

## Rosedale Abbey to Cropton 5.75 mls (9km), approx. 2.5hrs

**Transport** M6 from Pickering (outside Library)  
[and Ryedale Community Transport bus 173 on Mondays only]

**Map** 1:25,000 OS Explorer OL26 and OL27 (route slips across two maps at SE 740 938)  
or 1:50,000 OS Landranger 94 Whitby & Esk Dale (or corner of Landranger 100)

**Start** Rosedale Abbey

### Overview

Taking a less usual route south-east down the valley from Rosedale Abbey, this walk enables you to look back over your shoulder towards 'upper' Rosedale before fringing the moorland above the River Seven in 'lower' Rosedale, finally climbing Cropton Bank to the village of Cropton. Here there are no shops or toilets but The New Inn offers pub food and beers from its on-site brewery (tours may be booked). There are benches at the top of the hill on Cropton village green. The Moorsbus M6 stops on request opposite the pub to return to Pickering [also 173].

If you prefer not to attempt the climb of Cropton Bank, you may hail the Moorsbus on its way back from Rosedale Abbey at the foot of the hill at the junction of the Rosedale-Cropton-Lastingham roads\*\* (see corresponding place in instructions). There is a field gateway to wait safely for the bus, opposite the T-junction (though it is not a likeable place to wait, and no seating).

The going includes farm track, mostly moorland path and some road-walking. There are two sections of quite steep climbing at the start and the end, the rest of the route roughly contours.

In mid to late Victorian times Rosedale saw a population burst from a scattered rural 558 to an industrialised 2398 in twenty years, as a result of its ironstone mining. Along each side of the dale ran a railway line serving the mines and the kilns which calcined (roasted) the ironstone before the ore was transported in railway wagons to supply the blast furnaces of the north-east. (This story forms the core of the Land of Iron Project.) The dale has now reverted to being green and rugged with ruins of its industrialised past, and Rosedale Abbey itself welcomes visitors (two cafes and a pub, toilets, and caravans). The 'abbey' ruins (just to west of the village church) are worth a short detour to visit what remains (only a turret, staircase and stone seat) of the original small Cistercian priory founded in 1154 (served by a band of up to a dozen nuns who are credited with being the first to raise sheep commercially in the area) and dissolved in 1536. It is probable that the name of the valley derives from a personal Viking name "Rossi" or a word meaning 'horse', or another word 'rhos' meaning 'moor'. So no roses.

Along the walk you pass high up on your right the site of some ironstone mining, and later the remote site of another local but illegal industry, glass-making. In Elizabethan C16<sup>th</sup> England you needed an expensive licence to make glassware so the craft was pursued on the sly: this site in Rosedale (there's nothing to see but a small plaque as the furnace, discovered only in the 1960s, has been removed and reconstructed at nearby Ryedale Folk Museum in Hutton-le-Hole) was ideal as it offered seclusion, woodland for secretive living and fuel for the furnace, and key ingredients of sand and lime, and bracken, which when burned yields sodium oxide which helps sand melt. There was also clay in abundance for making crucibles in which the ingredients were melted. The glassworks here was actually established by refugee Huguenot craftsmen from France. As glassware is no longer a black market product, Gillies Jones Glass Studios in Rosedale Abbey have set up to create beautiful original pieces.

### Route

- Alighting from the Moorsbus opposite Abbey Stores in Rosedale Abbey, turn L off the bus (ie. away from the tree-covered green) to go back the way the bus came in
- In less than 150m, immediately after the entrance to Rosedale Abbey Caravan Park on your right, at the road junction at the foot of Rosedale Chimney Bank, take the road right signposted Thorgill

- Go over a stone bridge\* (same bridge as mentioned below) over the River Seven

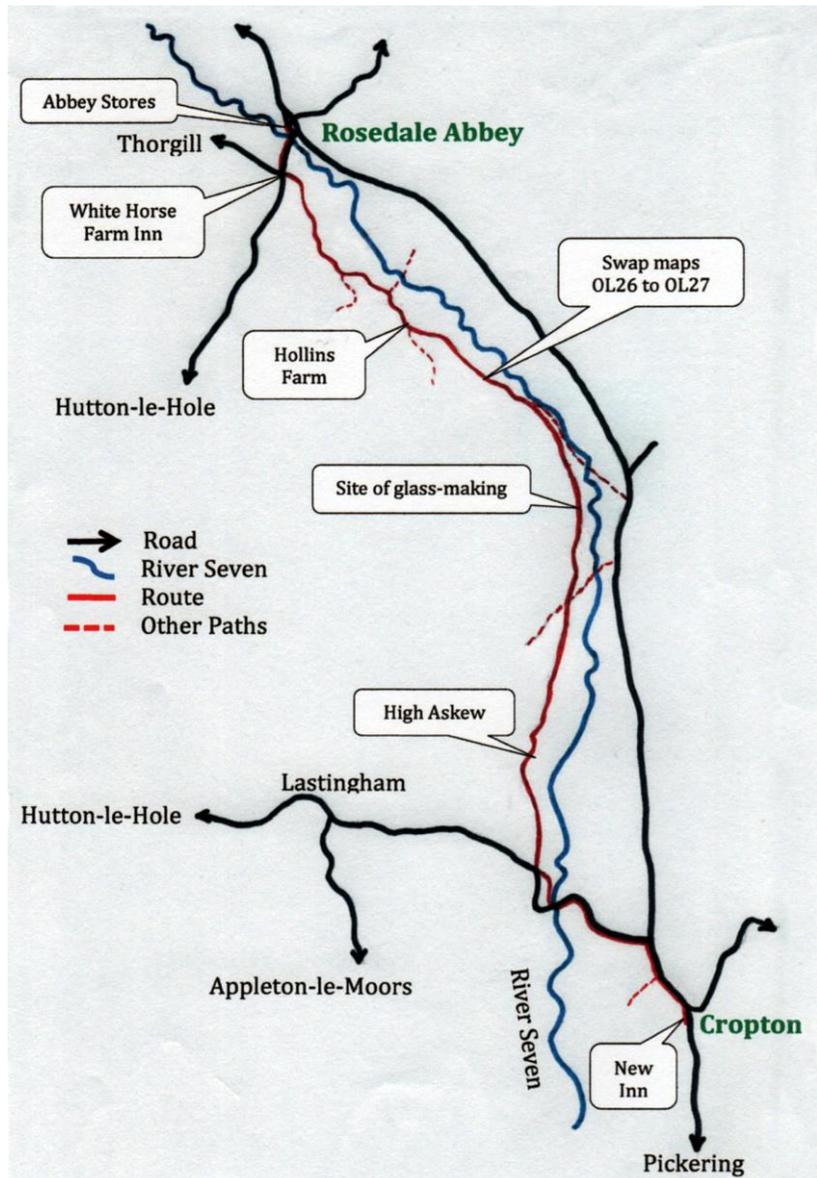
*This is the foot of Rosedale Chimney Bank, at max. gradient 1 in 3 (33%) the steepest road in England. (This accolade is supposedly shared with Hardknott Pass in Cumbria, but don't tell that to a Yorkshireman.) As such it provides a challenge for individual cyclists and international races, known as "the chain breaker". The 'chimney' in question served a nearby ironstone mine for ventilation – at 100ft it was a prominent landmark. The mine closed in 1929, whilst the chimney was demolished as unsafe in 1972.*

*The River Seven rises at Rosedale Head just four miles up the valley. It flows onward through Sinnington to meet the River Rye just north of Malton, thence the River Derwent in the Vale of Pickering before eventually spilling into the Humber Estuary and the North Sea at Hull. Wish the waters well on their journey as you cross the bridge here.*

- Just over the bridge\*, where the road turns sharp left up the hill, keep straight ahead on a footpath up the right hand side of the end-terraced house
- Up steps beside house emerge into a field, keep climbing up rough pasture with field boundary on left
- In 300m over stile, turn left on lane (opposite a golf course)
- In 150m at crossing with Rosedale Chimney Bank road, go straight across in front of White Horse Farm Inn with picnic benches overlooking a good view

[Alternatively from the stone bridge\* continue climbing on the road then in 300m (opposite junction right turn Thorgill Only), turn left through car park of White Horse Farm Inn]

- Continue through the car park of White Horse Farm Inn on a farm track which serves the series of properties you will pass



- In approx. 1.5km go through a handgate by a cattle grid (you have crossed the first cattle grid about half way along the track)
- In 40m by a wooden fingerpost, keep climbing straight ahead on a grass path (ignoring the entrance up the track left into Hollins Farm), keeping a stone wall on your left curving round the farm

1.5mls (2.5km)

- In 90m from fingerpost, fork left following the wall on a lower level bridleway (ignoring a path straight uphill onto the moor)

*Enjoy views back up Rosedale and North Dale over your left shoulder as you walk on. North Dale is a branch off Rosedale and was chosen by the contemporary northern and international sculptor Andy Goldsworthy for siting a series of unique artistic/architectural 'installations' known collectively as his "Hanging Stones" project*

- Follow this rough moorland-edge path as it winds, dips and climbs for 3.5km, ignoring all paths off

*Beware of possible mountain bikers also entitled to use this bridleway.*

*Note: you'll need to swap maps along the way.*

*You'll pass the site of some former illicit glass-making - a small plaque is mounted on a stone pillar beside the path on your right hand side, opposite a ruined stone building.*

*As you drop gently on a rough track to approach a property on your left (marked High Askew on your map), there's a flat stone 'bench' – in front of a single hawthorn bush at the corner of a walled field – to have a rest and find a modicum of shade.*

- Finally at a tarmac lane with fingerpost (by the entrance to High Askew property on your left, over a cattle grid), bear slightly right uphill

4mIs (6km)

- In just over 1km, where this lane meets the 'main' road to Lastingham (right) on a bend, go through a handgate on your left through a high hedge
- Head diagonally right gently down across a field for 120m to a field gate
- Head right through the gate to another field gate in just 50m
- At first keep near the left edge of this rough pasture on a kind of raised platform, before shortly leaving the edge to go straight ahead, but almost immediately curving left and gently down into a far corner (130m from last gate)
- A hand gate allows you onto the road before a bridge (marked Seven Bridge on the map)
- Head left over the bridge, follow the road

*Danger: Beware traffic on this narrow lane*

- In 800m at a T-junction\*\*, turn right over a bridge and begin to climb Cropton Bank on the road, facing traffic

5.25mIs (8.5km)

- In 300m ignore a track right by a metal bench, but now find a narrow path on the verge to continue climbing parallel to the road
- In 250m this path runs out at a bend so continue climbing steeply on the road again

*Danger: Take great care for traffic on this blind bend*

- At the top of the hill by a triangular green with horse chestnut trees and benches, the main village (no services) is off left, but bear right to find The New Inn on your right in 50m from the green

*Moorsbus M6 stops on request opposite the pub [also 173 Mondays only]*

*With thanks to Peter Lockwood*