



THE HERRIOT TRAIL

around Wensleydale and Swaledale
taking in locations from
'All Creatures Great & Small'





GRINTON

The houses of Grinton straggle uphill from the River Swale. Its splendid church was once known as the 'Cathedral of the Dales' After a bereavement in villages further up Swaledale, bodies were carried along an ancient 'Corpse Road' to the nearest consecrated ground, which, until the building of Muker chapel, was at Grinton.

The view from the top of the hill (close to the Youth Hostel on the road signposted to Redmire and Leyburn) is one of James Herriot's favourites. It was this view that first opened Herriot's eyes to the natural beauty of the Yorkshire Dales.

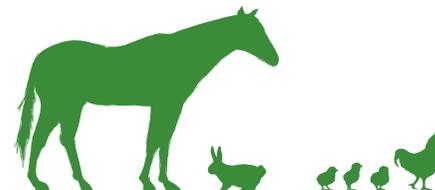
The Youth Hostel was originally built as a shooting lodge and doubled as a convincing prisoner of war camp in one of the Herriot films.

REETH

Reeth, with its sloping village green, marks the point where Arkengarthdale meets the main valley of Swaledale. Reeth's prosperity grew with the lead mining in the northern Dales, and relics of the industry and other Dales related curios can be found in the Swaledale Folk Museum.



The shops and pubs of Reeth will be familiar to regular Herriot viewers. Langhorn House, opposite the Buck Hotel, was Skeldale House in the first film, and interior footage was shot in the bar of the Black Bull Inn.



When Alf Wight first put pen to paper little did he know that he would become the world's most famous vet. He is better known as James Herriot whose tales of country life have captured the imagination of readers and viewers around the globe.

James Herriot was fifty and still working as a full time vet, when he began writing. His first novel, 'If Only They Could Talk', was published by Michael Joseph in 1970, followed a couple of years later by 'It Shouldn't Happen to a Vet'.

They were published together for the American market - and its title 'All Creatures Great and Small' was the one used for the TV series.

More books followed, two of them being turned into feature films.

But it was the BBC TV series that saw the stories successfully transferred to the screen. Between 1978 and 1983 forty-nine episodes were broadcast, bringing vividly to life the vets' practice of James Herriot, Siegfried Farnon and his brother - the happy-go-lucky Tristan.

James Herriot's 'parish' actually extended from Hawes in the west to Yorkshire's east coast, but most of the locations were filmed in the beautiful valleys of Swaledale and Wensleydale. The northern Dales have now become synonymous with the evocative tales.

The Herriot Trail will introduce you to many of the places that fired James Herriot's love of this landscape. Perhaps you will be encouraged to return and explore them more fully. One thing is for sure - you will not be disappointed.

LANGTHWAITE AND ARKENGARTHDALE

This lovely valley that begins to open up loses little by comparison with better known Swaledale. If Langthwaite seems immediately familiar, it's because this diminutive hamlet featured in the opening credits of the first Herriot series. The Red Lion pub has also made cameo appearances on TV.

SWALEDALE

As you descend a steep hill, another familiar scene presents itself - the shallow ford, again featured in the opening sequence, where James Herriot's car splashed through the water. At the next bridge look out for a ruined lead smelting mill on the left given the undeniably romantic name of Surrender Mill.

LOW ROW

This is upland scenery at its best and small wonder that Swaledale was James Herriot's favourite dale and provided many of the human dramas played out in All Creatures Great and Small. During the filming of many episodes, Robert Hardy (who played Siegfried Farnon) stayed at the Punch Bowl Inn at Low Row.

MUKER

This delightful little village fits snugly into its hilly surroundings. The many paths that meander between Muker and Keld offer some of the finest walking in the Yorkshire Dales. On your return the Farmer's Arms offers welcome hospitality.



WENSLEYDALE

The Buttertubs Pass offers increasingly dramatic views as the road climbs out of Swaledale. The Buttertubs themselves are deep limestone fissures in the ground, just yards from the road. Once you crest the bleak top of the pass, you are on your way down into Wensleydale, passing through the hamlet of Simonstone. Look out for Simonstone Hall, which was featured twice on TV - as the country club and the venue for Darrowby Show.

HARDRAW

Hardraw's parish church became Darrowby Church on television. Behind the Green Dragon Inn (pay a small fee at the bar) is Hardraw Force, the highest single-drop waterfall in the country, cascading over the lip of a rocky gorge. James Herriot was suitably impressed, but said he found the place 'eerie'.

HAWES

Hawes is the 'capital' of Upper Wensleydale, supporting many shops, pubs, a weekly market and livestock auction mart (Darrowby Cattle Mart). Here too is the Wensleydale Creamery where the delicious Wensleydale cheese is made.



Don't miss the Ropeworks or the Dales Countryside Museum and National Park Centre housed in what used to be the town's railway station.



BAINBRIDGE



The valley road from Hawes runs through the beautiful countryside. You follow the course of the River Ure to arrive in Bainbridge, a village that boasts an extensive village green and a set of wooden stocks. The Romans knew Bainbridge as Virosidium, and built a fort here on the little hill that overlooks the village.

ASKRIGG

When the location finders were looking for a place to represent Darrowby for the Herriot series, Askrigg's old world charm and Georgian houses gave it a head start on its rivals. Take away the modern cars and the village seems to return to another era. But Askrigg is no mere film set, it is handsomely authentic. The parish church at the bottom of the sweeping main street is worthy of investigation. The handsome Georgian house opposite the many stepped market cross became Skeldale House in the series and still retains the name today. The nearby Kings Arms has had its moments of television fame too, as Darrowby's Drovers Arms.



CARPERBY

When James Herriot got married it was to the Wheatsheaf Inn that he took his wife to for their honeymoon. The village hall was once filmed as the venue for a village dance.

CASTLE BOLTON

Take a detour to Bolton Castle, where the formidable battlements overlook the village of Castle Bolton. These romantic surroundings emboldened the real James Herriot to propose marriage to Joan Danbury (Helen Herriot in the books) while on a visit here. Mary Queen of Scots stayed here too, but not from choice. The castle was her prison - albeit a comfortable one - before she was executed at Fotheringhay Castle.



REDMIRE

Several Herriot episodes were filmed in Redmire (including in the Bolton Arms) and its surroundings.



WENSLEY

Wensleydale is the only major dale to take its name from a village rather than the river - the Ure - which runs through it. At one time Wensley's market was the biggest in the dale, but the great Plague of 1563 decimated the population. Wensley church was the location for James Herriot's filmed wedding and there is much of interest to see inside.

MIDDLEHAM



Middleham Castle was home of the powerful Neville family, who ruled their fiefdom almost like royalty. This village of handsome Georgian houses - many built with stone salvaged from the castle - is known today for the training of racehorses. The cobbles resound daily to the clatter of thoroughbred hooves as steeds are lead onto the gallops.

EAST WITTON

Appearances can deceive - East Witton's picturesque cottages were actually built last century, following a 16th century pattern

WEST SCRAFTON

Alf and Joan Wight spent many holidays in West Scrafton and a number of episodes were filmed here and elsewhere in Coverdale



WEST WITTON

The unfenced road climbs to the shoulder of Penhill, then winds down very steeply into West Witton. James Herriot contemplated this scene, years ago, knowing that his car had no brakes. He decided to tackle the descent in first gear...and lived to tell the tale. The Wensleydale Heifer in West Witton was where James and Helen enjoyed many a meal.

LEYBURN



This bustling market town boasts a large market square. Leyburn is the real life equivalent of Scarsburn, where Ewan Ross (Frank Bingham in real life) had his practice and is the fictional home of Granville Bennett. Thornborough Hall was used during filming as the home of the Ministry of Agriculture, a building that Herriot always visited with trepidation!

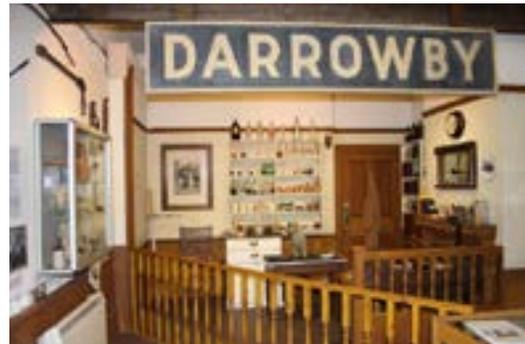
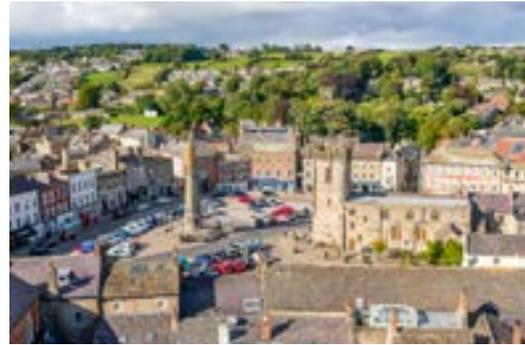
RICHMOND

James Herriot found Richmond 'an embarrassment of riches' - and with very good reason. With its ancient castle overlooking the huge cobbled market place, this is one of the loveliest towns in England.



When James Herriot created the town of Darrowby in his books, he combined features from Richmond, Thirsk, Leyburn and Middleham...and some from his fertile imagination too.

Richmond's narrow streets, known as wynds, are fascinating to explore. Tucked away down Ryder's Wynd is the Richmondshire Museum, where you will find among many other exhibits, a recreation of James Herriot's surgery. Find time to visit the Green Howards Museum and the exquisite Georgian Theatre. If you climb to the top of the castle keep your efforts will be rewarded by panoramic views of the town and River Swale - a fitting end to the Herriot Trail.



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