

# ***THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:***

## ***DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS***

### ***STOCKTON & DARLINGTON RAILWAY WALK BOOKLET No.6***



FIGHTING COCKS STATION ON THE STOCKTON AND DARLINGTON RAILWAY.

Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway.  
[WWW.SDR1825.CO.UK](http://WWW.SDR1825.CO.UK)



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The Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway were formed in 2013 to bring together all those with an interest in the S&DR to ensure that by the bicentenary in 2025, the 1825 Stockton and Darlington Railway line will have received the recognition and the protection it deserves as the birthplace of the modern railway. This booklet is part of a series along the 26-mile stretch of line from Witton Park to Stockton and represents the first stage in improving the interpretation and access to the line. We also aim to ensure that the standing remains are conserved and have proper legal protection including pursuing a case for inscribing the line as a World Heritage Site by 2025.

**[WWW.SDR1825.co.uk](http://WWW.SDR1825.co.uk)**

Other booklets in the series include:

-  S&DR Walk No.1 Witton Colliery to West Auckland
-  S&DR Walk No.2 West Auckland to Shildon
-  S&DR Walk No.3 The Shildon Circular
-  S&DR Walk No.4 Shildon to Heighington
-  S&DR Walk No.5 The Darlington Circular
-  S&DR Walk No.7 Preston Park to Stockton

*Front Cover. Fighting Cocks Station from an engraving dating to 1875*

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*Ordnance Survey "Explorer" Map 304 is a very useful resource for exploring the remains of this part of the S&DR. Ordnance Survey Grid References are used in this booklet.*

## **THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825: DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS SELF GUIDED WALK BOOKLET:**

This self-guided walk recreates the route of the 1825 Stockton & Darlington Railway from Darlington to Fighting Cocks, with an optional extra loop to Goosepool near Middleton St. George. If you are accompanied by your dog, you will find a number of dog-waste bins along this route. The Fighting Cocks Inn, now renamed Platform 1, welcomes dogs and their owners.

This walk can be used to link with the self-guided walk routes along the 1825 S&DR line between Witton Park and Darlington (S&DR Walks No.s 1-4) or the Darlington Circular (S&DR Walk No.5).

### **The walk route**

Your starting point is North Road Station (NZ28907 15710), now called the Head of Steam Museum. The museum is devoted to the area formerly served by the North Eastern Railway, Darlington's rich railway heritage and particular reference to the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

Exhibits include Stephenson's 'Locomotion No. 1', built for the opening of the Stockton & Darlington Railway, and 'Derwent', the earliest surviving Darlington built locomotive, on loan from The National Railway Museum Collection.

The museum also has a dedicated research centre, The Ken Hoole Study Centre, which has an extensive collection of documentary material, photographs, plans, books and periodicals.

Entrance to the museum is £4.95 for adults, but there are discounts for older and younger people, family tickets and annual passes and under-fives go free. Summer and winter opening hours are different, but generally, the museum is closed on Mondays. Check the web site before visiting.<sup>1</sup>

You can return to North Road Station in Darlington by train, from Dinsdale Station about 0.8km south of Fighting Cocks at Middleton St. George. Trains run about every one to two hours and tickets costs about £2.90.

There are more frequent trains to Darlington's main (Bank Top) station, but this is the other end of town, and would necessitate a 25 minute walk back to North Road.

The extended version of this walk takes you as far as Durham Tees Valley Airport, but there are few public transport options from there, and so a return to Middleton St. George with Dinsdale Station, or back on foot or cycle to Fighting Cocks or Darlington is recommended.

### **Historic Background**

At seven in the morning on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1825, twelve waggons of coal were hauled, from the Phoenix Pit at Witton Park, to mark the start of the formal launch of the Stockton &

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.darlington.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/head-of-steam/admission-and-opening-times/>.

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Darlington Railway.

A stationary steam engine drew the waggons up Etherley Ridge incline plane, and then fed the waggons down Etherley South Bank, where they met the road to West Auckland. From West Auckland, the train was joined by another waggon, filled with sacks of flour, and then led by horses across the level to the foot of Brusselton West Bank. Here thousands of people were waiting on the slopes of the ridge to see the working of the sixty horse-power engine stationary engine. The waggons went on to be coupled to the pioneering train, 'Locomotion No.1', twenty-one other waggons and the first railway passenger carriage 'Experiment' at Shildon. The completed train began its journey to Darlington. After two hours it would reach Darlington, nine miles away, at twelve o'clock.

At Darlington the train halted for half an hour. Locomotion No.1 was taken to the company's reservoir to replenish her water barrel. Six waggons of coals and twenty-three of the horse waggons, laden with workmen, left the main line, and were taken down to the coal depot. The horses were fed and watered and the coals were distributed to the poor of the town. Workmen were entertained to a *'right good dinner, washed down with copious libations of ale in various public houses in the town. No. 1 having filled her water barrel, the six waggons of coal having been taken off, and the waggons containing Mr Meynell's famous Yarm band, having been coupled on, the train started.'*

All passengers, who had alighted in Darlington, were replaced with new and even more eager passengers. No further stoppages occurred until the locomotive reached Goosepool, where it had to replenish water again (Heavisides 1912, 64-5). This eventful train journey, which was to change the face of the World, was to end at Stockton with much celebration and more dinners and libations! The lessons learned in the creation and running of the Stockton & Darlington Railway during the 1820s were to be copied, and improved upon, across the country, and soon, across the world.

A passenger service between Darlington and Stockton was to commence on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 1825 using the new coach "Experiment", which had accommodated Committee members on the opening day. The departure point for passengers was North Road, in Darlington, commencing at 7.30am or 3pm, and the journey would take two hours.

This walking route visits the accessible parts of the 1825 route from Darlington eastwards towards Fighting Cocks and Goosepool. It also follows the route that some lads, with the surname Robinson, took on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1825, as they ran to follow the train from Aycliffe as far as Fighting Cocks before returning home again.



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Figure 1. Stephenson's proposed route of 1823 in red and Overton's superseded route of 1821 in blue

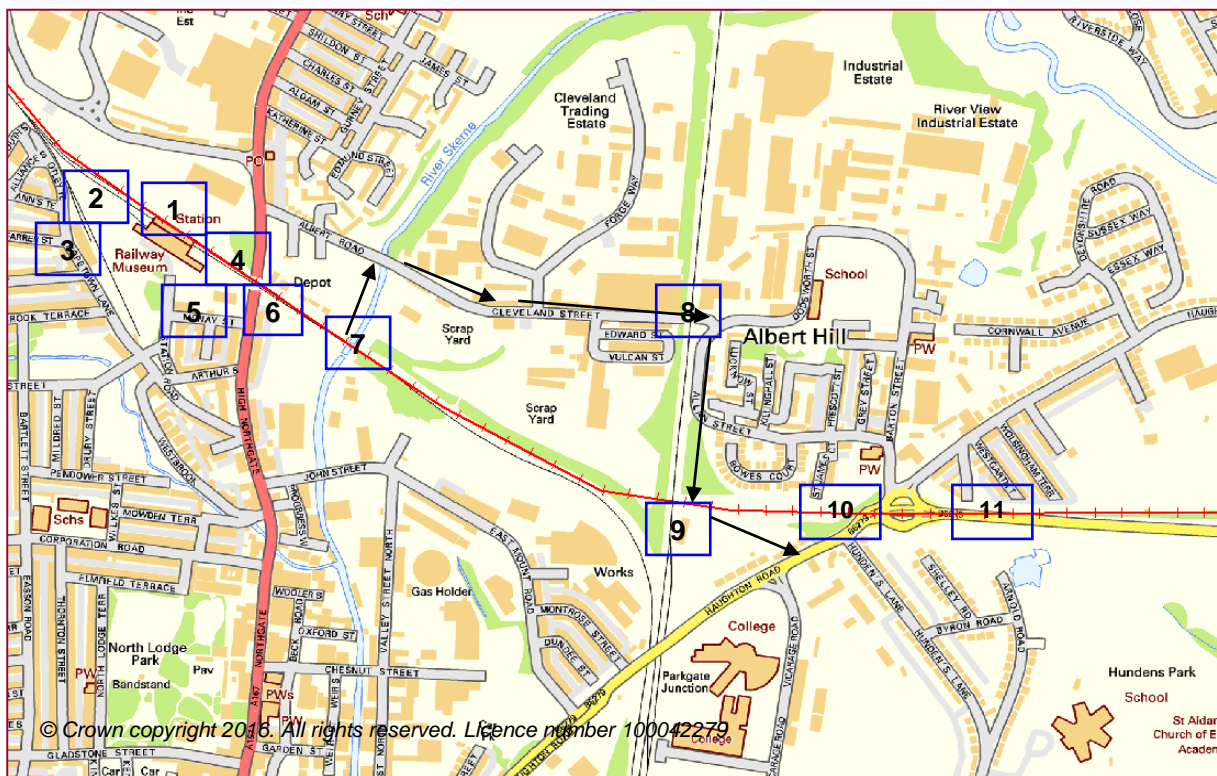


Figure 2. The walk route between Darlington North Road and Haughton Road

### **(1) North Road Station**

John Harris, the S&D resident engineer from 1836 to 1847, was instructed to design a new station and contracts were let in September 1841 for its construction; completion probably being around April 1842. It consisted of a spacious train shed, fronted with a single storey, plain

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classical Italianate facade built of sandstone rubble and covered by render.<sup>2</sup> The station that you see today has been expanded on several occasions.

- 🏠 The east and west wings were added in 1853-5, with further additions in 1864. An additional extension, on the east side, was added in 1872. The central second storey was added in 1876 to house telegraph equipment. In the 1920s a number of internal improvements were made, such as the provision of new waiting rooms and ticket barriers.
- 🏠 The left hand side (west) of the building was originally constructed as the station master's house in 1842, and included housing and yards. Note the S&DR ceramic railway plaque E9, showing that this end was used for domestic purposes. Such plaques were added to all domestic properties by the S&DR, in 1857.
- 🏠 The basement door led into the porter's mess where in the 1850's, a ghost was seen!
- 🏠 It is not clear if the original 1842 layout had separate entrances for passengers of different classes, but the 1864 alterations did do so, with a first class entrance on the west side of the portico and second and third class entrances to the east side of it. Later alterations were to get rid of this class-based separation for the entrance, but to retain it for waiting rooms and toilets. This change probably had more to do with increasing traffic, than with a greater egalitarian approach to travel.<sup>3</sup>
- 🏠 To the left of the building and around the corner you can see some **stone sleepers** laid out along with their rails. These have been brought from elsewhere on the S&DR line, but are useful in showing how the earliest railway lines were constructed.

*Plate 1. North Road Station.*



## **(2) Kitching's Ironmongery and Foundry (site of)**

From 1831, Kitching's iron foundry was located immediately north-west of the current station (NZ 28852 15754). Their decision to move here, from the town centre, was linked to the potential for future work which the new railway would bring, as well as the line providing good transport links for export. Indeed, their foundry was later to become the locomotive works for the S&DR. By 1829, William Kitching was a committee member of the S&DR, and so the family was clearly well informed regarding the future prospects on North Road. Kitching's foundry was partially demolished in 1870-1895 to make room for more sidings, possibly as part of the Royal Agricultural Show which was held in Darlington in 1895. The remainder of these buildings were removed as recently as 1975.

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<sup>2</sup> Fawcett 2001, 116

<sup>3</sup> Archaeo-Environment 2014, 18



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Plate 2. Photo of Brian Wastell's grandfather leaving work at North Road Station c.1910. Note the decorative vent flues and street lamps. The rough cast appears to be quite a dark colour, as opposed to the white of today. The flower beds extend up to the portico and so the extended ramp, which runs along the front elevation on the east side, must post-date this photograph. Towards the back, the train shed roof can be seen. (Photo courtesy of Brian Wastell and made available by Barrie Lamb)

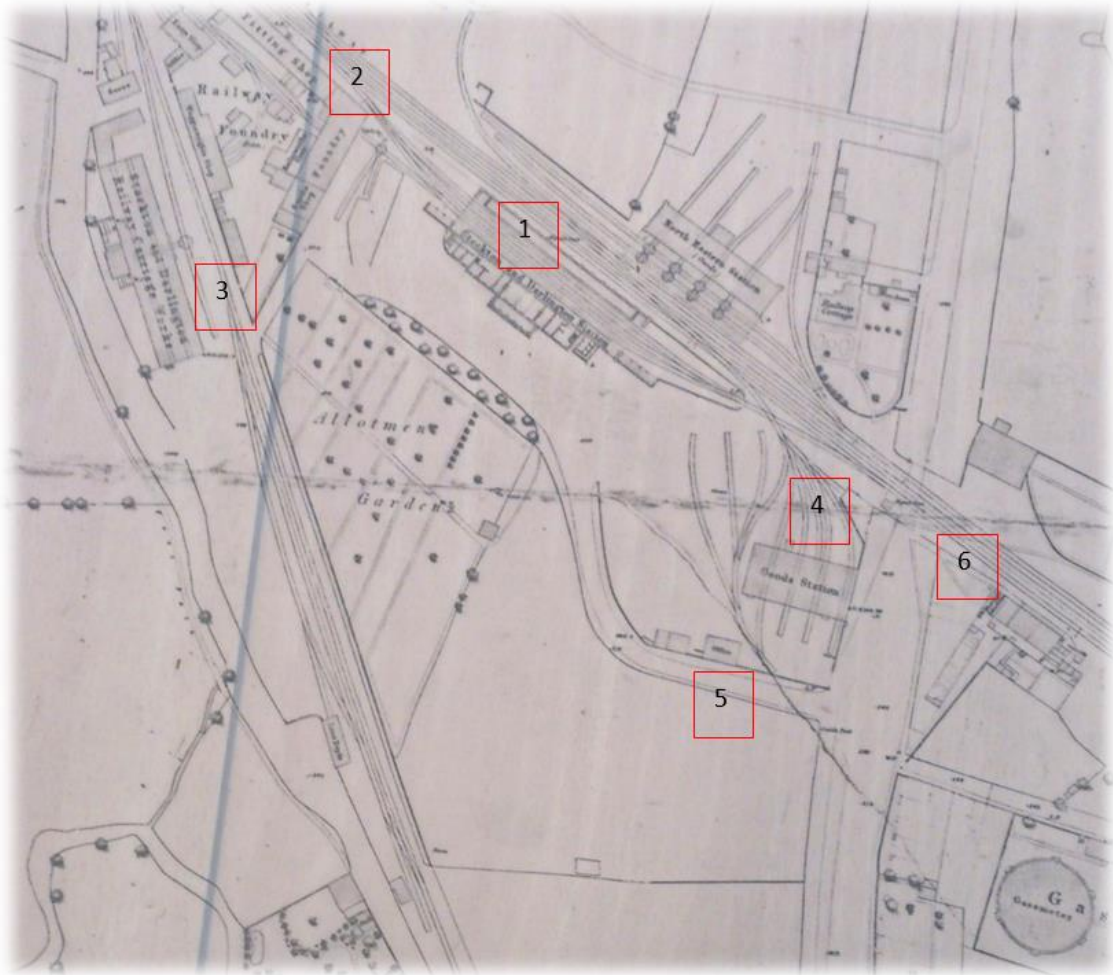


Figure 3. The S&DR North Road station (Stop no. 1) shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> ed OS map of 1856 (surveyed 1855) on the south side of the tracks. Kitching's Railway Foundry (stop no.2) is located to the west, and the S&DR Goods Station (no.4) and Offices (no.5) on McNay Street are also shown. The S&DR Carriage works (stop no.3) can be seen with a turntable to the front and sidings that go on the lime depot. The original (and first) purpose built station can be seen on the east side of North Road (no.6) but is not annotated, presumably because it was now used as cottages for railway staff and their families.

### **(3) S&DR Carriage Works (NZ 28777 15708)**

At this point, turn your back on North Road Station and look across the expanse of grass towards a long low white building. This is the **S&DR Hopetown Carriage Works** built in 1853. It was designed by Joseph Spark, who also designed alterations at North Road Station, and completed by architects *Ross & Richardson* of Darlington. The works were supervised by Thomas McNay, the S&DR's Engineer and Secretary (who we shall meet again on this walk). The building was used for the manufacture and maintenance of railway carriages, all of two axles. There were two internal rail tracks running the length of the building, and wings connected to the main network via small turntables, located in the central two storey building. Carriages entered the building from the turntable outside (where the arch is) and were then manoeuvred into position and sent down the long ends for repair or maintenance. The central building included lifting facilities (later removed). Construction on the site ended about 1884 when longer wheelbase bogie vehicles were introduced, for which the works were unsuited. All carriage manufacture was then transferred to the York Railway Works after 1863 under the NER. The building was later used as a store, and for repairing waggons, as well as being used as a rifle range by the railway company.<sup>4</sup> The buildings have been recently renovated with a fresh coat of lime wash and renewed windows. They are now home to the North East Locomotive Preservation Group and the A1 Steam Locomotive Trust and are used for restoration of heritage locomotives and the construction of new steam locomotives, most recently the A1 'Tornado'.



*Plate 3. Hopetown Carriage Works*

### **(4) THE GOODS SHED/ MERCHANDISE STATION (NZ28995 15632).**

Walk back towards the main road entrance and you will see, standing in the yard south east of the station, the once attractive arched windowed Merchandise Station. Designed by Thomas Storey. It was built on farmland on the opposite side of North Road from the original station in 1833 (Fawcett 2001, 19). The contract for its construction was let in 1832. It was the first railway building to be constructed on this side of North Road and would form the focus of considerable subsequent railway development by the S&DR.

As demand grew, the new Merchandise Station was doubled in size, by extending it westwards between 1839 and 1840. A clock tower was added in 1840.<sup>5</sup> The building was approached by sidings leading from the main S&DR line. These sidings brought waggons into what was an open fronted building divided into four bays initially, and then eight after its extension, where they could unload their goods. Goods at that time could consist of a variety of products; parcels and

<sup>4</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hopetown\\_Carriage\\_Works](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hopetown_Carriage_Works) [accessed 280116]

<sup>5</sup> Clarke 2006, 6



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packages were brought in from the wider area, but coal and limestone would go to separate depots. Carts from town approached the building from the other side, at McNay Street, having paid their dues at the Goods Agent's Offices, and loaded their goods before heading back to town. This approach is no longer possible due to massive earth moving operations which took place to replace a former level crossing on North Road with a bridge. This Goods Station is the earliest surviving example in the world, of a railway warehouse built on one level; although its layout has little bearing on the subsequent development of goods sheds, which went on to evolve.<sup>6</sup> Its experimental design proved to have deficiencies; in particular, later goods sheds in the rest of the world had access arranged from the narrow ends, rather than across their broader frontages.



*Plate 4. The Goods Station*

Thomas Storey was originally appointed as assistant engineer to George Stephenson<sup>7</sup> to construct the S&DR as early as 1821<sup>8</sup> or 1822.<sup>9</sup> After 1825, the S&DR no longer required the services of George Stephenson (although it did sometimes consult his son Robert Stephenson) and Storey became its Chief Engineer.<sup>10</sup> He lived at St. Helen Auckland, until his death in 1859. He became a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1829 and oversaw the construction of the Goods Shed in 1832-3. He left the S&DR to take up his appointment as Engineer in Chief with the Great North of England Railway in 1836 and was replaced by his former pupil, John Harris. He had an important role in projecting and forming both the Great North of England Railway and the Bishop Auckland and Weardale Railway.

*'In person, Mr. Storey was tall and athletic, and capable of undergoing great fatigue. He possessed great decision of character, and was deservedly respected for his strict integrity and honesty of purpose. He was as scrupulously just, as an employer, towards those who served under him, as he had been when an agent, to those under whom he served. During the last few years, he lived in retirement, his health not permitting him to undertake any great public work.'* (Obituary in Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers 1860).

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<sup>6</sup> Fawcett 2001, 19-20

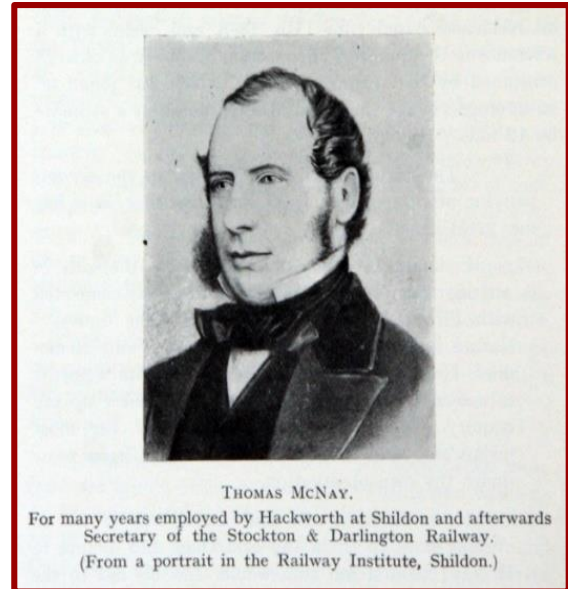
<sup>7</sup> Bill Fawcett pers comm

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In 1857 the goods station ceased to be the main point for goods handling on the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Sometime between 1870 and 1898, the west half was converted into a fire station serving the growing complex of railway buildings around the North Road area. It is now the home of the Darlington Railway Preservation Society which carries out locomotive repairs in this building.

### **(5) McNay Street**

Walk out of the station area and turn left on to **McNay Street**. This was the original approach to both the Merchandising Station/Goods Shed from 1833 and the passenger station from 1842. It was named after the S&DR's Engineer and Secretary, Thomas McNay.<sup>11</sup> The stone building half way along this road was the **Goods Agent's Offices**, built in 1840 (NZ28973 15600). Staff here controlled the use of the Goods Station behind. It is now the home to the North East Railway Association. As you walk along McNay Street you will notice Stephenson Street, named after George Stephenson, but it is not clear if this was the Engineer George Stephenson or the local station master, George Stephenson. Two very different people!



At the end of McNay Street you will see the entrance to the modern North Road station on the left. This is on the original 1825 route, and from here you can catch a train to Shildon, Heighington, Aycliffe, Dinsdale, Eaglescliffe or Thornaby – all providing access to other parts of the S&DR line.

At the end of McNay Street, carefully cross High Northgate and head left towards the railway bridge. Just before you reach the bridge, there is a piece of derelict land on the right which abuts the railway line. This is the site of the first purpose built railway station in the world.

### **(6) The First Purpose Built Railway Station in the World?**

Here was a demolished building (see plate 5), designed as a Goods Warehouse at a time when no such thing had yet been invented for the railways. It was to be the inspiration for the later 1830 warehouse at Liverpool Road Station in Manchester, which is surviving. The station was completed in 1827, and its loading bays were let to individual carriers at varying rates.<sup>12</sup> Waggon, usually horse-drawn, would run alongside the top floor of the building and into it tip their contents. Presumably the contents were then moved to the ground floor, possibly through the use of chutes or trap doors. Carts from town approached the ground floor openings to load. The station was operated by the carriers themselves, but it proved to be less popular than

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.clevelandfhs.org.uk/S%20%20D%20Employees.htm> [accessed 11.8.13]

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Thomas\\_Storey\\_\(2\)](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Thomas_Storey_(2)) [accessed 11.8.13]

<sup>10</sup> Bill Fawcett pers comm

<sup>11</sup> Image from Grace's Guides [http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Thomas\\_McNay](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Thomas_McNay) [accessed 280116]

<sup>12</sup> Fawcett cites PRO 667/ 31



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anticipated by the S&DR, and so by 1830 the ground floor was partially converted into two cottages.<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, in 1833, it was remodelled and dedicated as a passenger station, dwelling house and shop, with additional cottages being created from bays in 1835 and 1843.<sup>14</sup> The residents of these cottages were railway staff and their families, according to the 1841 census. This building was demolished in 1864, although fragments of it may survive on the edge of the live railway line adjacent, and below ground. It is not clear if the blocked doorway facing High Northgate is a feature of the station, or something later.



*Plate 5. The first goods station on the S&DR line, shown by an unknown artist. The original painting is now at Preston Park Museum, not far from Stockton.*

Before heading back down High Northgate have a look at the **railway bridge** over the main road. This was built in 1856 for the S&DR, but altered several times since. Prior to the bridge being constructed, there was a level crossing here which suggests that there has been a massive amount of earth moving in this area.

Through the other side of the bridge to the north west was an area that was dominated by the S&DR's Railway Works after 1863. These works produced their first locomotive in 1864 and went on to cover a substantial area and included paint and boiler shops. The creation of these new Railway Works in 1863 (in the same year as merger with the North Eastern Railway) resulted in the Shildon Works having to concentrate on the manufacture of waggons instead of locomotives. The Darlington Works closed in 1966 and the site redeveloped in the late 1970s. Only the clock survives from the Darlington Works – re-erected outside Morrison's supermarket.

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<sup>13</sup> Fawcett 2001, 17

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, 18



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Now head back down High Northgate and turn second left into a back lane. Head along the lane, past a large stone wall on your left of unknown date and function (it could be railway-related or it might relate to an old mortuary) where it turns into a grassy path and keep going until you see a large stone bridge on your left.

This is the Skerne Bridge, the oldest railway bridge in the world to remain in continuous use.

## **(7) The Skerne Bridge (NZ 29166 15543)**

This stone-arched bridge (plates 6 & 7 below) is in a Georgian classical architectural style, which was popular amongst the early railway pioneers.

George Stephenson was commissioned to design this bridge, to carry the railway over the River Skerne. Like another bridge he designed for the S&DR over the River Gaunless near West Auckland, he originally chose to use a combination of wrought and cast iron and stone.

However, there were problems with the design of the foundations, and the directors of the S&DR showed a lack of confidence in his design and so brought in the County Bridge Surveyor, Ignatius Bonomi.

Stephenson was ordered to consult Bonomi over the design, which he did reluctantly, having had to be reminded six weeks later by the committee. The foundation stone of the bridge was laid in July 1824 *'with Mr Bonomi's modifications incorporated'*. Further doubts were expressed about the use of iron, and whether it was strong enough, and Bonomi was brought in again. He provided a design and costs for a stone-arched bridge. By November 1824 he was sending very practical advice about the bridge being constructed.<sup>15</sup> The completed bridge was to feature as a vignette on the S&DR Railway share certificates suggesting considerable pride in its form by the committee.

*"There will be about 3000 cubic feet of stone in the arch and I think it might be wrought at the quarry providing a little extra care is taken in putting the blocks when wrought into the carts. As the blocks are large, they need not, I conceive, be piled upon each other. They should be laid upon straw or turf...straw bass worked up loosely would suit best..." (From Bonomi 2.11.1824 and quoted in Crosby 1987, 45)*

*"I hope that the offsets of the foundations may be found to project a little within the great arch in order to get a stool for the support of the centring. The two sole trees upon which the uprights are supported should be of oak and it would also be proper to put a piece of oak between the top of these uprights and the beam which reaches from wall to wall...The whole of the arched stones should be prepared and be on the spot before centring is fixed; it is not proper to suffer the weight of the stones to hang partially upon the wood, which weakens the centring...The masons who set the pens should be provided with large mells [mallets] to drive them well up and it is moreover a good plan to wedge them and keep them wedged until the next course comes on and so forward; the arch cannot be too tightly set at first. It will certainly tighten itself when the centring is eased, but if it has too much play, the form of the arch will be distorted..."*

*(From Bonomi 3.11.1824 and quoted in Crosby 1987, 45-6)*

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<sup>15</sup> Crosby 1987, 45

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*Plate 6. The Skerne Bridge in a painting, of 1875 from recollection, by Dobbin. He had attended the opening ceremony, in 1825, as a child.*



*Plate 7. Skerne Bridge today*

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Despite Bonomi's advice, only seven years later, the bridge had to be strengthened (you can see evidence of pinning through the structure), but it survives today, despite being widened and alterations being made to the decking, and remains in use. In the 1990s it featured on the English five pound note, as a celebration of the technological achievement that the S&DR represented.

-  You will now be leaving the route of the 1825 S&DR for a time as there is no path alongside the line which is in active use.
-  Continue along the riverside path away from the bridge heading north.
-  You will pass under a road bridge carrying Albert Road. This was built to serve the flourishing iron and steel industry of Albert Hill in the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century.
-  Continue a little further until you get to a grassy bank on your left with red brick housing and trees at the top.
-  The path cuts back along the top of this bank, back to the road you have just walked under – Albert Road which becomes Cleveland Street which runs parallel but north of the 1825 S&DR route.
-  Turn left and walk along Albert Road/ Cleveland Street. If you cross the road at this point, you will be able to look through the façade of a now partially demolished red brick building just beyond the metal railings of the bridge; the window opening survives and frames views down the river Skerne back to the Skerne Bridge (although vegetation can obscure this view). Continue along Cleveland Street towards an area known as Albert Hill. This is where there were a number of Victorian iron and steelworks and waggon works; all strategically located with sidings from both the NER east coast mainline running north-south and the S&DR line running east-west. There was no source of coal or iron in Darlington. It was the access to the railways that made these industries possible in this location, lying between the sources of coal, which travelled 'down' the S&DR, and iron ore 'up' the line from the Cleveland Hills.
-  To your left as you join Cleveland Street, was the Darlington Forge. To the right was the Albert Hill Foundry and the Waggon Works.

### **Taking you further...**

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Albert Hill was radically altered by the iron and steel works, yet, when John Pease was first approached by an ironworks establishment in 1854 to build at Albert Hill, he declined to sell land for any such purpose, because there was a feeling in Darlington against having the atmosphere impaired by iron manufacturers, and he would not be the first to introduce such a nuisance to his native town. However, the Darlington Land Company did sell, and soon the Pease family were represented on the Boards of a number of iron and steel foundries in the Albert Hill area.

Soon, the view from the trains between Newcastle and York would take in 'ponderous and yet elegant-looking works on the left hand, while the more recently built Springfield Works are on the other...' (Jeans 1974 (1875), 282). The main line ran down the east side of the Darlington









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Iron Company, the Stockton and Darlington Railway on the south side, with the South Durham Iron Co to the west.

It was not all ugly industry. The Darlington Iron Company consisted of a roof previously belonging to the building containing the Manchester Exhibition of 1852 and so 'The night passenger on the Stockton and Darlington sees many a glimpse of the foliated tracery of the arches, showing sharp and clear in front of the glowing fires. Far off, on road and river, the tall chimneys are conspicuous landmarks'.<sup>16</sup>

## **(8) Railway Bridge**

-  Continue past the Cleveland Arms, towards the traffic lights. At this point the road goes under the railway bridge carrying the current East Coast main line formerly (NER and LNER)
-  Alternatively, you can use the path which keeps to higher ground, until it reaches some steps. There are some fine Victorian railings along the edge. The paths meet at the same point on the other side of the bridge.
-  As you pass under the bridge you will notice that it has been doubled in width in the past, in order to accommodate a growing railway network. The tall buildings to your left were the Darlington Steel and Iron Works of the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century; they are now used as a scrap yard. Beyond the bridge was the Skerne Ironworks, founded in 1863, with a number of Pease family members being amongst the founding partners (Jeans 1974, 285).
-  When you emerge on the other side of the bridge, take the path up to the right alongside the bridge and walk along Allan Street (named after the Allan family of Blackwell who once owned the land here and sold it for the South Durham Ironworks).
-  As the road bends to the left there is a small grassy path on the corner on the right, through a gap in a stone wall, with metal railings in front. Take this path, which crosses the line of the S&DR. If the vegetation is low in winter, look to your right through the fencing towards the live line – there is an overhead sign on the line marking (roughly) where the present day main line crosses the route of the 1825 S&DR line. The East Coast main line originally crossed the S&DR at a level crossing, which was later controlled by a signal box, but there have been considerable earth moving works here since.
-  As you walk along this path, look out for some railway sleepers discarded alongside.

## **(9) The Engine Shed**

-  Continue along the path until you reach a long brick shed with two arches at the end. This is a two-road engine shed, designed by George Townsend Andrews, for the Newcastle & Darlington Junction Railway in 1844. Track ran alongside it until the 1970s. It is soon to be converted into housing which will, hopefully, retain its main architectural features and help preserve it for the future.

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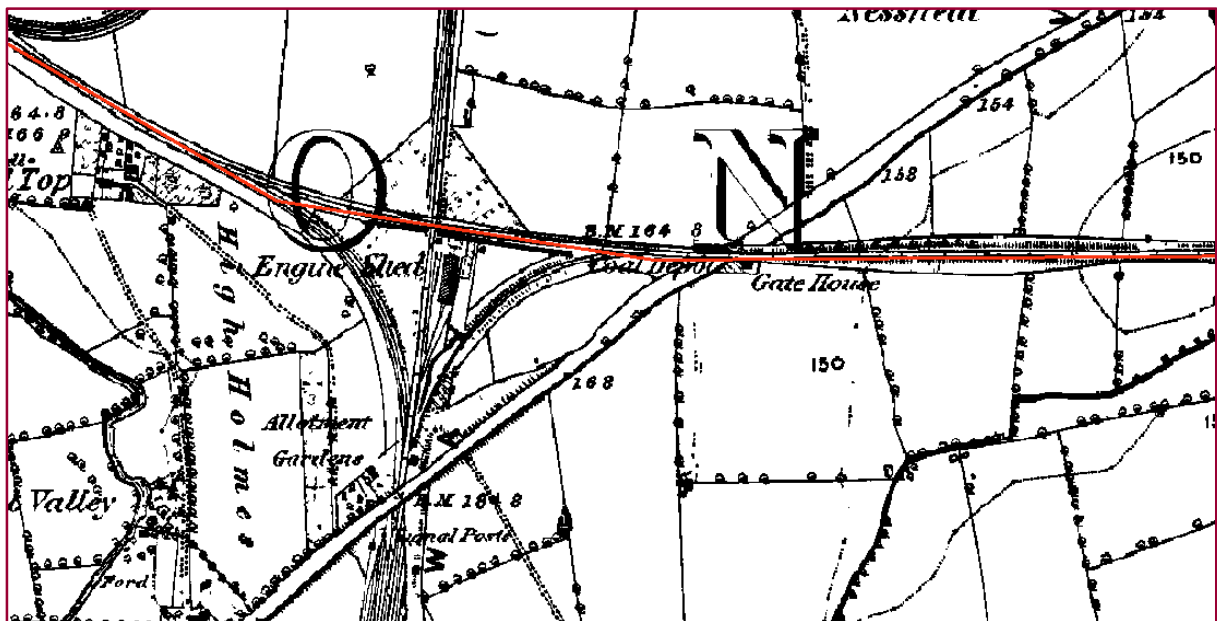
<sup>16</sup> [http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Darlington\\_Iron\\_Co](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Darlington_Iron_Co) [accessed 170316]

**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:**  
**DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS**

- Here, the S&DR line (see Figure 4) crossed through what is currently (2016) waste ground, and this is also due to be developed for housing. Importantly, the route of the line will be kept as an access road. However, archaeological excavations have found very little surviving evidence of the line.



*Plate 8. The Engine Shed when it was still in use (courtesy of the Northern Echo)*



*Figure 4. The S&DR shown in red with the Engine Shed to the south, a curved branch line joining the two lines and a Coal Depot adjacent to the line in 1855 (OS 1st ed 6-inch map). Note also a building known as a Gate House suggesting that it was either a Toll House for a Toll Road or was where the tickets were purchased to use the line from at the Coal Depot. The reproduction quality is not good enough to see the footpath which the accommodation arch served.*

## **(10) The Coal Depot (site of)**

- 🚶 Continue straight ahead on to Haughton Road and turn left.
- 🚶 Just before you get to the roundabout, there is a grassy bank on the left. The S&DR trackbed came in just behind this bank and headed across what is now a roundabout.
- 🚶 Somewhere under the road in front of you was a coal depot. Its date is unknown, but it was already here in 1855 and continued in use until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. There were also some S&DR cottages here on the other side of the road but they have now gone.

## **(11) The Haughton Accommodation Bridge and 1825 Road**

- 🚶 Cross Haughton Road carefully and take a path which veers towards the left down a grassy bank.
- 🚶 Soon, slightly to your left, you will see a tunnel passing below the busy road. The S&DR line once ran along the embankment which has now been reused as the 'cross town route' for road traffic. The tunnel is an original 1825 accommodation bridge which ran through the embankment.
- 🚶 You will notice on the approach that it has fine wing walls, but inside the tunnel is clearly of three phases. It has been widened twice to accommodate a widening rail line, but the wing walls must have been carefully taken down and reattached to the newly widened bridge.
- 🚶 Walk through the tunnel and turn right on the other side to head up on top of the embankment where there is a safe path suitable for walking and cycling for about 7.5km towards Durham Tees Valley Airport at Goosepool.
- 🚶 The embankment is wider, and in places taller, than the original 1825 route. At this point, the 1825 line must have been in the centre of the present day embankment (to match with the original extent of the accommodation bridge), but it veers to the north and south slightly between here and the A66.



*Plate 9. The extended accommodation bridge at Haughton Road and the distinct line inside showing where it was extended*



**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:**  
**DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1825, Locomotion No.1 travelled along the line from Darlington with no stoppages, as far as Goosepool, where the water barrel of Locomotion No.1 was replenished. Local lads from Aycliffe from the Robinson family ran all the way to Fighting Cocks with the train (Heavisides 1912, 64-6).

This part of the line later became known as the Fighting Cocks Branch, after normal passenger services were diverted from here, and instead ran via Dinsdale, along a new NER line from 1887 built to enable running to Bank Top Station in Darlington. It was demoted on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1967 to goods traffic only and at Lingfield Lane it was reduced to a single track siding where it served the large Paton and Baldwin wool spinning mill which opened in 1949 (Holmes 1975, 93) and whose building can still be seen about 1.2km to the east. Its final closure occurred in 1986 with that of the Long Welded Rail Depot at Dinsdale, which provided the only remaining traffic on the line.

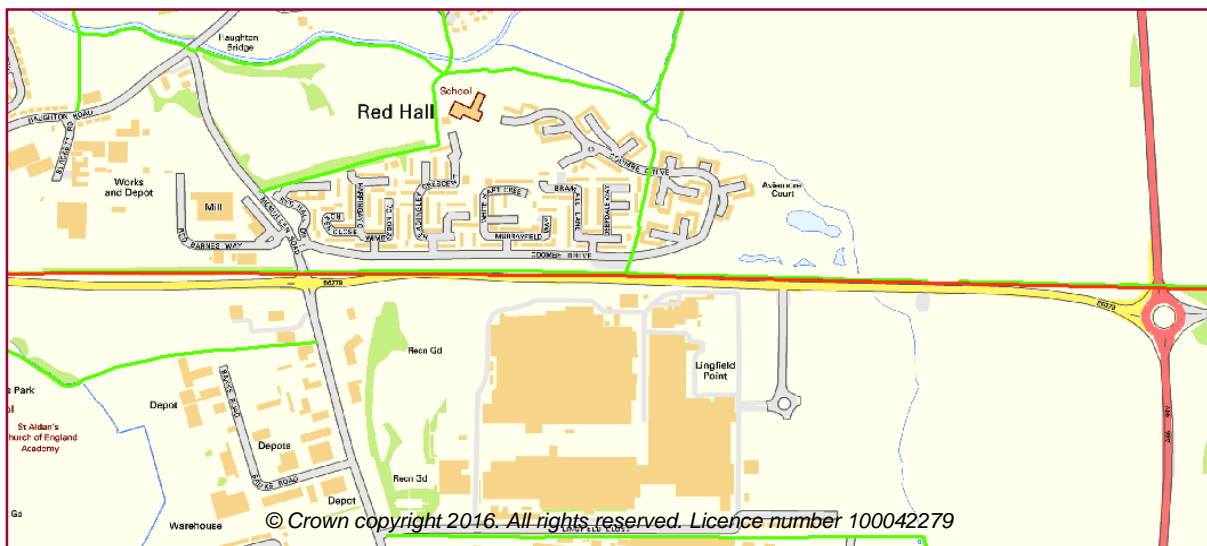




Figure 5. The walk route between Darlington and the A66

-  Continue along this path. When the line meets McMullen Road, cross over at the pedestrian crossing and continue straight ahead. McMullen Road was called Lingfield Road in 1855 and possibly in 1825 and the S&DR line crossed over it as a level crossing. The area is now very built up, but in 1825 this was all pasture fields and over to the north (left) was Red Hall Farm and Red Hall. It remained very rural until relatively recently.
-  It is worth keeping a look out towards the left, as you walk along the line after McMullen Road, and before the green metal bridge over the A66. There are the remains of a stone lined ditch which ran parallel to the line to keep it drained. This ditch was probably covered by an arched structure, but this has mostly collapsed leaving an exposed stone ditch. However, if you carefully look amongst the bushes on your left, you might spot some places where the full culvert survives complete with its arched top. There are even one or two examples of discarded stone sleepers lying amongst the vegetation. These are original two-hole sleepers from 1825 with the remains of metal pins inside.

**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:**  
**DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS**

- 🚶 When the route of the 1825 line meets the A66 there is a modern green metal bridge to take you across, and the route continues uninterrupted until you reach an underpass under the A67.
- 🚶 Go through here and continue on the line towards Middleton St. George and Fighting Cocks.

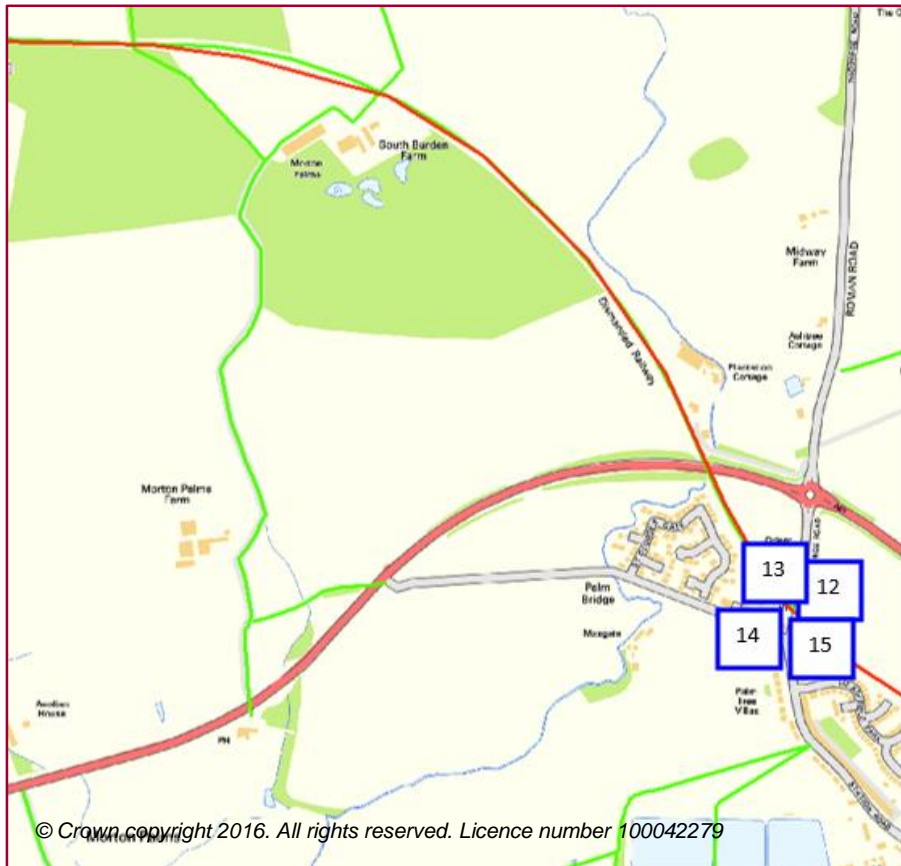
*Plate 10. Young boys, including Robin Coulthard on the right, cross the S&DR line at McMullen Road in 1947 (photo courtesy of Robin Coulthard)*

Report to S&DR shareholders 8<sup>th</sup> July 1823.  
“...since the last annual meeting of proprietors, your committee have proceeded in the works of the railway, and have constructed six miles of road between Stockton and Goosepool, and also the branch to Yarm for three-quarters of a mile. From Goosepool to near Burdon, land has been purchased for four miles, and contracts made for forming embankments and excavations on terms advantageous to the company, and below the engineer’s estimate” (Jeans 1975, 58).






- 🚶 On the way you will see a ditch along the right hand side where the line is in a cutting. This was designed to keep the line drained and a number of early stone sleeper blocks have been found discarded here. There is also a ditch at the top of the cutting on both sides (in places) and this would collect run off from the fields and take it away from the cutting. Today, rabbit burrows on the left embankment along the line throw out cinders from the old track surface.
- 🚶 When you reach the track to South Burdon Farm on your right, you can see that this was a level crossing for the farm. Whilst there is no particular evidence of the 1825 form of the crossing, there is a more recent concrete post and base on the right, which must have carried some sort of signal.
- 🚶 Along this stretch of line there are a number of concrete bases left from the line’s later use as a branch line which presumably supported signals.

**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:  
DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS**



*Figure 6. The walk route between the A66 and Fighting Cocks (the line starts top left)*

## **(12) Fighting Cocks**

-  Fighting Cocks is located at the end of this stretch of line and is cut by Sadberge Road (which becomes Station Road to the south). This road has evolved from a Roman Road (Page 1928, 293) and there was a level crossing here in 1825. This was to evolve into a complex level crossing with signal posts and later a signal box, but in the first five years of railway use it was a simpler affair, with the sleepers set into the ground to avoid obstructing road users. On the approach, the driver had to sound a horn to warn traffic of the oncoming train (Holmes 1975, 20).
-  Most of the land here that the new railway was to pass through belonged to Elisha Cocks (based on Stephenson's Book of Reference (DRO Q/D/P 8/2)). There was only one building at this crossroads in 1825, Palmtree House, now demolished and Dinsdale Moor House to the north, but the presence of the railway was to generate industry and building including an ironworks, a gas works and the creation of the village of Middleton St. George.
-  Before you reach the road, on your left and right you will see stone walls and ramps. These are the remains of the S&DR's coal depot.

**The name 'Fighting Cocks' comes from the now illegal sport of cock fighting, which was known to be popular around this area from at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century. However, the local landowner's surname was Cock, but it evolved into Cocks over time. The family didn't move into the area from Devon, until 1801 and used the name Pemberton until 1811.**



**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:  
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Figure 7. Detail of George Stephenson's proposals map of 1823, showing his intended route (in red) meeting the crossroads at Fighting Cocks. The large square represents Palmtree House which was already located here and survived until the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was sometimes referred to as Fighting Cocks Farm. There was no existing inn here – the inn must have been built in response to the S&DR line being constructed.

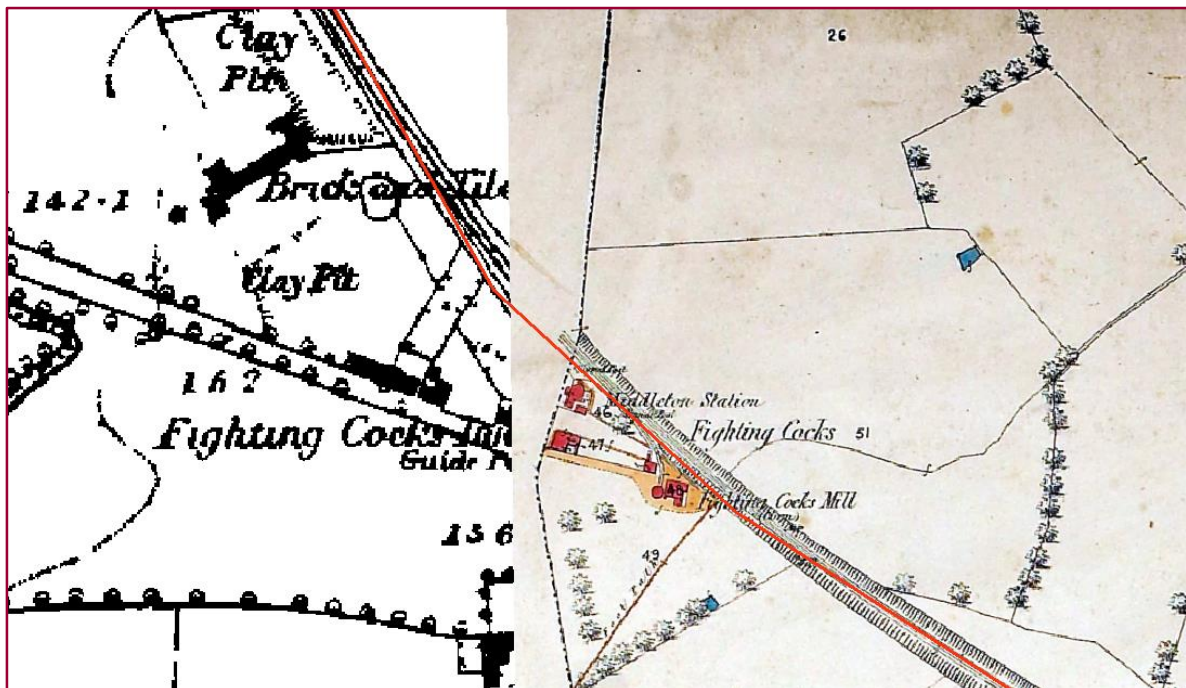


Figure 8. A combination of the OS 1<sup>st</sup> ed 6 inch and OS 25 inch maps dating to 1855 of the cluster of buildings at Fighting Cocks. The circular shape at Fighting Cocks Mill was a windmill.

### **(13) The Coal and Lime Depot**

The coal and lime depot was referred to in minutes of the S&DR Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1830, although it is not clear if it was a proposal or already existing by that date.<sup>17</sup> It was served by a small siding towards the back of the Fighting Cocks Inn (see below). This siding can be seen on the 1840 tithe map (see figure 8). The waggons approached the depot from Darlington along a ramp which ran along the wall on the south side of the track.

- 🚶 The remains of this ramp can still be seen in the bushes. Towards the road, the walls are much more substantial and presumably mark the boundary of the coal and lime depot. Later, a signal box replaced the earlier signal posts and was located on your right as you arrive at the road.
- 🚶 The presence of the railway here soon provided opportunities for other industries and, by the 1850s, there were brick and tile making sites, presumably to supply building materials for the houses which were now being built in the immediate area.
- 🚶 The Dinsdale Moor Iron Works were located next to the coal depot from 1860. They were established by a group of businessmen which included H. A. W. Cocks, local lord of the manor, J. W. Wooler, a Darlington colliery owner, who was later to take up residence in the parish, while of course the Pease family were also represented. As at the Darlington sites we have passed, there was no iron ore in this area, but it had been found in the Cleveland Hills in 1859 and, courtesy of the railway, it was possible to bring the iron ore here and the coal from Shildon to facilitate the manufacture of iron and steel. The works have long since been demolished, but during archaeological excavations, demolition debris was found and the mountings for a steam engine.



*Plate 11. Some of the remains of the S&DR Coal Depot, with the Fighting Cocks Inn beyond. A later signal box was located to the left of the wall.*

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<sup>17</sup> PRO RAIL 667/31, Minutes of SDR Sub Committee (grateful thanks to Brendan Boyle for sharing this information)



**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:  
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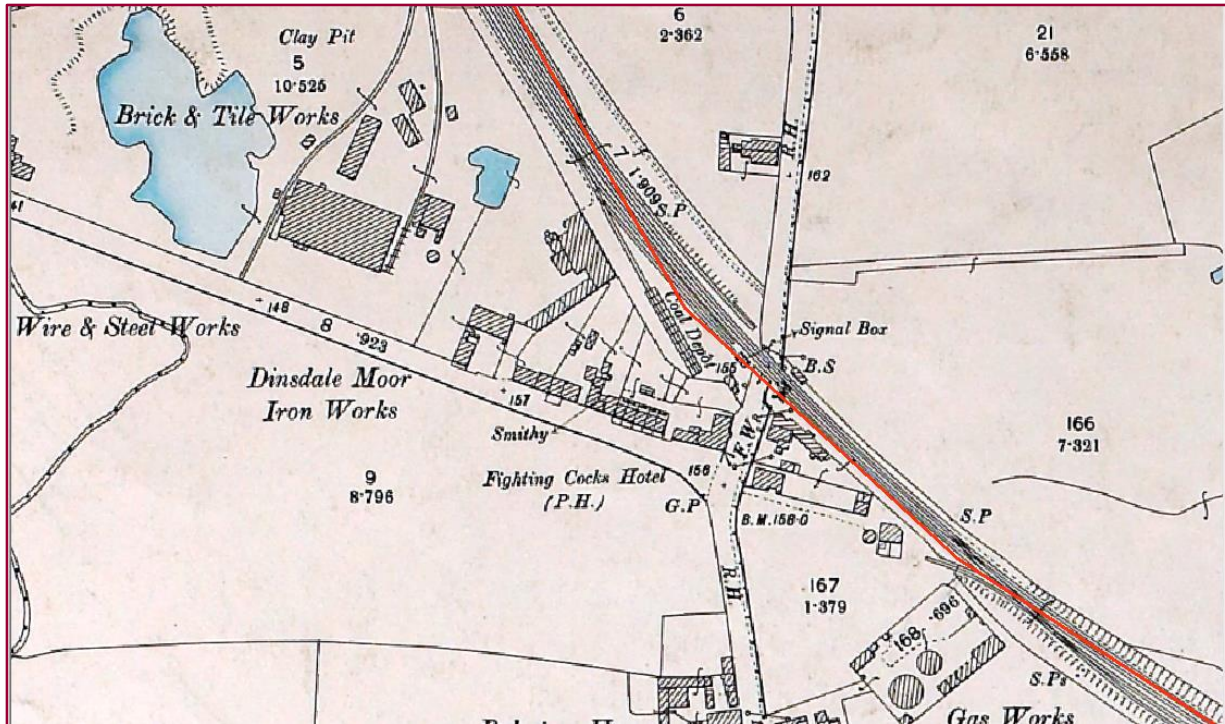


Figure 9. The OS map dating to 1897 (25 inch 2<sup>nd</sup> edition) showing the clustering of industry around the coal depot and its layout.

## (14) Fighting Cocks Inn

From the coal depot, turn right on to the main road and you are now outside the Fighting Cocks Inn, recently renamed Platform 1. The main door is around the corner on the street front.<sup>18</sup> There was no inn here when the proposed route was surveyed in 1822, but one was promptly built to serve the line and its users; it is mentioned in the Trade Directory for the area published in 1828<sup>19</sup> but could have been earlier. Other coal depots at Darlington, Stockton and Heighington had inns constructed by the S&DR from 1826, to serve the depot workers, and to provide somewhere to await the delivery of parcels and packages by the railway. It is likely that this inn had a similar role until a station was built in the 1830.

This inn along with others on the line at North Road, Darlington; the Railway Tavern in Stockton; the Lord Nelson at Potato Hall; one at Urray Nook, one at Goosepool and another at Heighington (now the Locomotion Number One) were all used not just by workers at the depots. Coaches and coal trains stopped here in such numbers that a watchman was told to 'put an end to such loose practices' (Heavisides 1912, 76). Passenger coaches stopped here too, to collect and drop off travellers. Fighting Cocks, along with Heighington (Aycliffe Lane) and Yarm Branch End became regular stops, in addition to Darlington and the railway termini (Hoole 1975, 20).

By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century the inn had been extended and was referred to as a hotel. The building we see today is certainly of four phases (five if you include the modern glass extension). The small red pantiled extension to the west is obvious, and was already in place by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The building was also extended to the rear twice.

<sup>18</sup> Open 11am to 11pm, serves food and dogs are permitted

<sup>19</sup> Parson & White's History, Directory & Gazetteer of Durham & Northumberland, vol 2, 1828



*THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:  
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**Then and Now...**



*Plate 12. The Fighting Cocks Inn (undated, but possibly 1930s. Image courtesy of Beamish Museum (NEG20016))*



*Plate 13. The Fighting Cocks Inn today (early 2016)*

'The late Mr Joseph Pease was wont to tell an amusing anecdote concerning an old farmer who turned out to see the No.1 engine and its freight on the opening day. It was the first thing of the kind that the old gentleman had ever set his eyes on; and he naturally enough examined it with as much curiosity as if it had been a new threshing machine. But the rational of the motive power greatly bothered him; and when the engine stopped at Fighting Cocks on the route between Darlington and Stockton, he advanced to Mr Pease, who was on the engine, and asked him if they pulled the engine "by them things," referring to the side-bar on which Mr Pease was resting his hand.' (Jeans 1974 (1875), 72-3))

## **(15) Fighting Cocks Station.**



*Plate 14. Ticket courtesy of North East Railway Association*

- 🚂 Fighting Cocks Station, now disused, is located on the S&DR line, just opposite the coal and lime depot.
- 🚂 The railway buildings consist of a station master's house and the station building on the left (painted white brick).
- 🚂 The station was opened in the 1860s, however, this was not the first station at Fighting Cocks.

At a S&DR Committee meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1830, it was 'Ordered that a Cottage for the accommodation of Passengers and Parcels and the sale of Coals Lime etc be immediately built at Fighting Cocks Lane and William Burn is directed to prepare a Plan forthwith to be laid before our next Meeting together with the one intended to be built at Yarm Branch.'

At the next meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1830, 'A Plan of a Cottage proposed to be built near the Fighting Cocks having been laid before this Meeting the same is approved with some slight alterations.'<sup>20</sup>

The 'cottage' went on to be referred to in archival records dating to December 1831,<sup>21</sup> when it was known as Railway Lodge and was occupied by John Clayton and Elizabeth Bedford who, tragically, lost their first child, Jane Bedford, at the age of three. She was buried at Middleton St. George on Christmas Day, 1831. John Clayton held the tenancy of the S&DR Company brewery at Darlington (part of the Railway Tavern) in 1829. By 1832, he gave his occupation as a coal-dealer on the happier occasion of the birth of his son Robert, and so must have been running the coal depot across the road.

The 'Cottage' or Railway Lodge was on the site of the later station dating to the 1860s and can be seen on the 1838 tithe map (see figure 10). Stonework in the back wall of the station today (private garden) suggests that this earlier building was incorporated into the present day station.

<sup>20</sup> PRO RAIL 667/31, Minutes of SDR Sub Committee (with grateful thanks to Brendan Boyle for sharing this information)

<sup>21</sup> from Durham Diocese Bishop's Transcripts, 1639-1919

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- 🏠 The architectural style of the station building belongs to that later tradition of neo-Gothic architecture, which was so popular amongst railway companies, with steeply pitched roof lines and ornate barge boards to the gables.
- 🏠 On the platform side of the station buildings and, sadly, out of sight because of the modern garage, there is a beautiful Gothic arched window where the sash could be lifted up in order to deal with customers across a counter. The station had latterly been known as Middleton & Dinsdale Station in 1855 (OS 25 inch 1855) and was renamed Fighting Cocks in 1866 after the inn across the road. This may have coincided with the construction of the new buildings, replacing the earlier 'cottage'.

The S&DR's Passenger Manager in the 1840s was one George Stephenson. This was not the world famous George Stephenson, but another one, also from Northumberland. A strong churchgoer and one of the key figures in building St. Paul's Church on North Road in Darlington, he went on to bring pressure to bear on the S&DR to stop using public houses as substitute stations.<sup>22</sup> Stephenson lived in Middleton St. George and commuted to his office in Darlington from Fighting Cocks each day. Even when he retired, he liked to inspect the staff at Fighting Cocks Station, which must have been greeted with much enthusiasm!!

*Figure 10. An extract from the 1838 tithe plan showing the Fighting Cocks Inn on the left side of the road and the 'cottage' or Railway Lodge on the right.*



- 🏠 Behind the station to the east was Fighting Cocks corn mill, which was served by its own siding, and was previously powered by a windmill.
- 🏠 In 1887, a new line into Darlington's Bank Top station was opened half-a-mile south of Fighting Cocks, and so Fighting Cocks Station concentrated on handling goods, until 9 March

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<sup>22</sup> Taken from NERA display on Fighting Cocks



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1964 (Hoole 1986, 118). The line continued after this serving the Paton and Baldwin factory outside Darlington, which had its own extensive sidings (Semmens 1975, 58), and also provided a route for occasional Sunday outings to the coast into the 1970s (Robin Coulthard, NERA pers comm).

*Plate 15. The  
Gothic window  
where customers  
could be served*



It is by this later route that you can now catch the train back to Darlington (or on to Eaglescliffe or Thornaby) by walking from Fighting Cocks down Station Road and Middleton Lane to Dinsdale Station.

Alternatively, this walk can be lengthened with an additional loop to Goosepool.

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**Then and Now...**



*Plate 16. Fighting Cocks Station to the right, the signal box (demolished) and the waiting shed to the left just visible behind the train. The photo was taken from the coal depot and the wall can be seen on the left – photo taken in 1960 (photo courtesy of Robin Coulthard, NERA).*



*Plate 17. The Station buildings today – now two private homes.*

## THE GOOSEPOOL EXTENSION.

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*Plate 18. Print dating to 1875 showing Fighting Cocks Station and the windmill to the rear which powered the corn mill. The smoking chimneys are the Middleton Iron Works. In the foreground, the curved roofline of the waiting shed can be seen.*



## **(16) The Waiting Shed**

- 📖 As soon as you pass through the gate, look to the left and you will see the foundations of a former building, behind a dog waste bin (see plates 19-20 below).
- 📖 This waiting shed survives in the shape of substantial foundations and low walls on an embankment which positioned waiting passengers high up ready to join trains. This was once an open fronted waiting shed, built of Pease's brick. The date is uncertain but, based on historic prints and mapping, it dates to between 1855 and 1875. The building was enclosed with a timber front possibly after passenger traffic was transferred to the Bank Top Station line in 1887 and its use was changed, possibly to a lamp room or storage. The ornate side walls have been reduced in the past and topped with cement coping.

### **Then and Now...**



*Plate 19. A waiting shed on the side of the S&DR line at Fighting Cocks c.1970. It was originally open fronted (Fawcett 2001, 127), but a new timber front added when its use changed, these included a paraffin lamp shed and a toilet. The 'RAMPS' sign relates to the storage of ramps; always in pairs. They were 4ft long pieces of shaped metal which were laid beside the wheels of a derailed waggon – one ramp for the left wheels, one ramp for the right wheels. The waggon was then pushed up the ramps and back onto the tracks.<sup>23</sup> Some brick foundations and walling can still be seen on the site. (Photo John Proud Collection courtesy of Win Proud)*



*Plate 20. The remains of the waiting shed in 2015*

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<sup>23</sup> Recollections of Norman Hugill published in the Northern Echo 17.3.15

**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:**  
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### Taking you further....


This line continued in use to serve the engineering works at Fighting Cocks, where railway coaches were scrapped.

Steam locomotives were also cut up here after they had been withdrawn during dieselisation (Semmens 1975, 58).


This stretch of line has a few other claims to fame. It was used as part of the locomotive parade in the 1925 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations of the opening of the S&DR from Goosepool to Faverdale where the locomotives and wagons went on static display.

It was also where Nigel Gresley's top secret experimental "Hush Hush" train was tested in 1929 before its official first trip to Kings Cross in London in 1930.

But it was all very hush hush.....

 Continue along the path, away from Fighting Cocks.

### (17) Middleton Iron Works and the Gas Works

 The housing estates on the right have been built on the site of the gasworks and the Middleton Iron Works which were served by sidings extending from the main line.

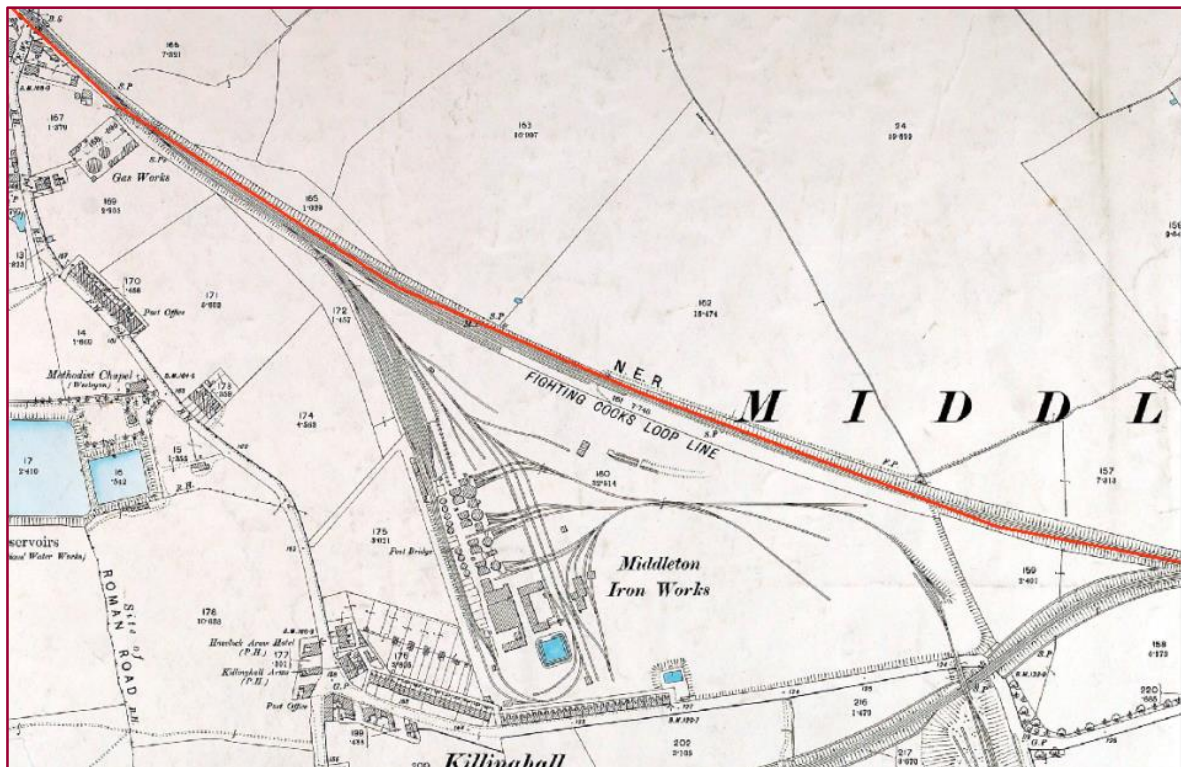


Figure 12. The OS 2<sup>nd</sup> ed map (25 inch) dating to 1897 showing the Middleton Iron Works and the Gas Works south of the S&DR line and now developed for housing



## **(18) Whinnies Local Nature Reserve and Bridge Abutments**

📖 As you approach The Whinnies Local Nature Reserve, you can see that the ground levels drop significantly to the left. Subject to the amount of vegetation growth, you might also be able to see some stone structures in the woods on your left. These are bridge abutments and are all that remains of a bridge constructed to take slag tubs on to the land on the other side from the Iron Works. This slag was used in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to make road chippings and was transported along a narrow gauge line to a slag crusher at the junction of Yarm Road and Long Newton Road. The bridge was locally called the Red Bridge, presumably because it was covered in red iron ore dust (Richardson 2003, 33).

“From Stockton to near Fighting Cocks the road has all been fenced with quicks, which appear to be in a flourishing state.” (Report to S&DR shareholders 8<sup>th</sup> July 1823, quoted in Jeans 1975, 60)

📖 Continue until a main road crosses the line – the line has been on an embankment, or battery as it was called in 1825. On the approach to the main road, the path shifts slightly left to head down to the road, but the line itself continues at a higher level. The road (Yarm Road) is modern and has been cut through the line. At the road, carefully cross and continue along the path parallel to the railway towards Oaktree Junction (NGR NZ 35419 13668).

## **(19) Oaktree Junction and Coal and Lime Depot**





This junction, starting about 80m in from the road, is where the more recent 1880s NER line joined the S&DR. Before that line was constructed, there was a coal and lime depot on the opposite side, about 160m in from the road. In order to control the trains using the junction after 1880, a signal box was built here. The S&DR is now a live line again, with trains between Darlington and Dinsdale and Eaglescliffe and Thornaby. Oaktree took its name from a nearby public house (Page 1928, 293).



*Plate 21. Oak Tree signal box with A8 locomotive (photo courtesy of the Armstrong Trust)*



## **(20) Goosepool**



-  The next road to cut over the line is St. George Way – another modern road. Before you reach this road, the path diverts a little off the line towards the north and meets a roundabout.
-  When you reach the road and the roundabout, this area is known as Goosepool. Its odd name is thought to derive from being the place where geese with tarred feet<sup>24</sup> rested on the way from one goose fair to another (Richardson 2003, 27). This was the area where George Stephenson pulled up Locomotion No. 1 on the launch day of the S&DR on the 27th September 1825, in order to replenish the water barrel (Heavisides 1912, 66).
-  From here the line is on a gentle gradient down to Stockton, making life easier when horses were sometimes used to haul the laden waggons. On the stretch onward from Urray Nook, a little east from here, dandy carts were introduced in the summer of 1828. These were light four wheeled trucks, open at each end and attached to the rear of the train. On reaching a down gradient, the horse was unhitched from the front of the train and was taught, after the waggons had passed, to jump on to the dandy cart where hay and water was provided. At the foot of the incline, the horse would resume its place at the head of the train. The saving in energy for the horse meant that each one covered 240 miles a week compared to the pre-dandy cart days of 174 miles per week. However, the return trip from Stockton to Shildon was uphill and even with empty waggons, the weight was 5½ tons (McLaurin 2006, 25).
-  From the roundabout at Goosepool go straight ahead along the A67. This is a busy road and you may need to cross it **so do take care.**

### **Taking your further.... and higher?**

On the opposite side of the road from where you are now is Durham Tees Valley Airport, built in 1971 and provided with its own railway halt. Since the early 1990s it has received only a bare minimum 'parliamentary' service to avoid the need for formal closure proceedings.

The airport started life as Royal Air Force Goosepool and, in 1941, became RAF Middleton St. George and operated under Bomber Command. In 1943 it was allocated to No. 6 Group, Royal Canadian Air Force and in 1964 started to take commercial air traffic.

## **(21) The Coal Depot and West Hartburn Tavern**

-  On your right you will see a pair of metal rusty gates, just after a lane marked as being a dead end, on the right. Behind these gates is an old railway coal and lime depot. You can see its curving walls extend into the depot from the road – these walls are capped with re-used four-hole stone sleepers.
-  Historic mapping shows several buildings inside including what must have been a weigh house. The depot also consisted of an elevated siding on beams over one or more cells

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<sup>24</sup> Tarring their feet was thought to make walking on hard surfaces easier

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where contents could be discharged through doors in waggon floors. In 1975 the cells still existed and some structures survive today. (Semmens 1975, 60).

- 🏠 We know that where there was such a depot, an inn for the workers wouldn't be far away. The West Hartburn Tavern was located across the road in the single storey cottage, now much modernised. The two storey brick building adjacent was Low Goosepool Farm, which appears to date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It was purchased by Benjamin Founders in 1820 who was a founding member of the S&DR, and a Quaker (but dithered on this point) and purchased the farm perhaps with a view to the S&DR railway line passing very close by.



*Plate 22. West Hartburn Tavern, now much modernised. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century this consisted of three cottages and a set of outbuildings on the far end.*

## **(22) Crossing Keeper's Cottage and Railway Bridge**

- 🏠 Return back down this busy road towards the lane that is shown as a dead end. It is called Carter's Lane.
- 🏠 Turn down Carter's Lane, on the left, and head down towards a railway bridge.
- 🏠 Just before you reach the railway bridge there is a pair of crossing keeper's houses on the right. These are mid- to late- 19<sup>th</sup> century and so much later than the 1825 line.







**THE ROUTE OF THE S&DR 1825:**  
*DARLINGTON TO GOOSEPOOL VIA FIGHTING COCKS*



*Plate 23. Left: The crossing keeper's cottages and right: the railway bridge carrying a slightly repositioned S&DR trackbed*

The railway bridge is the same date as the cottages. In 1825 this was a level crossing, but in the mid-to late-19<sup>th</sup> century, the road was excavated out to make it lower and the railway embankment was heightened and a bridge inserted instead.

## Your return ticket

-  Walk under the bridge and follow the road round until you reach a large grassy area with a roundabout ahead. Cross straight over towards Middleton St. George. You can now walk back through Middleton St. George past the Oak Tree pub on Yarm Road and pick up the line west of Oak Tree junction.
-  Alternatively, head towards the right to the roundabout on the A67 which will take you over a modern road bridge that looks down on the 1825 line.
-  From the modern road bridge, over towards the left was the Goosepool & Long Newton Railway which was built in order to deliver materials to the construction site for Long Newton Reservoir between 1900 and 1905.<sup>25</sup>
-  From this bridge walk back towards the roundabout at Goosepool and head left back on to the 1825 route that you arrived on a little earlier. There are also pedestrian level crossings on the 1825 line between Middleton St. George and the 1825 line so you can change your mind later.
-  If you walk back through Middleton St. George, turn right at the T-junction after the village which will take you back to the 1825 line near a roundabout. Take the left back on to the line heading west and you will be returning on the path towards Fighting Cocks. You can take either the cycle path or the walking route – they both come out at the same place.
-  From Fighting Cocks, you can take the train by walking left down Station Road and Middleton Lane to Dinsdale Station where you can catch trains to Aycliffe, Heighington, Darlington, Eaglescliffe or Thornaby, or you can return on foot or bicycle to Darlington the way you came.

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<sup>25</sup> Information from Barry Thompson, Friends of the 1825 S&DR and from Bowtell 1993



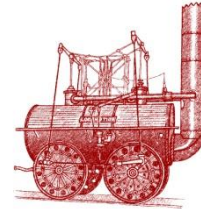
## **This guided walk leaflet was compiled using the following sources of information:**

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- Fieldwork by the Friends of the Stockton & Darlington Railway and Friends of the National Railway Museum.
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