

Things you might not know about Carlisle and Hadrian's Wall Country...

The most visible remains of **Hadrian's Wall** are mostly in Cumbria. It is **73 miles long** and was built nearly **2000 years** ago. Now a World Heritage Site and the most important structure built by the Romans in Britain, it's a great place to visit. With its many forts and milecastles Hadrian's Wall was the most strongly defended frontier in the Roman Empire.

Carlisle Castle was built in 1092 by William Rufus, son of William the Conqueror.

Carlisle's **Citadel** was first built by **Henry VIII**

Lanercost Priory was founded by Augustinian canons in 1169 and is largely built of stone from **Hadrian's Wall**.

Founded as an Augustinian monastery, **Carlisle Cathedral is the second smallest in England**. With some very impressive features it was given cathedral status in **1133**.

During the Dark Ages Britain was divided into small kingdoms, one of the largest and most important being **Rheged** which extended over much of North West England; hence, the Rheged Centre at Penrith, well worth a visit.

Carlisle is the only English city not featured in the **Domesday book of 1086** as it was part of the kingdom of Strathclyde at the time.

During Medieval times, Carlisle was a **walled city** with gated entrances to the north.

In the 12th and 13th Centuries, Carlisle had its own **mint**, and pennies were minted here using silver **mined in Alston**.

Between the 14th and late 17th century the area between the Scottish and English border was a frontier lacking law and order! For the **Border Reivers** stealing (reiving) was simply a way of life. From this violent time of Border history we get the term bereaved – from to 'be reived'

In 1568 **Mary Queen of Scots** was kept at Carlisle Castle for 8 weeks.

Carlisle **Railway Station** which opened in 1847, was designed by Sir William Tite who also designed the London Stock Exchange.

The **first pillar-box** in England was erected in Botchergate in 1853 it can be seen outside the Tourist Info Centre.

The Carlisle Bells are England's **oldest horseracing trophies** and are now kept at The Guildhall Museum.

The North Pennines is the second largest **AONB** (designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and is home to a large percentage of England's **black grouse**.

The **Solway Coast** has the third largest estuary in England, a highly important habitat home to the rare **Natterjack toad**. Also sighted offshore are seals, dolphins and porpoise.

Since Roman times Alston and the surrounding area was mined for lead, silver, anthracite and coal. In the 18th century, there were in excess of 100 mines in the area. **Nenthead Mines** and Heritage Centre is well worth a visit.

Gilsland used to be a fashionable Victorian spa destination, today a network of footpaths through Irthing Gorge Woods at Gilsland Spa is an enjoyable place to visit and see the Popping Stone, where **Sir Walter Scott** 'popped' the question to his future wife.

Talkin Tarn is a glacier formed tarn which once housed a wrestling ring and bathing house. Visitors will now find tearooms, gift shop and boat hire facilities there.