

A History Walk Around Marsden Village Centre

This leaflet is intended to guide you around the sites of a number of places important in the development of the village. While it is recommended that you follow the numbered sequence shown on the map, you may of course follow your own plan.

While the route is mainly flat and on pavements, great care must be taken when crossing what can be very busy roads. Where there are pavements and pedestrian crossings, please use them.

Transport

Marsden is only 7 miles from Huddersfield and can be easily reached by car, bus or train.

There is however, only limited on-street parking, but a large car park (free at the time of writing) is situated by the National Trust Marsden Estate buildings adjacent to the Railway Station. It is recommended that you use this. From here, the start point of the walk is reached by walking down Station Road, passing The Swan public house on your left, then turning up Peel Street to the Mechanics Institute with its distinctive clock tower.

Refreshments

Marsden is well served with cafes, restaurants, public houses, newsagents, fish and chip outlet, shops, coop supermarket, a post office and a local butcher's shop which sells various pies and sandwiches.

Toilet Facilities

There are no public toilets in the village, but there are toilets in the Mechanics' Institution when it is open, together with facilities for customers in the cafes and pubs.

Aknowledgments

All photographs are taken from the Marsden Photographic Archive www.marsdenphotoarchive.info with the exception of the following; 3 - Keith Hemsley, 5 & 18 - Roger Logue

Design and layout - Keith Hemsley

1 Marsden Mechanics' Institution, Peel Street

The hall was opened in 1861, although the institution had started 20 years earlier. With the industrial revolution workers came together to undertake self-improvement through education.

In response, Mechanics' Institutions were formed. The first was started in Glasgow in 1823, and then established in London in 1824 by George Birbeck and Henry Brougham. Our building stands at the junction of Brougham Road and Peel Street.



2 New Inn & British Queen, Manchester Road

Built in 1839, the New Inn, which exists today, had a similarly designed companion inn called The British Queen on the other side of Peel Street and facing Manchester Road. It closed in 1911 and is now a private house.



3 The Park

The park was commissioned and built by Marsden Urban District Council between 1910 and 1912. It was built on land donated by mill owners J.E. Crowther, E.J. Bruce, Arthur Robinson and Samuel Firth.

Notable features in the park are the Bandstand, War Memorial unveiled on 19th August 1922, a memorial to the Marsden-born Lancashire dialect poet Samuel Laycock, and the temperance drinking fountain which was funded by the Marsden Branch of the British Women's Temperance Association. The stone on which the Laycock memorial stands is of unknown origin, but appears to feature the Green Man.



4 Ready Carr House, Carrs Road

During the Luddite riots of 1812 the infantry posted to Marsden to protect the mills were housed in this road at the Blue Lion. The inn was subsequently boycotted by the locals and closed in 1813.

It was renamed Ready Carr House, now demolished, and became the home of Enoch Taylor. Further along and opposite the former Old New Inn was the iron foundry established by brothers Enoch and James Taylor. The Foundry later concentrated on manufacturing steam boilers, but also made several of the bridges in the village – still used today. At one time the foundry employed 300 men but closed in 1905. It later became Ready Carr Mill and was owned by the Crowther family.



5 The Old New Inn, Carrs Road

This was a substantial coaching inn with stabling for 24 horses. Originally called the New Inn it changed its name when the New Inn on Manchester Road opened in 1839.

In 1841 the Mechanics' Institution held its first meeting in a cottage next to the inn.



6 Bank Bottom Mills and Ottiwell's Mill

A four-storey fulling mill was built on the site in 1824, occupied by Norris, Sykes and Fisher in the 1830s and subsequently by Ben Sykes and Son.

The mill, established by John Crowther in 1867, grew to such an extent that by 1909 it employed over 1,000 people and by 1936 had risen to over 1,900 people. During the First World War it manufactured khaki cloth for army uniforms. In 1925 it had 669 looms and 60,500 spindles. The mill closed in 2003.



In 1812 Ottiwell's Mill, now demolished, at the bottom of Binn Road employed 400 workers. Its owner, William Horsfall, had introduced cropping frames made by the Taylor brothers. He was a fervent anti-Luddite and a First Lieutenant of the Huddersfield Corps of Volunteers. He was shot by the Luddites in an ambush near Crosland Moor and subsequently died of his wounds.

7 Old Fire and Ambulance Stations, Manchester Road

The fire station was built from funds donated by the mill owner John Edward Crowther and was opened in 1909. He also provided the first ambulance in 1911. The ambulance station opened in 1914. Manchester Road (A62) on which these stand, was the third and final route of the turnpike road built through Marsden.



8 Manchester Road

Cross the A62 by the pedestrian crossing and retrace your steps until you reach the top of Towngate. As you walk towards Towngate notice the steps on your right which lead down to the original level of the road which had to be raised when the turnpike route was altered for the third time.



The original Roman road from Chester to York and a packhorse road both ran to the west of the present day Old Mount Road. Archaeological evidence for these roads has been found near Pule Hill and excavations in 2015 found further evidence of the Roman road and its ditches near the bottom of Old Mount Road

9 Towngate

The most likely meaning of 'gate' is road, not a barrier or entry. This was once the village centre and the main thoroughfare through the village.

Towngate had several coaching inns, in addition to shops and houses. Three fairs a year were held here: Spring (April), Summer (July) and Autumn (September).

The footprint of a small church chapel may be seen at the top of the grassy knoll. It was built in 1758 but ceased to be used for services in 1895. It was sold for £60 and demolished in 1896. The headstones of the old graveyard can now be seen forming the path over the knoll.



10 Enoch and James Taylor's Tomb

Enoch and James Taylor were blacksmiths who made cropping frames for the mills. The cropping frames (also known as shearing frames) took work away from highly-skilled hand croppers and was a major factor contributing to the local Luddite riots. Cropping shears, weighing 40lbs and 4 feet in length were used to clip the raised nap of the cloth to improve the finish.



11 The Stocks

This 1928 photograph shows the stocks in their original position at the corner of Towngate and Church Lane. Harry Broadbent, so called 'Dutch Harry' as he was the husband of the landlady of the Two Dutchmen coaching inn, was the last person to be held in the stocks.



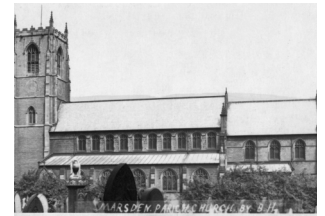
On the evening of 11th November 1820 he had spent the evening celebrating the birth of his son and the success of Queen Charlotte in preventing her husband George IV divorcing her. He gained entry to the church and seizing the bell rope rang the bell for a full five minutes. He was found guilty of being drunk and disorderly and, on refusing to pay the fine, was sentenced to six hours in the stocks.



The Two Dutchmen, which was demolished in 1968, was of similar appearance to No.3 Towngate which can be seen on the opposite side of the street.

12 St. Bartholomews Church.

The present church, often, referred to as The Cathedral of the Colne Valley, was designed by the prolific ecclesiastical architect Charles Hodgson Fowler (1840 - 1910) of Durham.



The nave and aisles were consecrated in 1895 and the chancel and Lady Chapel in 1899. The tower was added in 1910 and is unusual in having a peal of ten bells. The Lychgate, which stands on the site of the old church school, was paid for by J. E. Crowther.

13 Mellor's Bridge over River Colne

A charming single-arch footbridge, in the style of a packhorse bridge built c1775 and named after Tommy Mellor.



Although not shown in the 1793 map of Marsden the earlier date for the bridge is recorded in L.B.Whitehead's 'Bygone Marsden'. In 1804 a prominent citizen Edward Bower fell over the parapet and was killed.

14 Union Bridge

Originally built in 1861 it was named to commemorate the union of the two parishes of Marsden-in-Huddersfield and Marsden-in-Almondbury in 1888. Previously the river was crossed by stepping-stones.



15 Snail Horn Bridge

The bridge is situated immediately downstream of the point where Wessenden Brook and the River Colne meet to become the Colne as it flows west towards Huddersfield.



The original bridge was built in 1798 with three arches to carry goods traffic from Marsden Canal Dock storehouse at Warehouse Hill into the village. As traffic patterns changed the alignment of the bridge created difficulties and in 1891 it was replaced by the present wider bridge.

16 Johnstone's Grocery Stores

Looking up Peel Street may be seen the Wine Bank and the Riverhead Brewery Tap. William Johnstone established a grocery business in 1835 near Towngate Bridge and later moved to these premises at the bottom of Peel Street, now the Riverhead Brewery Tap and Wine Bank.



Johnstone's Stores sold groceries, drapery, millinery, hay, corn, coal, and was also the Post Office.

17 The Tenterposts, Warehouse Hill

Tenterposts were used for drying and stretching cloth. Horizontal wooden rails were attached to the stone posts and cloth was held in place by rows of tenterhooks attached to the rails.



The expression 'being on tenterhooks' is derived from this.

18 New Mills, Brougham Road

A mill has been on the site for over two hundred years and in that time gradually increased in size. The last major development was in 1906. The Art Nouveau frontage of the offices facing Brougham Road date from this period. The mill is associated with the Crowther family as Crowther, Bruce and Company.



19 Site of Taylor's blacksmiths.

Brothers Enoch and James Taylor's original blacksmiths premises was on the site of the Infants School next to the Mechanics' Institution. It was not the only blacksmiths in the village, but would appear to have been the most important. As previously mentioned Enoch and James manufactured the cropping frames which replaced the hand cropping of cloth.



The sledgehammers made by the Taylors were used by the Luddites to smash the cropping frames also made by them. These hammers were referred to as 'Enoch's hammers'. Hence the expression 'Enoch makes them and Enoch breaks them.' Interestingly there is no evidence of the Taylor's premises ever being a target for attack.

20 Cooperative building, Peel Street (1896)

During the late 19th and most of the 20th century the Cooperative dominated the shopping in the village.

In the mid 1800s the Marsden Self-help Cooperative Society was set up in a small shop adjacent to the Congregational Church and it later expanded to having a number of shops in and around the village, including multiple premises on Peel Street and at Binn Road, Smithy Holme on Marsden Lane, Lingards Terrace on Manchester Road, and stables at Warehouse Hill.



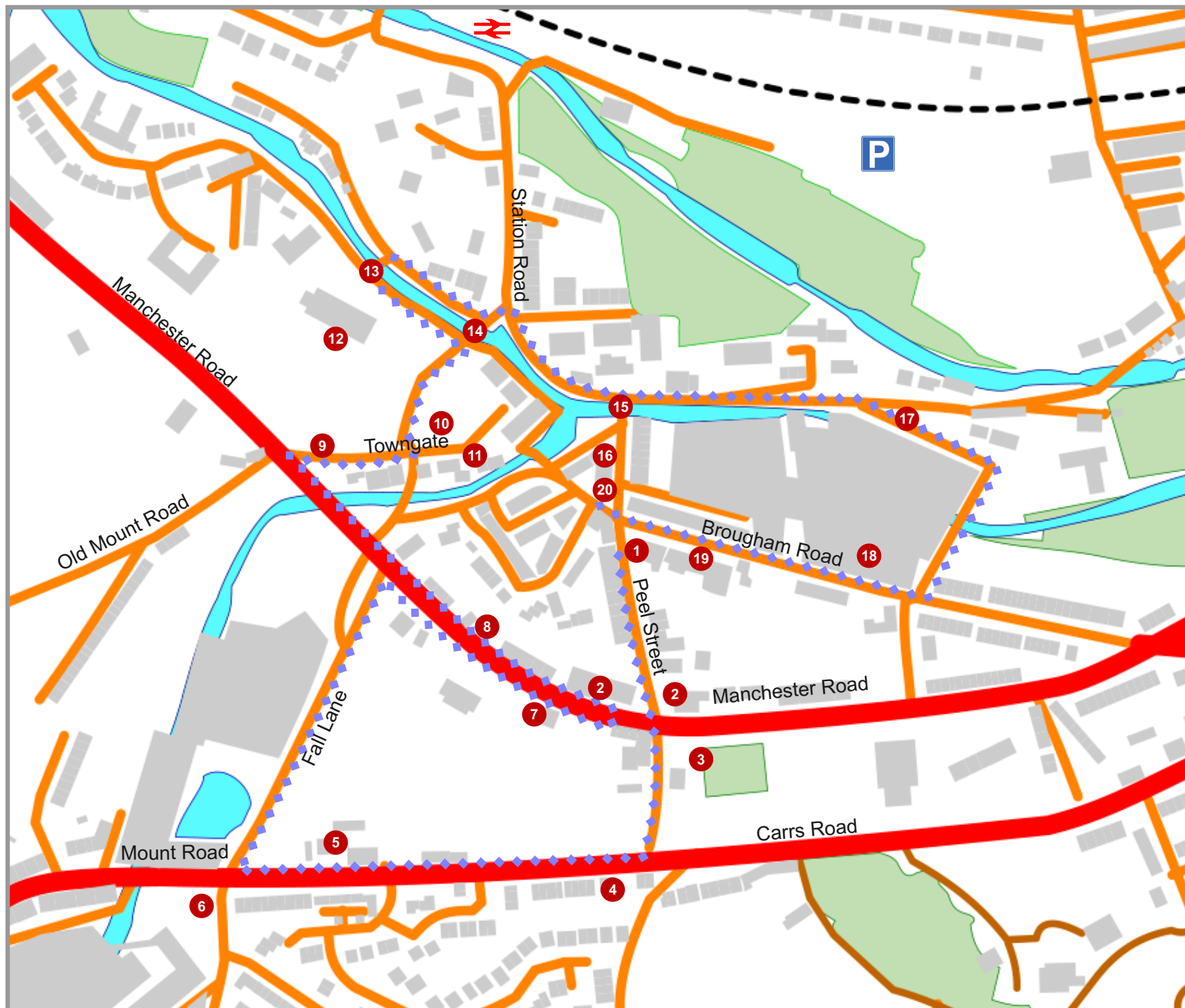
Marsden History Group



Marsden History Walk

Roger Logue
Nicholas Pollett

www.marsdenhistory.co.uk



- 1 Marsden Mechanics Institution
- 2 New Inn & British Queen
- 3 Marsden Park
- 4 Ready Carr House, Carrs Road
- 5 Old New Inn
- 6 Bank Bottom Mills
- 7 Old Fire and Ambulance Stations
- 8 Manchester Road
- 9 Towngate
- 10 Enoch & James Taylor's Tomb
- 11 The Stocks
- 12 St. Bartholomew's Church
- 13 Mellor's Bridge
- 14 Union Bridge
- 15 Snailhorn Bridge
- 16 Johnstone's Grocery Stores
- 17 Tenterposts
- 18 New Mills, Brougham Road
- 19 Site of Taylor's Blacksmith shop
- 20 Cooperative building

◆◆◆◆◆ Suggested route