



## Lancashire: the Making of the Modern World

History, heritage, the arts, landscape

**14–20 September 2026 (MM 175)**

7 days

Speaker: Chris Moss

Discover Lancashire, from the Mersey ports to the breath-taking Pennines.

Visit exceptional heritage sites: docklands, mills, canals, railways along with a fabulous range of galleries, museums, cathedrals.

City walks contrast with countryside and coast presenting immense architectural achievements as well as the staggeringly beautiful landscapes.

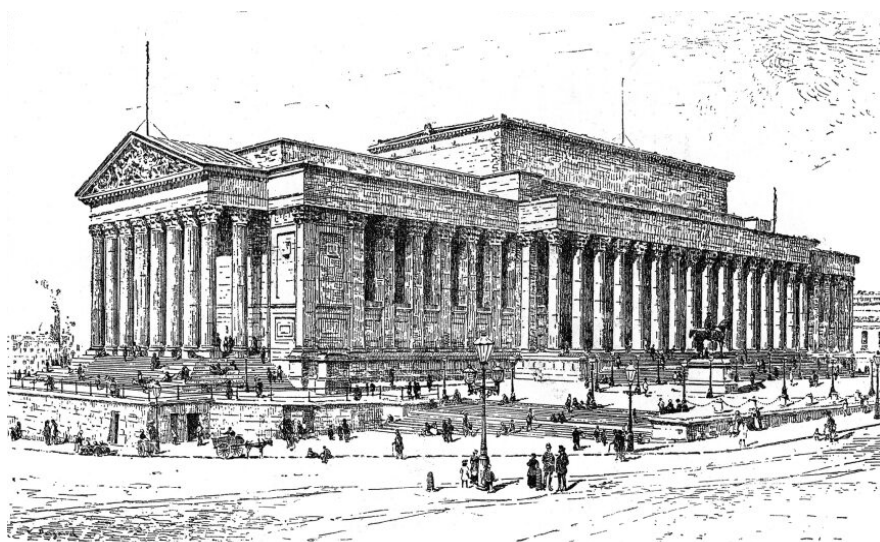
We stay in city centre and rural hotels, experiencing some superb dining and traditional pubs.

It's a bold claim to credit a single English county with the 'making of the modern world'. But the facts speak for themselves. Lancashire has punched above its weight and exerted an immense influence from the first canals and passenger railways, to the profound transformations of the global economy resulting from the cotton trade and Industrial Revolution, to the fields of atomic theory, popular music and broadcasting.

From the Wars of the Roses through to the early modern period, England's north-west axis never managed to rival the wealth and power of the southern counties nor Yorkshire, just next door. All that changed in the 18th century, however, when Liverpool began to develop its seaport. As a doorway to Ireland and the United States, the city played a seminal role in migration and colonisation and in Lancashire's burgeoning salt, coal and cotton trades.

Manchester, late to the game, was all the more anxious to compete. During the 19th century, it would become a major transport nexus and the mercantile hub for raw cotton as well as finished goods, experiencing an exponential population growth.

The rise of the two cities and dozens of densely inhabited towns transformed the county's built environment and landscapes, and impacted every possible sphere of work and leisure. Lancashire was a testbed for model villages, industrial estates and factory complexes. Railway Mania led to the creation of seaside resorts and Wakes Weeks. The Labour movement grew out of a long history of unrest and collective protest. We will unlock this rich and textured social history through people, art and place.



*Liverpool, St George's Hall, mid-19th-century engraving*

### Itinerary

**Day 1: Liverpool.** The tour begins in our Liverpool hotel. Leave here at 2.00pm for a walk down to the Pier Head, passing through the city's old financial district. On the Mersey are some of the UK's most famous waterfront buildings, including the Three Graces and Albert Dock. The Leeds-Liverpool Canal, which we shall criss-cross during the first four days of the tour, begins/ends here on the dockside. First of two nights in Liverpool.

**Day 2: Liverpool.** Today we spend time admiring the interior of Grade I-listed St George's Hall and the renowned artworks of the Walker Art Gallery. In the afternoon we'll visit the Anglican and Metropolitan cathedrals and the nearby Georgian Quarter. We'll have a pre-dinner drink in the Philharmonic Dining Rooms, one of the UK's most beautiful public houses.

**Day 3: Wirral and the West Lancashire Coastal Plain.** Take a boat trip to the Wirral peninsula and visit the model village of Port Sunlight and the Lady Lever Art Gallery. Drive north for the first of two nights in the Ribble Valley, just south of the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

**Day 4: Milltowns and Pendle Hill.** Pendle Hill, a backdrop to the Lancashire Witch Trials, the Quaker movement and radical politics, separates the mainly agricultural north of the county from the industrial heartland of East Lancashire. Abandoned and repurposed mills and canal and railway works line the valleys of the River Calder and Pendle Water. Queen Street Mill, near Burnley, is home to the world's last surviving steam-powered weaving shed and an excellent example of the classic 'mill complex'. Visit Gawthorpe Hall in Padiham, a fine Elizabethan mansion restored by Charles Barry and A.W.N. Pugin.

**Day 5: Manchester.** Regeneration and conservation compete for space in the centre of the north of England's largest city. We take a walking tour of Ancoats – which has been called the 'world's first industrial suburb' – and the cathedral quarter before visiting the transport and textiles rooms of the Museum of Science and Industry. Abutting Manchester Liverpool Road station, which opened with the Liverpool & Manchester railway in 1830, the museum is also close to old Granada TV film studios and the new Aviva Studios building. During the afternoon, we'll visit Castlefield to see the vestiges of Roman Mamucium and take in the city's libraries and art galleries. First of two nights in Manchester.

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continued

**Day 6: Salford.** Though encircled by Greater Manchester, Salford is a separate city, granted a market charter in the 13th century. It has played a prominent part in the regional culture and iconography. Starting in the 1980s, the docksides of the Manchester Ship Canal have been rebuilt to create the Salford Quays district. Visit the Lowry centre to see its namesake's work and the Imperial War Museum North, housed in Daniel Libeskind's aluminium-clad shard.

**Day 7: Manchester.** In the morning visit the Victorian home of Elizabeth Gaskell, the author of *Mary Barton* and *North and South*. We return to the hotel by lunchtime, when the tour ends.

## Lecturer

**Chris Moss.** A theology and literature graduate, former educator and Lancashire resident, Chris Moss has been a journalist for more than thirty years. He spent a decade living and working in Buenos Aires and also guides tours for Martin Randall Travel to Argentina, Chile and Spain. Since returning to the UK in 2001 he has worked for *BBC History*, the *Daily Telegraph*, *Time Out* and others. He has written and edited several guidebooks, including *Eyewitness Travel: Back Roads Spain*, a cultural history of Patagonia and a literary compendium for London commuters. In February 2026, Old Street will publish his latest book, *Lancashire: Exploring the County that Made the Modern World*.

## Practicalities

**Included:** hotel accommodation; private coach throughout; breakfasts, one lunch and 4 dinners with wine, water, coffee; admission to museums, galleries and sites; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

**Accommodation. Hope Street Hotel, Liverpool** ([hopestreethotel.co.uk](http://hopestreethotel.co.uk)): in a salubrious area between the cathedrals, it brings good modern design and comforts into a 19th-century factory and adjacent 1960s police station. **Northcote Hotel, Langho** ([northcote.com](http://northcote.com)): 4-star hotel on the edge of the Forest of Bowland with a Michelin-starred restaurant. **The Midland, Manchester** ([themidlandhotel.co.uk](http://themidlandhotel.co.uk)): a large elaborately adorned Victorian hotel, recent refurbishment blending something of its original character with modern comforts. *Single occupancy rooms are doubles for sole use.*

**How strenuous?** This tour would not be suitable for anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and who cannot stand for long periods of time. Average distance by coach per day: 25 miles.

**Group size:** between 10 and 22 participants.

**Combine this tour with:** *The Cathedrals of England*, 2–10 September 2026; *Walking a Royal River*, 21–27 September 2026.