



Carlisle City Centre walk - 1

As some of this walk takes you outside of the pedestrian area please beware of the traffic.

Start at the Crown and Mitre, completed in 1905. The previous building, also the Crown and Mitre, was where novelist Walter Scott stayed the night before his marriage to Charlotte Charpentier in Carlisle Cathedral. Charlotte spent her pre-wedding night in Castle Street, as noted by a plaque above Johnsons the cleaner. Later, the Crown and Mitre was owned by another Walter Scott, a railway contractor and publisher from Abbey Town. The initials JG on Specsavers stand for J Glaister who built this property as a café and shop. On the top of the quoins is the date of 1903, when this building was rebuilt as a part of street widening. The weathervane on the cupola of the next section is dated 1905, when more street widening was done to allow for the introduction of the trams. The Cathedral Lodge is circa 1893. Across the street, the gates into the Cumberland Building Society car park mark the entrance into what was Browns Lane. Excavations for the new HQ of the Cumberland Building Society turned up both Roman and medieval remains. Saint Mary's Gate is opposite the entrance to Saint Mary's Church, which stood in the Cathedral grounds; today the site of the church is occupied by the raised display flower behind the lodge. Hoopers stands on the site of Foster's Old Bank and the original Carrs Bakery and Shop before their move to Caldewgate. The main block of Hoopers was built in 1891 by the Creighton family, an extension of 1951 faces onto Saint Mary's Gate. The UK Firebird shop building is 18th century with 19th century alterations; a rare survival when the rest of that block was demolished in 1966 for the development of Stockland House. Would this development be allowed today in such a sensitive setting? Castle Street was also the site for the potato market.

The low wall surrounding the Cathedral was originally mounted with railings designed by R.W. Billings and erected in 1838. In 1930 they were removed as an eyesore and replaced with the present Lorimer Gates at the entrance to the Cathedral Close. The ground on the north side of the Cathedral was Saint Mary's graveyard, but only one or two stones remain. The opening in the wall opposite Hoopers marks the north entrance into the Cathedral before 1856. The vestry, dated 1950 on the rainspouts, now covers this entrance. On the other side of the north transept window another vestry covers the original entrance into that part of the Cathedral which was used as the parish church of Saint Mary's [before the building of a separate church as noted above]. The break in the Cathedral Wall at the meeting of Paternoster Row and Castle Street lead to the old entrance into the church.

21 Castle Street was the town house of the Richmond family and dates to the 1770s. The Boardroom pub dates to 1799. Long Lane, opposite, dates back to medieval times. Bookcase [both buildings] belonged to the Forsters, who had the Old Bank further along the street. Their initials and the date of 1798 can be seen on one rainwater head. The other head bears the date of 1898, when the facade was rebuilt. Bookcase, before becoming a book shop, has been a girls' school and then head quarters of the Carlisle and District State Management Scheme. Further along, Paradise Court takes its name from a field in Harraby, *Paradise* being a medieval name for an enclosure. The Johnston & Wright and Crutes & Mounsey buildings date from the late 18th century. Opposite, the 26 – 30 block on Castle Street was built in 1823 by Paul Nixon. Next is the entrance to Nixon's [sic] Court then the Tullie House clock tower. A plaque tells us this was the Public Library, Museum and School of Art. In the clock tower was the librarian's house. The next building along on this side was the old City Hall. This was an auction room built in 1888 by Mr Dalton. Technical classes were held here when the Library and Museum development opened. When the Technical School moved out in 1954 to the purpose built Technical College on Victoria Place this reverted to its original name the City Hall. Rufus House, faced in red sandstone, was built in 1963; replacing 18th century properties and Bird in the Hand Lane. Opposite - the next

property after the former City Hall is 18th century but the next block (projecting forward to a different street line) is probably 17th century. Next are two 18th century houses. You can still clearly see the lettering for Brown's Dye Works and the number 85 on one. After Rufus House is the Two Castle Housing building, early 19th century and originally the house of Mounsey's, the solicitors. Under the Two Castles Housing plaque you can make out the words 'Diocesan Registrar'. On the corner of Finkle Street is a men's barber shop, built in 1893 as part of a street widening process. This was erected for a decorator, painter and glazer, hence the stained glass in the window, a way of advertising their products. Note that No 1 Castle Street has an old spiked rod on the window ledge, to prevent loitering.

Round into Annetwell Street and past the Millennium Rotunda. When excavating for the Tullie House extension [dated 1990], remains of the Roman fort were found here. When Radio Cumbria was being built, more of the Roman fort, which extended to the Castle, was excavated. The Millennium Bridge in front of us is on the site of the old Irish Gate in the city's West Walls. The property on the corner of Annetwell Street and Abbey Street is 18th century and has been recently conserved. In Abbey Street the Chivers block dates to the 1880s. The Guild [ex Scout and Guides HQ] and Salvation Army HQ replaced 18th century town houses. These houses had suffered from subsidence, perhaps because they were built over the ditch of the Roman Fort. Opposite, Northern Vacuums is 19th century and between that shop and Peter Tysons is a townhouse, with steps, of circa 1801. The archway through Northern Vacs leads to Atkinson Court where the famous artist Sam Bough was born. This event is recorded above the archway. The WD on this plaque refers to William Donaldson who owned the property. Foxes is circa 1820s and the shoe repair shop perhaps the 1840s. The lettering of TP Bells cycle shop can be clearly made out. No 24 Abbey Street is circa 1790, and No 26 is a mid 18th century town house with original railings. Opposite, No 13, Herbert Atkinson House, is again 18th century, as are Nos 28 – 30. Beside Herbert Atkinson House is the Tullie House extension of 1892-93 with the city coat of arms.

Tullie House was built for Thomas Tullie; see the ornate rainwater pipes for the date, 1689. This was to become the City Museum and Art Gallery. The gates are contemporary with the house and the wall was reduced in height when the railings were added in the 19th century. The railings bear the name W. Dorning, not a local founder. Back across, Haltons, built in 1817, has the original railings and lamp overthrow. No 43 is 18th century and Nos 36 -38 early 19th century. No 42 Eaglesfield House, painted lime green, was the house of John Carnaby, plumber, who did the lead down spouts on Tullie House. This property is 17th century with 18th century alterations. No 48 is 17th century, later altered. The little doorway here [entrance to Fats Bar] was the entrance to what was known as Harrington's Lane; a Lane leading to West Walls, which predated Dean Tait's Lane of 1851. No 17 opposite is a single storey cottage with a storey added in the 19th century. The next property, on the corner with Paternoster Row, predates 1791.

Prepared by Carlisle Library with the help of Denis Perriam

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