



## Tours

### **Dales on Rails: Tour itineraries**

What do the North Pennine dales mean to you? Perhaps you come here to visit our historic castles and gardens such as magnificent Raby Castle or the impressive ruins of the castle at Barnard Castle. Or maybe you savour the world class art collection at The Bowes Museum. Perhaps our towns and villages are stopping places to sample our quaint tearooms, antique shops or bustling, colourful markets? Or perhaps you let your clients sit back and simply enjoy the inspirational and stunning landscapes of lush valleys backed by open fell land interlaced with the dry stone walls so typical of this area. Poets and writers such as W H Auden in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and Sir Walter Scott in the 19<sup>th</sup> century certainly found it an inspirational landscape.

**Good. Plenty enough reasons there to come and visit us....  
And we have another idea for you.**

**Who would have thought that the peace and quiet which is such an integral part of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty would have once echoed to the sound of train whistles, shunting of wagons and that oh-so-evocative sound of a steam train picking up speed as it pulls away from a country platform?**

**And who's to say that you can't provide your groups with that nostalgic experience today? For a real sense of discovering the past just follow the clues on the Dales on Rails itineraries.....**

Tour itineraries are prepared for Teesdale Marketing by Jan Williams, Northumbria Blue Badge Guide. The information is correct at the time of writing. Group organisers are advised to confirm opening times and arrangements for groups with individual attractions/organisations. A free guiding service is also available (availability is limited, please check with Jan). Contact: Jan Williams Tel 0191 383 0988 [Janwildurh@aol.com](mailto:Janwildurh@aol.com)

For further information contact:  
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DL12 8AA Tel 01833 690909 or 01833 695320 Email: [tourism@teesdale.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@teesdale.gov.uk)  
Download other itineraries from [www.teesdalediscovery.com/tours.htm](http://www.teesdalediscovery.com/tours.htm)

## Itinerary no 1

### Route Plan

Scotch Corner – A1 north – exit on A68 (signed Corbridge) – A6072 – Locomotion the National Railway Museum at Shildon – A6072 – West Auckland – A688 (signed Barnard Castle) – Cockfield/Gaunless Valley (brown signs from A688) – Cockfield circuit – B6282 – Toft Hill – A68 north – A689 – Wolsingham – Stanhope – B6278 via Crawleyside – Edmundbyers - A68 south – Scotch Corner

### Coach Timings

Scotch Corner - Locomotion/Shildon	=	25 minutes
Locomotion/Shildon – Cockfield	=	25 minutes
<i>(Cockfield Fell circuit</i>	=	<i>15 minutes)</i>
Cockfield – Wolsingham	=	25 minutes
Wolsingham – Stanhope	=	10 minutes
Stanhope – A68	=	35 minutes

### Commentary

Travellers coming up the east side of England who wanted to reach Scotland quickly in days long gone by would begin their journey north west from this very point – hence its name of **Scotch Corner**. And even earlier than that Roman legionary soldiers marching north from Eboracum (York) would follow what is now the modern A68 towards their fort on the Stanegate frontier near Corbridge.

But what would any of those early travellers have made of the super modern facilities and displays which make up **Locomotion: the National Railway Museum at Shildon**? Leave plenty of time to explore this fabulous new – and free entry - attraction housed in a one kilometre long site (fully accessible). The historic buildings and workshops of the Timothy Hackworth Museum are complimented by the modern design of the new building housing 60 vehicles, workshops, café and shop. And the star of the show? The locomotive “Sans Pareil” was built by Hackworth at Shildon and is recognised as one of the most important locomotives in the world. It took part in the famous Rainhill Trials of 1829 running against George Stephenson’s “Rocket”. “Sans Pareil” has now returned to the region and takes pride of place to welcome visitors to this terrific new attraction.

*Definitely “without parallel.....”*

**West Auckland** and nearby **Bishop Auckland** were once in the centre of a giant network of railway lines radiating out into the surrounding countryside. Economic need drove forward the

development of wooden wagon ways in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and then, as technology improved, wooden rails gave way to iron rails and horse power gave way to steam power and steam power was harnessed to produce sufficient energy to pull wagons of coal and limestone smoothly and, eventually, reliably.

But it was a long process of evolution to get to the achievements of Timothy Hackworth and George Stephenson in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. And that journey to steam can be traced in the landscape surrounding the villages of **Cockfield, Butterknowle, Woodland, Copley and Cockfield** all nestling in the pretty **River Gaunless Valley**.

From the A688 follow the brown signs for **Gaunless Valley Visitor Centre** and **Cockfield**. Continue through Burnt Houses to The Slack.

#### There is then a choice of routes:

*At the junction in the village **cars and mini-buses** only should turn left on the B6282 towards the village of **Copley**. A short stop should be made at the Visitor Centre adjacent to the disused Stag’s Head pub (check for opening times. Parking for cars and mini buses only in front of building). There is an excellent series of illustrated leaflets available in the Visitor Centre (and also from Barnard Castle TIC) which explain the local history and will help you identify all that is interesting in the landscape.*

*Cars and mini-buses can then continue past the Visitor Centre and in the village of Copley a left turn (signed Barnard*

Castle and Car Park) leads downhill to a small car park on the left of the road. This is the access point to explore **Copley Lead Mill Chimney** which can be discovered by taking the path uphill in the adjacent woodland. The smelt mill building no longer survives but the interpretation board in the car park explains the busy industrial scene which once dominated this part of the valley.

And if you read the board carefully you can find out why the Steele Road was so named.....

Return uphill to the junction with the main street in Copley, turn right and then look for a left turn signed **Lynesack Church** and **Butterknowle**. The church is delightful (please park considerately) and is the last resting place of one Edward Smith who died in 1884. The novelist Charles Dickens based the character of Smike in his novel "Nicholas Nickleby" on this very person.

Continue through **Butterknowle** village (look out for the sheep sculpture outside the village hall on the left) and return to The Slack and join the route given below.

**For full sized coaches the following route is recommended:**

From the A688 the road to Copley reaches a high point with far reaching views across the Gaunless Valley just before the descent to **The Slack**. At the crest of the hill there is a bus turning area on the left with a car park close by which gives a great view across the landscape. In the car park is an interpretation panel to set the scene.

**Cockfield Fell** is England's largest scheduled ancient monument. Agricultural activity stretching back over 2000 years can be traced around the remains of the Fell's Iron Age settlements. And beneath the soil which provided for ancient man lay the mineral wealth which was to sustain his descendants.

On the left of the road look for the pockmarks in the landscape which are evidence for the early bell pits sunk as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century to reach the coal seams beneath. Drift mines followed at a later period. Coal led to improved transport. Wagon ways, tramways and railways – including a branch of the famous Darlington and Stockton railway - turned the open

space into "a knotted bundle of shoelaces". Coke ovens sprang up. Brick works followed. Quarrying activity wasn't far behind.

*Staggering to think of so much industrial continuity and human endeavour in such a small area.*

Continue downhill to **The Slack**. At the t-junction turn right to cross a cattle grid and bear right (signed Toft Hill B6282). At the next crossroads turn right for Esperley and Cockfield passing through **High Lands** and **Low Lands**. Evidence for the old Haggerleases quarry can be seen far off to the right on the side of Cockfield Fell with the tell tale fan shapes of the old spoil heaps. At the next crossroads turn right again. On the approach to Cockfield's main street look for the pigeon crees in the fields to the right. The main street leads up to a t-junction. Turn right again to return through The Slack and take the B6282 again but this time continuing on to **Toft Hill** and the A68.

*After all this talk of railways wouldn't it be nice to actually take a ride on one?*

Wolsingham has just the thing. Climb aboard the newly opened and restored **Weardale Railway** and take a five mile ride through the delightful countryside flanking the lovely River Wear. One hundred goods trains a week trundled their way down the dale in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century moving limestone and, eventually, passengers down the dale. Today's passengers can enjoy a steam hauled heritage service between Wolsingham and Stanhope (Check for train running times. Contact [info@weardale-railway.org.uk](mailto:info@weardale-railway.org.uk) for times/dates).

Refreshments and an opportunity for local shopping can be built into a stop at the **Durham Dales Centre** in **Stanhope** before continuing up the B6278 road north through the aptly named **Crawleyside**. As the open fell land is reached towards the top of the hill look for the clues to Crawleyside's railway heritage. A narrow grass covered track is visible running parallel to the road over to the right. This marks the route of the **Stanhope and Tyne Railway** (1834-1951) which transported lead, iron and limestone to South Shields some 37 miles away. Robert Stephenson, son of the famous railway pioneer George

Stephenson, was the consultant engineer for the Stanhope line. And what a feat of engineering it was. The highest standard gauge railway line in England included a very challenging 1 in 8 incline. Stationary winding engines had to rope-haul wagons groaning under the weight of limestone up the steepest gradients in two stages.

Keep a look out for walkers striding out along the moor land ahead. They are enjoying the **Waskerley Way** a 10 mile

walk which follows the original route of the western part of the Stanhope and Tyne Railway. The C2C cycle route shares the path with hikers. The heather moor land provides the perfect habitat for upland birds such as grouse and hen harriers.

**Acknowledgements:**

Gaunless Valley Visitor Centre  
[www.traintrail.co.uk](http://www.traintrail.co.uk)

## Itinerary no 2

### Route Plan

**This route is accessible for full size coaches (except for Whorlton Lido where access is via a weak bridge 6' wide with 3t weight limit)**

Scotch Corner – A66 west – Thorpe Farm – west of Greta Bridge take right turn (brown signs for Rokeby and Egglestone Abbey) to Barnard Castle via Abbey Bridge – Barnard Castle – Bowes Museum – Whorlton – A67 (towards Darlington) – Winston – B6274 – Staindrop – A688 (towards Bishop Auckland) – Cockfield/Gaunless Valley – Toft Hill – A68 – A688 - West Auckland – A6072 – Shildon – A6072 - A68 – A1 north/south.

### Coach Timings

Scotch Corner – Barnard Castle	=	25 minutes
Barnard Castle – Cockfield Fell	=	30 minutes
<i>(Cockfield Fell circuit)</i>	=	<i>15 minutes</i>
Cockfield Fell – Shildon	=	40 minutes
Shildon – A1	=	12 minutes

### Commentary

A stop at **Thorpe Farm** on the A66 gets the day off to a great start. Fill your boots from a mouth watering choice of freshly made pastries, the wonderful aromas of freshly made coffee or a delicious selection of lunchtime meals.

And whilst you take refreshments reflect on the landscape around you. This is an area rich in literary connections. Charles Dickens (1812-70) visited Teesdale in 1838 to research nearby boarding schools for his novel "Nicholas Nickleby". He spent his first night in Teesdale staying in the old coaching inn at nearby **Greta Bridge**. This was more than 10 years after the development of the Darlington and Stockton Railway in 1825 but railways were still in their infancy and used mainly for transporting minerals. People still travelled across the country by horse and carriage and Dickens arrived in Teesdale on the mail coach from London.

Several miles ahead is **Bowes** village and in 1861 the **South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway** (great name!) transported coking coal from County Durham over to West Cumbria via Bowes village and Stainmore.

Mother Nature was kind to Teesdale. Stone quarried in the Barnard Castle area provided material for many of the railway bridges north of the city of York and stone from the old Hulands quarry was used as ballast for the London and North Eastern Railway. Modern quarrying activity takes place near Staindrop where

the Dunhouse Quarry has been worked for 75 years. Stone from here was used recently in newly constructed buildings in Newcastle and Edinburgh and for repairing and restoring Durham Cathedral.

The road out of Barnard Castle passes the extraordinary and magnificent building of **Bowes Museum** founded over 100 years ago by John Bowes and his French born wife, Josephine. John Bowes was the illegitimate son of the Scottish 10th Earl of Strathmore and lived on the Streatlam estate between Barnard Castle and Staindrop (the lodge gateway can still be seen from the A688 but the house no longer exists.) From the lodge gates a field road led down to the Bowes' private railway station at **Broomielaw**. It is said that the 10<sup>th</sup> Earl of Strathmore had been more than a little reluctant to allow the railway line to cross his land from Darlington to Barnard Castle so to sweeten the pain he was provided with his very own private station.

**Whorlton** is a delightful hamlet with attractive sandstone cottages topped by pan tile roofs. Full size coaches must turn left at the junction in the village to go north to the A67 and join the main road in the direction of Darlington. *(An alternative route would be to turn right at the junction in Whorlton village to access **Whorlton Lido**. (NB: the Lido area is accessed via a weak bridge 6' wide with a 3t weight limit. It is therefore not accessible to full size coaches).*

**Whorlton Lido** (Entrance charge. Check opening times) is a pretty recreation area on the banks of the River Tees. A **miniature railway** and the 9 hole putting green provide the fun. Whorlton suspension bridge was opened in 1831 after a disastrous start when a flood swept away the early foundations within just a few months of the construction work beginning. To avoid problems with future floods the architect, John Green of Newcastle, designed a bridge suspended high enough up to avoid any future raging torrents. It is now the oldest in the country to be supported only by its original wrought iron chains and stone pier. On a visit to watch military training exercises during the Second World War Sir Winston Churchill stood in the middle of the bridge to get the best view of training tactics.

From the A67 turn left onto the B6274 at **Winston**. The road cuts straight through the route of the 1856 **Darlington to Barnard Castle railway line**. The clues are there in the landscape. Look for the buildings on the left of this road just before the first sharp right hand bend. These stand on the site of the disused railway line. During the Second World War rural stations along this stretch of the line rang to the sound of soldiers' voices as they disembarked for the training camps at Stainton and Westwick.

The road continues to **Staindrop**. Turn right onto the A688. A fine view of **Raby Castle** comes into view shortly after leaving the village. The stronghold of the medieval Neville family, mighty Earls of Westmorland, this is very much now the family home of Lord Barnard. The castle is open to visitors (check opening times) and the aura of strength and domination which the outside of the castle gives is balanced with an interior which is both gracious and comfortable. The intimacy and sumptuousness of the Octagon Room contrasts with the splendid proportions of the Great Hall.

Just a short distance past Raby Castle entrance look for a left turn signed **Cockfield** and **Gaunless Valley Visitor Centre**. Continue through Burnt Houses to The Slack.

**There is then a choice of routes:**

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2000 years can be traced around the remains of the Fell's Iron Age settlements. And beneath the soil which provided for ancient man lay the mineral wealth which was to sustain his descendants. On the left of the road look for the pockmarks in the landscape which are evidence for the early bell pits sunk as early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century to reach the coal seams beneath. Drift mines followed at a later period. Coal led to improved transport. Wagon ways, tramways and railways – including a branch of the famous Darlington and Stockton railway - turned the open space into “a knotted bundle of shoelaces”. Coke ovens sprang up. Brick works followed. Quarrying activity wasn't far behind.

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The main street leads to a t-junction. Turn right again to return through The Slack and the B6282 this time continuing on to **Toft Hill** and the A68. Turn south towards West Auckland.

**West Auckland** and nearby **Bishop Auckland** were once in the centre of a giant network of railway lines radiating out into the surrounding countryside. Economic need drove forward the development of wooden wagon ways in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and then, as technology improved, wooden rails gave way to iron rails and horse power gave way to steam power and steam power was harnessed to produce sufficient energy to pull wagons smoothly and, eventually, reliably.

Leave plenty of time to explore the fabulous new – and free entry – **Locomotion: the National Railway Museum at Shildon**. Housed in a one kilometre long site (fully accessible) and incorporating the historic buildings and workshops of the Timothy Hackworth Museum the modern design of the new building houses 60 vehicles, workshops, café and shop. And the star of the show? “Sans Pareil” was built by Hackworth at Shildon and is recognised as one of the most important locomotives in the world. It took part in the famous Rainhill Trials of 1829 running against George Stephenson's “Rocket”. “Sans Pareil” has now returned to the region and takes pride of place to welcome visitors to this terrific new attraction.

*Definitely “without parallel”  
and the perfect ending to a perfect day*

**Acknowledgements:**

Teesdale District Council “Royalty,  
Railways & Regiments”  
Discover Teesdale  
[www.teesdalediscovery.com](http://www.teesdalediscovery.com)

## Itinerary No 3

### Route Plan

Scotch Corner – A66 west – Thorpe Farm – west of Greta Bridge take right turn (brown signs for Rokeby and Egglestone Abbey) to Barnard Castle via Abbey Bridge – Barnard Castle – B6277 - Lartington – Cotherstone – Romaldkirk – Mickleton – Middleton-in-Teesdale - B6282 – Eggleston – B6278 – Stanhope – B6287 via Crawleyside – Edmundbyers – A68

### Coach Timings

Scotch Corner – Barnard Castle	=	25 minutes
Barnard Castle – Middleton in Teesdale	=	25 minutes
Middleton in Teesdale – Stanhope	=	25 minutes
Stanhope – A68	=	35 minutes

### Commentary

**Barnard Castle** has always been an important centre of communications. The Romans thought so when they surveyed a road to link their fort at Binchester (near Bishop Auckland) to the high ground of Stainmore Pass and their fort at Bowes. The line of that road lies beneath modern **Galgate** in Barnard Castle. The town's newly refurbished TIC (2004) has a selection of guidebooks and walks leaflets which will help you discover this lovely market town. Browse at your leisure over a cup of fresh coffee in the TIC's own café. Coaches may park outside the TIC on Wednesdays by arrangement (tel 01833 690909 or 01833 695320).

Eighteenth century horse drawn coaches continued to bring wealth to the little town by the River Tees. But nothing compared to the excitement of local people when the steam trains first arrived in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Snaking its way westwards from Darlington the railway to Barnard Castle opened in 1856 and had its terminus in the town at Montalbo Road. Five years later the **South Durham and Lancashire Union Railway** (snappy title!) trundled its way out of the town and over Stainmore to West Cumbria.

But it is the final line out of "Barney" which this itinerary follows. The **Tees Valley Railway** steamed into operation in 1868 and brought the villages of **Lartington, Cotherstone, Romaldkirk and Mickleton** into easy reach of the large settlements further east. The beautifully constructed **Lune Viaduct** stands proudly alongside the dale road between **Mickleton** and **Middleton in Teesdale**. It is more than 40 years since the closure of these local lines and what once carried stone and livestock

down the dale now carries the **Tees Railway Walk** (NB: this is a permissive footpath and not a public right of way).

Despite plans to run the line all the way to Alston it was in fact **Middleton in Teesdale** which became the actual terminus and the old passenger terminus is now disguised as a caravan site (catch a glimpse on the right of the road just before dropping down the hill to cross the River Tees into the town).

Don't just drive through **Middleton-in-Teesdale**. The town is well worth exploring. Local shops in this town serve the surrounding agricultural community. The village bakery and tearoom offers bakery items and preserves and an excellent TIC (check opening times) is just the place to buy those all important postcards or guidebooks. An elegant drinking fountain in the main street is a reminder of Middleton's role in the lead-mining heritage of Teesdale. The name etched into the canopy is Robert Bainbridge who was Superintendent for the London Lead Company in the mid-nineteenth century. To learn more of the lead mining heritage and social history of the lead mining families of Teesdale a visit to the newly opened (2004) attraction "**Meet the Middletons**" located in the main street of the town is a must.

Or take a breather at **Eggleston Hall Gardens** in the village of the same name. This is a delightful stop for the plantsman and amateur gardener. Or a peaceful venue for those who simply prefer to sit and dream in this 4 acre site. The gardens contain many rare plants and shrubs and organic fruit, vegetables and herbs. Follow the signs to find the ruined chapel tucked away in one corner and leave time for the Coach

House Tearoom to satisfy any hunger pangs!

*Well, you can't think of trains **all** the time, can you....?*

The road from Eggleston village climbs over the high moor land of the North Pennine hills. Moor upon moor upon moor roll far into the distance. Patches of burnt heather show the care taken by modern land managers who maintain the moor land landscape as an important habitat for the grouse and other upland birds.

*But nowhere in this lovely area are you far from discovering our train heritage.....*

Climb aboard the newly opened and restored **Weardale Railway** at Stanhope and take a five mile ride through the delightful countryside flanking the lovely River Wear. One hundred goods trains a week trundled their way down the dale in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century moving limestone and, eventually, passengers down the dale. Today's passengers can enjoy a steam hauled heritage service between Stanhope and Wolsingham. (Check train running times. Contact [info@weardale-railway.org.uk](mailto:info@weardale-railway.org.uk) for times/dates).

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And even then that's not the end to our discovery tour. Keep a look out for walkers striding out along the moor land

ahead. They are enjoying the **Waskerley Way** a 10 mile walk which follows the original route of the western part of the Stanhope and Tyne Railway. The C2C cycle route shares the path with hikers.

*From here just enjoy the scenery through Edmundbyers and across Derwent reservoir en-route to the A68.*

## Itinerary No 4

### Route Plan

Leeming Bar (for Wensleydale Railway) – Leyburn –B6108 - Richmond – B6108 - Scotch Corner –A66 west – Barnard Castle – exit town via County Bridge onto B6277 - Cotherstone – Romalldkirk – Middleton in Teesdale – B6282 - Eggleston – B6278 towards Barnard Castle -A67 – Darlington – A1 north/south or A66 east/west

### Coach Timings

Leeming Bar – Leyburn		
(via Wensleydale Railway)	=	40 minutes
Leyburn – Richmond	=	25 minutes
Richmond – Barnard Castle	=	40 minutes
Barnard Castle – Darlington		
(via Middleton in Teesdale route)	=	1 hour 15 minutes

### Commentary

*What a way to begin this **Dales on Rails** day!*

The newly restored **Wensleydale Railway** – the “people’s railway” - is where the romance of steam meets the modern ambitions of dales folk determined to provide themselves and their visitors with an alternative way of enjoying the scenery of this lovely Yorkshire dale. This is a real taste of the past combined with a promise for Wensleydale’s economic future.

*Go on! Try it.*

*Don’t miss the first train of the day from Leeming Bar.....*

It took almost 30 years to complete the original line which linked Northallerton on the east coast main line to Garsdale in the west. From 1848 steam trains were pulling trucks loads of freight and passengers but by the 1950s only limestone was being carried to the industries of Teesside. The line finally closed in 1992. But once again the villages of Leeming Bar, Bedale, Leyburn and Redmire are linked by the 17 mile length of track and trains run 7 days a week.

The Yorkshire dales are usually named after the rivers flowing through them. So it must be the River Wensley which flows through Wensleydale – correct?

*No – not quite...*

Yoredale is the ancient name for Wensleydale and the pretty River Ure

flows through gentle, wooded scenery on its way to join the River Ouse.

And who can go through this dale without thinking of cheese? Originally made from ewes milk the earliest cheese making industry was a summer occupation for the wives and daughters of the farmers of the dales.

*And who can go through Wensleydale without thinking of castles?*

The Wensleydale Railway is open all the way up to **Redmire** which gives the perfect opportunity to visit the spectacular remains of **Castle Bolton**. Mary Queen of Scots began her long wait in captivity here at Castle Bolton and the Lord Scrope of the day gave her all the comforts due her rank. Friends and servants shared her captivity and the queen was even allowed time out to go on hunting excursions into the hills nearby.

**Leyburn** is the perfect small dales town. J M W Turner, that great master of landscape art and watercolour, passed this way in 1796 and produced many paintings and drawings of Wensleydale and the neighbouring Yorkshire valleys. And it’s worth just taking a moment to enjoy the local architecture. Some buildings show all the characteristics of the Georgian period when Leyburn was a prosperous market town. High, square buildings with a central doorway to create a balanced feel to the architecture. Sash windows and lovely decorations in the form of window mouldings. Delicious!

The road linking Wensleydale to Swaledale is a delight and very soon **Richmond** and all its tempting shops and places of refreshment comes into view.

There has been a military presence in this town for almost 1,000 years and today the modern British army is based at nearby Catterick Garrison. The horse-shoe shaped market place is one of the largest in England and narrow wynds or alleyways radiate off in all directions just waiting to be explored. **Richmond Castle** was virtually impregnable because of its position guarding the river crossing. Its Norman builder, Alan Rufus, was ferocious and brutal even by the standards of his day but he made sure his masons built something which was to last long enough to be used even into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lord Baden Powell, founder of the Boy Scouts, lived in the castle in 1908.

Perhaps he took time out to visit the wonderful gem which is Richmond's **Georgian Theatre**. One of the oldest theatres in the country still in its original form the theatre played host to all the famous names from 18<sup>th</sup> century theatre land including Stephen Kemble, Sarah Siddons and Edmund Kean.

Castles and a woollen theme link Richmond with the next stop on this "**Dales on Rails**" discovery trail.

**Barnard Castle** owes its existence to the castle built by Guy de Balliol in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and his nephew, Bernard, gave the town its modern name of Barnard (or Bernard's) Castle. Take time to explore "Barney's" delights. Want to do some serious shopping? Browse **The Bank** area where the town's growing reputation as an antique centre can best be appreciated. Fine furniture, second-hand books, clocks, silver, jewellery and much more besides. Visiting midweek? Then enjoy the banter of local stallholders in the open air market held every Wednesday morning. And if your visit coincides with the first Saturday of each month the Farmers' market is another must.

Barnard Castle's newly refurbished TIC (2004) has a selection of guidebooks and walks leaflets which will help you discover this lovely market town. Browse at your leisure over a cup of fresh coffee in the TIC's own café. Coaches may park outside the TIC on Wednesdays by arrangement (tel 01833 690909 or 01833 695320).

And just round the corner from the main street is the awesome and always fascinating **Bowes Museum**. The joint art collection of its founders – John and Josephine Bowes – is housed in an outstanding building which unmistakably has all the style and elegance of a French chateau. Together the founders built a fantastic collection of French and Spanish art and it is all ours to enjoy today. No wonder Bowes Museum is known as the "V&A of the North".

*...and don't forget to check out the timings for the performance of the mechanical Silver Swan.....an absolute must!*

Follow the main street steeply downhill to cross the River Tees on the old County Bridge and follow a lovely route into Teesdale. In places along the dale the modern road comes quite close to the route of the old **Tees Valley Railway**. Steaming into operation in 1868 it brought the villages of **Lartington, Cotherstone, Romaldkirk and Mickleton** into easy reach of the large settlements further east. The beautifully constructed **Lune Viaduct** stands proudly alongside the dale road between **Mickleton and Middleton in Teesdale**. It is more than 40 years since the closure of these local lines and what once carried stone and livestock down the dale now carries the **Tees Railway Walk** (NB: this is a permissive footpath and not a public right of way.)

Despite plans to run the line all the way to Alston it was in fact **Middleton in Teesdale** which became the actual terminus and the old passenger terminus is now disguised as a caravan site (catch a glimpse on the right of the road just before dropping down the hill to cross the River Tees into the town.

Don't just drive through **Middleton-in-Teesdale**. This is a small town well worth exploring. Local shops serve the surrounding agricultural community. The village bakery and tearoom offers bakery items and preserves and an excellent TIC (check opening times) is just the place to buy those all important postcards or guidebooks. An elegant drinking fountain in the main street is a reminder of Middleton's role in the lead-mining heritage of Teesdale. The name etched into the canopy is Robert Bainbridge who was Superintendent for the London Lead

Company in the mid-nineteenth century. To learn more of the lead mining heritage and social history of the lead mining families of Teesdale a visit to the newly opened (2004) attraction "**Meet the Middletons**" located in the main street of the town is a must.

The scenic route out of Middleton in Teesdale towards Barnard Castle continues high above the valley of the River Tees (look for a fine view of the river down to the right shortly after clearing the town). The dry stone walls of the Pennine landscape gives way to hedgerows on the A67 route through to Darlington. **Piercebridge** is worth a short diversion to discover the remains of the Roman bridge abutment. The Roman legionary soldiers arrived in 79AD marching north from their main garrison at Eboracum – modern day York. En-route there were rivers to cross. And the survival of this abutment - 2,000 years old - is as much a testament to the skill of the Roman builders as the railway lines and viaducts are to the Victorian railway engineers.

The **Darlington Railway Centre and Museum** is the perfect place to end this discovery trail. The station in North Road opened in 1842 and was built as a direct result of increased passenger traffic along the line of the Darlington to Stockton Railway line.

*And the name of the famous engine  
which provided the power to open that  
historic line in 1825?*

*Locomotion No. 1.*

See that locomotive and read all about its designer – George Stephenson – in the displays and exhibits in this delightful museum. Walk down the old platforms and peer inside the steam locomotives "Derwent" and "Blue Peter" and admire the lovely drawings and paintings of early advertisements tempting people to visit towns and cities around the country. Wander into the old Victorian toilets and discover the watercolour painting hanging on the walls of the museum which shows that historic day on 27 September 1825 when the world of transport changed for ever.....

*.....and began a journey which leads  
directly to our own story of  
"Dales on Rails".....*

**Acknowledgements:**

[www.discoverteesdale.com](http://www.discoverteesdale.com)

[www.trainrail.com](http://www.trainrail.com)

[www.wensleydalerailway.com](http://www.wensleydalerailway.com)