Things to See and Do on the Hadrian's Wall Line

TYNE VALLEY
COMMUNITY
RAIL PARTNERSHIP

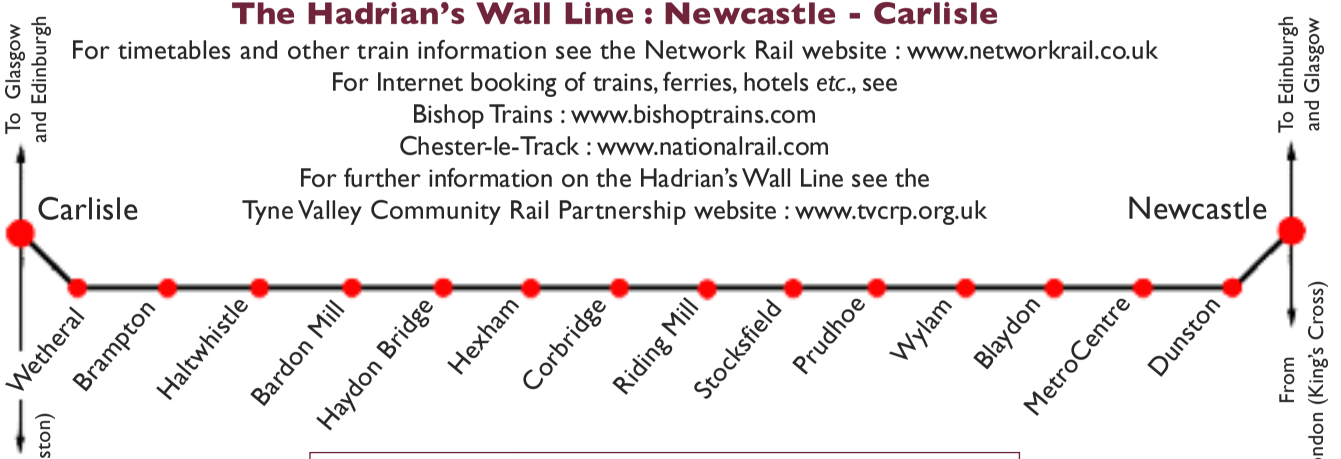
The Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership (TVCRP) represents the interests of local people regarding the railway service on the Newcastle to Carlisle Line. The Partnership, which is funded by local authorities and the train operating companies, works with community groups and other volunteers to decide how services should be run. It allows local organisations along the route to have a greater input into the line's rail services with the aim of improving passenger numbers, improving connectivity and boosting the local economy. It also eases any application for additional funding in respect of future projects. The TVCRP maintains a kiosk at Hexham station and an education centre at Haltwhistle.

This guide was prepared by the North Eastern Railway Association. Website : www.ner.org.uk

Note re the illustrations used in this guide : rather than use only modern photographs, which show the views you yourself can see today, many older photographs and postcards have been used so that you can compare and contrast today's scenery and townscapes with views from the past. The postcard view on the front cover is of the Cathedral Church of St Nicholas, Newcastle upon Tyne.

The Hadrian's Wall Line : Newcastle - Carlisle

For timetables and other train information see the Network Rail website : www.networkrail.co.uk
For Internet booking of trains, ferries, hotels *etc*., see
Bishop Trains : www.bishoptrains.com
Chester-le-Track : www.nationalrail.com
For further information on the Hadrian's Wall Line see the
Tyne Valley Community Rail Partnership website : www.tvcrp.org.uk



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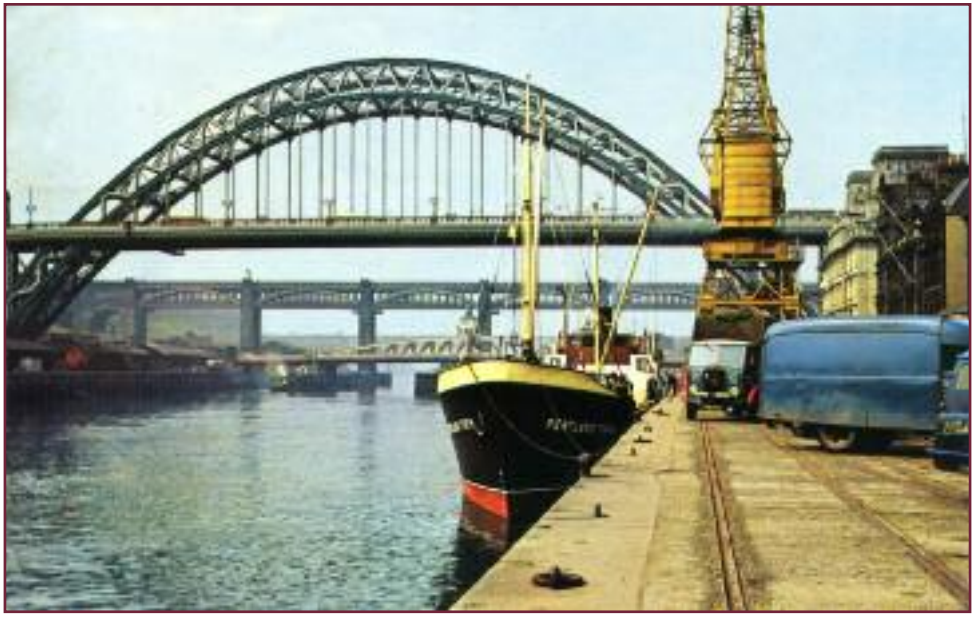
Now lads, I venture to tell you that I think you will live to see the day when the railway will supercede almost all other means of communication in this country ... the time is coming when it will be cheaper for a working man to travel upon a railway than to walk on foot.

George Stephenson

During 1824, two important meetings were held in Newcastle out of which developed the **Newcastle & Carlisle Railway** (N&CR). It was to become the first railway to be built across the breadth of Britain. Unfortunately the original N&CR Act prohibited the use of steam locomotives; the trains were required to be pulled by horses. This prohibition led to much trouble when the first section of the line was opened with great jubilation by steam-hauled trains on 9 March 1835. After objections by a local landowner, services were suspended from the 28 March to the 6 May 1835. Sanction for the use of locomotives was not given by Parliament until 17 June 1835.

The N&CR was opened in stages over the next three years. Great festivities were held on 18 June 1838, when the line was finally opened from Gateshead to Carlisle, including a civic reception given by the Mayor of Newcastle to his opposite number from Carlisle. The latter had travelled in one of the five trains which had left Carlisle in the early morning. From Gateshead a procession of thirteen trains set off in the opposite direction with some 3,500 passengers. Mishaps on the way delayed their return until 17 hours later, with many of the passengers being soaked to the skin as they sat unprotected from the weather in the open carriages of the day.



MV 'Pentland Firth' moored at Newcastle Quayside; the vessel was built in 1955 in the Netherlands for Messrs Gillie & Blair of Newcastle and sailed under this name until sold and re-named in 1967. There is no longer any commercial shipping to be seen at the Quayside, though it thrives as a tourist destination. There is a wonderful Sunday market, and bars, restaurants and hotels are open all year round. (JG Teasdale Collection)

The View from the Train, Newcastle to Carlisle

Newcastle

Newcastle upon Tyne is the most populous city in the north-east of England; the Tyneside conurbation is the seventh most populous in the United Kingdom. Newcastle developed around the Roman settlement of Pons Aelius; its present day name came from the castle built in 1080 by Robert Curthose, William the Conqueror's eldest son. In the 14th Century Newcastle became prosperous by the trade in wool, and later by the trade in coal from the many mines sunk in the vicinity.

Newcastle Central station is one of the great monuments of the early Railway Age. Located on the main line from London to Edinburgh, it was always a busy station. It remains so despite losing much of its suburban traffic to the Tyne & Wear Metro. The station was designed by the architect John Dobson to reflect the increasing prosperity and importance of the city. When opened on 29 August 1850, it replaced three earlier stations one of which had been built as a temporary terminus for the N&CR.

Trains on the N&CR started operating from the west end of Central station on 1 January 1851. In July 1862 the N&CR relinquished its independence and became part of the North Eastern Railway (NER). With the station completely in its ownership, the NER was able to reorganise its use and increase the number of platforms without extending the overall roof. The splendid entrance portico was added to the station in 1863.

Eventually, however, network and traffic growth made a major enlargement essential, and this was carried out during 1888-94. In 1904 the NER inaugurated its Tyneside electric train service from the east end of the station to Tynemouth and the coast, one of the world's first electric suburban services. These services are now provided by the Tyne & Wear Metro, leading to closure of platforms at the east end of Central station – the Metro serves Newcastle via stations underground.

To the east of the portico is the Royal Station Hotel, which is built on the course of the Roman

A postcard view of the interior of Newcastle Central station circa 1900. (Ruddock Limited / John Alsop Collection)

The King Edward VII Bridge not long after opening in 1906; the view is looking towards Newcastle. (Andrew Reid & Company / JG Teasdale Collection)

Wall. A short walk past the hotel over Orchard Street is the Mining Institute and the city's Literary and Philosophical Society. A plaque on the Mining Institute marks the position of the Roman Wall. On an island opposite is the Stephenson Memorial which is considered to be one of the finest works by the sculptor John Graham Lough. Stephenson stands in the centre on a stone column, around the base of which are four figures: an engineer resting his arm on a model of a steam engine, a blacksmith with an anvil, a miner with a safety lamp (invented by Stephenson) and a platelayer with a type of rail also invented by Stephenson.

Crossing the River Tyne

Some trains bound for Carlisle depart eastwards from Central station to pass over the Tyne via the High Level Bridge. Most trains, however, depart westwards to cross the river via the King Edward VII Bridge, which was designed by Charles A Harrison, the Chief Civil Engineer of the NER and built by the Cleveland Bridge & Engineering Company. The bridge was opened by King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra on 10 July 1906 despite being still unfinished at this time. General traffic began using the bridge on 1 October 1906.

There are magnificent views of the other bridges over the Tyne from the King Edward Bridge. The first bridge on the seawards side of the King Edward Bridge (to the left) is the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, which carries Metro trains over the river. It was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II on the 6 November 1981, nine days before regular Metro service.

Next is the High Level Bridge; designed by Robert Stephenson and built between 1847 and 1849, it was the first major example of a wrought-iron tied-arch (or bow-string) girder bridge. The bridge is on two levels: railway above and road below.

The other three bridges on the left are the low-level Swing Bridge (opened in 1876), the Tyne Bridge (opened on 19 October 1928 by King George V) and the pedestrian-only Gateshead Millennium Bridge (otherwise known as the Blinking Eye, first tilted on 28 June 2001).

To the right as you pass over the King Edward Bridge is the Redheugh Bridge. The original bridge was designed by

Thomas Bouch who was also the designer of the ill-fated Tay Bridge in Scotland. Beyond can be seen Dunston Staiths which are believed to comprise the largest timber structure in Europe; at their peak, 5.5m tonnes of coal a year were taken by rail from the Durham coalfields and loaded at the staiths on to ships waiting on the river; these transported coal both around the British Isles and internationally. Opened in 1893, the staiths were extensively restored for the 1990 Gateshead Garden Festival; unfortunately, they were seriously damaged by fire in 2003.

Using the Bensham Diveunder, your train descends alongside and then burrows underneath the main line to York and London. It emerges amidst an assortment of housing, industrial estates and landscaped areas and passes the site of Norwood Junction (for the branch to Dunston Staiths) shortly before reaching Dunston.

Dunston

The station first opened on 1 January 1909 and served as the terminus of a shuttle service from Newcastle. This service ended on 4 May 1926 (as a result of the 1926 General Strike) and the station was closed. It was very briefly brought back into use for special evacuation trains during the Second World War, but remained closed until it was officially re-opened by British Rail on 1 October 1984. Initially, most Tyne Valley services called at Dunston, but this service frequency was later reduced due to low passenger numbers, particularly after the opening of MetroCentre station. The service has been improved since December 2013 with an hourly service in each direction (including Sundays) provided by the Newcastle to MetroCentre service. A limited number of weekday and Saturday Hexham trains also stop here.

Shortly before MetroCentre station, your train rejoins the 1837 route of the N&CR to Redheugh (Gateshead) at the site of Whickham Junction.

MetroCentre

The station opened 3 August 1987 and serves one of Europe's largest shopping and leisure centres. Nearly a hundred trains a day call at the station, slightly fewer on a Sunday. From Newcastle, trains run every 15 minutes during the day to this station. The service is less frequent during evenings and on Sundays. The intu Metrocentre has almost 330 shops and 50 restaurants.

Leaving MetroCentre behind, your train crosses over the River Derwent at its confluence (right) with the River Tyne. Armstrong's Elswick and Scotswood Works were on the north bank (right) of the Tyne. William George Armstrong founded the works in 1847, principally to produce hydraulic machinery; whereas present day hydraulic machinery uses oil, Armstrong used water. His hydraulic cranes were very successful, and he expanded production to include bridges and armaments. The latter included battleships both for the Royal Navy and foreign navies. In 1882, the company merged with the shipbuilding firm of Charles Mitchell to form Armstrong Mitchell & Company and at the time its works extended for over a mile along the bank of the River Tyne. Armstrong Mitchell merged again with the engineering firm of Joseph Whitworth in 1897. The company expanded into the manufacture of cars, aircraft, railway locomotives and hydro-electric power plants. The company merged with Vickers in 1927 to create a subsidiary called Vickers-Armstrong. Armoured vehicles were manufactured at Elswick, latterly by BAE Systems, until 2012. The BAE site is now operated by the Reece Group, comprising a number of innovative engineering companies.

The south bank of the Tyne was also heavily industrialised, with numerous waggonways bringing coal from collieries in the Derwent Valley down to staiths on the south bank of the river. Nowadays only the two railway tracks to and from Carlisle pass underneath the A1 (Gateshead Western Bypass). This section of the A1 was built on part of the former Derwent Valley Railway to Rowlands Gill and Consett. This line opened in 1867 after three years of hard work. At its peak the Derwent Valley Railway was carrying over 500,000 passengers a year with regular goods traffic of timber, bricks and coal to Newcastle and iron ore to Consett. As road traffic became more efficient the service

declined until the line finally closed in 1962. The railway is commemorated in the Geordie folk song about an ill-fated train journey from Rowlands Gill, *Wor Nanny's a Mazer*. The route now forms the Derwent Walk, an 11 mile walkway from Swalwell to Consett. The rough ground on the left of the train marks the site of the connection from this railway on to the N&CR towards Blaydon.

On the right you may glimpse the Scotswood road bridge, along with the blackened girders of the former Scotswood railway bridge which was used by the Newcastle to Carlisle train service until 1982.

Blaydon

Blaydon was the original eastern terminus of the N&CR, opening on the 10 March 1835. Rebuilt extensively in 1912, the station buildings were largely demolished in 1979. Services were gradually reduced over the years, until December 2013 when the station regained a much improved service with calls every two hours in each direction (by Middlesbrough - Hexham trains) and extra departures at peak times. There is also a Sunday service for the first time since the early 1970s.

The song *Blaydon Races* was written by George (Geordie) Ridley of Gateshead. It is known worldwide and is sung whenever Geordies get together. The song describes the journey from Newcastle to Blaydon to attend the races held on Blaydon Haugh, and the places and people were real when it was written in 1862. There is now an annual road race, on the 9 June, which follows the song's route held in association with a Blaydon Races Folk Festival.

The river and railway part company as your train leaves Blaydon. The intervening land (right) is Stella Haugh, once the actual site of the Blaydon Races. It was latterly the location of Stella South Power Station and is now being redeveloped for housing.

On the north bank of the river (right) you can see the square tower of Newburn Church. In 1640 a Scottish army used the tower as a gun battery to defeat the English army of King Charles I, encamped on the Stella Haugh, a defeat which would lead two years later to the outbreak of the Civil War.

Newburn also played an important role in the early development of railways. William Hedley was born here in 1779, and later in life when serving as the viewer (manager) at Wylam

Blaydon station before the First World War; the North British Railway train has joined the Newcastle - Carlisle line west of Hexham at Border Counties Junction. (Bill Fawcett Collection)

Colliery he led the team that built *Puffing Billy*, one of the first steam locomotives. It was used on the Wylam waggonway, from 1813, to transport coal from the mines at Wylam via Newburn to the staiths at Lemington.

George Stephenson lived in Newburn and both of his marriages are recorded in the Church registers. At the time, Newburn was largely populated by miners and their families; Duke, Blucher, King, North Walbottle and Coronation collieries were sunk in and around the village.

Newburn was the lowest point on the river which could be forded. A bridge was built subsequently to keep travellers feet dry; the present bridge can be glimpsed through the trees on the right as your train passes Ryton Willows to regain the bank of the river just past the site of the N&CR's Ryton station**.** Ryton is on the hill on the left and passenger numbers using the station declined after the arrival of local bus services to the village in the 1920s. Ryton was closed on 5 July 1954; today people bring their cars to the former station forecourt to walk their dogs in the Ryton Willows.

The River Tyne is tidal to about a mile beyond Ryton, following the strengthening of the banks in the late 19th Century. The tidal limit coincides with the site of a railway that was laid across the river to access sidings on both banks for the river improvements.

Your train has now left the industrial landscape of Tyneside behind. The rest of the journey to Carlisle is through beautiful countryside, following the River Tyne to Haltwhistle. Villages stand out on the surrounding hillsides and nestle in the valley. Each valley settlement is often associated with a bridge over the river.

Shortly before the next station, to the right you might get a glimpse through the trees on the north bank of the river George Stephenson's birthplace. The small stone-built cottage was built circa 1750. Stephenson, who in later life became known as The Father of the Railways, was born here in 1781. The cottage is open to the public on selected days of the year: see the National Trust website www.nationaltrust.org.uk

George Stephenson's birthplace at Wylam. (Photochrom / John Alsop Collection)

Wylam

Wylam station, which was opened by the N&CR in 1835, is located on the south bank of the River Tyne. It is one of the earliest stations still in use in the world. Station Road crosses the line by a level crossing. Note that the west-bound (Carlisle) platform is to the east of the level crossing alongside the stationmaster's house, while the east-bound (Newcastle) platform is to the west of the level crossing.

The over-track signal box is of a type once quite common on the NER, but is now one of only two such surviving signal boxes of this design (Hexham being the other). The bridge (right) gives access to the village. It was originally built as a timber viaduct to access Benjamin Thompson's Ironworks on the north bank. It has been rebuilt on several occasions but still provides a useful link between the village and station. Wylam was the home of Charles Parsons, inventor of the steam turbine, who lived at Holeyn Hall. It was also the home of Timothy Hackworth who was involved in the building of locomotives such as *Puffing Billy*.

In the village is small railway museum, opened in 1981. It occupies a former classroom in the old school, now known as the Falcon Centre. In addition, there are attractive walks around the village, following the old railway that passes Stephenson's Cottage to the east and also heads west to the Hagg Bank Bridge. The village has its own brewery, several pubs and an innovative restaurant that serves pizzas cooked in a wood-fired oven.

Beyond Wylam, the railway builders were faced with the challenge of the steep-sided cliffs of Wylam Scars, running down into the river. Their solution was to build a $^{3}/_{4}$ mile brick wall out from the Scars, to create a shelf along which the railway still runs. The wall ends alongside the Hagg Bank Bridge (right) which looks like a miniature Sydney Harbour or Tyne Bridge although it predates both. It was originally built for the Scotswood, Newburn & Wylam Railway, to provide a line along the north bank of the Tyne. The railway used in places the route of the earlier Wylam Waggonway, running past Stephenson's cottage, to reconnect with the N&CR at Scotswood, just north of their former bridge at Blaydon. A number of firms were involved in the bridge's construction: WG Laws designed it; WE Jackson & Company of Newcastle upon Tyne dug the foundations and built the abutments; Hawks, Crayshay & Company of Gateshead manufactured the ironwork. The bridge was opened to traffic on 6 October 1876. The railway service, on what was known as the North Wylam Loop, was withdrawn in 1968. The bridge was converted into a footbridge in 1975.

Prudhoe

Shortly after the railway line and river part company, the regular-shaped landscaped hills on the right are chalk waste from the production of ammonium sulphate at the former chemical works (left), the site of which now forms a paper tissue mill for SCA Hygiene Products (UK) Limited. Your train soon reaches Prudhoe, where modern shelters provide cover for passengers. Signalmen in the tall signal box by the level crossing still operate the crossing gates and the station's traditional semaphore signalling. Because of the adjacent single carriageway Ovingham Bridge over the River Tyne and the frequent train services, there are often long road queues here. The Saxon tower of Ovingham church can be seen on the north bank.

Hagg Bank Bridge with the brick wall of the N&CR at Wylam Scars visible in the background below the bridge; photographed in 2012. (MH Ellison)

Prudhoe and its castle have had a violent past. In 1173 and 1174 the castle was besieged by King William of Scotland, though it was not taken. During the English Civil War it was occupied at different times by both Parliamentarians and Roundheads. People have lived in Prudhoe since the Bronze Age (two burial sites and a stone axe head have been found), though it was not until the middle of the 19th Century that the development of coal mining and heavy industry led to a rise in population approaching its current levels.

As it leaves Prudhoe, your train passes the remains of Eltringham Colliery and Eltringham Brick and Tile works (left) whilst the Tyne runs alongside the railway (right) for a short distance. As the river and railway part company again, the train passes (left) Eltringham. Nearby is Cherryburn, now a National Trust property, where the artist and engraver Thomas Bewick was born.

Mickley station opened in 1859 to serve the communities of Eltringham and Mickley, which is the larger village (left) up the hill. The station was only ever served by market day trains. A landslip in late 1914 meant that the tracks were slewed across the site of the westbound platform whilst the ground was being stabilised. It was never known for its passenger revenues (only 895 tickets were sold in 1895, just over 5000 in 1910) and a decision was taken not to re-open it. It last appeared in the June 1915 timetable.

Stocksfield

Stocksfield still has the original N&CR station house (on the left as the train enters the station). Stocksfield was to have been a junction for a railway to Consett, over which it was expected that large quantities of Cumbrian iron ore would be carried along the Tyne Valley Line to here and on to the ironworks at Consett, Tow Law and Middlesbrough. Construction started in 1856 but was soon abandoned though there are traces (left), just past the overbridge, of the cutting that would have formed the starting point for this railway.

Stocksfield developed as a community in the 19th Century following the opening of the Newcastle & Carlisle Railway. However, like

Prudhoe Castle, now open to the public. See the website: www.english-heritage.org.uk *(JG Teasdale Collection)*

Prudhoe, the local hamlets in the parish of Broomley & Stocksfield have been settled for centuries. There are several walks from the station to either Prudhoe or Riding Mill stations.

A road separates the railway from the river, whilst (right) on the river's north bank is Bywell, one of Northumberland's beautiful secrets. The village is built on a level, tree-fringed 'haugh' and swept on three sides by the Tyne. Bywell has a long history; there are traces of Roman occupation in the area and in AD 803 a bishop from Lindisfarne was consecrated here, which implies the existence of a monastery. Bywell Castle, built in 1430, is still largely extant (it was never actually completed) but is not normally open to the public.

Continuing on your journey, just before reaching Riding Mill station, the railway is crossed by a modern concrete bridge which takes the A68 over the railway, on its long climb out of the Tyne Valley onto the Durham Moorlands around Consett. By the river bridge there is a large pumping station, built to pump water released from Kielder Reservoir (north of Hexham) out of the River Tyne. The water then passes up and over the hills into the River Wear and then via a further tunnel on to the Tees. The scheme was designed to provide a water supply for the former heavy industries on the Rivers Wear and Tees. This massive engineering work has ensured the north-east of England has stayed free of water rationing in even the driest of spells.

Riding Mill

Riding Mill is situated on the south side of the Tyne. Originally centred around its mill and manor house, the village grew in the 19th Century with the arrival of the railway. The station still has an original N&CR building (left) on the Carlisle platform. One notable building in the village centre is the Wellington Hotel, infamous for its connection with a trial for witchcraft in 1673.

Beyond the station, the river re-joins the railway before the two are parted once again by Farnley Haugh. On the left, the site of the major landslip which closed the railway for six months in 2016 is clearly visible.

The N&CR originally passed through the higher ground at the western end of the Haugh by Farnley Scar Tunnel. This was one of two

A late Nineteenth Century view of Stocksfield station. The building on the left is the stationmaster's house. (John Alsop Collection)

tunnels on the N&CR and was originally bored to accommodate a single track of railway. More than one million bricks were needed for its construction. A section of the tunnel gave way on 28 December 1844, during widening work for double track operation. A further £1000-worth of repairs was ordered in 1871 when an inspection uncovered weaknesses. This chequered history led to the tunnel's eventual abandonment. Between November 1959 and June 1962, a deviation line was laid through a new cutting to the south of the tunnel. After closure, the tunnel was used for the cultivation of mushrooms. Preceded by a short cutting, the eastern portal of the tunnel can be seen (right). On 24 May 1988, this portal was given Grade II listed building status.

Corbridge

Approaching Corbridge, the numerous rugby pitches of Tynedale Park are passed on the right. This has been the home of Tynedale Rugby Football Club since 1976 and is also the annual home for a steam and vintage rally in mid-June. It is a short walk to the Park from Corbridge station.

Here the N&CR originally crossed the West Auckland to Elishaw Turnpike by means of a level crossing. It later transpired that the N&CR had no powers to obstruct the turnpike for the passage of trains. Therefore, in 1847, a bridge had to be built to carry the road over the railway which involved the demolition of the original station buildings. New station buildings were provided on the north side of the railway, with separate arches under the roadway giving access to the goods yard. The station had an over-tracks signal box like Wylam but it was burnt down circa 1960 when sparks from a passing steam locomotive ignited birds' nests in the structure. The station buildings now host an award winning Indian restaurant which offers escorted Raj Style train journeys from Newcastle.

Corbridge Bridge links the station with the village on the north bank of the Tyne. It was the sole survivor of the very destructive floods which battered north-east England in 1771; the old stone bridge at Corbridge has seen many floods since.

The village grew from the Roman town of Corstopitum, a supply town for the troops on Hadrian's Wall. Many Roman remains have been excavated; for details of the museum and opening times, see the website:
www.english-heritage.org.uk

Following the collapse of the Roman Empire, Corstopitum provided much of the building stones used in the construction of many of the village buildings, including the church, Vicar's Pele and nearby castles. In the 13th Century, Corbridge was second in the region only to Newcastle in wealth and its citizens were heavily taxed to help pay for Edward I's Scottish wars.

Corbridge has long been known for the excellence of its small shops, and several decorated fronts still survive.

As your train travels on to Hexham, the largest town in West Northumberland, it crosses the B6321 at Dilston Crossing. This was the main A69 route from Newcastle to Hexham until the building of the present highway on the north bank of the river. Nearby (left) are the ruins of Dilston Castle which are all that is left of the grand family seat of the Radcliffes, Earls of Derwentwater and prominent Jacobites. This ruined, early 15th Century tower house was once incorporated in the western wing of Dilston Hall.

Dilston Chapel, which stands nearby, was built circa 1616. It is a rare example of a post-Reformation recusant chapel. See the website:
www.friendsofhistoricdilston.org

At the foot of a wooded escarpment beyond the castle, the Devil's Water, a tributary of the River Tyne, flows beneath a single-span bridge, built at the same time as the chapel. Rumour has it that both the Lord's Bridge and the chapel were built with money originally raised for financing the Gunpowder Plot.

Hexham

Hexham, 22 miles from Newcastle still preserves the appearance of a well-cared-for country station. It was built on the garden of TW Beaumont, Esquire, Lord of the Manor of Hexham. The first section of the N&CR from Blaydon to Hexham was formally opened on 3 March 1835. The line was extended from

Hexham to Haydon Bridge on 28 June 1836.

Entering Hexham station, the train passes underneath the over-track Hexham (East) signalbox. This now controls the signalling and level crossings from east of Haydon Bridge to Stocksfield. Hexham's engine shed closed in 1959 and usage of the goods yard petered out in the late 1990s. In 2013 a major redevelopment scheme commenced. The goods yard on the south-east side has become a retail park. The railway stables have been relocated to Beamish Museum. The goods shed has been converted for use by a wine merchant. On the north side of the station, a new supplementary entrance and car park has been created affording disabled access to that platform.

At the station, sadly, the footbridge has lost its covering and the former NER enamelled station name-board lettered *HEXHAM FOR ALLENDALE* has gone. There was a bay platform at the west end (left) of the station for trains to Allendale, and another at the east end of the station (right) used by local trains to Newcastle.

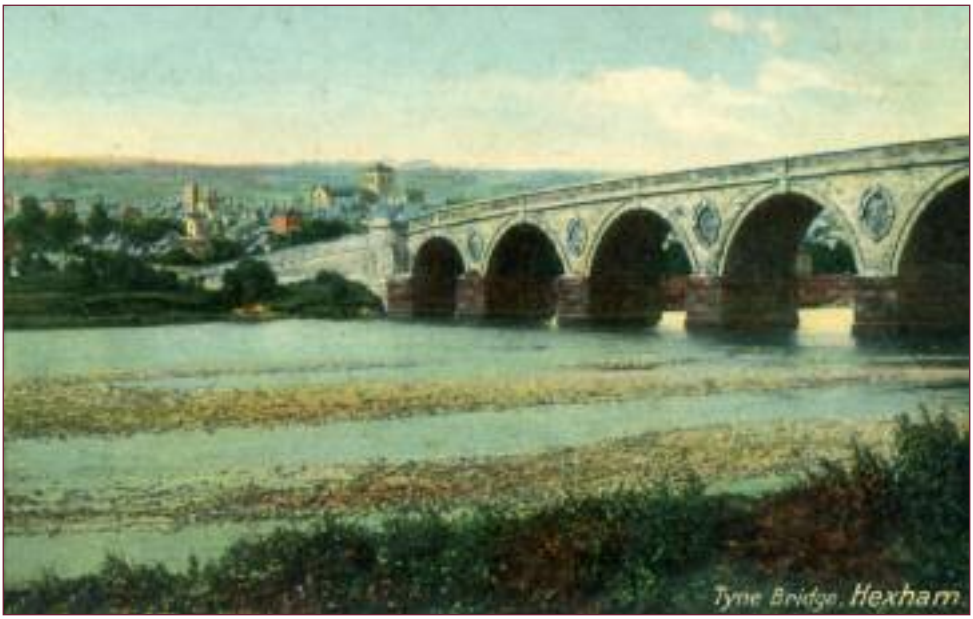
Hexham became a junction station with the opening of the first section of the Border Counties Railway (BCR), between Hexham and Chollerford on 5 April 1858. The BCR would become part of the Edinburgh-based North British Railway, a company which was desperate to have an independent route from Edinburgh to Newcastle, rather than having running rights over the NER's lines. They were thwarted by the NER at Hexham and at Morpeth, resulting in them operating a network of lines, from their main line from Edinburgh to Carlisle, through the sparsely populated rural lands of north-western Northumberland. The former BCR line from Hexham to Riccarton Junction was closed to passengers on 13 October 1956 and totally closed to all traffic from Hexham to Redesmouth on 1 September 1958.

In 1865, the Hexham & Allendale Railway (H&AR) received powers for the construction of a line between from Hexham to Allendale and on to Allenheads. The branch was opened to goods in 1868 but the passenger services did not start until 1 March 1869, due to a shortage of capital.

The line, which had been built to serve the lead mines in the vicinity of Allenheads, was destined never to reach that village. It ended at a terminus which was nearer to Catton than Allendale and well short of Allenheads. The NER absorbed the H&AR on 13 July 1876. Passenger services to Allendale were withdrawn on 22 September 1930 and goods services on 20 November 1950.

Hexham has an impressive mediaeval abbey, a town centre with cobbled streets and fascinating little shops including numerous antique shops. Walking from the Market Square, through the medieval archway you will see the Hexham Gaol which was England's first purpose-built prison and now houses the Border History Museum (website: www.hexhamoldgaol.org.uk). During the summer months free walking tours around the town are available – meeting place just outside the Gaol. Hexham Abbey at the heart of the town dates back to the 7th Century and its Saxon crypt can still be seen.

JW Carmichael's engraving of Hexham station not long after the opening of the railway.



The road bridge at Hexham spanning the River Tyne. (JG Teasdale Collection)

Hexham is a prime stopping off place for visiting places along Hadrian's Wall such as Chesters, Housesteads, Once Brewed National Park Centre, Vindolanda and Walltown Crags for the Roman Army Museum. Bus service AD122 runs from Easter to September between Hexham and Haltwhistle stations. For the timetable, see the website www.gonortheast.co.uk/ad122 *For local accommodation etc, see:* www.visithadrianswall.co.uk *See also the maps on pages 16 and 18 of this guide. (JG Teasdale Collection)*

There may have been a bridge over the Tyne at Hexham since the 13th Century; there were certainly ferries. In 1756, the lighthouse engineer John Smeaton designed a bridge but it was not built. In 1770 a bridge designed by William Gott was opened, only to be destroyed in the following year's floods. It was replaced by another Smeaton design, erected further downstream; opened in 1781 and lasted only a year until it too was swept away. The present bridge was built in 1793 to the earlier unused Smeaton design; it has lasted so far...

The bridge gives access to the modern A69 and the Roman Wall which crossed the North Tyne near Chollerford. At Chesters Roman Fort, on the west bank of the river, are the remains of a bath house and a museum housing Roman finds; see the English Heritage website.

West from Hexham

Border Counties Junction marks both the start of the branch to Allendale and of the Border Counties Railway (BCR) to Riccarton, both long since closed. Nearby can be seen the remains of the piers of the bridge (right) which carried the BCR over the River Tyne at the start of its long route to the wild Scottish border country. Nearby is the Meeting of the Waters, where the South and North Tyne join to form the Tyne for the rest of its eastward journey to the coast.

A couple more miles, and your train passes the site of Fourstones station. The village (right) takes its name from being bounded by Four Stones, supposedly set up for some religious purpose. The area was once very industrialised with a colliery and limestone quarries with extensive lime kilns. These generated considerable traffic in coal, stone and lime for the N&CR. The quarries also provided the limestone for the viaducts on a branch line to Alston.

The railway was once very busy with freight traffic, and here we see Class K1 No 62028 at the head of a freight train near Hexham on 23 September 1955. (RG Warwick)

Plan your visit to

Hadrian's Wall

Your map to the Wall and Cumbrian coastal defences

Key to Map

- Course of Hadrian's Wall
- Preserved sections of the Wall
- Military Way
- Hadrian's Wall path
- Hadrian's Wall cycle way
- Pennine Way
- Pennine cycle way
- Haltwhistle Burn route
- Motorway
- A Road
- B Road
- Railway
- Steam railway
- Cumbria Coast Trail
- Points of interest
- Carlisle Castle
- Museum / Visitor attractions
- Car park
- Information centre
- National Railway Station
- Airport

With all the information you will need on all major Roman sites, forts and museums to be found in Hadrian's Wall Country, this handy map makes planning your visit to the World Heritage Site a simple and stress-free task.

Whether you're visiting one spot, touring the length of the Wall or exploring the surrounding area, this is the perfect guide for your holiday.

COUNTRY

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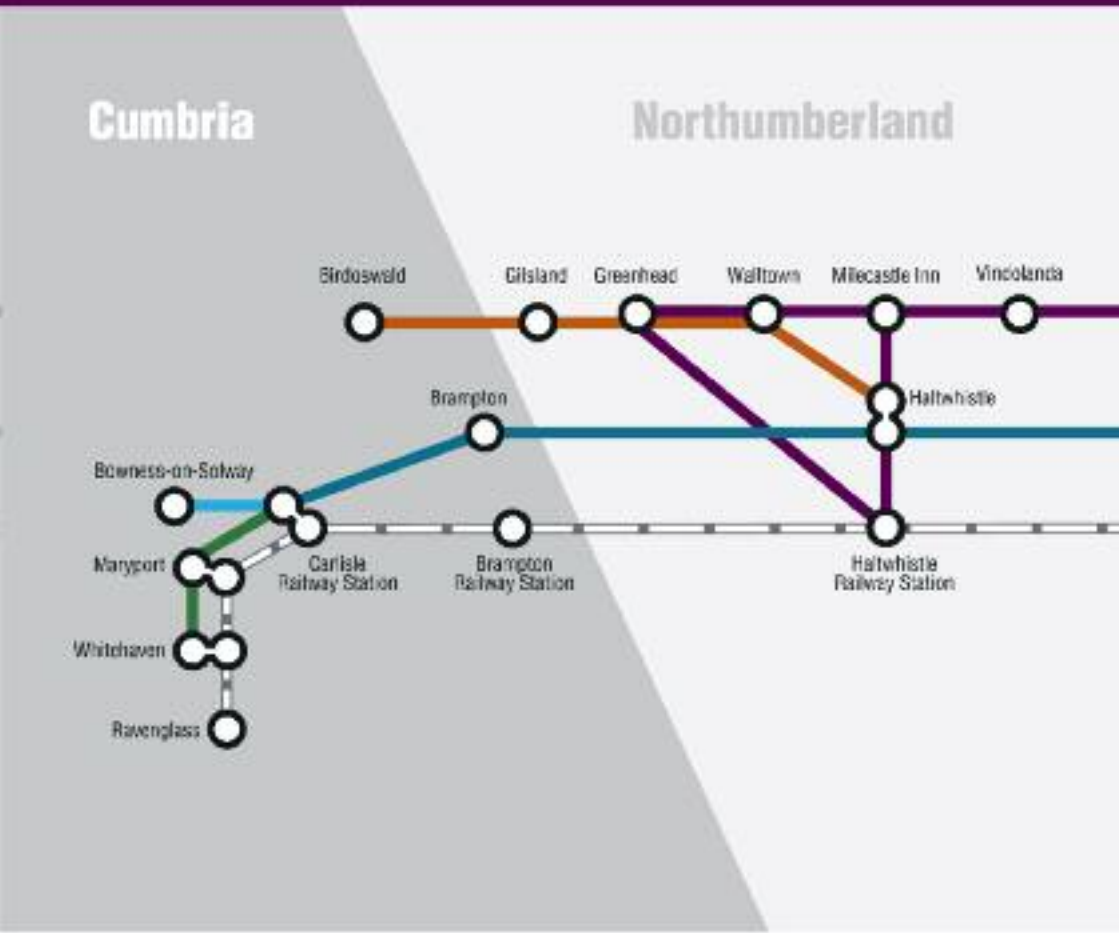
HADRIAN'S WALL COUNTRY

Getting around Hadrian's Wall

Bus routes



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COUNTRY

BUS

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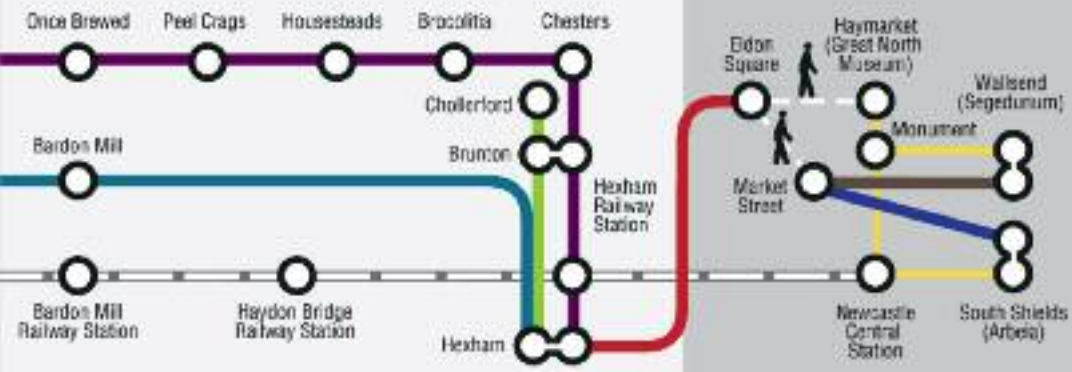
Tyneside



93	185 Not Sundays	AD122 runs Easter - September ONLY	1
380	680 Not Sundays		27
85/685		X84/X85/10	Metro

Web link to the AD122 bus service:
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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Frontiers of the Roman Empire inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005

A postcard view of Fourstones station. (NPC / John Alsop Collection)

Between Fourstones and Haydon Bridge, the Hadrian's Wall Line runs along the left bank of the River South Tyne as seen here where the Caponscleugh Burn flows into the river; note the arch in the retaining wall. (Bill Fawcett)

Haydon Bridge

For a time, Haydon Bridge was the terminus of the N&CR and originally it had a roofed train shed. However, in 1877, £2,291 was allocated for new station buildings and goods warehouses. Until the opening of the Hexham & Allendale Railway, Haydon Bridge handled the lead mined from the hills to the south, Allendale being five miles to the south of the town.

Haydon Bridge is a small town on the South Tyne with an interesting range of accommodation and shops. It was the birthplace of the Victorian artist, John Martin, perhaps Northumberland's most famous artist; his birthplace is a short walk from the village centre. This walk can easily be extended to take in nearby Langley Castle, a former ruin restored in the late 19th Century and now converted into a hotel; see website www.langleycastle.com

The castle played a modest role in the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745. James and Charles, Viscounts Langley and Earls of Derwentwater who lived in the castle, took part in the uprising and were beheaded for treason on Tower Hill in London.

Between Haydon Bridge and Bardon Mill, the N&CR crosses the River South Tyne twice, to pass close to Ridley Hall, named after the Ridleys of Willimoteswick. Their original home (now a ruined castle) was $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the Hall.

Bardon Mill

Just west of Bardon Mill station was Bardon Mill Colliery, a drift mine, opened by the National Coal Board's South Northumberland sub-division of the Northumberland & Cumberland Division, to exploit the workings of former drift mines, mainly at Henshaw Drift. Electric haulers and ropes were used initially to shunt the wagons, but this proved inadequate and a locomotive was provided from 1954. The colliery, the last to be served by the N&CR, closed on 23 November 1973 and the site has now been landscaped.

Bardon Mill itself is a small village by the railway station. The Errington Reay Pottery nearby produces a range of traditional salt-glazed stoneware, popular for home and garden; see the website www.erringtonreay.co.uk

Bardon Mill is close to some of the major Hadrian's Wall sites, and it offers fine walks, particularly to Vindolanda and the National Trust woodland of Allen Banks.

Higher on the hillside are the hamlets of Henshaw and Thorngrafton. Here there are traditional Northumbrian bastle houses, which could be defended against the depredations of the Border Reivers. Some are still inhabited.

Vindolanda is a mile north of the village. It is a world-renowned Roman site where the Vindolanda tablets, which may be regarded as the oldest postcards in the world, were discovered during archeological digs. Some of these are to be found in the museum along with a great many other Roman finds. See the website: www.vindolanda.com

Hadrians's wall and Housesteads fort are located three miles north of the village. See the English Heritage website.

Continuing on to Haltwhistle, the site of Melkridge Bunker (left); this was built in the 1980s to handle open-cast coal from Plenmeller Moor. The coal was brought to it by means of a

Bardon Mill station in its heyday. (Auty Series / John Alsop Collection)

covered conveyor which crossed over the South Tyne to reach the bunker. The bunker brought a welcome return to freight traffic originating on the N&CR for a few years. The site was cleared in 2000 but the sidings still remain at the time of writing these notes (2016). Your train then passes through a 200 yard long tunnel, which takes the railway under the original turnpike road and through a hill at a place called Whitchester. A little to the west of the tunnel, the railway occupies the bed of the River South Tyne, which was filled up and an embankment formed, the south side of which is protected from scouring by floods by stone facing. In order to divert the turnpike to the north of the railway, a 50 feet deep rock cutting was required.

Before reaching Haltwhistle station the train crosses over the Haltwhistle Burn which flows into the Tyne from the hills to the north of the Roman Wall. A walk along the burn is a delight, along a former mineral railway track bed through verdant woods and with views of the dramatic scenery of the Burn Gorge. You can walk to the source of the burn on the moors beside the Roman Wall or take the path south towards Haltwhistle.

Beyond on the left on the outskirts of Haltwhistle can be seen the Alston Arches Viaduct, constructed in 1851 with the opening of the first section of the Haltwhistle to Alston branch railway. The railway company's intention was to carry the lead, coal and other minerals in the Alston district. Rival schemes were proposed but it was the scheme of the N&CR that finally obtained Parliamentary approval. Passengers were of secondary importance at first but eventually, with the decline of first lead mining and then coal, the line retained some importance as a vital passenger link in the often severe winters in the district. When an all-weather road was opened in 1976 the line was closed on 3 May, though the goods service had ceased to operate in the mid 1960s. The Alston Branch approached the line on the (left) by a curving embankment from the viaduct to the station.

A tourist railway, the South Tynedale Railway, now operates from Alston to Slaggyford; see the website: www.south-tynedale-railway.org.uk

Haltwhistle

Haltwhistle was the most important station on the N&CR between Hexham and Carlisle. The staggered platforms were required due to the constraints of the river and the bridge carrying the Alston branch. The Newcastle-bound platform is sited east of the station buildings, with the Carlisle platform sited to the west; the adjoining ends are served by a footbridge.

The original N&CR station buildings remain on the north side. A locomotive turntable was provided at the west end of the station, with a water column for engines turning there. Water columns were also provided at the ends of the two through platforms, all supplied from a water tank (right) dating from 1861, situated on a stone base adjacent to the platform. The tank still has a large plaque commemorating its engineer Peter Tate and its fabricator H Wylie & Company. In 1994 the NER signal box closed, replacement facilities being provided in a portakabin. The NER signal box is now a listed building and its restoration won a National Railway Heritage award in 2003. Nowadays, the station provides a local transport hub connecting the trains arriving at Haltwhistle station to the AD122 Hadrian's Wall bus service and the North Pennines bus to Alston and the South Tynedale Railway.

The market town of Haltwhistle, which claims to be the centre of the British Isles, has a 13th Century church. Close by is the Centre of Britain Hotel with a pele tower incorporated into the building. You can follow the *Reiver Trail* around the town and see five other bastle houses all of which date back to the town's tumultuous past.

The Border Reivers raided along the Anglo-Scottish border from the late 13th Century to the beginning of the 17th. English Reivers were just as likely to ravage English farms and villages as Scottish ones; Scottish reivers too did not discriminate between whom they would raid. Their depredations were perhaps worst in the last hundred years of their existence, during the time of the Stewart Kings in Scotland and the Tudor dynasty in England. Their murderous activities were brought to an end by 'fire and sword' when the crowns of England and Scotland were united under King James in 1603.

Haltwhistle boasts good local shops, eating places and accommodation. It is only a few miles from some of the best remaining sections of Hadrian's Wall. You can walk from the town to the Wall via Haltwhistle Burn Trail.

Climbing up to the summit of the Newcastle & Carlisle Railway

The steady climb up to the Pennine Watershed which started at Hexham continues on departure from Haltwhistle. The N&CR parts company from the South Tyne and follows its tributary, the Tipalt Burn for the final climb to the watershed. The A69 joins the railway on the left as your train crosses over the drive to Blenkinsopp Hall on the only ornamental bridge on the N&CR. On either side of the train can be seen the octagonal turrets forming the ends of the castellated bridge. The construction of the N&CR past the hall involved the diversion and strengthening of the Tipalt Burn as well as the diversion of the then turnpike road (A69).

The Blenkinsopp estates passed to the Coulson family by the 1727 marriage of the Blenkinsopp heiress to William Coulson. Colonel John Blenkinsopp Coulson built the present two-storeyed house (right) on the site in about 1800. The architect John Dobson was subsequently engaged to extend and improve the house. Dobson, the architect of Newcastle Central station, may have also worked on the design of the bridge.

The Hall is passed on the right whilst on the left may be seen traces of Blenkinsopp Colliery. This had a remarkable life from the opening of the railway in 1836 until closure in 2002. See the website:

www.minersadvice.co.uk/blenkinsopp.htm

The A69 veers away (left) on a new alignment as your train passes through the village of Greenhead. Greenhead station had receipts of £2,327 and expenses of £211 for the year 1900. During 1911, the station served a population of 1,000 and 13,610 tickets were issued. Forty years later the station handled only 739 passengers and had receipts of £122. The station finally closed on 2 January 1967. Remains of the original N&CR station buildings and the world's oldest surviving engine shed can be seen on the right and the former station cottages on the left.

Haltwhistle as seen in an early 20th Century postcard. The North Eastern Railway passenger train is hauled by a locomotive of Class Q. (John Alsop Collection)

Just beyond the station, the line of the Roman Wall is crossed, as the Tipalt Burn (right) turns away from the railway.

The summit of the climb (to just under 500ft above sea level) is reached, before your train passes through the village of Gilsland which straddles the border between Cumbria and Northumberland. The village provides a useful centre for visitors touring Hadrian's Wall and other features of historical interest in this area of rugged Border country, popularised by the romantic novelist Sir Walter Scott. Gilsland has a population of about 400; most live on the Northumberland side of the River Irthing and Poltross Burn. The village is situated upon Hadrian's Wall, which as elsewhere provided a useful source of building stone once the Romans had departed.

The original Gilsland Spa hotel was built in the 1760s. As early as the 1780s it was a popular summer resort, and there is now plenty of accommodation locally, in hotels, bread and breakfasts and self-catering. See the websites:
www.visitcumbria.com
www.visitnorthumberland.com

During the construction of the N&CR, some excavation work was carried out; remains were found of a Roman milecastle, including coins dating between 32BC and 324AD. Later 20th Century excavations indicated that damage to the site had been caused by the construction of the railway.

As benefiting the spa status, the N&CR provided an elegant station at Gilsland, with extra buildings and glass canopies. Gilsland closed to passengers on 2 January 1967 and the modified N&CR buildings are passed on the right.

There are proposals to reopen the station to facilitate access to the Roman Wall and the nearby Roman Army Museum.

Just beyond the station, the N&CR crosses the route of Hadrian's Wall and then passes out of Northumberland into Cumberland (or Cumbria as it is now called). Now running on a plateau, the River Irthing can be seen (right) as the train heads towards Brampton. The scattered village of Denton is passed (left); it had two level crossings but no station.

Low Row station was never very busy, and closed to passengers on 5 January 1959 and to goods on 5 April 1965. The stationmaster's house is passed (left).

The level section since Gilsland ends at the site of Naworth station, where the line starts on a 12 mile descent to Carlisle. The station started life as a private station for use by the Earl of Carlisle at nearby Naworth Castle. The station was advertised as a public station in the 1 June 1871 timetable. It closed to passengers on 5 May 1952.

The station's greatest claim to fame is a tragic one! On 30 August 1926 a new Hailey open charabanc was crossing the line when it was struck by the 1:18 pm Newcastle to Carlisle express. Seven occupants of the charabanc were killed instantly and one passenger died later; three, including the motor driver, were seriously injured and three received minor injuries and shock. The gatekeeper, who had only recently taken up duties at Naworth, mistakenly opened the gates as the train was approaching and although the driver of the charabanc accelerated to try to get out of the way, the vehicle was caught by the engine and wrecked.

The Earl of Carlisle's Railway

At a level crossing with the A689 Brampton to Alston road can be seen (left) Milton level crossing gate box. Very soon your train arrives at Brampton Junction station. The junction once formed a connection (left) with the Earl of Carlisle's Railway (EofCR). This railway originated, circa 1776, in wooden waggonways at Tindale Fell Colliery. In 1798 work began on extending the waggonway to Brampton, and the first horse-hauled waggon of coal arrived there in April 1799. Unlike the Newcastle & Carlisle Railway, for example, no Act of Parliament was obtained for the EofCR as most of the route ran across land owned by Lord Carlisle. By 1808 the wooden rails had been replaced with cast and wrought-iron rails. The use of wrought-iron rails was an innovation at the time, previous waggonways having used cast-iron rails only. These were very prone to breakage.

The N&CR cut across the original route to the east of Milton Crossing; the waggonway

route was realigned to meet with the N&CR at Brampton (Junction) station. The EofCR was regauged to the standard 4ft $8^{1}/_{2}$in gauge adopted by the N&CR and operated a horse worked passenger service from Brampton to meet the N&CR (withdrawn in 1881). In 1837, George Stephenson's *Rocket*, the winner of the 1829 Rainhill Trials for the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, was bought for £300 to operate on the EofCR. It remained on the railway at Tindale, after service, until 1862 when it was donated to the Science Museum in London.

Brampton

Brampton was originally opened as Milton station and renamed Brampton in September 1870 and to Brampton Junction in 1885. Confusingly, it apparently reverted to Brampton in 1891, then back to Brampton Junction again in 1913 with the opening by the NER of a passenger service to Brampton Town. Services to the town ceased in 1923.

The station is approached from two minor roads, one on each side of the line, with no vehicular connection between them, although there was originally a foot crossing at the east end of the station. Brampton's important early role in the development of the N&CR has already been alluded to; suffice to say the station is now but a shadow of its former self. British Rail renamed the station Brampton (Cumberland) in May 1971 and Brampton (Cumbria) in August 1975.

Located over a mile north of the railway, the town of Brampton is ideally situated for exploring the north Cumbrian countryside. The long-closed railway from Brampton to Brampton Town is now an ` attractive tree-lined walkway to the town. Once there, look for the pre-Raphaelite stained glass in St Martin's Church, and in the centre of town the octagonal Moot Hall, built in 1817, which now houses the Tourist Information Centre. Close by is Lanercost Priory, founded by Augustinian monks in 1169; see the English Heritage website.

Also close to Brampton is Talkin Tarn Country Park which features a 65-acre lake, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' nature reserve, Gelt Woods. See the RSPB website: www.rspb.org.uk

Thomas Edmondson

Thomas Edmondson was perhaps the most famous personality associated with the N&CR. In 1836, he was employed as a clerk at Brampton (or Milton as it was). The early railway companies followed the method used by generations of stagecoach owners, whereby tickets comprised partially-printed slips of paper on which most details of the journey had to be written in by hand for each individual passenger. This was a tedious task for booking office clerks, in the days before the advent of impact printers! Within a few months of taking up his post, Edmondson realised the need for a simpler method and sought to devise one himself. He designed a cardboard ticket of standard size, on which was printed the name of the company, place of issue, destination and class of travel. Tickets were numbered consecutively so that records could be kept for accounting purposes. He also constructed a rack which held the tickets in such a way that the clerk could easily find the correct one;

Brampton Town en fête in 1913 for the opening of the NER's passenger train service to Brampton station. (NERA CA Kimber Collection)

A postcard view of the railway bridge spanning the River Gelt near Brampton. (Nicholson & Cartner / John Alsop Collection)

an example is preserved at Haltwhistle station. His final invention was a machine which printed the date on the ticket. Edmondson's inventions were such an improvement that they gradually spread throughout Britain and then throughout the world. He patented his invention and retired from the N&CR when his system became widely adopted and earned about £2000 a year in the 1850s. In 1984, British Rail announced that the use of Edmondson tickets would be phased out by 1987, though several preserved railways still continue to issue tickets based on Edmondson's original design.

Descent to Carlisle

Descending from Brampton, your train passes Talkin Tarn nature reserve (left) and crosses the River Gelt, the next tributary of the Eden by means of a three-arched oblique bridge.

Beyond the bridge, the railway enters the mile long Cowran Cut, the deepest part of which is walled at the foot of the slope for about half a mile: this part being 110ft in depth, with the walls being 14ft high. A tunnel through the hill was originally intended, but the idea was abandoned after a sufficient trial had been made, in consequence of the difficulties and expense likely to ensue from the strength of the springs, and the looseness of the sand which forms the core of the hill. At the time of completion, this cutting was considered to be the largest railway cutting in England.

The original intention of the N&CR was to take the line close by the village of Hayton. The local landowner denied closer access and a route was taken, one mile to the south of Hayton. How Mill station was provided to serve the tiny village of The How almost a mile away to the west of the station, while the Mill was on the

This Edmondson ticket was issued on 4 January 1964 for a Second Class journey from Harrogate to Wetherby. (NERA WF Astbury Collection)

other side. The Mill was a sawmill and a house where the owner lived with his family. How Mill station closed to all traffic on 5 January 1959. Serving also as a small post office, the stationmaster's house is passed (right) just after the crossing which was in place in the early 1940s.

After a further $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of descent, your train passes the site of Heads Nook station. Opening in 1862, the station served local quarries and mills as well as the small village. The station closed on 2 January 1967, and the stationmaster's house can still be seen (left). Goods facilities were provided a mile further west at the crossing at Broadwath.

Approaching Wetheral, the train crosses Corby Beck by a seven-arch viaduct, each arch has a span of 40ft; the viaduct is 60ft above the level of the beck. Corby Gates signal box is passed (left). Beyond, your train is under the control of the Carlisle Power Box, which was opened with the electrification of the West Coast Main Line to Glasgow in 1973. The open space beyond Corby Gates signal box was the site of the main goods facilities for Wetheral, of which the wooden goods shed was up for sale in the late 1980s. The railway is carried high over the River Eden by the five-arch Wetheral Viaduct. Constructed by Francis Hiles, the spans are 80ft each and the railway is about 93ft above the summer level of the River Eden.

Wetheral

The original N&CR station consisted of a group of single story buildings with a full glass canopy, at the west end of the viaduct. Some buildings survived closure and can be seen (right) as your train enters the station. Wetheral closed to passengers on 2 January 1967, but reopened on 5 October 1981.

The station can be approached from Corby Gates by a footpath along the north side of the viaduct.

At one time a $\frac{1}{2}d$ toll was charged, though this was waived in certain circumstances: 'Passengers crossing on Sunday to or from any place of public worship in Wetheral within one hour, before or after the time of Divine Service, or crossing on any Monday, Friday, or Saturday evening for the purpose of attending Divine Service, or choir practice at any such place of worship will be allowed to cross free of charge. This privilege does not extend to persons any such place of worship on any occasion than those above mentioned.' This toll was authorised by Act of Parliament. Because of the curvature of the line through the station at Wetheral, the signal box was placed in the centre of the station, high above the Down platform, so that the signalman could obtain a good view in both directions.

Wetheral lies beside the River Eden, consisting of houses grouped around a spacious village green. On the other side of the river stands Corby Castle, a late Georgian mansion. The building incorporates a 14th Century peel tower built as a defence against the Border Reivers.

Just south of the church is Wetheral Priory gatehouse, part of a Benedictine priory founded around 1100; see the English Heritage website. Near the gatehouse are man-made caves constructed in the river bank 40ft above the River Eden; they were excavated by the monks as places of refuge during border warfare.

A High Speed Train, diverted off the East Coast Main Line due to engineering works, rushes through the Cowran Cut. (Bill Fawcett)

The last station before Carlisle was Scotby station. In fact the village had two stations, the one your train passes through and also one on the Midland Railway's Settle & Carlisle Railway a $^{1}/_{2}$ mile south of the N&CR station. Scotby was the next smallest station to Naworth in terms of income / expenditure figures; it closed on 2 November 1959.

The Settle & Carlisle Railway approaches (left) at the site of Durranhill Junction. Between here and the actual junction of the lines at Petteril Bridge was a network of railway sidings and the Durranhill shed of the Midland Railway. On the right at Petteril Bridge was the original N&CR station at London Road. The station was shared with the Maryport & Carlisle Railway when that system opened in May 1843. The Maryport & Carlisle was a tenant of the N&CR, to whom it paid an annual charge of £250 in order to run its trains into London Road. It was only after the NER had absorbed the N&CR that an agreement was reached on 14 May 1862 with the London & North Western Railway in particular, which allowed the NER to become a tenant at Carlisle Citadel station, for an annual charge of £1,000. The London Road station remained open for goods, and the adjacent engine sheds were also retained. A new NER double line approach to Citadel left the Canal Branch (Canal Branch Junction), 30 chains west of London Road Junction, which opened to goods on 30 April 1862 and passengers on 1 January 1863. As part of the 1973 electrification of the West Coast Main Line, this line was reduced to a single line, which has proved to be a bottleneck for services. A connection (left) provides a south-facing connection with the West Coast Main Line to the south of Carlisle station, used by freight services between the Newcastle & Carlisle / Settle & Carlisle and the main line.

JW Carmichael's engraving of Wetheral Viaduct shortly after its opening to traffic.

Cowans Sheldon Cranes

London Road was also to be the location of the main works of Cowans Sheldon & Company Limited.

The company was founded in 1846 at Woodbank Upperby with the intention of making all sorts of forged iron work. However, in 1858 the company took over a crane-building works that had gone bankrupt. This occupied a site on London Road that had once been the St Nicholas Leper Hospital. Expanding production at this site, Cowans Sheldon went on to establish a world leading reputation in the manufacture of rail and dock cranes; the company became known in Carlisle simply as 'the cranemakers'. Cowans' cranes were exported across the globe to countries including Japan, Argentina, Nigeria, South Africa, Iraq, China, Canada and Bolivia.

The first railway crane was sold locally to the Maryport & Carlisle Railway. Railway companies used cranes to lift heavy loads on and off wagons and to re-rail locomotives, carriages and wagons after accidents.

Cowans Sheldon also built railway turntables for turning round steam locomotives, and many of these were also exported around the globe.

In the 1890s the company built Carlisle Market Hall.

By 1891 the company had built the largest

dockside crane in the country. The next step was to build a floating crane; Cowans Sheldon's first floating crane began work in 1907. In 1933 the company built what was at the time the world's largest floating crane for the Japanese. This did not turn out too well, as it was used to build battleships that would be used against us in the Second World War.

During both World Wars the company was exceedingly busy, supporting the war effort.

In 1969 Clarke Chapman of Gateshead bought Cowans Sheldon. Following a merger in 1982 with John Boyd the company was renamed Cowans Boyd. However, a combination of the decline of British heavy industry and the developing expertise of crane builders overseas led to the closure of the St Nicholas works in 1987. Crane building ceased in Carlisle and the works site (right) is now a shopping retail park.

Carlisle

In the pre-railway era a canal had been built to connect Carlisle with the sea at Port Carlisle. The N&CR had opened its London Road station in July 1836, and the branch to Canal basin extending round the then south side of the city in the following March. In the mid-1840s the Maryport & Carlisle, the Lancaster & Carlisle and the Caledonian Railways all added lines to other points of the compass, further confining the city on its south and west sides.

In 1854 the Carlisle Canal was converted into another railway which a few years later was taken over the North British Railway as its new line arrived in Carlisle from Edinburgh and Hawick in 1862.

Carlisle Citadel station was owned and operated jointly by the Lancaster & Carlisle (later the London & North Western) and Caledonian

Here we see Cowans Sheldon crane number 2118, built in 1897. It was bought by the North Eastern Railway, which allocated it to the York Locomotive Department. In the photograph, the crane is seen recovering a brake van after an accident at Milford Junction in November 1907. (Joint NERA - Ken Hoole Study Centre JF Mallon Collection)

Railways. The other five railway companies operating into Carlisle were all tenants in the station, though it was not until the 1860s that all passenger services were diverted into Citadel from London Road and Canal stations.

As traffic grew rapidly in the 1860s, and particularly the amount of freight being exchanged between the various companies, the facilities of the Border City gradually became more and more strained, despite piecemeal improvement. With the impending arrival of the Midland Railway a massive reconstruction of the approach lines to Citadel station, and new system of goods avoiding lines was embarked on and completed in 1878 followed by a large extension of the station itself with the construction of two new through platforms and a new overall roof, all completed in 1880.

Until 1922 each railway company working into Carlisle maintained its own traffic and maintenance facilities, giving rise to a heavy local interchange traffic between the various goods yards and depots.

At the Grouping of 1923 the London Midland & Scottish Railway took over the London & North Western, the Midland, the Maryport & Carlisle, the Caledonian and the Glasgow & South Western Railways. The London & North Eastern Railway absorbed the North Eastern and North British Railways, the latter including the branch to Silloth. An extensive rationalisation may have been expected, and some relatively minor economies did indeed take place including the reduction of the number of engine sheds from seven to four. However, it was left to the British Railways Modernisation Plan of the mid 1950s for the goods facilities to be rationalised by the opening in 1963 of the Kingmoor Marshalling Yard, north of Carlisle Citadel station on the West Coast Main Line towards Glasgow.

The Beeching Axe saw two significant rail closures including the former North British Railway lines to Silloth (closed on 7 September 1964) and Edinburgh via Galashiels (the Waverley Line, closed on 6 January 1969). Other rationalisations have also seen removal of goods lines to the west (left) of the station, due to reduction in freight traffic.

Your train climbs up to electrified lines of the Main Line (left) and passes Carlisle Power Box (left) before reaching the end of its journey in the cathedral-like interior of Carlisle Citadel station.

Class D17 No 1880 departs Carlisle Citadel station for Newcastle in the early 1930s. (NERA T Smeaton Collection)

At Carlisle long-distance services are operated by Virgin Trains, with the main routes being London Euston – Glasgow Central and Scotland – Birmingham New Street. Caledonian Sleeper passengers from/to London Euston may also alight/board here. Northern operates local stopping services to Newcastle Central via the Tyne Valley Line, to Barrow-in-Furness via the Cumbrian Coast Line, and to Leeds via the scenic Settle – Carlisle Line. ScotRail operates services to Glasgow Central via Dumfries and Kilmarnock, some of which operate through to Newcastle. TransPennine Express operate services from the North West and the Lake District to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The station has eight platforms in addition to a booking office, various catering outlets, waiting rooms, a newsagent, ATM and toilet facilities.

Carlisle Castle was founded in 1092 by William the Conqueror's son, William II. It was once the prison of Mary, Queen of Scots. Bonnie Prince Charlie captured the castle in 1745. Close by is the Citadel, built by Henry VIII. See the English Heritage website for details of opening times, *etc.*

Carlisle's Cathedral was founded as an Augustinian Priory, becoming a cathedral in 1133. It has suffered over the years, being partly demolished during the Civil War to provide stone with which to reinforce the castle. However, there is still plenty to admire, including 14th Century stained glass in the East Window.

The town is also home to the Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery. See the website: www.tulliehouse.co.uk

For the visitor, Carlisle is compact, level and visitor-friendly. The main high street is pedestrianised, and retail attractions include the The Lanes shopping centre and the Market Hall on Scotch Street; the latter is one of the few remaining covered Victorian markets in the country. The fine ironwork was made locally, by Cowans Sheldon.

For further information about things to see and do, eating and drinking, shopping, accommodation, *etc.*, see the website: www.discovercarlisle.co.uk

TYNE VALLEY
COMMUNITY
RAIL PARTNERSHIP

Epilogue from *The Railways of Great Britain and Ireland* by Francis Wishaw, 1842

Whoever is in the habit of travelling on the railway between Newcastle and Carlisle will be forcibly struck with the sinuosities of its course throughout. Yet, nothwithstanding this apparent impediment to speedy locomotion, no railway in the Kingdom is better regulated in point of punctuality of its arrivals, especially the quick trains, nor is there any upon which fewer accidents have occurred. A snake like motion, however, and frequent jerks, are consequences of this curvilinear course; and unless it had been originally laid out for a railway or tram-road to be worked by horses, no engineer would have ventured to recommend a plan which exhibits on the face of it almost one continuous series of curves from end to end.

Carlisle Castle in a 1920s postcard view. (Valtentine & Sons)