

## A history of Newcastle upon Tyne taken from Historic Quotes and Commentary.

**FORTITER DEFENDIT TRIUMPHANS** (she triumphs by a brave defence)  
coined after the last siege of an English Walled city 3 Feb 1644 – 27 Oct 1644



### Foreword

*My Dad, George (Geordie) Holmes inspired my interest in stories and quotes about the place I live. He would tell tales of Northbourne Street in Elswick. I could see it and practically relive it. Tales of Horse and Carts in the snowy winter months sliding down the Whinstone sett streets running steeply down to the Tyne, toward the Vicker's factory and Scotswood Road. The horses with their leg splayed trying to resist the force of the cart gathering speed and sliding into an inevitable disaster when it met another form of transport crossing it's path. The cart driver and kids running downhill after the runaway cart and horse. Tales of a large family and fox terriers' - 'ratters' as my Dad would call them. Tales of hard men and harder Policeman (the local Bobby). His own brother Matty, a Barrow Boy, would keep his boxing kit under the barrow waiting for a call to fight at St James Hall. Once called up, left in the morning for a day's travel to Bishop Auckland. It was a championship qualifier, but a contender had taken ill. Matty was drafted in to make up the bill. Needless to say, he went on to win the fight but of course not to go on to fight for the championship.*

*Nothing in the following pages are my opinion, they are a collection of notes that have interested me during my study of local history and that I simply repeat.*

Alan Holmes DipSurv, MRICS  
Chartered Building Surveyor.

**Novocastrian**

500 –  
565

## Early History

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**Procopius of Caesarea** (ca. 500-ca. 565) wrote of Hadrian's wall ' *Now in this island of Britain the men of ancient times built a long wall, cutting off a large part of it; and the climate and the soil and everything else is not alike on the two sides of it. For to the south of the wall there is a salubrious air, changing with the seasons, being moderately warm in summer and cool in winter. But on the north side everything is in reverse of this, so that it is actually impossible for a man to survive there even half an hour, but countless snakes and serpents and every other kind of wild creature occupy this area as their own. And, strangest of all, the inhabitants say that if a man crosses this wall and goes to the other side, he dies straightaway. They say, then, that the souls of men who die are always conveyed to this place*'.



500 -  
570

**Gildas** (British Monk c. 500 – c. 570) — also known as **Gildas the Wise** or **Gildas Sapiens** wrote ' *As the Romans went back home, there eagerly emerged from the coracles that had carried them across the sea-valleys the foul hordes of Scots and Picts, like dark throngs of worms who wriggle out of narrow fissures in the rock when the sun is high and the weather grows warm...they seized the whole of the extreme north of the island from its inhabitants, right up to the Wall...They were readier to cover their faces with hair than their private parts with clothes*'.

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650 -  
700

## 'Ad Murum'?

'Ad-murum' is translated 'At-Wall' in the Penguin Classics edition of Bede, not so different from 'On the Wall'

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Mentioned by **Bede**, the Father of English History, as *being one of the residences of the Anglo-Saxon kings of Northumbria*. Bede describes a major Royal estate capital called "Ad Murum" which lay on flat ground by the Tyne. Oswin, King of Northumbria (d. 651) apparently lived there and it was the site of the baptism of Bishop Finan of Paeda, King of the Middle Angles, and all his thanes and servants. Bede states that King Oswy was holding court here when he received King Sigbert of Essex in 653.

Early commentators **Bruce - Handbook of Newcastle**; and **Gray Chorographia**, 1649, thought that the Royal estate capital "Ad Murum", might be Pandon (see HER 1390 and 6621). Heddon-on-the-Wall has also been suggested.

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**Bede**, has a couple of intriguing references in his '**History of the English Church and People**', completed in 731. In Bk.III, chapter 21, he records the baptism of one King Peada "by Bishop Finan .... at a well-known village belonging to the king (i.e. Oswy, king of Northumbria) known as "Ad-murum", and, a little later King Sigbert was baptised "by Bishop Finan in the king's village of Ad-murum, so named because it

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stands close to the wall which the Roman's built to protect Britain, about twelve miles from the eastern coast". These incidents are both dated by scholars 653 AD.

**Bede** says *Ad-murum is about twelve miles from the Coast*. Now the length of an English mile has varied considerably but was never more than 1760 yards. The Roman mile was 1620 yards, putting Heddon about 16.3 Roman miles from the coast. Twelve English miles from the coast take us to about West Denton roundabout, twelve Roman miles to Denton Burn.

Along Hadrian's Wall, at intervals of precisely one Roman mile, there are fortifications known nowadays as 'milecastles'. The sites of almost all these milecastles have been established by excavation, and they have been given reference numbers beginning in the east and counting westwards. And right by Heddon village is milecastle 12, exactly 12 Roman miles from the eastern limit of the Wall at Wallsend. Could it be that Bede thought that Hadrian's Wall began right on the coast (he twice tells of it running from sea to sea), and therefore assumed that the twelfth milecastle was twelve miles from the coast?

The site of Ad-murum has been put at various points from Newcastle (Pandon) in the east, to Heddon in the west.. The local historian, **Cadwallader J. Bates**, writing in 1885, argued strongly that Ad-murum with its royal villa was at Heddon. If this is true, Heddon existed (probably under another name) in 653, and there the second Bishop of Lindisfarne, Finan, baptised the future kings of the Middle Angles and the East Saxons.

**Eneas Mackenzie (1827) 'A descriptive and historical account of the town and county of Newcastle upon Tyne'** This earlier author equates the location of Ad Murum, the king's village, and place of the baptism events, as being Newcastle. On page 5, he states:

**Camden** places *Ad Murum* at Welton, a village 3 miles north by west from Ovingham; and Dr. Smith fixes it at Walbottle. Brand says, " *A similarity of sound in the name has, it seems, occasioned both these errors, for such have our later discoveries clearly enabled us to call them ; Ad Murum being unquestionably the present Newcastle upon Tyne, where there are still traditional and printed accounts that" the Saxon kings of Northumberland had their palace.*" Bede tells us that the royal town *Ad Murum* was distant 12 miles from the eastern sea. Now, as the Roman measures would probably be retained in Bede's time, if we believe Dr. Gale, who makes 15 English miles answer to 20 Roman, his account of the distance of Newcastle from the sea will be strictly correct.

*Taken from Where is 'Ad Murum'? an article by Rev. J.P. Senior published in Vision, August 1984 and Tyne and Wear HER(7918): Walbottle, Early Medieval settlement - Details*

*Ad Murum (the Wall). Grey says, "After the departure of the Romans, the kings of Northumberland kept their residence, and had their house, now called Pandon Hall. It was a safe bulwark, having the Picts' Wall on the north side, and the river of Tyne on the south."*

**Mackenzie** goes on to write ... *'This ancient place, after being for some time called Ad Murum, acquired the appellation of Monkchester, which is usually interpreted "the fortified residence of the monks."*

## Monkchester

Extracts from **Bourne, Henry**, 1696-1733.

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THE Ancient and Present STATE OF *Newcastle upon Tyne*.

CHAP. II. Of this TOWN, after the Time of the ROMANS:.



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“AFTER the Departure of the *Romans*, it seems to have changed it's Name, as I shall shew immediately; and probably by the latter Part of it's after Name *Monkchester*, it was a Place of Defence, or *Garrison'd Fort*, during the Times of the *Saxons* and *Danes*. This Name of *Monkchester* it retain'd 'till after the Conquest. Thus we are told from *Simeon Dunelmensis*, a Monk of the Church of *Durham*, that *Newcastle upon Tyne* was anciently called *Monkchester*, *civitas Monachorum*, or the Town of the Monks, not because it belong'd to the Monks, but because the Monks of those Parts dwelt there.<sup>a</sup>

Mr. *Eachard* in his *History of England* says, that *Monkchester* was so called from certain Monks who *lived there* in great Austerity and Retirement; and the *Monasticon* gives us the following Account.

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“*One Place there was in this County, famous for being the Habitation of Monks, from whence it was called Monkchester, but that also was so ruined and destroy'd, that when the Monks of Mercia (the Monks mentioned before) came to it, they found no Token or Remnant of any Religions Persons who had had an Habitation there; all was defaced and gone*”.

For as *Hollingshead* observes that it was about 200 Years from the Ruin of the Monasteries to this Time after the Conquest<sup>d</sup>; so it must be taken Notice of, that the *Danes*, in the Year<sup>e</sup> 875, which was the 4th of the Reign of King *Alured*, divided themselves. So that King *Haldon* with one Part there|of went into *Northumberland*, and lay in the Winter Season near † to the River of *Tyne*, where he divided the Country amongst his Men, and remained there for the Space of two Years, and oftentimes fetched thither Booties and Preys out of the Country of the *Scots* and *Picts*.

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IT appears then from this, that the Monasteries of *Monkchester* had been in Ruins about 200 Years, that is to say, from the Year 875 to the Year 1074, the Time of the Coming of the *Mercian* Monk.

THE Name of *Monkchester* continued 'till the Building of the Castle, and after that, from the Building of it, it got the Name of *New-castle*: The Occasion of which was this. *Malcolme* King of *Scotland* having enterd with his Army into the Confines of *England*, came with it into *Northumberland*, and waisted and plundered the whole Country as far as the River *Tyne*; the Conqueror being all the while in *Normandy*, and also his Son *Robert Curtois*. But no sooner were the King and his Son come into *England*, than *Robert* was sent with an Army against *Malcolme* to drive him out of the Country. The *Scots* being appriz'd of this, retir'd into their own Country, and *Robert* with his Army encamp'd upon the Banks of the *Tyne*, where he built the *Castle* to defend these Northern Parts from the Incursions of the *Scots*, for the <sup>h</sup> Future.

THUS the Town lost it's Name of *Monkchester* for that of *Newcastle*, which it retains to this Day. But however by the building of the Castle it lost nothing else; for the Building of the said Castle did not destroy or take away the Right or Interest which the Towns-men had before; but that still remained as before.

AFTER this the Town grew more populous, and increas'd in Trade and Wealth; had great Privileges granted them by the Kings, built Churches, Monasteries, Walls, Bridges, &c. as shall be seen in the following Treatise'.

793 **Vikings, (also called Norseman or Northman)**, member of the Scandinavian seafaring warriors who raided and colonized wide areas of Europe from the 9th to the 11th century

In 793AD, the Vikings attacked Lindisfarne. A chronicler wrote: '*Pagens came to Britain from the North with a flotilla of ships, like stinging hornets. Like fierce wolves they overran the country on all sides, plundering, tearing, killing, not only beasts, the sheep and oxen, but even priests and deacons, companies of monks and nuns. They came to the church of Lindisfarne and laid waste with fearful plundering, they trampled upon the holy places with unhallowed feet, dug up the alter and carried off all the treasures of the holy church. They killed some of the brethren and took some away with them in chains. They drove out many of them naked and loaded with insults, and some of them they drowned in the sea.*

**The Anglo Saxon Chronicles** recorded of dreadful forewarnings '*these were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and whirlwinds, and fiery dragons flying across the firmament. These tremendous tokens were soon followed by a great famine; and not long after, on the sixth day before the ides of January in the same year, the harrowing inroads of heathen men made lamentable havoc in the church of God on Holy-island, by rapine and slaughter*'.

**Symeon of Durham in his 'History of the Church of Durham'**, wrote of events which followed at Jarrow: '*Yet this was not unavenged; for God speedily judged them for the injuries they had inflicted upon St Cuthbert. In the following year, when they were plundering the port of King Ecgfrith, that is, Jarrow, and the Monastery which is situated at the mouth of the River Don, their leader was put to a cruel death; and shortly afterwards their ships were shattered and destroyed by a furious tempest;*

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*some of themselves were drowned in the sea, while such of them as succeeded in reaching the land alive speedily perished by the swords of the inhabitants!*

1087 **Eneas Mackenzie**, 'The Corporation: Grants and charters', in **Historical Account of** 14  
 -1100 **Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Including the Borough of Gateshead (Newcastle-upon-**  
**Tyne, 1827)**, Reports: It being an important frontier fortress, King William II. according  
 to Hardyng, gave the burgesses— 30  
 ¶"—ground and golde ful great to spend, To buylde it well and walle it all aboute."

1100 **Henry I** made a law giving Newcastle Royal protection and setting forward a trade 32  
 - monopoly: '*No merchant unless he be a Burgess may buy (outside) the town either*  
 1135 *wool or Leather or other merchandise, nor within the borough except (from other)*  
*Burgesses .... And no one but a Burgess may buy webs (cloth) to dye, not make nor*  
*cut them*'.

1168 **Newcastle Keep and City Walls** 137



The current Newcastle Castle dates from the 12thC. The stone Keep was designed by Maurice Caementarius (Maurice the Mason) built between 1168 and 1178. Walls are 18 feet thick in paces, with a single room in each storey. The black Gate was added 1247 to 1250 – the roof, chimneys and mullioned windows added in the 17<sup>th</sup> C.

**W.H Knowles** wrote of the chapel within the Keep (later to become the cellar to the Three Bull's Heads) '*although very ornate, the work is not an example of thoughtful construction. It is very irregular in design and execution. The adjacent parts are clumsily brought together and rude in workmanship as compared with Maurice the Architects work at Dover*'. 28

1290 In 1290, the Prior of Tynemouth attempted to create another Port - at North Shields.  
 - Because of the tendency for the lower Tyne to silt up, this initiative made very sort of  
 1329 economic sense, and very quickly quays, bakeries, breweries and about 100 houses  
 grew up. The merchants of Newcastle were incensed, immediately petitioning  
 Parliament, claiming that their businesses were being undermined. And when it was  
 explained to Edward I exchequer clerk that the Royal revenue would be cut drastically,  
 Parliament ordered that the new port at North Shields be suppressed. And that 42  
 Newcastle merchants should have unfettered control of trade on the Tyne tidal river.  
 Fishing was left as Tynemouth's, uncontroversial business, and by 1329, there existed  
 14 fish quays and more than 200 fisherman's cottages.

1334 In 1334 **Roger Mauduyt** (Sheriff of Northumberland) reported ‘ *The castle of New Castle on Tyne is so decayed and so left to neglect that there is not in all the castle a single house where one can have shelter, nor any gate which can be close*’. 29

Chronicler **Ranulph Higden** (early 14C.) wrote “All the language of the Northumbrians ..... is so sharp, piercing, rasping, and unformed that we Southerners can rarely understand it. I believe that the reason for this is because they are near to foreigners and aliens, and also because Kings of England have always lived far away from that Country’. 34

1377 **Richard II** made a proclamation commanding the removal of all merchandise from the ‘common place, in Newcastle called Sandhill, where the inhabitants will want to assemble for their recreation’. 88

1399  
1400 **John Hardyng (or Harding)** (1378 – 1465) in his Chronicle and referring to William Rufus wrote: 30  
*‘He buylded the Newcastell upon Tyne  
 The Scottes to gaynstande and to defende  
 And dwell therein, the people to enclyne,  
 The towns to builde and walle as did append  
 He gave then ground and golde fulgrete to spend  
 To buylde it well and walle it all aboute,  
 And fraunchised them to pay a free rente out’.*

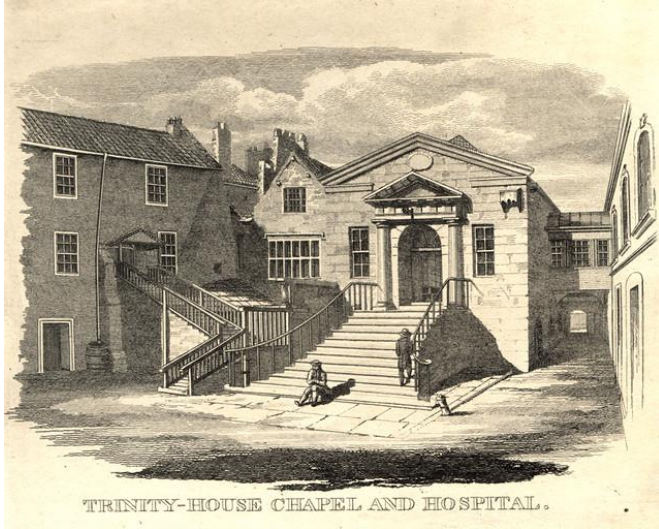
1435 The Italian traveller **Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini** (later to become Pope Pius II) in 1435 was not impressed with Northumberland and wrote ‘(Northumberland) was uninhabitable, horrible, uncultivated and I was relieved to find safe lodging inside the walls of Newcastle. Houses were miserable, built only of earth or wood, and each night men sought the safety of a peel-tower in case the Scots descended’. He also said that ‘the men were small, bold and forward in temper, the women were fair in complexion, comely and pleasing and not distinguished for their chastity, giving their kisses more readily than Italian women their hands’. 38

1509- A visit to Newcastle from **Royal Antiquary to Henry VIII** reported ‘ *the strength and magnificence of the walling of this town passeth all the walls of the cities of England and most of the towns in Europe*’. 31



1530 In Broad Chare is Trinity House. Whilst much rebuilt it retains original features from 137

the 1530's. It's work with lighthouses was first sanctioned by **Henry VIII**. He encouraged the Brethren: *'to build and embattle two towers, one at the entrance of the haven of the Tyne, the other on the hill adjoining, in each of which a light was to be maintained every night, for the support of which they are empowered to receive 4d. for every foreign ship and 2d. for every English Vessel entering the Port of Tyne'*. Then High and low lights at North Shields have kept many ships from the rocks at the mouth of the Tyne.



- 1533 Elizabeth I went on to command that Trinity House set up sea marks since so many  
– *'steeple, woods and other marks standing upon the main shore'* had disappeared.
- 1600 The Elizabethan historian **William Camden** described Newcastle as *'occulus, the eye of the North, the hearth that warmeth the South parts of this kingdom with fire'*.
- 1553 In 1553, a bill was passed in **Parliament** to incorporate Gateshead into 'the City of Newcastle' and also to set up a new Bishopric from the see of Durham. The death of Edward VI in 1553 reversed such an incorporation and Newcastle had to wait 329 years for a Bishop and Cathedral.

In 1553, in readiness for a Bishop of Newcastle clergy were proposed and the forerunners included the Scottish reformer John Knox. Knox was a lecturer and preacher at St Nicholas Church and was paid a stipend. Scots flocked to Newcastle to hear one of their own. So many that the Duke of Northumberland, **John Dudley**, thought that such large crowds of 'Aliens' presented a security risk. He proposed to London that the fiery Knox be removed. Knox fled to Europe when Edward VI died and the catholic Queen Mary (Bloody Mary) took to the throne. Not surprising he fled. Blood Mary, over three years had 220 men and 60 women burnt to death as Heretics. Another front runner for the Newcastle Bishopric, was **Nicholas Ridley** from Tynedale. Ridley briefly became Bishop of London but his Protestant leanings condemned him to the flames on 14<sup>th</sup> February 1556 at Broad Street, London. It is said, he was lead shaking to his pyre with the **Bishop Hugh Latimer of Worcester** (another Oxford Martyr) who comforted Ridley with the words *'Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out.'*

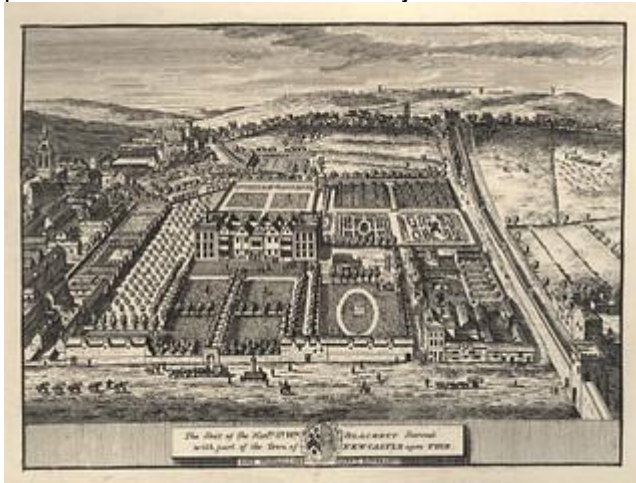


1554 The reputation of 'Reivers' and up-county Northumbrians was not well received in Newcastle or the lower Tyne and in 1554 the **Merchant Adventurers Company** thought them to be unemployable, unable to 'serve in this Fellysshype of non suche as is or shall be borne or brought up in Tyndall, Ryddisdall, or any other suche lyke places'. 39

1576 Newcastle attempted to annex Gateshead in 1576 when a bill suggesting this was read out in the House of Commons. Gateshead objected stating that "Gateshead now has a great number of substantial honest men, faithful true subjects as did appear in the late rebellion" and if it were united with Newcastle "it would be replenished with evil disposed persons and thieves". Furthermore "Gateshead people are religious, godly and good protestants..the town of Newcastle are all Papists save Anderson and he is knit with Papists" 42

1580 In 1580, part of the nunnery of St Bartholomew was said that the house had become 'so great a receptacle of Scots and other deemed ne'er-do-wells' it was pulled down -  
 1777 and a noble mansion constructed by Robert Anderson referred to as the 'newe house' replaced it. Described by the Newcastle writer, **Grey**, in 1610, as 'a princley mansion'. Indeed, it was good enough to be used to house King Charles I in captivity for 10 months following the surrender of the Scots in 1646. The house and lands were sold to the Blackett family who added two wings. In 1736, **Bourne**, described it as 'nought less than very stately and magnificent, being supposed the most of any house in the whole Kingdom within a walled town. It is surrounded by a vast quantity of grounds; that part of it which faces the street a thrown into walks and grass plots, beautiful with images and beset with trees. The other part of the ground on the west side of it is all a garden, exceedingly neat and curious, adorned with many and the most beautiful statues and other curiosities'. 60  
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On the passing of Sir Walter Blackett in 1777, the property was purchased by George Anderson, a prosperous builder, who converted it into three dwellings. The property passed on his death to his son Major Anderson who renamed it 'Anderson Place'. 61



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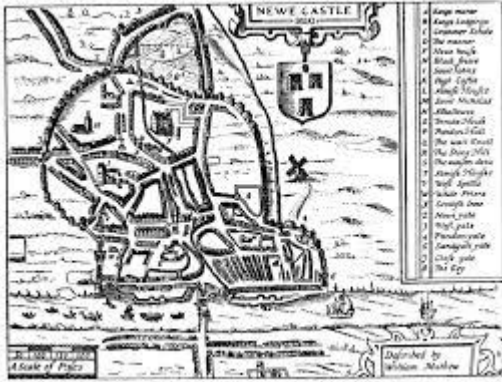
1598 In the Middle ages, coal was not used domestically, at least not outside Tyneside. Wood was the preferred fuel for heating and cooking. **John Stowe** (1598) wrote 'the nice dames on London (would not) come into any house where sea-coales were burnt, or willingly eat of the meat which was either smoked or roasted with sea-coal'. 33

1609 1609 description of Newcastle- 'glory of all the towns in this country'

1610 Sandhill

in **Speed's plan of Newcastle**, dated 1610, nought buildings occur on the site of Sandhill; yet there are deeds of the property in Sandgate as early as 1485 and 48 and seven.

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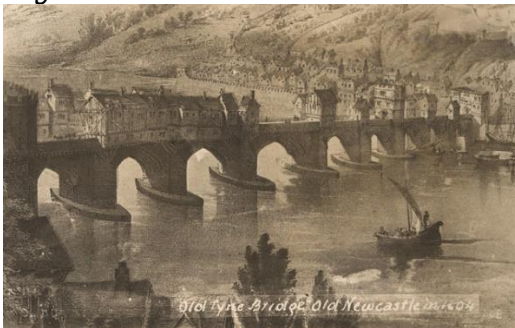
1619 The area immediately east of the Ouseburn was known as St Lawrence. From 1619, Sir Robert Mansell, the Vice Admiral of England, had been establishing glasshouses in St Lawrence. The St Lawrence glass industry was, perhaps, the most significant early glassmaking site in the country.

1635 In 1635 **Baronet Sir William Brereton** described Newcastle as '*beyond all compare the fairest and the richest town in England, inferior for wealth and buildings to no city save London and Bristow (Bristol)*'.

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**Sir William Brenton** (1635) described Newcastle Quayside as '*The finest quay in England I have met withal*'.

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In 1635 **King Charles I** prohibited the import of any sort of glass from abroad during the term granted to Mansell by **King James I**, for the sole making of glass.

1636 5037 people were said to have died from the plague and in 1675 a further 924 citizens were killed by the plague bizarrely known as the 'jolly rant'.

1644 **Rushworth**, 1644, claims *that the marquee of Newcastle 'for the better good of the town' against the Scots set the Sandgate, a street without the walls, on fire, which continued burning all Sunday and Monday.*

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1649 **W Gray** in his 1649 **Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne** says that *the suburbs of Sandgate escaped the fury of the civil wars, except some houses near the walls of the town.*

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1649 William Fray's Chronicle of 1649 mentioned that '*Newcastle's Flesh market was the*

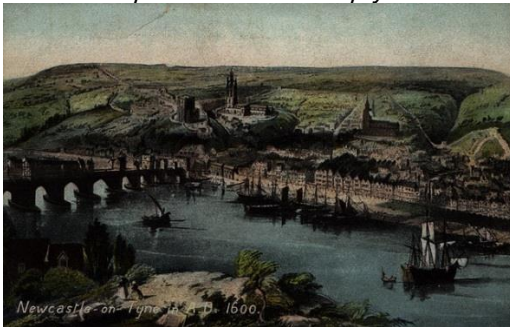
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*greatest of its kind in England.*

1649 The Ouseburn (Ewes Burn)

**William Gray's Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne** in 1649 says of the Ouseburn that 85  
*'upon the north side of the river is the Ewes Burn, over which is a Wood bridge, which goeth down to place called the glasse houses where plaine glass for windowes are made which serveth most parts of the kingdom'.*

The North Shore of the quayside encompassed the Riverside from the Swirle (later mispronunciations came known as the Squirrel) to the mouth of the Ouseburn and included the long mound known as Ropperry Bank. The early history of the North Shore as a ballast Hill is recorded in **Gray's Survey of Newcastle upon Tyne** in 85  
1649 where he says *'women upon their heads carried ballast, which was taken forth of small ships which came empty for coales'.*



1650 22 people were executed on the town Moor on a single day in 1650-15 for being 134  
witches.

**Ralph Gardiner** in his 1655 book, *England's grievance discovered, in relation to the coal-trade* wrote: "Thirty women were brought into the town hall and stript [sic], and then openly had pins thrust into their bodies." "The said reputed witch-finder acquainted Lieutenant Colonel Hobson that he knew women, whether they were witches or no by their looks, and when the said person was searching of a personable, and good-looking woman, the said Colonel replied and said, 'Surely this woman is none, and need not be tried'. The witch-finder replied 'but the Scotch man said she was, for the town said she was, and therefore he would try her'.



*Thirty poor women imprisoned, and hang'd for Witches.  
A. Hangman. B. Soldier. C. Two Sergeants. D. Witch-finder taking his money for his work.*

1653 **John Cleveland** 1653- *'England's a perfect world; has Indies too, Correct your 51  
maps; Newcastle is Peru'*

1655 **Ralph Gardiner's** *England's Grievance Discovered*, first published in 1655 reveals that a man in Newcastle claimed to have seen *"men drove up and down the streets, with a great tub, or barrel, opened in the sides, with a hole in one end, to put through their heads, and to cover their shoulders and bodies, down to the small of their legs, and then close the same, called the new fashioned cloak, and so make them march to the view of all beholders; and this is their punishment for drunkards, or the like."* 134

1698 Following the civil war Newcastle's population was 13,400 and **Celia Fiennes** visiting Newcastle in 1698, described it as *'it most resembles London any place in England, its buildings lofty and large of brick mostly or stone, the streets broad and handsome'*. 53

1700 Keel-bullies  
The sailors of the Tyneside colliers (the Keels) had a reputation as being some of the best seamen in England. **William Hutchinson** in his book '**Treatise upon Practical Seamanship**' claimed the Keel-bullies were *'the most perfect in working and managing their ships in narrow, intricate, an difficult channels and in tide-ways'*. He writes *'in heaving up their anchor briskly, they greatly excel other merchant ships'* and *'they are equally brisk and clever in warping, or transporting a ship with ropes, and likewise in handling, reefing and steering etc'*. 103

The word "keel" is from an Anglo-Saxon derivation meaning ship, but on the Tyne it was applied to a clumsy great oval, flat-bottomed boat used for carrying twenty tons of coal at a time from the dykes or staiths upriver to the collier ships at berth in the harbour. According to **Maxine Baker**, 'The boat was steered by two men known as "keel bullies". They used a large oar at the stern which was called a "swarpe". A pole with an iron point was used in shallow water - called a "set" on the Wear and a "pug" on the Tyne. They would walk up and down the boat wielding these and pushing the boat along, in a similar way to that used in punts. The keelmen were famous for their hard lives, drinking and knocking their wives around.' Hence The Sandgate lass's lamentation. Most of the verses were first printed by **John Bell** in 1812, including the third, fourth and fifth printed here [He'll set and row; May all the press gangs perish; And now he's in the union], which he got from a timber merchant called Thomas Thompson. The last verse is of 20th century origin, though despite the old song which used "as lang as keel gans down River Tyne" as a metaphor for eternity, the keels have not plied for a century or more. 94



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[1996:] 'Keelers' was the name of the men who sailed a particular type of boat, a flat-



bottom barge called the 'keel'. It comes from the Saxon and was originally spelt 'ceol'. The keels had been sailing on our river - the Tyne, where we all come from - since the 13th century. The last ones disappeared this century (20<sup>th</sup> C). They were propelled by a single mast, a single sail and an oar. When they were sailing with the wind they used the sail, when they were sailing against the wind or against the river they used the big oar. A three-man crew, and they carried a single cargo, always coal, because nowadays the river is navigable for about ten miles, up to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In the old days, in the last century and before that, the big ships couldn't get up the river. So the big ships used to lie at the river mouth, at Tynemouth, and the boats had to carry the coal down to the brigs and barques that carried the coal off all over the world. They carried about twenty tons of coal at a time.

- 1701 Keelman Hospital erected 1701 by charitable donation. The **Bishops of Ely** commented '*that he had heard of and seen many hospitals, the work of rich men, but that was the first he ever saw or heard of which had been built by the poor*'. 105



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- 1717 *There is large of area of Sandhill called the Milk Market* mentioned in the **common council books** in 1717.

- 1724 In 1724 **Daniel Defoe** described Newcastle as '*a spacious, extended, infinitely populous pace*'. And in 1725, **Daniel Defoe**, wrote '*they build (on the Tyne) to perfection as to strength and firmness, and to bear the sea, the Coal trade demanding such*'. And that Newcastle had '*the largest and longest key (Quay) for landing and loading goods that is to be seen in England*'. 106



**Daniel Defoe, A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain (1724) 'Newcastle** 106



*is a spacious, extended, infinitely populous place. It is seated upon the River Tyne, which is here a noble, large and deep river, and ships of any reasonable size may come safely up to the very town. as the town lies on both sides of the river, the parts are joined by a very strong and stately stone bridge of seven very great arches, rather larger than the arches of London Bridge; and the bridge is built into a street of houses also, as London Bridge is. They build ships here to perfection, I mean as to strength and firmness, and to bear the sea; and as the coal trade occasions a demand for such strong ships, a great many are built here. In Newcastle there is considerable manufacture of wrought iron’.*

1736 Historian, **Henry Bourne**, 1736 in ***The History on Newcastle Upon Tyne*** - “This street is chiefly inhabited by such as have their living by Shipping; such as Merchants, Hostmen, Brewers etc. As it is the great Place of Resort for the business of the Coal-trade (the grand support of this Town and Country, and many other Places also) and likewise for many other Things;” ..... ‘Of late years these houses (The Close) have been forsaken, and their wealthiest inhabitants have chosen a higher part of the town’. The quay became predominantly a trading and commercial area. Bourne went on to comment that ‘it is not so much to be wondered at, if in going along it you see almost nothing but a whole street of signposts of taverns, alehouses, coffee houses, et cetera’.



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**Bourn** discusses the glass-house-bridge over the Ouse burn ‘*the glass-house-bridge, so called because of the glasshouses which run almost contiguous to it, was originally a wood bridge, as the bridge higher up the bourn was, until within these six or seven years; but in a year 1669, when Ralph Jennison, Esq. was mayor, it was made of stone by Thomas Wrangham, shipwright, on account of the lands which the town let him; the passage however over it was very difficult and uneven until the year 1729, when Stephen Coulson, Esq. was mayor, it was made level and commodious both for horse and foot.*

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**Henry Bourne** in 1736 wrote ‘*The Sandhill, is so-called because it was formerly a hill of naked sand, when the tide was out. For formally the Tyne overflowed this place. It is a spacious place and adorned with buildings very high and stately, whose rooms speak the Ancient Grandeur, being very large and magnificent. It is now that part of the town where the chief Affairs of Trade and Business are transacted. The shops in this*

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*street are almost altogether those of merchants, which have many great conveniences of Lofts, Garners and Cellars. Here is the market for fish, herbs, bread, cloth, leather, et cetera'.*

**Bourne** also reported in 1736 that *'the number of souls in this street and the lanes belonging to it is computed to several thousands'.*

**Henry Bourne** explained that in the middle of Sandgate *'is an open place called the Squirrel (originally the Swirle), from a little Brook of that name, which runs through it into the River Tyne, which was the ancient bounds of the town of Newcastle'.*

**And Henry Bourne** describes the Holy Jesus Hospital (Freemen's or Town's hospital) *'You ascend to it [hospital] by stairs from High Street, and then enter into a pleasing field, on the North-side of which is the said hospital. It is three Storey high, and the Under-storey is adorned with Piazza's which are about 60 yards in length, and make a very agreeable walk. About the Middle of the Piazza's is the entrance into the second and third Stories, and over against this entrance is a fountain (very much beautified) for the use of the hospital'.*



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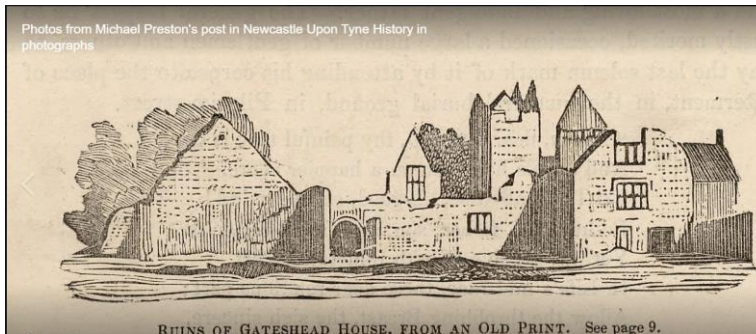
1742 The Methodist minister, **John Wesley** in 1742 preached in (Sandgate) what he described as *'the poorest and most contemptible part of the town'.* In front of 1500 local people he sang the 100<sup>th</sup> Psalm and preached a sermon. He described the slope to the Hospital *'covered from top to bottom with poor folk of Sandgate ready to tread me underfoot out of pure love and kindness'.* 89

1746 In 1746 the **Mayor of Newcastle** said of the Keel-bullies *'(they) are too ready to rise and become tumultuous upon the least pretence'.* 104

1746 In the early days of 1746, everyone south of the border with Scotland was a little agitated. Both anti-Scottish and especially anti-Jacobite sentiment was running high – well, among the protestant majority, at least. In January of that year, a few weeks before the decisive encounter at Culloden, **King George II's son, the Duke of Cumberland**, marched north, passing through Gateshead and Newcastle *en route*.... Delayed by troublesome roads, he arrived in Gateshead at 1am on the morning of 28th January ...

- *... where he was welcomed by a kind of illumination which gave his royal highness great uneasiness to see. The mob having set a mansion-house, with a popish chapel within it, on fire, at that place on the occasion. The outrage is said to have proceeded from the following circumstances. The family being from home, the house, chapel, &c. were left to the care of the gardener whose name was Woodness; when the duke and his attendants were coming down, the mob being anxious to see them, several of them climbed upon the garden walls to have a better view, when the gardener afraid of his master's property,*

*let loose some dogs upon them which bit several who were keelmen; being exasperated, they attempted to catch the gardener, who, no doubt, would have fallen a victim to their rage. Finding the object of their fury had eluded them, they set fire to the mansion-house, &c.....*The mansion in question was Gateshead House, which used to stand to the east of the present-day St.Edmund's Church on the High Street (aka Holy Trinity). Once the property of the Riddells, a catholic family, at the time the house was torched it was the seat of the Claverings, who were related to them. The fire rendered the property uninhabitable and it fell into ruin. It was eventually demolished – and the site is now taken up by high rise flats and a major trunk road. A repositioned gateway from the house remains in the grounds of St.Edmund's Church....



1764  
-  
1845

**Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey**, was born today at Fallodon, Northumberland. Descended from a long-established Northumbrian family seated at Howick Hall, Grey was the second but eldest surviving son of General Charles Grey KB (1729–1807) and his wife, Elizabeth (1743/4–1822), daughter of George Grey of Southwick, co. Durham. He had four brothers and two sisters. He was educated at Richmond School, followed by Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, acquiring a facility in Latin and in English composition and declamation that enabled him to become one of the foremost parliamentary orators of his generation. Grey was elected to Parliament for the Northumberland constituency on 14 September 1786, aged just 22. In 1830, following the death of George IV and when the Duke of Wellington resigned on the question of Parliamentary reform, the Whigs finally returned to power, with Grey as Prime Minister. In 1831, he was made a member of the Order of the Garter. His term was a notable one, seeing passage of the Reform Act 1832, which finally saw the reform of the House of Commons, and the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1833. As the years had passed, however, Grey had become more conservative, and he was cautious about initiating more far-reaching reforms, particularly since he knew that the King was at best only a reluctant supporter of reform. Grey spent his last years in contented, if sometimes fretful, retirement at Howick, with his books, his family, and his dogs. He became physically feeble in his last years and died quietly in his bed on 17 July 1845, forty-four years to the day since going to live at Howick. He was buried in the church there on the 26th in the presence of his family, close friends, and the labourers on his estate.

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- 1770 By the 1770's it was reported that 15 large glassworks was situated on the Tyne in and around Newcastle-the cluster St Lawrence been the earliest and largest. The **Hutton's map of Newcastle** dated 1772 shows St Lawrence dominated by the High, Middle and Low glasshouses. Historian, **Charleton**, described the St Lawrence area..... *'we find ourselves, amongst a crowd of old brick buildings huddled together without regard to order.'*



- 1776 Northumberland  
 Tynesider **William Hutchinson** (inventor of parabolic reflectors for lighthouses) in 1776 commented upon the transformation of Northumberland as *'The ferocity of the inhabitants is (now) subdued; traffic, arts, sciences, manufactories and navigations, have taken the place of brutal warfare, which is extinguished; Cultivation, with all the comeliness of Plenty, laughs in the valley; streams are taught to labour in mechanic systems to aid the manufacturer; every Creek and Bay is thronged with ships....Desert plains stained with Slaughter and track's with the progress of Rapine and Violence, formerly spread forth on extensive scene of desolation, where now rising woods, inclosed (sic) farms, villages and hamlets are disposed under the smiles of Prosperity'*

- 1787 **The Keep** was used as a prison and in 1787 **John Howard** (prison reformer) visited Newcastle and reported that *'during the assizes at Newcastle, the county prisoners are, men and women, confined together seven or eight nights, in a dirty damp dungeon, six steps in the old castle, which, having no roof, in wet season the water is some inches deep. The Felons area chained to rings in the wall. On the assizes Sunday the prisoners were exhibited to the public and the vulgar and curious paid sixpence each for admission''*.



- 1800 **David Bean** in his book **Tyneside: a Biography**, published in 1971, wrote of



's Newcastle during the Industrial revolution *'Now the whole river began to boom. Coal-based, this prosperity took in iron and later steel, shipbuilding, chemicals, light and heavy engineering. This was the era of invention, and the Tyne was at the forefront. From her banks came the first railways, the first electric lamps, the first big guns, the first Dreadnoughts, the first life boats, the most daring bridges....Now on both banks Tyneside filled with windmills and pits and factories. The gaps between, and the long sweeps up the hillsides behind, were crammed with terrace rows of brick to house the thousands of workers who were streaming in from all over the kingdom to get richer than all but a few of them ever really did. The Salmon twitched in liquid poison and gave up the ghost'*

1807 Of the older port of Newcastle, a letter in the **Gentleman's Magazine** of January 1807 expressed the following: *'alas! How mortified we were to find it just as it was said to be 100 years ago. The streets are paved with little rum cobblestones, so full of deep potholes as to be dangerous to ride along, for they have not been repaired for the last century. Yet they boast of their corporation having above £30,000 a year. There is an old joke against canny Edinburgh that they used formerly to empty certain containing vessels into the streets from upper storeys, but at Newcastle they now, very coolly lay them down and noon-day the scavengers, perhaps, come and take them up again next week, to the no small annoyance of passengers. The Street called 'The Side' would be a disgrace to any corporation in England'*



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1826 When, on 7th of January 1826, an advertisement appeared in the **Newcastle Courant** offering *'to be let, the Nun's field. Major Anderson has been induced to divide the said field into sites for the above purpose. Particulars apply to Mr Dobson, architect'*. Mr Richard Grainger, the town's most prominent builder, was to purchase Anderson Place and transform the centre of Newcastle. Richard Grainger went on to develop Eldon Gardens. Containing 10 houses designed by John Dobson, in the fashionable Palladian style around an ornamental shrubbery.

The historian **McKenzie** in 1827, said *'this square will be one of the proudest monuments of the taste and spirit of the corporation in modern times'*

Richard Grainger concluded negotiations with the Corporation for the purchase of



Anderson Place and the **Newcastle Journal** said *'the bells of the churches in Newcastle rang several merry peels, the same evening Mr Grainger's workmen were regaled with a plentiful supply of strongly ale, which drew together a great crowd of spectators, whose excited feelings, lead them to acts of violence. After being desired to depart they became furious and broke into the mansion called Anderson Place and destroyed the whole of a splendid staircase'*.

Within two weeks of signing the agreement for Anderson Place the **local newspaper** reported *'Mr Grainger commenced to check levels and lay out the intended new markets and streets in the Nun's fields'*.

- 1827 **Eneas MacKenzie** observed that Newcastle quayside was a *'dirty and inconvenient Street'* and that the chares leading from it were *'receptacles of Cyprian nymphs whose blandishments were of the most coarse and vulgar description. Indeed, most of these dark lanes were inhabited by very dangerous but not very tempting females'*.  
**MacKenzie** went on to say about Broad Chare *'is broad enough to admit at court. Most of the old houses have been pulled down and lofty commodious warehouses erected in their place. A narrow flagged footpath runs of the West side, but is neither a safe or a pleasant passage'*.



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And **MacKenzie** in 1827 said of the Ouseburn *'A plebeian district covered with extensive and important manufacturies, consisting of corn steam-mills, foundries, potteries, a flaxmill and other works'*.

- 1830 **Harriet Martineau** reported on Grainger's construction work that *'throughout a wide area excavation for the streets to the depth of 17 feet, and for the basement's story of the house, 27 feet. Valleys have to be filled to the depth of 35 feet. Sometimes it was necessary to make a dissent an ascent and sometimes the reverse. All this was exclusive of the trenches for foundations which were in some places 54 feet deep'*.

Amazed at the speed of construction the writer **William Howitt** commented *'Mr Grainger is one of the most extraordinary magicians ever appeared'*.

- 1831 In 1831, when **Thomas Oliver** wrote **Pictures of Newcastle** he described the Milk Market as a place where *'on Saturdays is a sale of old clothes laid on straw on the street (paddy's market).* 91



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**William Cobbett** described Newcastle *'the fine, opulent, solid, beautiful and important town.'* 70

- 1835 Report of the opening ceremony of the Grainger market quoted in **Dibdin**, *'it was a glorious vista, occupied by 2000 guests, irradiated by gas light. The Mayor was in the chair, it was evident that Mr Grainger was to be considered the Sun around whom the Minor planets rolled. The company had already drunk with much enthusiasm 'prosperity to the new markets'. They had met not merely to celebrate the opening of the markets but also for the purpose of paying a compliment to the individual who was both in his professional capacity and private character, an honour to the town.'* 65

Of the Grainger Market, **Charleton** in 1888 said *'entering by one of the arches from Grainger Street we pass through street after street of Butchers' shops in which are displayed hecatombs of fresh chilled meat. Rosy faced butchers surround us on all sides until we reach the regions where eggs, bacon and other provisions are displayed. In the centre a large stone basin with a fountain (nicknamed the butcher's spittoon). Which on market days played and had a very pretty effect when the Ducks brought for sale were allowed to swim in the water.'* 64



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- 1836 To celebrate the passing of the Great Reform Bill in 1832 and the part played in it by **Charles, Earl Grey** of Howick Hall plans were put forth to rectify a monument in Northumberland Square, North Shields. The idea was seized upon by Newcastle Corporation and on 14 September 1836 a special meeting was held by the **Grey Monument Committee** for *'leave to a erect a monument near the head of Upper Dene Street and also to change the name of that street to Grey Street'*. The plan was passed and Grainger was asked *'to convey to the committee sufficient space of ground at the* 66

*head of a Dene Street and change the name of that street to Grey Street'. The 134 foot high Roman Doric column, designed by Benjamin Green, was begun on September 1837 and completed in August 1838 when the 13 foot high statue of Grey, sculpted by Edward Hodges Baily was brought to the town from London and winched into position. The monument was unflatteringly described as 'a landmark for benighted strangers who have lost their way in the toon'.*



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**Eneas MacKenzie** in 1836 described Sandgate as the '*Wapping of the Newcastle*'. 14

The elegance of Richard Grainger's city centre was not always reflected in other parts of the town. The **Chief Constable's report of 1836** identified, 71 brothels and 46 houses of ill repute in the town. 77

1839 1839, the **Builder Magazine** - '*with their mercantile success and gain, and eagerness still further to enrich themselves the people of Newcastle have utterly neglected or provision for their health*'. At this time Newcastle was probably the only borough in England and Wales to have an uninvited inspection by the General board of health. 52

*'The town of Newcastle is horrible, like the ways of thrift it is narrow, dark and dirty,'* complained **Elizabeth Montague** on her very first trip to the city, mid 18C. "*That streets were so narrow that her carriage scraped the walls as it passed while the goods from the shops swung so far outwards that she could only marvel that 'I have not yet caught a coach full of red herrings'*" 54

Another visitor **Sophia Curzon's** first impressions '*exceeded all the horrible descriptions' she had heard. 'I really thought when we enter'd the Town that we were going into the deepest & darkest Pit ever heard of, as it was hardly possible to breathe for want of air & the horrid stink of the Tan yards'* 55

*'Most visitors assailed for the first time by the overcrowded tenements, heaving quayside and noisesome street markets wrestling for space within the medieval walls of mid eighteenth- century Newcastle recoiled in disgust'. From 'Wedlock', biography of Mary Eleanor Bowes, Countess of Strathmore.*

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**Sir John Walsham, Report on the Sanitary Condition of Newcastle (1839)**

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*'There is a considerable number of lodging-houses in Newcastle, some of the rooms of which are frequently occupied by from 15 to 20 persons each. In these houses the most deplorable scenes of profligacy and depravity are met with, both sexes being crowded together in a manner injurious to both health and morals. A medical gentleman told me that in the common lodging-houses where travelling vagrants are*

*often attacked with fever, etc., and in many cases die, the beds are the very next night occupied by fresh inmates, who of course are infected with the same disorder”.*

1840 Historian and journalist **Harriet Martineau** wrote about Grainger in 1840 ‘*out of this has arisen: nine new streets (exceeding collectively one-mile and 289 yards), the New market, the central exchange, new Theatre, new dispensary, music hall, lecture room, two chapels, incorporated company’s Hall, two auction marts, 10 inns, 12 public houses, 40 private houses and 325 houses with shops; the value of the property £800,000*’. Taking into account his previous work the journalist claimed ‘*that nearly £1 million has been added to the value of the town by one man in five years*’.

The traveller **William Howitt**, in the early 1840s, said ‘*there is nothing like it in any history of any age. Before the magic of Mr Grainger, not merely have stone and timber become ductile and pliant, but the stoney hearts and horny ideas of bankers, assurance brokers and capitalists in general, have melted and run down before him in streams of superabundant gold. Newcastle is now one of the most remarkable towns of the British Empire*’.

1842 **W. Howitt**. 1842 - ‘*You walk into what has been commonly termed the called, ‘the coal hole of the North’ and find yourself at once in the city of palaces; a fairyland of newness, brightness and modern elegance. And who has wrought this change? It is Mr Grainger”.*

Scottish journalist **Hugh Miller** in 1845 passed through Newcastle and said of the City ‘*As we drive on we could see the dense smoke of the pit-engines forming a new feature on the prospect; the tall chimneys of Newcastle, that seemed so many soot-black obelisks half lost in the turbid atmosphere, came next in view, and then, just as the evening was falling wet and cheerless, we entered the town, through muddy streets and along ranges of melancholy houses, dropping from all their eaves and darkened by the continuous rain of weeks*’.

In 1845 the Physician **D R Reid** published to the **Health and Towns Commission Report on the State of Newcastle upon Tyne and other Large Towns**, Reid reported ‘*Pandon Dene, on the East side of the town, has now become little better than a public sewer*’. ‘*Living conditions in the poor parts of the town like All saints and St John’s were damp and squalid inside and no better outside, where filth and refuse accumulate in the lanes and vacant corners...*’. On common lodging houses Reid said ‘*the most deplorable exhibitions on the want of sanitary regulations to be found in this country, crowded in the extreme, dirty, ill managed, occupied promiscuously by both sexes*’ Of the Lodging house clientele he described them as ‘*tramps, foreign sailors and Irishmen or Scotsmen seeking casual labour*’.

1845 **George Stephenson**, the Pioneer of the Steam engine and Railway. Gave testimony before Parliament regards the development of the Railway system. Stephenson recalled how humiliated he was when ‘*some members of the Committee asked if I was a foreigner, and another hinted that I was mad*’. The Foreigner question was a slight at Stephenson’s strong Northumbrian accent and certainly he was attacked in part because his origins were working class and he lacked a formal education. During one of the promotional meetings for the Sheffield, Ashton-under-Lyne and Manchester Railway George Stephenson was asked “*what would happen if one of your locomotives hit one of my cows.*” Stephenson is reputed to have replied in a very

broad, almost incomprehensible Geordie accent, "I would'na gi much chance for the coo!" On 6 October 1845, Stephenson's thoughts were put to the test. The evening train from Dunford Bridge to Sheffield was running down the gradient towards Penistone Station when the train met a cow which had escaped onto the railway track from the cattle market. The drover was unable to move it out of the way and the train hit the cow. The locomotive and coaches were derailed and damaged, the guard injured and passengers shaken but Stephenson was proven right; the cow was almost cut in two and killed on the spot. The accident was considered to be caused by "Cattle Drover's neglect".



**ON THIS DAY**  
25 JULY 1814: THE FIRST STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRAVEL-  
LING ENGINE INTRODUCED BY GEORGE STEPHENSON

- An inspection, by the **Health of Towns Commission of 1845**, including newly built houses in Blenheim Street and Blandford Street area said of the development ' *typhus, fever, cholera or other epidemic diseases ought never to have existed in the neighbourhood and never would have done so, but for the criminal cupidity of builders and the absence of non-enforcement of proper regulation. From a desire to obtain the largest possible rental from the smallest possible surface, the whole of this backland has been filled up with inferior houses built up into narrow pestilential lanes and attempted to be dignified by the names of Temple Street, Peel Street, Westmoreland Place et cetera* '. 76
- 1850 When **Queen Victoria** visited Newcastle to open the high-level Bridge and Central railway station she was said to be so appalled at what she saw that ever after, of passing through the town, she would have the curtains of her carriage drawn.
- 1853 A witness giving evidence in 1853 before the **House of Commons Select Committee on Public Houses and Places of Entertainment** estimated that ' *North Shields was home to about 300 'women of the town' around one for every hundred of the population. Sailors were said to stay in Public houses when ashore, where they found 'facilities not only of spending their money, but of sometimes ruining their health'. At that time there were 217 pubs in the Borough of Tynemouth, which included North Shields as well as Tynemouth and Cullercoats* '. 78
- 1854 In 1854, **Richard Grainger** was asked to summarise the number of new houses and streets he had built in Newcastle; he replied: ' *A great many. I have both part of New Bridge Street, Carlisle Street, Croft Street, Portland Place, Northumberland Street, 31 houses in Blckett Street' 22 in Eldon Square, 3 in Newgate Street, nine in Percy Street, 68 in Leazes Terrace, 80 in Leazes Crescent and other streets adjoining; 14 in St James's Street and terrace, the whole of the Royal Arcade .... used as the post* 49



*office and shops, Excise office and the bankruptcy courts and two banks, Grey Street I built entirely, 81 houses; Market Street, the whole, consisting of 38 houses, Grainger Street, 68 houses; Nun's Street, the whole, 26 houses, Nelson Street, the same number, 26 houses; Clayton Street, 107 the whole; Clayton Street West, 27, the whole; Hood Street, 16, the whole; Shakespeare Street, the whole, 16; Pilgrim Street, a part, 14; Nun's Gate, six, a part, Rye Hill, 23; Elswick, 19; Railway Street, 20.....'.*

In the first half of the century some of the worst parts of the town Lay only a matter of yards from the splendid new centre. In the steep gorge created by the river, a miasma of smoke from factory chimneys and steamboat stacks mingled with rank order from alkali works and abattoirs, the appalling stench of blood boiling and malodorous burning of horse flesh and bones in the glue factories, to create a rancid atmosphere. (ibid). The shock of the appalling cholera outbreak of 1853, which struck in Newcastle with particular severity, carrying away 1,533 victims, was still fresh in the mind when the Great Fire of 1854, although causing death, mayhem and considerable loss of property, swept away some of the worst fever dens in the town. (Ayris and Sheldon).

In 1854 there were more than 100 brothels and 500 public houses and beer shops in Newcastle.

In 1854 the **Newcastle Temperance Movement** wrote '*drink was no affectation but part of the City's economic and fabric with 425 pubs, 76 beer-shops and the colossal sum of £130,000 being spent a year on alcoholic beverages*'. 123

1861 In 1861 **Charles Dickens** gave readings from his Novels at a music hall in Nelson Street at between one and four shillings a seat (but the poorer people were allowed to stand in the gallery for a penny). Dickens wrote to a friend '*At Newcastle at heavy expenses, I made more than a Hundred Guineas profit*' he went on to say '*A finer audience there is not in England, and I suppose them to be a specially earnest people; for while they can laugh till they shake the roof, they have a very unusual sympathy with what is pathetic or passionate*'. 80

On 5 July 1861 the **Newcastle daily Journal** wrote of the Central Exchange '*rich and beautiful semi-circular building imbedded in a triangle of noble houses*'. 62

1862 **W E Gladstone** called Grey Street, '*England's finest street*' and '*our best modern street*'. 68



Many commented on the splendour of Grey Street including, **William Howitt** who claimed it to be '*one of the noblest and most magnificent streets*', 46

- Sir John Betjeman** wrote of his first encounters with Newcastle's Grey Street '*As for the curve of Grey Street, I shall never forget seeing it to perfection, traffic-less on a misty Sunday morning. Not even Regent Street, even old Regent Street, London, can compare with that descending subtle curve.*' 71
- 1872 In 1872 the **Admiralty Surveyor** reported '*from being a byword of neglect and decay, the Tyne has been converted into the most noteworthy example of river improvements within the bounds of the united kingdom.*' 110
- 1875 In **Samuel Smiles biography of George Stephenson**, he describes the Keel as '*of a very ancient model, perhaps the oldest extant of England; they are even said to be of the same build as those in which the Norsemen navigated the Tyne centuries ago. The Keel is a tubby, grimy looking craft, rounded fore and aft with a single large, square sail which the Keel-bullies, which the Tyne watermen are called, manage with great dexterity: the vessel being guided by the aid of the 'swape' or great oar which is used as a kind of ruder at the stern of the vessel.*' 100
- Samuel Smiles**, also writes "*From a walled medieval town of monks and merchants, Newcastle has been converted into a busy centre of commerce and manufactures inhabited by nearly 100,000 people. Newcastle is in many respects a town of singular and curious interest, especially in its older parts, which are full of crooked lanes and narrow streets.*" 100
- As you pass through the country at night, the earth looks as if were bursting with fire at many points; the blaze of coke-ovens, iron-furnaces, and coal heaps reddening the sky to such a distance that the horizon seems to be a glowing belt of fire. From the necessity which existed for facilitating the transport of coals from the pits to the shipping places, it is easy to understand how the railway and the locomotive should have first found their home in such a district".*
- Jose Maria De Eca De Queiros** Portuguese Diplomat and Novelist lived at 53, Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne 1874 – 1879. His commentary on Newcastle included: "An enormous brutish crowd, rough and noisy, fills the wide streets, harshly lit by shining gas lamps and shop windows; the Gin palaces are ablaze with light... drunks stagger about punching each other; on a street corner a preacher... howls verses from the bible ... Prostitutes pester insolently, demanding money ... two enormous policemen drag an old woman away, drunk and cursing; groups of miners, pipes in their mouths, greyhounds at heel, talk in the rough speech of Northumbria; amorous couples go by arms around each other, kissing shamelessly; the whistles of locomotives pierce the thick air... and in squares and alleys, on restaurant pianos, drunken patriots sing the new war song We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do...! Shouting that the Russians shall not have Constantinople!" 122
- 1880 Following his visit to Tyneside Novelist **William Clark Russell** wrote in 1880's '*Who says there is no beauty nor poetry in coal and grime and smoke, in huddled tenements, high chimneys and such things? ...Viewed from the rushing, broken, tossing River, there were screw-ships, with volumes of steam blowing from their sides....tugs rapidly darting to and for or toiling along with a string of barges in their wake, steamships looming tall, gaunt and bare, and colliers...lifting their ill-stayed spars into the whirling gloom. Iron foundries, shipyards, chemical and cement factories lined the river of either side, along with 'timber-yards', warehouses, wharves –*' 128

*leagues of them stretching in one unbroken chain' signifying for Russel 'the breadth of its interests, the wealth of its industries, the amazing spirit of progress, that animated the locality'.*

1881 **The Northumbrian Magazine**, 1881, an anonymous contributor, reported *'the name Milk Market would naturally suggest to a stranger, pleasant visions of country life and all the agreeable surroundings of a farmstead, of Pretty buxom milkmaids in Snow-white aprons, of Milk cans polished till they shine like silver. But alas! Such anticipations are woefully disappointed by the reality. It was an unsavoury locality, haggling and bargaining over the wretched rags going on all day long between the shabby buyers and the shabbier sellers. The crumbling, decayed old buildings look as though they only waited for a moderate gust of wind to convert them into a site of rubbish, form a fitting background to picture such as only Dickens could ever paint. If you should be on the meditative turn and disposed to moralise on the decay of all earthly things, we should recommend you take a stroll through that place (milk market). The rickety old buildings may one day be swept away, the poor will always be with us!'* 90

1882 The status of **city** was granted to **Newcastle** on 3 June 1882 and in July 1882 Canon Ernest Roland Wilberforce was consecrated the first Bishop of Newcastle.

(Newcastle was one of the boroughs reformed by the Municipal Corporations Act 1835: the reformed municipal borough included the parishes of Byker, Elswick, Heaton, Jesmond, Newcastle All Saints, Newcastle St Andrew, Newcastle St John, Newcastle St Nicholas, and Westgate. The urban districts of Benwell and Fenham and Walker were added in 1904. In 1935, Newcastle gained Kenton and parts of the parishes of West Brunton, East Denton, Fawdon, Longbenton. The most recent expansion in Newcastle's boundaries took place under the Local Government Act 1972 on 1 April 1974, when Newcastle became a metropolitan borough, also including the urban districts of Gosforth and Newburn, and the parishes of Brunswick, Dinnington, Hazlerigg, North Gosforth and Woolsington from the Castle Ward Rural District, and the village of Westerhope).

1885 Historian **Charleton**, 1885. *' Here, not so long ago, the' five-man boats' with their load of freshly caught North Sea fish, made fast alongside, while on the quay stood crowds of bare-headed, bare-armed, kilted-skirted, white-aproned women, with round shell baskets and' weazes' in their hands, ready to crowd on board as soon as a plank was laid ashore'. Charleton says of the Squirrel (originally the Swirle) 'sat the Sandgate lasses in their tubs, amongst the shallow water near the edge, washing tripe and singing old Newcastle ditties'.* 64



**Charleton** 1885: *'it is an interesting site to see the Steamers arrive and discharge their cargoes on the quay. There are baskets of fruit and potatoes by the thousands; there is hay and moss litter, cheese, butter, eggs, bacon and Lard, and flour, besides many other food supplies. Then there is the livestock - pigs, loudly protest, and sheep, quietly and gently been driven ashore; while great droves of cattle are hustled and prodded, and beaten and dragged and lead off to their various destinations. Most interestingly of all is to see the Scandinavian emigrants, who arrive every week on their way to the land of promise, America'* 64

The Stone Cellars situated between the old wooden dead-house and the river police station, had a brewery operating until 1840. It was also used for inquests held on bodies found in the Tyne. **Charleton** 1885 described the Stone Cellars Inn (made famous by Rolf Headley painting 'weary waiting') as *'an old public house well-known in Newcastle as the scene of so many inquests on bodies found in the Tyne. There is the bar, with its sanded floor, and behind it the usual high altar of Bacchus. A kitchen with a huge fireplace, sanded floor, long settles, spittoons and other accessories, a dark staircase ascending to unknown regions above, and guarded by a portcullis sort of gate, made of jet black Oak, a cell-like chamber with a bench down each side, taking up what is not occupied by the table. The parlour, its low ceiling which can easily be touched by hand. Down a few steps in one corner you come to a door, and, opening it, step out upon a wooden gallery overhanging the river. Leaning on the railing of the gallery we see the little wooden dead-house - seldom without some silent occupant'*

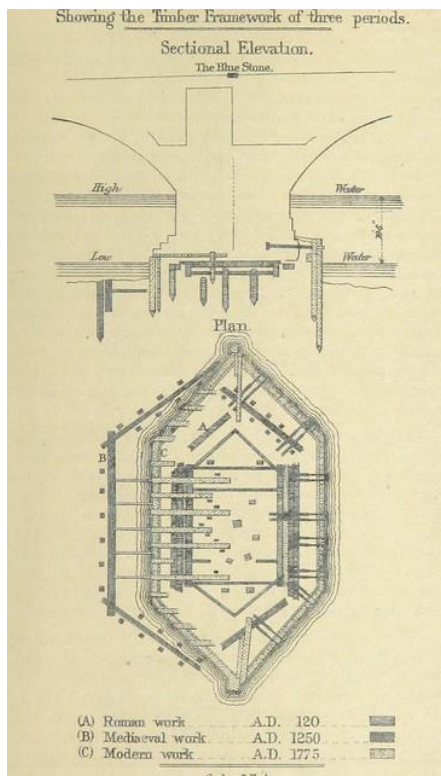
On it's closure in 1893, the Stone Cellars was remembered in the **local press** *'its parlour... the perfect ideal of the paradise of a shore-going captain of the old school; with its low ceiling, and its long latticed window, like those you see in the state cabins of the old high-pooped East Indiamen'*.



of the Ouseburn **Charleton**, 1885 said 'we are now in a truly desolate looking region'..... 'We find it, black and sullen, flowing among the most forbidding surroundings. Slaughter-houses, coal wharves and dwelling houses of not the most desirable appearance... Keels may be seen lying and delivering call into carts, which are backed ankle deep into the stream to receive their load, while the horses stand patiently in the cold water. In the cold water too are groups of ragged people with baskets and bags, wading and groping with their hands for the coals which has fallen overboard'. 64

Following Lord Armstrong's development of the quayside in the 1840s the historian **Charleton** in 1885 commented 'nowadays, it is the Aberdeen boat which moors opposite the Guildhall, on which occasions the quay becomes covered with a heaped-up mass of the merchandise; steam cranes, puff and snort; stevedores, labourers work like slaves, unshipping and shipping cargo; carts and horses come and go in long trains, till at last the quay is clear again, the Blue Peter is hoisted and the Countess of Aberdeen cuts loose her moorings and steams off again on her way to the Granite City'. 64

1887 **Archaeologia Aeliana** Journal of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle reports that during the dismantling and of the old Tyne Bridge an interesting discovery was recorded 'On the removal of the third pier from the Gateshead side, the one which ...carried the blue stone, a curious sight presented itself, the foundations of all the three bridges were to be seen. The medieval builders had make use of the woks of the Romans...and the builders of 1775 (sic) had availed themselves of the labours of both... piles had been driven.. by the builders of all the bridges, and a timber framework constructed corresponding to the size and form of the pier...In all... three bridges the form of the piers was the same...a cut-water up and down the stream, but they...differed in size". 17

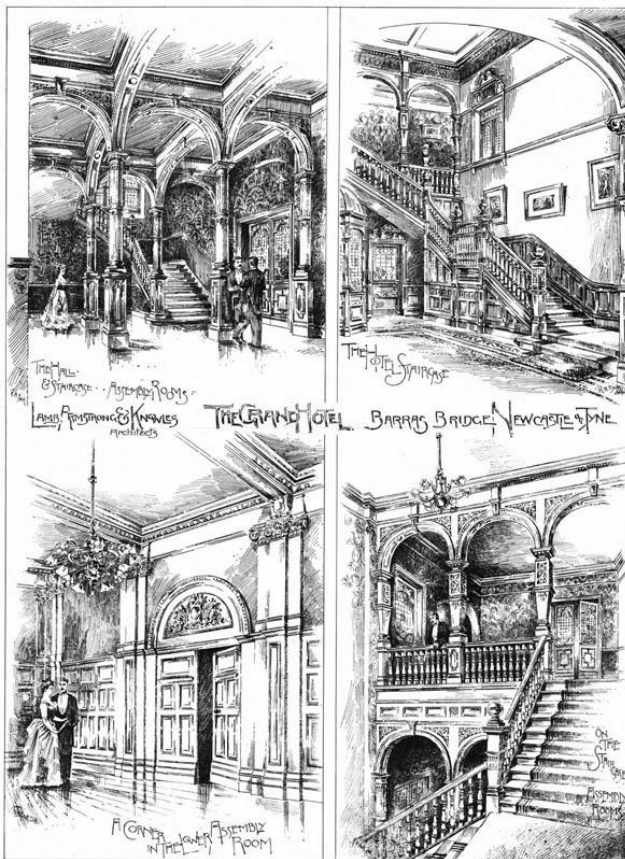




1888 **Charleton in 1888** said of the Central Exchange 'where the tired citizens may look in and, while they rest, drink in the beauties which art lays before him'. 64



1890 The city continued to develop and a **press article** from 1890 says of the Grand Hotel in Barras Bridge 'succession of stately buildings raised for the Hotel purposes in our midst, furnished in the highest style of art and costly luxuriousness, and equipped with all the modern innovations which science has brought to our doors. In this work of progress no man has been more conspicuous than our townsman, Mr James Deuchar. To him we owe the erection of the Grand Hotel, Barras Bridge, with its imposing facade, its equally noble suite of public reception rooms, and its complete equipment in every detail is a first class hotel, erected in a gross outlay of £60,000'. 81  
111  
However, the **Temperance Witness** claimed that the licensing authority had 'insulted the Christian moral feelings of the citizens' by sanctioning the building of the Grand". 123



- 1899 **Brian Bennison** 'Drink in Newcastle' claims at the end of the Nineteenth century the City hosted no fewer than 691 licensed premises, which was 1 for every 43 dwellings and one for every 307 people. It was one of the highest concentrations of boozers in Britain. Bennison writes '*Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century drunkenness proceedings expressed in terms of the number per 10,000 persons averaged 62 across England but stood at 207 for Newcastle.*' 7

Newcastle in the late 19C 'was simply the most drunken town in England' drunkenness proceedings nationally stood at 62per10,000 persons but in Newcastle it stood at 207per 10,000 and in 1901 10 comparable English Seaports had 88per10,000 proceedings., Newcastle had 225per10,000 persons.

- 1924 In 1924 Sociologist **Henry Mess** preamble to an official survey of this depressed industrial area (Tyneside) wrote '*It will be felt by any stranger who comes to live on Tyneside that it is one of the districts of England with the most marked characteristic in custom, character, manners and speech. It is difficult to set down in words local characteristics, which are so easily felt. There is a curious abruptness of manner, which is very disconcerting until one has got used to it. There is a marked clannishness of the old families. Hospitality is generous when once a newcomer has been admitted to it, but he may be kept a long time waiting in the cold. There is a great love of outdoor sport; an unusual knowledge of wild life; [and] a great deal of interest in local history and antiquarianism.*' 121

- 1928 The Tyne Bridge opened in 1928 and in 1930 **J. B. Priestley** writing in his *English Journey* said, '*a great bridge over a steaming space and we were in Newcastle. I have a very distinct recollection of taking a great dislike to the whole district. The centre of Newcastle has a certain sombre dignity, there is more impressive buildings than would have expected. It is chiefly built of a stone that has turned almost a dead black. Newcastle is even blacker than Manchester, it might almost have been carved out of coal.*' And of Gateshead **Priestley** described it as '*old carefully planned by an enemy of the human race. No true civilisation could have produced such a town.*' 79



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He went on to comment on Wallsend as 'slatternly women stood at the doors of wretched little houses, gossiping with other slatterns or screeching for the small children who were playing amongst the filth of the roadside'. Geordies as a whole he dismissed as '*stocky, toothless fellows in caps and mufflers cursing in their uncouth accents.*' **J.B. Priestley** wrote of the dialect '*To my ear it still sounds a most barbarous, monotonous and irritating twang. Every short phrase rises in exactly the same way, almost to a scream – tat law, ta ta, tee tee, ti ti. The constant 'Ay-ee, mon' or 'Ay, ee, yer –' of the men's talk and the never ending 'Hinnying' of the women seems to me equally objectionable.*' 79

**Priestley** was no fan he wrote ‘*A stranger from a distant civilisation, observing the condition of the place and its people, would have arrived at once at the conclusion that Jarrow had deeply offended some celestial empire of the Island and was being punished*’.

1928 From **Industrial Tyneside: A Social Survey made for the Bureau of Social Research for Tyneside by Henry A. Mess**, first published in 1928: 121

*“Tyneside is – we will not say militarist – exceptionally interested and proud with regards to all that concerns armies and navies. It is easily understood when one looks at its history. There, first of all, the Border tradition: for centuries there was watchfulness against the Scot, and the great leaders of Northumberland were, above all, leaders in war. In the second place, Newcastle and Tynemouth are barrack-towns, and the former is a great recruiting depot; the officers take a*



*prominent place in local society. And in the third place, Tyneside grew and thrived on the race of armaments. Battleships and big guns meant wealth to the captains of industry, work to the rank and file, and dividends to thousands of local investors. Men love what they create, and the Tynesider followed the fortune of his craftsmanship all over the world. When the Japanese fleet blew the Russian fleet to pieces at Tsushima, it was remembered with pride on Tyneside that most of the victor's ships came from their river. Scotswood and Jarrow, in particular, lived on the materials of war. Naturally, they found it hard to be enthusiastic about disarmament”.* 137

More From **Industrial Tyneside: A Social Survey made for the Bureau of Social Research for Tyneside by Henry A. Mess**:

*“It is not a pleasant picture which has been drawn, but it is a true picture... It is probable that the Tyneside population is the worst housed population in England and Wales. The health of the area is at least as bad as that of any other district, and the amount of tuberculosis is appalling. In the matter of elementary education the area is backward; in most of the towns the schools are poorly staffed. The overcrowding figures bring to mind homes so tiny and so crammed that they almost seem to protrude bedsteads as one passes along the street. The density per acre figures are the summary of row after row of front doors level with the pavement, whilst in the rear a little bricked-in yard opens on a back lane. The health figures speak tragically to anyone who has sensibilities; they tell of house after house where there is some tuberculosis member of the family, a child with swollen glands, a big boy at the children's hospital, a father at the sanatorium, or a daughter dying slowly in one of the two rooms which constitute a home. That violently fluctuating curve of unemployment corresponds to the many hundreds of housewives trying to meet the needs of their households, with no assurance as to what money will be forthcoming on the morrow, or whether there will be any money at all... Men who are eating their hearts out, who are losing their morale, who have been reduced from the status of self-supporting men to that of paupers.”*

- 1936 **H. Oswald 1936** description of the Theatre Royal read '*Upon entering from Grey Street, parties come into the magnificent rotunda...consisting of two storeys separated by a circular stone gallery supported by richly ornamented stone cantilevers....A stone staircase leads to the gallery of the rotunda and to the upper circle crowned with deeply sunk panelling. Round both tiers of dress and upper boxes are spacious corridors. The interior of the boxes are lined with red and their front forms the elegant curve of the auditorium. Twelve fluted and gilded columns, of uncommonly slender proportions, support the upper tier of boxes...pillars of a similar form support the gallery, around the front of which is gilded scroll*'. 72



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- 1950 The Historian **Hugh Trevor-Roper** while writing on Northumberland said of Newcastle merchants '*alone in a barbarous country among illiterate and boorish squirrens, constituted a single element of civilisation....separating them from their elder brothers who bit their fingernails in draughty castellated farmhouses and murdered each other over the biting of a greyhound or even less important matters of dispute*'. 131

- 1960 's The historian **Judge Lyall Wilkes** Writing in the 1960's said '*this was a unique planning pioneering effort because it made Newcastle the first city with an elegantly planned commercial centre. Before 1834, Wood of Bath have built graceful crescents, Adam had built squares in Edinburgh, Carr had built his houses in York, but Grainger and Clayton's development was not of houses or public houses, but of gracious shops and shopping arcades, in the Georgian style with ornate pillars, pilasters, pediments and friezes based on the designs of classical Greek architecture. It was not only with whom you can keep a unique achievement in 1834; in scale and beauty it has never been equalled in this country*'. 67

**Pevsner** in his introduction to the Northumberland volume of Buildings of England wrote '*Rough are the winds, rough are the moors, rough the miners, rough are the castles, rough are the dolerite cliffs by the Roman wall and on the coast, rough is the stone of the wall which takes the place of hedges, if you compare it with the walling of the Cotswolds, and rough seems to be even the smoother and more precisely worked stone under the black soot of Newcastle*'. 69

**Pevsner** said of Grey Street '*one of the best streets in England*',

**Pevsner** said '*if Edinburgh is the Athens of the North then Newcastle is the North's Corinth, or better still its Sparta*'.

**Pevsner** concluded Newcastle to be '*the best designed Victorian town in England and indeed the best designed large City in England altogether*'.



The man who destroyed one of Grainger’s Greatest achievements, the Royal Arcade, T Dan Smith, known as ‘Mr Newcastle’ in the 1960s had a vision to make Newcastle the ‘*Brasilia of the North*’ and likened the City to Milan and Manhattan.

Smith had a dream of a ‘*city free and beautiful*’ – a modern, vibrant Newcastle to rival the very best cities in the world.

Smith had a vision of Modernising Tyneside that included urban motorways, a metro and high profile architecture in the form of the Scandinavian style Civic Centre.



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He wanted Newcastle to become ‘*the outstanding provincial city in the country*’. He dreamed of ‘*a city in the image of Athens, Florence and Rome*’. “*I wanted to see the creation of a 20<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of Dobson’s masterpiece*’, said Smith in his Autobiography. ‘*We’ve got to talk in terms on new cities. Just as in the Industrial revolution, we were ahead of our time, in the age of leisure we ourselves will also be leading the way*” ref Inside Out T. Dan. Smith

The Obituary notice in the **Newcastle Journal** for T Dan Smith read ‘*An abrasive and often ruthless Town Hall politician, who had an intimidating physical presence and a booming voice which didn’t brook argument. He could rule a committee room with a rod of iron. He could strike the fear of God into City Hall officials*’. 62

1979 In **John Ardagh’s A Tale of Five Cities** (120) (1979) wrote of Tyenside ‘*one of the few areas in Britain where true regional traditions survive. It is at least as real and self-aware as Languedoc (and Newcastle) has a stronger personality than any other big English town. But, there are things I find objectionable, even frightening...language I could not follow...felt something of that angst in the presence of an alien, vaguely menacing culture that I have felt in Muslim lands such as Iran and Algeria*’. 120

2000 **Millennium Bridge** 129  
 On it’s first ‘blink’ The **Guardian newspaper** reported ‘*The worlds first tilting bridge (kas) opened to shipping, not in some exotic transatlantic location but at the heart of a British region long famous for innovation: the North-East. The bridge links Newcastle and Gateshead, two towns which have for so long glowered at each other with unease and suspicion across the Tyne but are now together growing as bright and thriving as at any time in their history*”.



- 2014 **Thomas Faulkner** in **Newcastle upon Tyne: A Modern History** compares Grainger's day with modern Britain: '*Grainger thrived in the hectic, entrepreneurial atmosphere following the Napoleonic Wars, when construction was fuelled by surplus capital and low interest rates. There may be some affinity between this situation and the business-minded encouragement of market forces characteristic Of 'Thatcherism' in the 1980's*'. 50
- Architectural writer, **Adrian Jones** commented on Newcastle '*the most dramatic of the big northern cities with all this topography and engineering bravado, but is also a city of restrained masculine elegance. It has a confidence and pride rooted in exceptionalism, its character like its accent, so very different from commercial Leeds or Manchester, or maritime Liverpool or Hull. Looking more like Edinburgh or Glasgow, it has a strong whiff of the Baltic too*'. 130
- 2018 London writer **Luke Turner** tweeted in November 2018 '*I love the energy of Newcastle on a Saturday night – Slayer fans from their big Gig, Sea Power crew, inter-generational groups on the piss, a bloke dropping his doner, laughing his head off, getting the poppers out for his mate. It's easy to moan these days about the homogenisation of the UK, but Newcastle always feels like it's a bit of an exception to that. It is such a great City*'. 132

## Of Miners and North East Mining

**E A Rymer** in *The Martyrdom of the Mine* (102) described the Northumberland miner as follows 'To see the rear Pitmen stripped to his 'buff', in short breeches, low shoes and cotton skull-cap, swinging his five-pound pick, while the sweat runs down his face is a sight which can never be forgotten'.

The miners lived in mining communities gathered around the mines and pits and were seen as clannish, suspicious and 'not like other folk'. **John Wesley** (89) regarded the Tyneside pitmen as being 'in the first rank of savage ignorance and wickedness of every kind'. And the Pitmen wives were 'strangers to cleanliness, frugality or economy'.

**Shirley Brooks**, in *The Morning Chronicle* (October 1849) (107) wrote

*'In the north-eastern corner of England lies the great carboniferous deposit which supplied in 1845 eleven-twelfths of the entire mass of coal burned in the grates and furnaces of the kingdom. Between the Coquet and the Tees run the Tyne and the Wear, draining the broadest and richest portions of the coalfield, and on their banks lie scattered the oldest, deepest and the most extensive pits. Like almost all coal deposits, the strata forming the Newcastle field "dip" to a common bottom, somewhat in the manner of a basin, and of this basin, the centre, and therefore the deepest point, lies the sea coast hard by Sunderland.*

*The houses of the pit village may, be divided into three classes. Those of the lowest class usually contain only one room; those of the second contain a large room and an attic. The best houses consist of two rooms on the ground floor, with generally an attic over one of them. In all cases, the sitting room door is the street door.*

*More than one half of the pit population virtually live - each family - in a single room. Here is bedroom and kitchen - here the men and the boys, on their return from the pit, wash their almost naked bodies, too often in the presence of growing-up daughters and sisters and here too the women dress and undress. The men say they cannot wash upstairs, as the water would splash through the frequently warped flooring down upon the furniture, and perhaps the bed below.*

*When a young couple get married they generally go to a furniture broker in Newcastle or Sunderland, with perhaps £10 of ready money, obtaining a considerable part of their purchases upon credit, and paying for it by instalments".*

Former miner **Sid Chaplin** (127). Sid Chaplin argued that he was influenced both by mining experience, and by the story telling that occurred amongst the men he worked with: '*Later I discovered the reality behind it all; the dust and darkness, the laming and maiming, the bitter waters and blood and sweat that mingles with comradeship on the coalface. And a pitman with his lamp face down in the dust so that his face was in the shade said, "Ah mind, Ah mind once..." All this becomes part of the pattern of my living, and the pattern of my stories. I am the spokesman, the story-teller. The stories themselves bear my signature, but by the nature of that pattern they belong to many people'* (1970: 8)

*"They take a little and go into the belly of Leviathan. They take a lamp into the most terrifying darkness and they are not afraid. They take a little light because underground they know their poverty. Without light their arms are useless. In the strata they meet a darkness like a velvet pad pressed against the open eye, and this darkness, without a little light, is impenetrable and eager. At 200 fathoms the sun takes no levy nor gives of his majesty ... All is without form and void". **Sid Chaplin***

## **John Dobson**

**The Macmillan Encyclopaedia of Architects** (73) says of Dobson '*probably the ablest - and certainly the most prolific Victorian Architect in the North of England*' '*a talented watercolourist, an able engineer and a meticulous surveyor*' He also played '*a key role in the great re-building of Newcastle upon Tyne*'. In the course of his long career, Dobson designed more than 50 churches and 100 private houses.

**Margaret Dobson** (74) (daughter) relates a story about John Dobson '*Mr Dobson designed the Fish Market, Sandhill, Newcastle, the business of which was previously carried on in the open air. The good ladies who presided the stalls seriously objected to be removed from their old quarters, and for some time Mr Dobson received such an impolite reception from them that he was obliged to avoid their presence. But, when bad weather came, and they realised the comfort of their new abode, they relented, and a deputation of fair dames arrived at his residence in new Bridge Street with a peace offering of fish for Christmas Diner. Ever after that he was their 'canny Mr Dobsor'*'.

**Dobson** (75) himself described his Central Station design as '*The style of the Building is Roman, and the most striking features of the design is the Portico in the centre. 200 feet in length and 70 feet in width, flanked on each side by an arcade the same length, by 53 feet in width, allowing sufficient room for carriages to drive in at the end of each arcade, to turn, and go out at each end of the projecting portico. The convenience of this plan in such a climate as ours....will at once be apparent and the grandeur of the effect produced by the Arcade and portico of this length will readily be comprehended*'. Opened by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert 29 August 1850.

## **The Border Reivers**

The 19C Historian **G M Trevelyan** (39) described the Border Reivers as '*Cruel, coarse savages, slaying each other like the beasts of the forest; and yet they were also poets who could express themselves in the grand style the inexorable fate of the individual man and woman, the infinitive pity for all things which they nonetheless inflicted upon one another. It was not one ballad-maker alone but the whole cut throat population that felt this magnanimous sorrow, and the consoling charms of the highest poetry*'.

In **George MacDonald Fraser's** (40) classic novel **The Steel Bonnets**, both inhabitants on both side of the border were described as '*barbarous, crafty, vengeful, crooked, quarrelsome, tough, perverse, active, deceitful – there is harmony about the adjectives to be found in travellers descriptions and official letters. In general, it is conceded that the borderers, English and Scottish, were much alike ....*'.

Geographer, **C.B Fawcett** (41) in 1919 said '*for several centuries, while the rest of England was a peaceful agricultural country, this border region was its fight frontier, a land of savage guerrilla warfare of mingled heroism and barbarity. In every ancient village there are traditions of the border raids. For long after the cessation of that warfare the then poor region of the North was an unimportant part of the realm, except for the fact that the road from England to Scotland passed through it for a Hundred miles. It was too poor and barbarous to attract settlers from the more fertile lands to the South, and hence maintained its distinctive character*'.

## Dialect

At least four languages were spoken on Tyneside in the Middle Ages. Latin (or book language) was written and preached by the Church. French was the language of the ruling class, following Norman rule. Edward I was the first English king that could speak English. His predecessors were unable to understand what 90% of their subjects spoke. The continued use of Celtic names in rural areas suggests that Old Welsh was still spoken in the more outlying regions (as they did in Cumbria). English was the vernacular; the language of the vast majority on Medieval Tyneside. And that is how it was perceived 'slave language'. The language of the underclass.

The English parliament (42) of 1332 was anxious about the decline of French-speaking in England, particularly amongst the Nobility. Other commentators worried that English could replace French or Latin as a 'civilised language'. Some believed that the Northern dialect was not only entirely unsuitable but also unintelligible.

Chronicler **Ranulph Higden** (34) (early 14C.) wrote "All the language of the Northumbrians ..... is so sharp, piercing, rasping, and unformed that we Southerners can rarely understand it. I believe that the reason for this is because they are near to foreigners and aliens, and also because Kings of England have always lived far away from that Country'.

1929 book....'by all Newcastle the word 'Canny' is perfectly understood. It is however an adjective which, to the southerner presents difficulties. To him, its many apparently contradictory applications are puzzling. It is said that it first made its appearance in literature in the seventeenth century but with the men of Tyneside it has been current coin from time immemorial. In 'Canny Newcastle' this very multum in parvo among words express as none other could, the true Novocastrian's love for and pride in his birthplace'

**Newcastle Daily Chronicle** (116) 1884 from 'A Sea Queen'.... (117) In the mouths of the lower orders, Newcastle English is ... a very rugged and grotesque tongue, as unintelligible to the stranger as Dutch...On the other hand, there is nothing sweeter than the pronunciation of the educated Tynesider. There is something fascinating to listen to the silken rippling of a Newcastle lady's speech, and the bur, and an unconscious sprinkling of expressive local words will make the veriest commonplace attractive in a cultivated male speaker'.

**Parliamentary Commissioner 1840** (118) reporting on the task of interviewing North East pitmen "The barrier to our intercourse were formidable. In fact, their numerous mining technicalities, norther provincialism, peculiar intonation and accents, and rapid and indistinct utterance, rendered it essential for me...to devote myself to the study of these peculiarities ere I could translate and write the evidence".

**J.B. Priestley** (79) (1930) wrote of the dialect 'To my ear it still sounds a most barbarous, monotonous and irritating twang. Every short phrase rises in exactly the same way, almost to a scream – tat law, ta ta, tee tee, ti ti. The constant 'Ay-ee, mon' or 'Ay, ee, yer –' of the men's talk and the never ending 'Hinnying' of the women seems to me equally objectionable'.

Message from **Graham Martin**, (119) Poet (Website host):

Graham Martin coined the word "Marradharma". It is a 'blend word' combining two words of very different origin:



**"Marra"** is a dialect word, common in the North East of England and Cumbria, of ancient Norse origin meaning comrade, friend, pal, buddy or mate.

**"Dharma"** is a word of Sanskrit origin meaning wisdom, cosmic laws, or teaching in a variety of religious contexts in eastern traditions.

When combined, they take on a meaning which is greater than the sum total of their parts and this is a central part of William's 'polishing of the coinage' of working class culture [ref. the Guardian Obituary (129)].

## **RYTON**

**A history of Ryton** (109) reports that from 1538 (when Bywell Bridge was destroyed) there was no River crossing between Corbridge and Newcastle until the Scotswood suspension bridge of 1831. Rytonians had to rely upon 'the Scotswood ferry' or the 'Benwell Ferry' and this service continued until the Second world war.

*'O where is the boatman...My bonny honey!  
O where is the boatman...bring him to me –  
To ferry me over the Tyne to my honey,  
And I will remember the boatman and thee'.*

There were two sizeable islands in the Tyne in front of Armstrong's Elswick works: Kings Meadows and the Clarence (or Annie) Island. Before 1883 it was possible at low tide to plodge from Elswick to Kings Meadow which had a public House. A map of 1864 shows a rowing boat company used to convey people and goods from Kings Meadow to Elswick.



In 1929 a **former publican's daughter** recalled 'my sister and I rowed hundreds of men to the shore and back again. Many a time I've managed the sculling boat alone with seven or eight drunken men as passengers. All the beer and even water had to be rowed across.

## Heaton

Heaton developed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed that licensed properties were restricted by covenants made with the original landowners. But towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the pressure for a public house mounted.

In 1890 magistrates were told by residence that Heaton was '*a very large district without a public house accommodation*', nearby Jesmond Vale was inaccessible and Byker '*did not contain the class of houses for the residents in the new part of Heaton*'.

In 1882 permission was granted for the East End Hotel which later became the Chillingham Hotel. The opening of the East End Hotel was an exceptional occurrence. When other proposals were put forward, temperance activists and the churches could be relied upon to organise resistance. The Heaton anti-licensing council was opposed to the granting of licences '*on moral grounds, because of the temptation they would place in the way of the young, and to those who passed by*'. And '*with it's fairy lights the public house would tempt those passing to turn aside from the path of rectitude*'. The anti-licensing council said more licences would '*destroy the character Heaton had in the past for moral perfection and purity*' and '*Heaton Road will become a Bear Garden*'.

James Deuchar (111) (Brewer) in 1934 applied to the magistrates for a publican's license for a Hotel to build on the corner of Heaton Road and Stephenson Road. The plan was to '*erect a hotel in the modern style with Georgian and Dutch structures, there would be a good frontage to the site, and provision is also made for a Veranda and car park at the rear, with a lawn faces south. A wine shop is to be included at the end of the building*'. Opposition to the hotel was put by a lawyer representing 52 residents who asked justices to '*visualise the possible effect on the minds of schoolchildren in the neighbourhood*'. The Minister of the Memorial Methodist Church claimed that the application was '*immoral*' and that they were '*trying to prevent people from an evil, just as you would try to prevent your children get diphtheria*'. The magistrates granted the licence and the Corner House was opened in 1936.

## Jesmond

The Cradlewell, Jesmond.



There was a time when many publicans would send to the actual 'Cradle Well' simply a Cradle Shaped horse trough on Jesmond Road. The publican of the Cradle well would say to fetch pure water to mix with whisky. In 1890 it was pointed out however that *'it is a fact beyond contradiction that many persons still walk there of a morning to drink the fresh spring water, which they commend is so much superior to the fluid the water company supplies from their pipes. Pity it is to disturb so great an hallucination on the part of all these people. The water to the Cradle Well is supplied through the pipes of the Water Company, and has been for years'*.

Following the end of the second world war and the return of the armed forces the demand for beer and Ale was in high demand. **Brian Bennison's** book, **Heavy Nights** (8) relays a story from a Shieldfield local. *'Licensing laws were strict and pubs were bound to stay open during licencing hours, whether or not they could meet customer demand. It was not unusual to find a public house packed within a couple of minutes of opening time and the barmaid calling 'beer off now' an hour later, whilst a neighbouring pub would then have 'beer on' for an hour. It was the publicans response to the shortage, their way of rationing. When the call 'beer off' was made at one establishment, dedicated drinkers would sprint to another. Alternatively, a lucky regular may be allowed to order five or six pints during 'beer on' and drink to his heart's content at his preferred local unmoved by the 'beer off' panic amongst other customers'*.

## **Byker**

Byker first appeared in historical documents in 1198 'as the most important Serjeantry in Northumberland' held by William of Byker, a Norman noble.

**R J Charleton's "A History of Newcastle-on-Tyne (64)** from the earliest records to its formation as a city" says of Byker: "It is a quiet place now, containing no ancient buildings but it has all the unmistakable air of an ancient settlement. It was held by Nicholas de Bikar in 1234 – one of the family that was so rich in land in the middle ages, to which belonged the ground on which the whole of Pandon and great part of Newcastle now stands.

The Percies held Byker in the time of Henry VI, and after their defeat at Bramham Moor, Edward IV granted it to his brother, the Duke of Clarence (of Malsley butt fame).

In 1567, it was held by Sir Ralph Lawson, and his descendents, we believe, hold great part of it still. There used to be here, a few years ago, an ancient house – the Blue Bell Inn – which had once been the manor house of the Lawsons, and perhaps stood on the site of the castle of the de Bikars. Some of its rooms were adorned with carved work and carved oak chimney pieces, and the walls were hung with old tapestry.

The old house was demolished in 1863 and the tapestry was presented to the Society of Antiquaries by Mr G A Brummell. "Dent's Hole was part of Byker and found to the south east of Newcastle, immediately east of St. Peter's. It is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1859, but disappeared before the 1895 map, due to the building of the railway. On both maps there is a ferry across to Friars Goose, Felling...Dent's Hole is mentioned in **Charleton's** "Newcastle Town" (64). The following passage mentions an "old Mr Emmet" who was probably one of our ancestors..... "...the whalers are seen no more at Dent's Hole; but the salmon fishery is still carried on there. At the east end of the village, if village it can now be called, is the house of Mr Emmet, who owns the ancient fishery. On poles in front we see his nets hanging up to dry, and by the shore his boats lie afloat in the season, ready to be launched at the proper time of the tide for fishing. The time arrived – that is, when the tide is nearly at its lowest – you will see the veteran fisher come forth in his shirt sleeves, wearing a long hat, and with a long pipe in his mouth. a group of assistants will gather round him, and the boats will be pushed off into the stream, the nets, which are piled on the partly covered-in stern, paying themselves out as the boat progresses.

One end of the net is left on shore, and the vigorous strokes of the old man soon brings back the boat (to which the other end is attached), after describing a half circle, to the shore. Then both ends of the net are drawn in, and slowly the bag approaches and is drawn on shore, and if we are, or rather, if Mr. Emmet is lucky, we may see two or perhaps three or four silvery-sided fish struggling in the meshes.

Other boats have meanwhile been pursuing the same tactics; no time is lost, for the golden opportunity only lasts until a short time after the turn of the tide."

**Kenneth More** (113) in his biography **More or less** recalls his pre-war impressions of Byker 'going through the streets of such wretchedness that it was almost inconceivable that people could live there', but on his arrival at The Grand (Theatre) he goes on to say 'everything inside the theatre was beautiful. The Auditorium was all gilt, with red plush seats. In the midst of the poverty and broken down houses and mean, shabby streets, the Grand glowed like a temple of enjoyment'.

**John Page** in 1973 retired as a publican of the Queen's Head in Byker. Known as Jackie 'boy' Page an ex-professional boxer who lost only six of 96 fights. **Jackie 'Boy' Page** reminisced of the Byker he had known 'the odd few Bob for a fight came in handy. For six rounds you got 19 shillings, for 10 you



got 50 shillings and for 15 rounds you got £5. I can remember up on the Town Moor there was real scramble for the gloves at the fighting booth. You got 10 shilling if you lasted three rounds. If you were knocked out you got nothing’.

In **John Jarret’s** Autobiography of ‘Seaman’ Tommy Watson, **from Byker to Broadway** – a former champion boxer who travelled to the states to be narrowly defeated by Kid Chocolate ‘the Cuban Bon-Bon’, Jarret recalls that Tommy Watson returned to his native Byker to manage the New Hawk pub, ‘the man who put Tommy behind the bar was Mr Ned Wilkinson, the one-time cycling champion. In fact, the New Hawk Inn had quite a sporting background, the pub at one time run by Mr Bob Gray, a former sculler on the River Tyne’. When Watson won the British title in 1932 he had trained for the big fight with one punch bag in a tiny room above the bar at the New Hawk.

## People

In 1924 Sociologist **Henry Mess** (121) preamble to an official survey of this depressed industrial area wrote "It will be felt by any stranger who comes to live on Tyneside that it is one of the districts of England with the most marked characteristic in custom, character, manners and speech. It is difficult to set down in words local characteristics, which are so easily felt. There is a curious abruptness of manner, which is very disconcerting until one has got used to it. There is a marked clannishness of the old families. Hospitality is generous when once a newcomer has been admitted to it, but he may be kept a long time waiting in the cold. There is a great love of outdoor sport; an unusual knowledge of wild life; [and] a great deal of interest in local history and antiquarianism".

In **John Ardagh's A Tale of Five Cities** (120) (1979) wrote of Tyenside "one of the few areas in Britain where true regional traditions survive. It is at least as real and self-aware as Languedoc (and Newcastle) has a stronger personality than any other big English town. But, there are things I find objectionable, even frightening...language I could not follow...felt something of that angst in the presence of an alien, vaguely menacing culture that I have felt in Muslim lands such as Iran and Algeria".

**C.B. Fawcett** (Geographer) (41) 1919 said of Northumbria, "For several centuries, while the rest of England was a peaceful agricultural country, this border region was its fight frontier, a land of savage guerrilla warfare of mingled heroism and barbarity. In every ancient village there are traditions of the border raids. For long after the cessation of that warfare the then poor region of the north was an unimportant part of the realm, except for the fact that the road from England to Scotland passed through it for a hundred miles. It was too poor and barbarous to attract settlers from the more fertile lands to the south, and hence maintained its distinctive character".

**Jose Maria De Eca De Queiros** (122) Portuguese Diplomat and Novelist lived at 53, Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne 1874 – 1879. His commentary on Newcastle included: "An enormous brutish crowd, rough and noisy, fills the wide streets, harshly lit by shining gas lamps and shop windows; the Gin palaces are ablaze with light... drunks stagger about punching each other; on a street corner a preacher... howls verses from the bible ... Prostitutes pester insolently, demanding money ... two enormous policemen drag an old woman away, drunk and cursing; groups of miners, pipes in their mouths, greyhounds at heel, talk in the rough speech of Northumbria; amorous couples go by arms around each other, kissing shamelessly; the whistles of locomotives pierce the thick air... and in squares and alleys, on restaurant pianos, drunken patriots sing the new war song We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do...! Shouting that the Russians shall not have Constantinople!".

In 1854 the **Newcastle Temperance Movement** (123) wrote 'drink was no affectation but part of the City's economic and fabric with 425 pubs, 76 beer-shops and the colossal sum of £130,000 being spent a years on alcoholic beverages'.

Newcastle in the late 19C 'was simply the most drunken town in England' drunkenness proceedings nationally stood at 62per10,000 persons but in Newcastle it stood at 207per 10,000 and in 1901 10 comparable English Seaports had 88per10,000 proceedings., Newcastle had 225per10,000 persons. War poet **Ivor Gurney** (124) commenting on his time recuperating in the General Hospital says 'Canny Newcassel, where people have very kind hearts and very rough manners. Hospitable in a manner almost unknown in the South'.

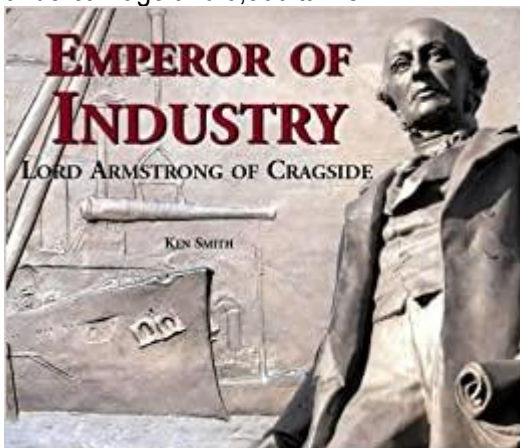
## Industry

In 1872 the **Admiralty Surveyor** (110) reported '*from being a byword of neglect and decay, the Tyne has been converted into the most noteworthy example of river improvements within the bounds of the united kingdom*'.



In 1876 the Italian Navy took delivery of the Tyneside shipyard built 'The Europa', fitted with a 100 Ton gun and the local antiquarian **Collingwood Bruce** (125) commented 'in the second century, Rome exhibited on the banks of the Tyne the triumphs of her engineering skills,...In the nineteenth Century the chieftains of Tyneside showed Rome how largely Britain had profited by her instruction'. Between 1868 and 1927 Armstrong's factory on the Tyne was responsible for 42% of all British Warship production. Armstrong sold armaments to any Government who could afford his products. It was with pride that the **Newcastle Chronicle** (126) reported 'Tyneside has become one of the world's greatest centres for the production of weapons of death' and the Chronicle realised that 'the town was most prosperous at times of peril'.

Between 1914 and 1918 alone Armstrong built 47 warships, armed another 62 ships and repaired or re-fitted 521 ships. By the end of the first world war Armstrong's factories were employing 60,000 men and women on Tyneside, producing over 13,000 heavy guns, 12,000 gun carriages, and 14,500,000 shells. And in the Second World war Vickers Armstrong produced 33,000 guns, 1.25 million shells and bombs, 11 million cartridges, 16 million fuses, 39,000 high pressure air and oxygen cylinders, 23,000 aircraft undercarriage and 3,500 tanks.



When Lord Armstrong died in 1900, the **Newcastle Chronicle** (126) was black bordered in respect but commented that he was responsible for 'the most wonderful machinery of production and the most tremendous machinery of murder' and that '*there is something that appalls the imagination in the application of a cool and temperate mind like Lord Armstrong's to the science of destruction*'.

## **Newcastle v Sunderland**

The Newcastle and Sunderland conflict predates the football rivalry by 226 years. It is a conflict that has divided two cities, 12 miles apart, for more than three centuries.

In the epoch before the 1600s, King Charles I had consistently awarded the East of England Coal Trade Rights (try to contain your excitement) to Newcastle's traders, which rendered the Wearside coal merchants redundant. People died because of it. Coal and ships were Sunderland's *raison d'être*.

But when, in 1642, the English Civil War started, and Newcastle, with good reason, supported the Crown, Sunderland, because of the trading inequalities, sided with Cromwell's Parliamentarians, and the division began.

It became a conflict between Sunderland's socialist republicanism, against Newcastle's loyalist self-interest. A purposeful enmity if ever there was one. Unlike rivalries between other football clubs, the differences between Newcastle and Sunderland date back to fighting based on the necessity to live and feed one's children, and benefit one's city.

The political differences between the two culminated with the battle of Boldon Hill. A loyalist army from Newcastle and County Durham gathered to fight an anti-monarchist Sunderland and Scottish army at a field equidistant between the two towns.

The joint Sunderland and Scottish won the day long battle – and Newcastle was later colonised by the Scottish Covenanters led by Alexander Leslie, 1<sup>st</sup> earl of Leven (siege of Newcastle)

Newcastle was subsequently used as a Republican military base for the rest of war.

To make matters worse the marquess of Newcastle formed the acclaimed Royalist regiment the 'Whitecoats' who distinguished themselves as a hard fighting outfit throughout the English Civil war but finally met their demise at Marston Moor in 1664 where they refused quarter and fought to the last man. On the opposing Parliamentary army was Sunderland born Lieutenant Colonel John Lilburne.

Later in history and the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. The Jacobites declared that the natives of Newcastle were staunch supporters of the Hanoverian kings, whose first representative George I reigned (1714-1727) at the time of the 1715 Jacobite rebellion. Newcastle contrasted with rural Northumberland and Sunderland which largely supported the Jacobite cause. Again Newcastle found their allegiance at odds with their neighbours. This time the Jacobite rebels and Scottish army were defeated and Newcastle were on the winning side.

In March 2000, more than 70 Sunderland and Newcastle hooligans took part in some of the worst football-related violence ever seen in Britain. It was not even a match day. What the police called 'usually respectable men and fathers' had decided to meet in mutual territory with their enemies, to fight with knives, bats and bricks.

Sunderland fans boarded a ferry towards Tyneside, found the awaiting 'army', and fought. One man was left permanently brain-damaged. Dozens of people were arrested, and years upon years of prison-time was sentenced.

The continuation of tension involves a new sense of injustice. For well over a decade, Sunderland's population has bemoaned that they have been paying their local taxes to finance both the Newcastle Metro and airport.

## Why Mackems and Geordies?

'Geordie' signified a supporter of the Hanoverian dynasty, where the first four kings were all called George. This was to distinguish them from Jacobites (Jacobus meaning 'James' in Latin, or supporters of the Stuarts). In the 1715 uprising most of Northumberland declared for the Stuarts but Newcastle closed its gates and supported the Hanoverians, and so its people became 'Geordies'.

The derivations are uncertain, but both have theories based in historical political allegiances. It has been said that the nickname 'Geordie' derived from the Tyneside coalminers preferred George Stephenson's (37) 'Geordie' safety lamp over the more widely used Humphry Davy lamp. However, there are reference to 'Geordies' documents well before the Safety lamp.

Most likely it is 'Geordie' because of Tyneside's staunch support of the Hanoverian King George II during the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion - 'Geordie' is a common diminutive of 'George' and the term "Geordie" may have derived from the popular anti-Hanoverian song "Cam Ye O'er Frae France?" which calls the first Hanoverian king "Geordie Whelps", a play on "George the Guelph".

It is also said that 'Mackem' because of Wearside's accommodation of the Scottish 'Blue Mac' army during the civil war. But, it is more likely, that the origins stem from aspects of the shipbuilding and coalmining industries. And it has been accepted almost universally that Mackem is derived from the phrase Mak(e)'em and Tak(e)'em, coined by Tyneside shipbuilders to insult their counterparts on the River Wear, who would build the ships and have them taken away by the richer classes

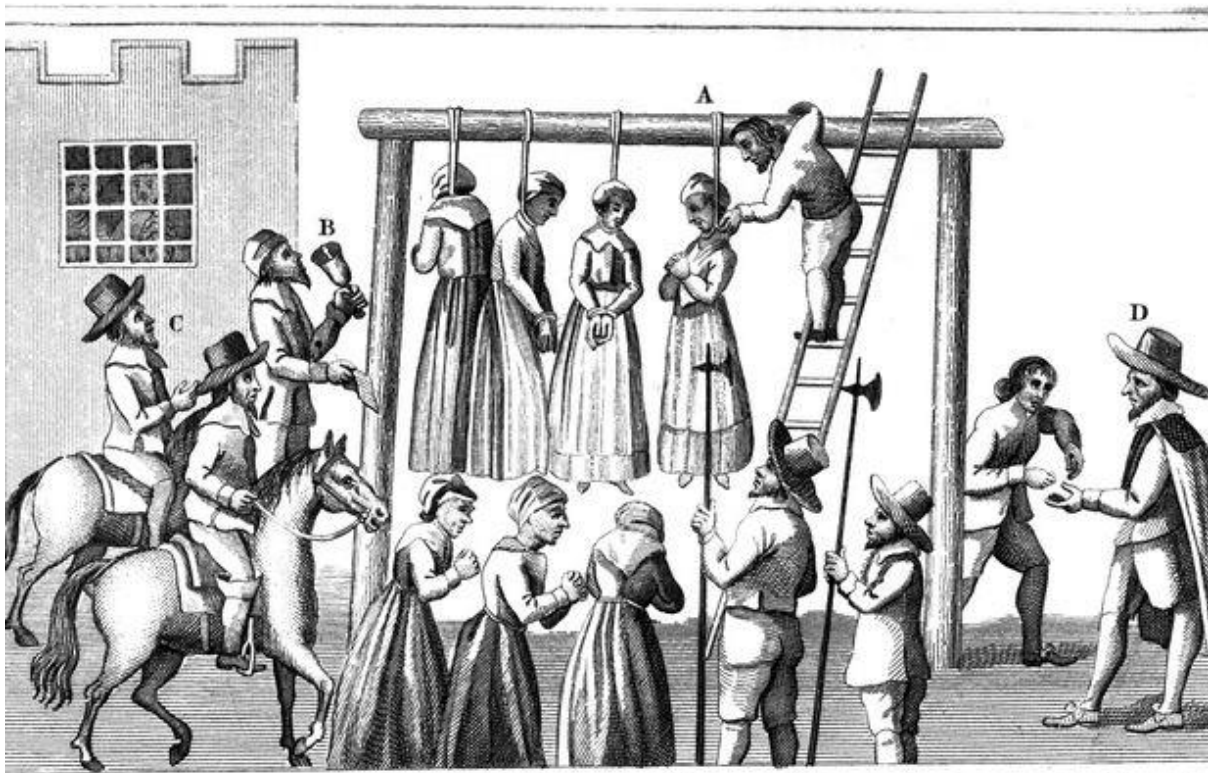


## Crime and Punishment

**John Gaule** (133) 1646 *Select cases of conscience touching witches and witchcraft*. "In every place and parish, every old woman with a wrinkled face, a scolding tongue, having a rugged coate on her back, a skull-cap on her head, a spindle in her hand, a dog or cat by her side, is not only suspect but is pronounced a witch. Every new disease, notable accident, miracle of nature, rarity of art, nay, and strange work or just judgment of god, is by the people accounted for no other but an act or effect of withcraft".

The witchpricker was paid 20 shillings for each one he picked out (if the unfortunate women when pricked did not bleed, it meant they were witches) identified 28 witches. Locked up in the old Newgate Prison and the Castle Keep, they awaited their fate - although half were freed, including one who was deemed "too pretty" to be a witch. **Ralph Gardiner** (134) in his 1655 book, *England's grievance discovered, in relation to the coal-trade* wrote: "Thirty women were brought into the town hall and stript [sic], and then openly had pins thrust into their bodies." "The said reputed witch-finder acquainted Lieutenant Colonel Hobson that he knew women, whether they were witches or no by their looks, and when the said person was searching of a personable, and good-looking woman, the said Colonel replied and said, 'Surely this women is none, and need not be tried'. The witch-finder replied 'but the Scotch man said she was, for the town said she was, and therefore he would try her'.

For the rest, on August 21, 1650, the 14 women and a man - who was accused of being a wizard - were publicly executed on gallows erected on Newcastle's Town Moor. Together with nine moss-troopers (a term for cattle rustlers) were also hanged that day.



It was the largest recorded mass execution for witchcraft in English history. The last would take place in 1727.

Records stored by **Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums** (135) reveal the cost of the executions. The "*bill of charges for the wiches for 2 weekes ending the 23th (sic) of August 1650 and other charges for executing the prisoners*" was £15 19s 2d".

An early description of the drunkard's cloak appears in **Ralph Gardiner's** *England's Grievance Discovered* (134), first published in 1655. A man in Newcastle claimed to have seen "*men drove up and down the streets, with a great tub, or barrel, opened in the sides, with a hole in one end, to put through their heads, and to cover their shoulders and bodies, down to the small of their legs, and then close the same, called the new fashioned cloak, and so make them march to the view of all beholders; and this is their punishment for drunkards, or the like.*"

In an episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast, historian Dan Jackson (136) highlights how the drunkard's cloak was used as a punishment for "habitual drunkards" in the north east of England in the 16th and 17th centuries. "It was called the 'Newcastle cloak', Drinking culture has been an intrinsic part of the north east of England for a very long time, Jackson adds. "It's a bit of a cliché, but it's very deep seated," he says. "Newcastle claims to be one of the first town's in England to brew beer, for example. And 'Newcastle hospitality' was a well known phrase in the 18th century – this meant, essentially, to kill someone with kindness (aka take them out for a big drinking session)."

## **Ballads and Song**

Ballads are a significant commentary through the ages. *Songs of the Bards of the Tyne* (92) is a [chapbook](#) style songbook, giving the lyrics of local, now historical songs, with a few bits of other information. It was edited by **J. P. Robson** and published by **P. France & Co.** in 1850. The Keel Row is a Border song from Newcastle and Tyneside. It was, oddly enough, first printed in Edinburgh about **1770** in '**A Collection of Favourite Scots Tunes**'. (93) The word 'keel' means, in Tyneside dialect, a boat. (**Penguin Book of English Folk Songs 112**)

[1974:]

**(The Keelers, intro Hull Shanty Festival, 'Seasongs', Radio Bremen, 27. Juni 1997) (96)**

As I came through Sandgate, through Sandgate, through Sandgate

As I came through Sandgate I heard a lassie sing

As I came through Sandgate, through Sandgate, through Sandgate

As I came through Sandgate I heard a lassie sing

*Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row*

*Weel may the keel row that my wee laddie's in*

*Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row*

*Weel may the keel row that my wee laddie's in*

Wha' s like my Johnnie, sae leish, sae blythe, sae bonnie

He's foremost 'mang the mony keel lads o' the Tyne

Wha' s like my Johnnie, sae leish, sae blythe, sae bonnie

He's foremost 'mang the mony keel lads o' the Tyne

*Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row*

*Weel may the keel row that my wee laddie's in*

*Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row*

*Weel may the keel row that my wee laddie's in*

He wears a blue bonnet, blue bonnet, blue bonnet

He wears a blue bonnet, a dimple on his chin

He wears a blue bonnet, blue bonnet, blue bonnet

He wears a blue bonnet, a dimple on his chin

**"When The Boat Comes In"** (or **"Dance Ti Thy Daddy"**) (97) is a traditional North East England [folk](#) song. An early source for the lyrics, **Joseph Robson's "Songs of the bards of the Tyne"**, published 1849, can be found on the FARNE archive. In FARNE's notes to the song, it is stated that these lyrics were written by William Watson around 1826. *Come here, my little Jacky,*

*Now I've smoked my Backey,*

*Let's have a bit crackey,*

*Till the boart comes in,*

*Dance to thy Daddy, sing to thy mammy,*

*Dance to thy Daddy, to thy mammy sing;*

*Thou shalt have a fishy on a little dishy,*

*Thou shalt have a fishy when the boat comes in.*

## The Sandgate Pant;

Or, Jane Jemieson's Ghost



The Bell of St. Ann's tolld two in the morning,  
As brave Skipper Johnson was gawn to the keel--  
From the juice of the barley his poor brain was burning--  
In search of relief he through Sandgate did reel;  
The city was hush, save the keel-bullies snoring--  
The moon faintly gleam'd through the sable-clad sky,  
When lo! a poor female her hard fate deploring,  
Appear'd near the pant, and thus loudly did cry:--  
Ripe Chenee oranges four for a penny!  
Cherry ripe cornberries- taste them and try!

O listen, ye hero of Sandgate and Stella,  
Jim Jemieson kens that yor courage is trig.  
Go tell Billy Elli to meet me, brave fellow--  
Aw'll wait yor return on Newcassel Tyne Brig!--  
Oh, marcy! cried Johnson, yor looks gar me shiver!  
Maw canny lass, Jin, let me fetch him next tide;  
The spectre then frown'd--and he vanish'd for ever,  
While Sandgate did ring as she vengefully cried--  
Fine Chenee oranges, four for a penny!  
Cherry ripe cornberries--taste them and try!

She waits for her lover, each night at this station,  
And calls her ripe fruit with a voice loud and clear,  
The keelbullies listen in great consternation--  
Tho' snug in their huddocks, they tremble with fear!  
She sports round the pant till the cock, in the morning,  
Announces the day--then away she does fly  
Till midnight's dread hour--thus each maiden's peace scorning,  
They start from their couch as they hear her loud cry--  
Fine Chenee oranges, four for a penny!  
Cherry ripe cornberries--taste them and try!

**R. Emery** (98)-- In: **The Newcastle Song Book or Tyne-Side Songster.**, W&T Fordyce  
Newcastle Upon Tyne

**Geordie Ridley** (101) wrote **The Blaydon Races** and allegedly first sang the song at a concert in Balmbra's Music Hall on 5 June 1862. It is likely that on this occasion the song ended with the exhortation to see Ridley's show on 9 June, and that the final verse was added for that later performance.

Aa went to Blaydon Races, 'twas on the ninth of Joon,  
Eiteen hundred an' sixty-two, on a summer's efternoon;  
Aa tyuk the 'bus frae Balmbra's, an' she wis heavy laden,  
Away we went 'lang Collin'wood Street, that's on the road to Blaydon.

**Chorus:**

Ah me lads, ye shudda seen us gannin',  
We pass'd the foaks along the road just as they wor stannin';  
Thor wis lots o' lads an' lassies there, aal wi' smiling faces,  
Gannin' along the Scotswood Road, to see the Blaydon Races.

The song was adopted as its marching anthem by the British Army Infantry soldiers of the Fifth of Foot ([The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers](#)), of [Fenham Barracks](#),

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