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Rowfoot to Lambley and Lambley Viaduct

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Featherstone Park Station Car Park (NY 682607) – free.
Ordnance Survey map	OL43 – Hadrian’s Wall
Distance	4.5 miles
Date of Walk	6 May 2019
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: This easy walk along the banks of the River South Tyne takes you past the impressive Featherstone Castle and to the spectacular Lambley Viaduct, passing through the village of Lambley with its attractive church en route.

Featherstone Castle is a private residence. Its origins date back to the 14th century and a tower built by Thomas de Featherstonehaugh. It has since had many additions and alterations and a varied history, including having its grounds used as a camp for training American troops in WWII and then a Prisoner of War camp. You may note some derelict, brick buildings on the far side of the river after passing the castle. Like all good castles, it has ghosts, the ethereal remnants of a wedding party in the 17th century where a fight led to many being killed.

Lambley church was built in 1885 on the site of an older church in such poor repair, that daylight could be seen between the stones.

Lambley Viaduct is a truly impressive structure towering above the River South Tyne. It was built in 1852 by the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway and in use until 1976. It carried the Alston branch line from Haltwhistle. It has 9 arches, each 56 ft wide and crosses 105 ft above the river. There are therefore great views from the top.

The walk starts from the Featherstone Park Station Car Park (NY 682607), although there is no longer a station there. To get there, turn south off the A69 at the Haltwhistle Bypass, signposted for Alston, Halton Lea Gate and Coanwood and simply follow this road to Rowfoot. Just beyond the car park is the rather excellent Wallace Arms, a “proper pub”, where I enjoyed a refreshing pint after the walk.

Start: From the car park, climb the steps and cross the old railway line (which will be your return route) to the road. Turn left along the road.

Continue along the road (Hall Bank) from which there are good views both north and south. It drops down, passing Featherstone Castle. When you reach the river, cross the footbridge and turn left, to walk along the right hand river bank.

At NY 671610, the path turns away from the river and crosses another footbridge, over Hartley Burn. Immediately after crossing the footbridge, turn left to follow the burn.

In the field you come to, head diagonally across the field to reach the river and turn right to follow it.

The route from this point crosses pasture and is well defined with stiles, gates and arrows. Just walk roughly parallel with the river.

Eventually, you go through a gate to join a broad track (NY 673596). Turn left and follow it to the road, by Lambley Farm. At the road, turn right.

Follow the road for just less than half a mile. Turn left on to a minor road, signposted to Lambley (NY 672590).

Follow the road over the bridge into Lambley village. Just after a house on the right called Harpertown, there is a footpath on the left which will take you to the viaduct directly. However, I chose to walk through the village, partly just out of curiosity but also to look at the church (St. Mary and St. Patrick). Assuming you do the same, carry on through the village. As you leave it, it climbs gently. About fifty yards before joining the A689, turn left along a footpath indicated by the fingerpost for "Lambley Viaduct ¼ mile" and "Coanwood 1 mile".

Follow the footpath downhill. After going through a gate, descend steps close to the viaduct. Turn right at a four way fingerpost following the sign for "South Tyne Trail (North) via Lambley Viaduct".

The remainder of the route is simply following the course of the old railway back to the car park, a distance of just over one and a half miles.

