



The Way of Learning

Durham to Jarrow

Introduction



This guide describes The Way of Learning between Durham Cathedral and St Paul's Church in Jarrow. All the Northern Saints Trails use the same waymark shown on the left. You will also be following the Weardale Way most of the way from Durham to New Lambton and Bede's Way from Monkwearmouth to Jarrow. The route is 61 kilometres or 38 miles. It is the most urban of the routes with two thirds of the route on minor roads or paved paths, but it is a route full of interest. I have divided the route into 5 sections of between 10 to 17 kms in length. As the route was first devised from Jarrow to Durham, the sections are in reverse order.

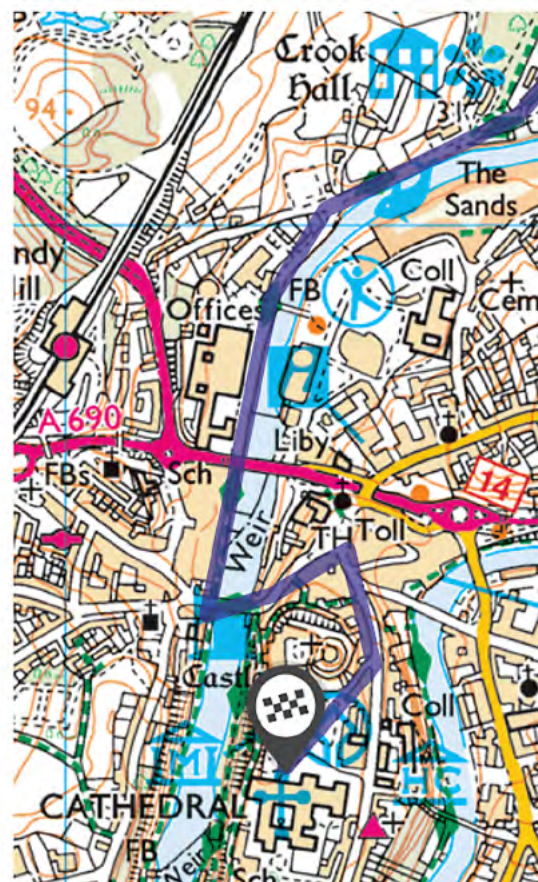
The primary focus for the majority of pilgrims journeying to Durham Cathedral in the Middle Ages was the shrine of St Cuthbert, but the other most notable person, whose tomb is in the Galilee Chapel in the cathedral, is the Venerable Bede. It is primarily because of him that this route is called The Way of Learning. He was indeed a man of great learning, who is probably best known for writing the first history of England. It was called *An Ecclesiastical History of the English Speaking People*. His other talents included the fact that he was an accomplished linguist, an astronomer and he also popularised measuring time from the birth of Christ. During his long life of extraordinary scholarship, he wrote 60 books.

There are other connections with the theme of learning, apart from Bede, along the route. It passes by the University of Sunderland and The National Glass Centre, as this region was where people first learnt many of the skills of glass making, including stained glass. The Penshaw Monument is based on the Greek temple of Hephaestus and is a reminder of what our culture owes to the wisdom of the Greeks. Bernard Gilpin, the great rector of Houghton-le-Spring in the 16th century established the Royal Keping Grammar School, which produced a stream of outstanding people including the local historian Robert Surtees. Chester-le-Street was another key place of learning, especially in the 10th century when St Cuthbert's shrine was located there. The first translation of the gospels into English took place in the scriptorium there. Finchale was the place where the hermit Godric lived in the 11th century and people came from far and wide to seek his counsel and wisdom. Finally of course Durham is a great city of learning with its famous university established by Bishop William van Mildert in 1832.

Section 5

Durham to Chester-le-Street – 13km

From the entrance to the cathedral go round or diagonally across Palace Green and down the cobbled Owengate into Saddler Street. This will lead you down into the Market Square where you turn left, passing the equestrian statue on your right. Walk down Silver Street to cross Framwellgate Bridge. At the far end of the



bridge, take the steps on your left down to the riverside and then turn left to walk back under the bridge. You will soon walk under Millburngate Bridge and then pass the Radisson Blu Hotel. As you continue along the riverside you reach the historic Crook Hall on your left.

Crook Hall

Crook Hall was originally built as a medieval hall house most probably in the 13th century, but later in the 17th century it was extended to become a Jacobean manor house. In the 18th century a large brick built Georgian house was added, so the present much restored hall contains an intriguing variety of styles and artefacts. The hall is surrounded by an English country style garden that is regarded as one of the best in the north of England. In 1995 the hall was bought by Keith and Maggie Bell who developed it into a popular tourist attraction and wedding venue.

After passing a sewage plant on your right, you leave the city behind you and cross over the flood plain. The road eventually bears left uphill away from the river to reach Frankland Farm. You carry on along Frankland Lane, passing a small woodland called 'The Scogs'. The tree lined lane leads to some kennels. Just after the kennels, you cross a dismantled railway. At this point you may like to turn off temporarily to explore the area on your right, where there were once brickworks, but it is now a nature reserve called Brasside Ponds. The Way of Learning continues by bearing left then right to pass by the two prisons – HMP Franklin on your right and Low Newton prison for women and young offenders on your left.

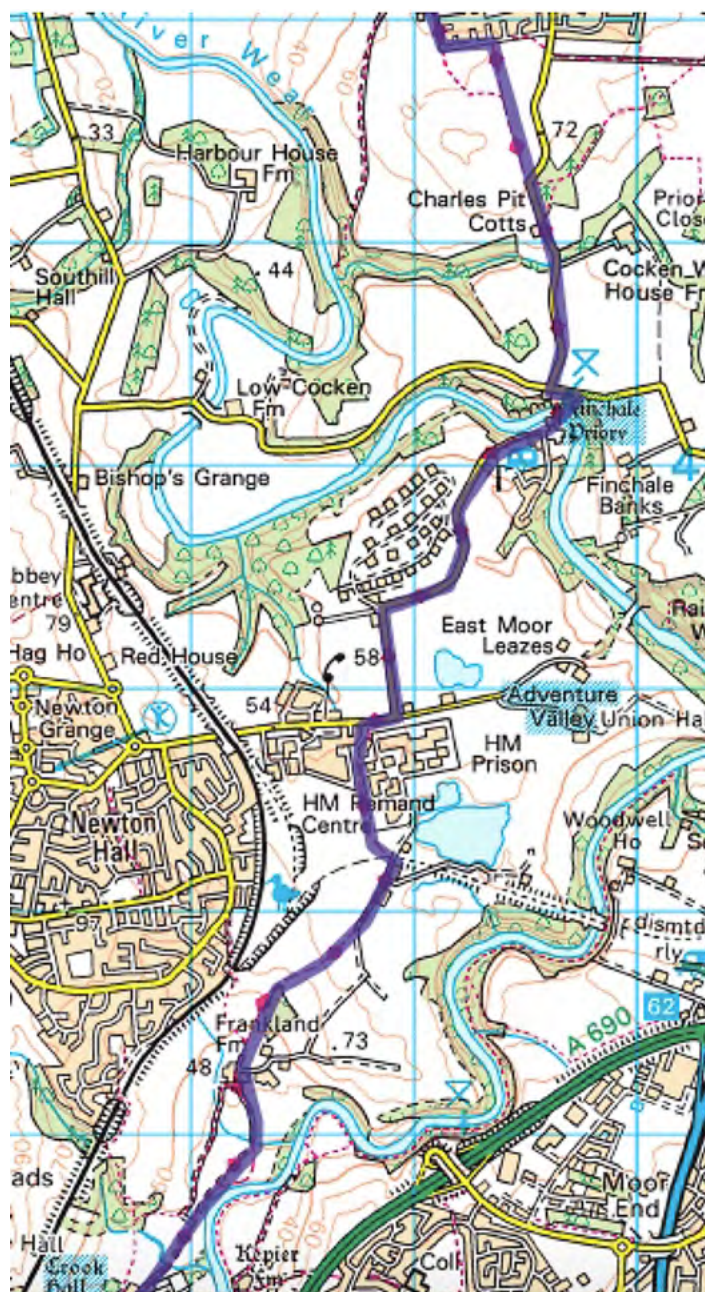
When you reach the main road turn right and then first left. In summer the fields here are often bright with poppies. You will pass the bunkers of what was once the Brasside Ammunition Stores on your left. This road leads you down the hill to Finchale Priory.

Godric and Finchale Priory

Finchale Priory is beautifully situated in a loop of the River Wear and is associated with a remarkable man called Godric or sometimes St Godric although he was never officially canonised. Godric was born C1065 in Norfolk and had a varied career as a peddler and a merchant seaman, before in his 30s, having a visionary encounter with St Cuthbert on Lindisfarne that transformed his life. He then spent a number of years travelling around the Mediterranean and making pilgrimages to Rome, Jerusalem and Santiago before preparing for life as a hermit. He persuaded Ranulf Flambard, the Bishop of Durham, to give him land at Finchale where he settled for the last sixty years of his life, living to over 100 before he died in 1170.

He lived a life of great austerity living on herbs, crab apples, honey and nuts and sleeping on the bare ground. He was much sought after for his sanctity and wisdom and gained a reputation as a miracle worker. He had a great affection for wild creatures and was reputed to allow snakes to warm themselves by his fire. He also has the distinction of composing the oldest songs in the English language for which we also have the original musical scores.

The fact that there is a priory here is entirely because of the fame of St Godric. There are a few remains of a chapel dedicated to St John the Baptist, built around the time Godric died and where he was buried. The Benedictine Priory was established in 1196 and the



major building work took place in the 13th century. For most of its history it operated as a rest home for monks from Durham who would come for breaks of three weeks. They still attended the times of prayer but enjoyed more freedoms than in Durham. The priory was closed at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536.

Cross the fine wooden bridge over the River Wear and walk up the steps to the road where you turn left and then right into Cocken Lane. There are wide grass verges here as you walk the next 700 metres until, when the road bears right, you go on the footpath straight ahead. This leads you to Great Lumley. Turn left when you reach the road and walk round with fields on your left and housing on your right. When you reach the T-junction, turn left and right into Back Lane. On your left you come to a good place for a rest where there is a striking wooden carving, incorporating a bench and a rectangle through which many take photos of the view down to Chester-le-Street. If the day is clear enough, you should be able to see The Angel of the North.

Take the footpath which leads you down along the field edges, until you reach some woods which you go through before reaching the River Wear again. Walk along the river side to Lumley Bridge which you pass under and then go right and right again to cross over the bridge. Walk into Riverside Park keeping the mini roundabout and the car park on your left and then taking the main path ahead before forking left. As you approach the A167, walk up the ramp and cross over the bridge into Roman Avenue. After passing two schools on your right, turn right into Church Chare and you will soon find St Mary and St Cuthbert's Church on your right.

Chester-le-Street

The town derives its name from the Latin word *castra* meaning a fort and the street refers to the Roman road which still runs north to south in what is now called Front Street. The Romans built their fort called *Concangis* here around 100 AD. In those days the River Wear was navigable up to this point, so it was probably an important supply depot for other Roman garrisons in the area. The Romans left in 410.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, this became the most important town between the Tyne and the Tees and this was particularly the case when the monks fled from Lindisfarne with the precious coffin of St Cuthbert and, after many wanderings, finally settled here in 882. They built a wooden shrine and a church most probably using stone from the Roman fort. For 113 years, Chester-le-Street was the home of the Bishops of Lindisfarne, the forerunners of the Prince Bishops of Durham, so the church was a cathedral. There was a constant stream of pilgrims to the shrine including England's first king, Athelstan, in 934 and the Viking king of Norway and York with the fearsome name of Eric Bloodaxe in 952. One of the bishops at this time, Aldred, commissioned the first translation of the Bible into English. It was translated in the margins of the Lindisfarne gospels which were in Latin and there is a facsimile copy of it in the church. After the removal of St Cuthbert's shrine to Durham in 995, the town was still a powerful place until it was largely destroyed by the Normans in revenge for the killing of Bishop Walcher in 1080.

The church of St Mary and St Cuthbert has one of the best preserved anchorages in the country called Ankers House. An anchorite was an extreme hermit, walled in to the anchorage with only a slit to see the altar in the church and an opening to receive food. There were six anchorites there between 1383 and 1538.

By the early 19th century, Chester-le-Street had become a major staging post on the Great North Road and many inns sprang up to serve travellers and their horses. Also during the 19th century the town became an important centre in relation to coal in terms of collection and distribution and serving the needs of surrounding mining villages and towns.

Section 4

Chester-le-Street to Houghton-le-Spring – 11km

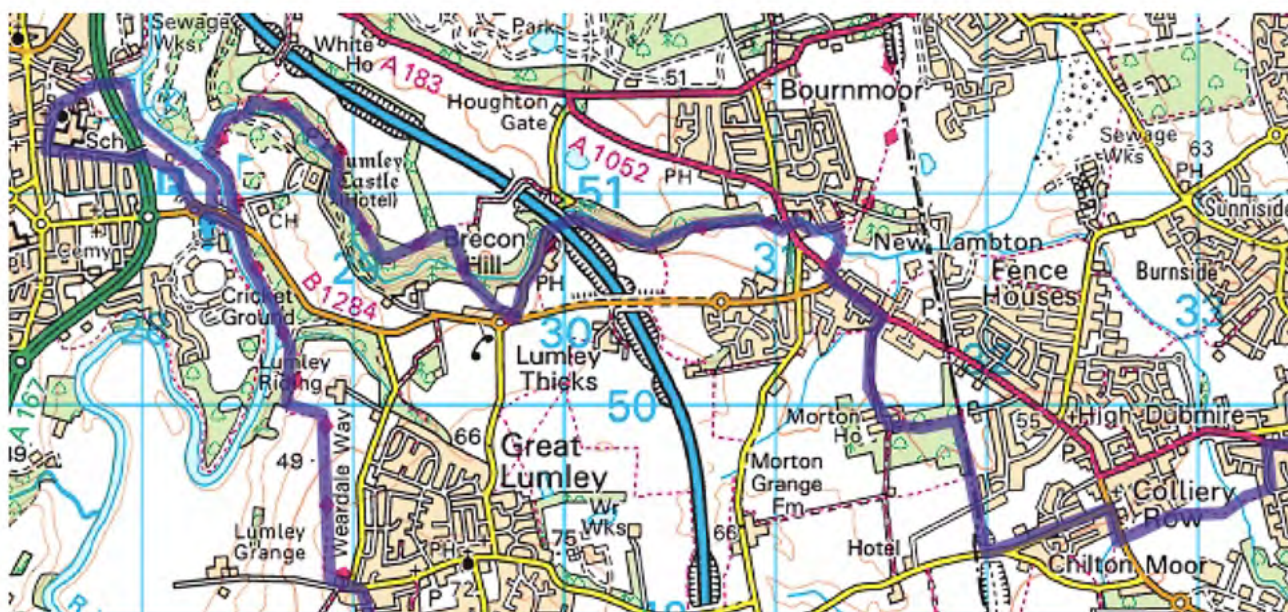
From the entrance to the church turn right and when the road turns to the left, turn off to the right into the park. Walk diagonally down and cross a road and you will reach the Chester Burn where you turn right to walk under the A167. You come out into Riverside Park and walk south for 800 metres with the River Wear on your left until you come to Lumley Bridge again. Cross over the bridge and turn left passing the golf club on your right. The road turns right up to Lumley Castle but you turn left to reach the river where you turn right. After 250 metres, turn right with the Lumley Park Burn on your left. After passing a footbridge on your left you walk up past the 10th tee of the golf course and soon after that, go left across the green to find Hag Bridge which

you cross over and then turn right. You pass through gates on the left hand side of the secluded Garden House and you should catch some glimpses of Lumley Castle through the trees.

Lumley Castle

There was a manor house on this site before it was converted into a castle in 1389 by Sir Ralph Lumley when he returned from wars in Scotland. King James VI of Scotland called here as a guest of Lord Lumley in 1603 on his way to be crowned King James I of England. For a while in the 19th century the castle was the home of the Bishop of Durham before becoming a hall of residence for Durham University. It was sold in 1960 and then in 1976 it was transformed into the 73 bedroomed luxury hotel that it is today. It provides an impressive background for Co Durham Cricket Club's Riverside ground and visiting teams often stay at the hotel.

After walking through the woods for a while, you walk up to the edge of the wood with a field and a strip of woodland on your left and then turn right to go down and cross a high culverted embankment over the burn. The path leads up to Castle Dene and a roundabout on the B1284. Turn left and left again down Forge Lane, passing the Smiths Arms on your right. At the bottom of the hill turn right to walk under the A1 motorway and regain the footpath with the Lumley Park Burn now on your left. After about 800 metres, you come to the A1052. The Floaters Mill Pub is nearby to your right. Cross over the road to find the path which is now to the left of the burn. There are houses on your left. The path leads you out into a park where you turn right to cross over the Lumley Park Burn which you will now leave behind.



The path leads out to the A1052 again where you turn left. After 200 metres, the path you need is on the other side of the road where you see trees and a bus stop. Cross with care. An unmade road through fields leads you to Morton House on your right. Look for a path on your left here to take you straight through the Woodland Trust reserve of Railway Wood. It soon leads to the former railway which you cross and then you turn right through the barrier, following a path on the east side of the former railway. After passing cottages on your left and crossing Newbottle Lane, you come to a bridge which you walk under and then turn left to go up steps onto Black Boy Road where you turn right. It's a controversial sounding name, but most probably so named after the men walking back home after a shift in the mines. Walk into Chilton Moor on the pavement, but you may like to then cross over to the grass verge on the right before turning right at the T-junction. Cross over a burn and then take the footpath on your left. Follow the path by the fence with Colliery Row on your left and a large factory over to your right. There are stiles by red gates as you cross Rainton Burn. Cross a small field and you arrive at a housing estate in Houghton-le-Spring. Turn left into a road called Ninelands.

Turn right at the main road and then cross over by the bus stop and go through a gap in the houses and then turn right on a path with neat blocks of red brick houses on your left and green fencing on your right. The path leads into Gilpin Street and then by a general stores into Thornhill Street. At the end of the street, the path passes a playground on your right. Turn right into the park and go left to access the next section of the park where you walk over to your right to a barn. This is rather special as it is the only tithe barn (now much

altered) in the north of England. This was a place where people brought their taxes which were often in the form of animals or food. This garden is one of the oldest gardens in England and dates back at least to the 12th century. You will see a castle like rectory on your left, originally built in 1483, which was where Bernard Gilpin, who we will read about shortly, provided his weekly Sunday meals. Walk through the arch to reach St Michael & All Angels Church.

Houghton-le-Spring

The town's name has an interesting origin. Houghton derives from two words *hoh* meaning a hill spur and *ton* meaning a farm or settlement. The 'le' suffix which is quite common in Co Durham, comes from the time when the Norman Prince Bishops of Durham wanted to distinguish different places for taxation purposes. Spring is not, as you might expect, because of a local well, but because of a family called the Springs who were associated with the area.

St Michael and All Angels Church is probably built on the site of an ancient place of worship. There are some Norman features, but it was mostly built in the 13th and 14th centuries. The most outstanding person associated with Houghton was Bernard Gilpin who was rector here between 1557 and 1583. There was probably no one who followed more closely the example of the early northern saints than Bernard Gilpin and the stories about him are strangely similar. His generosity was legendary and on one occasion he gave his horse away to a poor man whose horse had just died. Every Sunday between Michaelmas and Easter, he provided a hog roast meal for anyone who turned up! He gave away constantly to the poor. With his friends, he set up the Royal Kepier Grammar School in 1574 and he housed several of the students in his home and then later paid the fees for some to study at Oxford University. Every summer, Bernard Gilpin went off into the wilds of Northumbria around Rothbury to preach the gospel in much the same way as St Aidan had done 900 years before. In the church you can find Gilpin's tomb and there is a stained glass window which tells some stories of his life. Also you cannot miss the huge carving by the local sculptor Fenwick Lawson called *Risen Christ*.

On the east side of the church is Kepier Hall which was formerly the grammar school and also some almshouses built in 1668 by George Lilburne a Sunderland merchant.

Quarrying limestone has an ancient history here, but it was not until the 19th century that it was realised how much valuable coal could be mined under the limestone. Coal mining began here in 1823 and soon Houghton-le-Spring developed as an important central town for the surrounding colliery villages of the East Durham Coalfield.

Section 3

Houghton-le-Spring to Monkwearmouth – 17km

Turn right out of the churchyard and fork right into Sunderland Street. Just before you get to the end of the street, take the alleyway on your left, passing the Cutting Lounge Salon on your right. Walk across a car park towards the A182 and head for the green footbridge which you go over. Walk ahead and then right and left to take a path between the housing estate and the A690 on your right. After passing the path to the A690 underpass, walk diagonally to the left across the green and over a paved path to find the path up the hill. In summer, you are likely to see good displays of sainfoin and everlasting pea here. Turn right and left by a bench.

There are a network of paths as you get towards the top of the hill but as long as you keep the quarry perimeter fence on your left and head towards the A690 you will not get lost! You should come out onto the A690 at a car park, where you turn left and a few metres further on, take the footpath on your left. The path follows the perimeter fence of the quarry soon turning left and then after a further 220 metres, you turn right to make a straight course to Newbottle. When you reach Newbottle go ahead up a street called Cathedral View and at the top, go right and left to reach St Matthews Church which was built in 1886.

Newbottle and world's first railway disaster

The name Newbottle derives from the Saxon 'New Battle' meaning 'new settlement'. It is mentioned in the Bolden Book of 1183 as 'Newbotill'. Newbottle has the unenviable distinction of being the site of the world's first railway disaster. In July 1815, a crowd of curious onlookers had come to see a new locomotive which was being demonstrated at the colliery by the Scottish engineer William Brunton. A new metal boiler had been fixed

shortly beforehand, but the whole thing exploded, killing 13 people instantly, including a little boy, while others died later and many suffered horrific injuries.

From the church, continue ahead along North Street and where the street turns left, go straight ahead on the path and then turn right. At the next field boundary turn left and then right to reach a wood where you turn left. The path soon widens for a very pleasant stretch of walking through the wood. The path continues towards the Herringtons with fields on your left and the wood on your right.

When you reach the road turn right and cross over by the bus stop then turn first left. Go ahead, passing a mini roundabout, then fork left into McLaren Way. Soon after leaving the houses and passing some woodland, look for a barrier and width restrictor on your right and turn off here into Herrington Country Park which is on a former colliery site. You walk in a semi circular direction round to your left for about 400 metres, until you come to a cross paths where you turn right to take the path between the lakes. Go towards the car park and then walk diagonally left across the open space until you come to a paved path where you turn right to leave the park. Cross with care over the A183 with the roundabout on your right. Take the footpath on the other side through a gate which takes you straight up to the Penshaw Monument.

Penshaw Monument

This popular landmark was built in 1842 and dedicated to John George Lambton, first Earl of Durham (1792-1840) who was the first Governor of the Province of Canada and was known as *Radical Jack* because of his progressive views. It particularly commemorates the fact that he produced a document called *The Durham Report* which is significant because it charted a new course for the relationship of Great Britain with the British Empire. He recommended self governance for the more advanced colonies which was certainly a radical proposal at the time. He owned coal mines in the area and took great care of the miners. He was so popular that his workers refused to strike in the miners' strike of 1831. 50,000 people lined the streets on the day of his funeral in Chester-le-Street.

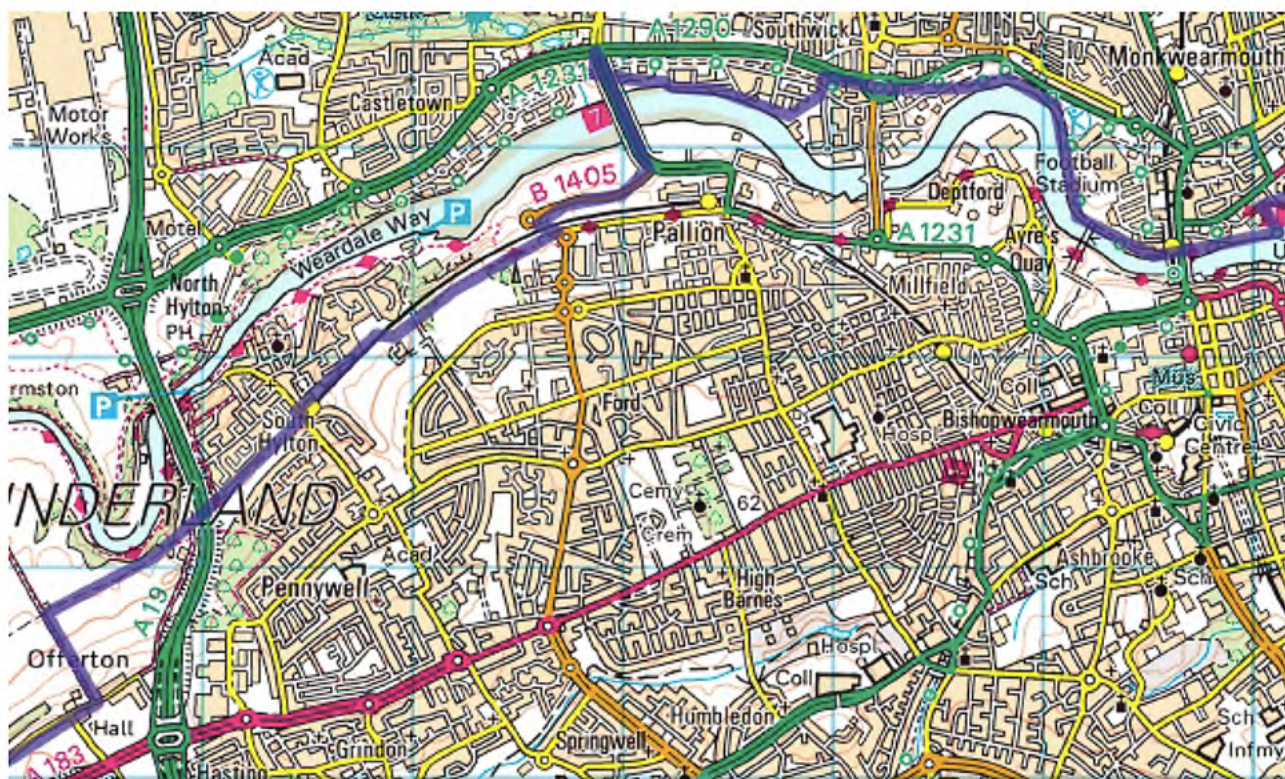
The temple itself was designed by John and Benjamin Green and was based on the Temple of Hephaestus in Athens. Hephaestus was the god of fire and craftsmanship, which is surely appropriate when we consider the creativity and inventiveness of the region. The monument is 30 metres long, 16 metres wide and 20 metres high and each column is 2 metres in diameter. The stone blocks are held together with steel pins and brackets.

Make sure that as you enjoy the views from here, you look back to see Durham Cathedral which is only 14 kilometres away to the south west, although with the twists and turns you have done rather more than that! If you had been coming from Jarrow, the pilgrimage tradition would be to make the sign of the cross and praise the Lord on seeing the cathedral.

From the north east end of the monument, walk down to a path with the wood on a steep hillside on your left. Go across a field and when you come to the minor road walk ahead into Offerton. After passing Offerton Hall Farm on your right, look for a sharp left turn soon afterwards, leading to a lane which then turns right to go down hill. When you come to the cycle path, turn right. After about 700 metres you walk under the A19 and continue ahead into the city of Sunderland.



After half a kilometre, you come to a road which you cross diagonally left and pass South Hylton Metro Station on your right. After a while the path switches to the other side of the railway and a kilometre further on you reach a road where you turn left under the bridge and then walk downhill to the impressive Northern Spire Bridge which you cross on this side. Work commenced in 2015 and it was opened in 2018. At 105 metres, the spire is the highest structure in Sunderland. At the north end of the bridge turn left and walk down flights of steps before crossing a road and picking up the paved path under the bridge. Just before you get to the river side, you will pass an industrial bench with cogs on your left.



After 500 metres the path leaves the river before the Queen Alexandra Bridge, going up a shady lane to a road where you turn left for a few metres, before coming to steps on your right which you climb up to reach the path. You turn right here on what is also C2C (Coast to Coast) cycle route whose signs you can follow. Walk through two underpasses and soon after, the path goes off to the right. Turn left and then right by a barrier to find your way back to the river. There is an excellent view of the Stadium of Light ahead.

On the walk from here along the north bank of the Wear, there is plenty to see in terms of industrial heritage, as well as a good variety of flowers in spring and summer. You will pass some impressive limekilns on your way. Exporting lime from here was a major industry in the 18th and early 19th centuries with the unique combination of limestone quarries and riverside next to each other. As you come to Monkwearmouth Bridge, look out for a sculpture called *Second Sun* by Andrew Small. His inspiration came from the Venerable Bede, who calculated the motion of the sun and the moon. You soon come to a striking sculpture called *Shadows in Another Light*. It resembles a steel tree and the plinth was the base of a former crane. Around the plinth are plaques about the history of Sunderland, created by blind and partially sighted people.

Take the next left after the statue and pass Sunderland College on your left before turning right to arrive at St Peter's Church, Monkwearmouth.

St Peter's Monkwearmouth

Monkwearmouth is unquestionably the most historic part of Sunderland. In 674 Egfrith, the king of Northumbria, granted these lands to a remarkable learned man called Benedict Biscop in order to build a monastery. Benedict made several visits to the continent and especially to Rome to find masons and glaziers to build the monastery in the Pre-Romanesque style. The monastery was the first ecclesiastical building to be built in stone in Britain and glass too was an original feature. The other main purpose of Benedict's journeys was to equip a library which eventually contained 700 volumes. It was in this library that Bede wrote many of his works. The most famous work to come out of Monkwearmouth was the beautifully illuminated '*Codex Amiatinus*'

which is the oldest surviving copy of the Latin Vulgate version of the Bible. It was given as a gift to the Pope in the early 8th century and is preserved in the Laurentian Library in Florence, but there is a fine facsimile in the church.

St Peter's Church is all that remains now of the original monastery, but excavations have revealed the layout. The monastery was ransacked, along with monastery at Jarrow by the Vikings in 865, but the Normans rebuilt them and they became monastic cells linked to Durham Cathedral. The monastery was closed by King Henry VIII in the Dissolution of the Monasteries and suffered from much neglect over the centuries until it was restored in the 1870s. Further restoration has continued in more recent years, including the installation in St Peter's Café of superb modern stained glass windows based on Bede's observations in his *Reckoning of Time*.

In 685, King Egfrith granted Benedict land on the south side of the River Wear. This was described as 'sundered land' from the monastery and this is how the present city gained its name. Bede himself was most probably born in Sunderland.

Section 2

Monkwearmouth to South Shields – 10km

Walk from the south side of the church, crossing the road and walking back to the river between the car park and the University of Sunderland on your left. Turn left passing the university and then The National Glass Centre on your left. This Centre tells the story of glassmaking, which was a major industry in the area. The last glass works closed in 2007, but at the Centre glass makers still continue to demonstrate their skills. Continue along what is now also signed as the England Coast Path which reaches the main road by a garage, but you immediately fork right down Sand Point Road to reach the marina. Walk round the marina which features some interesting public art. The path leads round and out from the estuary entrance and you soon pass Roker Pier with its lighthouse at the end on your right. It is unusual in that it is a curving pier and at 610 metres, it is the fifth longest in England. Continue along the promenade until you reach the very fine Bede Memorial Cross built in 1904 in the Saxon style. At this point, we have a short detour to see St Andrew's Church. Walk to the A183 and go over at the pedestrian crossing before going round the north side of Roker Park along Side Cliff Road, then turn right into Park Avenue and St Andrew's is on your left.

St Andrew's Church, Roker

At the start of the 20th century, the seaside resort of Roker was growing and a new church was needed. A local shipyard owner, John Priestman, was the main benefactor and he commissioned Edward Prior, who was a leading light in the arts and crafts movement, to design the church. This impressive building was built mostly of magnesium limestone quarried three miles up the coast at Marsden and it was completed in 1907. Prior engaged other members of the Arts and Crafts movement in contributing to the project which is why the church became known as 'the cathedral of the Arts and Crafts movement'. A prominent feature behind the main altar is a tapestry based on a design by Edward Burne-Jones, of the 'Adoration of the Magi'. This, as well as the chancel carpet, was made by William Morris and the painting in the dome showing the days of creation was by McDonald Gill.

From the east end of the church return to the coast along Rock Lodge Road and turn left where you will soon come to the White Lighthouse at Roker Cliff Park. This lighthouse was built in 1856 in cast iron and was located



at the end of the old South Pier. It was removed in 1983 to this location when harbour improvements were made. For the next kilometre at Whitburn Bay, you now have three options. You can either walk on the pavement or the cliff top path or the beach unless it is high tide. About 300 metres before the north end of the bay, make sure you are back on the coast road. Just after the housing estate on the west side, take the footpath which forks left with Cornthwaite Park on your right. After passing a play area, you come into Church Lane and you will soon arrive at Whitburn Parish Church on your left.

Whitburn

The name Whitburn probably derives from 'white barn' and may refer to a tithe barn that once existed here. The parish church was originally built in the 13th century and includes a 24 metre tower which was useful for mariners in the past. There was a major restoration in 1867. There are some unusual features. If you look at the east window from the west window, you will see that it is slightly tilted to the north to recall the drooping head of Christ on the cross – hence is called a "Weeping Chancel." There is also an peculiar window in the west wall of the south aisle. With its oval shape, it is called a "Vesica Piscis" or "Fish Window." It is cut out of four rough pieces of stone in the shape of a fish, the ancient symbol of the Christian Church with its curious play on the letters of the Greek word for fish – *ichthus*.

At the end of Church Lane, turn left into the attractive Front Street and after 70 metres turn right into Sandy Chare. The parish hall will be on your left and then you turn right and left across North Guards into Welland Lane. After 500 metres, take the footpath on your left soon passing by Well House Farm. Follow the public footpath ascending steadily alongside the field boundaries and over stiles in a north westerly direction, until you come to a field where you climb up Cleadon Hill to the sail-less windmill, which dates from around 1820. There are fine views all around. Go straight ahead and you will find a gate which leads onto a road, where you turn left and right passing Sunnyside Farm on your left. Cleadon Water Tower is in the wood on your right. Turn left before you draw parallel with it, along a path known as Occupation Road with housing on your right and fields on your left. Cross over Sunderland Road and continue ahead to reach a roundabout. Cross King George Road carefully on the north side of the roundabout. This is the end of the section at a point where you can pick up local transport.

Section 1

South Shields to Jarrow – 10km

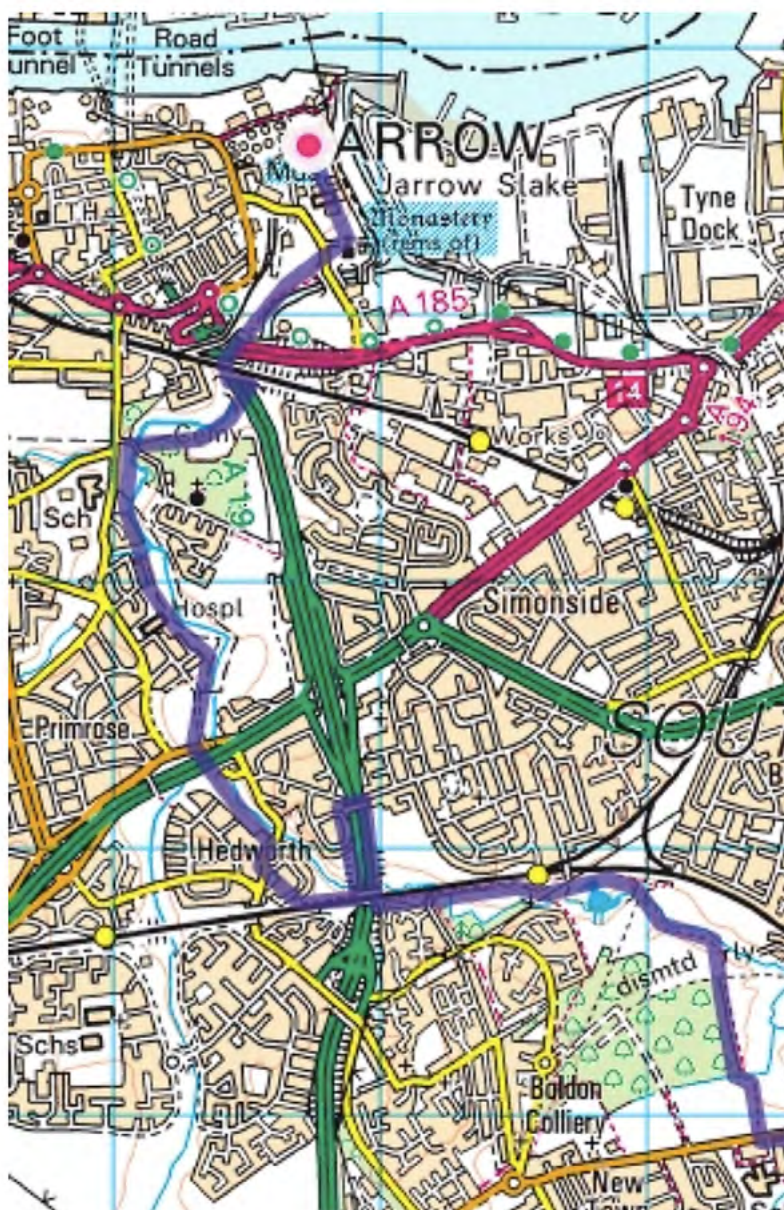
Walk straight on across the corner of Temple Memorial Park and cross Nevinson Avenue to the path diagonally opposite with South Shields School and its grounds on your left. Turn left with houses on your right. At the end of the road, continue ahead on the path. There are some allotments on your right. Take the next footpath on your right through a wood. There is a sculpture on your left as you leave the wood. Cross a field and once again the houses of Whiteleas are on your right. Go straight over at the bus turning circle. You will pass Tiledsheds Local Nature Reserve on your left and a primary school on your right, before you turn left at the steel



waymarker. You are now briefly on the former West Harton mineral line. When you reach a road turn right and cross over a level crossing as you walk into Boldon.

Boldon gave its name to the Boldon Book which was a survey of Durham and Northumberland arranged by the Bishop of Durham in 1183. *The Domesday Book* in 1086 had not included Durham and Northumberland, so this is often considered to be Durham's 'Domesday'. You pass a roundabout and after 500 metres, you come to Boldon School. Take the path across the road on your right. After passing a playing field, Colliery Wood is on your left. As its name suggests, around here is the site of Boldon Colliery which operated from 1869 to 1982. Walk under the bridge of an old mineral line before reaching the River Don where the path bears left.

Follow the river for about 350 metres before walking under a viaduct. You cross over the river and turn left and walk uphill. At a junction with a tarmac path, turn left to go down and cross the river where you turn right. Follow the river before going up to cross Station Road and bear right with houses on your left and the metro line on your right. You go down steps to the A19 and turn right under the bridge to follow the path alongside the A19. When you come to a footbridge, cross over it and double back now on the west side of the A19. The path turns right when you reach the railway and then bears right before crossing a road near the Greyhound Inn on your left. Turn right and walk down Hedworth Lane. At the bottom of the hill, turn left onto the tarmac path where you are back alongside the River Don again. You come back briefly to Hedworth Lane and walk under the A194. Cross over Roman Road near the Robin Hood pub to regain the path along the river. You cross from the west to east side and back again, and when the river turns east, you are on the south side as you pass Jarrow cemetery. When you walk under the A19, watch your head! Turn left and then right under the metro line bridge and then bear left to go under the A185. You keep on the north side of the river and the path brings you out to Church Bank which you cross over to reach your destination at St Paul's Church.



Jarrow

Jarrow derives its name from the original inhabitants of the area, a tribe called the Gyrwe (pronounced Yeer-weh) which means 'fen dwellers'. Much of the area to the east of St Paul's Church around the mouth of the River Don was a marshy estuarine area known as Jarrow Slake. The Port of Tyne now occupies that land. Jarrow was also sometimes called Donaemuth (Don-mouth) and this was the place given to Benedict Biscop in 682 by King Ecgrith of Northumbria for the building of his second monastery. Monkwearmouth and Jarrow were often considered as one monastery in two locations. By the beginning of the 8th century they were established as the foremost centres of learning, scholarship and book production in Britain.

The building of the monastery by masons from France was supervised by Benedict's assistant Ceolfrith. The monastic buildings included St Paul's Church which was built in the style of a Roman basilica. It has the distinction of having the oldest surviving church dedication in Britain, which can be seen in the wall above the Saxon chancel.

In Latin it reads: DEDICATIO BASILICAE SCI PAVLI VIII KL MAI ANNO XV ECFRIDI REG CEOLFRIDI ABB EIVSDEMQ Q ECCLES DO AVCTORE CONDITORIS ANNO IIII. This translates as: THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF ST PAUL ON THE NINTH OF THE KALENDS OF MAY IN THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF KING ECGFRITH AND THE FOURTH YEAR OF CEOLFRITH, ABBOT AND WITH GOD’S HELP THE FOUNDER OF THIS CHURCH. Only the chancel remains from the 7th century, but that contains a very special treasure – the oldest stained glass window in the world. The church also contains St Bede’s Chair, a Saxon stone cross called ‘*The Jarrow Cross*’ and three sculptures by Fenwick Lawson.

The golden age of Northumbria came to an end with Viking raids, the first of which took place in 794. Other raids followed and it was finally abandoned after being sacked in 865. In 1074 a monk called Aldwin from Winchcombe in Gloucestershire, who had been inspired by reading Bede’s *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, came with other monks from Evesham to rebuild the site as a Benedictine monastery. He later rebuilt the monastery at Monkwearmouth and both places became cells linked to the priory at Durham Cathedral. The monasteries were closed by Henry VIII in the 1530s but the churches survived.

North of the church is Jarrow Hall which dates from 1785. Beside it is the Bede Museum which is an excellent place to learn more about him and also contains the largest collection of 7th and 8th century coloured glass in Europe. In the grounds, you can walk through a reconstruction of an Anglo-Saxon village and farm which includes farm animals similar to those Bede would have known.

Acknowledgements

In my research for inserts on local history, I have used a wide variety of sources, but would particularly like to acknowledge the usefulness of England’s North East website, where more detailed information about places on the route can be found – <https://englandsnortheast.co.uk/>

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For more information on the Northern Saints Trails, see northernsaints.com

