

WALK 3

Two Eastern Terraces: to the *Lion* and back

An enjoyable ramble at a lower level. You start uphill, then walk a largely flat section with splendid views across Whitworth. The *Red Lion* marks the halfway point, after which you rise again to a higher terrace and finish with a longer descent.

START Riverside Car Park

TIME If you time this one right and the *Red*

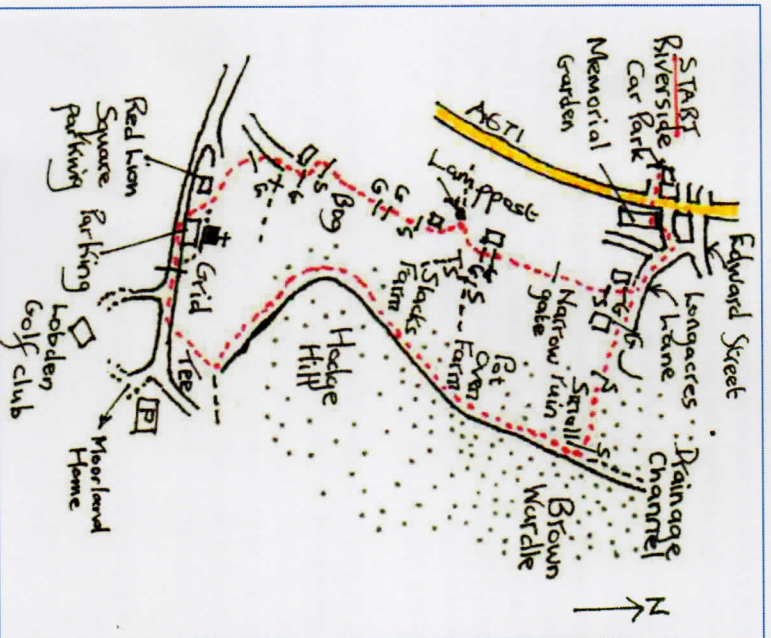
Lion is open (hours on internet), who knows! However, a brisk walk would be shy of an hour and a half.

DISTANCE Not quite 3 miles.

FOOTWEAR Sensible. There is one short section on flagstones, and another on setts: both require care if damp. One grassy bit can be *exceedingly* muddy, so we've included a (tolerable) detour if required.

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Cross the main road and go up through the Memorial Gardens. It's worth taking a look at Whitworth's war memorial. It is extensive. Exit the gardens at the top left, past the Scout hut and up Longacres Lane. At the top of the steps turn right, up Longacres Drive, then left, almost immediately, up the continuation of Longacres Lane (though there's no road sign to tell you that). At the sign for the stud farm turn right, over the fence-stile. At the next stile keep going in the same direction, either on the flat or, for an easier path underfoot, over the hump. You're heading for a very narrow gate – a veritable fatman's agony – at the right corner of this very narrow field. Once through, keep going the same way, with the wall on your right, until you reach Mid-Longacres Farm. Pass through the little metal gate, then left and down, through a metal kissing



gate. Walk down about 70 metres, then fork left at the lamp post. Ahead are white farm buildings, and to their left is a narrow, rather overgrown, path between a flag wall and a wrought-iron fence.

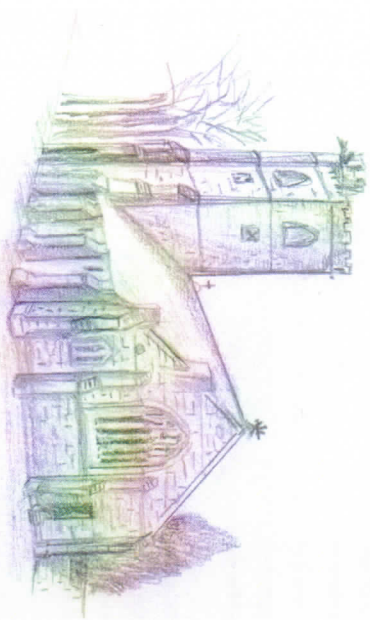
Follow this path for two hundred metres or so, through a flagstone stile and a double plywood gate to emerge into a meadow with a fence rising away to your left: if it's very muddy this fence will provide your detour (see below*), but otherwise simply keep following the wall that's on your right. However, it's wise to step a few metres to the left – right next to the wall is always squelchy. Approaching the next farm buildings there's a field-gate: it's no use to you (unless you need a quick retreat to Market Street, or *The Sportsman*) but the area in front of it is very often very boggy, so BEWARE. There are stepping stones, but they may not be adequate. If you deviate to the left you can narrow the quagmire you've to get across, but you'll not eliminate it entirely. If discretion outweighs valour, retreat and use the detour.

*The detour. Loosely follow the fence up to the left. Use the fence, then wall, to semicircle around and down, somewhat unevenly, crossing the narrow boggy stream easily but carefully, to a point on the original field path just beyond the quagmire.

Sometimes, at dawn or dusk, the consolation for the swamp is the chance to see rabbits, on the slope to the left and over the farm wall near the narrow stile that comes next. After that, bear left at the houses ahead, through a wooden gate, and start down the concrete track. Halfway down on the left a wooden gate takes you onto another overgrown flagstone path known as Cripples' Walk, so named because it was used by those recuperating from the ministrations of Whitworth's famous doctors, the Taylors. Their home was in *The Square*, and here they had their practice from the 1750s to the 1870s. They were originally blacksmiths with a gift for healing animal fractures, but they started to treat human patients and became widely known as bone-setters. Later generations were qualified as

doctors, and became nationally famous for their herb-based remedies and cures. Cripples Walk leads you towards the bottom corner of the graveyard. That will be your start onto the second half of the walk, after you've taken a break at the 17th century Red Lion, which you're behind at the moment.

When you come out of the pub turn left, between the houses, and go up the setted path towards St Bartholomew's Church. En route you could seek out the stocks dating from 1683 – never used for formal punishment, it appears. Also in the graveyard is the Taylor family vault. Whitworth Heritage Centre on North Street (07434703972) has lots more on all the historical aspects of The Square and St Bart's.



St Bartholomew's Church. Pencil drawing by Leanne Davidson

There are gargoyles all around the church, but for the eeriest of them go round the left, gloomy, side of the building. Then head right, to join Whitworth Rake just below a cattle grid. Use the gate to the left, and continue up the hill, bearing left in front of the old tramway (the 9th tee for Lobden Golf Club is on top of it). Ahead here is Brown Wardle, Whitworth's most prominent, but not its highest, hill. "Wardle" is a corruption of Old English (Anglo-Saxon) "ward hill". We can never be certain how or why it got its name, but if you do Walk 4 in this little series and pop up

top on a fine day and let your imagination wander... These days you'll frequently see cattle and horses on the hillside, grazing where their Commoner owners have turned them out. If you're really lucky you may also spot roe deer.

Where the flagstones cease, go left on a decent track, but near the first wall jump right onto a little footpath that runs between the track and an old watercourse/drainage ditch. Now keep this ditch on your immediate right as you circle up to the right then flatten out. Still following the ditch, pass above Pot Oven Farm, but just beyond the area of black scree below to your left start to look out for a little path that drops diagonally to a little ruin with a stile next to it.

Cross the stile carefully and walk straight down the field, crossing another stile, to Whitworth Stud. Go through the gate and on down the hill, passing through another gate where you saw the sign on your way up. Down again, right onto Longacres Drive, then sharp left and down the steps onto the bottom half of Longacres Lane, and back to The Riverside. JF



Sheep. Pencil drawing by Lucy Wilkins

walking

WHITWORTH

There are good walks in Whitworth around Cowm Res, and into Healey Dell - but how about something a bit more adventurous? You know there are moorland paths, but how do you get to them; are you allowed; and can you get back without retracing your steps?

Well, you could be brave and just go...or you could take one of these guides. All are circular; all start from a place where you can leave a car; all fit comfortably into a morning or afternoon; all have ups (to give you views) and downs (obviously); and all have route instructions along with a clear, simple map and a small helping of history.

Whitworth, you'll find, has a fantastic network of paths that can be knitted together into satisfying walks. And then? Invest in OS Explorer map OL21 (South Pennines) and explore. You might even find some walks that are half as good!

WALK 3 - TWO EASTERN TERRACES

These walks are part of the Spoddan Valley Revealed eco-museum. Visit: <https://spoddanvalleyrevealed.wordpress.com/>