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## Leyburn to Wensley via Leyburn Shawl

Starting point and OS Grid reference	War Memorial in Leyburn Market Place (SE 112906)
Ordnance Survey map	OL 30 – Yorkshire Dales - Northern and Central
Distance	6.1 miles
Date of Walk	25 October 2018
Traffic light rating	

**Introduction:** This walk from Leyburn to Wensley takes you via the curiously names Leyburn Shawl to Wensley, then back to Leyburn. The views over Wensleydale from Leyburn Shawl, a limestone escarpment, are truly magnificent and you can clearly see Roova Crags, Pen Hill and Addleborough. There is a topograph setting it all out.

The legend version behind the name Leyburn Shawl is that Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned at Castle Bolton, around 5/6 miles west of Leyburn. One day, she managed to escape and fled through woodland, along this escarpment, towards Leyburn. Her shawl caught on a branch, where it was found by pursuing soldiers, so indicating that she had passed that way. The escarpment has thereafter been known as Leyburn Shawl or just The Shawl.

An alternative story is that “Shawl” comes from Old Norse schalle or skali which refers to huts or shelters. You do pass the site of an ancient settlement along this route. Or it may come from Shaw, meaning wood. In essence, no one knows!

Prehistoric remains have been found here. The Shawl was used to host annual tea parties in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

You pass the impressive Bolton Hall which is home to Lord Bolton and has been in the family since 1149. It is the centre of a large estate, with a history of mining, quarrying agriculture and forestry. The house and gardens are private though the gardens have periodically been opened to the public.

You will also pass the remains of the Keld Heads Smelt Mill. Derelict and looking non too safe, especially the chimney, there are the remains of the engine house and another building. If you look to the right, there are the remains of the wheel pit. Production began in 1851. By 1859 its flue had been extended to a length of 3.3 kms, making it the longest in Yorkshire! Production ceased around 1888.

Wensley is a small, pretty village from which the dale gets its name, unlike other dales which take their names from the rivers which run through them. In this dale, the river is the Ure. Wensley received its market charter in 1202 and held the only market at that time. It boasts a fine pub, the Three Horseshoes and the White Rose Candle Workshop where as well as buying candles, you can watch them being made.

The walk starts from the war memorial in the market place in Leyburn, which is on the A684, the main road through Wensleydale. There is parking in the market place area and there is also a pay and display car park.

**Start:** With your back to the war memorial, cross High Street and walk along Commercial Square. Close to the end, you will see a sign for "The Shawl". At the end of the street, turn left and almost immediately right through a kissing gate and follow the path ahead through the field in front of the houses, known as Shawl Fields. You have now started crossing the top of the escarpment known as Leyburn Shawl.

At the end of the field, go through a walkers' gate and follow the path along the edge of the trees.

Continue along the top of the escarpment, ignoring a path off left at SE 093910.

Eventually, the path you are following dips down to the left (SE 086913).

Arrive at a three way fingerpost (SE 086913). Turn left, following the fingerpost for Preston-under-Scar and continue down the field to a kissing gate you can see.

Pass the corner of a fenced off rough area (SE 081912). Go left at the corner following the direction of a yellow footpath arrow.

Continue down, to the gate and beyond, ignoring a track off to the right which goes to Preston-under-Scar.

Follow your track until it bends right towards the trees. Almost immediately, cross another broad track and go through the gateway towards the farm.

Start anti-clockwise around the farm (Tullis Cote) but as you reach the corner of a barn, where the main track bends left towards the farmhouse, branch off right, on to a footpath, just before a power pole.

The path develops into a broader track. Follow it down past the remains of Keld Heads Smelt Mill.

Follow the main track down past the cottage to the road, crossing Keld Bridge. Cross the road and keep straight ahead following the public footpath fingerpost. A little further on, cross the railway and follow the path to another road where you turn right (SE 077905).

Opposite the house "Stoneham" (shown as Stoneham Cottage on the OS map), turn left down a broad concrete drive (SE 073905).

At a 'T' junction of tracks, turn left, then follow it as it bends right alongside a high stone wall. Continue past Bolton Hall.

At a crossroads of tracks, turn left, passing the front of Bolton Hall with its ornate black and gold gates. At the next junction, the left turn is the private drive to the house, so you turn right.

Arrive at the main road in Wensley (SE 092897) and turn left along it.

Follow the main road out of the village, passing the Three Horseshoes Pub (excellent beer!) and the candle makers. Just after you have passed the village sign for Wensley, turn right down a tarmac lane, going back on yourself. Look out on the left for a public footpath fingerpost and follow the direction into a field (SE 095898).

Initially, follow the power lines across the field. At the bottom of the field, by a small barn, turn left and follow the hedge on your right.

Cross a small field, then go through a kissing gate. Bear left to go round the top corner of a wood (SE 100897).

Follow the edge of the wood to a kissing gate, through which you enter the Leyburn Old Glebe Nature Reserve. Cross a small bridge, then turn left.

At the end of the field, go through a slit stile keeping straight ahead in the direction of a yellow arrow, parallel with the left hand field boundary.

As you get near the top of the field, turn right to head for the top right hand corner of the next field, where there are two gates. Go through the right hand gate and follow the hedge on the left.

A combination of easily discernable path, gates and stiles now guide you to Leyburn. Cross the railway once again and head for the opposite corner of this last field. Turn right along the road into Leyburn.

