In this issue:

The Classic Vintage Yorkshire Railway Posters
Back On Track The Scarborough Spa Express
The Legend of the Richmond Drummer Boy
The Druid's Temple, Ilton, North Yorkshire
Shops full of buckets and spades, beach balls and fishing nets at Bridlington.

Ready and waiting for a fun filled Yorkshire seaside holiday on fine yellow sandy beaches.
Editorial

Summer is once again with us and in this issue we look back in time at Yorkshire holidays gone by with vintage railway posters when it really was ‘Quicker by Rail’. It was once the golden age of train travel and the heyday of the British bucket and spade holiday. But by the 1960s the railways were having to compete with cheap package holidays abroad and more car travel which eventually ended the attractive poster era. We can also now go back in time to the golden age of steam and once again experience travel by steam train, in traditional carriages across Yorkshire’s beautiful countryside by The Scarborough Spa Express.

Also featured in this issue is the mystery of the Richmond Regimental drummer boy which has never been solved. Visitors to Richmond can follow the supposed route of the tunnel along the Drummer Boy Walk. The Druid’s Temple, Ilton in North Yorkshire is one of Yorkshire’s bizarre follies. It was build around the turn of the century by William Danby when he decided to build a re-creation of Stonehenge, Wiltshire.

In the Summer issue:

- **The Classic Vintage Yorkshire Railway Posters**
  Stephen Riley takes us on a journey through Yorkshire using vintage railway posters from the 1920s with London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) to the 1950s with British Railways (BR). He explains the history of railway posters and what brought about the end of these classic posters promoting Yorkshire’s seaside holiday resorts. Also the best place to see these railway posters in Yorkshire and where you can buy reproduction prints of Yorkshire vintage rail posters.

- **Back On Track The Scarborough Spa Express**
  The Scarborough Spa Express is operated by West Coast Railways (WCR) company but only operates during summer session one. Then everyone can once again travel by steam train in traditional carriages across Yorkshire’s beautiful countryside.

- **The Legend of the Richmond Drummer Boy, North Yorkshire**
  Jean Griffiths visits Richmond to retrace the footsteps of the legendary drummer boy in a 3 mile circuit walk which is packed with interest and wonderful scenery.

- **The Druid’s Temple, Ilton, North Yorkshire**
  Marcus Grant explores this ‘Druid’s Temple’ which is one of Yorkshire’s bizarre follies now set deep in the middle of a forest.

But there is much more to these articles, please read and enjoy them. We welcome your comments.

Andrew Simpson
The Classic Vintage Yorkshire Railway Posters

By Stephen Riley

The golden age of steam and the railway posters produced by leading artists of the day imprinted Yorkshire towns and the seaside resorts on the public imagination. They recall the period between the 1920s and 1940s which marked both the golden age of train travel and the heyday of the British bucket and spade holiday. This when the slogan ‘It's Quicker by Rail’, was something the trains could live up to.

Companies were quick to catch on to the demand and produced large numbers of posters advertising favourite historic landmarks, urban and rural landscapes, and popular seaside resorts. They tried to entice passengers with an almost endless variety of stunning, colourful and evocative images. Some of the finest poster artists of the day were employed to portray the delights and temptations that lay just a train ride away. The pictorial railway poster soon developed into a familiar feature on station platforms and in waiting rooms.

The First Railway Posters

The earliest railways posters just conveyed information on services provided including timetables. If they were illustrated at all it usually took the form of a locomotive and carriages to form trains in solid black blocks with a silhouette outline. In the 1870s coloured posters were introduced but once again they only gave factual information, rather than images. It was not until 1905 that Norman Wilkinson produced a poster that incorporated landscape paintings for the London & North Western Railways that lead the way to a new type of poster. Other companies soon followed and pictorial railway posters became recognisable on railway stations billboards.

A coloured Lancashire & Yorkshire & Midland Railways handbill from the 1890s advertising cheap week-end Excursions to Settle

Holiday Travel

It was holiday travel that the railway poster came to be associated with. This was a world of sunshine, sandy beaches and endless fun. The train was the best and often the only way to travel. The rapid growth of seaside resorts owed much to the expansion of the railways. But not all visitors that the railways brought were welcomed with open arms. At Bridlington, day visitors were disliked by regular visitors and local residents and the station was well away from the sea. The railways also opened up part of the country which had been previously inaccessible.

The Golden Age of the Railway Poster

In 1923 there were many railway companies operating all over Britain, however these were reorganised by the government into four new companies known as ‘The Big Four’. They became the London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS), the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), the Great Western Railway (GWR) and the Southern Railway (SR). This made life much easier for the traveller. During the 1920s and 1930s these new companies created there own in house styles from locomotives to leaflets. The LNER was the second largest of the ‘Big Four’ companies in terms of route miles. It lasted barely 25 years, but in this time left a prestigious mark in British railway history. The LNER developed its own distinct elliptical logo incorporating its initials and was the leader in graphic design with its use of good artists for its advertising posters. It promoted the East Coast resorts as The Drier Side of Britain and heralded its prestige express trains. This period has been referred to as the Golden Age of the railway poster.
LNER (London and North Eastern Railways)

LNER was the railway that served Yorkshire until the nationalisation of the railways after the Second World War and became one of the most important poster producers. In 1923 the advertising manager of LNER was William Teasdale; he was quick to recognise the crowd-pulling potential of a well designed and painted poster and sought out the top artists of the day to promote the company. LNER’s first poster was by Fred Taylor, it featured a view of the interior of York Minster in March 1923, titled ‘Treasure House of Stained Glass’. Over the next few months a stream of colourful images appeared on railway hoardings as the new advertising campaign got under way.

In 1935 the LNER introduced its first streamlined train, the Silver Jubilee, which ran between London and Newcastle. This was followed two years later by the Coronation which covered the distance between London and Edinburgh in only 6 hours. Speed and comfort were now stressed on their advertising posters.

The outbreak of the Second World War in September 1939 saw the hoardings cleared of most advertising and the railways were seriously taken over by the war effort. The Big Four companies were united for operations under the name of British Railways. After the war the railways reverted to ‘The Big Four’ and began to return to normal with poster advertising again, promoting the delights of holidays at home. Posters published by the LNER during this period continued to include the popular views of towns, countryside and the seaside. These posters recaptured much of the fun of earlier years and passengers again found it difficult to resist the lure of coast and countryside.

British Railways (BR)

When British Railways (BR) was created in 1948, which later traded as British Rail, it continued to produce posters of Yorkshire much as before. The new British Railways (BR) regions were similar to those operated by ‘The Big Four’ and many of their practices continued for the first years after nationalisation. Posters had a very similar look although they now carried the British Railways name in a distinctive lozenge design.

Advertising was on a regional basis and only in the 1960s did a distinctive new image develop. Once again the public was bombarded with and tempted by idyllic scenes of happy families in beautiful landscapes, enjoying the sunshine on golden sands and holiday fun. The style and designs changed to suit the changes in society that had taken place. Images of healthy families at play were used to promote resorts and rail travel. But by the 1960s the railways where having to compete with cheap package holidays and more car travel which eventually ended the attractive poster era.

Also during the 1960s, British Rail underwent radical re-shaping, steam trains were replaced by modern diesel and electric locomotives. New, cleaner, faster trains were promoted and featured prominently in poster designs. In 1965 the whole railway was re-branded with the distinctive double arrow logo and in 1966 the main-line express train services were branded Inter-City. This brought about the end of the classic popular poster of the Yorkshire seaside holiday resorts. The railway posters had to appeal to changing consumer tastes. They had to win back passengers who were turning to cars; one way was to use media personalities. However, these posters were tacky, a reflection of the times and seemingly railway poster art was in decline. In the 1980s posters were used to promote the new Inter-City 125 high-speed trains.

Between 1994 and 1997 British Rail was privatised with many new companies being created. So once again they are competing with each other. Maybe this will bring about one day, a new revival railway posters, draw from the rich heritage of railway posters of yesteryear and hopefully combine these with a new innovative approach.
The Artists

The artists employed during the Golden Age of railway posters produced extremely fine work and the railway advertising provides some of the best examples of contemporary commercial art. Two of the most important and prolific artists were Tom Purvis who worked for LNER from 1923 to 1945 and Fred Taylor.

Tom Purvis

Tom Purvis (1888 -1959) was born in Bristol, the son of a sailor and marine artist T.G. Purvis and was probably the greatest and most influential British poster designer of the twentieth century. He studied at Camberwell School of Art and worked for six years at the advertising firm of Mather and Crowther before becoming a freelance designer. Purvis developed a bold, two-dimensional style using large solid blocks of vivid flat colour and eliminating detail. This can be seen in his poster for Scarborough, produced in about 1930 and also in the depiction of ‘bathing beauties’ and fashionably dressed young couples.

From 1923 to 1945 Purvis worked for the London & North Eastern Railway LNER under the direction of Advertising Manager William Teasdale and then his successor Charles Dandridge, who both allowed him considerable freedom in his designs. During his time at the LNER Purvis produced over 100 posters, around 5-6 per year or one every two months. He enjoyed a very high status in the LNER’s advertising department as he was one of the major designers involved in the recognisably bold and graphic LNER poster style. He was so important to the LNER that he was paid a retainer of approximately £450 per annum to carry out his work.

His posters for the LNER largely avoided depictions of the trains themselves but rather concentrated on portraying the resorts that were the holiday destinations of travellers and the leisure pursuits that could be enjoyed there. Sex appeal was quite a strong element of Purvis’s work, with many posters portraying women in bathing costumes with bare arms and legs—quite risqué in 1930’s Britain!

As well as his work for the LNER, Purvis also designed posters for the Gentleman’s outfitters Austin Reed and for the 1932 British Industries Fair. In 1930 he joined the Society of Industrial Artists, a group which put pressure on industry to improve standards of training for graphic designers and provide a wider range of employment for them. In 1936 Purvis became one of the first Royal Designers for Industry. He gave up poster design after the Second World War to paint portraits and religious pictures.

Fred Taylor

Fred Taylor (1875-1963) was born in London and was one of Britain’s foremost poster artists from 1908 to the 1940s. Taylor studied at Académie Julian, Paris and Goldsmiths College, London. He was able to turn his hand to most subjects. Fred Taylor was best known for his posters of buildings and architecture. He was commissioned in 1930 to design four ceiling paintings for the Underwriting Room at Lloyd’s and murals for Reed’s Lacquer Room. Taylor’s main clients included the Underground (later London Transport), and the Empire Marketing Board, LNER and several shipping companies. He also exhibited at the Royal Academy and other London galleries.
LNER Posters Promoting Rail Travel to Yorkshire’s Seaside Coast

On the left are two posters produced to promote rail travel to Redcar and Saltburn-by-the-Sea, North Yorkshire. Redcar emerged as a seaside tourist destination with the opening of the Middlesbrough to Redcar Railway (M&RR) in 1846 and then became a resort for Victorian tourists. The development and improvement of Saltburn-by-the-Sea as a seaside resort was due to the extension of the Middlesbrough to Redcar Railway line (M&RR), which was opened on 17 August 1861.

The poster on the far left illustrates the sandy beach at Redcar, crowded with holidaymakers; it extends for about eight miles and in the foreground is Zetland Park, a long public open strip of coastal grassland situated between the beach and the A1085. This poster is titled ‘Zetland Park, Redcar’ and dates from 1941, by Frank Henry Mason.

The poster on the right above shows the sands at Saltburn-by-the-Sea with groups of sunbathers and swimmers in the sea. It is titled ‘Saltburn-by-the-Sea’ and is dated c1930s, by Frank Newbould.

Two posters promoting rail travel to Whitby, North Yorkshire

Along the east coast, south of Redcar and Saltburn-by-the-Sea is Whitby which was developed into a holiday resort by George Hudson, the infamous ‘railway king’ when he purchased the Whitby & Pickering Railway in 1845. At the height of the railway era Whitby had no less than four railway lines which brought thousands of visitors. Whitby has always been a beautiful and romantic holiday spot with its red-roofed houses and historic harbour and streets. It is one of the most atmospheric coastal towns and these vintage railway posters have captured that old fashioned and romantic image, to bring a nostalgic look at this bit of coast line.

The poster on the right above shows a sailboat in the harbour with a group of fishermen with their nets in the foreground. On the opposite side of them is a sandy beach and illustrates part the town’s buildings set on the hillside in the centre of the scene. St Mary’s Church and the ruins of Whitby Abbey are situated on the hilltop; they look down on the town and harbour. The poster is titled ‘Whitby’ and is dated 1935, by William Lee-Hanky.

The poster on the right shows a view of Whitby from the harbour, just up-river from the swing bridge. Two young ladies in swimming costumes can be seen in the foreground sitting on the harbour wall. Once again St Mary’s Church with the ruins of Whitby Abbey on the hilltop looks down on the scene. The poster is titled ‘Whitby’ and dates from 1930, by K. Hauff.
Scarborough was the next holiday destination on the east coast. This has always been the biggest and most popular of the Yorkshire east coast seaside resorts. Scarborough became Britain’s first seaside resort after Elizabeth Farrow discovered a stream of natural mineral water running from one of the cliffs to the south of the town. By the mid 1700s, Scarborough was established as the original English seaside resort as well as a Spa town.

The coming of the Scarborough-York railway increased the tide of visitors. The line was built by George Hudson’s York and North Midland Railway and opened on 7 July 1845. By the 1880s the importance of music and entertainment at the Spa was beginning to surpass interest in the Spa waters. This is illustrated in the above poster, which shows the Scarborough Spa complex and suncourt, which provided open air concerts. It is full with outdoor spectators sitting on deckchairs or standing listening to the band. As can be seen in the poster the Spa offers visitors a magnificent view of Scarborough’s South Bay and in the background can be seen the rocky headland with Scarborough castle and mediaeval walls running round it. This poster is titled ‘Scarborough’ and dates from 1939, by Fred Taylor.

The poster on the right shows a couple overlooking Scarborough’s South Bay from above the Spa complex. Behind them, in the background, is an excellent view of the old town and the sweeping sandy beach. This goes all the way to the harbour and headland on which the 12th century remains of Scarborough castle stands and a Roman signal station. The rocky headland separates the North Bay from the South Bay. It is titled ‘Scarborough’ and dates from c1930, by W Smithson Broadhead.

Below are two posters promoting rail travel to Filey

Filey was then, as it is now a lesser seaside resort with much less vintage railway advertising posters than for the larger resorts. Both illustrated posters are titled ‘Filey for the Family’.

The poster on the left shows a young girl fishing off Filey Brigg which protrudes out to sea for nearly a mile forming a natural pier and breakwater. In the background and almost semi-circular is Filey bay with its five mile stretch of sweeping sands, and in the distance is Filey town. It is dated 1924, by Charles Pears.

The poster on the right shows a group of children in swimming costumes on Filey sands smiling happily and playing with a beach ball. This poster is dated 1934, and is by Michael Foley.
Bridlington is the next seaside resort on the east coast after Filey and like Scarborough was hugely popular in the years between the two World Wars. Bridlington railway station is on the Yorkshire Coast Line that runs between Hull and Scarborough. The station opened on 6th October 1846 between the Quay and the historic town. After the discovery of a chalybeate spring, which is just a mineral spring water containing salts of iron, the Quay developed in the 19th century to become a seaside resort.

Bridlington was a fun, family seaside town. Travel posters marketed its vast, beautiful beaches, perfect for bathing and its fun, friendly atmosphere, absolutely the place to go.

The two posters on the right are simply titled ‘Bridlington’. The poster above shows a mother with her child having fun by splashing in the sea. The beach behind them is crowded with holidaymakers. The poster dates from 1935, and is by Tom Purvis.

The poster on the right illustrates holidaymakers leisurely strolling along ‘The Parade’ past neatly laid out gardens and a bandstand which are protected from the sea by a stone wall. In the distance, further up the beach can be seen more holidaymakers on the sands. This poster dates from 1930 and is by Henry George Gawthorn.

Two posters promoting rail travel to Hornsea, East Yorkshire

Hornsea is a small seaside town on the East Coast south of Bridlington. This was promoted as a seaside resort when a line providing transportation to and from the agricultural region of Holderness was built. This was the Hull and Hornsea Railway, a branch line, which connected the city of Kingston upon Hull with the seaside holiday resort of Hornsea. The line was opened in 1864 and closed in 1964.

Hornsea was a lesser seaside resort compared to the popularity and size of Scarborough and Bridlington, which it still is today. This means we find fewer vintage railway advertising posters than for the larger resorts. But Hornsea did not miss out completely though, and posters were created to help with the tourist effort.

The poster on the left shows a woman with her two young children in a train compartment looking out of the window at a view that stretches out in the distance of the sandy beach and sea at Hornsea. On the seat next to mother is a red bucket and the young boy is holding a spade in his hand, so there is no doubt that this is going to be a sand castle making holiday for him. This poster is titled ‘Hornsea’ and dates from 1930, by Septimus E. Scott.

The poster on the right is titled ‘Hornsea Lakeland by the Sea’, which refers to Hornsea Mere, located to the west of Hornsea and is generally described as the largest natural freshwater lake in Yorkshire. It is a bird sanctuary and a popular tourist attraction offering visitors rowing, sailing, boat trips and fishing. The poster shows a beach scene with elegant holidaymakers enjoying themselves on the sand and swimming in the sea. This poster is dated from 1923, by Freiworth.
The two posters promoting rail travel to Withernsea, East Yorkshire. Both are simply entitled ‘Withernsea’.

Withernsea is the last seaside resort on the East Yorkshire coast and is south of Hornsea. In 1853 the Hull and Holderness Railway was constructed and opened in 1853. It was a branch line which connected the city of Kingston upon Hull with Withernsea (via Keyingham and Patrington). The line terminated at Withernsea which is to the north-east. The intention of this line was to link Hull with the rich agricultural area of South Holderness, and to develop the coastal village of Withernsea into a new seaside resort. It would provide a cheap and convenient holiday for Victorian workers and their families, as well as boosting Withernsea’s economy. The line closed in 1964 with the last passenger train, which ran on 19th October of the same year.

Withernsea, like many British resorts, has suffered from a decline in the number of visiting holidaymakers over the last few decades, most likely due to the reduced cost of travel to Mediterranean resorts. However, the town still sees a significant increase in tourists between the months of June to August.

The poster above on the left shows the beach at Withernsea with a couple in swim wear playing with a ball, behind them are a group of children making sand castles and the Pier Towers can be seen in the far distance. The Pier Towers were the entrance to a 364 metre (nearly 1,200 foot) long pier, built in 1877 and is all that remains of this historical pier. The pier was gradually reduced in length through consecutive impacts by local sea craft, and the final section was removed during construction of coastal defences in the 1930s. This poster is dated 1923, by Maud Briby.

The poster on the right shows a young lady in a bathing costume and white robe, holding a small redheaded girl in her arms wearing a red swimming costume, behind them is a wavy green sea. This poster is date c1933, by Margaret Horder.

LNER Posters Promoted Rail Travel to Yorkshire’s Inland Cities, Towns and the Countryside

The historical walled city of York is situated on the River Ouse and has a rich heritage. It was founded by the Romans in 71 AD and called Eboracum. George Hudson brought the railway to York in 1839, which become an important central part of the railway network. Hudson’s career as a railway entrepreneur eventually ended in disgrace, but by that time, York was a major railway centre. York offered visitors a wealth of historic attractions, of which York Minster is the most prominent. The railway posters produced dealt with the historical side of York illustrating York Minster inside and out, the walls and medieval gatehouses called ‘bars’, and The Shambles.

The poster on the left illustrates Bootham Bar and part of the city walls with the western front towers of York Minster soaring in the background. Bootham Bar was built in the 14th and 19th centuries and almost stands on the site of the north western gate of Eboracum. The poster is titled ‘Relics of 20 Centuries Encircled by City Walls’ and was issued c1924 by Fred Taylor.
The poster on the left shows a picturesque street scene of The Shambles. In the far background are overhanging timber-framed buildings, some of which date to the 14th century, they are in the shadows of York Minster. In the foreground can be seen shoppers walking along the street in the shade of the buildings and on the left is a horse and cart. The horse has a feed bag over its nose and three women standing on the pavement are having a conversation. Nowadays these shops comprise a mixture of souvenir shops, bookshops, restaurants, cafés and bakers. This poster is titled ‘York, Walled City of Great Antiquity; Centre of a Glorious Holiday District’ and is dated c1920s, by Fred Taylor.

Below are two posters promoting rail travel to the Yorkshire spa town of Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Harrogate is a Spa town and a popular tourist destination. The first train to run into the town centre station was on 1st August 1862 and this was the new line of the North Eastern Railway which led to the opening up of Harrogate. The poster on the far right illustrates visitors strolling in the gardens in front of the Royal Baths, which were first opened in 1897 and were once a premier destination for the rich. The poster is titled ‘Harrogate’ and is dated c1930 by Fred Taylor.

The poster above on the left shows a couple watching a man and woman playing tennis in the white shadows of the Royal Baths. It is dated c1930 by Tom Purvis.

Below are two posters promoting rail travel to Knaresborough, North Yorkshire

Knaresborough is an old and historic market town located on the River Nidd, four miles east of the centre of Harrogate. The railway was opened in 1851 and the station is just beyond a stone viaduct crossing the River Nidd. The poster on the left shows a well dressed gentleman with a monocle and an equally well dressed lady in a railway carriage looking out of the window down at the River Nidd where there are boaters.

It looks like they have just crossed over the viaduct and are entering the town of which the top of the roofs can be seen on the right. This poster is titled ‘Knaresborough’ and is dated c1930, by Henry George Gawthorn.

The colourful poster on the right shows the River Nidd at Knaresborough with boaters and people strolling along the river bank. The 12th century castle can be seen in the background on a cliff above the River Nidd. It is titled ‘Knaresborough’ and is dated c1933, by Guy Malet.
On the right are two posters promoting rail travel to the Yorkshire Moors

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway was first opened in 1836 as the Whitby and Pickering Railway trade route and was horse-drawn. In 1845, the railway was acquired by the York and North Midland Railway who re-engineered the line to allow the use of **steam trains** for passenger use and stations along the line were built. This line brought the moors within easy reach of visitors and hikers. This is why posters promoting rail travel to the Yorkshire Moors were designed. The Yorkshire Moors are one of the largest expanses of purple and brown heather moorland in Britain. The poster on the right shows two women wearing 1920s style hats and clothing, walking on open moorland. Both women are holding walking sticks, while one also has a knapsack on her back. It is titled ‘Yorkshire Moors’ and is dated from 1930, by Tom Purvis.

The poster on the right shows a man and a woman on the moors, the woman is sitting on a rock outcrop wearing a 1920s style hat while the man standing next to her is wearing a 1920s style suit with a flat cap and has a walking stick in his hand. They are both looking with interest across the open peaceful moor covered with purple and brown heather which has outcrops of rock. This poster is titled ‘By LNER to the Moors’ and dates from 1924, by Tom Grainger.

Aysgarth railway was part of the Hawes Branch of the North Eastern Railway, it opened in 1878 and closed in April 1954. The station was situated near the falls so LNER was able to promote rail travel to Aysgrth Falls which are located in the Yorkshire Dales, and produced a beautiful poster advertising their rail services. In the poster on the left can be seen the Aysgarth Falls with water cascading over a series of broad limestone steps and in the distance is a forest. The poster is simply titled ‘Aysgarth Falls’ and dates to the 1930s, by Ernest William Haslehust.

The Yorkshire Dales Railway was a branch line linking the town of Skipton with the villages of Rylstone, Threshfield and Grassington in North Yorkshire. There were two stations on the line Grassington & Threshfield and Rylstone and a connection via the Skipton to Ilkley Line to Skipton. It was opened as a single-track line on 29 July 1902 and operated by the Midland Railway. Grassington lost its passenger service in September 1930 but the line was served by goods and holiday excursion traffic for many years afterwards. In August 1969 the final passenger-carrying train ran into Grassington station.

The poster on the right was produced to promote train services to the Yorkshire Dales; its location is unknown so it was probably in the artist mind’s eye. It shows the keep of a ruined castle, a farmer tending his sheep, a river in the foreground meandering its way to a village which is surrounded by rolling fields and hills in the background. It is titled ‘North East Dales’ and dates to c1936, by E. Byatt.
The poster on the right is of Bolton Castle located in Wensleydale in the Yorkshire Dales. It was built between 1378 and 1399 by Sir Richard le Scrope, and is a quadrangular castle. Mary, Queen of Scots was imprisoned here in 1569 and in 1645 it was besieged by Parliamentary forces, with the North-West tower suffering their bombardment. Today it is owned by Harry, 8th Lord Bolton and is a tourist attraction open to the public. This poster is titled ‘Bolton Castle’ and dates to the 1930s by Oliver Hall.

The LNER also produced several posters promoting rail travel to a number of well-known Yorkshire Abbeys

Jervaulx railway station was the station that served the village of Jervaulx. It was first opened as Newton-le-Willows on 19 May 1856 by the Bedale and Leyburn Railway and was renamed Jervaulx on 1 December 1877. It was then taken over by the North Eastern Railway, which became part of LNER during the Grouping of 1923 and closed on 26 April 1954.

The poster on the left shows an enchanting view of the remains of Jervaulx Abbey, near Ripon above the River Ure, which is set amongst the rolling countryside of the Yorkshire Dales. It was one of the great Cistercian abbeys of Yorkshire founded in 1156 and was dissolved in 1537. It remains a place of great beauty, tranquillity and history; it is also famed for having over 180 species of wild flowers among its walls. The ruins of the abbey are privately owned but open to the public 7 days a week dawn to dusk, an honesty box system of entry helps to conserve the site for future generations.

This poster is titled ‘Jervaulx Abbey’ and is dated 1933, by Fred Taylor.
The railway station at Helmsley was the station used for access to Rievaulx Abbey and Byland Abbey which served the market town of Helmsley in North Yorkshire. It opened in 1871 and was on the Gilling and Pickering branch line of the North Eastern Railway until its closure in 1964. From the railway station visitors to the Abbeys would then have to go by road.

The poster on the right shows the ruins of the 12th-13th century Cistercian Abbey of Rievaulx which is located north-west of Helmsley in North Yorkshire. Rievaulx Abbey lies in a deep valley by the River Rye, from which the monastery takes its name. Rievaulx Abbey was founded in 1132 and was once one of the wealthiest abbeys in England. The poster is a view of the columns and arches of the great church, with a group of visitors standing and sitting on the grass under one of the arches. At the Dissolution of the abbey in 1538 by Henry VIII the community only numbered twenty-three. The ruins are now a tourist attraction in the care of English Heritage. The poster is titled ‘Rievaulx Abbey’ and dates from c1923, by Sydney Lee.

The railway station at Helmsley was the station used for access to Rievaulx Abbey and Byland Abbey which served the market town of Helmsley in North Yorkshire. It opened in 1871 and was on the Gilling and Pickering branch line of the North Eastern Railway until its closure in 1964. From the railway station visitors to the Abbeys would then have to go by road.

The poster on the left illustrates the impressive remains of the 12th century Cistercian Byland Abbey which is located south-west of Helmsley, North Yorkshire. The remains of the huge church including the north side and the greater part of the west front can be seen in the poster. The church was said to be amongst the finest 12th-century churches in Europe and by the late twelfth century Byland, Fountains and Rievaulx were described as ‘the three shining lights of the North’. The abbey remains include one of the largest cloisters in England. It was dissolved on 30 November 1538 and is now less well-known and visited than the great abbey ruins at Fountains and Rievaulx. It is perhaps a more striking reminder of Cistercian life in Yorkshire. Today Byland Abbey is now in the care of English Heritage. The poster is titled ‘Byland Abbey’ and dated from 1934, by Fred Taylor.

Ripon railway station was the station used for access to Fountains Abbey; it opened on 31 May 1848 and was on the Leeds-Northallerton line that ran between the two, until September 1969 when the line was closed. It was once part of the North Eastern Railway and then LNER which produced the poster on the right of the ruined Cistercian Abbey of Fountains. The Abbey is situated in the valley of the River Skell, south-west of Ripon, North Yorkshire. The poster shows a dramatic exterior view of Fountains Abbey with its great tall tower. It was founded in 1132, and is the largest, best preserved monastic ruin in the country. It was dissolved in 1539 when Henry VIII ordered the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Today it is set in peaceful and tranquil surroundings owned by the National Trust and managed by English Heritage and can be visited all year round.

The poster is titled ‘Fountains Abbey’ and is dated 1934, by Henry Rushbury.
British Railways Posters Promoting Rail Travel to the Yorkshire Seaside Coast

From the start of 1948, the ‘big four’ were nationalised to form British Railways but declining passenger numbers and financial losses in the late 1950s and early 1960s prompted the closure of main branch lines and small stations which were axed by Beeching. Dr. Beeching was chairman of British Railways in the early 1960s and was responsible for these closures. But before this happened British Railways continued to produce posters of Yorkshire much as before and posters had a very similar look although they now carried the British Railways name in a distinctive lozenge design.

Two posters produced to promote rail services to the seaside resorts of Redcar and Whitby

The above poster on the left shows Redcar’s long expanding sands with groups of holidaymakers on the beach and the New Pavilion and bandstand. This poster is titled ‘Redcar’ and dates from the 1950s, by Ellis Silas.

The poster above on the right shows Whitby’s coast line with spectacular cliffs, beaches and bay dominated by the cliff top position of St Mary’s Church and the ruins of Whitby Abbey. It is titled ‘Whitby’ and dates from1950, by Gyrth Rusell.

Two posters above produced to promote rail travel to the coastal resort of Scarborough in North Yorkshire

They are both entitled ‘Scarborough’. The poster above on the left shows a view of south bay with the Spa at south end of the beach, the seafront and the harbour in the foreground. It was issued in 1950, the artist is Gyrth Rusell.

The poster above on the right shows the rocky headland that divides the coast line and seafront into two bays the North Bay and a South Bay with the ruins of the 12th century Scarborough Castle. It was issued in 1948, the artist is Frank Henry Mason.
Below three posters promoting train services to Filey, Flamborough and the Yorkshire coast

The poster on the far left shows the large stretch of Filey’s sandy beach with Filey Brigg in the distance. Holiday makers are playing on the sand or swimming in the sea. It is titled ‘Filey’ and dates from 1952, by Ellis Silas.

The poster on the near left is of the North Landing at Flamborough between Filey and Bridlington. This shows spectacular chalk cliffs covered with grassland at the top, to the rocky shore and sandy beaches. It is titled ‘Yorkshire’ and dates from the 1960s, by Edward Wesson.

The poster on the right was produced to promote train services to the Yorkshire coast. There is no location for this poster but the bridge gives its identity away, as Staithes. It runs over Staithes Beck, or more properly Roxby Beck, a stream that runs down to the harbour and into the North Sea, between dramatic high cliffs. It shows two men looking down at the boats on the river and further down the inlet towards the sea is Staithes village, with the cottages and houses built close to each other. It is titled ‘Yorkshire Coast’ and dates to the 1950s, by John Bee.

Two posters produced by British Railways to promote rail travel to the Yorkshire coastal resort of Bridlington

The poster on the far left shows a pleasure boat full of holidaymakers approaching the harbour wall, surrounded by seagulls. It is titled ‘Bridlington’ and is dated 1953, by Frank A. A. Wootton.

The poster on the left shows three boys looking down at the harbour where there are a number of boats and yachts, at the other side of the harbour is the wide sandy beach protected by a sea wall, crowded with holidaymakers. This poster is titled ‘Bridlington Yorkshire’s Gay Seaside Playground’ and is dated 1958, by George Ayling.
British Railways Posters Promoting Rail Travel to Yorkshire’s Inland Cities, Towns and the Countryside

Three posters promoting train services to the city of York

The poster on the left shows Bootham Bar in the shadow of York Minster. Notice that there are no cars or traffic to be seen, just people walking about. It is titled ‘York’ and dates from the 1960s, by Kenneth Steel.

The poster in the middle shows six figures superimposed on two pictures, the one below is of a medieval ‘bar’ with York Minster at the top of the picture. The top line represents a Roman centurion and a Norman Knight with an Archbishop of York in the centre. The bottom line represents possibly a Georgian gentleman, a Roundhead soldier with a Medieval Knight in the centre. York was widely promoted as an historical city and this poster reflects its history by characters. It is titled ‘York the Gateway to History’ and is dated 1955, by E. H. Spencer.

The poster on the far right shows a picturesque view of York with a sloped bank running down from the medieval wall, full of daffodils in full bloom, in the background is York Minster. It is titled ‘York in Daffodil Time’ and is dated 1950, Artist unknown.

Two Posters produced to promote rail travel to the popular North Yorkshire spa town of Harrogate

Both posters are views of Montpellier Avenue and Gardens. The area has not changed much; it is still a very beautiful, quaint and traditional looking place.

The poster on the far left shows a picturesque view of Crescent Gardens, an open area in central Harrogate with flowers and a tree-lined road. It is surrounded by some of the town’s main tourist attractions. This poster is titled ‘Harrogate’ and is dated 1953, by Kenneth Steel.

The poster on the left shows a view from one of the flower gardens in central Harrogate. Across the road are shops with blinds down to keep out the sun. Many visors can be seen shopping on this warm sunny day. It is titled ‘Harrogate’ and is dated 1957, by J. Merriott.
The poster on the right was produced to promote rail travel to Yorkshire. Although this poster is titled ‘Yorkshire’ it is a view of Knaresborough, North Yorkshire. It shows a steam train crossing the viaduct, built in 1851. On the river Nidd are two punters and the remains of the 12th century Knaresborough castle can be seen in the distance between the arches of the viaduct on top of the hill. This poster dates to 1954 and is by Jack Merriott.

Below two Posters promoting rail travel to Ilkley, West Yorkshire

The poster on the far left shows the famous Cow and Calf rocks on Ilkley Moor. Some ramblers are walking up the path that leads onto the moors and some sheep are seen grazing on the grassy incline. The scene overlooks the valley below and in the far distance moors. This poster is titled ‘Ilkley, Gateway to the Yorkshire Dales’ and dates from 1960 but the artist is unknown.

The poster on the right above shows the public Lido, an outdoor swimming pool constructed in 1935, it is one of only four public open-air swimming pools in Yorkshire and is a tourist attraction during the summer holiday season. The poster also shows wonderful views of Ilkley Moor in the background. It is titled ‘Ilkley, Gateway to the Yorkshire Dales’ and dates to 1957, by Frank Sherwin.

Posters promoting rail travel to the Yorkshire Dales and the Countryside

There is no location for the poster on the right, it is set somewhere in the Yorkshire Dales. It illustrated the natural beauty of the Yorkshire Dales. The landscape portrays a lush green valley with fields, woods and pastures with distinctive hills in the background. In the foreground a river meanders through the countryside and a farmer tends his sheep in the field. At the centre is a village church and stone built houses. The scene is an idyllic unspoiled beauty spot to attract tourists to the countryside. The poster is titled ‘Yorkshire Dales’ and dates from 1953, by Frank Sherwin.

The poster on the left shows a rural landscape with a farm in the foreground and green rolling hills stretching into the distance. The fields and pastures are bordered by dry stone walls which criss-cross the hillsides in elaborate patterns. A river can be seen at the bottom of the valley meandering its way to the village in the distance.

This poster is titled ‘Yorkshire’ and dates from c1950s, by Gyrth Russell.
British Railways also produced posters promoting rail travel to well-known Yorkshire Abbeys and Stately Homes

The poster on the far left shows the spectacular ruins of Fountains Abbey near Ripon, North Yorkshire. It was of the Cistercian, order founded in 1132 and is one of the largest and best preserved Cistercian monastic ruins in England. The view shows the East end of Fountains Abbey with the river Skell running under the Abbey, which in itself is a masterpiece of twelfth century building. The church, as can be seen in the poster survives to almost full height, including the 170 foot tower. Its life was brought to an abrupt end in 1539 by Henry VIII’s Dissolution of the Monasteries. Today Fountains Abbey is maintained by English Heritage, and owned by the National Trust. The poster is titled ‘Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire’ it dates from 1956 and is by Gyryth Rusell.

The poster on the right is of Selby Abbey, North Yorkshire and shows a view inside the church of ‘Abbot Hugh’s Pillar’, a nave pillar with a deep-cut diamond pattern. It was named after the Abbot, who in the 12th century, under his direction replaced the timber abbey by a stone one and this was the greatest phase of the building. Visitors to the Abbey can be seen walking around and looking at Abbot Hugh’s Pillar. The poster is titled ‘Selby Abbey’ and it dates to c1948-1965, by Kenneth Steel.

Although the poster on the right is titled ‘Yorkshire’ it is in fact a picturesque view of Kirkham Priory which is located between York and Malton. It was an Augustinian priory founded in the 1120s by Walter l’Espec, lord of nearby Helmsley, who also built Rievaulx Abbey. Kirkham priory continued until the time of its Dissolution in December 1539. The poster shows the ruins of Kirkham Priory which is situated on the banks of the river Derwent. A stone bridge goes over the river, which leads up to the impressive ruins of the gatehouse. This has number of heraldic shields on its walls and in the background are views of the hills. Kirkham Priory is in the care of English Heritage. It is a peaceful and tranquil beauty spot admired by visitors as they wander around taking in the atmosphere of the beautiful ruins. These include arched bays and a section of the vaulted entrance to the cloister under what is left of the south west tower and a set of monastic washbasins. The poster is titled ‘Yorkshire’ and dates to c1947, by Freda Marston, but it was not issued as a poster until 10 years after her death.

The poster on the left was produced to promote train services to Beverley, East Yorkshire. It shows a view inside Beverley Minster which is regarded as the most impressive church in England that is not a cathedral. There is much to see inside, including the tomb of Lady Eleanor Percy, which dates from around 1340 and is covered with a richly decorated canopy, regarded as one of the best surviving examples of Gothic art. It is the second Percy Tomb in Beverley Minster and is situated next to the High Altar on the north side, as shown in the poster with a lady visitor inspecting it. Today The Minster still provides the main attraction for visitors to the town. This poster is entitled ‘Beverley Minster’ and is dated c1960, it is by Kenneth Steel.

The Yorkshire Journal
Two posters promoting train services to stately homes in Yorkshire

The poster on the left shows the front of Newby Hall and gardens, near Ripon, North Yorkshire. The present house dates from the late 17th century and was built in the style of Sir Christopher Wren. In the 1760s Robert Adam was commissioned to alter the original Wren-designed house, and Thomas Chippendale to make furniture. Newby Hall is famous for its long double herbaceous borders which make the perfect walkway to the River Ure. This runs along the south side of the grounds as can be seen in the poster with a couple admiring the hall and slowly walking up to it. The poster is dated 1956 and is by Charles Shepherd.

The poster on the right shows the interior of Castle Howard, near York, North Yorkshire. It is one of the finest stately homes in Britain built in 1699 with extensive grounds containing temples, lakes, statues, fountains a rose garden and Ray Wood. The poster shows a view of the long gallery which is 54 metres in length with paintings on the walls and furniture on both sides. Castle Howard was first opened to the public in 1952. This poster is titled ‘England’s Stately Homes’ and is dated 1957 by an unknown artist.

Vintage Railway Poster Nostalgia

The railway posters illustrated in this article only represent a few that have survived, they once adorned waiting room walls and billboards on platforms. Posters are a disposable form of advertising and when they were no longer wanted by British Rail they burned tens of thousands of them.

Now yesterday’s vintage railway posters have become very sought after and collectible, as a true art form in their own right, but at the time they were pure and simple advertising for the railways. So if you can get your hands on an original it can be worth hundreds if not thousands of pounds.

In fact early last year in January, a lifelong railway enthusiast’s collection of vintage rail posters was sold at auction for more than £400,000. They belonged to the late Malcolm Guest who died aged 66 in July 2009. His collection of 2,500 posters was stored in his small terraced house in Knaresborough. Malcolm Guest worked for BR in the publicity department of Paddington Station in the early sixties. In the offices and archives were large quantities of memorabilia and posters that were no longer wanted by British Rail and were going to be destroyed.

Malcolm realised the significance of many of these works of art and decided to rescue them and ask if he could have them. He was also allowed to take home the original artwork and continued with his hobby up until his death. In the 1960s some 30,000 posters got burned at Waterloo station, today they would be worth about £20 million. Mr Guest’s widow and two grown-up children had no idea how much his collection was worth and were pleasantly surprised by the valuation given by the evaluators.

The first 580 posters from the collection were sold at auction over two days by Morphets auctioneers of Harrogate at the Great Yorkshire Showground. Railway historian and author, Dr Richard Furness described the auction as “the biggest and most important sale of posters that had ever been held.” The largest single amount was for a poster of Southport’s Lido which fetched £6,200, while another featuring Southport in the wintertime went for £4,400.

Thankfully we don’t all need to pay out so much to buy reproduction prints, they are now widely available online. These reproductions of railway posters are far more affordable and memorable to all of us who remember looking at them on railway stations.
Where you can see Railways Posters

The National Railway Museum in York is the best place to see railway posters. Their Pictorial Collection covers more than 150 years of railway history; this includes over 7000 posters of railway advertising. They cover the period from the earliest railways posters up to the present day which represent posters of the big four companies, British Railways and British Rail. The main purpose of the posters was to advertise the railways and the places they served. The posters illustrate changes in society over the years and the character of life over the period. They provide historical information on styles in art, the changing patterns of holiday making, urban and rural landscapes, architecture and fashion. They also reflect the development of railway companies and their graphic design and advertising standards.

Also in the museum’s collection are 100 locomotives, over 180 carriages and wagons plus uniforms and other railway equipment. The National Railway Museum is open daily 10.00am-6.00pm, closed on 24, 25 and 26 December and entrance is free of charge.

Two Outstanding LNER Posters for Content and History

The poster on the right shows elegant Harrogate. The fine detail does this subject real justice and gives a great feeling of the location over seventy years ago. It is in fact of the Montpellier Parade. The scene illustrates a brilliant warm summer’s day. The shops have their blinds down in order to keep out the sun. People can be seen shopping or sitting on benches underneath the branches of the trees around the flower gardens. Classic 1930s cars are parked on the roadside outside the shops. Since this poster was produced quite a few changes have taken place, all the shops have different occupants they include pubs, restaurants, cafés, tea shops, antique shops and souvenir shops. Harrogate became popular as an elegant Victorian spa town in the late 19th century, noted for its glorious public flower gardens. In fact the Stray covers two hundred acres of flowers and green parkland surrounding the town centre. Today Harrogate is better known as an Exhibition and Conference centre town with the Harrogate International Centre, centrally located. The town is also famous for its association with the great crime novelist Agatha Christie, who disappeared here for a few days in 1926. This poster is titled ‘Harrogate’ and is dated 1935, by Gordon Mitchell Forsyth.

The striking poster on the right is titled ‘Filey for the Family’ it illustrates a beach scene with a young lady at the centre in a bathing costume and white robe; she has a yellow parasol in her hand to protect her from the sun. Next to her is a man, they are both talking to a little girl in a red swimming costume, drying her arm with a yellow towel. Behind them children can be seen playing in the sea. What is so interesting about this beach scene are the two bathing machines in the background behind the lady. They have been rolled out into the sea. Bathing machines were very popular at seaside resorts in the 1800s they allowed people to change out of their usual clothes into swimwear and then wade into the sea. Bathing machines were roofed and walled wooden carts that had four large wide wheels with a door at the front or back. They were pulled in and out of the surf by a horse that had a driver. Once the bathing machine was in the water, the occupants disembarked down steps into the sea. Legal segregation of bathing areas ended in 1901, and the bathing machine declined rapidly. By the start of the 1920s bathing machines were almost extinct, but it would appear from this poster that at Filey they were still in use during the 1920s.

This poster is dated c1920s, by Reginald Edward Higgins.
Back On Track, The Scarborough Spa Express

In July 1927 the London North Eastern Railway Company (LNER) inaugurated the ‘Scarborough Flier’. This titled train ran from London King’s Cross to Scarborough Central and Whitby Town. It consisted of an express service from London to York, at which point the locomotive would be changed, before the train ran on to the coastal towns of Scarborough and Whitby. The service continued until September 1939 when, like many services, it was cancelled for the duration of the war. It was not until June 1950 that the service was re-introduced as a ‘Summer Only’ express and it quickly became ‘The Scarborough Flyer’ (note the change of spelling!) with the very characteristic sunburst design on the headboard.

The train ran for 13 years until it finally ended in September 1963, by which time these special named expresses were becoming unfashionable.

However, in the summer of 1981 the first ‘Scarborough Spa Express’ ran to celebrate the re-opening of Scarborough’s famous Spa building.
The Scarborough Spa Express Route

Now we can go back in time to the golden age of steam and once again travel by steam train in traditional carriages across Yorkshire’s beautiful countryside. The Scarborough Spa Express leaves York in the morning collecting passengers on a circular route calling at Normanton, Wakefield Kirkgate, Wakefield Westgate, Woodlesford and Castleford, arriving in York then on to Scarborough. You may choose to spend the day in York or extend your journey to Scarborough returning early evening. The Scarborough Spa Express runs on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday through the summer period and different steam trains are used.

West Coast Railways (WCR) is the company that operates the Scarborough Spa Express and although the service has been re-introduced, be it only a summer session one, no railway posters have been produced promoting its destinations. Unlike their predecessors LNER (London and North Eastern Railways) and British Railways (BR) who produced hundreds of railway posters promoting their destinations. Maybe one day we will see a new revival railway poster drawn on the rich heritage of these vintage posters to accompany the Scarborough Spa Express steam train destinations.

However West Coast Railways have produced a leaflet highlighting in writing the trip to York and Scarborough.

York

York is a place of contrasts, a medieval walled city with the ancient shops of the ‘Shambles’, the magnificent Minster, historic churches, intriguing museums and offering the best of modern shopping. In fact something for everyone!

If York is the northern heritage capital of England, Scarborough surely offers the best in British seaside entertainment.

Scarborough

Wide sandy beaches, popular attractions, a ruined castle, a miniature railway and some fine seafront walks offer a great day out for every member of the family.

Above: Map of the Scarborough Spa Route

Left: Two vintage posters by BR and LNER promoting destinations to York and Scarborough

Below: The Scarborough Spa Express
The Legend of the Richmond Drummer Boy, North Yorkshire

By Jean Griffiths

Richmond is a market town on the River Swale in North Yorkshire. It is situated on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales National Park and is a popular tourist destination. Steep, narrow, cobbled streets and elegant Georgian houses give the town its unique character. Of course a town as old as Richmond is bound to have generated some legends over the years and one of those attached to Richmond is that of the Drummer Boy.

According to legend, an underground passage connects Richmond Castle with Easby Abbey, about a mile away from the Castle, along the banks of the River Swale. It is believed the tunnel was constructed in medieval times as an escape route to the castle for the Abbot and Canons of the Abbey in case of an attack from the Scots, who were continually making raids into the northern counties of England.

The Legend of the Drummer Boy

The legend goes that many years ago, possibly at the end of the 18th century some soldiers found an entrance to a tunnel under the Keep of Richmond Castle. As they were too large to crawl into it themselves they selected one of the small Regimental drummer boys to be lowered through the narrow gap that led into a vault. The boy was told to walk along the tunnel and beat his drum as he went so that above ground the soldiers could follow the noise and plot the route.

The sound of the drum was heard clearly as he proceeded down the tunnel. It led them away from the Castle, across the Market Place in the direction of Frenchgate, and beside the River Swale towards Easby. When the soldiers reached Easby Wood, half a mile from the Abbey, the sound of the drumming stopped unexpectedly. This was never explained and today a carved stone stands to mark the spot where the noise stopped and is called the ‘Drummer Boy Stone’ by the local people. The poor drummer boy was never seen alive again.
Perhaps the roof had fallen in? But more confusingly, the tunnel entrance could not be found. The mystery has never been solved.

Legend also claims that his ghost still haunts the tunnel and you can hear the faint sound of a slow drumbeat of the drummer boy still!

The legend of the Drummer Boy is commemorated every year by the people of Richmond, who organise a walk through the town led by local school children dressed in the uniform of the Drummer Boy, loaned by courtesy of the Green Howards Museum.

The Market Place is the starting point of the walk from the obelisk in the centre of Richmond; it was erected in 1771, replacing a medieval market cross. The walk goes via Frenchgate, St. Mary’s Church and the banks of the River Swale passing the Drummer Boy Stone which is mounted on a plinth with a plaque. The Drummer Boy Stone marks the spot where the soldiers last heard the sound of drumming.

Following this path leads to Easby Abbey and St. Agatha’s church which was built in about 1140 before the White Canons arrived to build their abbey. The church contains some fine medieval wall paintings featuring rural agricultural life, termed the Labours of the Months published in the journal (TYJ 1 Spring 2011). Also a plaster replica of an extremely rare early Christian carved stone cross. The original, which dates from the late 7th or early 8th century, is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.
The church is open free of charge every day and visitors are welcome to look around. Easby Abbey, next to the church was founded in 1152 and its inhabitants were canons rather than monks of the Premonstratensian order, they wore a white habit and became known as the White Canons. It is maintained by English Heritage and visitors are welcome to look around the ruins. The walk returns back along the former Darlington-Richmond railway, all the way to Richmond Castle by way of the Richmond falls.

If you visit the Green Howards Museum you can pick up a leaflet which provides a map and description of this walk. This is an excellent way of seeing, at a leisurely pace, the delights of the market town of Richmond.

Above: The ornate road bridge over the River Swale near the old Railway station

Left: A spectacular view of the River Swale as it rushes over the falls
Richmond Castle

Situated on a rocky promontory above the River Swale, the great castle of Richmond dominates the town today and is among the oldest Norman stone castles in Britain. It is also one of the few Norman castles that never suffered a serious siege and remains today in a better state of preservation than do most other Norman castles. The building of the castle as a military stronghold commenced in 1071 on land gifted to Alan the Red of Brittany by William the Conqueror as reward for his part in the victory over King Harold and his continued support of William as one of his most trusted advisers. Richmond Castle became the headquarters of the Honour of Richmond, a vast assembly of estates in Yorkshire and beyond.

Richmond Castle was an impressive construction protected by massive stone walls on two sides and the steep banks of the River Swale to the south. The Castle was not typical of the period in several ways. It was built of stone rather than earth and wood and it was the first Norman Castle in England to have projecting mural towers to improve the defences of the walls and eastern gateways.

The town of Richmond grew up under the protection of the castle, but the civilian inhabitants lived outside the present market place, which was then the outer bailey of the castle. When, in the early 14th century Scottish raids posed a serious threat, Richmond gained permission to build a defensive wall around the bailey into which the civilians moved.

The best preserved part of the castle is the Keep which towers over 100 feet above the town. The Keep was a 12th century addition to the castle and was built over the original gate-house. The archway at the base of the Keep is of the 11th century and is, possibly, the only remaining part of the original structure. There were a number of smaller towers in the curtain wall, and the ruins of three of these can still be seen. Perhaps the most interesting is Robin Hood’s Tower, which is set in the eastern wall. On the ground floor of this tower is the Chapel of St. Nicholas with a barrel vaulted roof, wall arcade of semi-circular arches and, at the east end, a flat sill which may have been the site of the altar.
Two other interesting structures stand in the south-east corner. One is Scolland’s Hall, named after Scolland, a constable of the castle who died between 1146 and 1150. The other is the Gold Hole Tower, which contained the garderobes (latrines) of the castle. The upper part was rebuilt in the 14th century and contains a room with a fireplace.

King William the Lion of Scotland, taken at Alnwick in 1174, was imprisoned in Richmond Castle, as was David II after his defeat at Neville’s Cross in 1346. Charles I lodged in the castle during his journey south in 1647 after he had surrendered to the Scots.

**Exhibition Centre**

Also at the Castle is an exhibition centre which houses some of the artefacts excavated from the castle grounds. There is also a virtual reality touch-screen guide about the imprisonment in the castle of the conscientious objectors in the First World War.

Conscientious objectors, conscripted into the army and sent to join the Non-combatant Corps at Richmond, were put in the cells as a result of their refusal to obey orders. During the Second World War 1939-1945 other military prisoners where held at the Castle.
The Green Howards Museum

The Green Howards Regimental Museum is situated in the converted medieval church in the centre of Richmond’s cobbled market place. It tells the story of the illustrious Green Howards regiment from its very beginnings to the present day.

The museum’s collection spans three centuries of campaigning, travel and war. Artefacts and photographs of the Crimean War, the North-West Frontier of India, the Boer War and archive film of World War 1 form part of the vivid presentation of the Green Howards' story in both peace and war.

The pride of the Museum is undoubtedly the Harrison Room with more than 3,750 medals and decorations dating back to 1815, including eighteen Victoria Crosses and three George Crosses presented to members of the Regiment for acts of supreme courage.

Over the years the museum has build up a large archive of photographs relating to the Green Howards and its distinguished history. At present you can view photographs from the Boer War and World War I.

The Green Howards Museum has a well-stocked shop which sells a wide range of regimental and military memorabilia, military and historical books, guides, and a selection of toys, gifts and souvenirs as well as Newsletters of the Friends of the Green Howards Museum.

The Green Howards Museum is open 10.00 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Saturday throughout the year, closed on Sundays.
Yorkshire has many astonishing follies, but what exactly is a folly? It is not always easy to define, but perhaps ‘a building that has no purpose except to be there’ or ‘a structure that is not what it appears’. However you define them, they are almost always odd, and often accompanied by an interesting past. Follies fall into many categories which include Columns, Obelisks and Pillars, Pyramids, Temples and Towers. Most follies were built in Britain between the 17th and 19th centuries, often by wealthy landowners. Building follies was a fashion in the 18th century when folly building was at its height. No great estate grounds were considered to be complete if it did not contain at least one folly building such as a tower or a temple. This would be to improve the appearance of the landscape for the benefit of a wealthy landowner and his family as they surveyed the view from their home. Today follies are a part of our heritage.

One of Yorkshire’s bizarre follies is the ‘Druid’s Temple’ now set deep in the middle of Forestry Commission land, near the village of Ilton and about 4 miles west of Masham and ten miles north-west of Ripon, North Yorkshire. It is made of giant stones, well preserved surrounded by conifers and is a popular spot for picnickers. Around the turn of the century, unemployment was high in the area so William Danby decided to build a recreation of Stonehenge in Wiltshire to generate work for the local population. His intentions were good, as he was attempting to help the poor gain employment, but the workers were only paid a shilling a day.

Danby was a notable English eccentric born in 1752 and during his lifetime, he and three of his closest friends James Wyatt, John Foss, and Robert Lugar, built a fine mansion named New Swinton Hall. Now the newly named Swinton Park is a luxury 30-bedroom hotel, it is surrounded by the family estate in which guests have access to rivers, reservoirs, moorland, dales, and beautiful countryside bordering the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The building went on for some 50 years and only ended a few years before Danby’s death in 1833.
The henge Danby had built was no small druid’s circle; it was the real thing, it is oval rather than a circle approximately 100 feet long and 50 feet wide, with some of the stones standing over 10 feet high constructed on the moor. Danby’s henge was complete with both a heel and altar stone, constructed from menhirs, dolmens, sarsens, monoliths and trilithons. As a centrepiece for his creation, Danby had erected a central monolith set on a ring of 3 rounded steps, all flanked by a tall monolith at each corner. Beyond the central monolith the oval ring of stones and several solitary standing stones line a ceremonial avenue leading to the temple. William Danby was a true believer in doing a job properly!

**The hermit story**

It is claimed that the builder of the temple offered to provide any willing individual with food, and a subsequent annuity, provided he would live as a hermit within the confines of the temple for seven years. He also had to live a primitive life, speaking to no one and allowing his beard and hair to grow. If after seven years, of living in this sorry way the happy hermit would then rise to the status of a gentleman with his annuity. It is thought that several men underwent the challenge, one poor fellow managed to endure nearly four and a half years, but finally he too had to admit defeat, no doubt the hair from his beard was almost as long as his arms by the end.

*Right: Part of the standing stones of the circle, Photo by Chris Gunns*
During William Danby’s later years, he penned four great literary works of thoughts. ‘Travelling Thoughts’, ‘Thoughts on various subjects and ideas and realities’, ‘Thoughts chiefly on serious subjects’, and finally, published only a year before his death, ‘Extracts from Young’s night thoughts, with observations upon them’.

Visiting the Druid’s Temple

There is a small, free car park within the plantation and from there it is only a short walk to the Druid’s Temple. At the temple to the west through the trees a view has been left open overlooking Leighton Reservoir far below in the valley. If you are lucky to be the only visitor at the Temple you will find that there is absolute silence, with nothing but the sound of the wind in the trees and birds to disturb you.
Swinton Park Gardens

The earliest record of the gardens at Swinton Park dates from 1699 when a design by George London was laid out, with fountains added a few years later. This formal plan was swept away, probably by William Danby during his landscaping programme in the 1760s that resulted in the present English landscape garden. In the next years five lakes were dug out.

To the west of the castle there is a rockery, with a sunken path and rockwork steps. From here the lawn rises to a Gothick orangery which is now in disrepair.

The path leads on towards Coffin Pond, past the lime and Yew Avenue and Spring Garden, which is ablaze with colour with bluebells, daffodils, cherry blossom, rhododendrons and azaleas during the months of April, May and June.

The lakes were designed and dug out during the 1760s, when the Danby family were in residence at Swinton. During the early 1800s, the stone bridge at Coffin Pond was built, and the stone coffins, which were dug up in a nearby quarry, were laid out beside the boathouse. It is thought that they were for the nuns in the local nunnery.

The path follows the bank of Coffin Pond on both sides, and meets again above Lily Pond. It then continues to Top Lake, which features several druids’ seats, a large grotto, and a summer house in the middle of the island. Another folly, The Mount, is situated above Top Lake, looking over the parkland. The path then crosses back over a bridge at the tail end of the lake. From here there are several standing stones along the bank of the lake.

The foundations for Quarry Gill Bridge were laid in 1811, and took 11 years to complete. This part of the walk is by far the most dramatic, with views down the ravine and through the bridge and a stream that cascades down into several pools, particularly after a recent shower.

The parkland is divided from the castle by the serpentine stretch of water, Home Lake, designed to give the impression of a river. It supports a herd of approximately 100 fallow deer, including 10 stags.

Swinton Park guests are welcome to walk in the grounds throughout the year.
The Gardens and Lakes at Swinton Park

The Yorkshire Journal is a quarterly publication, published in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter and is a free online e-journal available at www.theyorkshirejournal.wordpress.com.

Every effort has been made to determine copyright on illustrations in The Yorkshire Journal. We apologise to any individuals we may have inadvertently missed. The Editor would be happy to correct any omissions.