

Northumbrian History, a wander through the ages

INTERESTING PLACES TO VISIT - WHICH ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

ROMAN SITES

Vindolanda, Bardon Mill (21.3 miles)

A fort a mile south of the wall. Excavations have yielded many letters which give an insight to garrison life. These and much more are brilliantly displayed in the adjoining museum. A site of ongoing excavation owned and managed by a local family of classical scholars and academics.

Roman Army Museum near Vindolanda (24.3 miles)

It shows how their army worked. The Museum has been developed and run in conjunction with Vindolanda.

Chesters, Humshaugh (5.4 miles)

A cavalry fort astride the wall where the wall and bridge crossed the river Tyne.

Corstopitum, Corbridge

The main supply depot for the wall garrisons, astride the main (A68) road to Scotland.

Arbeia, South Shields (43.9 miles)

A fort dominating the Roman port at the mouth of the Tyne. The west Gatehouse, The Commandant's house and a Barrack Room have recently been rebuilt, to show military architecture as it was when first built. It is impressive.

Segedunum, Wallsend (33.3 miles)

The last fort at the East end of the wall, where it joins the Tyne estuary. Recently excavated from underneath a car park of Swan hunter's shipyard. The Roman bath house has been rebuilt and it is in working order.

Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle University (28.7 miles)

Many of the best finds from the wall are on display here.

ANGLO SAXON

Yeavinger, Wooler

The site of a Saxon Hall and a huge livestock corral - No visible remains but an evocative place and well explained.

Bamburgh Castle, The Royal Capital of Bernicia (74.8 miles)

Restored in 1750 by Lord Crewe and later by Lord Armstrong, it remains their family home.

Lindisfarne, Holy Island (84.3 miles)

Monastic centre of the 'Golden Age' of Christian Northumbria - St Cuthbert.

St Paul's Church and Monastery, Jarrow. (41.7 miles)

Where the Venerable Bede lived, worked and wrote

'Bede's World' adjoining St Paul's Church

A new museum. A demonstration Anglo-Saxon farm, also experimentally reconstructed timber buildings which together explain Bede's work and Saxon life.

Hexham Abbey (6 miles)

St Wilfred's Monastery. His crypt and foundations survive - *see below*.

Escombe Church, Bishop Auckland County Durham (43.6 miles)

A little changed Saxon Church incorporating recycled Roman pillars from a nearby fort.

MEDIAEVAL

Aydon Castle, near Corbridge (11 miles)

A defended manor. No modernisation and reminiscent of the Waverley novels.

Hexham Abbey (6 Miles)

Ecclesiastical heart of Northumberland.

Belsay Castle (19.6 miles)

Large Norman Pele Tower. One of the first defensive dwellings in Northumberland to add a Jacobean wing with large mullion windows, just seven years after the accession of James I. Similar building had been going on in southern counties since mid Tudor times.

Alnwick Castle (58 miles)

Magnificent Percy stronghold. A Tourist hot spot - partly because it was used as the location for some scenes in a 'Harry Potter' film.

Lanercost Augustinian Priory (35.5 miles)

A beautiful site founded about 1166 by Henry II, it was completed in 1222. The Priory is about 20 miles south-east of the 'Debatable Lands', a lawless area.

Warkworth Castle (54.7 miles)

Off the tourist route, another Percy stronghold which dominates its town. A very impressive ruin.

Lindisfarne Castle (NT) (84.4 miles)

A Tudor Fort converted into a private house by Edwin Lutyens, with a walled garden planted by Gertrude Jekyll.

COUNTRY HOUSES

Wallington Hall, Cambo (NT) (14.2 miles)

Country home of one branch of the great Blackett family of Newcastle merchants. The old Fenwick Tower and house was replaced by a new mansion, started in 1688 by Sir William Blackett.

Cragside, Rothbury (NT) (30.3 miles)

Built by Sir William Armstrong - maker of guns, cranes, ships and many other things which helped to sustain the Empire and supplied our forces during W.W.I. and W.W.II.

Belsay Hall, Belsay (EH) (19.6 miles)

The Middleton family have lived at Belsay since the Conquest. The name changed for a time to Moncke for reasons of inheritance. (Cromwell's wise Scottish General). Sir Charles Moncke abandoned the old Castle and started to build Belsay Hall in pure Doric Style in 1807 to his own design. on his return from a Grand Tour.

LOCAL INDUSTRY

(Very popular with children)

Beamish Open Air Museum, Near Chester le Street, Co Durham (38.5 miles)

A large site which demonstrates the 19th Century coal industry in the North East. it includes a drift coal mine, a farm, livestock, a working tramway, village shops and much much more. The Mansion belonged to the family of Bobby Shaftoe who went to sea.

Kilhope Lead Mine, Upper Weardale.

A re-opened drift mine in remote Pennine moorland. the mine and minehead processing plant have been lovingly restored by local enthusiasts. - Interesting correspondence from emigrant miners in America who left Kilhope when the British lead trade was overtaken by Spain at the end of the 19th century. If you find the site interesting you should also visit the nearby lead mining village of Nenthead, which boasts of a small but interesting museum where the geology of the whole North Pennine ore field is explained.

The Discovery Museum, Blandford Square Newcastle-upon-Tyne. (28.7miles) *(Good for a wet day).* A huge modern prize winning Museum, which displays all the engineering and shipbuilding achievements of 18th-20th Century Tyneside. Other galleries show the history of Newcastle.

GARDENS

Alwick Castle (58 miles)

The gardens have recently been restored and are still being enlarged. They include dramatic water features, hornbeam tunnels, interesting gardens and a huge tree house. A major tourist attraction.

Howick Hall, nr Alwick (58 miles)

A gardeners garden. The product of nearly 200 years of enthusiastic owners. Some when serving overseas have collected and brought back plants to enrich their home. Lord Howick has been on expeditions to collect seed in different parts of the temperate world to propagate for the arboretum which opened in 2006.

Belsay Hall (19.6 miles)

A stunning spring shrub garden created in the shelter of a long narrow quarry, from which stone was taken to build the Hall and the Village.

NATURE AND WILDLIFE

The Farne Islands (NT) (77.9 miles) Boats for: Billy Shiels Tel: 01665 720316

The breeding ground for many sea birds. The site of Grace Darling's lighthouse and famous rescue and of St Cuthbert's refuge. Boat trips from Seahouses can be arranged. You will see seals and can sometimes fish for mackerel.

The Chillingham herd of Wild Cattle (69.4 miles)

A herd of white cattle have lived undisturbed in the 600 acre park, possibly since the end of the 13th century. Just as the cattle have been contained by man, man has also felt it wiser to keep out of the park so that in addition to the cattle, the park supports an unusually rich collection of wildlife. Escorted visits to see the cattle can be arranged.

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