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*A guide to inspirational historic buildings
in the North East*

Inspiring sites: Art and heritage in the North East

The magnificent sweeping landscape of the North East is studded with castles, ruins, mansions, and churches great and small. This rich cultural and artistic legacy stretches back to at least the early eighth century C.E. when the Lindisfarne Gospels were written on Holy Island and Saint Bede made the area an important European centre of learning.

For centuries, these sites have been a draw for artists. None were more captivated by the North East's blend of nature and antiquity than the eighteenth-century painters of the Romantic Age. Many celebrated artists worked in the region – J.M.W. Turner (1775-1851) depicted Prudhoe and Norham Castles dissolved in light, Thomas Girtin (1775-1802) produced atmospheric watercolours of Tynemouth and Lindisfarne priories, Thomas Hearne (1744-1817) painted a picturesque Barnard Castle, and John Varley (1778-1842) produced numerous scenes of Holy Island. Capturing the emotional power of historic buildings ravaged by time and weather, these artists evoked a tradition that lives on through us, having fired our appreciation and care for the irreplaceable monuments of our shared past.



Thomas Girtin, Durham Cathedral



Thomas Miles Richardson, Prudhoe Castle

Cover image: Thomas Girtin, Tynemouth Priory, Northumberland, ca.1793; Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection



John Varley, Holy Island



Thomas Hearne, Barnard Castle



John Falconar Slater, Hexham, Northumberland

Let the grand monuments of the North East inspire you, too. Experience their power to evoke centuries of history, time and weather for generations of artists. Overleaf is a map of the region with information on six recommended sites. All are easily accessible via Durham or Newcastle, well connected by public transport and some close enough for a combined day trip. Details of train journeys, metro stops and bus routes are designed to give you an idea of how easy it is to travel within the region, even without a car.

Many of these paintings (and more) are housed in North East collections. Why not visit:

The Laing Art Gallery
Newcastle Upon Tyne
www.twmuseums.org.uk/laing-art-gallery

The Bowes Museum
Barnard Castle, County Durham
www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk

Wearmouth-Jarrow

The churches of St Paul in Jarrow and St Peter in Wearmouth are twin monastic sites that together formed one Anglo-Saxon monastery; ten miles apart. Home to the influential Venerable Bede – monk, historian, poet and teacher – Wearmouth-Jarrow was a cornerstone of European learning and culture. St Paul’s parish church features a 7th century chancel, original dedication stone, and window of Anglo-Saxon stained glass. The nearby Bede’s World Museum tells the story of Bede’s life and legacy. At St Peter’s Church, the 7th century west wall and north porch, which Bede first walked through as a child of seven, are still standing, displaying original carvings. Excavated archaeological remains from the 7th century are also on display, and the small visitor centre runs historic tours.



St. Peter's Church, Monkwearmouth

Jarrow – St Paul's Church, Church Bank, Jarrow, Tyne and Wear, NE32 3DZ

10 min from Bede Metro

Mon-Sat 10am-4pm; Sun Eucharist 10.45am, visitors 2pm-4pm

Wearmouth – St Peter's Church, St Peter's Way, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, SR6 0DY

5-10 min walk from St Peter's Metro

Tues-Fri 10am-3pm; Sat 10am-4pm; Sun 1am-4pm

Free admission

www.wearmouth-jarrow.org.uk

Tynemouth Priory and Castle

Visitors to Newcastle are within easy reach of a visit to Tynemouth Priory and Castle, an imposing set of monastic ruins of what was at one time Northumberland’s largest Benedictine monastery, perched on the headland above the North Sea and the River Tyne. Evoking the tidal beauty of Lindisfarne, the rugged remains command spectacular views which have enchanted artists for centuries. The ruins visible today represent several periods in the site’s history: its Anglo-Saxon origins, remnants of a Norman church, the eleventh-century Benedictine priory with Gothic presbytery and conventual buildings, thirteenth-century fortifications and subsequent use as a royal castle after the Reformation, and its later history as an artillery fort.



Tynemouth Priory and Castle, Pier Road, Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear, NE30 4BZ

Tynemouth Metro is a ten minute walk from the Priory (unlimited adult day pass, £4.40), 30 min from Newcastle city centre. Arriva services no.306 and 356 run through Tynemouth

29th Mar – 30th Sept 2013, 10am-6pm; 1st Oct – 3rd Nov 2013, 10am-4pm; closed Mon-Fri 4th Nov-31st Mar 2014
£4.70 / £2.80 / £4.20 / Family £12.20

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/tynemouth-priory-and-castle

Hexham Abbey

When Wilfred Bishop of York received a gift of lands at Hexham from Queen Etheldreda at the end of the seventh-century, he built a Benedictine abbey here, and used nearby Roman ruins to help construct it. Only the Saxon crypt and apse still remain of Wilfred’s abbey; the majority of what visitors see today is the Augustinian priory (1170-1250) that replaced it. The awe-inspiring architecture houses numerous treasures: an Anglo-Saxon crypt, Roman stones and inscriptions, a Saxon bishop’s throne, Dark Age crosses, a pre-Renaissance pulpitum and the country’s only surviving monastic night stairs in continuous use. Why not also visit the nearby Old Gaol, England’s oldest purpose-built prison?



Hexham Abbey, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 3NB

Hexham Old Gaol, Hall Gate, NE46 1XD

20 min walk from Hexham station; frequent direct trains from Newcastle (35 min) and Durham (1hr). Arriva services 685/X85 from Newcastle

9.30am-5pm (Saxon Crypt 11am and 3.30pm)

Free admission: recommended donation £3 per person

www.hexhamabbey.org.uk

www.experiencewoodhorn.com/hexham-old-gaol



Finchale Priory

The atmospheric and picturesque ruins of Finchale Priory (pronounced ‘finkle’) on the banks of the River Wear only three miles from Durham are the former home of Saint Godric of Finchale, who settled here in the twelfth-century. The extensive remains of the monastic complex are of the Benedictine priory built in the thirteenth-century on the site of Godric’s original hermitage, and they include the stone chapel of St John the Baptist which once housed the remains of St Godric – look for the simple stone cross that marks his burial.

The site’s original layout is substantially intact. Boasting high elevations, subterranean rooms, a double altar basin and stone seat as well as intricate nave arches and heavily decorated capitals on arcade columns, it is worth purchasing a plan of the ruins from the concession (30p) as many of the monastic rooms are not labelled.

Finchale Priory, County Durham, DH1 5SH

Nearest station is Chester-le-Street (DH3 3EE)

Direct trains from Durham (6 min) and Newcastle (9 min) Nearest bus stop: Finchale Road, Brasside (Arriva service no.42)

29th March 2013 – 31st March 2014; 10am-5pm

Free admission

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/finchale-priory

Prudhoe Castle

Halfway between Newcastle and Hexham by train lies the ruined medieval castle of Prudhoe, ideally located for a combined day-trip with Hexham Abbey. Beautifully situated above the River Tyne and enclosed by a deep moat, it is easy to see why Turner painted a captivating hilltop view of Prudhoe. There are towered walls, the gatehouse, keep and Great Hall to explore, as well as surrounding dry moat, woodland and mill pond areas to enjoy. The castle was the home of the Umfravilles after the Norman conquest, survived two sieges during the 1170s – making it the only Northumbrian castle to resist the Scots – and was later restored by the Percy family before its incarnation as a Georgian manor house in the nineteenth century.



Prudhoe Castle, Castle View, Prudhoe, Northumberland, NE42 6NA

10 min walk from Prudhoe station; direct trains from Newcastle

(20 min) and Durham (1hr). Go NorthEast bus service no. 11 (Newcastle) and no. 10 (Hexham)

29th Mar – 30th Sept 2013

Mon-Sun 10am-5pm (closed Tuesdays)

£4.50 / £2.70 / £4.10

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/prudhoe-castle

Auckland Castle

Recently opened to the public, magnificent Auckland Castle dates back to the twelfth century. Built as a country estate of the Bishops of Durham, in 1832 it became the official episcopal residence. Standing in 800 acres of parkland, its interiors and grounds express the enormous power and influence of its residents. Explore the elegant throne room, Gothic revival Deer House in the park and the world-renowned collection of paintings by Francisco de Zurbarán depicting Old Testament patriarchs (dating to 1640-5) in the state dining room. Admire the Bishops’ extensive art collection and the twelfth-century hall, now St Peter’s Chapel, the largest private chapel in Europe, and enjoy a walk through the deer park.



Aukland Castle, Bishop Auckland, Co. Durham, DL14 7NR

15 min walk from Bishop Auckland train station – trains from Durham and Newcastle take approx. 1hr.

From May, Mon 10.30am-4pm and Wed-Sun 10.30am-4pm (closed Tuesdays)

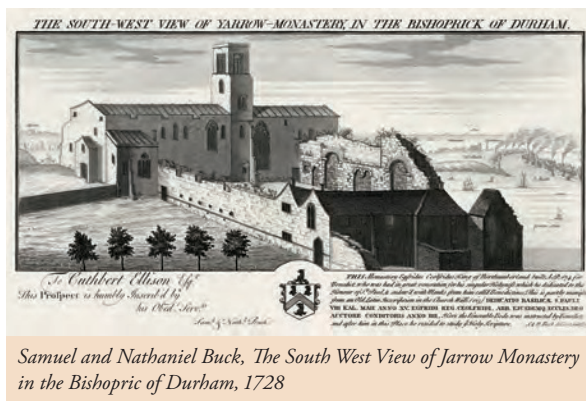
£8 / £6 / £4 / Family £20

www.visitors.aucklandcastle.org

World Monuments Fund Britain

World Monuments Fund (WMF) is the leading non-governmental organisation for the protection of cultural heritage, providing expert and tailored responses to the needs of important but ailing historic sites and architecture around the world, and securing their future through fundraising, conservation management, education, advocacy and partnership building.

For more information visit
www.wmf.org.uk



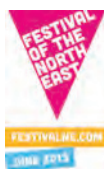
In June 2013 WMF Britain organised *Drawn Together: Making Art in Historic Buildings* at Auckland Castle and Hexham Abbey as part of the Festival of the North East. Some of the artwork created during this initiative is displayed in Durham Cathedral from July to September 2013 and can be seen online at www.wmf.org.uk. For more information see: www.festivalne.com/events/event/drawn-together and www.durhamcathedral.co.uk

All information correct at the time of going to press; for up-to-date opening times, admission and information on disabled parking and access, visit individual websites. For current public transport schedules, see:
www.nationalrail.co.uk / www.nexus.org.uk/metro / www.arrivabus.co.uk / www.simplygo.com

With thanks to:



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