



The Stanza Stones Walk: Devised by Mick Melvin.

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

Walk 1: Marsden to Mytholmroyd Starts: SE047115 = 30.25Km/18.08mi

Leg 1 Map: OL21 South Pennines

Turn left into Old Mount Road, after 50 Yards turn right at the footpath sign near to Throstle Nest cottage. After 130 yards follow the rough path left before the gate and in a short distance cross a step stile into a field. Walk left for ten yards and look for a footpath winding up the hill to the right running alongside a depression (not the farm track). Enter the farmyard and pass close to the farm building on the right hand side and emerge through a gate onto the open moorland. Once past the farm follow the left hand field wall alongside a sunken track and after passing through a gate enter an area of rough pasture. Walk forward for approx 70 yards until you cross the farm track. Set your compass to 230°M and follow the top of a low ridge which by-passes the damp ground on your right. Keep on this bearing for approx 175 yards following a feint path which gradually swings right crosses a stream and begins to climb the hill, running parallel with a wall, which is then followed in a westerly direction to the next “right angled” corner. Leave the wall and follow the feint path in a north Westerly direction toward the air shaft which can be seen in the distance. Here you will pick up a prominent path coming from right to left. It is worthwhile walking over to the memorial cross to sample the views down the Colne Valley.

Return to the air shaft and take the wide path going south west. When the edge of the escarpment is reached at a National Trust Land boundary marker, the path turns due south with the land falling away to your right. Follow the escarpment edge for 300 yards until you arrive at some large rocks on the right and an incline dropping down the hillside. Descend this incline until you are level with the foot of the crag and pick up a path on the left which climbs steadily up the hill beneath the crags. Upon entering the quarry make your way around the remains of the old winch house at the top of a steep incline. If you look to your right after crossing the incline you will see the Poetry Seat sited on the edge of the hill and commanding a fine view over the Colne Valley below. Beyond the Poetry Seat the Snow stone is facing you on the right.



From the Snow stone, return to the top of the incline and begin to descend. Approx a third of

the way down, look for a narrow path crossing from left to right and descending to the left hand side of a ventilation shaft and passing between two spoil heaps. Here you meet the main path coming in from the left. Follow this path which runs close to and parallel with the A62 trunk Road. Once past Owlery and immediately after passing Moorlands Farm watch out for a wooden gate in the wall to your left and a path leading down to the road. Cross the road and using the pavement, walk towards Marsden passing Shepherds Boy Buildings for 220 yards, to where a pair of steel guard rails leads into a walled lane on the left.

Marsden to Mytholmroyd: Leg 2

Turn left into the lane and walk down to the bottom where you arrive at Redbrook Clough, turn right and after crossing the stream follow it down to a beautiful little pack horse bridge “Close Gate Bridge” also known as Eastergate Bridge, where the confluence of two Pennine



streams forms the River Colne. The bridge is on the route of the Huddersfield to Rochdale packhorse trail. From the bridge, climb up Willykay Clough and then keep to the Station to Station Walk, changing to the Pennine Way at Haigh Gutter where the two paths come together at the A640. Follow the Pennine Way over the Pennine watershed and Blackstone Edge to reach the White House Pub on the A58 Halifax Road. From the White House walk towards Halifax for approx 250 yards and turn left through a gate once again following the

Pennine way. Walk along the Pennine Way for about a mile until you are approaching a quarry across the catch water drain to your right. As you approach the quarry, watch for a small stone arched bridge spanning the catch water drain on your right about 75 yards before the crags. The path leading from the bridge affords a close up view of the face carrying the Rain stone carving. The poem can also be seen from the main path if you continue along the gravelled track. Alternative route: If you enjoy a bit of adventure, return to the stone arched bridge and you will see a very faint path heading up the hill to the left in the direction of some flat topped rocks. Set your compass to 067°M and strike out over the moor which is not too boggy or rough. Ahead you are aiming directly at an electricity Pylon and just before you reach it, you should arrive at a footpath crossing from right to left. Turn left onto the path and in a very short time you will reach the embankment at Light Holme reservoir and the permissive path onwards.

After visiting the Rain Stone, walk in a north westerly direction to skirt the shallow depression on your right and aim for the left hand side of the electricity pylon in front of you. Take the gravel track which passes the pylon on the left hand side and head in the direction of White Holme Reservoir. Remain faithful to the permissive path which skirts White Holme Reservoir and follow the path



alongside White Holme Drain until it begins to turn in a Westerly direction just before reaching the Cloven Stone. Follow the northern edge of the path round the curve and watch out for a very feint path going in the direction of “Two Lads” cairns, north East Bearing 041°M.

Marsden to Mytholmroyd Leg 3

Cross this boggy ground and upon reaching the cairns change the Bearing to 117°M and aim for the shooting box about half a mile away to the south East. From this newly restored shooting box follow the feint path in a north Easterly direction to Cove Hill to reach a step stile and a gate. Cross the stile and walk towards the farm building ahead but don't go through the gate into the yard. Instead, as you reach a wall corner on your right look to the right for a narrow path which descends the steep hillside on some old stone steps arriving at the stream in Turvin Clough. This is a lovely little stop and a nice place for a break.

Follow the stream down Turvin Clough taking the uphill path left at the first stile. Soon the path develops into a wider track which can be muddy after rain. The path now is high above the stream until you emerge on a narrow metalled lane. Keep to the lane turning right to pass the Hinchcliffe Arms pub and you arrive at the church in Cragg Vale, St John the Baptist in the Wilderness. Turn left here where it states private road “Public footpath” and follow the Elphin Brook on occasion using permissive paths, down the valley toward Mytholmroyd. After walking beside the river through two fields the path reaches a narrow lane on a bridge. Turn right and then keep straight ahead down this narrow tarmac lane (Castle Gate) running parallel alongside the B6138. Watch out for an indistinct turning left into a house garden, which is in fact part of the old paper mill. The path descends through the garden and crosses the stream via Paper Mill Bridge to follow the left hand side through Paper Mill Wood high above the stream once more. Before beginning your climb uphill into Paper Mill Woods take time to take a look over both sides of Paper Mill Bridge to see the old abandoned buildings of the paper mill and the wooden water wheel below you in the river. The path now is high above the stream, which at this point is called Cragg Brook and there is a steep drop into the valley on the right. At a fork in the path take the right hand branch which drops down once more to stream level and enters a paddock.



Marsden to Mytholmroyd Leg 4



Emerge from the paddock onto a lane which drops down to cross a bridge (Spa Bridge) The Bridge is named after a small spring (Cragg Spa) which is sited just before the bridge on the right. In the nineteenth century the Spa was a minor visitor attraction as the water was considered to have health giving properties. Local histories describe the spa as being ‘dressed’ each May. The area was restored in 2010 by Calderdale Countryside volunteers and there are now steps down to the

sulphur spring and a seat to rest on. At the next bridge 'Clough Foot' turn left before the bridge and look for a gate on the right leading into a small pasture. Once again our way forward continues on concessionary paths before reaching a metalled farm lane beside a caravan park. Follow the lane to the right to arrive at the main B6138 at Dauber Bridge. Cross Cragg Road at Dauber Bridge and walk about 70 yards uphill, locate a set of steep stone steps climbing the hillside on the left hand side of the road. At the top of these steps as you emerge into a field, the path turns left and goes along the top of the wood on the eastern side of the valley down into Mytholmroyd the birthplace of the poet Ted Hughes.