

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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A Nation of Walkers

Britain is a nation of walkers. Our landmass may be modest in size but is latticed with a generous 140,000 miles of public footpaths, bridleways and byways, and exploring them is one of our favourite pastimes.

It wasn't always so. Before the late 18th century most people walked only because they had to, or if they were on pilgrimage. Walking was the preserve of the horseless poor. With the rise of the Romantic movement in the late 1700's came the idea of walking for pleasure, prompting such poets as Wordsworth to some of their finest words after traipsing the countryside on foot. So began the great British tradition of walking and recording the event by writing about it. Sometimes these were arduous hikes in far-flung lands; others were journeys much closer to home. Both were well received by all walkers alike.

Glenda B

Famous Walking Quotes

- 1) If you are in a bad mood, go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk.
Hippocrates
- 2) After a day's walk, everything has twice its usual value.
George Macauley Trevelyan
- 3) An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.
Henry David Thoreau
- 4) As you walk down the fairway of life, you must smell the roses, for you only get to play one round.
Ben Hogan
- 5) Everywhere is within walking distance if you have the time.
Steven Wright
- 6) In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks.
John Muir
- 7) Some people walk in the rain; others just get wet.
Roger Miller
- 8) Walking is a technique of solitude, a way into reverie. The walker is not a sleepwalker but a daydreamer.
Deirdre Heddon
- 9) Walking with a friend in the dark is better than walking alone in the light.
Helen Keller
- 10) The best way to lengthen out our days is to walk steadily and with a purpose.
Charles Dickens
- 11) I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in.
John Muir
Barbara S

What's in a Name

I'm terrible at anagrams I'm not much better at math, but on the television programme Countdown the section on the origins of names and phrases I find fascinating.

How birds got their names is in a lot of cases lost in the mists of time. It is complicated by the fact that in England, more than a lot of other countries, there have been big changes in culture and hence language overtime – Celtic, English, Norse and Norman/French. Many bird names have their origins in old English, which gradually evolved into modern English. The Wheatear derives its name from a phrase meaning white a**e which refers to the birds prominent white rump, whilst Redstart means red tail and Yellowhammer comes from the word “Ammer” which is still used in the German language, (Saxony in Germany is where the Saxons or English originated from).



Yellow Hammer



Redstart

The origins of the name of the nation's favourite bird the Robin begins in the Middle Ages with the original old English word “ruddock” (meaning redbird) This gradually fell into disuse replaced by ‘redbreast’. Then, as with Jenny Wren and Tom Tit, the species gained the nickname “Robin Redbreast” - the name Robin being an evolution of the name Robert. Then, gradually, this was shortened to Robin.

Tony C

Jenny Wren

by W. H. Davies

Her sight is short, she comes quite near;
A foot to me's a mile to her;
And she is known as Jenny Wren,
The smallest bird in England. When
I heard that little bird at first,
Methought her frame would surely burst
With earnest song. Oft had I seen
Her running under leaves so green,
Or in the grass when fresh and wet,
As though her wings she would forget.
And, seeing this, I said to her —
" My pretty runner, you prefer
To be a thing to run unheard
Through leaves and grass, and not a bird! "
'Twas then she burst, to prove me wrong,
Into a sudden storm of song;
So very loud and earnest, I
Feared she would break her heart and die.
"Nay, nay," I laughed, "be you no thing
To run unheard, sweet scold, but sing!
O I could hear your voice near me,
Above the din in that oak tree,
When almost all the twigs on top
Had starlings chattering without stop."



Wren

Contribution by Pesto Cenorr

Pilgrims Cross

Parking on the small carpark on Lumb Carr Road on the southern side of Holcombe, Spring Vale Ramblers set off to climb up to Peel Tower also known as Holcombe Tower. The Tower was erected to commemorate Sir Robert Peel, the founder of the modern police force. Striding out across the moor along a well-defined path the route now crosses Harcles Hill and takes you to a large cube shaped monument, marking the site of the Pilgrims Cross. The four sides of the cube tell the story and history of the cross, its significance and destruction.

Here are what is carved on each of the four sides:

“On this site stood the ancient Pilgrims Cross. It was standing in A.D. 1176 and probably much earlier. Pilgrims to Whalley Abbey prayed and rested here.”

“In A.D. 1176 and in A.D. 1225 the Pilgrims Cross is named in charters of gifts of land in Holcombe Forest. In A.D. 1662 King Charles II gave this manor to General Monk, Duke of Abermarle through whom it has descended to the present lord of the manor.”

“Nothing is known of the removal of the ancient cross, but its massive socketed foundation remained here until August 1901”

“This memorial stone was placed here May 24th 1902 by the copyholders of the manor and others”.

The socket was destroyed by unknown vandals in 1901. By 1902 as the monument tells us, the present stone was put in place. Monuments on ridgeways like this would have been invaluable guideposts for medieval travellers, both as a means of knowing how far you have travelled and as a way to orientate yourself in bad weather. Navigating by landmarks would be crucial in upland and moorland environments, so crosses and large prehistoric burial mounds would all have been named. The original monument was also known as Whowell’s Cross and Chatterton’s Cross.



There’s an anomaly in the above inscription, which names Whalley Abbey. The Abbey was not founded until 1296 which is after the cross was in position. However, near to Whalley is its rival Sawley Abbey, which was in existence from 1149.



The above picture is taken from the book Notes on Holcombe, published in 1901 by a local antiquarian, the Reverend H. Dowsett. It shows what seems to be a fairly massive cross base. Interestingly, another local cross base, that from Holden Cross near Haslingden, is similar in appearance and served the same purpose as a wayside marker. It can still be visited today and is to be found leaning against the clock tower within Victoria Park Haslingden.

The Pilgrim Cross is directly on the footpath which is close to the Ministry of Defence firing range, so watch out for red flags flying, if venturing further North.

The route now turns and heads off in a southerly direction down and off the moor on a path running on the edge of the firing range. At the old farmstead of Taylor’s Farm turn right off this main path and continue down the valley and then climb onto the plateau of the Redisher Local Nature Reserve. This reserve is one of the best ancient woodland sites in the borough of Bury and is home to a number of important woodland bird communities. In late spring, the steep valley sides are carpeted with bluebells and lesser celandine lines the banks of Holcombe Brook as it passes through the middle of the valley. The route continues down the valley passing the demolished bleach works site now a new housing development to reach Holcombe Old Road. Turn left and follow this partly cobbled old lane back up the hill as far as the turn off down to the car park. This is a 5 mile walk.



Michael C

Tasty Cheese and Beer

The SVRC Tasty Cheese six-mile ramble using footpaths, tracks and a little road walking takes place on Saturday, 7th August. The start of the Trail is located at Inglewhite and nestles underneath Beacon Fell. This is the heart of Lancashire cheese country, and the walk passes close to Mrs Kirkhams, Butlers and Greenfield Dairies.

The Green Man Inn is the only surviving public house in Inglewhite and opens on Saturdays from 12noon and we will be welcome at the end of our walk! The pub was almost certainly around in the 1700s. Although the datestone on the current building confirms it was built in 1809 there was an earlier building on this site before that date.



The modern Green Man at Inglewhite

Roads from four directions meet at the village green. Traditionally, there were three annual Fairs held at Inglewhite; the most important was horned cattle on Monday and Tuesday of Rogation week. Sheep were sold on the 25th April and cattle and calves on 18th October. The ancient fair became known as 't' Inglewhite Bull Fair i'th North. Toll Bars were erected crossing the roads at certain points on the four roads approaching the village for the fairs. A curved-shaped stone, used for holding a toll bar is still there near to Manor House Farm and the Toll Cottage is on the opposite side of the road.

Open to the public for the purpose of selling ale and spirits were The Green Man, The Black Bull and the Queens Arms and the fifteen houses situated within the toll bars. The Green Man has had at least 17 landlords since 1804. Four of them have appeared in court for breaches of the Licencing Act in force at the time.



The early Green Man

The holding of the Fairs on Sundays was eventually stopped by the vicar of Goosnargh supposedly because he objected to bull baiting. The Reverend Robert Shuttleworth became known as the 'Inglewhite Reformer'.

The market cross dominates the village green. It is documented that the original Market Cross was dismantled by the 19th century Vicar of Goosnargh, the Reverend Wilkinson, a vehement protestant. It was re-erected in 1911 by public subscription.

In 1675 tolls were collected for the passage of vehicles and animals along the road through the village. The Green Man was used for conducting legal proceedings and included the coroner's court when unusual deaths were investigated.

The congregational chapel was erected in 1826, over the old chucking pit which was the site of a primitive method of giving judgement on alleged witches. It supposedly proved that if they sank, they were witches.



The Congregational Church

Barbara S

The Sense of Sound On the Coast

This is the seventh in my series of walks undertaken by Spring Vale Rambling Class on a typical outing where I will concentrate on what you hear and not just what you can see.

A ramble where you would see and hear this group of birds would take you along the coastline and could be any of a number in this area where at the end it would lead you onto Arnside Knott. This provides you with magnificent views over Morecambe Bay looking over the estuary across to Grange Over Sands with the Lake District mountains behind. As you descend towards the Promenade and begin to hear children's' squealing voices full of laughter as they splash and play on the edge of the water, you start to see movements of colour on the golden sands and then it all starts to make sense. Walking along the sands produces a loud crunching sound as the small pebbles rub together under our weight. The route is initially difficult but soon we are onto the hard sands and the going becomes easier. The tide is out, but the sound of crashing waves indicates that it is rushing in, and we must soon leave the area, back on to a firmer path off the shoreline. Let's just sit and listen and enjoy the warmth of the afternoon.

Great Black Backed Gull

The first bird you will identify will be the Great Black Backed Gull as he can be as big as a small Alsatian dog as they keep on growing and they can live to the ripe old age of thirty years. They have a menacing glare to scare off any challenger and some of them have a permanently blood-stained beak that could have come off any poor animal, bird or possibly from a peck from a person. Nothing is off the menu for this bird, and he has an ear splitting "*Kee-Orr Kee-Orr*" shriek which announces his arrival onto the scene. In the past sailors were always happy to listen out for his loud cry as it announced that they were approaching dry land following years away on the high seas after taking part in exciting and dangerous voyages.



Knot

The Knot is a dumpy, short-legged, stocky wading bird. In Winter it is grey above the water line and white below but in Summer it has a brick red belly and face with a pale rump. His continuous "*Peep, Peep, Peep*" is a very distinctive calling to all in the group but both the Knot and his friend the Oystercatcher are at risk as they use their long bills to probe the sands for food. If the mollusc beds become over fished by fishermen or birds they not have enough food to sustain them all. This bird has a special sensory organ in his bill tip which helps to detect his prey buried in the sand. This works in the same way that echolocation works for bats and gives him a wonderful advantage whilst feeding.



Oystercatcher

The next bird that you will pick out from the group no doubt will be the Oystercatcher. He is a sturdy pied bird of coast and also fields, but he really enjoys his favourite foods which are cockles, limpets and many other types of mollusks. This young chap was born a romantic who doesn't just rely upon his fancy orange beak, his fancy dancing steps and offerings of aphrodisiac food tit bits to lure the ladies onto his side but he uses his voice to his best advantage. His singing or shouting is at its loudest when he is attracting the girls. Distinctive with a high pitched, sharp, call of *peep, pip, hueep and weeer* definitely carries a long way in this environment. Although his choice of notes is not the prettiest of songs, the combination open to him gives him lots of freedom to give his own individuality.



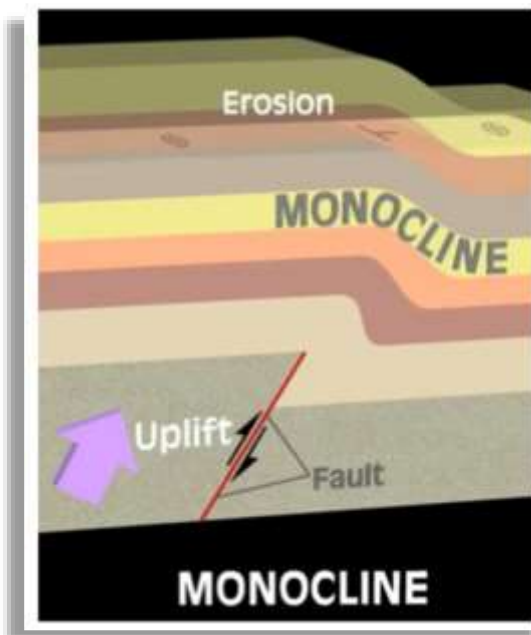
Although I could just sit and watch these birds for hours, I must remember that my favourite tea shop here closes quite early and I promised myself a well-earned afternoon tea with fresh scones which is always a treat on such a perfect day as this.

Maggie A

The Geology of Hutton Roof for the layperson

Recently, 8 intrepid SVRC members turned up for, according to the syllabus, an 8.5 mile, moderate walk. The book was wrong! After a long day we had walked 10 miles and deemed the walk as moderate to strenuous! However, we did see some impressive limestone formations including some rare and impressive examples known as *rinnerkarren*.

The history of Hutton Roof and the surrounds, start, as does most limestone areas, some 350 million years ago, which is the Carboniferous period. Fossils found within the rock show that it is formed from a warm shallow sea. Over hundreds of thousands of years these life forms accumulated on the seabed and compacted to form the limestones of today. It is estimated that the limestone at Hutton Roof is over 300m thick and had been folded into shape by movements in the earth's crust.



Perhaps the most impressive are **The Rakes**, which are a series of parallel limestone pavements dipping steeply. The reason for the steep inclination is that the Rakes are part of a monocline, a structural fold where beds go from a more horizontal orientation to a steepening before reverting to the previous pattern.

The Rakes were formed by glaciers moving across them from the north. Instead of smoothing over the hill profile, great wedges of rock were torn from the ice, down to a weakness due to the inclined bedding plane. The next bed of limestone was then left with a clean top surface, broken by a diamond shaped pattern. Rainwater over the ensuing years widened the joints to form the grykes visible today but also trickled over the inclined slabs. This trickling water slowly dissolved long parallel grooves.



The Rakes, photographed in 2007.

These spectacular stopping pavements are on a scale unmatched elsewhere in Britain. Unfortunately, due to our route and the proliferation of chest high bracken and trees in full foliage, we missed seeing The Rakes, but were able to see smaller versions of this unusual limestone formations on Hutton Roof.

We stopped for a short lunch number 1 on Uberash Breast, a limestone scar with a cairn and limestone slabs placed vertically. Unfortunately, the internet does not throw any light on how this area got its name, nor how or why the stones are vertical. However, there are vertical limestone slabs to be found on Moughton and Thieves Moss over near Clapham. Should anyone be able to find out more about Uberash I would be interested.



Jane C