

Border Counties Railway A0069

Site Type	railway
Site Name	Border Counties Railway
Other Name(s)	North British Railway (Border Counties Section), LNER., BR.
Ownership	Bridges: BRB (Residuary) Ltd., Hudson House, Toft Green, YORK, YO1 6HP
Related Sites	All railway sites are cross-referenced to this record.

LOCATION

National Grid Reference	NY 7800 8500	Km Square	
TAG 2006 Atlas : Maps	L1, L2, M1, M3, M4	Air Photo. No	Various

Modern Parishes	Falstone and Tasset
Historic Parish & Township	Falstone – Wellhaugh, Thorneyburn – Thorneyburn, Bellingham -- Charlton West.

LISTINGS

Scheduled Ancient Monument	x	Listed	x
National Monument Record	x	English Heritage Pastscape	x
Historic Environment Record	x	Tasset & Greenhaugh HVA	69
Grundy	x	Tasset & Greystead Books	MM- LX-

EVIDENCE

Trackbed and earthworks, 2 station buildings, various bridges and surfacemen's huts extant.

Shown on 1st Edition of OS '6 inch' Map Northumberland Old Series Sheets 59, 67 & 68 Surveyed 1862, and later editions. The track of the railway is shown on modern O.S. maps.

DESCRIPTION

The Border Counties Railway was promoted by William Charlton of Hesleyside (1810-1880) with the support of the Duke of Northumberland. The object of the railway was to serve the North Tyne Valley and in particular to facilitate the development of the Plashetts Coal field and the Bellingham Ironworks. The Engineers for the line were the Newcastle-based partnership of Robert Nicholson and John Furness Tone and an Act of Parliament authorising the line from Hexham to The Belling was obtained in 1854. Nicholson died in 1855 and the line was completed under the direction of Tone. The main contractor was William Hutchinson of West Hartlepool. The first sod was cut at Tyne Green Hexham in December 1855, but there were many delays and the line did not open to a temporary terminus at Thorneyburn until 1 February 1861, by which time the Bellingham ironworks had closed. The section to Falstone opened in 2 September 1861, and the remainder of the line to Riccarton Junction opened on 1 July 1862 although there may have been freight services operated before then. The line had been taken over by the North British Railway in 1860 and at the 1923 Grouping it became part of the LNER.

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Land had been purchased for a double line and all of the bridges were built to this standard but only a single line of rails was laid, the 'spare' land always being on the North side. There were stations at Tasset (A0063), at Thorneyburn (A0291) and, for a few months after opening, there was a halt at Charlton. There was a goods siding at Tasset and a short-lived connection to a colliery and tileworks at Low Thorneyburn (A0254). Most if not all the bridges under and over the line survive within Tasset; they are numbered sequentially west to east from Riccarton, some are maintained by the British Railways Residual Board and still carry these numbers. The line closed to passengers on 15 October 1956 and to goods traffic on 1 September 1958 before the Beeching cuts.

IMAGES

None.

NOTES

There is an extensive bibliography for this line, but most publications deal with its operation. It has been assumed that ownership of the track bed rests with an adjacent landowner, and that ownership (and responsibility for maintenance) remains with BRB (Residuary) Ltd.

REFERENCES

	<p>Charlton, Barbara. 1989. Recollections of a Northumbrian lady 1815-1866. L.E.O. Charlton (Ed.) The Spredden Pess, Stocksfield. ISBN 1 8717 04 7.</p> <p>Sewell, G.W.M. (1992) <i>The North British Railway in Northumberland</i> Merlin Books, Braunton, Devon. ISBN 0-86303-613-9</p> <p>Slade, J. and Slade M. (1975). Railway Structures near Falstone, on the Former Border Counties Railway, <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i>, 5th Series, III, 195-203.</p> <p>Thomas J. 1969. <i>The North British Railway</i> .Vol. 1. David and Charles, Newton Abbot. ISBN 0 7153 4679 0</p> <p>Northumberland Record Office, Armstrong Papers, NRO 309 C, Boxes 15-17 contain some of J.F. Tone's original papers relating to construction of the line [Currently, 2015, being re-catalogued.]</p>	
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