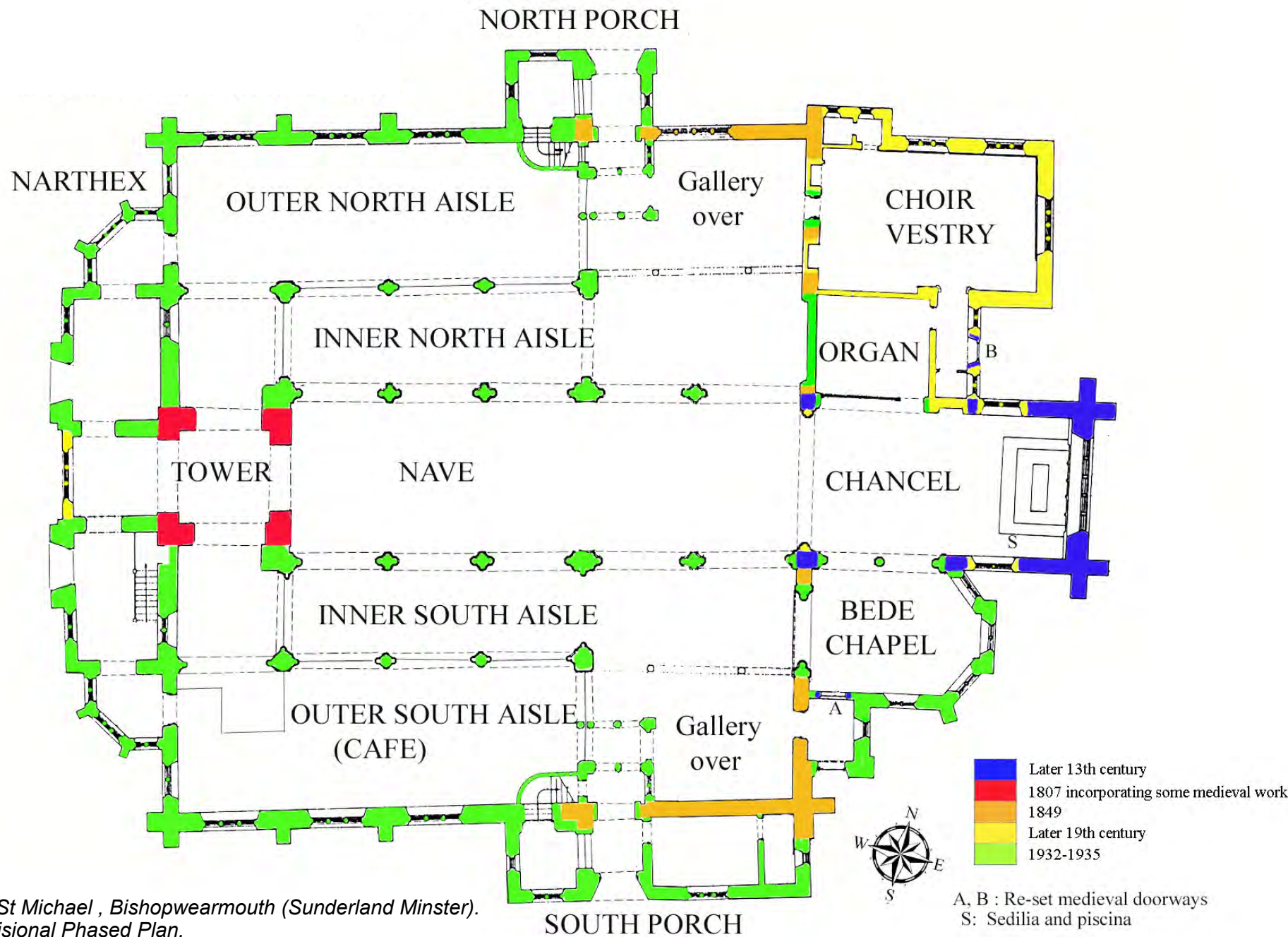# 6. HISTORIC BUILDINGS

6.1   Introduction

This chapter covers the historic buildings of Bishopwearmouth Village. It begins with detailed treatment of the most important building in the locale, the historic parish church of St Michael and All Angels, now more commonly referred to as Sunderland Minster (6.2).[4] This dates back to the Middle Ages, though it has been substantially rebuilt on several occasions. This is followed by a section on the other major medieval building known in the village, Bishopwearmouth rectory (6.3), sadly no longer surviving. Both these sections are compiled by Peter Ryder.

Then follows a summary (6.4) of the principal surviving buildings in the village core (by Judith Miller) and a description (6.5) of the many lost mansions and grand houses of the village (by John Tumman), now all demolished – a reflection of the time when Bishopwearmouth was still a distinct settlement with a quasi-rural, 'village' ambiance, still divorced from hustle, bustle and industrial grime and squalor of Sunderland town proper, and therefore a suitable setting for the houses of the wealthy and well-to-do.

In addition, a detailed record of the property encompassing 314-315 High Street West and 1-2 Church Lane was made as part of the Atlas research programme, by Peter Ryder, Richard Carlton and the Atlas Study Group. This is included as a supplementary report in Part 2.

A building recording report on the Galen Building and reports on building recording excavation and and watching briefs at the Gas Works site, all previously undertaken by the Archaeological Practice, are also included as supplementary reports.

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[4] The description of Sunderland Minster essentially reproduces, with permission, the Archaeological Assessment report on the church undertaken in March/April 2004 for the Diocese.

NORTH PORCH

NARTHEX

OUTER NORTH AISLE

Gallery over

CHOIR VESTRY

SOUTH PORCH

INNER NORTH AISLE

ORGAN

B

TOWER

NAVE

CHANCEL

S

INNER SOUTH AISLE

BEDE CHAPEL

OUTER SOUTH AISLE (CAFE)

Gallery over

A

Later 13th century

1807 incorporating some medieval work

1849

Later 19th century

1932-1935

A, B : Re-set medieval doorways

S: Sedilia and piscina

6.1: *St Michael , Bishopwearmouth (Sunderland Minster). Provisional Phased Plan.*

SOUTH PORCH

6.2 Sunderland Minster

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.

6.2.1 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 Exterior

Unless otherwise stated the external walls of the building are Caroe work of 1932-5, and of finely-tooled light fawn limestone (?) ashlar[5]; their architectural features are in a style based on a free interpretation of 14th/15th-century elements, the windows showing varied tracery forms beneath square heads. There is a hollow-chamfered plinth[6]; joggled lintels to all doorways and windows, and an oversailing parapet with a hollow-chamfered string at the base and a moulded coping. The transepts of 1849 are of coursed squared stone with a pecked tooling, and have smooth ashlar dressings. The roofs are of graduated green Lakeland slates.

The lower parts of the **West Tower** are enclosed by adjacent structures; the narthex on the west, the aisles at the sides and the taller nave to the east. The lower part of the exposed section, up to around the level of the nave roof, is of coursed roughly-squared stone in irregular courses. This section has angle pilasters on west only, with between them a lancet window (its lower part concealed by the narthex roof) that has a lancet arch with ashlar radial voussoirs set back within an outer order very like the surround of the larger Gothic-arched window above (lighting the Ringing Chamber), which holds a 16-pane sash with intersecting glazing bars in its head. Above this is a moulded oversailing course. There seem to be two phases evident in the fabric – the stone of the pilaster buttresses does not course in, as one would expect, with that of the main wall, and the upright ashlar blocks which form the jambs of the larger window seem to be set within the jambs of an earlier broader opening. The eastern angles of the tower at this level have big buttresses to north and south with twin-gabled heads The section of the tower above has pilaster buttresses at all four angles, and is of more regularly-coursed stone[7], with much recent replacement; there are clock faces on north, south and west. The pilasters rise to moulded caps just above the levels of the sill of the belfry openings. On the east of the tower, immediately above the ridge of the nave roof is a lunette-shaped opening with a raised stone surround; the belfry openings have two-centred arches and similar raised surrounds. Above is a boldly-moulded string and chamfered set-back at the foot of the stepped and embattled parapet, rebuilt by Caroe.

On the west of the tower is the **Narthex,** a single-storeyed block largely by Caroe, but incorporating the early 19th-century west porch that forms its central gabled section; here the original facing of coursed squared stone, now quite weathered, survives to mid-height; it contains a window of three trefoil-headed lights with cusped intersecting tracery (a mid-19th century insertion), under a pointed

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[5] Clipsham stone (Caroe 1935), as used in the Houses of Parliament. Weldon stone was used internally.
[6] The stone below this seems to be sandstone, probably re-used, and is now decaying badly.
[7] This change to better-quality stone is sometimes seen as evidence of the tower being heightened, but in fact simply indicates the level of the 1807 aisle roofs, which would have concealed the poorer masonry below.

Chancel from the SE

East door of Organ Chamber

North Transept, from north

SW view

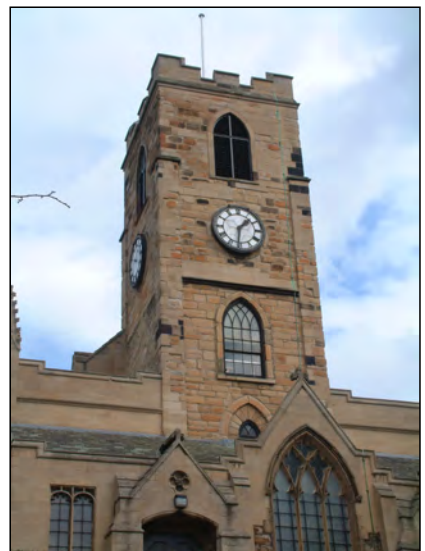## 6.2: Exterior Views of Sunderland Minster, Bishopwearmouth

Narthex from the SW

Tower from the north

Tower from the south

Tower from WNW

arch and a moulded hood with carved stops. On either side are projecting gabled porches; each has shallow buttresses flanking a segmental arched opening with a moulded head, and jambs that splay inwards to a shoulder-arched doorway on the line of the internal face of the wall between shallow buttresses; the gables above have quatrefoils and fleur-de-lys finials. Beyond the porches are square-headed windows of two cinquefoil-headed lights; the moulded parapets step up on either side of the central gable, and again at each corner. The returns of the narthex block each have a single-light window above lower quarter-octagon plan links between the narthex and the outer aisles; these have stepped buttresses at the angles, with three-light windows in the central diagonally-set face and two-light in the other walls.

The side walls of the **Nave**, set well back above the paired aisles, are all of 1932-5 and each have ranges of close-spaced clerestory windows, each of two lights with tracery above under a square head. The east gable of the nave has moulded kneelers and a cross finial.

The west walls of the **Inner Aisles**, largely concealed by the narthex, have big crocketted pinnacles at their outer angles. The west walls of the **Outer Aisles**, behind the links, have low-pitched gables with pairs of two-light windows flanking central pilasters that are carried up to niches, containing statues of SS Aidan and Cuthbert, with cusped heads beneath further crocketted pinnacles.

The south wall of the **Outer South Aisle** is of four bays, and articulated by stepped buttresses, above which a small diagonally-set shafts rising through the string course at the base of the parapet; there is a moulded string beneath the windows, which in the first three bays are of three lights and in the narrower eastern one a simpler two-light window, above the roof of the low porch that overlaps aisle and south transept. The north wall of the Outer North Aisle is similar except that the easternmost buttress is omitted,

The flat-topped **South Porch** has a doorway similar in form to the outer doors of the narthex, except that the inner doorway this time has a two-centred arch, with a two-light mullioned to the west and a three-light one to the east; each end wall has a single-light window.

The **North** Porch is smaller, only overlapping the western third of the transept; its outer archway and general form are similar to those of the south porch, with a two-light window to the west of the doorway and a single-light in east and west walls.

The **Transepts** of 1849 are externally identical in form, except that the lower part of the southern is completely concealed by the adjacent porch. The north transept has a chamfered plinth; both have large four-light window, with closed panels between two transoms at gallery level. The lights below are cinquefoil-headed and those above trefoiled, with a big sexfoil in the head, under a moulded hood with carved stops. In the gables above are cusped spheric-triangle windows; the coped gables have moulded kneelers with trefoiled gablets above, and a ring-cross finial. There is a two light Caroe window in the centre of the west wall of each transept, lighting the gallery and set just below the eaves.

Only the easternmost bay, or sanctuary, of the medieval **Chancel** is exposed externally. It is built of coursed blocks of sandstone, and has a two-part chamfered plinth (only properly exposed on the north) and paired stepped buttresses with gabled tops at the eastern angles. A moulded string at the level of the sills of the windows looks to be of 19th-century date in its present form, although it steps down close to the east end of the south wall in precisely the same way that the corresponding internal string course does. The north and south walls each have a window that in its present form looks Victorian; these are each of two trefoil-headed lights with a cinquefoiled circle in the spandrel,

under a moulded two-centred arch with a hoodmould and head stops. Directly beneath the southern window, below the string, is what appears to be a blocked opening of low Gothic-arched form, without cut dressings[8]. The east window looks genuinely medieval in part, and consists of five stepped lancets under a four-centred arch with a moulded surround and a hood with 19th-century head stops. The gable above has moulded kneelers with trefoiled gablets, and rises to a large square-plan finial that has a raised wheel cross on its east side and simpler relief crosses to north and south.

On the south of the chancel, and concealing the western part of its wall, is the **Bede Chapel** of 1932-5. This has a canted three-sided apse, the eastern face being set forwards as a projecting panel, with two-light windows; on the south is a porch with typical Caroe detail, having a doorway on the south sheltered by a slab canopy, and a single-light window on its eastern return.

On the north of the chancel the east wall of the **Organ Chamber** is set back between those of the chancel and choir vestry. It has a central projection holding a two-centred doorway with a double-chamfered surround, with a pair of lancets on each side. Some of the dressings of the doorway, including parts of the hood (which extends down on wither side to a moulded string that runs beneath the windows) looks so weathered as to appear medieval[9], and there is a badly eroded moulded hood, continued as string higher to the south. Above the openings is a big chamfered set-back; the wall above, of snecked stone, appears later.

The **Choir Vestry** to the north, a substantial east-west gabled structure, is built of snecked roughly-coursed roughly-squared stone, with dressings of diagonally- tooled ashlar. The east end has a large window, with a transom at mid-height, of four uncusped lancet lights, with a cinquefoiled circle in the apex, in a hollow-chamfered frame without a hood. On the north are two windows, each consisting of three trefoiled lancets of equal height, then to the west a lower section of wall, set forward, with two smaller single trefoiled lancets.

The Interior
The interior walls of the church are generally plastered and whitewashed, except for dressings and the north, south and west walls of the nave.

The base of the **Tower** has low and absolutely plain round-headed arches on north, south and east, with roughly-tooled voussoirs;. The arches are carried on plain square jambs, which seem to course in perfectly to with the lower walls, but the voussoirs – some of which have an extrados (outer face) or irregular form – do not seem to relate well to the adjacent walling – in places large blocks seem to have been cut to allow their insertion, and in others there are patches of small rubble filling in the gaps between the voussoir and larger walling stones. The arch opening west into the porch is slightly taller and of segmental form, springing from simple moulded corbels that look like Caroe work, although roughly chiselled to match the other dressings. On the west face of the wall (towards the narthex) the voussoirs of this arch project somewhat from the wall face; above the arch are two courses of tooled-and-margined ashlar of early-19th-century character, then above that a broad recess (cut across by the present roof) framing the lancet window visible externally; the sill of the lancet (its lower part infilled in brick) is visible, with below it the original shallow-pitched roof-line of the c1807 west porch, raised later in the century.

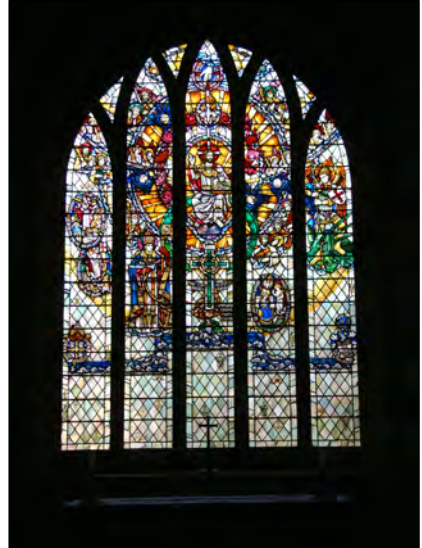[8]Might it relate to access to a vault?
[9]The faculty drawings for the 1932-5 works note that a 'doorway from SW corner' (presumably of the chancel) was to be re-used here.

Looking north through Tower

The Nave, looking west

View of the the East Window

Looking east from the West Gallery

6.3: Interior Views of Sunderland Minster, Bishopwearmouth

Arcade from the North Gallery

Statue at the South Aisle

View of the Pulpit

West window in the Tower

The east wall of the tower (i.e west wall of the nave) is of roughly-squared stone in courses that vary in height; it is slightly narrower than the present nave, so that its eastern angles stand proud of the wall just inside the arcades. These angles are formed by large blocks, which mostly correspond to the adjacent wall courses, which are quite regular up to the level of the springing of the arches, and above this much larger and more roughly finished; they contrast with the external western angles of the tower (seen from the narthex) which are of early 19th-century tooled-and-margined ashlar[10].

Above the tower arch is a gallery (its front by Caroe) beneath a similar but slightly wider arch; higher up the wall (where, as below, the voussoirs do not relate well to the adjacent walling), and partly concealed by the end truss of the roof, is a small blocked opening with a round-arched brick head.

On the north side of the tower at gallery level is a blocked doorway set east-of centre; externally the form of its head is concealed by the ceiling, but internally it now forms a recess, with a timber lintel beneath a round relieving arch turned in brick. A timber at the level of the lintel is continued all round the tower, being interrupted by the other openings. The lancet window on the west is set within a larger recess with a pointed arch in brick, and with brick at its rear above the level of the lancet sill. The present access to the gallery is via a round-headed opening in the south wall, which has a brick arch, and jambs cut square with the wall. In 2006 the tower was subdivided at this level by a north-south partition re-using part of the 1932-5 choir screen, and the western part contained a stair to the ringing chamber, now replaced by a ladder.

The Ringing Chamber is plastered round, and is lit by the sash window in the west wall, the sill of which lies a little below the present floor. On the east here is a square-headed recess that corresponds with the blocked opening visible from the nave. A steep stair alongside the east wall rises to another chamber, with its wall plaster now in poor condition; here there are small square openings behind the three clock faces, and, a little higher up, the lunette window in the east wall. A ladder against the south wall leads on up to the belfry itself, where the internal heads of the openings are turned in brick.

Within the **Narthex**, the central section has a segmental-arched doorway in each side wall communicating with into the two western porches, the northern of which is now subdivided. Further segmental-headed archways, now blocked, formerly opened from the end walls of the narthex into the quarter-octagon plan links (now toilets). The southern porch has a wooden stair against its east wall rising north to an elliptical-arched doorway set against the south-western angle of the tower, giving access to the office (on an inserted upper floor in the western bay of the outer south aisle) and also into the upper stages of the tower.

The dominating feature of the **Nave**, and indeed of the whole church interior, is Caroe's five-bay inner arcades. All of the 1932-5 internal work is in fawn to brown ashlar (Weldon stone). The piers are of cruciform plan, and of swept section between attached octagonal shafts with concave faces, with elaborately-moulded capitals and bases. The third piers, in effect crossing piers, are of more elongate plan, and carry arches linking to the outer arcades, whilst the eastern pairs of bays span Dobson's transepts. Above the arches is a corbel table carrying a projecting section of wall that rises to a moulded set back below the clerestory windows above the western three bays, and pairs of simply-moulded three-centred open arches towards the transept. A series of moulded corbels just below the corbel-table carry semi-octagonal shafts that rise beyond the thickened section of wall to moulded capitals that carry the roof trusses. The combination of the projecting section of wall-face, and the manner in which the rear faces of the wall-shafts are cut back above this seems designed to

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[10]There is an OS benchmark at the base of the north-western quoin.

give the impression of a triforium gallery. The corbelled-out section of wall is repeated on the outer faces towards the transepts. The eastern respond of the north arcade is a moulded corbel, presumably to accommodate some fitting or furnishing (now removed) against the wall beneath.

The outer arcades are of four bays, starting west of the transepts and extending a bay beyond the inner, as the aisles extend to the line of the west face of the tower; they are of similar form to the inner arcades, although the arches are lower; similar arches span the inner aisles on the line of the eastern face of the tower, and open into the transepts at their east ends. There is a more complicated arrangement at the east end of each outer aisle, where a central octagonal pier carries one segmental arch and one narrower quadrant-shaped arch, allowing room in the outer corner of the aisle for a curved projection to accommodate the gallery stair. Pilasters from these piers support elaborate niches with the figures of St George (north) and St Michael (south), with above the niches circular traceried windows, with billet-moulded surrounds, opening from the transepts. The west walls of the outer aisles have blocked segmental archways to the link through into the narthex, and two-light windows that have always opened inside the narthex.

Both transepts retain galleries, with their fronts in line with the outer arcades, carried on timber plates each supported by a pair of moulded octagonal timber posts. Beneath the galleries Caroe constructed stone internal porches and lobbies within the outer western angles of the transepts. These each have a substantial square pier at their inner angle, with a pair of four-centred arches springing from a slender octagonal pier towards the main body of the church (and from the central pier in the east end of the outer aisle) and a single arch towards the transept. The porch is further subdivided by a square-headed doorway, the outer section having a two-light window opening into the transept and a segmental-arched opening into the external porch. From the external porch further arches lead into lobbies at the foot of the stone stairs which first curve through the projections in the corners of the outer aisles, and then angle their way upwards through the transept wall into the galleries, where they emerge between ashlar walls with stepped hollow-chamfered copings.

The end walls of the transepts, and the east and south walls of the Bede Chapel, have segmental-arched recesses designed by Caroe to house radiators. On the east side of the south transept is a Caroe arch into the Bede Chapel, with to the south of it a two-centred doorway (perhaps Dobson) into the porch on the south of the chapel, now accommodating heating apparatus. On the north side of this porch is a blocked doorway with a two-centred arch with very badly weathered continuous mouldings, which must be another re-set medieval piece.

On the east of the north transept is a tall segmental-headed arch to the organ chamber, then to the north of it a doorway into the choir vestry; this has a segmental-pointed arch with a wave moulding, the head of which incorporates some weathered stones that could be ex-situ medieval work; the opening splays, in the manner of Caroe's porch doorways, to a two-centred arch on the line of the inner face of the wall.

The **Chance**l is entered under the chancel arch which is of two-centred form and of two orders, the inner with a broad chamfer inside a thin roll moulding, carried on triple attached shafts with moulded capitals and bases, whilst the outer continues unbroken to the ground; there is a moulded hood with head stops. Whilst the style of the arch is generally of the later 13th century, and it is recorded that the original arch was carefully dismantled and re-erected in 1808, the dressings must have been re-cut or re-tooled as nothing of the present arch looks convincingly medieval.

Inside the chancel there is exposed masonry below a moulded string that runs below the windows; the walls above are plastered. At the west end of the south wall two elliptical arches within a larger

one open into the Bede Chapel; east of this are three heavily-restored medieval sedilia, their sills now at floor level. The deeply-moulded trefoiled arches seem genuine 13th-century work, but the attached shafts that carry them, with their foliate caps, and the moulded hood with its stops carved as bishops' heads seem all restoration. East of the sedilia is a trefoiled piscina, its projecting bowl cut away; once again its moulded hood and foliate stops are of 19th-century date. The string course above the sedilia, which steps down over the piscina, again seems all restoration, as does all the stonework of the two-light window above the string, and that opposite in the north wall. These have moulded rear arches and internal hoods with head stops.

Some of the internal surround of the five-light east window may be genuine medieval work; it too has a moulded rear arch, and an internal hood with head stops; its level ashlar sill is clearly restoration.

On the north side of the chancel the large arch to the organ chamber at the west end of the wall is largely concealed by the organ and panelling; east of it is a doorway, now blocked, with a two-centred arch and a moulded surround, 13th-century in style but apparently all renewed stone. East again, beneath the two-light window, is a square-headed aumbry, its surround concealed by its woodwork.

The Choir Vestry has no features of real interest; its walls are plastered above panelling.

The Roofs
The nave roof is of five bays, and an impressive piece of 1932-5 woodwork; the king-post trusses have moulded and brattished ties, carried on short shafts, with solid knee-braces or spandrel pieces, supported by the capitals of the stone wall-shafts. Above the tie, on either side of the king posts are three moulded square baluster-like uprights; towards the apex of the truss horizontal struts , with arched braces below, produce a cruciform arrangement below the jowelled head of the king-post. There is a diagonally-set ridge and one level of purlins. There are trusses between each bay, and in addition set against the end walls. There is also a good low-pitched roof to the Bede Chapel.

The inner and outer aisles have low-pitched roofs with the longitudinal timbers carried on cambered ties; again there is much good detail, including wall posts with arched braces with carved and pierced spandrels.

The transept roofs, of 1849, are much plainer .Each is of five bays, with collar-beam trusses with their arch braces supported on stone corbels; above the collars further pairs of curving braces form an upper two-centred arch.

The chancel has a waggon roof, probably of later 19th-century date, with a moulded wall plate. The choir vestry also has a waggon roof, which may be of the same date.

6.2.2   Fittings and Furnishings
In the Baptistery at the west end of the Inner North Aisle is a marble **Font** of 1902; under the tower is an earlier pedestal-style font with a gadrooned oval-plan bowl, leaf ornament on the shaft and an eroded inscription with the date 181...on the base. The remains of a medieval (15th-century?) font lies in the southern part of the narthex, beneath the stair up to the office, and consist of a square stone base with hollow chamfer, and a simple octagonal bowl.

The altar in the Bede Chapel incorporates four round-arched carved panels from a **Pulpit** of 1632, believed to be from the church, retrieved in 1925 from a Wesleyan Mission.

11th Century Grave Marker

18th Century Font

18th Century Monument

Bede Chapel Altar

6.4: Monuments in Sunderland Minster, Bishopwearmouth

Medieval Font

Effigy of Thomas Middleton

Benefactions Board in S Gallery

Medieval Cross Slabs

Most of the fittings date from the 1932-5 restoration, and include some good-quality work; the present Pulpit is a quite spectacular piece, bearing the Sacred Monogram and roundels with the Symbols of the Evangelists, with a richly-carved tester above. Caroe was also responsible for the present fronts to the 19th-century galleries in the transepts.

The screens and fittings to the outer aisles date from the 1981 works by Ian Curry and Christopher Downs.

Some of the **Stained Glass** in the church was re-located during the 1932-5 restoration, including the west windows of the southern porch of the Narthex and of the Outer North Aisle (Jesus and the Children, and the Good Samaritan, both *c*1900). The west window of the older west porch incorporated in the Narthex was given in memory of William Bell d1856. Most of the windows in the main body of the church are of plain glass. The east window (the Ascended Christ), replacing one shattered by a World War II bomb, is of 1950, and by D.M.Grant. In the head of the north window of the chancel a 19th-century angel survives.

Another re-set piece is the **World War I Memorial** in the form of a screen, now placed between the Tower and the Narthex. On the north wall of the central section of the Narthex is a tablet stating 'This church was restored to the Glory of God 1933-1935 restoration made possible by the munificence of Sir John Priestland' . A brass plate at the east end of the north wall of the chancel commemorates an 1876 restoration of the chancel by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

On the west walls of both transepts at gallery level are old **Benefactions Boards;** that in the north transept relates to late 17th- and early 18th-century benefactions, and local almshouses; that in the south transept is dated 1820.

There are eight **Bells**, all recast in 1932. The **Bell Frames** are of the long-headed type, and have eight pits, four set north-south with two on either side swinging east-west; the south end of the frames seems to have been extended in ironwork.

6.2.3   Sepulchral Monuments

The earliest piece of sculpture in the church is a headstone or grave marker, which in 2004 was kept in the store in the basement of the outer north aisle but is now displayed in the chancel sedilia. The lower part of the damaged stone is uncarved and roughly dressed, for insertion into the ground; the design is described by Cramp (1984, 1, 53 and plate 19) as 'an incised standing cross....crudely framed by a wavering roll moulding. The cross has an incised roundel in the centre and incised squiggles in the quadrants'. There is a similar design on the rear, and fragments of ornamentation on the sides. Cramp considers 'this crude lop-sided carving .... either very late in the (Pre-Conquest) tradition or utterly incompetent', and suggests a possible 11th-century date. Todd and Yellowley (2003, 3) refer to two other stones found in the 1930s work that were identified by the British Museum as 'undoubtedly examples of late Saxon work'; one 'probably part of a grave cover' and the other a piece that 'somewhat resembles some pillow stones found at St Hild's nunnery at Hartlepool'. It is not clear what has become of these.

Two pieces of medieval cross slab grave covers are built into the internal face of the south wall of the southern porch of the narthex; they are described and illustrated by Ryder (1985, 62 and pl.9) along with a third slab which was for long in the store in the basement of the outer north aisle but has now been moved to the sedilia.

(1)   Upper part of early to mid-12th-century slab with simple bracelet cross under arcade of intersecting arches.

(2)   Part of the base of a slab; incised cross shaft and stepped calvary. Not dateable.

(3)   Mid-section of mid- to late-12th-century slab with part of a cross paté in circle, and a sword on the r. of the cross shaft. The upper section was drawn by Ryder (op,cit) but has not been located – it may well still be in the outer north aisle store.

At the south-east corner of the south transept is a worn and damaged effigy of Thomas Middleton; the hands are clasped in prayer and there is a sword on the right and a dagger on the left, with the feet resting on a lion. There are very worn remains of a black letter inscription that has been read as

'Hic iacet Thom' Middleton Armiger.......MCCCC'.

'Here lies Thomas Middleton, Knight ..... 1400'. This is the monument the lay in the north aisle of the medieval church (see Hutchinson's description, below); it was lost in the early 19th century, and rediscovered in the 1930s buried beneath the floor of the west porch.

There are a number of 18th and 19th-century **Wall Monuments**: On the east wall of the northern porch of the narthex is a pedimented tablet, with a pair of cherubs at the top, to Thomas Wilson, one of the proprietors of the glass manufactory at Ayres, d. 1776. On the east wall of the southern porch is a tablet to Ann, wife of Lieutentant Leech R.N., d. 1848, under an urn with a hawk perching on it, with on the base 'The Grave is Near'. In the south transept is a tablet to Christopher Bramwell, Bishopwearmouth merchant, d.1829. Various mid- to late 19th-century tablets are found in the north transept and westernmost bay of the north aisle, where there is also a larger wall monument to Ann Maud d.1759 that has an open pediment with a coat of arms, and is flanked by fluted pilasters with Ionic capitals. On the west wall of the outer north aisle is a tablet with a broken pediment and an apparently unfinished Latin inscription to Anthony Smith and William Scurfield, above a line of Greek key pattern. In the meeting room that occupies the eastern part of the outer north aisle is a tablet to Jane, wife of Henry Tanner 'of this parish, ship owner', d.1841

A complete list of monumental and other inscriptions in and around the church has recent been published (Yellowley 2001)

6.2.4   Historical Notes

1214   The first documentary reference to the church, Philip Balliol, dean of Poitiers, being rector.

1771   Nine windows removed and remade, the old north entrance was blocked, two new doorways built on the south and west sides (Chronology)

1787   A description of the church (Hutchinson 1787, II, 513-4) 'The altar rails form a square, thereby admitting many communicants to the service. The enclosure is six paces in length and three wide steps ascend to the rail; the whole is wainscoted and the east end ornamented with tabernacle work. The east window is under a pointed arch and formed of five lights; there are four south windows and one to the north having two lights each, under pointed arches. From the steps, the chancel is double stalled with oak in the cathedral form, ornamented with a carved entablature in

open work. The entrance from the nave is under a lofty pointed arch, rising from a cluster of small round pilasters; closed with stalls and a handsome wood screen, suitable to the rest of the chancel. The whole length of the chancel within the rails and without is about 19 paces. The nave hath two regular aisles, formed by two rows of three round columns, about 14 feet in height uniform, with rolls for capitals, supporting circular arches; there are four upper windows on each side. The nave and aisles together are about 15 paces in width and 16 in length, regularly stalled with oak and carved with fleur de lys. The pulpit is lofty and well ornamented. Near it in the end wall of the north aisle is a monument, having the effigy of a man in armour to the waist, with elevated hands in high relief, belonging, as it is presumed, to one of the family of Middleton. The tower rises on short round pilasters supporting pointed arches in the sides an a lofty arch towards the nave. The west end of the nave is galleried'

1806   According to Surtees (1816, 227) and Fordyce (1857, I, 428) 'in 1806 the nave and aisles were unroofed, and a part of the side walls taken down; the whole of the pillars and arches of the interior were removed, and the outer walls of the aisle raised to an equal height with the nave, so as to admit a gallery running round three sides of the church. Twenty-four feet of the chancel, and a large north porch, which adjoined the present vestry, were added to the body of the church. The arch above the chancel was taken down, the stones numbered, and carefully replaced in their original form, but further to the east. The western tower was also taken down and rebuilt, the south porch removed, and a west entrance opened under the new tower, a square structure, containing a clock, and surmounted by crocketted spirets at the corners... The works were begun in December 1806; the chancel was opened for service in 1808, and the whole was finished in 1810...'

Caroe (1935) refers to the 1806 roof as being flat-pitched, and of very heavy scantling. The three galleries were on cast-iron pillars, and 'a most unedifying result obtained' which resulted in structural problems.

1849   The transepts were added (Fordyce 1857, I, 429) providing the church with 540 extra sittings. The church was closed on 30 July 1849 and re-opened 10 March 1850.

1875   The chancel was restored, with paneling removed and a new roof of Westmorland slate (Chronicle)

### 6.2.5   Faculties and Records of Structural Work

Faculty no.	Date	Works
3/1/14	1673 (21 Oct)	Gallery
3/9/a	1720s	'Temp John Lawrence rector' (23 Jan 1721/2 - c1732) Erecting a gallery
3/12	1807	New pewing the church 'the stalls or pews... are in an irregular and decayed state and condition and liable to be damaged by the intended alterations to be made in the church'
3/16	1849	Enlarging church (addition of transepts, by John Dobson)

3/195	1873	Altering and repairing parish church, the works to include 'the removal of the present floor and pews, to cover the entire area with concrete…. (there were 53 vaults under the nave, which were 'becoming insanitary' so six inches of concrete were laid down over them (Chronology, which dates this work to 1872). Other improvements including the removal of portions of the north and south galleries for the purposes of rendering the transepts more useful and convenient'…
3/440/2	18 Dec 1902	New font, alterations to seating accommodation
3782	31 Dec 1917	Memorial chapel
3/1011	11 May 1921	New inner west doorway
3/2432	16 Sep 1932	Restoration and reconstruction of church
3/2574	20 Aug 1935	Giving up of a portion of the churchyard for street improvements.
3/2650	1 Feb 1937	Laying out the churchyard under the open spaces act.
3/4116	2 May 1959	Introduction of a moveable altar, credence table and altar rails, and removal of pews to a new position.
3/4835	4 Nov 1965	Removal of pews from north and south transepts
3/4886	22 July 1966	Alterations and improvements
3/5058	7 June 1968	Erection of a War memorial in the west porch
3/5122	8 May 1969	Repairs to the chancel
3/5263	16 June 1971	Repairs to tower and aisle roofs
3/5946	3 Aug 1981	Complete re-ordering of the church for the use of the parish and Action in Retirement.
3/6526	21 May 1987	Re-leading of roof over organ, raising pitch of roof…
3/8173	3 Oct 1996	Works including provision of a window in the internal west wall.
3/8998	20 Sept 2000	To indent stone mullions to certain windows…to replace mullions in two windows.
3/9471	19 Nov 2003	Works include disabled access ramps to south and west entrances

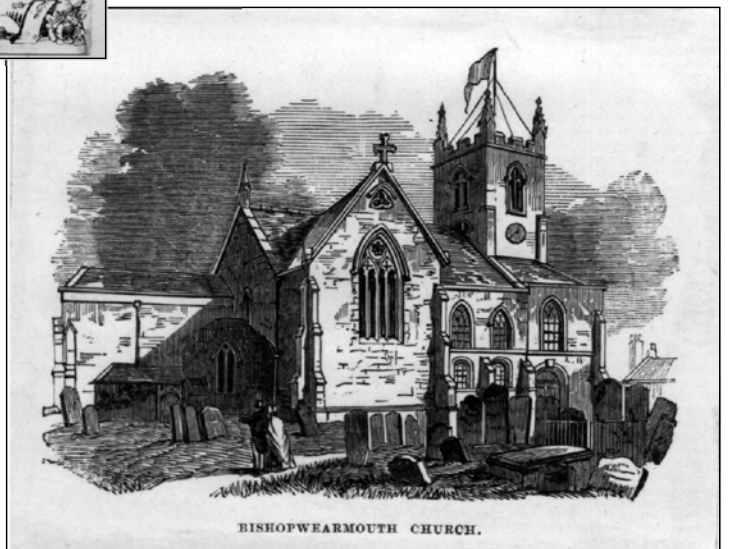# 6.5: Historic Views of St Michael's Church, Bishopwearmouth

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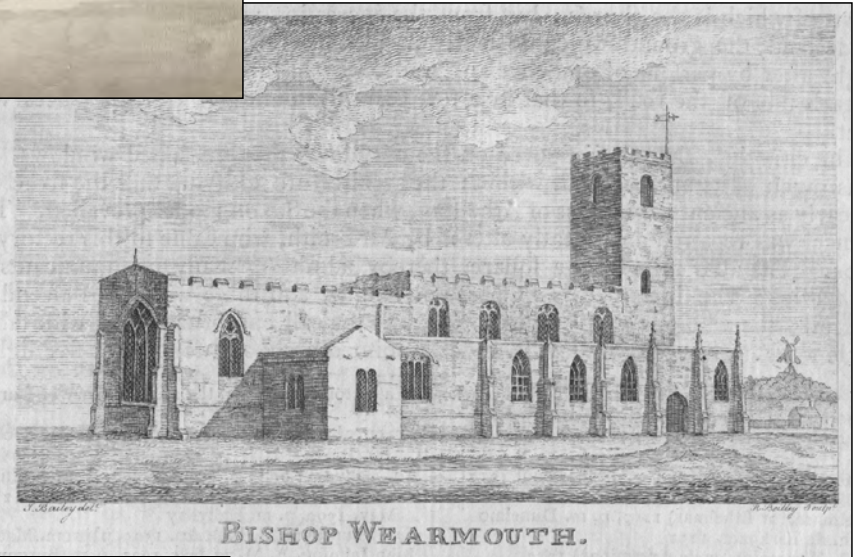
BISHOP WEARMOUTH.

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

BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHURCH,
C of of Durham.

Early 19th-century view of Bishopwearmouth Church

BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHURCH.

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

6.2.6   The Structural Development of the Church

Our main source of information as regards the medieval church, apart from the rather fragmentary remains of its *c*1300 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 *c*1250 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.

However, it is clear that much of the medieval building was largely swept away in the 1806-7 remodelling (by the Durham architect Christopher Ebdon[11]), 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 height[12], 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

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[11] https://www.sunderlandminster.com/contact-us/guide-to-the-minster-and-its-history/history-of-the-minster-by-eric-shegog/

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

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..

6.2.7   Archaeological Assessment
Whilst the sub-floor deposits in any church of medieval origin are potentially of archaeological importance, it is probably safe to admit that those at Bishopwearmouth have suffered more disturbance than most, given the known 19th and 20th-century history of rebuilding and alteration to the building. As with many churches, and especially those in urban areas, there has been extensive burial beneath the floors. It is known that by the mid-19th century these internments were causing problems within the building, so that in a layer of six inches of concrete was added to the floor in 1872, sealing off *c*53 vaults known to exist (Todd & Yellowley 2003, 18). The 1930s restoration was prompted by serious structural damage resulting from colliery subsidence; foundation works at this time will again have disturbed and destroyed earlier structures and deposits.

Nevertheless, as this is an important site with possible Pre-Conquest origins, any further excavations or significant disturbances of ground level in and around the building will require at least an archaeological watching brief

6.2.8   Priorities
Tangible links with the early history of the area are important in a modern city, and that the earliest piece of tangible evidence for a Christian settlement here on the south bank of the Wear, the late Saxon headstone, is now displayed in the sedilia and has now been joined by part of a medieval cross slab grave cover (another section of which is probably still in the church, but remains to be

located); two more cross slab fragments are displayed built into the wall of the southern part of the narthex. It is unfortunate that two other Pre-Conquest stones found in the 1930s seem to have been lost; if the stones themselves cannot be located, photographs of them might still exist. Apart from the retrieval of these stones, no archaeological recording seems to have been carried out at the time of Caroe's reconstruction, or if it was, the records have never found their way into print. So perhaps a search is in order, for either physical or documentary evidence from this period.

<div align="right">Peter F Ryder April 2004/revised December 2019</div>

6.2.9   Sources

Caroe, W.D. (1935?)   *St Michael's Church, Bishopwearmouth*. A History of the Church (partly by other authors)

Chronology   *Bishopwearmouth Church Chronology*. MS provided by David Beaumont, architect, 2019

Cramp, R (ed) (1984)   *A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in England*

Fordyce, W (1857)   *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*. II

Hutchinson, W (1787)   *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* II, 512-514

Pevsner, N & Williamson E, (1983)   *County Durham* (Buildings of England series, Penguin)

Ryder, P.F.(1985)   *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Cover in County Durham*. Architect. & Archaeol. Soc. of Durham & Northumberland Research report no.1.

Surtees, H.C. (1816)   *History of Durham* Vol.I, 227

Todd, A & Yellowley, C (2003)   *An Historical Account of the Ancient Church of St Michael and All Angels Bishopwearmouth 998 to 1998* (church guidebook)

Yellowley, C (2001)   *The Minster Church of St Michael & All Angels, Sunderland. Monumental Inscriptions and Dedications*.

INTERESTING DISCOVERY AT BISHOP-WEARMOUTH CHURCH.

(From a Correspondent.)

In the course of extensive repairs of the exterior of Bishopwearmouth Church, an interesting piece of Norman work has been brought to light. In removing the coat of cement which covered the lower portion of the nave, there has been exposed to view what was in all probability the ancient Norman doorway which had been the principle entrance to the church from the south. The Norman semi-circular arch, and the west jamb-stones are brought out in all the bold proportions characteristic of Norman work. The old arch is some fifteen feet high, and consists of three stones only. The surrounding walling is also the original work of the early Norman builders, the stones being largely of sandstone, not the local limestone boulders that were used in the majority of old stone buildings that remain in Sunderland. The interesting discovery reveals the fact, that when the church was rebuilt in 1807 the walls of the nave and the lower portion of the tower were not pulled down, but the new work was a heightening of the old walls; and then the old portion cemented over to correspond with the new stone work above. The earliest mention of Bishopwearmouth is in the days of Athelstan, A.D. 925-41; but the first rector on record is in the twelfth century. And it is to that period the ancient doorway now brought to light in all probability belongs.
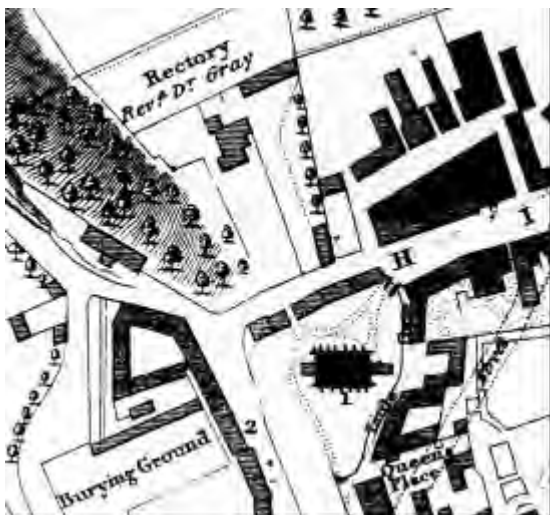
BISHOPWEARMOUTH CHURCH.

INTERESTING DISCOVERIES.

A correspondent writes:—In resuming the repairs of the lower portion of the outer wall of the west end of Bishopwearmouth Church some further discoveries have been made of special interest to antiquaries and archæologists. In removing the thick coat of cement which covered the ancient walls, left standing when the church was rebuilt in 1806-7, two stones and a Norman doorway have been brought to light. The two stones uncovered would be portions of the early church, built in the Saxon days of Athelstan, A.D. 925-41. One of the stones is part of a decorated column, built into the wall as an ordinary walling-stone, but its beautiful proportions are quite distinct. The second stone is of special interest, and carries the mind back to the fighting days of the battle of Nevil's Cross and Flodden field, when the English spearmen and archers were the terror of the Scotch in vaders. The stone is some twenty feet from the ground, is sixteen inches long and six inches deep, with numerous deeply-worn grooves and irregular markings where the ancient spear and arrow points were sharpened in the olden times. Similar stones are frequently seen on Early English churches—at Blanchland, Bamborough, Dalton-le-Dale, and Escombe, and every one of the old churches up the North Tyne. The Bishopwearmouth stone is high up in the last course of the remaining ancient wall, and must at one time have been on the lower level of the original Church of St. Michael. The ancient semicircular doorway uncovered is similar to the arch on the south wall discovered last year. But the present discovery shows that the large arch-stones had been removed, yet the old arched masonry is quite distinct and the line of large Norman jamb-stones is yet in position. Some half-dozen stained-glass windows are to be put into the older portion of the church, and further archæological discoveries are anticipated.

6.3   Bishopwearmouth Old Rectory

6.3.1   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 its being 'defaced and ruined by armies' in 1646[1], 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 £600[2]'; the new frontage had his arms over the door. Grimm's drawings[3] 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'.

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

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

[3]British 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 Sunniside. 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 site[5].

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

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

[5] Walker, 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.

6.3.2   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 features[6]; 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 house[7] 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 lever; 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 it[8].

[6]His 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)

[7]Walker op.cit 45

[8]The house is also shown on Raine'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 rectory[9]. 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]
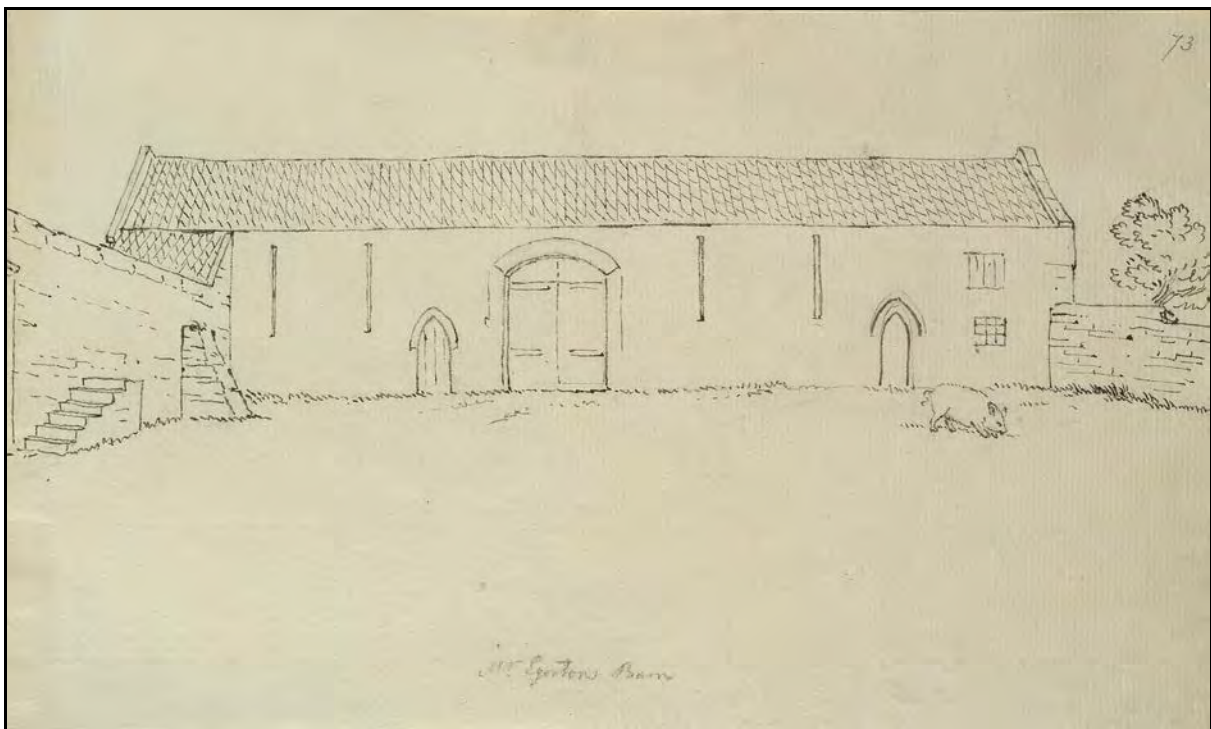
Grimm's view of the tithe barn (© The British Library Board, Misc. Add. 15540, f.73)

[9]Burleigh 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.

[10]For 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.

6.3.3   The Ex-Situ Remains

The Mowbray Park Arch

At the south end of Mowbray Park a medieval arch has been re-set as the entrance to a natural (?) cave in a Magnesian Limestone rock face, apparently an old quarry. The arch is round-headed and quite broad; it certainly looks to have been cut down in height. The jambs are simply chamfered , but the arch is made up of voussoirs showing a variety of sections, some chamfered, some with a pair of separate chamfers, so there must be a suspicion that it has been 'made up' using pieces from different architectural features. There is a hoodmould with square terminals. The arch had been partly buried, and was disinterred and 'restored' during park improvements in 2000.

It is recorded that this arch was taken from the 'entrance courtyard' of the Old Rectory. It matches well with one shown by Grimm as being set in an east-west wall, attached to the north-west angle of the Rectory main block. In its present sorry condition it is difficult to date closely, although the section of the hoodmould would tally with the 14th or 15th centuries.

The West Sunniside Arch

Set in a short brick wall on the east side of West Sunniside, this is the 'Early English' arch brought in 1937 or 1938 from the Tithe Barn, and presumably one of the two shown in Grimm's drawing as

being set in the south wall on either side of the threshing doors in the south wall. It is a sharply two-centred arch with a simple chamfered surround, rebated internally; each jamb is made up of two large irregular blocks, and the head cut from three more, a more recent piece of stone having been inserted at the apex of the arch. Has to be admitted that the brickwork of the wall in which it is set, and the old wrought iron gate it now holds, looks more like mid-19th century work than 1937/8.

Whilst the form of the arch is certainly suggestive of the 'Early English' style (13th-century) there are no other stylistic features, and it would be unwise to ascribe a date more specific than 'medieval'.

Both these ex-situ arches are now Grade II listed structures.

The Stair

On the demolition of the Old Rectory this very fine staircase, of later 17th-century character, was transferred to its successor on Gray Road, Ashbrooke; this is now St Martin's House, and the stair remains in good condition. It is an open well stair (rising one storey) with closed strings, square panelled newels, double spiral-twist balusters and a broad moulded and ramped handrail; there is an accompanying panelled dado with pilasters and a moulded and ramped top rail.

6.3.4   Discussion

Grimm's drawing provides the only real evidence of the Old Rectory in its medieval form, and shows a 14th/15th-century range facing west onto a courtyard behind the 17th/early 18th-century house, with a large doorway later converted into a window near its centre, and a possible garderobe at its north end. The Corder MS mentions an unsubstantiated tradition of a religious house here, and, whilst such traditions could well spring from the survival of medieval features that were simply perceived by local people to be in an ecclesiastical style, the range shown by Grimm does have a passing resemblance to the east range of a small monastic cloister, with the chapter house door prominent at its centre.
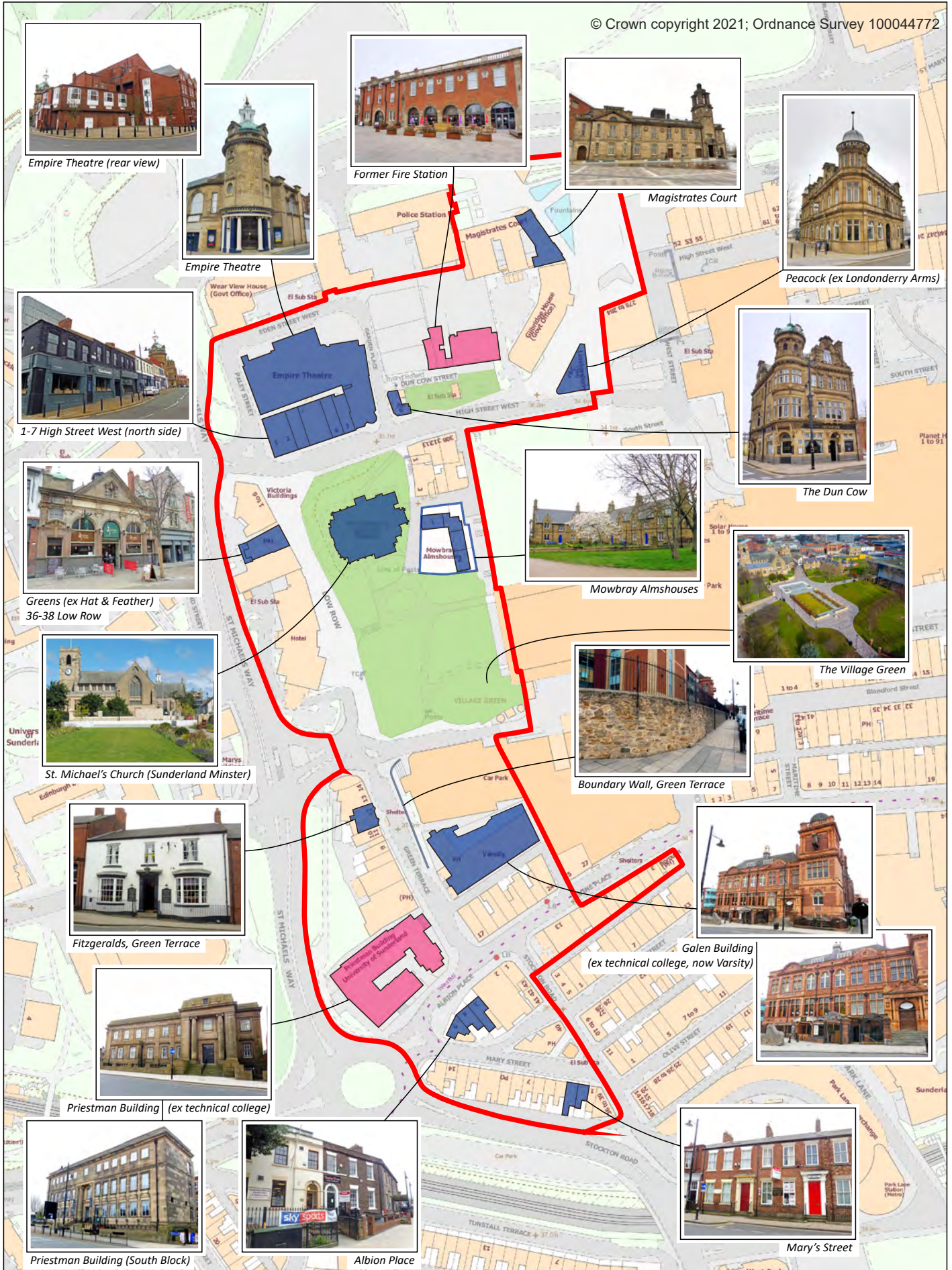
It seems likely that the main block of the house, rebuilt after the Civil War, replaced a further medieval range, although the medieval courtyard-entry arch (now in Mowbray Park) survived at its west end. Did this range replace the hall of the medieval house? (or, following the more remote possibility of this being a small undocumented monastic house, a church or chapel?). The more likely possibility is that this was a courtyard house, with its hall in the north range facing the entry arch, in which case the range shown by Grimm may have been a service wing? Unless further evidence comes to light, this is all very much in the realm of conjecture. The Tithe Barn to the east suggests that there was a second yard here, partly enclosed by agricultural buildings.

It is known that considerable works were carried out in both 1652 and 1704; the frontage of the house was clearly of the latter period, and carried the arms of the Rev. John Smith. The rear wing shown by Grimm has mullion-and-transom cross windows that might fit better with the earlier date, and the surviving stair, a fine piece of work that deserves to be better known, may well be of this date as well, although it could be a conservative piece of work of fifty years later.

Peter F Ryder July 2006

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)

The Dun Cow

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

Mowbray Almshouses

The Village Green

St. Michael's Church (Sunderland Minster)

Boundary Wall, Green Terrace

Fitzgeralds, Green Terrace

Galen Building
(ex technical college, now Varsity)

Priestman Building (ex technical college)

Priestman Building (South Block)

Albion Place

Mary's Street

= Boundary of Conservation Area **= Significant Green/Public Spaces**

= Listed Buildings **= Other Significant Buildings**

0   20   40   60   80   100   120   140   160   180   200 m

248

6.4 Surviving Historic Buildings

6.4.1 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.

6.4.2   The Peacock

The Peacock (former Londonderry) Public House was designed by local architect Hugh Taylor Decimus Hedley for Newcastle brewers Duncan and Daglish. 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.

6.4.3   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.

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ADDRESS	SOURCE	DATE	OCCUPIER	BUSINESS
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.

6.4.4   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 Raines 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.
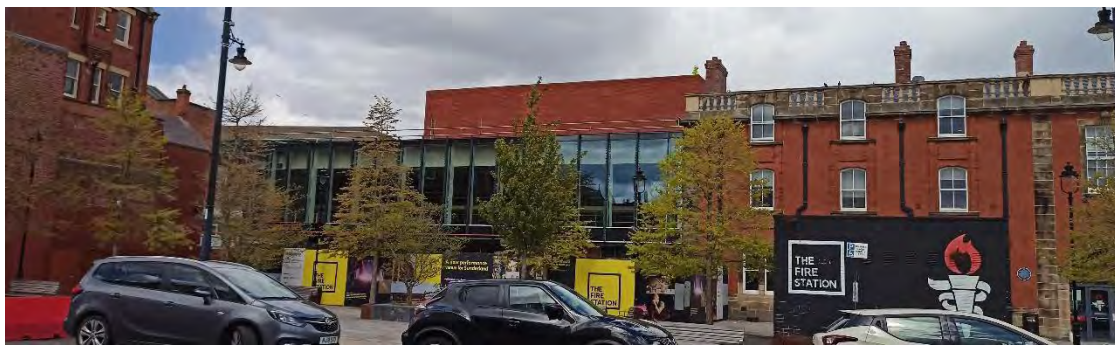
6.4.5   Fire Station

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)

6.4.6   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.

6.4.7   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 thereout 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.

By order of the Trustees,

R. G. C. MOWBRAY,
Chairman.

Bishopwearmouth,
23rd October, 1909.

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

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

6.5   Some Lost Village Houses

The following notes refer to some of the larger or better known village houses and are not meant as a comprehensive record of such houses.

6.5.1   St Michael's Rectory; Rector's Park
(for fuller detailed description by Peter Ryder, with illustrations, see 6.3 above)
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
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

6.5.2   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)*

6.5.3   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).*

6.7: Painting of the Rectory mansion in the early 19th century

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

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

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

6.11: 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.

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, 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.

6.5.4   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)*

6.5.4   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.

6.5.5   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 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).

6.5.6   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.

6.5.7   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; McKenzie & 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

6.12: The frontage of Rectory House

6.13: Rectory House seen shortly before demolition at the beginning of the 20th century to make way for the Empire Theatre
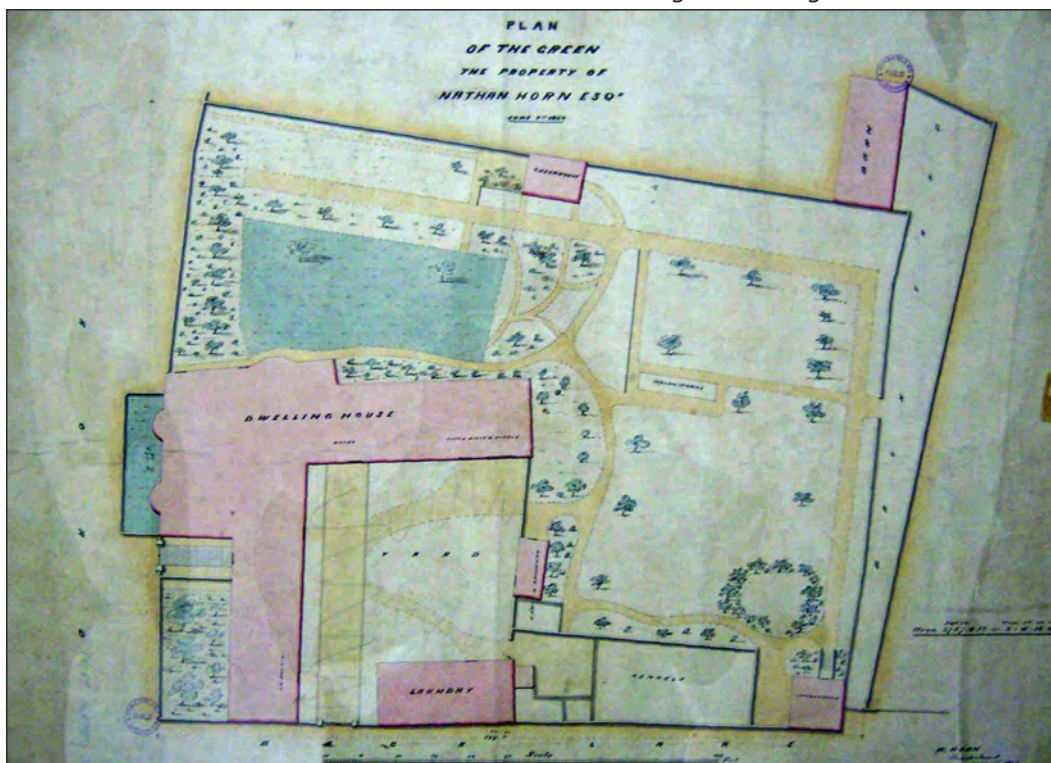
6.14: Southgate House in the late 19th century

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

6.16: The south side of Southgate House looking west along Vine Place

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

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 McKenzie and Ross *(McKenzie and Ross 1834)* *Sources: Vint and Carr Directory1844; Wards 1850*

6.5.8 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)

6.18: A 19th-century painting of Greenhill Cottage

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


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

Lost Buildings of Bishopwearmouth

HERITAGE FUND · Sunderland City Council · The Archaeological Practice Ltd.

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.
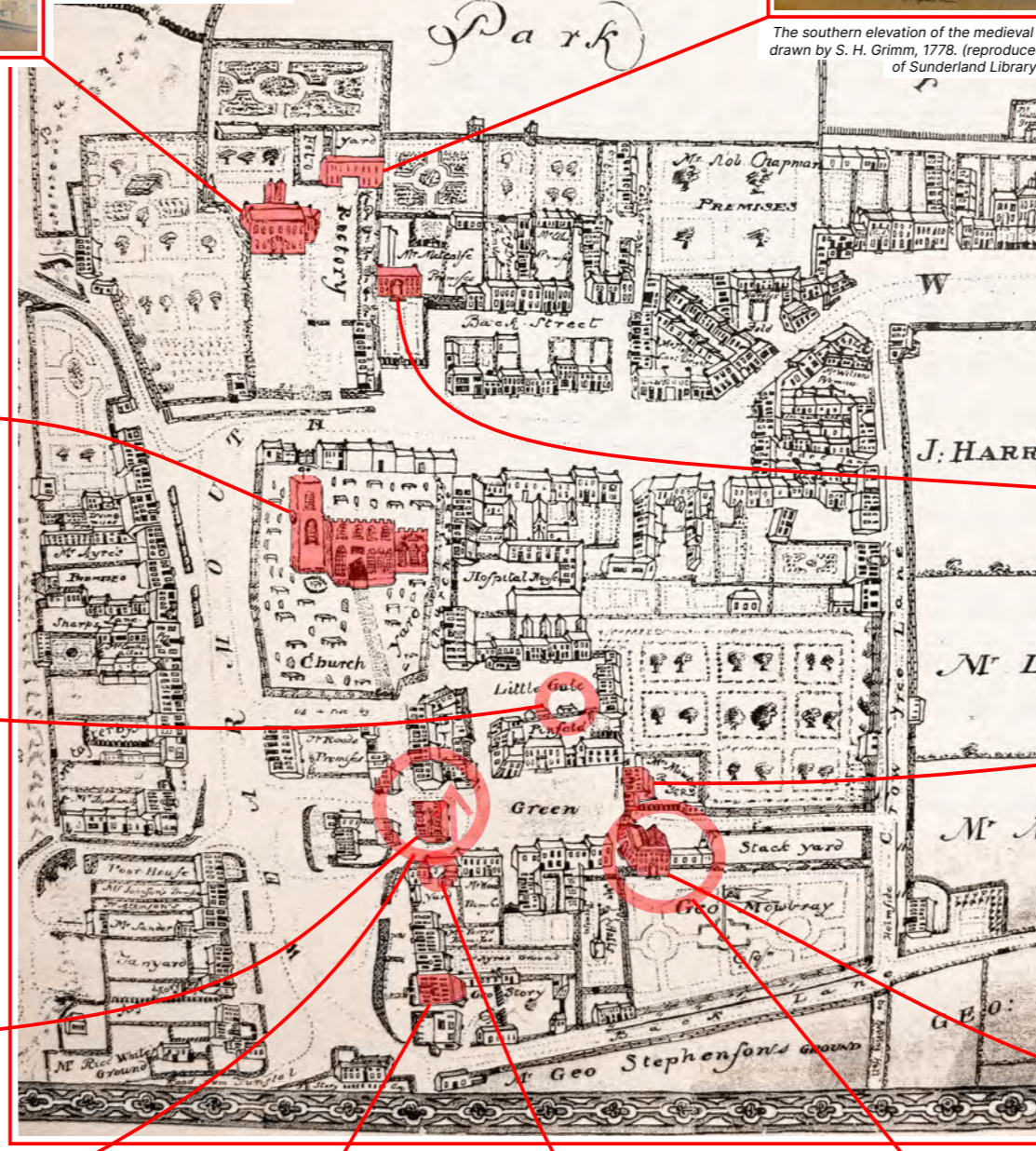

(Above) A view of the south frontage of the Rectory mansion in 1822. (Above right) The rear range of the Rectory depicted by S. H. Grimm in 1778 showing the surviving medieval structures (reproduced courtesy of Sunderland Library Services).

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

The southern elevation of the medieval Tithe Barn drawn by S. H. Grimm, 1778. (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.
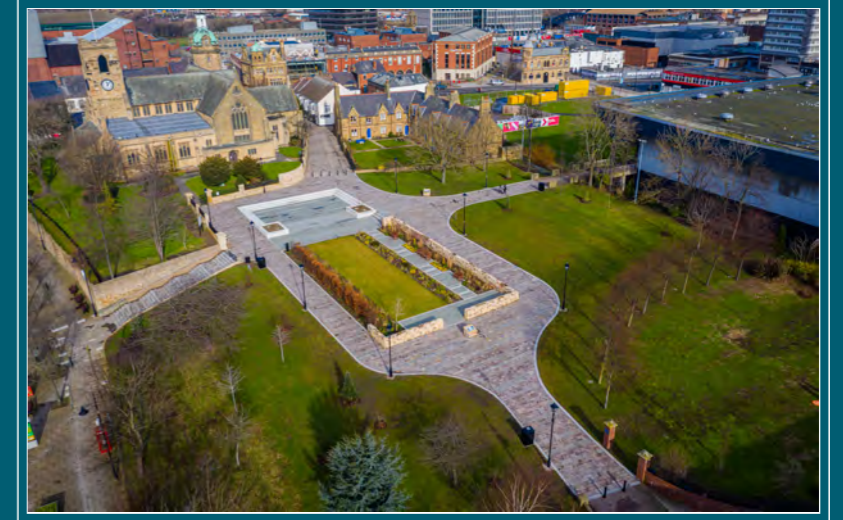
The medieval church of St. Michael & All Angels (reconstruction drawing by Peter Ryder).

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.

Built before 1737, Rectory House belonged to Henry Metcalfe at the time of Rain's Eye Plan. It was demolished around 1902 to make way for the Empire Theatre.

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.

7. COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

## 7.1 Introduction: Defining a Community

Today, Bishopwearmouth forms one small part of urban Sunderland, located towards the western end the city centre, and centred around the imposing landmark of Sunderland Minster (St Michael and all Angel's Church), which occupies the highest point in the locality. Although it has few permanent residents, apart from the occupants of the Mowbray Almshouses, the presence the Empire Theatre and the former Fire Station, newly converted into a major music and arts hub for the city, as well as numerous bars, restaurants and a hotel, gives the area a distinct character as the city's cultural and entertainment quarter. Thus it might be said that it is the proprietors and workers of these establishments who form the local 'community'. This represents just the latest stage in the area's evolution, over the past two hundred years or more, as part of wider urban community of Sunderland. However, up to the end of the 18th century, Bishopwearmouth existed separately as an important village settlement, the centre of a large rural township – its agrarian resource – and an even larger ecclesiastical parish, entirely detached from from the borough of Sunderland to the east. As such, Bishopwearmouth was a typical rural community of the medieval and early modern eras. Before c. 1800 most of the population of Britain lived in villages, hamlets or scattered farmsteads and were involved in farming the surrounding landscape or servicing the needs of the agricultural workforce.

Today it is difficult to gain an impression of the relationship between the ancient village and its rural territory, since, not only has Bishopwearmouth been swallowed up by the rest of Sunderland city centre, but the wider environs, too, have been largely built over, especially by post-WWII housing estates, which have masked the subtle features of the landscape. However, even surviving villages are now typically disconnected from the wider landscape to a very substantial degree, simply places of residence rather than foci of agricultural work, something made possible by the widespread car ownership.

In contrast, a comparable medieval community was organised around the exploitation of a defined tract of land, the **vill** or **township**, which formed the territorial resource of the people living in the settlement, whether the latter was a village, one or more hamlets or a group of scattered farmsteads. This would have been inscribed in the landscape in the form of large open fields, walled or ditched and embanked head-dykes, and moorland markers such as cairns or natural topographic features. Familiarity with the territory's limits would have been periodically reinforced by senior members of the community 'walking the bounds'. Moreover the members of these communities were tied together by much stronger bonds of association and institutional structures than is the case today, bonds forged by shared labour in the fields, particularly during ploughing and harvest time, and through regulated access to common resources, such as moorland grazing, as well as on ties of neighbourliness.[13]

Overlying these basic territorial units of rural subsistence was the tenurial framework of **manorial estates**, which extracted rents and labour from the cultivators of the village

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[13] In more recent periods, belonging to a community whose members were predominantly employed in a single, local industry located beside or close by the settlement, such as a coal pit, quarry or textile mill, could forge equally strong bonds and a similarly intense communal identity, as exhibited by the 'pit villages' of County Durham.
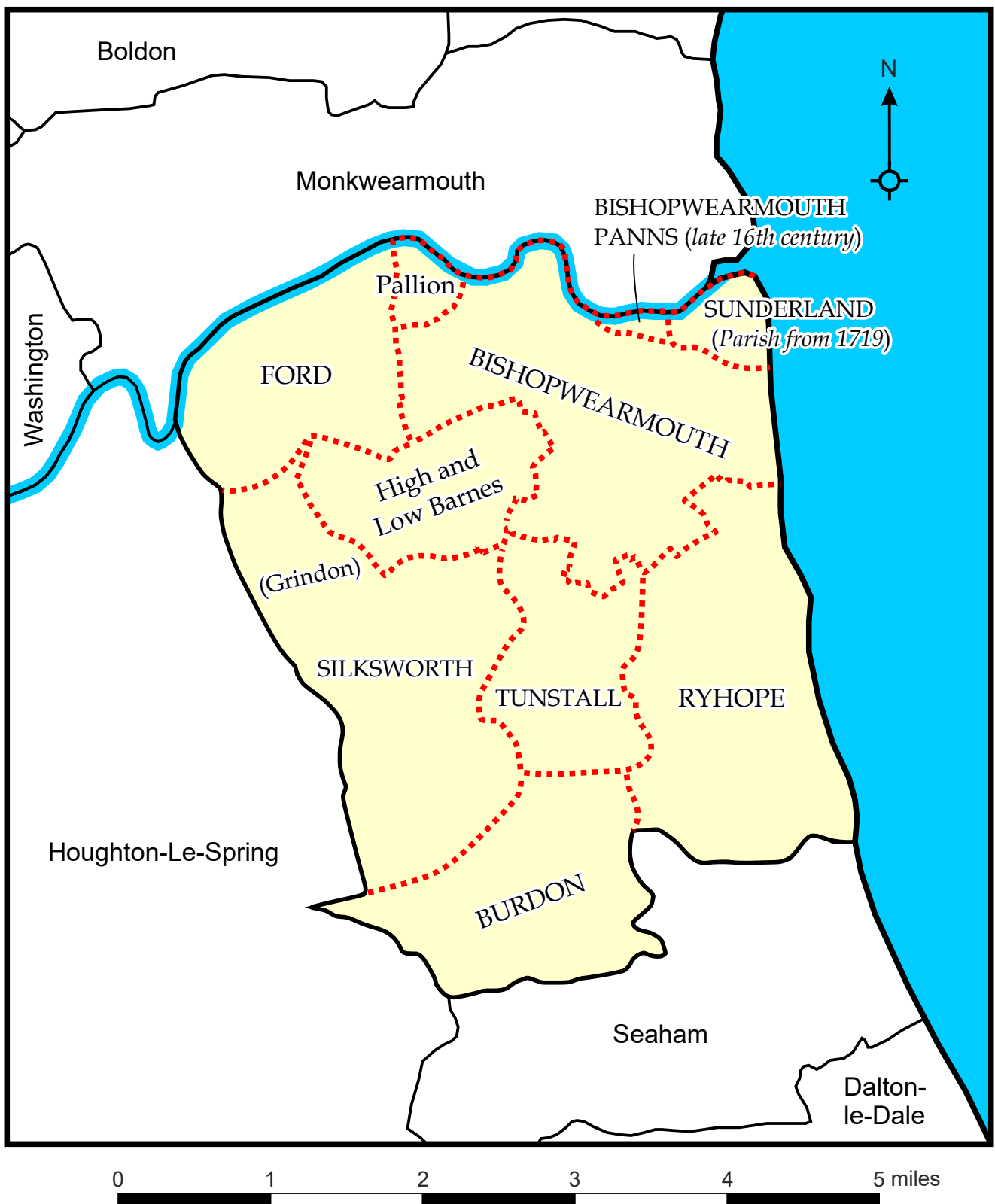
7.1: *The ecclesiastical parishes and chapelries of East Durham c.1800 with Bishopwearmouth parish highlighted in yellow and it's constituent townships dotted in red.*

townships. The pattern of manorial landholding was much more complex than the township distribution. Individual townships were often divided between multiple manorial lords, with the result that villagers might hold some of their strips of land from one lord and some from another. Moreover villagers might even acquire plots in neighbouring villages, through purchase or inheritance. The priests who ministered to these communities' spiritual needs were supported by yet another kind of the territorial unit – **the parish** – each of which, in the north of England, usually incorporated several townships.

To understand the more distant past of settlements like Bishopwearmouth it is therefore necessary to distinguish, define, and as far as possible map the various different territorial units within which the villages were incorporated, and which provided the framework for the development of those communities. Each of the units related to a different aspect of the settlements' communal relations – religious, economic and administrative, and seigneurial – and their function changed over time. Parish and manor are still terms familiar to us today, if not always perfectly understood, but the term township has largely dropped out of use (its modern equivalent being the civil parish, and even this has been discarded in fully urbanised areas like Sunderland), though it is, in many respects, the most important of these territorial institutions for the study of historic village settlement and its development was remarkably complex.

7.2   The Parish

7.2.1   Medieval ecclesiastical parishes

The basic unit of ecclesiastical administration was the parish, which essentially represented 'a community whose spiritual needs were served by a parish priest, who was supported by tithe and other dues paid by his parishioners' (Winchester 1987, 23). It was the payment of tithes – established as a legal principle since the reign of King Edgar 959-75 (Platt 1981, 47) – which gave the parish a territorial dimension so that the boundaries of the parish came to embrace all that community's landed resources. Only the most remote areas of upland waste were left outside the parochial framework, but in some cases territories which fell under the control of ecclesiastical corporations over a long period, evolved into 'extra-parochial' townships.

With mental images and impressions of settlement norms which are largely derived from southern and central England – 'chocolate box' photographs of ancient parish churches nestling in picturesque honey-coloured Cotswold villages for instance – we now tend, almost unconsciously, to consider a church as being synonymous with a village and assume every such settlement was the centre of a parish. However this is far from being the case in the north of England. Ecclesiastical parishes in County Durham typically incorporated several townships and those in sparsely populated west of the county, embracing Pennine dales such as upper Weardale and Teesdale were very large indeed. Bishopwearmouth parish, was perhaps at the upper end of the typical range, incorporating 7 such communities, consisting of Ford, Silksworth, Burdon, Tunstall and Ryhope, the borough of Sunderland (promoted to be a parish in its own right in 1719) and Bishopwearmouth itself, whereas Monkwearmouth parish, on the north bank of the Wear, was at the lower end of that range with only four townships – Hylton, Southwick, Fulwell and Monkwearmouth. To the south, Seaham parish contained only two townships (Seaham and Seaton) and, beyond that, Daldon-le-Dale was another four township parish, but Easington, further south still, was another large parish, similar in scale to Bishopwearmouth, with 5 or 6 townships, whilst the parish of Houghton-le-Spring, directly to the west of Bishopwearmouth, once contained a total of 15 or 16

medieval vill or township communities, not an unprecedented number for a parish in North-East England.[14]

7.2.2 Chapels

It is thus evident that these large medieval parishes contained many distinct communities and the church was often too distant to conveniently serve all the spiritual needs of the parishioners in the outlying townships. However, there are relatively few instances of new parishes being carved out of a well-established parish, and practically none after 1150. The payment of tithes created a strong disincentive to do so, since creating a new parochial territory would inevitably reduce the income of the priest in the existing parish. The widespread programme of ecclesiastical reform in the 12th and early 13th centuries gave added impetus to the fossilisation of parish territories, as ownership of the parish churches was transferred from the hereditary priests or local lay lords whose predecessors had founded the churches, over to monasteries and other ecclesiastical corporations. These powerful ecclesiastical corporations strenuously defended their legal and economic rights (Lomas 1996, 111, 116-17; Dixon 1985 I, 64), and to all intents and purposes put a block on the formation of new parishes. Instead the needs of the more distant township communities were sometimes catered for by the construction of dependent chapels of ease (Lomas 1996, 111-114). In some instances, where a parish was in the hands of an ecclesiastical body such as a monastery, a network of chapels was established, each chapel serving one or more townships, evidently with the deliberate purpose of ensuring the parishioners could worship with greater ease and convenience.[15] Perhaps the most perfect case of this was Chollerton parish in North Tynedale, Northumberland (Lomas 1996, 113-14). Here, each of the subordinate village townships in the parish was furnished with a chapel, with the exception of Barrasford, the closest village to Chollerton, a fairly convenient walking distance away, and those attached to the small moorland hamlets of Buteland, Broomhope, Tone and Cowden, in the northern part of the parish, whose populations were too small to support a chapel. It is almost certainly no coincidence that St Giles' Church, Chollerton, with its attendant parish, was in the hands of the Augustinian priory of Hexham. The Augustinian Order, or Black Canons, laid much greater emphasis than other monastic rules on work in the wider community (what we might now call 'outreach work') and hence on their responsibilities to the parishes they had charge of. This was very much the exception however and more often the creation of chapels was reliant on the whim of secular landlords, who wished to better provide for their own spiritual welfare and that of their tenants, and who perhaps regarded the possession of a chapel as a gratifying adornment for their manor.

This was certainly the pattern in the Sunderland parishes. In the outer townships of Bishopwearmouth parish, there was only the Chapel of St Leonard at Silksworth (Surtees 1816, 244; Patterson 1905; Cookson 2015, 33). It is no coincidence that there were resident lords in that township, which was been granted by Bishop Ranulf Flambard (1099-1128), to his nephew, Richard of Ravensworth, and then passed to the latter's son Geoffrey of Horden, whose family had acquired the FitzMarmaduke surname by the late 13th century (Cookson 2015, 31-33). In the later Middle Ages several local gentry families acquired

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[14] It is unclear whether Middle Herrington should be classed as a medieval separate vill, though it is mentioned as a distinct place. Later on it formed part of a single township with East Herrington. In the Middle Ages Middle Herrington's lands seem to have been divided between the lords of West and East Herrington.
By the early 19th century, when Surtees compiled his great county history, the number of townships or 'constabularies' in Houghton Parish had grown to 18 (1816, 145).

[15] Thus, in the huge parish of Holy Island in north Northumberland, four chapels were established by Durham Priory on the mainland, at Ancroft, Kyloe, Lowick and Tweedmouth, these chapelries encompassing four, eight, five and four townships respectively (Lomas 1996, 112).

portions of the estate, with Durham Priory holding overlordship of all or part of the vill. The chapel may have been in existence by the late 12th century, when it is alluded to by a charter. The clearest record is provided by a charter whereby John FitzMarmaduke (d. 1311), lord of Horden, granted land and tenements in Hawthorn worth 5 marks per annum to support John of Dalton, the chaplain of St Leonard's, with the proviso that John was to hold services for FitzMarmaduke and the souls of his ancestors (reproduced in Surtees 1816, 244).[16] The chapel was probably located in the field called Chapel Garth. None of the townships held directly by the bishop of Durham – Tunstall, Ryhope or Burdon – were furnished with one. Evidently the bishop saw no need to make separate provision for the tenants of the other townships in the parish.

There was, however, a chapel in the borough of Sunderland, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This functioned as a chantry, where masses for the dead were said, and was probably founded by Finchale Priory, one of the cathedral priory's daughter cells. Finchale possessed a number of properties in Sunderland borough, the income from which was used to support the chapel and its chaplain (Cookson 2015, 48; Summers 1858, 248-55), with an annual value estimated at £3 6s 8d per annum in 1535, shortly before the Dissolution (*Valor Ecclesiasticus* V, 323). The chantry chapel was apparently situated at the very easternmost end of Sunderland's High Street. A plan of this area, dating to 1715 and reproduced by Summers (1858, 254), shows that the very last section of this street was then called Chapel Street and featured a 'Chapel Hill' at its eastern end (on the west side of Pottery Bank), presumably the site of the chantry chapel.[17]

It was similar story in Monkwearmouth, where Durham Priory was the dominant lord, via its monastic cell centred on St Peter's church. Only Hylton township, the seat of an important local lordship held by the family which took the same name, was furnished with a chapel, that of St Catherine (Cookson 2010, 75-76, 2015, 47). This was established by the Hilton family for their own use and that of their tenants by the mid-12th century. In 1323, a chantry to St Mary was endowed in the chapel by Robert Hilton. There were three chaplains there in 1370, two of whom were probably chantry priests. Likewise, in the neighbouring Parish of Houghton, to the west of Bishopwearmouth, the Chapel of the Blessed Mary was founded at West Herrington, again on the initiative of the lord of that manor, Sir Thomas de Herrington in 1291 (Surtees 1816, 185), but no chapel was established any of the other northern townships of Houghton Parish until Penshaw Chapelry was established in 1745. The Chapel of St Catherine at Hylton had income worth £6 13s 4d at the Dissolution, the same as in 1461. The chantry of St Mary was dissolved in 1548, the last phase of the process and the chapel itself may have fallen into disuse soon after (Cookson 2015, 47). There is no evidence that the chapels at Silksworth or West Herrington survived the Reformation either (cf. Surtees 1816, 244), though the latter one was still mentioned in 1414.

7.2.3   The later evolution of the parish

Administrative developments

In the medieval era the parish was a purely ecclesiastical institution and was to remain so until the beginning of the 17th century when the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 made

[16] The Latin text is reproduced by Surtees (1816, 244). John of Dalton was also granted 'a plot of land on the west side of the village next to the Chapel of St Leonard' (*unam placeam terre in villa de Sylksworth iacentem ex parte occidental eiusdem villae iuxta Capellam Sancti Leonardi in eadem*), presumably so he could build himself a house there.

[17] Rather confusingly, another chantry, again dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, like those at Hylton and Sunderland, was located within St Michael's Church, Bishopwearmouth. This was valued at £3 15s 4d in 1548, when it was dissolved, like all other surviving chantries, as part of Edward VI's more radical Reformation.

this territorial unit responsible for the maintenance of the poor through the appointment of overseers for the poor and the setting of a local rate to support poor relief (*Statutes* 43 Eliz. I c.2; cf. Winchester 1978, 56). This is in many respects typical of the history of English local government whereby 'new administrative units have generally been created by giving new functions to existing territorial divisions' (Winchester 1987, 27). Thereafter parochial administration of poor law was particularly prevalent in southern and midland England, where parishes were generally smaller and often coterminous with the civil townships. However, in northern England even these additional functions tended to devolve down to the constituent townships, which were a more convenient and manageable size than the extensive parishes. The modern civil parishes were established by the Local Government Act of 1889 and were substantially based on the earlier townships rather than the ecclesiastical parishes (Statutes 52/53 Vict. c.63).

Church expansion . . . and decline

The accelerating pace of industrialisation on Wearside, from the 17th century onwards, was accompanied by dramatic population growth, which quickly rendered the existing ecclesiastical provision inadequate. The problem was initially most acute in Bishopwearmouth parish which contained the rapidly expanding town of Sunderland – the former medieval borough, given a new royal charter in 1634 – as well as the ancient village of Bishopwearmouth itself and the parish's other rural, township settlements. Thus, by 1700, St Michael's Church, Bishopwearmouth, had space for only a quarter of its parishoners. Moreover this problem accentuated the rivalries over social status within the parish. All the best-situated pews in St Michael's Church were passed down as hereditary possessions of the traditional landed elite families of Bishopwearmouth, leaving the merchants of Sunderland with no access to pews appropriate to their wealth and rank, obliging them to sit amongst those they regarded as their social inferiors. Accordingly a fund was created in 1712 to build a new church in Sunderland. Initially this was envisaged as just a chapel of ease, but lobbying by the wealthy merchants of the town, inspired by the recent example of Stockton on Tees, resulted instead in the creation of an entirely new parish, encompassing Sunderland township, and centred on the church of Holy Trinity, consecrated in 1719.

Nevertheless, this too soon proved inadequate to cope with demand on its own and, some 50 years later, it was found necessary to consecrate another new church, St John the Evangelist, as a chapel of ease for the Sunderland parish. This was built on the edge of the Town Moor, at the east end of Prospect Row, between 1764 and 1769, on the initiative of John Thornhill, a wealthy timber importer coal-fitter, quay owner and freemason. These developments in Sunderland proved mere stopgaps. By the end of the 18th century Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth village had expanded to form a single conjoined settlement, as Rain's Eye Plan demonstrates, and growth subsequently further accelerated as the 19th-century industrial revolution gained pace. Between 1817 and 1827 three chapels of ease were created in Bishopwearmouth parish – St Mary's, South Hylton/Ford (1817), St Paul's, Ryhope (1826) and St Thomas's John Street (1827) – with another, St Andrew's, Deptford, being added in 1841 and a fifth, St Paul's, Hendon, in 1852. These chapels of ease were in turn converted into district chapelries between 1844 and 1854, however, even so, this still only provided for a fraction of the population, as the 1851 census demonstrated, with attendance at non-conformist services greatly outnumbering Anglican congregations and perhaps only a third of the population of the three historic Wearside parishes attending any religious service at all.

A crucial factor which long retarded reform was the vast revenues reserved for the rector of Bishopwearmouth. During the 1830s the incumbent, Gerald Wellesley, enjoyed an estimated

income of some £3,300, making it one of the richest livings in the country (Cookson 2015, 177). It was only following Wellesley's death in 1848 that the process of redistributing the rectory's enormous revenues for the benefit of the wider district could begin. In 1849 the annual profits from its wayleaves, staithes and coal rents were vested in a trust, the Bishopwearmouth Fund, administered by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The proceeds from leasing and selling the glebe land and rectory were also to be paid to the Trust to support the wider parish. Further reform followed in 1867 when the Bishopwearmouth Rectory Act vested the glebe lands and endowments in the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to provide stipends for the incumbents of the parish's daughter churches and to create four new parochial districts (Cookson 2015, 178-79). An unfortunate consequence of this process was the sale and rapid demolition of the ancient rectory complex. Although the main residential house had been rebuilt in the late 17th and early 18th centuries by Robert Gray (rector 1661-1704) and his successor, John Smith, several 18th-century prints show that the rear ranges, to the north, still contained several standing medieval buildings prior to demolition, including a tithe barn,[18] all associated with the earlier rectory and its manorial complex (*see* Chapter 6).

Over the course of the later 19th and early 20th century many new churches were erected and new smaller parishes created, resulting in the break up of the great old parish of Bishopwearmouth. More recently, however, in the late 20th century, this process has gone into reverse as religious observance has declined dramatically, resulting in the closure of churches (even Sunderland's Holy Trinity in 1988) and amalgamation of parishes. St Michael's Church continued as the centre of a much reduced parish up until 2007 when it was reconstituted as 'a church for the whole city', called the Minster Church of St Michael and All Angels and St Benedict Biscop (having already been rebranded as 'Sunderland Minster' in 1998 when Sunderland itself was elevated to city status).

7.3 The Township or Vill

The basic territorial unit in County Durham was the township or vill (*villa* in medieval Latin), not the ecclesiastical parish. The term *vill* can be defined in two ways, on the one hand as a territorial community, which may be labelled the *territorial vill*, and on the other as the basic unit of civil administration in medieval England, the *administrative vill*. The two units were related and they could indeed cover identical territorial divisions, but this was not always the case so where possible they should be distinguished.

7.3.1 The territorial vill
In its most basic sense *vill* is synonymous with the English words *town* or *township*, deriving from the Old English *tun*, the commonest element in English place names, i.e. a settlement with a distinct, delimited territory, the latter representing the expanse of land in which that particular community of peasants lived and practised agriculture. A township/territorial vill was not the same as the village itself, which was simply the nucleated settlement which commonly lay at the heart (though not necessarily the geographical centre) of the township, and where the bulk of the individuals who made up the community might reside. A classic township, centred on a nucleated village settlement, was composed of three main elements, the village itself, the cultivated arable land and meadows, and the moorland waste or common. However a township community might live scattered about in dispersed farms instead of or as well as being grouped together in a nucleated village or hamlet. Any

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[18] The eastern third of the tithe barn survived until 1937 or 1938, when it too was demolished. One arch from the building was re-erected at West Sunniside.

combination of these elements was possible, but some permanent settlement was required for there had to be a community for a township to exist. Writing between 1235 and 1259, the lawyer Henry de Bracton defined the township thus (*De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae*, iii, 394-5; cited by Winchester 1978, 69; Dixon 1985, I, 75-6):

> If a person should build a single edifice in the fields, there will not be a *vill*, but when in the process of time several edifices have begun to be built adjoining to or neighbouring to one another, there begins to be a *vill*.

A township's consciousness of itself as a distinct community would have been reinforced by the communal agricultural labour required to work the land. This is particularly obvious in the cases where the township was centred on a nucleated village, its members living and working alongside one another, but even in townships composed of scattered hamlets or farmsteads it was just as vital to regulate access to the use of communal resources such as the upland waste or commons. Such activities would have generated a sense of communal cohesion however fragmented the framework of manorial lordship and estate management in the township might have become over time.

The boundaries of such township communities would have become fixed when the land appropriated by one community extended up to that belonging to neighbouring settlements (Winchester 1987, 29). In the lowlands, intensive cultivation had been practised for millennia prior to the medieval period, when townships are first documented. It has been argued that many of these boundaries were of considerable antiquity, particularly where obvious natural features such as rivers and streams and watersheds were followed, although such antiquity is difficult to prove conclusively. In the uplands, settlement is thought to have experienced successive cycles of expansion and contraction in response to a variety of stimuli, including environmental factors such as climatic change, but doubtless also political and economic issues. This may have resulted in periodic obscuring of the boundaries when communities were not fully exploiting the available resources and hence had less need to precisely define their limits. In all areas the definitive boundary network recorded by the first Ordnance Survey maps is obviously a composite pattern, in which precise delineation occurred in a piecemeal fashion over the centuries (see 7.3.4 below).

7.3.2 The administrative vill

The term vill also designated the basic unit of civil administration in medieval England, representing a village or grouping of hamlets or farmsteads, which were obliged to perform a range of communal administrative duties. The latter included the delivery of evidence at inquests, the upkeep of roads and bridges, the apprehension of criminals within its bounds and the assessment and collection of taxes (Vinogradoff 1908, 475; Winchester 1978, 61; 1987, 32; Dixon 1985 I, 78). The most comprehensive listing of these administrative vills is provided by the occasional tax returns known as Lay Subsidy Rolls. In many areas these administrative vills correspond very closely to the territorial vills and with the later poor law townships (see below). Dixon has shown this to be the largely case in north Northumberland (north of the Coquet), for example (1985 I, 78-9). This was by no means the case everywhere in the border counties, however. In the district of Copeland in West Cumbria, where a predominantly dispersed settlement pattern of scattered 'single farmsteads, small hamlets and looser groupings of farms' prevails, Winchester has demonstrated that the administrative vills had a composite structure, frequently embracing several 'members' or 'hamlets' which correspond to the basic territorial townships (Winchester 1978, 61-5). In many instances administrative vills were significantly larger than the later poor law townships. These relatively large, composite administrative vills correspond to what were

termed *villae integrae* ('entire vills') elsewhere in England. Finally, Winchester also suggests that the term vill gradually acquired a more specific administrative connotation as the organisation of local government became more standardised after the Statute of Winchester in 1285, with the result that in his Copeland study area, from the end of the 13th century, the term was restricted to the administrative units and no longer applied to the basic territorial townships (1978, 66-7).

This idea of the vill as an area of land with defined boundaries, potentially enclosing a number of settlements, rather than the territorial resource of a single community, is expressed in a passage by Sir John Fortescue, writing towards the end of the medieval period, and makes an interesting contrast with Bracton's description over two hundred years earlier (Fortescue, 54-55; *cf*. Winchester *ibid*. n.27):

> Hundreds again are divided into vills . . . . the boundaries of vills are not marked by walls, buildings, or streets, but by the confines of fields, by large tracts of land, by certain hamlets and by many other things such as the limits of water courses, woods and wastes . . . . . there is scarcely any place in England that is not contained within the ambits of vills.

7.3.3 Bishopwearmouth Panns

The pattern of townships could alter in response to historical circumstance and in particular demographic change. Small villages or hamlets, which had formerly been townships, could end up being absorbed in neighbouring townships when their population shrank during the late Middle Ages. Equally, new townships might be created, on occasion, in response to population growth. This was the case with Bishopwearmouth Panns, which took its name from the salt pans associated with the local salt-making industry that gained prominence there in the late 16th century. Located on the south bank of the Wear, adjoining Sunderland township to the east and Bishopwearmouth proper to the south, this was tiny strip of land – some six acres – reclaimed by embankment and quay-building, which represented former waste foreshore of Bishopwearmouth, between the high and low water marks. There was already a small community living in this area by 1577 and copyhold land on the Bishopwearmouth foreshore, known as Pan Hole, was noted in a lease of 1587. Ralph Bowes had acquired the lease of the 'pan hole' for his salt-making operations by the following year. It probably became a township, or constabulary, early in the 17th century and for a time at least formed an enclave for traders needing close control of river-based enterprises. It is suggested that, in a quest for exclusivity and commercial advantage, these may have deliberately sought the autonomy of a separate township, which would provide precious new space to build commodious residences on the waterfront that had become too crowded further east, in Sunderland township (Cookson 2015, 3, 58-59).

7.3.4 The Poor Law Township

The landscape historian, Angus Winchester (1978) coined the term 'Poor Law township' to describe the form of township community which is most familiar today, particularly through the various county histories for Durham, from Hutchinson (1794) onwards. (Surtees (1816-40), however, uses the term 'constabulary', deriving from the parish constables who performed many of the administrative tasks required in each township, such as welfare of the poor and collecting the county rate.) There, along with the parish, it provides the framework for the historical narrative of individual localities. The boundaries of these territorial communities were mapped by the First Edition Ordnance Survey in the mid-19th century and they have generally been presumed to have had a long and largely uninterrupted history stretching back in most cases to the townships of the medieval period.

Although there are many maps showing the village of Bishopwearmouth and the adjoining areas close to the Wear, the earliest detailed records of the entire township territory are provided by Bell's Tyne and Wear coalfield map of 1843 and the tithe map of 1846 (DUL-ASC), though Greenwood also marks township boundaries on his county map of 1820.

The assumption that the medieval administrative vill was the direct ancestor of the post-medieval poor law township, and hence of the modern civil parish, was a reasonable one since functionally they are somewhat similar, representing the most basic level of civil administration. However the actual line of descent is much more complex.

The administration of poor relief was originally established at parochial rather than township level, with the requirement of the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 that overseers for the poor be appointed in every ecclesiastical parish in England (*Statutes* 43 Eliz. I c.2; *cf*. Winchester 1978, 56). Following pressure in parliament to permit the subdivision of the huge ecclesiastical parishes in the northern counties into smaller, more convenient units, the 1662 Poor Law Act allowed 'every Township or Village' in northern England to become a unit for poor-rate assessment and collection with their own overseers (*Statutes* 14 Charles II c.12, s.21; *cf*. Winchester 1987, 27). Winchester has argued, on the basis of the arrangements he documented in the Copeland district of west Cumbria, that it was the territorial townships rather than the administrative vills which were most frequently adopted to serve as the new poor law townships.

The development of the Poor Law townships from the earlier, medieval territorial townships frequently gave rise to anomalies and ambiguities – particularly where there had been distinct hamlets or manorial farms within the original vill – and Bishopwearmouthprovides ample evidence of this. A case in point is the earliest surviving entry in the Bishopwearmouth Parish Books, dated to 1 July 1661 and excerpted by Surtees (1816, 230). This recorded that the churchwardens ordered an assessment of ten shillings'on every seat in *the several townships* of Bishop-Wearmouth, Tunstall, Borden, Silksworth, and *the several places* of Barnes, Ford, Pallyon, Grindon, West-Borden, Field-house,[19] and Farnton-Hall, and the Towne of Sunderland, and the Constablery[20] of Pannes'.[21] This suggests that local officials recognised a hierarchy of communities, with full village townships, on the one hand, and a series of distinct, smaller territorial entities, on the other, which were labelled 'places' by the 1661 churchwardens and did not have the rank of township.

Thus, West Burdon (also referred to as Old Burdon and Little Burdon) and Grindon were longstanding subsidiary hamlet settlements within the townships of Burdon and Silksworth respectively. They both had different tenurial histories from that of the main portions of their respective townships, with Grindon forming part of the Hilton lordship and West Burdon being held by the Nevilles – sometimes in conjunction a member of their affinity such as Thomas Menville – as free tenants of the bishop, whilst East, Town or Great Burdon was a directly held possession of the bishop. 'Farnton Hall' or Farringdon, which was also included within the formal bounds of Silksworth township, had formerly been a grange farm belonging to Hexham priory, coming into the possession of the Crown at Dissolution and passing into the hands of the Blakiston family by the late 16th century (Cookson 2015, 33). On the other hand Ford, also listed as a 'place' in 1661, was technically a full township, but

[19] Field-house doubtless represents Housefield ,or Bainbridge Holme as it was increasingly known.
[20] Constabulary seems to have been used interchangeably with township, as reflected in the way that Surtees typically refers to the townships with each parish as 'constableries' (cf. 1816, 224, for example).
[21] Curiously, Ryhope was omitted from the list altogether, though it was clearly a functioning township, subject to an inclosure award in 1658/1680 for example. Evidently, no assessment was made there by the churchwardens, for whatever reason.

7.2: Tithe Map of High Barnes and Low Barnes in the Township of Bishopwearmouth, dated 4th April 1845. (Ref: DUL-ASC DDR/EA/TTH/1/10)

7.3: Tithe Map of Bishopwearmouth Township, dated 9th September 1846 (Ref: DUL-ASC DDR/EA/TTH/1/20)

perhaps the village settlement there had shrunk to the point where its status had become a little uncertain. It too had once formed part of the Hilton lordship.

The remaining three places in the list, Barnes, Pallion and Field-house (i.e. Housefield/Bainbridge Holme), formed part of Bishopwearmouth township itself. They were located along the western and south-western periphery of the township's core territory, that is to say the village of Bishopwearmouth itself and the farmland directly associated with that community. These 'places' seem to have originated as discrete manorial estates held by members of local gentry families as feudal tenants of the bishop, and were separate from the main episcopal manor and the rector's manor.

Two of the three, Barnes and Pallion, were held by the Dalden family and then the Bowes in the late Middle Ages, as part of their manor of Hameldon,[22] and almost appear to have achieved the status of separate townships. Thus the tithe commutation for Barnes was recorded in a separate apportionment award and plan, the latter described as a 'plan of certain parts of the Township of Bishopwearmouth . . . called the District of High Barnes and Low Barnes' (DDR/EA/TTH/1/10: award dated 4 April 1845, plan also 1845). The main Bishopwearmouth tithe plan and award excludes Barnes, though the plan still labels that area as 'Township of Bishopwearmouth' and the title of the plan itself is 'Plan of *part* of the Township of Bishopwearmouth' (DDR/EA/TTH/1/20: award dated 9 September 1846, plan also 1846). Interestingly it also excludes Pallion, in the north-west corner of the township, though no plan or apportionment for that area has been located. On the 1st edition Ordnance Survey sheets, surveyed some 10 years later in 1855-56 and published in 1861-62, both Barnes and Pallion were demarcated in the same way as ordinary townships. However, they were captioned with lower-case lettering, indicating that they were subordinate to Bishopwearmouth Township (shown in fully capitalised lettering), but nevertheless distinct districts in their own right. Surtees includes both Barnes and Pallion in the 'constabulary' (i.e. township) of Bishopwearmouth, along with a third distinct estate, Bainbridge-Holme, formerly the Manor or Grange of Housefield. This too had originally been part of the Hameldon or Humbledon vill, but was a discrete manor in its own right, tenurially separate from the manor of Barnes, and it is not shown as a demarcated district on the Ordnance Survey or tithe maps, perhaps because ownership of the estate became very fragmented from the beginning of the 18th century onwards (see 9.6.3 below).

Townships were finally replaced in rural areas by the civil parish in the late 19th century. The Local Government Act of 1889, which established the civil parish, specifically stated it was to be 'a place for which a separate poor rate is or can be made' (*Statutes* 52/53 Vict. c.63 sec. 5), underlining the extent to which the new civil parishes were based on the former Poor Law townships. Generally the boundaries and extent of the old township and its civil parish replacement were identical, though in rural areas where civil parishes survive today, they are often somewhat larger than their predecessors, as a result of more recent territorial amalgamations. However, by the time that civil parishes were introduced much of Bishopwearmouth township, including the area of the ancient village centre, had already been absorbed into a new framework of municipal local government.

7.3.5   The transition to municipal government
The Municipal Borough of Sunderland was first established in 1835, encompassing the central townships of Fullwell, Southwick and Monkwearmouth on the north bank of the

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[22] Pallion was held by the de la Leie lineage up to the early 14th century. It was probably only after its acquisition by the Daldens, later in that century, that Pallion became attached to the manor of Hameldon and specifically Barnes, which the Daldens already possessed (see 9.5.4 & 9.6.3 below).

Scale 1:17500

0 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 1 1.2 1.4 1.6 1.8 2 km
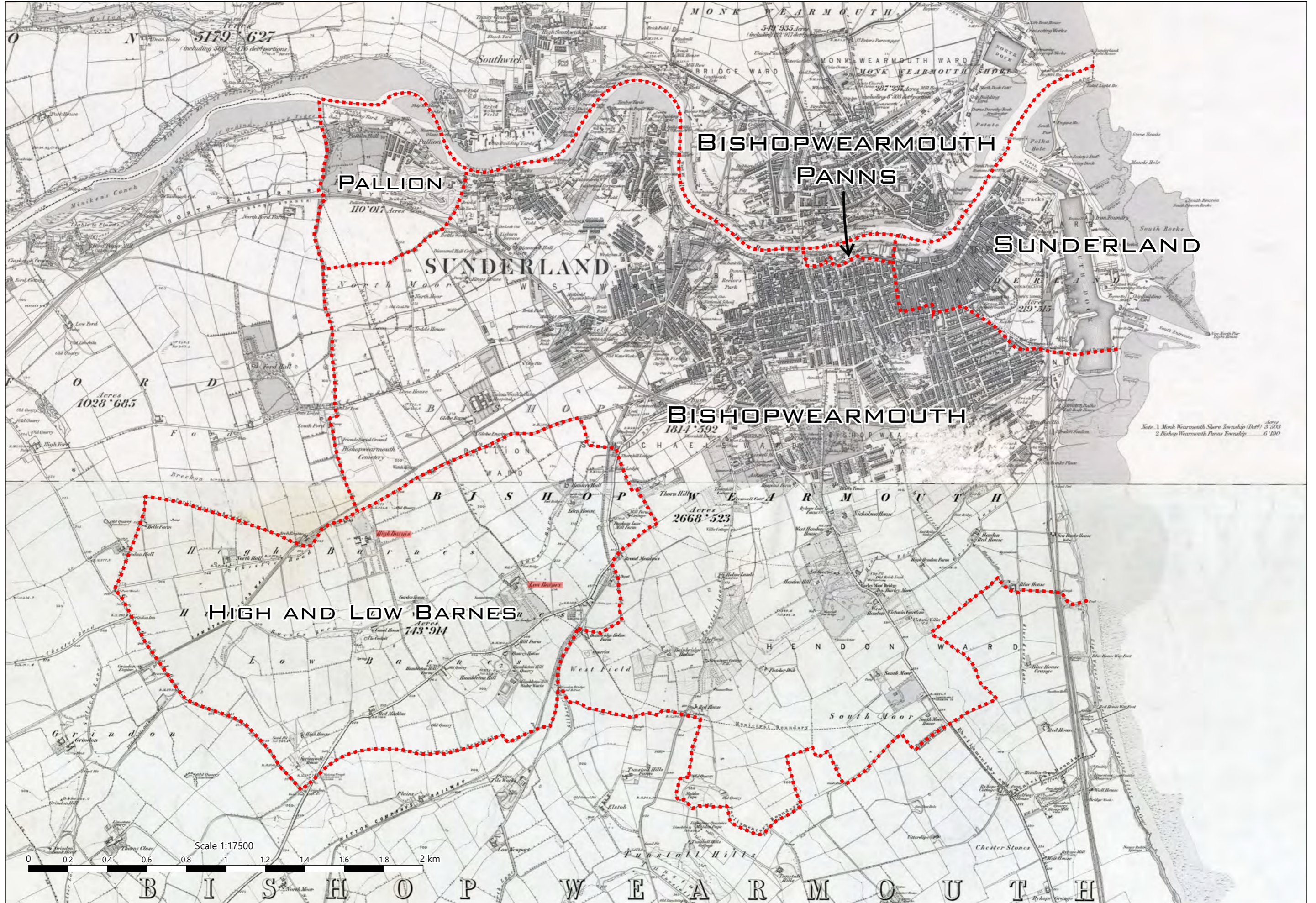
Wear and Sunderland and part of Bishopwearmouth on the south side (Cookson 2015, 131-32). Only the area of Bishopwearmouth within a mile of Wearmouth Bridge was initially included in the municipal borough, which created some confusion over which body had responsibility for operations such as highways maintenance. The initial extent of the borough can be seen on the 1st edition 6in Ordnance Survey sheets, as can the wards, into which the borough was subdivided. Over the course of the 19th century, the scope of the borough's operations was steadily expanded by successive reforms, notably the 1851 Borough of Sunderland Act. It took over the various functions of the two earlier improvement commissions for Bishopwearmouth (including the Panns) and Sunderland, which had been created in 1810, plus highways boards and sundry other authorities, including the residual responsibilities of Bishopwearmouth Vestry, and was elevated to the status of a county borough by the 1889 Local Government Act. Its territory was also repeatedly extended (in 1867, 1889 and 1895), although the borough did not fully absorb the area of the former Bishopwearmouth township until well into the 20th century, the area outside forming part of a separate civil parish, Bishopwearmouth Without. Ultimately, however, this process of centralising local government in a single urban authority for Sunderland eliminated the last vestiges of independent local administration associated with ancient village and township of Bishopwearmouth.

7.3.6   Township boundaries

The changing nature of the township as an institution, which has been outlined above, also resulted, in some instances, in alterations to their territorial boundaries. These boundaries were not fixed in stone since time immemorial, as is sometimes assumed, but were in fact subject to quite a lot of alteration in the post-medieval period as a result of the disruption of the late Middle Ages, changes to land ownership patterns and to field boundaries due to the enclosure process, plus the creation of Poor Law townships in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The township's southern boundary adjoining the townships of Ryhope and Tunstall is a possible case in point. The boundary with Tunstall is very irregular and sinuous. Its was apparently demarcated in 1528 following dispute over its course involving the Bishop of Durham (Cardinal Wolsley), as lord of Tunstall, and Lord Lumley, whose Housefield-Hameldon estate made up the adjoining part of Bishopwearmouth township. The irregularity and sinuosity of the boundary here is consistent with one which had evolved over time, following the edges of tracts of moorland or parcels of open arable land known as flats.[23]

By contrast the boundary with Ryhope is characterised by sharp changes of direction as it follows the edges of fields which can be no earlier than the 17th-century enclosure. It is clear from place-name evidence that Bishopwearmouth's South Moor lay in this area and, indeed, this moor may have extended well into Ryhope township, beyond the 19th-century boundary line, perhaps implying that the moor was used by the tenants of both townships (see Cookson 2010, 10, fig 8, and Cookson 2015, 26, fig 9, for this reconstruction of the township's layout). The boundary between Bishopwearmouth and Ryhope and between Ryhope and Tunstall may only have been defined and demarcated when the moor was divided into enclosed fields and might reflect the need to give all the farmers with grazing rights on the moor a fair allocation of land rather than simply dividing it neatly in two.

[23] The text of the agreement resolving the dispute is reproduced by Surtees (1816, 250), citing Rot. Wolsley.

7.4   Great Estates and Shires: Estate Management before the Manor

The classic form of medieval estate, prevalent in the North of England from the Norman Conquest onwards, was known as the manor. This consisted of a relatively small, bipartate estate, comprising demesne farm and tenant holdings, and embracing one or two vills at most. Sometimes, indeed, a vill might be divided between two or more manorial estates, with the villagers answering to different lords. Earlier in the Middle Ages, however, a altogether different pattern seems to have predominated. This was characterised by very large, integrated estates, forming coherent, contiguous blocks of territory, with outlying settlements providing renders in kind and labour for the lord's central hall and home farm (cf. Dyer 2003, 26-31). Various terms are used to designate such estates – 'great estates', 'multiple estates', 'composite estates' or 'shires' (the latter deriving from Old English *scir*, signifying something detached from a larger whole, such as a kingdom).
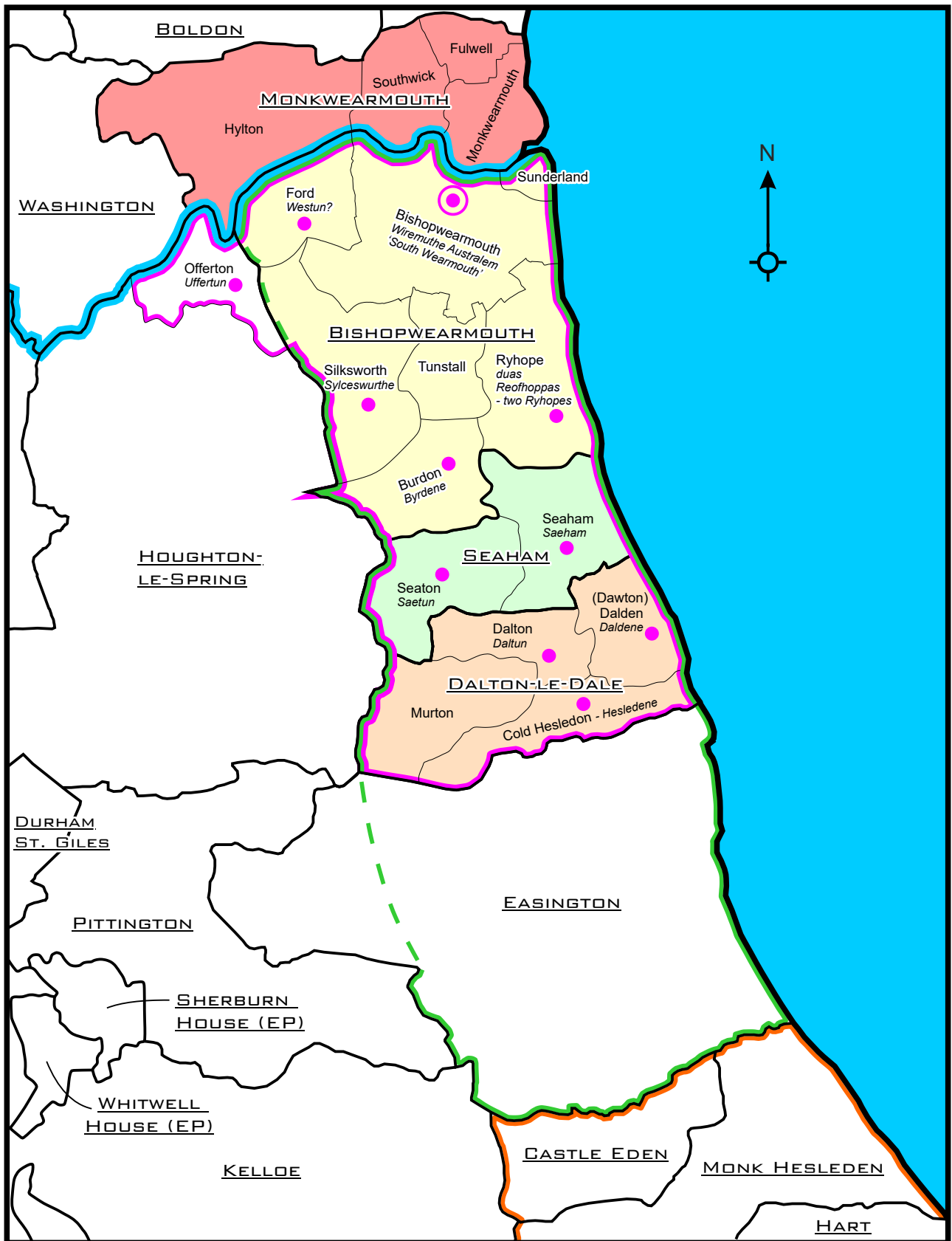
7.4.1   'South Wearmouth with its appendages'

Just such an estate, centred on Bishop Wearmouth, or South Wearmouth as it is labelled, was granted with its dependencies (*appendiciis*) by King Æthelstan (924-39) to the Community of St Cuthbert (*HSC* 26; cf. commentary, pp. 109-10; appendix II, pp. 124-9):

> In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I, King Æthelstan, give to St Cuthbert this gospel book, … (a list of church treasures, ornaments, clothing and books follows) … and my beloved vill (*villa*) of Bishop Wearmouth with its dependencies (*Wiremuthe Australem cum suis appendiciis*), namely *Westun* (location unknown – perhaps Ford township), Offerton (*Uffertun*), Silksworth (*Sylceswurthe*), the two Ryhopes (*duas Reofhoppas*), Burdon (*Byrdene*), Seaham (*Sæham*), Seaton (*Sætun*), Dalton-le-Dale (*Daltun*), Dawdon (*Daldene*), Cold Hesledon (*Hesledene*). All these I give under witness of God and St Cuthbert ….

The federal character of core and appendages itemised above was typical of such shire estates. The centre of the estate was presumably located at Bishopwearmouth itself, in the historic village core next to the parish church of St Michael and All Angels. A church on this site probably dates back to the late Saxon period judging from the survival of a grave-marker of possible 11th-century date (*Corpus*, 53; and see Chapter 6) and references to two other Pre-Conquest carved stones found during the 1930s rebuilding, but now lost. Although the grant described in the passage must have occurred in the 920s or 930s (dates of 924, 934 or 935 have been suggested based on references in other sources such as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, cf. Johnson South 2002, 108), the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* was compiled somewhat later, probably in the mid- to late 11th century date. However the compiler of the *Historia* was probably copying earlier records inscribed in blank spaces in the community's most treasured books (Johnson South 2002, 6-7). Rather than receiving and maintaining collections of written charters to record its acquisition of estates, the Cuthbertine community seems to have preserved these important 'business records' in gospels and other precious books. Indeed, as Johnson Smith notes (2002, 7), one of the main main purposes of the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* 'may have been to gather the information, scattered among these various books, into a single, easily accessible text.'

7.4.2   Comparable estates

Two other similar entries in the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* relate to another shire or composite estate, or perhaps two conjoined shires centred on Monk Hesleden and Easington, immediately to the south of the Wearmouth estate (*HSC* 19b, 22; cf. commentary, pp. 95, 104-5; appendix II, pp. 124-9): At the very end of the 9th century, Eadred the abbot of Carlisle bought from Guthred, the Danish king of York, the townships

BOLDON

Fulwell

Southwick

MONKWEARMOUTH

Monkwearmouth

Hylton

WASHINGTON

Sunderland

Ford
Westun?

Bishopwearmouth
Wiremuthe Australem
'South Wearmouth'

Offerton
Uffertun

BISHOPWEARMOUTH

Silksworth
Sylceswurthe

Tunstall

Ryhope
duas
Reofhoppas
- two Ryhopes

**HOUGHTON-
le-SPRING**

Burdon
Byrdene

Seaham
Saeham

SEAHAM

Seaton
Saetun

(Dawton)
Dalden
Daldene

Dalton
Daltun

DALTON-le-DALE

**DURHAM
St. GILES**

Murton

Cold Hesledon - Hesledene

PITTINGTON

EASINGTON

**SHERBURN
House (EP)**

**WHITWELL
House (EP)**

KELLOE

CASTLE EDEN

MONK HESLEDEN

HART

N

0   1   2   3   4   5 miles

= Land south of Iodene granted
by Raegnald to Onlafball c.918
(boundary = Castle Eden Burn)

= Land north of Iodene granted
by Raegnald to Scula c.918

= Vills comprising the
South Wearmouth estate

= Boundary of the shire estate of 'South
Wearmouth Vill (Wiremuthe Australem)
with its appendages granted to the
Community of St Cuthbert by King
Aethelstan c.934/5

*7.5: Bishopwearmouth and its environs in the 10th-11th centuries with the territorial landgrants
overlaid on a map of the parishes and townships of East Durham c.1800.*

286

(*villas*) of Monk Hesleden (*Seletun*), Horden (*Horetun*), the two Yodens (*duas Geodene*, i.e. Little Eden and Castle Eden), Hulam (*Holum*), Hutton Henry (*Hotun*), *Twilingatun* (location unknown), and conferred the estates on the Cuthbertine community. A little later on, Elfred son of Brihtwulf, a refugee noble from the west (Cumbria or Lancashire), was presented with the following vills by Bishop Cutheard (901-15): Easington (*Esington*), Monk Hesleden (*Seletun*), Little Thorpe (*Thorep*), Horden (*Horedene*), Yoden (*Iodene*, i.e. Little Eden), the two Shottons (*duas Sceottun*), South Eden (*Iodene Australem*, i.e. Castle Eden), Hulam (*Holum*), Hutton Henry (*Hotun*), *Twilingatun*, Billingham with its dependencies (*Billingham cum suis appendiciis* – probably another, separate composite estate), Sheraton (*Scurufatun*).

These territories correspond almost exactly to the later medieval parishes of Monk Hesleden, Castle Eden and Easington, apart from the omission of the vills of Hawthorn and Haswell, which formed northern and north-western districts of Easington parish. Easington and Monk Hesleden were named first, as the estate centres, which in the case of Monk Hesleden displaced it with regard to the strict, north-south geographical order otherwise maintained by both lists. The character of the territories with their compact form and hierarchical structure with a centre or *caput* and numerous dependent vills (*appendiciis*), appears typical of composite estates or shires, as recognised elsewhere.

Another indication of Easington's origin is provided by references to the series of farms which were carved out of Easington Moor by means of episcopal grants in the 12th and 13th centuries, notably Pespool and Boisfield (in or around present-day Pespool Wood), directly to the west of Easington, and Flemingfield, located to the west of Shotton. These demonstrate that Easington Moor was previously much more extensive than it appears on mid-19th century maps and probably functioned as a '*shire moor*' on which the inhabitants of many of the vills of the original great estate were able to intercommon and graze their livestock (Britnell 2004, 33).

7.4.3   The Boldon Book and the transformation from shire to manor

By the time the Boldon Book was compiled in the late 12th century the shire system had largely broken down and transformed into a pattern of smaller manorial estates focussed on individual townships, but elements of the earlier system appear to have survived longer on the bishop's estates than elsewhere. Several groups of contiguous townships bearing a 'shire' label figure in the survey, including Quarringtonshire (*Queringdonshire*), Heighingtonshire and Aucklandshire, in County Durham and Norhamshire and Bedlingtonshire in Northumberland, suggesting that these clusters represent the remains of integrated, multiple estates.

Possible relics of similar shire-estate arrangements are also evident in the Boldon Book in relation to the area of Houghton-le-Spring parish. Here the bishop held two central manors with demesne farms, Houghton and Newbottle. He also held the vills of South Biddick, Wardon and Morton. None of the latter group of vills appear to have contained episcopal demesne farms. Instead the tenants there leased their entire vills from the bishop and performed a variety of labour services on the Houghton and Newbottle demesnes (*Boldon Buke*, 6-8, 47-48). This system had probably prevailed more widely throughout the vills of Houghton parish, but during the 12th century many of the outlying townships had been granted to feudal tenants, the bishop's barons and knights, or in some cases to individual free tenants who were far less burdened than the villeins. In the latter case fragments of the earlier system sometimes persisted. At Herrington, where a free tenant, Hugh de Hermas, held two thirds of the vill, he was obliged to provide for the ploughing and harrowing of 4

acres at Newbottle and 12 men to perform autumn work, presumably drawn from his subordinate villeins (*ibid.*, 36, 70).

There are slight indications that the scope of the manor of Houghton extended over an even wider area. Villeins from as far afield as Boldon were obliged to mow there for one full day till the evening (*ibid.*, 4, 45). It is unclear, however, this was an isolated case or whether the same applied to the villeins of all the townships that were said to render as do those of Boldon, including Bishopwearmouth itself (*ibid.*, 5, 46).

In Bishopwearmouth, the dismantling of the earlier shire system seems to have followed a somewhat different course. The four vills which remained under the direct control of the bishop were paired together, Tunstall with Bishopwearmouth and (Great) Burdon with Ryhope. In both cases there was a single demesne which was leased out. The tenants of each pair of vills presumably collaborated in the working of their respective combined demesne. Two hundred years later, when Bishop Hatfield's survey was compiled c. 1381, Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall each had their own allocation of demesne land – 161 and 110 acres respectively – which was divided amongst the tenants, mostly in 10 acre portions. However, Ryhope had a larger area of demesne land (292½ acres), whilst Burdon had none, implying that the former combined demesne there was situated in the territory of Ryhope and was never split up between the two vills. Again it had been parcelled up into 12 acre portions by 1381 and rented out to various Ryhope tenants.

Thus, in both Bishopwearmouth and Houghton parochial territories, the way the bishop's estates were managed by the late 12th century was something of a halfway house between a shire estate and a classic manorial estate, though they took somewhat different forms. This may have been motivated by straightforward pragmatism. Even after the division of the patrimony of St Cuthbert between the bishop and the monastic convent of Durham Priory, and the subsequent grants of some episcopal estates to his *barones et fideles*, the bishop still held substantial blocks of often contiguous vills. Rather than bearing the cost of establishing a demesne farm in every one of these vills, including the construction of manorial halls and all the requisite agricultural buildings in each case, it was doubtless more economical to focus resources on certain key estate centres where the labour of dependent tenants from more than township could conveniently be concentrated.

7.5   The Manor

As a result of the developments outlined above, the manor, rather than the shire, was the basic unit of seigneurial estate administration and territorial lordship from the late 11th or 12th century onwards. Jurisdiction was exercised by the manorial lord over the estate, its assets, economic activities and customary and legal rights, through his manor court sometimes termed the *court baron* or in the estates of the Bishop of Durham and the Durham cathedral priory, the *Halmote court*.

7.5.1   Feudal lordship: baronies and manors
Manorial lordship represented only one link in the chain of feudal and tenurial relationships which extended from the lowly peasant through to the baronial superior lord and ultimately right up to the king himself. In the Bishopric of Durham, or *Haliwerfolc*, as it was also known in the Middle Ages, much land was held directly by the bishop, who was the superior lord, or by the cathedral priory. However many manors were granted to other lords, usually men of lesser rank, a process known as subinfeudation. These feudal tenants held the manors

granted to them as a 'fief' or 'fee' in return for an oath of homage and fidelity, becoming the baronial lord's vassals, 'his men' (*homines*). As such they were expected to perform a stipulated amount of military service and generally support and counsel their lord, attending his court periodically (a service known as 'suit of court'), and perhaps providing an annual gift of a sparrowhawk or pound of pepper or something similar. Military service was measured in terms of a knight's fee, or a multiple or fraction thereof representing, notionally at least, a certain number of days service. This might involve guarding the baron's principal castle (*caput*), a duty known as 'castle guard', logically enough, or campaigning by his side when the lord was called upon to contribute forces to a royal army.

The territory of Bishopwearmouth parish demonstrates the full range of lordship and tenure outlined above. The bishop, himself, directly held the vills of Bishopwearmouth, with its attached borough, Tunstall, Ryhope and Burdon. Similarly, the prior and convent of Durham held the townships of Monkwearmouth, Southwick and Fulwell, within Monkwearmouth parish on the north side of the Wear. Immediately to the west, however, the vill of Hylton was the seat of a compact territorial lordship held by the Hilton family, which straddled the Wear encompassing the vills of Newton-by-Hylton, Ford, Grindon and an additional manor, Clowcroft, whose exact location is unknown, but was probably contiguous with Grindon (Aird 1998, 219; Liddy 2008, 37; Meikle and Newman 2007, 52-53, 62-69; Cookson 2010, 15, 18, 25-28; 2015, 40-44).[24] The estate was valued at £120 per annum in 1376 and still maintained an honorial court at Hylton which the free tenants of the lordship were expected to attend, something of a rarity by this date. The Hilton family could trace their tenure back to the mid-12th century and such was their prestige that William Hilton was able to claim the title Baron Hylton in the late 14th century, a title none of his local peers sought to match.

Silksworth too was initially held by feudal tenants of the bishop. It was first granted by Bishop Ranulf Flambard (1099-1128) to his nephew, Richard of Ravensworth, and thereafter passed to the latter's son, Geoffrey of Horden. Geoffrey settled the estate on his son, also called Geoffrey, and his daughter, Emma who married Roger of Heplingdene (Eppleton near Hetton). By the 1170s, however, Philip fitz Hamo, sheriff of Durham (c.1180-c.1195), was purchasing much land there, which he ultimately gifted to Durham cathedral priory (for the original charter grants see *FPD*, 18-19n, 123-6n). The lords of Horden retained an interest in Silksworth until the early 14th century, by which time they had acquired the surname FitzMarmaduke, but by 1323, the whole manor had come into the possession of the cathedral priory. Meanwhile, the western half of the township, known as Farringdon Grange, had been granted to the Augustinian priory of Hexham by the FitzMarmaduke lords of Horden at some stage (*Black Book of Hexham*, 121-4 no. 73, 263-4). Hexham priory maintained a self-contained grange farm at Farringdon, as well as taking rents from some of the husbandmen and cottagers in the village of Silksworth, but Durham priory seems to have followed a different policy. Its Silksworth manor was rented out to members of the local gentry, including the Middletons of Belsay, with a cadet line of that family taking up residence there (cf. Meikle & Newman 2007, 70-71; Cookson 2010, 14-15; 2015, 31-3). In the 15th century four such individuals, Roger de Aske Thomas Middleton, William Rakett and Roger del Both, held Silksworth as free tenants of the priory, paying a total of 13s 4d per annum (*FPD*, 18-19, 123).

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[24] The Hilton family also held another block of contiguous manors in the Parish of Washington, immediately to the west of Hylton, including Barmston, Great Usworth and North Biddick.

7.5.2 Manor, township and parish

In its simplest form a single manor would encapsulate an entire township and the two would therefore have the same territorial limits. Indeed parish, township and manor could all be coterminous, with a small parish serving the spiritual needs of a single township community whose landed resources formed a single manorial estate and whose members were bound by a variety of personal and tenurial relationships to a single lord. However this simple arrangement was highly unusual in County Durham. As we have seen, the number of vills or townships greatly exceeded that of the parishes, whilst the number of manors would have been greater still. The 'classic' manor which encapsulated an entire village and its township was much rarer than primary school history lessons might have us believe. Then as now, the processes of succession and inheritance and the inevitable variability in human fortunes resulted in the amalgamation or, more often, fragmentation of estates. If the male line of a seigneurial family died out, the estates were usually divided between all the surviving female heiresses and this frequently involved subdividing individual manors rather than simply distributing different intact manors to the various heiresses (perhaps with the aim of ensuring the division was absolutely equitable). The detailed tenurial histories contained in the volumes of Surtees' county history provide plenty of examples of such processes at work and their impact on specific Durham manors. In other cases portions of the township which had originally formed part of the original manor might be granted to other lords, to free tenants, or to institutions of the church, such as neighbouring monasteries. Most townships therefore were divided between a number of manorial landholders (*cf*. Bailey 2002, 5-7).

7.5.3 The structure of the manor

A manor typically consisted of two principal elements, on the one hand land known as 'demesne' over which the lord maintained direct control – what we would today perhaps term the home farm – and on the other hand a series of permanent unfree tenant holdings. These two elements were integrated together with the tenants being compelled to provide labour to work the lord's demesne as part of their rent.

Demesne farming

The management of the demesne varied over time and depending on the size of the manorial lordship. A lord who just held one or two manors in a compact holding might supervise the farming of the demesne himself. In addition to the rents provided by any tenants he would retain all the profit from the demesne, using the produce to feed his household and selling any surplus to provide money to purchase anything else the household might need. On larger estates, however, such direct supervision by the lord was impossible. Instead two management strategies were possible. The lord might simply lease the demesne out for a predetermined annual sum in money or produce to someone who could directly manage the land, a local free tenant or a lesser manorial lord who resided on an adjacent estate perhaps, or even to the township community as a whole. By doing so the lord of course lost control over the full produce of the demesne, some of which the leaseholder would retain as his share, but the system was simple to administer and the lord gained a predictable income, with the leaseholder in effect bearing the risk of any fall in production as a result of a bad harvest, for example. The lease would run for a set number of years, or for the lifetime of the lessee and even one or more of his heirs. The rent paid by the lessee, rather than the landholding itself, was referred to as the farm (*firma*) and the lessee was accordingly known as the farmer (*firmarius*), the modern terms having shifted in meaning over time.

This system of leasing was prevalent throughout England (and indeed the rest of Europe) right up until the late 12th century when it began to give way to a system of direct

seigneurial management by means of paid employees who acted as the lord's agent supervising the workforce, including the tenants' compulsory labour services, paying any expenses and maximising the profit. By the 1220s this system of demesne farming had become the norm on large estates across England (though it was adopted nowhere else in Europe). This required more elaborate record keeping than was necessary for the old system of demesne leasing, with the lord's agent, variously entitled a reeve, bailiff or sergeant, having to prepare annual accounts which could be audited by a hierarchy of more senior officials. In addition various other types of document were drawn up using juries of local tenants: surveys were detailed written descriptions, rather than drawn maps or plans, which itemised all the manor's assets – buildings, land, stock and tenants; custumals listed all the rents and services owed by the tenants; extents added leasehold valuations to the assets listed in a survey; terriers were detailed topographic descriptions of the manor, parcel by parcel; whilst rentals listed the tenants with the rent in money or produce due from each. As a result England has the most detailed and informative manorial records of any country in Europe (for excellent introductions to manorial records and their usefulness as a source for local historians see Ellis 1994, Harvey 1999 and, incorporating translations of numerous examples, Bailey 2002).

The tenants

The second key component of a typical manor were the unfree tenants known as bondmen or bondagers, who are more generally labelled 'serfs' today (although that term is not usually encountered in medieval manorial estate records such as Inquisitions Post Mortem). These tenants formed the core of the community. They would usually have numbered between ten and thirty and were alloted standard-sized holdings or tenements, notionally around 24-30 fiscal acres, though the actual area might be more variable. They paid the same rents in cash and in kind and were bound to perform a certain number of days labour on the lord's demesne farm – the amount of each type of work – ploughing, harvesting, carting etc being carefully specified.

In addition there were usually also a number of lesser tenants known as cottars, cotmen or cottagers who held little or no land and had to earn a living by labouring for a wage or providing some specialised service such as smithing. Finally there would be a number of free tenants whose rights and obligations were much closer to those of feudal tenants. These would have been fewer in number than the unfree tenants and in many instances their holdings may have been smaller, but they had greater security of tenure and may have held land in more than one manor.

Lord and tenant in Bishopwearmouth

In the specific case of Bishopwearmouth and the neighbouring townships we can see how the two components of demesne farm and tenant services work by examining the respective entries in the two great surveys of the bishop's estates, the Boldon Book compiled in the late 12th century (c. 1183, but with some later insertions in the versions that have come down to us) and the Hatfield Survey of c. 1381. This is discussed in detail in sections 9.5.2 and 9.5.3 below.

7.5.4   Manors in the late medieval period: the growth of the manor court

The nature of the manor changed in the later medieval period. As a result of economic and social shifts, population decline and recession (following the Black Death), the labour shortages resulted in the progressive extinction of serfdom as unfree bond tenants, dissatisfied with the terms of their tenure could simply migrate to find a lord who was willing to set less onerous conditions. Hence terms like bondmen or bondagers and bondage

holdings (*bondagium*) disappear from the documentary sources along with the unpopular labour services on the demesne lands which could no longer be enforced and were replaced by husbandmen and husbandland (*terra husband*). The husbandmen paid rents in cash. No longer able to compel tenants to labour on the demesne and with the cost of wages spiralling upwards, lords, both secular and ecclesiastical, found direct management and cultivation of their demesne farm was no longer viable and simply leased the land out to one or more tenants instead. At the same time the manor court became more prominent in the definition of manorial status so that by the 15th century a new definition of the manor was emerging: a property was only a manor if its owner held a court for the tenants – a court baron (Harvey 1999, 2-3, 55). In the words of the Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke, in the early 17th century 'a Court Baron is the chiefe prop and pillar of a Manor, which no sooner faileth but the Manor falleth to the ground' (Coke 1641, 56-7, cited in Harvey 1999, 2).

7.5.5   The Halmote Courts of Durham Bishopric

In the Durham Bishopric it was the manor courts for the ecclesiastical estates were known as halmote courts. Both the bishop and the cathedral priory had halmote courts which supervised the administration of their respective vills. The courts recorded and sanctioned land transfers, regulated the use of common resources by the tenants of the manor/vill such as grazing on the moor, and dealt with minor breaches of the peace, debt and trespass (Meikle & Newman 2007, 60-61; Cookson 2015, 49-50). It has been argued that their competence was, however, somewhat greater than manorial courts elsewhere (Larson 2005, 102-105). The courts met three times a year, in summer, autumn and early spring. The tenants were obliged to attend the Halmote and fined for non-attendance. Each village was represented by a jury of three to five men, one of whom was almost always the local reeve, a tenant appointed to oversee the day to day management of the manor. The courts were presided over by the bishop's steward, assisted by the bailiffs and county coroners. The courts met in manorial halls or sometimes in a parish church, but they were not held in every manor or even every major parochial centre. Instead, to simplify the court officials' travel itinerary, the tourns regularly stopped at a restricted number of locations: Chester-le-Street, Houghton-le-Spring, Easington, Bishop Middleham, Stockton, Sadberge, Darlington, Bishop Auckland, Wolsingham and Lanchester (Larson 2005, 100-101). None was held at Bishopwearmouth, however, even though the village was formed the centre of a large parish containing a cluster of episcopal manors, like the other locations where the halmote courts met. Instead the tenants of Bishopwearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope and Burdon had to journey to the halmote held at Houghton-le-Spring.

This decision to centralise court proceedings at Houghton and not to hold a tourn at Bishopwearmouth was probably taken purely for the administrative convenience of the bishop's officials, who were doubtless keen to reduce the amount of time they spent on the road. Where possible they preferred to have the tenants come to them rather than travel to the tenants themselves. It should not be taken to signify that Bishopwearmouth was historically a satellite of Houghton, part of a huge super estate or 'shire' (see 7.4 above), embracing not only the large parish of Houghton, but also Bishopwearmouth and other neighbouring parishes.[25] When the halmote court tourns were first instituted they would have had no impact on the manorial status of Bishopwearmouth or Ryhope, for example, which was based on having a working demesne farm with its manor house, or 'hallgarth'. However the demise of these episcopal demesne farms from the later 14th century onwards

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[25] The obligation to undertake one day's mowing at Houghton imposed on the tenants of Boldon (and perhaps of other vills?) in the Boldon Book, which was noted above (7.4.3; cf. *Boldon Buke*, 4, 45), does not seem sufficient evidence to substantiate such a greater shire, ecompassing a larger are than Houghton Parish. In any case the evidence of the *Historia Sancto Cuthberto* strongly suggests that Bishopwearmouth was the centreof a shire in its own right, extending from the Wear down to the later parish of Dalden-le-Dale (see above 7.4.1).

and the increased emphasis on the proceedings of their manor or halmote courts as the defining feature/focus of these estates profoundly changed the way that the bishop's landholdings in places like Bishopwearmouth were viewed.

Thus, by the 17th century, Bishopwearmouth was regarded not as a manor in its own right but rather as just one of many townships encompassed by the great copyhold manor of Houghton-le-Spring, along with Houghton itself, Newbottle, Warden Law, Morton and East and Middle Herrington in Houghton parish, plus Tunstall, Ryhope and East Burdon in Bishopwearmouth parish. A survey of this manor was undertaken in 1647 on behalf of the Commonwealth Parliament, along with all the other manors of the recently abolished Durham bishopric. This itemised the properties assets and various tenancies of the manor, copyhold, freehold and leasehold (*Parliamentary Surveys*, II, 142-74; see Appendix 1.5: for summary). However the survey noted that Rectory Manor in Bishopwearmouth was a separate manor in its own right (*Parliamentary Surveys*, II, 147).[26] It had held its own halmote court from c. 1560 onwards (Cookson 2015, 49).

[26] *Parliamentary Surveys*, II, 147: (the jurors) 'present and say that the Parsonage of Bishop Wearmouth is a manor of itself and that there are diverse tenants which hold of the said manor most part of which tenants do hold by copy of the court roll and pay several yearly rents to the Parson of Wearmouth for the time being'.

8. VILLAGES

8.1 Villages, Hamlets and Farmsteads – Definitions

The territorial labels discussed in the previous chapter can all be defined with relative ease, despite the complexity caused by their changing role over time (which is especially marked in the case of the township), since they describe specific entities which figure in legislation and other formal records from the medieval period onwards. However it is a very different matter when it comes to precisely defining the terms used to describe different types of settlement, such as 'village' or 'hamlet'. As the foremost scholars of landscape and settlement studies have admitted (e.g. Roberts 1996, 14) it is extraordinarily difficult to define these terms with precision in such a way as to impose any absolute consistency of usage upon them.

For the purposes of this study the following definitions of settlement were used, all drawn from Brian Roberts' extensive work, in particular the succinct discussion provided in *Landscapes of Settlement* (1996, 15-19):

FARMSTEAD:
'An assemblage of agricultural buildings from which the land is worked'

HAMLET:
A small cluster of farmsteads

VILLAGE:
- A clustered assembly of dwellings and farmsteads, larger than a hamlet, but smaller than a town;
[and] A rural settlement with sufficient dwellings to possess a recognisable form (Roberts 1976, 256).

TOWN:
A relatively large concentration of people possessing rights and skills which separate them from direct food production.

8.2 Village Morphology

8.2.1 Village plans
The most substantial body of work on village morphology is that undertaken by Brian Roberts (e.g. 1972; 1976; 1977; 1990) much of it focussed on County Durham. Roberts has identified a complex series of village types based on two main forms, termed 'rows' and 'agglomerations', multiplied by a series of variable factors – such as their complexity (e.g. multlple row villages), degree of regularity, building density and the presence or absence of greens.

This provides a useful schema for classifying villages, but it is difficult to determine what these different morphological characteristics actually signify. Dixon (1985, I,) is sceptical of regularity or irregularity as a significant factor, noting that irregularity does not necessarily mean that a village was not laid out in a particular order at a particular time; that the regularity of a layout is a subjective judgement; and that an irregular row may simply be a

consequence of local terrain or topography. He also points out that, however irregular it might appear, by its very existence the row constitutes an element of regularity. He is especially dismissive of the presence or absence of a green as a significant factor in village morphology, arguing that a green is simply an intrusion of the common waste into the settlement; if such a space is broad it is called a green, if narrow it is a street or gate.

Village plans can take many forms, but one type, in particular, has become associated with County Durham – or the Bishopric as it was formerly termed – namely, the *regular, two-row green settlement*. This comprises two linear rows of buildings laid out along both long sides of a roughly rectangular green. The overall form of the settlement is typically a fairly regular oblong area, with the length of the rows and the green being greater than the width of the two rows and green combined. The rows may be subdivided into a series enclosed plots known as *tofts*, containing the dwelling, possible ancillary farm buildings, yards and garden. Sometimes an additional paddock-sized enclosure, known as a *garth* or *croft*, is tacked on to the rear of the toft. The house is typically positioned at or towards the front of the toft often opening directly onto the green, with the garden usually located to the rear. Where the village population later shrank, these tofts may well be empty and even become amalgamated into larger compartments. At either end of the village, routes may diverge off in several directions. This form was not universally adopted in the county, but was certainly ubiquitous, being found in all areas, especially in the county's eastern, agrarian and lowland half. This ubiquity is particularly pronounced when account is taken of close variants, where, for example, the intervening space is so narrow as to represent a street rather than a green, or where only a single row is present.

One of the simplest ways of studying historic village plans is to examine their layout as shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, with the 6 inch edition (1:10560) being the most suitable scale for the comparison of multiple examples side by side, a process promoted by Brian Roberts in his numerous works (*see* Roberts 1987, 12, for example). This provides a baseline dataset which is reasonably detailed, accurate and of uniform scale. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey represents the earliest, directly comparable series of maps covering every village. Those relating to Bishopwearmouth parish were surveyed in 1855/6 and published in 1861/2. Whilst much earlier maps are available in some instances, dating back to the 18th or even the 17th century, and these may be very detailed and informative, their varying dates and availability mean they are more suited to the detailed analysis of individual village histories, rather than a comparative overview. Even the tithe maps, which cover virtually every township, can vary greatly in quality and accuracy, and in any case they usually only precede the 1st edition by 10-20 years or so.

### 8.2.2 Village morphology in Bishopwearmouth Parish

The outer settlements

If we look at the historic villages of Bishopwearmouth parish using the methodology outlined above we can see that the majority consist of one or two fairly regular rows flanking a green. Moreover, in the cases where only one row is clearly extant, it can be argued that this is likely to have been a result of post-medieval remodelling associated with the creation of substantial mansions with extensive grounds which have swallowed part of the original village layout, including most of the evidence for a second row.

The clearest example of a regular, two-row village is **Tunstall**. The north and south rows and the intervening green of this east-west aligned village are clear (cf. also Cookson 2010, 15-16; 2015, 33-5). A back lane ran along the rear of the northern row's 'toft compartment',
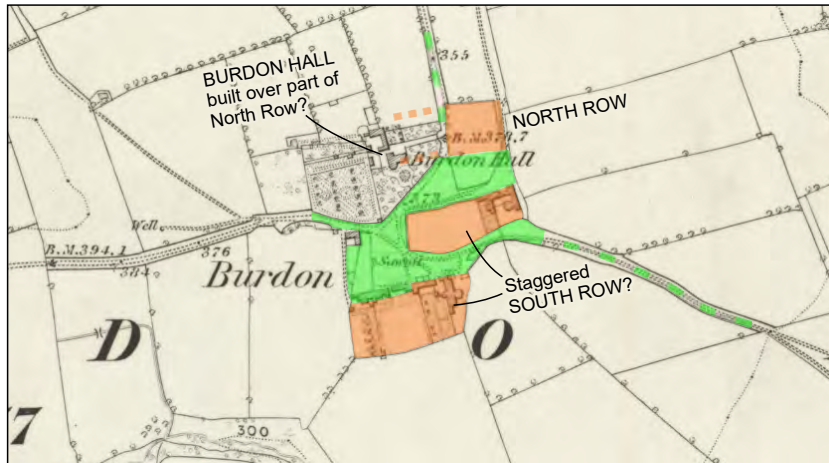
Scale

0   0.1   0.2   0.3 km
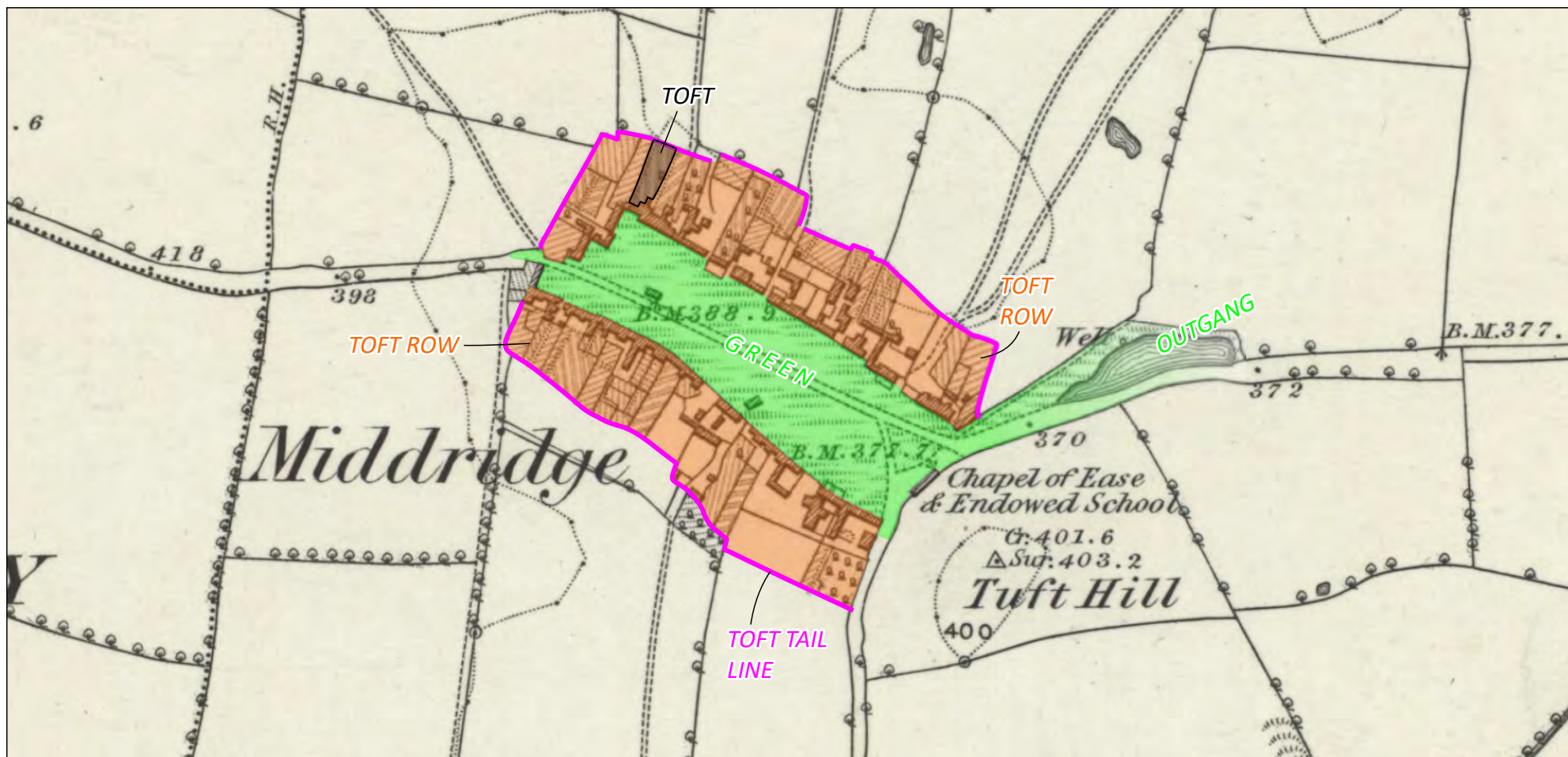
8.1: *Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch per mile, surveyed 1856, showing structural elements of Middridge village.*
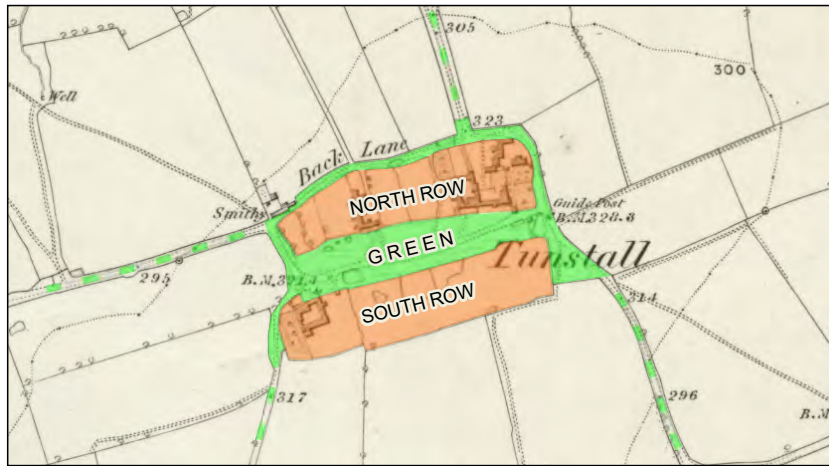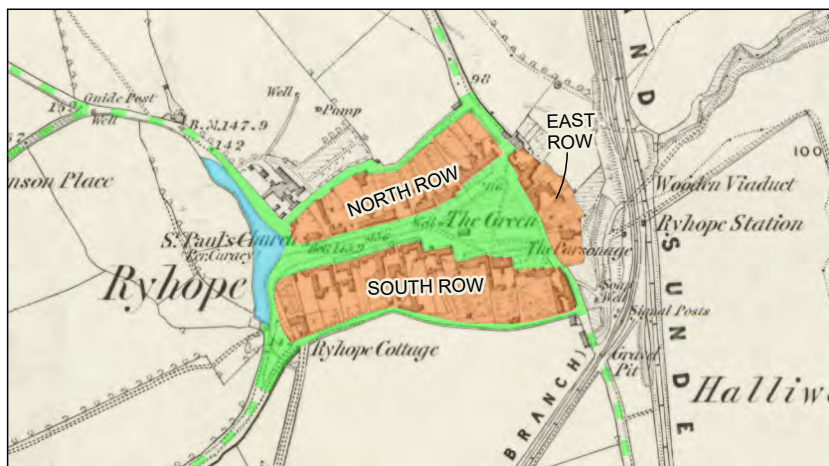
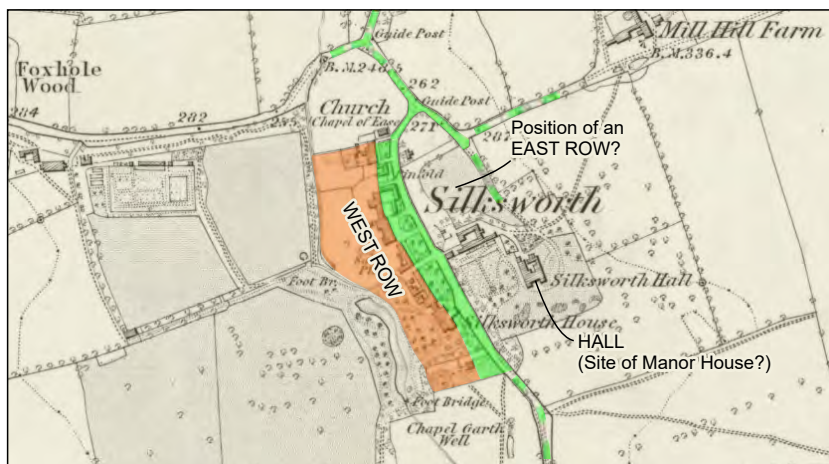**8.2:** *Comparative extracts from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch series (surveyed 1855-57, published 1857-62), showing villages within Bishopwearmouth Parish with interpretative overlays*

following the 'toft tail line' as it is termed (*see* Roberts 1987, 20-21 for the terminology). The toft tail line of the south row toft compartment is also clear, though no back lane was present there. However, the population was evidently much reduced from medieval levels, with many of the tofts in the north row being empty of buildings and those in the south row being largely amalgamated into a single compartment. Only the toft at the western end of the south row was occupied by a farm. This process was probably well underway by the late 16th and 17th centuries. When inclosure and division of the township's lands was completed in 1671 one man, Anthony Shadforth, already held half of Tunstall via three leases from the bishop (the result of an initial agreement made c.1591), whilst another four individuals held the remaining three leases (Surtees 1816, 250).

Ryhope is similar, also being east-west aligned, but had clearly remained a more populous centre, with all its tofts still containing buildings. It was also a little less regular. Like Tunstall It had two main rows, a north row and south row on either side of a green. This green, however, broadened out to the east, forming a much larger triangular space there, which was closed off a short eastern row (cf. Cookson 2010, 16-18; 2015, 34-5). There was a large pond at the western end of the village, with routes splaying out in several directions, whilst a north-south route traversed the eastern end of the green.

Silksworth is a little more complicated to interpret (cf. Cookson 2010, 14-15; 2015, 31-3). A western row is evident, aligned roughly north-south (actually closer to NNW-SSE). The original frontage of this row is revealed by the main building line. Gardens and some farm buildings have evidently encroached to the east of that line, perhaps during the 18th to early 19th centuries, over what had previously been part of the common green. The original form of the eastern side of the village is more uncertain however. Silksworth Hall occupies the south-eastern corner of the settlement and there is an associated farm complex just to the north of the hall's grounds. This may well have been the site of an original manorial hallgarth, but the hall's grounds may well occupy a larger area. It is quite likely that there was originally an eastern row laid out to the north of the manor house as well but its exact position is unclear, as a case can be made for the green originally having been either relatively narrow or quite broad. This eastern row may have been swept away by the landowner as the agricultural population of the village shrank when isolated tenant farms were established in the wider township.

Burdon too may have been subject to significant post-medieval alteration, and certainly considerable shrinkage and population reduction (cf. Cookson 2010, 18; 2015, 35). The main village was labelled variously East Burdon, Town Burdon, Great Burdon or simply Burdon. The 1st edition Ordnance Survey shows a rather curious layout, comprising two relatively short toft compartments which are staggered in relation to one another, the more northerly being displaced towards the east. The buildings occupying these two rows all appear to face north so it seems likely that they should be regarded as, in effect, an interrupt and staggered southern row. The green wraps around the more northerly toft compartment. By the time of the 1st edition there was only a single farm occupying a toft at the eastern end of this compartment, but the slightly earlier tithe map (DDR/EA/TTH/1/32, 1840) shows the remainder of the compartment divided into two further tofts, both occupied by farms located along the compartment's northern edge. The tithemap also shows a short stretch of what might represent the eastern end of a northern, row, comprising two tofts, opposite. By the time of the 1st edition these formed single enclosure, which had been extended southwards over part of the green and was devoid of buildings. The entire north-western part of the settlement was covered by Burdon Hall and grounds and it is likely that this has swallowed up much of the original north row extending further westward.

The two smaller, historic settlements of **Old Burdon** (also called West Burdon or Little Burdon – parva *Birdena*: *Boldon Buke*, 6) and **Grindon** probably only ever represented hamlets (cf. Cookson 2010, 15, 18; 2015, 33, 35). By the time of the 1st edition they were both reduced to just a couple of farmsteads, all displaying planned layouts typical of the 19th century, and it is impossible to reconstruct the earlier form of these settlements with any confidence.

In the case of **Ford** the problems of interpretation are greater still, as no coherent historic settlement site can be identified in that township. By the time of the 1st edition, most settlement had gravitated towards the river bank, where a new village called South Hylton grew up, attracted by the development of industries such as shipbuilding and potteries from the late 18th century. There may always have been some settlement in that area, focussed on the ford and the landing for the Hylton 'bovisferry', but perhaps no more than a hamlet (Cookson 2010, 18; 2015, 35, 236-9). It is unclear if there was a separate, purely agricultural village during the Middle Ages, but one possible candidate is the site of Ford Hall, towards the eastern edge of the township.

Bishopwearmouth village and its parallels
Turning to the plan of Bishopwearmouth village, itself, it is clear that this has a much more complex layout than the smaller green villages discussed above, with their one or two, relatively regular rows. However, in this case, the methodology adopted above, of using the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map as the primary medium of analysis is much more problematic. This is because, by the mid-1850s, Bishopwearmouth had essentially been absorbed by the expanding commercial and industrial town of Sunderland, obscuring its original plan. The attendant growth in population, in particular, meant that a great deal of infilling had taken place during the preceding two or three centuries.

Accordingly, it is essential here to make use of those earlier plans which are available in order to reveal the village hidden within the later urban settlement. Of course, even the earliest detailed maps considerably post-date the Middle Ages. Burleigh and Thompson's map of the River Wear, dated 1737, is the first to show the layout of Bishopwearmouth village in any degree of detail and accuracy (the map associated with Buck's Prospect of 1720, though earlier is too schematic to be of any great use). Rain's Eye Plan compiled in the last decade of the 18th century is also highly informative, even if somewhat distorted.The depiction of the village settlement on Burleigh and Thompson's map is certainly not equivalent in accuracy to an Ordnance Survey map. Nevertheless, the broad outlines of the main building rows depicted do appear to tally with those shown on the later, more reliable maps, such as the 1st edition 1:2500 and 6 in Ordnance Survey. It also has the benefit of showing the village layout whilst it was still a physically separate settlement (the last to do so), before it became attached to and then enveloped by Sunderland.

Based on the analysis of these maps and other evidence, the likely form of the earlier, medieval village layout is considered in detail below (*see* section 9.6.1). There it is argued that the village green was originally much larger than the area shown on 18th and 19th century maps and was more squarely proportioned than the greens of the more outlying villages considered above. It was surrounded by a series of toft rows and streets, and had a second major focus in the form of the broad, east-west aligned street to the north of the church (King's Road, now High Street West).

HEIGHINGTON

EASINGTON

BISHOPWEAR-MOUTH

AYCLIFFE

Scale

0   0.3 km

8.3: Comparative extracts from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey 6 inch per mile (surveyed 1855-57, published 1857-62), showing comparable large villages with parish churches in County Durham.

One of the factors supporting these conclusions is the analogy with comparable settlements. In the complexity of its layout, with its multiple rows, the size and proportions of its green, and its function as a communications hub, with routes heading off in all directions, Bishopwearmouth closely resembles a number of other, substantial County Durham villages which served as the centres of large parishes, such as Easington, Heighington and Aycliffe. The plans of these settlements are easier to interpret as they had not experienced urban encroachment by the time the 1st edition Ordnance Survey was conducted. It may also be significant that, like Bishopwearmouth these communities were all subject to the enduring control of ecclesiastical lords, namely either the bishop or the cathedral priory.

8.3   Archaeological Investigation

Whilst Brian Roberts, using the methods of historical geography, has perhaps done more to shape current thinking on the overall pattern of medieval village settlement than any other scholar, at the micro level of the individual village and its components the seminal investigation in the North-East has been Michael Jarrett's archaeological excavation of the deserted village of West Whelpington in Northumberland and, to a lesser extent, David Austin's rescue excavation of Thrislington, near Ferryhill, at the south-west corner of the Durham Limestone Landscape Plateau (Austin 1989). Jarrett's work was conducted over a period of fifteen years from 1966 onwards and revealed a substantial proportion of a medieval village (Evans & Jarrett 1987; Evans *et al*. 1988). Lomas (1996, 71-86) has recently emphasised the fundamental degree to which our understanding of life in a medieval Northumbrian village rests on the programme of research at West Whelpington. Austin's excavations were carried out over a briefer timeframe of only two seasons (1973-1974), but it was successful in establishing the plan of the medieval village and remains the most extensive excavation of a medieval rural settlement in County Durham and certainly on the Magnesian Limestone Plateau.

More recently, work in advance of opencast coal mining at Shotton, near Cramlington in south-east Northumberland, has shed potential light on the early development processes of medieval villages in the region. Two successive phases of early medieval settlement were uncovered there, each occupying a different location c. 300m from the site of the later medieval village (McKelvey 2010; Muncaster et al. 2014). This process, whereby village settlements were initially established on different sites from those currently occupied and then underwent one or more shifts of position between the 8th and 12th centuries, before reaching their present locations, has been documented for certain sites elsewhere in England and is sometimes termed 'the Middle Saxon shuffle'.

9. HISTORICAL SYNTHESIS – UP TO 1700

9.1 Evidence for earlier prehistoric activity

9.1.1 Introduction

The identification and assessment of prehistoric settlement and other activity in the area of Bishopwearmouth faces a number of challenges. The wider area is now largely covered by modern settlement, including 19th-century terraces and 20th-century housing estates, plus attendant facilities such as schools and colleges. The city centre, including the site of the original village, has been subject to extensive commercial development, whilst the stretches along the river bank have been fundamentally reshaped by industrial activity, removing or severely truncating levels associated with previous periods of occupation. While archaeological remains may survive beneath the areas of housing there is little chance of identifying or investigating these now, except in the case of substantial redevelopment. The widespread development also largely precludes the use of common extensive survey and assessment techniques, such as aerial photography and field-walking, to identify prehistoric sites, either as cropmarks or flint scatters.
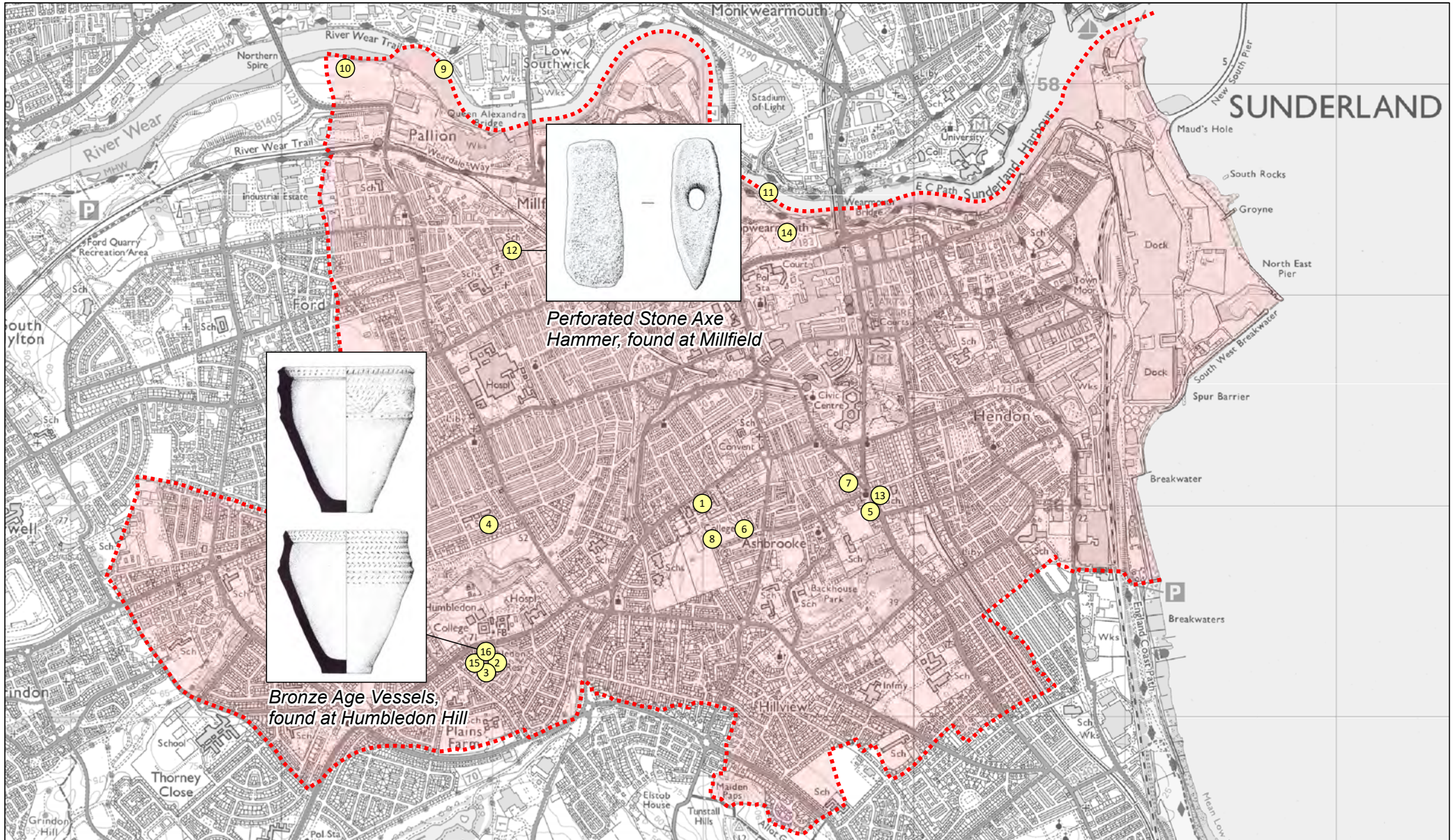
A further problem, specific to an area like Sunderland, which has functioned a port since at least the Middle Ages onwards, is that of ballast dumping which has introduced substantial quantities of flint and stone, materials which were commonly used as ballast. Consequently it is possible that many of worked stone and flint artefacts, such as arrowheads, scrapers or axes, that have been found in the Bishopwearmouth area may have been introduced as ballast, rather than signifying local activity in prehistory. This is particularly the case in relation to those dredged from the river bottom or found at sites along the river bank (e.g. Gaz. site nos 9-11; HER: 390-391, 393, also 59), although it should also be noted that it was not uncommon to deposit valuable items, such as stone axes, in rivers and lakes as ritual offerings. Findspots of such artefacts represent the most common site-type recorded in the HER for the area, but in many cases the exact provenance is poorly recorded and the objects themselves have since been lost.

More recently, however, the growth of developer-funded archaeological investigation, linked to the planning process, has begun to transform this rather frustrating picture. In particular, it has resulted in the discovery of two especially significant sites, namely, the defensive settlement of the late Bronze Age and Iron Age enclosing the summit of Humbledon Hill, where a funerary barrow with several Early Bronze Age cremation burials was already known, and – perhaps of even more importance in relation to the Bishopwearmouth Atlas – the multi-period site on the site of the former Vaux Brewery, just north of the historic village centre. This contained the remains of a Mesolithic settlement – perhaps a seasonal campsite overlooking the river gorge –plus features associated with a much later settlement which began in the Middle Bronze Age and extended through into the early Iron Age. It is likely that the next few decades will yield further such discoveries which will dramatically improve our understanding of Wearside's prehistory.
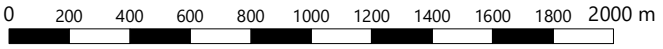
9.1.2 Background: The Stone Age

The earliest inhabitants of northern Britain would have been groups of Stone Age hunter-gatherers who were able to colonise the area in the intervals between the successive Ice Ages. However any traces left by such Neanderthal and earlier populations of the Palaeolithic era, or Old Stone Age, were obliterated by the ice sheets and glaciers which covered the region and scoured away landscape features during successive Ice Ages. The

9.1: Prehistoric HER entries in the Historic Township of Bishopwearmouth, transposed on the modern Ordnance Survey Map

Perforated Stone Axe Hammer, found at Millfield

Bronze Age Vessels, found at Humbledon Hill

Scale 1:25000

0   200   400   600   800   1000   1200   1400   1600   1800   2000 m

KEY - *HER entries colour-coded by period:*   ◯ = Prehistoric   ▪▪▪▪ = Historic Township Boundary

303

areaof Bishopwearmouth would in any case have been very different before the river valleys such as that of the Wear were formed, sculpted and moulded by the action of the glaciers. Indeed, the course of the River Wear once continued northward from Chester-le-Street, flowing down the Team Valley to join the Tyne, rather than cutting through the magnesian limestone plateau of East Durham to reach the sea directly, as it does at present.

Mesolithic hunter gathers (c. 10,000-4000 BC)

It is only with the end of the last Ice Age (around 10,000-8,000 BC) and the onset of the Middle Stone Age, or Mesolithic era (c. 10,000-4000 BC), that we can begin to chart the human story of northern Britain. As the ice sheets retreated, dense forest gradually regenerated and advanced northwards, bringing with it communities of hunter-gatherers, attracted by the more abundant resources which the new environmental conditions provided. We can envisage extended family units ranging widely over large territories, following the movement of deer and exploiting seasonal resources such as autumn berries and migrating salmon. These extended family groupings may have shared wider clan or tribal affiliations with similar social groups through ties of kinship, and real or imagined common ancestry.

The Neolithic period 4000-2400 BC: the first herders and farmers

From around 4000 BC onwards, the first identifiable farming and pastoral communities emerged in northern Britain, marking the beginning of the New Stone Age, or Neolithic era. These communities practiced 'slash and burn' agriculture in what would still have been an extensively forested landscape, cutting down trees with the stone axes and burning off the undergrowth, then cultivating for a number of years until crop yields began to decline through soil exhaustion when the group would move on to clear another parcel of woodland. However it is now considered that the herding of newly domesticated livestock – small, hardy cattle and agile sheep – is likely to have been more important to these communities than the cultivation of crops, with only limited evidence for arable agriculture across northern England as a whole until the Early Bronze Age.

9.1.3   Stone tools and campsites

Cat. no	HER no	Grid Reference	Date	Prehistoric stray finds
1	5	NZ 39 56	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Sunderland, flint scraper
3	9	NZ 380 552	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Sunderland, Humbledon Hill, flint arrowheads
4	377	NZ 380 559	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Sunderland, Mount Road, arrowhead
5	378	NZ 3980 5598		Sunderland, West Hendon House, scraper
6	379	NZ 392 559		Sunderland, Brookside Terrace, scraper
7	380	NZ 397 561		Sunderland, Esplanade West, scrapers
8	385	NZ 39 55		Sunderland, Ashburn, ? flints
9	390	NZ 378 581	Neolithic	Sunderland, Austin & Pickersgill Shipyard, polished stone axe
10	391	NZ 37 57	Neolithic	Sunderland, Pallion, Doxford's Shipyard, flint axe
11	393	NZ 395 574	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Sunderland, River Wear, perforated axe hammer
12	394	NZ 381 572	Neolithic/Bronze Age	Sunderland, Millfield, perforated axe hammer

Although there is uncertainty of the original provenance of some of the worked flint and stone artefacts found in Sunderland, in particular those dredged from the Wear or found on the river banks, the overall distribution does demonstrate a level of hunter-gatherer and early farming activity in the landscape, extending through to the Early Bronze Age.

The former Vaux Brewery site
A focus for Mesolithic hunter-gatherer activity was revealed by the excavations on the former Vaux Brewery site just north of Bishopwearmouth village centre (Cat. 14; TWHER 7111; PCA 2004; ASDU 2019). Evaluation trenches excavated in 2003 and 2004 yielded scattered finds of flint blades and blade-like flakes of Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods, hinting at some activity in the area during these periods. More extensive area excavation of Plot 1 in January-February 2017 revealed the likely focus of this occupation activity in the form of a series of intercutting and discrete ditches, gullies, pits and postholes located in the south half of the site. Palaeoenvironmental samples from these features comprised traces of charred heather twigs and charcoal, and two charred hazelnut shells from separate features. AMS radiocarbon dating of the shells provided dates of 7729-7598 cal BC and 8206-7836 cal BC, corresponding to the Mesolithic era. Although the palaeoenvironmental assemblage was sparse this is typical of the period. The evidence suggests that there was a Mesolithic camp on the site, comprising timber structures. The camp was probably occupied on a seasonal basis, the site providing a good viewpoint over the river gorge, facilitating exploitation of local riverine and coastal resources.

9.1.4   The Late Neolithic (3000-2500) **and Early Bronze Age** (2500-1500BC)

Humbledon Hill and Early Bronze Age burial monuments
Towards the end of the Neolithic era, and more especially in the subsequent Early Bronze Age (2500-1500 BC), distinct ceremonial monuments can be recognised in the area south of the Wear corresponding to the later Bishopwearmouth township and its wider environs. This was the period when metal tools – initially of copper then bronze (copper and tin alloy) – were first beginning to be adopted, though flint tools remained in common use for a long time thereafter. These monuments are all associated with burials, the most notable of them being the barrow on Humbledon Hill in the south-west part of the township (Cat. 2-3; TWHER 7, 9, 157). This 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. Inhumation burials in the form of 'two skeletons of great size' were found near these urns, but the date of these is unknown and need not be contemporary with the cremation burials (Cat. 60; TWHER 20). A second round cairn, thought to be of a similar date was uncovered on the hilltop during excavation in 2006/2007, prompted by proposed developments (now prevented by the scheduling of the site).

Similar burial cairns or barrows have been found further south at Tunstall Hope (TWHER 240), and Warden Law (TWHER 254-6, 442-5, 447). Other comparable sites have been recognised in the wider environs, the best known being the round barrow of confirmed Neolithic date 6km to the south-west at Copt Hill, beyond Houghton-le-Spring, which was excavated by Greenwell in 1877 (TWHER 100, 114, 424, 426). This was found to contain several partially cremated skeletons burnt in situ beneath a mortuary structure of limestone slabs, plus nine secondary cremation and inhumation burials, one of which – being laid out in a long cist – may be early medieval (Trechmann 1914, 123-30; Miket 1984, 53, 55; Young 1985). Also of Bronze Age date was the cist burial discovered at Langham Tower, perhaps in the 1920s, in the south-east part of Bishopwearmouth township (Cat. 13; TWHER 396; Miket 1984, 64, no. 26). Cists were stone slabs set around the burial resembling a stone coffin. It is

not known whether this cist was originally surmounted by a stone cairn to mark it out in the landscape.

The most important early prehistoric ceremonial or ritual site on Wearside (and indeed in the whole of Tyne and Wear) lies some XXkm to the south-west at **Hasting Hill** (TWHER 109-113, 325, 451-2, 467, 480). Evident today only as a series of cropmarks visible on aerial photographs, this complex comprises several distinct monumental structures, the earliest of which belong to the Neolithic era, with others belonging to the succeeding Early Bronze Age (or Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age transitional period):

1) An irregular oval or 'D-shaped' enclosure, measuring roughly 92m by 65m, surrounded by a single interrupted ditch (a type of monument often called a 'causewayed enclosure') – TWHER 109.
2) A rectangular cursus, or ceremonial pathway, defined by two parallel ditches some 30m apart, beginning close to the SE side of the ditched enclosure, where the monument was squared off, and visibly extending over a distance of at least 200m – TWHER 110. Like the causewayed camp this is characteristic of the Neolithic period.
3) Round barrows or ring ditches (including one round cairn on the summit of the hill, which was still surviving as an upstanding monument when it was excavated in 1911 and found to contain multiple Early Bronze Age burials) – TWHER 111, 113, 451-2.

The small round barrow on the summit of Hasting Hill, mentioned above, was excavated by Trechmann in 1911 (Trechmann 1912; 1913; 1914). This was constructed as a cairn of earth and stone, measuring 40 feet (12m) in diameter and 3 feet (0.9m) high, and contained multiple burials, both cremations and inhumations. A number of other circular and sub-circular features are visible as cropmarks near the Neolithic cursus and interrupted ditch enclosure and these have been interpreted as either ring ditches or burial mounds/barrows of probable Bronze Age date. All this activity demonstrates that Hasting Hill remained a focus for ritual activity well into the Bronze Age, the overall duration perhaps spanning well over a thousand years.

Changing burial customs: Neolithic to Early Bronze Age
As the excavated remains at Humbledon Hill and and the other barrows and cairns in the wider environs demonstrate, a variety of burial rites were practised during this period. Cists were constructed with sides formed by stone slabs and covered by a large capstone, and were large enough to contain a crouched inhumation burial (an intact body). They have been found, either within cairns or even as unmarked sites (although in these cases it is possible that the cairn was removed at an earlier date as a result of agricultural stone clearance but the cist was not disturbed). Cremations are also found in this period usually placed in a large funerary urn or a type of large pot known as a food vessel, which typically featured incised or scored decoration.

Whether they contained the remains of a crouched body or a cremation, the burial practices associated with the round cairns and stone cists were very different from those encountered in the long barrows and long cairns more typical of the preceding Neolithic period. The former generally contained individual burials –whether cremation or inhumation – though there might be more than one cist or other form of burial in a particular round cairn. In contrast, when the internal chambers were relatively undisturbed, the Neolithic burial mounds and cairns often contained the remains of many individuals, though frequently in an incomplete and disarticulated condition suggesting they had previously been kept

elsewhere, probably exposed in the open air for birds and other wild fauna to remove the flesh from the corpse.

Round barrows and cairns give the impression of being family mausolea, or monuments built to commemorate a particular individual, perhaps an important chief. The two functions were not necessarily mutually exclusive, as monuments which may have started life as the burial mounds of particular individuals were transformed into family tombs by succeeding generations, who sought to maintain a direct, overt association with the first occupant, perhaps the founder of their lineage, by interring further burials in the same monument.

This contrast with the funerary traditions of the earlier Neolithic implies that quite fundamental changes in views of death, the afterlife and possibly religion in general, may have occurred during the transition to the Bronze Age. It suggests a greater focus on the journey of the individual into the afterworld, and the relationship of that ancestor to a more tightly circumscribed family group or lineage, in marked contrast to the largely undifferentiated tribal ethos of the Neolithic. These may in turn be linked to equally profound changes in social structure, with a gradual shift from the more egalitarian, kinship-based tribal communities of the Neolithic, with their communal burial monuments housing the remains of multiple ancestors, towards a society in which burial was one means of expressing social power on the part of individuals who were beginning to play more prominent, controlling roles as tribal chieftains. The enhanced status of such individuals, with respect to the other members of their tribe, was reflected in the prestige grave goods deposited with the deceased. Moreover such commemoration could represent an attempt to ensure hereditary transmission of social power from one generation to the next and the establishment of a permanent chiefdom based on a particular lineage.

9.2 Settlements of the Middle and Late Bronze Age (1500-800 BC) to Iron Age (800 BC – AD 70)

9.2.1 Humbledon Hill defensive settlement

In the mid-late Bronze Age (1500-800/700 BC) and Iron Age, the ceremonial and ritual monuments of earlier periods went out of use. However settlement sites do become more prominent in the archaeological record, and in the landscape, most notably with the emergence of defended hilltop settlements known as hillforts in the late Bronze Age and Iron Age. Important settlements belonging to these later periods have been identified on Humbledon Hill and the former Vaux Brewery site, emphasising the enduring importance of both these locations during prehistory. The remains found on Humbledon Hill in advance of development take the form of a palisaded, embanked and ditched, defensive enclosure encircling the summit of the hill. These were traced by geophysical survey and evaluation excavations in 2003 and 2006-2007 respectively (Cat. 15; TWHER 13787; Hale and Still 2003, 4-7; Gaskell/NPA 2007). This appears to have begun life in the late Bronze Age as a palisaded enclosure (the palisade trench surviving as the inner ditch 0.5m wide and 0.5m deep), before the palisade was in turn encircled and replaced by an outer ditch during the Iron Age, some 9m beyond the inner one, and 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 (which is now a scheduled monument) a series of pits, each 2m in diameter, were identified. The dating of the two ditches was based on the pottery sherds recovered from them. Also recovered from the ditches was the corner of a triangular loom weight of Iron Age date, plus animal bone, some of it burnt, and pieces of flint.

Until recently only two certain hillforts were known between the Tyne and the Tees, namely the promontory fort of Maiden Castle (DCHER 1181) enclosed by a loop of the River Wear on the eastern outskirts of Durham City and curvilinear earthwork enclosure crowning Shackleton Beacon Hill, Heighington (DCHER 6819). A number of other possible examples have been proposed, including Toft Hill (DCHER 1674) where the Victoria County History notes 'a fortress of considerable strength once existed' (Page 1905, I, 348), regrettably destroyed by open-cast mining in 1972. More recently, it has also been suggested that one such may have enclosed the summit of Penshaw Hill (Archaeo-Environment 2010, 14-19).

Further discoveries, like Humbledon Hill, may show hillforts were not quite as rare between the Tyne and Tees as hitherto supposed. However it seems unlikely that their density in East Durham will ever approach that evident in north Northumberland. They are more likely to be associated with entire clans or sub-tribes rather than individual families or lineages. The Iron Age people who occupied the north of England, as later reported to us by Roman historians and geographers, were known as the Brigantes (variously interpreted as signifying the 'high ones', 'mighty ones' or perhaps the 'hill people', see Rivet and Smith 1979, 278-9) and seem to have been a confederation of many smaller tribal groups. Humbledon Hill and Maiden Castle might represent the political and ceremonial centres, and occasional refuges of individual groups. These strongholds occupied commanding positions, overlooking the Wear valley and its various river crossings, enabling a watch to be kept on neighbours and potential rivals.

9.2.2 Bishopwearmouth settlement (former Vaux Brewery site)

The second later prehistoric settlement to be identified in Bishopwearmouth was uncovered in advance of the development of the former Vaux Brewery site, only a little way north of the ancient village core (Cat. 14; TWHER 7111; PCA 2004; ASDU 2019). This is a complicated multi-period site with dating evidence of Mesolithic activity preceding this settlement phase. In the wider site area, investigated by evaluation trenching, multiple features were identified, including a large ditch, at least 6.80m wide with associated bank, possibly forming a boundary ditch or enclosure, plus a possible ditch terminus and a large pit. A curved gulley terminal was also identified during a watching brief on St Mary's Way in 2015. A relatively large pottery assemblage was associated with these features, with all but two of the sherds dating from the Middle Bronze Age (1500-1000 BC). These include well-preserved sherds from a variety of hand made vessels, some decorated and with extant rims. The remaining two sherds are either Late Bronze Age or early Iron Age and came from a well-stratified ditch fill, indicating continuation of activity on the site into the 1st millennium BC. A lithic assemblage comprising the cores and primary flakes characteristic of the Bronze Age and Iron Age periods was also recovered (in addition to the Mesolithic/Early Neolithic assemblage of blades and flakes), plus a worked bone object of uncertain function – a thin circular bone disc with a central hole and four incised grooves radiating away from the central hole on one side, perhaps a pendant or some other type of personal adornment.

The Bishopwearmouth site was probably the focus of important long-lasting settlement activity during the 2nd and early 1st millennium BC, with ditches perhaps indicating changing land boundaries. The relatively large quantity of Middle Bronze Age pottery recovered 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, implying that there was some activity on the site at an earlier stage than suggested by the pottery, even if this may not have had the same intensity as later on. Indeed the complex nature of the remains revealed, with multiple ditches, gullies and pits, makes it difficult to disentangle their chronology and sequencing with absolute confidence.

Thus some of the intercutting and discrete ditches, gullies, pits and postholes revealed during the mitigation excavation of the Plot 1 site in 2017 and broadly attributed to the Mesolithic period on the basis of the associated palaeo-environmental evidence might also belong to the later prehistoric phase of activity, as one small sherd of later prehistoric pottery was also recovered from a feature in this area.

9.2.3   River transport and the Offerton and Hylton logboats
Finally, when considering the Bishopwearmouth site, its proximity to the river and the importance of the Wear as a corridor of movement, transport and communications should be born in mind. The discovery of two logboats in the Wear at Offerton Haugh (TWHER: 340) and Hylton (TWHER: 340) provides compelling evidence for the river's use as just such a corridor (Whitcomb, 1968, 297-301; McGrail, 1978, 217-19, nos 67-8; Miket 1984, 56, nos 6-7). These are presumed to be of Bronze Age or Iron Age date, although, in the case of the Offerton Haugh example, reference made to the discovery of 'stone chisels' (stone axe-heads?) at the same time might point to an earlier date, in the Neolithic period. The Offerton Haugh boat is still preserved in Sunderland Museum and is some 3.5m in length with tapering ends, rounded at one (presumably the bow) and flattened at the other (the stern?).

9.3   The Romano-British Period

9.3.1   The Roman military presence in the North-East
With the conquest of the Brigantian tribal confederation during the later part of the 1st century AD, Wearside and East Durham, along with the rest of the north of England, fell under the control of an expanding Roman empire.

The principal bases of Roman power in the wider area were the forts housing garrisons of auxiliary troops which were established along the two main north-south roads running through the Durham lowlands. To the west, Dere Street led northward through central Durham to Corbridge and thence up Redesdale and over the Cheviots into Scotland. To the east, Cade's Road cut across the southern part of the East Durham Limestone Plateau and escarpment before descending into the valley of the Wear (which the Romans knew as *Flumen Vedra*) and continuing northwards to Gateshead and Newcastle. The road takes its name from the Durham antiquary who first suggested its course in the 18th century (Bidwell and Hodgson 2009, 177; Margary 1973, 431-3, 441: roads 80a, 80b). Of the two roads, Dere Street appears to have been the more important, with forts at Piercebridge, Binchester, Lanchester and Ebchester. In contrast only one fort is known along Cade's Road, situated at Chester-le-Street, where another route known as the Wrekendyke branched off to reach the fort at South Shields at the mouth of the Tyne. Thus, within the overall pattern of Roman military deployment in County Durham and southern Tyne and Wear, the nearest known forts to Bishopwearmouth were located at Chester-le-Street to the west, South Shields to the north and Newcastle to the north-west.

9.3.2   The regional civil and rural settlement pattern
The two roads, and Dere Street in particular, must have seen constant traffic, with the movement of troops, supplies, and messengers between the forts and other bases further north and south, notably the legionary headquarters at York. Substantial Romanised civil settlements, known as *vici* (singular: *vicus*) grew up around the forts, though rather less is known about these.

The rural settlement pattern is still less well understood, although significant advances have been made recently (cf. Hewitt 2011, 68-70). Some of the Iron Age enclosed sites are thought to have remained in use, at least up until the end of the 2nd Century AD. Some appear to have evolved into Romanised estate centres or villas, for example Faverdale, north of Darlington, where a two-room, stone-built, hypocaust heated structure, perhaps a bathhouse, was found (Proctor 2012). The main residential core of the villa complex there was not discovered, perhaps because ploughing had severely truncated the surviving archaeology on this site, but it may nevertheless be counted amongst the several villas to have been revealed in the Tees valley in recent years (e.g. Quarry Farm, near Ingleby Barwick, Chapel House Farm at Dalton-on-Tees, and Preston-on-Tees). This significant extension of the villa distribution north of Yorkshire has made the presumed villa site at Old Durham – where again only the bathhouse has been found – appear altogether less isolated, though it remains the northernmost of these high status rural estate centres yet known in the Roman empire (Richmond *et al*. 1944; Wright and Gillam 1951).

In addition, archaeologists have also begun to identify nucleated roadside villages, with the discovery, geophysical survey and partial excavation of a 2nd-3rd century site covering at least 30 ha at East Park, Sedgefield (Carne and Mason 2006; Mason 2007; Petts & Gerrard 2006, 54; Carne 2009). This settlement straddled Cade's Road, with a series of plots, enclosed by fences or ditches and sometimes containing timber buildings, lining the road and extending eastward of it along an irregular network of minor roads or tracks. The enclosed plots were used for a variety of purposes including small-scale industrial activity such as pottery manufacture and stockpens. It is likely that future developed-funded archaeological work will bring to light further examples of this type of site, sometimes termed a ladder settlement, along with more villas and provide a clearer understanding of the lower status farmsteads of the period.

The Romans in Bishopwearmouth and the lower Wear valley
How does Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth in particular fit into this pattern? Arguments have repeatedly been put forward for a significant Roman presence in the area of modern Sunderland, based on a variety of evidence. Yet this often crumbles upon closer examination and, indeed, few aspects of the city's past are more frustrating to grapple with.

The evidence for Roman settlement in the area has been summarised recently in the works produced in association with the Victoria County History and other surveys (Meikle and Newman 2007, 15; Cookson 2015, 13-14; cf. Tyne & Wear Historic Towns Survey 2004, 12-15). In terms of confirmed Roman artefacts, a number of coins and other small finds have been recovered throughout Bishopwearmouth (see table below), but nothing indicative of anything other than the kind of background 'noise' reflecting widespread activity in the landscape generated by scattered rural settlement. The picture is similar north of the river. The most outstanding find there was a bronze figurine of the Roman deity, Jupiter Dolichenus, discovered in 1820 at Carley Hill quarry in Fulwell (TWHER: 359). Two coins, a Hadrianic sestertius (117-38) and a Diocletianic 'follis' (284-305), were also found at Carley Hill in 1971 (TWHER: 33), whilst a little further west, at Southwick Quarry, Roman pottery sherds, including the remains of a late 4th-century cooking pot and an amphora handle stamped MAT were found in1927, plus two querns and a rubbish pit nearby. Further pottery sherds and a spindle whorl were uncovered there in 1933 (TWHER: 27). All of this points to the presence of a small Romano-British rural settlement or a farmstead, which, today, would doubtless have been the subject of a mitigation excavation to record it before it was destroyed by the quarrying.). It has been suggested this was a Roman burial inserted into a prehistoric burial mound.

Sherd of Roman Pottery, found at Keel Square

Scale 1:25000

0   200   400   600   800   1000   1200   1400   1600   1800   2000 m

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KEY - *HER entries colour-coded by period:*   ● = 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.

Rather more difficult to interpret is the burial of the 'Fulwell Giant' uncovered in 1759, a human skeleton reportedly 9ft 6in tall, with a shin bone 2ft 3in long 'from knee to anclet'. This was found under a 'ridge of limestone and rubbage (sic), presumably a barrow or cairn, and protected by four large flat stones (a coffin-like stone cist?), with two 3rd century Roman coins near the skeleton's right hand (Welfare 1980; TWHER: 398-400).

The scattered artefactual evidence does not suggest there was an important military or civilian or site on Wearside – a fort or a *vicus* settlement. Nevertheless, from the 19th century onward a strong antiquarian belief developed that there was fort in this area. This fort was traditionally sited on the south side of the river, on the high ground at the north end of Castle Street recently occupied by the Vaux Brewery (Cat no. 26; TWHER: 39 – see below).

Sunderland, suggested Roman fort: Cat. no. 26   TWHER 39   NZ 394 571
Nineteenth century antiquarians believed that there had been a "Roman station" near the mouth of the Wear, on the high ground at the north end of Castle Street. In support of this, its commanding situation was noted and evidence was cited of four foot thick founds of worked stones and cement examined there in 1873, ancient sculptured stones of supposed Roman work dug up near the Castle Well, and a Roman inscribed stone found in a wall of the rectory coach-house. The supposed inscription was subsequently debunked as 18th-century in origin (RIB 2348*).

Petch (1925, 31) thought this theory was possible, but considered the site to be irrecoverable at that stage. However, following demolition of the Vaux brewery which occupied the site in the 20th century, it has become available for archaeological investigations in advance of redevelopment. Undertaken in 2003-2004 and 2017, these, disappointingly, have yielded no Roman remains, whereas traces of prehistoric settlement from virtually every period, plus medieval agricultural activity, were substantiated (see above). Even allowing for possible 19th-century scarping of the area to the north, which might have removed part of the site, a Roman fort would be expected to give rise to a much broader spread of artefactual material, occurring as residual finds in features of later periods. In fact only a single piece of Roman pottery, a Hartshill-Mancetter mortarium rim sherd of the 2nd-4th centuries, has been recovered in this area, found during a watching brief when laying out Keel Square on the former course of St Mary's Way in 2015 (Cat no. 24; TWHER: 17343). A Greek provincial coin of c. AD 200, found during works on St Mary's Way in the previous year, may well be a modern import (Cat. no. 23; TWHER: 17142).

Various other reported finds of Roman structures further south in Bishopwearmouth or further afield in Sunderland – cobbled surfaces, mosaics and a supposed Roman pottery and kiln – have either been refuted or remain unproven. Thus the cobbled road surface, uncovered beneath Green's Public House (formerly the 'Hat and Feather' Inn), on Low Row, at the beginning of the 20th century, could well be associated with a phase of the medieval village settlement rather than any putative Roman site. If accurately identified, the mosaics reportedly briefly exposed in the 1970s would represent the northernmost examples discovered in the Roman empire, and evidence of a villa rather than a fort (none of the commanding officers' houses or bathhouses associated with the forts of Hadrian's Wall or its hinterland were furnished with mosaics), but they remain unsubstantiated. Further afield, the supposed Roman pottery and kiln uncovered in 1849 at Commissioners' Quay has been dismissed as neither Roman nor a pottery (Cookson 2015, 13), Petch having long previously

confirmed that earthenware bottle from the site that had been given to Sunderland Museum was not Roman (1925, 27).

Cat. no. 58   TWHER 73   NZ 3922 5694

Bishopwearmouth, Low Row, Green's Public House, paved roadway and Victoria Buildings mosaics: "Recently during the rebuilding of the ancient 'Hat and Feather' Inn, Low Row, a licensed house which has existed for upwards of 200 years, the contractors found old remains. At a depth of about 12 feet below street level, on that portion of the building which was the Inn yard, and adjoining the disused burial ground of the Church, a section of an ancient roadway was brought to light. The pavement was...of cobble stones, in a splendid state of preservation. At the same depth, and close to the ancient pavement, were the thick walls of what had been the boundary or retaining wall of the burn. The rush of water may yet be heard...". (Robinson 1907, 5).

Mr A.A. Bell of Sunderland claims in the 1970s to have seen the corner of a Roman mosaic in the cellar of Bell's Cycles (part of Victoria Buildings HER 11067 and same block as the Hat and Feather, now Green's Public House HER 4476). It apparently lay 18 inches below the cellar floor. The digger driver also claimed to have seen decorated border tiles and what looked like the hem of a gown. He also claimed to have found a second mosaic outside the police station when the roundabout was being built. Mr Bell claims that in the 1960s gas workers found another paved road near to the Empire Theatre at a depth of 12 feet. Unfortunately no archaeologist was called out at the time and no record or photographs exist to prove or disprove these finds.

Cat. no. 55   TWHER 82   NZ 409 577

Sunderland, Roman pottery kiln: In 1849, when clearing some old houses occupying the Pier or Commissioners' Quay (on what was once the north-east corner of the Town Moor) to make the river entrance to the Sunderland dock, the remains of what was supposed to have been the site of a Roman pottery were brought to light. Eight feet below the surface was a circle, 20 - 25 feet diameter, hewn out of the limestone, and containing a circle of small rubble stones like a horse-mill, apparently erected to grind clay. Close by was found red and yellow ochre, and pottery, both sherds and four perfect Roman bottles of unglazed red earthenware. One went to Sunderland Museum, and was later dismissed by Petch (1925, 27) as not Roman.

The Brigg Stones

Another enigmatic but substantial structure is represented by the Brigg stones ('Brigstuns', 'Brigstanes') in the River Wear at Hylton (see TWHER: 286). These comprised massive blocks of dressed stone, fixed with iron cramps and set in the river bed on a foundation of oak piles (Bidwell and Holbrook 1989, 112-13; Meikle and Newman 2007, 15). They are mentioned from the early 18th century onwards and shown on early maps, but were largely removed in 1865 to allow easier passage of keelboats carrying coal to the port (ironically not long before the keelboats themselves were phased out). The stones thus formed a continuous level structure above the river bed, submerged at high tide but forming a cascade at low tide, and it is suggested they formed a causeway or ford carrying a road across the river, or perhaps the foundation for a bridge.

The Brigg Stones generated considerable academic interest in the late 19th and early 20th century, and it is tempting to see them as forming part of a route connecting a Roman fort at Bishopwearmouth with the bridge over the Tyne at Newcastle and Hadrian's Wall beyond. However, even at the time they were first reported in 1883, several local antiquarians expressed doubts as to their dating and identification, and more recently scholars have tended to be sceptical of interpreting them as a Roman bridge or causeway (see for example Bidwell and Holbrook 1989, 113). Such a substantial engineered structure would only have been constructed by the Roman authorities a serve a significant highway and neither aerial photography nor historic map regression have yielded any evidence for Roman road alignments leading to the site (Cookson 2015, 14). The stonework could just as well be medieval, whether associated with a causeway, bridge or a weir for a mill, perhaps. Unfortunately, the destruction of the Brigg Stones in 1865 means that it may never be

possible to determine beyond doubt what the date and function of this important structure was.[27]

Dictum

One of the principal supports for the theory that there was a Roman fort at Wearmouth has been the suggested original documentary evidence for the site. A military commander called the *praefectus numerus Nerviorum Dictensium* ('prefect of the unit of Nervians of *Dictum*'), stationed at a place called *Dictum*, is mentioned in a late Roman document called the *Notitia Dignitatum*, a register of the empire's senior officials, compiled at the end of the 4th century AD, which includes all the military regiments under their command (*ND Occ* XL, 23). The location of *Dictum* is not certain, however it is positioned in the Notitia list between units stationed at South Shields (*Arbeia*) and Chester-le-Street (*Concangis*), which would be consistent with a fort sited at Wearmouth. Such a fort would probably represent a late foundation, built to protect the harbour and mouth of the river from coastal raiding by either the Picts or the Saxons, and would probably not have been established before the end of the 3rd century and possibly later still. Unfortunately, although the *Dictum*-Wearmouth equation is a plausible one, the geographical order of the Notitia list is not so consistently regular that we can be certain that *Dictum* lay roughly *between* South Shields and Chester-le-Street.

The same place-name also figures in another ancient geographical source known as the *Ravenna Cosmography* (Rivet and Smith 1979, 208-209, 339), where it appears in the slightly corrupt form, *Dixio* (the Notitia generally being regarded as more accurate in its recording of place-names). The Cosmography was compiled by an anonymous cleric in Ravenna for a brother cleric, Odo, at some date soon after AD 700, but using much earlier, Roman source material (Rivet & Smith 1979, 185). In the case of Britain the source material seems to have taken the form of three maps, of which the most significant in this context was a road-map of the entire British province(s) as far north as Hadrian's Wall (ibid., 190-200). *Dixio* is listed immediately after a cluster of place-names in East Yorkshire – *Eburacum* (York), *Petuaria* (Brough on Humber) and *Delgovicia* (perhaps Wetwang, though this is not certain). It is followed by a place called *Lugudunum* (*Lugunduno* in the Cosmography) and then *Concangis* (Chester-le-Street) and Corbridge. It has recently been suggested that *Lugudunum* was an earlier name for the fort at South Shields, later supplanted by *Arbeia* in the 4th century after a change of garrison. The name can be read, partially surviving, on a rather badly eroded altar from the site (Bidwell 2014). Despite the difficulty of interpreting the relevant part of the damaged and weathered inscription on the altar (RIB 1054), this is reasonably convincing. Thus the positioning of *Dixio-Dictum* in the Ravenna Cosmographer's list would imply that it lay in the north-eastern part of County Durham, fairly near South Shields and Chester-le-Street (thus echoing the Notitia Dignitatum), or perhaps somewhere in the eastern lowland districts between there and East Yorkshire. When compiling their work *Place-names of Roman Britain*, Rivet and Smith suggested that the road map was probably mid-4th century in date, the 'map' or 'geography' mentioned as having been sent to the Emperor Julian by a former vicar (superior governor) of Britain (1979, 71, 192). In these circumstances *Dictum/Dixio* need only have been a 4th-century military site with little or no earlier Roman occupation. However, more recently, Bidwell (2014, 56-57) has argued that much of the information on the map, if not the map itself, was much earlier, dating no later than the final decade of the 2nd century, based on the listing of *Lugudunum* rather than the

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[27] The milestone of the 3rd-century emperor Gordian (238-44), supposedly found nearby at Ford, which could have represented strong supporting evidence, was in fact found near Lanchester fort. By the time Surtees saw it (1820, 306-7) it had been moved to Greenwell Ford, Lanchester. Others later misunderstood Surtees' description and assumed Ford in Sunderland was meant (see RIB 2295; Cookson 2015, 13-14; *contra* Meikle and Newman 2007, 15).

later name, *Arbeia*, and the omission of two forts on Hadrian's Wall which were either unoccupied during the mid-late 2nd century or not built until after that date, namely, *Pons Aelius* (Newcastle) and *Concavata* (Drumburgh). The implication of this assertion, if correct, is that *Dictum* must have had military or civil occupation stretching back to the 2nd century AD, making it potentially an altogether more significant and long-lasting site than previously hypothesised, and this would be reflected in the archaeological remains which would be encountered upon discovery and excavation of the site.

In sum, the Ravenna Cosmography does appear to broadly confirm the evidence of the Notitia list, placing *Dictum* in the hinterland zone south of Hadrian's Wall eastern end, corresponding to present-day southern Tyne and Wear and north-east County Durham. (Although Rivet and Smith caution that the order of sites in the Cosmography is often a perilous guide to their location – 1979, 209, 211.) Wearmouth thus remains a plausible candidate to represent the site, but it is not the only one. In the last two decades, fieldwork has revealed two substantial and previously unknown Roman settlements in this region, at Bottle Bank in Gateshead (Hodgson 2009, 87-89;), and at East Park, Sedgefield (see above). Both take the form of roadside civil settlements, occupied predominantly in the2nd and 3rd centuries. No late Roman forts – or indeed Roman military sites of any period – have been recognised at either location, though an early fort, which would initially have been built of turf and timber, probably in the late 1st century, has been postulated at Gateshead (Bidwell & Snape 2002, 257-60). Gatehead would fit the site order of the Notitia Dignitatum and the Ravenna Cosmography virtually as well as Bishopwearmouth. Less so the Sedgefield settlement, which lay further south along Cade's Road, but given the uncertainty as to how much weight to place on the site order in the two documents even this is not necessarily decisive. The Sedgefield settlement does not appear to have been occupied after the 3rd century, on the basis of the current evidence, but small quantities of late 3rd and 4th century pottery were recovered from the Bottle Bank site (Hodgson 2009, 89). In either case it is conceivable that a late Roman fort might lie in another, as yet unexplored part of the site, hidden beneath the modern housing estates of Sedgefield, for instance, or at a higher point in Gateshead overlooking the bridgehead. Hence the question of the location of *Dictum* must remain unresolved for the moment.[28]

Finally it is also worth noting that nowhere called […]*ceaster,* typically signifying the site of a former Roman fort, is mentioned by Bede at Wearmouth in the early 8th century, although he knew the area exceptionally well, having been born on the south side of the river in what became part of the *territorium* of Wearmouth monastery and having lived virtually all of his life in that institution. If such a walled enclosure had existed, however ruinous its condition, it is quite likely that it would have been adapted to accommodate Benedict Biscop's new foundation.

A Roman 'signal station' at Bishopwearmouth?
Even if Dictum is eventually shown to have been located elsewhere that would not necessarily exclude the possibility of a late Roman military post at Sunderland. Something similar to the small, late 4th-century fortifications erected at intervals along the North Yorkshire coast might be envisaged. Misleadingly termed 'signal stations' these each consisted of a fortlet with a high watchtower surrounded by a circuit wall with a single small gatehouse and circular or D-shaped turrets at protecting all four corners (Bidwell & Hodgson 2009, 172-76). They occupied headlands and cliff tops and perhaps harbour mouths. None of the five known Yorkshire examples is mentioned in the Notitia Dignitatum and it is likely

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[28] The mouth of the Tees has also been suggested as an alternative location for *Dictum* (Bidwell 2014, 51), although that would make the geographical order in the Notitia, in particular, somewhat disjointed.

such sites were garrisoned by detachments drawn from larger garrison units based elsewhere. It has often been argued that these must have extended northward along the Durham coast in a continuous chain as far as the fort of South Shields at the mouth of the Tyne (e.g. Dobson 1970, 197; Bidwell & Hodgson 2009, 174). In fact, with no safe natural harbours along the Durham coast between Hartlepool and Wearmouth, it is questionable whether the fortlets there would have been as regularly spaced as those in the Yorkshire coast, but such harbours as did exist – Wearmouth, Hartlepool and the mouth of the Tees – would still have needed protection. Such a site would be much smaller than a full size fort and therefore more likely to have escaped detection thus far. Even so, such sites have each yielded several dozen Roman coins and commensurate quantities of pottery, far greater concentrations of material than have yet been found anywhere in Bishopwearmouth or elsewhere in Sunderland.

Nevertheless, if there was a Roman military site at Wearmouth, whether a full-sized fort or a smaller fortlet like those of the Yorkshire coast, there is a good chance that developer-funded archaeological investigation will reveal it at some point in the future.

Conclusions

The recent programme of excavations on the former Vaux Brewery site has provided no evidence to support the long held notion, based on unconfirmed antiquarian observations, that there was a Roman fort on the site, and that theory must now be discarded. Moreover, the lack of any known supporting road network, leading to Sunderland, provides another strong argument against the presence of a Roman auxiliary fort and associated civil settlement (*vicus*), like South Shields, Chester-le-Street or Newcastle. The site of *Dictum* mentioned in two ancient documentary sources is thus more likely to have lain elsewhere, perhaps at Gateshead, where a Roman settlement has been uncovered. However, it is possible – and perhaps even likely – that there was a smaller, late Roman fortlet and watchtower protecting the mouth of the Wear, similar to the sites known along the North Yorkshire coast erected in the late 4th century, but, if so, its site has not yet been identified within Sunderland and it may conceivably have already fallen victim to coastal erosion.

9.4   The early medieval period (AD 400-1100)

If the Romano-British settlement pattern in East Durham and the Wear valley is relatively poorly understood, this is even more true of settlement in the two centuries immediately following the collapse of Roman imperial rule in Britain. From the later 7th century, however, the area of Sunderland emerges clearly into the light of documented history with the foundation of the great monastery of Monkwearmouth on the north bank of the River Wear. Moreover, the individual who plays the most important role in recording the monastery's history, Bede, was himself a native of the area, the first 'Mackem' whose name we know. However, artefacts of this period from the areas on the south side of the Wear are rare.

9.4.1   The 5th-7th centuries: the region in an era of transition

There is increasing evidence that many of the Roman forts lining the Roman Roads of Dere Street and Cade's Road, remained important centres in the period following the end of Roman Britain, notably Binchester, Piercebridge and South Shields (Ferris 2010; Cool and Mason, 2008, 308-10; Bidwell and Speak 1994). There is clear evidence that occupation continued at those sites well into the 5th century, echoing the findings from excavations at forts along Hadrian's Wall, notably Birdoswald, Housesteads and Vindolanda. In terms of the

9.3: Early Medieval HER entries in Bishopwearmouth & Sunderland townships,
transposed on the modern Ordnance Survey Map

*11th century grave marker
in St Michael's Church*
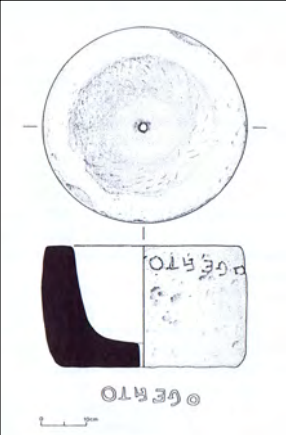
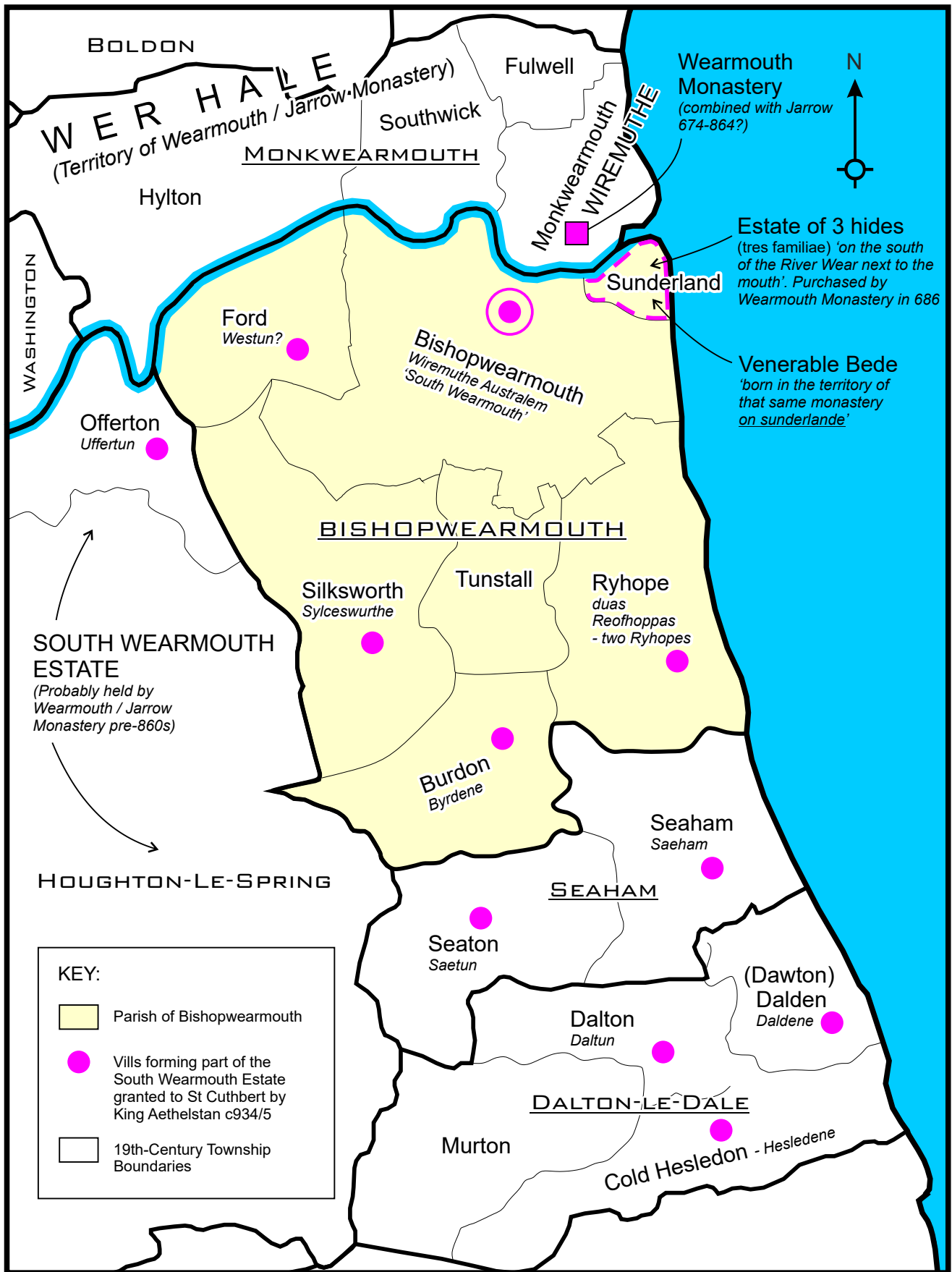*Anglo-Saxon stone bowl
from Queen Street East*

Scale 1:25000

0   200   400   600   800   1000 1200 1400 1600 1800   2000 m

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KEY - *HER entries colour-coded by period:* 🟢 = Early Medieval   ⋯⋯⋯ = Historic Township Boundary

318

BOLDON

WER HALE
(Territory of Wearmouth / Jarrow Monastery)

Fulwell

Southwick

MONKWEARMOUTH

Wearmouth Monastery
(combined with Jarrow 674-864?)

N

Hylton

Monkwearmouth

WIREMUTHE

WASHINGTON

Ford
Westun?

Sunderland

Estate of 3 hides
(tres familiae) *'on the south of the River Wear next to the mouth'. Purchased by Wearmouth Monastery in 686*

Bishopwearmouth
Wiremuthe Australem 'South Wearmouth'

Venerable Bede
'born in the territory of that same monastery on sunderlande'

Offerton
Uffertun

BISHOPWEARMOUTH

SOUTH WEARMOUTH ESTATE
(Probably held by Wearmouth / Jarrow Monastery pre-860s)

Silksworth
Sylceswurthe

Tunstall

Ryhope
duas Reofhoppas - two Ryhopes

Burdon
Byrdene

Seaham
Saeham

HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING

SEAHAM

Seaton
Saetun

(Dawton)
Dalden
Daldene

KEY:

Parish of Bishopwearmouth

Vills forming part of the South Wearmouth Estate granted to St Cuthbert by King Aethelstan c934/5

19th-Century Township Boundaries

Dalton
Daltun

DALTON-LE-DALE

Murton

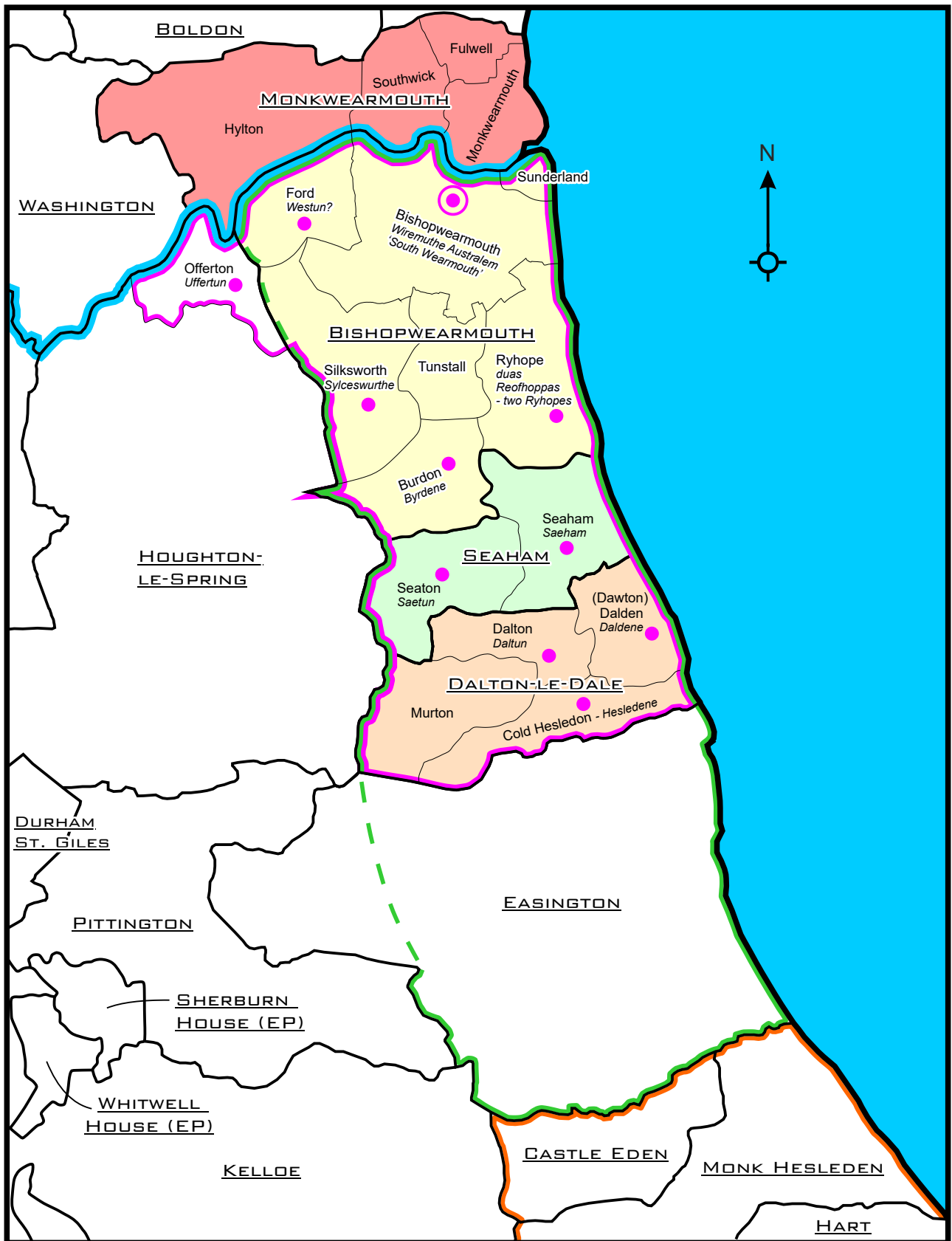Cold Hesledon - *Hesledene*

0   1   2   3   4 miles

wider rural settlement pattern, it is uncertain how long the dispersed pattern of villas and farmsteads was maintained after the end of the Roman period. In one case, however, the villa at Ingleby Barwick in the vale of the Tees, there is evidence of both late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon activity (ASUD 2000).

There is certainly evidence for the development of new burial practices such as burial of the intact body (inhumation) with grave goods, often weaponry such as spear and shield in the case of men whilst women were frequently interred with dress accoutrements such as broaches, which probably attached to the clothing they were dressed in at burial. In the past the existence of such inhumation burials, for example the 6th-century cemetery at Norton, near Billingham in Cleveland (Sherlock and Welch 1992), was seen as reflecting the arrival of a new population, Anglo-Saxons, from the Dutch, German and Danish coastal districts. The existence of such population movement is difficult to deny, given the linguistic change from Latin and Brythonic to English as the spoken language during these centuries, but the extent of that movement is now the subject of much debate. It is clear that by the time Bede was writing, in the early 8th century, he regarded the inhabitants of this region (including himself) as Anglians, or 'English', and displays considerable negative prejudice towards the Britons. However it is uncertain what proportion of the people Bede calls Anglians or Saxons were actually direct descendents of men and women who had crossed the North Sea at some stage to settle in Britain and how many had simply adopted Anglo-Saxon customs, culture and language as they were absorbed into the following of successful immigrant warriors.

9.4.2   Wearmouth monastery, Bede and the Sunderland estate

By the late 7th century Wearside formed part of one of the most powerful new Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, Northumbria. The monastery at Wearmouth was founded by the Northumbrian noble Benedict Biscop, in 673, on the north bank of the river, and centred on the church of St Peter. Subsequently, a second monastery was founded at Jarrow, c. 681/682, its church being dedicated to St Paul. Initially independent, this was later joined to Wearmouth as a double monastery, Wearmouth-Jarrow, though it seems clear that Wearmouth was the senior monastery, and the normal seat of the abbot (Grocock & Wood 2013, xxix-xxxii; cf. Meikle & Newman 2007, 24-25; Cookson 2015, 16). We know a great deal about this monastery, partly as a result of the writings of Bede, notably his History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow (*Historia Abbatum*), and other authors, such as the anonymous Life of Ceolfrith (*Vita Ceofridi*), but also the extensive archaeological excavations of the site led by Rosemary Cramp during the 1960s and 1970s (see Cramp 2005). The complex was clearly elaborate. The buildings were constructed of mortared stone 'in the Roman fashion', with glass windows, hard mortared floors and furnished with paintings on wood panels. In addition to the main church, St Peters, there were subsidiary ranges, perhaps residential in nature, plus courtyards and covered walkways. There were probably also workshops which handled the processing of vellum for liturgical books (derived from calf-skins derived from cattle herds grazed on the monastery's extensive estates) and the production of other materials and items required by the religious community. Its ancillary buildings probably extended down to the riverbank, as did those at Jarrow, and it is clear that the full extent of the complex has not been revealed, except perhaps on the east side.

As one of the most important monasteries in the Northumbrian kingdom, the foundation and development of Wearmouth monastery are of the utmost importance in the history of Sunderland as a whole, and in that of the wider region. However the monastery's principal significance in terms of the Bishopwearmouth Atlas lies in its impact on the area on the opposite, southern bank of the river, the areas which would become known as Sunderland
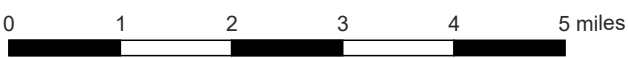
9.5: *Bishopwearmouth and its environs in the 10th-11th centuries with the territorial landgrants overlaid on a map of the parishes and townships of East Durham c.1800.*

and South Wearmouth and later Bishopwearmouth, and, in particular, the light which the associated records, shine on circumstances there in the early Middle Ages.

Firstly, it is clear, both from Bede's writings and from the archaeological evidence, that there were communities living in the area, even if the settlement remains themselves have so far remained elusive. It has been suggested that some of the earliest burials at the Wearmouth site might predate the monastery, in which case the cemetery may have served the nearby rural population (McNeil & Cramp 2005, 87-88; Cookson 2015, 20).

In the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Bede himself mentions he was born 'in the territory' of Wearmouth-Jarrow monastery (*HE* V, 24: *in territorio eiusdem monasterii*). In the Old English translation of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, which dates to the late 9th century, this is rendered as '*on sundorlande*' of the monastery (Plummer, *Baedae Opera Historica*, I, ix, n. 2), the term signifying 'detached land', i.e. a detached part of the monastic estate (cf. Watts 2002, 121-22). This makes it likely that he originated from the royal estate comprising the land of three *familiae* to the south of the Wear near the mouth of the river, which he mentioned in his 'History of the Abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow' (*Historia Abbatum* 9: *terram trium familiarum ad austram Viuri fluminis iuxta ostium*; Grocock & Wood (eds) 2013, 44-45).[29] Benedict Biscop obtained this estate from King Aldfrith and his counsellors for Wearmouth monastery in around 686, in exchange for two silk cloaks (*pallia*) of incomparable workmanship which he had brought back from Rome (Wood 2010, 112-13). Thus it is likely that this detached area on the south side of the Wear, extending westwards from the river's mouth, became known as Sunderland after its acquisition by the monastery. This was the location of the borough established by Bishop Hugh du Puiset established a borough in 1180 or some time in the following decade. Labelled simply the borough of Wearmouth in the foundation charter and the Boldon Book (*Episcopal Acta 24*, 133-35 no. 158; *Boldon Buke*, 6, 46), by 1196 the name Sunderland was being applied to the borough in official documents (Offler 1996, 11, n. 32; Cookson 2015, 51; both citing a royal tallage of the bishopric's manors and towns in 1196). The acquisition of this estate on the south bank would have given the monastery full control of any ferry route across the river at this point and any port facilities which may have been developing.[30]

There is of course no guarantee that the area of the 7th century estate corresponded exactly to the extent of the 12th-century and later borough. However, the fact that the wider area on the south bank of the Wear is designated South Wearmouth (*Wiremuthe Australem*) or simply Wearmouth in medieval documents, and later on, Bishop Wearmouth (from the 15th century onwards), rather than Sunderland, suggests that the original estate cannot have been a great deal larger (but note Wood 2010, 112, n. 131). In other words the name applied to a restricted tract of land on the south bank. Unfortunately the area given cannot be precisely calculated from the description provided by Bede – the land of three *familae*. The Latin term *familia* is generally equated to the Anglo-Saxon unit of land measurement known as the hide. A hide originally signified the amount of land sufficient for the support of a peasant and his household, or 'family' (hence the equivalent Latin term used by Bede), which might signify a more extensive group than just an immediate family. It is, however, impossible to define the extent of the area that this represented. Traditionally a hide was thought to represent to 120 acres (49 hectares), but it was really a unit of fiscal assessment – a measure of value rather than a measurement of area (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hide_(unit)). Nevertheless the general point is evident. There

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[29] There is a local, folk tradition that Monkton, near Jarrow, was the birthplace of Bede, but the likely equation with Sunderland makes this much less likely (Wood 2010, 112-13).
[30] For a general survey of the Wearmouth-Jarrow estate territories see Roberts 2008b.

was a small royal and then monastic estate on the south bank next to the river mouth, inhabited by families of tenant farmers from the the later 7th century onwards, if not earlier. Moreover, there is no reason why there should not be a similar agricultural population settled immediately to the west, in the area of Bishopwearmouth proper.

9.4.3 The South Wearmouth estate and the Community of St Cuthbert

The light briefly cast by Bede on Northumbria and its monastic communities dims following his death in 735. Alcuin, the great Northumbrian scholar and advisor at the court of Charlemagne, wrote to Wearmouth and Jarrow monasteries and their abbots on several occasions in the 790s in terms which suggest they still retained their accumulated prestige at that stage. However, the acute danger and disruption caused by Viking raiding probably caused the abandonment of the monasteries by the-mid 9th century, and certainly by the later part of that century (Cramp 2005, 360; Cookson 2015, 25). A burial ground appears to have extended over the monastic site at Wearmouth and it is possible that St Peter's Church remained in use at least partially or was reoccupied to perform parochial functions, but the picture is unclear.

Following the collapse of Wearmouth-Jarrow and other Northumbrian monasteries, one monastic body became the dominant religious institution in the region from the late 9th century, the Community of St Cuthbert (*congregatio sancti Cuthberti*). The community was descended from the monastery established on Lindisfarne or Holy Island in the 7th century, where the celebrated saint, Cuthbert, was bishop in 685-7. Increasing pressure from Viking raiding from 793 onwards finally caused the monks to abandon their island home in 875, carrying the undecayed body of their saint with them in its coffin, before eventually settling at Chester-le-Street in 883 and re-establishing the seat of the bishopric there. Just over a century later the bishop and community moved again, this time to the better protected site of Durham in 995.

Documentary evidence indicates that the Cuthbertine community was the recipient of numerous grants of land made by the Viking kings of York, notable rulers of newly emergent Kingdom of England – Æthelstan (924-39) and Canute (1017-35) – and prominent local lords during the course of the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries (Roberts 2008a, 154-7, 226-36). As a result the community became the principal landowner in the area between the Tyne and the Tees in this period, supplanting Bede's monastery of Jarrow-Monkwearmouth, previously the largest landowner there in the 7th and 8th centuries, at least in what is now South Tyneside and Wearside (cf. Roberts 2008b). Indeed this process of land acquisition may have actually begun earlier in the 9th century, before the community's move southward, as part of a deliberate effort to build up its southern holdings. It was also during the early 9th century that the bishopric of Hexham was suppressed and its territory absorbed into the bishopric of Lindisfarne. The incumbent was both bishop and abbot of the monastic community, his seat shifting from Lindisfarne perhaps to Norham and then to Chester-le-Street and eventually Durham, as the Community of St Cuthbert repeatedly shifted its base in the region.

The most important source helping to chart the community's expansion was the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, probably compiled in *c.* 1050. Although the original charters are not preserved, the acquisition of particular estates was written into this history to form an alternative record. It seems to have been the practice of the Cuthbertine community to inscribe its property acquisitions in the blank spaces in its gospels and other treasured books, and these were later collected together in the *Historia* to form a single, more convenient record. One of the large royal grants documented there was King Æthelstan's gift

of the estate described as 'his beloved vill of South Wearmouth with its appendices' (*Wiremuthe Australem cum suis appendiciis*). This is followed by a list of constituent vills which includes not just those of Bishop Wearmouth parish but those of Seaham and Dalton-le-Dale parishes as well, a combined area of some 6,600 hectares. Silksworth, Burden and the two Ryhopes[31] are mentioned, though Tunstall is omitted, as is Ford, though that may be represented by the otherwise unknown *Westun*, since Ford lies directly to the west of Bishop Wearmouth village. Also included is the vill of Offerton on the west side of Ford, which certainly formed part of Houghton-le-Spring parish, rather than Bishop Wearmouth, later in the Middle Ages.[32]

What we are perhaps seeing here in the listing of these places is the Community's acquisition of a *shire* or composite estate. These were very large, integrated estates, forming coherent, contiguous blocks of territory, with outlying settlements providing renders in kind and labour for the lord's central hall and home farm (cf. Dyer 2003, 26-31; see above Section 7.5 for discussion of shire estates). The huge South Wearmouth estate must have included the estate of three *familiae*/hides at the mouth of the Wear mentioned by Bede as belonging to Wearmouth monastery (see above). Bede (*Historia Abbatum*, 16: Grocock & Wood (eds) 2013, 60-61) also records that an estate of ten *familiae*/hides at Dalton was given to the monastery during the tenure of Abbot Ceolfrith (688/9-716). It is possible that Wearmouth had, by a series of piecemeal grants and purchases during the 7th and 8th centuries, acquired possession of all the territory corresponding to the 10th-century South Wearmouth estate. Following the Viking invasions, the collapse of the Northumbrian kingdom and the abandonment of Wearmouth-Jarrow monasteries, these lands probably passed to the Viking kings in York and their henchmen, and thence, by conquest to the West Saxon king, Æthelstan. He in turn granted it to religious community at Chester-le-Street, who had doubtless petitioned for the lands, in fulfilment of their self-appointed mission as the heirs to all the former Northumbrian monastic communities.

9.4.4   The parish church

It is likely that the parish church at Bishopwearmouth, St Michael and All Angels – now Sunderland Minster, was first established in the period following Æthelstan's grant, either later in the 10th century or perhaps in the 11th century, as part of the Community of St Cuthbert's estate centre there. 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; and see Chapter 6), 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 (*see above*: 6.2.3).

It is significant that the parish which developed from this did not encompass the full extent of the estate granted to the Cuthbertine community by Æthelstan. When the parochial pattern becomes clear in the Middle Ages the southern part of the estate territory formed the smaller medieval parishes of Seaham and Dalton-le-Dale, which comprised two (Seaham

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[31] 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 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).

[32] The vill of Morton, which formed part of Dalton-le-Dale parish later on during the Middle Ages, is also omitted, hinting that it may be a later creation, like Tunstall perhaps.

9.6: 11th Century Grave Marker in St Michael's Church, Bishopwearmouth

and Seaton) and four townships (Dalton, Dawdon, Cold Hesledon and Morton), respectively. The likely reason for this is that there were already churches at these two places, as evinced by surviving Anglian/pre-Viking remains. At Seaham, the parish church has been interpreted as 7th- or 8th-century in date (Taylor & Taylor 1965, 535-36; Pevsner & Williamson 1983, 398-99), though this has been questioned recently (Ryder 2011, 133). The presence of monolithic window heads in the north wall of the nave (*Corpus*, 135, pls 125-27), whether in situ or reused, plus the cemetery with 7th- to 9th- century burials to the north of the churchyard, is sufficient evidence for the existence of an Anglian church there, whatever the date of the extant building. At Dalton-le-Dale, part of a cross shaft of late 8th- to early 9th- century date survives, built into the south wall of the church (*Corpus*, 61, pl. 30:156), again implying the existence of an Anglian ecclesiastical site. These two may have originated as churches dependent on Wearmouth monastery, perhaps subsidiary monastic complexes which were then repurposed in the 10th or 11th century as parish churches (Cambridge 1984, 75, 81).

It is possible that archaeological investigation beneath the floors of the Minster may illuminate the early medieval origins of the church. Archaeological supervision of works to install underfloor heating in Houghton-le-Spring parish church (another dedication to St Michael and All Angels), in 2008, revealed the foundations of an Anglo-Saxon nave with flanking lateral chambers known as a porticus (Ryder 2011, 62-6; Archaeological Practice 2009). However Caroe's very extensive rebuilding works at Bishopwearmouth in the 1930s must have greatly damaged any archaeological remains of an earlier church there.
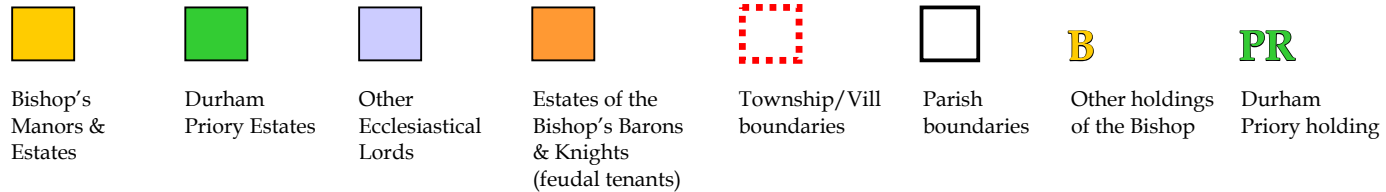
9.4.5   From vill to village – the emergence of nucleated settlements

The listings of estates in the *Historia de sancto Cuthberto* discussed above and in Chapter 7 (Section 7.5) imply that the pattern of vills or township communities, like Bishopwearmouth/South Wearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope etc., which are encountered in documents of the High Middle Ages, was almost fully established by the 10th and 11th centuries. Some feature even earlier, in the writings of Bede concerning the 7th and early 8th centuries. Less clear is exactly what these vills represent in terms of a physical settlement pattern. They certainly represent distinct rural communities, but it is uncertain whether these communities were each now predominantly focussed on a single nucleated village settlement or whether there might be a number of hamlets and farmsteads in a township at this stage.

There is, however, a rough consensus that the configuration of nucleated villages and hamlets may have begun to take shape from the 8th or 9th centuries onwards, but could quite conceivably not have been completed or even, to any substantial degree, commenced before the 11th or 12th centuries in many parts of County Durham and Northumberland. Some of these settlements may initially have been established on different sites and may have undergone one or more shifts of position before reaching their current locations (a process which has been documented for certain sites elsewhere in England, being known as the 'Middle Saxon shuffle'). This appears to have been the case at the recently discovered site at Shotton, near Cramlington in south-east Northumberland, where two successive phases of early medieval settlement were uncovered, each occupying a different location c. 300m from the site of the later medieval village (McKelvey 2010; Muncaster et al. 2014).
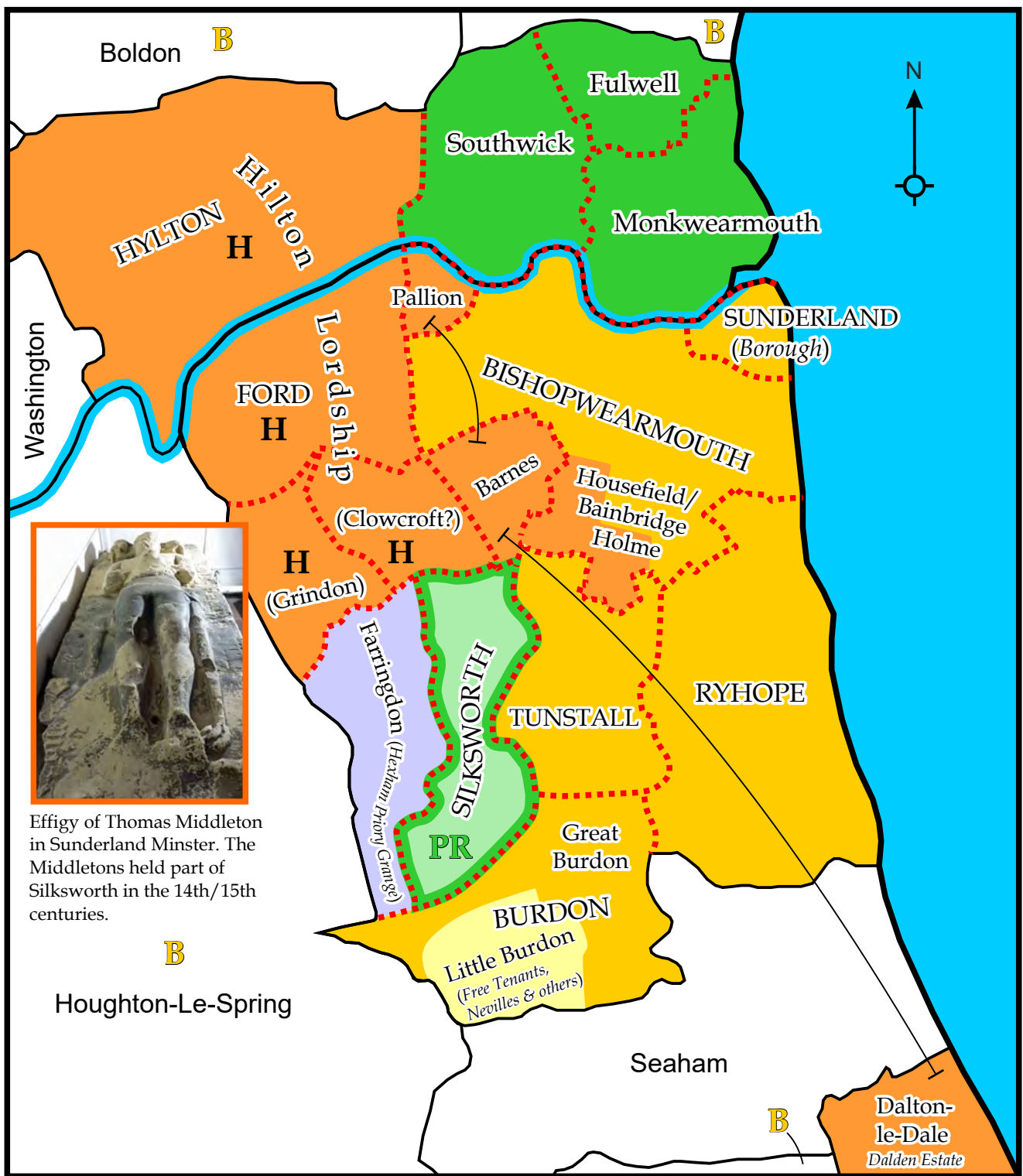
Effigy of Thomas Middleton in Sunderland Minster. The Middletons held part of Silksworth in the 14th/15th centuries.

Map labels:

Boldon **B**

Fulwell

Southwick

Monkwearmouth

N

HYLTON

Hilton

H

Lordship

Pallion

SUNDERLAND (*Borough*)

Washington

FORD

H

BISHOPWEARMOUTH

Barnes

Housefield/ Bainbridge Holme

(Clowcroft?)

H   **H**

(Grindon)

Farringdon (*Hexham Priory Grange*)

SILKSWORTH

PR

TUNSTALL

RYHOPE

Great Burdon

B

Houghton-Le-Spring

BURDON

Little Burdon (*Free Tenants, Nevilles & others*)

Seaham

B

Dalton- le-Dale

Dalden Estate

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

9.7: *Medieval Lordship in Bishopwearmouth and Monkwearmouth.*

9.5 The High Middle Ages (1066 – *c.* 1540)

Following the Norman Conquest, the great shire estate of Bishopwearmouth, itemised in the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto*, was broken up into smaller components. This was a consequence of the radical reorganisation that the Durham community of St Cuthbert was subjected to by the new Norman overlords. These profound changes then percolated down to the ordinary farm tenants in villages such as Bishopwearmouth. Nevertheless, when it reappears in historical sources during the 12th century, specifically in the great Durham episcopal estate survey known as the Boldon Book, Bishopwearmouth was still in the hands of the bishop. The same cannot be said of every one of the former shire's vills, however.

9.5.1 Background: Lordship and land tenure

Initially, little changed in the region after the Conquest, as the Normans sought to govern through Northumbria's existing power structures, the earldom of Northumbria and the Bishop of Durham, who was also Abbot of the Community of St Cuthbert. This relatively conciliatory policy was very different from that adopted in the rest of England, which involved wholesale removal of the existing landed ruling class, and seems to reflect Nothumbria's semi-detached relationship to the rest of the kingdom, still more of a dependency ruled by a viceroy rather than a fully integrated part of the whole. It was only after another Northumbrian revolt resulted in the assassination of Bishop Walcher (who also held the post of earl), in 1080, that this changed.

In 1083, the new bishop, William de St-Calais, established a convent of Benedictine monks under the leadership of a prior, and attached it to the new Romanesque cathedral under construction (Aird 1998, 100-141). The old Anglo-Saxon religious community was thought to be too lax. Many of the priests were married, in effect forming a hereditary caste, a factor which had helped the religious community to endure the turmoil of the Viking era, but was now deemed unacceptable by the reformed Catholic Church. The new priory was to be ordered strictly according to the monastic rule of St Benedict, whilst maintaining the services in the cathedral. In a further measure, the great 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, giving it a substantial degree of independence from the bishop.

In addition, successive bishops granted some of their remaining estates to their retinue of barons and knights – the *barones et fideles sancti Cuthberti* – in the period up to 1150. In some cases this involved granting lands which had previously belonged to the Community of St Cuthbert, but in others the bishop may simply have confirmed local families in the possession of estates they already held. By these means 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). Even those estates which the bishop did not hold directly and which were held instead either by the priory or by his barons and knights were all notionally held of the bishop as 'tenant in chief' in a feudal relationship.

Thus landed estates in medieval County Durham, a large proportion of which must previously have been held by the disbanded Cuthbertine community, now fell into three categories of lordship:

1. The bishop's directly managed estates – an extensive collection of lands distributed throughout the region retained under the bishop's immediate control. In the area of Bishopwearmouth parish this included the townships of Bishopwearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope and Burdon.
2. The patrimony of the cathedral priory established in 1083 or its subordinate daughter monasteries, or 'cells', such as Finchale priory or Jarrow and Monkwearmouth priories – another large block dispersed throughout the region. On Wearside, the priory's main holdings lay on the north bank of the river, centred on the re-established monastic cell at Monkwearmouth. It had however acquired control of the manor of Silksworth by the early 14th century, which it leased out to a local gentry family. Hexham Priory, by contrast, maintained a grange farm at the hamlet of Farringdon immediately to the north.
3. The lands of the barons and knights who were the bishop's subordinate feudal tenants and formed his military following. These estates included Ford and Grindon on the west side of Bishopwearmouth, held by the Hiltons of Hylton, and the vill of Hameldon or Homeldon on its south-western margins, corresponding to the later the manors of Barnes and Pallion, and Housefield.

Feudal Tenure
The creation of this last group, sometimes termed the 'knights of St Cuthbert', was by a process known as 'subinfeudation', whereby the bishop retained nominal possession, as the superior lord, over the land granted to the baron or knight, but in practice the recipient exercised largely unfettered control over their fiefs, extracting rents and labour services from the peasants of the manor. Consequently the actions of these manorial lords would have had a much greater day-to-day impact on the life of village communities which fell under their control than would those of the nominal overlord, the bishop.

In return, the inferior lords were supposed to provide military service, in support of the bishop, the tenant in chief, who was himself bound to provide the king with military support. Some of these subordinate lords, those holding the largest number of knight's fees and most numerous estates, would in turn have enfeoffed followers of their own to enable them to fulfil their military obligation to the bishop. The bishop's feudal tenants were also supposed to attend his court and generally act as faithful, supportive vassals, forming what is known as an honorial community, honour being another term for barony (for the composition of this group of barons and knights in the 12th century see Aird 1998, 184-226; Scammell 1956, 222-9).

Sources
The particular type of lordship to which any community was subject is significant because it has profound implications for the type and quantity of documentation pertaining to the estate. Because so much documentation relating to the Benedictine convent was preserved after the Middle Ages in the archives of the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral (now held in Durham University Archives and Special Collections), there are abundant documentary sources relating to the estates held by Durham priory and its daughter cells. These include manor court records, account rolls, charters and surveys of one type or another. The estates of the bishop are, likewise, fairly well documented (though not to the same degree as the priory's lands), with two major surveys and numerous charters having survived from the Middle Ages.

The third category, the lands of the bishop's barons and knights, is the least well recorded. There are however a number of charters and deeds relating to such estates, some preserved

because they were deposited in Durham priory for safe keeping. In addition there is an important class of material known as *Inquisitions Post Mortem* or **IPMs**. These were surveys undertaken by the bishop's officers on the death of one of the bishop's tenants-in-chief, that is a baron or knight holding land directly from the bishop in return for military service, in theory at least. The purpose of the IPMs was to determine the extent and value of the feudal tenant's estates, whether his heir was of age (if not the land reverted to bishop as universal landlord in the palatinate until the heir attained majority), and to make provision for the widow, if surviving (who was normally entitled to a third of the estate during her lifetime). Abstracts of these inquisitions were made subsequently by the bishop's officers, and these have survived, beginning in Bishop Beaumont's tenure (1318-33) and providing full coverage for the period from 1333 onwards (Liddy 2008, 28-9).

In the specific case of Bishopwearmouth, the township figures in the two surveys of the bishopric's entire estate, namely the celebrated document known as the Boldon Book, initially compiled around 1183, and the later survey initiated by Bishop Hatfield *c*. 1381.

9.5.2   Bishopwearmouth in the late 12th century

The 'Boldon book' represented a survey of all the bishop's estates initiated by Bishop Hugh, in *c*. 1183-1184.[33] Often misrepresented as Durham's Domesday Book, it is no such thing for it includes only the bishop's estates, omitting even those of the priory, let alone those of the many secular lords of the *Haliwerfolc*, bound to the bishop by feudal allegiance. Instead it is a straightforward manorial survey or 'custumal', recording the labour, money dues and other renders made to the bishop by the tenants of each of his estates within Durham and Northumberland (see Offler 1996; Aird 1998, 190-91; Scammell 1956, 202ff). Surveys of this kind were becoming increasingly common facet of manorial estate management by the late 12th century and were to become very widespread in the following century, though a large proportion have not survived.

The Boldon Book survey evidence (c. 1183)

A full translation of the sections of the Boldon Book relating to the villls of Bishopwearmouth parish is provided in Appendix 1: Source 3 (cf. *Boldon Buke*, 5-6, 46-7). A summary of the survey's implications for the village settlement at Bishopwearmouth and its neighbours is set out here. However we are immediately confronted with a significant difficulty in that survey does not list the numbers of tenants in each individual vill. Instead, Bishopwearmouth figures jointly with Tunstall, whilst Ryhope is combined with Burdon, but only that settlement known as Great, East or Town Burdon. Old or West Burdon is probably represented by Little Burdon, which was entered separately and was entirely in the hands of one of the bishop's free tenants, John de Houghton. Together there were 22 villeins and six cotmen (tenant smallholders or cottagers) in Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall as compared with 27 villeins and only three cotmen in Ryhope and (Great) Burdon.

The tenants

The villeins (*villani* or men of the vill) were, as their name suggests, the main tenants of the vill, the human core of each township community and manorial estate. In Bishopwearmouth they each held two oxgangs or bovates,[34] amounting in all to 30 acres. In return they had to labour on the lord bishop's demesne land for three days each week, including reaping,

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[33] The original 12th-century manuscript has not survived. Instead it has been transmitted in the form of four copies, A-D, ranging in date from the 14th to the 15th or even early 16th century (Offler 1996). These show some signs that a few alterations were made the original document post 1183/4.

[34] An oxgang was, notionally, the amount of land which could be ploughed by a team of oxen in a day. It varied from vill to vill, but was typically 12 or 15 acres. In the townships of Bishopwearmouth it was 15 acres. Bovate was a Latinised form of the word oxgang..

ploughing, harrowing and carting loads. However they were exempt from these burdens during the weeks of Easter and Pentecost and the 13 days holiday at Christmas. During the autumn harvest season four special work days involved the entire household with the exception of the tenant's wife, though they did receive food from the lord on these days and the other great precations or boon days. They also made a few small customary payments and renders in kind, which went by names such as scatpennys and averpennys. These villeins were all tied tenants, bound to the lord and the particular manorial estate and vill they were born on. Hence they were not free to move to another village and transfer their labour to another lord, for instance. Indeed an alternative name for such tenants was bondmen or bondagers and the arable parcels held by the villein tenants are described as bondlands (*terra bondorum*) in the Hatfield Survey, some 200 years later.

The cotmen or cottars (*cotmanni*) had smaller holdings of only 12 acres, but were less burdened, being required to work just 2 days per week on the demesne and make make annual renders of 12 hens and 60 eggs. They too were tied to the estate, but were exempt from working during the three main festivals, like the villein bondmen. They would doubtless have supplemented the resources extracted from their small holdings with casual paid labour perhaps on the lord's demesne farm or working for the wealthier villein and free tenants (perhaps performing some of the onerous labour services on their behalf). Some may also have undertaken various sorts of minor craft activities.

In addition there were three other tenants with special responsibilities who held 12 acre parcels of land like the cotmen. Two of these were craftsmen, the carpenter, who was described as an old man, and the blacksmith. They both possessed their holdings fo life and paid no rent, but the carpenter had to make and repair the ploughs and harrows required by the vill, whilst the smith was obliged to provide the iron coulters and shares used in the ploughs and win coal somewhere in the area (perhaps in Burdon – see below). The third specialised tenant was the pounder (*punderus*), an official of the bishop who supervised the pound enclosure or pinfold where stray livestock were impounded until their owners made compensation for the damage they had caused. As well as his parcel of land the pounder received renders of grain paid by the township as a whole presumably to feed the impounded stock (for which their owners would doubtless have had to pay). In return he had to render 24 hens and 500 eggs to the bishop, which would then be sold on.

No craft tenants were mentioned in Ryhope and Burdon. However, in addition to the pounder, two individuals were named, Elfer de Burdon and Amfrid, who were probably free tenants, superior in social rank to the vill's bonded tenants. They each held two oxgangs, like the villein tenants, but were not compelled to perform agricultural labour on the lord's demesne. Instead they paid cash rents (8s and 6s 8d respectively) and acted as the bishop's agents when necessary, going on errands for him. Moreover, Amfrid was exempt from any rent or imposition for as long as he held the lease of the demesne farm.

Finally the vills as a whole paid two ancient renders, peculiar to Northumbria, known as cornage and metrith. Cornage was a levy on head of cattle (its name was derived from *cornu*, the Latin term for 'horn'), and may originally have been levied in kind, but, if so, had been commuted to a cash payment by the time of the Boldon Book. Wearmouth and Tunstall paid 20s (£1) while Ryhope and Burdon paid 37s. The two pairs of vills also each paid two metrith cows (*ii vaccas de metride*), translated as 'cows in milk'.[35]

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[35] The precise meaning of metrith is uncertain; see Offler 1996, 36.

The demesne land and manorial farm

The demesne land attached to the bishop's manorial farm was not itemised in detail as it was 'at farm' (*ad firmam*), that is to say leased out or 'farmed out' to a leaseholder or 'farmer' (the origin of the modern terms farm and farmer, which originally did not have a specifically agricultural connotation). Hence, no figures for the amount of demesne land are given in the Boldon Book. However, the demesne farm for Wearmouth and Tunstall had 20 oxen (probably sufficient for two plough teams) and two teams of horses to pull harrows plus 200 sheep. Along with the mill it returned £20. By contrast the demesne farm for Ryhope and Great Burdon had sufficient stock for three plough teams and three harrows and had a flock of 300 sheep. Moreover the survey states that half a ploughland was without stock implying that the the numbers of oxen and perhaps horses were not quite sufficient to cultivate the entire farm.

Mills, fisheries and borough

In addition to the demesne farms, Wearmouth and Tunstall shared one mill whilst Ryhope and Burdon shared another, where the tenants of the vills were compelled to grind the grain harvested from their holdings. The mills were been leased out to professional millers who then charged the tenants accordingly. The leaseable value of Ryhope/Burdon mill was one marc (13s 4d). Millers were often unpopular figures within village communities, suspected, rightly or wrongly, of overcharging the tenants by using false measures.

More valuable still were the fisheries (*piscariae*) of Wearmouth – stretches of the River Wear where fish traps might be laid. These rendered £6 per annum. By contrast the 'borough (*burgus*) of Wearmouth' was worth only 20s (i.e. £1). The borough had been founded by Bishop Hugh du Puisset only shortly before the Boldon Book itself was compiled in 1183, and certainly no earlier than 1180,[36] so the low valuation may reflect the fact that it was in the earliest stage of its development. The borough settlement was located to the east of Bishop Wearmouth village lining the road leading down to the port on the south bank of the river (*Ostium Vedrae*). The restricted territory attached to the settlement was carved out of Bishopwearmouth and occupied the southern promontory at the mouth of the river. Later evidence suggests there was no arable land attached to the settlement, which was doubtless envisaged from the start as a primarily commercial and artisanal community, but there was designated moorland where the burghers might graze livestock. By 1196 a royal tallage document shows the borough was now being referred to as Sunderland and the name seems to have been in general use by the 13th century (Cookson 2015, 51; Offler 1996, 11).

Comparing the vills

The overall implication is that the demesne farm for Ryhope and Burdon was significantly larger that that of Wearmouth and Tunstall. Moreover the figures for the amount of land held by the tenants of the two pairs of vills are also greater in the respect of Ryhope and Burdon (918 acres) than they are for Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall (768 acres), the greater number of villein holdings associated with the first two being only partially offset by the higher number of cotmen tenements attached to the second pair. This is perhaps a little surprising since Bishopwearmouth was the parochial centre and was obviously a large township to judge from post-medieval mapping. Even if Tunstall was relatively small it was certainly no smaller than Great Burdon and probably slightly larger. Two factors might help to explain this apparent discrepancy. Firstly, part of territory of Bishopwearmouth township (as defined on 19th century maps), the area around Barnes, Bainbridge Holme and even Pallion, actually formed part of medieval Hameldon, which was a separate vill in its own right

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[36] Cookson 2015, 50. Hugh du Puisset's foundation charter is reproduced in Greenwell, *Boldon Buke*, xli, appendix iv, and *Episcopal Acta 24*, 133-35, no. 158.

during the 12th and early 13th centuries. Secondly, not only was some land in Bishopwearmouth, known as glebeland, directly attached to the parish church, but also the rector of the parish may have held his own separate manor. This was certainly the case by the 16th century, when the rector acquired his own manor court, but the rector is likely to have had his own landholding, separate from the bishop's manor at a much earlier stage.

Double manors

As suggested in Chapter 7, the pattern of large episcopal manors encompassing two entire townships, evident in Bishopwearmouth parish, was probably a consequence of the breakup of large integrated shire estates, like the South Wearmouth estate, encompassing entire parishes or indeed multiple parishes. Rather than incur the cost of establishing a manorial complex in every township which the bishop retained in the area, it was more economical to form these double-manors comprising two contiguous vills.

This practice certainly continued into 13th century. In 1235, master William of Durham, probably already rector of Bishopwearmouth parish, was granted the manors of Wearmouth and Ryhope, as well as the vill of Sunderland (i.e. the borough and its territory) by the bishop (*Episcopal Acta 25*, 289, no. 315; Cookson 2015, 51). The absence of any mention of the smaller townships of Tunstall and (Great) Burdon is probably not an indication that they were excluded from the grant, but rather that they were simply subsumed within their respective double manors, which naturally took their names from the larger township of each pair where the manorial hallgarth with its associated buildings was located. Indeed, it is likely that this pattern prevailed right up until directly managed demesne farming was abandoned in the townships of Bishopwearmouth parish during the 14th century.

9.5.3   Bishopwearmouth in the late Middle Ages (14th and 15th centuries)

Bishopwearmouth in Bishop Hatfield's Survey (c. 1381)

Almost 200 years after the Boldon Book was compiled, a second comprehensive survey of the Bishop of Durham's estates was undertaken c. 1381, under the direction of Bishop Hatfield, shining a renewed light on settlement and population in Bishopwearmouth. The Latin text of this document was published by the Surtees Society in 1857 (*Hatfield Survey*). The entry for the vill of Bishopwearmouth is translated and set out in full here in Appendix 1.

Context: plague and recession

Superficially similar to the Boldon Book in many respects (and consciously referring back to the earlier survey at many points), this new survey actually documented a radically different world. The long boom of the 13th century, which had followed the production of the Boldon Book, was well and truly over. This had seen extra land brought into cultivation and widespread, rapid population growth right across England. However it was followed in the early 14th century by climatic deterioration, famine and murrain, a deadly disease affecting the peasants' precious cattle. Then, in 1349-50, an even worse calamity followed with the Black Death, which carried away anything between a third and a half of the population, a trauma on such an unimaginable scale that it is a testament to the resilience of medieval communities that any kind of societal order was maintained. A renewed outbreak of the plague in 1361, repeated in 1375-6 and 1378-9 – which took away anyone without previous immunity who contracted the disease – must have come as particularly cruel blows, crushing any rising sense of optimism amongst the survivors of the first pandemic. Further waves followed in the 1390s, a decade after the compilation of the bishopric's new survey, preventing any recovery in population levels. Inevitably, such a devastating process had a profound social and economic impact. The shrunken population meant there was less

economic demand which reduced the price of grain and other foodstuffs and agricultural products. Conversely, it led to a concommitant shortage of labour, the cost of which rose substantially. This, in turn, increased the bargaining power of tenants vis a vis their lords, such as the bishop, with consequences which played out throughout the rest of the Middle Ages. On the one hand landowners were receiving lower prices for the produce of their demesne farms whilst facing ever-increasing opposition from their tenants to the performance of the compulsory labour services and having to pay more to secure hired labour. This resulted in the widespread abandonment of directly managed demesne farming.

The tenants of Bishopwearmouth in 1381

Name	Demesne land	Bondland*[1]	Cottage holding*[2]	Exchequer land*[3]
Thomas Menvill				*placea* of Hendon (ship mooring site)
Parson of Wearmouth Church				The Hough – pasture
John Hobson	10 acres	1 messuage, 12 bovates (180 acres) & moiety (½) of 1 mes + 2 bov (15 a)	1 cottage + 6 acres (½ of *Wrightland*)	2 tofts with curtilages
William Gray	10 acr	1 mes, 2 bov (30 a) & moiety of same (total: 45 acr)		1 garden
William Wermouth	10 acr	2 mess + 4 bov (60 acr)		
Alan Rudd	moiety of 10 acr (i.e 5 acr)			
Cecilia Nowell (widow of John)	20 + 10 acr + moiety of 10 acr (total: 35 acr)	2 mes + 4 bov (60 a) + ½ of 1 mes 2bov (total: 75 acr)	1 cottage + 12 acr (*Punderland*)	1 waste plot
Robert Robinson	10 acr		1 cottage + 6 acr	
Robert Warden	10 acr	1 mes, 2 bov (30 a)		
Robert Parish	Moiety of 10 acr			
Juliana Gamell	Moiety of 10 acr		1 cottage + 12 acr	
William Birdesman	10 acr			
Thomas Sheperdson*[4]	10 acr + moiety of 10 acr (i.e. 15 acr)	Moiety of 1 mess + 2 bov (15 acr)	1 cottage + 12 acr	1 garden
John Robinson	10 acr			
Emma Robinson (widow of William)	10 acr			
John of Sunderland	10 acr + moiety of 10 acr (15 acr)	1 mes, 2 bov (30 a)		1 toft + 1 acr 1 toft with curtilage
Stephen Carter	1 acr (*Forland*)			
Robert Payn			2 cottages + 18 acr inclu ½ *Wrightland*	
Thomas Marshall			1 cottage + 6 acr	
Nicholas Gamell			1 cottage + 6 acr (*Smythland*)	1 toft with curtilage
Thomas Bullok			1 cottage + 12 acr	
Robert Bullok				1 toft with curtilage
John Rudd				1 toft with curtilage
Robert Collesknave				1 toft with curtilage
John Panne				1 toft with curtilage
John Punder				1 toft with curtilage

*[1] Each bond tenant also pays per annum 13d per holding for land in Middle Moor and Small Moor. Together they also hold the common bakehouse and (with the tenants of Tunstall, Ryhope & Burdon)

the mill and brewhouse. The bond tenants also hold together 1 acre of the smith's land (*terræ fabri*) and pay p. a., until a blacksmith shall be found, 12d.

*[2] The cottage tenants each return 6d per annum for ½ acre in Middle Moor.

*[3] The exchequer tenants (excepting William Gray and Thomas Sheperdson) together hold 4 acres which were part of the smith's land and pay p. a. 4s.

*[4] Thomas Sheperdson may be related to William Schipherdson, a tenant of Bishopwearmouth mentioned in the bishop's halmote court records for 1368. The Shipperdsons were the most enduring family of the township, traceable as tenants and landowners from 1368 until the early 18th century.

Bishop Hatfield's Survey was more detailed than its 12th century predecessor. The four townships of Bishopwearmouth parish held directly by the bishop – Bishopwearmouth itself (*Wermouth*), Tunstall, Ryhope (*Reffhop*) and Burdon (*Birden*), plus Sunderland borough (*Burgus de Sunderland*) – each have individual entries, rather than being grouped in pairs as was the case in the Boldon Book. In addition there is an apparent entry for 'Hameldon', the vill on the south-western edge of Bishopwearmouth township, which, however, represents a mislabelling of the entry for an altogether separate vill, Shotton, south of Easington, as discussed below.

These township entries itemise each named tenant's holdings of the various categories of land – demesne land, bondland, cottage holdings plus a new category not included in the Boldon Book known as exchequer land (*terrae scaccarii*). We thus meet the most prominent members of the village community for the first time, all the land holding tenants, some 24 individuals. These are set out below with all the tenancies by each tenant being grouped together.

Only three were women, two of whom – Cecilia Nowell and Emma Robinson – are clearly stated to be widows (formerly married to John Nowell and William Robinson respectively). Presumably the Nowells and Robinsons had no surviving adult sons who would otherwise have inherited the lands, though other tenants with the surname Robinson are named (brothers or cousins of William perhaps). Many inhabitants are still invisible however, including almost all the female population and children, plus any adult sons who had yet to inherit their father's holdings and poor labourers who held no land at all. The community would have been very much larger than the 24 listed here, probably at least four times that figure and perhaps significantly more.

The free tenants

Two entries feature at the beginning of the Bishopwearmouth section under the heading of exchequer land. These are separate from the main block of exchequer tenements which were listed separately at the end of the section and mainly just comprise tofts with their curtilages (see below). This initial pair of entries is very different however because of the status of the tenants, namely Thomas Menville, who held a site (*placea*) at Hendon (*Hyndon*) for an annual rent of 2s, and the parson, or rector, of Bishopwearmouth parish, who held certain pasture land known as the Hough (*le Hough*), paying 6s 8d per annum. These individuals both belonged to the landholding gentry class, who would have held most of their estates by feudal tenure, rather than as free, rentpaying tenants, as here.

Thomas Menville is well-known. The younger son of John Menville, lord of Horden and Great Haswell near Easington, Thomas was lord in his own right of the manor of Ludworth in the parish of Pittington (Liddy, 2008, 61, 85, 87, 89). By the 1380s he had built up a significant interest in Bishopwearmouth. He figures in the Hatfield Survey, again, as the lessee of the borough of Sunderland, paying the bishop a sum of £6 per annum (*Hatfield Survey*, 137). This entitled Thomas to all the revenue from the market tolls and the profits from the borough

courts, plus the rights to a fishery on the Wear and eight dams (yares) which the bishop held in the river, along with assorted rents, including those from certain other fisheries or yares. Renewed for the same sum in 1393 and 1402, it is worth noting that this was a very substantial reduction on the £20 paid by a previous lessee, Richard of Hedworth, in 1358, a mark of the reduced prosperity and hence profitability of the borough as the long term impact of the Black Death made itself felt. Further south in Bishopwearmouth parish, Menville had, in 1363, also acquired a half share in the vill of Old Burdon – Little Burdon (*Parva Birden*) as it is called in the Hatfield Survey – in partnership with John Neville, lord of Raby and Brancepeth (Liddy 2008, 85-6). The partners (*parcenarii*) paid the bishop a combined rent of 10s per annum and performed various services such as carting wine and joining the bishops hunt or 'great chase' (ibid., 145). This association with Lord Neville was significant. Thomas Menville was a prominent member of the Neville 'affinity', the feudal following or circle of clients dependent to a greater or lesser degree on that great regional magnate.

The site that Menville held in Hendon is qualified as '*pro applicatione navium*'. This has been interpreted as a shipbuilding site (Summers 1858, 276), but the term is better translated as 'for the mooring of ships' or 'access to the shore by ships' (Latham 1965, 25), as Cookson (2015, 29, 57 n. 11; cf. Surtees 1816, 256) has argued. There is no evidence there was a proper harbour at Hendon and it is likely that ships were simply run-up on the beach at low tide to load or unload goods. Menville would presumably have levied a toll on these ships (the term *applicatio* actually implies payment for mooring). This could potentially have reduced the revenues of the borough, which Menville was leasing, but by the 15th and 16th centuries at any rate, vessels using the harbour at Wearmouth itself paid anchorage dues to Durham Priory's monastic cell at Monkwearmouth, rather than to the bishop or his lessee, so this was, in effect, a way the latter could take a cut of these dues, and may simply have regularised a long-standing practice.

The second free tenant, the rector of Bishopwearmouth, would also have been a wealthy man. He would have received the tithes from the parishioners and would have held the glebe land attached to the parish church, plus potentially other scattered parcels of land which would later form Rectory Manor, though it may not have been formerly designated as such at this stage as the rector is not known to have had a manorial halmote court before c. 1560. Moreover, on top of the income from the rectory itself, some parsons received additional grants of estates and revenues from the bishop of Durham. Thus a previous incumbent, in 1235, Master William of Durham, was granted the bishop's manors of Bishopwearmouth (with Tunstall) and Ryhope (with Great Burdon), plus the borough township of Sunderland, for life, as noted above (*Episcopal Acta 25*, 289, no. 315; cf. Cookson 2015, 51).

Though not named by the survey, the rector in 1381 is known to have been a man by the name of William de Packington, a senior royal official who was serving as Chancellor of the Exchequer by 1381 (Surtees 1816, 231; www.sunderlandminster.com/contact-us/guide-to-the-minster-and-its-history/rectors-of-sunderland-minster/). Packington, like many of the Bishopwearmouth rectors, was an absentee, and held multiple benefices (church livings), including other rectorships, prebendial stalls and deaneries.

The location of the Hough pasture is unknown. The name would suggest a 'hill-spur' – Middle English: *hough*, deriving from Old English: *hōh* (Watts 2002, 155), perhaps a parcel of land that was too steep or hilly to be worth cultivating.

Bondland

The holders of bondland were the equivalent of the villein tenants of the Boldon Book, the core of the village community. Seven individuals held this category of land in 1381, but the pattern of that landholding is very different from that evident two hundred years earlier when each tenant held two bovates (30 acres). By 1381 it is clear that many had amassed more than one holding. Most notable was John Hobson who had held 12 bovates plus half (a moiety of') another 2 bovate holding, that is to say 6½ of the original villein holdings, a total of 195 acres (13 bovates or oxgangs). Another tenant, the widow Cecilia Nowell, had acquired 2½ bondland tenancies, whilst William Wearmouth had two such holdings, William Gray 1½, and Thomas Sheperdson only half of one (a moiety of two bovates). In all, the seven bondage tenants in Bishopwearmouth had the equivalent of 15 villein holdings, as defined in the Boldon Book. Presumably the repeated plague epidemics had resulted in the deaths of many tenants and perhaps the extinction of some of the original villein families, creating a shortage of individuals willing or able to fill the gaps in the tenant rolls. This in turn enabled more ambitious and successful farmers to take over multiple tenancies, a process known as *engrossment*. In two cases a pair of tenants had jointly assumed responsibility for a standard holding, presumably when there was no one with the resources to take on another entire vacant tenement.

It is interesting to compare this pattern with the rather different one in neighbouring Tunstall, where 12 tenants held the equivalent of 14 original villein tenements. Apart from two individuals who each held four bovates (60 acres), all the bondland tenants held two bovate, 30 acre parcels like their anonymous 12th-century forbears. Moreover there was no overlap in the tenant rolls, no-one held land in both Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall.

Perhaps the most striking change, by comparison with the Boldon Book, is that all the compulsory labour services have been commuted to cash payments, along with ancient customary renders – 6 bushels of oats (*scat avenarum*), plus two hens at Christmas and six eggs at Easter. Somewhat puzzlingly John Hobson paid 31s ½d for his main holding of 12 bovates (180 acres), only a farthing (¼d) more than other tenants paid for a standard 2 bovate holding. Indeed all the other tenants paid in proportion to the size or number of their tenements, so William Wearmouth paid 62s ½d for his double size 4 bovate holding. John Hobson, or conceivably his father, must have been able to drive a particularly hard bargain to secure his tenancy on the terms that he did, perhaps in the immediate aftermath of the Black Death when the shortage of tenants was most acute and the bishop's officials were desparate to keep the land under cultivation. The bishop had however managed at some point to secure an additional annual payment of 4s 2d from every bond tenant.

Cottage holdings

The rents for the cottage holdings, Bishopwearmouth's other customary tenancies, had also been commuted from compulsory labour into cash payments, 10s 4d being the standard annual sum for a 12-acre tenement. The equivalent of five of these cottage tenements were listed under Wearmouth in the survey, but several had been split into two six-acre tenements (each with a cottage attached) and paid the lower sum of 5s 6d. The three functional smallholdings held by the blacksmith, carpenter and pounder at the time of the Boldon Book still survived in 1381, but had mutated into ordinary cottage holdings, largely indistinguishable from the other cottagia, save that their attached landholdings bore names which betrayed their origins – Smythland, Wrightland and Punderland. The holder of the Punderland, Cecilia Nowell, paid only 4s in cash, but also had to render 80 hens and 600 eggs (somewhat more than the total supplied to the lord in the late 12th century – 24 hens and

500 eggs). Three of these cottagers also held bondland, notably Cecila Nowell, mentioned above, and the ever acquisitive John Hobson who held half of Wrightland.

The only trace of the customary tenants' former labour services anywhere in the four Bishopwearmouth townships listed was in Tunstall, where the sole cottage tenant, Robert Dixy, had to spend four days in autumn helping the tenants on the township's demesne land harvest the crops, in addition to paying a 4s rent in return for his cottage and single acre of land.[37]

Demesne land

The explanation for the almost complete abandonment of compulsory labour can be found in the section dealing with the bishop's demesne land. Instead of describing the land stock and buildings of an integrated manorial farm, whether directly managed by the bishop's reeve and higher officials or leased out as a single unit to a 'farmer' – an ambitious rising man such as John Hobson, perhaps – thesurvey shows that the demesne farm had been split up and rented out in 10 acre parcels. All the bondland tenants held parcels of this land, plus some but not all of the cottagers. However some of the demesne land was held by people who do not figure elsewhere in the tenant rolls. In three cases two tenants jointly held 10-acre parcels, whilst some had obtained multiple parcels, most notably Cecili Nowell who had 30acres plus a joint share, with Juliana Gamell, in another 10 acre plot.

By totalling these parcels the area of demesne land in Bishopwearmouth vill can be estimated at 161 acres. The demesne at Tunstall, which was similarly divided up and rented out in 10 acre plots, totalled 110 acres, implying that at the height of its development, prior to the Black Death, the combined manorial farm for Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall will have encompassed a total 261 acres in the open fields. Although the manorial complex was situated in Bishopwearmouth village, its land was distributed in in both townships, and it's likely that when compulsory labour was still performed the peasants of Bishopwearmouth tended to work the demesne land in their vill and those of Tunstall the land in theirs, though there may well have been some flexibility depending on the precise tasks being performed. In contrast, there were 292½ acres of demesne in Ryhope – again mostly divided into 10 acre parcels – but none in Burdon. The original demesne farm of Ryhope and Burdon, mentioned in the Boldon Book, thus most probably lay entirely within Ryhope, the larger vill, and the villeins of Burdon would have had to trek to that neighbouring territory to perform the compulsory work demanded of them by the lord bishop.

This profound shift in manorial management was a result of the dramatic changes to the wider agrarian economy brought about by the Black Death. The pressure of rising wages for farm workers, on the one hand, combined with the stagnant prices for agricultural produce, on the other, meant manorial demesne farming was being squeezed from two sides, undermining its profitability. Moreover the compulsory labour formerly provided by villeins was increasingly difficult to enforce in the face of resistance from tenants conscious of their much enhanced bargaining power. As consequence, lords abandoned direct management of their farms, in all but a few cases. Sometimes the demesne land and manorial farm complex was leased out as a single unit to an entrepreneurial yeoman farmer to make the best he could of, perhaps by switching over to a greater emphasis on rearing livestock, notably sheep, which required less manpower to manage. However often the farm was abandoned altogether and the demesne land gradually ceased to exist as a separate category, being eventually absorbed into the land directly farmed by the tenants.

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[37] The tenants of the exchequer land in Tunstall together held 12 acres of land attached to a cottage, paying in all 12s per annum. This presumably originally represented another customary cottage tenancy.

The manorial farm complex is not mentioned in the 1381 survey so it does not appear that the bishop rented or leased it out to any of its tenants, either as a single unit or divided into several parts. However, later references to a hallgarth – the term usually given to the enclosure containing the manor house and its associated ancillary and farm buildings (*curia* in Latin documents) – confirm that there was a manorial farm at Bishopwearmouth, apparently located just to the east of the churchyard. It is possible that the complex was already abandoned by the time of the survey, but, given the generally conservative tenor of the document, it is perhaps more likely that it was retained, at least for a time. The buildings may have seen intermittent, residual use, but are unlikely to have been repaired or properly maintained, becoming more and more decrepit over time.

*Exchequer land (*Terrae Scaccarii*)*

The Hatfield survey contains another category of land tenure, known as exchequer land. It was so-called because the rents from these holdings were collected by the officials of the bishop's exchequer, and not by the local manorial reeve or bailiff (Lomas 1992, 152). This is not found in the Boldon Book and had evidently been introduced in the 200 years since the latter was compiled. The rents on these lands could be altered and could be recovered on the death of their tenants rather than automatically passing to their heirs, significant advantages from the lord's point of view. It therefore formed a convenient way for lords to bring more land into cultivation and create new tenancies to respond to particular problems or circumstances.

The character of these holdings could differ markedly from one township to another, but surprisingly uniform within a particular one. In Bishopwearmouth itself, they mostly consisted of a toft with with curtilage (fenced enclosure). Some of these were held by men who had no other holding, presumably craftsmen or wage labourers. Some may conceivably have worked in the neighbouring borough of Sunderland. In Tunstall, ten tenants held one or two roods in the moor for which they each owed 4d or 8d. These were combined with a larger sum for the enlargement of their messuage or tenement (*pro incremento messuagii/tenementi sui*). It is possible in this case that the tenants wished to enlarge the house and garden plots, with the additional rood taken from the moor being intended for the lost arable land adjoining their toft. In Ryhope there were some 22 holdings, each 1 acre and three roods. These too were probably taken from the moor though this is only specified in one case. Another group of exchequer holdings in the same township each comprised 'a tenement with garden', whilst a third each one consisted of one '*placea*', a term which is as ill-defined as its English equivalent, 'place'. These latter may have been vacant patches of land in and around the village which were brought into productive use, perhaps encroaching on the areas of common land inside the village, the green, lanes and outgangs. As Lomas has noted (ibid.), all these types of holding are so numerous and so uniform within their particular township that they clearly imply that they were created as single acts of lordship, the result of decisions taken at particular points in time, and doubtless ratified in the halmote court.

In contrast exchequer landholdings in Burdon appear more diverse, though generally fairly small, and in some cases may have been created when a tenant took over land previously farmed by another, the bishop's officials perhaps taking the opportunity at that point to change its status to the more flexible, new category of exchequer land. Indeed irregularity was a much more common feature of these exchequer holdings across the bishop's estates as a whole. Overall, across the entire Durham episcopal estate, additional holdings totalling some 6,732 acres had been created by 1381, as exchequer land, but it is worth emphasising

that the bulk of this land lay in the western half of the county where there were huge expanses of upland moorland waste which could be encroached upon without any issues. Just under 11 percent of the acreage lay in the townships of east Durham, like Bishopwearmouth, where the moorland common was less plentiful and a valued resource in its own right as pasture for the tenants' livestock.

Mills, brewhouses and the common oven

As regards the common facilities used by the villagers, the survey notes simply that the bond tenants of Wearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope and Burdon together paid for the mills and brewhouses. The sum they paid is left blank however and this combined entry means the survey gives no indication where the mills and brewhouses were located, whether all four villages had one, or whether the mills were windmills rather than water mills (as one might expect by this date). A common oven where the villagers could bake their bread is also listed, for which the bond tenants of Bishopwearmouth paid 3s 4d per annum. Similar ovens are also mentioned in Ryhope and Burdon, but not Tunstall.

Conclusions:

The bishop and his tenants after the plague

Comparing the Hatfield Survey entries with those in the Boldon Book shows that some profound changes had taken place in the relations between the bishop and his tenants in the intervening 200 years, most notably the abandonment of compulsory labour services and demesne farming. The rents for the portions of demesne land allotted to the tenants and for the newer category of exchequer land were paid in cash as were the payments made in lieu of the compulsory services formerly due on bondland and cottage holdings, whilst a handful of ancient renders were paid in kind. Moreover these changes were probably relatively recent, having most likely been introduced in the last 30 years, in response to the population collapse and labour shortages resulting from the plague pandemic.

Nevertheless, the survey still retained a conservative aspect. It contains repeated references back to the Boldon Book, particularly in relation to the compulsory labour services of the bondmen and cottage tenants, even though this labour had now been commuted to cash. The old types of tenancy – bondland, cottage holdings and demesne land – were still retained. There was no attempt to consolidate each named tenant's various holdings into a single tenement with one rent payment. Instead it gives the impression that the bishop's officials had not given up all hope of reversing the process one day and reconstituting the old system complete with its demesne farm and with cash payments converted back to compulsory labour there. However there was to be no turning the clock back. The changes wrought by the trauma of the mid-14th century and its aftermath were to prove irrevocable.

Population

The information recorded by the two surveys also suggests that the population of Bishopwearmouth village and the area under cultivation in the township both increased between the late 12th and the 14th centuries. This is evidenced not only by the new exchequer tenements. A total of 29 bondland holdings were recorded in Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall (15 and 14 respectively) in 1381, versus 22 in 1183, implying that an additional 210 acres were brought into cultivation in the two vills after the Boldon Book was compiled. The extent of demesne land may also have been greater, though this is more difficult to demonstrate conclusively as the acreage in the two vills is not specified in the Boldon Book. By 1381, however, this population growth had been checked and at least partially reversed by the plague. Aside from the two high status free tenants, Thomas Menville and the parson

or rector of the parish, the Hatfield Survey names only 24 tenants of all kinds at Bishopwearmouth and many of these had multiple holdings, implying they had acquired tenancies of families which had simply died out as a result of the repeated waves of pestilence.

Rich peasants and poor peasants, yeomen farmers and serfs

One of the myths associated with the way we commonly think of the Middle Ages today is that the inhabitants of a rural village like Bishopwearmouth would have consisted of a uniform mass of downtrodden peasants, all equally oppressed by their feudal lord and by the circumstances of their existence. In reality, village society was always more complex and this complexity probably became more pronounced over time, particularly during the social turbulence of the later Middle Ages.

The Boldon Book makes it clear that there were two categories of peasant farmer in the village by the late 12th century, the more numerous villeins (*villani*) or bondmen, who formed the core of the community each with 30 acre holdings of arable land, and the less numerous small holders or cotmen (*cotmanni*), with mere 12 acre holdings, plus the blacksmith, ploughwright and pounder with similar holdings. The cotmen would have lived a more precarious existence, trying to eke out a living by supplementing the crops they could grow on their smaller plots by finding paid work whenever possible and/or engaging in some sort of craft activity. Both cotmen and villeins were classed as customary tenants, dependent on the lord because they held customary lands, which were held 'at the will of the lord' (though modified in practice by the custom of the manor). These tenants were 'unfree', that is to say unable to freely dispose of their holding by sale or inheritance and liable for the burdensome labour services recorded by the Boldon Book. It is logical to assume that most if not all of these peasants were also personally unfree, i.e. serfs, tied to their lord's manor (and labelled a *nativus* – plural: *nativi* – in the documents of the time). However this was more complicated as there was no barrier to a free tenant also owning a villein tenement, in which case he would be bound to perform the same labour services and suffer the same theoretical restrictions in terms of bequeathing the tenement to his heirs, but would not be bound to the manor and any freeholding he possessed would be unaffected.

Some two hundred years later, a much greater disparity of wealth is evident in the Hatfield Survey. Of the 24 named tenants, as many as 10 have more than one type of holding, i.e. demesne land, bondland, exchequer land etc, and a few have acquired, or engrossed, multiple holdings in one or more of these categories. Thus at one end of the scale there was John Hobson with 10 acres of demesne land, a messuage and 13 bovates of bondland, that is to say 6½ of the original villein holdings, 1 cottage and 6 acres of land once held by the village carpenter, plus two exchequer tenements each comprising a toft with its curtilage, a grand total of 211 acres of arable land. The next wealthiest tenant, the widow Cecilia Nowell, was some way behind with 35 acres of demesne, 75 acres of bondland, a cottage and 12 acres once held by the village pounder (*Punderland*) and a waste plot of exchequer land, but still very comfortably off. At the other end of the scale were the five tenants of exchequer land, each holding no more than a toft with curtilage, or Stephen Carter, who had just 1 acre, called Forland, and four tenants of cottage holdings, each with parcels of arable land ranging from 6 to 18 acres in size. Such individuals would probably have had to seek paid work labouring on the farms of the richer tenants, though some may conceivably have worked as craftsmen or labourers in the nearby borough of Sunderland, which may helped to provide a safety valve for the local economy.

Overall it would appear that village society had become more unequal over the period between the two surveys. It is noteworthy that only seven of the 24 tenants in 1381 had holdings which matched or exceeded the size of a standard 30 acre villein tenement of the late 12th century. Indeed it seems that the population of Bishopwearmouth was evolving in two different directions. On the one hand some were becoming rural labourers, either landless or furnished only with small holdings, dependent on what they could grow in their garden and the odd cow they could graze on the common moorland to see them through difficult times, but also perhaps increasingly drawn to the work and commercial opportunities provided by the neighbouring borough. On the other hand, the village's richer inhabitants were following a path which would see them transformed from peasants into yeoman farmers, as the agrarian economy gradually evolved from one dominated by feudal tenurial relations to a capitalist one, seeking profit not just subsistence. This process may have begun in the 13th century but probably accelerated by the second half of the 14th century. Its beneficiaries, men like John Hobson and Cecilia's husband, John Nowell, would doubtless have dominated village politics during their lives and may conceivably have been even more resented for their acquisitive behaviour than the lord bishop, himself.

Interestingly, this pattern of developing inequality was nowhere near so pronounced just to the south, in Tunstall. Most tenants there held the standard villein allotment of two oxgangs (30 acres) of bondland, plus 10 acres of demesne land and a rood of exchequer land. Relatively few tenants had engrossed multiple tenements of any particular category. The richest tenant was Robert Williamson with 60 acres of bondland (i.e. a double size villein holding), plus 30 acres of demesne and 2 roods of exchequer land in the moor. Only one other tenant, John of Newton, had acquired two villein tenements (2 messuages and 60 acres), but he lacked a 10 acre allotment of demesne land that most of the other tenants possessed. Of the 13 named tenants only one was a smallholder, Robert Dixy, with a cottage and a total of just under 6 acres of land. Otherwise, most of the tenants held just over 40 acres, a couple just over 30 acres, in addition to John of Newton on 60½ acres. Thus Robert Williamson, although very comfortably off with 90½ acres, would have struggled to dominate his village community with quite the same ease as his counterparts in Bishopwearmouth.

It is not easy to explain the social differences between the two villages. Perhaps Bishopwearmouth's proximity to the borough of Sunderland meant it was more exposed to the market economy, with the result that its inhabitants were better able to generate the cash to make land purchases. It could also be suggested that the same proximity to the port may also have increased the settlement's exposure to the incidence of the plague, resulting in the extinction of a greater proportion of the old tenant families than was the case in Tunstall, and thereby providing more opportunities for engrossment of holdings by the surviving tenants. However, more data is required to provide firm answers.

Despite the widening gap between the richest and poorest peasants, the multiple changes noted above meant that an ever increasing number of Bishopwearmouth's peasant farmers were personally free as opposed to being serfs, even if they remained dependent on the lord, to some degree, as customary tenants. It is estimated that by the late 14th century personally unfree serfs (*nativi*) made up only ten to twenty percent of the tenants in Durham. Although landlords like the bishop still attempted to find and recover fugitive *nativi*, and there were numerous inquests in the halmote courts during this period to determine whether a particular tenant was free or a *nativus*, this proportion continued to decline as the Middle Ages wore on. Many servile families may have died out altogether as a result of the recurrent pandemic and the overriding shortage of tenants meant that however

zealous lords might be in searching for their own fugitive serfs they would tend to ask few questions of anyone who offered to take up a vacant tenement on their manorial estates. Moreover, the abandonment of labour services in favour of cash payments, plus the widespread possession of parcels of demesne and exchequer land, held on fixed term leases, by the holders of bondland, all helped to blur the distinctions in status between different grades of free and unfree tenants. A further, related development was the evolution of customary tenancies into copyhold ones over the course of the late 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, effectively providing tenants with security of tenure and inheritance.

9.5.4 Lords of the outlying manors (Hameldon, Barnes etc)

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. Originally this would appear to have been a vill, or township in its own right. It is described as the vill of *Hameldona* in one of the Ravensworth deeds dating to the early 13th century (Bell 1939, 46, no. 6; below Appendix 1: Source 2). The three 13th- and early 14th-century Ravensworth deeds that refer to Hameldon or Homeldon imply that the FitzMarmaduke lords of Horden, the Umfravilles and even the Nevilles, may have had an interest in Hameldon as feudal tenants of the bishop. However, 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.

Hameldon Manor I: Barnes and Pallion

The better known of the two manors was held by the Escollands – or Daldens as they were known from the 13th century onwards. This was one of the longest established seigneurial families in the bishopric (Surtees 1816, 4-6; Scammell 1956, 220, 225; Aird 1998, 209). They first appear under Bishop Rannulf Flambard (1099-1128), when a certain knight, Scollandus (or Scotland), was sent as a messenger to Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury. In 1166 Elias Escolland (*Elyas de Eschaulande*) held two knights' fees and two thirds of another in the demesne of St Cuthbert (*in dominico beati Cuthberti*[38]) by ancient enfeoffment (*de veteri feffamento*), probably signifying they were granted these feudal estates by Rannulf Flambard (Aird 1998, 186; *Red Book*, I, 415-18). The core of their holdings lay in the coastal district south of the Wear, with lands at Seaham, Seaton and Murton, as well as the family seat at Dalden, where a tower house was erected in the 14th century, plus other holdings in Durham City and Bishop Middleham (Scammell 1956, 225, Aird 1998, 209).[39] When the Dalden male line expired the manor of Hamildon passed to the Bowes family, who acquired the full Escolland-Dalden estates by successive marriages during the course of the late 14th and early 15th centuries (Surtees 1816, 4-6). The Bowes family seat lay at Streatlam, north-east of Barnard Castle, and they already held six manors in that part the Durham bishopric by the mid-14th century (Liddy 2008, 41-2, 65, 69).

When the Bowes acquired the former Dalden manor of Hamildon it comprised two distinct territories, Pallion (*Pavillion*) and Barnes, as well as a fishery in the Wear. These 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

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[38] The demesne of St Cuthbert represent the bishop's Durham and Northumbrian territory, as distinct from his fees in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, which were listed separately.

[39] The land at Bishop Middleham was exchanged with the bishop for part of Penshaw township in the late 12th century, when Middleham was being developed as one of the bishop's residential estates (see *Boldon Buke*, 7, 11-12, 47, 51).

at least.[40] However, there is clear evidence that Pallion was originally part of a separate lordship held by the de la Ley family, probably carved out of Wearmouth vill and granted to Gilbert de la Leia by the bishop Hugh du Puisset in the second half of the 12th century.[41] Certainly Pallion was in the hands of that family by the 13th century. *Le Pavylloun* was cited as the abode of Sir Philip de la Ley in the list of 'Knights of Durham present at the battle of Lewes' in 1264 (Surtees 1816, 241n(a); Greenwood *Hatfield Survey*, xvi; Hunter Blair 1946, 214; Holford 2009). Similarly, an official 'proof of age' declaration for Robert, brother and heir of John de la Leygh, deceased, recorded he was born in 'le Pavylion by Suthwermouth' on 2 November 1306 (Bain 1907, 60). Gilbert de la Leia, presumably an ancestor of Philip, John and Robert, is listed in Henry II's feudal inquisition of 1166 as holding half a knight's fee by new enfeoffment in the 'land of St Cuthbert' (i.e. present-day County Durham) – *in terra Beati Cuthberti de novo feffamento* (Aird 1998, 187, 195n, 196n). He was one of Bishop Hugh du Puisset's principal counsellors and, hence, in prime position to secure such episcopal grants. He also held the vill of Witton Gilbert – including land called *Cruketona* which he was to grant to Durham Priory – as well as various manors in Yorkshire and Northumberland. [42] Pallion must have been acquired by the Dalden lineage and absorbed into its Hameldon manorial estate at some stage during the 14th century, before the male line of that ancient family in turn expired.

This estate, which was centred on Barnes, continued in the uninterrupted possession of the Bowes family until the death of Sir George Bowes in 1545, when his three daughters inherited a large proportion of the family's lands, comprising the estates in the eastern part of the county, which had not been entailed in tail male (Surtees 1840, 103, Brown 2015, 140). These estates were divided between the three, with Anne Bowes, who had married her cousin, Robert Bowes of Aske, receiving the manor of Hamildon in her share (Surtees 1816, 235). In 1571, Robert Bowes exchanged the manor with the Crown, in return for certain other forfeited estates at Old Acres, Seaton and Offerton, though Surtees notes that the Crown's possession may only have been nominal as both Robert Bowes and his son Ralph were repeatedly styled 'of Barnes' after 1571 and may well have continued to reside there (ibid., note f). The family formally regained possession of the manor of Hamildon, along with Clowcroft and Grindon, via a grant of James I in 1611.

Hameldon Manor II: Housefield/Bainbridge Holme
The second estate is first mentioned in the early 13th century, featuring on one of the Ravensworth Deeds (Bell 1939, 46, no. 6) where 'Hameldona' is mentioned as one of several vills where the lords of Ravensworth had rights. Robert, son of Richard de Ravensworth, quitclaimed these rights to his nephew, Geoffrey, son of Geoffrey (Robert's brother). By the 13th century the lords of Ravensworth and Hamelden bore the name de Yeland and were linked to the Umfraville barons of Northumberland (ibid., 52, no. 26). This Hameldon appears to correspond to the property known as Housefield (later called Bainbridge Holme), which lay directly to the east of the Barnes estate and north of Tunstall Hills. 'Homeldon and Housfeld' are listed amongst the manors which Ida de Neville was granted a third part of as her dower, by agreement with Sir Robert de Umframville and his wife Eleanor, in 1320 (ibid., 55, no. 35). By the later 14th century it was in the hands of the senior branch of the Lumley family, which had its principal seat at Lumley Castle from the early 13th century.[43] This

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[40] In the 1661 Bishopwearmouth Parish Book, Barnes, Pallion and Field-house (presumably Housefield/Bainbridge Holme) were included amongst a list of seven smaller areas designated 'places', distinct from the townships of Bishopwearmouth, Tunstall, Burdon and Silksworth (cf. Surtees 1816, 230).

[41] The name is variously transcribed de la Ley, de la Leie, de la Leia, de Laley and de la Leygh.

[42] Scammell 1956, 223-25; cf. *Episcopal Acta 24*, 35-6, 82, nos 40 & 94; **25**, 228-9, no. 230; *FPD*, 188n.

[43] A cadet branch of the family had its seat at Ravensworth Castle which formed its principal holding along with the adjacent manor of Lamesley (Liddy 2008, 50-51).

lineage formed one of the most important knightly families in the bishopric, having managed to expand their landholdings through a succession of profitable marriages during the 14th century (Liddy 2008, 43). The manor 'del Housfield next Tunstall' figures amongst the holdings of Robert de Lumley in his Inquisition Post Mortem of 1381 (*Cursitor's Records* I, 229). It remained in their possession until 1560 when John Lord Lumley alienated the estate to Thomas Whitehead, Gent (Surtees 1816, 234). The later name of the manorial site, Bainbridge Holme, which eventually replaced Housefield, is thought to result from the earlier grant by the same Lord Lumley, in 1539, to one of his senior retainers, *fidelis et dilectus noster* Nicholas Bainbridge, for the latter's lifetime (Surtees 1816, 234).[44]

Clowcroft

It has also been suggested that a third estate, Clowcroft, also formed part of Hameldon and may have lain in the western margins of Bishopwearmouth township (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, though it most often seems to have been associated with Grindon and Ford, immediately to the west of Bishopwearmouth township. The manor of Ford (Le Forth), with Grindon and Clowcroft, was held of the bishop by the Hiltons of Hylton Castle, by service of one knight's fee and formed part of that family's core ancestral estates (Liddy 2008, 37; Surtees 1816, 241-42). Like the Escollands/Daldens, the Hiltons were one of the longest established seigneurial lineages in the bishopric (Aird 1998, 195, 219; Meikle & Newman 2007, 62-67; Liddy 2008, 37, 43; Cookson 2015, 41), even claiming pre-Conquest origin, and were certainly established in the locality by 1166, when Romanus de Hilton was listed as holding three knights' fees *in dominico beati Cuthberti* (*Red Book*, I, 415-18; Aird 1998, 186). Whilst Ford and Grindon were retained as demesne manors by the Hiltons, the manor of Clowcroft was granted to feudal under-tenants, or 'subinfeudated', either to the Dalden family (as suggested by Surtees 1816, 241) or, more likely, the Conyers family.[45] A number of mid-15th-century Inquisitions Post Mortem of the barons of Hilton mention they held a rent issuing out of the manor of Clowcroft (*Cursitors Records* I, 409 (1448); II, 221 (1435)), with the manor said to be in the hands of William Bowes in 1448. Tenure of the manor had passed by marriage to the Bowes, and was retained in the hands of that family at least until the death of Sir George Bowes of Dalden in 1556, when the principal male line expired and the family estates were divided between his three daughters as co-heiresses. In 1600 William Hilton was still the superior lord, holding Clowcroft from the See of Durham by one knight's service (Surtees 1816, 241), but, in 1608 or 1611, Clowcroft and Grindon were included with the manor of Hamildon (Barnes) in the grant of James I, which was conveyed to Ralph Bowes son of Robert Bowes of Aske.[46] The manor of Clowcroft is listed, along with the manors of Barnes and Hamildon, in the inquisition post mortem for Ralph Bowes, taken on 10 April 1624 (*Cursitors Records* I, 344), and in the will of William Bowes dated 3 January 1649 (*Sunderland Wills & Inventories*, 222-25, no. 90).

The picture is, however, further complicated by evidence that by 1461 a portion at least of the Clowcroft was held by the Carlisle family (*Cursitors Records*, I, 349: IPM of John Carlisle 5 Oct 1461), probably as feudal or free tenants of the Bowes. This family also held land in Penshaw and a fishery in the Wear from the Bowes, as well as the manor of Bernewell in

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[44] According to Surtees (1816, 234), the property is still described in later conveyances as 'Housefield and Ellescope'.

[45] The IPM of John Coigners (i.e. Conyers), dated 13 May 1342, includes the manor of Clowcroft, held of Alexander lord of Hilton, amongst his holdings (*Cursitors Records* II, 172). In 1431 the manor of Clowcroft, held of William Hilton, was listed amongst the estates of Robert Conyers (IPM 25 June 1431: *Cursitors Records* II, 180). This portion of the Conyers estate may then have passed to the Bowes by inheritance or marriage.

[46] Surtees (1816, 241) gives the date of 1608, but on. p. 235 he gives a different date of 1611.

Penshaw in their own right. The Inquisition of John Carlisle, in 1486/7, specifies the Clowcrofte holding was 'a rent issuing out of the lands and tenements of Ralph Bowes in Clowcroft' (IPM 10 January 1487: *Cursitor's Records* I, 352-53). It is likely that the Bowes granted these lands in Clowcroft or rent to the Carlisles as one of their client families. John's death, however, marked the demise of the mail line of that family, the estates passing to his daughter and heir, Johanna, wife of Christopher Thirkeld, and thereby into the hands of the Thirkelds, a Yorkshire family (Surtees 1816, 196-7). On the death of Marmaduke Thirkeld in 1595/6, the estate came into the hands of the Amcoats family. Inquisitions Post Mortem for Alexander Amcoats in 1622 and 1627 show that the family retained possession of lands and tenements in Clowcroft at that stage, along with the manor of Penshaw and other lands and tenements in Penshaw and Grindon (*Cursitors Records*, I, 316).

Clowcroft does not feature on any map and the latest documentary references noted in this study date to the early to mid-17th century. Thereafter it seems to disappear and it is clear that by the time the more detailed county maps of the 18th century were produced, such as those by Maire (1711-20), Kitchen (c. 1750) and especially Armstrong (1768), which show more placenames, the name Clowcroft had been superceded. No reference directly places it within Hameldon manor or vill, however, and it was perhaps more closely associated with the manor of Grindon.

Two possible locations for Clowcroft may be suggested. One option is to identify it with the discrete farmstead called Thorney Close, tucked between Grindon to the north and Farringdon Hall[47] to the south (all three of which fell within the 19th-century township of Silksworth). Thorney Close is mentioned from the 18th century onwards, but not earlier (cf. Surtees 1816, 247; Cookson 2010, 150; 2015, 107). However, Surtees notes that Thorney Close was exempt from tithes, like Farringdon Hall, which originated as a grange of Hexham Priory in the Middle Ages (Surtees 1816, 2247; Cookson 2015, 33). On that basis he suggested that Thorney Close originally formed part of that monastic estate (followed by Cookson, op. cit.).
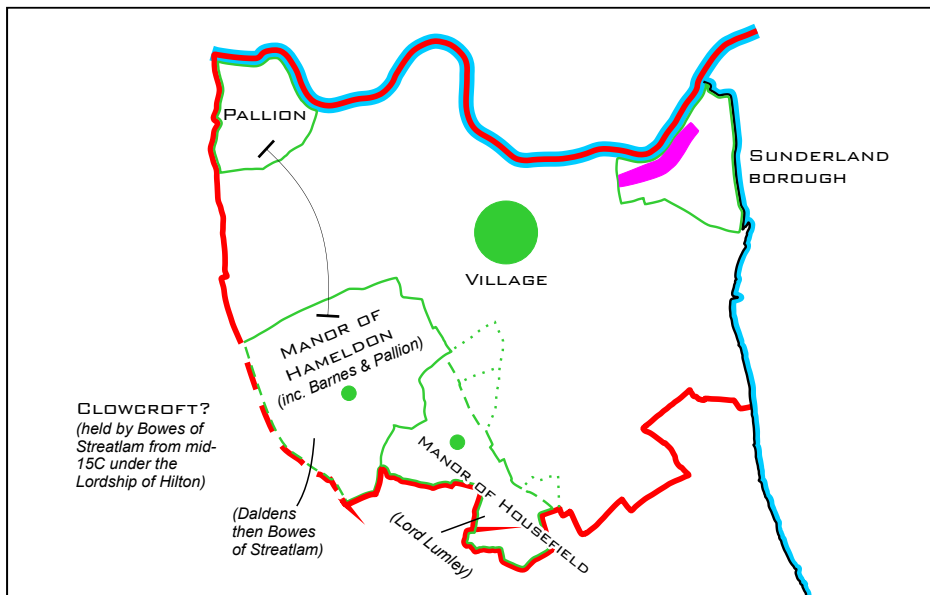
An alternative and perhaps preferable solution would be to identify Clowcroft with the western half of the Barnes estate. The extent of that estate delineated on the tithe map and 1st edition Ordnance Survey appears to straddle the boundary between the townships of Ford and Silksworth (including Grindon) on the one hand and Bishopwearmouth on the other. Indeed, the Barnes estate protrudes westwards as far as Grindon, its outline suggesting it might have swallowed up part of Silksworth township. Perhaps the grant by James I of the manors of Hameldon, Clowcroft and Grindon, which were conveyed to Ralph Bowes in 1608/11, resulted in an expansion of the Barnes estate absorbing Clowcroft and perhaps even part of Grindon. The occasion for this may have been the division of the estate into Low Barnes (or 'Old Barns': cf. Maire's county map 1711/20), the original manorial seat, and High Barnes ('New Barns': Maire 1711/20) in 1668/1673. This followed the acquisition of the estate by William Haddock, consequent upon his marriage to Mary, heiress of William Bowes, around 1640, and Haddock's subsequent sale of Low Barnes to John Jenkins in 1668 and High Barnes to Walter Ettrick in 1673 (Surtees 1816, 235-36. Instead of splitting the estate into eastern and western portions, this divided it into northern and southern parts, and this significant reorganisation could explain why Clowcroft is never encountered after that date.

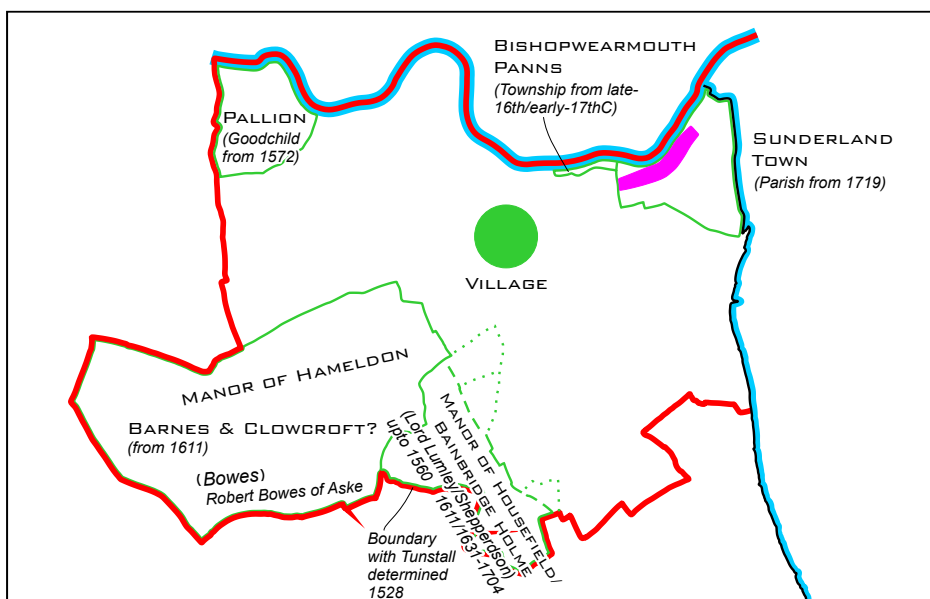[47] More commonly labelled Farnton Hall earlier on, cf. Surtees 1816, 247 and county maps from Saxton 1586/7 onwards.

9.8: The Development of Bishopwearmouth Township

1. 12th-13th century

Le Pavylloun
PALLION
De La Ley

SUNDERLAND borough
(founded by charter by Bishop Hugh du Puiset c1180/1183

VILLAGE

HAMELDON VILL
Escolland / Dalden
(2 Manors)
Lords of Ravensworth de Yeland

CLOWCROFT?
(Part of the Hilton Lordship)

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2. 14th-15th century

PALLION

SUNDERLAND borough

VILLAGE

MANOR OF HAMELDON
(inc. Barnes & Pallion)

CLOWCROFT?
(held by Bowes of Streatlam from mid-15C under the Lordship of Hilton)

(Daldens then Bowes of Streatlam)

MANOR OF HOUSEFIELD
(Lord Lumley)

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3. 16th-17th century

BISHOPWEARMOUTH PANNS
(Township from late-16th/early-17thC)

PALLION
(Goodchild from 1572)

SUNDERLAND TOWN
(Parish from 1719)

VILLAGE

MANOR OF HAMELDON

BARNES & CLOWCROFT?
(from 1611)

(Bowes)
Robert Bowes of Aske

MANOR OF HOUSEFIELD / BAINBRIDGE HOLME
(Lord Lumley/Shepherdson)
upto 1560 1611/1631-1704

Boundary with Tunstall determined 1528

Key:

━━━ = Boundary of greater Bishopwearmouth Township

━━━ = Estate Boundary ━━━ = River/Coastline ● = Settlement Site

Scale
0   0.4   0.8   1.2   1.6   2 km

Humbledon in Bishop Hatfield's Survey – a puzzle solved

One important source has not been mentioned above in the detailed discussion of the various manors on the south-western margins of Bishopwearmouth around Humbledon Hill, namely the Hatfield Survey of 1381. The survey apparently contains a lengthy description of a vill of labelled 'Hameldon' – slightly longer in fact than that pertaining to Bishopwearmouth – which had 6 free tenants, 15 holdings of demesne land, 9 cottage holdings, 15 bondland holdings (including 5 leased to the tenants for much smaller payments), plus a pounder, a windmill, a common oven and a common forge (*Hatfield Survey*, 137-140). This section is, however, very puzzling. Its inclusion in the survey implies that the vill was held directly by the bishop, yet no other source does so. Most refer to the estates in this area as manors, held as fiefs or fees by feudal tenants of the bishop. Nor is there a corresponding entry in the Boldon Book as would be expected if it was part of the episcopal holdings.

The clues to the resolution of this conundrum are provided by detailed analysis of the entry's contents. Amongst the free tenants, one held 12 acres of land called Saddokland whilst another two held a total of 6 acres said to have been formerly held by Saddok (ibid., 137). The mention of Saddok is another retrospective reference to an entry in the Boldon Book, as is quite common in the Hatfield Survey. Saddok – or Saddoc as he appears in the Boldon Book – was a free tenant who held one bovate or oxgang for a rent of 3s and by service of going on errands for the bishop (*Boldon Buke*, 8, 49). However, Saddoc's tenement was not in Hameldon (which does not feature in the Boldon Book), but in Shotton, south of Easington. The township of Shotton was one of the bishop's core holdings, but there is no equivalent section with its heading in the Hatfield Survey. Evidently the 'Hameldon' entry is in fact that relating to Shotton which has been mislabelled and displaced out of its geographical order in the survey, so that it follows on after Wearmouth, Tunstall and Sunderland borough, but before Ryhope and Burdon. This is confirmed by another reference, which is to be found amongst the listing of the vill's pasture land. There it is noted that the tenants hold amongst themselves pasture called *Shottonnesden* (i.e. Shotton's Dene) for which they paid 53s 4d per annum (ibid., 139). There is no Shotton Dene or Shottonsdene today, but it is presumably represented by one of the narrow, deeply incised and steep-sided valleys or denes which formed the boundaries of Shotton township, such as Castle Eden Dene to the south, the valley of the Gore Burn or Wapping Burn to the west or Blunts Beck to the east.

9.6 The medieval landscape of Bishopwearmouth

This section provides a detailed analysis of the possible medieval and early modern layout of Bishopwearmouth – both the village core and the wider township territory. It is based principally on the research conducted on behalf of the Victoria County History and published in its volume devoted to Sunderland – *A History of County Durham V* (Cookson 2015, 26-8) – and in the associated *England's Past for Everyone* volumes (Cookson 2010, 8-11; Meikle & Newman 2007, 45-7), which synthesised relevant information provided by medieval and later source materials. The information was summarised in a plan of the township (Cookson 2010, 10 fig. 8; 2015, 26 fig. 9), which is reproduced here. The key source materials include the earliest historic maps, notably Burleigh and Thompson's 1737 map of the River Wear, which includes Bishopwearmouth village, and John Rain's Eye Plan (1785-90), plus documentary sources such as the 1647 Parliamentary Survey (*Parliamentary Survey*, 143-74) and the 1792 terrier of Rectory Manor (DUL-ASC, DDR/EA/GLE 1/11). Later maps, though ever more accurate in terms of their cartography, culminating with the series of Ordnance

9.9: Medieval HER entries in Bishopwearmouth & Sunderland townships,
transposed on the modern Ordnance Survey Map

Scale 1:25000

0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 1600 1800 2000 m
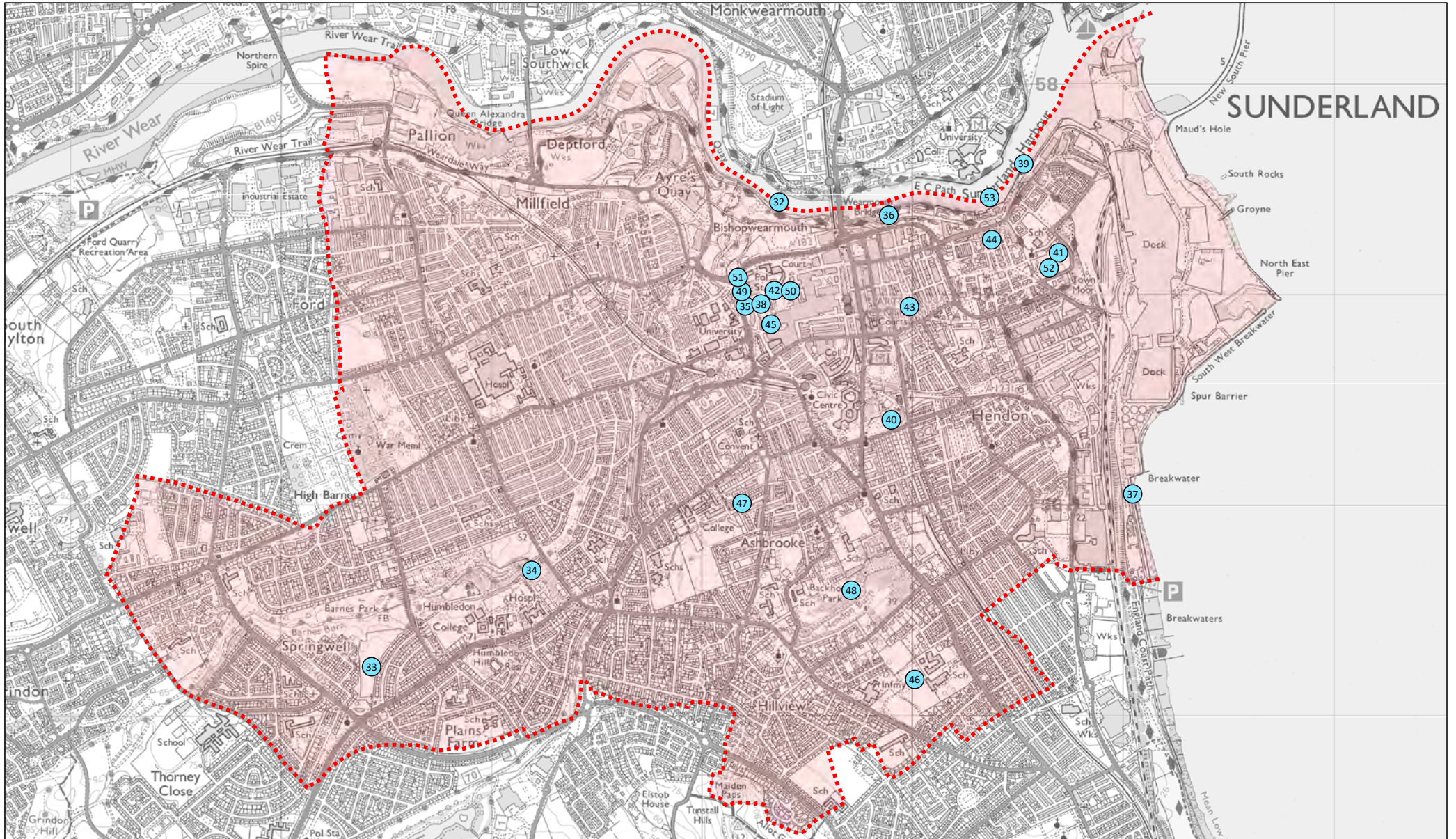
© Crown copyright 2021; Ordnance Survey 100044772

KEY - *HER entries colour-coded by period:* ● = Medieval ┅┅┅ = Historic Township Boundary

Survey sheets from the mid-19th century onwards, are less useful for these purposes because the earlier village layout is increasingly obscured by a densely packed urban plan, as Bishopwearmouth was merged with and absorbed into industrial Sunderland. However two 19th-century maps held in amongst the Durham Halmote Court Records at Durham University Library Archives and Special Collections (DUL-ASC, DHC 11/V/12 & 16) mark features associated with Rectory Manor which shed light on much earlier arrangements.

9.6.1   The village core

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

In the case of Bishopwearmouth, which was the centre of a large parish, there was another major component, a substantial church. Moreover, as the rector of the parish was a wealthy man and a significant landowner in his own right, the village contained a second manorial complex to accommodate the rector and organise the farming of the glebeland and the other lands allocated to him within the vill.

The parish church
An indisputable fixed point of reference is provided by the Church of St Michael and All Angels, which still clearly occupies the original site, even if the present structure now preserves little of its former medieval fabric, having been much rebuilt on several occasions. Its late medieval external form is shown by two surviving, late 18th-century drawings of the building, by Grimm (1778) and Bailey (1787), at which stage the church was essentially unaltered, prior to its substantial rebuilding c. 1800.

The surrounding **churchyard** is mentioned in a decree by Bishop Thomas Langley in 1425, admonishing the parishioners for having cut down an ash tree standing in the graveyard (*infra cemiterium*) without the rector's permission and threatening them with excommunication if any further trees there were felled (text reproduced in Surtees 1816, 232).

Rectory Manor
A second, clearly locatable feature is provided by the rector's manor, which stood on the north side of High Street West, facing the church. Again, the surviving pictorial record of the building is invaluable in helping to interpret the original form of the building complex (see Peter Ryder's analysis above 6.3: *The Rectory*). This includes several drawings by Grimm in 1778, paintings completed in the early 19th century, plus a drawing of the main house in 1822 and a photograph probably taken short before its demolition c. 1855. Although the main house was extensively rebuilt in the mid-17th century, and attained its definitive form following further rebuilding at the beginning of the 18th, the north range to the rear still contained extensive medieval remains which are evident in Grimm's drawings. There was also a detached medieval tithe barn located at the rear of the complex. Shown in a line drawing by Grimm, the eastern end of this structure actually survived until 1937/8. Thus the position and to a considerable extent the form of the church and rectory can be reconstructed with a reasonable degree of confidence.

The layout of the village

In contrast the position of the rows of peasant tenements and the bishop's manorial complex, plus the overall form of the village, must be reconstructed, principally on the basis of the historic map evidence and relevant documentary sources noted above, plus the surviving layout of the settlement.

Unfortunately, archaeological investigation has thus far been of limited use in determining the layout and historical development of the medieval village. Trial excavations previously carried out at Low Row and Woods Lane (TWHER Event 1515), at the junction of Crowtree Road and Vine Place (TWHER Event 1518), and in advance of the extension of the Bridges shopping centre (TWHER Report 1997/9), for example, have all revealed no evidence of medieval tenements, allotments or other early features. A combination of cellaring and truncation through ground terracing and relatively levelling has removed the archaeological deposits in the areas of the historic village core hitherto investigated (for results summary see: *Sunderland Archaeological Assessment* 2004, 29).

Burleigh and Thompson's 1737 plan may be adopted as a starting point as the oldest relatively detailed plan of the village. Although it is not as detailed as Rain's Eye Plan, produced towards the end of the 18th century, and certainly not as accurate the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, the 1737 map crucially shows Bishopwearmouth still separated from the borough settlement of Sunderland to the east.

The green

The church and churchyard stand 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. Burleigh and Thompson's map shows an elongated L-shaped block attached to the eastern edge of this area with another rectangular block located immediately to the west. This block, which was proportionally longer north-south than it was east-west, sat like an island within the green. These building groups are shown in more detail on Rain's Eye Plan (1785/90), by which time more built-up islands have appeared to the west and south-west. 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) also figures in a copyhold document of 1630, reproduced in the 1647 Parliamentary Survey, some 150 years earlier, demonstrating that the encroachment of buildings onto the north-east corner of the green was already underway by then (*Parliamentary Survey*, 165). It is likely that this began with the erection of buildings around the pinfold, before further encroachment in the form of the blocks to the west and then south-west. At any rate, by the mid-18th century, and perhaps even by the mid-17th century, Littlegate was surrounded by buildings on all four sides.

This process of encroachment reflected the decline and eventual extinction of the green's former communal functions, including grazing the villagers' stock. Originally the green would probably have encompassed all of the square area to the south of the churchyard and east of Low Row, including the areas later occupied by Littlegate, Southgate and the Bowes Almshouses, with just the eastern and southern edges of the green lying in the same positions as shown on the later maps. The only structures which would have stood within the green during the Middle Ages are likely to have been structures with communal functions such as the pinfold.

9.11: *Extract from Rain's* Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishop Wearmouth*, 1785-90, showing Bishopwearmouth village.*
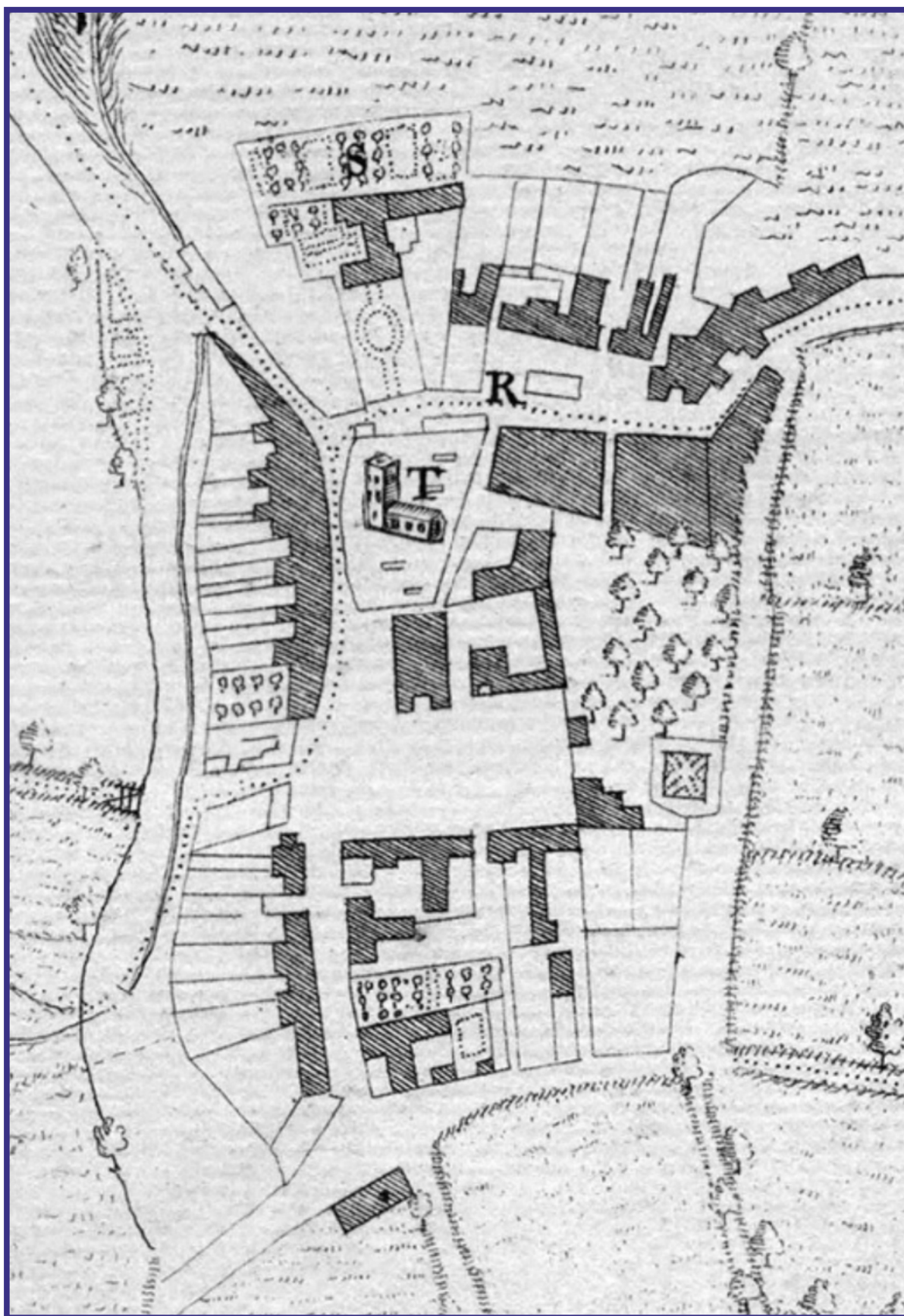
The rows of village tenements

The tenements or house plots occupied by the peasant cultivators of a village – the bondmen, husbandmen and such like – 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 dwelling and outbuildings, this arrangement sometimes being termed 'toft and croft', though croft could also refer to a larger separate enclosure, attached to the rear end of the toft. Such crofts (garths is an equivalent term commonly used in northern England) would provide pasture or cultivable land immediately adjacent to the farm and separate from the common fields of the vill.

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. Burleigh and Thompson's map shows the characteristic arrangement with buildings at the front and long narrow plots to the rear, extending back as far as the Wearmouth, or Howle-Eile, Burn. The row was interrupted midway along, at the lowest point, by the road leading to Chester-le-Street and Durham, dividing it into two parts, Low Row to the north and High Row – as Green Terrace was formerly known – which climbed up the slope to the south.

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'. It is likely that High Street West, known as King's Road in the Middle Ages, was once much broader, much of the space on the north side being infilled by new developments to house the ever-growing population of the industrial town or covered by by the front gardens of the Rectory and the adjacent Rectory House ('Mr Metcalfe's Premises' on Rain's map) which were doubtless extended southward to annex much of the former common highway at some point before 1737.

Equivalent rows on the south and east side of the green and on the south side of King's Road/High Street West are not quite as obvious on the 18th-century maps, but it is likely that they were once present there too. Rain's map, which preserves more detail, is rather more useful in this respect than the 1737 plan, revealing long narrow plots with buildings to the fore, similar to those of former toft rows, along the south side of the green and the east side of what is now Green Terrace. Comparable elements can be discerned, albeit less confidently, along the south side of High Street West, to the east of the churchyard. Arrangements there are somewhat obscured by the density of occupation evident in the area, doubtless a symptom of burgeoning population growth, with the previously separate centres of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth now being connected together to form a single, continuous, urban settlement.

Only on the east side of the green does the pattern of rows seem to have been obliterated. A couple of large houses, Fenwick Lodge and Crowtree House, with their attached gardens, are shown occupying this entire area on Rain's plan, a marked contrast to the densely

packed buildings in other parts of the village centre. The gardens associated with Fenwick Lodge, labelled 'Mrs Mowbray's Premises' on Rain's plan took up virtually all of the back plot area on the east side of the green. Similarly extensive gardens (assigned to George Mowbray esquire on the plan) were attached to Crowtree House, which was positioned right in the south-east corner of the green. These gardens stretched from the south-east corner of the green all the way south to what is now Vine Place and east to Crowtree Road. Perhaps these large plots were the result of the engrossment in the late Middle Ages, when certain individuals acquired multiple tenant holdings, as the evidence of the Hatfield Survey makes clear. This land had previously formed part of the Shipperdson estate, before it featured in the 18th-century maps and was acquired by the Mowbray family through the marriage in 1738 of Teasdale Mowbray of Washington and Ann Reed, heiress to the estate. The Shipperdsons were a longstanding Sunderland family. Their main seat lay at Bainbridge Holme (Housefield), in Humbledon, until 1704 when it subsequently passed to the Pemberton family. A certain Thomas Sheperdson, perhaps an ancestor, was listed amongst the tenants in the Hatfield Survey of 1381 as holding 42 acres, a cottage, a garden and half a messuage in Bishopwearmouth.

The growth and development of the village

This village layout probably did not emerge fully formed straightaway, but instead may have been the result of a process of development of uncertain duration. The combined number of tenants recorded in Wearmouth and Tunstall by the Boldon Book, in 1183, was 31 (see above: *9.5.3 – population*). By the time of the Hatfield Survey, in the late 14th century there were 24 tenants recorded at Bishopwearmouth alone, with a further 13 at Tunstall (cf. Cookson 2015, 27). Bishopwearmouth and Ryhope were clearly the larger settlements at this stage, with significantly more tenants than Tunstall or Great Burdon.[48] Moreover there are hints that the 1381 total at Bishopwearmouth, in particular, might reflect a partial collapse in the size of the village population as a result of the Black Death, implying that the 13th century may have witnessed very substantial population growth, which would presumably have been reflected in expansion of the settlement's layout.

The most detailed discussion of the village layout and phasing of its development, hitherto, is that provided by Clay, Milburn and Miller in the commentary associated with the reproduction of Rain's Eye Plan (Clay et al. 1984, 55). With the parish church acknowledged as the one secure fixed point, they identified three key structural components of the village plan: (a) the Green to the south-east of the church; (b) the tenements on either side of the broad street running west to east on the north side of the church; (c) the long north-south orientated row of tenements, parallel with and backing onto the Wearmouth/Howle Eile Burn, and interrupted midway along to form Low Row and High Row (Green Terrace). They argued that the village was originally clustered around the Green during the Anglo-Saxon era, but was reorganised in the 11th or 12th century, following possible destruction during the Norman conquest, when its focus may have been shifted to the east-west road north of the church, with the holdings of the bishop's tenants laid out on either side of this one long, broad street (King's Road, now High Street West). Based on its likely propensity to flood due to its proximity to the burn, it was suggested that the serial western row (Low Row/High Row) was a result of later settlement growth.

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[48] There are 26 named tenants at holding the various categories of land at Ryhope (*Hatfield Survey*, 140-44). At Birdon there are 10 individuals holding bondland and exchequer tenements, plus a further 12 free tenants (ibid. 144-46), but one of the latter is an institution (the chantry chapel of St Mary), and several are clearly members of the regional gentry and therefore absentee tenants. There is no overlap between the bondland/exchequer and free tenants.

Labels in image: Rectory; Parish Church; ~ Kings Road (High Street West) ~; ~ Low Row ~; Bishop's Hallgarth; Pinfold; GREEN; ~ High Row ~
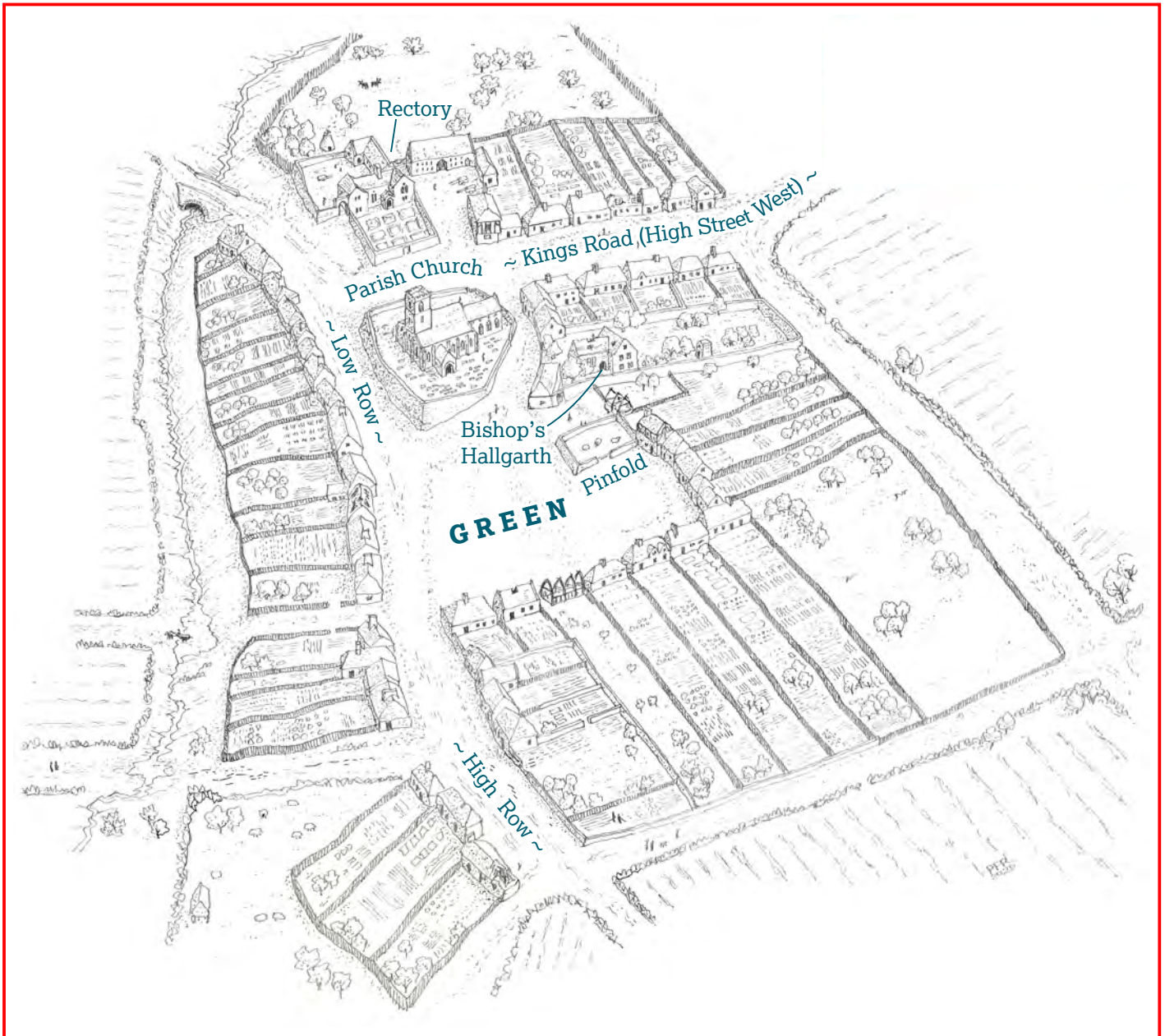
9.12: *Artistic reconstruction of the medieval village of Bishopwearmouth, around c.1380, by Peter Ryder.*

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

356

This scheme was reiterated in the *Sunderland Archaeological Assessment & Strategy* (Tyne & Wear Historic Town Survey 2004, 17). Meikle and Newman, in the first of the two 'England's Past for Everyone' paperbacks produced as part of the recent Victoria County History research on Sunderland, also followed this suggested sequence (2007, 46), involving the original Anglo-Saxon village, centred around the Green, being reorganised and re-sited along the east-west road to the north of the church, during the 11th or 12th century.

However, a different sequence was proposed by Cookson, in the main Victoria County History volume on Sunderland (2015, 27). She too considered that the Anglo-Saxon settlement was perhaps limited to a cluster of dwellings around the green, with the village layout subsequently being extended in the 11th or 12th century. However, based on the historic map evidence, she argued that the addition of new formal elements to the irregular pre-Conquest village involved the construction of the rows of dwellings on the west side of the settlement (Low Row), with their back tofts running down to the natural boundary formed by the burn. These tofts were different in scale and form from those of the older settlement (around the green), resembling the burgage plots laid out for Sunderland borough in the 1180s, though not so long or large, and may have been of similar vintage. Subsequently, the village underwent further expansion, north of the church and south-west into what is now Green Terrace.

No firm evidence is presented to support either of these suggested chronologies, other than the morphological analogy with Sunderland's burgage plots. Although individual elements of these two suggested schemes are plausible, without firm archaeological or documentary markers, demonstrating when different parts of the village were occupied, it is impossible to substantiate or refute either of them and they must remain hypotheses. Furthermore, despite the suggestion that the Green-centred, Anglo-Saxon village was destroyed during the Norman conquest, the Green clearly remained a permanent functioning component of the settlement layout. Indeed, as has been discussed above, the Green was clearly larger than recognised by Clay, Milburn and Miller, or by Meikle and Newman, and Cookson, with the pinfold located *within* it rather than on its northern edge, whilst its western and northern parts were swallowed up by post-medieval infilling. The plots on the south side of the green and the east side of Green Terrace, may likewise have been disrupted by similar infilling by the time they were first mapped in detail in the 18th century. It is possible these plots were originally more regular and toft-like, as argued above.

The complexity of the developed plan, commented upon by Clay, Milburn and Miller, is in fact typical of this category of substantial village which also served as the centre of a large parish. Notable examples include Easington, Heighington and Aycliffe, which were focussed on large greens, or Houghton-le-Spring and Chester-le-Street. In part, this complexity was an inevitable consequence of their function as communication hubs, with routes heading off in all directions towards regional centres, such as Durham and Newcastle, and more local destinations, such as neighbouring settlements.

The bishop's manor house and farm

Location – evidence for the Hallgarth
It is not obvious, based on the evidence of the earliest maps, where the lord bishop's manorial complex should be located within this village layout. There is no direct reference to it on either Burleigh and Thompson's map or Rain's Eye Plan. Nevertheless the existence of the manor house and farm is indirectly confirmed by the references to demesne land and

livestock in the Boldon Book. A functioning farm is a prerequisite for the exploitation of such land and stock.

In the North-East, the usual term given to the complex comprising a manor house and demesne farm buildings was 'hallgarth', as for example in the case of the settlement still known as Pittington Hallgarth, where the standing remains of a manor held by Durham Priory can still be seen. Its Latin equivalent, used in medieval documents, was *curia* – court (i.e. the courtyard surrounded by the manor farm's various buildings). A plot of land or property in Bishopwearmouth called the Hallgarth is mentioned in the 1647 Parliamentary Survey.[49] The hallgarth's location is not specified in that document, but a conveyance of 1859 sheds more light. This is one of a group of 18th- and 19th-century deeds relating to properties, including 'Wester House', 'High House' and 'School House', located in the area immediately east of the churchyard, which were consulted as part of the historic building recording and study of 314-315 High Street west and 1-2 Church Lane. The 1859 conveyance is the earliest of the documents relating to School House and refers to the latter being abutted on the south by 'Hall Garth'.

The School House seems to have been the most southerly of the group of buildings on High Street West and Church Lane encompassed by the deeds and this implies that Hall Garth – i.e. the former manorial enclosure – lay to the south of that cluster of buildings, roughly in the area of the present Mowbray Almshouses. Mention of the Hall Garth in the conveyance must, in fact, have been an historic reference, perhaps copied from an earlier deed relating to the property (as was often the case with descriptions in such documents), as, by 1859, the land immediately south of School House was occupied by the Gibson Almshouses, which had been founded in 1727. A small, irregular plot/piece of land labelled Hall Garth is shown in this location on a 19th century map (DULASC DHC 11/V/12 (85): 1817 Plan of the Rectory of Bishopwearmouth). Its outline has been reproduced recently on the map reconstructing the layout of medieval/early modern Bishopwearmouth in the Victoria County History volumes relating to Sunderland (Cookson 2010, 10 (fig. 8) & 177 n. 11; 2015, 26 (fig. 9), 28).

Finally, a further piece of evidence is provided by references in the same documents to Hall Moor. This formed one of the township's common moors and appears to have been located only c. 450m to the east of the village, just beyond East Field, one of the community's three townfields. It is reasonable to suppose that Hall Moor acquired its name because it was the closest to moor the manorial hall situated on the east side of the village. Perhaps it represented moorland which was originally reserved for the lord's use as part of his demesne, though this is a more speculative.

Description and function
Thus the manorial hallgarth was located immediately to the east of the churchyard, facing onto the north-east corner of the green, with the compound probably extending all the way east to what became Crowtree Lane. The complex would typically have comprised the manor house itself, plus a barn, where crops would be processed and stored, and a range of other ancillary buildings, such as a granary, a dovecote and as cartsheds etc, all arranged around a courtyard, and perhaps with attached gardens and orchard, the whole enclosed within a stone boundary wall or fence. The facilities at Bishopwearmouth would not have been as grand as some of the Bishop's other Durham manors. Darlington, for example, was one of the bishop's most important manors and, significantly, would have regularly

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[49] Isaac Wattson holds 'one messuage adjacent upon the hallgarth in Wearmouth' (Surtees Society **185** (ed. D A Kirby, 1972), *Parliamentary Surveys of the Bishopric of Durham*, p. 171). The copyhold entry was dated 19 September, 14 Carol Re (i.e. 1638).

accommodated the Bishop himself on his travels along the Great North Road between his Durham residences (Durham castle, Bishop Auckland) and his great manors further south, such as Howden near Selby, where he had another palace. Despite its location at the centre of a large parish, Bishopwearmouth did not even accommodate the local tri-annual halmote courts, where the bishop's officials conducted all manorial and petty judicial business during their seasonal tours of his estates (Larson 2005, 100). Instead the business of Bishopwearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope and Burdon was all dealt with by the tourns held at Houghton-le-Spring, at any rate by the 14th century when the surviving records of the halmote courts begin.

The manor house would have been a rectangular building, probably comprising a hall open to the roof beams, with a central hearth for warmth. Some private residential accommodation – a solar – may have lain at one end, where the bishop's bailiff and other officials could have resided during occasional visits to inspect the manor, and perhaps a kitchen and other service rooms at the other end separated from the hall space by a cross passage (though the kitchen etc was sometimes contained in a separate building). The hall was a multi-purpose space where the farm's permanent staff (*famuli*) would have eaten and slept, indoor work could be undertaken and official meetings held.

The farm would have been worked by a mixture of full-time paid servants (*famuli*) and unfree tenants – bondmen and cottars – who were compelled to perform a set number of days work on the farm throughout the year, and especially during harvest-time and the ploughing season, as the rent for their holdings.

There was certainly a demesne farm of this kind held by the bishop at Bishopwearmouth. The demesne is mentioned in the Boldon Book and then encompassed farmland in both Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall, a flock of 200 sheep, plus teams of oxen for ploughing and horses for harrowing. At that stage (*c*.1183) the entire farm was leased out ('at farm') to someone (the 'farmer' - hence our modern term) who would have paid the bishop a set amount for a term of years and would then endeavour to make a profit on the deal, by generating more revenue than the sum he had paid. At other times it may have been managed directly. In that case a reliable senior tenant would have been appointed as reeve, his own rent waived for the duration of his service, and he would then direct the farm operations, render accounts, under the supervision of the bishop's own officials, and perhaps reside in the manor house.

All this changed after the Black Death in the mid-14th century, however. The drastic reduction in population size meant tenants were in short supply and could bargain more successfully for an improvement in their terms and conditions, whilst labourers could demand higher wages. At the same time the price of produce grown on the manor was suppressed due to the reduced demand generated by a smaller population. Squeezed between these two forces, most landowners abandoned demesne farming. The 1381 Hatfield Survey shows the demesne land in Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall had been parcelled up into 10 acre holdings and rented out to various of the tenants, whilst the compulsory labour of the bondmen and cottars had been commuted into cash rents. There is no mention of the hallgarth in the survey, but it may have continued intact but unused for a while, gradually falling into decay. Once it was realised that demesne farming was never going to be re-established, however, it is likely that individual buildings and plots within the hallgarth will have been leased out piecemeal and the complex abandoned as any kind of single functioning unit.

**9.6.2   The wider vill/township territory**

The research undertaken for Sunderland's Victoria County History is particularly important for an understanding of the layout of the rural landscape surrounding the village, which represented the township community's territory. However, some caution is needed when interpreting the results of this process.

The information assembled from the documentary sources and historic maps, regarding the outline of the pre-enclosure townfields and common moors, plus the location of the glebeland and the various parcels of land pertaining to Rectory Manor, was mapped using a 1st edition 6 in Ordnance Survey base (Cookson 2010, 10, fig. 8; 2015, 26, fig.9) This, of course, postdates the 1649 enclosure award by some two centuries. Moreover, the most important cartographic source material – the 1817 plan of Rectory Manor (DUL-ASC, DHC 11/V/12) and the Ordnance Survey map marked with the landholdings of Houghton and Bishopwearmouth Rectory manors (DHC11/V/16) – plus other source material such as the 1792 Rectory and Glebe Terrier (DUL-ASC, DDR/EA/GLE 1/11), also postdates the award, although incorporating some information which refers back to that agreement and the arrangements preceding enclosure. Enclosure typically entailed a great deal of straightening of field boundaries and consolidation of plots, as professional surveyors demarcated boundaries and divided up open fields into individually held field parcels. Reliance upon the Ordnance Survey and other post 1649 maps unavoidably embeds that straightening in any reconstructed layout. In other words it should be recognised that the field boundaries of pre-enclosure layout are likely to have been less regular and rectilinear than those which postdated 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 particularly in the North as *flatts*, more generally as *furlongs*, and then into smaller units termed *sellions*. However these subdivisions were not separated by hedges, fences or walls, but simply by narrow uncultivated strips known as *baulks*. The farm-holdings of individual tenant farmers comprised multiple strips of ploughland, which were typically scattered throughout the various flatts, each strip being composed of several parallel riggs (ridges and furrows).

The position and extent of Bishopwearmouth's arable lands can be determined. Three large fields have been identified, East Field, West Field and South Field, so named presumably because of their positioning relative to the village settlement. East Field lay to the east and south-east of the village and was traversed by a path heading eastwards, labelled Back Lane on Rain's Eye Plan, this had become Borough Road by the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, the name which it retains today. South Field lay directly to the south, initially forming a relatively narrow area bounded by Tunstall Lane on the west and Stockton Road to the east, but then broadening out further south. West Field lay to the west and particularly the north-west, and was bisected by Hylton Lane, which led to the Ford-Hylton ferry and the road thence to Newcastle. Rectory Manor held parcels of land in all three fields, which helps to define their extent. Indeed most of the tenants will have held land in strips scattered throughout the three fields. This pattern still prevailed in the 17th century, right up until the townfields were enclosed in 1649, as reflected in the copyhold leases recorded by the Parliamentary Survey undertaken a couple of years previously. For example:
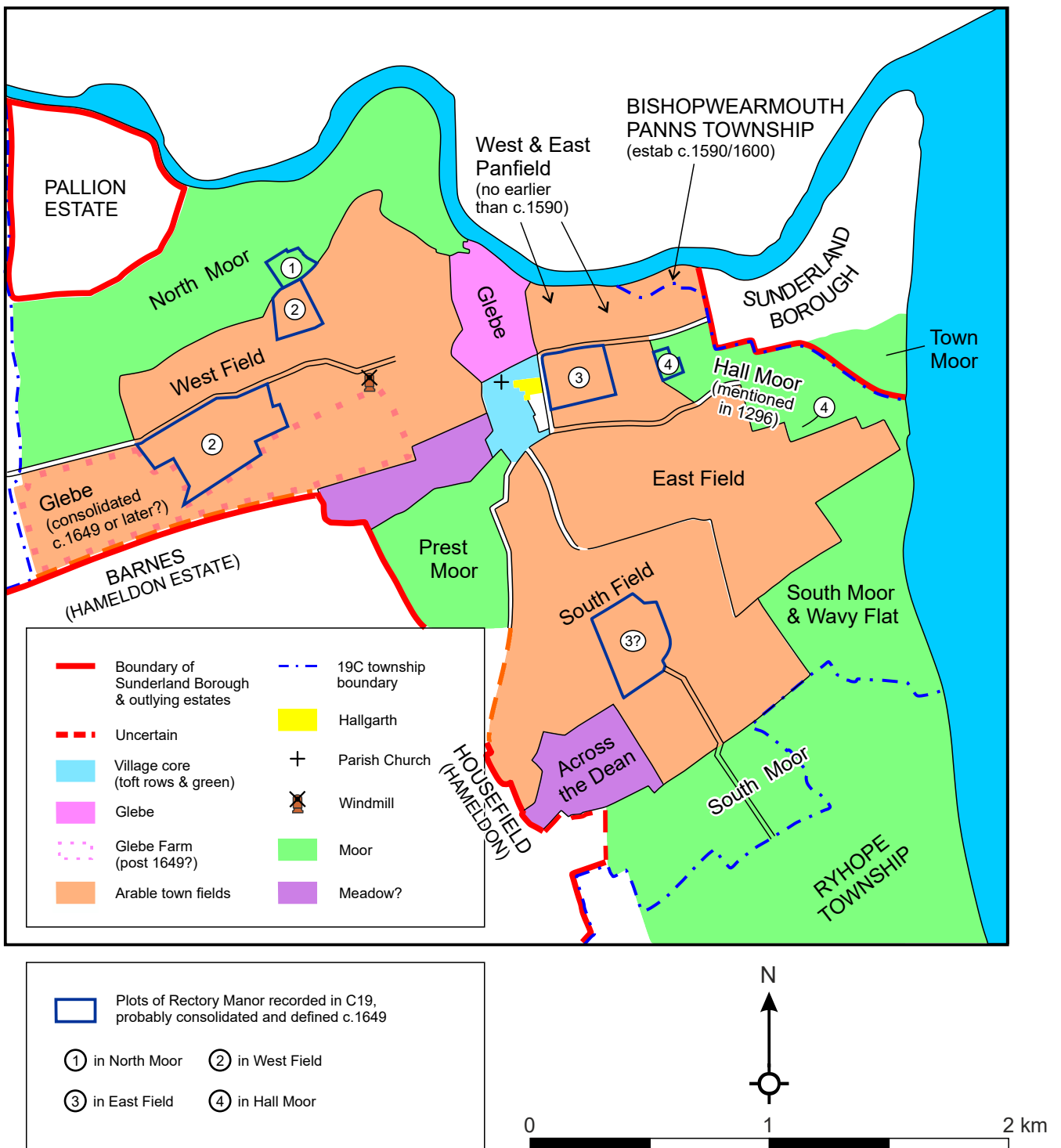
9.14: *Reconstruction of the late medieval landscape of Bishopwearmouth township, based on analysis of post-medieval documentary sources conducted by the Sunderland VCH project (cf. Cookson 2010, 8-11, fig. 8; 2015, 26-8, fig. 9), with the limits of the outlying estates also shown and the extent of South Moor adjusted.*

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)

John Nicholson, by copy dated 22 April, 23 Carol Re (1647)*, holdeth one acre of land in the eastfield and one other acre in the southfield and 2 other acres in the westfield.*
(*Parliamentary Survey*, II, 166)

Elizabeth, wife of Edward Chilton, and Margaret, wife of John Ratcliffe, daughters and co-heirs of Thomas Bee, by copy dated 7 September, 22 Carol Re (1646)*, holdeth 3 roods of land lying in 3 several fields in the town (vzt) one rood of land in the eastfield lying on the south of Bildon Hill and one rood of land in the southfield lying upon Howden*
(*Parliamentary Survey*, 170 – perhaps Howden should read Hendon; the rood in West Field is omitted from the description).[50]

This three-field system would have 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 soil exhaustion through over intensive cropping. The field could be grazed during its fallow year, the manure deposited by the livestock helping to restore nutrients to the soil. Indeed the system may have been deliberately introduced precisely to combat fears of creeping soil exhaustion.

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.

North Moor extended to the north of West Field, stretching along the river bank encompassing what is now Ayre's Quay and Deptford, extending as far as the boundary with Ford township, but excluding Pallion to the north-west, which was associated with Barnes as part of the manor of Humbledon (*Hamildon*) and the estates which descended from that.

South Moor occupied much of what is now Hendon in the south-east corner of the township, but also appears to have extended southward into Ryhope. Indeed a greater proportion of the moor appears to have fallen within that township. The moor was presumably shared by the inhabitants of the two townships and the boundary between Bishopwearmouth and Ryhope may not have been formally defined until their moors and fields were enclosed in the mid- to late 17th century.

Of the two smaller moors, Hall Moor lay beyond East Field, separating the latter from the limits of Sunderland borough, where it skirted along the western edge and southern ends of the burgage plots and adjoined the borough's own moor, known as Town Moor, further to the east. It was accessed by the path or lane which eventually became Borough Road. North

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[50] See *Parliamentary Survey*, 166, 169-170, for other similar examples.

and South Prest Moor was bounded by Tunstall Lane to the east, the Wearmouth or Howle-Eile Burn to the north, the Barnes estate to the west and probably by the Housefield or Bainbridge Holme estate to the south.

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 these moors figure in the Hatfield Survey, which instead refers to a Middle Moor and Small Moor (*Hatfield Survey*, 133-34: *Midilmour et Smalmoure*).

Parks

Medieval manors sometimes included enclosed parks where deer could be kept and hunted or for grazing cattle, usually closely associated with the manor house and hallgarth. However, there is no indication in the medieval sources that the bishop had a park attached to his manor house and farm in Bishopwearmouth. Parkland is not referred to in the Hatfield Survey and, certainly, none seems to have existed on the bishop's lands by the mid-17th century, as the jurors appointed in 1647 to undertake the Parliamentary Survey of the bishop's Manor of Houghton le Spring (which included Bishopwearmouth) testified:

> *There are no parks, warrens, sheepwalks or other several grounds belonging to the lord of this manor …* (*Parliamentary Survey*, 143)

The parcel of glebeland lying immediately to the north of the Rectory, was known locally as Rectory Park and marked as a park from Rain's Eye Plan onwards. This was, however, only formally enclosed by a stone wall by the rector, Henry Egerton (1776-95), towards the end of the 18th century (Clay et al. 1984, 9; Cookson 2015, 184).[51] The wall is shown on Rain's Eye Plan (1785-90), separating the park from the remainder of the glebeland north of the village, and does not feature on Burleigh and Thompson's map 50 years earlier. The latter map showed that the entire area of glebeland north of the village was not subdivided by any internal walls or fences at this stage and extended across to the to the north-west across Galley Gill and Wearmouth Burn. It was labelled simply as 'the Rector's Ground' on the 1737 map. There is no indication whether this area might have informally functioned as a park at this stage or earlier, but at any rate it clearly formed part of the Rector's land holding, rather than the main episcopal manor.

Woodland

There are no specific references to woodland in medieval sources such as the Boldon Book or Hatfield Survey, but there may still have been surviving areas of such, perhaps along the steep slopes leading down to the riverbank, in which case these would presumably have been exploited for timber. However, the 1647 Parliamentary Survey gives the impression that this part of County Durham was a largely treeless environment by the mid-17th century. The local jury empanelled to undertake the survey of the Manor of Houghton-le-Spring declared:

> *… there are no … foreign* **outwood pastures or common** *which the lord hath in right of this manor nor any* **outwood** *wherein the tennants have any pannage, mastage or herbages …* (*Parliamentary Survey*, 143)

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[51] It is labelled 'Park' on Rain's Eye Plan (cf. Clay et al. 1984, 8) and Rector's Park on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey.

To the 14th Article we say there is no timber growing upon on any of the copyholds to our knowledge … (ibid., 146)

To the 24th Article we say there are neither woods nor coppices in this manor which we know of … (ibid., 147).

The Mill

Both the Boldon and Book and the Hatfield Survey contain references to a mill at Bishopwearmouth (*Boldon Buke*, 6, 46; *Hatfield Survey*, 133-34). The Boldon Book records the townships of Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall together and refers to a single mill, which was leased along with the combined demesne farm. Together these were worth £20. It is likely, therefore, that the tenants of Tunstall had to use a mill in Bishopwearmouth at this stage. Ryhope and Burdon had their own mill, which was worth one marc (13s 4d). The Hatfield Survey states that the bond tenants of (Bishop) Wearmouth, Tunstall, Ryhope and (Great) Burdon pay amongst themselves (i.e. together) for the mills and brewhouses. Each bond tenant in the four vills paid 13s 7¼d for their share of the lease of the mill and a beer toll (*pro firma mollendini ventritici cum toleneto cervisiæ* – though only in the cases of Bishopwearmouth and Tunstall is the mill is specifically referred to as a windmill: *molendinum ventriticum*).

It is not clear whether the mills mentioned in the Boldon Book were watermills or windmills. All the mills that are known later on in Bishopwearmouth and the neighbouring townships of the parish were windmills and it is even possible that those recorded in the Boldon Book were as well. The horizontal-axis or vertical windmills (so called due to the plane of the movement of its sails) used in the region were developed initially in the 12th century in northern France, Eastern England and Flanders (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windmill; White 1962, 87). These early windmills were post mills. The wooden mill building (known as the 'body' or 'buck') sat on a central upright post and could be rotated to face the wind direction using a 'tail pole' to the rear, which also helped to keep the structure balanced. The earliest certain reference to a windmill in this zone is from Weedley in East Yorkshire in 1185 (Turner & Gregory 2009, 2), around the same time as the compilation of the Boldon Book. This would make a Bishopwearmouth/Tunstall windmill a very early example of its type, but windmills were undoubtedly preferred on the Magnesian Limestone Plateau of East Durham once that technology became readily available. Most of the streams and burns there were unreliable and of limited force due to the porous limestone geology, whilst the relative elevation of the plateau and its proximity to the sea meant it was generally exposed to strong winds. On the other hand, if the mill recorded at Bishopwearmouth in the Boldon Book was in fact a watermill, it may have lain near the mouth of the Wearmouth Burn or perhaps on the Wear itself, attached to a dam associated with one of the fisheries – like the mill at Southwick (Cookson 2010, 24; 2015, 39), which continued in use into the 15th century. However, any watermill at Bishopwearmouth is likely to have been abandoned much more rapidly.[52]

The picture is somewhat clearer at Ryhope, where an earlier watermill may have been supplied by a very large pond situated at the western end of the village, which can be seen on the tithe map and 1st edition Ordnance Survey. This was probably replaced by a windmill

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[52] The Bishopwearmouth mill has no connection with the 'mill-dam built on the land of Sunderland', for which Roger de Audrey, lord of Croxdale, Butterby and Coxhoe, paid the bishop one marc, as recorded in the Boldon Book (*Boldon Buke*, 69). The Sunderland named there is that which gives Sunderland Bridge by Croxdale its name (see Offler 1996, XII, 11 n. 32, 35 n. 130; contra Cookson 2015, 31).

on the summit of Mill Hill, a kilometre to the south-west, which had already disappeared by the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, doubtless supplanted at some stage by the two mills shown on the coast, in what is now Grangetown, labelled Ryhope Mill and Stoup Mill (which both figure on Greenwood's 1820 county map).

The Parliamentary Survey of 1647 makes it clear that Bishopwearmouth, Tunstall and Ryhope each had a windmill for grinding corn, by lease from the bishop, by the mid-17th century (*Parliamentary Survey*, 144, 173). The tenants were no longer obliged to grind their corn there, however. The mill in Bishopwearmouth was held by Martin Watson of Wearmouth, and had neither house nor ground attached to it. It probably lay on the south side of Hylton Lane to the west of the village, where two post mills are depicted on Rain's Eye Plan (Clay et al. 1984, 6, 62-63). Unfortunately it does not feature on Thompson and Burleigh's 1737 map of the river's environs as Hylton Lane forms the map's southern limit, though it does figure on Armstrong's county map (1768). A windmill is shown there on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1855, published 1862), described as 'old windmill', implying it was disused by then. The surrounding area is labelled Millfield, and this name has subsequently come to apply to a wider district of Sunderland. This location is consistent with the description of parts of a Bishopwearmouth copyhold held by Thomas Ayre, which included 'one parcel of land in the west field of Weremouth leading to a milne there …' and 'one rood of land in the Milne Piece' (ibid. 164).

Another reputedly ancient mill in Bishopwearmouth township was located at Hendon on the sea banks, described as an 'ancient wooden stob-mill' with a 'massive wooden post' (cf. Cookson 2010, 22). This features on Greenwood's county map (1820), and the tithe map (1846) and was in ruins by the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey, where it is labelled 'Old Windmill (Ruins)'. It is not mentioned in the 1647 Parliamentary Survey, however, which might imply that it erected at some stage thereafter.

The earliest historic maps and images provide evidence for a number of other mills, particularly in the town of Sunderland, which was not covered by the Parliamentary Survey as it did not form part of the bishop's Manor of Houghton-le-Spring. Samuel Buck's *North Prospect of the Town of Sunderland* around 1720 shows a row of four windmills beyond the borough range in the western part of the town, their sails protruding above the roofs of its buildings, whilst the associated map reveals a fifth example in the eastern part of the town. However, the view and map do not extend sufficiently far west to reveal Bishopwearmouth's mill. The four western mills also figure on Burleigh and Thompson's 1737 map, depicted as four post mills on wooden tressles occupying the southern ends of burgage plots. All but one of these mills had been demolished by the latter stages of the 18th century, on the evidence of Rain's Eye Plan. Their replacement was the new tower mill, built in 1756 beside Hendon Road (Cookson 2015, 31), which does feature on the eye plan. A second tower windmill shown on Rain's plan, located on the north side of Durham Road to the west of Bishopwearmouth village, was probably of a similar date (Clay et al 1984, 30-1, 38, 46, 62-3).

Fisheries
Fishing rights along the Wear, which could be leased out to tenants or exploited directly, were an important asset for the bishop and prior of Durham and the other lords of the three communities at the mouth of the Wear. There is also evidence for sea-fishing for notably for herring, but also cod, haddock, whiting, ling and mackerel, by the inhabitants of Sunderland, using seine nets or specialised boats called cobles (Meikle & Newman 2007, 88-89; Cookson 2015, 54-55, 56). In Bishopwearmouth, however, only riverine fishing is mentioned. This typically involved throwing a weir or dam, known as a *yare*, across the river to trap salmon

moving upstream, the yares taking the form of semi-circular enclosures of stones or stakes and wattle which retained the fish as the tide ebbed (Meikle & Newman 2007, 89; Cookson 2015, 56-57). Specifically, there is repeated reference, in 15th- and 16th-century inquisitions post mortems relating to the Bowes family, of a fishery in the Wear, known as Bowes Water (Surtees 1816, 241; Meikle & Newman 2007, 70), the Bowes having inherited the manor of Humbledon or Hameldon, which included Barnes and Pallion, from the Dalden lineage. The Bowes Water fishery perhaps corresponded to the stretch of the river adjoining Pallion, which the Bowes held, but the rights granted by the bishop may conceivably have been more extensive. By 1647, however, all the fishing rights in the township of Bishopwearmouth proper (which probably excluded Pallion and the Barnes estate) were leased by the bishop to John Shippardson. The lease (dated 15 May 1635) comprised:

> *… fishing in the river of Weare so far as the grounds belonging to the township of Bishop Wearmouth doth extend along the said river together with free way leave to and from the said fishing and liberty to hang their nets to dry upon the ground* (*Parliamentary Survey*, 143, 173).

The rent included the provision of '6 good and fresh salmon in the due season'.

Quarries
There is likely to have been quarrying in Bishopwearmouth during the Middle Ages, not least to provide the stone for the great parish church and for structures like the bishop's manor house and the rectory. However it is not mentioned in either of the two medieval surveys, implying that the working of quarries in the township was not being regularly leased to tenants at that stage. Quarry working may have been episodic and was perhaps managed directly by the bishop's officials, given that the largest structures were ecclesiastical (church and rectory) or held directly by the bishop (the manorial hallgarth). The focus is likely to have been Building Hill (earlier known as Bildon, Boldon, Boyldon Hill), a ridge of outcropping magnesian limestone of the Roker Formation (Upper Magnesian Limestone) conveniently located just 500-600m south-east of the village, on the present site of the Civic Centre and the southern end of Mowbray Gardens. Stone from Building Hill can still be seen in the retaining walls in Green Terrace and Low Row (Cookson 2015, 2).

By 1647 all limestone quarrying rights within Bishopwearmouth township were leased to John Shippardson along with the fisheries previously discussed. The terms of the lease suggest quarrying may have been more extensively distributed throughout the township, particularly with regard to making lime. The terms of the lease drawn up in 1635 gave Shippardson had a virtual monopoly on quarrying limestone and burning lime in the township, though the the bishop and his successors retained residual rights to quarry limestone and burn lime at Building Quarry to repair 'their ancient tenements and no otherwise'. This right actually seems to have extended to the copyhold tenants:

> *… And also those quarries of limestone within all and every the wastes or waste grounds within Bishop Weremouth and all lime pits and houses already digged and made within any part of the premises as shall please him the said John Shippardson. And also to build and erect thereupon 2 limehouses for laying and keeping lime in and for persons employed about the said lime pits to live in and no other (except free libertie for the said Bishop and his successors to dig limestone and burn lime at the quarry of Boldon fpr repaying their ancient tenements and no otherwise.*
> (*Parliamentary Survey*, 173).

Roads, lanes and pathways

Bishopwearmouth was the communications hub for the area. Routes exited the village in every direction and for the most part travellers heading towards the borough of Sunderland would first have to pass through Bishopwearmouth.

The main highways through the township can all be traced and indeed largely remain in use today. These main communications arteries linked the village to neighbouring settlements and, more distantly, to the principal regional centres of Durham, Newcastle and Chester-le-Street, functioning like major arteries and providing a framework for understanding the wider settlement pattern.

One route has declined in importance. Hylton Lane formerly connected Bishopwearmouth with Newcastle via the ford and later ferry between Ford and Hylton (Cookson 2015, 239-40), but the ferry was never replaced by a bridge directly connected to Hylton Lane. Instead the road has been supplanted by other routes using bridges built more centrally in the Sunderland conurbation. The road emerged from the north-west corner of the village, crossing a bridge over the Howle-Eile Burn known as Hind's Bridge, heading north-west, then WSW, before turning northward again to reach the river crossing. Hind's Bridge (Gaz. 47; HER 16197) is shown on Rain's Eye Plan (Clay et al. 1984, B1, 22-23). It bore an inscription 'The Hinds Bridge 1649', which survives only as a fairly modern replica. 1649 was the date of the Highways Award, which set out the permitted widths and routes of the highways and paths in Bishopwearmouth township following enclosure of the fields and moors (see below), but the inscription may conceivably mark the rebuilding of the bridge rather than its initial construction (ibid.).

What is now High Street West (formerly probably King's Street or King's Road) ran through the northern part of the village from west to east, passing between the church and the rectory grounds, and continuing on eastwards towards Sunderland borough and port, where it formed the town's main street. In the area between the two settlements, it passed through open fields, with East Field and Hall Moor to the south and West and East Panfield to the north.

The routes to Chester-le-Street and Durham exited the village through the gap between Low Row and High Row (now Green Terrace). A bridge, of uncertain date, crossing the Howle-Eile/Wearmouth Burn, is shown on Rain's Eye Plan. This would doubtless once have been a simple ford. The Chester-le-Street Road continued directly on from there heading WSW, whilst the Durham highway ran behind High Row before turning and running along the north side of the burn, parallel with the other road. After just over half kilometre it crossed back over the burn and headed south-westward toward Durham via Houghton-le-Spring, where the periodic halmote court proceedings for the manor of Bishopwearmouth were held. Both routes, though much modified, survive today as Chester Road and Durham Road respectively.

From the south-west corner of the village two lanes meandered through southward towards Tunstall and Ryhope. Tunstall Lane was initially bounded by Pres-moor to the west and South Field to the east, whilst the other route, now labelled Stockton Road and Ryhope Road,headed SSE between East Field and South Field and then directly across South Field and South Moor to reach Ryhope. This important road continued on to Easington and, ultimately, Stockton and Hartlepool.

In addition there was a much more extensive network of minor trackways and paths, extending throughout the township like capilleries, providing the farmers with access to their lands – their scattered strips in the arable fields and the grazing grounds on the moors. Such tracks would gradually have attenuated as they penetrated deeper into the open fields, dividing and subdividing to becoming less heavily trafficked paths, giving the farmer access to major blocks of strips, the *flatts* and then to their constituent *sellions*, and finally the to the farmers'own strips of ridged and furrowed ploughland, by which time the path might be little more than a narrow uncultivated strip, or *baulk*, separating one sellion or flatt from another. A good impression of the extent and complexity of the network of paths is provided by the 'Award of Highways and Private Ways of Bishopwearmouth', a copy of which was published by G. W. Bain, appended to the third instalment of his article on the Topography of Bishopwearmouth (1910, 13-19). This document was associated with the enclosure of the townfields and moors in 1649, and the first part appears to date to around that time, whilst a second part derives from a manor court session on 7th May 1675. It thus marks the replacement of the earlier system with routes adapted to conform to the new pattern of enclosed fields and consolidated landholdings. It is not possible to map the network with absolute confidence as not all the toponyms are identifiable and many of the routes are traced largely in terms of whose ground they passed through and gave access to. The previous system, which functioned whilst the townfields were in operation, is even more irrecoverable.

Conclusions: A medieval layout or an early modern plan?
Some caveats were noted above regarding the reconstruction of the layout of medieval Bishopwearmouth, presented in map form in the VCH volume (Cookson 2015, 26, fig.9), based on information recorded in historic maps and documents which postdate the 1649 inclosure award. It was argued that the original boundaries may have been less rectilinear than those marked on the mid-19th century Ordnance Survey map and the landholdings more fragmented.

However, there is more a fundamental issue, in that the layout shown is likely to relate only to the very end of the Middle Ages and to the subsequent early modern era (the 16th and early 17th centuries). There is evidence that township communities like Bishopwearmouth underwent a series of significant reorganisations from the mid-14th century onwards, in the aftermath of the Black Death.

Firstly, the bishop's manorial hallgarth would have been a prominent feature of the pre-1350 village, just as the Rectory continued to be, and there would have been a substantial quantity of demesne land (161 acres according to the Hatfield Survey) attached to the bishop's manor. This would either have been distributed throughout the farmland, in a similar way to the parcels of Rectory Manor, or perhaps organised into a single coherent block as the glebe-land was at a later date at any rate.

It may also be significant that none of the three main townfields – West Field, East Field and South Field – which feature in documents of the 17th century/early modern era, appears in medieval sources. Admittedly, relatively few topographical names are mentioned in those earlier documents, but most of those that are do not recur in the later sources. Thus Hall Moor does figure in a charter of 1296 (TWA 838/56), as noted above, but the Hatfield Survey records two moors, Small Moor and Middle Moor (*Midilmour et Smalmoure*), which are not part of the later arrangements unless names have changed over time. This may be one indication that the layout of the township had been altered since the late 14th century. Another may be the association of Wary Flat with South Moor as part of the moorland in the

south-east corner of the township on the VCH map reconstuctions, since it is a name more typical of arable land rather than moors. 'Flat' was the term most commonly used in this region (its equivalent elsewhere is furlong) to denote the large portions into which the common fields were subdivided. Perhaps the some of the moorland to the south-east of the village, near the coast, had once formed part of the community's arable land, but had subsequently reverted to rough grazing as part of a wider reorganisation of the township's farmland.

Indeed, although evidence for the three-field system is not entirely unknown in the North-East before the 15th century (cf. Britnell 2004, 25-6), it generally seems more typical of late medieval or early modern arrangements there, part of a pattern of re-organisation evident across the region, probably designed to introduce more systematic crop-rotation and fallowing in the open fields and thereby restore fertility (cf. James 1974, 75-76). Previously, charters recording grants of land typically referred simply to 'the field of (such and such a village)', which designated all the arable land held by the community. The assorted strips of ploughland which might be involved in the grant of a tenement were located by reference to the field's principal subdivisions, the flats, or other distinctive features. Thus, at Barrasford, in the North Tyne valley of Northumberland, an Inclosure map of 1716 (Aln. Cas. O.18.4) shows a typical three-field system, the three main fields being designated West Field, East Field and Crag Field, with an additional, much smaller field, next to the village, being called Little Field. However the Black Book of Hexham Priory, a rental survey of all the priory's landholdings dating to 1379, which itemises a single tenement held by the monks, comprising 30 acres of arable land and 1 acre of meadow, makes no reference whatsoever to the fields of the 1716 map and award when locating the four blocks of ploughland strips. Instead the acres are located by reference to four toponyms which probably represent flatts, in one case, *Seleegeflatte*, explicitly so (*Black Book of Hexham*, 81-2, no. 33). None can now be located on the ground with any confidence. If the fields shown on the inclosure map had been in existence in 1379 it is difficult to imagine they would have been so completely ignored, so the arrangements documented in 1716 cannot have been implemented much before the 15th or even 16th century.

Thus, Small Moor, Middle Moor and Wary Flat may be clues hinting at an earlier layout of Bishopwearmouth township, which is now largely irrecoverable. Hall Moor may represent another clue. It presumably took its name from the bishop's manorial hall on the east side of the village. However in the reconstructed arrangement it is separated from the hallgarth by East Field so East Moor would have been a more logical name. Perhaps Hall Moor originally extended right up to the manorial complex, or the latter may have been adjoined by a Hall Flatt, now lost from the records, which in turn extended as far as Hall Moor. Perhaps this moor was even originally reserved for the lord's livestock, for the pasturing of the 20 oxen and 200 sheep mentioned in the Boldon book for instance.

9.6.3   *Hameldon* - The manorial farms of Barnes, Pallion and Housefield
There is little detailed information regarding settlement and land-use in the outer districts of Bishopwearmouth, which were managed as entirely separate estates. These landholdings, comprising Barnes, Pallion, Housefield, or Bainbridge Holme as it was later known, and perhaps Clowcroft, initially formed part of or became associated with the manor of Hameldon or Homeldon, which takes its name from Humbledon Hill to the south-west of Bishopwearmouth village.
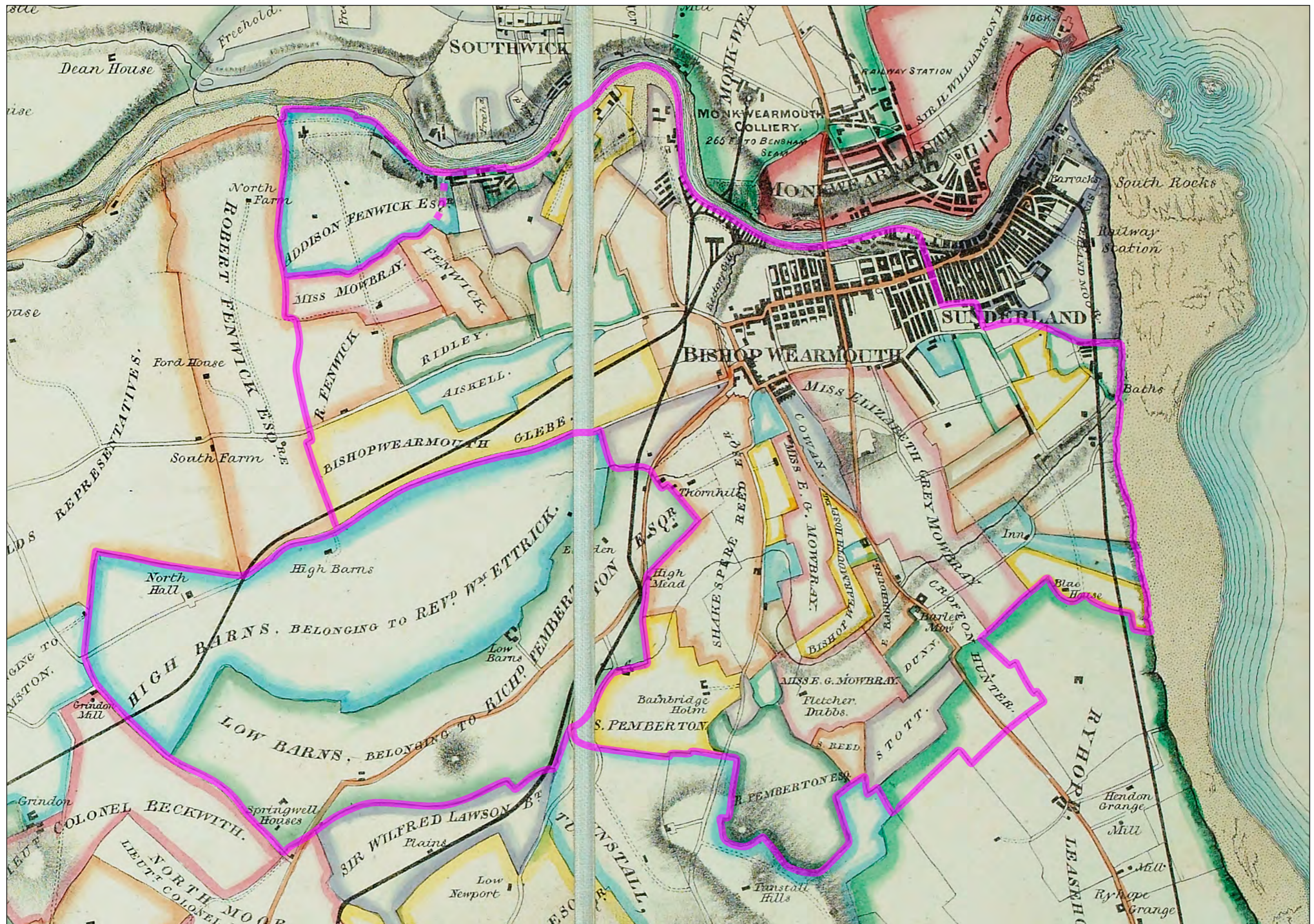
Hameldon

Hameldon is initially decribed as a vill in the earliest record, which dates to the early 13th century (Bell 1939, 46, no. 6; cf. Appendix 1: Source 2), implying there may have been a village or at any rate some form of rural peasant community at that stage. If so, this presumably lay somewhere near Humbledon Hill, perhaps at Low Barnes.

Subsequently, however, these estates are just described as manors. In the late Middle Ages this term generally signified a landed estate, cultivated by rent-paying tenants – whether customary or free – over whom the lord exercised seigneurial rights through the operation of a manorial court (Liddy 2008, 39-43). Indeed, the existence of such a court was central to the definition of a manor in this period (Harvey 1999, 2). These courts were the lay estate equivalent of the bishop's halmote court, which the tenants of Bishopwearmouth, for example, were obliged to attend at Houghton-le-Spring three times a year. They enforced the by-laws of the tenant community, issued finds for non-attendance, registered the entry of heirs of customary tenants into their holdings, received homage and feality of the free tenants and exercised criminal jurisdiction over minor disturbances of the peace. The fines imposed by the court accrued to the lord and and were thus an additional source of seigneurial revenue. This form of manor was typical of the southern and eastern parts of the bishopric, the lowland zone where arable farming predominated, and here manor might be used interchangeably with vill, particularly where a village township was entirely encompassed by a single manorial estate.

However, as Liddy has outlined (2008, 46-47; cf. Dunsford & Harris 2003, 46), in the western, upland parts of the Durham bishopric, a 'manor' was essentially a unit of land management based on a single residence, rather than being a locus of jurisdiction, and, indeed, the term might signify nothing more than a dwelling. They were single farmsteads, that is to say 'a compact cultivated or pastured area without appurtenant customary holdings or labour services' (Dunsford & Harris 2003, 46), similar to modern farms. These 'manors' mostly originated as moorland farms, and comprised nucleated demesnes, lacking customary tenants, and were dependent upon wage labour for their cultivation or exploitation. There is little or no evidence that these farm-manors had lordship over tenants in the way that the manorial estates in east Durham did. Likewise, *manerium* was the normal term used by the officials of Durham Priory to refer to the monastery's grange farms and those of its subordinate cells, farms such as Wingate Grange, Haswell and Hetton on the Hill. However, the majority of these priory manor farms lay in the lowland, eastern and southern parts of the Durham.

Although it would be logical to assume that Bishopwearmouth's peripheral Hamildon manors conformed to the normal lowland, east Durham pattern of landed estates, with tenants subject to the regulation of a manor court, the alternative upland/priory farm model is worth bearing mind, particularly when examining the smaller of these estates.

Barnes

The most important of these estates was that centred on Barnes. 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 this 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 shows there was a manor house, plus attendant outbuildings, located at the estate centre, which corresponds to the later Low Barnes. Surtees suggests 'this was probably the residence of the lord's steward, or the principal farmer' (1816, 235). The demesne land associated with the manor, comprising just pasture and meadow, suggests the farm was only involved in rearing livestock at this stage, which would have required fewer staff than arable cultivation, perhaps a response to the widespread problem of agricultural wage inflation. This farm was probably leased out. The Bowes were essentially rentier landlords by this stage, holding ten or more manors in Durham by this period and did not manage exploitation of their lands directly (Brown 2015, 147). Their family seat lay at Streatlam, in the parish of Gainford, north-east of Barnard Castle (Liddy 2008, 41-2, 65, 69), and there is no indication they ever resided on their Hamildon manor at Barnes.

From c. 1572, Barnes became the seat of a junior branch of the Bowes family, when Robert Bowes of Aske inherited the manors of Barnes, Hamildon and Clowcroft. The manor house was probably refurbished or rebuilt. In his will of 1649, William Bowes described it as the mansion house of Barnes (*Sunderland Wills & Inventories*, 222, no. 90).

The main income from the manor probably derived from rent-paying tenant farmers residing there. These may have been regulated by a manor court controlled by the Bowes. Admittedly, no documentary evidence for such a court exists, in the form of surviving manor court rolls, for example, but this is not unusual, particularly with regard to lay estates, which lacked the degree of institutional continuity that helped preserve documents relating to ecclesiastical estates. There is, however, evidence that the settlement at Barnes comprised more than a single farm and manor house. Two probate inventories, dating to 1615 and 1629, do seem to indicate the presence of tenant farmers at Barnes in the early 17th-century, and would imply there was a hamlet there at that stage.[53] Moreover, the settlement was termed as a village on Ogilby's 1695 map of the road from Durham to Tynemouth via Sunderland (equivalent to the present Durham Road), where a turnoff to Low Barnes, captioned 'Bar'es a village', is shown some distance before the crossing of Wearmouth or Howle Eale Burn (labelled 'Stonebridg & Brook'). The schematic depiction features two buildings and it was clearly a much less substantial settlement than Weamouth village which is depicted, again schematically, as two densely packed rows on either side of the road.
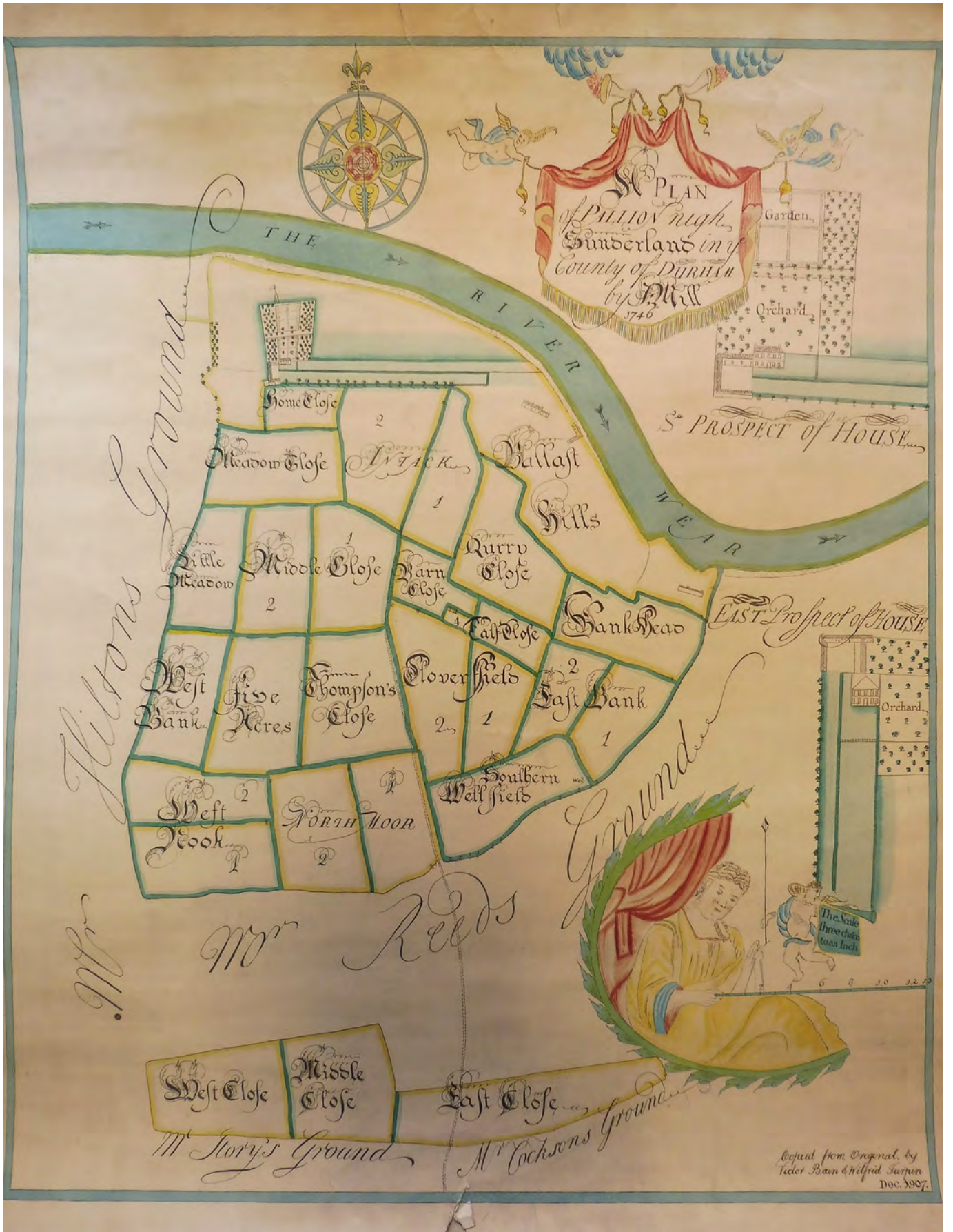
Pallion
The other main component of the Hameldon estate held by the Dalden and then by the Bowes lineages was Pallion. This probably originated as a separate estate, granted by the bishop Hugh du Puisset out of his Wearmouth lands to Gilbert de la Leie in the second half of the 12th century, as argued above (*see* section 9.5.4). It was physically isolated from the two main Hamildon estates, centred on Barnes and Housefield, by the arable land and moor making up the north-western part of Bishopwearmouth township.

It probably derives its name from *Pavillion* – 'tent' – implying it originated as a temporary residence, perhaps a kind of summer pleasure ground for activities such as hunting and feasting, in a pleasant riverside location by the Wear. These may have been comparable with the seasonal *ludi* or games which Durham Priory maintained on its estate at Beaurepaire (Bearpark). Surtees (1816, 241) surmised that Pallion 'was doubtless the summer seat, and

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[53] Inventories of Ralph Wetslett of Barnes, dated 25 September 1615, and Ralph Watson of Barnes, 13 October 1629 (*Sunderland Wills & Inventories*, 51-52, 100-101, nos 22 & 44; DPR1/1/1615/W11/1; DPR1/1/1629/W4/1).
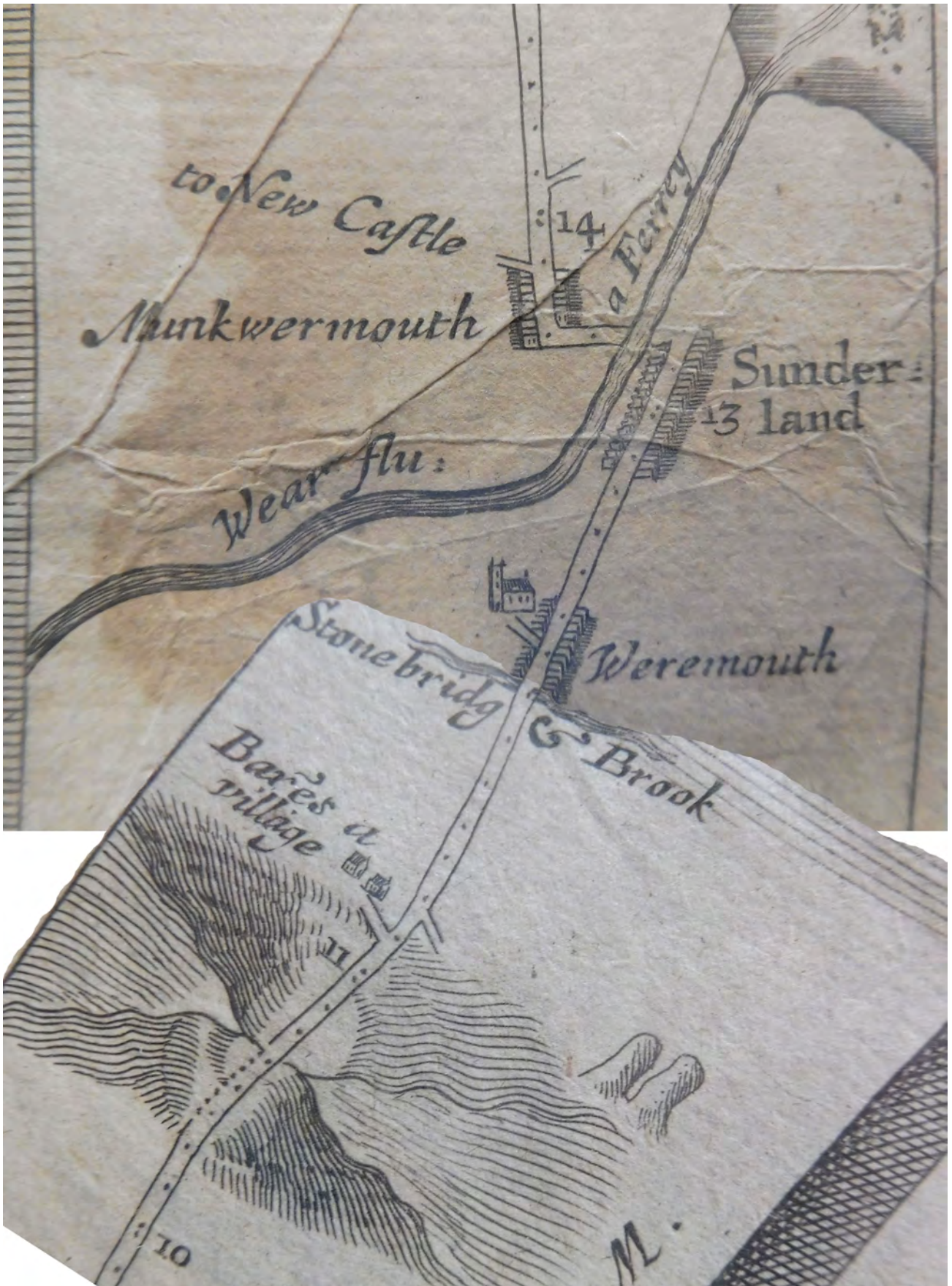
9.16: Ogilby Durham-Tynemouth Map of 1698, composite extract showing Bishopwearmouth and Barnes.

9.17: Map of the Pallion estate c.1746, redrawn in 1907.

occasional residence for business or for pleasure' of the Daldens, but it seems more likely that the de la Ley family established this site. By the mid-13th century it appears to have evolved into a permanent elite residence of the de Laley lineage, since *le Pavylloun* was recorded as the abode of Sir Philip de la Ley in 1264, whilst Robert, brother and heir of John de la Leygh, was reportedly born in 'le Pavylion by Suthwermouth' on 2 November 1306 (see above: 9.5.4; cf. Surtees 1816, 241n; Greenwood *Hatfield Survey*, xvi; Hunter Blair 1946, 214; Holford 2009; Bain 1907, 60).

Pallion was presumably acquired by the Daldens, perhaps through inheritance, at some point later on in the 14th century, being absorbed into their Hamildon estate, and may have declined in importance as a result, in favour of Barnes. It was still described as a manor in 1408, when it was included in the inquisition post mortem of Aline Conyers (widow and heiress of William de Dalden who died in 1369): *Manerium de Homyldon alias dictum Manerium de Pavyllon* (*Cursitor's Records*, II, 177). Nevertheless, there is no indication that the Bowes of Streatlam, who subsequently acquired Pallion and the manor of Hamildon, ever resided there, but this was to change following the extinction of the main male line of that family in the mid-16th century. After Robert Bowes of Aske inherited the estate 'the whole tenement and grounds called the Pallyon' was sold to John Goodchild of Ryhope, in 1572, and thereafter became the seat of the Goodchilds. The property is described at that stage in terms which suggest it 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 severall and free fishery in the River of Were, in or adjoining the said Pallyon'

The farm may also have had certain grazing rights in Bishopwearmouth's North Moor. Two maps of the Goodchild's Pallion estate, dated 1746 and 1793 (copies by William Turpin in 1907 are held in SAS Archives), show a detached group of three, later five, closes to the south of the main estate in what was formerly North Moor. This block of fields may have been awarded in lieu of grazing rights when the moor was enclosed, probably around 1649. The 1572 description of the farmland again suggests a farm primarily oriented towards stock rearing, with only 20 acres of arable land, which could be worked economically by paid farm labourers. This agricultural pattern may have prevailed up to the mid 18th century. The 1746 map shows just a single farm complex, located beside of the main house at Low Pallion, near the river bank, plus a possible field barn and attached enclosure roughly in the middle of the estate. Tenant farms only appear later, on the 1793 map, for example.

Housefield (Bainbridge Holme)
Housefield and Ellescope, as it was labelled in conveyances (Surtees 1816, 234), later known as Bainbridge Holme, was also described as a manor and may have been similar. The Lumleys, who held the estate, were members of the aristocracy. They were rentier landlords (Brown 2015, 147), like the Bowes, and would not have resided at Housefield, having many other much larger estates and properties, most notably their principal seat at Lumley Castle. The manor would normally have been leased out, but was sometimes granted to Lumley retainers for the term of their lives, and such men may have resided in the manor house. Thus, it was granted to William Mahew, servant of Sir John Lumley, in 1405, and to Nicholas Bainbridge, in 1539, whose tenure seems to have resulted in the property acquiring a new name, Bainbridge Holme. The toponym 'holme' signifies 'water meadow' so perhaps Nicholas Bainbridge was responsible for laying out the water meadows there. The old name continued to be used in documents, however, and does not appear to have been definitively

9.18: *Bainbridge Holme Demesne Farm estate plan, c.1835. (Ref: TWA 1209)*
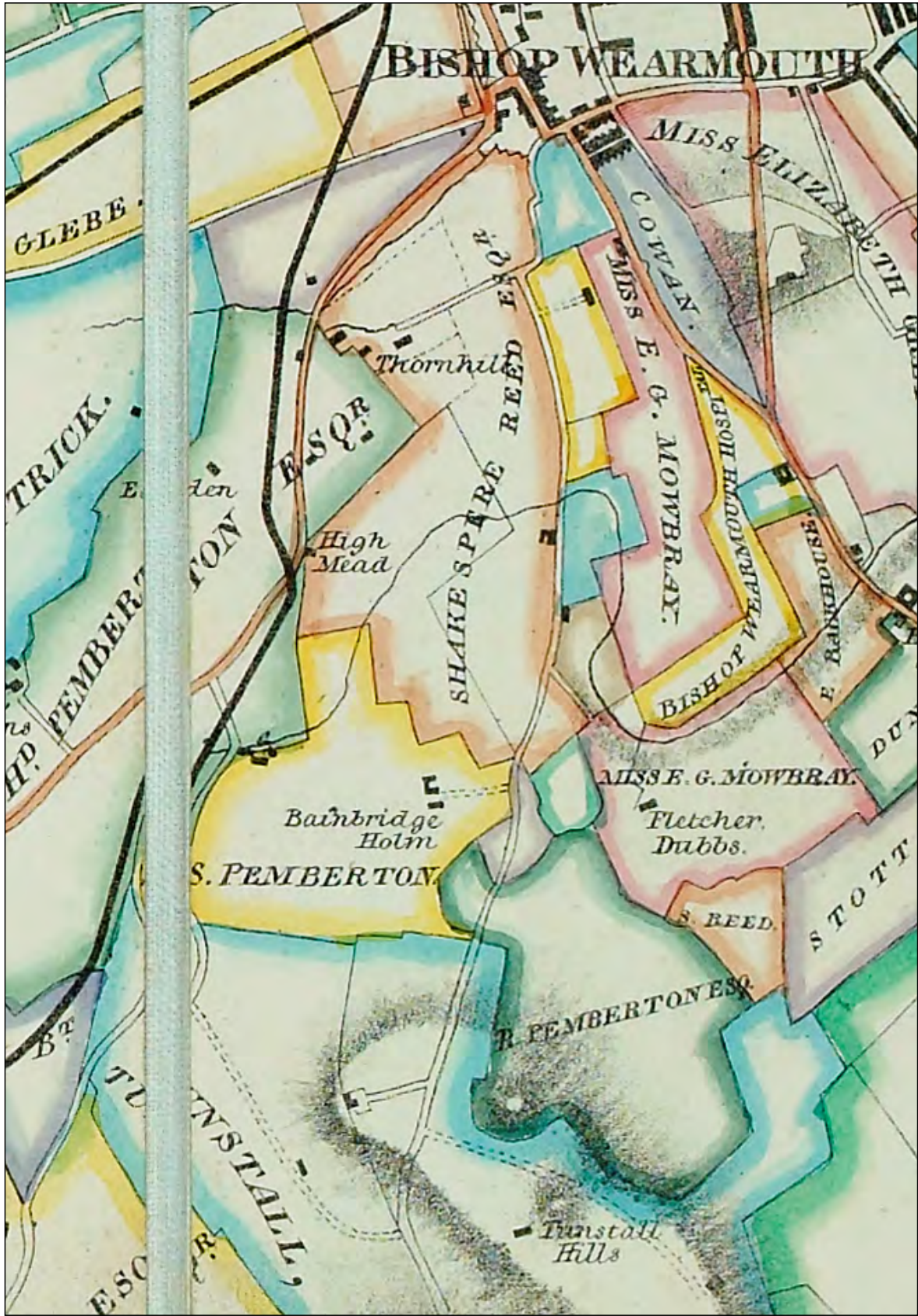
9.19: Extract from J T W Bell's Map of the Great Northern Coalfield Tyne & Wear District, 1843, showing the area of the medieval Hameldon estate centred on Housefield/Bainbridge Holme.

9.20: *Extract from Robson's Parish Map of Bishopwearmouth, c.1830, showing the separate parts of the Bainbridge Holme Hameldon estate following its repeated division amongst multiple heirs.*

superceded by the new until the time of the Civil War (Surtees 1816, 234; Cookson 2015, 29), by which stage it was in the possession of the Shipperdsons.

The extent of the manor of Housefield

The boundaries of this estate are more difficult to determine as they were not preserved by the tithe map or marked on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey as a discreet territory, in a manner equivalent to township boundaries, as Barnes and Pallion were. Nevertheless its approximate boundaries can be reconstructed using historic map evidence and the summary of the estate's complex, 18th-century tenurial history documented by Surtees (1816, 234; cf. Shipperdson and Pemberton pedigrees: ibid., 114 & 237), which resulted in its fragmentation into three or four separate properties.

By the early 17th century Housefield had passed to the Shipperdson family. On the death of Robert Shipperdson of Bainbridge Holme, in 1704, the estate passed to his nephew Micheal Pemberton, his niece, Barbara Wilson, and sister, Margaret Sparke, as tenants in common. In 1713, the Bainbridge Holme was divided into discreet portions or moieties, with the East moiety being allotted to Michael Pemberton and the West moiety to Barbara, wife of Ralph Robinson, who sold it to John Pemberton of Monkwearmouth in 1715. It is not clear from Surtees' summary, however, what happened to Margaret Sparke's share of the estate, which should have formed a third moiety. Following the death of Michael Pemberton, the East Moiety was subject to further sub-division between his four daughters and co-heirs, Mary, Anne, Bridget and Elizabeth. Most of these portions were acquired by John Pemberton II, son of John, the 1715 purchaser of the West moiety, in 1758 and 1778, thus reuniting the a large part of the original estate. However the portion of Mary Wilkinson was not acquired at this stage. On the death of John Pemberton in 1783, the recombined estate was again divided, this time between John's two surviving sons, Stephen, the elder, who took up residence at Bainbridge Holme, and his younger brother, Richard Pemberton of Barnes.

It is the post-1783 state of affairs which is depicted by the earliest detailed maps of this part of Bishopwearmouth township, which date to the 1830s and 1840s. A plan of 1835 (TWA 1209) shows the extent of Bainbridge Holme Demesne farm, centred on Bainbridge Holme itself, but this represents only the estate core, a small fraction of the whole. The two Pemberton estates are shown in full on Robson's 1830 map of Bishopwearmouth Parish and on Bell's 1843 map of the Great Northern Coalfield, whilst Mary Wilkinson's portion is probably represented by the relatively small landholding shown in the ownership of T. Wilkinson on Robson's parish map, sandwiched between the two Pemberton estates.[54]

These three properties mark the minimum extent of the Housefield manor, but there is a distinct possibility that the estate was once larger still. In particular the fate of the 1713 moiety held by George and Margaret Sparke of Hutton Henry is unknown. As tenants in common their portion should have passed to their heirs rather than their fellow co-tenants.Surtees account was based on the deeds held by the Pemberton estates. Since these make no mention of purchasing the moiety held by the Sparkes it seems most likely that the fate of this third share of the original estate was disregarded because it never came into the hands of the Pembertons. This part of the original estate probably lay to the north of the Pemberton/Wilkinson lands, since Tunstall lay immediately to the south, Barnes to the west and South Moor extended over most of the area to the east. In effect it may have formed a North moiety in 1713. The maps of the 1830s and '40s show a block of land in the hands of Shakespeare Reed, bounded by the Low Barnes estate to the west and Tunstall Lane to the

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[54] The Wilkinson landholding is also shown, rather inaccurately, on Bell's 1843 Coalfield map, but not labelled with Wilkinson's name.
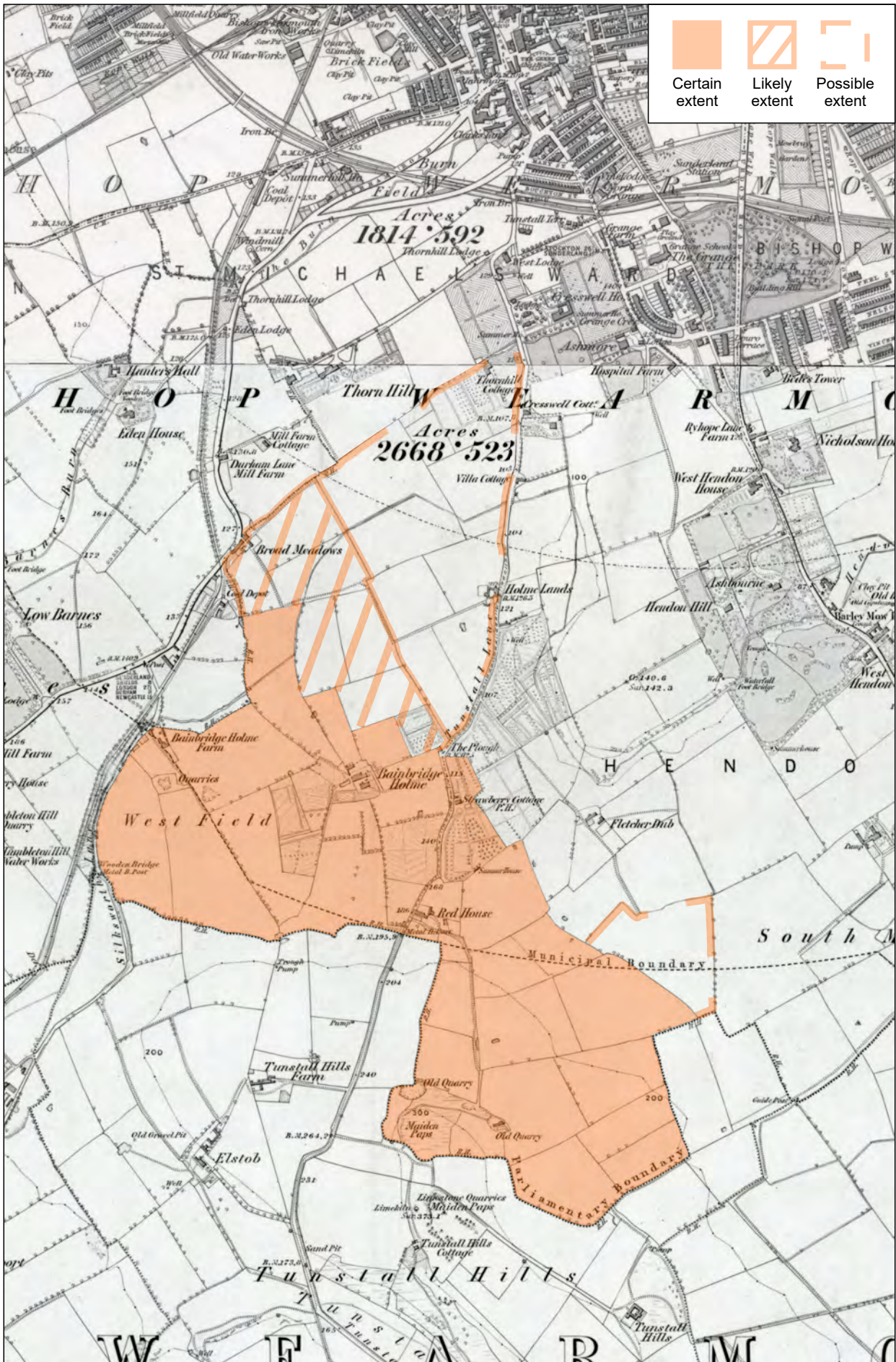
9.21: *Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey, 6 inch series c.1862, showing the suggested extent of the Housefield/Bainbridge Holme - Hameldon estate.*

east, and extending northward from Stephen Pemberton's property right up to the south-western approaches to Bishopwearmouth village. This estate was centred on the mansion known as Thornhill, built by John Thornhill in the later 18th century. Not all of these fields necessarily formed part of the Housefield manor. The northern part was probably occupied by Bishopwearmouth's Prest Moor, prior to enclosure around the mid-17th century, and the boundary between that moor and the manor is uncertain. It is unclear, for example, whether the estate extended far enough north to include the farm called Holme Lands, marked on the 1846 Tithe plan and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey beside Tunstall Lane. In addition, a second smaller piece of land, also in the hands of Shakespeare Reed, lay just to the east of Richard Pemberton's estate and might also have formed part of the original Housefield manorial estate. By what means these lands passed from the hands of George and Margaret Sparke in the early 18th century to Shakespeare Reed by *c*.1830 is uncertain, but it is plausible that they were acquired by the wealthy Sunderland coal-fitter, timber importer and quay owner, John Thornhill (*c*.1720-1802), when he was building up his Thornhill estate.

The southern limit of the manor was marked by the boundary with the township of Tunstall, of course. However this may not have been so well-defined during the Middle Ages. Surtees (1816, 250) reproduces the text of a document dating to 1528 recording an attempt to resolve a boundary dispute between Lord Lumley (lord of Housefield/Bainbridge Holme) and Cardinal Wolsley, bishop of Durham (and hence lord of Tunstall), over the ownership of 'certain grounds within the town and fields of Tunstall', whereby 'the said Lord Lumley shall have and occupy as (his) such grounds as the tenants of my Lord Legate Grace (Wolsley) of Tunstall aforesaid shall affirm and appoint to be the very proper grounds of the said Lord Lumley'. All the other lands were to be occupied by the bishop's tenants of Tunstall, unless Lumley could produce sufficient evidence to the contrary.

The estate was thus 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. It may originally have been subdivided into a number of large fields. The field enclosures to the west of Bainbridge Holme are collectively labelled West Field on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey plan, and may represent one such field. Perhaps there was once also a South Field and even a North Field. Finally, this manor, too, was associated with a fishery or yare in the Wear, bounded by Pallyon Yare West and Lady Yare East, and attached to the sale of the manor in 1560 (Surtees 1816, 234).

The Hameldon estates in the late 16th-17th century
With the exception of Pallion, during the 13th and early 14th centuries, when the de la Leys were at least intermittently resident, these three compact manors were held by absentee landlords, the Daldens, Bowes and Lumleys, during the later Middle Ages. From the mid-16th century onwards this changed. John Lord Lumley sold his Housefield manor of Hameldon to a local gentleman, Thomas Whitehead, in 1560, whereupon it passed through a succession of gentry hands before coming into the possession of the Shippardsons in the early 17th century. The Barnes manor of Hameldon passed to a cadet line of the Bowes family, in the person of Sir Robert Bowes, who made it his principal residence, while selling Pallion to John Goodchild of Ryhope. Thus all three estates came into the possession of local, resident gentry families during the mid to late 16th century and this remained the pattern going forward, despite changing hands on a number of occasions and undergoing some sub-division.

9.7 The Medieval Parish Church, Chapels and Religious Worship

9.7.1 The parish church
At the heart of religious life in medieval Bishopwearmouth was the venerable parish church, St Michael and All Angels. Repeated rebuilding of the parish church has removed all but a few traces of the medieval structure. Parts of the chancel at the east end and perhaps some of the masonry of the tower are all that remain of the ancient church depicted by Grimm in 1778. The final great remodelling by W.D. Caroe in 1932-35 has produced a worthy replacement, however.

9.7.2 The parish and its rector
The parish and its rector are first mentioned in 1214 (see below), though there is reason to believe it may have been in existence long before that, with probable 11th-century sculpture found in the church, and the evidence of the *Historia de Sancto Cuthberto* that Bishopwearmouth was the centre of a large ecclesiastical estate from the early 10th century. Located at the heart of an extensive parish, much of which formed part of the episcopal estate, the Bishopwearmouth rectory was a very rich living, with a large income deriving from sources such as tithe payments and glebeland. These might be supplemented by further one-off grants, like that to master William of Durham in 1235, who received the manors of (Bishop)Wearmouth and Ryhope (which also encompassed Tunstall and Burdon respecitively), plus the vill of Sunderland (i.e. the borough), for life (*Episcopal Acta 25*, 289, no. 315; cf. Cookson 2015, 51). As a consequence, the rectors of the parish were wealthy men, effectively ecclesiastical lords in their own right. In 1292, when ecclesiastical livings were assessed for papal taxation, Bishopwearmouth was valued at £100 per annum, a very large sum. However, only 26 years later, in 1318, this had declined by almost half, due to economic recession brought on by several years of terrible weather resulting in bad harvests, disease affecting cattle livestock (murrain) and war with the Scots (Cookson 2015, 47). However it was to recover much of that lost ground over the course of the later Middle Ages. In 1535, Henry VIII's inspectors valued the church and rectory building at £89 18s per annum (*Valor Ecclesiasticus* V, 313), whilst the chantry chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the parish church was valued at a further £3 15s 4d in 1548 (Cookson 2015, 47).

The first rector or parson known to us by name was Arnald de Auckland, who was also proctor of Sherburn hospital, and was presented to the parish as rector by the crown in 1214, only to be superseded almost immediately Philip Balliol, dean of Poitiers in Aquitaine, presumably as a result of Arnald's death (*Episcopal Acta 24*, xlvii nn63 & 67, citing *Rot. Chart*. 196b and *Rot. Litt. Pat*. 112, 120, 130b). Philip, in turn, was followed by master Adam Marsh (*de Marisco*), rector from c.1217 to 1232. Significantly, Adam was a nephew of the incumbent bishop, Richard Marsh, which suggests that, despite the imposition of clerical celibacy, attempts to stamp out nepotism in the church had limited success. Nevertheless, Adam's religious devotion appears to have been sincere. An Oxford-educated biblical scholar and teacher, he eventually resigned his living to join the Franciscan Friars Minor, a vocation which involved a genuine embrace of poverty and renunciation of worldly wealth. His successor, William of Durham (rector 1232-50 – also called William of Sedgefield), was also a scholar, being a prominent theologian and, later, founder of University College, Oxford[55] (Cookson 2015, 47; cf. Surtees 1816, 231). Both were clearly men of genuine religious vocation who may well have taken up residence in their parish, at least for part of the time. The same cannot be said of many of their successors. In many cases such men were absentees, often holding multiple benefices (church livings) and performing other clerical or administrative roles whilst taking the income from the rectory, but not actually residing in

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[55] William of Durham also held the position of Archdeacon of Durham (Surtees 1816, 231n).

the parish. Although, technically, the practice of holding multiple benefices simultaneously, known as *pluralism*, was frowned upon by the Church, this does not actually seem to have made it any less prevalent. Two prominent incumbents, in particular, exemplify this.

Perhaps most striking was Robert of Geneva, who was made rector in 1375 (Surtees 1816, 231; www.sunderlandminster.com/contact-us/guide-to-the-minster-and-its-history/rectors-of-sunderland-minster/). The youngest son of the Count of Geneva, Robert was an archetypal prince-cardinal of the church, haughty and supremely arrogant, a man 'related to half the sovereign houses of Europe' (Stonor Saunders 2004, 209-10). Not only was he also rector of nearby Easington parish, as well as Bishopwearmouth, but he was already a cardinal from 1371 onwards, having previously been ordained Bishop of Therouanne (in 1361 when aged only 19) and Archbishop of Cambrai (1368) in northern France. In 1378, supported by the other French cardinals, Robert contested the election of Pope Urban VI and was elected Pope Clement VII by the breakaway faction (allegedly using the revenues from his Bishopwearmouth living to fund his campaign). Thus began the Western Schism, the period, lasting up until 1417, when there were two competing popes, one in Rome and one in Avignon. A highly controversial figure in his own time, Robert was held responsible for the massacre of the townspeople of Cesena, while leading a Papal army in northern Italy in 1377, which earned him the label 'butcher of Cesena'. It is extremely unlikely that Robert ever set foot in his Wearside parish.

Robert's successor, in 1381, was William de Packington, a Warwickshire man. Though not of such elevated origins as Robert of Geneva, William, too, was very well-connected, having served as clerk and treasurer in the household of the Black Prince. Consequently he was able to amass a whole series of ecclesiastical benefices, including rectorships, prebendial stalls and deaneries. In 1379 he held the post of Keeper of the King's Wardrobe and by 1381 he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Again, as a high-ranking royal official, William most likely never visited the parish he was nominally responsible for and if he did it was probably only to take receipt of the tithes and other revenues.

In the absence of such rectors, the actual day to day parochial work, holding services and curing of the parishioners' souls, was performed by stipendiary curates, paid a salary out of the revenues of the parish. These men were of much lower social standing than the rectors.

9.7.3 The Reformation

The medieval church, embodying the international unity of Western Christendom with its allegiance to the pope in Rome, was brought to an end by the process known as the Reformation, initiated by Martin Luther in Germany and unleashed in England by the reigns of Henry VIII and his son, Edward VI. A brief revival of Catholicism under Mary was reversed by her younger half-sister, Elizabeth. The practical consequences had widely differing impacts in the two Sunderland parishes, however. Although the Benedictine cathedral priory of Durham effectively survived the Dissolution of the monasteries, by dint of the overnight transformation of its Prior and Convent into the Dean and Chapter, the monastery's daughter cells were abolished, including Monkwearmouth, as well as Jarrow, Finchale, Holy Island and other even smaller establishments. As a result, the extensive monastic landholdings, encompassing Fulwell, Southwick and Monkwearmouth itself, passed into lay hands,the parish thereby losing its landed endowment rendering it unable to afford to pay a priest. In 1548 the only priest in the parish was the one serving the chantry in Hylton chapel. Subsequently, in the mid- and later 16th century, it was served by stipendiary priests, with a succession of curates being named, but their status was far lower than the rector of Bishopwearmouth (Cookson 2015, 49, 180).

The latter parish was far less affected. Its rectory remained a grand, rich living and continued to attract powerful and well-connected incumbents. The most drastic institutional change was the abolition of the chantry of the Blessed Virgin Mary in parish church in 1548. Nevertheless we should not underestimate how profound and unsettling the changes may have been for the parishioners of Bishopwearmouth. In the interior of the church, wall paintings which would have helped to inform and guild the illiterate majority would have been white-washed over and stained glass windows perhaps replaced, if not immediately at some stage in the 16th or 17th century as waves of Protestant zeal washed over the area. The pattern of services changed, with the words of the bible proclaimed in the spoken sermons becoming more important than liturgical ceremony or image. Moreover the frequent shifts in the government policy towards religion during the 16th century must have created traps for the unwary or outspoken parishioner and the threat of jeopardy for the most devout, unwilling to risk the safety of their soul for that of their body. The majority doubtless learnt to keep their heads down and adapt to the frequent gyrations in the approved form of faith and worship as one monarch succeeded another.

9.8 Settlement and Agricultural Development 1500-1700

Changes to farming and landuse which had been underway since the late Middle Ages gathered pace and intensified over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries. The open arable fields and eventually even the common moor belonging to the communities of East Durham were divided up and enclosed.Greater landlords like the Bishop of Durham had abandoned direct management of their farms and simply leased (or 'farmed') their land out to enterprising local farmers. An increasing emphasis on livestock farming – particularly sheep rearing – which required less labour than arable cultivation, may have reduced the proportion of the local population engaged in agriculture. As a result of all these factors the size of many village communities dwindled over time. However villages like Bishopwearmouth, which formed the centres of large parishes, remained important. Moreover Bishopwearmouth benefited from its proximity to the increasingly prosperous coal port of Sunderland as the 17th century progressed.

9.8.1   Bishopwearmouth in the 16th-early 17th centuries: the Elizabethan Survey 1588
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. This shows how how these communities changed in the period immediately following on from the Middle Ages, and coincidentally it maintains the pattern of one survey every two years or so. Unfortunately this survey has not been published by the Surtees Society or an equivalent body, unlike its counterparts, the Boldon Book and the Hatfield Survey.

By this stage all the holdings had been converted to copyhold tenure, with the exception of a couple of leaseholds, one of which was the mill. 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 was worth in terms of the value of the crops and stock it could produce. The entry fines levied when a new tenant inherited the tenement were also low, typically not exceeding a single year's

rent on the Bishop of Durham's estates in 1647 (Brown 2015, 95). The overall effect of these features of copyhold tenure as it had evolved since the late Middle Ages was to put increasing pressure on the bishop's income from his estates, which fell ever further behind the rising cost of living..

Table: Bishopwearmouth Tenants in the Elizabethan Survey of 1588

Tenants	Holdings	Rent/annum
Copyholders		
Robert Patteson	1 messuage	£1 19s 8d
Thomas Hilton	1 messuage	£4 1s 8d
Christopher Whorton & William Patteson	1 messuage	£4 6s 8d
George Gervis	1 messuage	£1 1s
William Sheppson	1 messuage	£1 8s 8d
William Riddell	1 messuage	£1 6s 4d
The wife of William Sheppson	1 messuage	10s 6d
George Clarke	1 messuage	6s 8d
John Blenkinsoppe	1 messuage	£1 1s
Adam Holme	1 messuage	£2 2s 8d
John Sheppson	1 messuage	£3 4s 8d
John Thompson	1 messuage	£6 17s 4d
Widow Watson	1 messuage	£3 8s 2d
Margaret Persons	1 messuage	£2 2s 6d
Richard Sheppson	1 messuage	£3 3s 4d
Widow Wilkinson	1 messuage	£2 1s 8d
Ralph Bowes, gent.	Parcel of ground (the *Pannehole**)	3s
John Hoote	Parcel of waste ground	1s
Christopher Whorton	Cottage	6d
Widow Chamber	Cottage	1s
Widow Colier	Cottage	1s
Phillipe Hall	Waste plot	4d
Total		**£39 9s 2d**
Leaseholders		
Thomas Sparrow	Windmill (21 year lease)	£2
Robert Patteson	Cottage with 15 acres	15s 4d
Total		**£2 15s 4d**
Perquisites of the Court		12s
Grand Total		**£42 16s 6d**

See Brown 2015, 238, Table 30 and Surtees 1816, 225.
Original document DUL-ASC CCB/D/1981/185000B, ff. 13r-v.
* containing 10 salt-pans (Surtees 2016, 225)

There is no mention of bondage tenure in the 1588 survey, and it is clear that serfdom, whereby tenant farmers were tied to the manor and obliged to provide labour on the lord's farm, had ceased to exist. However, the later Parliamentary Survey shows that some of the land held in Bishopwearmouth in 1647 was still distinguished as 'bond land', 'demeasne land' – the latter more commonly referred to as 'Lord's land' – or Exchequer land, all categories contained in the Hatfield Survey. In addition, a further type of land, not found in the 1381 document, is mentioned in the Parliamentary Survey – 'husband land' or 'husbandry land'. By 1647 such distinctions no longer retained any significance, but the appearance of husband land does hint at a change which may have occurred after 1381, but had already ceased to be meaningful by the late 16th and early 17th century. Husbandmen were customary tenants of a manor, like bondmen, but paid rent in cash, rather than by performing compulsory labour services, and were not bound to the manor like bondmen, though effectively they appear to have had security of tenure. Many manors in North-East

England, notably ones held by the Durham Priory, had both bondage and husbandry tenants from an early stage, but husbandmen are not recorded at Bishopwearmouth or any of the Bishop's neighbouring vills in the two medieval surveys. It seems likely, therefore, that, at some stage after 1381, some of the customary bondage tenements in Bishopwearmouth, were reclassified as husbandland tenancies, formalising the shift payment of cash rents rather than compulsory labour. By 1381, the labour owed, plus the various ancient renders, had all been commuted to money rents so the shift was somewhat academic. Moreover, the continued survival of some titular bondlands in 1647 implies the changeover was never fully completed. Nevertheless, the creation of the husbandlands, presumably during the 15th century or perhaps the very late 14th century, may have responded to tenant pressure to ensure labour services and bondage were never revived.

The 1588 survey does not include exact details of the individual holdings, but the rents paid are at least indicative of the general amount of land held in each case, as Brown notes (2015, 237). The disparity in the size of the holdings is clear, with John Thompson paying £6 17s 4d for his messuage, the highest rent in the township, whereas George Clarke paid a mere 6s 8d for his. Two other tenements were valued at more than £4, one held jointly by Christopher Whorton and William Patteson and another in the possession of Thomas Hilton. Indeed, the lack of any uniformity in the size of the rents is striking, with three copyholders paying just over £3, another three paying just over £2 and four between £1 and £1½. Only two holders of messuages paid exactly the same rent, £1 1s (or 21s as it was set out in the document). This would imply that the holdings were probably mostly amalgamations – 'engrossment' – of multiple holdings of different types, such as parcels of former demesne land and bondland tenements. This varied composition can be seen much more clearly in the Parliamentary Survey some 60 years later. However, like the disparity in the size of holdings, it was already a pronounced feature of Bishopwearmouth tenantry by the time of the Hatfield Survey, in marked contrast to the neighbouring communities of Tunstall and Ryhope which displayed much greater uniformity.

In some cases the tenants and their farmholdings can be fleshed out with details from the probate inventories. Those relating four Bishopwearmouth yeoman farmers have been analysed by Brown (2015, 237-240), namely William Pattinson (d. 1615), John Thompson (d. 1616), Adam Holmes (d. 1619) and George Shepherdson (d. 1635).[56] The first three all figure in the 1588 survey, whilst George Shepherdson belonged to a slightly later generation. He features frequently amongst the previous copyhold surrenders noted by the 1647 Parliamentary Survey. Pattinson, Thompson and Holmes all had goods worth significantly in excess of £200. Shepherdson's goods were valued at more than £317. They were all pursuing a mixed farming regime of arable cultivation and livestock rearing. In most cases the value of their stock exceeded that of the crops, whether standing in the fields or stored in house or stackgarth, but the most valuable stock were actually the oxen and horses used for ploughing and harrowing, so the balance was still weighted towards arable farming. A number of tenants, like Adam Holmes, also leased land in Ryhope. The probate inventories of the wealthier tenants of the bishop's lands also show a diversification away from purely agricultural interests towards more commercial or mercantile investments. George Sheperdson had an eighth share of a ship worth £20, as well as numerous debts owing to him, some of which were from his neighbours.

One thing which had changed considerably since the late Middle Ages was the names of the families making up the tenant community at Bishopwearmouth. There is no obvious trace in the Elizabethan Survey of the descendants of John Hobson or Cecilia Nowell, the wealthiest

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[56] *Sunderland Wills & Inventories*, 45-49, 60-63, 70-72, 153-58, nos 20, 26, 30, 60; cf. Brown 2015, 239, Table 31.

tenants in 1381. Instead, the 1588 document shows that other families had risen to prominence, in particular the Pattesons, represented by Robert and William Patteson, and, most notably of all, the Sheppsons, or Shippedsons/Shippardsons as their name was more commonly written. The latter may have been descended from Thomas Sheperdson, a middling tenant listed in the Hatfield Survey, with a total of 42 acres, a messuage, cottage and garden, and William Schipherdson, a tenant is mentioned in the bishop's halmote court records for Bishopwearmouth in 1368 (cf. Surtees 1816, 114). In 1588, William Sheppson, his wife, John Sheppson and Richard Sheppson each held a messuage, with values ranging from 10s 6d to £3 4s 8d. George Shepherdson, whose probate inventory of 1635 was noted above, was presumably the son of one of these. By 1647, further new tenant lineages had appeared, in some cases having apparently taken over copyhold tenancies surrendered by descendents of individuals mentioned in the Elizabethan Survey. The Shippardsons remained prominent, however, with John Shippardson the younger holding at least three copyholds (the subsequent page is missing from the document), whilst his father, John Senior, held the lease of theWear fisheries and all the quarries within the township, notably Bildon Hill. The elder John was also one of the partners in the colliery at Harraton on the Wear, which by 1630 was contributing 6000-10,000 tons annually to the coal shipments from the river. Indeed the family were probably the driving force behind its development in the early 17th century (Hatcher 1993, 255; Brown 2015, 240). In turn the profits from these commercial interests were recycled back into the kind of investments in land which could secure higher status. Thus, in 1624, William and John Shepherdson purchased the portion of Murton manor held by John Shaklock, who had acquired it when John, Lord Lumley was forced to sell this and several other manors to pay off his substantial debts. In doing so, the Shepherdsons were taking a critical step on the path from yeoman farmers to local gentry.

9.8.2 Bishopwearmouth Panns

One important development of the late 16th and early 17th centuries was the spread of settlement westward, along the river foreshore, from the western edge of Sunderland quayside. This settlement encompassed 6 acres of Bishopwearmouth built on waste land between the high and low water marks, reclaimed from the river by embankment. It was separated from the rest of Bishopwearmouth township by the steeply rising bluffs above the river bank, as can be seen on Buck's Prospect of 1720. Settlement here was initially sparked by the development of salt-panning in the 1580s, driven by Robert Bowes of Barnes, who had acquired the lease of a piece of ground on the foreshore known as the 'panne hole' for a yearly rent of 3s by 1588 (see *Elizabethan Survey* above; Surtees 1816, 225-6n), using coal from his pit in Offerton to fuel the panning. Despite financial difficulties these operations were later recovered and continued by Robert's son Ralph Bowes (Meikle & Newman 2007, 98; Cookson 2015, 58-9).

By the early 17th century, this settlement, called Bishopwearmouth Panns, had acquired the status of a township or constabulary in its own right, separate from the main village township (Meikle & Newman 2007, 45, 70, 98, 108; Cookson 2010, 6, 12; 2015, 3, 29, 58-9; *township see above*: 7.3.3). It was effectively an economic extension of Sunderland and, like the latter, was densely occupied with as many as 85 households by the middle of the century, six of which were evidently substantial houses or mansions with between four and nine hearths, as demonstrated by the 1666 Lady Day hearth tax return (Meikle & Newman 2007, 177; Cookson 2015, 92; *see below*: 9.8.4; and Appendix 1: Source 6).

The Civil War

Sunderland played an especially prominent role in the Civil War, as it played out in the North-East. The town was a hotbed of puritanism and hence supported Parliament during the struggle, in contrast to Newcastle and the rest of the region which declared for the king. In particular, the town formed an alliance with the Scottish Covenanters who actively intervened and campaigned in the region from 1641 onwards. The alliance was probably first tentatively formed during the Bishops' Wars against the king which saw a Covenanter army invade the North-East in 1640, seize Newcastle and then, in September, launch a raid on Sunderland, seizing £840 from the customs house there, an operation conducted with such ease as to prompt suspicion of local collusion.A second Scottish invasion, in 1644, made Sunderland its principal base, having failed to take Newcastle. There were repeated clashes in March, between the Scottish and Royalist forces to the west of Sunderland, both north and south of the river, around Hylton and the Herringtons respectively. However, atrocious weather with frequent snowstorms, plus the difficulty of advancing through the field heges of this part of County Durham, where much of the landscape was already enclosed, prevented the armies of General Leslie, Earl of Leven, and the Royalist Marquess of Newcastle from fully engaging one another. The main bodies of these two forces departed the region in April, heading south into Yorkshire where they would ultimately meet for a decisive encounter on Marston Moor in July as part of larger Parliamentary and Royalist armies. However Sunderland retained a Scottish garrison, remaining under occupation until February 1647.

Although, overall, the Wearside coal trade was to profit greatly from the support it gave to Parliament achieving increased prominence and political support, the impact on many individuals' lives must have been far less sanguine. Armies are never pleasant to have as neighbours, even if the Scottish Covenanters and the Sunderland townsfolk were allies, so Wearside is likely to have suffered considerable upheaval and disruption, not only from the actual fighting, but also from the demands of accommodating and provisioning the troops.

The camp

The most obvious physical testament to these turbulent times was camp which the Scottish army established on the open ground between Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland in March 1644 (TWHER 24). This took the form of a rectangular fort with trenches and mounds on the three landward sides and the steep bank leading to the Panns sand schoal providing a natural riverside defence to the north (Meikle & Newman 2007, 125-26; Cookson 2015, 68). The opposite ground on the Monkwearmouth shore was low and flat, so the camp was secure from enemy artillery on that side. According to Summers the camp had originally straddled High Street, but by 1795, when the ground was levelled for building, was visible largely only in West Pann Field, between Pann Lane (NZ 396 573) and the Rectory Park (NZ 392 570). "Two trenches and mounds of earth called the 'big dyke' and 'little dyke', then partially existed", running between 235 High Street and the north end of Lambton Street, and then to 125 High Street (Summers 1858, 412-14n). There is reference in 1675 to "the Forts", and a cannon ball was found in 1815 on the site of 223 High Street (TWHER 1990). There are some inconsistencies in these accounts. The descriptions preserved by Summers suggest that, in 1795, the visible remains of the camp lay to the west of Pann Lane, between there and Rectory Park, but this area was already almost entirely built up by this stage, as indicated by Rain's Eye Plan of 1785-90 (Clay et al. 1984, 10-12, 26-8, 56-7). It seems more likely that the surviving earthworks lay to the east of Pann Lane, on General Lambton's

ground, which was still open at that stage, as the Eye Plan makes clear. This would tally with the reference to Lambton Street, but would place the observed remains in the area of East Pann Field rather than West Pann Field.

The rectory
The political conflict was matched and indeed fuelled by religious discord in this period. The Puritans were extremely hostile towards the Arminianist theology and high church practices of the Church of England, imposed Archbishop Laud during the reign of Charles I. The rector of Bishopwearmouth from 1633, John Johnson, was eventually obliged to quit the parish in 1642 due to the implacable opposition of Sunderland's puritan elite. After Johnson's death in 1643, his successor Christian Sherwood, continued to challenge the local puritans by reading the articles of the Church of England during services. In doing so he may have attracted the unwelcome attention of the Scottish covenanter troops, garrisoned in the fields immediately to the east from 1644 onwards, whose views were closer to those of the puritans. After Sherwood was ousted by an 'intruder' with Parliamentarian sympathies, William Johnson, in 1646, the new incumbent found the rectory was 'defaced and exceedingly ruined by armies' (the army in question can only have been the Scottish one, though the new rector was perhaps too politic to say so directly). Johnson set about repairing the building to make it habitable and had spent £41 8s on the works by 1650 (Meikle & Newman 2007, 136-37; Cookson 2015, 64-65). Indeed, the local jury impanelled to conduct the Parliamentary survey of Houghton Manor, in 1647, reported that the 'parsonage house' was in good repair 'for anything we know' (*Parliamentary Survey*, 147).

9.8.3   Enclosure

Table: List of recorded enclosures in Bishopwearmouth Parish (from Tate 1946)

Date	Description	Township	Area (acres)
c. 1591	*-*	*Moiety of Tunstall*	*380*
c. 1649	*Townfields (and moors)*	*Bishopwearmouth*	*c. 1350*
1658[57]	Townfields	Rivehope (Ryhope)	817
1670	-	Moiety of Tunstall	380
1680	Townfields	Rivehope (Ryhope)	733

(Entries shown in italics represent agreements not confirmed by Chancery Court Decree; those in roman were made or confirmed by Chancery Court Decree Award.)

One of the most fundamental changes ever to affect the landscape of Bishopwearmouth township was carried out during this period, with the enclosure of the 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. The Bishopwearmouth inclosure is generally dated to 1649 or thereabouts, following the early 19th-century historian, George Garbutt (1819, 115-16), who cited a surviving document, the *Awarded Highways and Private Ways of Bishopwearmouth*, dated c.1649. This date was accepted by Tate in his general survey of enclosure in County Durham (1946, 137)[58]. However it was disputed by Walker (1983a, 27), who noted that there was very little evidence concerning the date of enclosures in Bishopwearmouth, but argued that it was probably accomplished in the 16th century. He pointed out that the 1649 Award of Highways did not define holdings but simply laid down

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[57] The agreement, encompassing the 1550 acres of Townfields in Ryhope township, is dated 1658 and 817 acres were enclosed at that date. The decree of 1680 confirmed the previous enclosure and divided and enclosed the remainder (see Tate 1946, 133 n. 29).

[58] Tate cited the 'Court Rolls of Manors of Houghton and Bishop Wearmouth Rectory', but omitted references to specific documents.

certain rights of access, through or around various landholdings, in order to resolve disputes. More recently Meikle and Newman (2007, 143, 146-7) and Cookson (2015, 28, 236) have broadly accepted the date of 1649, but Cookson also noted a later documentary reference to 'Parson Johnson' having 'allowed partition of an area between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth, which must have been within Bishopwearmouth township and occurred in the 1630s or 1640s (2015, 91, citing TNA, E134/7Anne/Mich3 (Durh.)).

This process had already begun in the wider parish towards the end of the 16th century, with the division and enclosure of a moiety (half share) of Tunstall (Tate 1946, 134, 136). This moiety comprised the three leaseholds held by Anthony Shadforth some 80 years later, in 1670/71, when the remaining moiety, consisting of three leaseholds held by four other tenants, was similarly divided up (Surtees 1816, 250; DULASC DHC6/IV/54, 9 January 1671). Ryhope followed later in the century, an initial division in 1658 being augmented and confirmed in 1680 (Surtees 1816, 252; DULASC DHC6/IV/35, 28 June 1680; cf. DHC11/V/65 – a later printed map with annotations showing the ancient enclosures and the 1680 enclosures). Later on, in the 18th and 19th centuries, land was increasingly enclosed by specific parliamentary acts, but this mostly affected the extensive tracts of upland common attached to townships in the west of the county, in the Pennine dales and moors. The enclosures carried out in east Durham in the 17th century or earlier were generally accomplished by private agreement on the part of the landowners and freeholders, and then in many cases confirmed by a Decree Award in the Durham Chancery Court (cf. Durham County Local History Society 1992, 36-7). The other townships of the parish – Ford, Silksworth and Burdon – were probably enclosed by private agreement amongst the landowners at some stage during the 16th or 17th centuries, but, as with Bishopwearmouth itself, the lack of any chancery court decrees recording the awards relating to these communities means exact date and form of the process there is uncertain.

In the absence of a surviving inclosure award by Chancery Court decree for Bishopwearmouth, it is worth reviewing the various pieces of evidence which do exist, before reaching any conclusion regarding the date and form of enclosure there.

Not mentioned hitherto, by those considering the inclosure process, is the 1647 Parliamentary Survey of the manors held by the bishop of Durham. The survey was conducted by collating and examining, with the aid of local juries, all the original freehold deeds, leases and court roll copyhold entries relating to each manor (cf. *Parliamentary Survey*, I, xii, xix-xx). A list of all the tenements in each manor's constituent townships was compiled, summarising the composition of each holding and the terms by which the named tenant held it, including the date of the original document and the identity of the previous tenant(s) who had surrendered it. The resultant compilation gives the overall impression that the landscape of Bishopwearmouth was highly parcellated, with many copyholds evidently having been subdivided into two, three or four separate parts at some point in the past, presumably due to division through shared inheritance. As noted above (see 9.6.2 – Arable lands), some of the copyhold entries record tenements comprising very small acreages of land – or even in one case just a few roods – which in turn were split into at least three separate parcels, one in each of the three main townfields. Moreover, some of these fragmented and scattered copyholds are dated as late as 1646 and 1647, which would imply that inclosure cannot have been completed before 1647.

The Award of Highways and Private Ways *c*.1649 (published in Bain 1910, 13-19) did not define holdings, as Walker observed, but simply laid down certain rights of access through or around various landholdings. Nevertheless it gives an impression of a more coherent

distribution of the tenant farmers' 'grounds' than is the case with some of the holdings listed in the Parliamentary Survey. On close analysis the published highways award appears to consist of two separate documents with different dates. The first part (Bain 1910, 13-15) is a list of highways, common ways, wainways and footways, some defined as private ways, which appears to date to the beginning of 1649 or perhaps a little earlier, since it mentions that the inhabitants ('neighbours') of Bishopwearmouth township were to pay Ralph Holmes the compensatory sum of '£12 18s 'before the 20th of Jan'ry 1649' (ibid., 13). The second part (ibid., 15-19) consists of a presentation, made in the Houghton Manor Court on 7 May 1675, by four jurors from Bishopwearmouth township – John Shepperdson Junior, Thomas Atkinson, John Atkinson and John Unthank. This comprised a detailed itemisation of all the township's routeways, grouped in order of significance, beginning with the King's Highways and then the King's Footways, the 'neighbours' common ways 'for cart and carriage', and finally the private ways and private footways 'appropriate to particular persons'. The date is corroborated by repeated reference to 'Dr Grey' amongst the named landholders in the 1675 list, that is to say Revd Robert Grey, who was Rector of Bishopwearmouth 1661-1704. In other words, the four jurors were not belatedly copying a much earlier document into the manor court rolls. Rather, it reflected the circumstances of the late 17th century.

The final piece of evidence is provided by a dispute over tithe payments in Bishopwearmouth, early in the following century, which came before the King's Remembrancer side of the Court of Exchequer between 1702 and 1712. Successive rectors of Bishopwearmouth, Robert Grey and then John Smith (1704-1715), complained that the income the rectory derived from corn tithes had been severely reduced, enclosure having fostered a switch from arable cultivation to livestock rearing, with much land being turned over to grazing pasture. In response, they sought to claim tithe dues on sheep and cattle in addition to the established tithes on hens, geese and hay. This, in turn, was resisted by the copyhold and leasehold tenants of the parish. The depositions or witness statements taken by the court's locally appointed commissioners shed considerable light of farming in Bishopwearmouth between the mid-17th and the early 18th centuries.[59] Thus, in 1708, William Craggs, the tenant of Bishopwearmouth cornmill attested that arable land in the parish 'is of late much lessened by being turned into pasture and grazing for the better accommodating of the townships of Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth' (cf. Meikle & Newman 2007, 147). It was further reported that 'Parson Johnson' had 'allowed partition of an area between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth (TNA, E134/7Anne/Mich3 (Durh.); cf. Cookson 2015, 91). This area must have lain within Bishopwearmouth township. Two rectors of Bishopwearmouth bore the surname Johnson during the 17th century, John Johnson, who was the incumbent from 1633 up to his death in 1643, though he actually quit the parish in early 1642, and William Johnson, a Commonwealth intruder and the incumbent in 1646-51. The inclosure referred to must therefore have occurred during 1633-42 or 1646-51, with the latter bracket, it may be noted, encompassing the traditional date of 1649.

Overall, the combined evidence suggests that the townfields and moors of Bishopwearmouth were not fully enclosed by 1647, but most likely was shortly afterwards in 1648/9. The abolition of the Durham bishopric by Parliament in 1646, which was maintained until the Restoration in 1660, would explain why the inclosure was not confirmed by Chancery Court decree. However, in the absence of such a Chancery Court decree setting out the terms of the award, it is not impossible that the whole process was rather more piecemeal, with some inclosures being undertaken by private agreement prior to 1648/9.

[59] The original documents are held in the National Archives in the Exchequer Records of the King's Remembrancer – Depositions taken by Commission: TNA E134/1Anne/East4, E134/1Anne/Mich15, E134/7Anne/East1, E134/7Anne/Mich3, E134/11Anne/Trin1.

With the available data it is not possible to map this process in detail, to show the distribution of tenant holdings before and after enclosure. The number of uncertainties presently seems too great, given the lack of contemporary detailed maps, but it is conceivable that further analysis might yield some results. What is clear is that enclosure lead to profound changes to the way in which the landscape of Bishopwearmouth was farmed and to the distribution of settlement within the township, as explored in more detail below (*see 9.9.1*).

9.8.4   Population
Some idea of the size of the township's population during the mid- to late 17th century can be gauged from the hearth tax records, albeit imperfectly. These records also provide an index of the relative wealth of separate households across the area (see Appendix 1: Source 6).

The 1666 hearth tax return
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 1666 Lady Day (25 March) return for the parish (excluding the largely urban township of Sunderland[60]), 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 Farringdon 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. Admittedly, the population of Bishopwearmouth township will also have included the inhabitants of outlying settlements, such as Barnes, Pallion and Bainbridge Holme, as well as the village itself. However, those settlements were probably no more than small hamlets or even just a single mansion house and attached farm, in some cases, and cannot account for the difference between Bishopwearmouth and the other village townships. Bishopwearmouth has almost six times as many households as Ryhope, the rural township with the next largest total.

These figures suggest that the village community of Bishopwearmouth may have shared some of Sunderland's characteristics in terms of the number and density of households, whilst tiny Bishopwearmouth Panns may be regarded as a contiguous extension of urbanised Sunderland. The contrast with the comparatively small number of copyholders and leaseholders listed in Bishopwearmouth in the 1588 and 1647 surveys is especially striking. Bishopwearmouth was clearly no longer simply an agricultural community and parish centre, with a population largely composed of farm tenants, agricultural labourers and a few craftsmen, plus the incumbants and servants associated with the church and rectory. 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.

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[60] 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.

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, in Bishopwearmouth parish as a whole 85% of the houses (excluding those of Sunderland township) had only one hearth, whilst in Bishopwearmouth township the figure was 202 houses out of 236 possessing only a single hearth (Meikle & Newman 2007, 176-7; Cookson 2015, 92). 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.

9.8.5   Changes to the village 1600-1750

The increased population must have resulted in changes to the character and layout of the village. The newly enclosed fields surrounding the village and extending up to the boundary of Sunderland town were 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 them 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 'Sunniside', 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. It is likely that neither of these two developments had occurred by the mid-17th century. Both, indeed, may quite conceivably belong to the 18th century[61].

Instead, the demand for more housing was evidently met by increasing the density of occupation in the three existing settlement areas, Sunderland town, Bishopwearmouth Panns and Bishopwearmouth village. In the 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.

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[61] The only point where the early 18th-century maps both show that the built area of Sunderland itself had begun to breach its original limits was at its north-west corner, on the north side of King's Road, where buildings were already encroaching upon the East Panfield, filling the angle between Sunderland and the Panns.

9.24: *Buck's Prospect of Sunderland c.1720. Note the appearance of the first building blocks between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth village.*
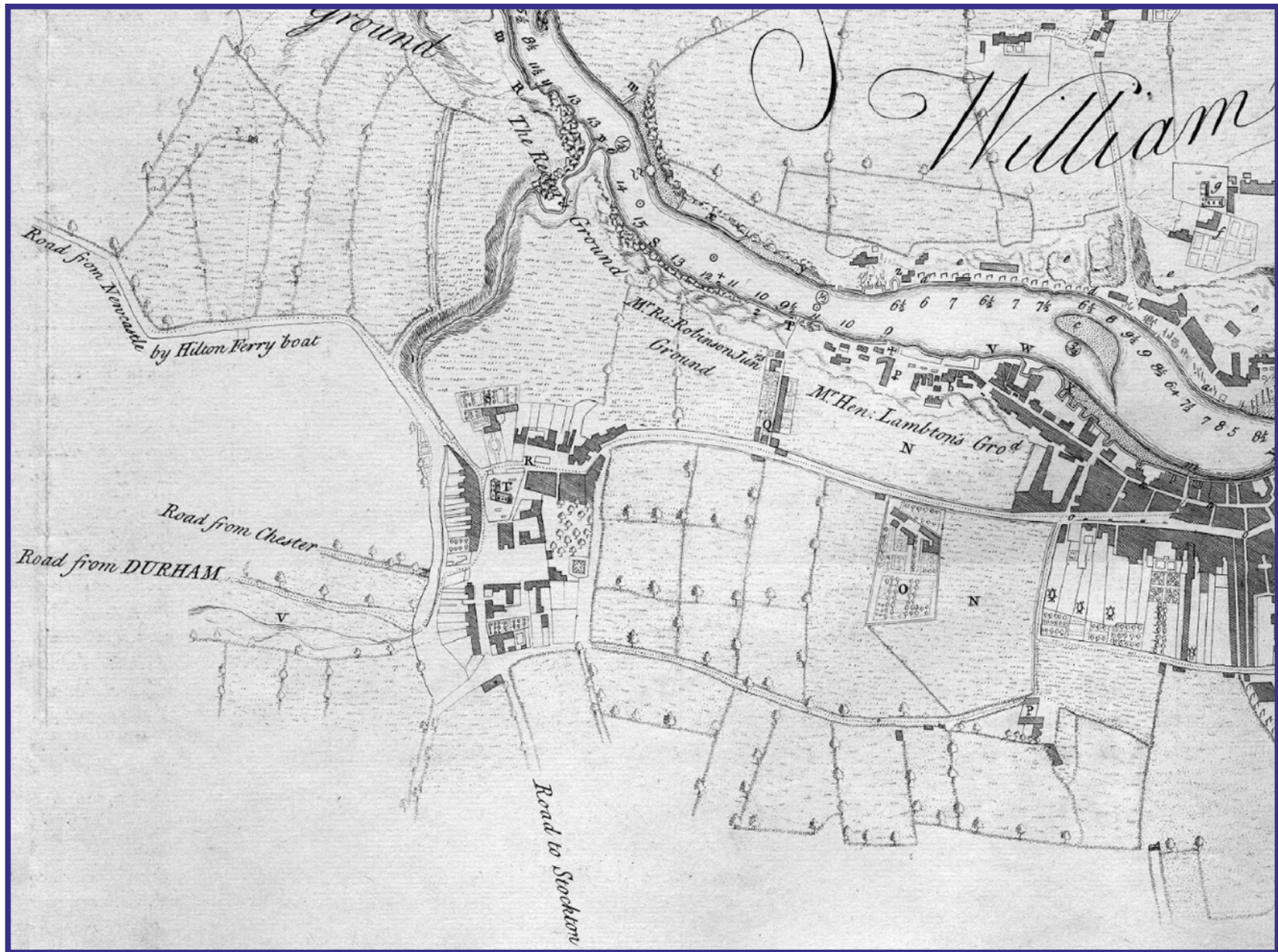
9.25: *Extract from Burleigh & Thompson's River Map of 1737 showing the first buildings to encroach on the area between Bishopwearmouth village and Sunderland town*

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)[62]. 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. In some cases these buildings may have been combined with land detailed in another lease to form a working farm, but most of these dwellings must surely have been sub-let to labourers or artisans.

Thus, by the mid-17th century it would seem that, despite its spatial detachment, Bishopwearmouth village was already functioning as an integrated element of Sunderland's commercial and industrial economy.

9.9   Settlement in the township 1650-1850: from nucleation to partial dispersal

When the hearth tax records were compiled in the mid-17th century, which allows us to estimate the number of households in Bishopwearmouth at that stage, it is likely that the settlement pattern 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.

Although the hearth tax records do not reveal where exactly the householders actually lived within the township, some of the prominent houses on the periphery of the township can be identified, as their owners are well-known. Thus the main house at Barnes (later Low Barnes) can be identified as the property with five hearths held by Mr Haddocke. Surtees relates that William Haddock sold 'the old seat-house', along with about one half of the Barnes estate, to John Jenkins of London in 1668 (1816, 235). Similarly, the house with two hearths in the possession of John Goodchild can be identified with the main house at Pallion. However, the owner of Bainbridge Holme at this stage, Adam Shepherdson, is not listed in the hearth tax schedule. John Shepherdson clearly had a substantial house, with four hearths, but this may have been situated beside the village green. The most substantial property of all, however, was Dr Gray's rectory, with nine hearths, located in the village itself (Meikle & Newman 2007, 177; see Appendix 1: Source 6).

Three processes were to begin to change this simple and long-established pattern.

[62] 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.

9.26: *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).*

9.27: *Extract from Armstrong's County Map of Durham c.1768, showing 'Bishop Wearmouth'.*

397

9.9.1   The new farms

The impact of enclosure

Enclosure, probably completed by *c*.1649, triggered a gradual process of change which transformed the landscape and settlement pattern in Bishopwearmouth just as is in other rural townships. 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. Each farm was self-contained 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 Bishopwearmouth's three townfields. Another case was Moor Farm, beside the borough's back lane, later Coronation Street (Cookson 2015, 28). Its fields encompassed land on what had formerly been Hall Moor.

The historic map evidence

Although enclosure gave rise to consolidated farmholds, the farm steadings probably remained clustered in the village, initially. However the logical next step 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 movement, 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 (which could represent shrunken former villages). However, these maps may not form entirely reliable guides, after the mid to late 17th century at any rate. Many of the county maps were published by Dutch cartographers such as Blaeu or Jansson and were not based on any systematic resurvey. Essentially the Dutch geographers were reusing Saxton's survey and recycling material with only occasional nuggets of new information being added, for example the roads surveyed by Ogilby and by Warburton. Maire (1711-20) does show the long-established estate centres of Pallion, Bainbridge Holme and 'Old Barns' (Low Barnes), plus New Barns (High Barnes), but it is not until the appearance of Andrew Armstrong's map of County Durham, in 1768, that any map of this type began 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 areas close to the river are covered by much more detailed maps from the early 18th century onwards, but it is not until the 1830s and '40s, with the appearance of Robert Robson's Plan of the Parishes of Bishop Wearmouth and Sunderland (1830), John Bell's Great Northern Coalfield map (1843) and the tithe map (1846), that equivalent maps

encompassing the entire Bishopwearmouth township, become available. By this stage, however, some farms closest to the original village had already been swallowed up by the expansion of the combined urban spread of Sunderland-Bishopwearmouth.

Farms near the village
The farms situated between Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth village are the best documented since they figure on the detailed 18th century maps showing the village and its immediate environs. Two unlabelled buildings are marked on Burleigh and Thompson's map (1737) at the site of Moor Farm, but nothing is shown on the slightly earlier map accompanying Buck's Prospect (1720). The farm complex is depicted in more detail on Rain's Eye Plan towards the end of the 18th century. Labelled 'Farm House', it comprises a farmhouse in the centre of the group, an adjoining single storey range to the west and another large building, perhaps a barn, to the east of the house, plus an enclosed stackyard to the south (Clay et al. 1984, 46-47). The dyehouse to the west was probably a separate enterprise. The Eye Plan also depicts a second farm called 'Field House' located at the eastern end of Back Lane (later Borough Road) leading from Bishopwearmouth village to Sunderland town. It comprised a large, south-facing house, plus three ranges of ancillary farm buildings arranged around an enclosed yard attached to north. A long dyehouse lay to the north of the farmyard, beside Back Lane. This complex is also shown and captioned 'the Field house' on Burleigh and Thompson's map some 50 years earlier.

By the time of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey no trace of Moor Farm is apparent. It had evidently been demolished to make way for the expansion of urban Sunderland. Field House still figures on the map, but it is shown surrounded by the terraced housing with only one small field remaining to the south of the house. The rest of its fields had been swallowed up by the town's suburbs and the complex clearly no longer functioned as a working farm by this stage.

Pallion
A further gauge of the rate at which dispersed farmsteads were established is provided by two 18th-century maps of the Pallion estate.[63] The first, dating to 1746, shows just one farm complex, grouped around three sides of a yard on the west side of the main house at Low Pallion, near the river bank. Another unidentified building and attached enclosure can be seen roughly in the middle of the estate, sandwiched between Barn Close and Calf Close. The latter two field names might imply that this building was just a combined field barn and byre for cattle at this stage rather than a small farm. On the second map, by Rain in 1793, three farmhouses are shown, all labelled as such. One represents the same site noted previously, located between Barn Close and Calf Close.An associated stackyard is shown on the east side and the buildings are depicted in a form which suggests there was a house plus an attached barn/byre, the latter not being as deep as the house. A second farmhouse is located towards the south-west corner of the estate. This too is depicted as two conjoined buildings with different depths from front to back, presumably a house and barn/byre, plus a stackyard to the rear (north). The third farmhouse is situated in a detached parcel of five fields, located to the south of the main estate, in what was formerly Bishopwearmouth township's North Moor. This comprised a farmhouse and garden located within House Field. A coal pit is also shown immediately to the north-west in Pit Field. It is conceivable that the tenant here worked both the pit and the land. On the 1st edition Ordnance Survey the farmhouse is labelled Todd's House, perhaps preserving the name of an erstwhile tenant. The coal pit was evidently abandoned by that stage, being labelled 'old coal pit'. The fields to

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[63] These survive as copies made in 1907 by Wilfrid Turpin and Victor Bain, held in the archives of Sunderland Antiquarian Society.

9.28: Extract of the Pallion Estate Map c.1793.

9.29: Details from the Pallion Estate Map c.1793, showing the mansion house (left) and industrial developments along the river bank (below).

the north, separating this detached portion from the main Pallion estate grounds, probably formed part of North Moor Farm, which is also shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey.

…and beyond
North Farm itself is shown on Armstrong's map of 1768, but Glebe Farm, further south, does not feature until Robson's 1830 parish plan and subsequently on the tithe plan of the township. Although a great many isolated buildings are shown on Greenwood's county map of 1820, most of which were probably farms, these are for the most part unnamed and therefore quite difficult to identify. This pattern is typical of farms in the more central and southerly parts of the township. It doesn't mean that such farms weren't in existence at a much earlier date, in the 18th century for instance, but they lay outside the urban and riverine zones covered by the more detailed of the earlier maps. Indeed, it is not until the 1st edition Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1855) that the buildings of many farms like Glebe Farm and North Farm are shown in detail.

9.9.2   Gentry houses in the countryside
Writing early in the 19th century, Surtees related how the preceding century had witnessed the creation of 'several handsome seat-houses' by members of the local merchant and gentry class in countryside of the rural township surrounding urban Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth (1816, 225; cf. Cookson 2010, 150-51: Panel 8; 2015, 106-107, 118-19). The examples he cited included the Grange, beside Stockton Road, built by John Maling in or before 1784, Thornhill, to the south-west of Bishopwearmouth village, built by John Thornhill, and several houses erected near the coast in Hendon, namely Hendon House, Middle Hendon and Hendon Lodge, built by Hendry and Thomas Hopper, Ralph Robinson and Christopher Maling, respectively. Hendon House was built on the site of Old Hendon Farm, 'a complete grass farm … with a new residence', sold in 1770 along with the adjacent stob mill, the earlier farmhouse being incorporated as the kitchen and rear service block of the new house (Cookson 2015, 118). Other examples include Deptford House, beside the river, just to the east of Pallion, long the residence of the Laings (Cookson 2010, 150; 2015, 107). These new houses joined the much older manorial estate centres of Pallion, Barnes and Bainbridge Holme, further to the west and south-west, which were also rebuilt during this period. Barnes had been divided into two estates, High and Low Barnes, from 1668, with the Ettricks making High Barnes their seat, whilst Low Barnes, the original centre of the estate, was eventually acquired by Richard Pemberton, in 1783, whose family also held Bainbridge Holme. Low Barnes was developed with vast grounds, including an extensive garden, fir and elme plantations and a pond stocked with tench. These grounds were eventually laid out as the present Barnes Park in 1907-1909 (Surtees 1816, 234-36; Cookson 2010, 150-51; 2015, 106-7, 118).

9.9.3   The merging of Bishopwearmouth and Sunderland
A further process was only just beginning to gather pace in the 18th century, but would ultimately overwhelm all the farms and the gentry houses and mansions noted above. This was the growth of urban Sunderland, its fusion with Bishopwearmouth, and the subsequent expansion of this combined conurbation across southern Wearside continues to this day.

During the 18th century, this growth was largely restricted to the periphery of Sunderland town, around the historic borough limits, and particularly to the area between the town and Bishopwearmouth village. This growth was particularly evident in the second half of the century. Whereas there was relatively little settlement apparent between the town and the village on Burleigh and Thompson's map in 1737, by the penultimate decade of the century Rain's Eye plan shows that considerably more areas were built up, particularly on the north

side of High Street West, where only one field, held by General Lambton, interrupted a continuous ribbon of development (Clay et al. 1984, 26-9, 56-7). There was still considerably more open land on the south side of the street, but here too formally laid out gardens and buildings were beginning to spread across the fields. Further new developments would ensure that High Street West was built up along its entire length by the end of the second decade of the 19th century. In addition there were a scatter of industrial buildings and occasional rows of workers cottages along the river bank, which feature on Burleigh and Thompson's map, Rain's Eye Plan and the two Pallion estate maps.

The urban and industrial expansion made those mansions closest to Sunderland and Bishopwearmouth less attractive for their wealthy owners as the houses and their grounds no longer offered the rural seclusion sought by the mercantile elite. By the time the 1st edition Ordnance Survey was published in 1862, The Grange had already been converted into a school and was surrounded by rows of buildings, a railway, park and other paraphanalia of urban Sunderland. Rows of housing were also enveloping the country houses and farms of Hendon, and were spreading westwards across what had formerly been North Moor and into Pallion. The zone closest to the river witnessed an explosion of industrial development, resulting in the proliferation of shipbuilding yards, saw mills, gas and chemical works, and brick and tile yards, plus associated brick fields. However convenient such proximity was for the proprietors of houses like Pallion and Deptford, in terms of managing their enterprises, this was not enough to outweigh the unpleasant aspects of industries, such as exposure to smoke, noise and pollution. Hence, they too were abandoned in favour of mansions further out in the countryside.

10. BISHOPWEARMOUTH IN THE MODERN ERA – 1700 to the Present

This chapter consists of a summary historical overview of the development of Bishopwearmouth in the last three centuries. It is intended to provide a framework for the detailed studies of particular areas of the settlement and aspects of its modern history in Chapter 11, which have been provided by members of the Atlas Study Group.

10.1 From village to urban quarter

### 10.1.1 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 (9.8.3 & 9.8.4 above), 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.

10.1.2 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'.[64] 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

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[64] 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.
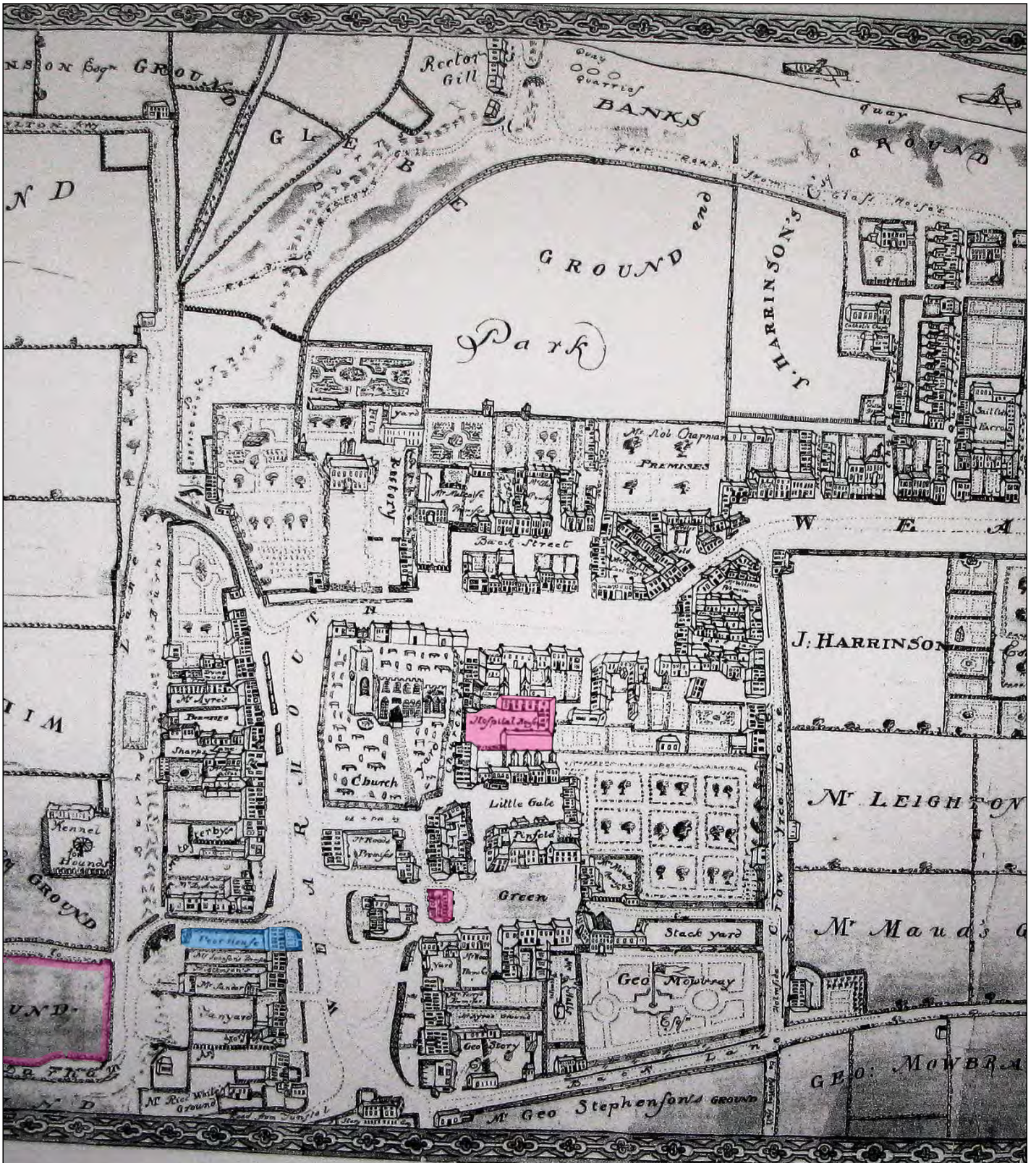
10.1: Extract from Rain's Eye Plan of Sunderland and Bishop Wearmouth*, 1785-90, showing Bishopwearmouth village with the two almshouses highlighted in pink and the poorhouse in blue. The hospital grounds SW of the village are outlined in pink.*

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.[65] 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 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).

### 10.1.3 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* 9.8.4 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; cf. 9.9.3 above). By 1817, Robson's Plan shows there was unbroken development along both sides of High Street West.

10.1.4 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 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

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[65] 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.
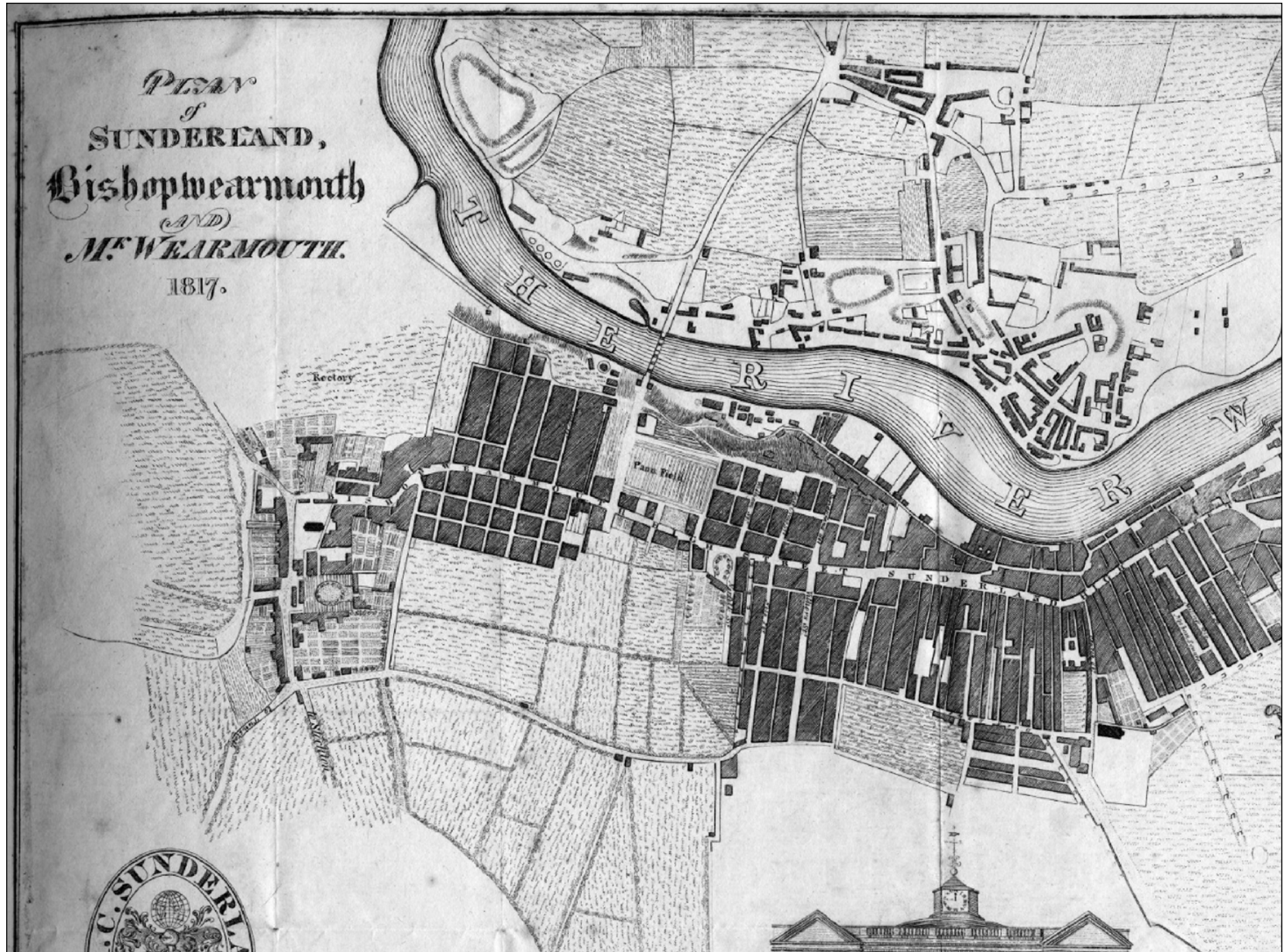
10.2: *Extract from Thomas Robson's Plan of Sunderland, Bishopwearmouth and M[on]k Wearmouth c.1817.*

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 (*see* 6.3 above; 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.

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 1983a, 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 (1983a, 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 (1983a, 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 1983a, 36-8).

10.2 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

10.3: *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).*

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

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 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 compex 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 hostelries 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.

Accomodation 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.

10.3   The 20th Century

10.3.1 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.

10.3.2 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 above* 6.4.1).

10.3.3 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).

10.3.4 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.

10.3.5 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.

10.3.6 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.

10.3.7 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.

10.5: *Air raid shelters being dug in the Green, 1938*

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

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 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.

10.3.8 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.