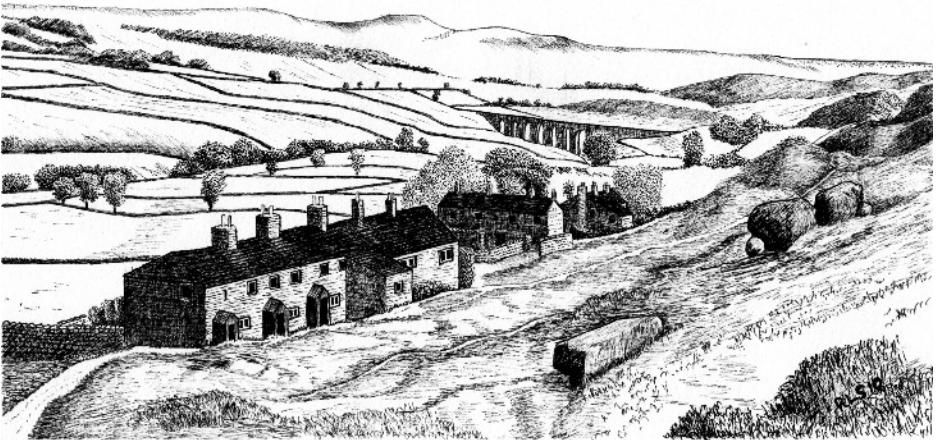


BAILDON HERITAGE TRAILS

# The Lost Hamlets of Baildon Moor



Produced by Baildon Local History Society ©  
Commissioned by Baildon Town Council

2015

First edition - 2011  
Second edition (slight revisions) - 2015

This Heritage Trail is one of several created by Baildon Local History Society and commissioned by Baildon Town Council. Please see inside the back cover for a list of other Trails in the series. The Walks are available in booklet form from Baildon Library for a small charge, or you can download them free at [www.baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk).

### **Countryside Code and Privacy**

Several of these walks use public rights of way over farm land and others go close to houses. Please help keep Baildon the beautiful place it is:

Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.

Leave gates and property as you find them

Protect plants and animals and take your litter home

Keep dogs under close control

Respect other people and their property

### **How to get there**

**Bus:** Service 626 runs from Brighouse and Bradford through Shipley to Baildon; Service 649/50 runs between Otley and Shipley through Baildon; and Service 656/7/8 runs from Bradford and Shipley to Baildon Lucy Hall Drive. The latter two services pass close to Baildon Station. Alight at the bus terminus in the centre of Baildon Village – in Towngate, by the stocks – and make your way up to the Eaves car park on the moor where this walk starts (directions to the car park are given in the Guide).

**Rail:** Baildon is on the Wharfedale line between Bradford and Ilkley, with connections through Shipley to Leeds and Skipton. The station is in the lower part of the village, with a short walk up to the centre, or there are buses (see above). From the station walk though the car park up onto Station Road and turn left: you will see the bus stop on the corner of Kirkfields. To walk, go up Kirkfields, turn left into Holden Lane, and left again at the mini-roundabouts into Hall Cliffe, which brings you to Towngate in the centre of the Village.

Check details of buses and trains with MetroLine (0113 245 7676 or [www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com)).

If coming by car, park in the Eaves car park (see start of Guide). If it's full, there is another small car park a few hundred yards over the brow of the hill, on the left.

**Maps:** See the back cover for maps.

Alternatively, the area covered by this Walk is on OS Explorer Map Sheet 288 (Bradford and Huddersfield): scale 1:25,000 or 4 cm to 1 km (2½ inches to 1 mile).

## The Lost Hamlets of Baildon Moor Walk

This walk is in two loops: the first visits some of the hamlets which used to thrive on the edge of Baildon Moor; the second looks at some of the the history and archaeology on the higher reaches of the Moor itself.

**Distances:** Lost Hamlets Loop: 2 miles (3.3 km)  
Moor Loop: 3 miles (4.7 km)

These are only approximate. If you wander about looking at things you'll do more.

### From Towngate to the Eaves car park

For those with their own transport the walk starts at the Eaves car park, but for those coming by public transport it's an interesting short walk from the centre of Baildon (0.5 mile or 0.8 km). Apart from the Stocks by the bus terminus, the main landmark here is the Potted Meat Stick between the roundabout and the Ian Clough car park. This was once a drinking fountain which was given to the village by the Amphlett family, who offered either a fountain or a carillon of bells. After being removed from its original site in the 1960s, it was resited where it now stands in 1986. It gains its popular name from the colour of the column – pink (or roseate) granite. Continue up Northgate with The Malt Shovel on your right, and notice the renowned sweet shop on wheels on your left. (See *Baildon Village Walk* for more information about this area.)

Carry on up the road past the garage to the cattle grid, with a pedestrian gate to the right. On the left note the open area above Pennithorne Avenue: this is Pennithorne Common, a small annexe to the main moor. Continue up the good walker's path on the right hand side of the road, past the right turn to Moor-side and the left turn to Eldwick and Bingley, until you reach the car park on the right at the top of the hill, used by ice cream sellers at most times of the year. This is called the Eaves, or Low Eaves, and the walk proper starts here.



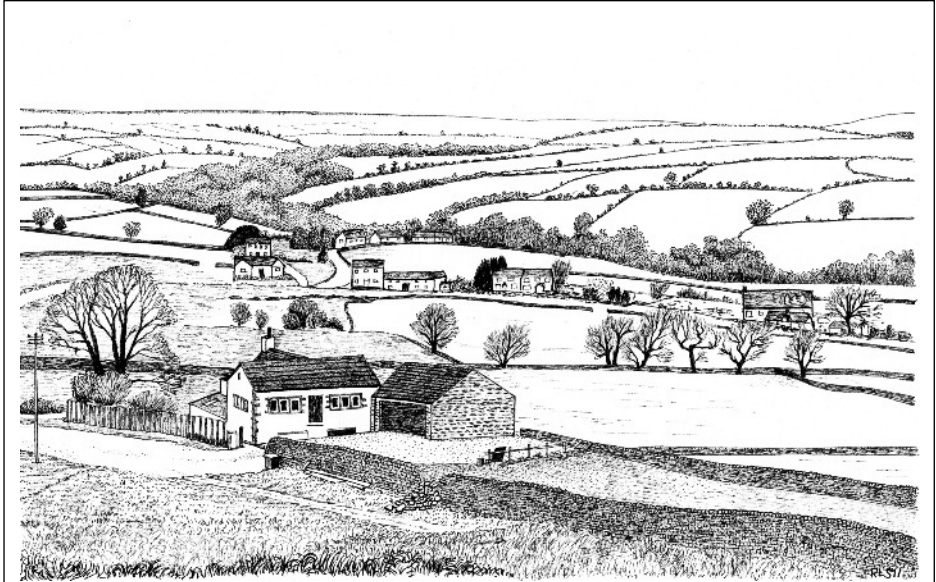
*Pennithorne Common*

## **Baildon Moor**

Baildon Moor may superficially appear to be a natural landscape but it is in fact the very opposite. Man has made his mark here ever since the retreat of the last Ice Age some 10,000 years ago. At first a small group of hunter-gatherers would have combed the area for any food they could obtain, and then some five millennia later, larger groups would have begun settling and using simple farming techniques which included tree clearance. Hazel and alder trees would have been the prominent vegetation at that time. The next great influence on the landscape was the discovery of first ironstone and later coal, but change has always been a characteristic of Baildon Moor, as we shall see.

### **The view from the Eaves car park**

From the edge of the car park you see landscape created by the retreat of the glaciers at the end of the last Ice Age. The valley has been significantly deepened by ice action, and mounds of glacial deposits, called moraines, can be seen in the surface undulations. The glaciers originated in the Yorkshire Dales, and brought with them limestone from that region, as well as sandstone picked up on the way. This explains some of the flora of the Tong Park area, such as yellow rattle, common spotted orchid and ox eye daisy, which are more often found in limestone areas and are not typical of the millstone grit area around Bradford. At the bottom of the valley are Spring Woods, occupying the steeper section carved out by the melt waters from the glaciers as they retreated at the

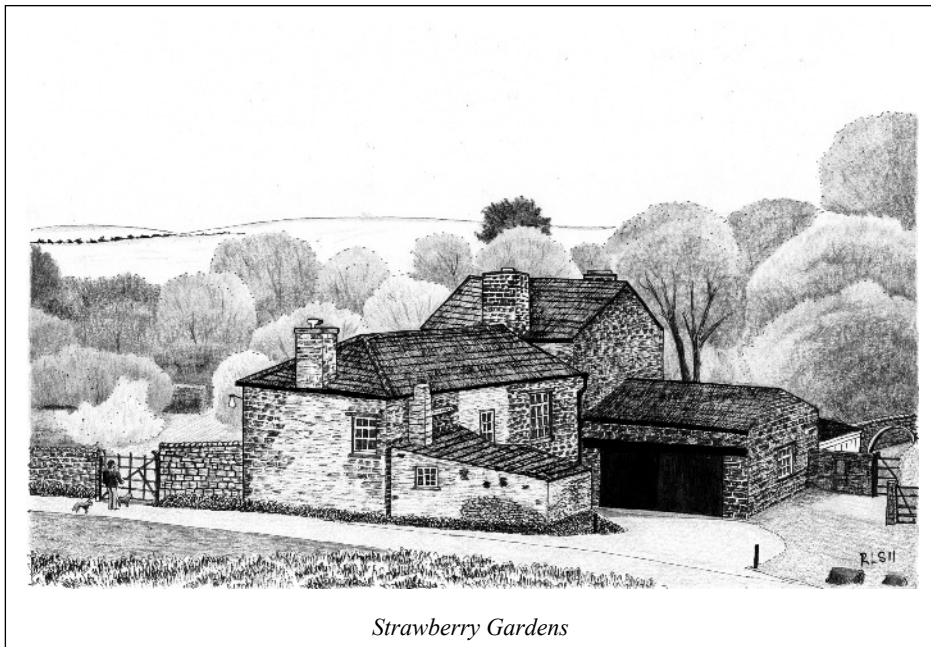


*View from The Eaves: The White House and the hamlet of Low Springs*

end of the ice age, where now there is just Gill Beck. The plant species found there, such as lesser celandine, wood anemone and dog violet, indicate that these are ancient woodlands.

Just below the sand quarries on the skyline, is the long linear village of Hawksworth; and this side of Gill Beck, are two much more compact hamlets which we shall see on this walk. In front is Low Springs, set in rich farmland; and to the left, beyond the road and just within the moor vegetation, is Low Hill with its old chapel. The field walls form their characteristic pattern far up towards Rombalds Moor. Further to the left is the broad sweep of Baildon Moor – the site of human activity in times both ancient and modern, some of which we shall explore in the second half of this walk. To the right, lower down the valley, can be seen the Hollins Hall golf course and the Tong Park railway viaduct. Above that are the houses of Yeadon (with binoculars you can make out the Town Hall), the knoll with the trees is called Rawdon Billing, and the church with the tall spire is St Margaret's in Horsforth.

Gill Beck joins the River Aire, and you look down the broad winding vista of Airedale with the tall buildings and urban expanse of Leeds clearly visible on the lower land. Beyond, you can make out the plumes from the power station cooling towers at Ferrybridge and Eggborough out in the Vale of York. Further to your right, across the houses of Baildon and St John's Parish Church and on the other side of the Aire Valley,



*Strawberry Gardens*

stands Idle Hill with its radio mast and (now disused) reservoir. To the right of that, in Bradford, you can see Lister's Mill Chimney and, far beyond, in clear weather, the radio mast at Emley Moor and the Southern Pennines.

## **The Lost Hamlets Loop**

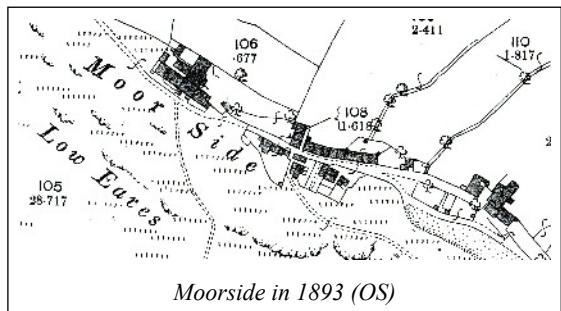
The first part of the walk takes you round the site of three old moorland villages.

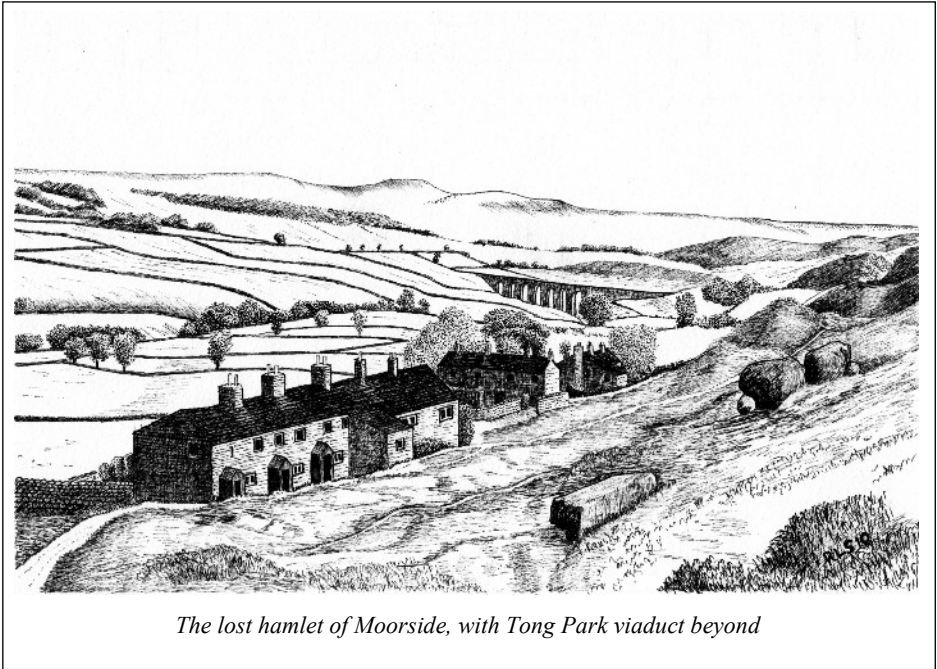
### **The Eaves to Moorside**

Leave the car park, walking away from the road and with the steep edge of the escarpment to your left. Choose any of the paths, but don't stray too near to the edge, as the quarry is unfenced and can be dangerous. One path down to the tarmac road to your right is almost a natural staircase. On your right is Strawberry Gardens, originally known as Lantie Gardens, after its builder. In Edwardian times it was renowned for its teas, taken in- or outdoors. Fresh fruit such as cherries and gooseberries were sold from the orchard, and it is recorded that the owners occasionally supplied the Whitsuntide teas for the local Sunday School. The 1901 census records William and Mary Wilkinson living there, 66 and 70 years old respectively, and described as market gardeners.

Follow the road which curves left; to your right is a stile which leads to Baildon Rugby Club and Jenny Lane. Take care: vehicles use this road to Moorside Equestrian Centre. The quarry on your left is Low Eaves Delph, from which fine quality gritstone was extracted: it was used in the rebuilding of St John's Church in 1847-48. There are two other quarries nearby, near the Eaves (by the main Baildon-Hawksworth Road), and one in the woods by Tong Park which supplied stone used in the building of the now demolished Tong Park village, and for the great railway viaduct (see *The Railway Walk*). Pause awhile on the well-situated bench on the corner to take in another of the many wonderful views on this walk, and then continue round the corner and down the hill by the tarmac road, to the Equestrian centre, which you keep on your right. Follow the road until the tarmac becomes a gravel surface and then an earth track, as the road twists into the moor.

Looking ahead, try to imagine 23 houses in this small area, for this is where the village of Moorside used to stand. The population of Moorside, which on some censuses was called The Row, was highest at the first census of 1841, being 131. By 1891 it was reduced to 64 with some properties empty, but even so this was the most populous of the hamlets we shall be looking at today.





*The lost hamlet of Moorside, with Tong Park viaduct beyond*

The earliest housing at Moorside was probably mid-eighteenth century, with floor, walls and roofs made of local stone. Joshua Briggs had a school here in the early nineteenth century, before moving to Tong Park. He was a pioneer of local education, having set up a school at Baildon Green from 1780 and seems to have run both Sunday and day schools. He then lived in a shooting box on Rombalds Moor and ran a school from there – he taught the Airedale poet, John Nicholson. He moved to Moorside, then Tong Park and finally Baildon village: John La Page speculates whether he may have been the first village schoolmaster.

By the time of the first national census the principle occupation of the residents was wool combing, and given that an average of six people lived in each house the living conditions must have been appalling, until the work moved to the factory. Besides wool combing, many worked as miners on the moor and further on you can see, high on the bank, two short rows of supports which were used to support a handrail at each side of the path used by workers from Moorside climbing up to the moor pits.

Electricity was installed in 1947, but the end came in 1961 when Baildon Health Committee judged the houses unfit for human habitation, mainly because of the sewage system and dampness in the houses. At the same time other parts of Baildon were also

condemned, a total of 94 houses. Most of the people living at Moorside objected, but compulsory purchase of most of the cottages was completed by 1964, with the maximum compensation being £40. (Moorside Farm was not included in the Compulsory Purchase Orders.) So, by the mid-1960s most of the cottages were demolished. The last remaining back walls of some of the houses can be seen on the right, almost hidden behind the long horse manure heap, and some cobbles remain on the road. Had they remained, the houses might have been converted into desirable residences commanding a high price, which has happened at Low Hill, as we shall see.

Moorside has a place in local literature through the novel *Windy Ridge* (based on *Hawksworth*), written by local author William Riley and published in 1912. Riley, born in 1866, was the Managing Director of Riley Brothers who produced magic lanterns and slides in Bradford, and at one time lived in Baildon. The novel was originally written just to be read to his wife (who was ill) and friends, at the completion of each chapter. However, his wife persuaded him to publish the book, which was very well received. It was compared favourably by one reviewer to Mrs Gaskell's *Cranford* novels. Encouraged by this success, he went on to publish a further forty novels. He died in 1961 aged 95, having been a prominent Methodist Local Preacher for some 75 years.

One attraction of living in Moorside was the purity of the water, which percolates out of the hill on the left. In the late nineteenth century this was very much purer than the



*The spring at Moorside*

contaminated water available in Baildon village. It was taken from three wells which can still be seen – strikingly different in appearance – as we continue along the cart track, with the wooden fence and occasional sheds on your right. The first is the most obvious, with large curved retaining walls forming a sort of grotto for the well at the back. The second is further up the track, piped into an

old bath, where the water is sparklingly clear. The third is the least obvious, but you'll find it where part of the track becomes boggy – just above the left verge, with the spring now spilling out over the track, and forming muddy puddles.



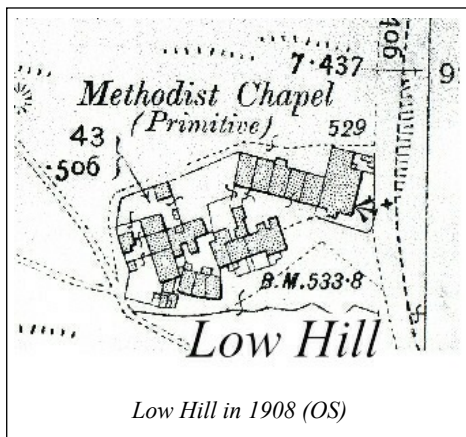
## Moorside to Low Springs and Sconce

As you continue up the cobbled track, look up to the left, and note the stone posts marking the path up to the moor from Moorside. Pause at the field gate on your right and look at the gently rolling countryside with Spring Woods below you, with the viaduct visible on your right. Walking on, you soon come to The White House. This is now a private house but is better remembered as a tea room or restaurant. Near here is said to grow eyebright, a plant once used for an infusion to bathe and strengthen weak eyes.

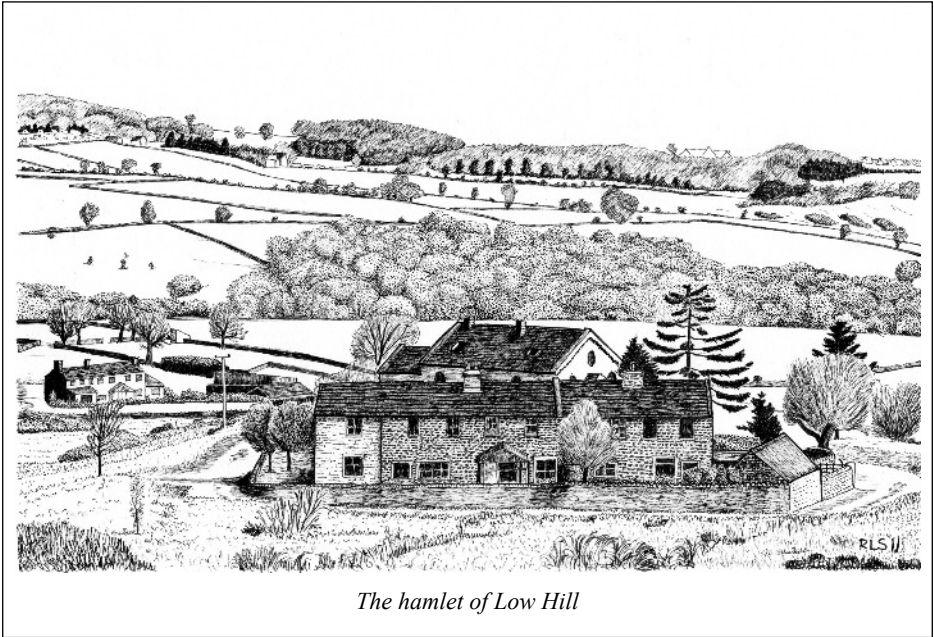
Go on past the White House, keeping it to your right, but before you come to the main road take a cleared path down through the bracken on your right which heads for a field wall which runs parallel to the main road. For a time you have a field wall on your right, and beyond that you cross a little footbridge. The path was recently cleared by the Friends of Baildon Moor, but some parts of it have been rather churned up by horse riders. Walk down the path until you come to the old chapel by a cluster of cottages, which constitute the second hamlet, Low Hill. Cross the road here at some safe point. Take care; visibility downhill is poor (stop, look, listen).

This old chapel was the Primitive Methodist Church. It cost £500 to build in 1874, on land purchased from the Lord of the Manor. It served both Low Hill and Moorside, with people from Low Springs and Sconce also attending. In its heyday it held very popular fund raising concerts and was noted for the large attendances to open air services there. The congregation from Browgate Primitive Methodist Chapel in Baildon used to attend its Chapel Anniversary Services, trooping across the moors. The population of the area declined and, with it, church attendance. The congregation fell to under ten and in 1917 the Trustees decided to close. It was sold to Thomas Robinson for £320, and enjoyed renown as a tea room for some time.

Just before you walk round Low Hill, look up the road towards the moor. On the right



is a Public Footpath notice directing you onto the moor. This is clearly marked on Ordnance Survey maps up to 1934 as Sconce Gate, which indicates that it is an ancient track. It skirted Low Hill and headed for Howden Wood, Sconce, and presumably then led on to Faweather and beyond. It was probably the way through the Sconce area before the village was built and Sconce Lane was made. It has been disused for some time as there is no bridge over the (narrow) stream, and although it can still be walked it is not well defined. The six inch to the mile map shows the link



*The hamlet of Low Hill*

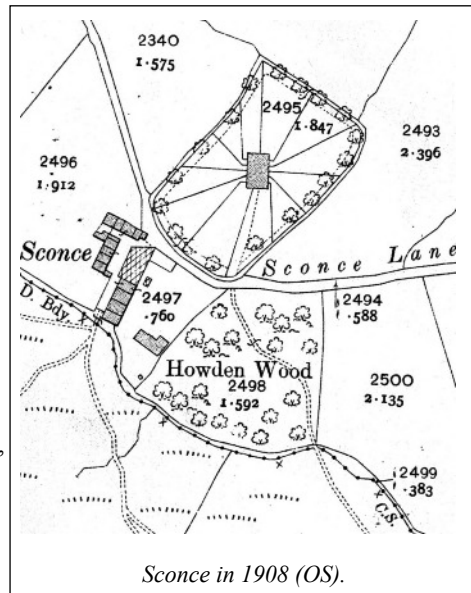
to a path which led from Tong Park, bypassing Moorside, to below the White House and then to the field wall mentioned previously.

Now, walk along the track between the moor and the hamlet, and circle clockwise round the houses, which used to be home to miners who worked on the moor. The maximum population of Low Hill was 96 in 1861, reduced to 26 by the 1891 census. In the 1890s Baildon Village had been promoted as a healthy place to live by two doctors, Johnson and Dunlop. However conditions were very bad in 1852, which led to the report of the General Board of Health, and later to improvement in water supply and the sewerage systems. The inspector said of the moorland hamlets, 'I do not think I have visited any place combining physical circumstances more favourable to health and longevity' – this when the rest of the report was highly critical of the conditions! The report led to the Public Health Act which requires an improved water supply, with reservoirs built in 1856, 1876 and 1891 – part of a general move in most growing towns to improve health.

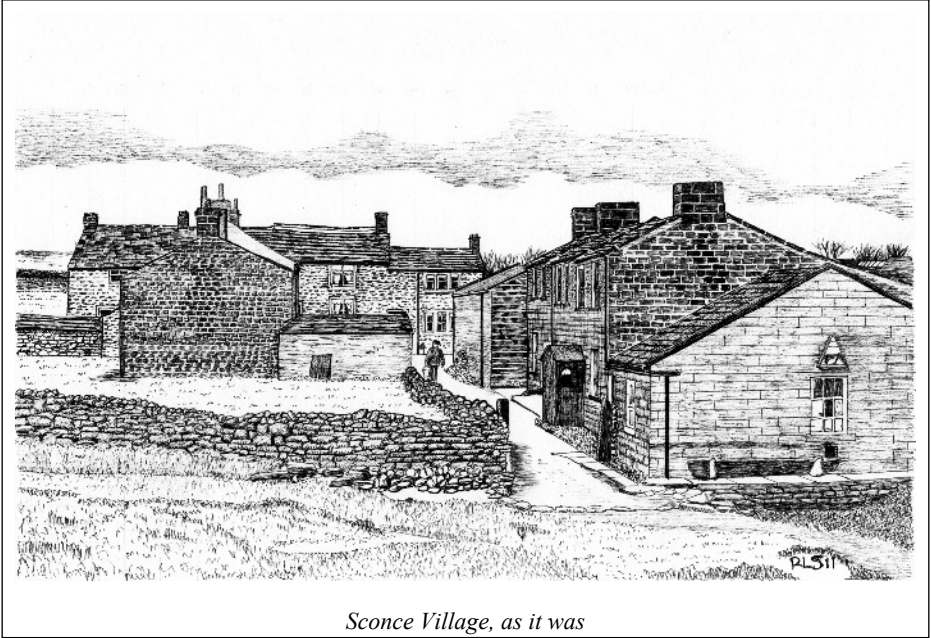
Improvement in Baildon Village led to living on the moor becoming less attractive, some of the houses consequently becoming holiday homes. Dr Battersby, Medical Officer of Health for Baildon, condemned the village in June 1961, with the exception of the chapel, and No 15 was excluded also as it had a pipe bringing water from nearby Joe's Well. This was originally called Crag Well and served both Low Hill and Sconce. The water

was analysed in the 1960s inquiry and found to be of exceptional purity. Nos 12/13 and 14 were given the opportunity to improve as they were part of the same row, buttressing No 15 which was to remain. After some arguments with Baildon Urban District Council, it was agreed that water could be piped to the other houses, and a septic tank could be built on council land, with householders paying an annual fee. The great irony is that the moorland hamlets drew from local wells (as at Moorside) much better water than the more polluted supplies to Baildon Village, at least until Baildon UDC built the reservoirs between 1856 and 1891. As you walk round the Low Hill houses, you will see that they have been beautifully done up, and one wonders what might have been done with those at Moorside.

Back on the road, make your way downhill past the new stone Baildon sign to the next group of houses which is called Low Springs, and which is in Hawksworth. For about 50 yards the road has virtually no verge and you must proceed with great caution. At the sharp right-hand bend, turn left up Sconce Lane which is sunken with use, with old and picturesquely irregular dry-stone walls on their gritstone base, and patchy tarmac. Should you meet any cars they will probably be moving with some caution, but you will have to scramble up the banking to let them pass. However, after a few hundred yards we will reach Sconce Scout camp where we shall leave the lane and head back to the moor. You are now in Bingley parish.



The Scout camp is on the site of the old hamlet of Sconce, which consisted of 13 houses in a T-shape, probably built in the mid-18th century for the Ferrands family of Bingley. The grassy area to the left is called the Old Village Field. This is the scout's camping area and should be respected. The other two fields which make up the scout camp are Rye Croft (to the right, i.e., north, of Sconce Lane) and Howden Wood Field. The earliest reference to residents of Sconce come from court records held in West Yorkshire Archives at Wakefield. There seems to have been a considerable feud between local families between 1672 and 1676. Robert Whiteacre and William Holmes of Sconce together with Christopher Lupton of Faweather were charged with theft of various items – three joints of veal at one time – the victims being the wife and daughter of Anthony Mason, butcher of Rothley.

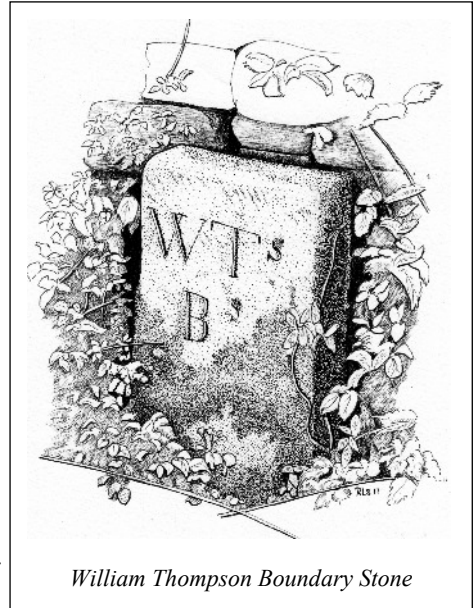


*Sconce Village, as it was*

In 1868 much of the village was bought by William Wainman Holmes, who was the owner of the worsted mill in Baildon (see *Baildon Village Walk*). In 1900 the field just north-east of the village was an aviary, breeding large numbers of canaries and poultry (the pens are shown on the adjacent map, and are labelled ‘Aviary’ on the 1893 OS map), and a decade later it was a holiday camp with a large central building surrounded by bell tents. It later became Jackson’s Holiday Camp for Boys and Girls, until it was burned down in the 1930s. The 1901 census, the last available, records only ten people living in Sconce. The Sconce houses were demolished by order of Bingley Council in 1934-35 on grounds of poor sanitation, much earlier than the two Baildon hamlets. Shipley and Baildon Scout Council purchased the land in 1964 for £550, and it is now a well-used facility.

There are two stiles on your left into the camp buildings. The first, with a surveyor’s benchmark engraved on it, comes before the first building: don’t take that – go on past a second pair of wide gates on the left (and a little green gate, marked SBD on the right), where you will find a second narrow stile on the left just before the second building, and where tarmac strips on the road begin. Turn left through this and go straight ahead, with the new stone building on your right and the green metal container on your left. You will come to a little path that leads through a stile with a small sheet-metal gate out onto the moor. Go through this and you are back in Baildon.

Along to the right are boundary stones placed by the Lord of the Manor, William Thompson. They are inscribed 'WTB' for 'William Thompson Boundary'. It is believed that there were thirteen stones placed in the early 1800s, and the early Ordnance Survey maps show them dotted about the moor, but few remain. At present only three are shown on OS maps, marked as 'BS' or simply 'Stone'. To protect his lands William Thompson did a boundary perambulation, the last being on 30 May 1854. Traditionally this was done on Rogation Day, with clergy and manor agent in attendance, and is more commonly known as beating the bounds. It started at Baildon Bridge and went past Dixon Mill (later Salts) to where Loadpit Beck runs into the River Aire, and where the manors of Shipley, Bingley and Baildon met. Then it went to Brackenhall Green, up Glovershaw Beck, and followed the moorland stream to reach Sconce and down to Gill Beck and eventually all the way back up the River Aire to Baildon Bridge. All of Baildon's boundary followed streams.



*William Thompson Boundary Stone*

(The *Salt Market Walk* takes you along this boundary by the edge of the golf course, to Birch Close, Faweather, Little London, and back to this point by Sconce Lane.)

### **Sconce back to the Eaves car park**

As you come through the little metal gate, just in front of you is there is an ancient little footbridge of stone slabs allowing you to step dry shod over a little beck making its way from the moor down to Gill Beck, past Low Springs. Shortly after the bridge the beck falls steeply over rocks (an impressive waterfall in wet weather). Make your way along the path ahead of you towards the car park on this side of the hill on the main road towards Baildon. It's a bit up-and-down, but the path is too well-defined for you to get lost. Careful stepping may be needed at times, but much improvement has already been made, including better drainage in the boggy areas, by the Friends of Baildon Moor. Some way along the track you may see (bracken willing) up on the moor away from the track on the right, a small fenced construction of stone. This is Joe's Well (or Crag Well, being in Sconce Crag) mentioned earlier, from which the Low Hill houses had their piped supply.

The path cuts through an area with shale deposits in some places, the first significant remains of the mining industry – the irregularity of the track and the surrounding terrain is largely due to the small-scale coal mine workings of the past, which we shall see much more of in the second part of the walk. The shales near to Hope Gate and Crook Farm contain marine fossils, but those by Sconce generally do not.

Follow the path back to a small car park; cross the road and climb the hill up to the Eaves to complete the first loop of the walk. Once there, pause on one of the benches to see the ground you have traversed. You may find the nearby plaque expresses your feelings, as many have before you. You may now go on to do the second loop of the walk, or leave that for another day.

## **The Moor Loop**

The second loop of the walk takes you up over the Moor and visits some of the archaeological sites to be found. There are more excellent viewpoints.

**Please note:** This is quite a strenuous walk, involving steep slopes and rough tracks which are sometimes wet. Take due care, and also ensure you are properly clad, both for the terrain and the weather. There are, however, many seats on the way.

## **The Eaves car park to the Reservoirs**

The area opposite the Eaves car park entrance was a scene of much military activity in the Second World War. One Baildon resident remembers the arrival of soldiers in October 1939. They set up a searchlight battery and took over part of the golf course. There was a generator for the search light (in what is now the small car park) a sound detector, a rangefinder and two search lights. This was followed by a tank park and the area up to the reservoirs was used as a tank training ground, and he even remembers being given a ride on a tank as a small boy. In 1942 huts were built and a large number of military personnel were billeted in the Picture House (which was in Northgate – demolished in the 1960s) and any large empty houses.

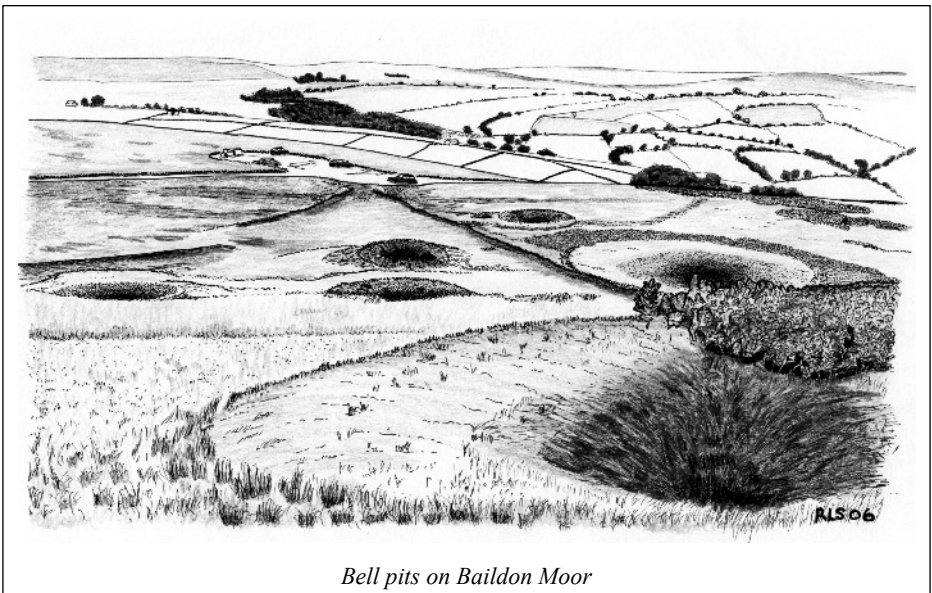
From the Eaves car park head across the Baildon-Hawthorn road, with extreme care, as with all moorland roads. Take one of the well-defined grassy paths (one goes between four wooden posts placed to discourage parking, the other is opposite the car park exit) which soon merge. Ignore any lesser paths: go straight ahead on the main track towards the reservoirs – a walled enclosure on the Bingley Road with a few trees.

On the right are fine examples of bell pits: circular with built up ‘collars’. There are an estimated 600 mining remains – bell pits, ventilation shafts and drainage holes, which are the most prominent feature of this landscape. Mining began in the thirteenth century, over on the Glovershaw (west) side of the moor, where the material sought was ironstone. You can still pick up ironstone nodules on many parts of the moor, recognisable as heavy for their size due to the metal content. The ironstone was taken to a site by Glovershaw

Beck which flows towards Shipley Glen, and the metal was extracted in a small furnace known as a bloomery. The 1900 OS maps mark two such sites near Glovershaw. Close by was a good source of charcoal in the local woods, which was used to achieve the high temperatures needed in the smelting process. The name, Loadpit Beck alludes to the iron industry (a 'lode' or 'load' is a vein of ore, and just for variety the Lane just above Loadpit Beck on the Eldwick side, is spelled 'Lodepit'). The extraction of iron is associated with the monks of Rievaulx Abbey at Faweather Grange (a Grange was a monastic farm).

Bell pits in general, however, were for the extraction of coal. By the seventeenth century coal was being mined on the moor on a large scale, this industry continued until the nineteenth century. The technique was simple but dangerous: a vertical shaft was sunk, probably to a depth of 60-80 feet and the walls were strengthened with timbers. The (often small) amount of coal was extracted along the seam, and the 'bell' was the internal shape, with the narrow shaft broadening out along the coal seam. Work continued until the risk of collapse was deemed too high, when it was abandoned and the shaft back-filled with any unusable shales and earth, and then capped. This settled over time and left the characteristic depressions. Some of these fill with water and create an interesting environment for plants and insects.

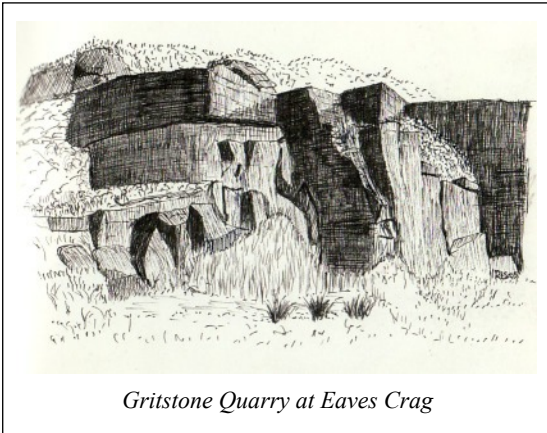
Many people must have died or been seriously injured in accidents over the centuries, mostly unreported. The Royal Commission on Children in the Mines looked at deaths in the Bradford area between 1837 and 1841. One death, of a young boy aged between



*Bell pits on Baildon Moor*

six and seven years old, is recorded in April 1838. The Bradford Observer reported that the inquest was held in the Cross Keys Inn, in Northgate, Baildon, and that he had fallen some 70 yards from the corve (basket) he was riding in. The verdict was accidental death, with no blame on the owner. Fortunately the use of child labour was restricted by the Factory Act of 1844, which followed the Commission's report in 1842.

Head for the road, and make your way along the track parallel to it until opposite the public footpath sign. To your right is a small quarry which utilised an outcrop in the



*Gritstone Quarry at Eaves Crag*

millstone grit rocks: you can see a few rocky outcrops from where you are, but you can walk round and into the quarry. This is Eaves Crag. Opposite the worked face is an uneven area with grass and bracken – a climb up there affords a wonderful view towards Low Hill and Low Springs. The neatly tended greens and fairways of the Baildon Golf course are a contrast to the increasingly invasive bracken, with only the best-used tracks visible. An occasional bright purple patch in the summer

is that tenacious wild flower, rosebay willowherb, sometimes known as fireweed, particularly in America. It is normally a plant of disturbed ground.

Return to the road and cross (carefully, as this is the crest of the hill) and follow the path to the wall at the edge of the lowest reservoir. Here you can rest on a bench which is dedicated to one Bill Metcalfe, a member of the golf club for 40 years. On a sunny summer's day this is the first shade since the start of the walk. Then, follow the reservoir wall until you reach a deep drainage channel. Cross this with care: the easiest place may be just at the corner of the wall. Note the shales here, a sedimentary rock created from mud and clays, composed the very thin layers which separate quite easily.

The walk now continues more or less up along the long wall of the reservoirs to the top corner, but the paths are not all that clear. Perhaps the easiest is to walk along the right-hand edge of the fairway away from the reservoir, past a sand-filled bunker on your left, until (as you come to what looks like a second bunker, but it's filled with rushes, not sand), you see a small path bearing right through the long grass towards the upper end of the reservoir. Follow this, forking right onto another path about three quarters of the way along the length of the reservoir, and pushing your way through bracken: but by one route or another make your way to the top corner of the reservoir wall which has



a large stone at the corner projecting upwards (it's a good landmark, and you can also see the main Bingley Road on the hillside beyond it).

On the outside of the stone is etched rather faintly the letters BWW, presumably for 'Baildon Water Works', and on the inside is the date 1875. However, it's almost hidden by a stone, so you can't see the date from the path, and even from close to the wall you have to crane your neck! The reservoirs were built in response to the Board of Health report for Baildon, the inspector being William Lee. He found all the wells in the village polluted, indeed people paid for water to be brought from the moorland wells, three quarters of a mile away – some spent up to four pence (4d) a week on water, a significant amount from a working wage in those days. The poor sewerage system led to the setting up of a Baildon Board, the creation of the reservoirs being one of the first steps towards making Baildon a much healthier place to live in.

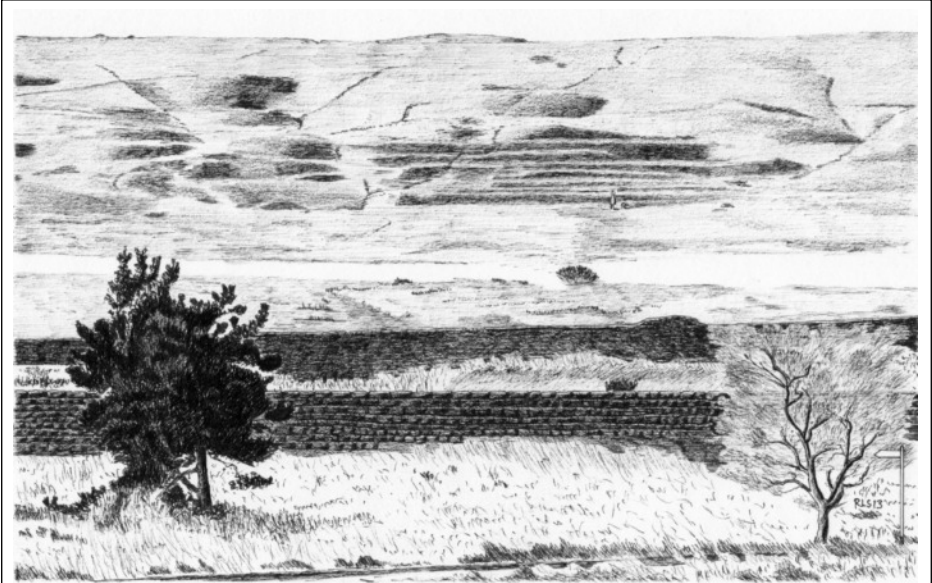
### **The Reservoirs to the Hutton seat**

Just above the reservoirs and slightly to your left as you stand with the tall stone behind you, is a golf course fairway. Make your way through the heather towards this (it has marker indicating '17') watching out for golfers driving off from the tee on your right, and pause on the far side of it, just where the dirt track from the tee meets it.

Look towards the bracken-covered higher ground, where the ground appears terraced. The terraces are the remains of training trenches dug during the First World War, and this whole ridge is where the Rifle Volunteers of the 1860s and the Territorial Army up to the First World War had their gun targets. There used to be competitions, the first known of which was in September 1859, by the Bradford Volunteer Rifle Corps, and made up of teams of 60 men. In 1861 Sir Titus Salt presented a silver cup worth 11 guineas, as second prize – the first being a rifle and case worth 25 guineas. In the following years there were many competitions between volunteers from the Yorkshire area – one in 1892 had teams from Bradford, Skipton, York, Leeds and Huddersfield.

The 1893 Ordnance Survey map shows the line of fire, which was right across the area now covered by this part of the golf course. The longest range is shown as 800 yards, from close to the Baildon-Hawthorn road. These ranges were also used by the Territorial Army, in particular, the First Company Sixth Battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment which was formed at Manningham Barracks in 1900. They held annual training camps on the moor, and had a good time learning to shoot, sharing the camaraderie and escape from their work and industrial grime. They were the first to enlist voluntarily for the army: mobilised in August 1915, and later serving at Ypres and The Somme where many of them perished.

However, the ranges were closed in October 1912, just before the outbreak of World War 1. A stray bullet had lodged in a window frame at Hammondale House, near Eldwick: the War Office understood that this was not the first such incident, and ordered closure.



*World War 1 training trenches above the reservoirs*

Thus overnight the Bradford and Leeds Rifles were left without a shooting range, but much of the moor was still used for other training exercises during both World Wars.

Now walk along the right-hand side of the fairway, with it on your left. After about 100 yards a grassy path runs parallel to it: follow that until you come to the second of two small and none-too-obvious paths (near a drainage channel) leading off up to your right towards the highest part of the skyline. The path you want is just beyond a group of small rowan saplings, which may help note the turn, and as confirmation that you've taken the right path you will quite soon pass a damp bell pit on your immediate left, but you can't see it clearly from the fairway. Soon you reach a small barren stony area (which you can just see from the fairway). Cross this in the middle, still going gently uphill, and take the well-pronounced path that bears left up the hill into the bracken. In the exposed part of the hillside can be found the remains of lead bullets used in the competitions described earlier. It is said that in Edwardian times people collected them by the bucketful and were paid for this. They still appear regularly, particularly after heavy rainfall.

Continue up the hill, through the bracken, ignoring lesser paths that cross yours, and you will soon see a welcome seat, at the meeting of several tracks, dedicated to Tom and Jean Hutton 'who both loved Baildon'. From here you have a wonderful view of the way you

have come. On the left is another fine bell pit, and in the field over on the right is a scarred mound, the remains of a spoil tip associated with one of the three actual pits which were situated on the moor – Brandcliff Pit (the others were Dobrudden which the main walk will visit later, and Lobley Gate, where Glen Road joins Bingley Road).

The extra elevation extends the view out over the Vale of York, including Drax Power Station, about 30 miles away (50 km). You can also see the tops of hangars at Leeds-Bradford airport. Closer to hand, you can see the walk's starting point, and the water in the reservoirs. On the golf fairways are further indications of the former mining activity. The ground in general is often quite uneven, and here and there you can see the outlines of filled-in bell pits. These show as dark circular patches, especially after rain.

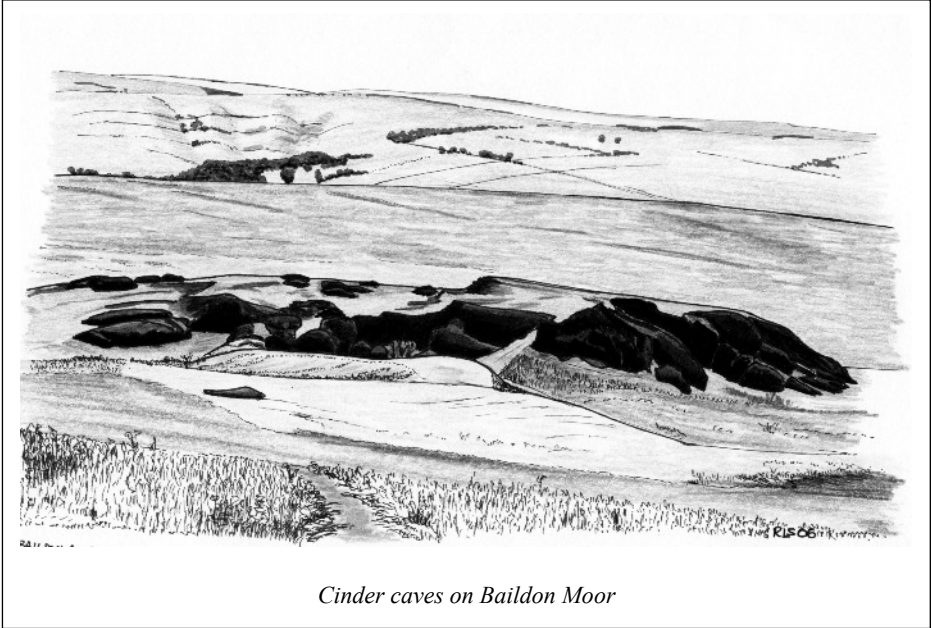
You now have a choice of route. You can stride up to the summit of the Moor and on to Dobrudden Farm by a route which will bring you back here, or if you've had enough for the time being, you can head back to the car park now. To return to the car park leave the seat and begin down by the way you came up, but immediately fork right down the main track, which is rather stony and soon turns to clay. However, it's steep and very rough: watch your step. If you prefer to find an easier path, you can follow any of the narrow paths which drop down, always heading for the field wall and the houses on your right, with the golf course to your left. For information about what you may see on this part of the walk, skip on to the final section of this walk: '**Brandcliff back to the Eaves car park**' The distance back to the car park is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (1.3 km).

### **Hutton seat to the Trig Point**

To continue the walk, climb up the broad track behind the seat towards the summit. Further up the hillside the vegetation changes from bracken to low growing grass. At a meeting of several ways note a bell pit on your left which has been extensively used by cyclists. The top section of the bell pit is well exposed and the infill can be seen – shales, pebbles, and larger stones, etc., and the cycle track divides the bottom of the bell pit in half with boggy parts and rushes at both sides.

Cross over the tracks which runs across the hill (one below the bell pit and one above) and continue upwards, then taking the right fork. When the trig point is in sight the landscape again changes, this time heavily quarried. Here several deep pools have formed in the former workings; interestingly the deepest pools on the moor are at its greatest height. The early Ordnance Survey maps show this area as a sandstone quarry – High Plain Delph. At times deep ruts cut through the workings. Note the sparkle of the quartz crystals from the sandstone.

At the summit, which is 925 feet (281 metres) you have wonderful views all round. If you are fortunate enough to be there on a sunny evening with the sun setting, different parts of the panorama are highlighted as clouds drift over. Sometimes Idle Hill and Thackley beyond will be highlighted, and then perhaps the distant Ovenden Moor wind farm above Oxenhope where the blades can be seen rotating. The diorama (set up by



*Cinder cones on Baildon Moor*

Friends of Baildon Moor) indicates what you can see in all directions. There are welcome seats here, near one of them and to the right of the track which leads to the road below, is a clearly carved cup and ring stone (atypically, with two rings), of which more later.

You will probably see dog walkers, joggers, kite and model aeroplane fliers. Mountain bikers and horse riders may come into view. Baildon Moor is one of the most used moors in West Yorkshire, and with that comes the problem of path erosion, something you will have seen on this walk. In former times you might have met a crowd on the moor. In 1835 the Leeds-based Irishman, Jem Bailey, fought Bradford's John (Brassy) Leechman. They were both prominent prize fighters, a brutal business, which the newspapers reported drew a crowd of some 12,000 to Baildon Moor. The fight lasted 135 minutes in 74 rounds, the winner, Bailey, took a prize of £10. Several more fights are recorded. More genteelly, large crowds were also attracted to the knurr and spell matches, where a small round pottery ball (the knurr) was mechanically ejected from a device (the spell) and hit by a club (the pommel). What links these two very different activities is that they are both an object for gambling, which is what attracted such large crowds – and there also used to be cock fighting at Dobrudden.

### **The Trig point to Dobrudden Farm Caravan Park**

When you are ready to move on, stand with the trig point on your left and the diorama on your right: then take the well-worn track immediately in front of you, and very soon

you will see the almost straight path to the Dobrudden Caravan Park, with the village of Eldwick beyond. Make your way to the right hand end of the park, crossing the road.

As you go, note down to the right the dark masses of the waste heaps known locally as the Cinder Caves. These were created by the spoil heaps being set alight and being left to burn for several days, or even weeks. It is said that a previous generation could remember Baildon Moor glowing a fiery red in the night. Some of the product of this burning was used in local road making, what was not needed was simply left. The different components of the heap erode at different rates and so the heaps slowly change.

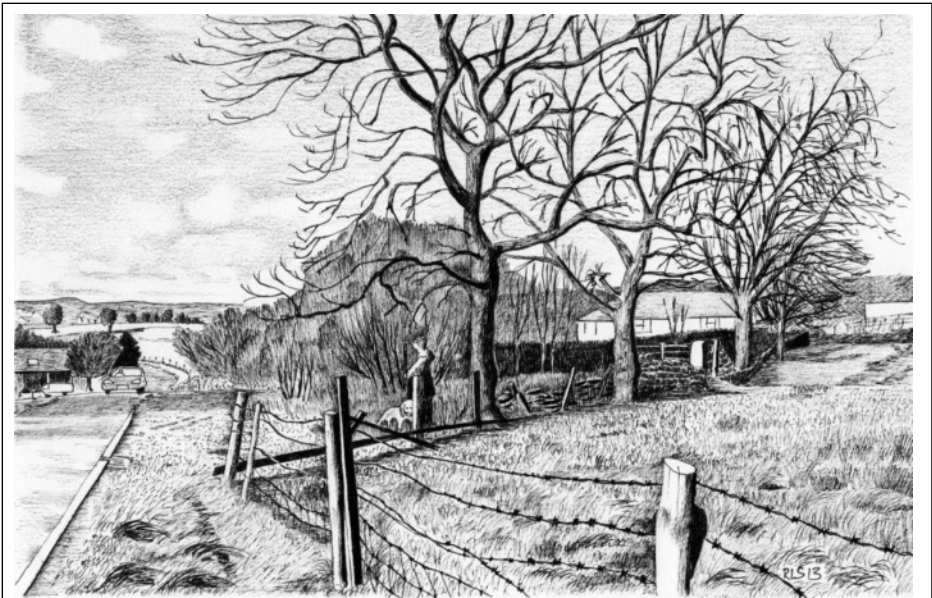
Below, on the other side of the road is Low Plain, a rich area for finding carved rocks: cup and ring stones as they are referred to, but now called Prehistoric Rock Art. Around 35 of the 80 or so recorded on the moor are in this area. They date from the late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, though may have been carved over periods of several hundreds of years, and may have gone through design changes. They can be found in many areas of the north of England, but the ones on Rombalds Moor (Bingley, Baildon and Ilkley Moor) are extensive, and have been well studied and mapped. No one knows why these rocks were carved, but they are a sign that hunter gatherers were beginning to settle, and could have geographical, family, spiritual or burial significance. Whilst theories abound, the fact remains that we will never know why prehistoric man took the time to do so many carvings. Remember though that when they were being carved, the



*Cup and Ring Stone, near Dobrudden Farm Caravan Park*

moor would have been covered in small trees such as willow and alder, and that the climate would have been similar to that in Southern France nowadays.

When you reach the caravan park rest on the seat near to the camp wall, with the lovely message 'Rest and be thankful.' On the path which leads directly in front of you, is a small but deeply carved rock, but the easiest marked rock to find is the one which was placed in the wall of the caravan site behind where you are sitting (follow the wall downhill a few yards: it's just under the power line). This was placed there by the curator of Cartwright Hall, Sidney Jackson. He did much to promote the study of the moor, particularly in schools. It was he who called Baildon Moor 'Bradford's open air museum' – a concept which is hopefully illustrated by this walk. The rock would not originally have been upright, but flat like most of the others. It was moved in the 1950s, and that could not be done now, as they are all scheduled monuments under the care of English



*Glovershaw Common, on the Bingley Road, where once animals would have been penned*

Heritage, and have been recorded by GPS satellite positioning. Permission is now needed even to uncover the turf.

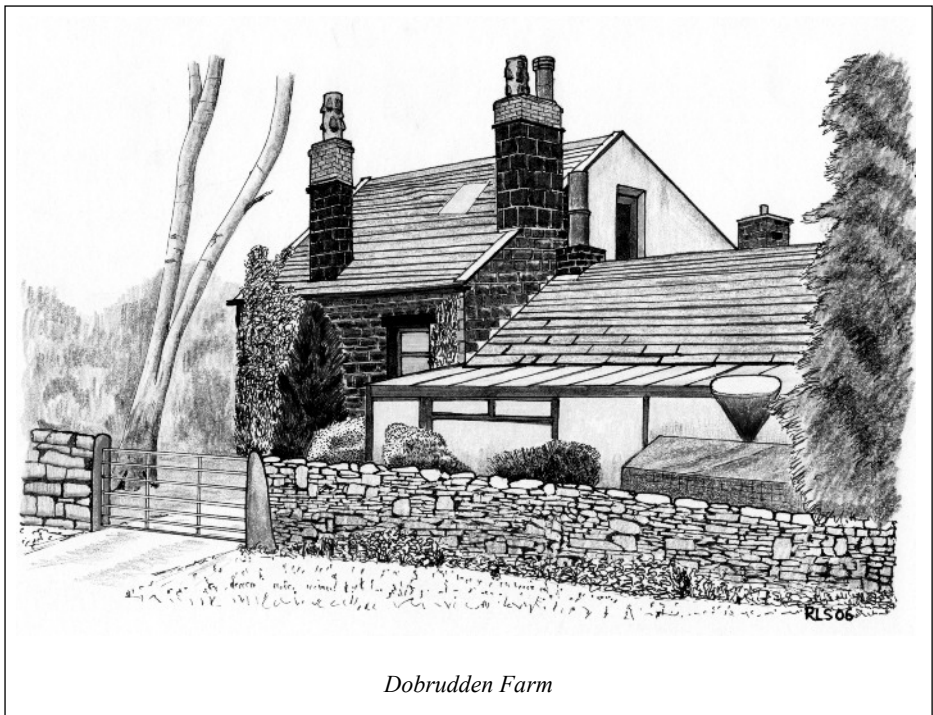
If you walk just a little further, to the brow of the hill, you get a wonderful view of the upper reaches of Shipley Glen, including Glovershaw where the ironstone was worked. Mention was made at the start of the walk of the effect of glaciers in forming the landscape,

and here it can be seen again. Shipley Glen was carved out by the heavy and sustained melt waters from the icecap high on the moors at the end of the last ice age, and it is formed by the confluence of the Glovershaw and Eldwick Becks – you can trace their courses by the lines of trees. Following the line of Eldwick Beck (the far one), you can see further up little dry valleys, their contours picked out by the dips in the field walls. It is likely that these too were formed by melt waters.

### **Dobrudden Farm Caravan Park to Brandeliff**

Return to the seat and follow the path with the wall on your right towards the caravan park entrance, passing Dobrudden Farm House. The unusual name is derived from ‘Dobriding’ which means Dob’s clearing. In 1851 it was described as a nine-acre farm, and the farmer’s wife and daughters also worked as wool combers. It was also known as Cock-walk Farm, because it had a cock-pit and a large number of game cocks. In June 1853 one James Cawthray was fined heavily for taking part in a cock fight on Baildon Moor, and for trespassing.

Turn left along the tarmac road, and after about 50 yards right along a track indicated by the blue Millennium Way Circular Walk sign number 16. (Another path from the ‘Rest



*Dobrudden Farm*

and be thankful' seat comes in here, just where there is often a pile of roadside rubble.) Any of the well trodden paths up the hill will take you back to the summit, but our walk heads round the far brow of the hill, and still has plenty of surprises. If you are still in good walking form, continue past the fenced area with hawthorn bushes growing within. This is a capped deep mine shaft, a remnant of the Dobrudden Pit which had an engine house and a flue which went up the hillside to a chimney.

Just after this pit site, and well before the wall, at another bell pit on your left, take a path left up the hill. Fork right, keeping the bell pit on your left. The path climbs a little way up the hill and curves to the right, soon coming to run parallel to the field wall you can just see below you. From here you can once again see the wind farm on the distant horizon, and this side of it you may be able to pick out (with binoculars) the single wind turbine in the quarry just above Haworth.

Continue along the brow of the hill until you can see the wonderful view of Saltaire, from which you can appreciate the grid pattern of the streets. Just below you are Hope Gate, and the field in which medieval pottery was found by a local man, Bernard Stubbs, who excavated this area. Coming from Hope Gate there is a short piece of pack-horse way which winds through the bottom of the small valley, and would have headed across the moor to Lobley Gate, Golcar Farm and beyond.

There are lots of paths, but you want to keep on round the hill at the same contour, and continue to appreciate the wonderful view as it changes. St John's church tower and then Baildon comes into view. Parts of Shipley are in view with octagonal Tax Office and the redeveloped Mason's Mill complex, and below you is Sandal School. Soon you can see the trig point on the left, and patches of bracken on your right. When you come to a rough track crossing the path you are on, turn right and head down for Baildon. The field wall gets ever nearer as you pass through another heavily quarried or mined area, with several mounds of clinker (examples of the cinder caves described earlier), and another seat, in the memory of one Jen Pugh. From here you get a very clear view of the site of Brandcliff pit, in the adjacent field. Further down, where a deeper sort of double track probably used by heavy carts seems to go into the hillside (actually this is best seen coming up the hill rather than going down), is where ganister was quarried, a hard rock rich in silicon. It was taken down to Baildon Green and mixed with the quarried locally fireclays to be made into fire bricks for mill chimneys and domestic fires and flues (see the *Ferniehurst and Baildon Green Walk* for more on this).

### **Brandcliff back to the Eaves car park**

Follow the track until it reaches the corner of the wall – the heavily-eroded steep and rough track down from the Hutton seat comes in on your left at this point, that is, the short cut for those who didn't go on to the summit of Baildon Hill. Turn right, following the direction of the wall, and walk down the track with the houses on your right and the golf course on your left. Continue on the track which now goes through patches of





*Paved track on Baildon Moor*

blackberries and gorse, with occasional honeysuckle. You soon reach stretches of double paved wagon way. These stones were set down to prevent the iron wheeled wagons from sinking in the boggy ground. These wagons would have carried the extracted materials down to Baildon village for distribution further afield. A little way further the surface looks like fused molten material. This covers the original stones in places and is something of a mystery – were fires used to create a high enough temperature to fuse the material which then hardened on cooling? And if so, why?

The vegetation changes once again, now much influenced by the nearby gardens. There is a sort of ‘corridor’ with many garden escapees, not native to the moor. At the Millennium Way signpost, just before the first tee (all the tees have names: this one’s ‘Reservoirs’) the right turn takes you to the Golf Club and the refreshments of Baildon. To get back to the Eaves car park, keep on until you reach the Baildon-Hawksworth Road, then turn left and make your way back to the car park.

A final thought as you complete this walk. Until 1899 all the lands you have walked over today were the property of the Lord of the Manor, the last one being Colonel Maude. He sold the 778 acres, including Baildon Green and Brackenhall to Bradford Corporation for £7,000, certainly one of Bradford’s finest acquisitions

## **List of the Baildon Heritage Trails**

*All these publications can be downloaded free at [www.baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk)*

*Except as noted, they are available in booklet form for a small charge at Baildon Library.*

1. **The Baildon Village Walk:** the old lanes, folds and corners of central Baildon.
2. **Coach Road to Shipley Glen:** a short walk through lanes and woodlands.
3. **The Charlie Thompson Walk:** old Charlestown round St John's Court.
4. **The Turnpike Walk:** between the two old turnpike road milestones on Otley Road.
5. **The Kirklands Walk:** St John's Court to St James's, Kirklands and Hoyle Court.
6. **The Riverside Walk:** from Roundwood Road to Charlestown by the River Aire.
7. **The Railway Walk:** the Arches at Woodbottom to the great Viaduct at Tong Park.
8. **The Threshfield and Low Baildon Walk:** Based on Station Road, with glimpses of clothiers cottages and grand houses of later mill owners.
9. **The Lost Hamlets of Baildon Moor:** the remains of Moorside, Low Hill and Sconce, and the archaeology of the moor.
10. **Ferniehurst and Baildon Green:** A walk looking principally at the sites of two Victorian mansions with Salt family connections.
11. **The Salt Market Walk:** Sconce, Birch Close and Faweather by old lanes.

*Also available*

**Exploring Baildon: a Guide to Public Spaces:** brief information on 55 selected sites within the extensive, interesting and beautiful network of public spaces in Baildon.

**The Baildon Peace Walk:** a short walk based on the Baildon Peace Garden between Cliffe Avenue and Green Road. Published by and available from Baildon Community Link: 01274 588681 [baildon.link@btinternet.com](mailto:baildon.link@btinternet.com).

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Mike Lawson, Tish Lawson, Stewart Main and Marian Taylor.

Drawings by Roy Lorrain-Smith ©

Maps by Vic McLindon

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Comments on this walk are welcome and should be sent to:  
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Baildon BD17 6NX  
[clerk@baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@baildowntowncouncil.gov.uk)



# The Lost Hamlets of Baildon Moor

NOT TO SCALE

