

6 Northumberland Hall

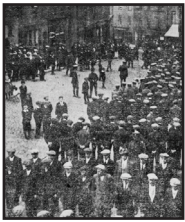


The Hall was built in 1826 at the expense of the third Duke of Northumberland. There is a roll of honour, listing 1200 men from Alnwick who served in the war. The plaque was commissioned by the women who ran the rest room for soldiers and cost £25-2-6d.



7 Alnwick Town Hall

Within weeks of the war starting, the call went out by Field Marshall Horatio Herbert Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, for thousands of volunteers to swell the ranks of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), which had suffered devastating losses in the opening weeks of the war. They responded in their thousands, usually in groups of friends and workmates. The Town Hall became the main recruiting base in the early stages of the war.



8 Fenkle Street

This was the Drill Hall for the Territorials of the 7th Battalion, Northumberland Fusiliers. Originally, the Territorials were intended for Home Defence only but it soon became apparent that the British Expeditionary Force was too small for the conflict on the Western Front and the next line of trained soldiers to be called upon to do their duty were the Territorials.

9 Duchess' School, Bailiffgate

It was not long before casualties began to arrive back in England to recover from their wounds. Large buildings such as Howick Hall, and including some schools, were re-organised as convalescent hospitals. Lady Victoria Percy, daughter of the Duke of Northumberland, opened a hospital at the Duchesses School in January 1915. Ladies of the town were enrolled for nursing duties as part of the Voluntary Aid Detachments (V.A.D.)



10 Parish Hall

Parlez-vous Francais? In order to maintain the 'entente cordial' French lessons were given to the troops to ensure friendly relations with our allies continued.



Alnwick shortly before the outbreak of the Great War:

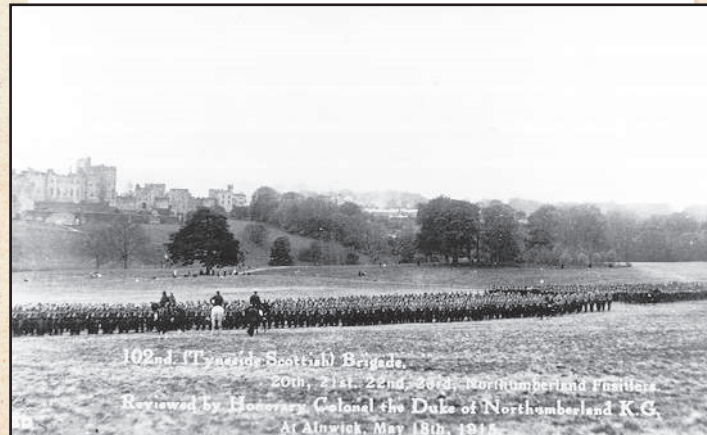
The county town of Northumberland delightfully situated amid beautiful scenery is on the south bank of the river, from which it derives its name. It is 5 miles from the German Ocean and has a station three miles west from Alnmouth Junction station on the North-Eastern railway.

Kelly's Trade Directory 1910

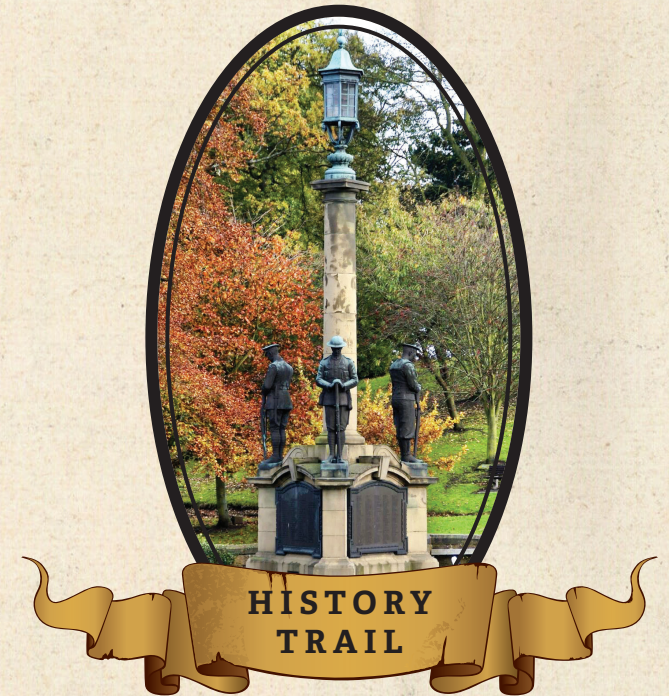
Courtesy of Northumberland Records Office

11 Alnwick Camp

The Pastures at Alnwick Castle. The Duke of Northumberland provided land to construct a training camp for the newly-formed regiments of Kitchener's army - the Tyneside Scottish Brigade. The Tyneside Scottish was the first to arrive on 29 - 30 January 1915 after an overnight stop in Morpeth. The camp was later converted to a military hospital and in January 1916 patients began to arrive.



ALNWICK AND THE GREAT WAR



Despite the passing of 100 years the slaughter of millions during the Great War of 1914 - 1918 still haunts the imagination. In tightly-knit communities, where 'pals' and brothers rushed to join the colours, losses could be devastating.

This trail has been designed to show how that apparently distant war reached into the very heart of rural Northumberland and affected the lives of the people of Alnwick. Almost 800 in Alnwick District were not to return.





1 - Alnwick Memorial

stands at the junction of Bondgate Without and Denwick Lane. Three bronze figures with heads bowed and rifles reversed on a triangular pedestal, pay homage to the three services: a sailor, airman with cap and a soldier with tin helmet and backpack. An elaborate bronze and glass lantern rises above the

central Doric column. The memorial was unveiled on 11 November 1922 by the Duke of Northumberland and cost £2000 to construct. There are 189 First World War casualties named but of the 19 men who are buried in Alnwick Cemetery only 7 of them are named on the war memorial.



2 Railway Station (now Barter Books)

A branch line ran from Alnmouth to Alnwick. Opened in 1850, it proved invaluable after 1914 for the movement of war material and troops,

particularly after a training camp was set up on the Alnwick pastures in 1915, initially for the Tyneside Scottish Brigade and other infantry battalions of the Northumberland Fusiliers' regiment'.



3 Alnwick Workhouse

Always looked upon with more than a little dread, the workhouse was opened in 1810

on the north side of Green Batt, between Roxburgh Place and Hotspur Street. The old workhouse was replaced in 1840 and moved to Wagon Way Road. Of the 34 inmates in 1814, there were 20 whose combined ages came to 1523 years - an average of 76 years, due, as one chronicler noted, to the 'salubrity of the air of Alnwick'. In 1914 a different kind of inmate was interred. Three German ships had been interned in Amble harbour and the sailors were held in custody in the almost largely redundant building, until they were transferred to a prisoner of war camp.



4 Police Station

Immediate concerns were raised about the possibility of a German invasion along the coastline of Northumberland. A Local Emergencies Committee was formed (LEC) to respond to this threat. As the fear of invasion grew special constables were enrolled. They received a badge but no uniform. Their

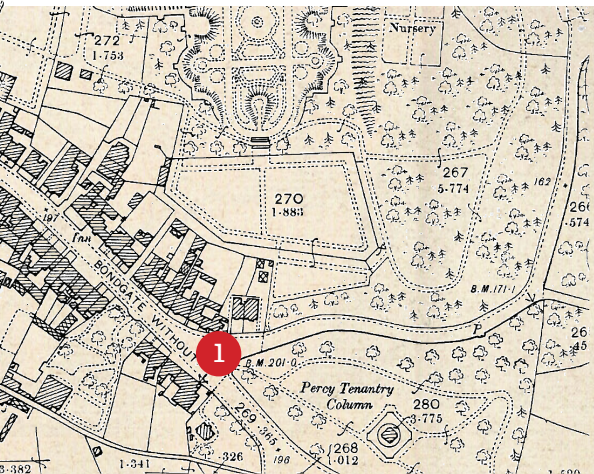
principal duty was to ensure that a black-out was observed so no raiding zeppelins could find their way to a brightly lit target. Boy scouts were enlisted to give warning if the enemy were sighted and despatch riders alerted to warn farmers to move or, in the last resort, to destroy their livestock. The civilian population was to be evacuated by train to Wooler on the Alnwick-Cornhill railway.



5 Corn Exchange

Families began to suffer hardships as food shortages grew because of German submarine activity. In a stirring speech at a public meeting at the Corn Exchange on 17 August 1914, the Duke of Northumberland opened up a fund for the needy. The Lord Lieutenant's Fund, as it was called, had raised £42,759.16s by 29th August 1914

The Corn Exchange building was also the local cinema. Patriotic films and heavily censored newsreels about the war were shown to bolster morale.



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