

Dumb Steeple (or **Doom Steeple**). The origins of this obelisk are obscure. Some suggest it was a place where sanctuary could be claimed. Others suggest it is a parish boundary stone, marking the threefold intersection of Mirfield, Clifton & Hartshead parishes. On the night of 11 April 1812 it was the muster point for about 150 Luddites. The field to the north of the obelisk was the marshalling area for the force prior to moving off to Cartwright's Mill at Rawfolds.

Three Nuns Inn. An inn has probably stood on this site since early in the 16th century.



Its intriguing name may refer to three nuns, Cecilia Topcliffe, Joan Leventhorp and Katherine Grice, from the former Kirklees Priory nearby.

When the Priory house was surrendered to Henry VIII's commissioners in 1539, it housed eight professed nuns. The prioress, together with four nuns, retired to a house in Mirfield known as Paper Hall, (a corruption of Papist Hall.) Cecilia, Joan and Katherine remained close to the former priory where they founded the eponymous inn.

Robin Hood. The story of Robin Hood relates that he died at Kirklees Priory. Accompanied by Little John, an aged Robin travelled from the Barnsdale area north of Doncaster to be bled by his

1 The Three Nuns Public House. Standing on the footway facing the Three Nuns, turn left and follow the busy A62 for 400 metres to the **2 Dumb Steeple.** A blue plaque here gives some information relating to the Dumb Steeple and the Luddites.

Return to the Three Nuns.

On the eastern side of the car park is a path which follows an old lane in a northerly direction. Follow the path. After 700 metres ignore a path off to the right. After a further 300 metres, where the track forks, take the lane to the right **3 (Cross Hills Lane)** and follow it into Hartshead village, emerging by Cross Hills Cottage at a bend on Hartshead Lane.

Cross the road and proceed straight forward. Pass (or call at) 'The Gray Ox' pub. Continue forward past Peep Green Lane up Church Lane and arrive at **4 Hartshead Church.**

Pass the church and follow the road round to the right to the cross roads. These are sited in the former extensive Hartshead Moor. (The information panel erected by the Spen Valley Civic Society explains the extent of Hartshead Moor at the time of the Luddite attack here in February 1812.)

Cross the road carefully and go forward along Hare Park Lane. After 400 metres you will arrive at a small

5 Friends (Quakers) burial ground. This is marked on older maps as 'The Sepulchre' (an ecclesiastical/biblical name for a tomb). Take the footpath at the front right corner of this graveyard: cross the stile and proceed along the green lane.

Ignore the first path entering from the left-hand side just before an electricity pylon. A little further on at a field gate, turn left. Follow the path down the side of the field, keeping the hedge on your right. At the bottom turn right and follow the path, pass through a squeeze stile onto Clough Lane. Turn right, pass a house called 'Wheatfields' and go forward past the cemetery. On reaching Triangle Farm on the left, cross the road carefully and go down the unmade lane. (This is a bridleway known as **6 Bullace Trees Lane** and is marked with blue arrows.) Keeping on the lane go forward passing through two green field gates until the church in Roberttown is reached.

Turn left, cross Church Road carefully and opposite the Community Centre (just before Roberttown Grange) turn right down School Street. On reaching Roberttown Lane, turn right and walk down to the **7 Star Inn.** (The plaque placed here by the Spen Valley Civic Society tells the part the pub played in the history of the Luddites.)

At the Star Inn turn right along Commonsides until a public

cousin - Elizabeth de Stainton, the prioress of Kirklees Priory. However her paramour Sir Roger de Doncaster wished Robin dead and persuaded Elizabeth to let him bleed to death. As Robin approached death he summoned Little John and asked for his long bow. He shot an arrow and asked that he be buried where it landed. Robin's grave is a mile to the north-west of the Three Nuns in privately owned woodland.

His epitaph reads:
*'Here underneath this little stone
Lies Robert, Earl of Huntingdon
No archer as he was so good
And people called him Robin Hood
Such outlaws as he and his men
England will never see again.
Died 24 December 1247'*

St Peter's Church. Hartshead

Thought to be of Saxon origin the church was rebuilt in 1180. Between 1811 and 1815 the curate at Hartshead was the Rev. Patrick Brontë, father of the famous Brontë sisters. He lodged at the nearby 'Lousy Thorn' farm, now called 'Thorn Bush' farm. It is said that on the night of 11/12th April 1812 he heard the sound of the Luddites as they passed on their way to Cartright's Mill.

Friends' Burial Ground.

Friends, otherwise known as Quakers, do not practise the rite of baptism by water. In the 17th Century this meant that Quakers could not be buried in consecrated ground. So they established their own burial site.

Bullace Trees Lane.

The bullace is an edible fruit similar to a damson. Trees bearing this fruit still grow here on the left after Triangle Farm.

footpath sign is reached before the school. Turn left through a squeeze stile, and follow the path through a second stile and pass into a field. Keeping the hedge on the left, pass a small wood and go through a third stile, continuing with the fence to the right, to a fourth stile at Prospect Road.

Cross the stile, turn left and follow Prospect Road, passing the Hartshead club/pub on your right. At the bottom cross Fall Lane carefully, pass through the stile and go straight ahead across the field, passing between two very old stone gateposts. Continue forward to an upright stone pillar. At this pillar turn left and walk down a hidden green lane. At the end of the lane pass through a stile and follow a boardwalk over marshy ground until a bank with steps is reached on the left hand side.

Go up the steps, emerging on Hartshead Hall Lane. Turn right and follow the road, past Hartcliff stud farm and **8 Hartshead Hall**, to a field gate immediately ahead. Pass through the gap between the gate and the wall and follow the path, keeping the wood on the left-hand side. At the end of the wood there are three paths. Take the centre one going over a stile and follow the path which crosses the field down to another small wood where there are two stiles. Continue forward across the field towards marshy Brook Shrogg which is again crossed on a boardwalk, followed by a stile and a footbridge. Follow the path, emerging on to the A62. Turn right and go downhill to the Three Nuns, back to the starting point



St. Peter's Church



Friend's Burial Ground



Star Inn



Spen
Valley
Civic
Society

We wish to thank the following people and organisations whose assistance enabled the Luddite Trail to become a reality.

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The Luddite Trail Part 1



Who were the Luddites.

Luddites were working men who were fearful when their livelihood was threatened by the introduction of machines. The Luddites after whom the Luddite Trails are named, were mainly local croppers.

Hand shearing of unfinished woollen cloth required huge skill and the cropper was one of the highest-paid of all the textile crafts people. Croppers used enormous, heavy shears on the woven cloth, which had previously had its nap raised, and sheared it to produce a fine finish.

A machine called a cropping frame could replace four hand croppers. For some this meant unemployment, poverty and starvation.



A cropping frame, hated by the croppers



Dumb Steeple

The Luddite Trail comprises two parts which together commemorate the route taken by the Luddite marchers from the Dumb Steeple to Cartwright's Mill at Rawfolds, Liversedge, on the night 11/12 April 1812. The trail description also notes other features of interest along the route. The trail can be followed by any reasonably fit person and provides an introduction to some of the history and geography of the Spen Valley.

Start:

On the footway outside the Three Nuns Pub, Leeds Road, Mirfield (A62). The trail can be started anywhere but follow it in a clockwise direction.

Distance & Time

5 miles (8km). Allow 2 hr 30minutes. SE 181211, WF14 0BY.

code:

Nearby parking is difficult. Before parking in the Three Nuns car park please seek permission.

Bus Service:

Buses 202, 203, 220, 229 & 278 all pass nearby. Stout footwear is recommended as some paths can be muddy at times.

Refreshments:

Three Nuns Pub and Starbucks near the start, the Gray Ox, Hartshhead, Hartshhead Social Club, the New Inn and the Star Inn in Robertown.

Finding your way:

i) A copy of the Ordnance Survey map Explorer 288. (Optional.)
ii) A on-line .gpx file is available for those walkers who have Ordnance Survey maps in electronic form.

iii) The trail is waymarked using discs.

Note on the design of the Waymarking discs.



TURN LEFT



STRAIGHT ON



TURN RIGHT

The image on the disc represents two crossed sledgehammers, called Enochs. These were carried by the Luddite hammermen to smash the hated cropping frames. The hammers were manufactured by Enoch & James Taylor of Marsden who also made the cropping frames.

Enoch did make 'em, and Enoch shall break 'em'

