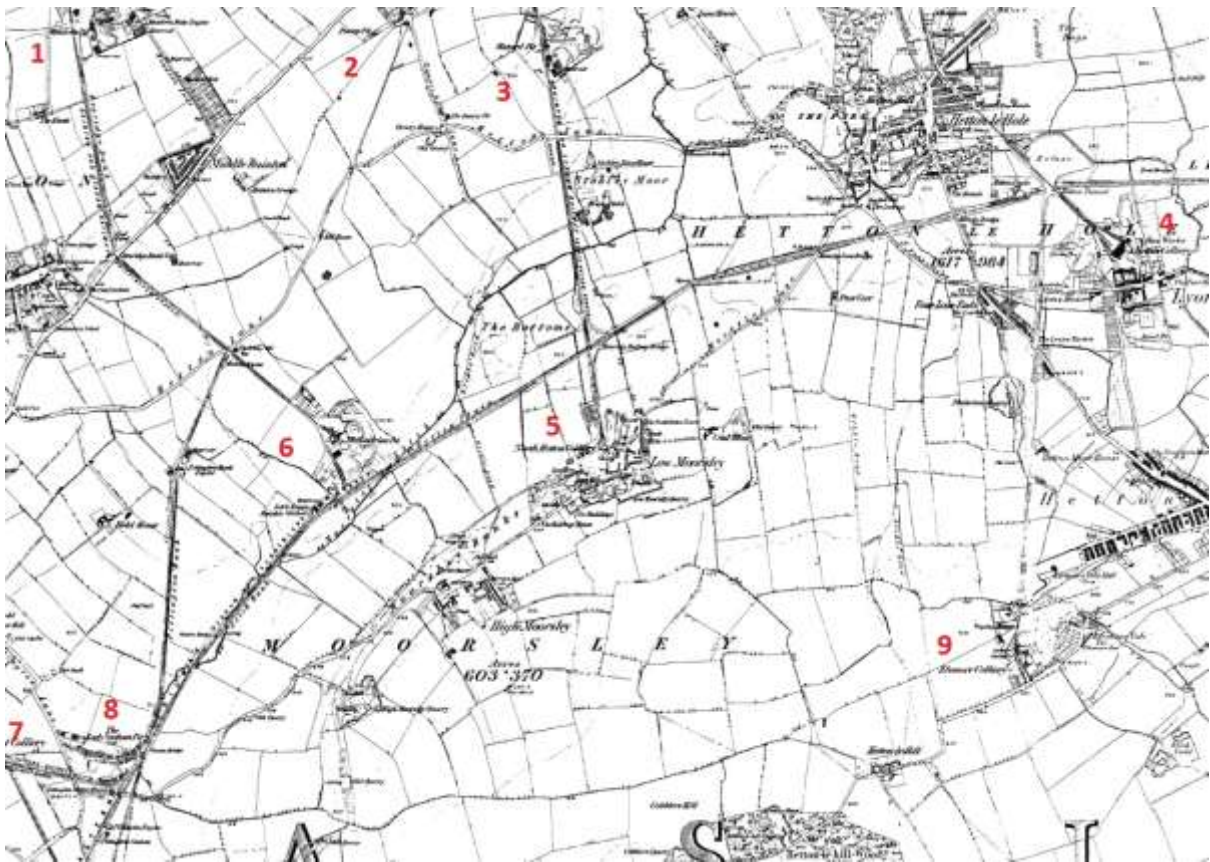


## Moorsley Collieries – David Witham

Moorsley Colliery (more commonly known as North Hetton, possibly named after the company that owned it?)

Situated to the West of Hetton-Le-Hole on the North side of the Moorsley Road (Hetton to Pittington) opposite the Black Boy Public House, There are some irregularities from the Durham Mining Museum <http://www.dmm.org.uk/colliery/n022.htm> As it states Opened 1821 However it also states Sinking Started at a later date 1826 ? However just like the Nearby Hazard Colliery both closed 1935 and in later years were classed as one mine.



1869 map of the western part of Hetton le Hole showing the position of nearby Mines

1 Meadows Pit part of the Rainton Group of Collieries, note the Wagon Way that linked up to the Alexandrina Pit (6) and Lady Seaham Pit (8)

2 Pontop Pit Situated within the Village of East Rainton near the present day School, a primitive mine with no wagon way and little known about its History.

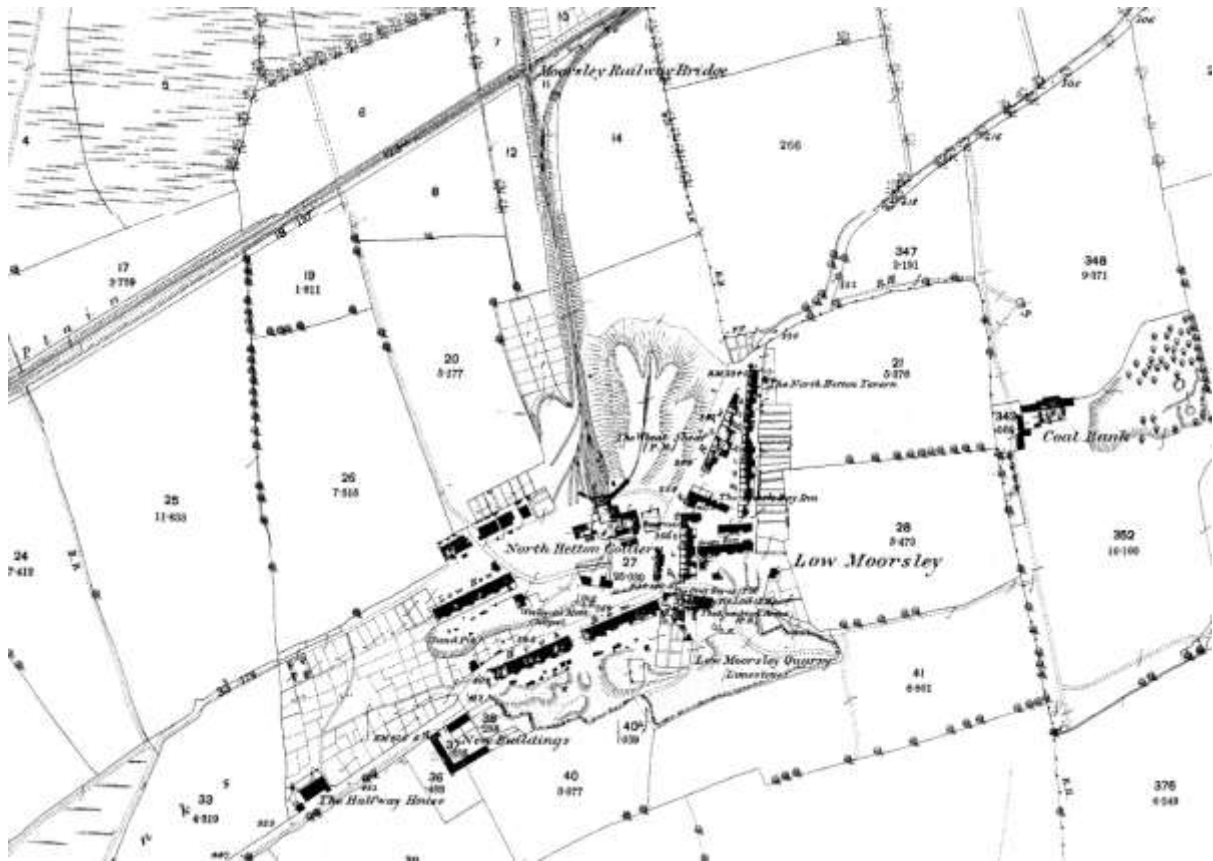
3 Hazard Colliery also Known as North Hetton, The sister Pit to the Moorsley Colliery, Opened 1818, this was the bigger mine which once employed over 1200 workers by 1921, Despite closing in 1935 parts of the Mine were left until the early 1980s, whilst the old Wagon Way was left until the late 1950s/early 60s.

4 The Lyons or better known as the Hetton Colliery, A complete Gamble by the new Hetton Coal Company as to whether Coal actually existed underneath the Deep Limestone rock, the sinking of two shafts (Minor/Blossom) was unusual in those early days, but it appears necessary due to the problems of Water. This was once a Ground Breaking Colliery and in the 1822 also had the Deepest Shafts in Britain/ Possibly the World, With some help from the then little known Colliery Engineer George Stephenson (He developed the Killingworth Wagon Way before the term Railway was used, but would go on to Greater things) and Sir Nicholas Wood (who stayed on at the Colliery and is Buried in Hetton Cemetery) The Lyons Colliery was possibly the Worlds 1st Super Pit? It also had the grand title of the longest Railway Line in the world stretching 7 miles over the most torturous Hills (Warden Law) which required a number of Static Engines to Haul the Heavy Coal Trucks uphill, using the empties going down Hill as Counterweights, all this in a mere 2years from start to finish before the invention of Excavators (All dug by hand) An incredible Feat today let alone back in 1820. Despite the Mine being a pioneer and showcase for all other Deep Mines there appears to be little information on its History, Digging through some archives it had one of the highest temperatures recorded in the upcast (Furnace) shaft. Sadly very little remains of the Colliery, though one of the 1930s Railway Building still stands within the Lyons Industrial Estate.

5 North Hetton/Moorsley Colliery Sunk by the North Hetton Coal Company but fell in the hands of the Lambton group by 1910s Sister Pit to the Hazard Colliery (3) Situated North of Front Street Moorsley (though the shafts were more to the west) The Mine was close to the Rival Coal owners The Alexandrina Colliery (To the west 6) So was practically under siege, as to the East by the Lyons Colliery (4), the North by the Hazard Pit (3) and from the South by the Elemore Colliery, meaning a limited life expectancy, It closed 1935, other than the former Wagon Way to the North the area has been landscaped and nothing now remains.

6 Alexandrina Colliery part of the Rainton group of mines, Situated to the West of Hetton-Le-Hole and to the North of the former Sunderland to Durham Railway, it is surrounded by heavily dense woodland and known locally as the 2nd Pine's, a private dwelling house to the North with the former wagon way from the Meadows Pit (1) now part of the access road in, This mine is also said to still have an Air Shaft ? The site was also home to a small pox Hospital. The Mine also had a satellite shaft (Letch Pit) to the West and just North of the former Durham to Sunderland Line, a patch of clumped together trees marks its past.

7 and 8 Both are over the Boundary and into the Pittington area Belmont Colliery (7 ) was sunk by another Coal Rival Coal Company Bell), It is now part of a Golf Course, though it is thought the odd small building survives? The Lady Seaham Pit (8) was part of the Alexandrina/Rainton group, its Wagon Way branched off from the Alexandrina Pit. Today a mound of trees covers the site but it is visible from the junction of the Moorsley/Pittington cross Road. Both mines closed around 1900.



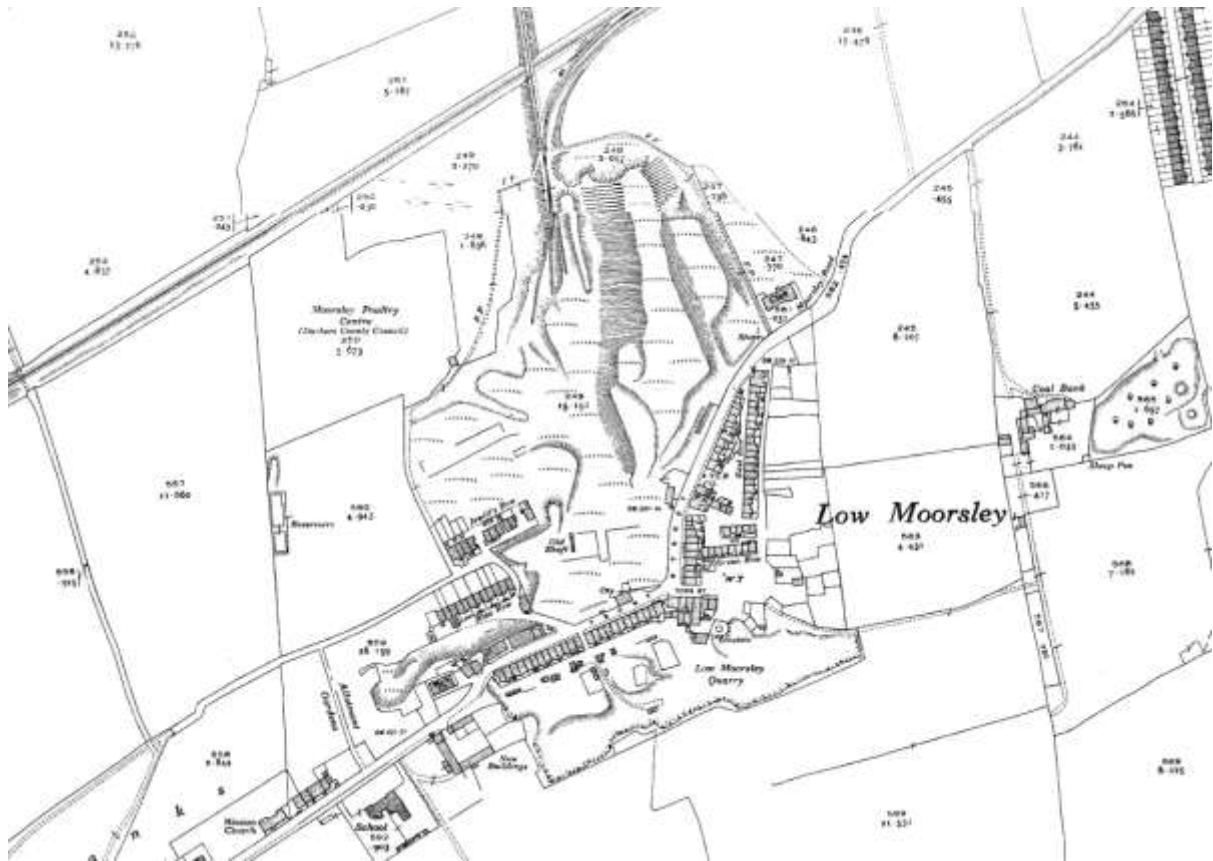
Moorsley 1856 showing a highly condensed mine and housing and a large number of Quarries and a lime Kiln, Moorsley has almost completely changed from this map to the present day, though Front street survives along with the Public Houses ! (even more are near the quarries) note the line branching off from the Sunderland to Durham Passenger Line.,



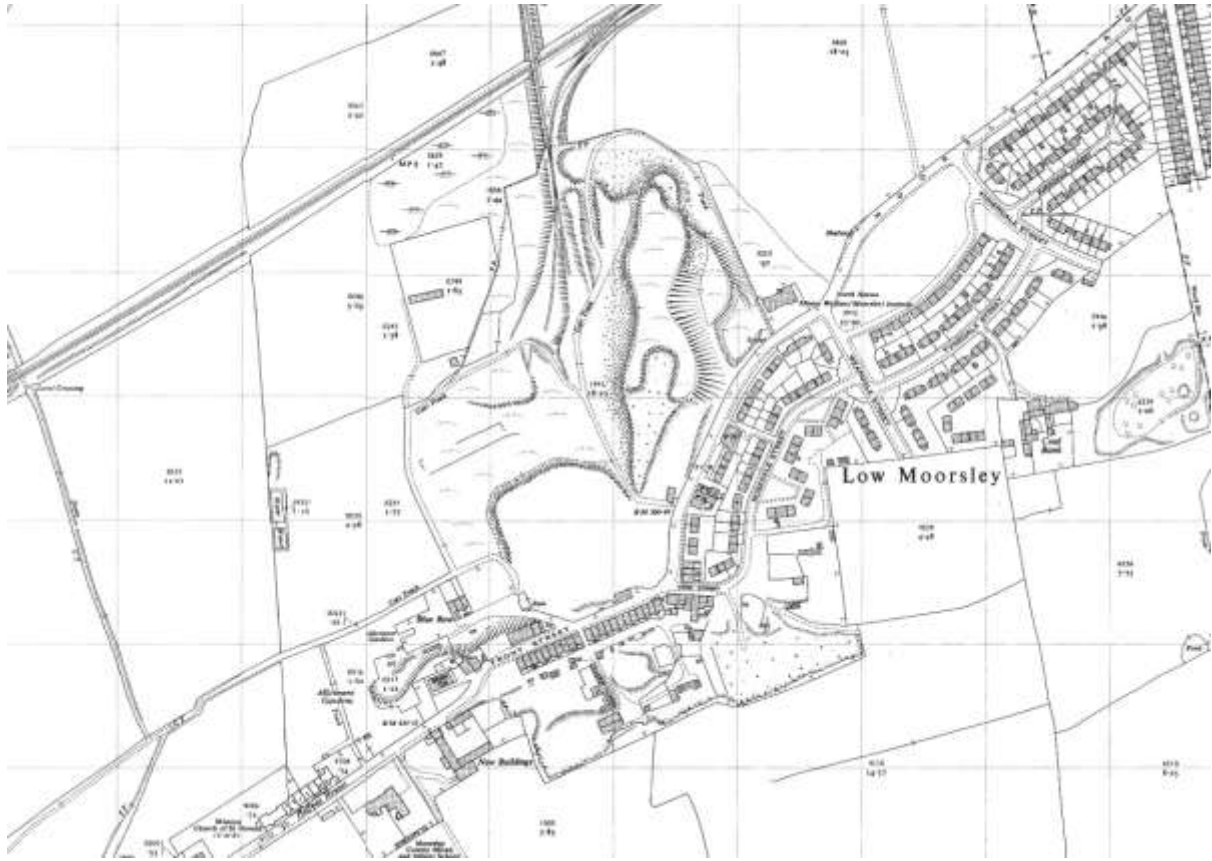
1896 a much clearer map showing an enlarged site including the rudimentary Brick works and also a Gasometer to the North!, The waste heaps are bigger also note the number of chapels and the Mission Church near the present day Valley View, on the opposite side is the new School built by the Coal Company, this was still in situ though abandoned and derelict until the mid to late 1990s when it was demolished and a private dwelling House was built on the site looking quite similar .



1919 by this time the mine is in the hands of the Lambton Group, Not much has changed by this time but the map is more detailed listing Jewits Row near the Brickworks and Blue Row just behind.



1939 shows demolition to have already taken place leaving just "Old Shafts" however the wagon way is still in situ, It is strange that this was left and can only guess that it was used to remove the Colliery waste? As for the shafts possibly due to the Lambton group also owning the Lyons colliery they were left for Ventilation? Interestingly the nearby Hazard and Dunwell shafts were also left.



1959 Demolition has changed Moorsley considerably though a small amount remains.. for now, Jewits Row has disappeared along with part of Blue Row, (no mention of the shafts) However the village has been replaced by Council Housing changing little from today, again strangely the Wagon Way remains.



1968 again demolition has played its part transforming Moorsley no trace of the mine along with the remains of Blue Row and the South side of Front Street near the Quarries, Both Railways have disappeared (the Durham Sunderland line thanks to Dr Beecham) But Moorsley has changed little from this date !