

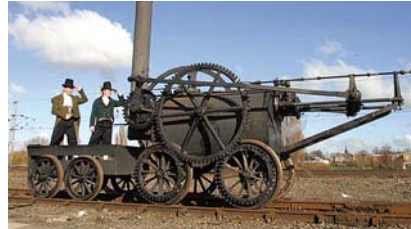
Exploring York's Railway Heritage

Life before the Transport Revolution

York has been a hub of transport communications since the Romans established the city in AD71, linking it to an efficient road system and making use of its waterways. But until the railways were established in the early part of the nineteenth century, people could only travel as fast as their feet or a horse could take them. In the early eighteenth century, a stagecoach journey from York to London took 3 to 4 days, though by the end of the century innovations in road construction and coach design had shortened the journey-time to around 36 hours.

Early Development of the Railways

In 1804 Richard Trevithick demonstrated that a mobile steam engine powered by coal could run on a permanent way of iron. With so many horses enlisted in the Napoleonic wars, horse power was becoming more expensive. North of Newcastle upon Tyne a mining engineer called George Stephenson experimented with steam power. If coal could be fed to a mobile steam engine to replace the horse's pulling power the problem would be solved. Stephenson was successful and, in 1825, constructed the Stockton to Darlington railway to move coal in quantity. By 1830 Stephenson had gone on to build the first passenger railways to service the large industrial towns of Manchester and Liverpool with a new engine designed by his son Robert. It was called Rocket



Hudson, Leeman and York's great railway story

Having received a large inheritance George Hudson, a young draper from York, decided to invest in the new North Midland Railway. The venture was a success and Hudson began plans to bring cheap coal to York by railway to help York catch up with the industrial boom towns of West Yorkshire.

By chance Hudson met George Stephenson and persuaded him that a railway from York to the coalfields near Selby would be profitable. The first railway connecting York to the Leeds and Selby line was opened in 1839 and by 1841, York was linked all the way to London. Hudson pressed on with more speculation, opening the line from York to Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1844 and, by then owning over 1,000 miles of track, he gained the title 'The Railway King'. Eventually, however, the bubble burst, profits fell and investigations began into Hudson's misuse of shareholders' money. He was forced to resign from his companies and in 1866 found himself in the debtors prison now occupied by York Castle Museum

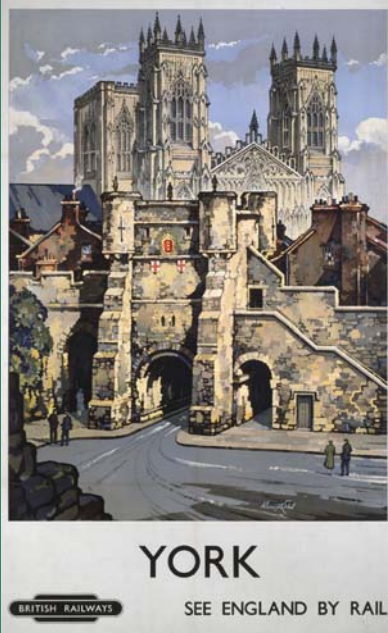
In spite of Hudson's decline York was by now established as an important railway city. The formation of the North Eastern Railway company in 1854, led by George Leeman, Hudson's arch-rival and political enemy, furthered York's rail links by cutting the journey time to London to 5 hours. By now the railways had become a major employer in York, in 1880 the railway engineering and carriage works in Holgate employed up to 5,500 staff. During the twentieth century, the UK's national railway network was re-organised three times. However, railways remain an important contributor to the local economy both as an employer and provider of services. The long railway tradition has laid the foundations for the modern industry in the city to thrive.



This is York
Exploring York's Railway Heritage

www.visityork.org/explore

The Start of the Walk is at Exhibition Square



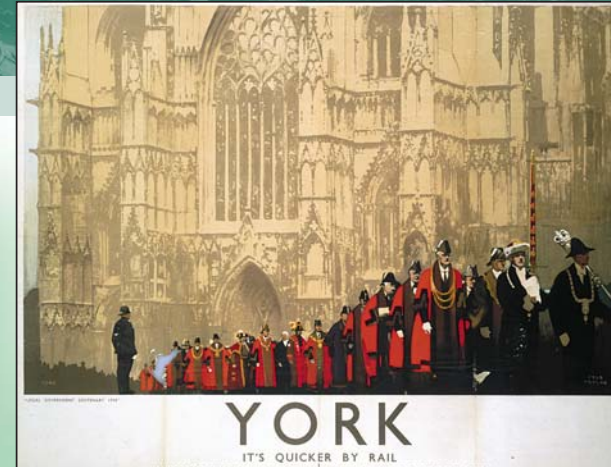
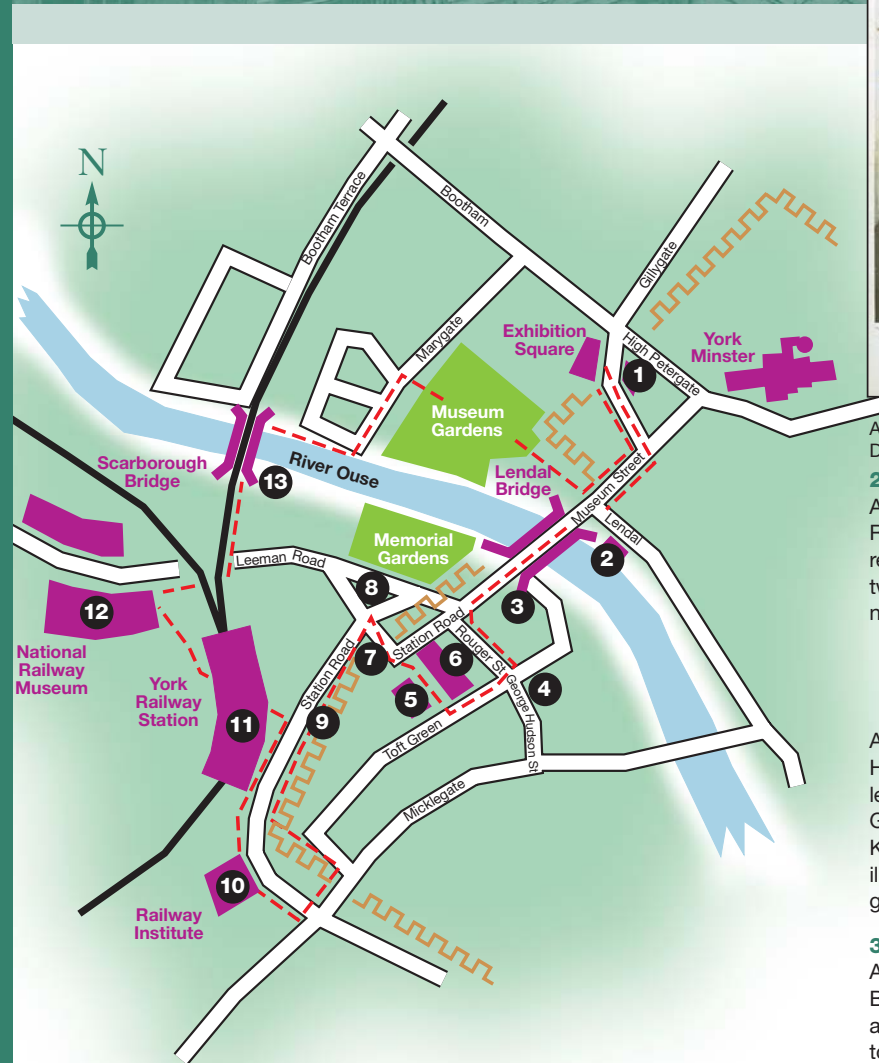
1. The De Grey Rooms and Exhibition Square

Colonel De Grey of the York Hussars gave his name to the De Grey Rooms, which were built as the Officers' Mess in 1842, by G T Andrews, and paid for by public subscription. The building was used by the Railway King, George Hudson for many of his railway meetings.

It has been an appropriate home for the tourist information centre as the tourism industry was born of rail travel. Within a couple of years of the arrival, in 1839, of the first railways in York, excursions were arriving from as far off as Manchester, Leicester, Nottingham and even London. The railways also brought both lavish theatre productions and wider audiences to York. The Theatre Royal flourished and was rebuilt four times during the 19th Century. The Art Gallery hosted two Fine Art and Industrial exhibitions in 1860 and 1879, attracting 338,000 and 530,000 visitors respectively, demonstrating the new mass mobility of the railway age.

Location for the start of the walk which is 10 minutes walk from the Railway Station, close to car parks at Marygate and Union Terrace and very close to the Park & Ride terminus on Museum Street (Green Line).

Exploring York's Railway Heritage



A railway excursions poster depicting Mayor-making Day in York

2. Lendal

At the bottom of Lendal is York's Post Office, built in 1884. The Royal Mail was quick to take advantage of the transport revolution brought by the railway and by the mid-1860's York had two postal deliveries a day; a letter posted in London before noon was delivered in York the same evening!

*This is the Night Mail crossing the border,
Bringing the cheque and the postal order...
(W H Auden - born in York in 1907)*

Almost next door is the distinctive red and cream Mansion House, home to the Lord Mayor of York since 1730 and legendary for lavish banquets during the reign, as Mayor, of George Hudson in 1837, '38 and '46. In May 1837 the Railway King celebrated Victoria's birthday with spectacular gas flare illuminations and followed this in June with a feast for 14,000 guests to celebrate her coronation as Queen.

3. Lendal Bridge

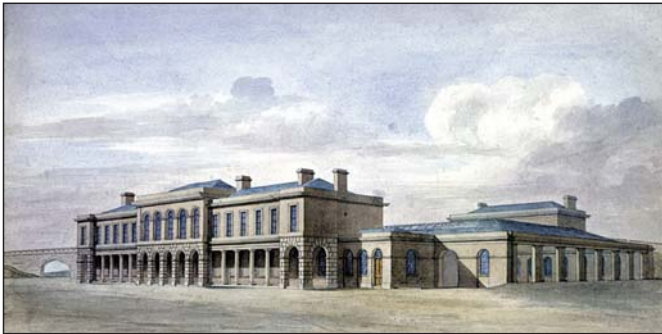
An example of Victorian cast iron technology at its best, Lendal Bridge was finally completed in 1863 by Mr Thomas Page (after an earlier ill-fated attempt by a Mr Dredge). The bridge was built to provide better access to the centre of York from the railway station, which at that time, lay inside the city walls at Toft Green. The project was championed by George Hudson through delays, wrangles over finances and opposition from the Leeman family, the local ferry owners.



4 George Hudson Street

Just off Station Road is George Hudson Street, named after the Railway King, who at one time co-owned a third of Britain's railways. With the help of a £30,000 inheritance (£5 million today), George Hudson, the draper, transformed himself into the most famous speculator of the railway mania era. However, questionable business dealings eventually brought about the downfall of the Railway King who fell into disrepute and bankruptcy.

On his fall from grace in 1849, George Hudson Street was renamed Railway Street, but in 1971, a century after his death, York partly forgave George Hudson and the street was given back its original name.



The old station before the hotel was built

5. The Old Station and the first Royal Station Hotel, Tanner Row

Through the railings on Tanner Row you can see the old York Railway Station, which was built in 1840 and continued in use until the 1950s. The platforms were demolished in 1966. In 1852, the first Station Hotel was added to the front of the station. It acquired the "Royal" title when Queen Victoria and her entourage stopped by in September 1854 en route from Buckingham Palace to her beloved Balmoral Castle.



6. The Railway Headquarters, Station Road

Facing the old Royal Station Hotel stands the grand former headquarters of the North Eastern Railway (NER), "a huge palace of business", which was completed in 1906. The shields and badges carved above the entrance and on the Station Road side of the building tell the story of the many early railway companies which amalgamated in 1854 to form the NER. The NER itself became part of The London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) in 1923 following the amalgamation of 123 pre-war rail companies into the "big four" regional companies.

The building itself is a mix of architectural styles; Dutch gables and balconies, Queen Anne embellishments and topped with a fine gilded weathervane. A smaller replica of this building was built in Coney Street, Westminster as the NER's London office. It is now the Liberal Democrat Party HQ.

7. The Lutyens Memorial

To commemorate the 2,236 men of the NER who died during the 1914-18 war, the company commissioned the eminent Sir Edwin Lutyens, who had built the Cenotaph in Whitehall, London. Work began in 1923 and to overcome aesthetic concerns by the Council a full-scale mock-up of the memorial was first constructed in wood. The memorial occupies the site of the original York station coal depot and carriage sidings.

8. Statue of George Leeman

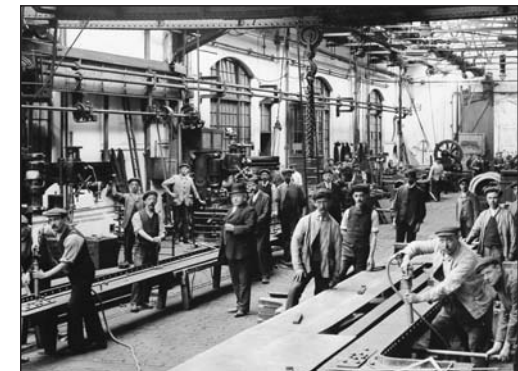
Walk through the opening in the bar walls (made prior to the opening of the new station in 1877 to allow access to it from Lendal Bridge) and cross the road to meet another great contributor to York's railway story, George Leeman. Chairman of the NER, MP and Lord Mayor of York three times, Leeman was also the arch-rival of George Hudson and chiefly responsible for his exposure and downfall.



9. The view from the Bar Walls

Inside the bar walls we can see an area, now filled with railway related administration buildings, which for many years from 1840 onwards was home to the busy lines, soot, smoke and bustle of the old York railway terminal. Trains approached through two arched piercings made in the historic walls and reversed back out to continue their journeys onward to Newcastle and Scotland.

Outside the parapets, stands the new York Railway Station (1877) and the enormous Royal Station Hotel, which was completed one year later in 1878. The octagonal hotel entrance (with elaborate patterned tiling) right next to the station welcomed guests direct from the platform at their journey's end. The building is now called the Royal York Hotel. Continue along the Walls to Micklegate Bar.



10. The Railway Institute, Queen Street

"While billiards are good study is better"

In 1889, under the direction of George Leeman and inspired by Victorian values of "instruction and self improvement", the NER built the Railway Institute on the site of the Railway Tavern. Removing the tavern itself was an important motive as the men of the locomotive and wagon works on Queen Street were known to be tempted by "the demon drink" even before arriving at their workbenches. The Institute had a "well stocked library and a reading room well supplied with various periodicals and newspapers" (G. Leeman).



11. York Station

“Never since the building of the glorious Minster centuries ago had so immense and noble a structure reared its head in York” (The Yorkshire Gazette June 1877)

When the *new* station opened in 1877 it was the largest station in the country and seen by many as “a monument to extravagance”. By 1910, however, 352 trains per day were running through York and the platforms had grown to be nearly 1700 ft long.

A plaque outside the waiting room tells of the heroic efforts of the station foreman, William Milner, during the Great York Air Raid, which took place in the early hours of 29 April 1942, when the Luftwaffe attempted to cut the vital East Coast Main Line at York. The original tearooms are now occupied by York Model Railway.



York Station after the air raid 1942



12. The National Railway Museum

The NRM is the largest museum of its kind in the world. The NRM collections are vast and diverse, ranging from an Aladdin's Cave of railway objects in the Warehouse to a superb collection of Royal carriages in the Station Hall (York's former bustling Leeman Road Goods Station). The Great Hall of the NRM largely covers numbers 3 and 4 roundhouses of the former York North Motive Power Depot. Inside you will find legendary locomotives such as the Flying Scotsman, the Duchess of Hamilton and the record-breaking Mallard and an original turntable which is demonstrated twice daily.

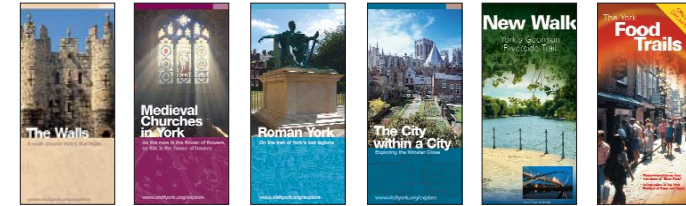


13. Returning to the City Centre

From the N.R.M. you can return to the city by road train (in season). or taxi. If you would prefer to return by foot . leave the N.R.M. main entrance, walk under the mainline bridge and left along the alley to the river. Cross over Scarborough Bridge, which was designed by Robert Stephenson in 1845 and led to the growth of the Victorian seaside resort. Incidentally, the resident engineer for the Scarborough line was Alfred Dickens whose famous elder brother Charles was a frequent visitor to Victorian York.

Exploring York

York has a rich and colourful history that dates right back to Roman times. All around are clues to its past. Walking through the streets of York is the best ways to unravel its many stories and to savour the rich architecture and archaeology at every turn.



Exploring York walking trails are available from the Tourist Information Centres and other outlets in York. All the trails are available online from, www.visitYork.org/explore

Tourist Information Centre

To book accommodation in York and for all other visitor enquiries;

Tel: 01904 621756

Website: www.visitYork.org

Park and Ride Bus Services

Buses run every 10 minutes or less

White Line (from Askham Bar on the A64)	01904 707726
Yellow Line (from Grimston Bar on the A1079)	01904 431388
Green Line (from Hawcliffe Bar on the A19)	01904 541333
Red Line (from the Designer Outlet A19 / A64)	01904 551400

Shopmobility / Disabled Access

Visitors are welcome to use the excellent facilities of the Shopmobility scheme. Scooters, powered wheelchairs or manual wheelchairs are available. Shopmobility is located on level 2, Piccadilly Car Park. Tel: 01904 679222

Useful Telephone Numbers

• All emergencies	999
• York Police Station	01904 631321
• York District Hospital	01904 631313
• Lost property city centre	01904 551677

Acknowledgements

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