

On their camping trip, Gerald and Ted hunted rabbits, fried up a bacon and egg breakfast and discovered a deadfall trap nearby. A 'deadfall' trap is one in which a heavy rock is propped up with a stick and bait placed beneath the rock. When the fox (in this case) takes the bait, it dislodges the stick and is crushed by the falling rock. It inspired Hughes's ghost story *The Deadfall* in which he is awakened from sleep in the tent by a spirit in the form of an old woman, who leads him to a fox caught in the trap. The morning after having this dream, Ted and Gerald found a fox with its leg trapped beneath the fallen deadfall stone.



the deadfall stone

Abel Cross (pictured on the cover) is actually a pair of stone crosses, nicknamed 'Cain and Abel' or 'Mourning and Vanity'. They probably served as wayside markers but legend says they mark the graves of two rivals who fought over a local girl, Katie of Cross Ends Farm. The two rivals, Heptonstall Jim and Oxenhope Jack, killed each other whilst fighting over Katie, and as murderers, could not be buried in consecrated ground, so Katie buried them here. It is said she was subsequently buried in the space between the two, having committed suicide by jumping from **Lumb Bridge** into the surging waters of the waterfall below. She is known as the White Lady, a ghostly apparition who haunts **Lumb Bridge**. Hughes's poem *Where the Mothers* was later retitled *Abel Cross, Crimsworth Dean* and is the first poem in the collections *Three Books* and *Elmet*.

One of the great pleasures of wandering the woods of the Upper Calder Valley is the frequency with which you come face to face with **roe deer**, before they bounce off through the trees flashing their white backsides. Though native to Britain, they were hunted to near-extinction in England by the 18th century, but were reintroduced in the Calder Valley in the mid-20th century. Roe deer are relatively small and reddish-brown (darkening in winter) and only the females have the white rump, while the males have short antlers. An encounter with two in Devon is recounted in Hughes's poem *Roe-Deer*.



Discovering Ted Hughes's Yorkshire is a series of six route maps that will allow walkers to encounter the Yorkshire landscapes – Myholmroyd and the Upper Calder Valley, Mexborough & the lower valleys of the Don & Dearne and Patrington in East Yorkshire – that formed and inspired Ted Hughes, poet laureate 1984-1998.

In the period before the First World War, Crimsworth Dean was a local beauty spot and a favourite location for Sunday walks and camping trips. Ted Hughes's maternal uncles Thomas and Walter Farrar referred to it as 'the happy valley' and were joined on their jaunts there by Hughes's father William on at least one occasion. Inspired by accounts of these trips, Gerald Hughes began to camp in the valley, in the traditional Farrar/Hughes spot on a sheltered area of flat ground beneath the cliff of a disused quarry that was later used as a council stone dump. Young Ted accompanied Gerald at least once on one of these camping trips, spending three days there in the summer of 1937. It was on this trip that Hughes had 'the dream that later turned into all my writing' – an encounter with a fox and a mysterious old woman that he later worked-up into his ghost story *The Deadfall* – and he described the campsite as 'a sacred place to me'.

the Bukta Wanderlust tent Gerald and Ted camped in



The deadfall stone that was the inspiration for Hughes's story can still be seen in the woodland above the campsite. Hughes's childhood friend, the late Donald Crossley was guided to the site of the stone over fifty years after the event by Gerald Hughes, who wrote letters to him from his home in Australia, providing directions. Crossley renewed his acquaintance with both Ted and Gerald Hughes in the 1980s and through his questioning was able to develop a great deal of invaluable contextual information on Hughes's poems about Myholmroyd and the Upper Calder Valley. Crossley's archive is open to the public at the University of Huddersfield's Heritage Quay.

This map was commissioned by the Discovering Ted Hughes's Yorkshire Consortium, the Ted Hughes Network, University of Huddersfield and enabled by generous funding from Hebden Royd Town Council.

Walk devised by Donald Crossley, Nick Wilding and Ruth Crossley of the Elmet Trust based on information supplied by Gerald Hughes. Thanks to Carol Hughes for her help and support in the production of the map.

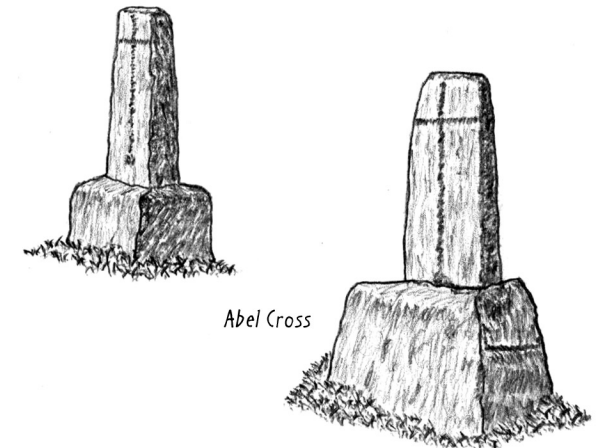
Leaflet drawn & designed by Christopher Goddard
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DISCOVERING TED HUGHES'S YORKSHIRE

The Upper Calder Valley

MAP 2: CRIMSWORTH DEAN

A 3.5-mile walk around this beautiful rural valley where Ted Hughes camped as a boy, also taking in Lumb Hole and Abel Cross



Abel Cross

'Think often of the silent valley,
'for the god lives there.'

In Hardcastle Crag, that echoey museum,
Where she dug leaf mould for her handfuls of garden
And taught you to walk, others are making poems.'

(from *Leaf Mould*)



Distance: 3½ miles (5.8km)

Ascent: 210m

Time: 1½-3 hours

Public Transport: There is no public transport to Midgehole, but the start of the route is only 1 mile from Hebden Bridge and ½ mile from the bus stop at the end of Midgehole Road served by the B3 bus between Keighley and Hebden Bridge.

Parking: Pay car parks at Midgehole at entrance to the National Trust's Hardcastle Crags estate.

Refreshments: No refreshments.

Character: A short exploration of the beautiful valley of Crimsworth Dean. The route takes in Lumb Hole, Abel Cross, part of Hardcastle Crags and the 'sacred place' Ted Hughes camped as a boy. Good paths throughout.

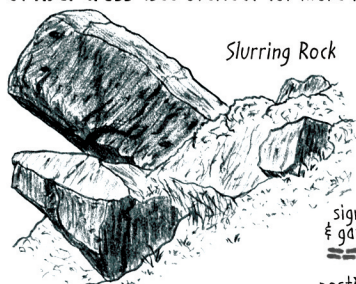
Hughes's poem *Dead Farms, Dead Leaves* (later retitled *Shackleton Hill*) is about the ruined farms of Crimsworth Dean's landscape. Hughes considered that the history of human effort in the region was coming to an end, defeated by the weather, land, and collapse of farming and industry. It is illustrated in *Remains of Elmet* by Fay Godwin's photo of **Baby House**, which was sited half a mile further along the track up the valley, but nearby **Nook** and **Sunny Bank** have a similar air of decay.

③ Continue along the track from **Abel Cross** and turn left at the end, climbing past the farm at **Laithe**. After another half mile fork right at a signpost and angle down the slope to the ruins of **Sunny Bank**. Follow the walled path down the hill to the wooded hollow of **Lumb Hole**, a fine waterfall and pool just below **Horse Bridge**. On the far bank there is a plaque commemorating Hughes's poem *Six Young Men*, which is based on a photograph taken at this location.

The **Willow Gate** packhorse path up through **Foul Scout Wood** crosses through the middle of a small circular **hearth** that was one of many dug out of the hillside for burning charcoal. These were used from the 12th century onwards and this example is notable as the path's stone surface has been laid across it, meaning it was already out of use by the 18th century or earlier. If you dig around on the lower side you'll find small pieces of charcoal that are hundreds of years old.

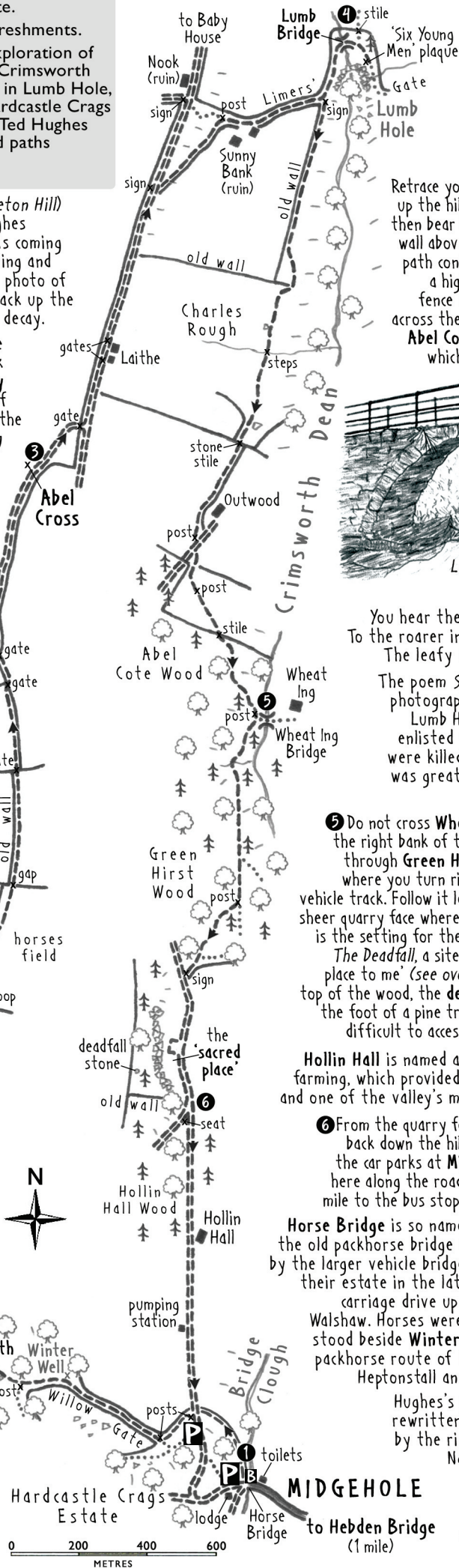
The **horses field** near **Shackleton** was where a seven-year old Hughes had the experience he would later write about in *The Horses*, describing them as 'Huge in the dense grey - ten together - megalith-still'.

② Retrace your steps to the stile and follow the old walled path up the hill past the ventilation shaft for the aqueduct between **Widdop Reservoir** and **Halifax**. At the top, turn right along the track into the hamlet of **Shackleton**. At the junction bear left to a sign and stile to the left of a farm building, and follow the broken-down wall right along the edge of the field. Continue beyond the end of the wall to the left-hand of two gates, then cross the fence by another gate 20m beyond. Follow the right side of the fence and old wall through two gaps until a pedestrian gate brings you onto the other side of the next wall. Before **Abel Cote Farm**, recross to the right side and join the vehicle track immediately in front of the farm. Follow this right for half a mile to the prominent site of **Abel Cross** (see overleaf for more information).



Slurring Rock was used for sliding (or 'slurring') down by local children in the 19th century, and their clog irons have worn a clear groove in the rock's northern side.

From the road end at **Midgehole**, turn right at a sign before the lower car park and follow a path up to the higher track. Continue straight across above the upper car park, then turn right at a waymark post and follow a walled path between open fields. This old packhorse route bends left and continues steadily up through the trees beyond. Passing **Slurring Rock** near the top, keep right at a waymarker and then bear left before the stile to reach **Willow Gate Rock** after a few yards. There are great views from here across the **Hardcastle Crags** woodland estate.



Lumb Bridge stood on **Limers' Gate**, a packhorse route between **Lancashire** and **Halifax**, and used to be known as **Horse Bridge** (and the whole valley **Horse-bridge Clough**). The pool below the **Lumb Hole** waterfall is a popular local swimming spot.

④ Retrace your steps from **Lumb Hole** back up the hill only as far as the first bend, then bear left at a sign and follow an old wall above **Crimsworth Dean Beck**. The path continues across **Charles Rough** to a high stone stile, then follows the fence around **Outwood**. Head straight across the track beyond and descend into **Abel Cote Wood** at a stile, soon after which you reach **Wheat Ing Bridge**.



'From where these sit
You hear the water of seven streams fall
To the roarer in the bottom and through all
The leafy valley a rumouring of air go.'

The poem *Six Young Men* was based on a photograph of six companions taken at **Lumb Hole** in 1914, just before they enlisted to fight in **WW1**. All of them were killed, some within weeks. Hughes was greatly preoccupied with **WW1** and wrote about it frequently.

⑤ Do not cross **Wheat Ing Bridge**, but stay above the right bank of the stream. The path continues through **Green Hirst Wood** to a waymark post, where you turn right and climb up to join a large vehicle track. Follow it left and after 200m you pass a sheer quarry face where Hughes camped as a child. This is the setting for the second half of Hughes's story *The Deadfall*, a site he later described as a 'sacred place to me' (see overleaf for more details). At the top of the wood, the **deadfall stone** is still in place at the foot of a pine tree near the wall, but it is very difficult to access up the rough and steep bank.

Hollin Hall is named after its earlier use for holly farming, which provided winter fodder for livestock, and one of the valley's many names was **Hollins Valley**.

⑥ From the quarry follow the vehicle track steadily back down the hill past **Hollin Hall** to return to the car parks at **Midgehole**. It is only a mile from here along the road into **Hebden Bridge** and half a mile to the bus stop at the end of **Midgehole Road**.

Horse Bridge is so named because it was the site of the old packhorse bridge at **Midgehole**. It was replaced by the larger vehicle bridge when the **Saviles** developed their estate in the late 19th century and built the carriage drive up through **Hardcastle Crags** to **Walshaw**. Horses were kept at a cottage that once stood beside **Winter Well**, which served the busy packhorse route of **Willow Gate** running between **Heptonstall** and **Limers' Gate** to the north.

Hughes's poem *Hardcastle Crags* (later rewritten as *Leaf Mould*) was inspired by the rich woodland landscape of the **National Trust's** estate, where the **Hughes** family often picnicked. The woods were originally planted along the carriage drive to the **Saviles'** shooting lodge at **Walshaw**.