

Twenty seven MILLS HILL –CASTLETON via TANGLE HILL

This is a rewarding walk with some very fine views and a real treat for you in Thornham Fold. On parts of the route you may well feel as if you are in remote countryside.

Take the train from Eccles Station to Manchester Victoria. At Victoria board a stopping train to Rochdale via Castleton, and alight at Mills Hill station.

Go down the station steps and turn right under the railway. Cross the canal bridge then U-turn to your right to go down the steps by the side of the bridge.

On the canal bank turn right and follow the towpath as far as a stone bridge. At the bridge turn right down the stone steps to the River Irk and walk along the bank.

Go ahead always keeping the river just on your left (There is a short ascent over flags at about 30 degrees at the stepped weir). *Eventually this will take you through a pleasant piece of parkland.*

At the end of the park bear right along the park fence to the gate. *Just up the steps there is a pleasant formal garden.*

Go out of the park gate and turn left. Cross the bridge over The Irk and go straight ahead to take the right fork of the road.

The road bears right at a row of old cottages. Then take the first left. *On your right you will see a chapel converted to a house and on the left the red brick Heald Green Methodist church.*

After crossing the bridge over the motorway ignore the first road on the left to a farm, then take the second left at the white cottage on the corner. Keep ahead past Cinder Hill farm.

At the junction take the right fork to go past a large, white, modern farmhouse. The road bears right along the edge of some woodland on your left. *You can see the distant spire of Royton church, and Oldham to your right.*

Eventually you come to a gap on your left - go left through this gap into the "Pennine Woodland" and then proceed uphill along a tarmac park road.

This road takes you through some fine woodland. It dips down. At the bottom of the dip go to the left for the steps up to the monument. *(An obelisk war memorial to men of Royton). From here there are fine views and a view pointer.*

Below you can see the hamlet of Thornham Fold. Go straight down from the pointer towards this. Go through the fence and turn left. Go through a small gate and then take the track right into Thornham Fold. *You may notice on your right The Tandle Hill Tavern. This tiny pub serves a range of J.W. Lees beers and has an extensive menu of very good pub food. It was chosen as the Greater Manchester Beer and Food Pub of 2007.*

From The Tandle Hill Tavern go left and follow the broad country road down to the main road. Cross the main road and go between the garage and The Hopwood Arms to join the canal bank.

Turn right towards Castleton. At lock 53 go left over the bridge and then right to continue on the towpath.

Next you cross a bridge right and then left adjacent to Whipp and Bourne Switchgear. At lock 52 again go left over the bridge and then right to continue on the towpath.

At lock 51 U-turn to your left to go towards The Blue Pits Inn, Castleton. At the main road U-turn right down the station approach. This brings you onto the Manchester Platform of Castleton station.

CLASSIFICATION: MEDIUM LENGTH, MODERATE WALK.
COUNTRYSIDE, SPLENDID VIEWS, GOOD FOOD,
PUB, CANALS.

RAIL FARE: category ONE.

Maps: OS 1:50 000 sheet 109

Manchester A-Z