

SKIPTON TO BURNLEY LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL

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TRIP TYPE : SOLO CYCLE

OBJECTIVE : CYCLE FROM SKIPTON TO BURNLEY ON THE LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL, RETURNING BY TRAIN FROM BURNLEY MANCHESTER ROAD, VIA LEEDS.

DISTANCE : 27.5 MILES

TIME : 3.5 HOURS, 7.9 mph

NICHOLSON: GUIDE 5, pp 127-135

COSTS : CAR PARKING IN SKIPTON. TRAIN FROM BURNLEY MANCHESTER ROAD TO SKIPTON, 2 PER HOUR, £26.30

DIFFICULTY : MODERATE

OVERVIEW: A top ride over the bleak Pennine landscape, on towpaths which are quite tough in places. Parking is not easy in Skipton, and the train back is somewhat tortuous and expensive, taking some time and changing at Leeds as there are no direct trains. But it's worth it for the views and the experience - one of my top 10 rides.

1. SKIPTON TO FOULRIDGE (15.5 MILES)

Parking for free in Skipton is not easy, and you will probably have to pay if parking in the town itself. There is a large car park at the station, or at Coach Street in the town centre.

If you've not already done it while doing the Skipton to Leeds ride, where it is described, it is well worth doing the Springs Branch while in Skipton. This is essentially a feeder which runs round the back of the castle, and is very pretty.

Assuming you've parked at Coach Street car park, BD23 1LH, take Coach Street to Belmont Street, turn right to Belmont Bridge and cross it. Turn right down Belmont Wharf and join the towpath, heading west.

Ray Lane Bridge 172
Leeds and Liverpool Canal

As you head out of town there is a short stretch of road by the caravan park, then you quickly rejoin the towpath, which is good compacted earth and gravel to Gangrave.



However, as you head out into the wilds, the path becomes earth and grass, rocky with some tree roots. The countryside is bleak and beautiful. The canal twists round the contours once past Bank Newton. It is slow going, especially if the wind is blowing over the tops from the Lancashire side.

Just before South Field Bridge, 159, the towpath joins a track (the Pendle Way), and is much improved from then on. Pass through Greenber Field and the edge of Barnoldswick.

2. FOULRIDGE RESERVOIR (1.5 MILES)

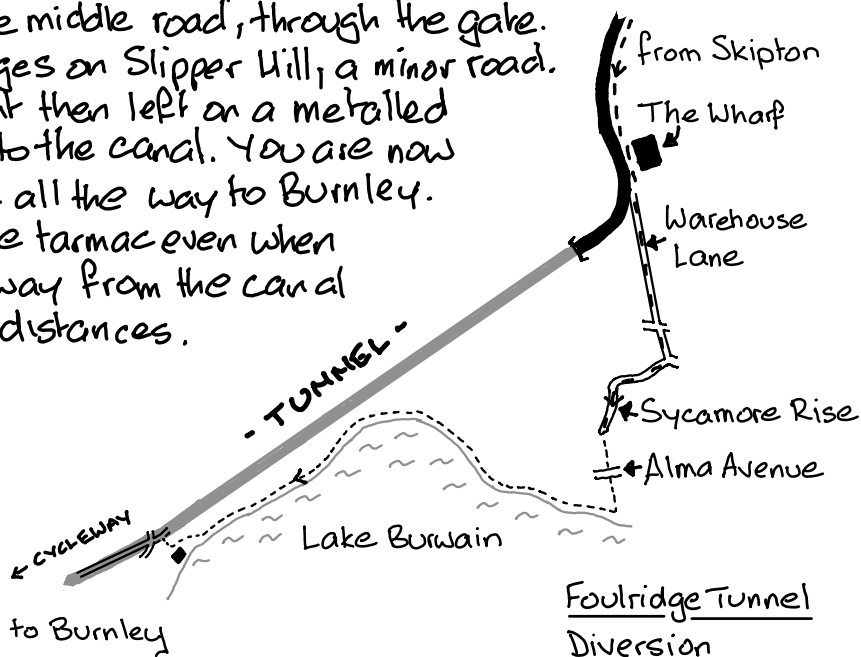
At the wharf at Foulridge, as the canal bends right towards the tunnel, continue straight up Warehouse Lane. Cross Station Rd. up the hill. Turn right on Sycamore Rise, which is steep, and follow it to the end where a track continues up a steep

gravel path. Cross Alma Avenue and drop down to Foulridge Lower Reservoir, which has the grand alternative name of Lake Burwain.

Turn right on a narrow, overgrown path which has a very tight railed section. Continue round the reservoir, which is a feeder at the summit level of the canal. At the building drop down the slope through the car park to Reedymore Lane. Turn left to the 4-way junction.

Note: to avoid the narrow path round Lake Burwain, once you've gone up Warehouse Lane, turn right at Whitemoor Road, B6251, out of the village. Turn left on Reedymore Lane to the 4-way junction.

Take the marked cyclepath to Burnley, which is the middle road, through the gate. This emerges on Slipper Hill, a minor road. Turn right then left on a metalled path back to the canal. You are now on tarmac all the way to Burnley. Stay on the tarmac even when it veers away from the canal for short distances.

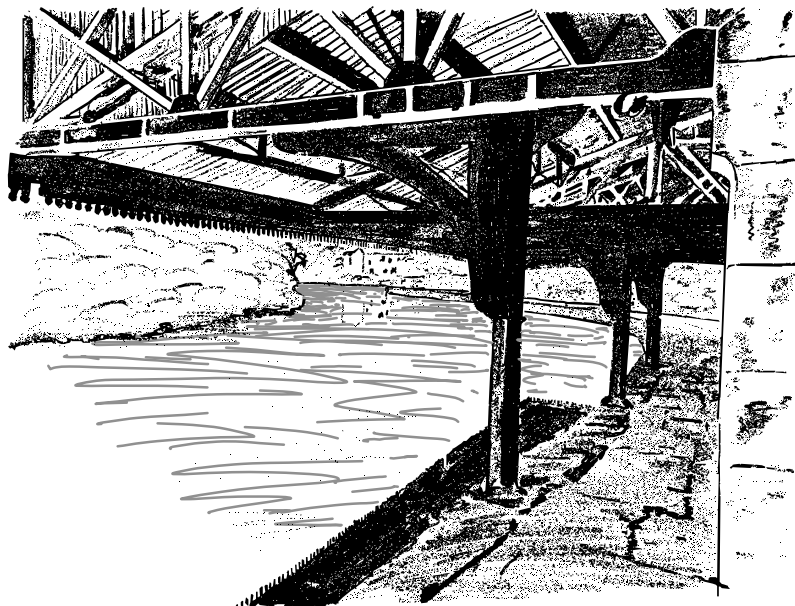


3. FOULRIDGE TO BURNLEY (9 MILES)

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Pass through Colne and Nelson. As you approach Burnley cross the long straight embankment. Continue round the bend to Manchester Road Bridge, 103B, where you climb up to the road. Turn left across the bridge to a large roundabout. Cross straight over and up the hill to Manchester Road station on your right. Trains are 2 per hour, change at Leeds.

There are no inviting watering holes close to the Burnley end of the ride, so you can either try a bar at Granary Wharf in Leeds, under the station, while waiting for your connection, or one of many good pubs (including a couple of micropubs) in Skipton. The Beer Engine is particularly handy for Coach Street car park.



Burnley Wharf,
Leeds and Liverpool Canal