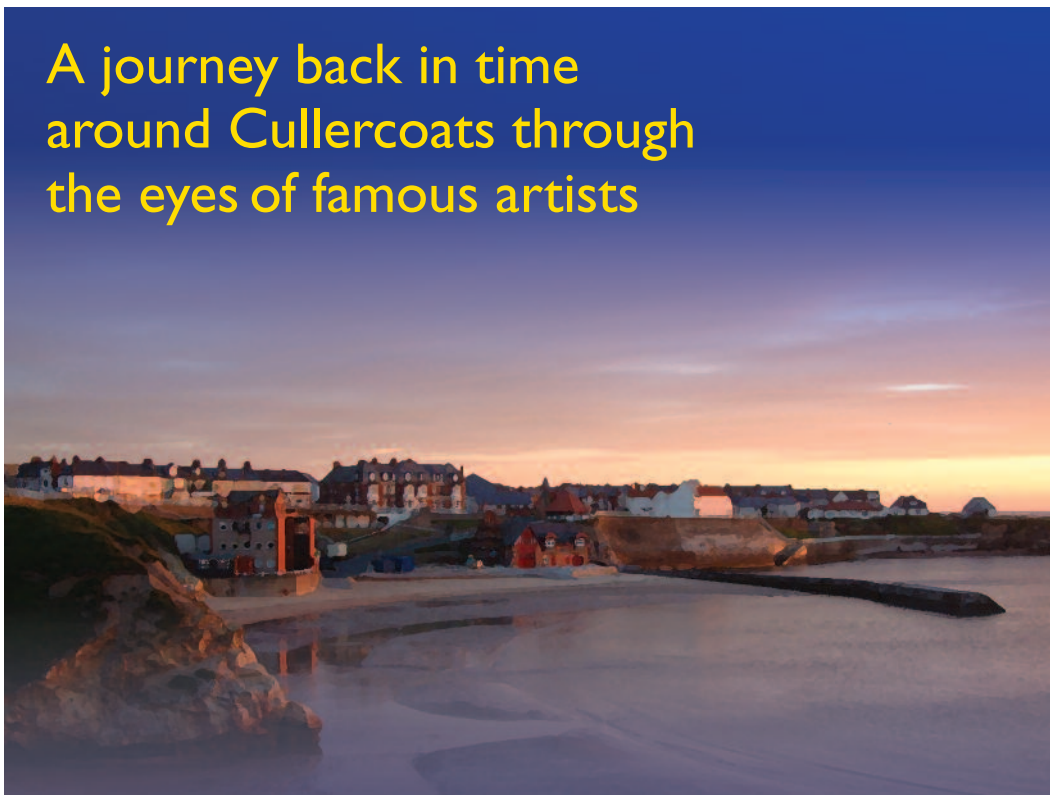


Cullercoats

A R T T R A I L

A journey back in time
around Cullercoats through
the eyes of famous artists



Why Cullercoats, a small and perhaps unassuming fishing village, became such a popular place for artists could be debated ad infinitum. Winslow Homer, one of America's leading artists, certainly found reason to stay in Cullercoats and he spent a number of months living and painting here. Perhaps the rugged coastline and the more often than not bracing sea breeze reminded him of his native New England. Maybe the fishing folk, their way of life and character inspired Homer and other artists to use them as subjects for their creativity.

The quaint charm of the village and the picturesque harbour that is Cullercoats Bay are also reason enough to inspire. To this day contemporary artists, inspired by their predecessors from days gone by, continue to paint scenes in and around Cullercoats.

Winslow Homer

1836-1910

Born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1836, Winslow Homer was encouraged to take an early interest in art by his mother, an amateur watercolourist. No art schools or institutions existed in the Boston area during his youth, leaving Homer to develop his own artistic style. Homer became one of the leading figures in the history of American art and was considered to be the nineteenth century's foremost exponent of realism.



Front cover of Harper's Weekly
November 21st 1863
Winslow Homer – *The Russian Ball*

In 1859, Homer moved to New York and continued as an illustrator whilst developing a reputation as an artist. During the Civil War he worked as a war artist and depicted scenes on the Union side during his trips to the front line.

After the war, and with a growing reputation, Homer made his first trip to Europe spending 10 months in France. He returned to the United States and settled in New York where he spent the next 13 years painting landscapes in places such as the Adirondack Mountains in upstate New York. In 1873 Homer first worked in watercolour, a medium he used for the rest of his career.



Homer's second trip to Europe in 1881 saw him settle in Cullercoats, a small fishing village on the north east coast of England. It was here that he honed his technique in watercolour using the fisherwomen of Cullercoats and the seascape as themes.

Returning in 1882 to the United States, Homer moved to Prout's Neck, Maine, in 1884 seeking solitude. He did however continue to travel to such places as Canada, the Bahamas and Cuba, often to escape the harsh Maine winter. It was on the Maine coast that he created many of his finest and most admired seascapes.

Homer died in Prout's Neck in 1910.

Cullercoats as an artists' colony

Cullercoats was known as an artists' colony and had a reputation among artists as being an inspiring place to both live and work.

The origins of the colony date back to the 1820s when Newcastle artists discovered the appeal and charm of Cullercoats. The breathtaking coastline and the character of the fishermen and fishwives soon became a favourite subject of theirs.



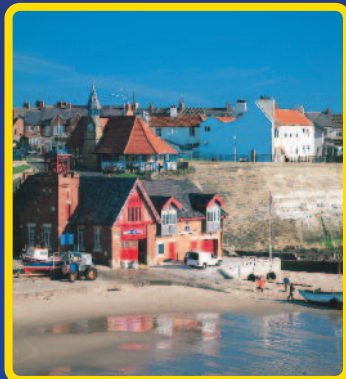
This photo, taken around 1882, shows how the village changed from the foundation of the colony in the 1820s to Homer's time in Cullercoats with the Hudleston Arms on the left, the Watch House and the Salt Baths in the foreground.



An engraving of Cullercoats circa 1820

This engraving of Cullercoats dates from around 1820 and shows what the village looked like when the artists first arrived.

Robert Jobling, John Falconar Slater and William Henry Charlton are all famous names associated with the artists' colony. Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums has an extensive collection of Cullercoats art. North Tyneside Council's collection includes "When The Boats Come In", also known as "Morning On The Beach", by Jobling (pictured right).



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Winslow Homer – Watching the Tempest 1881
Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts

With the Watch House in the background and the storm clouds gathering, the Cullercoats fishermen are pictured battling against the elements. Capturing the fishermen huddled together Homer portrays one element that perhaps prompted him to stay in Cullercoats, the sense of community spirit and togetherness.

Winslow Homer – Mending the Nets 1882
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

The important role of women in the community is demonstrated here with the local fishwives mending the nets. Homer admired their ability to work long days in such harsh elements and observed them at work, often hiring them to sit as models. The row of fishermen's cottages on Simpson Street (off Victoria Crescent) shows where local fish folk lived and worked.



Winslow Homer - The Breakwater, Cullercoats 1882
Portland Museum of Art, Maine

Cullercoats women are again the focal point for Homer. The breakwater in this instance is the north pier of Cullercoats Bay and the women can be seen in reflective mood, perhaps waiting for the men to return with their day's catch.

Winslow Homer - On the Sands 1881
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Everyday life in Cullercoats is captured by Homer including mother with child. Take a moment to stand on Cullercoats Bay, look around you and take in the sights and smells of Cullercoats. See what is going on today and imagine what life was like in that exact spot in Homer's Cullercoats.



Robert Jobling - When the Boats Come In/Morning on the Beach c1887
North Tyneside Council Collection

Jobling captures the working lives of the villagers with men, women and children on the beach at low tide. A former shipyard worker, Jobling lived in Whitley Bay and Cullercoats and would know better than most the perils the sea could present to the fishermen. Many of Jobling's works were exhibited at the Royal Academy.

John Falconar Slater - Cullercoats 1910
Tyne & Wear Museums

Considered to be one of the region's leading impressionist artists, Slater spent his latter years living in Cullercoats. Here we can see fishermen and bathers on Cullercoats Bay with the newly built Dove Marine Laboratory on the left of the picture in a scene very reminiscent of the Cullercoats we know today.



John Falconar Slater - Stormy Sea at Cullercoats
North Tyneside Council Collection

A high tide in Cullercoats Bay shows just why the seascape was appealing to local artists and provides a stark contrast to paintings showing a low tide. Slater exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1889.

John Wilson Carmichael - Tynemouth from Cullercoats
Tyne & Wear Museums

Carmichael was born in Newcastle and was a prolific exhibitor of art at both the Royal Academy and the British Institution. The picture shows a high tide in Cullercoats Bay in the foreground looking down to Tynemouth Priory and Castle. Clearly visible are the two navigational beacons, still in use today, that sailors line up in order to gain a safe passage through the treacherous waters and into the sanctuary of Cullercoats Bay.



Art trail

Places of interest
(see back page)



Cullercoats Bay is accessible by the north and south via steep gradients. The location indicated on the map provides a panoramic view of Cullercoats Bay at seafront level.



CHARLES CHURCH



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Cullercoats Watch House

The Watch House can be seen in many works done by artists in Cullercoats, perhaps not surprising since it has such a prominent location on the seafront overlooking the north of Cullercoats Bay. It dates back to 1879 and was the home of the Cullercoats Volunteer Life Brigade that was formed in 1865. The Watch House is now a Grade II Listed Building.

Cullercoats Lifeboat Station

The first lifeboat arrived in Cullercoats in 1852. The boathouse was built in 1896 and was funded by the Co-operative Wholesale Society. The boathouse is still home to the Cullercoats Lifeboat today.



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Dove Marine Laboratory

The Dove Marine Laboratory is part of the School of Marine Science and Technology at Newcastle University. It celebrated its centenary in 2008 and its location makes it an important centre for the study of marine biology.

Cliff House

Cliff House is one of the oldest and most attractive buildings in Cullercoats and dates from 1768. The builder and first owner of the house was Thomas Armstrong, a commander of His Majesty's Cutter, Bridlington. It was alleged he helped smugglers escape, which may help account for his grandiose house.



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Winslow Court

Winslow Court, named after Winslow Homer, stands on the site of the former Bay Hotel. Opened in 1870 as the Hudleston Arms, this was where Winslow Homer lived during his time in Cullercoats. A Blue Plaque is now in situ to commemorate Homer's time in Cullercoats.



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