

Tyne and Wear Heritage Way

Section 1: North Shields - Seaton Sluice (8 miles)



Heritage Information

A There has been a ferry between North and South Shields since at least 1377. Until the 19th century, sculler boats rowed by oarsmen would be used. By 1863, there were three routes in operation but now there is only one.

The tall building to the left as you reach the road, is High Brewery dated 1871. The Brewery Quay was used to maintain fishing boats.

The Collingwood Mansions building was built onto the old Northumberland Arms (1808). A plaque can also be seen, commemorating the former Sailors' Home, built by Benjamin Green for the Duke of Northumberland in 1854-6. Also along this stretch, street names refer to former activities, now disappeared - Star and Garter Quay, Old Customs House and Ropery Stairs.

The Stag Line Building (1806-07), standing on high ground, is recognisable by the emblem of the famous Tyneside Shipping Company.

B The two tall white buildings are the High and Low lights which were designed to guide ships into the harbour. There are two pairs of these 'lights' in this area; the old ones dating from 1727, the new from 1808.

Clifford's Fort was built in 1672 to defend the



The Walk: Section 1

Start: North Shields Ferry landing stage. (NZ 356 678)

1 Leave the North Shields ferry landing stage and walk a short distance up to the road. Turn **R** and follow the signs to Fish Quay, passing the Collingwood Mansions on the left. Continue straight ahead on the road with the new apartment building called Dolphin Quays on the right. Pass the Prince of Wales Tavern (The Old Wooden Dolly) and, after the ice-making plant, bear **R** onto the Fish Quay.

2 Walk the length of the Fish Quay and at the far end, turn **R** to pass the Dock Master's House and the remains of Clifford's Fort.

3 Bear **L** onto an open area, Low Quay, and walk parallel with the river until reaching a promenade walk which follows the river, past Black Middens Rocks.

4 Ahead, the Collingwood monument is clearly visible. Take any of the paths which lead up to the monument. From behind the monument, go downhill and bear **R** to a track past the Sea Scouts' Hut to reach a road. From here, turn **R** to visit The Watch House. Retrace your steps and follow the road that goes across a bridge and uphill towards Tynemouth Priory and Castle

5 From here, walk up the coast to St Mary's Lighthouse using cliff top paths, stretches of beach and promenades. Just to the left of the start of the causeway over to St Mary's island is the place known as Curry's point.

river mouth during the Dutch Wars. Nearly three quarters of the original walls survive.

Low Quay is an ancient market site although most of the current buildings are late 19th and early 20th century.

C The austere block of flats on the cliff top ahead were built by Sir James Knott, the shipping magnate and philanthropist.

The Black Middens rocks have been the cause of many shipwrecks.

Collingwood monument was erected in 1845 to Admiral Lord Collingwood, Nelson's second in command at the Battle of Trafalgar. The four cannons are from Collingwood's flagship, Royal Sovereign.

D The Watch House was built in 1886 to house the men of the Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade which had been founded in 1864.

The bridge crosses the former railway track used to transport stone for constructing and repairing the Tyne pier. The priory and castle stand on an ancient site. A seventh century monastery was replaced by an eleventh century Norman priory, now ruined. The gatehouse and barbican are the remains of Tynemouth Castle and date from the fourteenth century. Gun emplacements for coastal defence stood on the site until 1956.

E All along this stretch, N. Tyneside heritage noticeboards provide excellent information. Worthy of mention are The Grand Hotel, St George's Church, Cliff House in Cullercoats and the Spanish City with its towers crowned by bronze statues of cymbal players.

F St Mary's Lighthouse dates from 1897-8. It is 126 feet high and stands on the site of a mediaeval chapel whose sanctuary contained a continuously burning light, warning seamen of danger. During Elizabethan times, the island was known as Hartley Bates after its owner. From 1864 to 1895, the old stone house was the Square and Compass Inn. Curry's point derived its name from a murderer who was executed at West Gate, Newcastle on 4th September, 1739. His body was later hung in chains within sight of the Three Horse Shoes Inn at Old Hartley where he had murdered the landlord.

G Not far away is the village of New Hartley where, in 1862, 204 men and boys were killed in the New Hartley Pit disaster. The beam of the pumping engine broke and fell down the shaft, trapping the men below.

The Delaval Arms pub at the top of the road, has the *Billy Blue Stone* standing outside. This is a huge glacial erratic boulder. The local blacksmith, William Carr (1756-1825), who was 6' 4" tall, 3' across his shoulders, and weighed 24 stones, was famed for being able to lift it easily!

H The stack in the bay is known as Charley's Garden. In the 1930s it was a flat topped rock with a narrow arch and a patch of grass on the top.

I The harbour dates from about 1660 when Sir Ralph Delaval built a pier and wharves at the mouth of the Seaton Burn. It cost £7,000 and berthed 14 vessels to load coal, mainly for London.

Trade grew and a new harbour entrance was begun in 1761. The *New Cut* opened in 1764. The 1865 maps show this as Hartley New Harbour. The harbour began to decline when railways were built to carry coal to the Tyne; the disaster at Hartley Colliery completed the decay.

The octagonal stone building near the harbour in Seaton Sluice is the old Revenue Office.

Seaton Sluice has been a busy industrial area. Salt pans were worked from the 13th - 19th centuries. There were iron and copper sulphate works as well as a lime kiln and corn mill from the late 18th - 19th centuries.



6 From Curry's point, continue along the cliff path. Cross the car park at Low Hartley and keep straight on along the cliff path to join a road in Seaton Sluice. Walk ahead to the harbour. It is worth walking over the footbridge across the Cut to see the Coastguard lookout and Sandy Island. This is a hill formed of ballast carried by ships returning to harbour and dumped before reloading. Return by the footbridge.



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