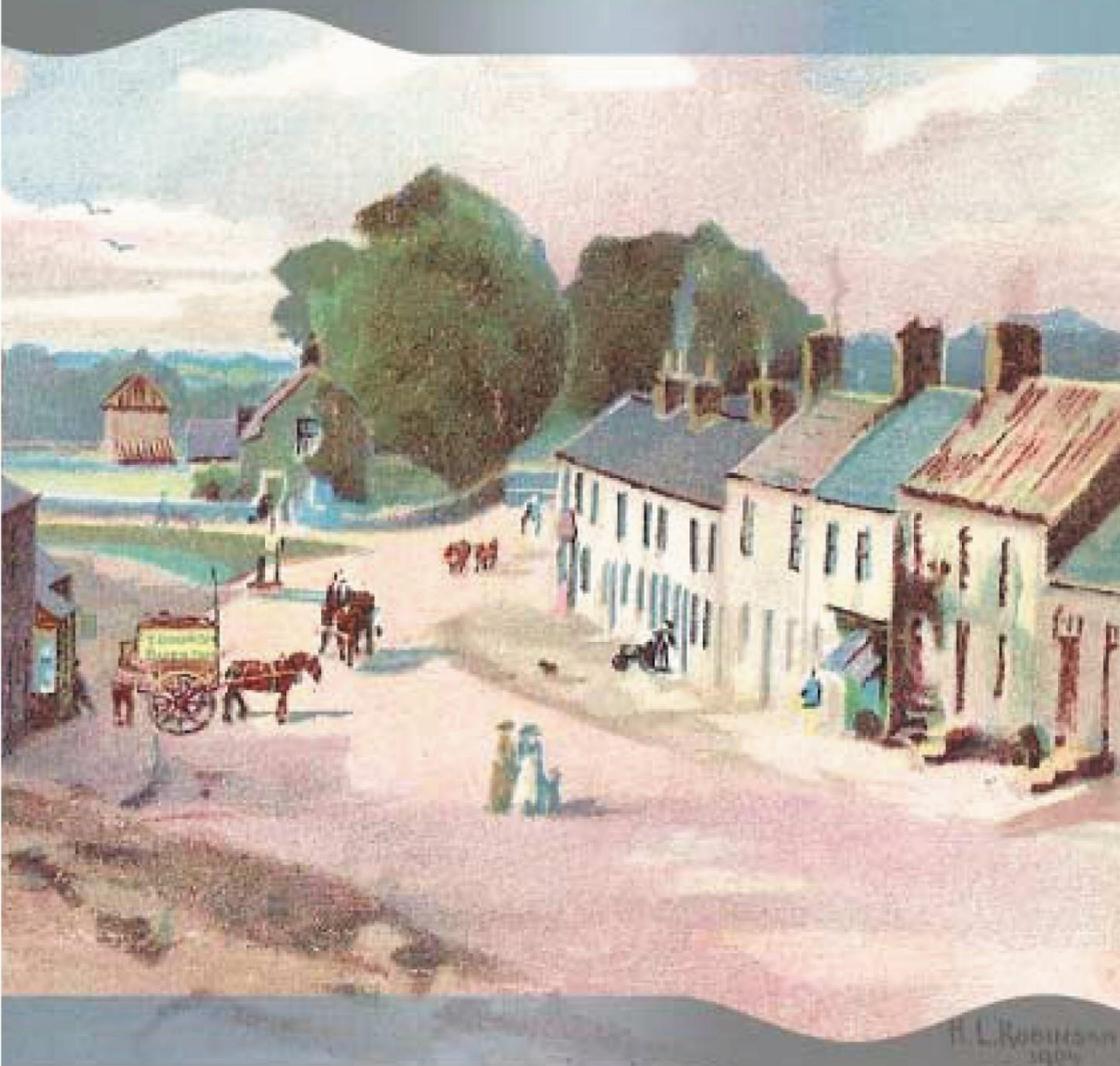


Embleton Parish Heritage Trails



Explore the history of this
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Countryside Code

Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs.

Leave gates and property as you find them.

Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.

Keep dogs under close control.

Consider other people.

Although the walks included are simple, the weather in North Northumberland can be changeable so suitable clothing should be worn.

The text mentions several buildings which are now private homes. Please respect the privacy of the owners of these properties.

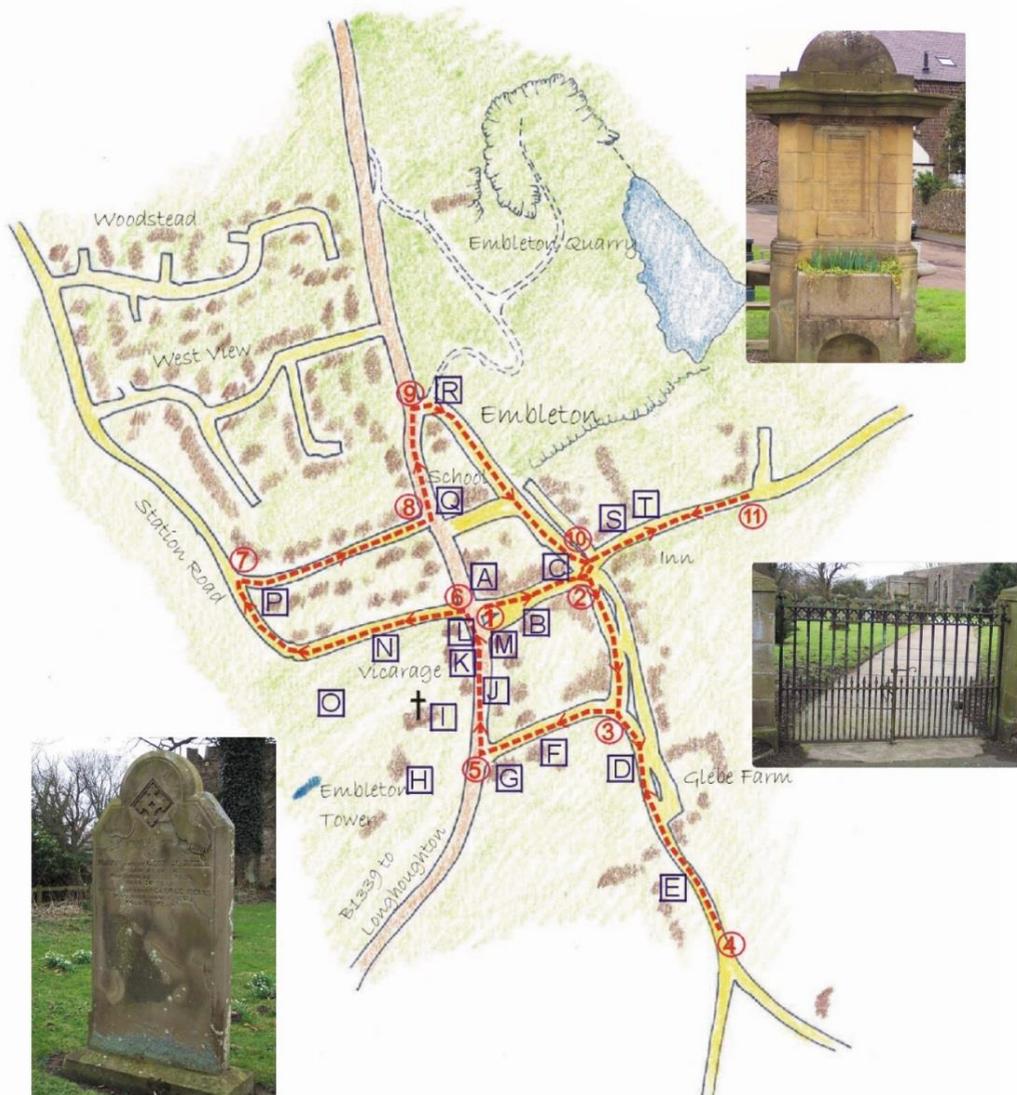
All the walks are suitable for taking your dog along but please ensure it is kept under control and on a leash when necessary, especially during lambing time.

The information in this book is included in good faith and is believed to be correct at the time of publication. No responsibility is accepted by the author of the Parish Council for errors or any loss or injury however caused.

Walk No. 1

The village and its history

This 1 hour walk takes you around Embleton village. On this walk you will pass most of the village's historic sites and buildings. Information relating to these is given on the following pages.





① Leave the green with its pump and set off up Front Street

A Until of late years the place was very deficient in regard to a water supply. There was only the pump in the middle of the street and a well in a field about a quarter of a mile (400m) away. Both were rather picturesque but quite inadequate for the wants of the people. Now an ample supply is got from a few miles distant and there is only wanting more buildings of a respectable and commodious description to make Embleton a splendid sea-side resort for those who seek health and change of scene during Summer (local newspaper circa 1900).

On the right hand side is the old Presbyterian Church which was sold for conversion to two dwellings in 2000.

B The United Reformed Church (formerly the Presbyterian Church)

In 1832 a group of Presbyterians in Embleton and District decided to establish a congregation in association with the Church of Scotland. The committee secured a site from the Earl of Tankerville and a new building was opened sometime in 1834. Ministerial oversight was secured and a Licentiate of the Church of Scotland was ordained in 1834.

Trouble came with the Disruption in Scotland in 1843 and the minister hurried across the border without even waiting for his resignation to be accepted. Now that no Church of Scotland minister could be found an Independent minister from Alnwick helped for a while until by chance a student from Airedale College was secured.



This was the Rev. William Stead whose ministry is remembered today through the son, William T. Stead, born to him in the old Embleton Manse. William became world-famous as a journalist and champion of distressed causes. By the 1880s the congregation had grown to some 200 and the church was enlarged. In the 1920s the interior of the church was reconstructed and modernised and an acetylene gas plant for Church and Manse use was installed. By the 1930s electric lighting had replaced gas. The congregation had remained steady at around 200 despite the local population falling.

Unfortunately, after the war the congregation steadily declined until the use of the church became impractical and it was sold in 2000 with the United Reformed Church members sharing the parish church in a positive ecumenical setting. Due to a further decline in the congregation the United Reformed Church in Embleton held its last service on October 23rd 2005.

The houses on the opposite side are now mainly holiday homes but in the early 1900s these were occupied by villagers. Some had wooden porches with roses and other plants growing in small front gardens. Evidence of their existence can still be seen in the pavement in front of some of these houses. Looking to the right the village general store (Moody's) is still going strong after more than 100 years, which is more than can be said of its competitors, the Co-op, Pitts Emporium Supply Stores, Thompsons Butchers etc. - but more of these later. Behind the shop lies Star Yard, once the site of The Star Inn. There is now no sign of the once thriving Co-op which was opposite the shop and closed in 1968.

C The Co-op

The Embleton Co-op was a branch of the Howick Co-op Society which was founded in 1895 by Lord Grey of Howick to provide a service to his estate workers. The newly opened Co-op also began to serve the communities and farmsteads in the surrounding area and in 1918 the Embleton branch was opened on Front Street in what was formerly the butcher's shop. A traveller covered the area from Spittalford to Seahouses and as far as Eglingham by bicycle on a fortnightly round. In most cases orders taken one day were delivered the next by horse and cart, until a van was introduced about 1930. The traveller worked five and a half days a week and was estimated to call on about 800 customers on his round. In addition to the normal grocery orders he also carried a catalogue for hardware, carpets and furniture, for which he took orders. The staffing of Embleton Co-op was more or less the same over the period it operated. For instance in the 1950s it was:

Groceries and Provisions -

1 Manager

Greengrocery, Bakery - 1

Traveller

Hardware and Furniture - 4

Shop Assistants

Drapery, Outfitting -

1 Manager

Boots and Shoes -

1 Traveller,

1 Shop Assistant

Butchery - 1 Manager, 4

Assistants (who also drove the vans)



It is worth recording that up until the mid to late 50s foodstuff was delivered in bulk, butter in 112lbs (50kg) barrels, lard in 28lbs (13kg) cartons, etc. By the 1960s the individual Co-op Societies like Howick were experiencing difficulties in competing with the newly emerging supermarkets, and the Howick Society, with its Embleton branch, were taken over by the North Eastern Co-op Society in 1964. The branch finally closed in 1968.

Finally, on the left, the single storey building was, until 1999, a shop selling vegetables, etc., and the house next to it is on the site of the former Three Tuns Inn.

2 Turn right, following the handrail, onto the road which passes in front of the now defunct village fish & chip shop and winds down past the Greys Inn. Looking to the left the low building opposite was once the quarry office, and later a tea room before becoming a private dwelling. To the left of this is 'Cheviot View', the site of the former Railway Inn. Continue along the road to the junction with W. T. Stead Road where another, later, village pump can be seen on the left next to the commemorative seat given in memory of William Pitt. The Pitt family ran the other general store and several other enterprises in the village for many years.

3 Cross the road and continue past the play park on the right.

D During WW II the army built an assault course starting at the church field, heading east across the cricket ground and children's park, over the wall, across the road and over the wall around what were then old farm buildings. The concrete overlays on the walls can still be seen today.

Continue onto the raised footpath along Sunny Brae and past what were reputedly quarrymen's cottages, built at a cost of £50 each, to the end of this path from where there is a striking view of Dunstanburgh Castle. Continue along the road to the Embleton village sign and look back towards the cottages where the remains of a medieval dovecote, **E** which belonged to the Lord of the Manor, can be seen. This is located in a private garden and cannot be visited

4 Return to the junction, cross over to the Blue Bell and walk along W.T. Stead



Road towards the church. On the left are a pair of revolutionary 1927 'prefabs' of reinforced concrete with cavity walls, shown in the North East Exhibition of that year. **F**

Beyond these bungalows lies the recently refurbished Creighton Hall, named after Mandell Creighton in whose memory it was built by his wife and friends.

G Creighton Hall

Of all the vicars of Embleton, none is as famous as Mandell Creighton who was Vicar from 1875 until 1884. He was born in Carlisle in 1843 and went to Merton College in 1862. He became a Fellow and Tutor of Merton in 1866 and was appointed Vicar of Embleton in 1875. He married Louise von Glehn in 1872 and they had two children whilst living in Embleton. In 1884 he was elected Dixie Professor at Cambridge and in 1885 Canon of Worcester. By 1890 he was Canon of Windsor and became Bishop of Peterborough in 1890. His career reached its climax with his appointment as Bishop of London in 1897, and he died in 1901. During his lifetime he published 'History of the Papacy' in five volumes and journeyed to America and to Russia. The Creighton Memorial Hall, one of the largest village halls in northern England, was opened by his widow in October 1903. When first built it included a reading room for the use of the working men and a billiards room, still in use. The Hall has been totally refurbished over the last three years with the aid of several grants and is still used nearly every day and/or evening.

At the end of the road there is a fine view down the drive towards the old vicarage

H Large additions were made to the vicarage in 1828 by the famous Newcastle architect, Dobson. The house also features a domed Victorian greenhouse and a pele tower. This is a typical Northumberland 'Vicar's Pele' and is mentioned in the list of 1415. This is private property but over recent years the owner has kindly allowed the Church Fete to be held in the gardens on the first Wednesday in August.



5 Turning right and crossing over the road brings one to the Holy Trinity Church

I The Church

The church may appear to be Victorian but there are some remains in the lower stage of the tower which show that there was a stone church built before the end of the eleventh or early twelfth century. Nothing exists of the Norman nave or chancel except the walls of the nave. Major alterations occurred in the fourteenth century when the aisles were rebuilt and the tower was joined to the church and the two upper stages of the tower rebuilt. The west tower is broad and unbuttressed and the bell openings have Y-tracery, typical of the thirteenth century. The south porch is also medieval. No more major changes were made until 1867 when the whole chancel was rebuilt at the expense of Merton College, whose warden and fellows still hold the patronage of the living. The first rector of whom we have record is called Adam and he lived at the end of the twelfth century. In 1274, Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, son of Henry III and brother of Edward I, gave the advowson of Embleton Church to Merton College, Oxford, for the support of scholars.



In front of the church is the 'Parish Church Rooms', **J** which in the early 1800s was a school for girls, and is now used for meetings of the Brownies, Guides and Local History Society, etc. Next to this lies the new vicarage **K** and then, what was until recently, the village police house. **L** Opposite, on the corner, is the 'Old Manse' in which W.T. Stead was born. A plaque on the wall reads: WILLIAM THOMAS STEAD 1849 TO 1912 WORLD RENOWNED JOURNALIST AND APOSTLE OF PEACE WAS BORN HERE. In July 1987 the W.T. Stead International Memorial Society held a meeting and commemorative service in the United Reformed Church. A tree in the garden of the former church bears a plaque with the inscription "This Western Hemlock, planted by Mr William Kennedy Stead, marks the visit of the W.T. Stead Memorial Society to Embleton." In 1999 the Society met again in Embleton with visitors from all over the world attending.

M **W.T. Stead**

William Thomas Stead was a social reformer and campaigning journalist who revolutionised newspaper reporting. He was born in Embleton in 1849, the son of a congregational minister.

He began training as a minister himself but soon turned to writing for his living. At the age of 22 he was appointed editor of the newly established Northern Echo in Darlington.



He soon gained a reputation for forthright and campaigning journalism.

In 1880 he became assistant editor of the politically influential Pall Mall Gazette in London. Three years later he became editor and tackled a range of burning issues in Victorian society. He was also editor of the radical magazine 'Review of Reviews'.

He campaigned against female discrimination, the shortcomings of the Royal navy, militarism and against the Boer War. He had audiences with Pope, Cecil Rhodes, the Czar Nicholas II of Russia, Queen Victoria and Albert. One of his greatest and most controversial campaigns occurred in 1885 when he published a series of articles, 'The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon', which drew attention to the sale of child prostitutes in Victorian London and led to the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885. In 1912 Stead was invited to address a peace conference at the Carnegie Hall in New York, along with the then President, William Howard Taft, and sailed aboard the ill-fated Titanic. He gave his life jacket to a young mother and helped fellow passengers to the remaining lifeboats, but died when the ship sank

6 Turn left at this corner into Station Road and follow the footpath past 'Moot Hall' on the right.

N Moot Hall

The 'Kings Court' or manorial court met in a building set aside for the purpose, called the Moot Hall, which is mentioned in several ancient documents and dates back to 1290.



The courtroom was on the first floor of the building of which the ground floor was

used as a stable. In 1532 the sum of forty six shillings was spent on the repair of the hall and stable beneath it. On July 4th 1543, Thomas Burgoyne, William Denton and Robert Horsley were directed 'to view and survey the state of the Moothall In Emyldon, what decay it is in, the cost of repairing or rebuilding it, what timber, stone, etc. the King has there towards the repairs, and where such may be had near and best chepe'. Burgoyne reported to Henry VIII that as nearby Dunstanburgh Castle was falling into ruin there was enough timber and lead there to make 'a flatte roof unto the seyd Motehall and that done to cover the same with lead'.

The suggestion does not seem to have been adopted and the work of rebuilding was eventually undertaken by Ralph Grey of Horton. Grey, the Queen's Officer, lived in the Hall for about twelve years, having taken up residence to supervise resistance to Scottish raiders. Many disputes were tried in the Moot Hall and local tradition has it that the stocks were situated at the south west angle of the front wing. The history of the building during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is obscure. We are told that 'after the enclosure (of land) which followed the partition (1730), the townships of Embleton and Stamford assumed their modern aspect. Did Moot Hall thenceforth cease to be a semi-public building, a court and manor office, and first become a private residence? On the south front three large sash windows were inserted at some time during the eighteenth century, and the excessive thickness of the sash bars is characteristic of around 1730. The windows of the rooms below have thin sash-bars of the latter part of the eighteenth century. Inside the building there remains architectural evidence of the three periods - Elizabethan, Queen Ann and Georgian.

Continue down Station Road and looking across to the left the vicar's dovecote can be seen. **O** This forms part of the old vicarage property and, like the old vicarage wall, is built of Dutch bricks imported via Beadnell.



7 After the road bears round to the right, thurn right into Merton Cottages and pass the site of the old village smithy **P** on the right, eventually joining the main road opposite the Vincent Edward’s Primary School.

Q Vincent Edward’s Primary School

The Vincent Edwards School in Embleton, having been founded in 1688, is older than any English University with the exception of those of Oxford and Cambridge, older than the vast majority of English public schools, and pre-dates those schools set up by religious organisations. 1688, the year of the foundation of the school, was the year after the ‘Glorious Revolution’, the enforced flight of James II allowing the crown to pass to his daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange. England was still essentially a rural country and the government, nationally and locally, was in the hands of land-owning aristocracy, gentry and squirearchy. There were, however, members of the wealthier classes who could see that an impoverished and deprived population was a powder keg which could well explode at some future date. One of these was the Rev. Vincent Edwards, Vicar of Embleton from 1680 to 1714, who also founded schools at Newton by the Sea, Brunton, Rock and Rennington.



In his will he wrote "I do give and bequeath to the school at Embleton, for ever, the land and house which I purchased off Thomas Watson of Newton, together with the school and house built at my own expense, to pay for teaching poor children of this parish to read, say their catechism, write and cast accounts, and I do give £40 more, in interest whereof is to be paid as further encouragement to the said master for teaching poor children. I would not have the number of children to be taught gratis on my account restrained to fewer than ten, nor to exceed the number of fourteen. I do nominate, appoint and constitute the Vicar of Embleton overseer and visitor of the said school with full powers to nominate and appoint a master and to displace him upon neglect or failure in his duty". The school and house referred to were built on the site of the present schoolhouse and garden (at the very end of the left hand track leading from the junction of Sea Lane and Front Street). The school continued to exist in its original building until 1825, by which time the buildings were no longer fit for use. In 1825 the school was rebuilt on a new site some 50m to the north of its original site. The land and ground for the new school was given by the Earl of Tankerville and materials were donated by farmers. As the church made no offer to pay for the rebuilding this was entirely paid for by Shafto Craster of Craster Tower. After the rebuilding the original charity scheme came to an end. In the mid 1800s quarrying commenced on a large scale to the north of the school. By 1894 the face of the quarry was approaching the school building (which was some 5m above the present ground level in that part of the quarry) and it was necessary to build a new school. In 1872 the school had been placed under the control of the Education Department, though remaining a 'church' school, and in 1894 the Charity Commissioners sold the original Vincent Edwards gift of land. The new school, with three classrooms, opened in 1897. It was modernised in 1964 and continues to serve the community today.

8 Turn left passing the garage (Grieves & Co) and cross diagonally to the old quarry, entry to which is via a piece of missing fence next to the locked gate. The quarry is owned by Alnwick District Council which hopes eventually to build a few private houses on the top (west) side. The remainder, including the lake, will remain a natural wildlife area. The quarry is used by the villagers to exercise their dogs and as a playground by children, and at present access is not denied.





R *The Quarry*

Embleton whinstone quarry ceased production in 1961, having been a major source of employment for about 70 men in the area for almost 100 years. Generations of the Appleby family worked the quarry. Thomas moved to Embleton in 1840 as a married man of twenty and began business as a stone merchant. He subsequently brought his son Tom into the business and opened the quarry in 1864. Another son, Mark, joined the business and they traded as T and M Appleby until late in the century, also extracting stone from sites in Embleton in the field south of Sunny Brae cottages and opposite both Sunny Brae and the Greys Inn. The land on which the quarry stands was not owned by the Appleby family but was leased from the owners and a royalty paid on tonnage extracted. The land had been the property of the Tankerville Estates from enclosure in 1730 until it was purchased by Samuel Ayres of Leeds in 1868. It was subsequently sold to Sir Arthur Sutherland in 1919.

Embleton quarry was an early producer of tarmac in this country from just after the end of the First World War until the mid 1950s. By the late 1950s the quarry, having, until this time produced 20,000 to 30,000 tons per annum, became uneconomic to operate because of the increasing overburden (top soil, clay and sandstone) that needed to be removed before the whinstone could be quarried. After all quarrying had ceased and the machinery was disposed of the quarry was purchased by Alnwick District Council and used as a waste disposal site from 1974 to 1984. Since then, nature has reclaimed large areas but attempts to de-gas the waste to make the land suitable for building continue.

In the Nineteenth Century all stone was transported by horse and cart either to Craster Harbour or the main line station at Christon Bank. At the beginning of the Twentieth Century a 30 inch (70cm) gauge horse tramway was built, north of what is now the Greyfield Estate, to link the quarry to Christon Bank station but the horses

were soon replaced with steam locomotives. However, because of the considerable amount of handling involved in delivery by rail, this method became uneconomic with the advent of mechanised road transport, and the private rail link was closed in 1932. The company ran coal-fired Sentinel steam road wagons in the 1920s and 30s but petrol-driven 3 ton Bedford lorries were introduced in the mid 1930s.

9 Leaving the quarry at the point of entry, turn left and follow the track behind the school until you reach the top of Front Street again. In the 1700s a group of Quakers met in a house on the site of the current Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel, and Quakers Row commemorates a burial ground once used by the Friends. The garden on your right just before the road junction was the site of a lodging house for itinerant quarry workers.

10 Turn left down Sea Lane. On the right was once the village cinema.

S The Empire Cinema

Embleton had its own cinema for a short time. It opened on February 6th 1947. The entrance was at No.3 Mount Pleasant and the stalls were in a long room on the 1st floor. Balcony seats were 1/6d (7p) and the stalls 9d (4p). The balcony and projector room are now bedrooms at No.1, Mount Pleasant and the smell of the projector room stayed on for many years after the cinema closed in about 1952.

Continue down Sea Lane to 'The Sportsman' which has magnificent views across Embleton Bay to Dunstanburgh Castle. This hotel now encompasses Pitts House (later Dunstanburgh House) which was a boarding house open in the early 1920s with nine residents. **T**

11 Retrace your steps up the hill and on the corner on your left, facing down Front Street, once stood Pitt's Emporium Supply Stores. If you carry on down Front Street you return to the pump. The Dunstanburgh Castle on the right used to be known as the Hare and Hounds.

Bolton Brothers Transport

John Bolton (b1882) was a self-employed shoemaker in Embleton. He used a horse and trap to visit surrounding villages and farms and combined this with passenger hire work e.g. taking people to and from Christon Bank station.

In 1924 he purchased a 30 seat solid tyre open charabanc for public hire and for regular trips to Alnwick hirings and markets, Holy Island etc. Initially he continued as a shoemaker and his brother Tom was the bus driver but soon a second charabanc was acquired together with two cars for hire. By 1926 John had given up shoemaking and the brothers began to operate a bus service between Bamburgh and Newcastle. They built a garage in Embleton (now a new terrace of houses next to the school). Demand was such that further buses were purchased and by 1930 they operated eight buses and had three cars for hire plus petrol and tyre sales from the garage. About 1928 a second garage (for car hire and petrol) was opened in Seahouses. The business continued until 1935 when the bus operation was sold to the United Bus Co. The car hire, petrol and tyre sales continued, even through the war, until it finally closed in 1950 when John retired.

