

MASTERS & MEN TRAIL WALK ROUTE...



1 ALL SAINTS CHURCH

The Huskar Window, in the St James Chapel, commemorates the Huskar Pit disaster in 1838, when 26 child miners were drowned.

Turn left outside the door; keep left to the gate at the bottom of the churchyard. Turn right at the road and right again onto the public bridleway along the waggonway stones. Look for the track widening (just after the last house).

2 WAGGONWAY PASS-BYE

Empty wagons waited in the pass-bye as full wagons descend to the canal basin.

3 STABLES & BLACKSMITHS

Behind the high stone wall were the stables for waggonway horses. Here blacksmith William Haynes treated horses with 'coff balls'.

Keep straight ahead to the 'Bells Steakhouse' (which was then a pub called 'The Six Ringers').

4 THE SIX RINGERS

In 1843 Mr. Davies gave a talk here about mining 'Unionism'. Miners became aware of how they could put their case for improvements in working conditions.

Follow the track to the left of the 'Bells Steakhouse' where trees cover a waggonway siding.



5 BRANCH LINE

A branch line brought coal from two Clarke pits near Noblethorpe Hall. Joshua Marshall, the son of a waggoner, was killed here when a waggon ran over him.

Continue to the end of the path. Take care crossing the road and continue left to the replica waggon.

6 THE REPLICA WAGGON

Each waggon carried about 2¾ tons of coal. Waggoners sat on the top or led the horse. A trapdoor allowed emptying from an elevated coal staithe at the canal basin. This replica was built by Roggins Local History Group.

Take care here! Turn right to cross the road via the traffic island to the garage; turn left to the cottage on the right corner of Cone Lane.



7 THE CROSS PIT YARD & OFFICE

In 1830 the Clarke's private waggonway extension passed through a gate here.

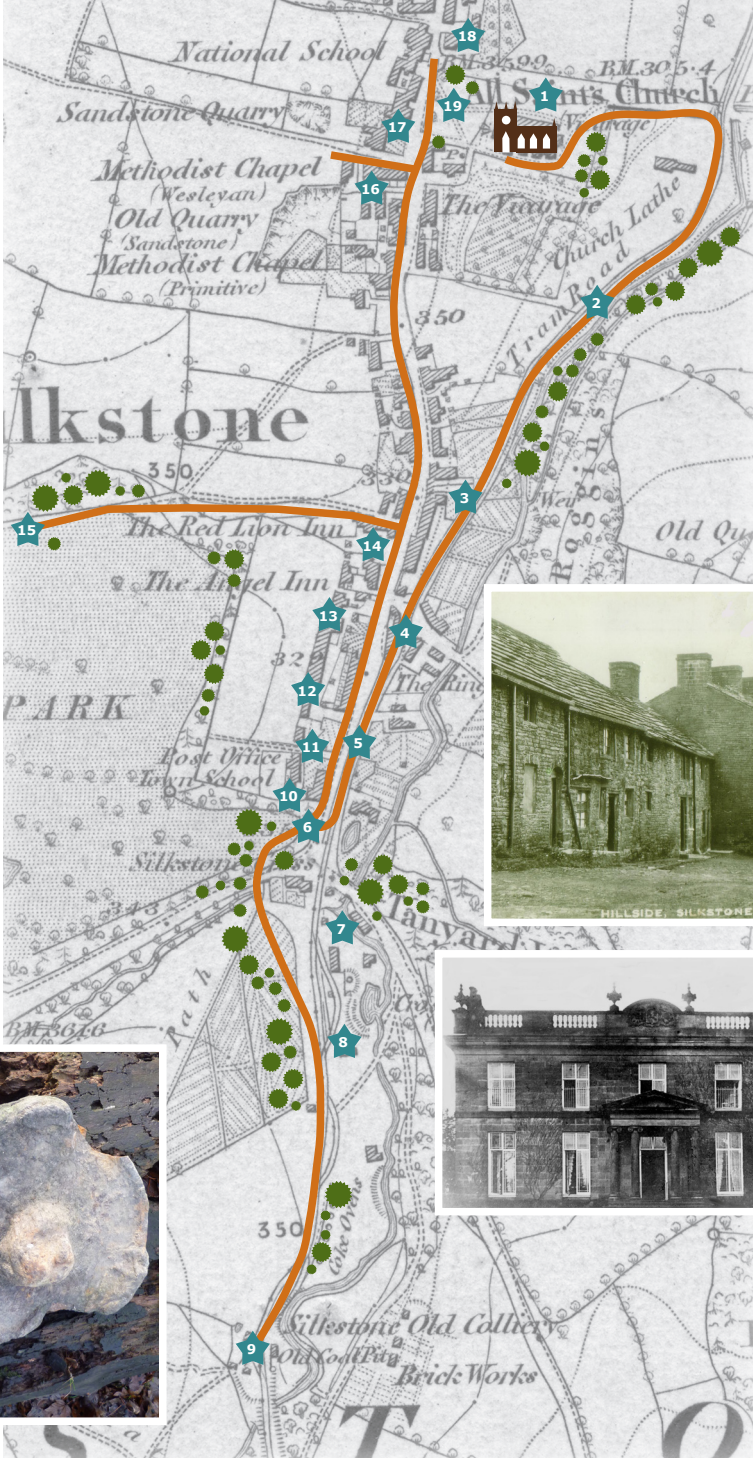
Retrace your steps past the garage, turn left down the public footpath to the recreation ground. Walk down the side of the Huskar Rooms, to the grass area.

8 A BUSY INDUSTRIAL SCENE

By about 1840 Cross Pit had two shafts here (beneath your feet), waggonway sidings, coke ovens and two engine houses. Later there were tile works and a gas works.

Follow path to the right below the football field bank and continue to a kissing gate. In summer, beware of cows and keep dogs on a lead.

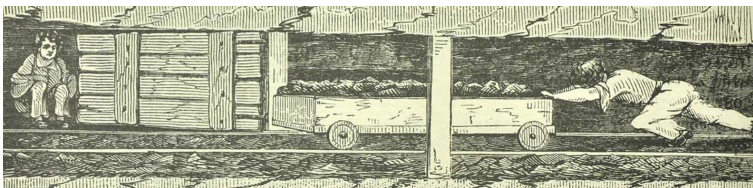
1850's map with thanks to: The Ordnance Survey



9 THE BOTTOM OF THE CLIMB TO SILKSTONE MOOR

A rope haulage worked by gravity: full waggons on one end of a long rope hauled up empties on the other end. Stone rubble marks the position of Old Silkstone Colliery. In the 1830s the Clarkes extended their waggonway to the Huskar and Moored pits in the next valley.

Retrace your steps along the path to the Huskar Rooms and carpark.



10 THE TOMMY SHOP

Miners bought everything they needed from their employer under the 'Truck' system: food, textiles, whale oil, tools, and their housing.

From the late 1870s the Clarke pits began to close down, their coal worked out.

Take care! Retrace your steps back across the road. Stay on the left, passing the waggon on your right.



11 THE BLACKSMITHS SHOP

William Haynes had his smithy here.

Continue to the bottom of the drive on the left.

12 OLD TOWN SCHOOL

The school provided Silkstone's education from 1754 and through the Victorian period.

A Public Reading Room later stood beside the school. Education helped miners to understand and safeguard their rights.

Continue to the next drive. Cross and stop on the pavement opposite the 'Bells Steakhouse'.

13 MINERS COTTAGES

Look left behind the modern bungalows at the school playing field stone wall. This was the original front wall of the former miners' cottages.

On 4th July 1838, the day of the Huskar Disaster, horse drawn carts delivered twenty young bodies to their homes in Silkstone, three to Thurgoland and three to Dodworth.

Carry on along High Street, to the Red Lion Pub.

14 THE RED LION

The day after the Huskar Disaster a crowded inquest heard evidence in front of witnesses, journalists and family members.

Turn left up the public footpath just after the pub. Follow the path, keep left, then right, until you can look up the fields towards Noblethorpe Hall, which in summer is hardly visible behind the trees.

15 NOBLETHORPE HALL

Home of the Clarke family, the coal masters. At the time of the Huskar Disaster RC Clarke was rebuilding his family home in the style of a mansion.

Return to the Red Lion Pub. Turn left and follow High Street past the old Primitive Methodist Chapel ('Tom Horsfield's') to the Ebenezer Chapel on the left.

16 WESLEYAN CHAPEL & SUNDAY SCHOOL

The chapel was originally built in 1815, and rebuilt in 1876.

Cross the road to the War Memorial.

17 NATIONAL INFANTS SCHOOL

In 1850 Sarah Anne Clarke, widow of RC Clarke built the Silkstone National Infants' School (now the pharmacy).

Go back to High Street and turn left. Continue to the seat with the 'Silkstone Lane' planter.

18 HIGHFIELD HOUSE

Across the road, on the corner, stood Highfield House, the home of Surgeon Edwin Ellis, who gave evidence at the Parliamentary Enquiry into Conditions of Work in 1842.

Retrace your steps and take care crossing the road to the churchyard gate. In the churchyard go left to the Huskar Memorial.

19 HUSKAR MEMORIAL

Please take a moment to read about the disaster and the names and ages of the children.

Only three references to the disaster survive in the archives of RC Clarke:

- a bill for '26 shrouds, assorted sizes'
- the Vicar's notes for the funeral, starting, 'Begin at the north end by calling...' followed by the list of children in burial order
- a bill from 1841 for 'Ale for seting the monument' for the stonemasons.

Continue back to the path and down to the porch to go back into the church.