

# Historic Waterways

Length: 6 miles

Time: 3±4 hours

Your walk will start gently on the tow path of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. We then guide you along rural footpaths across farmland so be prepared for stiles and gates and some uphill sections. On your descent back to Foulridge you can enjoy fine views over the surrounding areas which were largely shaped by the introduction of water transport. The walk finishes near Café Cargo (Tel. 01282 865069).



**1** Start from alongside the **Leeds and Liverpool Canal** at the **Foulridge Canal Wharf**. Take the towpath heading away from the entrance to **Foulridge Tunnel**. Continue past the **Lime Kiln** for approximately 1 mile to Mill Hill Bridge which is the third bridge you reach. Go over the bridge, cross the stile and head for the mill. When the tarmac road bends to the left bear right down to the stream.

**2** Cross the stream and follow the footpath up the side of the field. Go through a gate and cross over the next narrow field. Go through the squeeze stile and continue in the same direction, passing farm buildings to your right. Continue through a gate and over a stile until you reach a field gate. Do not go through the field gate but turn left keeping a drystone wall to your right. Continue up to the road.

**3** Turn right onto the road. Turn left after the big white house heading up a track. At the top of the track cross the stile and turn slightly right heading towards the gateway on the skyline. Go through the gate and continue onto a moorland track to a gate. Go through the gate and turn left onto another track.

**4** Follow the track for 1.4km to its junction with **Gisburn Old Road** and turn left. Take the footpath on the right shortly after the first building that you pass (Peel House). When you reach a stile, turn left. Continue with a wall on your left for 300 metres to a stone stile just before a small copse. **Blacko Tower** is up to your right. Climb the stile and follow the fence line to the corner of the field. Go over the stile keeping the boundary wall to your right. Head to the right hand corner of the field and go through the gate.

**5** Follow the line of the fence on your right and then the boundary wall uphill. Keep the wall on your right until a stone squeeze stile on your right near to **Malkin Tower**. Turn left diagonally across the field and follow the opposite wall boundary down to the stone stile. Cross the field diagonally to the left side of Hollin Hall and continue to the road. Cross the road and climb the opposite stile. Cross a further stile and head down the field with the hedge on your left.

**6** After 100 metres take the stile on your left, go down the steps, cross the stream, then up the steps to the road. Cross the road passing in front of the house to a field. Continue with the wall to your right, go through a gateway then straight across the next field to a stile. Climb the stile and bear right across the field to surmount another stile.

**7** Go past a house then turn left. Go through a stile into a tree lined path. When the path opens out into a yard, go onto the driveway and follow this until the road. Look out for **Ball House** on your left. Cross the road into the sailing club car park and bear left up past the club house. Follow the path around the **Foulridge Lower Reservoir**. Where the path narrows, climb the stile on your left. Go up the hill.

**8** After the modern house on your right turn right into the green lane continuing into a yard area. At the end of the yard turn right and then immediately left taking the track down to the road and turn right. Turn left at the junction and follow the road down to the canal wharf.



The Leeds & Liverpool Canal

## The Leeds and Liverpool Canal

In 1770 work began on the canal, but it wasn't until 1790 that work started on the Foulridge stretch. It is the longest canal in England and took over forty years to build, but its arrival ensured the growth of the cotton industry, which revolutionised the towns and villages of East Lancashire.

## Foulridge Canal Wharf

Foulridge Wharf and Warehouse were built in 1815 and were used by leggers waiting to provide their services to boatmen who would shout 'Legger Ahoy'. The canal is now used solely for recreational purposes. In the heyday of canal transport, the Wharf flourished and boats unloading their cargoes of raw cotton from America via Liverpool were a common sight. However, from its earliest days, the canal has always been used as a source of leisure. The canal company shareholders were regularly entertained aboard the steam launch The Waterwitch. Foulridge Leisure Cruises continues this long tradition from Foulridge Wharf and guided trips can be enjoyed on board the Marton Emperor. For further information telephone **01282 844033**.

## Foulridge Tunnel

Also known as 'The Mile Tunnel', Foulridge Tunnel took five years to complete and was the single most expensive item on the entire canal building project. It remains one of the key engineering achievements of the Georgian Age. It was built by the 'cut and cover' method after the navvies encountered quicksands, and is 1,640 yards long, with no tow path. Constructing the tunnel was a dangerous occupation and many 'navvies' perished in their task. Some were unceremoniously buried beneath the canal banks where they had died.

With no towpath, horse-drawn barges had to be 'legged' through. Leggers lay on planks fixed to the boat and 'walked' along the tunnel walls pulling the barge with them. Leggers became so proficient that they could get a loaded boat over the distance in an hour. Legging ceased in the 1880s after the death of a legger by suffocation and the introduction of the steam tug.

In 1912, Buttercup the cow fell into the canal and swam through the tunnel. Rescued at Foulridge, she was revived with alcohol from the Hole in the Wall Pub, which was demolished in 2010.

## Lime Kiln

This kiln is likely to have been constructed at the same time as the canal and was used to burn limestone. This material was burned with coal to produce lime, which was in constant use for agricultural purposes, for building and industry. It was transported down the canal to be used in Foulridge and the adjoining villages.

## Gisburn Old Road

This was the main packhorse route to Gisburn until it was superseded by the new road, constructed by a Turnpike Trust.

## Blacko Tower

Blacko Tower was built in 1890 by a local grocer and landowner, Jonathan Stansfield, to enable him to see into the Ribble Valley from the top. Unfortunately he could not, and he shrugged off his disappointment by saying, "I've never drunk nor smoked in my life, so I am making this my hobby".

## Malkin Tower

Although the exact location for Malkin Tower is unknown, it is believed that the area near Blacko Tower may be one possible location. It was home to Old Demdike, one of the Pendle Witches in the 17th century. The building is believed to have been less grand than its name suggests. It is likely that the building was a dilapidated farmhouse. Malkin Tower is famous as the place where the Pendle Witches are supposed to have met on Good Friday in 1612 to plot the rescue of the Pendle women held captive in Lancaster Castle.

## Ball House

This was the home of John Moore, a celebrated Quaker preacher in the 17th century. The porch at Ball House bears the inscription 'IM 1627 AM', the initials of the builder, John Moore and his wife Ann. Part of the building was standing much earlier, a 'Bawlhous' on the same site being recorded on a map of 1561. In 1968 the house, together with Noyna Bottom Farm, featured in a production of Anne Brontë's 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall'. The oriel window

built into the gable end came from the porchway of Wycoller Hall, the Ferndean Manor of Charlotte Brontë's 'Jane Eyre'.

## Foulridge Lower Reservoir

Also known as Lake Burwain, it was constructed in 1793 to supply water to the newly constructed Leeds & Liverpool Canal. It is one of four reservoirs which feed the six mile summit length of canal.

Today the reservoir is also used as a recreational facility. Burwain Sailing Club was reformed in 1952 and currently runs a full programme of dinghy racing. The club runs a learn to sail course each May for new sailors.

The commonly used name of Lake Burwain may have an interesting story to tell as 'Burwains' means burial ground or cairn. There may be an ancient burial mound yet to be discovered showing evidence of ancient occupation.



*Blacko Tower*

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This circular walk follows public rights of way across farmland and other privately owned land. Please respect people who live and work in the countryside. Be prepared for muddy stretches, uneven path surfaces and weather conditions which change suddenly.

- **Take care to keep to the path**
- **Keep dogs on a lead**
- **Clean up after your dog**
- **Wear waterproof boots**
- **Take waterproof clothing**