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High land home

A self-guided walk around Hoylandswaine in South Yorkshire



Explore a historic village and its surrounding countryside
Find out about the significance of its geographical position
See evidence of many different industries and trades
Discover a unique wildflower meadow

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the stories of our landscapes
discovered through walks







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Cover image: Track between Hoylandswaine and Guyder Bottom, Neil Theasby, Geograph (CCL)

High land home

Explore the village of Hoylandswaine in South Yorkshire

It is easy to pass by Hoylandswaine without noticing it. These days a bypass takes traffic around the outskirts of the village.

But turn off the main road and discover an ancient village that was once a hive of activity. And it was geography that shaped the village's history.



Its position on high land, the prevailing climate, the underlying geology and soils all influenced the development of particular industries.

There is evidence of nail making, coal mining and linen weaving, tanning, salt trading and farming. It is quite remarkable how many different industries and trades this small village hosted.

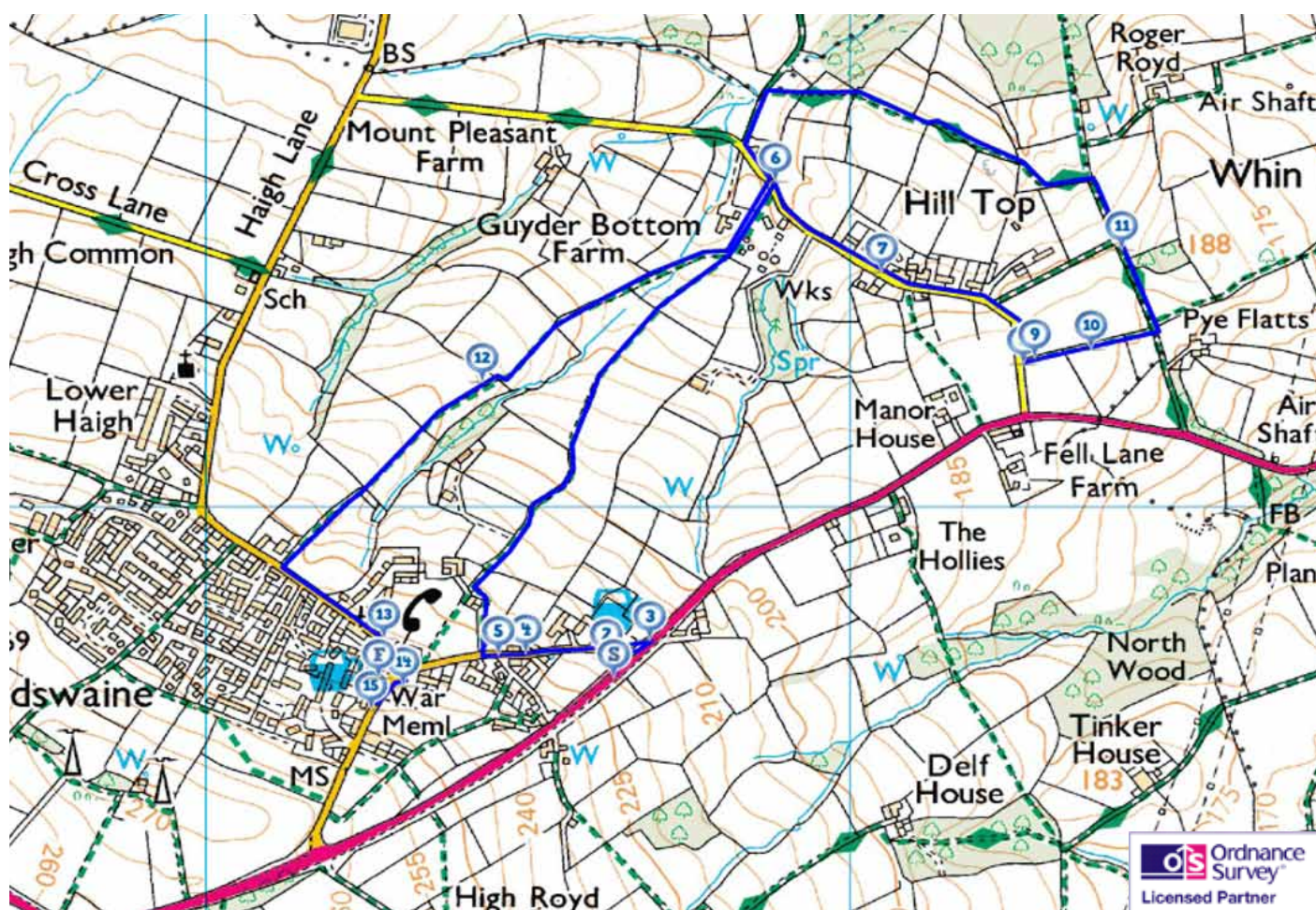


The story of this village comprises layer after layer of different people who owned the land and used the land from prehistoric tribes to Roman traders and from medieval lords to twentieth century benefactors.

The highlight at the mid-point of the walk is a visit to a unique wildflower meadow which is now a SSSI.

Top: Farming on the high land © Jenny Lunn
Bottom: The old nail forge © Jenny Lunn

Route map



Stopping points

- Start** Village sign near Lord Nelson pub, Barnsley Road
- 2.** Water trough opposite Lord Nelson pub
 - 3.** Nipping Row Cottages, off Barnsley Road
 - 4.** Old nail forge, outbuilding of 355 Barnsley Road
 - 5.** End of Skinpit Lane
 - 6.** Guyder Bottom, Cooper Lane
 - 7.** Hill Top House, Cooper Lane
 - 8.** Top of Cooper Lane near Barnsley Road
 - 9.** Entrance to Pye Flatts SSSI, Cooper Lane
 - 10.** Pye Flatts SSSI, off Cooper Lane
 - 11.** Whin Moor Lane
 - 12.** Fields below Pinfold Farm
 - 13.** Cricket ground, Haigh Lane
 - 14.** War memorial, junction of Barnsley Road and Haigh Lane
 - 15.** Almshouses, 305-311 Barnsley Road
- Finish** Rose and Crown, Barnsley Road

Practical information

Location	Hoylandswaine, South Yorkshire
Getting there	<p>Car – Hoylandswaine is 6 miles west of Barnsley. It is easily accessible from the M1 (Junction 37). The village is just off the A628 Manchester to Barnsley road and the A629 Huddersfield to Sheffield road. Park at the Lord Nelson pub which is adjacent to the start point.</p> <p>Train – The nearest stations are Penistone (2 ½ miles) and Silkstone Common (3 miles) which are served by trains running hourly between Sheffield and Huddersfield via Barnsley.</p> <p>Bus – The village is served by local buses running between Barnsley and Penistone every hour (limited service on Sundays). There are several stops on Barnsley Road near the Lord Nelson (start of walk) and Haigh Lane (end of walk). See www.travelsouthyorkshire.com for details.</p> <p>Bicycle – The Trans Pennine Trail (national coast-to-coast cycleway) which is designated as National Cycle Route 62 runs through Penistone a couple of miles to the south.</p>
Start point	Village sign near Lord Nelson pub, Barnsley Road, Hoylandswaine S36 7JA
Finish point	Rose and Crown pub, Barnsley Road, Hoylandswaine S36 7JA
Walk distance	2 ¾ miles
Level	Moderate – several ascents and descents; some stiles en route
Terrain	Pavements, rural lanes, tracks and field paths
Suitable for	<p>Dogs – A pleasant countryside walk for dogs but they must be kept on a lead in fields where there are livestock (between Stop 5 and 6, between Stop 11 and 12). The Rose and Crown (Stop 16) is a dog-friendly pub.</p>
Best time to visit	The wildflower meadow (Stops 9 to 10) is at its best from May to August.

Refreshments **Lord Nelson** (start of walk) – Open 7 days a week for lunches and evening meals. www.lordnelsonhoylandswaine.co.uk

Rose and Crown (end of walk) – Open 7 days a week from 10am for coffee, tea and homemade cakes; light lunches from 12 noon and evening meals from 4pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturdays. www.roseandcrown-hoylandswaine.co.uk

Toilets There are no public toilets in the village; customers can use the toilets at the two pubs.

Places to visit **Pye Flatts SSSI wildflower meadow** (Stop 9 and 10)
The walk visits the wildflower meadow but if you would like to know more about the history of the site, its flora and traditional management you can arrange an official guided tour; these are free and sponsored by Natural England under the educational access scheme. Contact Granville Danny Clarke in advance on 07966 507 626.

Hoylandswaine Nail Forge (Stop 4)
The historic nail forge is not open to the public regularly. If you would like to visit look out for special opening times during the village festival in July and on Heritage Open Days in September.

High Royd Farm – High Royd Lane, Hoylandswaine S36 7JR
Take home some local produce from this excellent farm shop located just the other side of the A628 at the top end of the village. Open Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 10am to 1pm.

Wortley Top Forge – Forge Lane, Wortley, S35 7DN
This 17th century iron forge is the oldest surviving water-powered heavy iron forge in the world. It is located between the villages of Wortley and Thurgoland about 5 miles south of Hoylandswaine on the A629. Open between Easter and November on Sundays (11am to 5pm) plus Bank Holiday Mondays. Small admission fee. www.topforge.co.uk

Tourist information www.yorkshire.com/places/south-yorkshire
www.visitpenistone.co.uk

1. Welcome to Hoylandswaine

Village sign near Lord Nelson pub, Barnsley Road

Welcome to South Yorkshire and the village of Hoylandswaine. We start our walk by the village sign to find out about the origins of its name because this is key to the story of this place.



What's in a name?
© Jenny Lunn

The village was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as being called Holan. The first part of the name comes from the Old English word 'hoh' meaning a hill spur or ridge so essentially the village name described cultivated land on a high ground at the top of a slope. In a short while you will see this positioning for yourself.

The 'swaine' part of the name was added in the eleventh century and refers to the manorial land being in possession of a man called Swein, which is the old Scandinavian for Sveinn. Although the village name draws from both Saxon and Norman times, this area has been shaped by historic periods both before and since. We will discover evidence in the landscape of different people who owned the land and used the land.



View from the high land towards the northeast
© Jenny Lunn

We start in the village on the high ground before going down to the valley bottom to explore an outlying hamlet then come back up again.

Along the way we will find out how the geographical position, as well as the climate, geology and soils have all shaped the different industries of the village in the past and present.

This walk was created by Granville Daniel Clarke FRSA, a celebrity artist, poet, songwriter, musician and conservationist, who has lived in the area for nearly 40 years. He has illustrated the walk with his own drawings, paintings and poems.

Directions 1

From the village sign walk a few steps away from the main road with the wall on your left. Opposite the entrance to the Lord Nelson car park is a small paved area where there is a bench and water trough.

2. Watering holes

Water trough opposite Lord Nelson pub

Water is an essential resource for any human settlement. Many towns and cities the world over are established along the banks of rivers for easy access to water. But, as we have already discovered, this village is built on high land. So what was its primary source of water?

Actually the geographical location provides the answer. First the high altitude of the Pennines means that the area receives plenty of rainfall. Second the underlying geology in this area means that natural springs and wells abound.



Well dressing
© G D Clarke

Thus despite its ridge-top position, Hoylandswaine always had a plentiful supply of water. There would have been a number of troughs and wells like this one for the use of people and animals until standpipes were fitted in the 1920s. Mains water was piped to the village in 1950s.



Lord Nelson pub
© G D Clarke

This water trough is decorated every year during the village festival with murals created by the local school children. This follows the ancient custom (widely found in neighbouring Derbyshire) of giving thanks for water.

Across the road is another 'watering hole', the Lord Nelson pub. This is actually one of the oldest buildings in the village, dating back to 1569.

It was originally a farmhouse but was later converted into three cottages (the left hand one still bears the date 1723). It later became a hostelry.

Directions 2

With your back to the well, cross the road and turn right along the pavement away from the Lord Nelson. The pavement bends round to the left and joins the main Barnsley Road. Stop here and look at the end of a row of houses opposite which is known as Nipping Row Cottages.

3. Damp basements

Nipping Row Cottages, off Barnsley Road

This area of high ground experiences a cool, dull and wet climate. This was quite influential in one of the village's main industries: linen weaving.

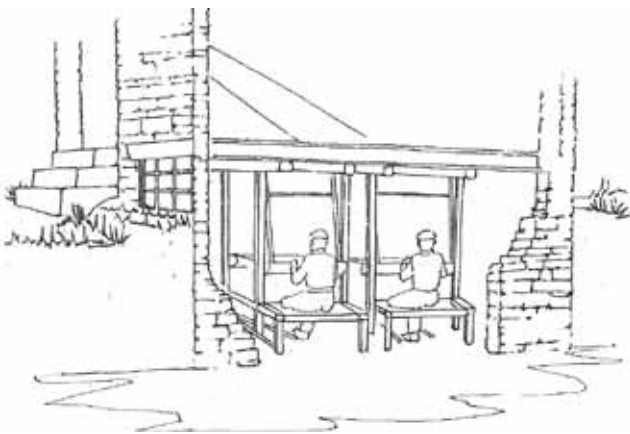
It was a trade recorded in Hoylandswaine as far back as 1637 in the will of a Mr Thomas Gudder whose occupation was listed as 'lynnen webster', an early term for linen weaver.

Although Yorkshire is well-known for the woollen industry, linen was significant too and the nearby town of Barnsley was an important centre for it.



Nipping Row Cottages
© Jenny Lunn

Hemp, the raw material for making linen, was grown locally in the surrounding village of Hoylandswaine. In cottages like those opposite it was woven into linen cloth before being taken to Barnsley for bleaching and finishing.



Linen weavers at work in a basement
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

Linen looms were generally located in the basement because the damp air made the yarn less likely to snap during weaving. The presence of basement windows in this row is the clue that they were purpose-built as linen weavers' cottages. Wool, by contrast, tended to be woven on the upper floors of cottages where large windows let in lots of light.

Production in small village-based workshops like these declined as the industrial revolution spread. The invention of power looms mechanised the weaving process, increasing efficiency and output.

The establishment of factories and warehouses in towns left villagers in places such as Hoylandswaine needing to find alternative sources of employment.

Directions 3

Retrace your steps to the Lord Nelson and continue up the pavement on the right side of the road for about 100 metres. Look for a stone cottage on the right (Number 355). Look over the wall just before it into the small garden where there is a stone outbuilding.

4. Forgemasters of nails

Old nail forge, outbuilding of 355 Barnsley Road

This old building, barely the size of a modern garage, was once a nail making forge. There are actually three rooms inside, each of which was a separate nailshop with its own forge.

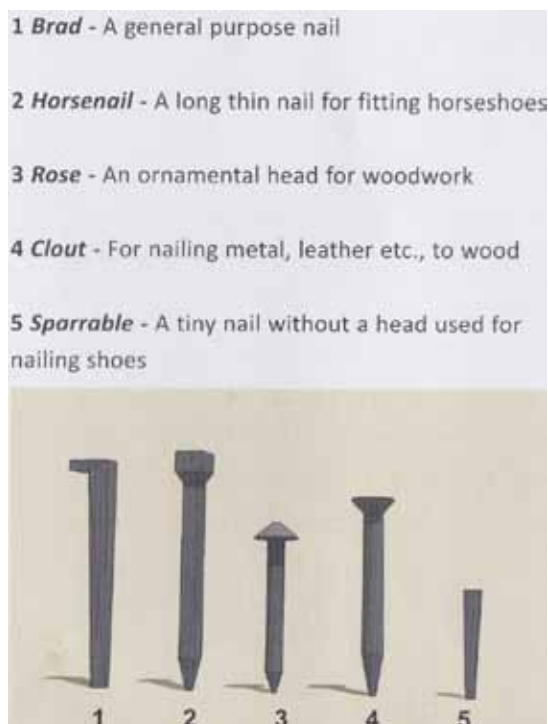
Nail making was quite an important industry in this area at one time and the village had several other forges.

The reason for the development of an industry making objects from iron was largely due to the local geology. A seam of ironstone runs roughly north-south passing through this area between Penistone and Barnsley.



Nail forge
© Jenny Lunn

The other elements important for iron making were also present in this area: extensive woods for making charcoal and local rivers for water power.



Types of nail
Copyright unknown

Although there is a history of iron making in South Yorkshire dating back to the Roman period and written evidence dating back to the 1100s, the industry received a boost in 1585 when the blast furnace was introduced. This invention provided hotter air and made the process more efficient.

From the medieval period, nails were made in small workshops next to the nail makers' homes. There were some full-time nail maker's in the sixteenth century but most would have fitted it in between working in the fields.

It is not known when nail making first began in Hoylandswaine but the industry was certainly established by the 1700s. While nail making seems to have been a widespread trade in the 1700s, it become increasingly concentrated in the 1800s in a few villages, including Hoylandswaine. By 1806 records indicate that there were around 60 nail makers in Hoylandswaine rising to 90 in 1851.



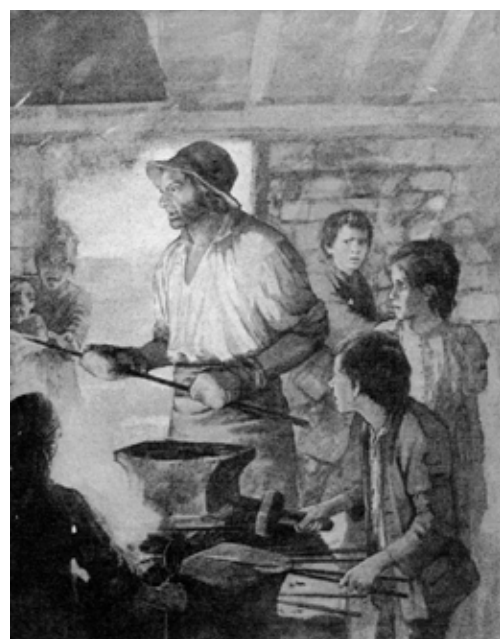
Inside the nail forge
Original sketch © Granville Daniel Clarke

Nail making was a family business and often the women and children would work alongside the men making smaller nails to supplement the family income. Nail making was piecework, paid on the basis of output rather than time, and 1,000 nails per day was the standard output.

An anonymous rhyme goes:

“Hoylandswaine nailers go rat-a-tat tat,
On thin watter porridge, and no’ much o’ that.”

From the mid-1800s the industry began to decline. In 1861 there were 53 nail makers in the village; by 1891 there were just eight. This was due to the introduction of mechanised nail making in factories where nails could be mass produced at a greater rate. Also, the opening of a steelworks in the nearby town of Penistone in 1863 offered less hours of work for higher wages.



Family at work in the nail shop
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

The last full-time nail maker in the village was Alf Chappell whose family had been involved in the trade since the 1850s. He worked at the forge until 1911 and his son Fred occasionally made nails as late as the 1940s for a Penistone firm.



Nail forge on Mustard Hill (centre), demolished in the early 1900s
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



Alf Chappell the last full-time nail maker
in Hoylandswaine
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



Cleaning the bellows during a restoration work party
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

After closure, many of the village's nail shops were demolished or converted to other uses. This is one of the last remaining examples still in existence in the country on its original working site, and exceptional in retaining one of its original hearths, hence being protected as a Grade II Listed Building.

It was donated to the South Yorkshire History Society in 1998 and later restored. It is open to the public on Heritage Open Days and during the village festival. Notice the ornamental gate in the design of nails.

Directions 4

Continue up Barnsley Road for about 20 metres. Stop by the next road on the left called Skinpit Lane.

5. Waste not, want not

End of Skinpit Lane

Place names and street names often provide clues as to the geography and history of a place, as we have already discovered with the meaning of Hoylandswaine. Here is another example: Skinpit Lane. A 'skin pit' was a tank that was used to soak animal hides during the tanning process.

Despite being host to many industries over the centuries, this has been primarily a farming community. We will find out more about farming later in the walk but we stop here to consider the animal waste product.



The only remaining evidence of the tanning industry
© Jenny Lunn

There was once an abattoir at the top of Skinpit Lane. It was built in 1933 by Thomas Helliwell. His sons, David and Stuart, continued the business until the building was demolished as part of a road-widening scheme in 1976. Their meat business slaughtered cows, sheep and pigs and the hides were sold to a company called Northern Hides.

Although there is no written or photographic evidence, it is thought that there was a tannery on the site prior to this business. Older villagers remember bark being collected for the tanning process. Local woodlands would have supplied a ready source of raw materials.

When crushed, tree bark releases tannins which preserve the skin and make it tough, durable and water-repellent. Bark tanning can be done to virtually any type of animal skin but it is generally reserved for tanning leathers from large thick hides such as cattle, horse and pig. It is used for many personal items such as shoes and boots, belts and pouches, as well as useful items such as saddles and bridles, armour and knife scabbards, and bellows.

Directions 5

Continue up Barnsley Road for another 20 metres. Look on the right for a track which is signposted as a public footpath. Follow the track for about 100 metres with the hedge of the bowling green on the left. Go round the first house to a junction then follow the track round to the right. After about 75 metres the track bends round to the left but the public footpath continues straight ahead. Follow the footpath down the left side of the field for just over half a kilometre. At the bottom the footpath meets some trees and there is a kissing gate. Go through the gate and follow the narrow path down the side of the sewage farm. When you meet a road (Cooper Lane) cross over to the gate about 10 metres to the left.

6. Going underground

Guyder Bottom, Cooper Lane

We have already discovered how the lie of the land and the climate influenced local industries but a further factor is the underlying geology. Beneath our feet is the South Yorkshire Coalfield and here at the western edge of the coalfield one of the coal seams comes very close to the surface and is therefore relatively easy to access.

The earliest mining activity was recorded around the early 1800s. In those days there were only primitive techniques of extraction using day-holes and drift mines. As the term 'day-hole' implies, a large enough opening in the ground would allow daylight working of the coal deposit. Once the miners reached the coal seam they tunnelled or 'drifted' along it, removing the coal as they went using picks and shovels, until they joined up with the next day-hole.

This was a fairly small-scale industry with most of the mines being privately-owned. The first coal mining business in this area was located here in this area called Guyder Bottom and was later known as Primrose Mine.



Primrose Mine at Guyder Bottom
Original sketch © Granville Daniel Clarke

Early maps show several air shafts scattered around the area so there were numerous small mining enterprises in operation.

It would appear that the development of the mining industry sent the linen industry into decline. The census of 1841 notes 13 miners in the parish but in 1861 the figure had risen to 66.

The Primrose Mine employed 30 people at the height of its production and produced 10,000 to 12,000 tons of coal annually. The pit supplied coal to wool and cotton mills, and to brick and pipe works both in Yorkshire and Lancashire. In the late 1950s, coal from this pit was transported to a well-known porcelain factory in Port Sunlight on The Wirral.



Mr Arnold Hill with a coal wagon
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



Workers at Primrose Mine on the day it closed (1969)
Courtesy of The Barnsley Chronicle

But by 1969 it had become uneconomical and closed after 100 years of operation. The only evidence left of Primrose Mine is in this field.



All that remains of the Primrose Mine
© Jenny Lunn

Can you see a large flat stone? This was a loading platform where coal used to be loaded onto the drays or wagons.

Very little other evidence of the small mines in this area remains, just an occasional large hole in the landscape offers a clue that there may have been a day hole.

Directions 6

Facing the gate, turn right and follow Cooper Lane past the entrance to the sewage farm then steadily uphill. Stop after about 200 metres when you reach the entrance to Hill Top House on the right.

7. A hive of industry

Hill Top House, Cooper Lane

Apart from the main village, Hoylandswaine comprised a scattering of hamlets. We have just come from one of them, Guyder Bottom, the name deriving from the Gudder family who lived at the farm there in the seventeenth century.

This upper part of Cooper Lane was another hamlet once known as Ellhirst or Upper Ellhirst and later as Hill Top. The name Cooper Lane only emerged in the mid-twentieth century and the reason is uncertain as there are no local records of coopers (barrel makers) living here nor anyone with the surname Cooper.



Earliest known map of the area by Jeffries (1772) showing Hoylandswaine and the surrounding hamlets
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

The hamlet now has numerous modern houses but it was once just a few buildings with a small population. Despite this, it was a hive of industry. We've already found out about coal mining down at Guyder Bottom and in other small pits across the area; there was also nail making, linen weaving and beer brewing, as well as farming.

The large house here at right angles to the lane is Hill Top House. The original outhouses were once used as a malting shed for brewing. There would have been plenty of barley grown locally to produce the beer.

On the other side of the lane is a small stone building now used as a garage. This is thought to have been a nail shop. It is the same pattern and size as of other village nail shops and hundreds of handmade nails of all sizes have been found amongst the debris of the floor over the years.



Mr John Haigh Jackson and his family at Hill Top House (c.1910)
Note the malt shed attached to the right
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



Former nail forge on Cooper Lane, now a garage
© Jenny Lunn

This area of Guyder Bottom and Hill Top was also ideal for linen production. Just round the corner on the left, where Number 44 now stands, were two weavers' cottages (demolished in 1959) with large cellars which provided the damp conditions ideal for weaving.



Linen weavers' cottages on Cooper Lane
Original sketch © Granville Daniel Clarke

Directions 7

Continue up Cooper Lane for about 300 metres until the lane levels off. Look on the left side for a pair of ornamental gates into the last field before the main road.

8. Layers of history

Top of Cooper Lane near Barnsley Road

We've now come back up onto higher ground although look across the field and up the hillside and you can see the main village of Hoylandswaine perched higher on the ridge.

This area here is known as Pye Flatts; the 'pye' (spelled 'pie' on early maps) derives from magpie while 'flatts' is the Saxon word for a small copse of trees.

This may look like a very non-descript lane with ordinary fields either side but this site actually tells us much about land ownership and land use in this area in four different periods of history.



Looking up to Hoylandswaine on the ridge
© Jenny Lunn



An aerial photo reveals a circle which was an Iron Age fort
The gateway on Cooper Lane is top centre
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

It was the high land position that would have been attractive for prehistoric people. This was an ideal defensive site with good views.

This fort would have contained a village settlement. Today when moles burrow through the soil, they leave round mounds. A geologist has suggested that these show where the settlers' huts may have stood because the moles choose the softer earth for burrowing.

First step back into prehistory and the Iron Age (800 BC to 100 AD). In 1992 aerial photographs taken by English Heritage revealed an Iron Age fort right here.

Standing here on the lane by the gate you are right inside it! It straddles the field behind the ornamental gates, the adjacent field and the lane.



Mole hills suggest the position of hut circles
© Colin Bower

Winter Ghosts

A harsh frost, and dense fog,
Dominate the Pye Flatts Pennine vista.
Dull ambience permeates
This mist of timeless serenity
On the old wildflower meadow habitat.

All is still...

Yet evident signs of subterranean life
are revealed...

As mining moles tenaciously stir the earth below.

As fresh soil mounds emerge –
as dark blots on the white grass carpet landscape,
as these winter ghosts tunnel on
through the good earth below.

To leave an organic statement of awareness,
From these shovelling creatures.

To remind all of we sharing planetarians,
That nature breathes – and lives secretly –
In the ecological shadows.

Granville D Clarke

Fast-forward to the Roman era 2,000 years ago and this site also had importance. During that period this landscape was largely uninhabited moorland but it was on an important trading route.

Salt was carried from Cheshire where there were several important salt-producing towns to Barnsley and Doncaster. Hoylandswaine stood on this route; we know that Hamper Lane in the village follows the route of an early salt path while in the nearby hamlet of Gunthwaite the stone salt path is still in place and very visible.

Salt was an important commodity; in fact it had such value that it was sometimes used as a currency. Salt was used not only for preserving and flavouring food but also as an antiseptic.

Next move forward almost a thousand years to the Saxon period in the late-ninth century AD. King Alfred is credited with dividing England into counties at that time.

Yorkshire became three divisions or 'ridings' – East, West and North – this area being in the West. The ridings were sub-divided into 'wapentakes', this area being in the Staincross wapentake. Around this period Pye Flatts and the surrounding lands were owned by the Saxon nobleman Ailric who lived in the nearby village of Cawthorne. During this time this area was probably used as a hay meadow for grazing.



The old salt path (subsequently a packhorse trail) from Gunthwaite to Penistone via Hoylandswaine
Original pen and wash © Granville Daniel Clarke



Seal of Ilbert de Lacy
Wikimedia Commons (CCL)

Then came the Norman invasion of Britain. William the Conqueror rewarded his supporters by giving them land – but this land was already owned and managed by the resident Saxons. In some places there was conflict but the West Riding one appears to have remained fairly peaceful.

The Norman knight Ilbert de Lacy was given the West Riding including all lands in the Staincross wapentake but evidence in the Domesday Book suggests that he allowed the Ailric and his son Swein to retain the lands as under-tenants.

Directions 8

Remain in the same place but look more closely at the ornamental gates.

9. Speaking stones and talking gates

Entrance to Pye Flatts SSSI, Cooper Lane

Having found out about the varied ownership and use of this area in the past, we can now find out about its more recent history. And the clues to this lie in these unique and award-winning ornamental gates (there is a second pair at the far corner of the site on Barnsley Road).

The gates capture the key elements in the history of this site. First look for the magpie on the top right which evokes the place name of Pye Flatts. Then note that the magpie is sitting upon pit head gear associated with the coal mining industry. At the bottom right is the surveyors' symbol for coal measures.



Ornamental gates and stone stile into the meadow
© G D Clarke

In between is a colourful rainbow and a collection of lines and circles that represent the wildflowers found in the meadow through the seasons. In fact, the series of three meadows through the gates are a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). They are one of the last remaining haymeadow grasslands sites in the UK and the only known one on coal measure soil.

Look across the dry stone wall to the adjacent field and you will see that it is cultivated by a farmer; the 'chemical green' stands in contrast to the wildflower meadow. But why such a contrast in adjacent fields?



The wildflower meadow contrasts with the 'chemical green' field beyond
© G D Clarke

Until the 1950s there were many traditional grassland sites like this across the UK. However, because of food shortages after the Second World War, all available productive land – including traditional haymeadows – was put to use to grow crops and feed the population.

At the same time farmers were encouraged to use chemicals to produce higher yields. This farming practice led to the loss of around 97 per cent of all British wildflower meadows.

But this site at Pye Flatts was not suitable for ploughing due to its hilly and uneven character. As you follow the path across the second field notice the significant dip in the ground – this was where people had once dug for surface deposits of coal, as well as clay.

Such uneven ground was not suitable for ploughing and harvesting with modern machinery. So these fields were left to nature with occasional cow grazing and hay cutting. Thus, by default rather than design, this site was not ploughed and no chemicals were put on it.



Winter reveals the uneven character of the site
© Brian Parkhurst

The special nature of this site was only discovered in 1989 when road works began to widen and realign the main road between Hoylandswaine and Silkstone. English Nature (now Natural England) recognised the rarity of the site and it was declared a SSSI. One-tenth of the meadow was lost but the remaining seven acres were saved.



Meadow gates in winter
© G D Clarke

Granville Danny Clarke and a colleague bought the site and formed a company called Meadowlands. Between 1991 and 1996 seeds from the meadow were harvested and their sale generated the funds to restore the site.

This involved rebuilding the dry stone walls forming the boundaries of the meadow (see the two stone plaques inside the gates), replanting an ancient hedge down the middle of the site which marks the boundary between Hoylandswaine and Silkstone, and building the ornamental entrances. The gates were created by local metal sculptor, Jane Strawbridge, and the speaking stones and stile by local stone sculptor, Suzanne North.

Directions 9

Go through the gap between the standing stones or through the gates. Follow the footpath straight ahead with the dry stone wall on your left and the meadow on your right. It is forbidden to stray from the designated public footpath (unless accompanied by the landowner or on an official guided walk) as this damages the plants and flowers. After going through the hedge break into the second meadow look for a seat in the dry stone wall on the left made from an old plough.

10. Fields of gold

Pye Flatts SSSI, off Cooper Lane

As we have already discovered, the lack of ploughing and chemical treatment allowed this meadow to survive but what are the conditions that allow the flowers to thrive here? Meadowland plants are light-loving so this open, elevated site allows them to flourish.

The meadow will look different depending on the time of year of your visit. May to late August is the best time when the meadows are resplendent in many colours.

Around one hundred species of flowers and grasses grow on this site.



Meadow flowers in summer
© Brian Parkhurst

In terms of flowers, look out for yellow rattle, tufted vetch, self heal, ox-eye daisy, red clover, sheeps sorrel, black knapweed, harebell, creeping buttercup, devilsbit scabious and many more. There are also orchids to be found including the common spotted orchid and twayblade orchid.



Left to right: common spotted orchid, twayblade orchid, yellow rattle
Original watercolours © Granville Daniel Clarke

In terms of grasses, look out for meadow foxtail, cocksfoot, tufted hair, field woodrigh, yellow oat, Yorkshire fog and crested dogs tail among others.

Of course the flowers and grasses provide habitat and food for a whole host of insects, invertebrates, moths, butterflies, bees and birds.

Since its rediscovery, the meadow has been managed in a traditional manner. If it were not managed in this way it would soon revert back to scrubland.

Management involves one hay crop, preferably in late August when the seeds have fallen, followed by six to nine weeks of sheep grazing to give a 'tighter haircut' to the sward.



Meadow spot burnet moth
© Brian Parkhurst

The sheep also translocate seeds around the meadow on their hooves balancing species around the three meadows. Their droppings also provide a light nutrient to the soil.

This walk has been exploring some of the natural resources of this local area and the industries that draw on them; this meadow needs to be regarded as one of these precious natural resources.



Outdoor classroom - school group visit to the meadow
© Brian Parkhurst

Today, the landowner, Granville Danny Clarke, in partnership with Natural England keeps the meadows open to the public to encourage people from across the community to learn about wildflower meadows and enjoy this special place.

Directions 10

Continue along the footpath with the dry stone wall on your left and meadow on your right. At the end of the second field, go over the stone stile and across the third field. Go over the next stile and turn left onto Whin Moor Lane. After about 150 metres there is a public footpath off to the left. Stop at this junction and look at the field on the right where there is a wind turbine.

11. Wind of change

Whin Moor Lane

From here we can see a modern utilisation of the elevated ground. This 15 metre high wind turbine was erected in the last few years but it is by no means the only wind turbine in this area.

In this landscape of hilly ridges and deep valleys, the higher points are ideal for capturing wind. It is not only elevated ground, but also outside the planning restrictions of a National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and where there is a relatively low population density.



Wind turbine off Whin Moor Lane
© Jenny Lunn

For example, just over three miles east of here on the other side of Penistone is Royd Moor wind farm.

It stands at 320 metres above sea level on an exposed ridge. There are 13 turbines which are considerably bigger than the one here: they are 35 metres high to the hub and 54 metres to the top of the blade. The turbines, in operation since 1993, generate enough power to supply over 3,500 homes and displace the emission of 7,345 tonnes of carbon dioxide each year.



Royd Moor wind farm
Barry Hurst, Geograph (CCL)

Wind farms have been a hot topic of debate in Britain for several decades. With the decommissioning of old coal and nuclear plants and uncertainty over gas supplies, alternatives are needed.

The UK is considered to be the best location in Europe for wind power and one of the best in the world.

At the beginning of 2014 there were 5,276 wind turbines in the UK, some on land and some offshore, generating around eight per cent of the nation's electricity.

There are plans to increase the number of wind farms still further but the challenge is to get approval for constructing them amidst considerable local opposition.

The land in this area will also have another new use. Just over the hill from Whin Moor, an old clay quarry will be filled in 2015 to create a 10-acre nature reserve called Naylor Bank.

Directions 11

Continue along the track for another 100 metres where there is a public footpath signposted on the left. Go through the gate or over the stile and diagonally across the level field. Look for a marker post where the field drops down a short steep slope. At the bottom of the slope (where it may be muddy) go through the gateway or over the stile and follow the path along the left side of the next field.

After about 150 metres there is a stile on the left which takes the path across into the adjacent field. Follow the path along the right side of the next field. Go over the next stile and head diagonally down the next field and over the stile at the bottom. The path across this next field takes you to another stile at the very bottom of the valley.

Turn left onto the path (also may be muddy) which emerges onto Cooper Lane after about 100 metres. Turn left along the lane and then right after about 75 metres onto the footpath that we came down earlier.

Follow the path by the side of the sewage farm then go through the kissing gate at the top. Bear right towards the lowest point in the field then follow the footpath up the wall on the far right. At the first field boundary go over the stone stile and continue up the right side of the next field. At the next field boundary go over the stone stile and continue up the centre of the next field. At the top the path turns to the right and then left through a gateway. Stop here.



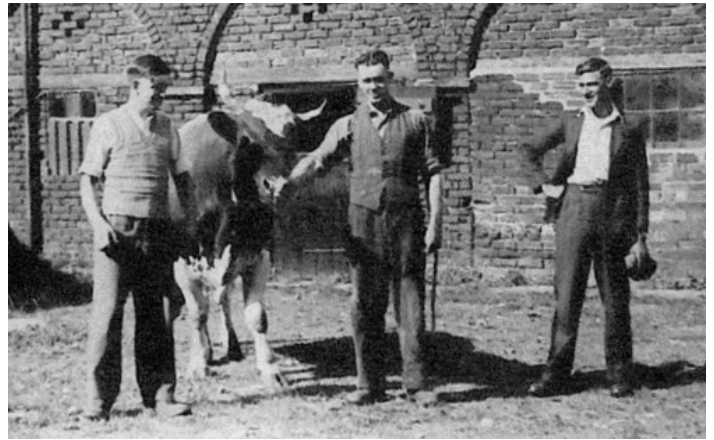
Cattle grazing off Whin Moor Lane
© Jenny Lunn

12. Working the land

Fields below Pinfold Farm

Hoylandswaine probably had farmers among its inhabitants from its very earliest days. Most people would have tilled their own little patch and kept a cow and some chickens. From this grew small farms which provided the livelihood for the majority of villagers for many generations.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were five types of people using the land: Lords of the Manor and other landed gentry who worked their home farms and rented out others; managers or overseers who often looked after the home farm and collected rents and dues from tenant farmers; yeomen farmers, a small number who had bought their own land; tenant farmers who paid rents and rates to land owners; and humble agricultural labourers.



George Webb at Green Bottom Farm
with his Ayrshire Bull, a winner at the Penistone Show
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

Through the centuries, farming in Hoylandswaine has generally been mixed with animals reared (largely cows and sheep) and a variety of food crops grown.

Of course productivity depends on a combination of factors including the climate, the lie of the land and its drainage, and the underlying geology and soil type.



'Blue winter' - snow leaves High Royd Farm isolated
Original watercolour © Granville Daniel Clarke

Here the landscape of high ridges and steep hillsides ensures good drainage while the predominantly clay soils are fertile.

On the other hand, this area of high ground does experience heavy snowfalls which can leave farms cut off.

Another important factor is the way in which the land is managed. Local farmer, Phil Penrose, says "you get out of the land what you put in". Livestock produce manure which returns essential nutrients to the soil.

The 1881 Census shows a newcomer to Hoylandswaine: John Haigh Jackson. He lived at Hill Top House on Cooper Lane where we stopped earlier. He was not a farmer but an agricultural machine proprietor.

The shift from manual to mechanised harvesting reduced the workforce and increased the speed of gathering crops.

His threshing machine, which was driven by a steam engine, was quite a sight and people would gather at harvest time to watch the huge machine with wonder and awe.



John Haigh Jackson and his Threshing Machine
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

All the many industries in the village that we have found out about – including coal mining, linen weaving, nail making and tanning – have come and gone apart from farming. Today there are six working farms in the village. A couple are dairy farms which rear cattle and grow crops for use as fodder, a couple keep flocks of sheep and a couple are arable farms.



Farming in Hoylandswaine today
© Jenny Lunn

Directions 12

Follow the track in a straight line up through the next few fields until you reach the road (Haigh Lane). Cross over to the other side where there is a pavement and turn left. Stop after about 200 metres at the entrance to the cricket ground.

13. Balls, bails and bonhomie

Cricket ground, Haigh Lane

Whether you worked as a nail maker, linen weaver, coal miner or farmer, life in Hoylandswaine was not easy. Most people worked long hours, six days a week.

Many people went to chapel on Sundays. The stone building here is a Methodist Chapel built in 1807. The building is rather unusual in having the meeting room located on the upper floor whilst underneath is the caretakers flat. The chapel closed in January 2014 and was sold in June so it is no longer open to visitors.

A Sunday School was added in 1811 (now the village hall) and many villagers learned to read and write there. There is also an Anglican church in the village, built in 1867.

Aside from working and chapel people did have some time off. Common pastimes in the area were cricket, knur and spell, pigeon keeping, hunting and shooting.

Villagers would also have looked forward to annual excursions such as Sunday School outings and picnics.



Methodist Chapel (top) and Anglican Church (bottom)
© G D Clarke / © Jenny Lunn



Sunday School outing at Whitsuntide to Wharnccliffe Craggs (c.1894-5)
About 30 children and adults are sat on the dray
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

This is the cricket ground and the village club has its origins in the late-nineteenth century.

The hill top position of the village isn't really ideal for a perfect pitch – you can see from here that it is on something of a slope!

Across the far side is a bowling green but it is enclosed by high hedges to protect it from the winds that strike this high hillside.



Village cricket team (early 1900s)
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



The Ball is over
Original poem and watercolour © Granville Daniel Clarke

Another popular pastime was knur and spell, also known as 'nipsy' or 'pitmen's golf'.

This game originated in the moors of Yorkshire then spread throughout the north of England.



Young man demonstrating nipsy
Copyright unknown



Knurr and spell
From 'The Costume of Yorkshire', published in 1814
Copyright unknown

It dates back as far as the fourteenth century but was particularly popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, often with betting on the results.

A small ball ('knur') was launched into the air and players took turns to try to hit it with a long club ('spell'). The winner was the person who hit the ball the furthest.

The wildflower meadow that we visited earlier sits on the boundary between Hoylandswaine and Silkstone. During the road widening scheme in the late 1980s, traces of knur and spell were found in the meadow which indicates that people from the two rival villages gathered there for competitions.

Directions 13

Continue along Haigh Lane as it bends round to the right. At the junction, cross over to the small war memorial opposite. Do go up the steps and through the gate.

14. Lest we forget

War memorial, Barnsley Road

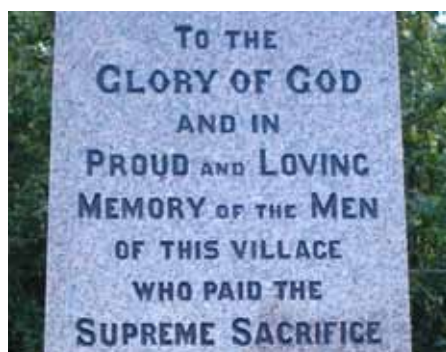
During the nineteenth century the population of the village and the scattered small hamlets around varied between about 650 and 750.

In each household, all able hands were put to work in different industries and trades to support the family. But some were sacrificed for the 'greater good' when the Great War came.

Young men of the village signed up and travelled from the security of their Yorkshire home to faraway shores. It must have been a devastating blow when four of them did not return.

The memorial was erected in 1919 to commemorate the lost. Sadly three more names were inscribed after the Second World War.

Bashforth – Broadhead – Thorpe
Born in life – out with nought.
Mellor – Lockwood – Charlsworth – Seniors,
never to return – families left –
enduring the lean years.
Lest we Forget.



War memorial
© Jenny Lunn



Tom Lockwood (fourth from left) visiting the village on home leave in June 1915; he was killed in action in France in February 1916

Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group



War memorial (1919)

Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

The wreaths of poppies laid here each November on Remembrance Day seem to weather the storms of this high-land climate.

Directions 14

With your back to the war memorial, turn left and walk about 50 metres up Mustard Hill (Barnsley Road). Cross over and look at the row of four cottages (Numbers 305 to 311).

15. Where there's nails there's brass

Almshouses, 305-311 Barnsley Road

At the beginning of the walk we found out about the nail making industry which was quite a speciality here in Hoylandswaine. Another forge was on the site where these four houses now stand (see picture on page 13). And the person who had the old forge demolished and these houses built was a former nail maker.

George Senior, who was born in 1838, came from a long line of nail makers. He was enrolled at the local school but left at the age of seven to begin making nails alongside his father. He was paid 2d a day and expected to produce 1,000 nails a day, six days a week.

He left the village when he was 13 years old to become an apprentice at Kenyons Forge in Middlewood near Sheffield. By the age of 21 he moved on to other iron companies in Sheffield eventually climbing up the ranks to become manager then owner of an iron works at Pond's Forge.

By that time George was an important industrialist. In 1891 he became a member of Sheffield City Council, in 1901 he was appointed Lord Mayor of Sheffield and in 1906 he became a magistrate. But this successful businessman and one of Sheffield's most esteemed citizens never forgot his humble roots in Hoylandswaine.



Alderman George Senior
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine
History Group



Laying the foundation stone for the almshouses
by Mrs Senior (16 June 1906)
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

In 1906 he pulled down the old nail forge on this site where his father had worked and where he had started his working life. In its place he built four almshouses to provide accommodation for the deserving poor of the village.

To qualify, residents (or 'inmates') had to be over 60, born in Hoylandswaine or lived there for at least 10 years, belonging to the 'industrial classes', and of 'good character and moral worth'.

It's nice that a relatively poor and ordinary village produced someone who went on to great success and wealth.

Directions 15

Make your way back down the pavement to the Rose and Crown pub.

16. A changing village

Rose and Crown, Barnsley Road

Hoylandswaine would have started out as a small cluster of farmsteads around a road junction, a pattern that probably changed little in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The character of the village changed significantly in the late-twentieth century with some modern infilling and demolition of eighteenth and early-nineteenth century buildings, as well as the building of housing around the core.



Photograph looking down on Hoylandswaine from the early 1900s before the fields were built upon
Courtesy of Hoylandswaine History Group

Today the population of the village is just over 1,000 and there is currently a proposal for a further 120 homes to be built. But in spite of approximately 100 houses being built during the last 30 years, shops and other amenities have disappeared including the post office, village store, 'chippy' and cobbler.

From being reasonably self-sufficient fifty years ago, Hoylandswaine is now largely a commuter village and very few people earn their living in the village. It is largely the social functions that remain: the church, the primary school, the village hall that is used by community groups, and the cricket and bowling clubs that provide both sporting and social functions.

The two pubs – the Rose and Crown here and the Lord Nelson where we started the walk – also play an important role in the modern village. With the closure of the village shop, the pub now sells daily newspapers. They also seek to attract outsiders and passing trade by offering traditional Yorkshire food.

This walk has told the story of a Yorkshire village and the significance of its 'high-land' position. The elevation, as well as the underlying geology, the soils and prevailing climate, have all strongly influenced the industries and trades that developed here from farming, tanning and coal mining to linen weaving, nail making and salt trading. Across the landscape were clues to the past in names, buildings and fields. We not only found out about the industries of the villages but also about its people and their lives.

Directions 16

There are bus stops just the other side of the junction with Haigh Lane; the Lord Nelson is about 300 metres beyond along Barnsley Road.

Summer Earthlight over Hoylandswaine

I gaze from this high land hill that is – Hoylandswaine...
a unique place...

For the travelling eye to scan the wide rural spyglass terrain –
Over these quaint village hamlet rooftops –
through to the farmer-green patchwork fields –
with their enclosed dry stone wall perimeters.
That embrace the rare wildflower meadows of Pye Flatts –
and its Iron-age fortress beginnings.

Travelling over Hood Green hill escarpments through Stainborough valleys,
to Barnsley – blue urban horizons...

Highlighted by the Summer sun casting its warm glow, across this dynamic vista...

Revealing the Landscape's tonal values of England's green and pleasant land –
whilst remembering the Saxon high land farmers,
who also visually encompassed from here in times past...
without nature's distant grey veil of today's pollution –
born from the increasing consuming demands –
from society for power and communication.

Visibly evident on the distant skyline...
the gleaming power stations – Ferrybridge and Drax,
fuelling their smoking emissions
to contaminate the blue sky with false clouds.

Across to the westerly horizon – the tall Emley giant mast stands aloft –
radiating its waves of communication, endorsing the Orwellian theory of indoctrination –
to programme and control,

Now serving today's demands, for modern-day convenience.

Tis no longer the same simple landscape view, our forefathers and their weary eyes
would have beheld, after farming toil or hot furnace nail-making grind...
only the same setting circling sun, in infinite solar beauty
still paints the free open landscape picture of the earthlight's
green tonal values of shape-form, and shadow from these same countryside contours,
of the golden days they would have seen.

Now as the Earthlight fades on the western sky,
and eventide transcends into night-stealing our joy of this day –
yet leaving our tranquil mind pictures –
as we give thanks to the free gift of nature.

Granville D Clarke – Hoylandswaine, July 2014



Summer Earthlight over Hoylandswaine
Original watercolour with pen © Granville Daniel Clarke

Credits

The RGS-IBG would like to thank the following people for their assistance in producing this Discovering Britain walk:

Granville Daniel Clarke FRSA for suggesting the walk, researching and writing the materials, creating artwork and poetry especially for this walk, and providing photographs (www.granvilledclarke.co.uk)

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Colin Bower, Barry Hurst and **Neil Theasby** for additional images reproduced under the Creative Commons License

Howard Lunn for assistance with testing the walk

Further information

Hoylandswaine History Hub
www.hoylandswaine.co.uk

Experience Barnsley
www.experience-barnsley.com

Silkstone Reflects
www.silkstonereflects.co.uk

Visit Penistone
www.visitpenistone.co.uk

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