

## Activity 1 Famous Northumbrians

Northumberland has been the home of various famous Northumbrians, past and present. Would your class enjoy finding out more about them? Here are two suggestions.

### Grace Darling

It is 180 years this year since Grace Horsley Darling became one of Britain's most famous heroes. Born in Bamburgh on November the 24th 1815 as the 7th of 9 children, Grace spent her childhood living in two lighthouses – Brownsman and Longstone, on the Farne Islands – where her father, William, was the lighthouse keeper. Grace lived at Longstone from the age of 10. Her new home was built on bare rock, in the North Sea, and was only 1 metre above the water at high tide. Nothing grew there and there were no birds.

Her bedroom was circular, like the shape of the lighthouse, and was above two others, on the third floor of the lighthouse. On the ground floor, just one room had to be the kitchen, dining room and the living room. Imagine this big family living in such a small space!

There was no running water. Grace and her family had drinking water sent out to the lighthouse and also collected rainwater for washing. There was no electricity back then; just oil lamps. There was also no school, so Grace's father had to give her lessons in English, maths, geography and history.

Her father had to polish the lighthouse's brass reflectors and its lamp and windows every day and, of course, watch out for ships at sea.

Gradually, Grace's brothers and sisters left home, so by the time she was 19, there was just Grace, her father and her 16-year-old brother William living at Longstone.



A few years later, on September the 7th 1838, Grace looked out from the lighthouse at 4.45am and saw a steamship called the SS Forfarshire broken in half on a large rock called Big Harcar. It was dark and it was not until 7am that she saw some survivors, clinging to the rocks. Many people had already been swept away and had died. The sea was rough and treacherous, but only Grace and her father were there to help that night.

### Activities

What do you think happened next?

What do you think life was like for Grace in the lighthouse? Use some good adjectives to describe it!

What does 'isolation' mean? What different types of isolation can there be?

Grace raised the alarm and, despite the stormy and rough seas, she and her father rowed out to try to rescue 9 people – eight men and a woman with two children who had died. He climbed on to the rocks, whilst Grace tried to keep the boat steady in the rough waters and off the rocks, by rowing furiously backwards. Together, they took the survivors back to the lighthouse and looked after them for three days, until the storm passed.

### Activities

How do you think Grace felt when she saw the people on the rock?

How would you describe Grace?

Grace's name became known not just in Britain, but all over the world. Artists came to Longstone to paint her portrait and pictures of her went on sale. She received hundreds of letters of praise, as well as gifts and money. Queen Victoria also sent her £50.

She and her father both won a Gold Medal from the Royal Humane Society and Silver Medals for Gallantry from the National Institute for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck.

Everyone wanted to see Grace Darling. She was a national heroine. But all the fame made her ill and her father worried so much, he sent her away from the lighthouse. She lived in Wooler, but her health did not improve. Next, she went to Alnwick. There, the Duke of Northumberland's personal doctor discovered that she had tuberculosis. On the evening of Thursday October the 20th 1842, Grace died in her father's arms, aged just 26.

### Activities

Discuss some of the vocabulary in this story. What do 'gallantry' and 'humane' mean?

Why would being famous put a lot of pressure on Grace?

Why do we give medals to people who do brave and great things? Who do we know who has done something brave, or is courageous every day, because of the job they do?

Turn the story around. Imagine Grace does not raise the alarm that night, because she is too scared. What would have happened? How would that have made her feel?

What is tuberculosis? What other awful diseases are there?

## George Stephenson



George Stephenson was born on June the 9th, 1781 in Wylam. George is often called the 'father of the railways', but why is this?

George's family were poor and were miners – like many people in his area. George was used to helping his father, Robert, pump water out of the mine and the equipment they used was driven by steam.

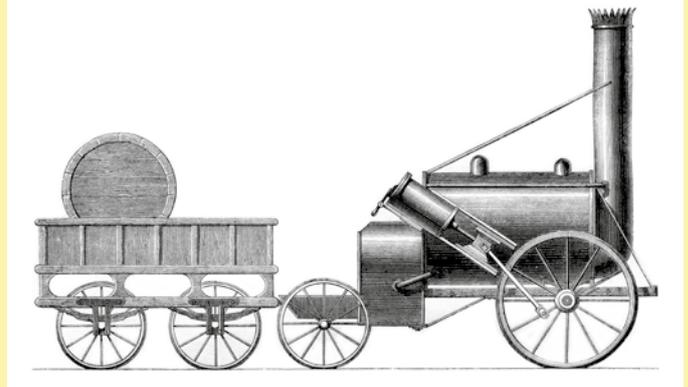
When he was 10 years old, he too went to work in the mine. When he was 14, he had a new job, as an assistant fireman. A little later, he started to pull cages full of miners up from the mine, using a winding machine. Although he had all these jobs, he could not read or write until he was 18 and he had to teach himself to do that, getting some help at a night school. When his wife died, he moved to Scotland with his young son, Robert, who also became a famous engineer.

Engines fascinated George and, when he managed to repair a broken pump engine at a mine that had flooded, he was praised and given a job that was all about looking after engines!

After working with engines so much, George wanted to build his own locomotive. He got some people to support him and, in 1814, built an engine called 'Blucher' – his first locomotive and one that could reach a speed of 4mph and pull a load weighing 30 tons.

In 1823, George opened a locomotive factory in Newcastle and two years later this led to him building an engine called Locomotion No 1. Locomotion No 1, which cost £500, could carry 450 passengers and reach a speed of 15mph.

Three years later, George's locomotive, known as Stephenson's 'Rocket' took part in a competition run by the Railway Board. The judges were looking for speed, weight and a powerful engine that would not let them down. The 'Rocket' was a superb engine and all of those things, as the judges could see when it conducted 10 laps of a track. On the final lap, it reached a very impressive speed of 29mph!



Thanks to George's work, the first passenger railway was developed, running from Stockton to Darlington, and built by the business run by George and his son, Robert, and called Robert Stephenson and Company. Then, a Manchester Liverpool Railway opened in 1830 and the Birmingham to London line was opened in 1838, bringing railway travel to thousands of people.

George played a major part in what was known as the Industrial Revolution. He died on January 12 1848, having seen his dream of building engines become a reality.

### Activities

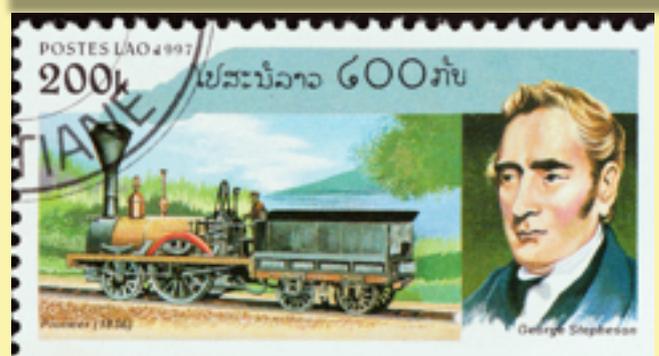
**What else happened in the Industrial Revolution? How did it change lives?**

**How important is it to have a dream? What is your dream?**

**Have you been on a steam train? Describe what happened?**

**George Stephenson has appeared on many different stamps around the world. Why is that? Would you like to have your picture, or something you had drawn, on a stamp? Why?**

**The picture below is a stamp from Laos. George has also appeared on stamps in Poland, Hungary, Equatorial Guinea, Macedonia, Cambodia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Where are these countries on the map? Find out more about them.**

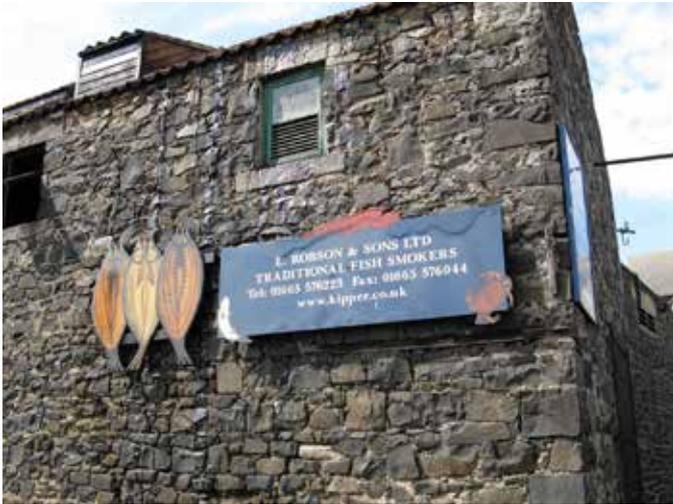


**COMPETITION**  
Your chance to  
design a Royal  
Mail stamp!

Encourage your pupils to design a stamp for Northumberland Day and we will have one winning design made up into a Royal Mail stamp! Send what you choose as your class's best entry to [NDay@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:NDay@catapultpr.co.uk) but keep the original, in case we need it!

## Great Northumbrian Food & Drink!

Northumberland produces some great things to eat and drink. Can your pupils suggest some? Some popular suggestions might be Craster kippers, pease pudding, or Northumberland Cheese, including 'Northumberlandia'!



But what about drink? Have they heard of Marlish water ([www.marlish.co.uk](http://www.marlish.co.uk)) For what reason do local products become popular? Why is it important to buy local? And why could healthy drinks like Marlish be more popular than ever now, since the Sugar Tax's introduction and more awareness of the benefits of healthy eating?

What do they know about mead and its long history in Northumberland? Discuss how mead is made and how producers like Northumberland Honey ([www.northumberlandhoney.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandhoney.co.uk)) can help people understand the importance of bees. What is that? Help your pupils find out.

Finally, why not build in a little maths and some superlatives? This is the World's Biggest Stottie, created at Langley Castle last year, to celebrate Northumberland Day.



It measured 1 metre in diameter and weighed 15kg before pease pudding and ham was added. That took the weight up to 60kg. Can you create some maths questions around this?

Also, what other biggest, tallest, heaviest, oldest and smallest things are there in the world? Have fun finding out!

## The Northumberland Flag

Northumberland's red and yellow flag dates right back to the 7th century and is rooted in history. It is thought that it has a longer history than any other flag in the country.



This is its story. 7th century king and saint, St Oswald, founded the Kingdom of Northumbria, bringing together his domain of Bernicia with that of Deira to the south. England's first historian, The Venerable Bede, noted in his 'Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum' that, on Oswald's death, "they hung up over the monument his banner made of gold and purple." It is thought that this description led to medieval heralds assigning arms of eight alternate stripes of red and gold (yellow) to Bernicia's emblem. It is also reported that Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, flew the same colours in the Middle Ages.

The current flag was adopted in 1995 as the flag of Northumberland. Its design stems from the county's ancient association with Oswald's colours. However, the stripes were broken up in the current design, to create echoes of the shape of a castle's crenellations – as seen on its battlements.

## Activities

Have your pupils create their own Northumberland flags, to decorate the school, or to take home with them.

Have them think about parts of a castle and learn how they are named e.g. arrow slits, barbican, battlements, drawbridge, dungeon, gatehouse, keep, moat, ramparts, turrets, towers, portcullis and bailey.

Which castles do they know of in Northumberland? Where are they on the map? Why were they built in these locations?

What other famous fortification is Northumberland famous for? Why was it built? How many years did it take to build?

## A Famous Landmark



**Not all famous things in Northumberland are living things, but they still have stories to tell. One such landmark is the wonderful LV50 – a historic lightship moored in the south harbour in Blyth.**

LV50 was built in 1879 in London and designed by Bernard Waymouth, one of the architects of the Plimsoll Line. She weighs a whopping 205 tons, is 100ft in length and is built very much like an 18th century fighting ship. She never had an engine and was always towed to her place of work.

Lightships like LV50 have been used since 1732, to act as floating lighthouses, in highly dangerous locations where it is impossible to build lighthouses. They too had to warn ships and boats of hazards at sea, using a beacon and a fog signal. LV50 had a reed fog horn and a single revolving lantern. These were state-of-the-art when first designed as previously most lightships only had two fixed bright lights. LV50 warned ships of dangers through a flashing pattern displayed from her lantern as well as a distinctive sound from her fog horn.

Amazingly, 7 men had to be aboard lightships, to operate these warning devices. It was a hard life, living in cramped and sometimes noisy conditions, often in very wild weather and sometimes for a couple of months, before another 'crew' took over.

LV50's first location was one of the most dangerous in the Britain – just off the Isles of Scilly on the Seven Stones Reef. She was then moved to a sandbank called Shambles off Weymouth, then to other locations such as the seas off the Isle of Wight, then to a location North East of Felixstowe.

After 73 years of very hard service, repairs and refits she was sent to a breakers yard. Luckily, in 1952, she was rescued by the Royal Northumberland Yacht Club and towed to her home in Blyth.



## Activities

**Trace LV50's journey around Britain. Can you work out how many miles that might roughly be?**

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**What would it have been like being one of the men on board?**

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**Why do ships need foghorns? What does maritime law expect them to do in foggy conditions?**

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**Why is safety so necessary? What other safety systems do you know about e.g. radar, air traffic control, car fog lights**

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**Learn about the Morse Code and how that works.**

## Win A Class Trip to Visit LV50!

Thanks to the generosity of the Friends of LV50, we are able to offer one school a prize of a class trip for up to 30 children.

Children will be able to go on board LV50 and imagine for themselves what life was like aboard a lightship.

The Friends of LV50 will show children a slideshow, which will help them understand the vessel's history and also learn how this type of safety has a 4000-year-old history.

Children will be split into three groups of 10, to explore the vessel and will then be able to work on board, on some class tasks.

Teachers can plan these tasks having talked to the Friends of LV50, but what works well are:

- Explorations of circuits and lighting
- Creative writing
- Storytelling

Teachers can also make a preparatory visit to LV50, to plan their class's trip beforehand.

To be in with a chance of winning this trip, please send an email to: [NDay@catapultpr.co.uk](mailto:NDay@catapultpr.co.uk) briefly saying why your class would love to visit the super LV50 and hear her story (100 words maximum).

If you don't win, your class can still visit LV50, if you know that this type of living history will be of great benefit to them. To enquire about this, please email [friendsoflv50@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoflv50@gmail.com)

LV50 is open for public visits between 11am and 4pm on the last Thursday of each month from April to September and as part of Heritage Open Weekends initiatives in September (Thursday (10am-4pm), Friday (10am to 4pm) and Saturday (10am-noon). Visits are free-of-charge, but donations to help maintain this wonderful vessel are very welcome.

## Speak Like a Northumbrian!

Did you know that Northumbria has its own language – a dialect that is derived from the language spoken by the Angles in Anglo-Saxon Britain? It's 1500-years-old and should be preserved – hence the efforts of the Northumbrian Language Society to do that. Why not teach your pupils some of these Northumbrian words?

| Standard word | Northumbrian word |
|---------------|-------------------|
| man           | gadgy             |
| attractive    | bonny             |
| dirty         | hacky             |
| sticky        | claggy            |
| toilet        | netty             |
| weak          | wairsh            |
| light         | low               |
| most          | maist             |
| good, sweet   | kif               |
| blue          | blee              |
| brown         | broon             |
| friends       | marras            |
| maybe         | mebbies           |
| old           | aad               |
| big           | muckle            |
| night         | neet              |
| bees          | bumlors           |
| ewes          | yows              |
| donkeys       | cuddies           |
| rabbits       | coney             |
| horse         | Galloway          |
| pig           | geassy            |
| herbs         | yarbs             |
| eggs          | yarries           |
| stop/stay     | blin              |
| bridge        | brig              |
| hill          | knowe             |

| Standard word | Northumbrian word |
|---------------|-------------------|
| one           | yan               |
| a meal        | bait              |
| fool, foolish | donnart           |
| dandelions    | pittleybeds       |
| mud           | clarts            |
| middle        | mell              |
| above         | abeun             |
| stream        | born              |
| roses         | Eglantine         |
| bend          | jud               |
| potatoes      | tetties           |
| how are you?  | what fettle?      |
| going         | gannin            |
| grass         | garse             |
| to look sulky | glump             |
| great         | gort              |
| to wish for   | green             |
| wet, sleety   | hashy             |
| to hurry      | hirtle            |
| houses        | hoosen            |
| probably      | lickly            |
| bad           | toaty             |
| tempered      |                   |
| a shelter     | shields           |
| place         |                   |
| dark          | mirk              |

