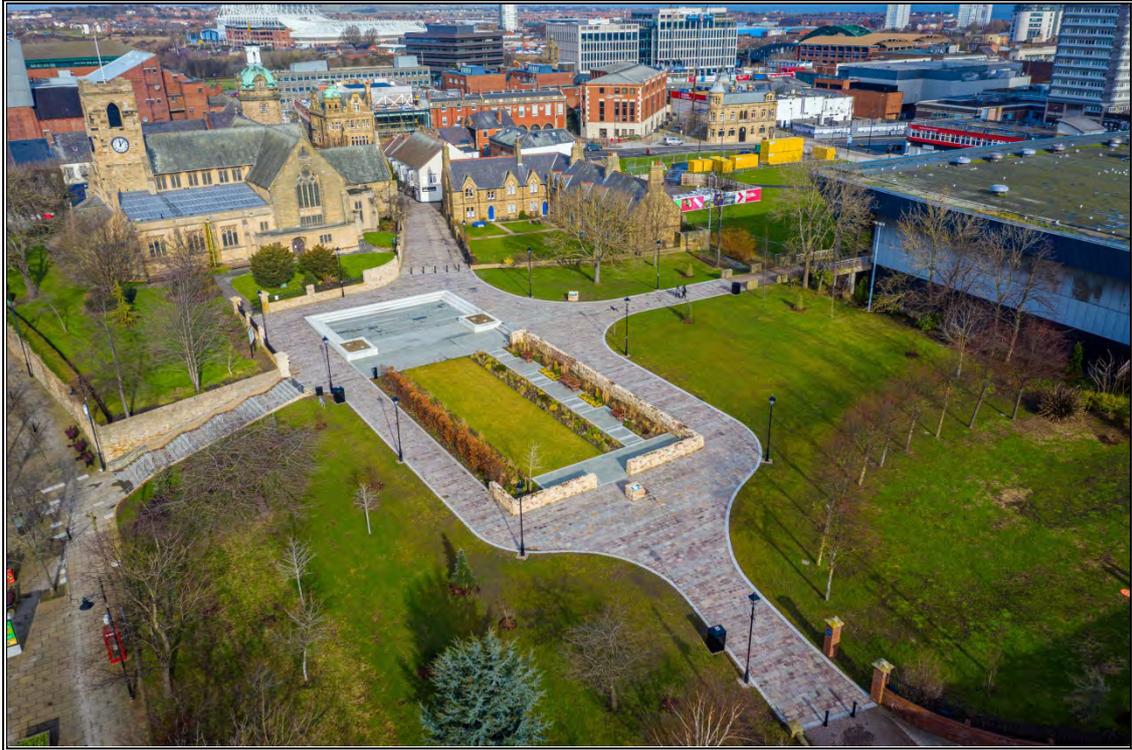


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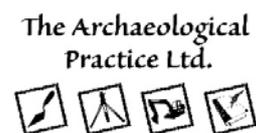
THE HISTORICAL VILLAGE ATLAS SUMMARY REPORT



2021

Produced by
The Archaeological Practice Ltd & the Bishopwearmouth Village Atlas Group

Supported by
Sunderland City Council: Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme



BISHOPWEARMOUTH

A HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY STUDY OF A VILLAGE, QUARTER AND TOWNSHIP IN SUNDERLAND



Extract from Rain's Eye Plan of 1785-90, showing Bishopwearmouth village

By the Bishopwearmouth Village Atlas Group

&

The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

Edited by Alan Rushworth

with contributions by:

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Robson, Peter Ryder, John Tumman & the Fitzakerley family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Particular thanks are offered to the following for providing assistance in various ways:

The staff of Tyne and Wear Archives, the Tyne and Wear Archaeological Officers, and Sunderland City Library Local Studies kindly hosted group visits and assisted in providing access to the collections and archives under their curation. The Tyne and Wear Archaeological Officers Jennifer Morrison, Sophie Laidler and later Rachel Grahame supplied data from the Heritage Environment Record. The members of the Sunderland Antiquarian Society at 6 Douro Terrace were especially helpful in granting access to the vast quantity of archival material held there. All historic maps, photographs and prints are reproduced by permission of the Sunderland Antiquarian Society unless otherwise specified. The three views by Samuel Grimm of St Michael's Church and Bishopwearmouth Rectory (Miscellaneous Add. 15540, ff.71-73) included in Sections 15 and 16 are reproduced by permission of the British Library.

The summary report was edited by Alan Rushworth on behalf of the Archaeological Practice Ltd, drawing on the material contained in the main report adapting it where necessary to fit the shortened format. Section 2, devoted to the geology of Bishopwearmouth, is an extract from Chapter 4 in the main report produced by Ian Kille. Sections 15 and 16 covering Sunderland Minster and the ancient rectory represent extracts of original text by Peter Ryder, originally contained in Chapter 6 of the main report, whilst Sections 17 and 18 were written by Judith Miller and John Tumman respectively for inclusion in the same chapter. All the other text was written by Alan Rushworth. Most of the illustrations were in the summary report were prepared by Marc Johnstone and Alan Rushworth. The present-day photographs were contributed by Judith Miller and Alan Rushworth. The names of all the contributors to the full report are also shown on the title page of this summary.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This short report is designed to provide an accessible summary of the history of the ancient village of Bishopwearmouth, which is now forms part of Sunderland city centre. It represents a more concise version of the recently completed *Bishopwearmouth Historical Village Atlas*.

The village atlas project was initiated and funded by Sunderland City Council and assembled by the Archaeological Practice Ltd., with the collaboration of members of the local community who participated in the Atlas Study Group. It forms one of the components of the National Lottery funded Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage (TH) scheme, a five year programme initiated by Sunderland City Council and scheduled to run from September 2018 until August 2023. Bishopwearmouth offers the potential to make the greatest contribution to the local environment and economy in terms of its townscape enhancement, strengthening the area's evolving cultural scene and consolidating the considerable regeneration investment in the area at present. The Townscape Heritage scheme will support and compliment an ambitious program of regeneration activity in the Minster Quarter of Sunderland City Centre, including the Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter project, public realm improvements and major private sector leisure and retail developments. One component of the Townscape Heritage scheme entailed the remodeling and enhancement of Town Park to become Minster Park, where two newly erected display panels draw on the research information collected by the Village Atlas programme (see pp. 9 & 73).

Information from a wide range of sources has been used, including existing archaeological and historic buildings records, historic maps and documents, historic and aerial photographs and published information. The wealth of information held by the local community has been accessed through a combination of meetings, workshops and guided walks where documents, oral comments, and notes have been collated. For the most recent period information has also been gathered orally, with a total of 4 oral history interviews being conducted with knowledgeable local informants by 7 participants from the study group. In addition, under the direction of the Archaeological Practice Ltd, a detailed record was made of the historic buildings at 1-2 Church Lane and 314-315 High Street West, located on the corner of Church Land and High Street West.

The historic centre of Bishopwearmouth, the site of the ancient village settlement, is situated on the south side of the River Wear towards the west end of Sunderland city centre. It sits on the summit of a low hill, 30m (100 ft) above the Wear and almost a mile upstream of the river mouth. To the west the settlement was bounded by the valley of the Wearmouth Burn (also known as Howle-Eile Burn and further upstream as Barnes Burn), which is now covered over and culverted though the city centre, from the eastern end of Barnes park northwards. To the north of the village, the burn flowed into the Wear via a deep ravine known as Galley's Gill. To the south a ridge led to the stone outcrop of Building Hill, formerly known as Bildon or Boyldon Hill.

The ancient village is the principal focus of the report, of course, but the settlement has also been examined in the context of its wider landscape, particularly in relation to its pre-modern history, from prehistory to c. 1700, when the village was essentially a rural, farming community. The extent of the surrounding landscape studied corresponds to the rural territory, known as a 'township,' that was directly attached to the medieval and early modern village of Bishopwearmouth. Largely comprising fields, and moorland and riverine fisheries, this was exploited by that community as its agrarian resource. Bishopwearmouth township encompassed a sizeable area, calculated as over 2668 acres when it was comprehensively mapped on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map in the mid-19th century, encompassing much of present-day Sunderland south of the Wear.

THEN AND NOW



An 1892 view from the Green, looking northwards along South Gate towards St Michael's Church, with the Bowes Almshouses in the foreground to the left.



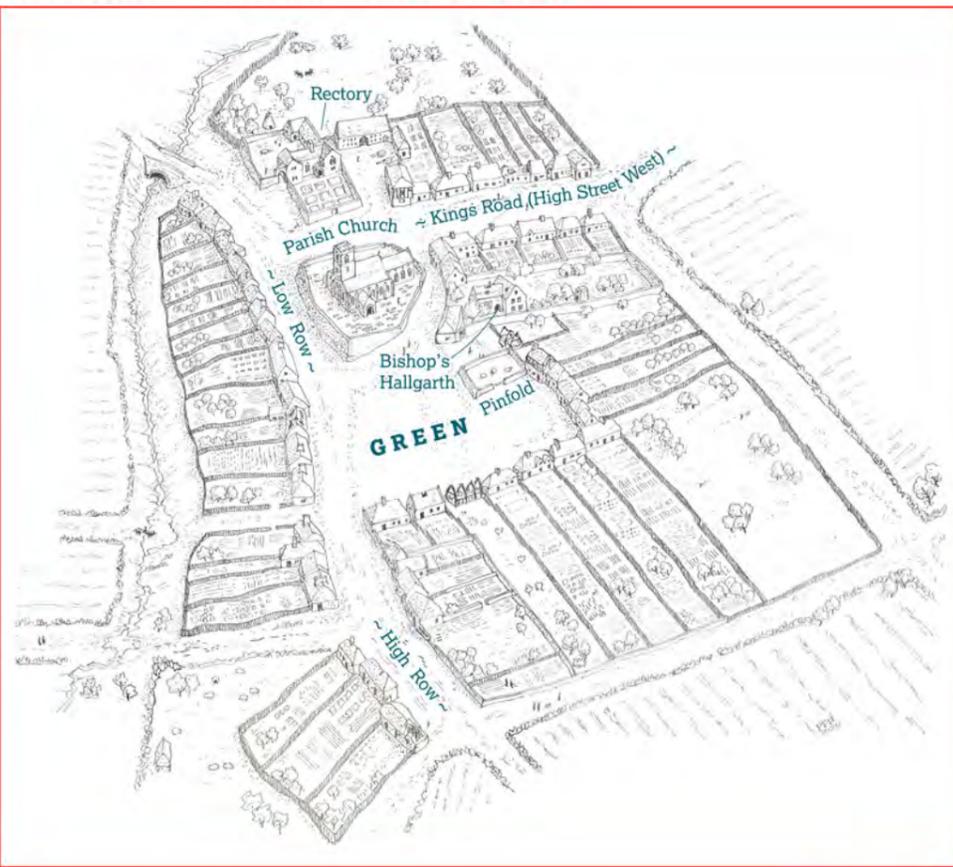
A similar view today. The buildings were demolished in the 1960s/70s. Minster Park, newly laid out in 2019-20, occupies the foreground in their place.

Bishopwearmouth Village through time...



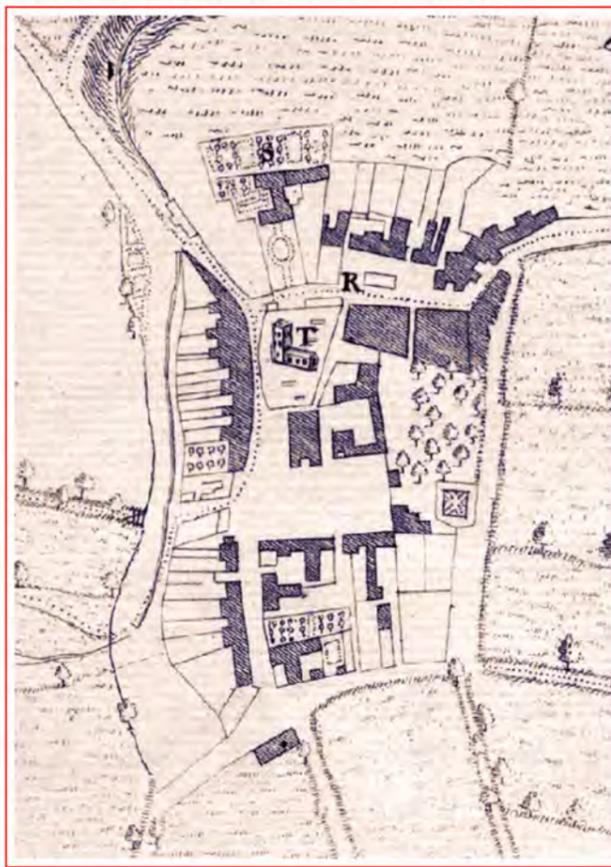
Artistic reconstruction

The medieval village of Bishopwearmouth, around c.1380



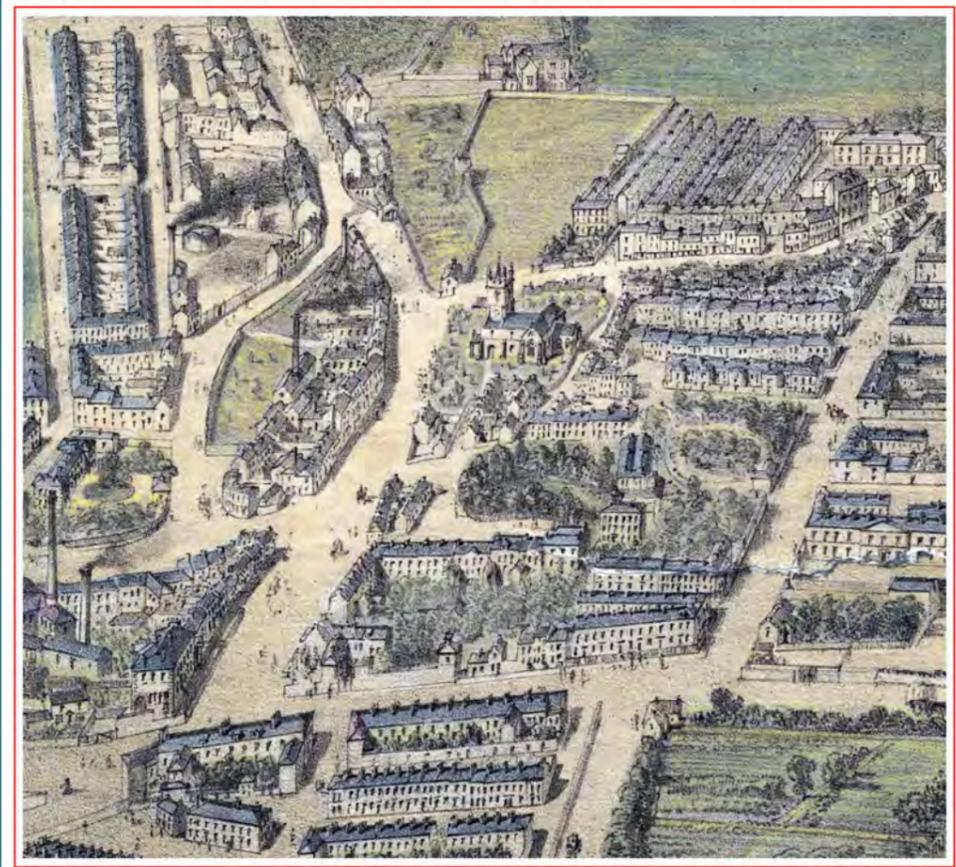
Burleigh & Thompson's River Plan

Extract showing Bishopwearmouth village in c.1737



Bird's eye view of Sunderland

Extract of a lithograph showing Bishopwearmouth village c.1857, artist unknown



This view shows the village around the time of a great survey of the Bishop of Durham's estates in 1381. Much of what we know about the village and its people in this period comes from this.

It reveals the impact of the Black Death, the terrible plague which raged through the 14th century. Many tenant families may have died out as a result so some of the houses are shown abandoned and in a state of decay. The bishop's own manor house and farm (right of the churchyard) was also in a state of dilapidation, with all the land now rented out to tenants.

Some familiar elements can be seen in the layout of the settlement. The long row of tenements forming Low Row and High Row (now Green Terrace) can be seen to the west (left) of the settlement. At the top of the view what is now High Street West can be seen beyond the church. A large, open green is shown at the centre of the village, with a pinfold enclosure where straying livestock were penned, on its east side. On the highest point at the north end of the green, stands the ancient parish church of St Michael and All Angels. To the north of the church the rector of the parish occupied a fine house with a large barn to the right, where tithes of produce from the entire parish were stored, and a park behind. (Drawing by Peter Ryder)



Aerial view of Bishopwearmouth c.1924. © Historic England

Burleigh and Thompson's map of 1737 shows that Bishopwearmouth still formed a separate village settlement in this period. However, the map shows significant changes. Buildings have crept over the northern part of the medieval green, a consequence, in all likelihood, of the steady growth in population from the 16th century onwards. The process may have begun with houses springing up around the edges of the pinfold, and created several narrow streets, notably Southgate and Littlegate, the latter already being mentioned in a survey of 1647.



Extract from the 5th Edition Ordnance Survey Plan c.1955.

By the time this bird's eye view was created by an unknown artist in 1857, Bishopwearmouth had merged with Sunderland to the east to form a single urban settlement, all the intervening fields having been built over. Housing now extended to the south of Vine Street and thus beyond the limits of the former village, whilst further residential development is apparent to the west of Galley's Gill and Low Row. To the north, the ancient rectory has vanished from the scene, having been demolished in the previous year. A school stands to the north, occupying part of Rectory Park.

The view depicts Bishopwearmouth as fairly leafy, with trees surrounding the oval green enclosed by Thomas Nicholson in 1799, indicating the area remained relatively well-to-do. The grand houses on the east side of The Green, Fenwick Lodge and Crowtree House, still have extensive gardens attached, as do the houses along The Green's south side. To the west, however, a series of mill chimneys can be seen to the rear of Low Row and High Row (Green Terrace), the smoke spewing forth shown blowing ominously towards the former village.

Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme

Sunderland City Council was awarded funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2018 to manage a five year Townscape Heritage Scheme within the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. This heritage led regeneration scheme provides grants for restoration and enhancement works to important historic buildings, funds improvements to public spaces, and delivers a programme of events and activities to showcase the history and architecture of the area.

By the mid-20th century the ancient village nestled amidst a fully developed industrial town, surrounded by densely packed terraced housing and industry. The former grand houses were demolished or converted to commercial use, but most of the buildings around the green survived with relatively little alteration until around 1960, when a new cycle of development began which would sweep almost all of them away to make way for shopping and leisure centres, car parking and Town Park.

Minster Park

In 2019-20 the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme funded significant improvements to the former Town Park which included a new central sensory garden on the footprint of the lost historic streets of Littlegate and Southgate, using reclaimed materials, new trees and soft landscaping, resurfacing of the footpaths in traditional granite, and new seating and upgraded lighting. The project also reused historic street name plaques and a restoration plaque from the lost Bowes Almshouses. Repair works were carried out to Sunderland Minster churchyard rebuilding the historic boundary walls and repairing sections of surviving Victorian railings, plus new cast iron railings to match this historic pattern.

933/935

First mention of Bishopwearmouth when the great shire estate of 'South Wearmouth' is given by King Athelstan to the monastic Community of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street (recorded in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* of c. 1050).

1183

The township (vill) of Bishopwearmouth (*Weremouthe*) is documented in the Bishop of Durham's Boldon Book. The church was built or perhaps rebuilt in stone in the 1100s.

1533-1548

The Reformation – Monasteries and chantries dissolved following England's break with the Catholic Church, including the chantry chapel in St Michael's Church (1548).

1642-1649

Civil War – The area of Sunderland is occupied by Scottish armies. The Rectory was vandalised by troops in 1646, repaired 1647. The townfields and moors of Bishopwearmouth township were divided up and enclosed in 1649.

1785-99

Rain's Eye Plan shows that Bishopwearmouth is now linked to Sunderland by continuous ribbon development along High Street West. In 1799 the oval Green enclosure is made by W. D. Nicholson of Crowtree House.

1930s-40s

1932-35 – St Michael's Church rebuilt by W.D. Carøe. WWII – Communal air raid shelters constructed beneath The Green in 1938. In 1943 a bomb struck between the church and the Mowbray Almshouses.

1960s-80s

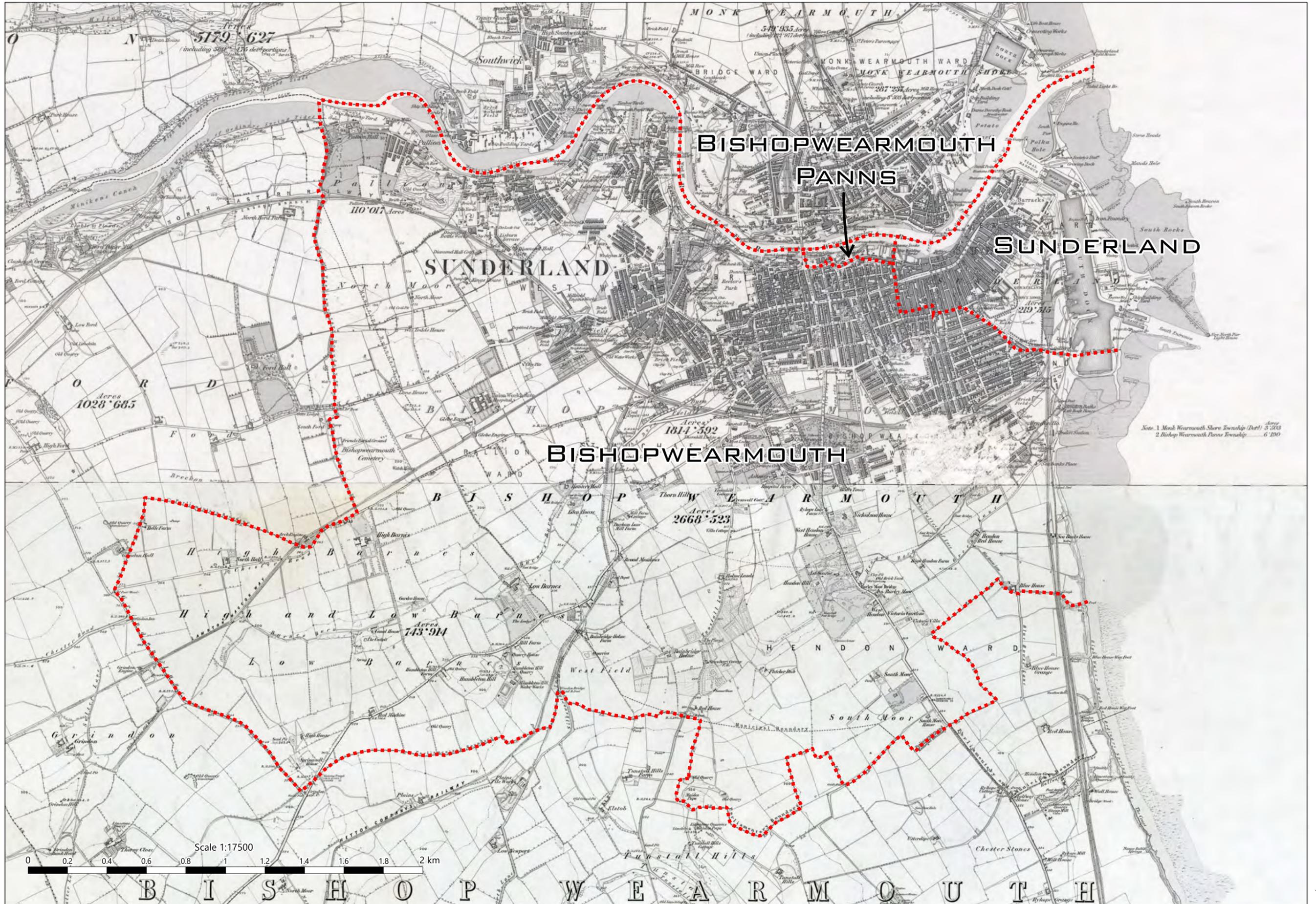
Streets south and east of the church demolished including the Bowes Almshouses, Littlegate and Southgate. Redevelopment including construction of Crowtree Leisure Centre (1978) and the Bridges Shopping Centre (late 1980s, extension 2000), and laying out of Town Park.

2019-2020

The area around the Minster is remodelled and enhanced to form Minster Park.

6th FIRST EDITION ORDNANCE SURVEY PLAN C.1862

EXTRACT SHOWING BISHOPWEARMOUTH TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY (RED) IN RELATION TO VILLAGE-CORE (BLUE)



2. BISHOPWEARMOUTH GEOLOGY AND GEODIVERSITY

Introduction

In the introduction to Gillian Cookson's book, *Sunderland: Building a City* (2010), she talks of the influences on the city's development as follows: "Sunderland's uniqueness was born in the extraordinary topography of a dramatic river gorge and the sandy expanses of a harbour mouth, in the promise of valuable local minerals and in the ambiguous role of the Wear, dividing but also uniting".

In this section the natural processes which created this extraordinary topography, the river gorge and its delta and the fabulous richness of geological resource which underly are summarised.

The Geological History of the Bishopwearmouth Area

The landscape around Bishopwearmouth is of low hills cut sharply by the river gorge of the River Wear and bounded to the east by the low cliffs and beaches which edge the North Sea. The shape and form of the hills is variable and speaks of a long and complex history in which rock layers, varied in their lithology and durability, have been uplifted and downwarped, folded and faulted several times. Erosion has also played a major part both in the ancient and recent cycles of uplift. The latest cycle of erosion by ice and then rivers has carved out the current shape of the land surface.

The composition of the natural landscape can be divided into two parts: the sequence of hard rock, from which much of the areas valuable raw materials are derived, and a covering of unconsolidated clays, sands and gravels as well as soil. One of the features of the landscape of northern Britain is a consequence of our geologically recent, glacial past. During the last glaciation which lasted between about 28 000 and 14 000 years ago, much of the north of Britain was covered in ice. When it melted, it left behind huge amounts of rock debris in the form of unconsolidated glacial tills which draped over large amounts of the landscape and was partially reworked by rivers. This drift, as it is generically known, is an important element of the landscape and is one of the reasons, along with the development of soils and plant cover and man-made constructions, that the underlying hard-rock geology is very often obscured.

The Solid Geology

The solid geology exposed in and around Bishopwearmouth are from two major geological periods, the Carboniferous and the Permian. The solid rocks which underpin the landscape of the area range in time between the later part of the Carboniferous period at about 320 million years ago, through to the middle of the Permian period at about 280 million years ago. There are two rocks that exemplify each period, the coal from the Carboniferous and the Concretionary Limestone from the Permian, each of which encapsulate something of their time and of their use.



Small coal seam at Cocklawburn Beach

The first of these is coal on which the material wealth of Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland is formed. It is a unique and highly important rock which requires specific conditions to form in. Whilst these conditions are not unique to this area, the coal's presence was vital to the social and economic development of Bishopwearmouth. Coal is the major reason for the Carbon used in the name of the Carboniferous Period

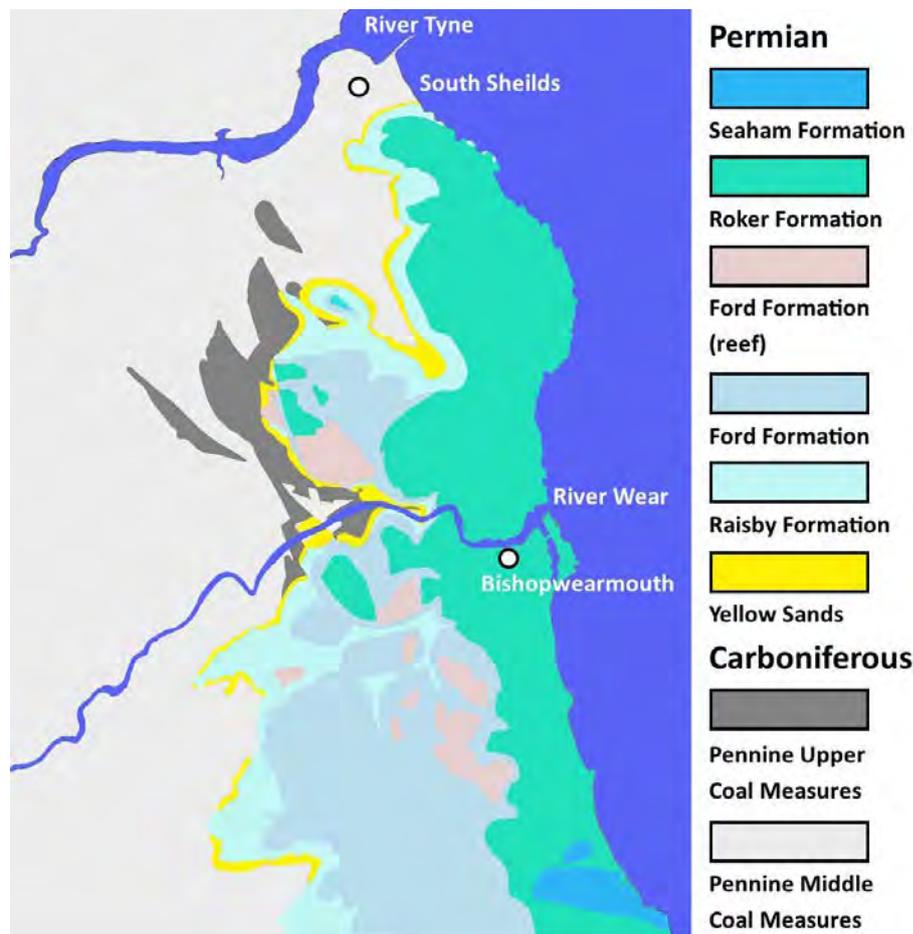
The second is the Concretionary Limestone which is Permian in age. It doesn't have the economic significance of coal, but its outcrop is confined to Bishopwearmouth and the immediate area around. Its character, as has already been noted, is emblematic of the built environment in Bishopwearmouth.



Concretionary Limestone in the Minster boundary wall

Each of these rocks is characteristic of the significantly different conditions of their period, the coal of wet tropical swampland, and the limestone of sea in a hot arid climate.

How the rocks are laid out



By examining the existing limited exposure of rock, information from boreholes and extrapolations based on other indicators such as the shape of the landscape, geological maps can be created. These maps provide a guide to how the underlying rocks are disposed, as if surface material has been stripped away.

What this geological mapping shows is that all the rocks that immediately underlie Bishopwearmouth are of Permian age. These Permian rocks first crop out at South Shields

and form a progressively widening strip which runs down to Hartlepool. Inland of this strip, rocks of Carboniferous age are exposed. The contact between the Carboniferous and Permian rocks is a sub-planar surface which dips gently to the east such that in general the thickness of Permian rocks increases towards the coast. The wedge shape of the Permian strata overlying the Carboniferous rocks means it is possible to dig through the Permian rocks and mine the Carboniferous rocks underneath.

Bishopwearmouth's Geodiversity Star – Concretionary Limestone

These local geological resources have played an especially prominent role in creating the built environment of Bishopwearmouth and one element of the geodiversity, in particular, stands out and deserves a starring role for its local significance and remarkable pre-history. Of all the stones which

are used within the generations of construction in Bishopwearmouth, the extraordinary textures found within the Concretionary Limestone is the most beautiful. This stone was available in the immediate vicinity of Bishopwearmouth and whilst it is not structurally the best building material it is unique, and its incorporation within boundary walls is a crucial element of the areas character. In addition, the stone has a fascinating origin which is both cataclysmic and mysterious and which makes an exploration of the geodiversity of Bishopwearmouth a particularly rewarding task.



Concretionary Limestone in the boundary wall of the Minster

The Concretionary Limestone also acts as a marker for the relationship between the human development of Bishopwearmouth and the rocks which lie beneath it and the landscape within which it was built. The Concretionary Limestone is the most local stone albeit with only small exposures remaining within the boundaries of Bishopwearmouth. It is also the most conspicuous of the geological materials used in

the earliest constructions, most notably medieval and post-medieval boundary walls. As the years go by the history of Bishopwearmouth can be seen mapped out in the stones used within the walls and buildings of Bishopwearmouth. The succession of major industries which create the wealth of the area grow and decline, the transport routes, cost of extraction and demand for different and better-quality material changes. This is particularly marked as the mining and quarrying industries open up sources of better quality of sandstones from Carboniferous rock sequences which are still relatively near to Sunderland. Into the modern era some developments respond to the wonderful diversity of geological material, which access to global transport gives. Sadly, other developments show a loss of character, a geographical blandness caused by using widely available building materials which no longer reflect the character of this area.



Through all this, the last remains of old boundary walls made of the concretionary limestone are threaded through Bishopwearmouth like a partially culverted river. They remind us of its connection to the landscape and give historic lines of beauty between its many fine buildings.

The ancient retaining wall at the north end of Green Terrace being examined by members of the Atlas Study Group

3. ORIGINS: THE PREHISTORIC AND ROMAN PERIODS

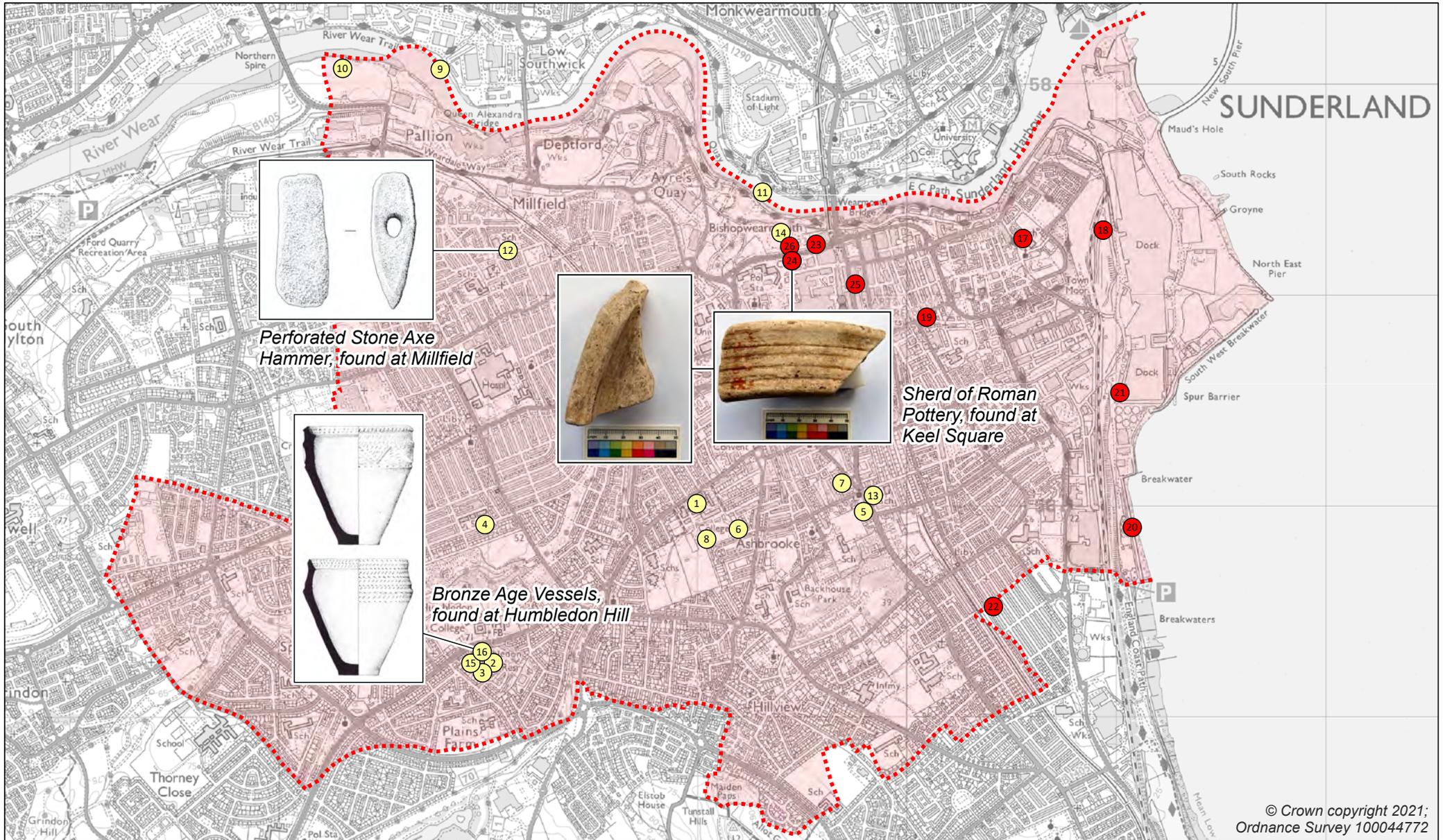
The earliest traces of human occupation in the area of Bishopwearmouth were left by groups of hunter-gatherers in the period known as the Mesolithic era or Middle Stone Age (10,000-4,000 BC), following the final retreat of the glacial ice sheets. Evidence takes the form of flint tools and the ditches, gullies, pits and postholes of a possible encampment discovered on the site of the former Vaux brewery (Site 14; Tyne & Wear HER 7111; PCA 2004; ASDU 2019). All subsequent periods of prehistory are represented by finds of artefacts and site remains across the area, associated with the earliest farming communities of the Neolithic era (New Stone Age), the metal-using peoples of the subsequent Bronze and Iron Ages, right up to the arrival of the Romans in the 1st century AD.

The two most important sites both feature remains of multiple periods. On Humbledon Hill, in the south-western part of the township, a barrow yielded four cremation burials, three of which were interred in large pottery urns known as food vessels, when it was destroyed to make way for the construction of a reservoir on the summit in 1873 (Sites 2-3; TWHER 7, 9, 157). The barrow and burials probably date to the early Bronze Age or late Neolithic era. A second round cairn, of similar date, was uncovered on the hilltop during excavation in 2006/2007. The same excavations in advance of development revealed a later palisaded, embanked and ditched, defensive enclosure encircling the summit of the hill (Site 15; TWHER 13787; Hale and Still 2003, 4-7; Gaskell/NPA 2007). This began life in the late Bronze Age as a palisaded enclosure, before the palisade was encircled and replaced by an outer ditch during the Iron Age, with an earth and stone bank, standing to a maximum height of 0.8m, which was interpreted as a rampart. Within the interior of the enclosure (now a scheduled monument) a series of pits, each 2m in diameter, were identified. Finds included pottery sherds and the corner of a triangular loom weight of Iron Age date.

The Vaux brewery site to north of Bishopwearmouth village centre, where the Mesolithic remains noted above were found, was also the focus of important long-lasting settlement activity during the 2nd and early 1st millennium BC, with ditches perhaps indicating changing land boundaries. One large ditch, at least 6.80m wide with associated bank, perhaps formed either a boundary ditch or enclosure. The relatively large quantity of Middle Bronze Age pottery recovered, including well-preserved sherds from a variety of hand-made vessels, some decorated and with extant rims, suggests that this was the period of most intense activity. However, one ditch yielded an AMS radiocarbon date of 2480-2280 cal BC, spanning the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age transition, and two sherds of either Late Bronze Age or early Iron Age came from another well-stratified ditch fill, implying that there was activity on the site at both earlier and later stages, albeit perhaps of lesser intensity.

Individual finds of the Roman period have been found throughout the city of Sunderland, implying the existence of dispersed rural settlement throughout the area, associated with fairly intensive farming of the landscape. A sherd of a mortarium (a Roman cookery mixing bowl) of 2nd-4th century date, found during a watching brief when laying out Keel Square on former course of St Mary's Way in 2015, is the closest of these to Bishopwearmouth village. Evidence for a fort or sizeable settlement has proved elusive, however, despite the quantity of ink spilt on the subject. Such a fort has been identified with a place called *Dictum* mentioned in Roman documentary sources and with reports of massive stone foundations and intersecting walls being uncovered 5ft below ground at the north end of Rectory Park (*South Shields Daily News* 17 February 1865; cf. Robinson 1903-4, 98; TWHER 39), but conclusive proof of either supposition is lacking. Such foundations might, however, conceivably point to the existence of a small watchtower fortlet of the type found along the North Yorkshire coast, all of which date to the late 4th century – the last phase of Roman rule in Britain. The topographic situation would at least be appropriate for such a defensive coastal installation.

PREHISTORIC & ROMAN HER ENTRIES IN BISHOPWEARMOUTH & SUNDERLAND TOWNSHIPS, TRANPOSED ON THE MODERN ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP



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Ordnance Survey 100044772

Scale 1:25000



KEY - HER entries colour-coded by period: ● = Prehistoric ● = Roman ⋯ = Historic Township Boundary

Cat. no	HER no	Grid Reference	Roman finds in Bishopwearmouth
17	56	NZ 41 57	Sunderland, Roman coin: "A first brass of Nero (54-68 A.D.) was found in a brickyard near Sunderland in 1861. It has not been possible to locate either the coin or the brickyard in which it was found. Not in Sunderland Museum". Longstaffe cites "Contemporary newspaper" as the original source.
18	60	NZ 41 57	Sunderland, Roman silver spoon: "A Roman silver spoon with a short hooked handle was found near Sunderland. The bowl of the spoon now damaged but inscribed "...NE VIVAS" which had doubtlessly read "BENE VIVAS" when the spoon was perfect. The exact provenance and present location of the Roman silver spoon was not ascertained. Not in Sunderland Museum".
19	62	NZ 401 569	Sunderland, Villiers Street, Roman coins : In c. 1820 coins of Constantine I (306-337 A.D.) were found during building excavations near the south end of Villiers Street, apparently by Dr. Collingwood jun. of Sunderland, who reported the discovery to the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries. The O. S. could not discover "the exact provenance and present location of the finds". The first grid ref (on O.S. card) is to the S end of Villiers Street, the second (and less probable) to the S end of Villiers Street South.
20	68	NZ 4108 5586	Hendon, Roman coin: "Coin of Postumus (258-267) found in 1965". Information from Sunderland Museum Accession Register. The find spot appears to be close to the high tide mark, but the nature of the shore at this point is not known.
21	69	NZ 41 56	Hendon, Roman coin: "AE 3 found on Hendon beach 1961". (Presumably Roman)'. Information derived from Sunderland Museum.
22	72	NZ 4042 5551	Hendon, Roman coin: "Coin of Constantius II (337-361) found at 74 Hastings Street, Sunderland. In possession of W Scott, 10 Capetown Rd, Hylton Castle". Information derived from Sunderland Museum.
23	17142	NZ 3957 5723	Sunderland, St. Mary's Boulevard, Roman Coin: Alex Croom has identified this as a Greek Provincial coin of Septimius Severus (193-211). Coins with Greek legends come from the eastern half of the Empire; Croom suggests this is a modern import. The coin was found in March 2014 during water mains works on St Mary's Way by Tom Sainthouse, the Health and Safety Manager for Fastflow.
24	17343	NZ 39 57	Sunderland, St Mary's Way, Roman Mortarium: Piece of Mancetter-Hartshill Roman mortarium rim found during a watching brief on St. Mary's Way. The rim is 81mm in length, 38mm wide and up to 12mm thick. It is in a hard, creamy-white fabric with sparse inclusions of fine (<1mm) red/brown and black particles. The rim is a reeded hammerhead type and has traces of a red-brown external wash. The edges of the sherd are worn and abraded and no grinding grits survive. Curvature suggests an original vessel diameter of c.310mm. These mortaria were manufactured between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD at Mancetter and Hartshill, Warwickshire, and had an extensive distribution in the Midlands and Northern England.
25	34	NZ 3976 5705	Sunderland, Roman coin: "A tetradrachm of Maximianus (286-310) found circa 1953 on the site of Jopling's near St. Thomas's Street", i.e. N side of the street. The information is derived from a Sunderland Museum record, and the O.S. suggests the finder was Mr Ludwigson (?) Thistle Road, Thorney Close, Sunderland.

4. THE EARLY MEDIEVAL ERA

Wearmouth monastery, Bede and the Sunderland estate

We reach firmer ground in the early Middle Ages, most notably with the foundation of the Anglo-Saxon monastery at Monkwearmouth, on the north bank of the River Wear, in 673. This is documented in the writings of the Venerable Bede, in particular his *History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow* (*Historia Abbatum*). It was subsequently combined with a second monastic community at Jarrow, becoming one of the most important monasteries in the powerful Northumbrian kingdom and, as the home of Bede, a crucial site in the formation of English identity, the place where he composed his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Bede, himself, was born on the monastery's territory, perhaps on the small royal estate, comprising 'the land of three *familiae* to the south of the Wear near the mouth of the river' which the monastery acquired c686 (*HE* V, 24; *Historia Abbatum* 9; Grocock & Wood (eds) 2013, 44-45; Wood 2010, 112-13). This estate probably occupied the same area as the borough of Sunderland established in the late 12th century. The phrase 'in the territory of the monastery' is rendered as '*on sundorlande*', i.e. 'on detached land (of the monastic estate)' (cf. Watts 2002, 121-22), in the late 9th-century Old English translation of the *Ecclesiastical History* (Plummer, *Baedae Opera Historica*, I, ix, n. 2). This may be the origin of Sunderland's name and would mean that the estate, like the later borough, was situated to the east of Bishopwearmouth, around the mouth of the river.

The South Wearmouth estate and the Community of St Cuthbert

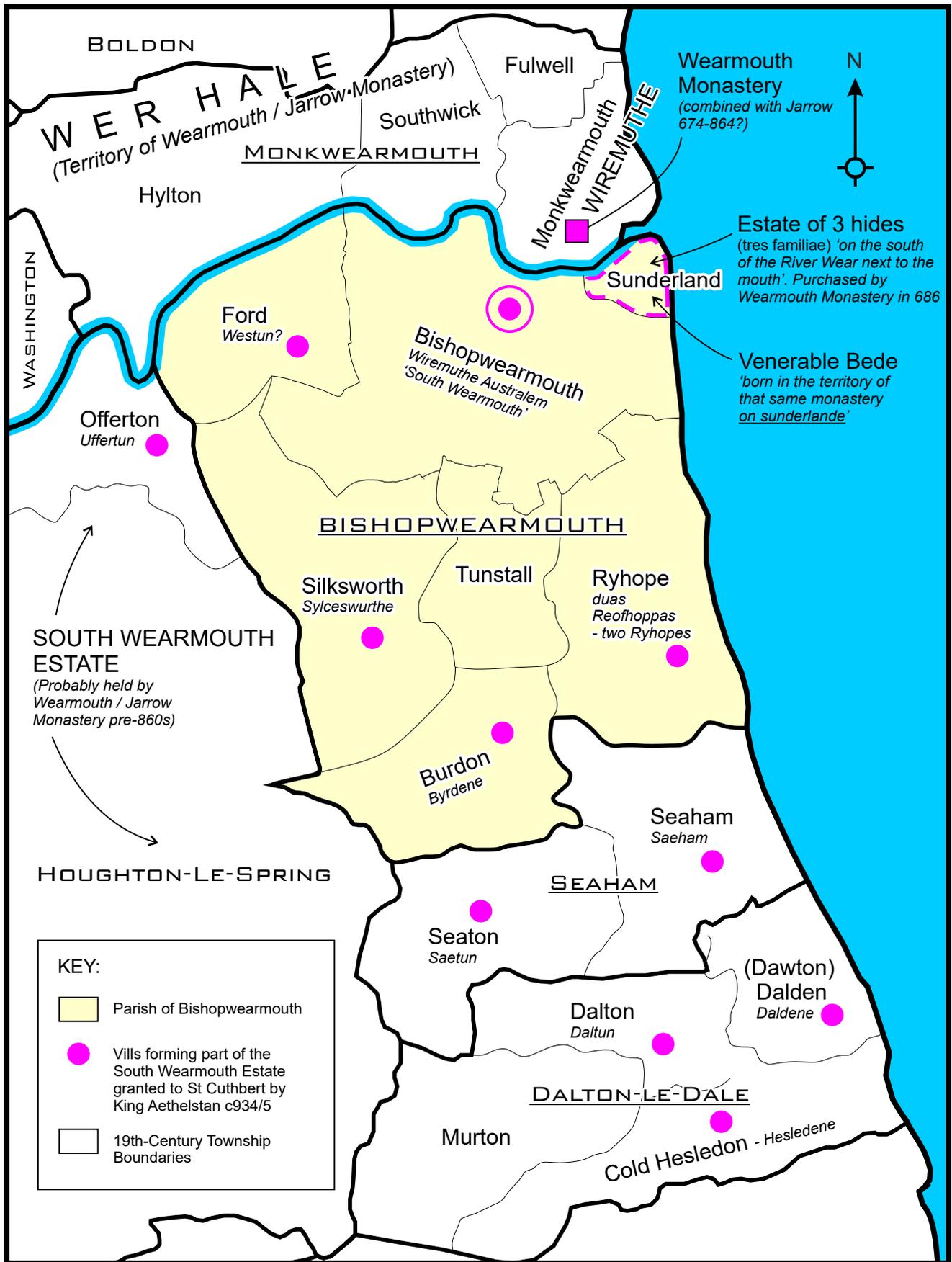
The glory was not to last. The Viking onslaught in the late 9th century led to the collapse and abandonment of Wearmouth-Jarrow and other Northumbrian monasteries. Only one survived, the Community of St Cuthbert (*congregatio sancti Cuthberti*), initially established on Lindisfarne in the 7th century, where the celebrated saint, Cuthbert, was bishop in 685-7. Fleeing Danish raids, the monks abandoned their island home in 875, carrying the undecayed body of their saint with them in its coffin, eventually re-establishing their community and bishopric further south, first at Chester-le-Street in 883, and finally at the better protected site of Durham in 995.

As the 'last man standing' of the Northumbrian monastic world, the Community was the dominant religious institution in the North East from the late 9th century. The beneficiary of numerous grants of land by the Viking rulers, Anglo-Saxon kings and other lords, it gradually became the principal landowner from the Tyne to the Tees between the 9th and 11th centuries, acquiring many of the estates that had previously belonged to defunct monasteries such as Wearmouth-Jarrow. These land grants are documented in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, probably compiled in c. 1050 as a collective record of property acquisitions previously inscribed in the blank spaces in gospels and other treasured holy books.

It is in this context that we find the earliest mention of Bishopwearmouth or South Wearmouth as it was then known. One of the large royal grants documented in the *Historia* was the gift by King Æthelstan (924-39) of the estate described as 'his beloved vill of South Wearmouth with its appendices' (*Wiremuthe Australem cum suis appendicitis*: HSC 26; cf. commentary, pp. 109-10; appendix II, pp. 124-9). This is followed by a list of constituent villas which includes not just those which later formed part of Bishop Wearmouth parish but also those of Seaham and Dalton-le-Dale parishes, plus the vill of Offerton, which later formed part of Houghton-le-Spring parish, in all an area of some 6,600 hectares. Silksworth, Burden and the two Ryhopes¹ are mentioned, though

¹ The two Ryhopes (*duas Reofhoppas*), signifying 'rough or rugged valleys', probably refers to the two valleys within the territory of the township – Ryhope Dene, half a mile south of the village, and another to the north, largely destroyed by later coal-mining activity (Meikle & Newman 2007, 47-48). Cookson (2015, 35) suggests there may have been two settlements originally, perhaps a hamlet in each valley. This is quite possible, but not necessarily the case if the name of

BISHOPWEARMOUTH & ITS ENVIRONS IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

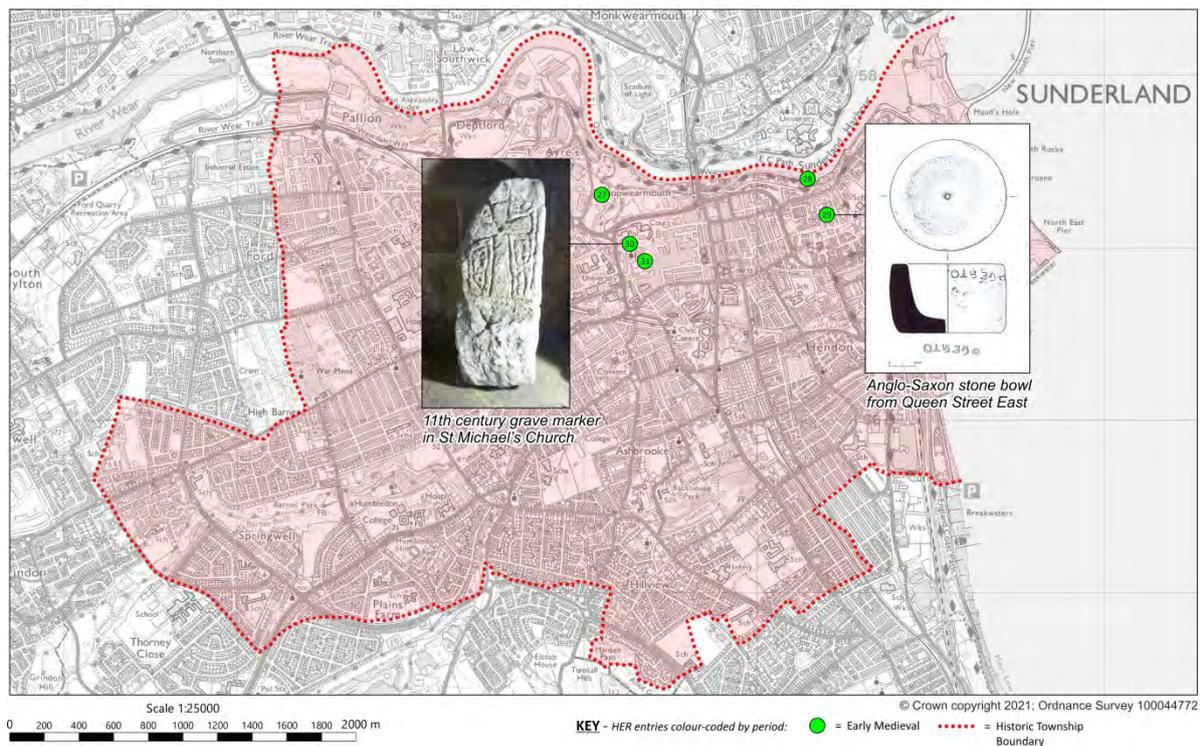


Tunstall is omitted, as is Ford, though that may be represented by the otherwise unknown *Westun*, since Ford lies directly to the west of Bishopwearmouth village. This represents the Community's acquisition of a type of very large, integrated estate known as a *shire*, which formed a coherent, contiguous block of territory, with outlying settlements providing renders in kind and labour for the lord's central hall and home farm.

Parish church

There is no mention of a church at South Wearmouth in the record of King Æthelstan's land grant, but is likely that the parish church of St Michael and All Angels – now Sunderland Minster – was founded by the Community of St Cuthbert at some point thereafter, either later in the 10th century or perhaps in the 11th century, to serve the inhabitants of the estate. Although no Anglo-Saxon masonry or architectural features have been identified in the surviving fabric of the church, a headstone or gravemarker of possible 11th-century date is preserved in the present church (*Corpus*, 53, pl. 19: 98-101), implying the existence of a Christian burial ground, and most likely, therefore, an associated church or chapel by that stage. Two other Pre-Conquest carved stones were reportedly found during the 1930s rebuilding, but these cannot now be located.

EARLY MEDIEVAL HER ENTRIES IN BISHOPWEARMOUTH & SUNDERLAND TOWNSHIPS, TRANSPosed ON THE MODERN ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP



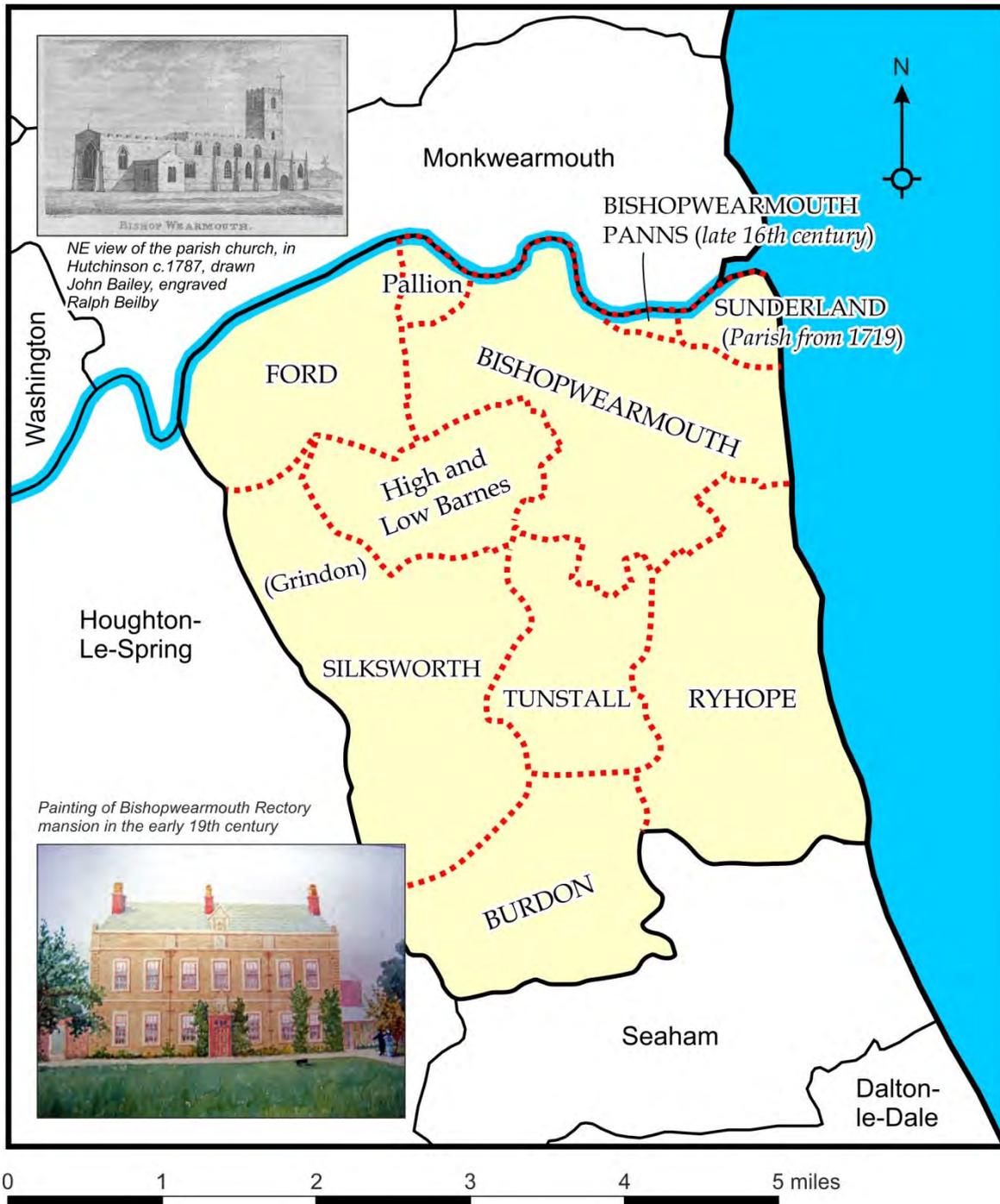
the vill given in the grant was purely topographical. The Boldon Book implies there was only a single settlement by 1183 (*Boldon Buke*, 6, 46-47).

11TH CENTURY GRAVE MARKER IN
ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH, BISHOPWEARMOUTH

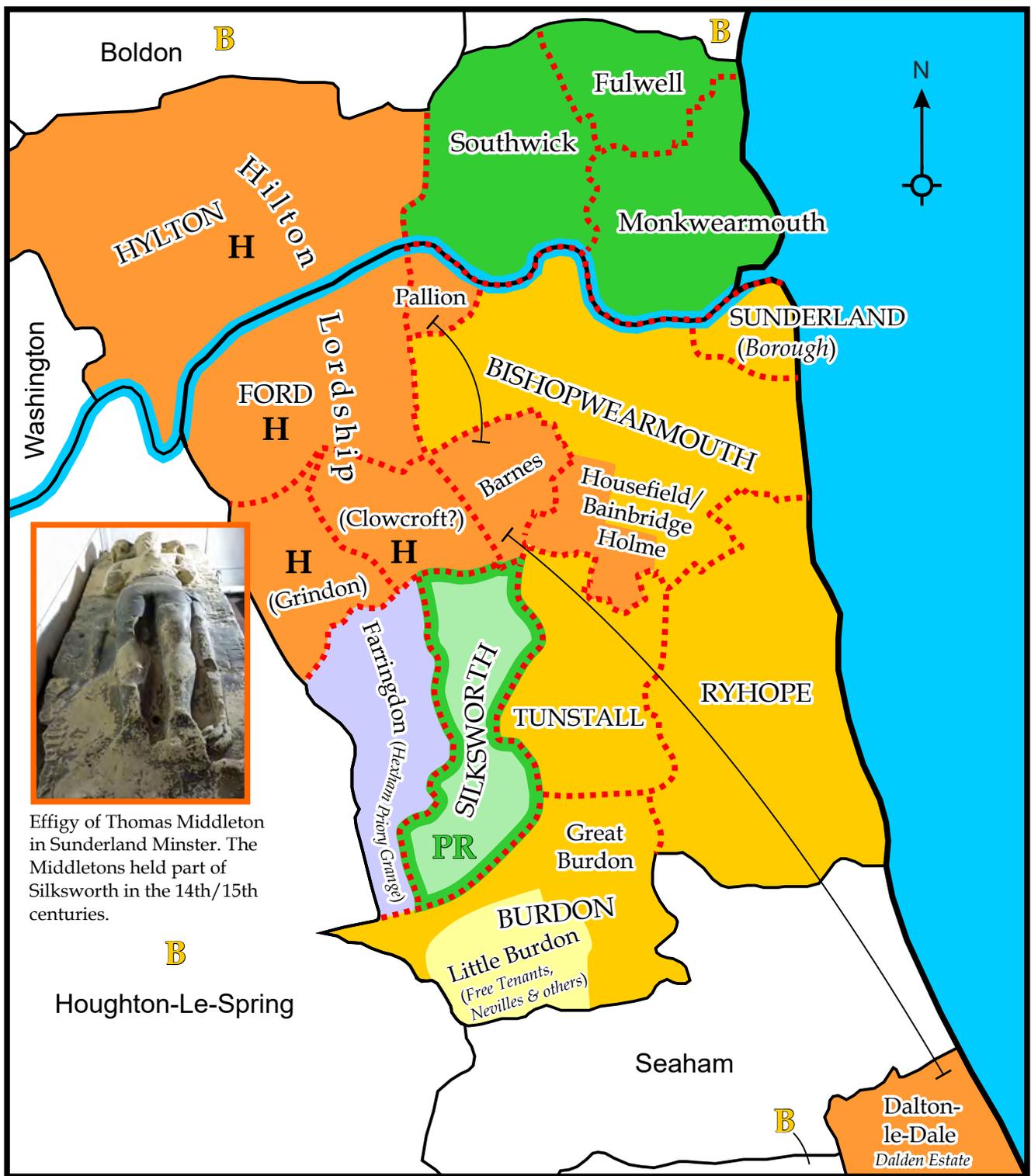


5. PARISHES AND TOWNSHIPS

Each village community, like Bishopwearmouth, was the focus of a defined territory, known as a **township** or **vill**, which the settlement's inhabitants exploited. The townships were grouped into larger ecclesiastical territories, **parishes**, for the purposes of religious worship. In Northern England parishes could often be very large, encompassing many communities, as was the case with **Bishopwearmouth Parish**. Bishopwearmouth was thus both a township in its own right and the centre of a much larger parish.



The ecclesiastical parishes and chapelries of East Durham c.1800 with Bishopwearmouth parish highlighted in yellow and its constituent townships delineated with dotted red lines.



Effigy of Thomas Middleton in Sunderland Minster. The Middletons held part of Silksworth in the 14th/15th centuries.

0 1 2 3 4 5 miles

- Bishop's Manors & Estates
- Durham Priory Estates
- Other Ecclesiastical Lords
- Estates of the Bishop's Barons & Knights (feudal tenants)
- Township/Vill boundaries
- Parish boundaries
- B Other holdings of the Bishop
- PR Durham Priory holding

Medieval Lordship in Bishopwearmouth and Monkwearmouth.

6. BISHOPWEARMOUTH IN THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

Bishops, Monks and Knights

Following the Norman Conquest, the ancient Anglo-Saxon religious community of St Cuthbert at Durham and its vast landholdings between the Tyne and the Tees, including Bishopwearmouth, were subject to radical reorganisation by their new overlords.

In 1083, the new bishop, William de St-Calais, established a convent of Benedictine monks in place of the Anglo-Saxon community, placing it under the leadership of a prior, and attaching it to the great new Romanesque cathedral then under construction (Aird 1998, 100-141). The new priory was to be ordered strictly according to the monastic rule of St Benedict, whilst maintaining the services in the cathedral. The landholdings of the Community of St Cuthbert were divided between the bishop and the new cathedral priory (Aird 1998, 145-7, 155-66). The priory thus became the second great landowner in the area of County Durham.

In addition, successive bishops in the period up to 1150 granted some of their remaining estates to their retinue of barons and knights – the *barones et fideles sancti Cuthberti* – in return for feudal military service. The bishop came to be recognised as the universal, superior landlord between the Tees and Tyne – the area known as the *Haliwerfolc* or the Bishopric. That is to say he was not only a major landowner in his own right, but also the ‘sole landlord’, subordinate only to the king (Liddy 2008, 25). Thus, even those estates that the bishop did not hold directly, and which were held instead either by the priory or by his feudal retainers, were all notionally held of the bishop as ‘tenant in chief’.

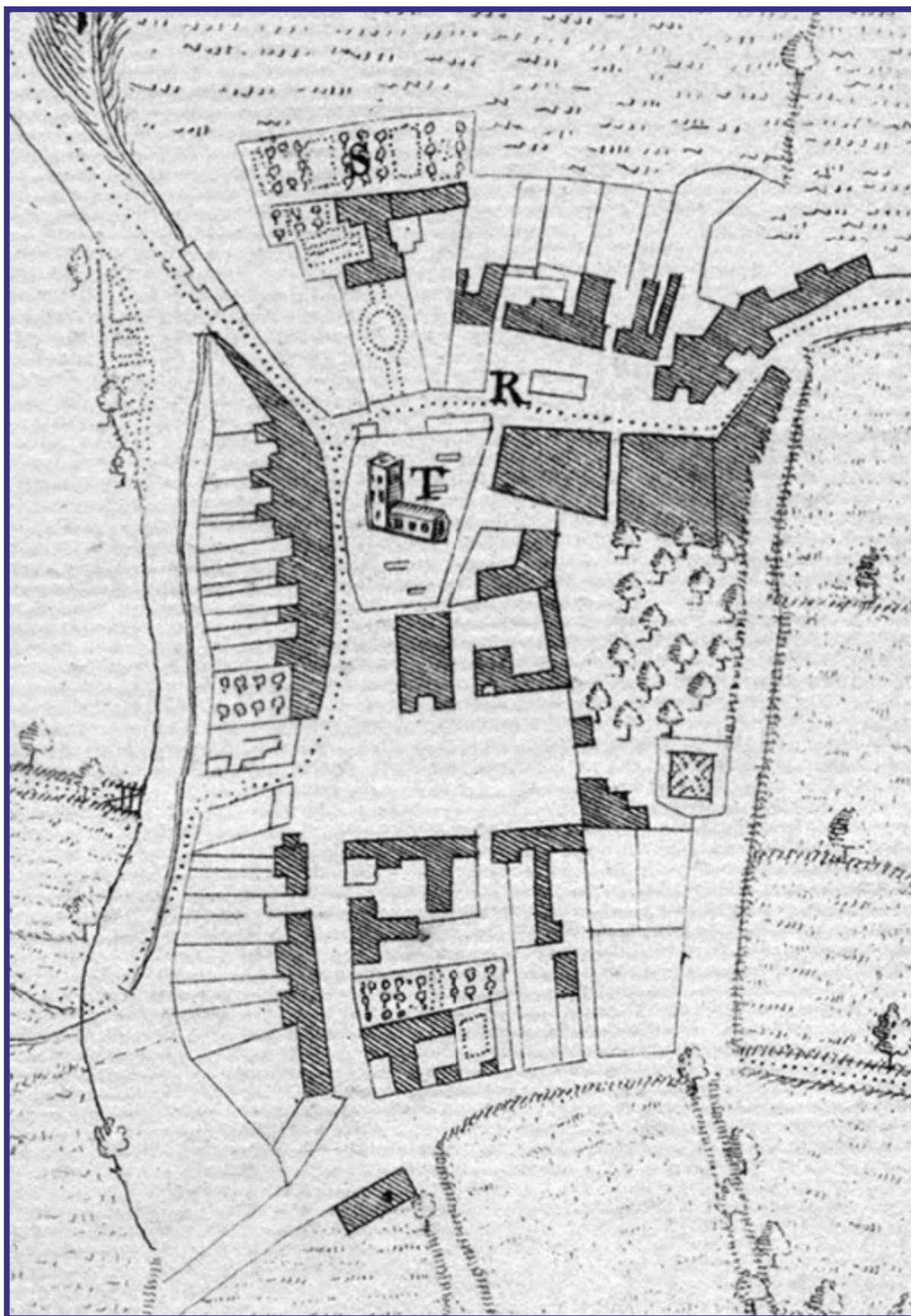
The township or vill of Bishopwearmouth was still in the hands of the bishop when it was documented once more in the great survey of the latter’s lands known as the Boldon Book, commissioned c1183. However the extensive shire estate, itemised in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, had already been broken up. Of the other vills in Bishopwearmouth parish, the bishop also held Tunstall, which was managed jointly with Bishopwearmouth, and Ryhope and Burdon, which were similarly linked together. Some outlying parts of Bishopwearmouth township were held by the bishop’s followers, having originally formed a separate vill known as Hameldon, located beside Humbledon Hill, around Barnes and Bainbridge Holme.

Bishopwearmouth Village

If we cannot be certain precisely what form settlement took at Bishopwearmouth when the vill is first mentioned in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* – whether a village or a hamlet plus several scattered farms perhaps – it is highly likely that there was a single nucleated village there by the time of the Boldon Book.

The ultimate form of village probably developed over time as the rural population expanded. A combined total of 31 tenants is recorded in Wearmouth and Tunstall by the Boldon Book, in 1183. By the time that a second great survey of the episcopal estate was compiled under Bishop Thomas Hatfield, in 1381, 24 tenants are recorded at Bishopwearmouth alone, with a further 13 at Tunstall (*Hatfield Survey*, 132-6; cf. Cookson 2015, 27). Moreover it is likely that the 1381 total at Bishopwearmouth reflects a partial collapse in the size of the village population as a result of the catastrophic Black Death. The number of tenants in the village at the end of the 13th century may have been even greater following a century or more of continual growth in rural population across England, only to fall back again once a deteriorating climate and famine struck in the early 14th century and then the devastating plague in 1349-50, with repeated recurrences thereafter.

BISHOPWEARMOUTH VILLAGE
ON BURLEIGH & THOMPSON'S MAP, 1737



7. THE MEDIEVAL VILLAGE PLAN

The layout of medieval villages typically featured several key components: the dwellings and tenements of the peasant farmers, the lord's manorial or 'demesne' farm, a central green or street, access routes leading out to neighbouring settlements or into the common fields, plus a mill and other communal facilities such as a pinfold, a common oven or bakehouse and a brewhouse.

Bishopwearmouth also featured a substantial parish church, **St Michael and All Angels** (now Sunderland Minster), still ensconced on its original site, even if the present structure now preserves little of its former medieval fabric, having been much rebuilt on several occasions. Moreover, the rector of the parish was also a significant landowner, with the right to exploit the parish glebe and other lands as well as receive tithes, so the village contained a second manorial complex, **the rectory**, comprising a large house, a very substantial barn and other outbuildings, much of which, including some original medieval fabric, survived into 19th and 20th centuries to the north of the church. Thus the church and rectory represent two certain points of reference when reconstructing the village plan.

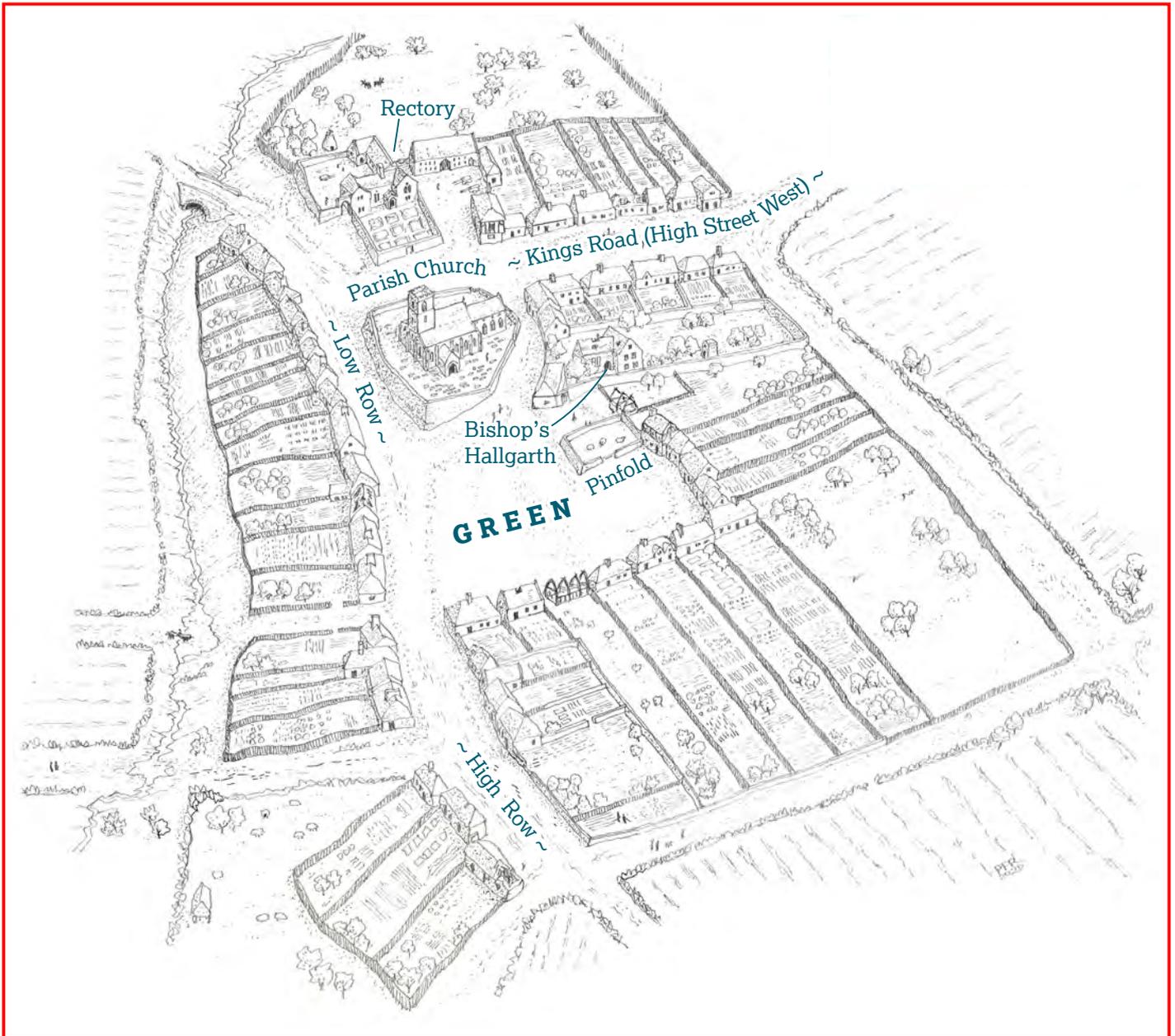
The other elements of plan must be restored, using the historic map evidence and relevant documentary sources, plus the surviving layout of the settlement. Burleigh and Thompson's 1737 plan may be adopted as a starting point, as the oldest relatively detailed plan of the village. Rain's more detailed Eye Plan (see p. 40), produced in 1785-90 is also useful, though by then settlement was encroaching on the area between Bishopwearmouth and the borough of Sunderland to the east.

The church and churchyard are shown on the 1737 map standing on the north side of the roughly square area, largely open, but with its northern half partially encroached upon by buildings. This represents **the village green**. An elongated L-shaped block is shown attached to the eastern edge of this area with another rectangular block located immediately to the west, sitting like an island within the green. The L-shaped block is revealed on Rain's plan to enclose an open rectangular yard, labelled 'Pinfold'. This must correspond to the pinfold of the medieval village community, where stray livestock were impounded. A rectangular space immediately to the north, largely separated off from the rest of the green by the pinfold block and by the block to the west, is labelled 'Little Gate' on Rain's plan. 'Litlegate' (sic) already figures in a copyhold document of 1630 (*Parliamentary Survey*, 165), demonstrating that the encroachment of buildings onto the north-east corner of the green had begun by then. This probably started with the erection of buildings around the pinfold, before the blocks to the west and south-west appeared, as the green's former communal functions were abandoned. Originally the green would probably have encompassed all the area south of the churchyard and east of Low Row, with just the eastern and southern edges of the green lying in the same positions as shown on the later maps. The only structures likely to have stood within the green during the Middle Ages would be those with communal functions such as the pinfold.

The **tenements** occupied by the peasant cultivators of a village were typically laid out in fairly regular **rows**. Each tenement would have consisted of a *toft*, a fenced plot containing the homestead of a peasant family with the house itself (in some cases taking the form of a longhouse providing accommodation for both humans and animals), plus any outbuildings, such as a barns and sheds, a garden for vegetables and herbs, yards and small enclosures (Roberts 1987, 20-21; 2008, 39 fig. 2.3, 58ff). Typically, the plot was narrowly proportioned, extending well to the rear of the buildings.

The clearest example of such a toft-row arrangement at Bishopwearmouth can be traced along the west side of the settlement, corresponding to present-day Low Row and the west side of Green Terrace (High Row). Burleigh and Thompson's map shows the characteristic arrangement with buildings at the front and long narrow plots to the rear, extending back to the Howle-Eile Burn.

RECONSTRUCTING MEDIEVAL BISHOPWEARMOUTH



Artistic reconstruction of the medieval village of Bishopwearmouth, around c.1380, by Peter Ryder.



Reconstruction drawing of St Michael's Church, during the late Middle Ages, by Peter Ryder

A second distinct toft-row can clearly be discerned on the 1737 map along the northern edge of the settlement, immediately next to the rectory, again featuring buildings to the fore and plots to the rear. The buildings of this row are set well back from the later street frontage of High Street West. By the end of the 18th century, Rain's map shows that the area in front of the row had been substantially infilled, with the former frontage now facing onto 'Back Street'.

Equivalent rows on the south side of the green and on the south side of King's Road/High Street West are less obvious on the 18th-century maps, but can still be traced, particularly on Rain's Eye Plan. Only on the east side of the green does the pattern of rows seem to have been obliterated by the creation of two grand houses, Fenwick Lodge and Crowtree House, with their extensive gardens.

The bishop's **hallgarth** (the term usually given to a manorial complex comprising a manor house and demesne farm buildings in the North-East) was located immediately to the east of the churchyard, roughly in the area of the present Mowbray Almshouses. The compound faced onto the north-east corner of the green and probably extending all the way east to what became Crowtree Lane. Though long redundant, the 'hallgarth' survived as a name for this part of the village. Thus a piece of land or property called the Hallgarth is mentioned in a copyhold entry of 1638² and in a conveyance of 1859 relating to an adjoining building, the 'School House', which was located in the area immediately east of the churchyard and south of High Street West. It is also shown as a small, irregular plot on a 19th-century map (DULASC DHC 11/V/12 (85): 1817 Plan of the Rectory of Bishopwearmouth; cf. Cookson 2010, 10 (fig. 8) & 177 n. 11; 2015, 26 (fig. 9), 28).

The reconstruction drawing of Bishopwearmouth village, opposite, depicts it around the time of a great survey of the Bishop of Durham's estates commissioned by Bishop Hatfield in 1381. Much of what we know about the village and its people in this period derives from that survey.

The reconstruction reflects the impact of the Black Death, the terrible plague pandemic which struck a generation earlier in 1348-49 and recurred at frequent intervals thereafter. Many tenant families may have died out as a result so some of the houses are shown abandoned and in a state of decay, whilst more fortunate neighbours amassed multiple farm-holdings. The bishop's own manor house and farm to the right of the churchyard was also in a state of dilapidation by now as labour shortages and high wage costs made it uneconomic for lords to continue farming their demesne land directly. Instead the Hatfield Survey reveals that all that land was now rented out to tenants.

Some familiar elements can be seen in the layout of the settlement. The long row of tenements forming Low Row and High Row (now Green Terrace) can be seen to the left, along the west side of the settlement. At the top of the view what is now High Street West can be seen beyond the church. A large, open green is shown at the centre of the village with a pinfold enclosure where straying livestock were penned, positioned towards the east side. In the centre of the village, on its highest point at the northern end of the green, stands the ancient parish church of St Michael and All Angels.

To the north of the church, the rector of the parish occupied a fine house with a large barn to the right, where tithes of produce from the entire parish were stored, and glebe land behind. The rector was an important lord in his own right and the rectory would become the centre of a separate manor by the 16th century.

² Isaac Wattson holds 'one messuage adjacent upon the hallgarth in Wearmouth' (1647 *Parliamentary Survey*, 171).

8. THE WIDER FARMING LANDSCAPE

The layout of the wider townscape, including the outline of the pre-enclosure townfields and common moors, plus the location of the parish glebeland, has been reconstructed from documentary sources and historic maps (cf. Cookson 2010, 10, fig. 8; 2015, 26, fig.9). The most important of these relate to various parcels of land pertaining to Rectory Manor, recording their position with regard to the pre-enclosure open townfields and moors, and thereby establishing the latter's location (DUL-ASC, DDR/EA/GLE 1/11(1792); DUL-ASC, DHC 11/V/12 (1817); DHC11/V/16). However, none of the surviving maps predate the 1649 enclosure award. Such enclosure typically entailed a great deal of straightening of field boundaries and consolidation of plots, as professional surveyors divided up open fields into individually held field parcels. The field boundaries of pre-enclosure layout are likely to have been less regular and rectilinear than those recorded post 1649.

Arable lands

The core resource of a lowland medieval township like Bishopwearmouth was its arable land, the ploughlands where the cereal crops, which formed the basis of the peasant diet, were cultivated. Such arable land was typically organised into one or more large open fields. These in turn were subdivided into units known as *flatts*, or *furlongs*, and then into smaller units termed *sellions*. These subdivisions were separated only by narrow uncultivated strips known as *baulks*.

Three large fields have been identified at Bishopwearmouth, East Field, West Field and South Field, so named presumably because of their positioning relative to the village settlement. The individual tenants would typically have held land in strips – each strip being composed of several parallel riggs (ridges and furrows) – scattered throughout the three fields, as demonstrated by the following extract from a copyhold lease recorded by the Parliamentary Survey in 1647:

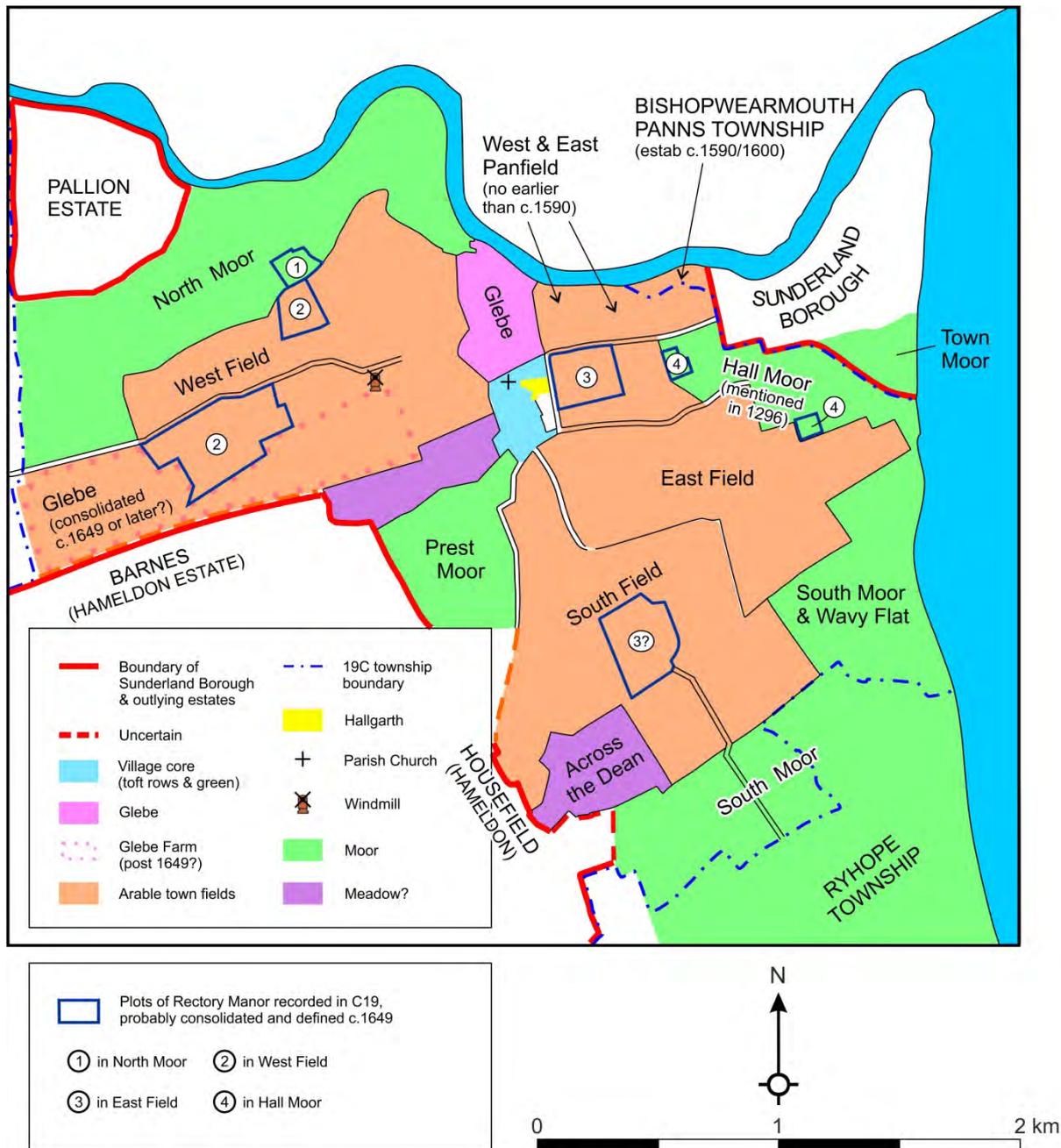
John Nicholson, by copy dated 11 April, 23 Carol Re (1647), holdeth ... (other holdings listed) ... 6 acres of land, parcel of the premises viz: 2 acres lying in the southfield, 2 acres in the westfield, 2 acres in the Eastfield and pasture for 2 beasts in the southfield
(Parliamentary Survey, II, 166)

Three-field systems are generally more typical of late medieval or early modern arrangements in North-East England, a pattern of re-organisation perhaps deliberately introduced to combat fears of creeping soil exhaustion. (cf. James 1974, 75-76). It enabled a regular system of crop rotation to be operated across the community's arable lands with each field being left fallow once in every three years to allow it to recover its fertility and prevent over intensive cropping. A field could be grazed during its fallow year, the manure deposited by the livestock helping to restore nutrients to the soil.

The common moors

Rather like its arable land, Bishopwearmouth's common moorland was split into several distinct blocks of land, generally distributed around the periphery of the township beyond the townfields, as shown on the reconstructed layout. These moors comprised two large tracts, labelled North Moor and South Moor, plus two much smaller areas, Hall Moor to the east of the village, beyond East Field, and North and South Prest Moor immediately south-west of the village.

Hall Moor is mentioned in a charter of 1296 drawn up by Arnesius of Sunderland confirming the grant of one burgage and croft to one John of the Shields, also of Sunderland, and witnessed by Stephen Gare as mayor of the borough (Cookson 2015, 30, 51, 53, citing charter T&WA, 838/56). The burgage plot was set on the south side of the king's street (High Street) and extended south to the borough boundary adjoining the hall moor. However none of the moors figure in the Hatfield Survey of 1381, which instead refers to a Middle Moor and Small Moor (*Hatfield Survey*, 133-34).



Reconstruction of the late medieval landscape of Bishopwearmouth township, based on analysis of post-medieval documentary sources conducted by the Sunderland VCH project (cf. Cookson 2010, 8-11, fig. 8; 2015, 26-8, fig. 9), with the limits of the outlying estates also shown and the extent of South Moor adjusted.

The layout shown is likely to relate only to the end of the Middle Ages and to the subsequent early modern era (the 16th and early 17th centuries). None of the three main townfields featuring in 17th-century and later documents, appear in medieval sources, whilst the topographical names mentioned in earlier documents mostly do not recur in the later sources. The landscape organisation prevailing earlier in the Middle Ages may have differed somewhat, but is now largely irrecoverable.

9. THE OUTLYING MANORS

The south-western and western margins of Bishopwearmouth Township fell within a separate area known as **Hameldon** or Homeldon, taking its name from the prominent landmark, Humbledon Hill. This comprised several manorial estates, **Barnes, Pallion, Housefield** or **Bainbridge Holme**, and perhaps **Clowcroft**. The maps opposite show their extent and outline their complex tenurial history. By the mid- to late 14th century, if not earlier, the area appears to have divided into two manors held by different lordships, that held by the Escolland or Dalden family and that held by the Lumleys.

The settlement pattern

There is little detailed information regarding settlement and land-use in the outer districts of Bishopwearmouth, which were managed as entirely separate estates or manors.

Pallion (*Pavillion*) and Barnes are shown as defined districts on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, demarcated in the same way as townships, although they do not seem to have had the status of full townships by this stage at least. The Inquisition Post Mortem for Sir William Bowes (*Cursitor's Records* II, 320; cf. Surtees 1816, 235; Hutchinson 1787, II, 683-4), who died in 1465, provides some information regarding the Barnes estate, which comprised:

- ❖ The Manor of Barnes, held of the see of Durham by knight's service and suit of court
- ❖ A messuage with appurtenances called *The Barnes*, consisting of a hall, two chambers, a kitchen, two granaries and a dovecote
- ❖ 100 acres of pasture
- ❖ 20 acres of meadow

This manorial farm was probably leased out. Its demesne land, comprising just pasture and meadow, suggests the farm was only involved in rearing livestock at this stage.

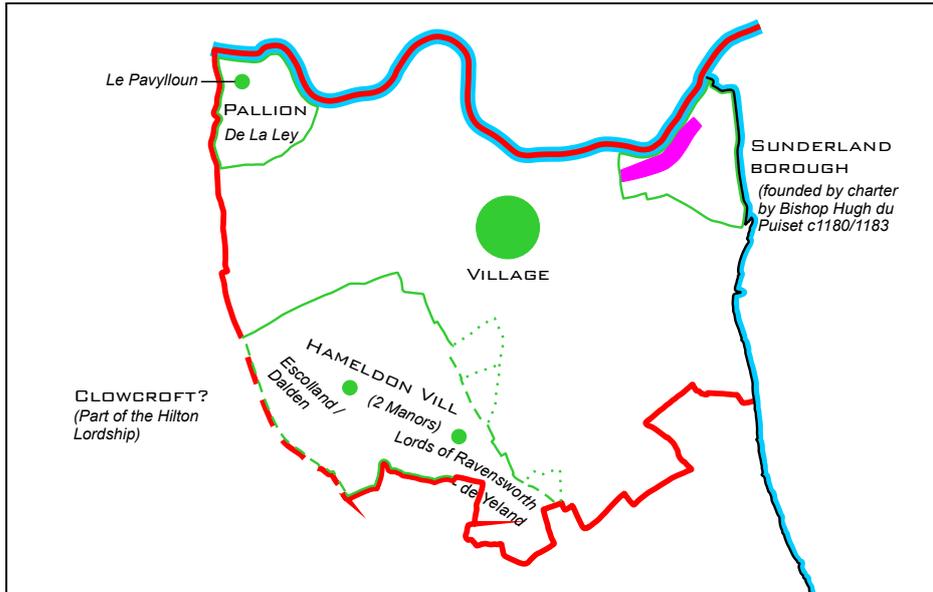
The name Pallion probably derives from *Pavillion* – 'tent' – implying it originated as a temporary residence of the de la Ley lineage, perhaps a kind of summer pleasure ground for hunting and feasting in an attractive setting beside the River Wear, though it certainly became their permanent abode later on. When 'the whole tenement and grounds called the Pallyon' was sold to John Goodchild of Ryhope, in 1572, the property is described in terms which suggest it then comprised a single manor farm with attached fishery:

- ❖ A messuage, toft and garden
- ❖ 20 acres of arable land, 30 of meadow, 200 of pasture, 100 of moor and 100 of furze in Palyon and Wearmouth
- ❖ 'One several and free fishery in the River of Were, in or adjoining the said Pallyon'

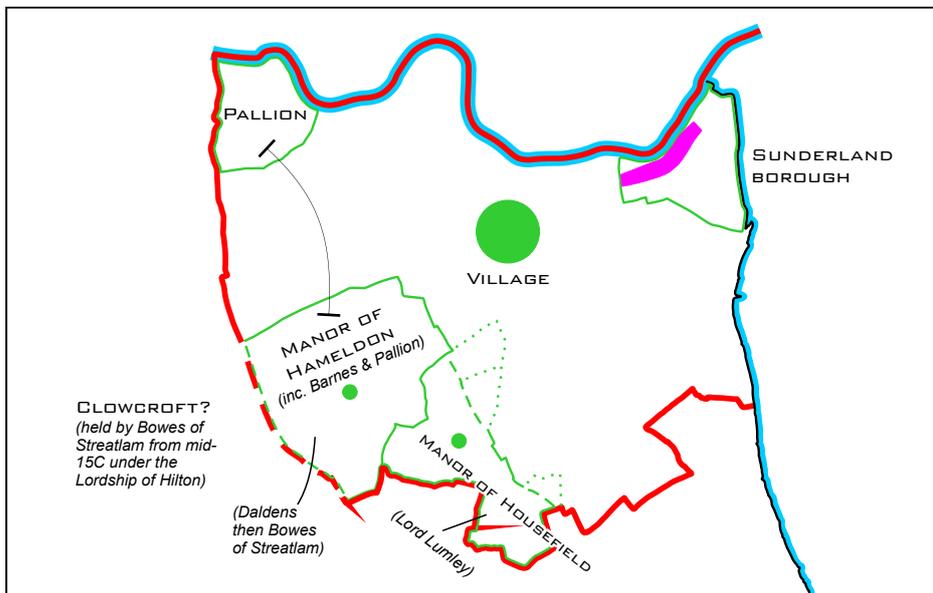
The Housefield estate of the Yellands, Lumleys and Shipperdsons can be reconstructed as a fairly extensive area extending to the west, south-east and perhaps north of Bainbridge Holme, which would have been farmed either as a single demesne farm or perhaps through several tenants.

The other estate tentatively associated with Hameldon and the western margins of Bishopwearmouth township, namely Clowcroft, is something of a puzzle (Cookson 2010, 12; 2015, 28; cf. Surtees 1816, 241). This manor figures in documentary sources as late as 1649, but not thereafter and its precise location is now uncertain as it does not feature on any map, though it most often seems to have been associated with Grindon and Ford, to the west of Bishopwearmouth. It should perhaps be identified with the western half of the Barnes estate which protrudes westwards as far as Grindon, its outline suggesting it might have swallowed up part of Silksworth township. Perhaps James I's grant of the manors of Hameldon, Clowcroft and Grindon, conveyed to Ralph Bowes in 1608/11, resulted in the Barnes estate ultimately absorbing Clowcroft.

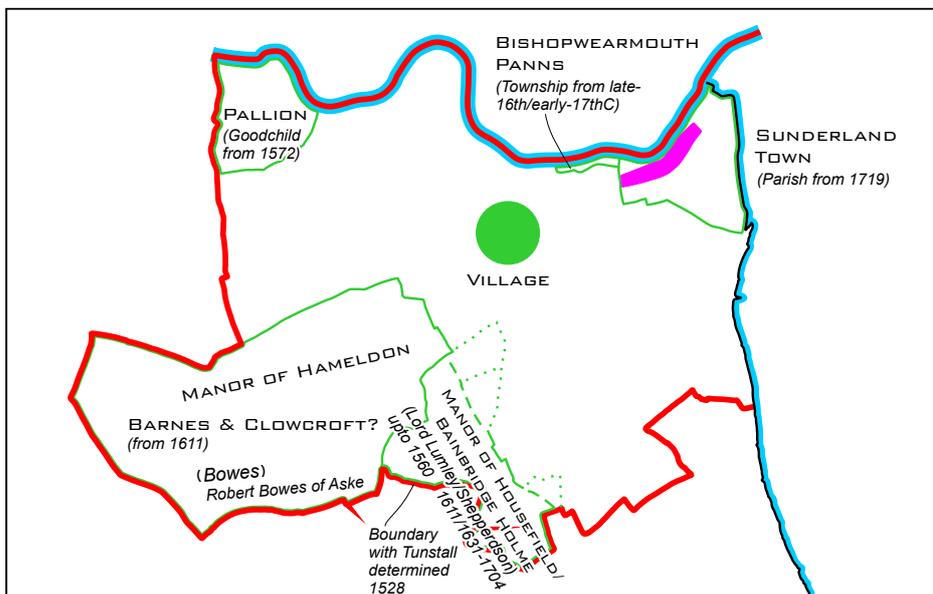
THE DEVELOPMENT OF BISHOPWEARMOUTH TOWNSHIP



1. 12th-13th century



2. 14th-15th century

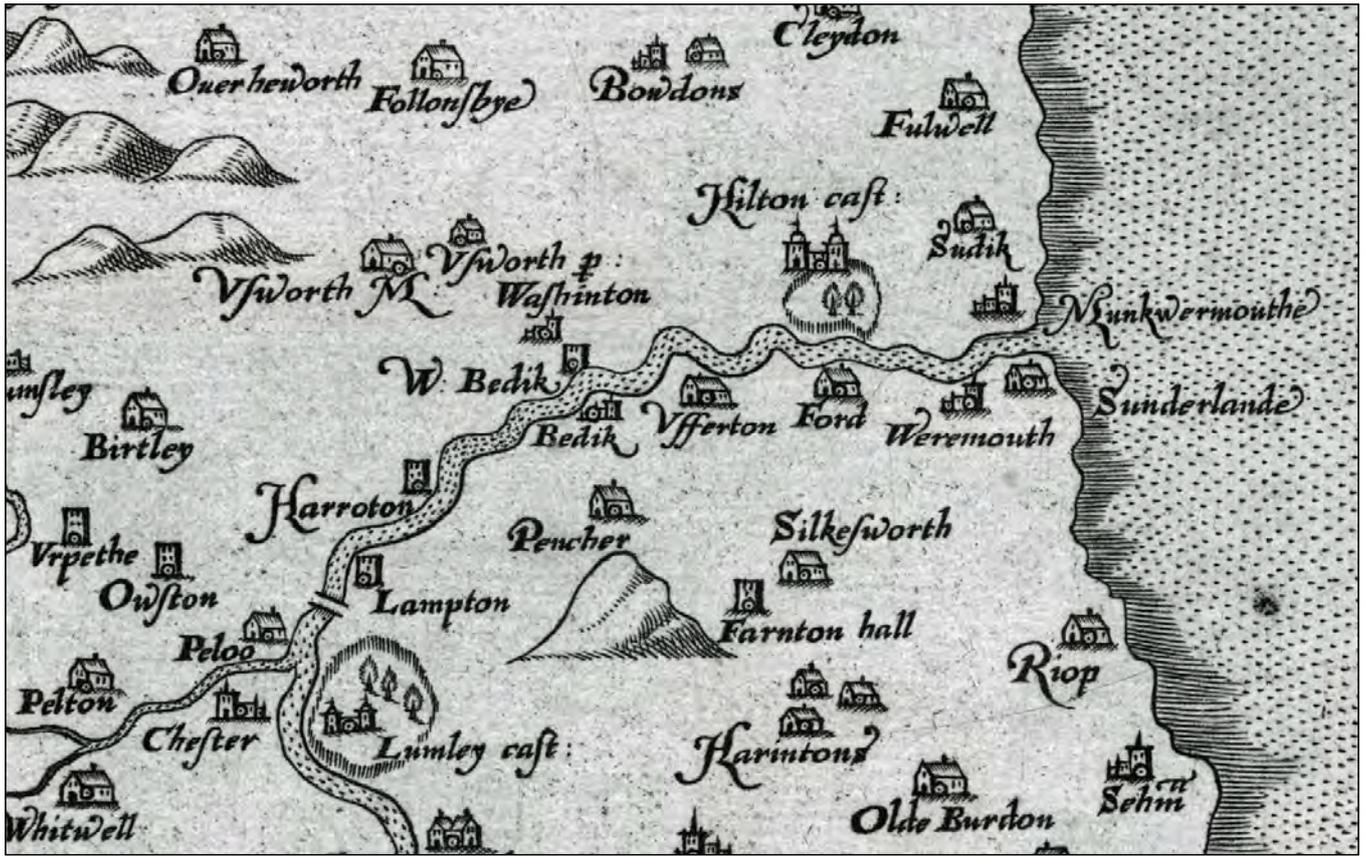


3. 16th-17th century

Key:

- = Boundary of greater Bishopwearmouth Township
- = Estate Boundary
- = River/Coastline
- = Settlement Site





Extract from Saxton's County Map of Durham c.1576, showing 'Weremouth'.



Extract from Speed's County Map of Durham c.1611, showing 'Weremouth'.

10. BISHOPWEARMOUTH 1500-1750

The best evidence for the population, society and economy of Bishopwearmouth in the 16th century is provided by another survey of the townships held by the bishop, which was undertaken in 1588 (cf. Brown 2015, 238; Surtees 1816, 225). By this stage all the tenant holdings had been converted to copyhold tenure, with the exception of a couple of leaseholds, one of which was the township's windmill. Copyhold was a form of customary tenure (whereby land was held according to the custom of the manor) and took its name from the fact that the title deed received by the tenant was a copy of the entry in the manorial court roll. These copyhold tenancies effectively gave their holders security of tenure. Moreover the rents were fixed and the severe inflation in prices and wages experienced in the 16th century meant that the tenants were soon paying well below what the land was worth in terms of the value of the crops and stock it could produce. As a result the income the bishop received from his estates fell further and further behind the rising cost of living.

An important development of the late 16th and early 17th centuries was the spread of settlement along the river foreshore, from the western edge of Sunderland quayside. This encompassed 6 acres of Bishopwearmouth built on waste land between the high and low water marks, reclaimed from the river by embankment. This was initially sparked by the development of salt-panning in the 1580s. By the early 17th century, this settlement, called **Bishopwearmouth Panns**, had acquired the status of a township in its own right, separate from the main village township.

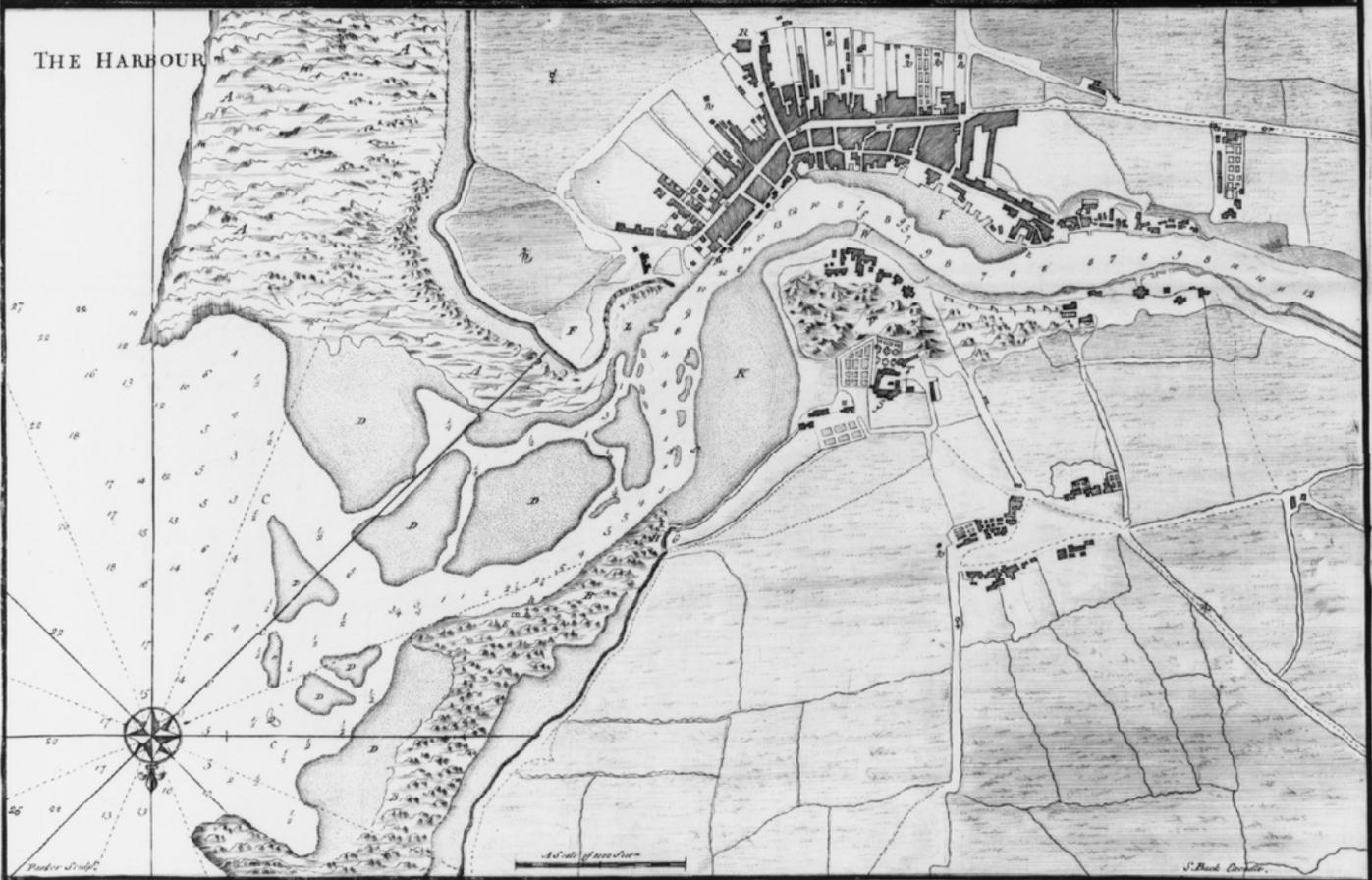
The 1666 hearth tax return

Much valuable information regarding the overall population – as opposed to the relatively privileged copyhold tenants – is provided by the Hearth Tax return made on Lady Day (25 March) 1666 (*Durham Hearth Tax*, xcix-c, 54, 58-62, 145, 148-51). The most striking feature is the very large number of households in Bishopwearmouth by comparison with the other townships of the parish. Of the 420 households listed in the return for the parish (excluding the largely urban township of Sunderland³), some 236 were located in Bishopwearmouth township, while the tiny township of Bishopwearmouth Panns accounted for 85 of the remainder. The four rural communities of Ryhope, Tunstall, Burdon and Silksworth (including Grindon and Farrington Hall) counted only 99 households (40, 18, 16 and 25 respectively). This would imply that the character of Bishopwearmouth village and township was very different from that of its neighbours. Bishopwearmouth has almost six times as many households as Ryhope, the rural township with the next largest total. Clearly, Bishopwearmouth was no longer simply an agricultural community and parish centre. Instead the number of resident households can only be accounted for by assuming that the population was increasingly integrated with the economy of neighbouring Sunderland. The settlement probably now accommodated a substantial population of craftsmen and labouring poor who tried to find work in the port, loading coal onto ships, or in associated industrial enterprises such as the saltpanning or shipbuilding and related activities like ropeworks, as well as seasonal work on local farms.

Also apparent from the 1666 Lady Day hearth tax return is the contrast between the impoverished mass of the population and the relatively small group of wealthier families. Thus, 202 houses out of 236 in Bishopwearmouth township had only one hearth (cf. Meikle & Newman 2007, 176-7; Cookson 2015, 92). In contrast, Dr Gray's rectory, the most substantial property in the township, had nine hearths (Meikle & Newman 2007, 177). There seem to be relatively few householders who might be categorised as being 'of the middling sort' between the ordinary poor and the township elite.

³ Some 115 households paid the 1666 Lady Day tax in Sunderland, but the list of non-payers or 'non-solvants' has not survived making direct comparison impossible. However, given that more than half of the households in Bishopwearmouth and more than three quarters of those in Bishopwearmouth Panns were non-solvants, the number of households in Sunderland is likely to have been upwards of 500.

THE PERSPECTIVE & ICHNOGRAPHY of the TOWN of SUNDERLAND in^y BISHOP^N of DURHAM.



REFERENCES.				EXPLANATION.	
A. The South Rocks	I. The Well	R. Sunderland Church	6. The Road to Durham	<p>Observe, that the Rocks & Sands &c. are represented in this Plan as they appear by at the lowest Tide on a common Spring. Note, that the Numerical figures as they Express the several depths of Water in the Channels in Feet & fathoms.</p> <p>That the Compse of this Plan corresponds with the Regiments Survey taken in the time the Survey was made by a good Copper Plate Instrument whose Water by Evaporation is 12. 45.</p> <p>That following Levels or differences of height compared to the Horizon of y^e Bar in feet & inches & Division parts of Inches</p>	
B. The North Rocks	K. The Hans Land	S. Monk Wearmouth Chh.	7. The Road to Newcastle		
C. The Bar	L. The Cattle landing	T. Monk Wearmouth Hall	8. The Road to Shields		
D. The Bar Sands	M. The Custom house key	V. Botolph ground	9. The Town Moor		
E. The Cyl ^d Beacon	N. The low ferry Boat landing	W. The point of the North key	10. The Warren		
F. The South Point	O. The High Street	X. Ludg ^e Hole	11. Corn Windmills		
G. The North Point	P. The low Street	Y. The D ⁿ Sand	12. Carl of Scarboroughs low key		
H. The West Beacon	Q. The Cliff Height	Z. The Salt Pans	13. Barlyth ^e Begans West key		

Buck's Prospect of Sunderland c.1720, with map. Note the appearance of the first building blocks between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth village.

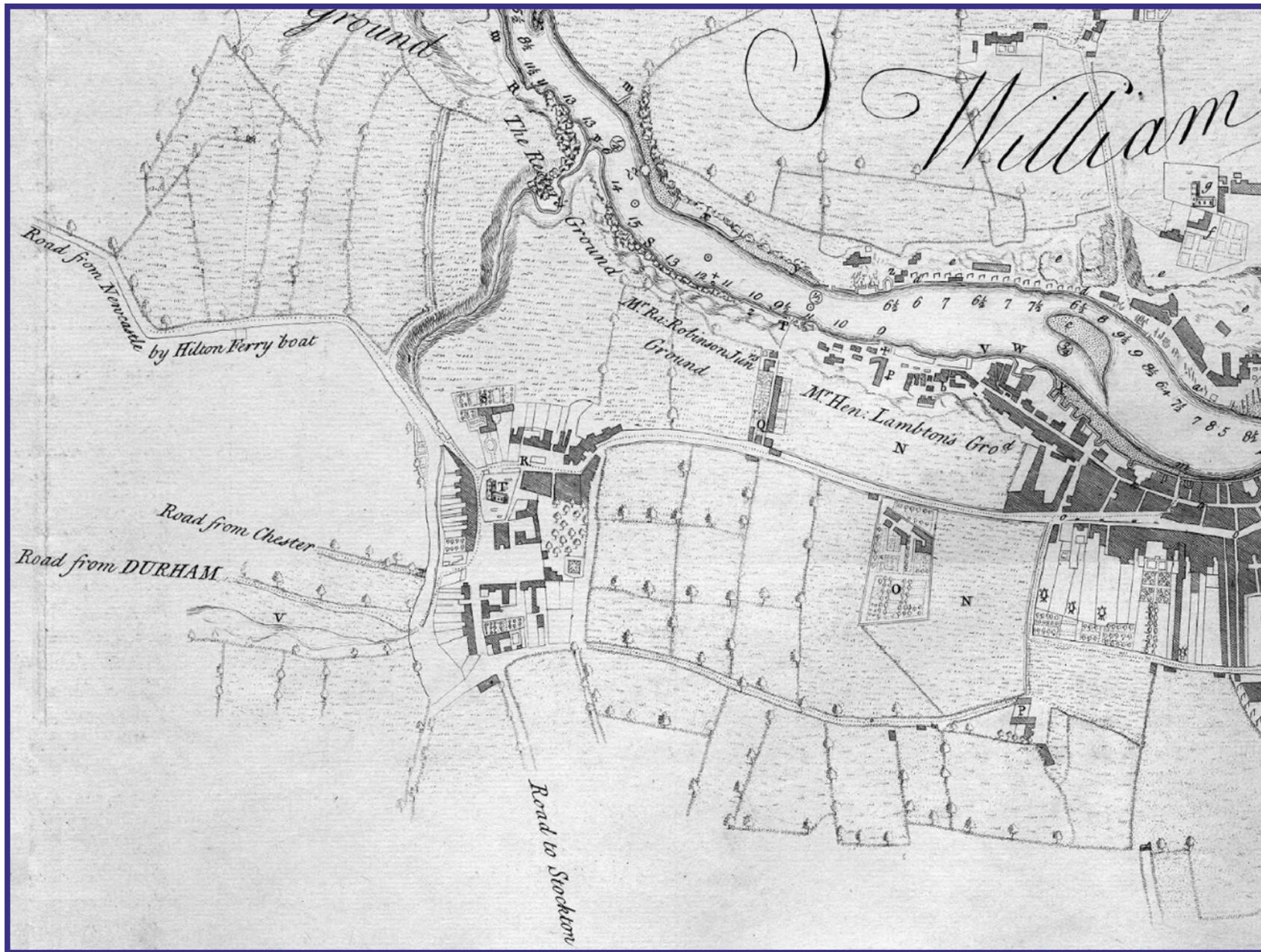
Changes to the village 1500-1750

The increased population must have resulted in changes to the character and layout of the village. The land surrounding the village and extending up to the boundary of Sunderland town was still given over to farming and no attempt seems to have been made to develop these open areas to cope with the needs of an increasing population. The copyholders who controlled this land were still concerned to exploit it for agricultural profit. The area between Bishopwearmouth village and Sunderland town still remained largely undeveloped in the early 18th century (Cookson 2015, 105). 'Buck's Prospect', with its attached plan (1720), shows only one block of buildings and gardens midway between the two settlements, plus another, smaller, cluster of buildings on the south side of King's Road (later High Street West), closer to the eastern end of Sunderland, at the point where a lane diverged towards the south-west corner of the town's burgage plots. The latter can be identified with 'Sunnside', the residence of the Quaker Maude family. By the time of Burleigh and Thompson's map (1737), the house had acquired spacious gardens, extending well to the south. The other, more developed block is labelled, appropriately, 'the Halfway Houses' in the key on Burleigh and Thompson's plan. It occupies an oblong parcel, lining a track leading from King's Road northward to the edge of the bluffs overlooking the river bank at the western end of the Panns. Both of these developments may well be no earlier in date than the 18th century.

Instead, the demand for more housing was evidently met by increasing the density of occupation. In Bishopwearmouth village this manifested itself in two distinct ways. Firstly, the common spaces, notably the central green, but also the broad expanse at the west end of King's Road/High Street West, were increasingly encroached upon, as can be discerned on Burleigh and Thompson's map. This process was certainly underway by the mid-17th century. Littlegate is mentioned in a copyhold lease of 1630, preserved in the Parliamentary Survey, indicating that the north-east quarter of the green was already at least partially built-up by then (*Parliamentary Survey*, 165). The lease specifically refers to Littlegate lying to the east of a cottage which was adjoined by another tenement and garth. This implies that the block of buildings shown to the south of the churchyard on Burleigh and Thompson's map must already have been in existence by 1630. The process probably began with the addition of dwellings alongside existing structures that may have been located on the green, such as the common bakehouse, the alehouse and most notably the pinfold. Comparison of Burleigh and Thompson's map with Rain's later eye plan shows the pinfold, located on the east side of the green, was already partially enclosed by buildings by the 1730s, and the earlier reference to Littlegate suggests this was already the case more than a hundred years before.

The second way in which additional dwellings were created within the pre-existing village limits was by subdividing existing plots and making use of back plots behind the street frontages. As is clearly apparent from the copyhold leases reproduced in the Parliamentary Survey, many of the original copyhold tenements had been split two, three or even four ways, in any case, due to the vagaries of divided inheritance, and this will have facilitated the process of infilling of the village plan. The survey also provides evidence for shops or workshops at Bishopwearmouth in 1646/7, as highlighted by Brown (2015, 241), citing the case of the copyhold in the hands of Richard Johnson, as heir to his brother, Thomas, which included 'one shop on the south betwixt doors', forming part of a substantial dwelling house with a hall and chamber, plus a fold and two parts of a garth to the rear, half a barn and small areas of former Exchequer land (*Parliamentary Survey*, 170)⁴. This tenement had a little land attached and may also have been used as a farmhouse, but many of the copyhold documents just refer to a messuage, house or cottage, sometimes, though not always, with an attached garth, and make no mention whatsoever of any associated farmland. Many of these dwellings must surely have been sub-let to labourers or artisans.

⁴ The following entry in the survey relates to a very similar complex of dwelling house, barn, fold and garth, in the hands of Martin Watson, which incorporated a 'shop now made into a chamber' (*Parliamentary Survey*, 170). There is no mention of farmland attached to this tenement.



Extract from Burleigh & Thompson's River Map of 1737 showing the first buildings to encroach on the area between Bishopwearmouth village and Sunderland town

11. A CHANGING LANDSCAPE – THE TOWNSHIP 1600-1750

The settlement pattern in the mid-17th century was still substantially similar to that of the medieval period, with most farms and other dwellings still concentrated in the old village. In addition, a few, small settlements, which marked the centre of ancient manorial estates, were scattered around the periphery of the township, at Pallion, Barnes and Housefield, or Bainbridge Holme as it was now known. These may have consisted of little more than a mansion house and farm, though there may have been a small hamlet at Barnes.

The impact of enclosure – the new farms

This pattern was ultimately to be transformed by the enclosure of the township's medieval open arable fields, or 'townfields,' and their division into hedged fields or closes, plus the accompanying enclosure and division of areas of common moor. Generally dated to 1649, this represented one of the most fundamental changes ever to affect the landscape of Bishopwearmouth. Previously, the two main farming activities, arable farming and the grazing of livestock, were largely segregated into different parts of the landscape – respectively the townfields and the moors. Moreover, an individual's arable land in the large, open townfields might be intermixed, strip by strip, rigg by rigg, with those of their neighbours, and each tenant's holding was very fragmented. Now, with the division of the landscape into smaller fields bounded by hedges, the tenants could be allotted compact farm holdings, composed of blocks of contiguous fields, and these new fields could each be rotated between arable cultivation, pasture or meadow, so the tenant could now practise mixed farming entirely within the holding, without recourse to common moorland or collective management of such communal resources, maintained through byelaws enforced in the manorial court, as was the case with the old system. One example of these new farms was Glebe Farm, which comprised a block of fields to the west of the village, bounded by Hylton Lane to the north and Chester Road to the south, and all forming part of the parish glebe assigned to support the church and rectory. This area had previously formed part of West Field, one of the three townfields.

The historic map evidence

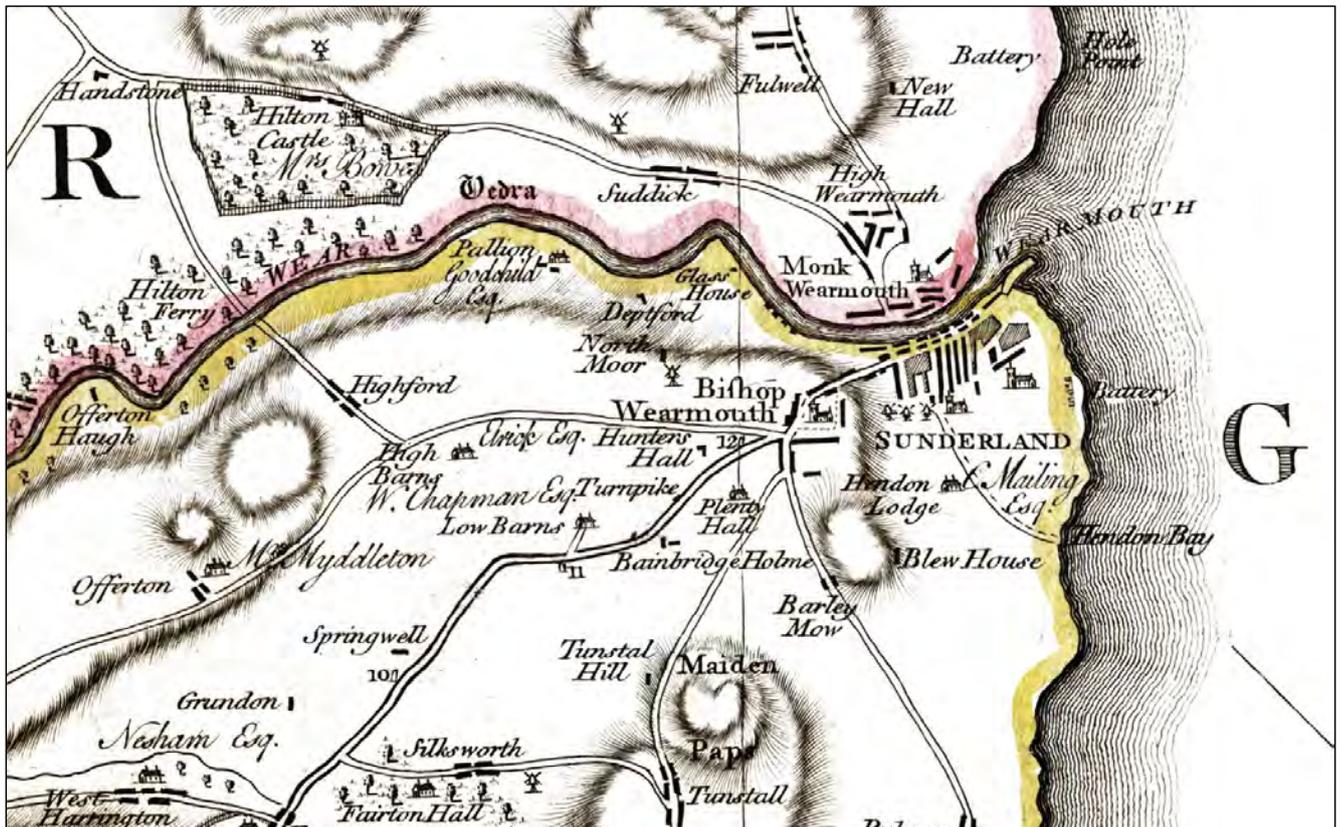
Although enclosure gave rise to consolidated farmholds, the farm steadings probably remained clustered in the village initially. The next stage was to resite the majority of the farmsteads to the centre of their respective holdings. It is, however, difficult to establish the pace and timing of this shift, due to the relative paucity of detailed and reliable maps. To be sure, the numerous 17th- and early to mid-18th-century county maps, which followed on from those produced by Saxton (1576) and Speed (1611), continued to depict a world of villages, rather than a more differentiated picture of farms, villages and hamlets. However, these maps may not form entirely reliable guides. The 17th-century county maps published Dutch cartographers, such as Blaeu or Jansson, simply reused Saxton's survey, recycling material and adding only occasional nuggets of new information. Maire (1711-20) shows the long-established estate centres of Pallion, Bainbridge Holme and 'Old Barnes' (Low Barnes), plus New Barnes (High Barnes), but not until the appearance of Andrew Armstrong's map of County Durham, in 1768, did any map of this type begin to properly depict the more complex settlement pattern which had emerged. Armstrong's map was published at a scale of one inch to one mile (1:64,000), which enabled the incorporation of more detail, following the offer of a bonus of £100 by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce for the production of county maps at that larger scale.

The farms situated between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth village or close to the river are the best documented, since they figure on the detailed 18th century maps showing the village and its immediate environs. Interestingly no farms are shown on the earliest such map, which accompanied Buck's Prospect (1720), suggesting the process did not begin until later in that century. However many parts of the township were not covered by detailed maps before the mid-19th century.

THE GROWTH OF DISPERSED SETTLEMENT



Extract from Maire's County Map of Durham c.1711, showing the location of Old (Low) and New (High) Barnes and Bainbridge Holme, as well as the village of 'Wermouth' (Bishopwearmouth).



Extract from Armstrong's County Map of Durham c.1768, showing the village of 'Bishop Wearmouth' and some of the new farms and gentry houses in the wider environs of the township.

12. 18TH-CENTURY BISHOPWEARMOUTH – From Village to Urban Quarter

Population growth and infilling

Over the course of the 18th century the village of Bishopwearmouth underwent considerable change. Several factors were at work which contributed to this. Firstly, as noted previously (see Chapter 10), the village population was rising, but, initially, the settlement remained largely constrained within its existing limits. This resulted in a much greater density of occupation, with back plots and gardens behind street frontages being infilled with buildings. It also drove the increasing encroachment on the common areas of the village, in particular, the central green and the wide expanse of King Street to the north of the parish church. This process can be charted by comparing successive maps: Burleigh and Thompson (1737), Rain's Eye Plan (1785-90) and the 1st edition 1:500 Ordnance Survey (c. 1858). As a consequence, the streets immediately south and east of the church formed a small warren of tightly packed properties, mostly of 18th-century or earlier date, lining Church Lane, Littlegate and Southgate. Late 19th and early 20th century photographs give a good impression of their appearance.

The almshouses: looking after the poorest

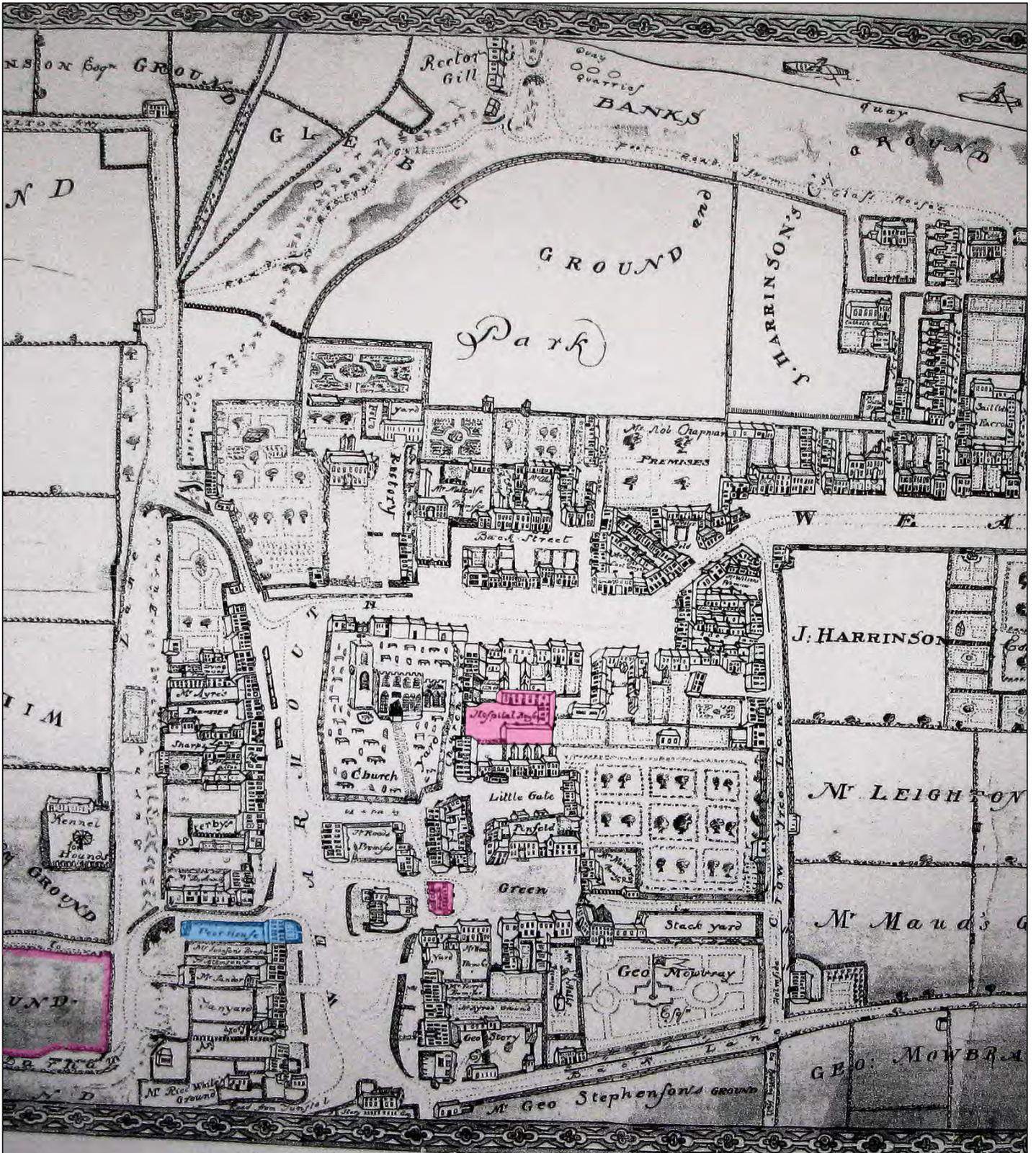
In fact, there is reason to believe that Burleigh and Thompson's map may not fully represent the degree of complexity already existing by the 1730s, since it fails to show the **Bowes Almshouses**. These were established in the south-west corner of the green, c. 1720, by Revd John Bowes, rector of Bishopwearmouth 1715-21, and should therefore be apparent as a separate block on the map. The almshouses comprised a row of apartments for 12 women. Although omitted by Burleigh and Thompson, the building does figure on Rain's Eye Plan, in the form of a single, free-standing block labelled 'Almshouse'.¹ The row was aligned north-south and was the building was slightly broader at the south end, as can be seen on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey and 20th-century photographs. Surtees was extremely dismissive of these almshouses, describing them as 'a double row of miserable hovels', built or purchased with £100 left by Dr Bowes for some charitable purpose within the suburbs of Wearmouth (Surtees 1816, 232n).

A second group of almshouses was erected a few years later, in 1727, immediately to the east of the parish church. The **Gibson Almshouses** took their name from their benefactor Jane Gibson, who left £1,400 in her will to Isabel Reed of Bishopwearmouth to buy land and provide accommodation for 12 elderly women ('for the reception of twelve decayed old women who have been in better circumstances'). A larger complex, this almshouse building comprised three blocks arranged in a U-shape around a central square of gardens, which opened onto Church Lane to the west. It is labelled 'Hospital Premises' on Rain's Eye Plan. Two fields labelled 'Hospital Ground' on the same plan and shown as extending to the west of Wearmouth Burn beyond the south-west corner of the village, represent part of the copyhold land bought with the residue of Jane Gibson's bequest and an additional £1,000 contributed by Isabel Reed and her second husband Ralph Robinson.² This land was intended to provide income to support the charity and generated £150 annually in rental payments by 1814 (Cookson 2015, 277-8, 306; Clay et al. 1984, 24-5, 38-9; Surtees 1816, 232-3).

Whether deliberately or not, the poorhouse for the parish was situated fairly close to the Bowes Almshouses. Located at the north end of High Row (Green Terrace), next to the route which cut

¹ The almshouse block in fact looks mispositioned on the eye plan, when compared with the more accurate record provided by the 1st edition Ordnance Survey. The building should probably have been placed in the eastern part of the small 'island' of development shown to the west, rather than depicted as an entirely separate structure.

² A larger block of 'Bishop Wearmouth Hospital Lands' was located to the south of the village on the west side of Stockton Road. This is shown extending southwards then westwards on Robson's 1830 map of Bishop Wearmouth and Sunderland Parishes and on Bell's 1843 map of the Tyne and Wear coalfield district.



Extract from Rain's Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishop Wearmouth, 1785-90, showing Bishopwearmouth village with the two almshouses highlighted in pink and the poorhouse in blue. The hospital grounds SW of the village are outlined in pink.

through the west side of the village then forked to become Chester Road and Durham Road, the building was purchased from William Watson for £105 by Bishopwearmouth Vestry in 1750 and a converted from a domestic residence. It housed 25 inmates in 1823, but many of the parish's paupers were supported in their own homes through 'outdoor relief' (Clay et al. 1984, 38-40).

The fusion of Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland

Although some development in the area between the village and the historic limits of Sunderland borough and Bishopwearmouth Panns occurred in the first half of the 18th century, as evinced by maps of the period (*see* 10 above), this really gathered pace after c.1750, helping to relieve the pressure on the old village settlement. By the late 1780s Rain's Eye Plan shows that Bishopwearmouth is now linked to Sunderland by an almost continuous ribbon of development, particularly along the north side of High Street West, where only one field, labelled General Lambton's Ground, interrupted the built-up zone (Clay et al. 1984, 26-9, 56-7). By 1817, Robson's Plan shows there was unbroken development along both sides of High Street West.

The Mansions of Bishopwearmouth

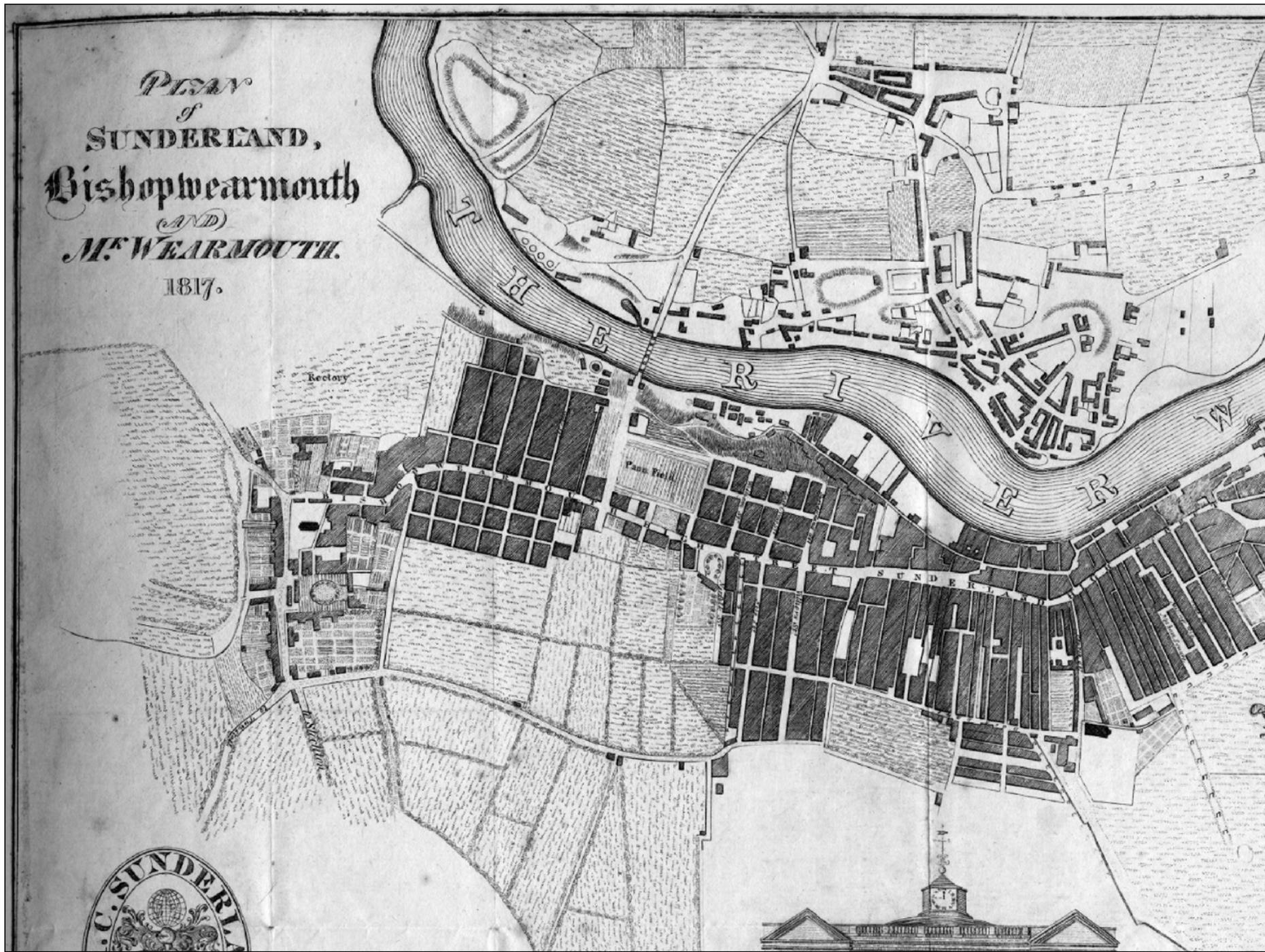
At the other end of the social scale from the almshouses and poorhouse, several well-appointed mansion houses were erected in Bishopwearmouth from the late 17th century onwards by members of the local gentry and mercantile elite. These are all depicted on Rain's Eye Plan towards the end of the 18th century. They include Fenwick Grange and Crowtree House on the east side of the Green, and Southgate House at the southern end of Green Terrace. Along the north side of High Street West, the ancient Rectory was rebuilt at the beginning of this period, whilst another substantial dwelling, Rectory House was erected immediately to the east. Typically these houses had sizeable gardens attached, as indicated on Rain's Eye Plan. In some cases the buildings probably replaced farmhouses once used by the township's copyhold tenants, now that such farmsteads, with their associated barns, byres and other outbuildings, had been relocated to their respective parcels of land in the wider township. This underlines how the character of the village changed over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, from an essentially rural, agrarian settlement to a quasi-urban quarter on the edge of an increasingly prosperous town and port.

Perhaps the most prominent of these houses was the **Rectory**. Some £41 8s worth of work on the building was undertaken by rector William Johnson in the mid-17th century, but this was most likely limited to repairs to render the building habitable after the damage suffered during the Civil War, rather than any wholesale rebuilding. The main rectory house was completely rebuilt under the rector Robert Gray (1661-1704) and his successor, John Smith (1704-15). Gray was the incumbent for an exceptionally long tenure and was 'both resident and conscientious', but the fact that the work continued under his successor, who spent some £600 on the project, would suggest that this occurred late in his tenure, during the late 17th or beginning of the 18th century (cf. Cookson 2015, 65, 184). This would accord with the style of the building evident in drawings and photographs. The reconstruction seems to have been limited to the main house, which had two storeys and seven bays along its southern frontage. Late 18th century drawings of the ancillary buildings making up the rear ranges show these were still predominantly retained their medieval form with subsequent alterations from a range of periods.

Another relatively early example was **Southgate House**, which was built by Thomas Storey sometime in the second half of the 17th century. Comprising three storeys and five bays, this house was situated at the south-east corner of Green Terrace, where the Galen Building now stands. The Storeys were another prominent local family (cf. Surtees 1816, 233; pedigree). Immediately to the east of the Rectory, was another substantial residence, known as **Rectory House**. Built before 1737, when its outline is marked on Burleigh and Thompson's map, this too was a three storey house with five bays on its frontage, and belonged to Henry Metcalfe at the time of Rain's Eye Plan.

PLAN
OF
SUNDERLAND,
Bishopwearmouth
AND
M^oWEARMOUTH.

1817.



Extract from Thomas Robson's Plan of Sunderland, Bishopwearmouth and M[on]k Wearmouth c.1817.

On the east side of the green and in its south-east corner there two further houses of note, respectively **Fenwick Lodge** and **Crowtree House**, as they became known. Each had extensive, formally laid out gardens attached, which, together, stretched eastward to Crow Tree Lane and south to Vine Place, and both belonged to the Mowbray family when they were depicted on Rain's Eye Plan. This land had previously belonged to the Shipperdson family (Walker 1983, 35; Clay et al. 1984, 41). On the death of John Shipperdson, in 1670, it passed to his son, known as John the elder, and thence to his grandson, John the younger (cf. Surtees 1816, 114 – *Shipperdson pedigree*). It was acquired by Teasdale Mowbray in 1738 through marriage to Ann Reed, heiress to this part of the Shipperdson estate. Walker (1983, 35) suggested it may represent an early enclosure of the open village green, but it seems more likely to have been the result of the engrossment and merger of a number of tenements, which originally occupied the east side and south-east corner of the green, by the Shipperdsons and their predecessors during the late Middle Ages and early modern era. The Shipperdsons' house probably lay in the south-east corner of the green where a large building complex is shown on Burleigh and Thompson's map. Rain also depicts a very sizeable house there. **Fenwick Lodge** was built by Teasdale Mowbray after marriage to Ann Reed in 1738, presumably replacing the much smaller building marked on Burleigh and Thompson's map. Perhaps he found the Shipperdson house rather old-fashioned and ramshackle and wished to erect a more modern and comfortable mansion. After his death in 1785 his widow may have continued to live there as the building is labelled 'Mrs Mowbray Premises' on Rain's eye Plan. By 1823 it had been acquired by Robert Fenwick, a brewer, who added a lodge on Crowtree Road and gave the house the name by which it is commonly known. **Crowtree House** is shown on Rain's Eye Plan as belonging to George Mowbray, the son and heir of Teasdale Mowbray, but he preferred to live at his newly built residence, Ford Hall. After George's death, however, his widow lived at Crowtree house until her death in 1795, when it came into the possession of a local shipbuilder, Thomas Nicholson. Walker suggests that Nicholson may have rebuilt the house (1983, 38). In 1799, Nicholson secured permission from the Bishop of Durham to enclose what remained of the green, subject to a right of access to other occupiers of the Green, a move which was to prove unpopular locally. This entailed the erection of the enclosure wall, which extended westward from Crowtree House to encompass an oval area in the centre of the Green. By 1826 Robert Fenwick had purchased Crowtree House and its grounds as well, bringing the entire area of the Shipperdson-Mowbray estate on the east side of the green back into single ownership again (Walker 1983, 36-8).



Extract from the Map of John Nesham's Newbottle to Sunderland Railway, 1817, showing Bishopwearmouth Village south of the newly erected staithes on the River Wear at the northern end of the railway (TWCMS: 2011.3209).

13. 19TH-CENTURY DEVELOPMENT

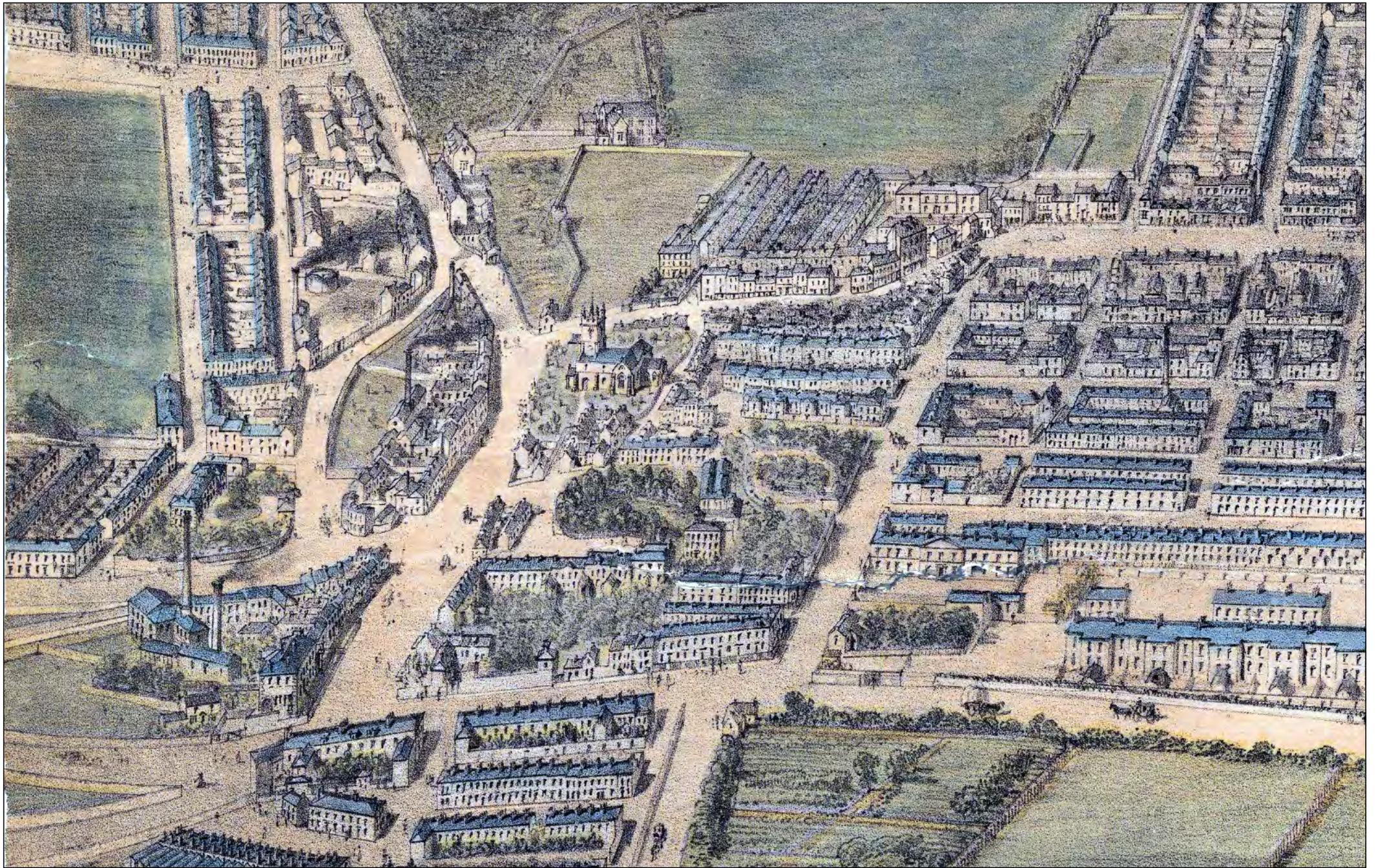
The 19th century was to bring further changes to the character of Bishopwearmouth. Following the physical linking up of Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland at the beginning of the 19th century, by the mid-1820s development was beginning to spread further still. Terraces of housing were erected to the west and south of the historic village site, effectively enveloping it, as can be seen on Wood's map of 1826.

Industry also spread along the river bank through Deptford and Pallion, and took on a striking new form with arrival of the first railways, Nesham's railroad from Newbottle (later absorbed into the Lambton colliery empire), opened 1812, and, a decade later, the locomotive and rope-hauled Hetton Railway, completed by the Hetton Coal Company in 1822. These were constructed to carry coal from pits further inland to staiths, or 'drops' above the river bank, where it could be discharged directly into ships moored below. After slicing through the fields in the western and south-western parts of the township, the railways reached adjacent stathes above the river bank just beyond Galley Gill, the deep ravine through which the Wearmouth Burn flowed into the river. The railway lines themselves then became a focus for further industrial complexes which were soon established along their routes, particularly next to the intersection of the two lines where they crossed Hylton Road. These included brickworks and glassworks, and, perhaps most notably, the Bishopwearmouth Ironworks built, in or before 1826, to the south of the crossing in the angle between the two lines and extending north to the road. Another substantial enterprise was James Hartley's Wear Glass Works, which opened on the north side of Hylton Road in 1836, plus the Sunderland Glassworks just beyond, all of which are shown at the height of their operations on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey. All these industrial works required huge quantities of coal, which were supplied by the railways as well as generating bulk goods which could be transported on by rail. However, the smoke and clamour from all these operations only a short distance to the west beyond Wearmouth Burn and Galley Gill, obvious had an impact of the character and ambiance of the former village settlement of Bishopwearmouth itself.

The opening, in 1796, of the spectacular iron bridge soaring over the Wear also had a profound impact on the subsequent development of the town. Over the course of the following decades the combined urban settlement's centre of gravity shifted to the area around Fawcett Street in the recently built-up zone between the ancient village and the original borough limits. Bishopwearmouth became simply one quarter within the rapidly expanding town.

The impact of all these trends by the middle of the century is evident on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey. A more evocative depiction, however, is provided by a remarkable, lithographic, bird's eye view of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth produced by an unknown artist in 1857/58. This portrays Bishopwearmouth on the cusp of change. There are elements of continuity. The area of the ancient village is shown as fairly leafy, with trees surrounding the oval green enclosed by Thomas Nicholson in 1799, indicating the area remained relatively well-to-do. The grand houses on the east side of the Green, Fenwick Lodge and Crowtree House, still have extensive gardens attached, as do the houses along the Green's south side, and remained the homes of well-to-do, prosperous families. However, housing now extended to the south of Vine Street, and thus beyond the limits of the former village, whilst further residential developments are apparent to the west of Galley's Gill and Low Row. Moreover, a series of mill chimneys can be seen to the rear of Low Row and Green Terrace, the smoke they are spewing forth shown blowing ominously towards the former village.

The 1st edition Ordnance Survey provides further evidence on the nature of these industries and the changing character of the area. On the west side of Green Terrace there were two sizeable



Lithograph of a 'Birds-eye view of Sunderland', c.1857, artist unknown. Extract showing Bishopwearmouth village.

tanneries, Richardson's Tannery and Clark's Tannery. Tanneries were notoriously smelly and thus unwelcome neighbours. To the rear of Richardson's Tannery, the map shows the Bishop Wearmouth Steam Mill. Its chimney is one of those shown spewing forth the smoke drifting towards the Green. This was to grow into a very substantial complex over the next hundred years. A second corn mill, Dunn's Mill, is shown further north behind Low Row. Again, the bird's eye view graphically illustrates the impact this may have had on the air quality in the centre of Bishopwearmouth. A third chimney was probably associated with one of the tanneries and others are shown further north in the gasworks between Hind Street and Hope Street, and at the northern apex of Low Row.

Also noteworthy is the extraordinary number of pubs and hostelrys shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map. These were distributed along Low Row, High Street West, Crowtree Road and the northern and western sides of the Green, which gives a good impression of the increasing flavour of the area. Moreover much of the residential accommodation in Low Row and Hind Street was laid out around courtyards, for example Gray's Buildings, Swan Court and the Kirtley Buildings, an arrangement prone to overcrowding and poor slum conditions.

This combination of industrialisation, squalor and increasing urban sprawl contributed to the declining status of the former village area over the remainder of the century, as the wealthy began to flee the noise, dirt and pollution, seeking greater seclusion and rural tranquillity further out in the countryside. As a result, the large houses around the green were increasingly put to institutional; and even commercial uses as the century wore on. In this regard, one major and profoundly symbolic change is evident on the birds'-eye lithographic view, where the ancient rectory is absent from the scene, having been demolished the year before, in 1856, following its sale by the Church. Instead a school stands to the north, occupying part of what had been Rectory Park. Along with the main house, this swept away the surviving medieval structures in the range to the rear of the main house, depicted by S. H. Grimm in 1778, a particularly sad loss in terms of Sunderland's heritage. Only the eastern third of the medieval tithe barn remained and this survived only until 1937 or 1938.

The gradual change in the character of the area was reflected in the description of Nos 16, 17 and 18 The Green provided by their auctioneer, in 1886, who, whilst describing their location as 'a healthy, quiet, respectable part of the Borough; free from its turmoil, and yet adjacent to the principal business part', also noted the premises were 'well adapted for a Public Institution, being surrounded by a lofty wall', (*Sunderland Daily Echo* Thursday December 2nd 1886 p 2, col 2). By the late 19th century, a large drill hall occupied part of the south side of the Green, occupying an extensive, former garden area to the rear of the building frontages. Around the same time Crowtree House was sold to the School Board and converted into the Sunderland Day Industrial School which opened in June 1884. By the end of the 1870s Southgate House, towards the southern end of Green Terrace, was likewise being used as a school. After sale to Sunderland Corporation in 1896, it too was demolished. The last survivor of these once grand buildings was Fenwick Lodge, though its final circumstances were much reduced. By 1871 the extensive gardens to the east of Fenwick Lodge had been covered by terraced housing, and the building itself fell into commercial use. It was acquired by Binns for use as a furniture warehouse in 1916 and finally demolished in the 1970s, as part of the wholesale redevelopment of the area extending up to the east side of the Green, which was to see the creation of Crowtree Leisure Centre.

Accommodation at for those at the opposite end of the social spectrum saw continuity and even renewal, however. The two ranges of the Mowbray Almshouses were erected in the Gothic style on the east side of the churchyard in 1863, replacing the Gibson Almshouses which previously stood in that area. The Bowes Almshouses were also restored in 1879, though this did not entail substantial rebuilding.

14. FROM 1900 TO THE PRESENT DAY

Bishopwearmouth in the early 20th century

The character and appearance of Bishopwearmouth in the early to mid-20th century is captured by two early aerial views taken in 1924. The ancient village can be seen nestled amidst a fully developed industrial town, with densely packed terraced housing to the south and west and intermixed with industry particularly to the west and south-west. The imposing bulk of Bishopwearmouth corn mill, with its many buildings, is especially prominent to the south-west. This was furnished with railway sidings, connected to the line which swept round just to the south, running from Sunderland to Durham via Penshaw. The mansions which had once graced the area had been demolished or converted to commercial use, but most of the buildings around the green survived with relatively little alteration.

High Street West: pubs, shops and theatreland

By this stage High Street West had developed into a continuous shopping street extending all the way eastward to the ancient borough limits, where it became High Street East. As well as shopping, the street was also a focus of recreation. Many of the pubs shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey had been rebuilt in splendid late Victorian and Edwardian style, notably the **Dun Cow** and the **Londonderry Arms**, now the Peacock, both rebuilt in 1901/2. These were extremely ornate, the Dun Cow featuring an ornate drum and copper cupola, whilst the baroque Londonderry Arms was furnished with distinctive bell-shaped lead turrets and still occupies a triangular plot like its predecessor. An even more important addition to this recreational economy was the building of the **Empire Theatre** in 1906-1907. To make way for this one of the last mansions in Bishopwearmouth, Rectory House, was demolished around 1902. The opening performance featured vaudeville star, Vesta Tilley, with appearances in later years by Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy, and George Formby. The Sunderland Empire remains one of the most important elements of the city's cultural life to this day (see Chapter 17).

Municipal buildings

Indeed, during this period Bishopwearmouth witnessed the construction of a number of public buildings which were important in the development of the 20th century town as a whole. To the east of the Empire Theatre, the **Fire Station** was also completed in 1907, replacing the previous one located on the north side of The Green. This formed part of a group of municipal buildings erected at the same time in this area, including the adjacent public baths and wash houses (of which only the front portico now survives), and the Central Police Station and Magistrates Courts, immediately to the north, which still stand (though the police now occupy the adjacent Gilbridge House to the west).

Sunderland Technical College

Further south, the imposing brick and terracotta Galen Building, which housed Sunderland Technical College, was constructed between 1899 and 1901, towards the southern end of Green Terrace, partially overlying the footprint of the former Southgate House. The college was highly successful and respected, and, in 1939, it was expanded by the construction of the Priestman Library Building, on the opposite side of the street. Immediately filled to capacity by the institution's 10,000 books, the building was further extended by the addition of another wing around the corner, on the north side of Albion Place, in 1951 (Cookson 2015, 164, 291-92).

In the south-east corner of the former village, next to the Green, a purpose-built school named **Green Terrace School** was erected by the Sunderland Education Board, in 1909, to replace the

Sunderland Day Industrial School accommodated in Crowtree House, which was demolished in 1906. It was to educate the local community's children right up until 1980.

St Michael's: from parish church to Sunderland Minster

In 1932-1935 St Michael's Church underwent yet another rebuilding, this time by the nationally renowned architect, W.D. Caröe. Constructed in the Perpendicular style, the outcome was, finally, a building of considerable architectural merit, commensurate with its position at the heart of religious worship in a major industrial town, and a worthy replacement for the great medieval parish church largely destroyed by the remodelling of 1806-8. Unfortunately this swept away most of traces of the medieval church which had survived up to that point, and represented a lost opportunity for archaeological research and investigation. Further internal remodelling was undertaken by Ian Curry in 1981, with the aim of creating meeting rooms and a café in the outer aisles. In 2007 the church was reconstituted and renamed Sunderland Minster to serve the city as a whole.

World War II

As World War II loomed, communal air raid shelters were constructed beneath the oval enclosure of the Green in 1938, the excavation work being captured by a much reproduced photograph. The centre of Bishopwearmouth survived the war relatively unscathed, the bomb which fell between the church and the Mowbray Almshouses in 1943 (commemorated by another much reproduced photograph), mercifully causing relatively little damage to those buildings.

The later 20th-century redevelopment

Around 1960, a new cycle of development began which was to be more radical than any since the late 18th/early 19th-century expansion of Sunderland. With the exception of the parish church, the Mowbray Almshouses and some of the buildings along Church Lane to the north, all the structures in and around the Green would be swept away as part of this process. Thus, between 1960 and 1973, the buildings lining the streets south and east of the church were all demolished, including the Bowes Almshouses, Littlegate and Southgate. Initially, from 1973, this open space was used mainly for car parking, but in the 1980s it was landscaped and laid out to form Town Park, ironically perhaps restoring the Green to something closer to its original medieval form and extent. One can, however, only speculate how the ancient pan-tile roofed cottages of Littlegate and Southgate might have been adapted to form an attractive quarter of bars, restaurants and quirky shops had they survived to the present day.

The two most prominent components of the 1970s-80s redevelopment were the construction of Crowtree Leisure Centre (opened in 1978), which occupied a very large expanse on the south side of High Street west and east of the Mowbray Almshouses, and the Bridges Shopping Centre (opened in the late 1980s, with an extension in 2000). To make way for the latter, Fenwick Lodge was demolished. Although prolonged commercial use (as Binns Depositary from 1916 onwards), had obscured its former status, this was the last remaining example of Bishopwearmouth's once numerous, grand houses. The buildings along the southern side of the Green and the eastern side of Green Terrace, north of the Galen Building, were also removed to make way for the shopping centre's multi-storey car park. Included in this programme of demolition, in 1988, was Green Terrace School, which had already closed its doors to pupils in 1980, by which time most of the local residents had moved away.

Low Row and the western side of Green Terrace survived much better, however. A Travelodge hotel, built around 2005, now takes up much of the southern end of Low Row, but it respects the pre-existing footprint of the row, even if it merges many of the previously separate building plots and tenements. The late Victorian and Edwardian buildings comprising the northern half of the row still stand. The mostly 19th-century houses along the west side of Green Terrace have survived best of

BISHOPWEARMOUTH IN WORLD WAR II



Air raid shelters being dug in the Green, 1938



Damage caused by the bomb which struck in front of the Almshouses on Church Lane

all, though all were converted into commercial use, as offices, during the 20th century, and, more recently, four have been transformed into public houses. One of these, No 12 Green Terrace, now Fitzgeralds public house, is the only one to have featured on Rain's Eye Plan towards the end of the 18th century.

The 21st century – the story continues

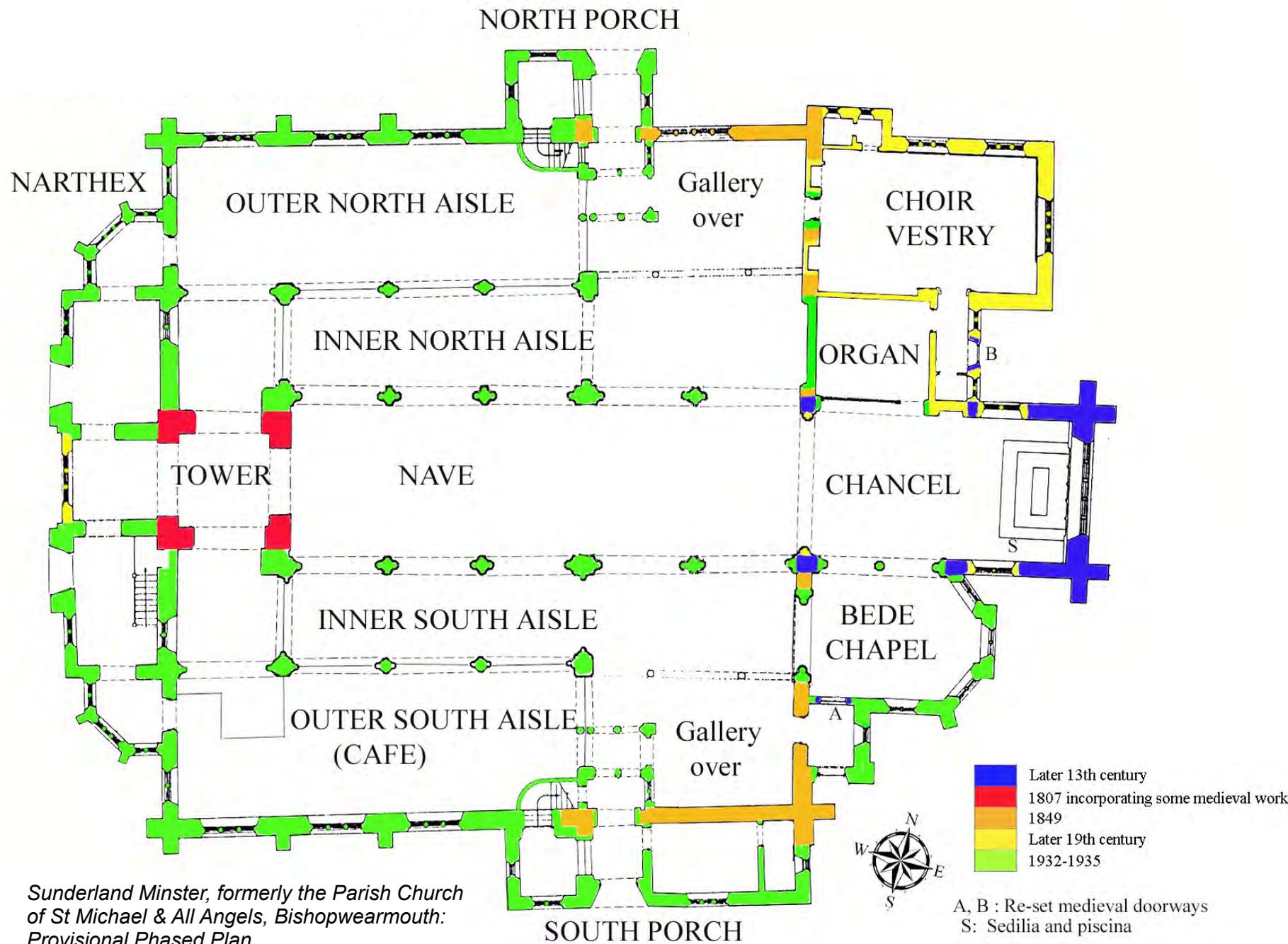
Despite the confidence of the later 20th-century planners and developers and the sweeping nature of the redevelopment undertaken then, elements of that scheme have proved relatively shortlived. The Crowtree Leisure Centre has now having been demolished, and the broad area on the south side of High Street West, which it occupied, is presently open, awaiting the next phase of transformation.

During 2019-2020, as the centrepiece of the Bishopwearmouth Townscape Heritage Scheme, the area of Town Park, south of the Minster and extending right up to the oval Green enclosure, was remodelled, repaved and enhanced to form **Minster Park**. This has created an attractive outdoor space which celebrates the heritage of Bishopwearmouth.

On the east side, however, the looming form of the western end of the Bridges Shopping Centre sits awkwardly with these improvements, whilst its inflexible structure make it difficult to modify and adapt to changing conditions. With traditional retail stores and shopping centres – hitherto a major engine of city centre prosperity and employment – faltering in the face of the exponential growth of internet shopping, the shape of future redevelopment remains uncertain. Imaginative and innovative solutions may be required. What is clear, however, is that, once again, Bishopwearmouth stands on the cusp of change.



A view of the newly laid out Minster Park, looking north towards Sunderland Minster, the historic heart of the settlement.



Sunderland Minster, formerly the Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels, Bishopwearmouth: Provisional Phased Plan.

15. SUNDERLAND MINSTER (Formerly the Parish Church of St Michael & All Angels)

Sunderland Minster, until 1998 the parish church of St Michael, Bishopwearmouth, stands in the western part of the centre of the modern city of Sunderland, on the south side of High Street West at its west end (facing the Empire Theatre on the north side of the road), with Low Row bounding the churchyard on the west.

Description

The church in its present form is quite a complex structure, consisting of a five-bay nave with both inner and outer aisles, extending west to engage the tower, and transepts; there is also a narthex west of the tower flanked by two porches, and also low porch blocks overlapping the junctions of the transepts and the outer aisles. The chancel has a chapel (with a south porch) on the south and an organ chamber on the north, with beyond that a large choir vestry.

The Structural Development of the Church

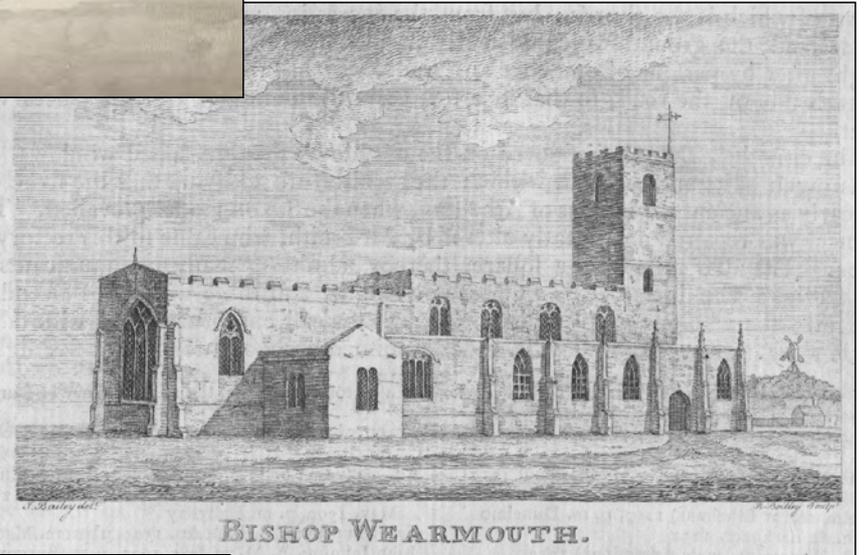
Our main source of information as regards the medieval church, apart from the rather fragmentary remains of its c1300 east end that survive today, is to be found in two late 18th-century illustrations, a drawing in the British Library by Samuel Hieronymous Grimm from the 1780s and a print in Hutchinson (1787, II, 511). They show a church with a lofty western tower engaged by the nave aisles, which are articulated by buttresses with gabled tops, and have windows with pointed arches that seem to have lost their tracery; the nave has a four-bay clerestory of 15th-century character, with two-light windows and an embattled parapet.

Grimm's south view (left) shows a gabled south porch, and Hutchinson's north-east view a north door in the corresponding bay of the north aisle. The chancel has two-light windows of late 13th-century character on the south, with a peculiar form of clerestory of small circular windows above, and an embattled parapet. Hutchinson's view (below) shows a gabled vestry extending north from the centre of the north side of the chancel, with a structure with a five-light window, probably a chantry chapel, in between this and the east end of the north aisle. There are relatively minor discrepancies between the illustrations (Hutchinson shows the tower rather higher in proportion to the nave), but the overall impression is of a substantially medieval church. The round arches of the nave arcades described by Hutchinson may well have been of 12th-century date, but the features shown on the two illustrations span the later medieval period, from c1250 onwards, although there are references to the remains of 'Norman' doorways being discovered in the south and west walls in 1903 and 1904 (see appendix). Todd and Yellowley (2003, 4) state that 'one researcher considers that the tower could quite possibly have been Saxon' but there is nothing in the features shown that really backs this up. It is really difficult to interpret the tower, as, although some accounts state that it was completely rebuilt in 1807, the stonework and mutilated low round arches at its base could at first sight be taken for early medieval work. They are probably not, as they do they tally with Hutchinson's description of the old tower arches, but a report on the 1903/4 works states that they revealed that parts of the nave walls and tower had been retained in 1806-7 (see appendix). Although the ground plan of the tower has not changed from that shown in mid-19th century drawings, the present state of the arches (and perhaps the tooling of their voussoirs) may owe something to Caroe and the 1930s work. The evidence already described in the west wall more convincingly suggests medieval fabric has been retained.

HISTORIC VIEWS OF
ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH,
BISHOPWEARMOUTH



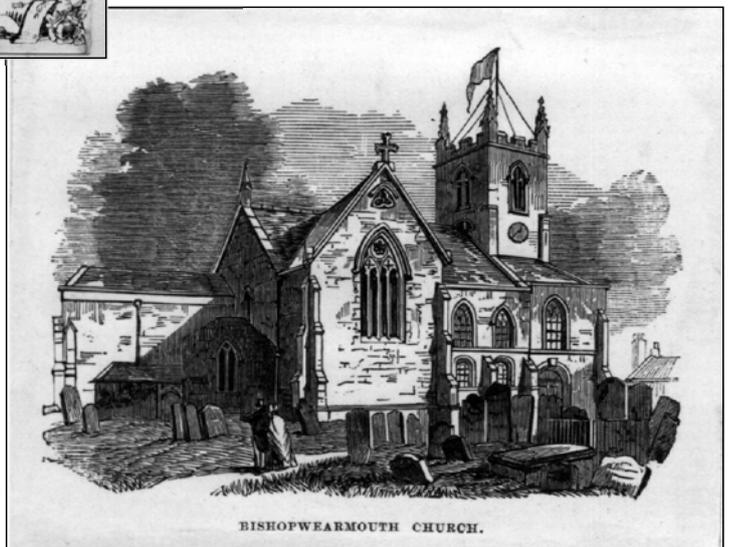
Grimm's view, from the south, 1778,
© The British Library Board, Misc. Add.
15540, f.71



View of the church from NE in Hutchinson 1787
- drawn John Bailey - engraved Ralph Beilby



Early 19th-century view of Bishopwearmouth
Church



Later 19th-century view of
St Michael's Church after
the addition of transepts in
1849-50

However, it is clear that much of the medieval building was largely swept away in the 1806-7 remodelling (by the Durham architect Christopher Ebdon³), as can be seen by comparing various 19th-century views with Grimm's 18th-century drawing. The nave has been extended east and its aisle walls doubled in height⁴, whilst the tower is remodelled, and the south porch replaced by a western one. Bar the tower the overall appearance is of a large nonconformist chapel with a fully galleried interior; as in many chapels, access to the galleries was by a pair of stairs, here in the bays flanking the rebuilt tower. The medieval arcades were completely removed, the new galleries being carried on cast iron piers. Only the eastern half of the old chancel was retained, dwarfed by the adjacent 'preaching box'; theologically, the form of the remodelled church emphasised the contemporary dominance of Word over Sacrament. Antiquarian concern was not entirely absent, as can be seen from the fact that the medieval chancel arch was carefully dismantled and re-erected, although either then or at some subsequent date it has been so heavily restored so as to lose any appearance of age.

With continued urban growth, by the middle of the 19th-century additional seating was required, and this came in the form of transepts added by Newcastle architect John Dobson. The faculty plans for the 1849 works survive, and show the thick-walled medieval vestry on the north of the chancel as still surviving at this stage, with a smaller addition to its east. The plan also shows the two side doorways of the west porch infilled, and tracery installed in its west window. The medieval vestry was swept away during later 19th-century changes when the present organ chamber and choir vestry were constructed. It was also in the later 19th century that the removal of panelling revealed the sedilia and piscina again, and it became obvious that medieval fabric did in fact survive at Bishopwearmouth, although a number of antiquarian writers such as Hodgkin's *Little Guide* of 1913, and, more surprisingly, both first and second editions of Pevsner's *Durham* (Buildings of England series) have failed to acknowledge the fact.

In the early 20th-century local colliery workings caused subsidence which threatened the stability of the church, and it had to be shored up. Drastic repairs were necessary, and these came in 1932 with the final great remodelling by W.D.Caroe, an architect of national repute, who transformed an unwieldy building of no great aesthetic merit into one of considerable architectural status, 'quite a remarkable effort in a free neo-Perp' (Pevsner & Williamson 1983, 451) with especially notable interiors, both in the detail of the fabric and the quality of fittings and furnishings. The estimated cost was £35,000, and the work was only made possible by a generous donation from Sir John Priestman. The reconstruction did come at some cost to the older fabric, as the addition of what is now the Bede Chapel entailed the loss of the western half of the south side of what remained of the medieval chancel, and whatever remained of the old walls of the nave aisles, raised and remodelled in 1807, was swept away. Although Caroe's works would have afforded an unparalleled opportunity to research the history of the fabric, there is no record of any archaeological recording or investigation being carried out at this time. It is recorded that 'the foundations were reconstructed upon the principle of a reinforced concrete grid continuous in all directions (Caroe 1935).

Caroe's interior was altered again in 1981 by Ian Curry, when his outer aisles were screened off from the main body of the church and put to new uses, a café on the south and meeting rooms and offices (above a low basement) on the north; the interior was opened out by the removal of Caroe's chancel screen, sections of which were re-used elsewhere in the building.

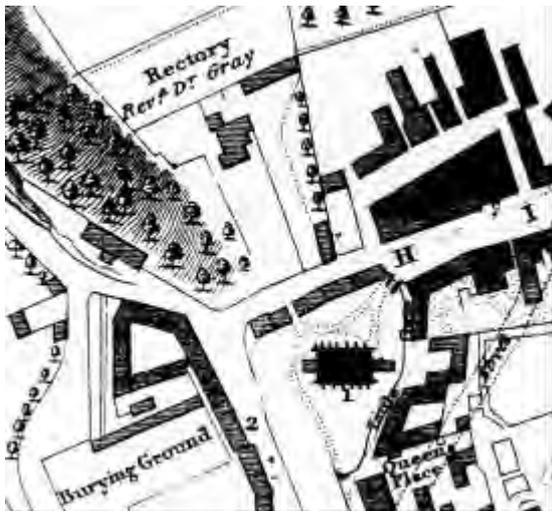
³ <https://www.sunderlandminster.com/contact-us/guide-to-the-minster-and-its-history/history-of-the-minster-by-eric-shegog/>

⁴The half-height buttresses shown suggest that the old aisle walls were retained and heightened.

16. BISHOPWEARMOUTH OLD RECTORY

Historical Background

The Old Rectory at Bishopwearmouth stood opposite the parish church on the north side of High Street West set well back from the road. The earliest reference to the building itself seems to it being 'defaced and ruined by armies' in 1646¹, as a consequence of which it was extensively rebuilt in 1652 by the Rev Robert Gray; it was then described as 'completely rebuilt in 1704 by Rev John Smith, at a cost of £600²'; the new frontage had his arms over the door. Grimm's drawings³ made in the 1770s show that this rebuilding was certainly not complete, as clearly medieval fabric survived at least in the rear wing (left). A 1792 Glebe Terrier describes the house as being built of stone and brick with a blue slate roof and having twelve rooms. In the early 19th century William Paley spoke of it in glowing terms 'Such a house! I was told at Durham it is one of the best parsonages in England: and that there are not more than three bishops that have better. There is not a shilling to be laid out upon it, and you might have rubbed it from top to bottom with a white handkerchief without soiling it'.



(left) *Bishopwearmouth from Wood's plan of 1826, showing the Old Rectory (towards top, just left of centre) with the Tithe Barn to its north-east*

Despite this praise, within half a century the redevelopment of the old village, and increasing land prices, forced the sale of the Old Rectory in 1855, and it was demolished the following year; such was the quality of the masonry that gunpowder had to be employed. Some mourned its loss: 'one of the finest and most interesting of the lesser mansions in the County, but remorselessly destroyed...in spite of a few efforts from more enlightened souls to save it'.

¹Corder manuscripts (Sunderland Library) no 29 Bishopwearmouth, M-Z, 69.

²Walker, C.B., Bishopwearmouth Township in *Antiquities of Sunderland* XXVIII (Spring 1983), 44.

³British Library ref 005ADD00001554OU00072000/-73000



Samuel Grimm's view of the rear ranges of the Rectory (© The British Library Board, Misc. Add. 15540, f.72)

Three ex-situ relics of the old house survive. A medieval arch from the 'entrance courtyard' is said to have been removed to the Manor House, Athenaeum Street; this would appear to be the same arch later re-used, cut down in height, as the entrance to a natural cave on Building Hill (now Mowbray Park)⁴. An 'Early English' arch from the adjacent tithe barn, also drawn by Grimm, is now in West Sunnyside. The greater part of the barn was destroyed at the same time as the Rectory, but about a third of it (apparently the east end) was retained, and stood in Back Paley Street until 1937 or 1938, when the arch was presented to a Mr Theo. Nicholson, who had it re-erected on its present site⁵.

The staircase was removed to a new Rectory built in 1857 on the Mowbray Estate, supposedly by the Newcastle architect John Dobson.

⁴Although Mowbray Park was being created, out of old quarries, in 1854-7, the same time as the Old Rectory was demolished.

⁵Walker, op.cit, 44; the Corder MS (70) gives the demolition date as 1938, and also states that a medieval cross slab was found in the walling; his description and dimensions of this match a slab in the parish church, although this is there described as being found during 1931/2 alterations to the church. See Ryder, P.F. *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Cover in County Durham* (1985), Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland Research Report, 62 (slab 3) and plate 9.

Description

A water colour drawing of the rear parts of the old house, seen from the west, was made by Samuel Grimm in the 1770s (above); it shows a tall L-plan block of building with the north wing continued by a lower block, with a narrower and lower block beyond that, returning west at its north end. The short northern wing of the main block clearly contained a stair (presumably that which still survives, having been removed to the mid-19th century Rectory), and has two mullion-and-transom cross windows under straight labels, of 17th-century character. The adjacent block to the north was clearly a medieval structure, containing what looks like a broad elliptical archway with a window of two trefoil-headed lights inserted in its blocking, with a two-light window under a segmental arch on the south and a three-light mullioned window on the north; on the first floor are two small two-light windows with straight labels, and at the north end a big stepped buttress. The narrow L-plan block at the north end of the range has a set-back at first-floor level, and narrow single-light windows to the upper floor. It has the appearance of a garderobe block (cf the Prior of Durham's Manor House at Beaurepaire).

The windows that Grimm shows in the north and west elevations of the east-west part of the main block are square-headed, without obvious datable features⁶; he also shows a wall extending west from the north-west corner of the block as containing two arched openings, the eastern with a hoodmould of some sort.



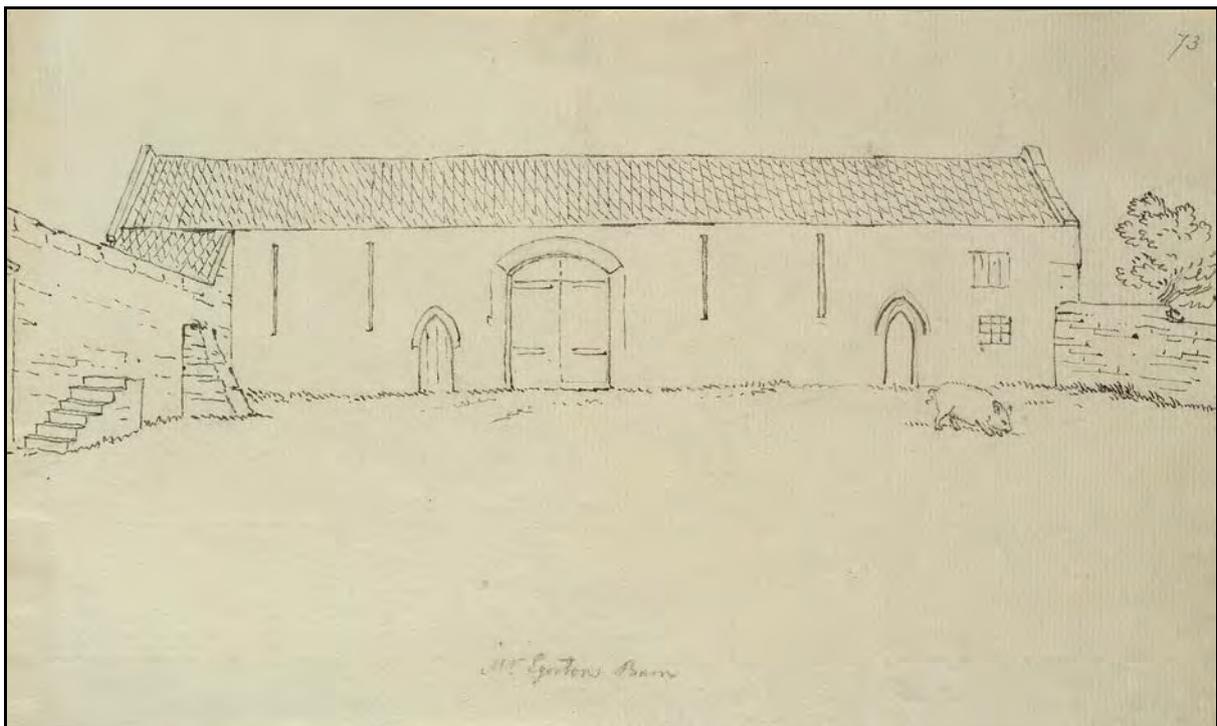
A photograph of the front elevation of the old house⁷ presumably taken shortly before its demolition, shows a symmetrical frontage of seven narrow bays. The tall window openings had eighteen-pane sashes on the ground floor and fifteen pane (nine above, six below) on the first. The central doorway was set under a stepped cornice on corbels, above it a pedimented tablet bore the arms of Smith, breaking a string course at first floor level; there was a moulded cornice below the oversailing parapet which was decorated with ball finials, with apparently a walkway behind it; the roof had a central gabled dormer, with an opening in the parapet in front of it⁸.

⁶His detail of the west end of the main block is confirmed by a drawing by Fossick of Bishopwearmouth made in 1810 (used as a cover illustration in the guide to Bishopwearmouth Parish Church c 1982)

⁷Walker op.cit 45

⁸The house is also shown on Rain's 'Eye Plan' of c1790, a picturesque 'aerial view' which cannot be trusted for detail; it shows the main block as having two parallel gabled roofs, but this seems to be an error.

Grimm gives a second drawing, 'Mr Egerton's Barn' (below) showing the Tithe Barn, a long building set east-west, a little to the east of the north wing of the rectory⁹. This has a big segmental-headed arch for its threshing doors, set a little west of centre, with, to either side, a smaller two-centred doorway, and a series of tall slit vents. The barn was 'last perhaps used for the storage of tithes by Archdeacon Paley and was later used as a brewhouse, laundry, slaughterhouse, stable and hayloft. Constructed of local limestone, with walls 3 feet thick, and originally 108 feet long, it was – in 1905 – of two storeys, the upper with massive beams, and had a high pitched roof covered with pantiles above a bottom course of flagstones. The east wall had 3 buttresses, and 2 ventilation slits'¹⁰



Grimm's view of the tithe barn (© The British Library Board, Misc. Add. 15540, f.73)

Peter F Ryder July 2006

⁹Burleigh and Thompson's map of 1737 shows the buildings as linked, and Grimm's drawing shows a range extending south from the west end of the barn, but later maps show a space between them.

¹⁰For a description of the barn in its final state in the early 20th century, with photographs, see J. Robinson, *PSAN*, 3 Ser., 1 (1903), 96-99; cf also *Sunderland. An Archaeological Assessment & Strategy* (Tyne Wear Historic Towns Survey) March 2004, 27-8.

HISTORIC BUILDINGS & GREEN/PUBLIC SPACES IN THE BISHOPWEARMOUTH CONSERVATION AREA

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Empire Theatre (rear view)



Empire Theatre



Former Fire Station



Magistrates Court



Peacock (ex Londonderry Arms)



1-7 High Street West (north side)



Greens (ex Hat & Feather)
36-38 Low Row



St. Michael's Church (Sunderland Minster)



Fitzgeralds, Green Terrace



Priestman Building (ex technical college)



Priestman Building (South Block)



Albion Place



Mowbray Almshouses



Boundary Wall, Green Terrace



Galen Building
(ex technical college, now Varsity)



Mary's Street



The Village Green



The Dun Cow



- = Boundary of Conservation Area
- = Significant Green/Public Spaces
- = Listed Buildings
- = Other Significant Buildings

17. SURVIVING HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Sunderland Empire Theatre

The Sunderland Empire is an impressive Edwardian Theatre commissioned by the Thornton Moss company who had a number of theatres across Britain. Built in 1906/1907 in a free baroque style, it has a colonnaded entrance, rear auditorium and lobbies built of brick with ashlar dressings and slate roof. The site was formally occupied by Rectory House, a detached mansion with extensive grounds. The Empire Theatre was designed by architects W.M. and T.R. Milburn and is a fine example of their work in the region. The Milburns designed a number of theatres for Thornton Moss including the Empires at Glasgow, Edinburgh and Liverpool and the Dominion Theatre in London, and also designed the Old Fire Station and Magistrates Court in Bishopwearmouth.



(Rectory House c.1901 and Empire Theatre c.1910 Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society)

The original layout could seat 3000 people in a three tiered house with an elaborate décor typical of the time incorporating classical themes and portraits of Mozart, Shakespeare, and actors David Garrick and Thomas Sheridan. The building is dominated by its huge drum tower in ashlar and copper cupola, surmounted by an effigy of Terpsichore, the Greek Muse of Dance. The sphere underneath Terpsichore originally rotated. The original statue is now within the foyer, removed after concerns it would be damaged during WWII bombing raids and a fibreglass replacement now stands atop the tower.

A plaque on the side elevation commemorates the laying of the foundation stone on 29th September 1906 by vaudeville star Vesta Tilley who also performed at the theatre on its grand opening night on 1st July 1907. Charlie Chaplin, Laurel and Hardy and George Formby later performed at the theatre.

The building is Grade II* listed and is owned by Sunderland City Council, acquired in 1959 as the first Civic theatre in Britain using funding from the War Damage Reparation Fund. The theatre is currently leased to the Ambassador Theatre Group along with a second building at 4-5 High Street West used as the box office and management offices.

The Peacock

The Peacock (former Londonderry) Public House was designed by local architect Hugh Taylor Decimus Hedley for Newcastle brewers Duncan and Dalglish. Built in 1901/2 in a baroque style with each corner surmounted by distinctive bell-shaped lead turrets, making it an immediately recognisable building. It is constructed of sandstone ashlar with granite entrance columns and a Lakeland slate roof. The unusual triangular footprint was dictated by the shape of the previous building on the site and established traffic layout around the site.



(The Peacock in 2020 following restoration works. Source: Sunderland City Council)

The current name of the public house reflects the original name of the previous coaching inn building on the site recorded from at least 1772. Later renamed The Londonderry in 1834, the first Peacock building had a similar footprint to the existing but was a lower two storey construction with rooms to let above the public house. The 1894 Goads Insurance plan depicts The Londonderry as part of a larger group of buildings terminating Crowtree Road with T Crathorne's furniture showroom abutting to the south. The Londonderry name is still reflected in stained glass window details to the ground floor.



(The previous Londonderry building. Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society)

The building is Grade II listed and a notable landmark within the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Restoration works were undertaken in 2019-20 funded through the Townscape Heritage Scheme. A planning application was submitted in 2020 for a new music academy on the top floor opening in October 2021.

1 - 7 High Street West

This mid-19th century terrace is thought to have been originally residential properties judging from the layout depicted on the 1856 OS plan, the first map showing this group of buildings which are not shown on the earlier 1846 Tithe Map. The 1851 census reveals a range of occupations of the residents from a widowed Innkeeper to a Butcher including houseservants at several houses reflecting their economic status. This census also refers to No. 5 and 6 as “houses uninhabited” presumably recently constructed and not yet occupied.

The properties have long since been adapted from their original appearance whether residential or business with 20th-century shopfronts throughout. The two storey properties are well proportioned and solid in their form and appearance. The first floor classical details have some variation reflecting their individuality but with an overall group character despite the more modern alterations.



(View along High Street West c.1980 and July 2020. Source: Sunderland City Council)

Historic census and trade directories indicate a range of businesses along the terrace through the 19th and 20th centuries including long standing businesses such as Brumwells ironmongers at No. 3 High Street West from at least 1890 to 1933, Wilsons Drapers at No.4 and 5 from at least 1890 until 1938, William Queenan Picture Framer from at least 1888 to 1933 at No. 8.5 and then at No.7. John Duckworth undertakers are also noted at No. 6 High Street West on the 1914 Kelly's Directory and still trade there today. The mix of other businesses included butchers, boot and shoe makers and house furnishers with the property numbers fluctuating reflecting subdivisions and mergers over time.

It should be noted that this terrace once formed part of a larger shopping street with businesses continuing east past The Dun Cow towards The Peacock/Londonderry, and west to Silksworth Row with a further group on the opposite side of High Street West along the churchyard edge.

<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>SOURCE</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>OCCUPIER</u>	<u>BUSINESS</u>
1 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	James Clifford	Boot and shoe maker
1 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Mrs Annie Clifford	Boot and shoe maker
1 High Street West	Newcastle Daily Chronicle	1904	Stead and Simpson	Boot and shoe shop
2 - 3 High Street West	Sunderland Daily Echo	1879	Beardall and Yates	Drapers
2 High Street West	Shields Daily Gazette	1868	M Brown	Smallwares
2 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	Alexander Hayhurst	Cabinet Maker
2 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Alexander Hayhurst	Furniture Broker
2 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	Harriet & Co	House Furnishers
2 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	Nortons Ltd	House Furnishers
3 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	Thomas Dodd	Ironmonger
3 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	John Thomas Brumwell	Ironmonger
3 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	Brumwells	Ironmonger
3 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	J T Brumwell	Ironmonger
4 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	Robert Johnson	Hairdresser
4 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Robert Johnson	Newsagent
4 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	R W Wilson & Sons	Drapers
4 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	R W Wilson & Sons	Drapers
4 High Street West	Church Bazaar booklet	1938	Wilsons	Drapers
4.5 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	Thomas J Smith	Butcher
4.5 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	John Dodd	Butcher
5 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Robert William Wilson	Draper
6 High Street West	Gazeteer of Durham	1827	Barnabas Sharp	Hosier/Glover
6 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	John Burkhard	Butcher
6 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Leonard Bartelmeh	Butcher
6 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	John Duckworth	Undertaker

6 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	J S Duckworth	Undertaker
6.5 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	Maypole Dairy	Dairy
6.5 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	Maypole Dairy	Dairy
7 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1888	Joseph Fleming Strother & Son	Leathercutter
7 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Strothers	Leathercutter
7 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1890	Joseph Fleming Strother & Son	Leathercutter
7 High Street West	Kellys Directory	1914	William John Queenan	Picture Framer
7 High Street West	Wards Directory	1933	W J Queenan	Picture Framer

The terrace is Grade II listed and adds group value to the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Restoration and enhancement works are currently being planned funded through the Townscape Heritage Scheme.

Dun Cow Public House

The Dun Cow is an Edwardian building constructed of highly moulded sandstone ashlar with a Lakeland slate roof. Designed by Newcastle based architect Benjamin Simpson in 1901 for Robert Deuchar, a local brewer and property developer at a cost of £2000. The current building replaced an earlier Dun Cow Inn on the site recorded since 1834 which gave its name to Dun Cow Street to the north labelled on the 1856 OS Plan. There is a similar footprint of a building shown on the 1785-90 Rain's eye plan, but the rear street is labelled Back Street not Dun Cow Street so this may not have been the first Dun Cow building.



(The previous Dun Cow Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society, and current building in 2021 Source: Sunderland City Council)

The building has a rounded corner bay surmounted by an ornate drum and copper cupola with a recently restored clock. The entrance has a granite plinth, marble features and together with richly embellished dormer windows makes a significant visual impression. The corner includes an elaborate carved section with foliage features and partially concealed woodland animals. The incorporation of such details of nature are typical of the period.

The interior of the bar area features a richly decorated and Indo Gothic style wood carved bar which was restored in 2014. The first floor is currently a vacant restaurant with residential accommodation above, which was once rooms to let as part of the Dun Cow Hotel – a function reflected in the original name plate.



(Woodland animals nestling in the corner panel and interior. Source: Sunderland City Council)

Several vacant and dilapidated properties adjacent to the Dun Cow were demolished a few years ago with planning permission since granted for a new auditorium connected to the refurbished Old Fire Station which is currently being constructed.

The building is Grade II listed and a notable landmark within the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area. Restoration works were undertaken in 2019 funded through the Townscape Heritage Scheme. Planning applications were submitted in 2020 for a first floor function space and alterations to the rear entrance.

Fire Station

The Fire Station is one of several historic buildings in the area designed by W.M. and T.R. Milburn and completed in 1907. It was originally part of a group of municipal structures in this part of the city centre, with the Fire Station, the adjacent public baths (of which only the front portico survives), the former Police Station (now replaced with Gilbridge House) and the Grade II listed Magistrates Court.



(The Fire Station and the former Police Station. Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society)

As a key public building, the Fire Station was intended to make a statement on the street scene and act as a local landmark. The building demonstrates a strong sense of grandeur and pride in public institutions, with high quality brick and stonework, ornamentation and detailing on the front elevation. This is further evidenced by the decorative flambeaux highlighting the purpose of the building using the fire-fighters helmet, fire bucket and torches. The engine bay, with its five arched entrances and the adjacent watch room are key spaces which would have been the operational hub of the building from 1907 right up until the day of closure.

In 1992 the Fire Station became redundant and remained so for 22 years until it was redeveloped as a new cultural hub with grant funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The restored building opened in November 2017 and retains internal fixtures and finishes to the engine bay with glazed tiles and coat hooks on the walls and openings for firemen's poles in the ceiling. A new auditorium extension is currently being constructed funded by Arts Council England and contributes significantly to the cultural regeneration of the conservation area.



(May 2021 auditorium and fire station. Source: Sunderland City Centre)

Magistrates Courts

The foundation stone for the purpose built Sunderland Magistrates Court was laid in January 1905 and the building formally opened in September 1907. Also designed by the Milburn brothers, the building was part of an overall investment of £40,000 in the municipal complex of the Fire Station, Police Station and Magistrates Court.



(Opening of the new court in 1907. Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society)

The adjacent public baths were already present having been constructed in 1859 following demolition of the Sunderland Poorhouse which influenced the footprint of the buildings. The first sitting of the new court was on 2nd September 1907 where the first defendant charged with drunk and disorderly behaviour was dismissed in honour of the occasion.

The courts are constructed of sandstone ashlar with rusticated window surrounds with leaded lights, a commemorative plaque is on the east elevation. A strong feature is the large lantern style tower with narrow lower windows, carved swag details, a vaulted open stage, topped with a ball finial. Towers are a particular feature of the surviving historic buildings in Bishopwearmouth and this is a notable example prominent in views into the area.



(Current views of the Magistrates Court. Source: Sunderland City Council)

In 1972 a new police station was built adjacent to the north, the previous police station building and the public baths were demolished in 1975. The building remains in use as a local magistrates court. Externally the building is complemented by the new pedestrianised civic space Keel Square completed in 2016 by the City Council.

Mowbray Almshouses

The Grade II listed Mowbray Almshouses were built in 1863, replacing the earlier Gibson almshouse buildings which dated from 1727. A plaque on the north elevation commemorates the earlier building and history of support from the Gibson and Mowbray families.



(Memorial plaques at the almshouses. Source: Sunderland City Council)

“By will dated 14th of July, 1725, Jane Gibson, of Sunderland, widow, gave to Isabel Reed, of Bishopwearmouth, widow, the sum of £1,400 to be by her disposed of towards the buying of ground to build twelve decent rooms to inhabit in, and for the building the same firmly with stone, within the parish of Bishopwearmouth or Sunderland and after the same are built to apply and put out at interest £1000, part of the said £1,400, and apply and pay the interest thereof yearly and every year unto twelve poor persons that shall from time to time be chosen to inhabit in the said rooms by the said Isabel Reed, her heirs and assigns preferring the relatives of Jane Gibson, if any be before others. Isabel Reed, widow, intermarried with Ralph Robinson, of Middle Herrington, Esq., and jointly with her husband fulfilled and enlarged the intention of the founder, built the Hospital as directed on her own ground at Wearmouth, and vested £1,000 in the purchase of copyhold lands within the town fields of Wearmouth. The building, consisting of a centre and two wings, with a small inclosed court, stands a little to the east of the church. The rent of the land in 1814 was about £150. The perpetual appointment is vested under the will of the founder, and a subsequent decree in the family of Mowbray, late of Ford, the only descendants and representative of Isabel Reed”
 (Source: Sunderland Daily Echo, 23rd January 1903)



(Rain's Eye Plan. Source: Sunderland Antiquarian Society)

The 1795 Rain's plan and 1856 ordnance survey map depict a C shaped structure slightly north of the existing site, as described in the article above. This is labelled as Hospital House on the 1795 plan with a L shaped group of properties fronting Church Lane and Little Gate shown immediately to the south. By the 1856 map Queens Place had appeared within the courtyard of this southern group, perhaps indicating the crowded expansion of this part of the town. The copyhold lands referred to in the 1903 article above (known locally as Hospital Fields) increased significantly in value and were disposed of for the large sum of £15,000 which enabled the acquisition of the tenements to the south so that a new larger almshouses could be constructed. A road linking with Carter Street and continuing south to Church Lane was also provided by the Corporation, and is still present today looping around the north of the Almshouses.



(Almshouses in 1980. Source: Sunderland City Council Archive)

The current 1863 building was designed by Edward Robert Robson, who later became architect for Durham Cathedral and then the School Board of London. The two storey Gothic style building is constructed of thin courses of squared sandstone rubble with ashlar dressings, a Welsh Slate roof with red ridge tiles and tall ashlar chimneys. The buildings are arranged around a communal garden enclosed by a low stone wall with 20th-century railings. Eight residents currently reside in the almshouses.



(Current view of the almshouses. Source: Sunderland City Council)

The purpose of the almshouses were to provide affordable accommodation for the deserving poor of the parish, and an alternative to the workhouse. The 1910 rules below demonstrate the attitudes of the time as monitored by the Board of Trustees.

Jane Gibson's Alms Houses,

Bishopwearmouth.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

TO BE OBSERVED BY THE INMATES.

1. The inmates of the Almshouses must keep their apartments clean and tidy, and in each house, in turn, or as may be arranged, clean the passage, stairs and closet, lock the doors at a stated time, and do such other things as may be necessary for their common convenience and comfort.
2. The doors of each house must be locked at 10 o'clock, and the yard door of the men's house at dusk each evening. The back gate in the women's department must be kept closed, except when required to be opened for the taking in of coals, the removal of ashes, or for similar purposes.
3. The inmates may not let their apartments for hire on any consideration whatever, and they may not have any person to reside with them regularly, except with the permission of the Trustees. No person other than the inmates shall sleep on the premises without first obtaining the consent of the Trustees or their Clerk.
4. No inmate may be absent from his (or her) rooms for a longer period than 48 hours without the permission, in writing, of the Trustees. Leave to be absent will not be granted on more than two occasions in the year, except under special circumstances, and for not more than fourteen days at a time.
5. No inmate may carry on any trade or occupation in the Almshouses or precincts thereof of a character likely to injure the premises, or to cause annoyance or inconvenience to the other inmates, or which is not approved of by the Trustees.
6. If any inmate is guilty of insobriety, insubordination, breach of rules, or immoral or improper conduct, the Trustees may suspend the payment of the pension of such inmate either wholly or in part during such time as they think fit, or they may remove him (or her) altogether from the Almshouse.
7. The pensions of the inmates will be paid quarterly, on, or about, the 14th day of February, the 13th day of May, the 13th day of August, and the 13th day of November of each year, at the rate of not less than seven shillings and not more than nine shillings per week each. The Trustees in lieu of paying the whole amount of the pension to the inmates in money, may from time to time expend any suitable portion thereof in providing such inmates respectively with fuel, clothing, or other necessaries, or comforts, as the Trustees in their discretion shall think fit.
8. If any inmate shall become possessed of a secured, sufficient income from other sources than that of this Charity; or shall otherwise cease to possess the required qualifications, such inmate will be called upon to retire from the Almshouse.
9. The house numbered 4 at the south end of the block, is reserved for men, who may or may not be married. In the event of a wife surviving her husband, she will be required to vacate her rooms as soon as conveniently may be after his death.
10. It is expected that the inmates will live on good terms with one another, and in case of necessity be ready to help each other in times of sickness.

Bishopwearmouth,
23rd October, 1907.

By order of the Trustees,
R. G. C. MOWBRAY,
Chairman.

Printed by J. Leighton & Son, 21 Norfolk St., Sunderland.

(1910 Rules for Almshouse residents. Source: Gibson Almshouse Trust)

18. LOST VILLAGE HOUSES

The following section describes some of the larger or better known houses of Bishopwearmouth village.

St Michael's Rectory; Rector's Park

The rectory was sited at the north end of Bishopwearmouth, on the north side of High Street West, in extensive gardens of around 12 acres. A drawing by Grimm shows a rambling L-shaped building with windows ranging in date from medieval to the 17th and 18th centuries, supporting the view that the early rectory was extensively rebuilt in the late 17th century or later, after it had suffered war damage in 1642. It was finally demolished in 1856. In the same grounds were the tithe barn, plus coach-house and harness-room, the two latter surviving into the 20th century. Part of the archway which led to the stables is the arch which was re-erected at the base of Building Hill when Mowbray Park was laid out.

Source HER 418 (for a fuller detailed description by Peter Ryder, with illustrations, see Chapter 16 above)

Part of the boundary to Rector's Park was known as the "Castle Wall"

Source J Burnett The History of Sunderland (1830) p 69-70

Crowtree House & Fenwick Lodge

Before looking at these houses, which take up the east side of The Green, individually, it is worth noting that in 1670 this was land in the ownership of the Shipperdson family, and could possibly have been an early enclosure of this part of The Green. In 1738 Teasdale Mowbray of Wolsingham married Ann Reed, the then Shipperdson heiress and came into possession of their lands in Sunderland. Wood's plan of 1826 shows Robert Fenwick in possession of all of this land, ie both houses and their grounds. (*John Wood 1826*)

Crowtree House (See photo)

The Rain's Eye Plan shows it as in the possession of George Mowbray, with very large south facing grounds extending as far as what became Vine Place and east to Crowtree Road (*Rain's Eye Plan*). After the death of Mrs Mowbray in 1795, the house was sold to Thomas Nicholson, a shipbuilder with premises at Panns in 1798. In 1799 he obtained a grant from the Bishop of Durham to enclose The Green in front of the house, subject to other occupiers of property at The Green having a right of access. He may also have rebuilt the house. He died in 1811 and his son Robert inherited it; after his death in 1820 and stood empty for a while, but owned by his widow. By 1826 Robert Fenwick had bought Crowtree House (*John Wood's Plan 1826*) and he subsequently let it out, dividing it into two separate houses. In 1851 Thomas Meik, Engineer to the River Wear Commissioners, was living there with his wife, 2 sons, 3 servants and a nurse (*1861 Census*). By 1857 the south eastern part of the garden, around the junction of Vine Place and Crowtree Road, had been built on to form Borough Road Terrace and Crowtree Terrace, terraces of housing for quite well-to-do people (see notes on the social structure of the streets west of Crowtree Road). (*10ft to the mile Ordnance Survey Map*).

Robert Fenwick died in 1862 and the house was auctioned off. The description makes interesting reading:

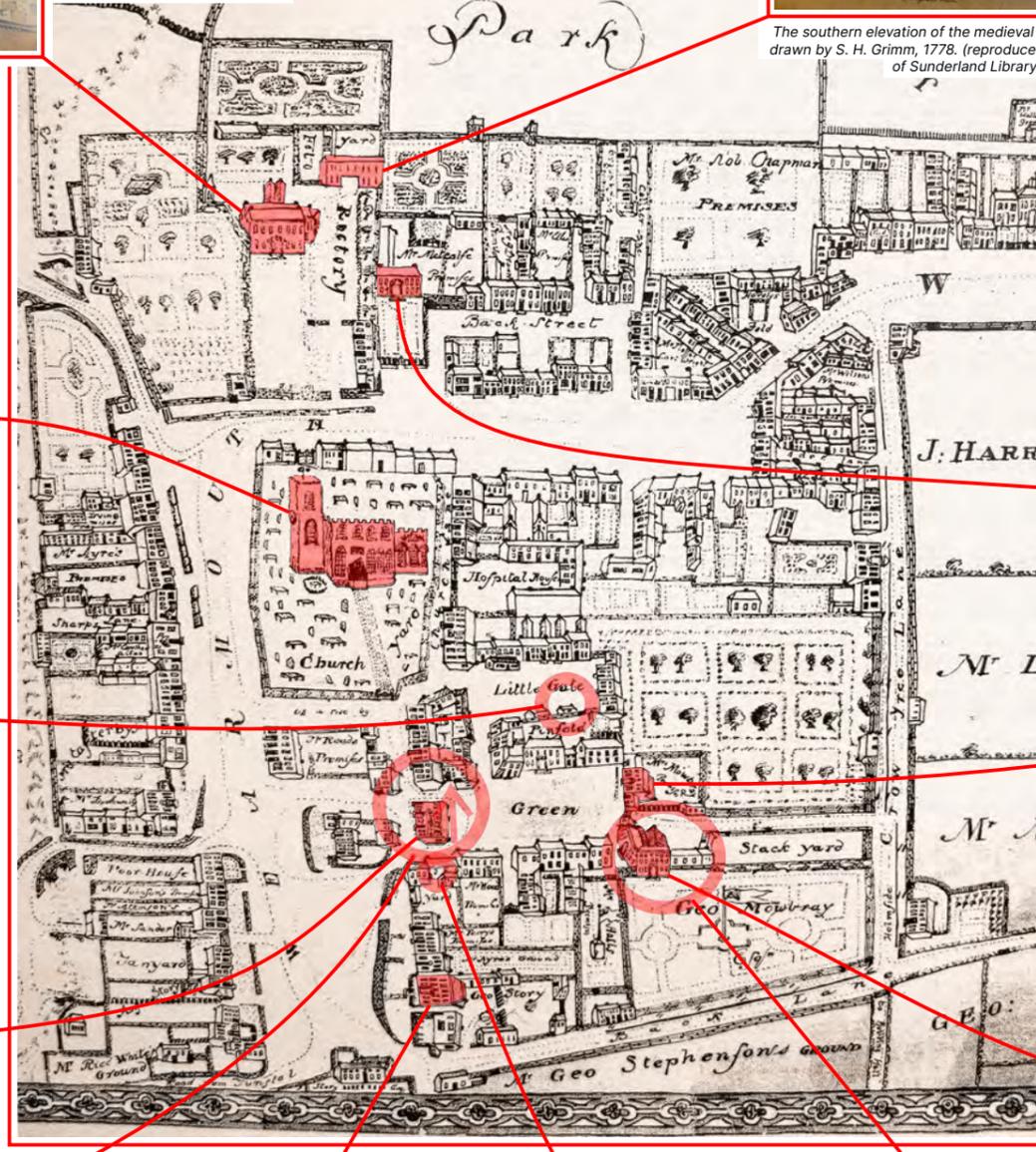
"... excellent Family Mansion House ... fronting to Wearmouth Green on the West, with a large Garden, and an entrance into Crow Tree Terrace on the South, and another large Garden, extending to Crow Tree Road on the East, together with the Stables, Coach Houses and other Outbuildings,

Lost Buildings of Bishopwearmouth



Many notable buildings which once graced the former village of Bishopwearmouth have been lost, becoming redundant as the function and character of the area changed, and then demolished.

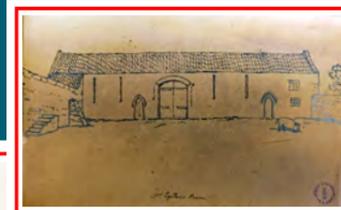
Rain's Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth c.1785-90



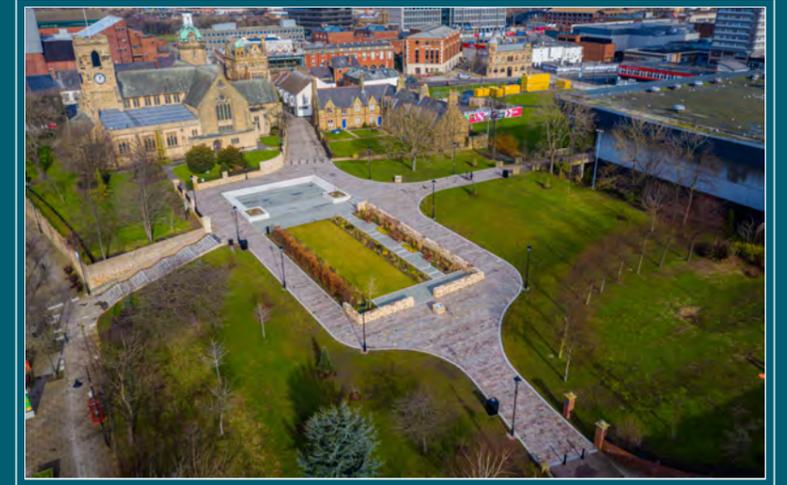
(Above) A view of the south frontage of the Rectory mansion in 1822. (Above right) The rear range of the Rectory depicted by S. H. Grimm in 1778 showing the surviving medieval structures (reproduced courtesy of Sunderland Library Services).



The great Rectory which stood to the north of the church, survived until 1856. Home to the rector of the parish, the main house, a substantial mansion, was rebuilt c.1700, but to the rear a range of medieval structures continued in use, until the house was demolished, whilst to the east, part of the great tithe barn clung on well into the 20th century.



The southern elevation of the medieval Tithe Barn drawn by S. H. Grimm, 1778. (reproduced courtesy of Sunderland Library Services).



The medieval church of St. Michael & All Angels (reconstruction drawing by Peter Ryder).

Repeated rebuilding of the parish church has removed all but a few traces of the medieval structure, so that it too may be considered 'lost', although the final great remodelling by W.D. Caroe in 1932-35 has produced a worthy replacement.



By the late 18th century there were several well-appointed mansion houses with substantial gardens in Bishopwearmouth, many depicted on Rain's Eye Plan of 1785/90.



13-15 Littlegate in 1922, looking east.

The streets immediately south and east of the church formed a small warren of tightly packed properties, mostly of 18th-century or earlier date, lining Church Lane, Littlegate and Southgate. Late 19th and early 20th century photographs give a good impression of their appearance.

However, as Bishopwearmouth was absorbed by the expanding commercial and industrial town of Sunderland in the 19th century, the wealthy owners abandoned their Bishopwearmouth houses, fleeing urban dirt and pollution for more salubrious residences further out in the countryside.



Fenwick Lodge, built by Teasdale Mowbray after 1738. By 1871 the extensive gardens had been covered by terraced housing, and the building itself fell into commercial use. It was acquired by Binns for use as a furniture warehouse in 1916. Demolished in the 1970s.



The Bowes Almshouses, founded in 1721 and restored in 1879, seen from the edge of Green before demolition in the 1960s.

These were all swept away in the 1960s. Minster Park provides visible reminders of these streets by marking their position and displaying their original name plaques.



A photograph of 1892 from the western end of the green looking north up Southgate towards St Michael's Church, with the Bowes Almshouses visible to the left.



Southgate House, was built by Thomas Storey in the late 17th century. In the 1870s the house was used as a school and was demolished to make way for the Galen Building after sale to Sunderland Corporation in 1896.



Dickie Chilton, a local eccentric, outside his house at 19 The Green.



Green Terrace School was opened in 1909, replacing the Sunderland Day Industrial School. It educated the local community's children until closure in 1980, by which time urban redevelopment had resulted in most residents moving away. Demolished in 1988.



Crowtree House, shown as belonging to George Mowbray on Rain's Eye Plan, was later sold to the School Board and turned into the Sunderland Day Industrial School which opened in June 1884. Demolished in 1906.

THE RECTORY



Painting of the Rectory mansion in the early 19th century



Photograph of the Rectory in 1853, taken by Edward Backhouse, historian (1808-79).

CROWTREE HOUSE & FENWICK LODGE



*View of Crowtree House after conversion to a school in 1884.
The building was demolished in 1906*



Mid-20th century view of the west side of Fenwick Lodge, which looked out over the Green.



The east facade of Fenwick Lodge, at the end of Fenwick St, featuring twin projecting wings. It was acquired by Binns in 1906 for use as a warehouse.

and the open piece of enclosed land on Wearmouth Green. The whole of the premises ... occupy an area of 5,270 Square Yards, or thereabouts. (It) ... is ... divided into Two convenient Houses, the Western portion being in the occupation of Mr Thomas Moore and the other is that of Mrs G MacKenzie". (Source *Newcastle Daily Journal* 01/11/1862 p4 col 1)

It is interesting that it was being sold retaining the right of access to the part of The Green which Mr Nicholson had enclosed in 1799.

In 1873, Charles McKenzie opened a Classical Academy at the house. He bought the house in 1884 for £1,000 and later sold it to the School Board for £1,750, after which it was demolished in the early 20th century to make way for a purpose built school, Green Terrace School, which opened in 1909, administered by the Sunderland Education Board.

Fenwick Lodge (See photo)

A house is shown here on Rain's Eye Plan, and described as "Mr Mowbray's premises" (*Rain's Eye Plan*). It was built by Teasdale Mowbray after his marriage to Ann Reed in 1738. He died in 1785 and his son George inherited, but chose to build Ford Hall, later the birthplace of General Havelock) as his home. After his death in 1791 his widow returned to the house until 1795, after which it may have been let. The 1802 rate book indicates it had changed hands, now belonging to a Mr Blakiston. By 1823 it was owned by Robert Fenwick, a brewer (see above), who rebuilt the house and constructed an entrance lodge facing onto Crowtree Road. At this time he changed the name to Fenwick Lodge. He died in 1862 and, like Crowtree House, it was auctioned, being described as:

"The Large and Superior ... FAMILY MANSION HOUSE,... fitted up with every convenience, and suitable in all respects for the residence of a Gentleman's Family. The house fronts to Wearmouth Green on the West, and on the opposite side possesses a large Garden with a Vinery, and an entrance lodge opening into Crow Tree Road, in which there is a frontage of 204 Feet and on the North side of the House are excellent Stables, Coach House and other Outbuildings with an entrance into Queen Square. The whole Ground admeasures 5,646 Square Yards, or thereabouts". (Source: *Newcastle Daily Journal* 01/11/1862 p4 col1)

John Wilson of Aberdeen must have bought it and moved to the house in 1863. He was a wholesale provision merchant and used the back premises as storage. By 1871 the garden to Crowtree Rd had been built upon to form Fenwick Street (*1871 census*). It remained his business premises until 1916, when it was bought by Binns for workshops, storage and warehousing. (Source: *Sunderland Daily Echo* Friday April 7th 1916 p4 col3)

Rectory House (See photo and Burleigh & Thompson's Map)

A building is shown here on Burleigh and Thompson's Plan (*Burleigh & Thompson 1737*) and therefore it may pre-date that time. Rain's Eye Plan identifies it as "Mr Metcalfe's premises" (*Rain's Eye Plan*), confirmed by the 1790 County Poll book which lists Henry Metcalfe as living in Bishopwearmouth. The house was a large double fronted three storey building set well back from the High Street, having a long garden in front of it. Around 1900 it was owned by Dr D F Todd, who sold it in around 1902, after which it was demolished to provide the entrance to The Empire Theatre at the corner of High Street West and Garden Place.

Southgate House (See photos and Plan of Site)

The origins of this house were in the 17th century. It was reputedly built by Thomas Storey who is mentioned in the 1649 Award of Highways. He died in 1695 and his son, George, who was one of the witnesses to the induction of the first Rector of Holy Trinity Church in 1719, inherited it. The Rain's Eye Plan shows it as Mr Storey's, along with a piece of land on the other side of what was then the road from Tunstall. A house on the west side of High Row (Green Terrace) is also shown as owned by

RECTORY HOUSE



The frontage of Rectory House



Rectory House seen shortly before demolition to make way for the Empire Theatre at the beginning of the 20th century

SOUTHGATE HOUSE



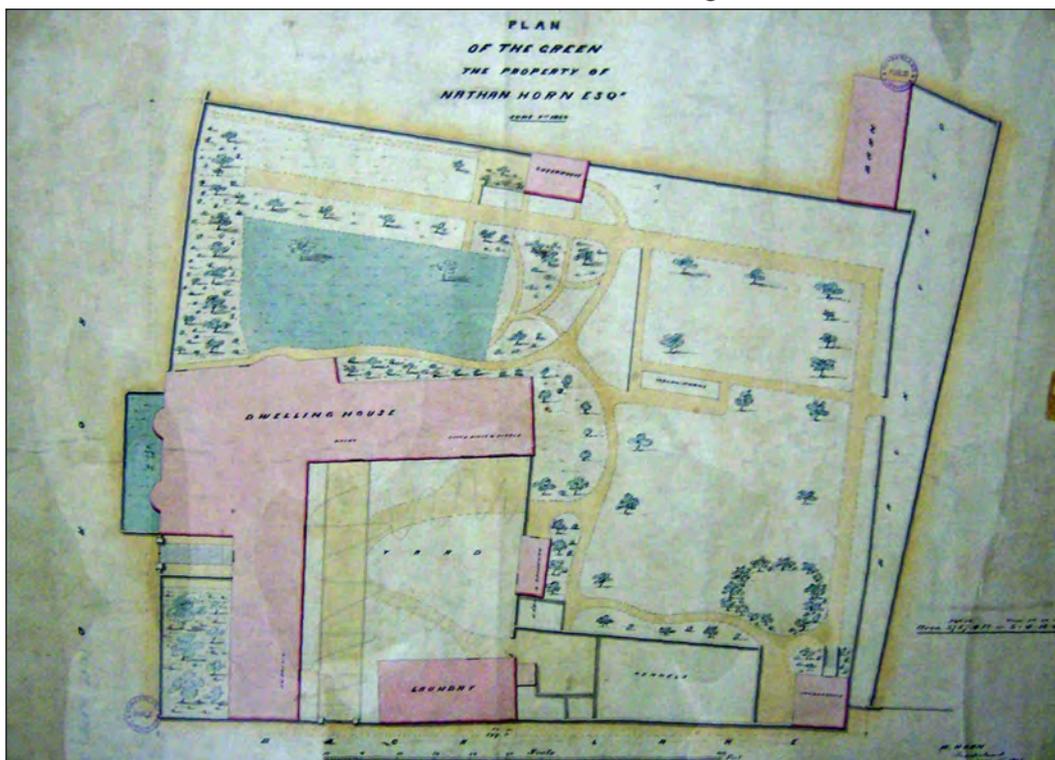
Southgate House in the late 19th century



An earlier 19th-century view of Southgate House on Green Terrace



The south side of Southgate House looking west along Vine Place



A plan of Southgate House in 1857, then called The Green, bounded by Green Terrace to the west and Vine Place to the south.

a Story, but it is not clear whether it is the same family. Nathan Horn, partner in Scott and Horn Bottlemakers on the banks of the river, bought it in 1794, retaining the house until 1857, when John Scott (possibly the other partner?) took it over. John Scott's son, Henry, a shipbroker, lived there between 1866 – 1870. By the end of the 1870s it was a school, run by Rev. Reginald Heart Yeld, but fell into disrepair and was sold to the Corporation in 1896, following which it was demolished and the site used for the Technical College (latterly known as the Galen Building).

Holmeside Cottage (House)

Situated towards the south end of Crowtree Rd and facing onto it, Holmeside Cottage is likely to be the origin of the name "Holmeside" which refers to that stretch of Borough Road running between Crowtree Road and Fawcett Street. The house was probably built in the 1770s by William Maude; his wife Hannah was living there in 1777 and in 1797 left it to Samuel, her oldest son. John Maling the potter was living there in 1811 having moved from The Grange off Stockton Road and by 1836 it was a school for young ladies, run by a Miss Higginson, the grounds being used as a market garden. It was demolished around 1860, a mason being recorded as living there in 1851 (*1861 Census*), and the south side of Maritime Place and the west block of Holmeside built on the site.

Greenhill House or Cottage (See painting)

Shown on John Wood's plan of 1826 (*John Wood 1826*) with an associated building, possibly a barn (*HER 16192*). In 1844 a Miss Jane Peacock ran a Ladies' Seminary from Greenhill Cottage; however, there was no entry in Ward's directory of 1850, so presumably she had gone to make way for the gasworks which were subsequently built there (*See Ordnance Survey 10ft to the mile map, 1857*). Later on, around 1900, the house would have been demolished for the new gas offices fronting Hind Street were built. (*Source: English Heritage listing description; Mackenzie & Ross 1834*). Until recently the remains of walls could be seen behind the gas board offices. These were possibly a boundary wall to the cottage, or associated structures on Hind Street (*HER 16193*) The gas board offices still exist, now forming part of the University. Greenhill Cottage could be the house which contained within it the Monk's Well (*HER 37*) as referred to by Mackenzie and Ross (*Mackenzie and Ross 1834*)

Sources: Vint and Carr Directory 1844; Wards 1850

Thornhill Cottage (See photos)

Thornhill Cottage, part of the Thornhill estate, was situated on Tunstall Road to the west of the junction with Green Terrace. When new Durham Road was laid out, using material excavated for the railway line to Durham it fronted that road but was at a lower level. It was an old farm house with John Reynoldson as tenant. It later became a dairy then around 1910 Borrowdale Bros took it over as a stonemason's yard. It was demolished in the 1950s for the extension of the Priestman Building of the University which fronts Durham Road.

(NB Source throughout this note: "Bishopwearmouth Township" by C B Walker Sunderland's History No 1 p 25-48 Sunderland Antiquarian Society 1983, unless otherwise stated)

GREENHILL COTTAGE & THORNHILL FARMHOUSE



A 19th-century painting of Greenhill Cottage



Thornhill Cottage, formerly a farmhouse, seen in the first half of the 20th century next to the south end of the Priestman Building



Another view of Thornhill Cottage on the north side of Durham Road, when in use by Borrowdale Bros., stonemasons.

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