

Fifty four. LITTLEBOROUGH – PENNINE WAY.

This is a trek for accomplished walkers. It follows a steep Roman Road and then the level Warland Drain stretch of the Pennine Way - there are extensive and dramatic views. It then follows a lovely route down into Todmorden where there are plenty of refreshment opportunities.

Catch a train from Eccles to Manchester Victoria and change onto a Leeds or Bradford stopping train going via Rochdale. Alight at Littleborough Station. Descend from the platform and turn left under the railway and then left at the road. Where you join the main road turn right.

Ignore the first right turn off the main road. Then turn right onto Ealees Road. This later becomes just 'Ealees'. *There are some attractive stone cottages along here.*

U-turn gradually left (ignore the Hollingworth Lake directions) and follow road through gate on the left.

Go diagonally left across the yard, between the buildings, and through a small stile gate in front of you. Turn right up hill. Cross the stream and continue up.

Go right up some steps to cross a small stone bridge and then through a stile.

Follow the road as it curves gently left to join a tarmac lane and then keep going along this by the power lines.

At the T-junction with a minor road follow the footpath sign pointing right in front of a row of cottages. You pass a High Peak marker stone. You ascend steeply with a wall over to your right. *As you get higher notice the stones of the old Roman Road.*

This crosses a stream/drain at right angles. Turn left along the drain. *This drain collects water from the moor to feed the reservoirs for Rochdale. The views here are on a grand scale, making boulders and even hills look small.*

Follow the drain and where you come to a two-slab bridge on the right turn left down the path to the road. Turn right at the road and pass the White House pub (real ales and food).

Cross a bridge and turn left onto the Pennine Way below the reservoir. *This road skirts round dramatic stone outcrops (note the weathering by the prevailing winds.)*

Keep left to go under the power lines. *White Holme Reservoir will be on your right. Further on you will see stones with R(ochdale) C(orporation) 1885 and R(ochdale C(orporation) W(ater) W(orks) 1925 on them.*

At this point S-bend left and then right to follow the desired route. *Stoodley Pike is ahead of you.*

You come to an overflow bridge where the drain bends almost 90 degrees to the right. Just before this bridge take the stone flagged path on the left across the moor. It is marked Todmorden Centenary Way.

Go along the left side of Gorland Reservoir and at the corner take the steps down to the left. Curve right past some capped rocks to your left. Cross the bridleway and go down.

Go left through a gate in the wall and towards a farm. Turn right just before the house and behind it to the main road.

Cross the road and go through a stile towards Todmorden. Eventually go right through a stile onto a lane. Left along the lane and follow this for some way.

Enter the Graveyard on the left side of the lane and head down towards the church. Curve right under the spire (*which serves as a porte-cochere! This is a grand Unitarian Church of 1868*). S-bend down through garden to leave the churchyard.

Pass the Golden Lion on your right, and across the 1864 canal bridge. Go left across the road, go right and then left up Rise Lane to the railway station. The Manchester train leaves from the nearer platform.

CATEGORY: LONG. DIFFICULT - with steep rough paths.
 COUNTRYSIDE, FINE VIEWS, ROMAN ROAD,
 MOORLAND, PUBS, ARCHITECTURE

RAIL FARE: category two.

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