



### **The Stanza Stones Walk: Devised by Mick Melvin.**

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**A fifty mile upland walk from Marsden to Ilkley visiting the six Stanza Stones carved with poems written by Simon Armitage.**

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### **Walk 2. Mytholmroyd to Haworth: = 17.38Km/10.8mi**

#### **Map: OL21 South Pennines**

Leave Ted Hughes' birthplace and return to the bridge across the Rochdale Canal. Immediately after crossing the canal bridge descend a flight of stone steps on your right and walk along the towpath to the next bridge. The canal here is the subject of Ted Hughes' poem (The Canal's Drowning Black) Cross this bridge and walk towards the house with the large arched window facing you, turn left along a short section of lane and take the track at the left side of the red brick building. Take the track which branches off to the right uphill and climb steeply to the top where a metal gate leads into a field. At the top of the field enter the farmyard via a step stile and proceed up the lane in front of you, soon passing between two houses turn left when you reach the metalled lane and walk up to where the lane takes a sharp



turn right. Look to the right for a step stile up on the top of the wall. Climb the stile and follow the way marked path up the steep hill beyond to emerge onto a road where you turn right and walk for approx. 100 yards before turning left at a sign reading Wicken Hill. Follow the farm lane up 40 yards until you see a walker's gate on your left before the house. Take this gate and the path which runs behind the house, over two ladder stiles then turning right to cross a third step stile. Head in a north easterly direction to reach a wall corner, keep the wall on your left and walk into the next corner and cross a ladder stile into a field. Now in front you can see a low building set in trees, aim for the building and cross another ladder stile. Once over this stile, aim to the left of the building

heading for a gate in the top wall of the field. Once past this stile turn right onto the Calderdale Way. Very soon the path divides, take the left fork, leaving the Calderdale Way and shortly you will see a standing stone looming up in front. The stone (Churn Milk Joan) is the subject of Ted Hughes' poem of the same name. There is a seat (Cranley's Seat) near to the stone on which you may take a short rest if needed. You may wish to exchange a coin of your own for one of the coins left in the top of the stone as is the tradition. Many paths

radiate out from Churn Milk Joan; the one you are wanting departs in a north Easterly direction passing close to some old shooting butts. Wistful photographs by Fay Godwin of the butts and Churn Milk Joan are featured in “Remains of Elmet” a wonderful book of poems by Ted Hughes. Keep on this path next to the shooting butts and in ten minutes you arrive at a high wall corner. Don’t take the path which descends beside the wall, instead look for a path (not on the map) which goes left heading north and shortly joins a more prominent path coming in from your right heading north West.

### **Mytholmroyd to Haworth: Leg 2**

Stay on this path which can be wet after rain but provides excellent view left into Luddenden Dean, cross the Back Clough stream at Dimmin Dale and continue until you reach a catch-water drain crossing your path. Turn left at the drain followed very soon by a right turn and keep to the footpath as far as another standing stone. You are now standing on High Brown Knoll with the Trig Point only yards away to the left. You will be returning to this stone but I’m sure that you will want to visit the trig point first. The summit of High Brown Knoll holds one of the Trigs visited on Andrew Bibby’s Six Trigs challenge walk, a walk which I can thoroughly recommend. Return to the standing stone and instead of turning right, back to where you came from, keep straight ahead on a narrow path descending through the heather leading back to the catch-water drain where a little stone bridge crosses. Cross the drain and turn left to walk along the eastern side. Keep to the catch-water drain, first going north and then north easterly until you reach the embankment at Warley Moor Reservoir. Just before the drain empties into the reservoir, turn left to cross it and take the path going to the right skirting the edge of the water. After crossing two wooden bridges on this sometimes muddy path you arrive on a grassy track heading east along the northern bank of the reservoir. The track turns north east passes through two walls and one gate. At the second cross wall, turn left down the banking and pass through a large gap in the wall to pick up a feint path which takes you across two fields to a step stile onto the lane. Once on the lane turn right and in 30 yards take the gate on the left onto the moor. This gently climbing track winds uphill and into an area of old stone delphs Nab Hill. Three hundred yards after the stile the track narrows and passes between two walls.



### **Mytholmroyd to Haworth: Leg 3**

As soon as you emerge from between the walls take the track going left (north east) slightly uphill and in front you will see a large cairn fashioned into a rough shelter. Walk forward to the escarpment edge and there, ten foot below you, resting among rocks on this otherwise heathery slope lays the Mist Stone. From this vantage point you have breathtaking views over



Oxenhope to Haworth and up the Aire valley. Approx. 30 yards away to the east you can see another stone shelter. This structure serves two purposes in that it is primarily a shelter from the elements and it is also, when seen from the sky, a stone sculpture in the shape of a question mark. The shelter provides a good spot to eat lunch with its stunning views down the valley. Return to the track which has now become a path through the peat hags and remain faithful to it until you

reach a left turn after crossing Little Clough. Turn left here and soon you reach wide Hambleton Lane crossing from right to left, turn left and follow the lane down to the Bronte Way. Our way on now follows the Bronte Way, initially to Oxenhope crossing the famous Keighley and Worth Valley Railway Line with its connection to the film adaptation of Edith Nesbit's moving book *The Railway Children*. The route takes in Bents House, known in the film as *Three Chimneys* the iconic family home of the Waterbury family. The Bronte way carries onward to Haworth, home to the three illustrious Bronte sisters and now the site of the Bronte Parsonage Museum.