

10 Leisure Walks of Discovery A Boot Up THE NORTHUMBERLAND COAST

Anthony Toole

The Northumberland coastline, from the mouth of the Tyne to Berwick upon Tweed, has its share of craggy cliffs and long, sandy beaches. Yet once one moves beyond the Tyneside conurbation in the south, it has the feel of a neglected beauty. Much of the scenery of the Northumberland coast derives from its rich industrial heritage, as everywhere can be seen the quarries from which the coal and limestone were harvested. In most places these have been reclaimed by Nature, and are now thriving wildlife reserves.

The ten selected walks, varying in length from 2 to 5 miles, suit the needs of families, groups of friends or individuals looking for a gentle stroll or a longer walk and together cover the full spectrum of what the coast has to offer. They can be enjoyed during half a day, or combined with a few hours on a beach, and in most cases could be shortened without loss of essential character.

Halsgrove's new-format guidebook, containing maps, photographs and useful information will ensure a great walking experience. Packed with colour, the book is an ideal reminder of a visit to the area.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Toole lives in Newcastle upon Tyne, and spends much of his time walking in and writing about the hills of the north-east. He contributes walk descriptions regularly to *BBC Countryfile Magazine* and also contributed to the AA publication, *50 Walks in Durham and Northumberland*. He writes outdoor features for *The Northumbrian*, *The Countryman* and *North-east Life* magazines. He is a prizewinning member of Outdoor Writers' and Photographers' Guild and Writers and Photographers Unlimited.

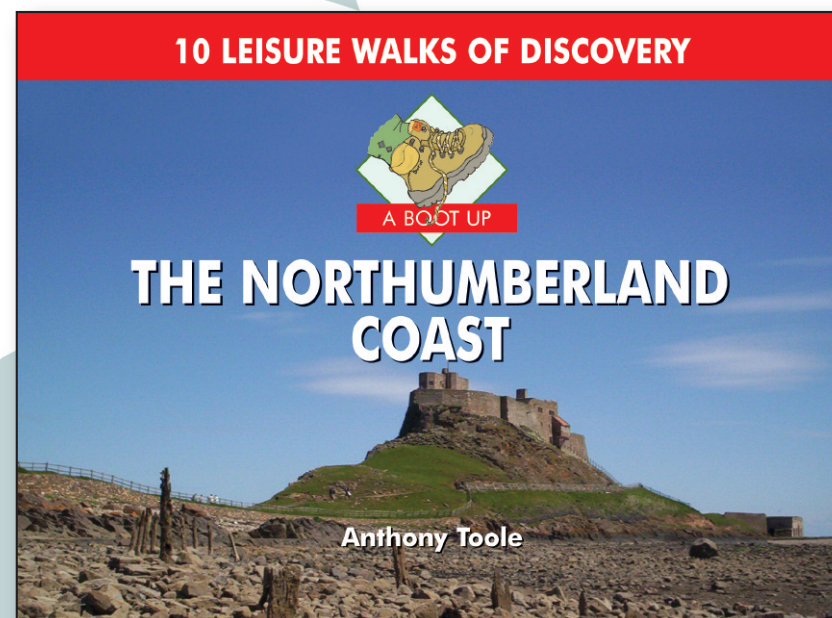
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A BOOT UP THE NORTHUMBERLAND COAST



Charlie's Rock



River Coquet and Warkworth Castle



Right: Crag Point and Old Hartley



St Mary's Island from causeway



Bamburgh beach

1 North Shields and Tynemouth

Tynemouth Castle was founded as a Benedictine monastery in 1090 AD. Later fortified, it continuously guarded the mouth of the Tyne against invasion, until as recently as 1960.

7 Follow the road from the car park (NW) around the west of the bay, then carry on uphill for 200 metres, past the castle and the Gibraltar Rock Hotel, and follow the road around the rim of King Edward's Bay, which is almost enclosed by tall cliffs. On windy days, the waves are amplified by being funnelled into the bay, making this a popular venue for surfers.

8 Continue around the neat rocky headland for 300 metres to the southern tip of Long Sands Beach, which runs for a kilometre as far as the former fishing village of Calleroots. Beneath you is the now abandoned open-air swimming pool.

9 The road now curves round to the west, and in a further 200 metres comes to a roundabout. Cross

2 Whitley Bay

A pleasant 3.5-mile walk along the sea front of a faded, yet still attractive seaside resort.

Though much smaller, Whitley Bay once rivaled Blackpool as a holiday destination for people from north-west England and southern Scotland. The Spanish City was built in 1910 as a permanent playground, and throughout the 20th century, it thrived. But from the 1980s, like most other resorts, it began a slow decline. Now, all that remains are the Dome and a small row of amusement arcades, cafes and chip shops on the adjacent Marine Avenue. However, regeneration is under way, and the sea front is once again an attractive venue for a walk or a day at the beach.

St Mary's Island, when accessible, is a rock-pool wonderland. Its lighthouse,

12

10 Continue south past this, and after 100 metres, turn right (W) to return to the Metro station.

13

Whitley Bay

Level: 15 m

Distance: 1.5 miles

Notes: Seaside pavements, concrete promenades and sandy beach. Shows signs of St Mary's Island is exposed.

Peak & start: See first car park on The Links, Whitley Bay.

Start ref: 42 351729

Public transport: Regular buses and bus services from Newcastle.

Website: <http://www.whitleybay.co.uk>

Map: <http://www.tynesidetravel.co.uk>

Example of a double-page spread.