

# Walk 10 - WALSHAW TO GREENMOUNT

Distance: 2 to 3 miles  
About: 2 to 3 hours  
Terrain: Easy > moderate  
Parking: Plenty on street' available.  
Public transport:  
481 - Ramsbottom to Bury via Walshaw.  
480 - Bolton via Hawkshaw & Affetside  
510 - Bolton via Ainsworth & Walshaw to Bury.  
Refreshments:  
**Toby Carvery** (Previously the Bull's Head), Greenmount. Queen Victoria and White House, Walshaw.  
No public toilets. All paths fully waymarked.

7 Starting from Walshaw parish church walk up the High St. towards Radcliffe & Bolton and turn 3rd left into Sudren St. (unadopted).

The path starts in the right hand corner through a 'kissing gate' and goes down between a pair of hawthorn hedges. Should the path be overgrown in summer, go through a gap in the right hand hedge just down from the top.

When crossing the second field, follow the hedge on the left .

Go down and almost straight ahead (slightly to the right) across the meadow, to a join a path behind the hawthorn hedge, by the trees in the distance.

Continue along it over a stile and join the bridleway.

Follow the bridleway around to the left and up the slope to join Owlerbarrow Road.

Turn right to Walshaw Road, cross over and take the path up the left hand side of Owlerbarrow Farmhouse.

Go through the gate in the left hand corner of the yard.

6 Follow the path alongside the hedge and then over the wooden bridge and walk alongside the stream for a couple of hundred yards before bearing right at the next junction.

*Please note: this footpath and the next one, can become heavily overgrown in summer and very wet underfoot. As an alternative, instead of taking the path from Owlerborrow Farm continue down Walshaw road towards Bury taking the first turn on the left between the industrial units up to the asphalt area and the start of the path across to Tottington Road.*

Continue along the narrow path between a hedge and a wire fence behind the Stables Fitness and Leisure Club

*The Stables is part of the Boltholt Country Hotel. The Boltholt was once a print works and the leisure club is in what were originally the old stable block, with the stable partitions still there creating small workout rooms*

5 The path emerges on to an asphalt section of road amongst modern houses, turn left here along a path around the meadow, eventually arriving on Tottington Road.

Cross Tottington Road and go up Greenalgh Moss Lane, almost directly opposite, go around the bend past the three cottages and turn left onto Pickering Close.

Walk down the Close to the bottom and turn left down the path between Nos 14 & 12 to join the old railway track now renamed the Kirklees Nature Trail which started life as the Bury & Tottington Railway Company.

*The Bury and Tottington Railway's single track line opened for passenger and freight, pulled by steam engines, on November 6, 1882, although only 3.5 miles long it took four years to build because of the many engineering works required, like the wonderful 9-arch viaduct over Island Lodge along with the many bridges needed. There were stops at Woodhill, Brandlesholme, Woolfold, Sunnywood, Tottington, Greenmount and Holcombe Brook. Many of these halts had no platforms, so rather clever retractable steps were fitted to the carriages to allow passengers to comfortably board and alight.*

*In 1913 Dick, Kerr & Co of Preston were tendering for an electric railway contract in Brazil and saw that the gradient curves of the existing Bury to Holcombe Brook line were ideal to prove the viability of their design. This resulted in ground-breaking technology that saw the line being the first in the world to be converted from steam to high voltage electricity. The experiment was a great success but the overhead system had only a short life and was converted to a 3rd rail system in 1918, the service remained electrified until 1951. When cost-savings had to be made, all the electrification equipment was removed. The line, which was once the only line of its sort in the world, ended its life as a poor relation of the Bury to Manchester electric train service. Steam trains were reintroduced and the last passenger train left Bury for Holcombe Brook at 10.26 pm on May 4, 1952. Freight continued until 1963 running as far as Tottington.*

4 Turn left for around half a mile and just before the second steel barrier, turn right down a track, Sunnywood Lane, and left again, a few yards down the track (around the end of a set of iron railings) diagonally up the path through the woods.

*(As an alternative try the, 'riverside walk'. Continue along the track bearing left down to the Kirklees Brook, follow the path by the river and up the wooden steps to re-join the main route)*

Follow the path up through a pleasantly wooded hillside, and emerge onto an open grassy area of a somewhat overgrown recreation ground and playing field.

Head north up the middle of the field in the general direction of Holcombe Hill in the distance. Following an overgrown but visible cart track for approximately 2/3 the length of the field.

As the field begins to slope gently downhill, take the path off to the right which becomes a track going downhill, at the bottom bear left.

*(This where the riverside walk re-joins the main route)*

3 Continue around the bend going uphill, turn first right and proceed along the path noting the redundant mill lodges on the left and right and the sight and sound of Kirklees Brook down a steep drop to the right.

You are now approaching the ruins of Tottington Mill.



A corn mill stood on the brook here in 1295 and was replaced in 1792. By 1796 there was a cotton mill producing muslin which may well have occupied the corn mill. This was owned by John Gorton and his family who contributed to the prosperity and expansion of Tottington between 1790 and 1820.

The mill was acquired by Joshua Knowles in 1821, a man in his early twenties, who had formerly worked at the Grant Brothers' mill in Ramsbottom. He greatly developed and extended the site into an industrial complex and became by far the largest employer of labour in the area. In 1823 about 300 people were employed and by 1841 this had risen to 393 with over a third being boys and girls aged 7 to 13.

Tottington mill was the first to use an eight colour printing machine, exhibited at the Great Exhibition in 1851, and played an important part in the history and development of the trade.. His step brother Samuel Knowles took over the business on the death of Joshua in 1853. He retired when the company was taken over by the Calico Printers Association in 1899. Sadly the mill closed in 1928 apart from an engraving shop that remained open until 1940 when it was demolished. The site is now overgrown but many remains survive, including walls, vats, settling tanks, engine beds, a flywheel pit and chimney bases.

Continue over the stream and up the cobbled path past the front of Tower Court, previously a farm with the initials JK 1840 set in a date stone above the entrance.

Joshua Knowles built Tower Farm in 1840, with a wonderful, fifty square-foot crenallated water tower with a row of small corbelled arches around the top to replicate the projecting gallery at the top of medieval castle walls years ago, with openings in the floor through which stones and boiling liquids could be dropped on attackers. Immediately above the imposing archway entrance to the courtyard is the inscription J.K. 1840. The construction is modelled on Nuttall Hall Farm, Ramsbottom an earlier building with 14th century origins, now demolished. Tower Farm was built to stable the many heavy horses required to bring coal from Mountain Mine in Affetside and transport raw goods to, and finished goods from Tottington Mill to Bury and elsewhere.

Twelve years later both Knowles and one of the Grants were on the committee of four who raised the funds and organised the building of Peel Tower on Holcombe Hill using exactly the same architectural style.

② Turn left at Tower Court down Shepherd Street as far as its intersection with the Kirklees Nature Trail.

Turn right once more down the nature trail towards Brandlesholme Road, Greenmount.

① Cross the road and turn left up to Greenmount Church

The stone wall of its car park is the only remaining evidence that you are standing on a bridge. The Bury to Holcombe Brook electric railway line went under the bridge. During the 1960's the deep cutting was filled in before the houses could be built

Greenmount Church stands in the centre of the village. This building was instigated by Samuel Knowles, owner of Tottington Mill. The Lancashire Congregational Union donated £500 towards the cost of £3,856. It was opened in February 1867 and originally had seats for 580 people. The spire of this gothic style building is 105' high. The building of the church enabled the day school, which opened in 1863 in a white washed room within Tottington mill, to be transferred to the Sunday school building. It was called Greenmount British School and opened on 1st July 1867.

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**Queen Victoria and White Hourse, Walshaw.**



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