



6. **Go straight** ahead until you come to a FOOTBRIDGE over Hollins Brook. DO NOT CROSS THE BRIDGE but turn LEFT keeping the brook on your right. In the far corner of the field is another STILE which you cross. Continue straight on to cross another STILE just in front of the River Lostock. Go across and LEFT beside the river. DO NOT CROSS THE FOOTBRIDGE on your right but keep along the footpath beside the river until you come to a hedge and ditch.
7. **At the** time of writing, the footbridge is missing but we hope it will be reinstated and you can continue the walk. If not, use the suggested detour at the end of these instructions.
8. **Once across** the ditch you may follow the river especially if the grass is high awaiting silage/hay making. Otherwise follow the official footpath route diagonally across the huge field heading towards the cluster of farm buildings and tall trees. Exit onto Ulnes Walton Lane via the STILE on the LEFT of the bridge. Take care crossing; the lane is surprisingly busy with traffic. The STILE is directly opposite and takes you into the fields beside the river.
9. **Go along** the river to a STILE and continue to a FOOTBRIDGE. Once across continue straight ahead, away from the river, towards a metal gate to the right of some large buildings. Exit via a small gate on the right of the large gate.
10. **Walk up** the white track towards right corner of a large brick building. When you reach the line of trees, turn left along the tree line, after about 10mtrs you will see the STILE on your right. Go through the stile onto the car park. Look to the left and you will see a black notice board and some bollards below it. Walk between the bollards and turn RIGHT towards main road. *Gradwell's Farm to the left is very old and reputed to have an underground tunnel linking it to St Michael's Church, Croston. West Lancashire remained Catholic during the time of Elizabeth I and priests travelled secretly to avoid persecution.*
11. **Cross onto** Highfield Road beside the Highfield Restaurant and continue for one third of a mile. There is a pavement which keeps crossing from one side of the road to the other. *You will see the Croston Millennium 1 mile post, one of a series of stone carvings erected in 2000.*
12. **When you** come to the first red brick house on the right, *Woodlands* cross the road and go over a metal ladder-type STILE. Follow the line of hedge and cross a FOOTBRIDGE. Continue straight ahead towards a gate, crossing the STILE beside it onto a grassy track. Go over the next STILE and follow the track. At the end of the track *to your right can be seen the parkland of old Croston Hall and its Lodge.*
13. **Go past** the farm buildings on your left and through the metal gates. At the River Yarrow, leave the track by going over the STILE on your left. *Across the river is Croston Corn mill. There is a weir and Rivers' Authority data collection station.* Go away from the river and keep the hedge on your left. The

river swings round to meet you again at the STILE. *On the opposite side of the Syd Brook which flows through Charnock Richards and the South of Eccleston flows into the Yarrow.*

14. **Go over** the STILE and keep beside the river with the barbed wire on your left. *Here there is fencing to protect the riverbank which has been planted with Alder and Hazel.* Leave via a STILE beside huge Willow tree. *Ahead is Winter Hill, the TV mast and smaller transmission masts for the emergency services. The Millstone Grit hills stands above the Lancashire Plain that we are on as the Western edge of the Pennines.* If you walk straight towards the mast you will come across the next STILE as the river curves away to your right. *You walk through improved pasture of ley grass, mostly rye grass and white clover, which grows well on the damp heavy fertile clay soil of the flood plain.* DO NOT GO OVER THE FOOTBRIDGE on your left, but go over the STILE straight ahead on the right of the metal gates.
15. **The next** STILE is visible ahead and slightly to the right. *Look right to see Harrock Hill, an outcrop of Millstone Grit rock whose hardness resisted erosion so that it now stands out above the Lancashire Plain. The river makes a huge bend, a meander, here.* Once over STILE beside the metal gates keep close to the river. *From here there is an excellent view of St Mary's Parish Church, Eccleston with the small mound of Great Hill to the left of the tower.* This is a huge field. Ignore the stiles over the barbed wire fence unless you want access to the river. *Close to the electricity wires is a red and white post showing the path of the Morecambe to gas pipeline under the river. Next is the remains of an old willow cut right down but now miraculously regenerating itself.* Head towards the church. *The white tower is the grain silo at Manor House Farm whose dairy cows graze these fields. The huge flood plain stretches to the left, but on the right the river comes up against the bluff line shown by the gentle upward slope. The hanging fences across the river are where the cattle cross.* The STILE is in the far right corner of the field. Once over go LEFT to a STILE with a "dog gate" onto a track between the river and a hawthorn hedge. *Here is a variety of wild plants (including nettles, necessary for caterpillars for butterflies) blackberries, ragwort, Himalayan Balsam, hedge parsley, willowherbs etc and is full of butterflies in summer.* Exit over the black STILE. *Look across the river to the sandy cliff to see sand martins nests and see them swoop over the water. This is a local beauty spot and paddling place.* Keep along the hedge and exit by the second black stile. *Note the beautiful old beech tree on the left. The track beside the river is continuously undercut and lost due to the river changing it's course and eroding the bank. The fine Georgian brick building was once the old rectory.* Go over the STILE beside the beech tree onto the track in front of the houses. Exit at the junction of New Lane and Lydiate Lane.