pavement (**E on the map**), the bottom of which is now well below the present road level, due to continual road re-surfacing.



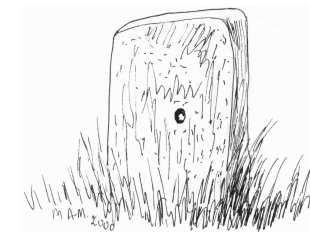
Continue forward. You are now in Crimble. Note the drawing of the clock tower. This was located on the Brook Mills building until its recent demolition.

5. **Continue ahead past the Swan Inn, keeping the inn on your right. Past the inn, bear left across the road towards**

a gap between the houses where there is a bus stop and public footpath sign. Go through the gap, between houses and join a path which at first bears right, then climbs up a flight of steps (which can be slippery) to the allotments

This was one of the short cuts used by workers to get from Hill Top to the mills at Crimble that have now been demolished.

There was a small dipping pool near to the path, constructed by the allotment holders as a source of water, the overflow water tumbling down the hill to Crimble Brook, but this has now disappeared. The 1840's was a time of bad trade and great hardship here. Most families had become dependent on the woollen mills and few had land on which to grow food. Unemployment money to buy food was unheard of. Spade Husbandry Societies were formed, with the support of the landlord and allotments of about a quarter of an acre were set up. There are still some fine allotment gardens up here, but those without tenants are going back to nature.



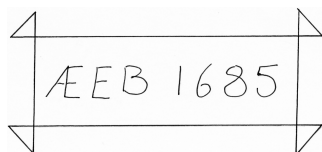
6. **At the top of the steps continue up the path past the allotments. When you reach a road, turn sharp left away from the road down a track, passing garages on your left at the end Waverley Street. Keep**

to the left and shortly after passing the garages veer left away from Waverley Street down a track with a wall on your left which becomes a walled lane. Continue along this lane / path (which was once a road to Halifax) into Olney Street

Several old buildings in the fold were pulled down

in the early 1900's when Olney Street was driven through.

Now pause and look at the long house (**F on the map**) on the right behind the green, now numbers 15 and 16 Hill Top Fold. This building, Aeneas Bothomley's house, is listed; i.e. it is on a Government list of buildings of architectural or historic interest that may not be altered in appearance without planning permission. This one is interesting on both counts; architecturally because it is a 1685 re-build in stone of an earlier cruck house, using the same ground plan; historically because Slaithwaite's diarist Robert Meeke, lodged and wrote his diary here between 1689 and his death in 1724. Note the blue historic information plaque on the wall of 15 Hill Top Fold.



7. At the end of Olney Street, go left along Meal Hill Lane to its junction with Royd Street and Hill Top Road. Turn left for a few yards to see numbers 13 to 19 Hill Top Road (G on the map**)**

Look at the datestone 1763 with the initials WH for Mr Walker and his wife.



8. Return to the junction and walk ahead along Royd Street

Forty years ago there were four corner shops at the junction of Meal Hill Lane and Royd Street. Now there are none, with one of the old shop premises having been demolished. One of the remaining former shops had the name White Royd Terrace carved above a window but this is no longer visible. This first row of houses was built on a field called White Royd.

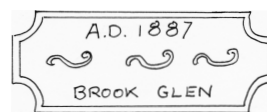
On the left hand side of Royd Street, number 8 (**H on the map**) is another mock Tudor, like those in Lewisham Road. On the other side of the road at the end of the stone terrace, there is a row of houses for the railway workers, not of stone, but of fawn coloured brick, known locally as Brick Ouses. You see across the road, shops with a stone inscription reading Slaithwaite Equitable Industrial Society Ltd Branch No. 4, a former 'Cwop' shop. This is evidence of the extraordinary vigour and growth of the Co-operative Movement in Slaithwaite during the nineteenth century.



In fine weather at the weekends, the cricket field rings with cheers and clapping. The Estate map of 1837, in Slaithwaite Manor House, shows four fields called Cricket Lands, adjoining the White Royd Fields.

10. Cross over Royd Street to Grove Street, then turn right into Netherend Road

Near the end of the road on your right is a detached house (Netherend) number 45 (**J on the map**), sited at an angle. It is older than the road, which was named after it, but the name is much older still. It appears in a document of 1460. The land falling away on the left, now with new houses on it, was called Tenterfield. Open as it is to westerly winds blowing down the valley, it was suited to drying wet finished cloth stretched on tenterposts.



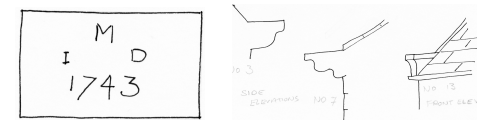
Did you spot this datestone?

11. Cross the road ahead (Bankgate – beware of traffic) and turn right up the hill. Take a path on your left over a footbridge and across the dam of Slaithwaite Reservoir

Note the colourful metal plates on the bridge railing giving various information about the area. The reservoir was constructed to provide water to the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Merry Dale Brook runs into it. Looking left you have a grandstand view of Slaithwaite village.

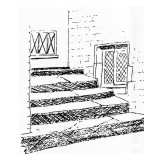
12. On reaching the road, turn right, cross over and then turn left into Blakeholme Close. Keep to the right and at the bend take the fenced footpath to the right. On left near the end of the path there is an old stone barn, Blakestones Barn. The path turns left at the end and puts you in front of Blakestones Barn

This splendid building (**K on the map**) is listed. It has been converted to a house. Glancing through the large arched doorway, you can see the corresponding arch in the other wall of the barn. The great horse wagons, loaded with corn or hay, could enter here, unload and leave through the other arch. At the lower end of the barn is a small doorway with a deep lintel and stone surround; this was the entrance to the cow byre or mistal. The date stone reads MID 1743. Two of the houses clustered close by are as old if not older than the barn. Alterations and the coating of white painted cement disguise their true features. The shapes of the projecting stones (called kneelers) at the ends of the eaves are a clear indication of age. The older kneelers tend to be smaller and less elaborate. The houses numbered 2, 15 and 16 are listed.



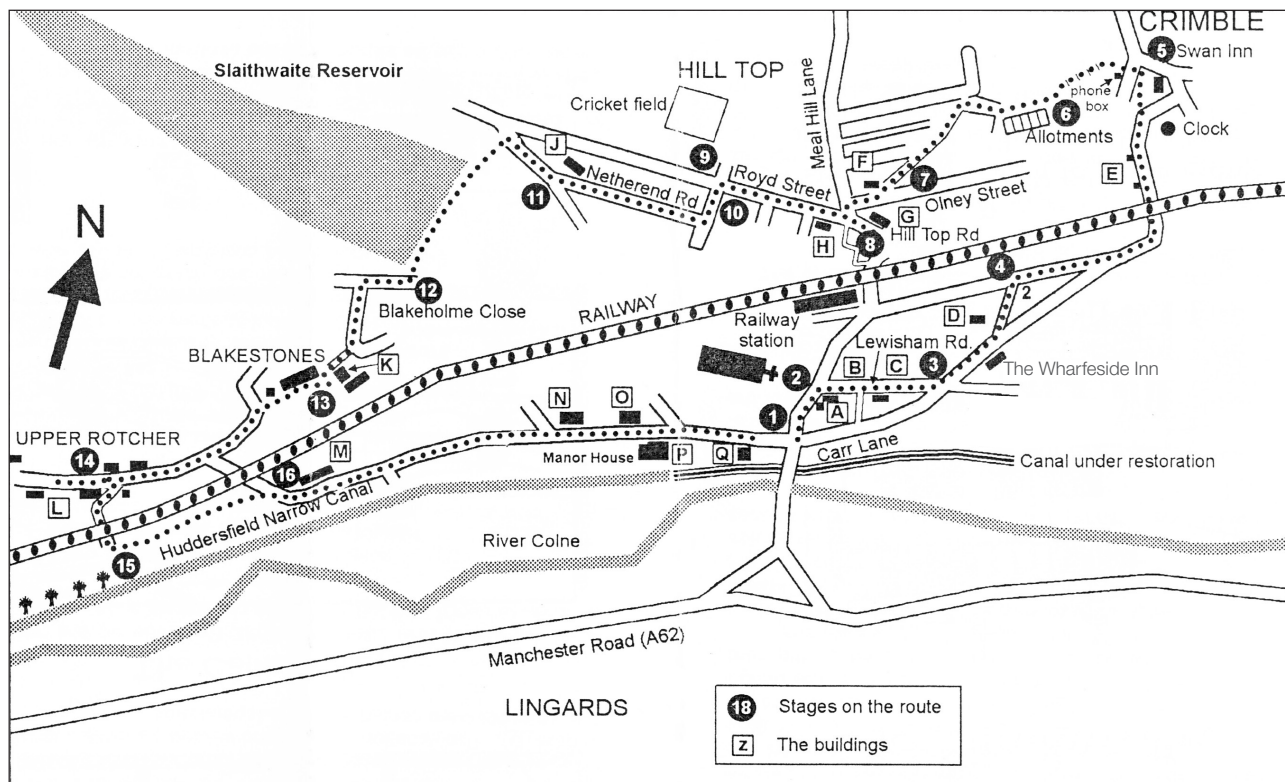
13. Walk on through this lovely old hamlet of Blakestones. Turn left towards the railway. The road soon forks left to pass under the railway. Ignore this turn, but continue ahead to reach Upper Rotcher (L on the map**)**

Nearly every building here is listed. Notice a large stone water trough, before the first house on the right; a spout of water is trickling in from the higher ground behind. This is typical of the age-old water supply for outlying settlements in this area; a regular supply was essential not only for the household but also for cloth-making and livestock.



Between 10 & 12 Upper Rotcher

14. When you reach the gate, don't go through to Stone Laithe Farm, but note the interesting turnstile leading into the field near the farm buildings, then



turn back. Notice another fine stone water trough opposite the first house number 10. Turn sharp right past the last house on the right, number 11 and continue down the path and under the railway bridge towards a kissing gate directly ahead

As you walk down towards the railway, look on the right for a little old house with mid-1700's kneelers like those at Blakestones.

If you are surprised to find two railway bridges so close together, remember that when the railway was built, well over 150 years ago, a clear way had to be made for every farm road then in use.

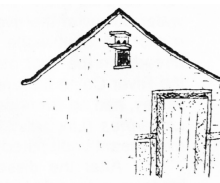
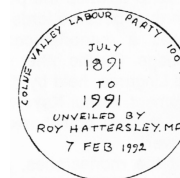
After going under the railway bridge the track swings to the right. This is Park Lane. (This name is a reference to the park of Slaithwaite Hall, which stands a mile further away towards Marsden and is where the lords of Slaithwaite Manor lived before the Kayes owned the estate.)

15. Go through the kissing gate

The long, grassed area is known as Rotcher Tip. There is no tipping now and it is a picnic area and public open space.

16. Turn left and walk through the grassy area, with the railway on your left, back towards the centre of Slaithwaite. You soon arrive at Rotcher Lane. You are now in Lower Rotcher. Continue down this road back to Slaithwaite

The long building on the left (*M on the map*) is a two hundred year old farmhouse and barn, much altered in appearance by recent re-windowing. When the road meets a junction turn right. Look across the junction to number 23 (*N on the map*) which has a plaque beside its front door commemorating the formation of one of the first-ever Labour local parties.



Further down the road, number 11 (*frontispiece and O on the map*) is listed as a surviving manufacturing dwelling. The top storey has a continuous row of thirteen stone-mullioned windows, of which five are now blocked. This long room would have been full of looms from end to end.

In front of the house is a cruck barn which may be medieval.

As you approach the Silent Woman pub, notice the long low roof opposite. At the end of the building, turn right down a cobbled way (passing the Dartmouth Estate Office notice) and turn right to look at the front of the long building, the Manor House (*P on the map*). You can view it best from its car parking area. It was built by Slaithwaite landlord, the Kayes, in the sixteenth century.

On the green in front of the Manor House is an upright cylindrical stone found locally in 1587 and now believed to be a milestone from the Roman road that passed along the valley.

To the left of the manor house, see the small lock up intended for local felons. It is believed that it was never used!

Return to the cobbled way and walk straight across the end of this to the short lane opposite and walk down this. As you emerge from it into the public car park looking ahead you will see an old packhorse bridge over the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and to the left hand side, the back of the Free School founded in 1721 by Robert Meeke, Slaithwaite's curate and diarist. The building on the right hand side, behind a new extension, was an old inn (The Dartmouth Arms) Go through the car park and turn left to see the front of the former school (*Q on the map*), which was rebuilt in 1842. It is now a funeral parlour. Note the blue historic information plaque on the wall near the entrance to the old school building.

Across the road is the Shoulder of Mutton, now the oldest pub in the village, built about 1800.

Here the tour ends.