

MG Northumbria
North British Run 8th June 2008



Morpeth station with the platform to Woodburn on the left.

The Wansbeck Railway, linking Reedsmouth and Morpeth, 25 miles to the east, was sponsored by the North British Railway. Scotsgap to Morpeth opened in 1862 and the following year the company was absorbed by the NBR, who saw the possibility of having a route from Edinburgh to Newcastle via Riccarton Junction, Reedsmouth and Morpeth then over the Blyth & Tyne Railway. The North Eastern Railway also saw this possibility and prevented it by absorbing the BTR in 1874. Reedsmouth to Scotsgap opened in 1865 and this was followed in 1870 by the Northumberland Central's branch from Scotsgap - Rothbury. Its subsequent absorption by the NBR two years later led to the Morpeth - Rothbury line becoming the major route. The Wannie line was the name given to the fourteen mile section between Reedsmouth and Scotsgap which operated as a feeder service, although there were never more than three passenger trains daily in each direction. Passenger services were withdrawn in 1952 and the line closed to all traffic in 1966.

This run attempts to follow as close as possible the route of the North British Railway section from Morpeth to Bellingham, and the Border Counties line from Bellingham to Hexham. The finish is at Chollerford and at an easy pace should take around 11 1/2 hours. The lines down the side of the instructions indicate which side of the road the line was at any given point, so look out for any interesting features (railway anoraks only).

The navigation is by Tulip diagrams, skip this bit if you are happy with them, and don't panic if you have not used them before. The arrowed graphic on the left of the page is a simplistic view of the junction ahead of you, your position is indicated by the dot, and the arrow tells you the exit from the junction. Only deviations from the main road are specified (unless the main road is unclear or badly indicated), the top signed destination is stated next, followed by the distance from the start at Morpeth. If you arrive in Wark with your trip meter reading out of sync with the directions zero it at the junction before the bridge and follow the distances in brackets. There are several turns close together so this might help. If you get lost there is a list of villages at the end of the instructions in the order that they are visited, so you should be able to pick up the route. If you get totally lost ring Paul on 07896953199.

The Run now departing.....

MORPETH 0 Zero trip on exiting car park, turn right and right again onto main road.



A197
Newcastle 0.1



B6524
Belsay 0.7



Mitford 2.3



Meldon 3.6



Bolam 7.2



No sign 7.5 Meldon Stn ahead to left of bridge



No sign 7.9



Hartburn 10.2



No sign 11 Angerton Stn at 11.6m at sharp right hander.
Middleton 12.8



Middleton 14.2 Middleton Stn to right of house after bridge



Rothbury 15.5



B6343
Cambo 16.5 Scots Gap Stn on left at 16.9.



Elsdon 18.0



Knowesgate 19.0 Knowesgate Stn on right before junction. Quarry for Whinstone nearby.





















Bellingham 21.2



No Sign 23.7

25.1 On right watch out for Summit Cottage, highest point on line at 820 ft above sea level.

		25.7	Slow here to take in view!
	A 68 Woodburn	27.3	CAUTION A68
	E Woodburn	27.5	
	W Woodburn	28.5	
	A68 Jedburgh	29.4	CAUTION A68
	Bellingham	29.5	
	B6320 Hexham	34	Possible roadworks- short delay
	No Sign	36.2	Tight Left after trees. Indicate and slow on seeing chevrons ahead. If you miss this turn proceed to Wark and zero trip outside Black Bull on Birtley road.
		38.2	Look out for lay-by and park here to watch Swallows and Swifts. The old line ran on the other side of the river through the Countess Park Deviation.
	No sign	38.4	CAUTION 1:4 UP
	No sign	38.8	CAUTION Exit with care.
	Birtley	40.4 (0.0)	Zero trip here if meter out or you missed turn after Bellingham.
	Birtley	40.6 (0.2)	
		40.7 (0.3)	
	Birtley	40.9 (0.5)	
	No sign	41.4 (1.5)	Yes this is correct, and the surface does improve!
	No sign	41.8 (1.9)	
	Hexham	47.1 (5.3)	Slow at 47.3 (5.5) to check out skew blockwork on underside of bridge, the technique was developed by Newcastle mathematician Peter Nicholson and used extensively on the Border Counties Line .



Chollerford

48.5 (6.7)



Riverside Tea
Rooms

48.8 (7.0) Finish.

List of villages

Molesden, Meldon, Middleton, Scots Gap, Knowesgate, East Woodburn, West
Woodburn, Bellingham, Wark, Barrasford, Chollerford.

Now for the one and only question.! How many times have you crossed the line on this
run?

Answer.....

Tie break. This run was 49m, how long would the same journey be by rail?

Answer.....