

Please Follow The Country Code

- Guard against all risk of fire
- Take your litter home
- Leave gates as found
- Help to keep all water clean
- Keep dogs under control
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Keep to public paths across farmland
- Use gates and stiles
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work

Public Transport

Please use public transport as often as you can.

Buses

For timetable information ring 0113 245 7676 or call at Huddersfield Bus Station, Upperhead Row. Timetables also in libraries and at Colne Valley Trust, Slaithwaite. Nearest bus stop to the start/finish of this walk is at Town End, Golcar.

Trains

For local timetable information please ring 0113 245 7676. For National Rail Enquiry Service ring 0345 48 49 50. Timetables also in libraries and at Colne Valley Trust, Slaithwaite. Railway stations at Huddersfield, Slaithwaite and Marsden.

Food and Drink

The Colne Valley is well-provided with a range of pubs, restaurants and takeaway food outlets to suit all tastes. For further information see the local press, Tourist Information Centres and the Colne Valley Trust.

Accommodation

For information see the Kirklees Accommodation Guide, available from Tourist Information Centres.

Information Points in the Area

- Huddersfield Tourist Information, Albion St. 01484 221000
- Holmfirth Tourist Information, Huddersfield Road 01484 222444
- Colne Valley Trust, 21a, Carr Lane, Slaithwaite 01484 847790
- Mechanics Institute, Peel St., Marsden 01484 843701
- Colne Valley Museum, Cliffe Ash, Golcar. (Sat/Sun p.m.) 01484 659762

Disclaimer

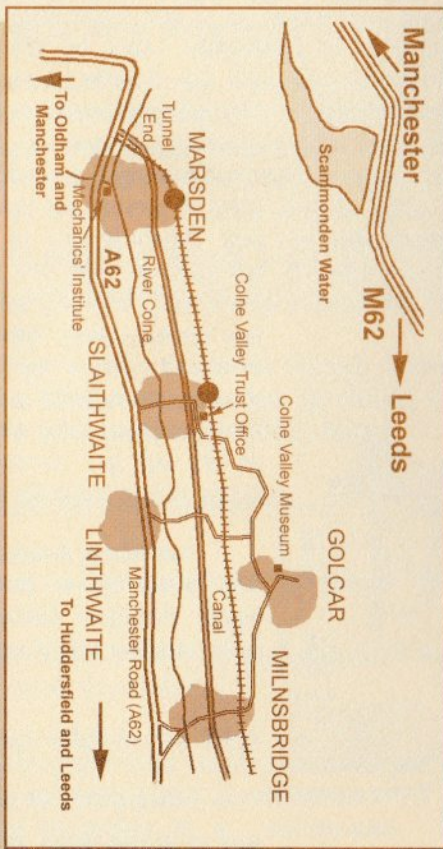
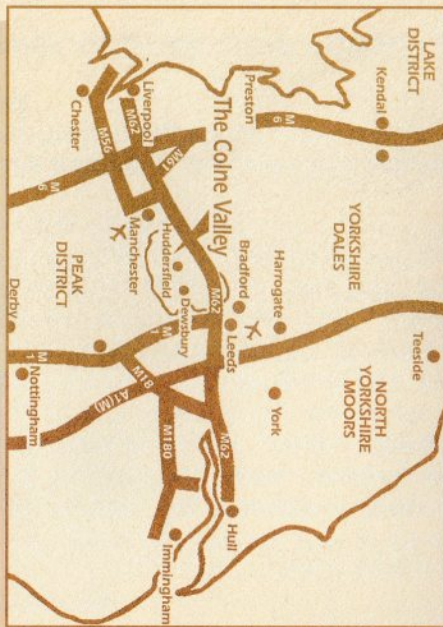
The Colne Valley Trust, together with the author and artist of this walk have attempted in all good faith to provide adequate safety warnings, and they cannot in any way be held responsible for any claims arising from damage to person or property. It is in the best interest of walkers to observe these safety warnings. Please note also that the route of this walk does not imply a right of way, and in some cases this walk takes advantage of permissive paths. The definitive guide to the rights of way on this walk can be found at the Highways Service, Flint Street, Huddersfield.

Acknowledgements

The buck stops with the author, but he wishes to thank the following people who have helped him in the preparation of this walk:
Staff at the Colne Valley Trust and the colleagues responsible for producing other walks in the series, for their advice and support.
The many friends and colleagues who have kindly given the walk a 'test drive' and whose comments have been so helpful.
Maureen Astley-Mullen, who has devoted considerable time and enthusiasm in producing such attractive illustrations and map.

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Where we are . . .

The Colne Valley

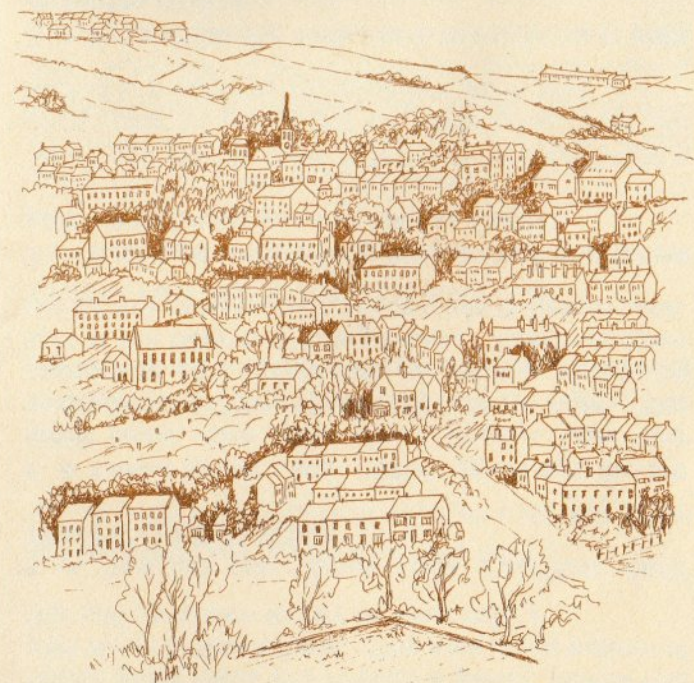
The Colne Valley Trail

A series of Countryside
and Village Walks



Golcar Appleyard Trail

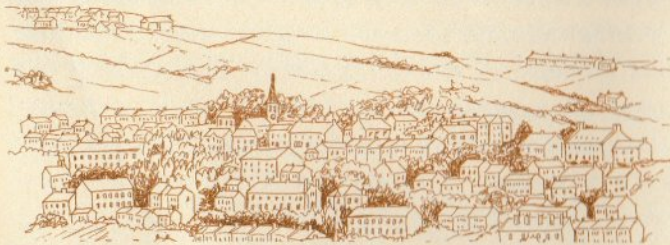
Discover the 'Provence of the North'.
Experience our Exhilarating Hills and
Brooding Valley on this walk.



Welcome to our Village

Sir John Betjeman called it the 'Provence of the North'. We've been favourably compared with an Italian Hill Village. Golcar is a village of dramatic contrasts. From its exhilarating hills the clear Pennine water races breathlessly over eight hundred feet in less than three-quarters of a mile, to its brooding valley. At the heart of our village is a closely-knit community of weavers' cottages, which defy gravity and cling perilously to the hillside.

What was it that created one of the most important textile villages in the West Riding in the early nineteenth century? The soft sparkling Pennine water helped to process the wool and later to drive the factories. It was also 'Golcar Guts', born of a special kind of independence and stubbornness, coupled with an adventurous spirit. There is more than a hint of jealousy in the valley jibe: 'Golcar! That's where everyone owns their own house and the one next to it'.



From humble beginnings

The click of sheep shears and the clatter of shuttles could be heard from our scattered hill farms and cottages since the early part of the fourteenth century. For nearly five hundred years textiles have been a way of life for our village. By 1830 Golcar was one of the most important centres of woollen handloom weaving in the West Riding. In our Golden Years, in the middle of the nineteenth century, well over two thirds of the valley's clothiers were located in our village.

Weaving was not mechanised until the 1860's. Jobs, skills and a whole way of life were finally swept into the degrading drudgery of the mills. Many people found work in the mills. Some held out, impoverished yet proud, as the village adjusted to a new way of life.

In the nineteenth century the building of the canal and railway helped to bring prosperity to our village. It is ironic that the building of the M62 motorway spurred the most recent transformation in Golcar.

Colne Valley Museum

What was it like to live and work in a hand weaver's home around 1850? Come and see for yourself at the Colne Valley Museum. The distinctive three storeyed museum, housed in three weaver's cottages, has become an important historical and cultural centre, not only for our village, but also for the whole valley. The museum, which has won numerous prestigious awards, is a distinctive landmark in our village and has been featured regularly on television. Special attractions include popular Craft Weekends, which are held in April and October, together with facilities provided for school visits. The museum is open on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Please check at the museum for opening times.



What's in a name?

Our village name has gone through at least eleven changes, from Gudlagesar and Gudlagesarge in the Domesday Book, through to Gowker in 1535, before finally settling on the current spelling of Golcar. (Villagers do not pronounce the 'l' in their village name. Perhaps this is a 'throwback' to the 1535 version!)

The source of 'Gol' is a shortened form of Saint Guthlac, a monk who preached in these barren hills towards the end of the seventh century

There is no agreement on the second part of our village name: 'Scar'. Some say it refers to a **rock**, or **scar**, others think it means **chapel** or **pulpit**. So we shall never really know what our village name was intended to mean. It is an appropriate legacy to be left by our ancestors, who had great generosity of spirit, but never gave much away!

The Golcar Lily

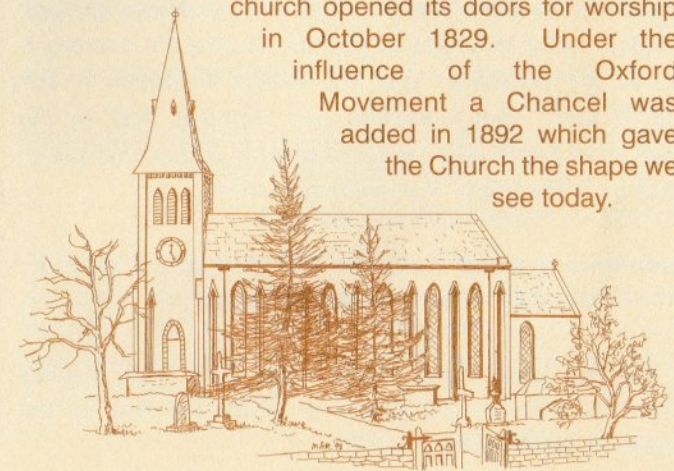
There are at least eight different versions of 'The Golcar Lily Story'. One of the most popular explanations compares the fair complexions and pretty features of the young ladies of our village to the beauty of a lily. Some associate our nickname with the 'lily like' flowers which grew near to Golcar railway station. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was believed to have compared the 'savages' of Bolster Moor and Scapegoat Hill with the 'lilies' of Golcar. The banner used on the Church processions bore a lily, as did the wagon of the Golcar Football team that took them to their away matches. Finally, the most enchanting explanation has to be the story about the persecuted French Huguenots bringing their weaving skills together with the lily from their flag to our village.



St John's Parish Church

Peter Atkinson of York was entrusted with the job of designing our 'Waterloo' Church'. The money came from 'The Million Fund', which was part of the spoils of war with France. It was designed in the Gothic style with the inclusion of a gallery, which was quite unusual for a Church, though not for a local 'chapel'.

The tall spire, which dominates our village and can be seen from many other parts of the valley, has looked down on so many changes since the church opened its doors for worship in October 1829. Under the influence of the Oxford Movement a Chancel was added in 1892 which gave the Church the shape we see today.



Golcar Appleyard Walk

This walk takes in the Colne Valley Museum and a splendid picnic area. It also introduces you to the canal with the highest and longest tunnel in the country and to one of the most important surviving examples of a hand weaving loomshop.

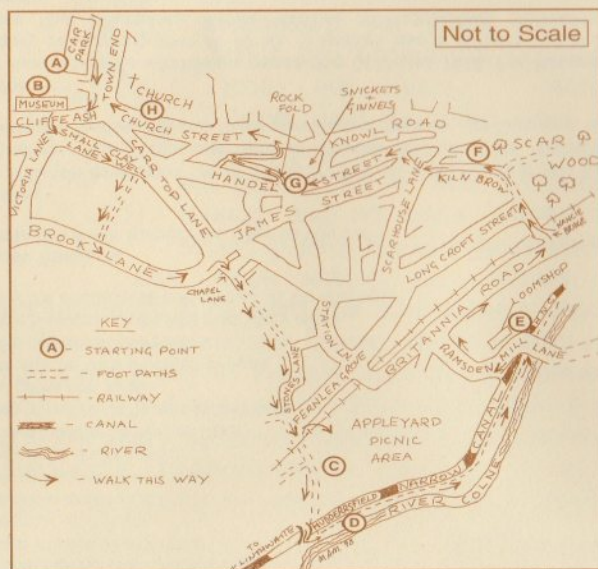
Important Information For Walkers

1. This walk involves some steep gradients
2. It is not recommended for small children, pushchairs and the infirm.
3. You need to allow at least an hour to complete this walk
4. You will find the Ordnance Survey Pathfinder Map 702 (Huddersfield and Marsden) and the Colne Valley Society Map (sheet 2) useful.

Notes for the walk:

- Distance: Approximately two miles.
- Time: Allow yourself an hour.
- Look out for a → sign in left hand column, this warns of a change of direction.
- **Bold type gives instructions.**
- **BOLD ITALIC CAPITALS GIVE SAFETY WARNINGS.**
- *Italics give you information regarding places of interest and what to look out for.*

(Please refer to section: 'Important information for walkers')



A The walk starts in the car park at Town End.

1 → Turn right at car park exit.

2 → After a few metres, turn right down cobbled Cliffe Ash and walk past the Colne Valley Museum.

B See separate article about the museum. At the top of Cliffe Ash enjoy what must be one of the most remarkable of settings for a mill, which is now visible. Heath House Mill sits on the Pennine Countryside in such a unique setting. As your eye takes in both the 'Cottage Industry' days of textiles at The Museum, and the mechanisation which came with the advent of such mills as Heath House Mill, we are given a grim reminder of one of the most turbulent times of our village. Spare a thought for the time when civil strife swept through our village and the Luddites were pitched against the unbridled introduction of new technology, as they attempted to protect their jobs, communities and a way of life which was soon to be lost.



Doing it in Style

There is a unique architectural style to be found in our valley and village: the weaver's cottage. The long mullioned windows of these cottages add such a distinctive character to our village. Designed to take advantage of their south facing aspect and provide the maximum amount of light for the longest periods, their colour and design have formed a harmony with the landscape into which they were built. Some of the best examples can be found in Cliffe Ash (Colne Valley Museum), Ridings Lane, Church Street (opposite the vicarage) and Handel Street.

3 → At the bottom of cobbled Cliffe Ash, take a sharp left hand turn along Small Lane, which leads onto Claywell.

NB DO NOT GO DOWN STEEP VICTORIA LANE.

4 → Immediately after large converted building on right hand side, turn right and follow path at side of house which takes you through a ginnel. Follow this path down to Brook Lane. (The area at the bottom of this path is known locally as 'New York'.)

5 → Turn left onto Brook Lane. **CAUTION: FAST TRAFFIC ON THIS ROAD.**

6 → Follow Brook Lane. When you reach the left hand bend, turn right down Chapel Lane and continue past Golcar Baptist Church on right. This appears to be a cul-de-sac, yet there is access by foot at the bottom of Chapel Lane. Continue down the narrow cobbled path which leads to Stones Lane.

7 → Turn right on reaching Stones Lane and follow path which brings you to a railway viaduct.

C If you wish to make a diversion here and enjoy a picnic, take the path to the left. After going under the viaduct turn right into the Appleyard picnic area.

8 → To continue the walk, take the right hand path under the viaduct.

The impressive double viaduct under which you are now walking was built for the Huddersfield- Manchester Railway. Completed in 1849 this railway still carries the major transpennine rail traffic.

Follow the path, which drops quite steeply down to the Canal.

9 → After walking over the Canal Bridge - **MAKE SURE YOU GO IN THE DIRECTION THAT TAKES YOU UNDER THE BRIDGE. THE CANAL MUST BE ON YOUR LEFT HAND SIDE FOR THE NEXT SECTION OF THE WALK.**



D The Huddersfield Narrow Canal rises through 42 locks from Huddersfield up to its highest point. It boasts the longest and highest tunnel in the country. The canal was opened in 1811, after seventeen troublesome years in the making. It was never a commercial success, yet it helped to bring prosperity to the valley.

Notice the grooves on the side of the bridge, which have been caused by the tow rope connected between the horse and the canal barge.



10 → Continue walking along the canal towpath until you reach the next lock

E 11 → When you reach the next lock, turn left and walk over the bridge. Continue on the path as it rises up to the Ramsden Mill Lane loomshop.

This building is considered one of the most important surviving examples of a loomshop. It was built around 1840. The ground floor was used for storage, the first floor for domestic purposes and the two top storeys for hand loom weaving. 'Loomshops' were an 'in between' stage in the development from the weaver's cottage (Colne Valley Museum) to the mill. Notice the numerous mullioned windows and the 'taking in' doors on the gable end. This loomshop was probably built by the Ramsden family who owned Ramsden Mill at Linthwaite, and built 'Bankfield' immediately in front.

Continue up steep Ramsden Mill Lane and at the top -
12 → Turn right down Britannia Road.

There are good views of the valley from here, looking down to Milnsbridge, across to Linthwaite and up the valley to Slaithwaite.



13 → Immediately before first houses on left hand side turn left up steps. Follow path which takes you onto a footbridge over the railway. Continue on this path.

DO NOT TURN LEFT ONTO LONGCROFT STREET.

Continue on path which has a handrail. This path leads you to some steps and the path forks here

F 14 → Take the left fork and follow this path up to Kiln Brow. Continue straight across a small road.
DO NOT TURN LEFT OR RIGHT HERE.

15 → On reaching James Street **CAUTION:TRAFFIC.** turn left and continue for approx. 50 metres

16 → Turn right off James Street, between house numbers 31 and 32, and walk up steps. Continue on this path until reaching Handel Street.

17 → Turn left onto Handel Street

Continue on Handel Street for approx. 150 metres.

There are some more interesting views of the valley and Bolster Moor from here.

18 → Turn right onto small cobbled road, Rock Fold. Follow road to left and continue on Rock Fold until it appears to arrive at a cul-de-sac. There is a pedestrian exit.

G You are now approaching the 'Snickets and Ginnels' area of our village (see separate article). It is fun for children and adults to explore this honeycomb of narrow passages which are a special feature of our village. You cannot get too far lost!



Snickets and Ginnels

As our village grew in a topsy turvy manner in the early part of the nineteenth century, some way had to be found to get around. A complex labyrinth of passages sprang up which acquired the most delightful name of 'snickets' and 'ginnels'. A 'snicket' ('snikkit' in local spelling) is a 'short cut, a narrow passage between houses and walls', whereas a 'ginnel' is 'a narrow passage between high walls or houses'. If you do have time, there are many of these passages to explore in our village. Most of them can be found in the area between Carr Top Lane, Handel Street and Church Street/Knowl Road.

19 → Take the pedestrian exit and turn right up cobbled path until it reaches a small road.

20 → Turn right and follow this road as it passes a tasteful conversion of the old Church School into flats.

H 21 → On joining Church Street turn left and follow the road past the church to the car park.