

Calderdale Way, walk route – dramatic West Yorkshire!

Mill Bank, Crag Vale, Mankinholes, Todmorden

(9.7 miles; start satnav HX6 3ED)

This part of the walk goes over the moors near Studley Pike; an exposed section.

At the bottom, turn left at the bridge over Lumb Clough river, and follow it upstream. Go through a couple of gates to emerge on Gough Lane. Follow this road uphill to emerge on Lighthazles road. Head across to follow the road opposite as it winds its way uphill for about a mile. Bear right into a grassy lane opposite a wind turbine and then turn left, uphill. At a junction bear left, passing a farm which is on the right and continue uphill.

After a short distance, reach a T-junction and go left with views, on the left, into Flints reservoir which is now derelict. Continue on this lane to a stile. Go through the gate to enter the moor and follow this until a fork. Bear right to follow this track towards a distant ruin which is a wartime 'Starfish' bunker.

'Starfish' were large fire decoys replicating the explosions and fires that occurred in a bombing and incendiary raids. They were to lure bombers away from their intended targets, in this case the Greetland railway station and goods yard.

Starfish sites included a 'boiling oil' trough linked to a tank of diesel oil and a water tank. The trough contained coal and creosoted waste. Diesel oil was fed into it by a pipe. Once ignited, oil was pulsed into the trough and after 20 minutes, water was released which produced a violent explosive burst of flame.

The concrete bunker is the control. The decoy fire was located south west towards Great Manshead Hill.

At the ruin, bear sharp right along the level track with views of Stoodley Pike prominent on the hill to the left. Continue through a gate and on a walled track through two further gates. When reaching a wall corner and signpost, bear left and descend downhill over the stile, passing Catherine House Farm on the left with its distinctive factory chimney

Continue along this road crossing the next junction onto Coppy Nook Lane. In a short distance the first set of farms is reached. Here go left down at Bent Top Farm and through a gate which leads further downhill.

Follow this track bearing right at the corner and then left through a gate opposite a ruined building. This track winds its way downhill further to another building

Just before the building go sharp left at a stile and through a stile on the right down a stone paved track. At a gap in the wall on the left, go through to an initially level paved track alongside a wall. Follow this down to a walled lane and turn right, down to the main road at **Crag** (4.0 miles).

Cross the road and down a few paces before turning sharp left, down to the church of St. John in the Wilderness and the Hinchcliffe Arms. From the pub follow the main road up the valley, ignoring the right turn at the old gate house and continuing along the north side of Withins Clough for almost a mile to Withins Reservoir.

Follow the path alongside the right hand edge of the reservoir until a sign pointing to Stoodley Pike, on the right. Follow this uphill approximately in a straight line until half-way up. Then turn left at a walled lane.

Go along for approx 100 yards to a water trough and over a stile to follow a level stone paved path with wall on right. After a few fields, the path goes right through a wall pass then left. Follow this to join a wide track uphill and towards a distant building surrounded by walls. At the wall and path corner, turn right uphill and through a gate at the top onto the moor. Follow the stone path to the edge of the moor. Studley Pike is on the right and provides a detour, if wished.

The descent down to Mankinholes village is clearly marked by causeway stones winding downhill to a walled track overlooking Lumbutts and Lee Dam. When you reach the junction, do not go straight ahead but turn right over a stone stile, onto a grass track between two walls to **Mankinholes** (3.0 miles).

When you reach the main road carry straight on and pass the Youth Hostel, on the right. Keep straight ahead until reaching the last house on the right and graveyard. This was the old Sunday school built around 1800s, a sign post on the opposite side points downhill to the Pennine Bridleway, go down to reach Top Brink Inn.

From Top Brink Inn, follow the cobbled road downhill towards the water tower.

At the bottom of the hill, bear right along the main road going uphill for approx $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to Croft Gate farm on the right-hand side of the road at a bus stop.

Here a Calderdale Way sign beside the farm wall points the way, up the farm access, to a gate at the far end. A stile a little further on the left goes into a field and up to and over stiles to emerge at a Longroyd Farm. Here the path bears left across a small field to the equestrian centre on the opposite side. Go through and follow the access road around to the left and on up to a 'T' junction. Turn right and right again, then all the way down to the (spire) Church.

Keep following the road, curving left downhill until the path leads to Fielden Square at **Todmorden** (2.7 miles).