

Ramblers Gems

A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Current Restrictions / Rambling On
- 2 Orkneyinga Saga
- 3 The Lady Anne Way
- 4 A Walk from Moss Fold
- 5 The Cotton Legacy

Current Restrictions

Government restrictions are starting to ease, but it's clear that COVID-19 has not gone away. We have been following guidelines issued by the Ramblers, the national voice for walkers. It is essential that we resume our activities in a phased way which is both safe and responsible.

In England from Wednesday 1 July, small group walks can resume. The group size must be limited to a maximum of 6 people in total. This means the walk leader, plus 5 walkers. Social distancing must still be observed as well as the use of hand sanitisers.

This is the official advice and is published here for information only. Just how we are going to achieve this within our walking club is still to be worked out. This will be discussed within our committee and will be in agreement with our walks leaders.

For the time being we **will not** be starting up our walks programme.

There are significant differences to the rules depending on whether you live in England, Scotland or Wales.

Rambling On

We are currently in our 125th year of walking around our outstanding and diverse countryside. Over this long period, the structure of how the class operates has changed very little, but we do continue to evolve and adapt to the situations of the time as they arise.

In the early days rambles were always on a Saturday and as most people worked on a Saturday morning the rambles were in the afternoon, catching the 1.39 pm train from Spring Vale station. This tie in with the local transport system was used for many years, progressing from the train to tram and finally local buses to reach the destination. As these modes of transport became more and more restrictive the car took over. Now a ramble organised to use the train to reach the walk destination is considered a novel and exciting day out. It was only in 2011 that all Saturday walks were organised to commence at 11.00 am.

Initially thirteen walks within the year were organised meeting fortnightly between March and October. The numbers today are 18 Saturday walks, 9 evening walks, a short AGM walk, and 8 winter walks. The Good Friday walk was first introduced back in 1929 when the trip out was to Ingleton on the 29th March. This is a tradition that we still maintain today with a walk on both the Friday and Easter Saturday. For many of our later years this was organised as one of our motor coach trips, the other being in May and was called the "ride out"

During the summer wake weeks holiday period which for Darwen was the early July, three full day walks would be arranged on the Saturday, Tuesday and the Thursday.

To be continued

The Orkneyinga Saga

I love a good book especially one with a bit of mystery and drama.

It is 2018 and I am planning my walking holiday to Orkney. I needed a few books to read before, during and following my holiday. After a Google search it appeared that the Orkneyinga Saga might be a good place to start. Written circa 1200 this saga is full of myth, legend and history. A Penguin Classic of 1978 translated from the original language. I soon discovered that this 'History of the Earls of Orkney' is not a place to start...it consists of 112 Chronicles.



Old Man of Hoy



Cairn entrance

Unable to get to grips with the Saga further research led me to Clare Carson and her Orkney Twilight and The Dark Isle. It is a trilogy, but the middle book is not based in Orkney. Providing me with lots of Norse mythology and local folklore these books had me travelling backwards and forwards across the remote island of Hoy and locations such as the Water of Hoy Loch and nearby the Betty Corrigan Memorial, the Dwarfie Stone, Trowie Glen, beautiful Rackwick Bay and the walk to the famous rock stack, the Old Man of Hoy (137m) standing on a lava platform. A famous Viking drama took place in 995 BC when Earl Sigmund the Stout was forcibly converted to Christianity.

It was on the journey back to the ferry terminal that the Hen Harrier nearly flew into the minibus window and later we could see the Sea Eagles nest which was being monitored by the Whilst doing the Westness Walk on Rousay I told Mick, our walk leader, of my difficulties with the Saga and he suggested I read George Mackay Brown (GMB). The Westness Walk

takes in Midhowe Broch, Midhowe Cairn, a Norse farmstead, and a Pictish and Viking cemetery. It isn't a long walk but it is a coastal walk, you see the seals and it is all free. I am still convinced that I spent more time underground than walking on this day as we visited a selection of Neolithic chambered cairns crawling through narrow entrances and descending down precarious steps and ledges. We included Blackhammer, Taversoe Tuick upper and lower floors, The Knowle of Yarso as well as Midhowe.

Later that week we had an early morning start to Skara Brae because we wanted to avoid the majority of tourists especially those from the gigantic cruise liners berthed in Kirkwall. Nearby Skara Brae is Skail House which houses a gift and book shop. I left with Magnus, Beside the Ocean of Time and Vinland by GMB intending to start reading them immediately beginning with Magnus.

None read until Covid-19 shutdown! I started Magnus again and then read the two other books. I have relived my 2018 holiday during the eight weeks of my furlough through these three books. I can now dip in and out of the Saga and find matching chronicles to the history and locations mentioned in GMB's three books. Any gaps are filled in by the official guides to the Brough of Birsay, the Earl's Palace and St Magnus, Kirkwall (Christchurch) plus my walking memories and the many photographs I have.

Everyone talks about Stonehenge in June and the summer Solstice. The Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness that sing in the wind are more impressive. You can visit Maeshowe Cairn and read the Norse runic inscriptions from the 12th century. I have enjoyed a 'virtual' holiday on Orkney during my 2020 garden and bedtime reading.

Barbara S



A small part of Ring of Brodgar on a wet and stormy day

The Lady Anne's Way

It was during our first long distance walk 'The Coast to Coast' that we – Michael and I discussed the idea of attempting two long distance walks each year and so we planned two for 2007. The first was to be the 'Lady Anne's Way' a walk of 100 miles starting in Skipton and finishing in Penrith.

The walk consists of six stages comprising -

1. Skipton to Grassington 15 miles
2. Grassington to Buckden 12.5 miles
3. Buckden to Hawes 18.5 miles
4. Hawes to Kirkby Stephen 17.5 miles
5. Kirkby Stephen to Appleby 17 miles
6. Appleby to Penrith 19 miles

The walk from Skipton to Brougham Castle travels through the Yorkshire Dales, Wharfedale, Wensleydale, Mallerstang Dle and the Vale of Eden.

This piece is more about the Lady herself rather than the walk, but anyone wanting more information about the walk then I can supply this.

I knew very little about Lady Anne until a bit of research revealed that Lady Anne Clifford was born in 1590 in Skipton Castle and was the only surviving child of George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland and his wife Margaret Russell. The Clifford family owned vast estates extending from Skipton to Brougham in Westmorland and contained a number of castles. On her father's death in 1605 Lady Anne failed to inherit the estate which passed to her uncle and his male heirs, this injustice was felt deeply by Lady Anne was to be a bone of contention for years after.



Skipton Castle

She was married twice, firstly to Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset which is why she spent her married life in the south of England. Her second husband was to be Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, the marriage was not a happy one and after four and a half years they lived apart. The Earl of Pembroke died in 1650 and so Lady Anne returned to the home of her birth as by this time she had come into her right full inheritance.



Pendragon Castle in Mallerstange Dale

Much of the estate, and in particular the castles had fallen into disrepair so she set about repairing and restoring not only the castles but churches and estate houses on route, she was sixty years old when she started the project which continued for the rest of life. Lady Anne was very strict towards her tenants but very fair in any disputes and could be very generous to those who worked for her. She spent a lot of time in Appleby but Brougham remained her favourite and it was there she died.

Alan S



Brougham Castle nr Penrith

A Walk from Moss Fold

Walking Distance 4 miles

An alternative start point is from Sunnyhurst Wood Darwen. Walk up the steps to the right hand side of the Kiosk to join the top path through the woods. (Point A)

The walk starts off the A666 at Moss Bridge Post Office at the northern end of Darwen, just before the road leading to motorway slip road. Walk up Moss Fold Road with the factory on your left. This route continues as a farm track and turns right to go in front of the farm buildings. The Darwen Vale School is on the right. Keeping along this track, which turns right and left through an avenue of trees, rising gently you will reach Greenlands Farmhouse. Look for the stile in the fence on the left and after crossing walk directly forward, keeping to the left of the field to find a stile in the hedge at the far end.

Once over the stile the path drops down to cross a wide bridge and then rises to follow a fence on the left that runs behind the houses. Now descend to cross a further stile and then follow the clear obvious route adjacent to the derelict football field. Keep to the left of this field to find a stile in the fence and then a rather stiff climb to the left of a few scattered trees. Once over the stile you are on a farm lane, almost opposite to the Darwen Golf Clubhouse. From this point turn left to go a few yards downhill before turning onto the club car park where you will find a finger post indicating the way.



The path from here is not very well defined, but if you should aim for the small group of cottages, following the white direction posts marking the across the golf course. The path becomes clearer as you descend to the cottages at which point turn right on the farm lane to pass by the cottages. Look for the little step stile besides a gate and small copse and follow this to re-enter the golf course.

The path now runs diagonally uphill and is usually easily discernible. When it reaches the track turn left and follow it to the edge of the golf course, where you meet a much wider path running between two fences, with a horse riding paddock and some buildings on the left. Follow the path till it reaches the farm lane, you now turn left, going down through Bury's Tenement farmyard and on down into Sunnyhurst Wood.



Darwen Golf Club House

Once within the Woods keep left and follow on the top path as it winds back and forth. Eventually, you come to a section of the wood that is dominated by conifers on both sides of the path. At the steps turn left (Point A) above the Kiosk and Information Centre. Now follow the ginnel onto the lane that will lead you onto the golf club access road.

At the road turn right down Dutton Avenue and at the school playing field turn left onto Birch Hall Avenue. Follow the avenue around and down to reach the A666, where after turning left and walking for about a quarter of a mile you will return to the starting point.

Tony C

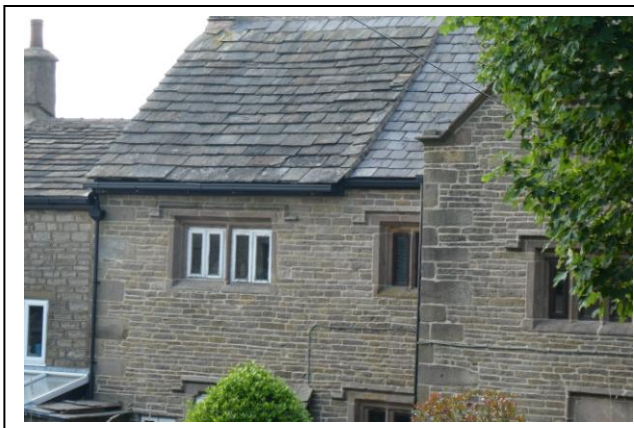
The view across the golf course to Darwen Tower



The Cotton Legacy

The basic rural farming economy existed in the Tockholes area throughout the 1600's and this remained right up until the start of the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions in the early 1700's. The local farm labourers were needed less and less as mechanisation took hold across the whole of the country. These workers turned their hand to other means to earn a meagre living. They took up stone quarrying, coal digging and later silk and cotton weaving to help support their families, while living in small holdings attached to the bigger farms. Later they built stone cottages directly alongside these farms and along the network of country lanes that crisscrossed the area. This haphazard approach to building resulted in the strung out nature of the Tockholes landscape.

The cottagers supplemented their meagre income more and more by turning to spinning and weaving both cotton and silk, but the introduction of inventions such as the Spinning Jenny, by local man James Hargreaves from Stanhill, and the Spinning Mule by Bolton man Samuel Crompton in the late 1700's enabled factory spun yarns to be mass produced. This increased capacity put an additional strain on the small scale hand loom weavers and so to increase production, purpose built terraced cottages were constructed incorporating several looms as well as the weavers accommodation. These properties have the typical row of stone mullion windows at first floor level to provide the maximum amount of light allowing weaving to take place.



Mullion Windows at Tockholes

Factory weaving gradually replaced these small local industries, but not before rioting and unrest by the workers, was wide spread throughout the area. The population moved into the growing mill towns of Darwen and Blackburn. To try and halt the migration of skilled workers two mills were built in Tockholes.

Victoria Mill (1859-1869) and Hollingshead Mill (1859-1903) The Victoria Mill was situated on Tockholes Road near to Fine Peters, the only remains are the cottages at Pleasant View once thought to be used as the mill offices. Hollingshead Mill was situated adjacent to the Royal Hotel on the site that is now the car park. The only evidence is the remains of the mill pond behind the cafe.



Fine Peters Tockholes

As you walk around the country lanes and footpaths of Tockholes, look out for the evidence of this now long gone industry that made Lancashire the Cotton Capitol of the world. The small terraced cottages with their long rows of mullion windows are plentiful throughout this whole area. The terraced houses for the mill workers still remain at Hollingshead Terrace adjacent to Vaughn's Cafe. The warehouses that collected the finished goods for distribution are evident in such names as Silk Hall, Duck Hall and Cotton Hall. The yeoman farmsteads are still standing, as in the house at Ryal Fold and Higher Hill, both with their associated cottages and barns. Fine Peters is a grade II listed building with its date stone of 1757 PME (for Peter and Elizabeth Marsden the original owners). The owners of Victoria Mill, the Redmaynes, lived and prospered here during the early 1800's. Dean Lane running by the side of Fine Peters is an ancient pack horse route from Preston to Yorkshire and was used to bring in raw materials and distribute the finished goods

So take time to explore the area around Tockholes for you will be amazed at what you will discover. Join us on one of our walks to learn more information regarding the hidden gems of local history, fascinating and diverse architecture and the sheer joy that is Tockholes and the cotton legacy.

Michael C