

Blisland, and De Lank Quarry

Distance: 4.5 miles

Map: Ordnance Survey Explorer 109

Start: Blisland Village Green (Grid Ref SX 101732)

Character: This walk starts at one of Cornwall's prettiest villages, with a post-office/shop/cafe, a CAMRA award-winning pub, an interesting church and (unusually for Cornwall) a village green. The latter is dotted with benches, so ideal for a post-walk rest – enjoy the peace and solitude of moorland life. The route is initially through farming country, followed by footpaths across commonland, and then a working granite quarry, before returning to Blisland via quiet country lanes. There are a couple of stiles, one steep descent, one steep ascent, and some very uneven walking around the quarry area. Take care when within the quarry and stay on the public footpath. A compass is always advisable when walking on the moor, and bearings are used in the walk description.

Park beside the village green, without causing an obstruction - bear in mind that a tractor or lorry might need to pass (if public transport is required, the only way to get to Blisland is with Corlink – Tel: 0845 850 5556 – who operate on demand between 07:00-23:00 Mon-Sat and 07:00-19:00 Sundays. Fares are reasonable).

Many roads radiate out from the village green, but the one that needs to be followed leads off N, signposted to Pendrift, and past the village hall. After 0.4m a crossroads is reached. Continue ahead in a northerly direction. After 0.3m the small hamlet of Pendrift is reached. Continue straight ahead, through the hamlet, until a wooden farm gate is reached.

Pass through the gate, taking care to shut it behind you, as livestock are often in this field. Three very muddy fields are now crossed in a NW direction. In the bottom RH corner of the third field, a stile and set of stone steps need to be negotiated before descending to the valley bottom (a great place for butterflies in July & August). Once in the valley, three evenly placed trees are good markers to follow N before the route turns NNE towards a footbridge over the De Lank river (otters frequent this river, and the river Camel, but you would be extremely lucky to see one. Dippers are more confiding, though)

Follow the obvious path left as you leave the footbridge, and then N towards an isolated cottage which is soon passed. Immediately after the cottage, the entrance to De Lank Quarry is seen. This quarry has been producing quality silver-grey granite for over 150 years, and has supplied granite for New Scotland Yard, Tower Bridge, The Royal Opera House, Trafalgar Square and the Princess Diana Memorial Fountain in Hyde Park, to name a few.

Cross the quarry access road and proceed through a kissing gate. Continue N, with the fence on your right. After 250m, turn right across a stile. The rocky path winds up to a T-junction, with the quarry ahead. Turn right, to pick your way along the upper edge of the quarry, before descending to the right of it – good views may be

had on the descent, but watch your footing! Upon reaching the quarry car park, be vigilant so as to follow the footpath signs and not trespass onto quarry property. The way-marked route takes you through the car park, left over a sand track, past some settling tanks, left, and immediate right on a narrow footpath bearing NE up a steep incline to a stile. After catching your breath, traverse the stile and turn right (SSE) along the path. Go through a field gate and turn right, keeping the hedge on your right. For the next few metres, the way is not obvious but, if you continue SSE with a hedge on your right and traverse a couple of stone stiles, you will soon arrive at Penquite Farm track. Bear right to a cattle grid and ford.

Cross the ford and continue SSE up the gentle slope ahead until, after 0.3m, you reach a crossroads of paths, the left hand one being more obvious. Here, there are two options:-

1. Proceed straight on SSE until you reach a lane. Turn left to a Y junction*, where you need to turn back sharp right (S). After 0.5m you cross a cattle grid and, after another 0.25m, reach a T- junction E of Cassacawn. Turn right and proceed back to the village of Blisland.

* the Y junction should be encountered almost immediately – if it isn't, you've left the moor too far N, so turn back along the road until you do reach the Y junction, and turn left (S) towards the above-mentioned cattle grid.

2. Turn right – SW to WSW – to soon encounter a boundary hedge on your left, over which there are fields as opposed to the common moorland you are still on. After a couple of minutes, you should encounter a large granite boulder known as Jubilee Rock (marked on OS Explorer 109 at SX 104 744). It was engraved, in 1810, by an unknown person to mark the golden jubilee of George II. A later addition marks the jubilee of Queen Victoria. Other symbols are some noble Cornish coats of arms and Britannia. If at first you don't succeed, wander around until you spot it (you are on open access land). It's worth the effort as, on a fine day, the view from the top is superb.

After enjoying a picnic or a rest by the Rock, proceed SW to a gate in the bottom corner of the common land. This gate leads to a sunken track – an ancient route that brings you back into Pendrift. Turn left and retrace your earlier steps to Blisland.

Enjoy your walk, but keep an eye out for the Beast of Bodmin Moor!



Legend

CAMRA: Campaign for Real Ale, N: North, E: East, S: South, W: West

Keep Cornwall Tidy

Please remember to take your litter home with you, thus ensuring future enjoyment of Cornwall for others. Better still, take a carrier bag and pick up litter along the way! Thank-you.

This walk has been researched and compiled by Bodmin Visitor Information Centre. 'Gold' award winners at the 2009 Cornwall Tourism Awards- Best Tourist information Centre. For further information on this walk, refer to OS Map No 109. For details of other walks in the area, please speak to a member of staff. With compliments, Bodmin Visitor Information Centre ☎ 01208 76616. Reviewed and updated March 2010.