



Hadrian Goes Loco
Carlisle to Newcastle
I G Liddell

The text in this book is merely an indication of what might be possible ... or what might have been possible at the time of researching or later revision.

Each reader must assess whether each part of the route qualifies as suitable or safe for public access. The author does not warrant any point of legality or safety in any part of the description of the route.

Thanks are due to many people who have helped me with route-finding and with intelligence local to a number of areas traversed by the route. Their contributions enrich the route and the stories along it. Clearly, any mistakes and misinterpretations remain with the author.

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Front cover photograph:
Wetheral viaduct with footbridge

Hadrian Goes Loco

Carlisle to Newcastle

HGL

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| Start | Carlisle station— CA1 1QZ |
| Finish | Newcastle station — NE1 5DL |
| Distance | 129.6km |
| Duration | 29 hours 02 minutes |
| Ascent | 1762m |

Introduction

The route

The Tyne Valley Line threads its way across the country between Carlisle and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The line keeps to the south of Hadrian's Wall, and indeed to the south of the river to the east of the confluence of the River North Tyne and River South Tyne at Hexham, until its crossing of the river on the approach to Newcastle station.

The route is often close enough to the Wall to make a loop possible, visiting the Wall while linking appropriate stations (but don't try this with Brampton and Haltwhistle). Some parts of the route are right down at the river bank, so be sure to look back over a few days' weather reports, since water may be pouring down from rain-soaked hills.

The railway stations will be your main source of public transport connections, though buses are generally available east of Haltwhistle (unless the route goes roving away from the valley).

Shops and other facilities are fairly sparse between the stations, so you should carry full provisions for the day — this applies particularly west of Hexham.

The stations and sections

There are sixteen stations (including the terminal stations) in total on the Tyne Valley Line between Carlisle and Newcastle, so there are fifteen sections of route. The second section, from Wetheral to

Brampton, includes as a coda the short (2.7km) walk along the old line which connected what was originally Brampton Junction with the centre of the town.

The sections of the route are as follows.

| | Start of section | km | End of section | Page |
|----|------------------|------|----------------|------|
| 1 | Carlisle | 10.2 | Wetheral | |
| 2 | Wetheral | 18.0 | Brampton | |
| 3 | Brampton | 19.5 | Haltwhistle | |
| 4 | Haltwhistle | 9.4 | Bardon Mill | |
| 5 | Bardon Mill | 9.8 | Haydon Bridge | |
| 6 | Haydon Bridge | 13.5 | Hexham | |
| 7 | Hexham | 8.5 | Corbridge | |
| 8 | Corbridge | 4.8 | Riding Mill | |
| 9 | Riding Mill | 5.3 | Stocksfield | |
| 10 | Stocksfield | 4.8 | Prudhoe | |
| 11 | Prudhoe | 4.4 | Wylam | |
| 12 | Wylam | 8.6 | Blaydon | |
| 13 | Blaydon | 3.7 | MetroCentre | |
| 14 | MetroCentre | 3.1 | Dunston | |
| 15 | Dunston | 4.7 | Newcastle | |

Times and distances

Each section is headed by details of the section of the walk, with distance and duration. The latter is calculated with reference to Naismith's Rule, which takes account of slope. For the purposes of the calculation, standard walking pace is set at 5 kilometres per hour: individual readers may adjust expected timings according to their natural speed.

Do not assume, though, that you can manage a faster gait: that will just put you under the cosh on expectations, and will leave no time to stand and stare. Key access points to public transport within sections are given at the appropriate point in the narrative. Parts of this route are on rough ground, so you should make allowances for your speed in such conditions. Look at the timetables and estimate for the train comfortably beyond your target time, so that you are readied for any delay *en route*.

Distances are given in kilometres (after all, that's how the grid squares are constructed on the map, and we should really have ditched the awkward multiples of 12, 3, 220, and 8 generations ago); the duration is based on Naismith's rule at a flat-ground pace of 5 kilometres per hour, and accounting for slope. If your natural

walking speed is at 4 kilometres per hour, you will need to adjust the duration by a factor of 1.25 to obtain an approximate duration for your own needs.

Logistics

The walker will probably want to combine, in some instances, consecutive sections into walks to be undertaken in a single day: intermediate stations and bus stops are highlighted in the text. In a few places, there are large gaps between optimal break-points: there are advisory notices within the sectional narrative at appropriate points where serious decisions may need to be made.

Since speed and stamina are specific to each walker, no “number of days for completion” is offered. Specifically, it is not a race — it is an opportunity to sample the landscapes and streetscapes at a pace which suits the individual walker.

You should always carry a small water bottle and some emergency nibbles; on some stretches, it can be handy to have a sandwich or similar in reserve. You are encouraged to make use of local facilities in the areas passed through, but you should also make sure that you have a Plan B tucked away in your pocket or backpack — whether for yourself, or for someone you might meet who is in greater distress.

Within the narrative, the sixteen main compass directions are used for most instances of orientation. However, sometimes more accuracy is required, and a numerical compass bearing has to be given. It should be stressed that a compass is a very useful piece of equipment, even on suburban streets, but it becomes essential when crossing areas of open land or woodland where there is a multitude of paths (or none at all).

I try to keep out of the trap of “cross the stile, and make for invisible barn over the skyline”, a direction I found (and revised) within a set of route-notes to a long-distance path over forty years ago, and to assume no detailed knowledge of the area by the reader. You will therefore see that these directions are sufficient to follow the route if you have a capable map in your hand.

Maps of the route

The route is mapped and available on the *OS Maps Online* website and app (see the appropriate link at the end of this introduction). To find the route, home in on the area of interest (making sure that the start of the section is covered by the displayed area). Select *Routes*, then *Discover routes*, and untick the *Premium routes* constraint. You should be able to scroll down alphabetically to find the route. The URL for the map specific to each section is given at the appropriate sectional introduction within the narrative.

In the narrative below, each section is split into subsections, each of which is a maximum of 2km in length (half an hour's walking time for most people). The subsection numbers correspond with the staging-points on the maps. Thus the introduction to each section is nailed to the station of departure, carrying the *n.1* subsection number.

Online resources for transport and logistics

There are some very useful resources from the major transport players, and from others. A few of the most notable resources are listed below.

- **Traveline**
<https://www.traveline.info/>
Journey planning for public transport (rail, bus, ferry, etc.) across the country.
- **Bustimes**
<https://bustimes.org/>
Comprehensive site for bus timetables across the UK (and the Republic of Ireland). You may drill down to each individual bus stop.
- **National Rail**
<https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>
Journey planning for rail services.
- **Ordnance Survey**
<https://explore.osmaps.com/>
Access to Ordnance Survey maps online, for desktop, laptop, tablet and smartphone. Printing maps is possible. Walkers are urged to take out a subscription (which unlocks the familiar OS mapping at 1:50000 and 1:25000 scales): the cost — no more than a few cups of coffee per year — will be repaid countless times over.
- **Bikehike**
<http://www.bikehike.co.uk/mapview.php>
Using OpenStreetMap, footpaths and cycle paths are overlaid on the base map. Useful for viewing link paths to and from the route.
- **National Library of Scotland**
<https://maps.nls.uk/>
It may seem curious to reference a library in Edinburgh for information about London's topography, but NLS carries an extensive collection of digitised historic maps covering the whole of Great Britain. These may be searched from an overlay on the modern map. Within the narrative text, if a reference is made to "old maps", then NLS will be your source.

Carlisle to Wetheral

10.2km; 109m ascent; 2hr 13min

Introduction

1.1 The *Hadrian Goes Loco* walk begins at Carlisle; the series of walks from station to station along the line to Newcastle therefore begins at the imposing Citadel station.

The first rail services started at the station in 1847, even before the neo-Tudor building was complete. Carlisle's other stations fell away quickly, with all the competing railway companies making connections to the station, and the Citadel station (so named because it was next to the old fortress) became the dominant station in the city by 1851. The station building is Grade II* listed. The architect was Sir William Tite, who also designed railway stations in Carnforth and Lancaster, and for the London and South Western Railway. He won the competition with his design for the Royal Exchange in the City of London, and landscaped Brookwood Cemetery near Woking. Among his ecclesiastical designs, the church on the A40 in Gerrards Cross, built in the Byzantine style, is particularly notable.

Carlisle Citadel station

At the top of the station forecourt (Court Square), there are bus stops for most services: the bus station is about 450m away on Lonsdale Street (off Lowther Street). There is a bus connection with Carlisle at Carleton on the A6.

All city centre facilities lie beyond the sandstone towers to the left at the top of Court Square.

Two imposing and venerable hotels abut the station: the Station Hotel is on Court Square, and the County Hotel stands at the head of Botchergate. Both are Victorian in origin.

Route

1.2 From the station, walk up Court Square and turn right onto Botchergate, using its left-hand pavement. Pass the County Hotel and the Caledonian Inn on your left: note the cobbled alleyway on your left, which gave access to stabling for coach horses.

Continue down the left-hand pavement of Botchergate to its end at the junction with St Nicholas Street.





*Cumberland Inn,
Botchergate*

London Road tramshed



Across the road (this is why we prefer the left-hand pavement), there are some interesting buildings, all of them serving different purposes from their original briefs.

Each of two pub names celebrates a local luminary — William Rufus (King William II) took Carlisle castle from King Malcolm III of Scotland in 1091, bringing what is now Cumbria under English control, while Woodrow Wilson (28th President of the United States of America) visited Carlisle in 1918 to reconnect with his ancestral home. A third pub — the Cumberland Inn, which lies between the other two — is the best preserved example of a pub built for State Management, the nationalised Carlisle licensed trade, in 1930. On the left, another pub, the Border Rambler, has a sign showing a rambler and a cartwheel: the rambler must have been a Wainwright.

Beyond the county offices (on the left), a green area on the right is the site of Christ Church (1830-1938, demolished 1953); the imposing terrace on the left dates from 1903, and now contains student accommodation on the upper floors. At the end of the terrace, a cobbled entry betrays its age from the time

of horses and carts.

After crossing Rydal Street, you will see a postbox set into the wall (and the backing for a stamp vending machine): it is no surprise that the building used to be a post office, but it may be more surprising to learn (from a plaque on the wall) that this was the site of Britain's first post box.

At the junction with St Nicholas Street (built on the site of a Roman cemetery), continue straight ahead, now on London Road. Pass two pubs on the left: the first is called the Cranemakers, possibly after the workers at the Iron and Engine Works where the retail park is today on the right. Beyond the retail park, London Road rises to cross the railway, passing a former tramshed on the left.

The Carlisle electric tramway system opened in 1900, and was

in trouble a decade later. It failed to match change in the city after the Great War, and the routes were converted to bus services. The tramshed is now occupied by a car hire company. Behind the tramshed, you will see the goods station of the North Eastern Railway (which ran the services between Newcastle and Carlisle).

On the bridge, carved into the sandstone, is a benchmark, with the number 1 next to it. There is no reason for the numbering, and a look at old maps (which are available at <https://maps.nls.uk/>) gives no clue. Note the shape of the building on the right, accommodating the railway beneath.

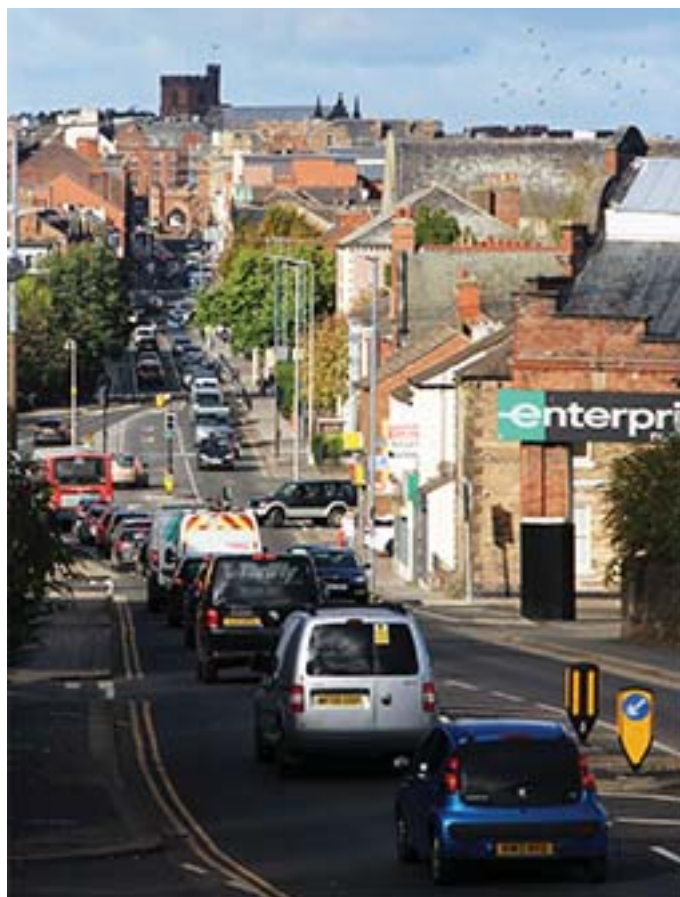
1.3 Beyond the railway bridge, a ramp takes a street along the frontages of the houses up to Chertsey Mount: do not take this route, for it reaches a dead end. Continue along London Road, with the houses of Summer Hill on the left. At the end of the row of houses, you will see the London Road Retail Park down to your left: it is built on the site of the goods station of the Midland Railway, which ran services from St Pancras, Sheffield and Leeds, along the famed Settle-Carlisle line.

Cross London Road, and take the road on the right, towards the Hilltop hotel on Gallows Hill. Where the road begins to climb, take a path on the left which descends towards the River Petteril. Where the path forks, keep to the right, with the metal fencing immediately on your right.

Behind the fence is the site of the engine shed for the London, Midland and Scottish Railway, which ran services on what is known today as the West Coast Main Line.

Keep the fence close as you trend left, with the main line railway immediately to your right. The path becomes surfaced and passes to the right of Gillford Park, home of Carlisle City FC, to reach a road at Upperby Bridge.

Carlisle City FC was formed by two Carlisle



View from the bridge, back towards the city centre

Beyond Upperby Bridge, the path runs between the river and the railway



United players to give a pyramid route to the local boys' and men's (neither women nor girls were considered then) teams in the lower leagues, leasing Gillford Park from the local railway sports club (the railwaymen still have a clubhouse and their community garden there). During the 1980s and 1990s, Carlisle Rugby League club played at Gillford Park.

1.4 Make your way across the road and continue ahead, with the river on your left. The path will take you across the river by a footbridge: keep close to the river across two fields beyond the end of the housing on your left. After crossing a stile into the next field, the path leaves the riverside, bearing off to the left before rejoining the river upstream.

Where the path splits, with the riverside route continuing over a slightly challenging stile, take the left fork which rises with strip-fields to the left, levelling out with an open field on the left, with a small utility station at its left-hand edge.

Turn left and make diagonally across the field towards the road: as you approach the road, you will see a stone stile in the wall. Cross the stile to reach the A6: cross the road and turn right: this is Carleton.

At this point, there is a restaurant, a pub, and a bus stop on the main route between Carlisle and Penrith. The 104 bus service runs every thirty minutes, except on Sundays when it drops to one bus every two hours.

The pub (the Spotted Cow, or Nosey Cow) is open from 1200 to 2300, but only on Thursdays to Sundays; the restaurant (the Dhaka) is open every day, but only from 1630 in the afternoon.

1.5 Continue down the A6, passing the day centre on your left, to The Beeches, an imposing residence on the left. Turn left here up the lane.

At the far end of the farm buildings on the left, there is a vending machine selling fresh milk and milkshakes.

Follow the lane to its far end, where turn left and then right, towards the Carleton Clinic. At the second road on your right, turn right, and follow a path to the left of the road, with a hedge on your left

M6 crossing, looking north



separating you from the new housing, some of which is still under construction at the time of research (late 2021), and heading for an electricity pylon. This path takes you to, and then across, the M6.

1.6 After the footpath has crossed over the motorway, the path turns left to run parallel to the oncoming motorway traffic, then turns right onto a lane, where it passes a caravan site.

Follow the lane to a junction, where a track comes in from the left. Turn right, and then follow the lane through a left turn and then a right turn, to come out onto Broomfallen Road, at the southern end of Scotby.

The bulk of Scotby is off to the left, where there is a shop, and an hourly bus service (not Sunday) to Carlisle and Wetheral. The pub in the village is open in the evening (not Monday or Tuesday) and at lunchtime on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Turn right along the road, using the left-hand pavement. Just before you reach the second utility pole after the end of the houses on the left, take a track on the left. This leads between tree-lined hedges to Wolfe Bridge, where it runs beneath the Settle-Carlisle railway line.

1.7 Beyond the railway, the track continues, detouring slightly to the right to keep Scotby Shield Farm on your left-hand side.

1.8 Continue ahead along the track to reach a road at a bend. Follow the road ahead to reach a junction with an old fingerpost sign.

Turn right, soon picking up a pavement on the left-hand side of the road at the point where you enter the village of Wetheral.

The village is first documented in the early twelfth century, and means the riverside land where wethers (castrated male sheep) were kept. In the church, there is a statue by Joseph Nollekens, which is the subject of a poem by William Wordsworth.

Follow the road into the centre of the village. Cross the main road at the bottom, then turn right. At the village post office (and café), bear left to descend the road, passing the Crown Hotel, to reach the railway station.



Lane approaching railway (Settle-Carlisle) underpass



Carlisle-bound train leaving Wetheral station

Trains from Carlisle arrive at the platform on the same side as the footbridge (which runs alongside the railway) to Great Corby; trains from Newcastle arrive at the other platform, across the station footbridge.

The centre of the village, with the Crown Hotel and the shop/café, is up the hill from the westbound platform.

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2 — Wetheral to Brampton

18.0km; 356m ascent; 4hr 11min

Introduction

The section of the route from Wetheral to Brampton is mainly on farmland, with some woodland interspersed among the fields.

The only public transport en route is a bus between Brampton and Carlisle (one journey in each direction on Tuesdays and Thursdays during school terms only) which visits some of the villages. Brampton town centre is served by buses which undertake part or all of the route between Carlisle and Newcastle.

There are few facilities *en route*. There are pubs (not open every day) at Great Corby, Faugh, Castle Carrock and Talkin, and a café at Talkin Tarn. There are two buses per week (but only during the school term) serving Faugh and Castle Carrock. Stock up well with the necessities (including your first-aid kit, for there is a superfluity of thorns and barbed wire along the way).

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10332490> covers this section of the route.

Route

Cross the River Eden using the footbridge which runs alongside the railway on the Wetheral Viaduct to reach the road at Corby Gates.

Turn right, cross the railway by the level crossing, and continue to the green outside Corby Castle with its impressive sandstone forge, facing the pub.

Corby Castle was an ancestral home of the Howard family, but was sold to Edward Haughey (Lord Ballyedmond) in 1994. Haughey undertook major refurbishment, after which the castle was used for

Wetheral Viaduct with the adjacent footpath: the 50mph speed limit is for trains, rather than for pedestrians



private and corporate entertainment. Haughey died in 2014 in a helicopter accident. The castle was used as a location for the filming of *The Woman in White* (Wilkie Collins), starring Diana Quick.

The Queen Inn is open from lunchtime to evening on Wednesdays to Sundays.

Turn left, and descend the road to cross Corby Beck next to the school, and rise again out of the valley on

Sandy Lane. Where the road turns to the left, continue ahead to join a path which leads past a bowling green to go along the left-hand edge of a field. Climb over the stile to reach the railway line and, after crossing the tracks and descending again, continue over the stile and across the field to a gate in the middle of the far side. Exit onto a road, where turn right, then left at the crossroads, to reach the hamlet of Broadwath.

Cross the stream (it is called Cairn Beck), and turn right along a path between the building and the beck. This path keeps close to the beck all the way to the point where the beck emerges from under the railway; at this point, the path bears left as it rises to reach track level.

Cross the railway by the pedestrian level crossing. On the far side of the tracks, choose the higher (left-hand) path which rises to a lane. Continue along the lane round a left-hand bend to reach the road at Heads Nook.

Turn left and follow the road across the railway. Pass Rose Paddock and The Whins (streets) on the left, and go beyond the brick-built houses on the right. Just beyond a wooden gate on the left, turn right down a lane towards The Croft.

At the bottom of the lane, having passed a paddock on the left, bend to the right. Do not take the obvious route up to the buildings, but take a path which peels off the lane to the left to reach a footbridge on the left. Do not cross the bridge, but turn right uphill, corralled between electric fences, to reach the railway.



*Bridge at Broadwath:
note the remains of mill
machinery above the leat*



Autumn colour, Heads Nook



String of Horses, Faugh

Cross the railway once more, and cross the next field. Cross the stile and continue in the same direction across the rougher surface of the next field, following a slightly raised ridge-line. Cross into the next field (with the hedge on your left) and pass to the right of a shed. Continue in the same direction along the left-hand edge of the next field, and on through the farmyard to reach the road at Faugh (pronounced *Faff*).

Off to the right a little way along the road lies the String of Horses, a seventeenth-century inn and restaurant with rooms.

There is a bus from this point to Brampton at 1345 on Tuesdays and Thursdays during school terms. However, on other days, there is no public transport at all.

Turn left, and follow the road through the village to reach a crossroads, where you turn right into Fenton Lane (the route which is signposted towards Flatt, not towards Fenton). This lane takes you past Fenton Lane End Farm.

Continue past Flatt Farm, the road bends to left and right. At the sharp bend to the left, take a gated green lane to the right, then turn left to cross a stile. Follow the right-hand side of the field up to the Gray Stone, a prominent standing stone.

From the Gray Stone, follow the faint track ahead, bearing right to meet and follow a hedge on your right, descending to meet a road. Turn right on the road for 60m, and then left on a footpath. Keep to the path in an easterly direction all the way out to a road, where turn right to pass Townfoot Farm.

Gray Stone



Continue along the road until you reach the centre of Castle Carrock, at the junction with the Geltsdale road, which passes to the right of the pub.

The Duke of Cumberland Inn is open between 1200 and 2030 from Wednesday to Sunday; there is a limited option of bed and breakfast in the village.

If you decide to break this stage at Castle Carrock — almost on the half-way mark — then a taxi link from Brampton (07402018151 or 0169773386) is probably your best bet. There is a bus at 1400 on Tuesdays and Thursdays during school terms to Brampton, but that is all.

Take the path to your left, passing the castellated Watson Institute of 1897 (the village hall) on your left, to reach the end of the little green, then turn left to reach a lane. Turn right to pass the village school on your left, and then pass out of the lane to reach the field ahead.

Pass the old moat on your right, and follow the path up the hill, keeping north of east, to a stile at the top. Another field and stile will bring you to a lane.

Bear round to the right, keeping farm buildings on the right, then pass more buildings on the left as you rise to a road. Turn left along the road to Jockey Shield, where the road turns sharply to the right.

Here, carry straight on ahead on a stony track, passing a park bench on your left. Descend to cross the River Gelt by a gated stone bridge, then turn left on a track with the river below you on the left.

At Low Hynam, do not go through the gate, but take the rising path to the right, up through the woods to reach a track junction at the top. Turn left along the track to Talkin Head Farm.

Continue along the lane, bearing left at a junction (where a road sweeps down from your right) to reach the village of Talkin.

The Blacksmith's Arms at Talkin offers food, drink and accommodation.

If you need to leave the route at this point, a taxi link from Brampton (07402018151 or 0169773386) is probably your best bet. There is a bus



*Watson Institute,
Castle Carrock*



Rising path at Low Hynam



Visitor Centre, Talkin Tarn

which calls at the village a little after 1400 on Tuesdays and Thursdays (but only operating during school terms) to Brampton, but that is all.

Continue northwards from Talkin, descending on the road to reach Tarn Head, marked as a hotel on maps but now a group of private residences.

Just beyond the houses, opposite a car park (for the Talkin Tarn Country Park),

take the path on the right which leads to Talkin Tarn.

Turn left to walk at the tarn's rim, with the water on your right. When you reach a boathouse, rise to pass it on your right, and continue along the waterside to reach the visitor centre.

Talkin Tarn is at the centre of a popular country park which is managed by the local council. The tarn is a glacial kettle-hole lake, and was formed about ten thousand years ago during the Ice Age.

The visitor centre contains an information point, a café, a car park, and toilets.

Brampton station footbridge



Having passed (or else having explored) the visitor centre, make your way along the tarnside path past the boat slipway, then take a path through the woods on the left. This path leads into a field.

Keep a hedge on your left until the path meets a road. Turn right on this road to reach Brampton station.

You will arrive at the platform served by trains towards Carlisle; eastbound trains towards Newcastle depart from the platform on the other side of the footbridge.

The footbridge's light and elegant design is replicated at other stations on the Tyne Valley Line — were they all delivered as a standard Ikea-style kit, just like the tin tabernacles of the era, which are found all round the country?

The station was opened in 1836, under the name of Milton (or *Milton for Brampton*). A branch line, known as the *Dandy Line*, originally horse-drawn but steam-operated

between 1913 and 1917 — the service was resuscitated between 1920 and 1923, but clearly was not economically viable — ran into Brampton town: the Dandy platform may be seen behind platform 1, the Newcastle-bound platform.

The station was later known as Brampton Junction, since there was a rail link (which was closed in 1953) from here to a junction with the line between Haltwhistle and Alston at Lambley, running via Hallbankgate.



Brampton station, with the Dandy Line on the right

However, Brampton's real claim to railway fame lies not in its tracks, nor in its (now demolished) station architecture, but in the innovations of its first station-master, Thomas Edmondson. He was the first to create cardboard tickets of standard size (57.2mm by 31.0mm) and design, which were individually numbered to avoid fraud on the part of the ticket clerks, and he invented the ticket dating machine.

With the opening, in 1842, of the Railway Clearing House to apportion revenues amongst the railway companies, the Edmondson ticket became a necessity for all journeys, as other ticket types would be rejected by the Clearing House. By patenting his printing and dating machines, and by charging the railway companies 10/- (50p) per railway mile per annum, Edmondson became very wealthy.

The Edmondson ticket was not phased out until 1990, when the familiar orange tickets (printed to order by the computerised APTIS machines) took over completely. About thirty years on, these card tickets are gradually being replaced by paper "till-roll" tickets with QR codes to operate the ticketing gates. Of course, in many cases, the gate technology has not yet been upgraded to accept the QR codes as well as card tickets) — in such cases, any passenger who is travelling with a till-roll ticket will need manual assistance to pass through the gate.

The installation of till-roll ticket-issuing machines is being matched to the local gate technology wherever possible (so the card tickets have not yet disappeared), but there will inevitably be mismatches, especially on long-distance journeys.

To continue on the *Hadrian Goes Loco* route beyond Brampton station towards Haltwhistle (but beware, the next section is long and without any natural break-points), walk past the station along the road from the Carlisle-bound platform entrance.

2* — Brampton station to Brampton 2.7km; 14m ascent; 33min

Introduction

There is a footpath link between Brampton station and the town centre, using the trackbed of the old railway (the *Dandy Line*). Though it is not part of the canonical *Hadrian Goes Loco* route, this 2.7km route is a delightful way to reach the centre of Brampton, with its opportunities for bed, board, refreshment and replenishment.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10332567> covers this section of the route.



Route

Starting at the north side of the footbridge, at the eastern end of Platform 1, follow the path which runs parallel to the back of the platform (noting the former platform edge on your left): this is the Dandy Line trackbed.

Go through a stile by a gate at the far end of the station, and take the path which curves off to the right (with the *Bleaberry Wood* sign on your left).

The path through the woods soon runs into a cutting as it straightens out. The surface is softened by the annual leaf-litter. Soon, the tunnel under the A69 is reached.

There is no safe access to reach road level here, nor is there a safe place to park on the road, so do not on any account arrange a pick-up from the main road.

Go through the tunnel, with its magnolia-painted walls a distinct contrast to the darker hues of path and trees. The path continues on



the far side, now stone-strewn (and in autumn, leaf-strewn): some of the stones are rounded enough to make foot-slippage a possibility, so be aware and walk with care. There may be a small hospital in Brampton, but it is not compulsory to have to visit!

At the far end, houses about the path on the left (the street is called Edmondson Close) as the path curves gently to the right to reach Station Road by a descending flight of steps.

Brampton Town station was in the area across the road; the remains of the rail bridge are visible on both sides of the road.

Cross Station Road and turn left, passing the bridge abutments. At the junction with Tree Road, cross back to continue on the left-hand pavement, and take the gentle bend to the left to join Moat Side, the A6071, at The Sands.

Continue walking along the left-hand pavement of Moat Side, passing the Wilson Memorial Homes (1930).

Ascend the gradient on the road with a park on your left, then descend the other side, still on the left-hand pavement to reach the Co-operative food shop.

Turn left in front of the shop, and take a lane to the left of the shop's car park. This lane turns right, then left, then right to come out onto Brampton's Market Place.

Continue, passing the octagonal Moot Hall on your right. Cross Craw Hill and turn right along the left-hand pavement to reach the post office and the Howard Arms on the left: this is the centre of Brampton.

From the bus stop as you approach the post office, buses run to Carlisle on the 685 route. From the bus stop on the other side of the road, the buses on the same route run to Hexham and Newcastle.

The Hexham-bound stop also serves the bus at 0920 on Tuesdays and Thursdays to Talkin, Castle Carrock, Faugh, Heads Nook and Wetheral. Note that the buses which tour the villages on this route do not serve Wetheral



*Bridge abutments,
Station Road*



Moot Hall, Brampton

when travelling towards Carlisle, so if you are planning a longish day walking from Wetheral to Brampton town centre, it may be better to start your day in Carlisle, taking a train to Wetheral and a direct 685 bus back to Carlisle.

The Howard Arms offers food, drink and accommodation: there is a full range of shops, cafés, banks and other facilities in the town: there are other accommodation options.

Brampton has been a settlement since the seventh century, and lies in a glacial hollow. The Howard family, Earls of Carlisle, have long had a hand in shaping the town, and the seventh Earl (in statuary form) looks down from the Mote which is situated on the north-east side of the town centre.

At the west end of Front Street, the church contains stained glass by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, created in the Arts and Crafts studio of William Morris; the architect of the church was Philip Webb of Kelmscott, and this is his only church commission. This church replaced the old church to the west of the town, which was built with stone plundered from Hadrian's Wall.

The Wall runs about 3km to the north of Brampton, passing the site of Camboglanna Roman fort to the north-west, and the ruins of Lanercost Priory (with adjacent tea room) to the north-east.

Brampton to Haltwhistle

19.5km; 306m ascent; 4hr 24min

Introduction

3.1 This part of the route begins at Brampton station, on the south side of the tracks (that is to say, from the gate which leads to the Carlisle-bound platform.

There is no viable public transport on this section before the arrival at Haltwhistle, where bus and train services are available.

The route between Brampton and Haltwhistle is a long walk with only the shop and pub at Hallbankgate for refreshment. You should carry all provisions for the day.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10333210> covers this section of the route.

Route

3.2 Turn left out of the station gate, and follow the road. Turn right at the T-junction at the end of the road, and follow that road for 400m. Turn half-left onto what is little more than a track (though Google did manage to track the route on Streetview).

At the end of the track, turn left onto a road. After 400m, you will cross the Lineholme Burn.

3.3 Continue ahead on the road the road past Kirkhouse on the left, and on to Cleugh Head. Bear left at the road junction, then take the left-hand road ahead (running north of east) to reach the main road at Hallbankgate.

Hallbankgate was a centre for the mining of coal and lead, and for the quarrying of limestone. The railway, which operated from 1852 to 1953, crossed the main road just to the east of the pub.

There is a pub and a community shop/café in Hallbankgate. The shop is open between 0900 and 1600 (closing at 1200 on Sundays). The bus shelter accommodates passengers for the two journeys per week (one each on Tuesdays and Thursdays) on the bus between Carlisle and Brampton.

Turn right at the pub, keeping the bus shelter on your left, onto Crossgates Road. Follow the road to a cluster of houses called, rather euphemistically, Park Terrace. Pass a road which goes off to the right and, where Crossgates Road turns right, continue ahead on a track. Opposite the entry to a house on the right, bear left to reach Clowsgill Holme.

3.4 Cross the line of the railway and take a path half-right. Pass some woodland on your left, and continue out to the road at Coalfell, either by turning left at the corner of the fence on your left, or by taking the track ahead on your right. The former option takes you to the (probably drier) road surface, while the latter uses less of the roadside.

3.5 Turn right along the road; if you have taken the option to reach the road without touching the track, pass a row of houses on the right before you reach the end of the track.

Follow the road to the next cluster of houses, and take a track which leads ahead to the left of the road. Pass Greenside Farm, then follow the right-hand side of three fields. Continue ahead to a path junction at Folly Rigg.

3.6 Bear slightly left, now heading north of east, and still with the field-boundary on your right. The path soon takes up an easterly bearing.

3.7 Follow the path past a wooded area on your left, taking a slight right-hand adjustment, and passing through a wall with some old sheep pens over to your left, to reach a ford after a further 240m or so.

Continue straight ahead through a wood to Stanniston Hill, where a track comes up from the right. Follow the track ahead, bearing to the left as you do so, and follow it through a half-right turn to reach a road.

3.8 Cross the road, and continue on the path ahead for about 1.15km to reach the path's crossing-point with the Pennine Way. Continue ahead to reach a road.

3.9 Turn left and follow the road past a junction, and onwards across Hartley Burn. Follow the road, passing High Burnfoot and then Low Burnfoot. Cross Hartley Burn once more, this time by a footbridge, and follow the path ahead. Pass a weir on the River South Tyne, and then pass a footbridge over the river, to reach a bridge over Bishop's Linn.

3.10 Cross the bridge and continue ahead through the woods to reach a road. Turn right onto the road to cross the river on Featherstone Bridge. You are now on the River Tyne Trail. Turn left, and follow the road to Park Burnfoot.

3.11 After crossing Park Burn, pass the entrance to a caravan site on the left, then enter the Bellister Estate at a gate (just before a metal National Trust sign).

Follow the path (and the River Tyne Trail) through the wood. Descend towards the river, but then turn right with woodland to your left. Turn left to take a path through the woodland and, after about 500m, take a path on the right to reach a road at Bellister Bank.

3.12 Turn left along the road, and follow it past the entrance to Bellister Castle (on your right). Before you reach the A69, though, turn left onto a road, and where the road (almost immediately) swings to the right, take a track on the left to make a fresh acquaintance with the River South Tyne.

Follow the track under the bridge, and bend right and then left onto Bellister Road, which was cut off when the A69 was re-routed along the Haltwhistle by-pass. Ignore a bridleway to the left which crosses the river, and continue past Bellister Haugh. Turn left and cross the river on a footbridge.

If you need a train bound for Carlisle, take the path on the left immediately after crossing the river, and ascend to platform level.

For Haltwhistle town centre and trains towards Newcastle, pass beneath the railway and continue to the main road, where turn left. At the crossroads beyond the pedestrian crossing, turn right for the town centre or turn left to reach the station.

Haltwhistle to Bardon Mill

9.4km; 91m ascent; 2hr 02min

Introduction

4.1 This section begins outside Haltwhistle station on Station Court, next to the platform served by eastbound trains towards Newcastle.

Buses and trains are available at each end of the route, but between these points there is no access to public transport

Likewise, between Haltwhistle and Bardon Mill, there is neither shop nor pub. Haltwhistle has all facilities; Bardon Mill has a hotel/pub, and a convenience shop with a tea-room.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10270695> covers this section of the route.

Route

4.2 Follow Station Court out to the main road, and turn right. Follow the road past the pedestrian crossing and turn right to pass beneath the railway. The path on the right descends directly from the platform served by westbound trains towards Carlisle.

Cross the river by the bridge, and turn left onto Bellister Road. Follow the road out to the A69. Follow the footway round to the right, then cross the busy road. Turn left to reach Plenmeller Road and turn right, now following the River Tyne Trail. Follow the road past West Plenmeller Farm, then past East Plenmeller Farm, to the junction with Unthank Road.

4.3 Turn left to follow Unthank Road, still with the River Tyne trail, to Unthank Hall, executing turns to the right, then to the left, then to the left and finally to the right at the Hall..

4.4 Continue past the Hall to cross a cattle grid. Pass East Unthank to reach Shankfoot.

4.5 Continue ahead through bends to the right and then to the left. Follow the track eastwards through Haughstrother Wood and on to Oadhall Mill.

4.6 Follow the track eastwards to reach a road at Willimoteswick. Turn left on the road and follow it to the driveway for Partridge Nest, over on your right.

4.7 Continue along the road for 230m. Turn left onto a path which leads over the River South Tyne on Millhouse Bridge. Continue ahead to reach the railway at a level crossing. For trains towards Carlisle, take the path before crossing the tracks, For

trains towards Newcastle, and for the facilities of Bardon Mill, take the path immediately after crossing the tracks. If you are continuing the day's walk beyond Bardon Mill, continue ahead to the main road at the Memorial Park.

For Bardon Mill, with its pub, convenience shop and café, and buses on the Carlisle-Hexham-Newcastle route, continue ahead from the north side of the station to reach the main road.

Bardon Mill to Haydon Bridge

9.8km; 204m ascent; 2hr 17min

5.1 This section begins at Bardon Mill station, at the level crossing at the east end of the platforms. It takes to the rolling hills to the north of the river — the River Tyne Trail on the south side would make a more sedate alternative.

The 685 bus route serves Bardon Mill and Haydon Bridge, but there is no access to public transport between these two endpoints. If you arrive at Bardon Mill by bus, alight at the Memorial Park.

Haydon Bridge has two pubs and a small supermarket.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10270358> covers this section of the route.

Route

5.2 Turn left at the level crossing, and follow the lane to the main road at Memorial Park. Cross the road and follow the road ahead underneath the A69. Ignore a road which goes off to the right, and pass houses on the left.

Just as the road begins to turn left, you will pass a barrier on the left, with paving slabs leading to it. Just beyond the access to Silverdale on the right, about 180m from the road you passed on your right, you will see a utility pole. Just before you reach the utility pole, at a signpost, cross a stone stile in the wall on your right.

Follow a path up the field, making for a double-fronted house ahead. Turn right and follow the lane out to a triangle, where take the left-hand option. This takes you onto a road which you follow eastwards to Thorngraston.

5.3 Continue along the road past East End Town. Turn left through 90° with the road, and pass beneath power lines to a point where the road veers slightly left.

5.4 Turn right onto Haresby Road — a by-way — with a wall on your left. Follow the track for about 1.7km to reach Muckle Moss on your right, and a footpath leading off southwards on your right.

5.5 Continue eastwards for a little over 1.7km to reach Whinnetley Moss, at the end of the second of two wooded areas on the right-hand side of the track.

5.6 Turn right, with the woodland still on your right, on a lane. Follow the lane to its end at a T-junction, and turn left. Follow through a right-hand bend to cross a bridge across Honeycrook Burn and reach a road junction.

5.7 Continue ahead for a few metres, then take a path off to the left to cross a tributary of Honeycrook Burn by a footbridge.

Pass into a field, and keep to the left-hand side of it and the four succeeding fields to reach Chesterwood Farm. Go through the farm and turn right onto a road. At the end of a small triangular pasture on the left, turn left and cross a ladder-stile, into a field. Follow the right-hand side of the field, then go through a gap and follow the left-hand side of the next field, all resolutely eastwards.

At the corner of a field with woodland over to the left, bear slightly right, just to the right of a bend in the wall opposite, and follow the left-hand edge of the next two fields, out to a road through a squeeze-stile in the wall. Turn right for 30m to a road junction.

5.8 Turn left onto the road, then after 50m, turn right through a gate (the one *beyond* the garden gate on the right) into a field. Follow the path straight downhill until, with a turn to the right, you come out onto a road.

Follow the road for 90m to Haydon Bridge station.

For trains towards Newcastle, take the road on the left before the level crossing and climb the steps onto the platform. For the village centre, and if you are continuing your day's walk beyond Haydon Bridge, continue ahead after crossing the tracks.

The village centre contains a convenience shop; turn right at the bottom of Church Street just beyond a pub (onto Ratcliffe Road) to reach it and another pub. Beyond, at the Community Centre, there is a pair of bus stops on the route which links Carlisle, Hexham and Newcastle.

Haydon Bridge to Hexham

13.5km; 215m ascent; 3hr 03min

Introduction

6.1 This section begins on the west side of Haydon Bridge station at the level crossing. If you are arriving from points west, you will need to walk along the road to the north of the tracks to reach the level crossing.

The buses on the 685 route run through the centre of Haydon Bridge. There is an occasional bus (not on Sundays) at Low Gate which links with Hexham. Hexham is the nexus of local and long-distance bus routes for the area.

There are no facilities for refreshment and replenishment between Haydon Bridge's shop and pubs and all the facilities to be found in Hexham.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10270223> covers this section of the route.

Route

6.2 Walk south on the right-hand pavement of Church Street to reach the centre of Haydon Bridge.

The village centre contains a convenience shop; turn right at the bottom of Church Street just beyond a pub (onto Ratcliffe Road) to reach it and another pub. Beyond, at the Community Centre, there is a pair of bus stops on the route which links Carlisle, Hexham and Newcastle.

Ease round to the right onto Ratcliffe Road to reach the convenience shop, and cross the road at the end of the railings. Turn left to go back to the junction, then turn right to cross the river by the Old Haydon Bridge.

Here, on John Martin Street, there is another pub, and a fish and chip shop, plus public toilets (along the route on the left, next to a wall postbox).

Turn left to follow John Martin Street almost to its end, turning right onto Whittis Road just beyond the toilets. Follow Whittis Road round to the right and up to the top of the street. Turn left on a path which crosses Langley Burn and passes beneath the A69 to come out onto the A686.

Cross the busy road to take the road ahead (signposted to Threepwood, though be sure that there is no connection with PG Wodehouse's Blandings Castle to be inferred). After 170m, turn left at a gate onto a path which keeps to the left-hand side of fields for 450m and, where there is a gate on the left, turn right and descends to cross Crossley Burn.

6.3 The route climbs out of Crossley Burn's valley, keeping to a roughly east-south-easterly direction through Elrington Wood.

Where it emerges on the south-eastern side of the wood, it turns southwards to follow the right-hand side of a field. At the end of the field, the path switches to follow the next field southwards along its left-hand side. At the end of this field, turn left to reach a road at Elrington.

6.4 Follow the road ahead round to the right, and cross the line of a former railway. Turn left and follow the road past East Elrington and High Yexley Wood, both on the left, to Letter Box Wood and Yexley Cottage on the right.

6.5 Keep ahead beyond Yexley Cottage to reach a larger road, where turn right. Follow the road past the entrance to Snape Farm on the right to reach an overgrown lane on the right. This is Cushat Lane.

6.6 Cushat Lane is so straight that it must have run along the line of a property boundary. Follow the road ahead to a junction at Low Gate.

There is a two-hourly bus service to Hexham at Low Gate. There are no buses on Sundays.

6.7 Turn left, but do not curl left with the road. Take a narrow road ahead (a little to the left of a wall postbox) which bends to the left, round the back of a care home, then bends to the right. Shortly after you come alongside a wood on the right, turn left onto a path within the wood.

The path gravitates towards the edge of the wood as it maintains its eastward progress. Where the field on the right ends, turn right to reach a point where a path on the right leads to Highside Farm.

6.8 Continue southwards, then at the corner of the wood, turn left along the wood's edge. With a quick right-and-left, pick up a lane which passes Leazes on the right, and advances to the edge of Hexham's suburbia.

Just before the first house, turn left to follow Shaws Lane. Cross Dukes Road and continue on the path out to West Street.

6.9 Cross the road, and continue along Spital Lane opposite. Ignore a path to the left, but where the lane swings left to the golf club's car park, continue ahead.

6.10 Bend round to the right, the golf club's buildings on the right. Where there is a path going off to the left, take it to cross the railway. At the river, turn right and follow the riverside path (the River Tyne Trail) for about 570m. There is a questionable ford across the river here, but a much more believable bridleway to the right, across the golf course.

Turn right here, and cross the golf course. Cross the railway again, then turn left onto Tyne Green Road. Turn left, and then bear left through a gate to cross the railway once more.

Cross a ladder-stile and follow the lane, easing to the right, to reach a road at a roundabout. Turn right, crossing the road to its left-hand pavement. Turn left onto Station Road, and follow it to the station forecourt.

Hexham to Corbridge

8.5km; 121m ascent; 1hr 54min

Introduction

7.1 This section of the route follows the River Tyne Trail on the southern side of the river. On the north-west side of Corbridge (off-route), the Roman town is laid out.

There are buses in Hexham and in the centre of Corbridge, and also at Dilston.

Hexham has all facilities: the centre of Corbridge has shops, cafés and pubs. There is a pub next to Corbridge station.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10270046> covers this section of the route.

Route

7.2 Turn right onto Station Road, and at the end turn left onto Alemouth Road. At the roundabout, bear left to take Hallstile Bank, against the traffic flow on this one-way street. At the top of the climb, turn left to reach Market Place, with its open pillared market hall.

This is the commercial centre of Hexham, with all facilities to the south and west of the Market Hall.

Keep the market hall on your right and walk along Fore Street (it is pedestrianised) to Battle Hill.

The bus station is downhill on your left, with services to Newcastle, Carlisle and local villages.

At the far end, turn right, then take the next street on your left, Eastgate. Keep to the left-hand pavement as you climb out of the town centre. Ignore the right fork with its lorry route to Blanchland.

Follow the road for a further 300m, passing the headquarters of the Northumberland National Park on your left. After a left bend, the road settles into an easterly direction.

7.3 Take a road called Fellside (or Tyneview Terrace) which eases to the left of the main road: once you are on this road, you have an excellent view of Hexham and the Tyne Valley. Follow the road for a little under 300m to a turning place with a corrugated iron shed on the right, and advance to a fingerpost and a path making off to the right ahead.

Take this path — it is the River Tyne Trail, which you have been following from the end of Station Road — as it rises above road level. After about 550m, the path makes a definitive bend to the right, and after a further 170m, arrives at a T-junction of paths.

Turn left, and follow the track to Duke's House.

7.4 Continue past Duke's House, through the forest and out the other side. Pass beneath power lines, and continue to Dilston Park Farm.

7.5 Carry on eastwards until you reach the northern edge of a wood, at a campsite. Do not swing north, but continue ahead on a bridleway to reach Dilston Mill on Devil's Water. Follow the mill access out to the main road. Turn right to cross Devil's Water.

There are bus stops ahead serving Newcastle on the left-hand side of the road and, on the right-hand side, Hexham and Carlisle.

7.6 Immediately beyond the bridge, turn left onto a footpath. Pass beneath the railway, and keep the farmland of Dilston Haughs on your right to the outflow of Devil's Water into the River Tyne.

Devil's Water rises very close to the source of the River Derwent, at a place called Blackburn Head on the Carriers' Way. The carriers were ponies and their drivers, bringing smelted lead down to the River Tyne for onward transport. However, the route of the Carriers' Way is probably prehistoric. In the valley of Devil's Water, Cadwallon of Gwynedd was killed by King Oswald's army after the Battle of Heavenfield (just north of Hadrian's Wall in 634, setting the scene for Northumbrian domination).

Continue on the riverside path (still the River Tyne Trail) to pass the south abutment of the bridge which carried the Roman Dere Street, between Eboracum (York) and Scotland, across the River Tyne. Advance to the southern end of the current road bridge.

Corbridge itself is on the north bank of the River Tyne, and has everything a walker might need — food shops, cafés, restaurants, pubs, goldsmiths, artworks, wedding dresses, you name it.

7.7 Turn left to the end of the single-carriageway bridge, and cross the road. Turn right to reach the bend on Station Road on the left.

If you are not concluding your day's walk at Corbridge, take the riverside path on the left as indicated by the fingerpost.

Follow the left-hand pavement past the modern roundabout to reach the end of a street on the left called The Stanners, with a postbox on the corner. The station lies ahead.

For trains towards Carlisle, cross the main road and continue on its right-hand pavement to the railway bridge, and descend to your right to the platform. For trains towards Newcastle, and for a pub, take the road ahead to the left. There is a footbridge between platforms at the station, just in case you change your mind.

Corbridge to Riding Mill

4.8km; 40m ascent; 1hr 01min

Introduction

8.1 This section of the route is squeezed between the river and the railway. Mud may be expected at any time. If the river is in spate (look back at the past week's weather data to see how much rain has fallen in the catchment area), then the River Tyne Trail makes for a much drier alternative, being mainly on lanes and pavements. In such conditions, or in wet weather, the alternative is much to be preferred, reducing to just about zero the chance of slipping into the strong current. The River Tyne Trail between the stations is 5.3km in length, climbs 164m, and takes 1 hour and 20 minutes by Naysmith's calculations.

There is no access to public transport between the two endpoint stations of this section: buses serve the centre of the village.

The pub at Riding Mill and a coffee shop at the station is the only opportunity for refreshment on this section of the route after leaving Corbridge.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269917> covers this section of the route.

Route

8.2 This section starts at Corbridge station — either at the station building (if arriving from the west) or on the road bridge (if arriving from the east).

Set off northwards from the station to reach the corner of a street called The Stanners, where the station access road merges with the main road.

For any necessities from Corbridge, you will need to press ahead across the river, and return to this point, a diversion of about 2km.

Turn right onto The Stanners and follow it out to the riverside. Continue along the riverside path until it comes alongside the railway, where a path exits to the right, underneath the railway, to Farnley Grange.

8.3 After about 400m of walking parallel to the railway, bear left to the top of Farnley Scar and continue round a broad right-hand bend to return to river level. Pass a large gravel lake on your right, and continue to come, once again, to walk parallel to the railway.

8.4 Walk between the railway and the river for about 1km, then take a path which branches off half-right to emerge

from the woods at the station, beside the eastbound platform. Cross the footbridge for trains towards Carlisle, and to continue walking if Riding Mill is not your day's walk's final destination.

There is a coffee shop at the station, which opens at 0830 (1000 at weekends) and closes at 1700 (1500 at weekends, and 1930 on Wednesdays). Out on the main road, there is a pub, and bus stops for services between Newcastle and Hexham.

Riding Mill to Stocksfield

5.3km; 91m ascent; 1hr 13min

Introduction

9.1 This section starts at Riding Mill station, on the southern side of the tracks. In its entirety, it follows the River Tyne Trail, whose waymarks may be helpful.

The bus stops at the pub are served by buses between Newcastle and Hexham.

There is a café in the station building, and a pub on the main road.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269860> covers this section of the route.

Route

9.2 Make your way out to the main road along Riding Close. Turn left to reach the pub, then cross the road to take Mill Close opposite. At the end of Mill Close, bear left to cross Ridingmill Burn and come out onto Church Lane.

Cross the road, and ascend Old Playground opposite to its top left-hand corner. Turn left to emerge onto Whiteside. Cross the road, then turn right past a stone-faced house, and immediately turn left onto a path.

At the end of some woodland, the path turns right, then half-left to cross a field on the diagonal, to the corner of a care home, and on to reach the A68 by a set of steps. Cross the road to reach a path entry on the opposite side.

The A68 follows the line of Dere Street, and has been a major thoroughfare for 1900 years (at least). Today, it is busy with cars and lorries, rather than with carts and armies.

Take great care in crossing the road: there is barely room for two people at the side of the road. Cross in groups of one or two; wait for those in front to have gone before coming out onto the road, and once you have crossed the road, advance onto the path ahead to leave room for the next arrival at the side of the road.

Follow the path ahead, ascending into Shilford West Wood. *After* you have crossed over a path in the wood, bend to the left. Descend slightly to a break in the forest, and turn right to reach the southern edge of the wood.

Turn left, cross a burn, and follow the outside edge of woodland ahead, then through a right turn. At the corner of the wood, do not turn left, but carry on ahead to reach the access road for Roe House, which is over to your left.

9.3 Continue over the access road to reach a road by a ladder-stile. Turn left onto the road. Follow the road for 750m to and through Broomley.

9.4 Where the road turns right, carry on ahead on a track for a few metres. Take a path on the left which, once it has struggled through the scrub, takes off in a north-easterly direction to the far right-hand corner of the field. Cross Smithy Burn, and follow the edge of a wood north to reach Broomleyhope Wood.

Bear right once inside the wood, then bend left to resume your north-easterly progress. After about 350m within the wood, you will come to a path junction. Here, swing round to the left (north) and let the path return you to a north-easterly direction. Continue down a forest ride to come out at a car park for Stocksfield's Community Woodland, with the railway immediately on your left.

9.5 At the car park entrance, turn left to cross the railway, then turn right onto the main road. Cross the road and turn right onto its left-hand pavement. Pass a bus stop, and cross over the road to Stamfordham via the refuge, to continue over the railway and along the main road into Stocksfield. Pass another bus stop to a junction.

There is a convenience shop across the road.

Turn left to reach the station.

Stocksfield to Prudhoe

4.8km; 67m ascent; 1hr 03min

Introduction

10.1 This section begins on the forecourt of Stocksfield station, on the southern side of the tracks. If you are arriving from the west, do not exit out of the back of the platform, but cross the footbridge. This section follows the River Tyne Trail to Green Hill, and from Eltringham to Ovingham Bridge at Prudhoe.

There is no viable access to public transport between the two endpoint stations on this section of the route. Buses serve Prudhoe for Newcastle, Hexham and Carlisle, and there is an hourly bus

service between Hexham and Newcastle (not on Sundays) which stops in Ovingham.

There is a convenience shop at the exit from Stocksfield station forecourt. There is a café and a pub near Prudhoe station, and a convenience shop and a pub in Ovingham, just across the river.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269785> covers this section of the route.

Route

10.2 Walk out of the station forecourt to the main road and turn left. Follow the left-hand pavement past a bus stop and a school building on the left. Pass a cricket ground and a car park with a recycling centre on the left, then take a track to the left, just before a house.

Follow the track, which may have lorries on it, past Merry Shield and on to Green Hill, following the River Tyne Trail as best you can through landworks.

10.3 At Green Hill, the River Tyne Trail bears off to the left to seek out the railway and then the river; here continue east of north, crossing a burn and following the edge of a wood on your left.

About 450m after crossing the burn, where the tree cover falls away to the left, turn half-right and cross the field with trees over to your right, to pick up a path heading east-north-east along the right-hand side of a long (over 400m long) field. Turn right and left on a track; where the track bends to the right towards some buildings, carry on straight ahead, then bear off right to reach a road at a bend.

Up the road to your right is Cherryburn, the birthplace of Thomas Bewick, the eighteenth-century artist, engraver and illustrator. The cottage and a small museum are in the care of the National Trust (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cherryburn/>), but there is no drop-in visiting.

10.4 Turn left along the road past Eltringham. Cross Cherry Burn and turn right onto a by-way.

Here, you join forces once again with the River Tyne Trail as it comes up from the riverbank.

Follow the by-way for almost 1km to come out onto a lane, with a factory fence ahead. Turn right to reach a main road, and turn left along it. After 120m, bear left through a gate and follow the River Tyne Trail down to the railway.

Cross the railway by the pedestrian level crossing. Turn right to follow a path out through Prudhoe Riverside Park. Where there is a barrier on your left next to a dog-waste bin, you have a decision point.

If you do not intend to finish your day's walking at Prudhoe, continue ahead under the road bridge. For Prudhoe station, turn right to pass a children's play area on your right, and follow the road out to Station Road, where turn right. For trains towards Newcastle, turn left onto the platform before the level crossing; for westbound trains, turn left after the crossing.

There is a café in the Riverside Park, facing Station Road.

Prudhoe to Wylam

4.4km; 27m ascent; 55min

Introduction

11.1 This section starts at Prudhoe station, at the level crossing at the west end of the platforms. The route of the section follows the River Tyne Trail from Riverside Park to Hagg Bank Bridge. The route then follows the old railbed to the centre of Wylam before descending to cross the river and reach the station.

After leaving Prudhoe station, there is no public transport access point until you reach the centre of Wylam.

Likewise, there is no opportunity for refreshment or replenishment after leaving Prudhoe station until you reach the centre of Wylam.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269598> covers this section of the route.

Route

11.2 Turn right onto Station Road, then turn left into Riverside Park. Follow the road to a children's play area on the left, then continue to the riverside path. Turn right and pass beneath Ovingham Bridge. Follow the path to a pumphouse at The Spetchells.

11.3 Continue along the riverside path past Hagg Farm, then round the bend of the river. About 600m after passing Hagg Farm, take a path on the left of the by-way to reach Hagg Bank Bridge.

The bridge carried the former route of trains between Newcastle and Carlisle.

11.4 Cross the bridge, and follow the trackbed ahead. Pass beneath Main Road (where there are toilets) and continue to reach the corner of a car park. If you are not ending your day's walking at Wylam, continue ahead, otherwise turn right

to keep the war memorial on your right; follow the road to and over the River Tyne to reach the level crossing at the station.

For trains towards Newcastle, turn right before the level crossing; for westbound trains, turn left after crossing the tracks.

There is a pub on the south side of the level crossing; other facilities are on the north side of the river on Main Road.

Wylam to Blaydon

8.6km; 9m ascent; 1hr 43min

Introduction

12.1 This section begins at Wylam station, at the level crossing. The route of the section follows the River Tyne Trail from the car park in North Wylam to Newburn Bridge.

Buses are available at Wylam, Newburn, Stella and Blaydon.

There is a convenience shop at Newburn, and there are chain fast-food and coffee outlets near the route at Blaydon.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269506> covers this section of the route.

Route

12.2 Cross the bridge, and continue ahead past the war memorial to the north-west corner of the main car park. Turn right along the trackbed to Stephenson's Cottage, birthplace of the railway pioneer George Stephenson.

The cottage, with gardens and a café, is in the care of the National Trust (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/george-stephensons-birthplace>).

12.3 At the cottage, turn right and immediately left to pick up a path which runs closer to the riverside. Follow the riverbank for not much short of 2km to the Tide Stone.

The Tide Stone marked the tidal limit of the River Tyne until 1900, when improved dredging extended the tidal limit to Wylam.

12.4 Continue along the riverbank to reach Tyne Riverside Country Park, on the site of the Isabella colliery, where turn left towards the park's facilities.

These facilities include a café with toilets, a slipway, and a lodging.

12.5 Return to the riverbank beyond the slipway, and follow it to Newburn Bridge. Turn right and cross the river and, beneath the power lines, turn left to regain the riverside, now on the south bank.

The path on the south bank of the river between Wylam and Gateshead is known locally as Keelman's Way.

Follow the path past a large electricity substation along the riverside until forced into a 90° turn to the right (note — a 90° turn to the left here would be disastrous). After 60m, turn left onto King Oswald's Drive.

12.6 After 250m, turn left on a made path to regain the riverside, where turn right. Follow the path between the river and the modern houses until you come alongside the railway.

These houses on and around King Oswald's Drive are built on the site of Blaydon Racecourse, famed in song.

Continue between the river and the railway for about 550m to reach a sculpture commemorating the Blaydon Races.

12.7 Keep going along the riverside path until a path to the right gives access to Blaydon station — this side for trains to Newcastle, and over the footbridge for westbound trains.

If you are continuing your day's walk beyond Blaydon, keep to the riverside path.

Blaydon to MetroCentre

3.7km; 18m ascent; 46min

Introduction

13.1 This section begins on the north side of Blaydon station, on the riverside path. If you are arriving by train from Newcastle, cross the footbridge and exit from the eastbound platform. the route returns to the riverside and crosses the outflow of the River Derwent before arriving at the MetroCentre.

There is no viable access to public transport between the two endpoint stations of this section.

There is a pub near the Derwenthaugh marina, and of course the facilities at the MetroCentre are all but limitless.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269421> covers this section of the route.

Route

13.2 Walk away from the station and turn right onto the riverside path. Follow it out to reach Factory Road. Factory Road is joined by Patterson Street before it splits off to the left.

On the section where Factory Road and Patterson Street co-exist, the factories on the left are listed as a “Manure and Alkali Works” and a “Fire Brick and Sanitary Tube” works on maps of the middle of the twentieth century.

Continue along Patterson Street to the riverside, and turn right. Pass beneath the A1 road bridge and then beneath the Scotswood rail bridge.

13.3 Continue on the riverside path to pass beneath the Scotswood road bridge. Here, the path becomes more structured and gains the name of Derwenthaugh Road. Pass to the right of a retail facility in an area known as Derwenthaugh Marina.

13.4 Turn right to cross the railway at a level crossing. Immediately after the crossing, turn left to pass a building on the right and reach a pub.

The pub opens at noon and serves a range of European food, the emphasis being on Italian cuisine. Local “pub favourites” are also offered.

Walk across the frontage of the pub to pick up a path. Take the left-hand (higher) fork to cross the River Derwent by a railside bridge. Keep the boundary of railway property on your left, and pass beneath Riverside Way.

Continue on the path until you reach a roundabout on your right, with a pedestrian bridge visible ahead.

If you are not concluding your day’s walking at MetroCentre, continue ahead beneath the pedestrian bridge and then the road bridge to reach Cross Lane.

For MetroCentre station, bear right to cross Scotswood Way at the refuge, the roundabout now just off your left shoulder. Turn left to reach the exit from the bus station. Use two pedestrian crossings to reach the bus station. Enter the bus station and ascend to bridge level, and turn left to reach the station.

Of course all facilities are available in the shopping mall.

MetroCentre to Dunston

3.1km; 12m ascent; 38min

Introduction

14.1 This section begins at MetroCentre station: access and egress are through the bus station via a pedestrian bridge.

The mall has a large bus station with local and long-distance routes bringing eager shoppers to the mall, and taking them away again, satiated by retail therapy.

In the middle of Dunston, frequent buses ply to route between Gateshead and the MetroCentre.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269364> covers this section of the route.

Route

14.2 Exit the station via the bus station, turning right at the end of the bridge and descending to street level and making for the west side of the station building. Take two pedestrian crossings to exit the bus station and continue ahead on the left-hand pavement of Scotswood Way. Turn right (signposted *Keelman's Way*) to cross the road at a refuge with the roundabout on your right.

Bear round to the right to pick up the left-hand (north) pavement of Scotswood Way, with the railway on your left. Pass beneath the pedestrian bridge to the station, and then beneath a road bridge, to reach Cross Lane. Turn left and pass beneath the railway, then turn right to cross over Cross Lane. Take a few paces forward along Handy Drive, then turn left to cross the road. Advance a few paces and turn right along a path parallel to Handy Drive.

Follow the path parallel to the road until it eventually runs out of steam and joins the roadside pavement. Follow the pavement to the junction with St Omers Road — indeed, the road ahead from the junction is called St Omers Road.

Here, the footway parts company with the roadside: follow it until you can ease to the right onto Railway Street. Follow Railway Street across Flour Mill Road to its end, where ease right onto the left-hand pavement of St Omers Road.

Follow the left-hand pavement of St Omers Road to Kingfisher Court on your left, just past a terrace of older houses on your right.

14.3 Turn left to enter the Kingfisher Court complex, bearing right at the fork and descending to river level. Turn right onto the riverside path, which soon turns right and then left. At the outflow of the river Team, turn right to reach a bridge on your left, known as Scrapyard Bridge.

14.4 If you are not concluding your day's walk at Dunston, cross the bridge and take the path on the right to reach a higher path, and turn sharp left to continue.

For Dunston station, pass the bridge and walk out southwards along Staithes Road. Use the refuge over to your left to cross the main road, and cross the small car park to join Ravensworth Road, heading south (not on Wellington Road, heading west).

There is a convenience shop on Ravensworth Road, on the right.

Continue along Ravensworth Road, crossing over to its left-hand pavement at a pedestrian crossing. At the end of the street, use the pedestrian crossing to your left to cross Ellison Road. Turn right on Ellison Road, passing a pub, to reach the station: access is from the road bridge.

Dunston to Newcastle

4.7km; 97m ascent; 1hr 06min

15.1 The route from Dunston to Newcastle lies mainly on the riverside path, which was in the past a mineral railway line. After leaving the station, the route picks up the trackbed of a line which supplied the coal staiths. The approach to Newcastle uses the iconic High Level Bridge (with rail lines above the roadway) and passes the Castle.

Dunston station closed in 1926 as a result of the General Strike, but re-opened in 1984 after the trains between Newcastle and Prudhoe were re-routed onto the south bank of the river. This change of route was principally to save on the maintenance of the Scotswood railway bridge, but also to capitalise on the building of the MetroCentre, the first phase of which opened in 1986. During the gap in the station's operation, the line's main use was to serve Dunston Power Station, on the site of which the MetroCentre was built.

After leaving Dunston station, the route is free of public transport access until you reach Gateshead. Newcastle has, of course, all facilities.

The opportunities for replenishing supplies are limited to the supermarket on Ellison Road, and a pub (no food) at its junction with Ravensworth Road.

The map at <https://explore.osmaps.com/route/10269255> covers this section of the route.

Route

15.2 From the platform at Dunston station, rise on the ramp to Ellison Road, and turn right. Follow Ellison Road on its right-hand pavement, and pass the end of Ravensworth Road on the left.

There are bus stops on Ellison Road.

Cross to the left-hand pavement at the zebra crossing, and continue downhill. Just beyond a supermarket on the left, but before the bridge, take a path to the left which rises to bridge level, and turn left to pick up the trackbed of a railway spur which ran onto the coal staiths at the riverside, now the Teams Cycleway. Follow the

cycleway northwards, crossing Clockmill Road and the River Team by a bridge to reach a fork in the path.

This is a decision-point: the right fork continues at a high level out onto the coal staiths, so if you do not have a head for heights, you should take the left fork down to meet a west-east path.

The high-level route continues past housing on the right, and on through a gateway onto the wooden superstructure of the staiths. If the gate is closed (there have been several instances of fire damage to the wooden structure), you will need to retrace your steps to the fork, and take the lower route, avoiding the staiths altogether.

The wooden walkway bends round to the right, with the river on your left and the tidal basin on your right: at a set of gantries, a staircase on the right leads down to the lower level, from which you may return to the “mainland” at the lower level (still over water), arriving opposite a row of houses. Turn left along the riverside path, once another railway.

The building of the high-level railway onto the staiths allowed the direct loading of local coal into the holds of ships on the Tyne; the staiths were also used to export coke and other products of the area’s “fossil industry”. The railhead was built by the North Eastern Railway Company in 1893, and finally closed in 1980. The tidal basin was dug in 1903 to allow loading at any state of the tide.

The current walkways were created by a restoration project linked to the Gateshead Garden Festival of 1990. The staiths have listed building status and form a Scheduled Ancient Monument, to protect the heritage of the area. The Garden Festival has no lasting reminder, save the riverside path: the site was derelict until housing development was begun in 2002.

The low-level alternative (left fork) drops to the path just to the west of the high-level route’s bridge; you should turn right here onto the riverside path to continue towards Newcastle..

If you have decided not to break your journey from MetroCentre at Dunston, you will have crossed the Scrapyard Bridge to the point where the descending path meets the riverside path.

15.3 The route continues along the riverside, passing the housing developments on the site of the Garden Festival to the mouth of the tidal basin.

The riverside path continues towards the city centre, and the famous Tyne Bridges. The first bridge is the high-level Redheugh road bridge.

The current (third) Redheugh bridge opened in 1983, replacing the previous bridge of 1901. This second bridge replaced one which was opened in 1879, the year of the Tay Rail Bridge disaster: the first Redheugh bridge was, like the first Tay Rail Bridge, designed by Thomas Bouch, and structural faults were noticed as early as 1885.

Pass beneath the Redheugh bridge, then the King Edward VII rail bridge (1906).

15.4 Continue beneath the Queen Elizabeth II metro bridge (1981), all by the path along the river bank. Do not take the rising path immediately after the rail bridge. Continue along the river bank to a car park: here, turn to the right, cross the car park, and take a flight of steps opposite. This leads to a path which rises to High Level Road, opposite a forbidding stone wall.

The housing which you may glimpse behind the wall (look to your right) occupies the site of the nineteenth-century Gateshead Rail Works. These works, and the original Gateshead station, were the headquarters of the North Eastern Railway Company.

Turn left along High Level Road to the south-western arm of the High Level Bridge. Pass beneath the railway to reach the south portal of the High Level Bridge.

The High Level Bridge was designed by Robert Stephenson, and opened in 1849. This allowed trains to cross the Tyne and made for a direct connection through the city for trains running the East Coast line between London and Edinburgh. Road traffic is carried (today, southbound only, and only for buses and taxis) beneath the railway level. There is a cycleway on the upstream side and a footway on the downstream side (smart separation!), both at road level. Rail congestion on the bridge was eased by the building of the King Edward VII bridge in 1906, and the completion of Newcastle Central station. The bridge was closed for three years from 2005 to allow major structural refurbishment to take place: this limited the road width to one lane. The bridge is Grade I listed.

Cross the bridge's road portal: the arches ahead on your right are on the site of Gateshead East station, which was replaced by Gateshead Metro station in 1981.

Turn left to take the footway on the downstream side of the bridge: this is one of the best views of the river within the city. At the northern end, you will reach Newcastle castle on your right.

The Romans placed a fort on the site of the castle — Pons Aelius (after the family name of Publius Aelius Hadrianus). The son of William the Conqueror built a wooden motte in 1080; King Henry II built a stone castle during the 1170s. The Black Gate was built in 1250, and the Town Walls came later in 1265. Scottish troops besieged the castle in 1644, in support of the Parliamentarians during the Civil War; after the surrender of those besieged, the castle was used as a prison.

Pass beneath the East Coast Main Line and turn left, crossing the road at the traffic lights. Keep to the left-hand pavement of Westgate Road, with the railway arches on your left. Westgate Road veers away from the railway as it climbs: at the top, bear left into Neville Street, and follow it to Newcastle station.

The station opened in 1850, and was served by trains of the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway Company and the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway Company. Trains from Carlisle arrived along the north bank of the Tyne; trains between Berwick and York arrived and departed from the east, running to the south by the High Level Bridge. After the building of the King Edward VII Bridge, through running of trains between London and Edinburgh was made possible. In 1982, trains to and from Carlisle were re-routed across the King Edward VII Bridge to Dunston, and the original line via the Scotswood Bridge was torn up.