

Rosedale Railway - Sheriff's Pit-Thorgill - East Mines

Walk 4

Distance - 9.4 miles (Moderate)

Start/car parking - Lion Inn car park

Note: It would be a great help to future walkers if you could record any inaccuracies you come across during this walk and report them to reception so that appropriate amendments can be made. Thank you for your help. *Happy walking!*

WALK

1. The walk starts and ends at the The Lion Inn car park on Blakey Ridge ([GR 679 997](#)). Cross the road carefully and look for a public footpath sign to the right of the building opposite - follow a rough path down through the heather to the old railway line.

2. Turn right and follow the old track which provides an excellent surface for walking. Follow the track to a grassy clearing - a few scattered stones are all that remains of Blakey Junction ([GR 684 989](#)). It was here where a line left the Rosedale railway to wind its way across the High Blakey Moor to Ingleby Incline, then down to Battersby Junction before continuing on to the steelworks in Durham, then later Teesside.

3. From Blakey Junction continue straight ahead on the railway track enjoying the wonderful views east across Rosedale.

4. About 2 miles further on you arrive at the ruins of Sheriff's Pit ([GR 697 962](#)) where part of the gable end of the mine manager's house is all that remains standing. Nearby, fenced off, is the 270ft deep abandoned mine shaft. **(Take great care with children and dogs because part of the fencing has been damaged).**

5. Leave the track on the left opposite Sheriff's Pit where there's a faint path going almost due east across the moor - the gable end just about points you in the right direction!

6. On reaching a wooden and wire fence cross a stile, then continue on, bearing slightly right and gently downhill along a sunken track, in parts difficult to follow. Just aim for a holly tree and stile at the corner of a dry stone wall at [Grid Ref 704 963](#).

7. Cross over the broken wall and walk to the right of an old stone ruin, then continue on down a steep grassy bank. Continue down past the farm ruins of Gill Gank, and then through a gate next to a large stone house. Follow the access road down until you reach the hamlet of Thorgill ([GR 707 966](#)).

8. Turn right and walk on past the pretty houses in the hamlet.

9. Soon after leaving Thorgill, look for an access road leading down to Low Thorgill Farm ([GR 710 967](#)). Continue on between the farm buildings, then through a small gate and straight on down the next field.

10. On reaching a small footbridge spanning the narrow river at the bottom, cross it and continue more or less straight on and up across the next few fields - parts of the path are an old stone trod. Continue on aiming for the houses up ahead.

11. After the last field, go through a gate, bear left and follow a wide track to Hill Cottages ([GR 708 976](#)). Go past the end house, straight across the road and through a gate near a seat - follow the track ahead and uphill past the white farmhouse and duck pond.

12. Behind the house you will see a set of ruined buildings - **(these were once part of the Rosedale East Branch Railway Goods Station)**. Continue on as the track bears left behind the ruins, soon reaching an information plaque near a gate.

13. Go through the gate and follow the stony track round to the left past more ruins of the Goods Station buildings.

The track then bears right to join the old railway track bed - continue straight on enjoying the superb views to Rosedale Head.

14. Soon you arrive at an impressive set of ruined arches - the 'Old Kilns' - the chimney above acted as a ventilator. **(Iron ore was tipped into the kilns from above then roasted to remove any impurities such as water and carbonic gas. This process was known as 'calcination' and helped reduce the weight of ore to be transported to the steelworks at Teesside and Durham, thus saving on both carriage costs and royalties).**

15. About 1/2 a mile further on you arrive at a second set of kilns - the 'New Kilns'. These were built at a later date than the first set but served exactly the same purpose.

16. Continue to follow the track for about the next 3 miles, passing yet more evidence of a once thriving industry. The track is a masterpiece of engineering as it follows the contours of the valley sides, crossing huge embankments and passing through deep cuttings.

17. Follow the track all the way to Rosedale Head where it curves left crossing yet another huge embankment, then continue along the track on the west side of the dale as it begins to climb gently along the hillside.

18. Not far beyond a brick ruin, look for a signposted path to the right leading up through the heather to the roadside - turn left and follow the grass verge before carefully crossing the road to The Lion Inn.

NB - An alternative version of this walk is to start at Hill Cottages (Point 11) and then use Lion Inn (Point 1) as a lunch stop.

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Disclaimer:

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