

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 cafes and pubs available in Marsden and Slaithwaite.

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

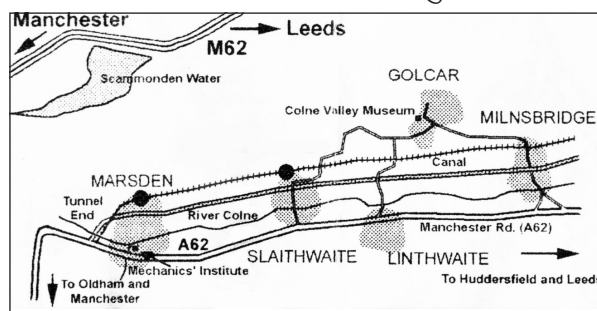
Golcar and Slaithwaite Walkers are Welcome, together with the original leaflet author and leaflet artist, have attempted in all good faith to provide adequate safety warnings and they cannot in any way be held responsible for any claims arising from damage to person or property. It is in the best interest 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.

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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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Marsden to Slaithwaite

The Northern Line



A walk for the more adventurous along the valley side with some attractive views and the occasional scramble

Marsden to Slaithwaite – The Northern Line

Distance: A linear walk of nearly 4 miles.

Time: Allow 3 hours.

Use Explorer map 288 (Bradford, Huddersfield and East Calderdale) to add to the information shown on the leaflet map.

*The easiest and shortest route from Marsden to Slaithwaite is along the canal towpath. This walk is more adventurous. It follows a route along the north side of the valley, with a variety of views and terrain. **There are some rough parts and steep slopes, which may be difficult for young children, or inexperienced walkers.** There are several points where you can leave the route and return to the towpath. These are marked on the map with an asterisk.**

You can reach the start of the walk either by train (Marsden is on the Huddersfield to Manchester Victoria line) or by the 185 bus from Huddersfield to Marsden Dirker, asking for the Marsden Station stop.

Start the walk from Marsden train station. From the westbound platform (travelling towards Manchester), walk to the road and turn right up the hill (away from Marsden). Follow the road uphill as it crosses both the canal and the railway. From the eastbound platform (travelling towards Huddersfield), climb the steps from the platform and turn right at the top.

1. Turn right into Reddisher Road. Cross the road and turn left up a track on the left called Spring Head Lane. Pass between an old barn and a house, climb the steep, tarmac, track to a house (Ingle Nook). Walk along the front of the house and continue along this track. Go past two tracks on your left and Dirker Bank, Old House and Barn Old House on your right. Just beyond these houses there is a tarmac track on your left, opposite a telegraph pole. *Straight ahead there is a view of Cellars Clough Mill and Sparth Reservoir.* Turn left up this tarmac track, soon passing trees on your right.



2. You reach a high point with views down the valley. Go through the gap to the right of the large metal gate and continue along the track. Soon it turns right, crosses a stream and continues towards a house.

3. Before you reach the house, turn right through a gap in the wall and follow a narrow path, at first between walls, but soon with a low wall on your right and woods below. Eventually you cross a stream. Continue along until you emerge onto a broad track. (Turning right here will take you back down to the railway and the canal.) Turn left, climb for a short distance, then cross a stile on your right and continue across two fields to another broad track. *Straight ahead there is a fine view of the hamlet called Slaithwaite Hall.*

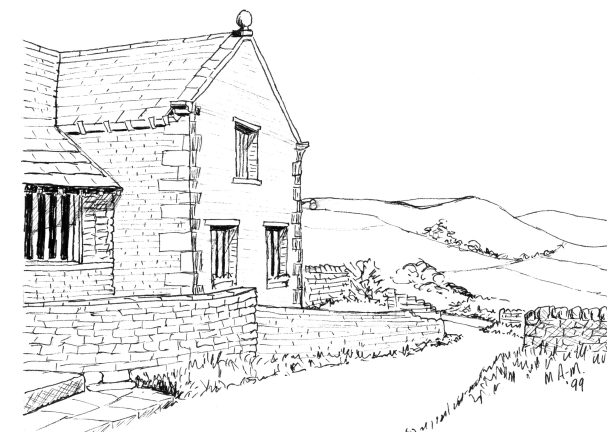
4. Here you can also return to the towpath by turning right. **WARNING: If you want to carry on the walk route, you will soon have to follow a steep, though short, rough, grassy slope down to a stream.**

Two jobs in one: The farm on the hill to your left – Netherwood Farm - is typical of many such isolated farm buildings on the hillsides above the Colne Valley. The land was never good enough to provide a living by itself, so the smallholders combined farming with textile production, under the putting-out or domestic system. Almost every home had its own track down to the valley floor, whence wool was brought and to which woven cloth was returned.



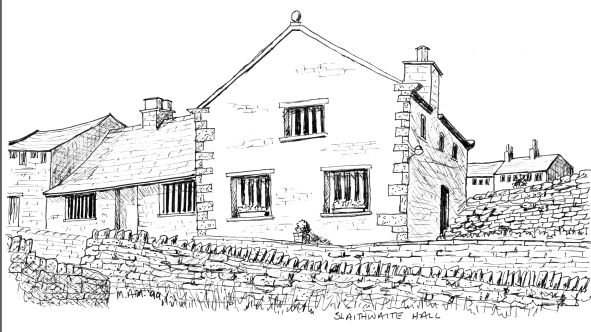
5. Turn left and walk up to the farm (Netherwood Farm). Turn right just in front of the farm. Pass through a stile by a gate on your right, then cross a field with a wall on your right. Keep by the wall to your right. The path now descends very steeply then continues to the left down a steep zig-zag path through the trees to a stream with a handrail across. Cross the stream, turn right and follow the path, climbing slightly up the left bank. The path turns left and continues to rise to a waymarked post indicating a right turn, where you descend until you join another stream with a handrail across. Cross this, turn right and climb the bank to a small wooden gate. (This section of the walk is well waymarked.)

6. Go through the gate. Ignore the steps on your left. Follow the path ahead through trees, which goes downhill at first and later rises. The path eventually turns left to arrive at a stile and a field gate. Cross the stile on to a track heading towards a group of houses (Slaithwaite Hall).



Slaithwaite Hall:

Now a farm hamlet, *Slaithwaite Hall* is the site of one of the oldest settlements in the Colne Valley. It was the residence of the Tyas family, who held the Manor of Slaithwaite in the thirteenth century. Part of the old hall still exists, with cruck timbers concealed behind a stone exterior, but now it is used as a barn. The name *Slaithwaite* was first recorded as 'Slathwait' in 1178. Since then it has had at least thirty-eight different spellings, including 'Slaughwaite' on Thomas Jefferys' map of 1771. Today, locally, it is pronounced 'Slawit'. The English Place Name Society claims that it means "a clearing where timber was felled", but others suggest the meaning "sloe clearing". Whichever you prefer, it seems certain that the township of *Slaithwaite* further down the valley, owes its name to a clearing at the top of the hill, where the hamlet of *Slaithwaite Hall* now stands.



7. Just before you reach the houses, go over the stone stile to the right of the gate. Turn right on the track between houses, then left onto a narrow road (*Slaithwaite Hall*) that soon joins another road (*Marsden Lane*). Turn left and walk up the hill. On your right there is a deep valley and an oak wood. After some distance, on the right just beyond the wood, a field wall approaches the road at a right angle and there is a footpath sign set back from the road. (Should you be in need of refreshment at this point, you can continue up the road to the *Rose and Crown at Cop Hill* and then return.)

West Slaithwaite School:

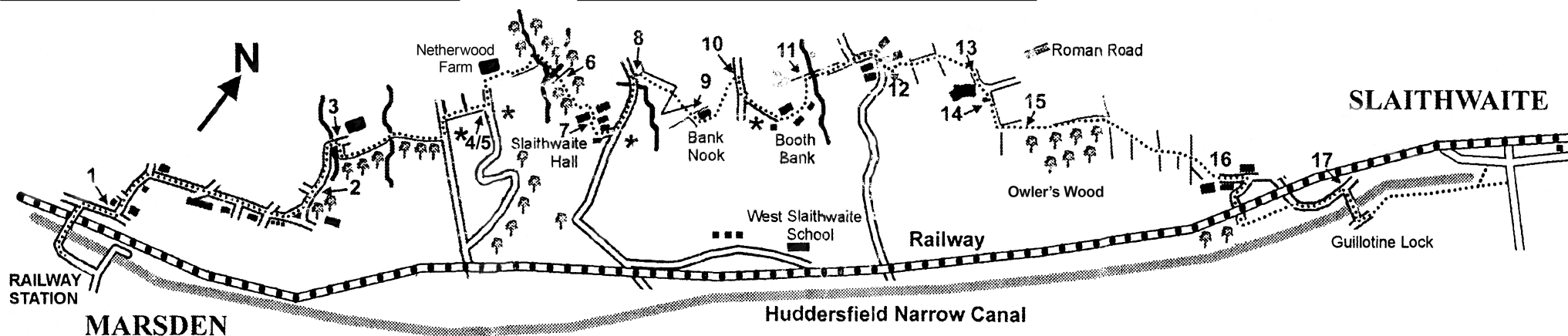
This was one of the five Church schools built in a twenty year period in the mid-nineteenth century. The foundation stone was laid in 1859, by the 5th Earl of Dartmouth, whose estate covered much of the *Slaithwaite* area. (The Dartmouth estate still owns a good deal of the land on the hillsides around the village.) Built by local firm *Eaglands*, the school and master's house were completed in 1861 at a cost of £1260. It replaced an earlier school, which had been housed in a former loomshop at *Bank Nook*. Loomshops were small scale weaving mills, of which there were many in the Colne Valley. The property is now a private house.

8. Leave the road here by crossing a ditch on your right, then through a gap stile in a wall on the right and follow a path through the field, keeping close to the wall on your left. Cross a stile, then go diagonally slightly to your right across another field, following some flagstones, (which may be covered by vegetation) to a stile in the wall. Below you can see the former *West Slaithwaite School*.

9. Once over the wall, drop down through a gap in the wall, towards a house. Go over the stile, turn left in front of the house and follow the track keeping left up a short cobbled rise. Keep on the track until it joins a lane.

10. Turn sharp right and walk down the lane for a short distance. Turn left onto a path, which gradually drops down to a group of buildings. Turn left up the hill, through the left hand gate, passing in front of the house (*Booth Bank Cottage*), keep left and climb a grassy track above a deep clough on your right.

11. When you reach a fence, don't cross the stile, but turn right and walk alongside the fence. Take care as this path is narrow and overgrown and uneven underfoot. The path goes over a stream. Continue keeping the fence on your left, then between the fence and a wall on your right. Cross a stile and after 50 yards you emerge onto a road. Walk downhill along the road, which soon bends to the right.





Cloughs:

Steep-sided narrow valleys, leading off the main valley. The swift-flowing streams may have waterfalls where sandstone and shale meet. The trees are mainly oak and larch – the remnants of ancient woodlands. They are rich in bird life. The Colne Valley Tree Society works in the area to help preserve and restore these and other woodland habitats.

12. Part way round the bend, take the second left into a farmyard. There is a small redbrick building on your right. With the farmhouse on your left, pass in front of and below the farm. Cross over a stile and continue through a field with a wall on your left, then through a gap by a gate. Go diagonally downhill across this field, following flagstones (which may be covered by vegetation), down to a small metal gate behind a house (Wood Nook).

Roman Road:

Recently a Roman road was discovered in the field to your left. This road linked the forts at Slack (near Outlane) and Castleshaw (just over the Pennines, near Delph). It is thought to be part of the York to Chester road. From here it continues through Marsden and over Pule Hill, crossing the Pennines close to the present A62.

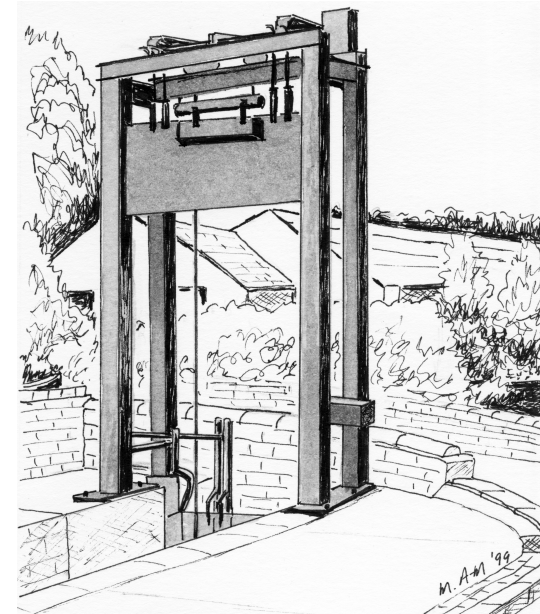
13. Pass through the gate and along a narrow fenced passage beside the house. (You will see an access road on your left which leads to Lower Holme.)

14. Ahead, pass between the wall and the circular pond and then through a gate into a field. Walk with a wall on the left to a gate, turn left through this and walk with a wood on your right (Owlers Wood). An owl was someone engaged in the illegal exportation or 'owling' of wool or sheep.

15. Walk along the path at the top of the wood and then go through a stile into a field. Take care as the stone surface where you step down can be very slippery. Cross the field and go through a wall gap and down towards a group of houses.



16. Go through a turnstile gate and down the track. Pass two houses on your right and then turn sharp right (at 11 Upper Rotcher) down a track to the railway. Pass under the railway line, walking ahead to reach a gate to a grassy area beyond (Rotcher). Go through the gate and turn left along the path which soon joins a road. Turn right and follow the road down to Slaithwaite.



The Guillotine Lock Gate:

Erected in 1997. When the canal was being restored, there was no room for re-establishing a more conventional lock gate as the road bridge had been widened.

17. At the bottom of the hill, take the turning on your right and cross the canal. Note the forbidding sight of the guillotine lock gate on your right as you cross. Turn left and continue into Slaithwaite. **Here the walk ends.**

You can return to Marsden by train from Slaithwaite Station or by bus. Frequent buses run from Manchester Road, opposite Nobles Bar, to Marsden. Alternatively, when you cross the canal by the guillotine lock gate, you can turn right and walk back to Marsden along the canal towpath, a distance of just over 2.5 miles.