

kiln on the left.

The Lime kiln was built around 1827 and was used by the Selby family to supply lime to the Biddlestone estate, but due to competition from commercial kilns and the high operating costs it was no longer used after 1866.

In Northumberland the practice of liming farmland dates back to the 17th century. Burnt lime was used to 'sweeten' acid soil to produce better crops and improve rough pasture. Agricultural burning of limestone was a small scale enterprise. Landowners built the kilns to provide lime mainly for their own estates.

Follow the bridleway up past Park House on your right into a field with hedge on left. Descend through a small wood to a lodge house on right and continue on the track by river for 200yds to a foot bridge. Cross the river and follow track to the right and join the road at the east end of Harbottle village.

You will hear the voices of the following people who shared their memories and stories for the **OUT OF TOWN MUSEUM** project.



Dr. John Smail remembers growing up in Harbottle and his Father's wasted winter journey.



Andrew Miller worked for the Forestry Commission and reflects on its impact on the landscape and ecology of the area.



Bob Burston recalls the campaign against nuclear waste dumping in the Cheviot Hills and a tale of a former vicar of Alnham.



Anne Dunn explains why there was a temporary village erected at 'The Barrier' just outside Alwinton.



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## OUT OF TOWN MUSEUM

### Walk In Their Shoes Harbottle and the Drake Stone



An exhilarating ascent to the Drake Stone with fine views to the east, a visit to Alwinton Church and a gentle stroll back along the River Coquet back to Harbottle.

The young doctor, the wrong trees and a long winter journey.

Time	3 - 3.5hrs
Distance	4.17 miles
Difficulty	Moderate
Ascent	150m
Terrain	Track and grass paths

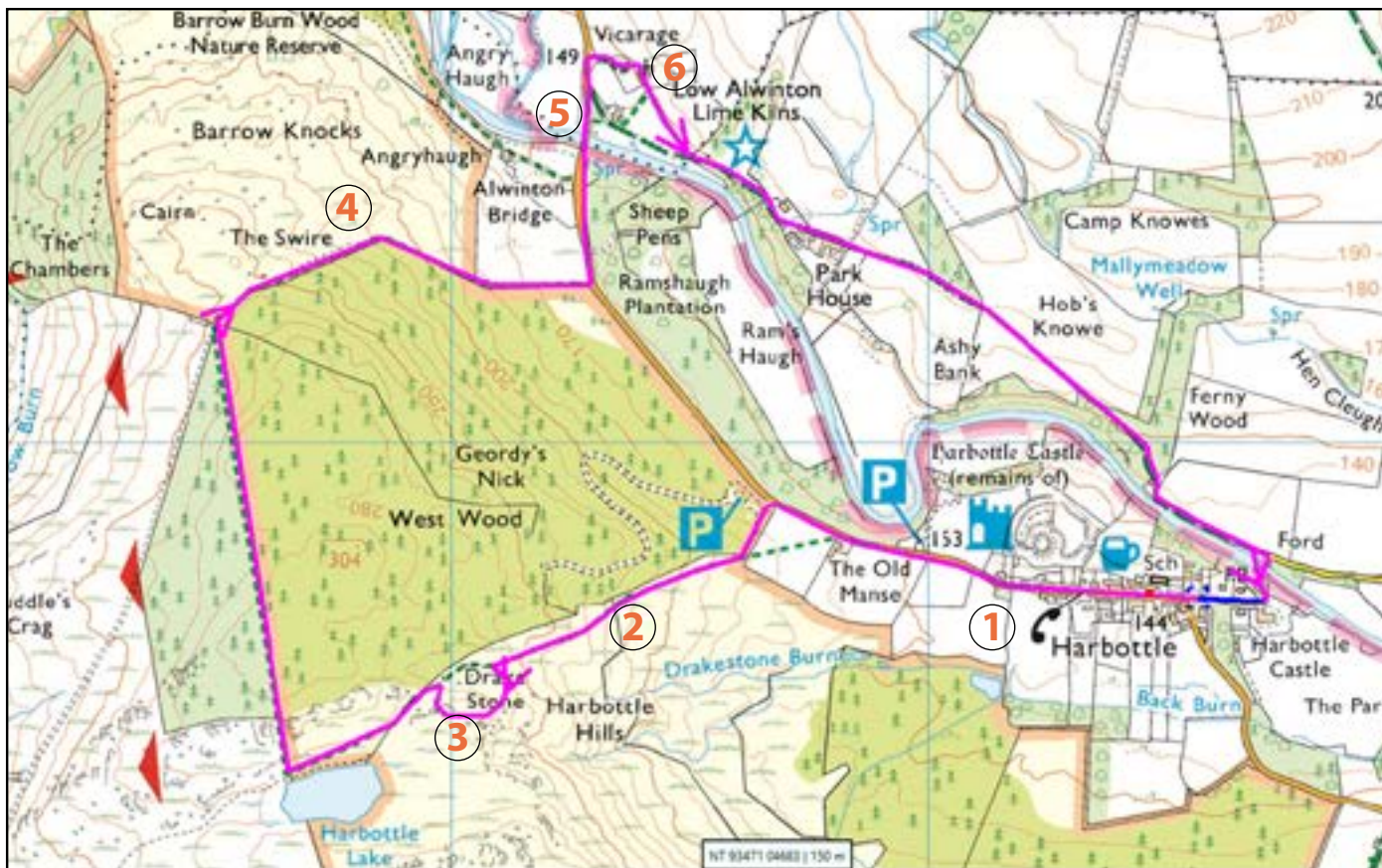
A steep ascent to the Drake Stone. Strong footwear recommended. Park on Harbottle main street NT934046.

Leave no litter.

Take only photographs and memories.

Please respect this ancient landscape and leave the stones as you find them. To protect wildlife and farm animals, please keep your dog on a lead at all times. Thank You.





Select the audio at the numbered locations

- 1 John Smail - The Doctor's Son
- 2 Andrew Miller - A Depleted Landscape
- 3 Bob Burston - The Cheviot Hills Campaign
- 4 John Smail - Gone to the Pictures
- 5 Anne Dunn - A Temporary Village
- 6 Bob Burston - A Vicar's Tale

Park on main street near the Star Inn. Walk west and stop almost next door at the memorial fountain. Play **AUDIO 1**.

Continue through village past Harbottle Castle on

A castle first occupied the site from the 12th century when Henry II ordered Odinel de Umfraville to build a 'strong castle' at Harbottle. This was probably a simple timber motte and bailey.

By 1200 the castle was built in stone. Following the Act of Union in 1603 the castle fell into ruin with the stone used for dwellings in the village.

your right and cross the road to Northumberland National Park car park. Follow the track up a short steep stretch to join a path and continue with fence and plantation on your right. Pause at a seat about half way up and look back over Harbottle. Play **AUDIO 2**.

Follow a steep path up until it levels off and detour left to Drake Stone with fine views over Harbottle and surrounding area. Play **AUDIO 3**.

The Drake Stone, originally called the Dragon stone or Draak's stone, was reputed to have been used by druids. The massive sandstone boulder was deposited here by a glacier during the last Ice Age. Northumberland's largest single outcrop of fell sandstone, 9 metres high and in excess of 2000 tons. It is said to have magical healing powers dating back to the time of the Druids. One being that sick children passed over the Stone would be cured.

If you have binoculars look west over Harbottle Lake onto the army training ranges and you will see what might be a dummy village or depot. Return to the path and continue with Harbottle Lake to your left. At a stone wall at west end of lake turn right up a steepish path to enter West Wood plantation. Descend through plantation to emerge from the wood onto a track. Take care during the descent as the wood was badly damaged by Storm Arwen and there may still be a considerable amount of debris across the path which in places is steep. Watch your footing. Play **AUDIO 4**.

Turn right and descend on the track to the road. Turn left to the bridge over the River Coquet. Play **AUDIO 5**.

Continue along the road for 150yds and turn right to Alwinton Church. Play **AUDIO 6**.

There is a toilet on your right just before entering the churchyard. Leave by a small gate in the south corner of the churchyard to join a bridleway alongside river. Continue on to an impressive lime



injection what do you give her? And he gave me the thing and it was sterile water and that's what he injected once a month. This cured her problems.

My father believed in coloured tablets, not white tablets. Coloured tablets were better. They worked better. If you believe in something, then it works. My father spent more time, in fact, talking to patients. He preferred to talk through things with them, whether it takes half an hour or whatever. Much better to talk a thing through.

### ⑤ Anne Dunn

The Ministry bought, the first farms they got, were in 1911, but in the early 1950's they bought a lot more because they realised that it was ideal training area for what the soldiers needed.

That was after the 2nd World War that, you know, they trained a lot up here before the 2nd World War and that. They needed more area so they acquired more farms and the shepherds cottages were a way out, actually on the firing area. So they built a little village, just above Alwinton. What they called it, they always called it 'The Barrier.' Why that, because there used to be a barrier across the road obviously, and there was a big flat area and there were like wooden, chalet places, wooden huts, and the families moved down there during the day from, from the farms.

Those houses were all built. There was Fulhope, two at Blindburn, Barrowburn, two at Shillmoor, two at Quickening, and two at Linnbriggs. They built ten houses up there in the 1950s for the shepherds to move off the hills. Sometimes they'd go back and they might be damage done to the houses, or round about the houses where there had been shells. It would be quite difficult for the families but they all seemed to accept it. You know, you just moved from one house to the other.

You would have stuff in both but it would be basic. But life was basic in those days. You didn't have all the fancy gadgets and all the televisions and all the stuff like that. As long as there was a fireplace and you could put the kettle on and have a cup of tea,

people managed. They didn't know any other.

### ⑥ Bob Burston

The last vicar of Alnham was a gentleman called Lord Wolseley. He was an Irish peer. And Lord Wolseley had fought in the First World War and he'd been badly shell-shocked and he struggled with the experiences of war for the rest of his life. He lived at the old vicarage there, the vicarage at Alnham, I think I'm right in saying, up to the early 50s.

There were some lovely stories about Lord Wolseley. He was a faithful parish priest and he was a very big framed man apparently and his wife was a diminutive soul.

She used to go to church and Lord Wolseley. would sometimes be carried away during his sermons concerning time and his wife used to raise her wrist into the air and tap her watch with her finger to tell him it was time to finish and when he didn't stop her next sign was to lean down to her handbag and get a white handkerchief out and wave her white handkerchief at him. And when he still didn't stop, she would lean down, pick up her handbag, walk out and slam the door.

Dorothy Sordy told me that story. Dorothy, God bless her soul, also told me that when she was courting Harry, Harry lived at Alnham, one day. Dorothy was sent by Harry to see the vicar to put their banns in and she couldn't get any answer at the vicarage door. The door was wide open, it was open all the time apparently, but there were no answers. So, she stepped back from the doorway and then a window opened from upstairs and Lord Wolseley leant out the window and Dorothy said she was rather shy at the time and said, Vicar I've come to put my banns in I'm to be married to Harry. To which Lord Wolseley replied "Go away and come back another time I'm in bed with my wife."

And yet, I know from the way Dorothy told me those stories there was a great love of Wolseley in Alnham.

### ① John Smail

My Father, he bought it from the previous doctor who, an elderly gentleman, and he built a surgery on to the house. The house had no gas, no electricity of course, so it was all gas lamps, candles and this sort of thing. It was on the front street, half way up the village, so village life revolved around it, the surgery and probably the pub just more or less opposite.

It was a nice spot. Got to know a lot of the neighbours, even as a young lad, because I pretended to be a doctor at the time. Brought up in that belief and I used to go up and down the street in my pedal car and I do remember Marty and Bella who had a little shop just up the road. They had a problem with a boil and I prescribed a bread poultice, which was an old way of doing things. I believe it worked and as a little lad of, I would think I was only about 3 at the time, it's amazing.

But the house itself it backed onto fields, the sawmill below. We kept hens, we had 2 pigs. The pigs were of use when, a period when, Harbottle was cut off for a period of a month. My Father, the local vicar and the local squire went out shooting for deer. Our pigs were slaughtered so that we could keep all the inhabitants of the village, you know, enough for them to eat. And of course, the hens laid eggs and that helped also.

So it was a very nice period where the whole village are together and it just, this is what's lovely about this part of the world and Upper Coquetdale. You get to know all sorts of people.

### ② Andrew Miller

Probably most families in the valley had somebody that worked for the Forestry Commission because we were still at the height of the expansion of the modern forestry plantations. Probably I think at the time I was planting about 1500 Sitka Spruce a day in places like Uswayford, at the top of the Coquet there, all on new ground, beautiful open moorland that had been ploughed and taken in for forestry. I then spent the rest of my career trying to find a way to take those all away again. I loved it of course at the time

and enjoyed doing the practical work and working with all the other local guys.

But of course at the same time, as time moved on I began to learn more about conservation, my passion and how actually many of these things were probably the wrong thing or the wrong tree in the wrong place and so all these thousands of Sitka Spruce we were planting were probably the wrong thing to be doing. We became in the UK expert at converting very poor land into modern productive forestry. But of course that was we now know at the expense of things like peatland habitats, the problems with water coming off with all these plough lines taking the water very quickly off the hillside where we see more of these sort of flash floods that can be quite harmful further down and we get flooding in Rothbury now. All partly as a result of this work that was done in the 50s, 60s and early 70s.

So now government policy changes there's lots of work going on locally, take the exotic Sitka Spruce off and maybe plant or allow regeneration of native woodland as well. Really significant changes just in my lifetime in terms of what we think about the right thing to do for forestry.

Maybe if you are new into the area you would look at it and think isn't this wonderful, but it's a slightly depleted landscape than the one I grew up in.

### ③ Bob Burston

There was a suggestion that the government of the day would like to dump nuclear waste in the Cheviots. I think Nirex is the Government agency that wanted to do this. There was a thorough going objection. Myself and Bernard Richardson who was the Doctor at Harbottle, we created a little local structure for the defence of the Cheviots, and we worked closely with a group that was formed at Wooler and the two worked together to try and put Nirex off the idea. Because there was a proposition that they should drill into the Cheviots above Uswayford in this valley and also at Threestone Burn above Ilderton. And the matter was forced to a Public Inquiry. The Public Inquiry was to be held at the

relatively newly opened Gosforth Park Hotel.

Our little group from this valley, we objected. We thought the people whose voices should be heard were very local people, indigenous people to the Coquet and we demanded that the Public Inquiry sat for a week at the Jubilee Hall in Rothbury where we would tender our evidence. Bernard Richardson and myself recruited a number of people, probably had never spoken in public in their lives and we talked to them individually and asked them their reasons why they didn't want Nirex to dump nuclear waste in the Cheviots.

It was their descriptions of why the Cheviots shouldn't be sullied in this way that came over so powerfully that Bernard and myself knew they had to be heard, not through myself and Bernard, but they had to be heard through themselves speak those words publicly. In fact we didn't want to interfere with their words because their words were far more powerful than any argument the Doctor or the Vicar could put over. And we took a group of them to the Jubilee Hall for this Public Inquiry and to this day I live in awe of those folk who overcame all their fears about speaking publicly to state a stewardship of the land, a care for the land, an appreciation of what the land is and why it was inappropriate to dump nuclear waste there.

That was for me a very moving moment made by people who had always lived in this valley, born and bred. Some of them had never been as far as the Gosforth Park Hotel if you see what I mean. Anyway we won the campaign and as you know, there was no nuclear waste dumped in the Cheviots.

### ④ John Smail

During one of the stormy times with the snow, he got a call from just over the border because his practice was the biggest in England at the time and not because of the number of patients but just the area he covered. He had patients from just over the border on the way to Hawick and on the other hand, beyond Morpeth, if the patient moved a little bit he'd be very happy to continue to see them. That was his

life. Were his patients.

One occasion when they had this bad snow storm and he got this message, thought the lady had appendicitis. It sounded urgent but the roads were all blocked. So he called the local police, so they sent I think about 2 or 3 burly policemen, apart from the driver, and they drove to where this person lived, digging through the snow to get the car through. Which was obviously the police vehicle, big thing, and got my father to it after battling through it and, really, it must have been a tremendous strain on these policemen. My father went to the door of this house and on it was posted, written, 'Gone to the pictures in Ha wick.'

The sky, well, the whole thing was blue. Obviously my father was extremely embarrassed and the policemen were quite upset because they'd put everything in it.

Of course, there weren't roads to the shepherds places. Many times when my father would go out and he and, with local nurse, and might be going to having to walk to places and walk in these extreme conditions. Going through fords and this sort of thing to get to places. But there was a lot walking to do in those days. It was a way of keeping very fit. My mother would perhaps go with him sometimes.

He was a dispensing doctor. Obviously the nearest chemist was in Rothbury. Now you couldn't expect a shepherd a way up in the hills there to get down to Rothbury to get a prescription so my father, my grandfather before him, and every day we'd to fill, in the boot of the car, we had a medicine thing, all the different medicines and when they went somewhere and prescribed something they got it from the car and gave it to the patients. A lot of alternative medicines. I mean there was a lady and she used to come once a month for her injections. She could hardly walk up the street and I can remember one occasion actually walking up to the practice, really struggling, and after she'd had her injection she was as spright as anything and off down to get the bus down into Felton. I said to my father, what's the