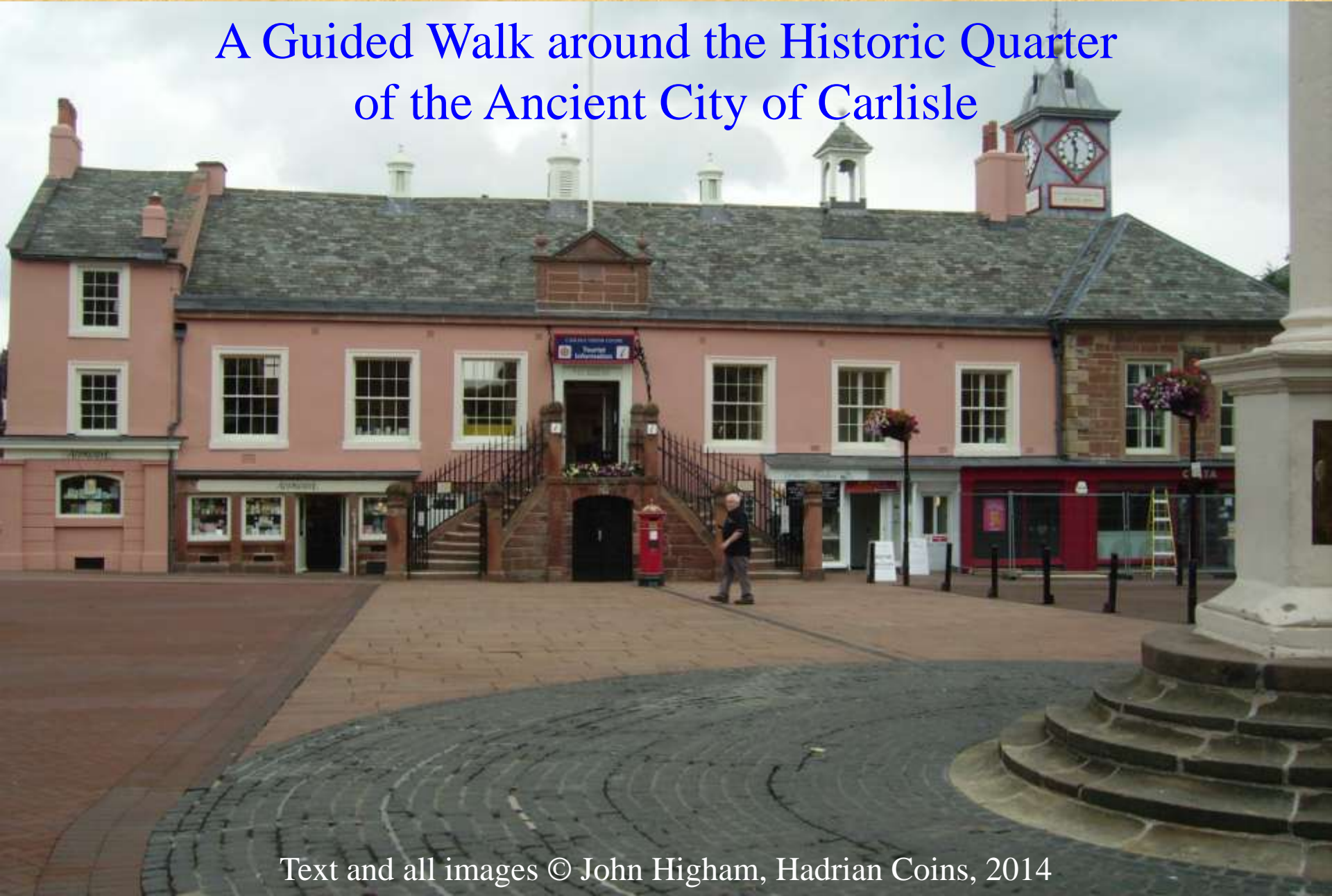


In the Footsteps of Time

A Guided Walk around the Historic Quarter
of the Ancient City of Carlisle



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In the Footsteps of Time

This walking tour of the Historic Quarter of the Ancient City of Carlisle begins at the stone **Market Cross** in the City Centre. Many of the illustrations on the right of each page show Carlisle at it was about 1780.



Carlisle's street layout closely follows that of the Roman town and this central square was probably the Roman Forum. The city held a weekly market and annual fair in this square from the 13th century until recent times. The **Market Cross** was the place from which the bell was rung to start the market and from which the official prices for bread and ale were announced. The present Cross dates from 1682 and replaced an earlier wooden one. It has a sundial (essential before the widespread use of clocks) and, on top, a heraldic lion reading from the city's 16th Century '*Dormont Book*', a compilation of the city's by-laws covering everything from defence against the Scots to street cleanliness.

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From the Market Cross, the **Old Town Hall** is just a hop, step and jump away



The Old Town Hall, in its present form, was erected in 1668/9 on the site of a mediaeval wooden-framed building. The Clock Tower was added in 1717, making the sundial on the cross redundant. The market bell hung in the bell tower, replacing the mediaeval hand bell. The city dignitaries (many representing the Eight Trades Guilds) met in the upper room of the Town Hall with shops on the ground floor. The Town Hall probably stands on the site of its Roman equivalent – the *Basilica*. It is now used as the city's Tourist Information Centre. The **red post box** in front of the Old Town Hall is a replica – marking the site of the very first letter box in Britain following the introduction of the *penny post* in 1840.

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To the left of the Old Town Hall and slightly set back is the **Guild Hall**



The **Guild Hall** was the house of a London merchant, Richard Redness, built shortly after the fire of 1391 which destroyed much of the city. On his death, the house was bought by the City Corporation and became the home of the city's eight Trades Guilds. Each guild had a room in the upper storey while the ground floor was used for shops. The Guildhall is a typical mediaeval timber-framed house - a series of boxes built one on top of the other and projecting over the street. With generally narrow streets and thatched or wooden roofs, fire was an ever-present hazard. The upper floor of the Guild Hall is now a museum and well worth visiting.

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Look to your left and walk across to the **Crown and Mitre Hotel**

The **Crown and Mitre Hotel** was built in 1905 on the site of the Crown and Mitre Coffee House which had a long and colourful history. During the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, Bonnie Prince Charlie stayed here. By the end of the 18th century the Crown & Mitre had become the main coaching inn of the city, a stopping place for both mail and stage coaches on their way to and from London, Glasgow and Edinburgh.



Sir Walter Scott, the novelist, stayed here the night before his wedding to Charlotte Charpentier in the Cathedral on Christmas Eve 1797, following a whirlwind romance of just three weeks! In 1905, original building was pulled down and three years later the present hotel was opened. In 1919 President Woodrow Wilson of the USA, arrived by Royal Train and stayed in the Crown and Mitre on his “*pilgrimage of the heart*”, visiting the places where his parents had lived and worked.

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From the Crown & Mitre, walk left along the right hand side of the central square. Keep a lookout for a narrow lane on your right (St Cuthbert's Lane) and go down it towards the church you can see at the end.



St Cuthbert travelled from his hermitage on the Farne Islands to Carlisle in 685 AD to establish a monastery. The church doesn't face east in the traditional way but is aligned with the roman road through this part of the city, indicating a very early build, possibly even a roman foundation, predating St Cuthbert's arrival though it is always associated with his visit. The present church (probably the fourth on the site) was built in 1778 in the Georgian style, with a superb classical interior, though it retains a 14th century window. The church has a moving pulpit, on rails which is probably unique.

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Follow the street around St Cuthbert's Churchyard, along Heads Lane and emerge into **West Walls**. A few yards to your left is an opening in the wall, now leading to the car park – this was the **Sally Port**



West Walls is the sole survivor of the city walls which encircled and protected the city from Scots' attack on many occasions. At the foot of the impressively high wall today is a car park and railway line but in mediaeval times it was the marshy valley of the River Caldew, as shown in the old painting at the right. The **Sally Port** was a small gate letting defenders 'sally out' under cover of mist or darkness to destroy any siege weapons and generally disrupt the enemy's plans. It was against this section of city wall that the Scots attacked during the siege of 1315 – luckily their siege engines got bogged down in the marshy ground and their assault ladders were cast down by the defenders led by Sir Andrew de Harcla.

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On the fifth day of the siege, [the Scots] erected an engine for casting stones near the church of the Holy Trinity [the Cathedral], where their King had placed himself, and continually threw great stones towards the Caldew gate, and at the wall, but did no injury, or but little to those within, except that they killed one man. . . . In the meanwhile, the Scots erected a great berefray, in the manner of a tower, the height of which considerably exceeded that of the walls; . . . but it never drew near to the wall, for when it was drawn upon wheels over moist and clayey ground; there it stuck by reason of its weight, nor could it be drawn any further or occasion any inconvenience.



This description of the siege of 1315 is abridged and translated from the Lanercost Chronicle. The illustration showing Sir Andrew de Harcla's defence of the city is from the initial letter of the Charter given to the city by a grateful King Edward II afterwards.

On the ninth day of the siege . . . Lord James Douglas, a valiant and wary soldier, with certain of the more bold and alert of the army, posted themselves on the western side, over against the place of the canons and preaching friars [i.e West Walls], where, on account of the height [of the walls] and difficulty, an attack was not apprehended, and there erected long ladders which they ascended, and they had archers in great numbers, who discharged their arrows thickly, lest any one should raise his head above the wall: but, blessed be the Lord, they found such a resistance there, that they were thrown to the ground with their ladders, and there and elsewhere about the walls, some were taken, some slain, and others wounded. Yet no Englishman was killed during the whole siege, except one man struck with an arrow, and the one above mentioned, but a few were wounded. Thereupon, on the eleventh day . . . early in the morning [they] returned into their own land in confusion; leaving behind them all their warlike engines.

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From the Sally Port retrace your steps along West Walls and pause just beyond the junction with Heads Lane.



The **Tithe Barn** was provided by the Bishop of Carlisle to store the grain and other goods which were collected from the surrounding villages as part of the church's tax or tithe (tenth part). It was built conveniently near the West Walls Sally Port to allow the goods to enter the city without paying the city's tolls (tax) on goods entering the city by the main gates. The barn, restored by St Cuthbert's Church in the late 1960s, dates from about 1480 and some of the massive original oak timbers remain in place. It is open most Fridays for a coffee morning and is also used by Carlisle Methodists for their weekly worship

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From the Tithe Barn continue along West Walls, pausing at a convenient place to look out to the west towards the tall chimney



Shaddongate Mill (1835) symbolises the city's rapid economic growth in the early 19th century. The Mill (now converted to residential apartments) is 124 feet long, 58 feet wide, and 83 feet high, and with 351 windows. At the time it was the largest factory in the country. Built by Peter Dixon as a cotton mill, the firm employed over 8,000 by 1847, mostly outworkers. **Dixon's Chimney**, built about the same time as the mill, originally stood 305 feet high and was the tallest chimney in Europe. The right-hand photo shows mill workers' terraced houses in the nearby Denton Holme suburb of Carlisle.

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Carry on along West Walls as far as **the Deanery**, which is the tall building shown in the photo.



The Deanery is the modern name for the Prior's residence during the time the Cathedral was part of a Priory of Augustinian Canons (explained later). As rebuilt in the 15th century, the Priory incorporated a three storey fortified **Pele Tower** for the security of the Prior and the resident Canons in case of attack by the Scots. The Priory is open to the public on occasions and is worth seeing if only for the original painted ceiling in the Prior's Chamber (his office cum bedroom).

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Just beyond the Deanery, turn right into a narrow passage which leads to the **Abbey Gate** in Abbey Street



In 1122, a **Priory of Augustinian Canons** was established in Carlisle with a church dedicated to St Mary and the usual monastic buildings set around a cloistered square. From an early stage in its history, the Priory has been popularly known as the Abbey, hence Abbey Street and Abbey Gateway. The only entrance to the Priory was through this gateway at the junction of Abbey Street and Paternoster Row, the Priory being surrounded by a high wall. This gate was erected in 1528, the culmination of an extensive rebuilding which had begun in 1464. When the priory church became a Cathedral in 1133, this was still the only entrance, the public entering the Cathedral through its West Door without passing through the other priory buildings.

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Go through the Abbey Gateway and follow the path between the Fraternity (on your right) and the Cathedral



The space between the **Fraternity** and the Cathedral was once occupied by the Priory Cloisters, set round an open square. The only part remaining (shown on the photo) is probably a 19th century reconstruction. The upper part of the building known as the Fraternity was originally the Canons' Refectory (dining room) and the modern café is in the cellars below the Refectory. Most of the other Priory buildings have disappeared as has much of the Nave of the Cathedral.

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Turn your back on the Fraternity and look at the Cathedral



The **Priory Church of St Mary** was designated a **Cathedral** in 1133. The original building was of grey-white limestone and some stones of this colour can still be seen high up in the walls. There was extensive rebuilding in the 15th and again in the 19th century, replacing much of the limestone with red sandstone. After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1533, the priory buildings and Cathedral Nave (the public part – on your left) became dilapidated and ruinous and in the late 1630s, two thirds of the Nave was pulled down to repair the city walls in case of a Scots attack – only two of six bays remain (left photo). A new door was added in the 19th century (right photo) to replace the West Door which had been removed.

Make sure you put aside time to explore the Cathedral later – it is well worth doing so.
You can download a free step-by-step guide via www.hadriancoins.co.uk/Videos.htm

In the Footsteps of Time

Continue through the Cathedral Close and emerge onto Castle Street, then cross the road, turn left and continue as far as **Bookcase**, formerly the Headquarters of the **State Management System**



Like many of the new pubs, the Horse and Farrier was built with a bowling green alongside

In the First World War, an enormous munitions factory was built north of Carlisle. Thousands of the well-paid workers lodged in Carlisle and drunkenness became a serious problem, threatening public order and munitions production. In 1915, the State took over the breweries and public houses in the area and adopted draconian measures. After the War, a **State Management Scheme** was set up with its headquarters in the building now occupied by Bookcase. The SMS breweries made good-quality beer and their architect Harry Redfern built fifteen model pubs and re-designed many others to encourage responsible drinking. This ambitious and successful scheme finally ended in 1971 .

In the Footsteps of Time

Cross back over Castle Street and continue towards the Castle before entering the grounds of **Tullie House Museum** through an archway on your left



Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery was established by Carlisle City Council in the 1890s and was originally based in and around the late 17th century house of the Tullie Family (hence the name). The museum has extensive collections based around the themes of nature, history and art and some of their collections are of national and international importance. The museum was extended extensively in 1989-90 and again in 2000-01 with a new Roman Gallery displaying many of the finds from the Roman Fort underlying Castle Green. Some of the exhibits are outside the buildings such as this lawn which overlies one of the main streets of Roman Carlisle.

In the Footsteps of Time

Continue through the grounds of Tullie House and emerge into Abbey Street



Old Tullie House is a Grade 1 listed building dating from 1689 and was probably the first stone-built private house in the city, replacing or incorporating an older building. An oak staircase, several panelled rooms and a large fireplace from the house remain in place in the museum and the gardens are a peaceful haven away from the bustle of the city centre.

Abbey Street, named from the Abbey Gateway, has many houses and shops of the Georgian style. This style was fashionable between 1780 and 1830 when much of the city centre was rebuilt in stone, a building boom financed by increasing industrial prosperity.

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At the end of Abbey Street, look to your left to see the site of **Caldewgate** or **Irish Gate**



The Millennium Footbridge was built on the side of one of the three mediaeval gates through the city's defensive walls. This was the **Caldew Gate** (after the River just outside it) or alternatively the **Irish Gate** (travellers travelling to and from Ireland via the port of Whitehaven would have used this Gate). Nothing remains of the three gates except the names - the other two gates were Rickergate (or Scotch Gate) and Botchergate (or English Gate). The three gates and most of the town walls were pulled down between 1805 and 1815 to allow for the expansion of the city. A short section of wall is visible between the site of the Caldew Gate and the Castle and includes a solitary tower – the Tile Tower, built of narrow bricks (not tiles), and thought to be a better protection against gunfire than stone.

In the Footsteps of Time

At the end of Abbey Street, turn right and continue along Annetwell Street running parallel to the busy road.
Stop near the main entrance to Tullie House Museum and look across at **Carlisle Castle**



The first **castle** at Carlisle was built by William II (Rufus) in 1190 when he conquered the region. His castle was an earth and timber structure of the type known as a *Motte and Bailey*. The remains of his earthworks are visible below the stone walls you see today. About 1135, King David I of Scotland converted part of the castle to stone, building the Great Tower (or Keep) and putting stone walls round the inner bailey (roughly the right hand half of the photo). After King Henry II of England regained the castle in 1154, he completed the circuit of walls. The present gatehouse was built in the late 14th century and is a superb example of a defensive gatehouse with living accommodation above it.

Make sure you put aside time to explore the Castle later – it is well worth doing so.
You can download a free step-by-step guide via www.hadriancoins.co.uk/Videos.htm

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The dual carriageway means that the castle is as cut off from the rest of the city nowadays as it was in mediaeval times. However, near the entrance to Tullie House are steps down to a subway which will take you under the road and on to the castle. In this underground gallery, you will find many memories of Carlisle's past as a railway and engineering centre as well as memories of a more turbulent past dominated by Border Reivers (armed thugs from both sides of the border whose actions added words like *blackmail* and *bereaved* to our language) – the **cursing stone** is a tribute to the Bishop of Glasgow's attempt to curb their activities by placing them under a curse – well worth pausing for a good read.

In the Footsteps of Time

After passing the end of Castle Street, Annetwell Street becomes Finkle Street*.

At the far end of Finkle Street, turn right into Fisher Street.

*Finkle Street is a name that occurs in many ancient towns where there was once an abbey.

The name is thought to derive from the herb *fennel*, grown in monastic herb gardens for treating digestive disorders.



Carlisle has a long history of religious non-conformity. **George Fox**, founder of the Quaker Movement, preached in the Cathedral in 1653 and was imprisoned for blasphemy, narrowly escaping the death penalty. A Quaker Meeting House was set up in Abbey Close the same year but in 1702 it moved to Fisher Street where there were already two Quaker burial grounds. It was replaced by a larger Meeting House (now the Arches Café) at the city end of Fisher Street in the 1776. In the 1960s this property was sold (subject to restrictive covenants) and shortly afterwards the present Meeting House was opened at the castle end of Fisher Street on a burial ground bought in 1681. **John Wesley**, founder of Methodism, preached in another Fisher Street Chapel in 1788 and again in 1790.

In the Footsteps of Time

Walk up Fisher Street a little way, then immediately after you pass the car parks on the right hand turn right up the narrow **Long Lane**. You will emerge in Castle Street, alongside Bookcase



In mediaeval and more recent times, Carlisle was noted for its 'lanes' – narrow passageways leading from street to street and giving access to the yards and gardens behind the houses on the street fronts. Many of the old lanes have now been incorporated into the modern shopping centre called '*The Lanes*' but **Long Lane** is one of the few that retains its former character. It is reputedly haunted by Mary Queen of Scots who used it as an indirect route between the castle (where she was under house arrest) and the Cathedral where she was allowed to worship. Many of the large sandstone blocks in the wall along Long Lane are re-used building stones from Roman and Mediaeval buildings.

In the Footsteps of Time

From Long Lane, you will emerge in Castle Street, opposite **The Board Room** Public House.
Turn left and walk along Castle Street

The Boardroom, a traditional pub serving real ale and lunchtime food, is housed in an imposing building which illustrates many of the features of georgian architecture – a style which was fashionable between 1780 and 1830 when much of the city centre was rebuilt.

At this end of the city, the streets around Abbey St, Castle St and Fisher St provide lots of examples of georgian doorways, a few are illustrated – there are many more to spot.



In the Footsteps of Time

Continue along Castle Street, with good views of the Cathedral on your right.
When you reach the end of the Cathedral grounds, turn left into St Mary's Gate (inset photo)



Up to the 16th century, two thirds of the walled city of Carlisle was occupied by the Castle, the Cathedral and the Abbey, St Cuthbert's and two Houses of Friars - leaving very little space for shops and houses.

In the Footsteps of Time

At the end of St Mary's Gate, you are back in Fisher Street.

Look to your left to see the Victorian Market Hall and, beyond it, the former Methodist Central Hall



Carlisle's **Victorian Covered Market** (left photo) was built in the 1880s with an imposing three-span wrought iron and glass roof built by local engineering firm Cowans and Sheldon. It is one of the few Victorian markets to be still in use for its original purpose. It is thought the Market is built over the site of the Public Baths of Roman Carlisle.

The **Methodist Central Hall** (right photo) was opened in 1922 during the ministry of George Bramwell Evens (from 1914-26) and inspired by him. It was largely funded by the *Hovis* millionaire Joseph Rank. Evens was very active in denouncing the drunkenness that led to the nationalisation of the breweries and pubs in the First World War but is better known as the broadcaster *Romany* who featured on BBC Children's Hour from 1933 up to his death in 1943. The Methodist Central Hall, a Grade II listed building, closed in 2005.

In the Footsteps of Time

Turn right and continue along the pedestrianised part of Fisher Street towards the town centre



The whole length of **Fisher Street** was open to passenger traffic until the city centre was made pedestrian-only in the late 1980s. Driving down here was not for the feint-hearted. Now, this part of Fisher Street gives a good impression of how a mediaeval street must have looked – narrow, no side-walks, a central drain, overhanging buildings (well, at least one, the Mediaeval Guild Hall). Fortunately, apart from the odd piece of litter, there is no longer the accumulation of rubbish of all sorts which gave the mediaeval city authorities such problems. Look out for the **Fire Insurance Plaque** above the date stone on the wall of the building currently occupied by Sawyer's Chemist. It dates from the time when Insurance Companies ran their own Fire Brigades and would only put out 'their own' fires!

In the Footsteps of Time

Continue along the pedestrianised part of Fisher Street towards the town centre



The building which incorporates the Arches Coffee Shop is **Kinmont Barn**. Dating from 1702 it was the Quaker Meeting House with a burial ground behind it. The building was rebuilt and enlarged in 1776 and continued in use as a Quaker Meeting House until the 1960s. The upstairs rooms, open to the roof, show the timber structure of the barn. The open square behind is now known as Treasury Court – so named because it held the City Treasurer's Offices until the Civic Centre was built in the 1960s.

The History of the **King's Head** was be traced back to the 17th century but there was almost certainly an earlier ale-house on the site, possibly as early as the 10th century. Serving a variety of real ale and food at lunchtime, the King's Head was voted City Pub of the Year in 2008, 09, 10, 11 and 2012 by the Solway Branch of CAMRA.

In the Footsteps of Time

Continue along the pedestrianised part of Fisher Street and make your way back to the town centre



There are some interesting alleyways leading off this part of Fisher Street to the left

Rosemary Lane (left photo, leading to Scotch Street) was described on a deed of 1201 but the name is not recorded until the late 18th century. Its dog-legged shape was necessary to deviate around land belonging to St Alban's Chapel. Rosemary is an aromatic herb once used to sweeten smelly streets and also used for digestive ailments.

St Alban's Chapel is mentioned in a deed of 1201. It was demolished in 1549. **St Alban's Row** is first mentioned as a street name in 1660.



In the Footsteps of Time

Walk right along the pedestrianised centre to the far end and then continue to the Court Houses



In the early 16th century King Henry VIII, fearing another Scots invasion, sent his German military engineer north to improve the defences of Carlisle in the new age of gunpowder. He adapted the Castle, building a ramp to get cannon up to the battlements, adding the Half Moon Battery to protect the inner gate and replacing the battlements with bullet-absorbing turf. To strengthen the approach to the city from the south he built a completely new fortification – **the Citadel**, pictured on the right. At the start of the 19th century, this fortification was perceived to be a hindrance to the increasing traffic entering and leaving the city and was demolished, to be replaced by the twin drum-shaped towers either side of a new wide thoroughfare. These towers held the **Court Houses** which is their modern name but the name Citadel is preserved in Citadel Square and Citadel Station.

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At the Court Houses, turn right and the Citadel Station is in front of you.



In 1847, Carlisle's **Citadel Railway Station** was opened, just outside the old city walls. From the start it was intended that the station would be shared by several independent railway companies. They all said it wouldn't work – but it did and by the end of the century, no less than seven companies shared the station. The **Station Hotel**, visible at the left of the 1847 engraving was built at the same time.



In the Footsteps of Time

You have now come to the end of this tour which has taken you round much of the walled city of Carlisle as shown on this 16th century map.

If you want more, you can download the following free guides, etc from:

www.hadriancoins.co.uk/Videos.htm

A Short Guide to Carlisle Castle

A Short Guide to Carlisle Cathedral

Thank you for taking the time to read through this short guide. We hope you continue to enjoy your visit to our city and that you will return to visit us again before too long.



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More E-books from John Higham

John Higham taught History in Birmingham, Oswestry and Liverpool before moving to Cumbria in 1968 to become Head of History at the then Nelson Thomlinson Grammar School in Wigton, a position he held for the next 18 years before taking early retirement to open an antiques shop, *Souvenir Antiques* in Carlisle with his wife Julie, eventually specialising in antique maps and in roman coins.

The following E-books are based on their specialist interests:

The Antique Maps of Cumberland and Westmorland

Antique Engravings of the City of Carlisle

The Postcards of Edward H. Thompson

Some Antique Engravings of Keswick and District

A Guide to the Coins of the Roman Empire

In the early years of this century, he began to teach (mainly) local history to adult education students in Carlisle with the emphasis on practical history – *where to go, what to see* and *how it all fits in* - based on his experience of leading groups of all ages round historical sites in Britain and Europe.

E-books based on these courses are:

Visit Cumbria's Past

Explore Hadrian's Wall

Discover Northern Castles

Ostia Antica, the Port of Ancient Rome

Virgin Queen to Merry Monarch

1066 – the Story of a Year

Details of these e-books together with links for download are all on the souvenirantiques website (link below). You can see those already published at <http://payhip.com/johnhigham>

At the end of 2013, the Carlisle shop had to close, mainly because of building developments. The couple continue to trade online via these three websites:

www.souvenirantiques.co.uk

www.cumbriamaps.co.uk

www.hadriancoins.co.uk