

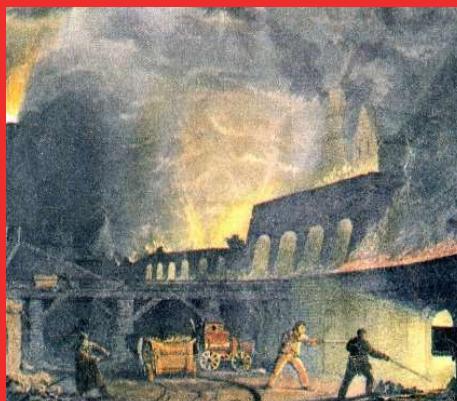
**EXPLORING YOUR LOCAL HISTORY**

# **THE OUTER WEST**

## **NEWBURN LEMINGTON SUGLEY**

### **BELL'S CLOSE**

#### **A HERITAGE GUIDE**



**St James' Heritage & Environment Group  
West End Heritage Guides**

# **The Outer West**

## **A Heritage Guide**

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### **Newburn: an introduction**

Newburn today is on the periphery of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, bypassed by its major transport routes, but the area has an important history long predating its incorporation into the city in 1974. Although it remained a small settlement, it occupied a strategic location that gave it a significant role in a wider economic and political context. In fact, before the Norman Conquest, Newburn was considered more important than Newcastle.

The ancient manor of Newburn was important strategically for many centuries because it was the lowest crossing point on the River Tyne. Consequently many marauding armies have headed for Newburn on their way to attack other places. Perhaps the most famous was the Battle of Newburn in 1640 where a Scottish army defeated an English one, leaving the way open to seize Newcastle and proving a decisive turning point in the Civil War.

Later on, Newburn was on the route of the Wylam Waggonway, along which coal was carried from the pit at Wylam to the staithes at Lemington via Newburn. This waggonway was one of the oldest in England, and one of the most important. It was the scene of early experiments in steam locomotion in the early 19th century. Among these early steam engines was the Puffing Billy.



In 1871 a railway line was built (the Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam Railway) which connected the village to the main Newcastle and Carlisle line via a loop from Scotswood Bridge

to Wylam. A station was built just to the south of the village in 1875, receiving passengers until 1958. In 1893 communications were further improved by the building of a bridge across the river near to the station.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw a rapid growth in industry around the small village.

There were already several pits in the area, but the impact of coalmining grew with the opening of the Isabella Pit in 1867 to the west of the village. Coke ovens and brickworks were also developed on the site.



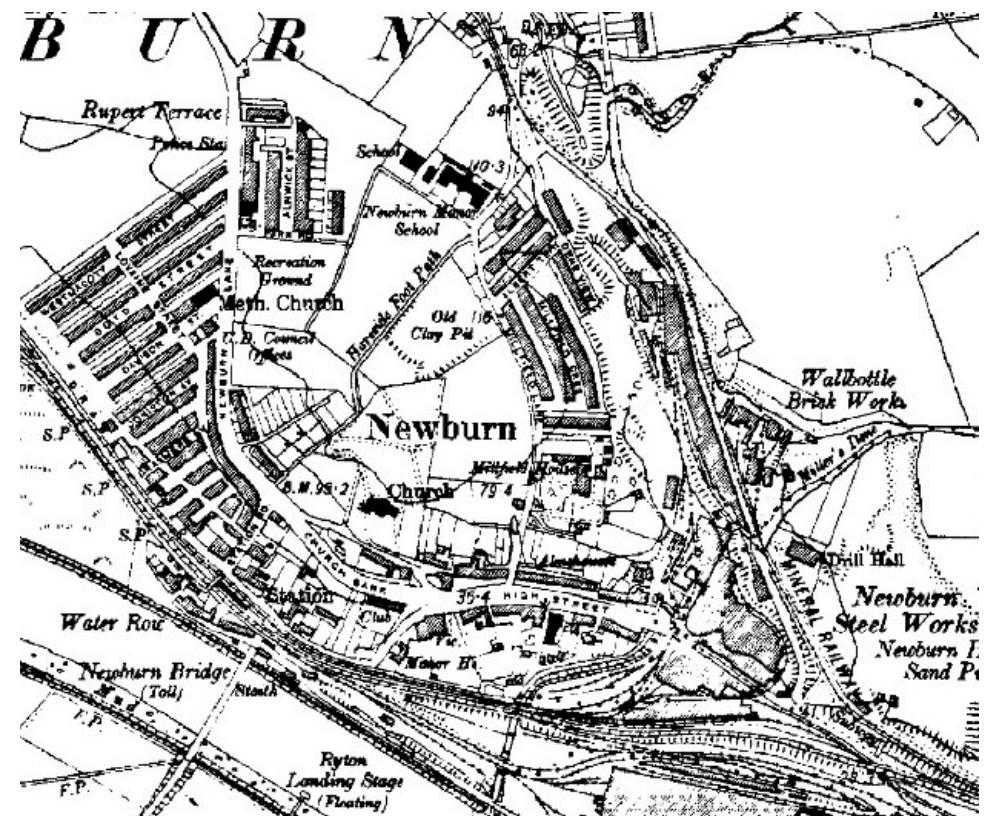
On the other side of the village, a steel works had started up in 1822 in the dene between Newburn and Walbottle.

Demand for its products soon soared, as a result of the rapid development of industry across Tyneside, and especially with the expansion of the railways. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Spencer's steel works had workshops all the way down from the dene to the river. After the closure of Wylam Pit in 1867, the section of the waggonway through Newburn was turned into a mineral line connecting Isabella Pit to Spencer's works.



So important was the steel industry that Newburn was known locally at this time as "New Sheffield". This photograph of workers at Spencer's was taken c1912.

As a consequence of this growth in industrial activity, the village of Newburn had expanded to the west and north. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, rows of terraced housing had been built. The new houses to the west of the village were named after Directors of Spencer's Steel Works - Westmacott, Davison and Boyd. Meanwhile one of the most important relics of the area's past – Newburn Hall with its 15<sup>th</sup> century pele tower – was swallowed up by the expanding steel works. Another historic building, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Newburn Manor House, had disappeared by the time of the First World War.



This map shows how Newburn looked in 1921

# Newburn Village Heritage Trail

## Start your walk

The walk starts at the War Memorial on the north side of the main street. This is quite a distinctive feature so you should have no difficulty finding it.

### War Memorial

The war memorial is a Grade 2 listed structure. It was paid for by public donation to honour the dead of Newburn & District in the First World War.

The memorial was unveiled in 1922 by the major local landowner, the Duke of Northumberland. It features a stone figure of a soldier in battledress on top of a rectangular Portland stone pillar.



Leaving the War Memorial, cross the road and walk down Station Road.

As you walk down, you can see on your left a building that formerly housed the Imperial Cinema. It opened in 1911 with seating for 550 people.

At the bottom of the road, on the right hand corner, there is a large building which used to be the Newburn Hotel. This was

built in 1895 to provide accommodation for rail passengers and stabling facilities for horses.

Turn left at the bottom and walk along the road. The station used to be here, but there is nothing remaining of its wooden buildings.



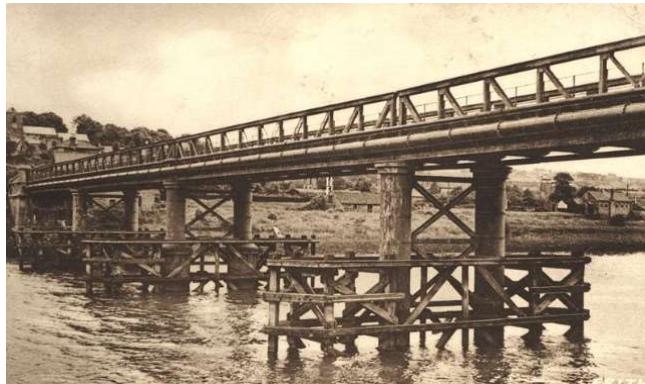
Newburn Station, date unknown.

When you reach the traffic lights, turn right and walk a few yards to the start of Newburn Bridge. Take a look around here, but do not cross the bridge.

To your west you can see the Boathouse Pub on the riverside. This is Water Row, notable as the site of the former Water Row pit where George Stephenson worked for a time, looking after a newly installed engine built by Robert Hawthorn. There is a plaque on the front wall of the Boathouse commemorating Stephenson, and also marks carved into the wall showing how high the water rose during the frequent floods to which this area was prone.

## Newburn Bridge

In 1893 a bridge was opened across the river, connecting Newburn to the south. It is pictured here c1920. The bridge supports go down nearly 30 metres, resting on solid rock.



The need for a bridge was largely prompted by the major dredging operations carried out by the Tyne Improvement Commission which meant that the ford could no longer be used. The bridge also enabled local people to cross the river easily to reach Ryton Station which was on the main Newcastle-Carlisle railway line. Newburn Bridge operated as a toll bridge until 1947.



Take a moment to imagine the scene more than a century ago. This photograph of the riverside at Newburn dates from 1899.

Leaving the bridge, turn right at the traffic lights and walk up Station Road to rejoin the main street of Newburn village. This route curves gently as it goes uphill – less steeply than the way you walked down.

There is not a lot to see any more, but you can imagine that on your right is the site of the ancient Manor House. Sadly nothing remains of this building today.

When you reach the junction with the main street, take a look at the building on the left. This used to be the Working Men's Institute.

## Working Men's Institute

The Working Men's Club and Institute dates from 1884. .

The Institute was built for the workers at Spencer and Sons steel works. The Institute was equipped with baths, a library, reading rooms, recreation rooms, and other facilities. Workers from the steel works could use the club for a penny a week. No alcohol was served.



During the economic slump of the 1920s, when the steel works closed down for a period, the building was used as a dole office.

More recently it was a care home but this has closed.

Turn right at the top of the road, noting the old vicarage as you pass.

### Old Vicarage

The building you can see with the sign saying it is the Old Vicarage dates from 1868. Pictured right, it is no longer the residence of the local vicar, who now occupies a modern building behind the older vicarage.



The Old Vicarage itself is not in fact the oldest vicarage in the village. It replaced the previous 16<sup>th</sup> century building known as the Manor House, which stood just to the south and is pictured here on the left c1900.

Next door to the old vicarage is a large white house named Newburn House. This was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and is Grade 2 listed. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was a doctor's house, and is still known locally as "Dr Scott's house".

Walk east along the main street, noting that trams used to run along here, connecting the village with Lemington to the east and Throckley to the west.

The tramway was replaced by a bus service in 1946.



As you walk along, note the row of Almshouses on the opposite side of the street. When you have almost passed these, you will see on your side of the street the former Cottage Hospital building. It is now a private house, but see if you can spot the carving above the door which identifies it as a hospital.

### Cottage Hospital

This building began as a Methodist Sunday School. When this was replaced by a bigger school, the building was offered to the Local Board of Health. In 1909, the Spencer family paid to extend the building and convert it into a hospital.



The Cottage Hospital is pictured here in 1910

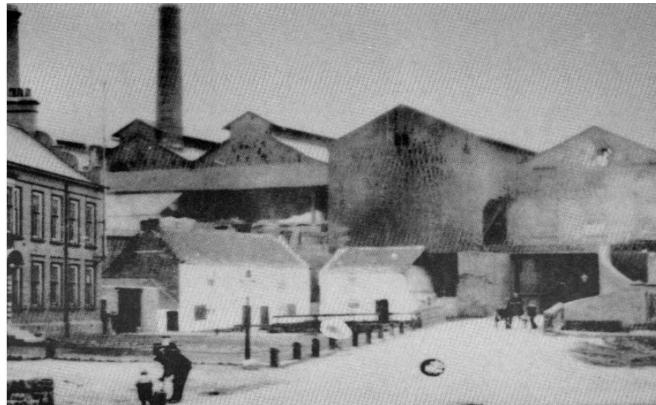
Further along, you will see on the opposite side of the street a large brick building which used to be the offices of Spencer's steel works. You can identify it by the semi-circular porch hood over the entrance door.

### **Spencer's Steel Works office**

Spencer's steel works grew during the 19<sup>th</sup> century from its original grinding mill in Millers Dene (to the north east of Newburn village) into a huge operation spreading down to the river, including a large rolling mill covering most of the land south of the railway line. By the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the works covered 60 acres and employed almost 2,000 workers.

The office building on the main street is pictured on the left of this photograph.

This was not the company's head office which was on Westgate Road and later on Collingwood Street.



Cross the road and walk back towards the Almshouses. Just before you reach them, you will see an older stone house. This was built for the Duke of Northumberland, Newburn's main landowner, in 1822. It was the residence of the County Bailiff. There is a sign carved into the stonework saying "Erected by High Duke of Northumberland Lord of the Manor 1822".

Next you come to the Almshouses.

### **Almshouses**

This row of twelve Alms Houses was built in 1870, funded by a charitable donation from Hugh Taylor of nearby Earsdon in memory of his parents.



The homes were for residents aged over 60 from Newburn and the adjacent villages, and provided free accommodation. Residents were also given a weekly allowance, which was higher for men than for women.

This photograph of the High Street with the Almshouses on the left dates from 1909.

Continue to walk west until you reach the lane off to your right leading to the Church of St Michael and All Angels which is set back from the main street.

The church dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century or earlier, and is Grade 1 listed. It is worth walking up to look at the building from the outside even if you are unable to go in. The churchyard can be visited at any time.

## **St Michael and All Angels Church**

There used to be a wooden church on this site, prior to the stone building you see today. This was burned down in 1067 AD.



The oldest part of the present church building is the tower which dates back to 1100 AD, or even earlier. Additions were made during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, including the north aisle with its Norman arches and the chancel which is one of the longest in Northumberland. Many changes were made in the Victorian era. The Spencer family who owned the steel works were major benefactors, contributing the original peal of six bells, the chancel screen and pulpit. The lychgate is also part of their legacy. The building was severely damaged in a fire in 2006, but has since been sensitively restored.

Among the features worth seeing inside the church are the stained glass windows, notably that commemorating William Hedley, the pioneer of steam locomotive engineering. The Delaval family, believed to be early patrons of the church, are commemorated by a gravestone in the floor of the chancel. There is also a war memorial inside, created in 1921, and some fine wood carving by the notable woodworker and painter Ralph Hedley.

As well as serving the local parish, the church has experienced the impact of wider events in its long history. Just after the Norman Conquest, the Earl of Northumberland was murdered in the entrance to the church. He had recently been appointed as governor by the new king, William the Conqueror, and is believed to have been the victim of the displeasure of the local lords whom he had displaced. During the Battle of Newburn Ford in 1642 the Scottish army used the tower as a platform for their guns, using this commanding position to fire at the English who were camped across the river at Ryton. In 1832 the vicar was one of 66 local people who died during an outbreak of cholera.

## **Churchyard**

The churchyard is well worth exploring, although the higher part is quite overgrown and not easily accessible. Among the notable people buried here are Robert Hawthorn, chief engineer at Walbottle Colliery, whose sons started the engineering firm of R & W Hawthorn at Forth Banks in Newcastle; William Hedley, the mining engineer and railway pioneer; and members of the Spencer family, owners of Newburn's huge local steel works; and Samuel Davison, an inventor and engineer who worked for R & W Hawthorn's Leith engine works in Edinburgh, and whose designs were used in the first railways in South Africa. The graves of Hawthorn and Hedley are to be found on the south side of the church, and that of Davison on the north side.

Right: St Michael's Clergy (undated)



After leaving the church, continue along the lane to the west. This will take you past the library and down to the main street again. The War Memorial is a short distance further along the street.

You can finish your walk here where you began or continue a little further along the road in the same direction to take in some of the village's oldest houses, the Grade 2 listed Town Hall, and the Memorial Park.

A short distance beyond the War Memorial you will come to Dukes Cottages and Percy Street. They were built by the Duke of Northumberland.

Further along, on the opposite side of the road, you can see the former Town Hall. Prior to its incorporation into Newcastle in 1974, Newburn had its own district council.

The Town Hall is pictured here in 1911, the year it was opened.



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If you continue along the road, you will arrive at Newburn Memorial Park. Note the stone monument with a plaque explaining who is commemorated here.

### Newburn Memorial Park

This park is in memory of Henry George Alan, Ninth Duke of Northumberland. He was killed in action in the Second World War during the retreat to Dunkirk while serving as a lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards.

The Duke of Northumberland (pictured here) was described in a contemporary newspaper report as "a sandy-haired unmarried man of 26, who travelled round the world and whose principal recreations are fox-hunting and chess". He was one of the largest landowners in England. The family owned most of the land in Newburn, and their name crops up around the village as owners and benefactors.



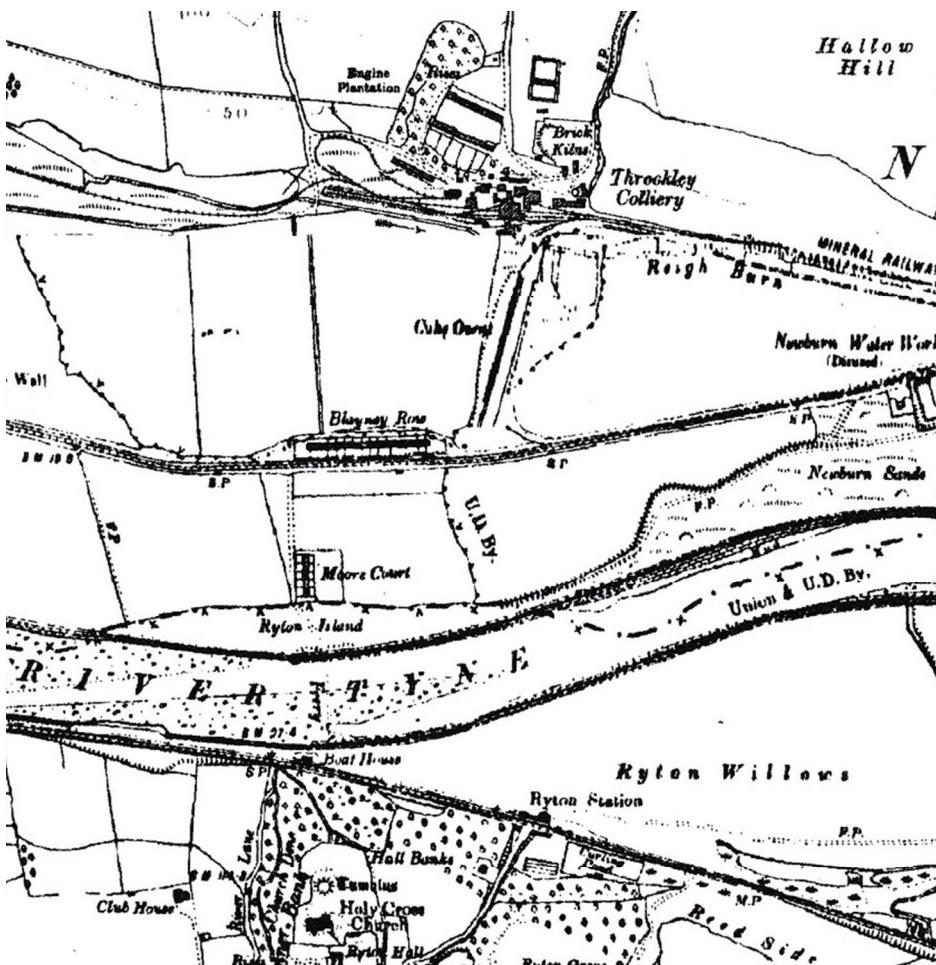
The Duke of Northumberland is an ancient title with connections to the title of Earl of Northumberland whose first holder came over to England with William the Conqueror. The family seat is Alnwick Castle.

This is the end of the walk. Retrace your steps to return to the War Memorial.

# **Tyne Riverside Country Park Heritage Trail**

## **Blayney Row and the Coke Ovens**

This is a pleasant country walk which introduces you to the heritage of the area west of Newburn. Allow about an hour. This extract from the 1921 Ordnance Survey map shows what this area looked like a century ago.



## **Start your walk**

The walk starts and ends at Newburn Leisure Centre, at the eastern end of the Tyne Riverside Country Park.

If you are coming by car, there is a convenient car park on the opposite side of the road from the leisure centre. There is also a car park on the riverside where the next section of the walk begins, but this can be busy

Continuing past the leisure centre, you come to the Big Lamp Brewery and Keelman Pub on your right. Turn left here and walk down the road towards the river. This takes you to the site of the Battle of Newburn Ford. There are helpful information boards here telling you about this important battle.

## **Battle of Newburn**



It is hard to imagine as you sit in this pleasant spot overlooking the river that this was once the site of a bloody battle which played a decisive role in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Civil War, and ultimately led to the execution of Charles the First.

Newburn was situated at the lowest point of the Tyne where it was possible to cross by ford. Before there was a bridge, this meant that it was of great strategic importance. It was here in 1640 that a Scottish army chose to cross the river in order to attack Newcastle.

The higher ground on the north side provided a much better position overlooking the English army who were camped over the river on Ryton Willows. The English were outnumbered and easily defeated. Newcastle was left undefended, and the king was forced to make peace.

Walking in this area today you can still find souvenirs from this battle, such as musket balls, cannon balls and fragments of bone.

From here walk west along the riverside path, passing the slipway.

As you reach the children's play area you can look back and see Newburn Bridge behind you with the last remaining cone of the old Lemington Glassworks in the background.



Lemington Glassworks is pictured here in 1915. The remaining cone is over 120 feet high and made of more than a million bricks.



the inner west. This photograph shows a group from St James' Church enjoying a picnic in 1919.

After a while you will reach a junction. One path continues along the riverside towards Wylam. The other is marked by a brown sign with an acorn which identifies it as Hadrian's Wall Path. This is the path you will take, but before you do it is worth stopping briefly a few yards further along the riverside. Here you can see the view across to Ryton, with the

boathouse directly opposite and the spire of Ryton Church on the skyline. There is a convenient bench here.

Take the path which leads away from away from the river, heading towards a terrace of brick-built houses. Pass around a gate and along the front of the houses. This is Moore Court. It is named after one of the female members of the Bates family of Heddon Hall who had the houses built for workers in the local brickmaking and coalmining industries.

Walk in front of the houses and continue straight on until you reach a junction, with another row of houses on your right. Here a path and cycleway goes left towards Wylam, following the route of the old waggonway which brought coal from the Wylam pit to the staithes at Lemington from where it was transported downriver. When it opened in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century the waggonway had wooden rails, but these were later replaced by iron rails. This five-mile long waggonway was the site of early experiments in the development of steam locomotives. The Puffing Billy and Wylam Dilly worked on this line. It was closed when the Wylam pit shut in 1869 but parts of it were used by other local pits and industries.

Turn right to walk along the front of the houses. This is Blayney Row.

These houses were built in 1889, as the sign in the middle of the Row tells you. They were built for the employees of the Heddon Brickworks, and sold to the Throckley Coal Company in 1895. The Bates family of Heddon Hall owned Heddon Brickworks and Colliery. They had a family connection with the Blayneys of Montgomeryshire in Wales – thus the name.

At the end of Blayney Row there is a car park with an unmade lane heading off it signposted "Public Restricted

Byway Throckley". Follow this, keeping an eye out for the small wooden sign on your left saying "Coke Ovens" a short distance along the path. This narrow path will take you to the remains of the old coke ovens. Have a look around but take care on the uneven ground. There is a plinth on the site which once held an interpretation board. Sadly the board has gone, but the plinth is interesting in itself as it is made of old bricks from many former collieries. Afterwards retrace your steps back to the sign on the main path.

## Coke Ovens

The ovens were used to make coke using coal from the nearby Isabella Colliery which lay north of this site. The colliery was opened in 1867 and closed in the 1950s.



This 1909 photograph of the pit and associated coke and brick works was taken from across the Tyne.

The main customer for this coke was Spencer's steelworks in Newburn. The firm was founded in 1810 and grew to be a huge concern. It was the largest local employer by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with 1,800 workers. Among its products was the steel plate for the Mauretania. Its decline after the First World War led to the demise of the coke works also.

Spencer's steelworks is pictured here in 1910. By this time the site extended for 60 acres across Newburn. It was connected by rail to Isabella Pit.



## Options for return route

At this point you have a choice of routes back to the leisure centre. The full circular route takes you along a narrow path which gets very muddy in wet weather. If you prefer not to take this route: turn right when you leave the coke ovens and walk back towards Blayney Row. When you reach the "Restricted Byway" signpost (and a black litter bin) turn left onto the walkway that runs alongside the road. This will take you directly back to the leisure centre.

If you prefer to take the more scenic but possibly muddy route, turn left when you leave the coke ovens. Keep your eyes open for a path going off to the right, marked by a sign saying "No motorcycles" and two short wooden posts with an arrow saying "Public Bridleway". The path crosses a wooden bridge and then runs alongside a stream on your right and open fields on your left. Keep going on this path, ignoring any paths going off in other directions. The path brings you out at the back of the car park opposite the leisure centre.

# Bells's Close, Sugley and Lemington

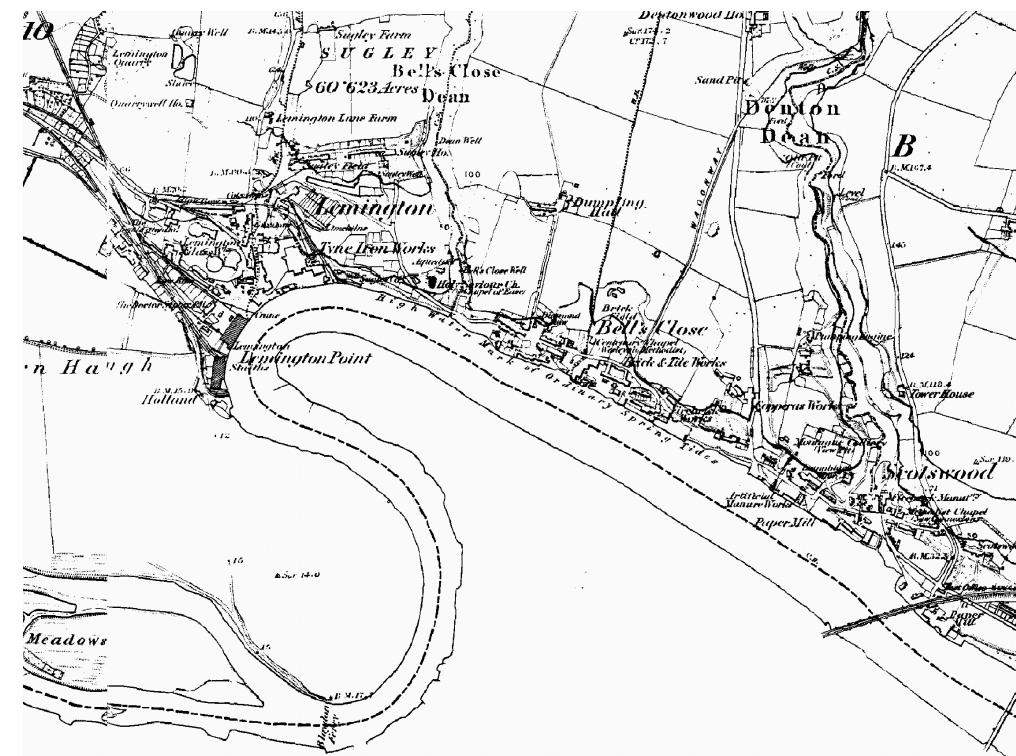
## An Introduction

The extract from the 1857 Ordnance Survey map on the opposite page shows what this area looked like by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

You can see a string of villages clustered along the banks of the River Tyne, although it is not easy to pick out the details. At the bottom right of the map is Scotswood, at that time a small settlement bounded on the west by Denton Dene. The Denton Burn which flowed through the Dene formed the boundary between the Townships of Benwell to the east and Newburn to the west. Immediately west of Scotswood lies the small village of Bells Close, occupying the area of riverside between Denton Dene and the next Dene – Sugley Dene. A short distance further west again is the village of Lemington. Apart from these riverside settlements, the landscape is dominated by farmland.

This was no rural idyll, however. Coalmines were dotted around the area, as well as brickworks and other small-scale manufacturing activities mainly clustered on the land near to the river. The greatest concentration of industry was to be found on the area of flat land just south of Lemington village, where there was an iron works, a glass works and the coal staithes from which coal from the surrounding pits was loaded onto barges to be transported down river. Further to the west lay the village of Newburn which boasted several pits and associated industries as well as a burgeoning steel works that gave it the nickname locally of “New Sheffield”.

Nor were these isolated rural settlements. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was already a road bridge at Scotswood enabling access to the south of the Tyne. There was also a railway bridge there, although the railway line did not as yet reach further west than Scotswood. Within a couple of decades, a railway line had been built connecting the area to the main Newcastle-Carlisle line via a loop from Scotswood Bridge to Wylam, and a station was added. The final stage of the third walk in this booklet takes you along the track-bed of this former railway line, which now forms part of the Hadrian’s Way national path.



# Bell's Close, Sugley and Lemington

## A Heritage Trail

This circular walk goes from Bell's Close to Lemington and back again. You will visit the villages of Bells Close, Sugley and Lemington, and take a look at the former industrial sites to the south of Lemington Road.

The walk begins at Bell's Close which is just west of the A1 motorway. Your starting point is the junction of Scotswood Road and Neptune Road. At the entrance to Neptune Road there is a sign saying "Welcome to Dumpling Hall".

### To reach the starting point

If you are coming from the direction of Newcastle on the A6085, Neptune Road is the second turning on the right shortly after the Newburn Haugh roundabout.

If you are travelling by car, take a left turn off Neptune Road into Ottringham Close. Here the Hadrian's Way path crosses Neptune Road. This is clearly signposted on both sides of the road. You can park on Ottringham Close, and walk back down Neptune Road to the junction with Scotswood Road.

If you are using public transport, several buses run along the main A6085 Scotswood to Newburn road.



If you are travelling to Bell's Close from the direction of Newcastle, you might like to reflect on the importance of coalmining to this area as you pass the B&Q store on Scotswood Road just before it is crossed by the A1. This is the site of the Montagu Pit. Three of the victims of the disaster which killed 28 men and boys came from Bell's Close.

### Start your walk

Your walk starts at the junction of Scotswood Road and Neptune Road.

You are in Bell's Close. To the north is the Dumpling Hall Estate, built in the 1960s and 1970s on farmland. If you look closely at the 1857 map on page 23, you can see a large house called Dumpling Hall, which gave its name to the housing estate that occupies the site now. Just to the west of the old Dumpling Hall was the West Denton pit, and there were several mine shafts in this area. To the east of Neptune Road is the former site of the Bell's Close brick and tile works and, above it, one of the pits belonging to the Montagu Colliery.

Walk a short distance west from the junction and take the first right turn. Walk up here until you see on your right St George's Field, one of almost 500 public open spaces made available throughout the country as a memorial to King George V who died in 1936. The King George Foundation was responsible for local fundraising to buy the land. The playing fields are now overseen by Fields in Trust in order to "preserve and safeguard the land for the public benefit". There is a commemorative panel on a brick plinth on the Bell's Close field.

Walk west along St George's Road. When you reach the school at the end, take a left turn to reach the Grade 2 listed St George's R.C. Church. The stone building which you see above the church is the old school house which is currently empty.

## **St George's Church**

St George's RC Church, Bell's Close, was opened in 1869. It is one of the oldest buildings in this area. The church was paid for by the local landowner, Richard Lamb, and there are memorials to the Lamb family inside the building.



The early congregation included many Irish families who came into the area in search of work. Initially many worked as keelmen on colliers transporting coal from the local staithes. Later they found employment in the rapidly growing local industries such as railways, iron, glass and brick making.

Bell's Close also had a Wesleyan Methodist Church dating from 1837, located in the north west of the village. This closed in 1975.

Continue down the steps to the main road. Turn right in the direction of Newburn and walk to the end of the church grounds. Here you see a large natural land fault. This is Sugley Dene. From here a small stream runs under the main road into the "Lemington Gut".

## **Lemington Gut**

Pictured here c1930, the Gut is a small expanse of water left behind when the River Tyne was re-routed away from Lemington in the 1880s. A new shorter channel was created through Blaydon Haugh.



## **Lemington Staithes**

Lemington Staithes were located on the Gut. A waggonway ran to the staithes bringing coal from the local pits.



The photograph shows one of the few visible remains of this once busy quayside area today.

Continuing west, you come to another church. This tells you that you have reached Sugley.

Take a moment to admire this fine building.

## **Holy Saviour Church**

Holy Saviour Church, Sugley, was opened in 1837, making it the oldest building in this area. It was designed by the well-known architect Benjamin Green, who was also responsible for the Theatre Royal in Newcastle. The building is oriented north-south rather than the usual east-west in order to avoid an old pit shaft. Originally a Chapel of Ease for Sugley from St Michael and All Angels Church in Newburn, this now serves as the Anglican parish church for the whole Lemington area.



Continue to walk up the road which curves upwards by the side of the church. This is the furthest west part of Scotswood Road. The main road which continues towards Newburn is called Lemington Road.

On your right are a set of bungalows called Wedgwood Cottages. Opened in 1936, these were built for retired workers of the North Eastern Railway. Note the plaques on the walls.

Beyond the cottages, you reach a tubular railway bridge bearing the stamp of its maker Tubewrights Ltd of Newport in Monmouthshire, Wales.

After crossing the bridge turn right and walk along to Station House. Now substantially refurbished, this used to be the Station Master's house. The road leading to it is Sugley Villas. It contains several impressive villas which provided up-market residences for local factory managers.

## Lemington Station

Lemington railway station, pictured here in 1921, was on the route of the Scotswood, Newburn and Wylam railway which connected the villages of Lemington and Newburn to the main Newcastle and Carlisle line. There were sidings serving the Montagu and Blucher Collieries as well as Carr's brickyard and a copperas works.

Lemington station closed to passengers in 1958 and to goods in 1960.



Retrace your steps past (but not crossing) the tubular bridge. You have now reached Lemington.

You are now in Tyne View, the main street of Lemington. This photograph shows how Tyne View looked a hundred years ago



Take a right turn up Rokeby Street. This is named after Lord Rokeby, the landowner who sold the land to Northumberland County Council on which Lemington Riverside Primary School here was built in 1909.

This class photograph dates from the early years of the school.



Take a stroll around the perimeter of the school, turning left and then left again into Sugley Street.

On the way, you will see some of the terraced housing built over a century ago to accommodate families employed in the local glass, iron, mining and railway industries.

At the end of Sugley Street turn right into Tyne View. When you reach the “Healthworks” Lemington Resource Centre, you will see some helpful interpretation boards on the wall next to the entrance on the right-hand side of the building. These highlight items from the village’s past.

From the Lemington Centre, cross to the opposite side of Tyne View and pass through the ornate black gates to meet the Hadrian’s Way path. Turn right to walk along the path for a few yards, then turn left down a small track just before the picnic area. As you reach the main Scotswood-Newburn Road, you can see in front of you the huge glassworks cone. Turn left and walk along the pavement to a building identified as Norland Construction Ltd. This building originally belonged to the Tyne Iron Company.

There are other remains to be seen here of this important industry which dated back to 1797.

To the right of the building are some of the old kilns, unattended and open to the elements. Access is difficult, and care is needed if you want to get close-up to the remains. The markings



on these handmade bricks from the kilns show that they were made by William Stephenson of Throckley whose brickworks can be traced back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century or earlier.

Now look south to see, some distance away on the opposite side of the main road, a Grade 2 listed building which used to be the Manager’s house and office. This photograph will help you pinpoint the location of the building – it is in the centre of the picture.



Unfortunately it is not possible to get close to the building now, as it is on a locked site.

Elsewhere on the area south of the main road, there are various remains of walls and ramps to be seen, but their function is unclear. None of these important remains of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century industry are listed, and it is likely that they may soon disappear altogether.

## Tyne Iron Works

The Tyne Iron Works was founded in 1797. In 1869 it was taken over by Spencer's, owners of the large steel works in nearby Newburn, but ceased production only seven years later.

The iron works occupied a site which has since been cut in two by the main Scotswood- Newburn Road, now the A6085. This 1903 photograph shows the lower part of the iron works site on the riverside at Lemington. Next to it - a power station and a glass works.



Staying on the north side of the busy main road, walk further west to view the glass works cone. This is the last remaining one of several cones that used to stand on this site. Here glass could be fired to a temperature of about 2,000C.

## Lemington Glassworks

When the glassworks at Lemington opened in 1787, Newcastle was an important centre of glassmaking. Over the years it had a variety of owners, including the Duke of Northumberland and the Sowerby family of Benwell. In 1906 the General Electric Company took it over, making bulbs and tubing for electric lights. Traditional hand-manufacturing processes were still in use in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The glassworks closed in 1997 and the buildings were demolished, with the exception of one of the original 18<sup>th</sup> century cones (pictured here in 1976) which was refurbished and listed. It is estimated to contain almost two million bricks.



Our walk route now continues west along the north side of the main road to the roundabout next to an Asda store, and returning to Lemington village.

However, if anyone wants to see the glass works cone close-up, it is possible to take a detour by crossing the road at this roundabout, then walking back in the opposite direction to reach the turning signposted "Stanegate Stoves". Walk down here to see the cone close-up. Around it are scattered remnants of former industries. Stanegate Stoves have a show room inside the cone where members of the public can view their wares. Note that the entrance to the site is locked when the show room is closed.

## **Canary Island**

Although there is no trace of it today, we cannot leave this area without mentioning Canary Island.



During the First World War a munitions works was built on an island in the Tyne off Lemington Point. The location was chosen to be at a safe distance from any homes because of the risk of explosions.

It acquired the name Canary Island because the materials used by the women who worked there filling shells turned their skin and hair yellow. As you can imagine, this was a dangerous occupation and damaging to the health of the workers.

The road going north from the Asda roundabout is called Northumberland Road. On the opposite corner is an imposing stone building which was formerly the Lemington Hotel. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries this would have been the hub of industrial and political life in the area. Local magistrates' inquests, annual dinners and high-powered meetings took place here.

Walk up Northumberland Road to a tubular bridge crossing the old railway line which is now Hadrian's Way path. Cross to the left side of the road to walk over the bridge. Immediately in front of you is an old church, now known as Lemington Methodist Church.

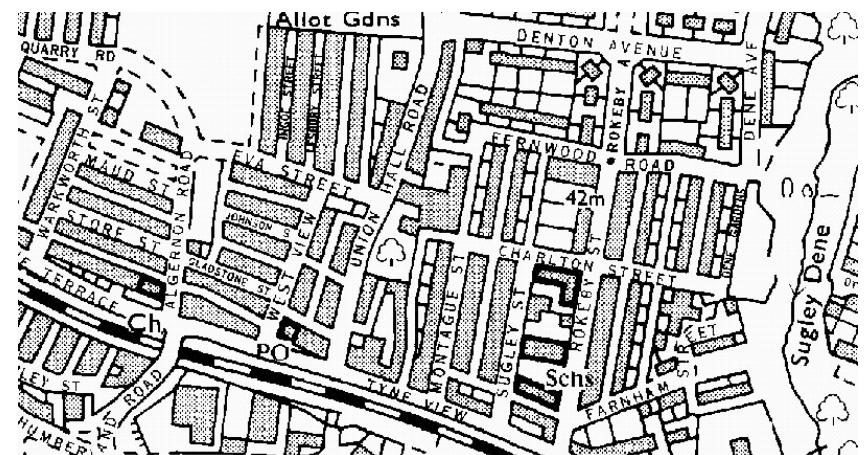
## **Lemington Methodist Church**

Lemington Methodist Church building was opened in 1891. It was then called Algernon Road Primitive Methodist Church, and replaced an earlier chapel dating from 1861.

This was a response to the rapid residential development of this area prompted by the expanding local industries and the accessibility offered by the railways. Later mergers left this as the only functioning Methodist church in this area.



Heading further up what is now Algernon Road, you come to another bastion of working class life – the Lemington and District Social Club, established in 1904. The club would have had a thousand members in its early days. It contained a bar, sitting room and an entertainment hall seating 700 people, as well as a billiard room, library and reading room.



This extract from the 1989 OS map shows the surrounding terraces. The Social Club is located at the west end of Eva Street.

## Lemington's terraces

Some of Lemington's old terraced streets remain: others have disappeared. Eva Street still exists but some of the houses that you see in this 1905 photograph have been demolished.



Low Row, seen in this photograph on the left in c1890, has disappeared from the map, although there is still a High Row between Tyne View and the main road.

Walk along Eva Street and then take a right turn down Union Hall Road to reach Tyne View again. Union Hall Road is a long road running all the way up from here to meet the A69 West Road out of Newcastle. Looking left when you come to Tyne View you will see that you are back at the Lemington Centre. Pass through the black gates again and join the Hadrian's Wall path. Turn left and walk in the direction of Bell's Close and Scotswood.

From here you cannot go wrong as long as you keep to the Hadrian's Way path. Although this is the official Hadrian's Wall National Path, it does not, of course, follow the line of the Roman Wall here. The Wall ran further north along the

line of what is now the main A69 road. This path follows the track-bed of the old railway that connected the Newburn and Lemington areas with the Newcastle-Carlisle Railway. Later it was used as a mineral line. The route feels rural as it passes through woodland and grassed areas.

As you walk east, the path crosses over the wooded Sugley Dene. This is an important area of semi-natural ancient woodland, providing a valuable habitat for many varieties of birds.

To the south of the bridge, note a large metal pipe crossing the Dene. This dates from the 1850s and still carries the area's water supply.

To the north, on the edge of the Dene, there used to be a grand house with a large garden and what were described as "pleasure grounds". This was Sugley Hall which dated from the 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. No trace of it survives today. Its past occupants included Mr Bulmer, a merchant from Hull who was the principal shareholder of the Lemington Ironworks.

Crossing to the other side of Sugley Dene you are back in Bell's Close. The path comes out onto a residential street called Ottringham Close. At the end of this you meet Neptune Road. Turn right and walk down to the junction with the main Scotswood-Newburn Road.

**You are back at your starting point.**

# **EXPLORING YOUR LOCAL HISTORY**

## **A HERITAGE GUIDE**

This heritage guide is an introduction to the history of Newcastle's outer west villages of Newburn, Lemington, Sugley and Bell's Close. It includes three illustrated walk trails offering insights into the heritage of this area.

When this area became part of the City of Newcastle in 1974, it brought with it a long and fascinating history. Its strategic location as the lowest crossing point on the River Tyne meant that, before the Norman Conquest, it was regarded as more important than Newcastle. During the 17th century, it was the site of a decisive battle of the Civil War. Later, the Industrial Revolution transformed the area, giving Newburn the name of "New Sheffield", while glass-making and other industries flourished further east in Lemington. Coal – both mining and export – played a major role in the local economy.

Join us on a journey to explore the history of the outer west.

### **St James' Heritage & Environment Group**

St James' Heritage & Environment Group is an independent volunteer-run organisation and registered charity providing activities and resources for people of all ages to explore and celebrate the history of the west end of Newcastle.

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