

CROWTHORN STAR WALK

Comprises five circular walks based on the former Crowthorn School (a National Children's Home). The walk was originally devised for children of the School. Proceeds from sales of badges are donated to that charity. It would be beneficial to be in possession of the OS Explorer Series Map No 287(West Pennine Moors / Blackburn)-1:25000 or Landranger Series 103 & 109-1:50000.

SECTION ONE(8 miles)

Leaving Crowthorn School, go up Crowthorn Road to the top of the hill passing Crowthorn End (White House) over the cattle grid and take the left fork. Just before the maggot farm, climb a short track up the left hand bank following a faint path towards the broken wall in the far left corner of the field to cross a generally muddy patch to the path across Wet Moss running in a NE direction and marked initially by a few wooden posts. Continue until almost on top of a gully, turn right and make towards the MOD flagpole on Bull Hill. At the base of the Hill veer sharp left and gradually down hill to reach the corner of a stone wall (GR772193) where nearby is a signpost given by the BBC Manchester 'Outsiders'. At the wall corner turn sharp left down the hill to cross Alden Brook (Rossendale Way), taking a NE direction along the valley to reach Fall Bank Farm and then on as far as Great House Farm. Just before Great House, turn left up a grassy slope to climb a stile which gives access to a concrete track, turning sharp left up the hill, in a generally W direction and cross several stiles before descending to Musbury Brook. Now turn almost due N and in about 400 yards pass a ruined farm house (Musden Head) and follow the right hand side of the wall to descend to cross another stream. The path moves to the other side of the wall and climbs gradually towards another ruined farm (Nettle Hall) where just before it, turn left through an opening in the wall to take a grassy track leading westwards up the hill to the prominent ruins of Causeway End. Turn left through the gap stile in the wall behind the ruins and follow the stone wall until it veers sharp left. Here turn half right to a stile in the wire fence and downhill along the left hand side of the wall where in 200 yards ignore the stile but turn left, still keeping to the left hand side of the wall and then the remains of a fence to reach another stile. Soon the path descends to Whowells Farm where turn right through the gate and then immediately left through two farm gates into a field. Cross in SW direction to stone gap stile half way along the boundary wall. Cross the waste land to the rear of the Toby Inn and then along the road towards Bolton for 600 yards. After a sharp bend take the track to the left by a bungalow to Little Edge Farm where just after it, take the stile to the right to follow the left hand side of the wall for ½mile to Crowthorn Road then turning right to Crowthorn School.

SECTION TWO (6 miles)

Leave the school and go up Crowthorn Road as far as Crowthorn End (White House), over the cattle grid bearing right along Moorbottom Road. In ¾ mile, just before the MOD area (flagpole and Warning Notice) go through the gate to the right and keeping close to the wall pass the ruins of a farm building down Lark Hill, initially, following the right side of the wall but just after reaching the level ground, crossing a substantial stile to the other side. Stay by the MOD fencing down to Holcombe Hey Farm, turning right and continuing in a NW direction along the farm access road to a T junction where continue straight ahead. In 50 yards pass a small garden to the left which contains the grave of Roger Worthington. Follow the path signs around the rear of the cottage. Take the path between the solid wooden railings and past a sheep enclosure to join the track around the gardens of Red Earth Farm bearing slightly right onto the main access track. In 50 yards, by a security gate, and where the track turns sharp right go left to cross two stiles into a plantation. At the far end, cross another stile into a field, turning right around the corner of the plantation and then bear right to a stile at the top and into a belt of trees before climbing two stiles into another field. Keep the fence on the right, then a wall on the left and go downhill to Higher Barn Farm and then along the track to the Edgworth to Bury Road where turn right down the hill, crossing to the left hand pavement. After 300 yards take the path down to the stream bridge and up through the woods towards Barlow Institute. Before entering the children's play area, turn left along a walled track and follow the path behind the house gardens to come out on the main road. Turn left and cross to Harbour Lane. At the end of the Lane find a stile and go down to the Wayoh Reservoir. Continue northwards around the reservoir on the lower path and at the sharp left turn by a seat continue straight on for a short distance towards the wood, turn right to go up to the top of the hill,

bearing right and crossing the field to a kissing gate. Turn left along the track as far as Isherwood Fold and right to the Blackburn Road. Cross the road and turn left for 100 yards to take the footpath between the houses into a field then head diagonally to a stile and follow on left of the wall to School Lane where turn right to Crowthorn School.

SECTION THREE (8 miles)

Leaving Crowthorn School go down the road towards Bolton and in 100 yards where the road turns sharp left, cross and continue straight ahead down School Lane. Near the bottom, another track comes in from the right and the main track turns sharp left. Take the partly hidden stile at the side of a hen cabin into the field on the left and continue to another stile, turning half left across the field to pick up a path between the houses on Blackburn Road. Cross the road, turn left for 100 yards and right into Isherwood Fold and carry on in an E direction parallel to the main road and where the track veers to the left, turn right and go through a kissing gate into the open field, then straight ahead towards the reservoir and left on the upper path to the squeeze stile by a stone building. Descend to the reservoir dam and in the same direction climb the slope to the side entrance of the Black Bull PH and the road where turn right down the hill. In 400 yards cross and go down Birches Road. After the row of cottages, turn right, over the pack horse bridge and up the footpath opposite to the main road. In about 40 yards cross to the footpath to the former Church School and just past, take the steps to the right to the Church Yard, leaving by the gate on the north side, to then turn right and pass the public house. Cross over to the conservation area with the village stocks and the old market cross. Return to the Chetham Arms, turn right down Kay Street and take the first left to come out by the side of the former Williams Deacons Bank, now a private house. Turn right to the site of the former station, crossing the railway to go uphill to cross a more substantial track and up through a belt of trees. After passing two stone gate posts make for the stone wall on the left and follow this to the stile at the top where turn right and along the ridge as far as the trig point. Bear slightly right to locate the only remaining stone of the 'Druidical Circle'. Cross the stile in the stone wall to meet a track in 100 yards where turn right. After 100 yards where the ground begins to fall away and the path forks, go straight down the hill to a gate in the wall. After the gate bear half right to a ruined farm building and continue in the same direction until meeting a stone wall. Follow this until reaching the Green Arms Road to Clough Head Farm track. Take the stile near the gate on the far side of the access track and follow the rough path, keeping the gully on the right, down to Spring Bank Farm where cross two stiles and, keeping left of the house, take the access track to the main road and railway bridge. Cross the bridge, turn left into the group of dwellings called Over Houses and follow the track round to the left. Just past the houses, by a barn, take the track off to the left. The track descends and just before Armsgrove Farm take the path on the right hand side of the gardens to the shore of the reservoir, continuing over the dam and along a sunken lane. After the sharp turn left, climb the steps and enter a field by a stile, the path continuing alongside the hedge. Cross into the next field and continue in the same direction, crossing a small stream to a stile near Entwistle Old Hall where turn right down the road then left up towards the Station. Before reaching the bridge over the railway go over the stile on the right and descend into the wood crossing two footbridges. After the second, turn right to follow the shore of the Upper Wayoh and in about 400 yards turn sharp left for 40 yards to the steps into Mothers Wood and the road. Turn right and after 100 yards, cross over and go up School Lane. At the hen cabins take the right fork up the rough track to Crowthorn School.

SECTION FOUR (9 miles)

From the School go down the road towards Bolton and where it turns left at the junction with School Lane, cross to the right and go through a gap stile to the School Playing Field. Cross to a stile near a pole and descend the bank to cross the stream. Follow the fence line to Willows Farm and Moorside Road. Cross the road to the pavement turning left for ½ mile to Moorside Farm which is on the left. Go through the farm yard to the stile at the far end and into the field turning right on a bearing of 210° and passing under the overhead wires to reach a gate leading to Blacksnake Road. Cross and turn left for 100 yards to the footpath on the right which leads through a wooded valley to the track around the Upper Wayoh. Turn right to follow the main path and after crossing two footbridges (Witton Weavers sign) go through the kissing gate to the right, up the hill, under the railway and along Edge Lane passing new houses. Keep straight ahead and bear right on the track by Delph Farm (Witton Weavers sign), passing farm on left through a gate and stile. In about a ½ a mile in a clump of trees (GR711185), on the right is the site of a long demolished house and in the garden is the grave of 'Captain - a much loved family pet'. In about 200 yards, turn left through the substantial gate onto a grassy downhill track to two prominent

stone pillars where turn half right (215°) and go down to the bottom corner of the plantation and over a stile to a footbridge over the Cadshaw Brook. Follow the reservoir path for ½ mile and shortly after a second expanse of water on the right, by the picnic tables, take the path through a broken down wall into and through the conifer plantation to the overflow car park. Descend to and go through the main car park to take the concessionary path through the wood and under the railway viaduct to turn right along the shores to the end of Wayoh Reservoir. At the dam, turn left and then right at the far end. Continue to the Black Bull PH turning left up the hill and cross the road when convenient. Take the footpath round to the back of the Barlow Institute (not the path into Brandwood Fold but the one by the front door of the next row of cottages). Passing the back of the Institute, come out at a stile on the Bury road. Cross and bear slightly left, taking the path hidden by some cottages. Go up the steps and over a stile bearing sharp left up the field to join the track from the Rose & Crown PH. Pass a small reservoir and follow the wall / fence to the stile on skyline by a pylon to continue on same line to a gate leading to Plantation Road where bear slightly right and take the track to Barons Farm keeping to the right of the house and crossing a lawn to go through a small gate and then a stile at the top into rough pasture. Continue up the hill, go through two gates and then a stile on the right of Longshaw Head farm buildings. Turn left onto Moorbottom Road and after Crowthorn End (White House) descend the road to the School.

SECTION FIVE (8 miles)

Leaving the school go north along the Broadhead road for 500 yards taking the footpath on the left to and through the farm to the access track. At the next track junction turn sharp right to Orrell's Farm. Go behind the house, turn left then right through two gateways and descend to the stile, downfield (350°) to cross the stream bridge. Bear right to a stile and on roughly the same bearing uphill to a stile in the fence continuing straight ahead on a vague track. Pass through two gates (Lower House 100 yards on right) and in 60 yards turn left on the rough track to a stile by a copse of trees but do not cross it. Turn right on the rough track to a stile on the left near some coke ovens. Cross and follow the track in a westerly direction (not past the coke ovens) to a stile in the fence. Cross and turn right on the vague grassy track to meet a wall and then a track between fences. Continue straight ahead between fence and wall to pass Higher Aushaw, turning first right to another farm, there through the yard and across the paddock to cross the stile. Bear 330° downhill to stile in the stone wall in the far corner of field. Climb bank to a farm. Go into the farmyard and through the stile, opposite the front door, into a field which cross to the stile in the right corner of the garden of Cuckoldmans. Go round the front of the farm to the access track and after the buildings go through the gate on the right, descending the field through a gap in the wall and then two stiles. Continue with the fence to the right passing Scotland Reservoir and just after take the stile through the fence. Continue for about 300 yards on the east side of the fence to reach a clough. Beyond the clough bear 120°, initially following a vague path between grouse butts continuing on a sometimes unclear path to the summit of Greystones Moor. Cross the stile and bear 75° towards the right hand corner of the plantation. Continue on this bearing, inside the fence, to a clough where bear right (152°) and descend to a gate. Continue with fence on left to a stile into Broadhead Plantation. Keep close to the western edge of the wood until it eventually emerges onto Longshoot Farm access road where turn right. Just before the farmhouse, go over a stile into field (NOTE: In early 2002, the stile needed replacing - reported but if not re-instated, backtrack to gate and enter field). Go diagonally down the field to a stile, over the stream bridge. Bear right up the bank and follow the fence around the farm. Pass through the archway, turn left up the track for 80 yards and right again through a small gate crossing the field to a footbridge. Go up the bank and turn left through a gap in the wall to follow the hedge and fence line to Hall Hill Farm. Just beyond the house, go over a stile on the right and follow the wall down and cross the stream at GR742192. Follow the fence and wall up hill and just before Orrell's Farm cross the stile on the left. Go righthandedly around the outside of the garden. Bear left to Stanley Hill and to the track back to Broadhead Road. Turn right and go down the hill to Crowthorn School.

You have now completed the CROWTHORN STAR - well done! A rucksack badge is available at a cost of £1.50p (plus SAE) and any donations to the National Children's Home Charity are welcomed. For a badge, please make cheques payable to Margaret Griffiths and send to her at 288 Turton Road, Bradshaw, Bolton BL2 3EF.

Details of any suggested changes to this route description would be appreciated.