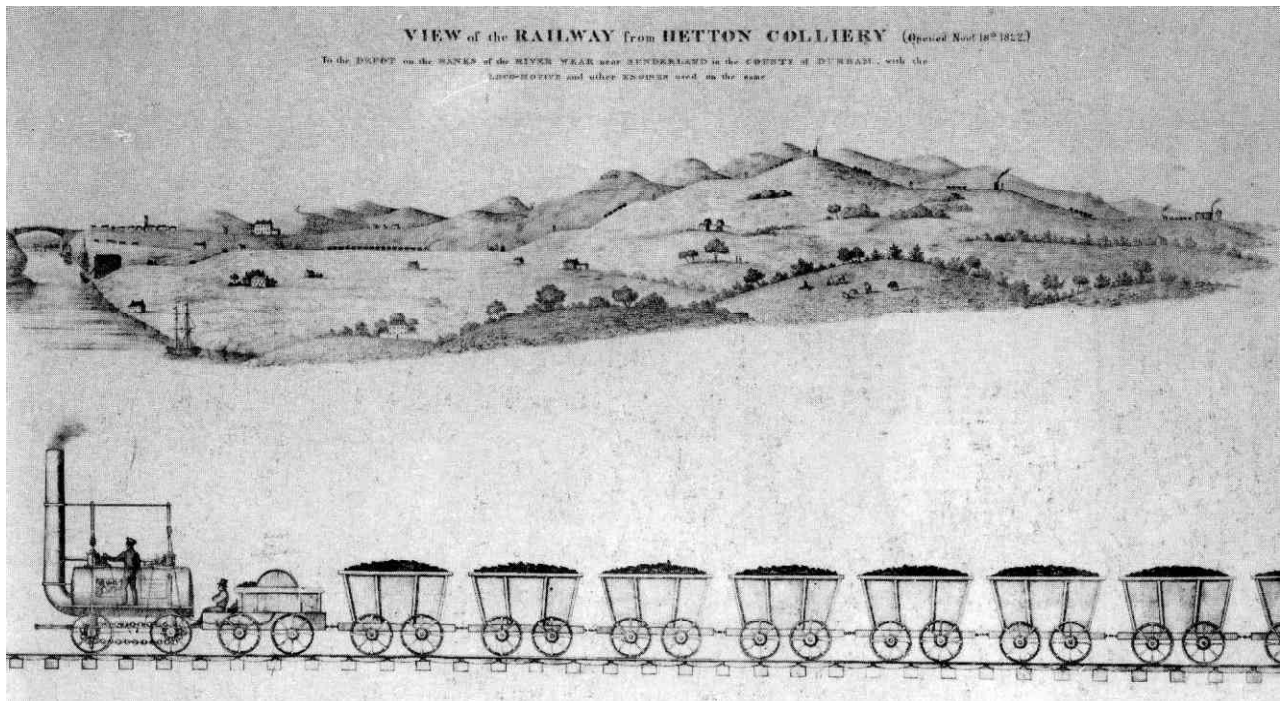


# THE HETTON VILLAGE ATLAS

*A Community, its History and Landscape*



HETTON LOCAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



# THE HETTON VILLAGE ATLAS

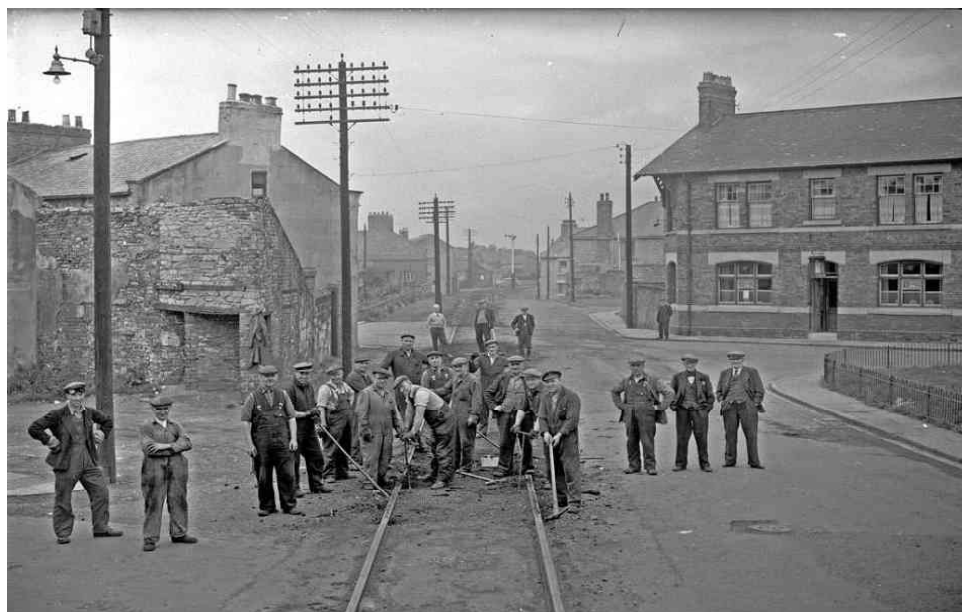
THE LANDSCAPE, HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT OF  
HETTON-LE-HOLE AND NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES



Lyons Cottages at Hetton Lyons, with the cottage lived in by Robert Stephenson during construction of the Hetton Colliery Railway shown nearest to the camera.

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**Hetton Local and Natural History Society**



Lifting the track of the Hetton Colliery Railway in Railway Street, Hetton, in 1959

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23/02 Saxton's map of County Durham 1576, DRO D/XP 26 Map of Durham County by John Speed n.d. [1611], DRO D/CL 23/14 Morden's Map of County Durham 1695, DRO D/CL 23/46 'A new map of the county of Durham' by Jones & Smith 1808, DRO NCB I/X 228 Rainton estate plan late C18, DRO D/Br/P 165 Hetton Coal Company Estate Plan 1824, whilst the following were maps and plans are reproduced by permission of the Marquess of Londonderry and Durham County Record Office: Durham County Record Office Londonderry Estate Archives D/Lo/P 239 The County Palatine of Durham Survey'd by Capt. Armstrong 1768, DRO D/Lo/P 242/1 Map of the Great Northern Coalfield – Hartlepool Coal District 1843 (J.T.W Bell), DRO D/Lo/B 309/8 Eye plan River Wear with Rainton-Penshaw railway 1820, DRO D/Lo/D 889 Sketch of Rainton coal mines 1815, D/Lo/B 309/14 Hetton coal dispute plan 1820; and the following map is reproduced by permission of Lord Strathmore and Durham County Record Office: DRO D/St/P 20/2 'A Map of the County Palatine of Durham ... by C. Greenwood 1820'.

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## 22. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

### Conclusions

The previous chapters have analysed the landscape and history of Hetton in considerable detail, including its geology, biodiversity, and hydrology and the successive phases of settlement which can be identified in the area.

The prehistory of the area is still very opaque. An important monument, one of the most significant prehistoric sites in Tyne and Wear, the Seven Sisters barrow on Copt Hill, lies just beyond the northern boundary of the study area, and Hetton-le-Hole once had its own round burial cairn, the Fairies Cradle or Maiden Hill, sadly destroyed in the 19th century. Otherwise, however, there are only isolated finds, such as the Carr House polished stone axe, and a few sites identified as cropmarks on aerial photographs or through geophysical survey. Nevertheless more intensive research and fieldwork would undoubtedly yield interesting results.

The same comments apply to the Romano-British period and to the early medieval era where the patterns of settlement in Hetton are even more obscure. Nevertheless it is probably within the early Middle Ages (400-1100) that the district's ancient village communities – Hetton, Rainton, Eppleton, Hetton-le-Hill – with their defined territories (townships), first originated. Only in the case of Rainton, however, is there actual documentary evidence to substantiate the emergence of a territorial community at this time and shed light on its origins. Thus there are few historical periods more important in the story of Hetton and any improvements in our knowledge would be of the greatest significance.

The documentary record shows that all the ancient village communities of the Hetton area were in existence by the 12th and early 13th centuries – Hetton-le-Hole, Great Eppleton, East and West Rainton, Moorsley and Hetton-le-Hill. Study of the western half of the area is facilitated by the vast corpus of medieval documents – charters, rentals, accounts and court rolls, relating to the estates of the Benedictine priory of Durham Cathedral, which was lord of East and West Rainton and Moorsley. It is therefore possible to study these communities in great detail and explore the landscapes of their associated territories (vills). However, even in the eastern half of the study area some progress in revealing the lost medieval landscape is possible using charters and other documents.

One step forward in particular has been to resolve the confusion over the original names of Hetton-le-Hole and Hetton-le-Hill. Analysis of the references in the medieval documentary sources has shown that Hetton-le-Hole was always called Hetton (or a closely similar variant such as Hetona or Hettune), whereas Hetton-le-Hill was initially Heppedun, later shortened to Hepden, then Hepton, but never called Hetton before the later 16th century. This in turn enables us to disentangle which family was lord of each community and understand better what they were doing with their landholdings in terms of grants to religious communities like Finchale Priory, and to other lords and freeholders, and enclosures of the common waste, and potentially therefore to improve our understanding of the medieval landscape of Hetton.

The story of Hetton and its landscape in the 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries falls into a common pattern for north-east Durham, with the enclosure of the former open townfields and common moors in the early 17th century, dividing these open expanses into numerous closes, bounded by quick-set hedges. This was followed by the gradual redistribution of farmsteads away from the old villages into the wider township territories, where they were centrally located in coherent, remodelled farm tenancies. The Dissolution of Durham Priory caused little upheaval in East Rainton

and Moorsley as Prior and Convent were seamlessly replaced as landlords by the Cathedral Dean and Chapter. The gentry in the western part of the study area were also involved in the growth of coal-mining to feed the capital's voracious appetite for house-coal, promoting developments in waggonway technology which were a wonder to visitors to the region.

Coal mining in Rainton is amongst the earliest in the region, extending back to the Middle Ages, especially to the west, nearer the river in West Rainton, Moorhouse and Rainton Park. This importance has been recognised by the scheduling of the area of Mallygill Woods where archaeological remains of this earlier activity can still be identified. However the collieries of East Rainton too played an equally important role in the 17th and 18th centuries, notably those established by Sir John Ducks ('Rainton Ducks' or 'Old Ducks' Colliery) in the second half of the 17th century to exploit the High Main Seam. This was one of the most productive pits supplying the London house-coal market, and under the management of Jane Wharton and later, John Tempest, Rainton Colliery was instrumental in the development of waggonways on Wearside, to transport coal from Rainton to staiths at Penshaw for onward movement by keelboat to the ships waiting in the port of Sunderland (see Chapters 10.8 and 12). There is much documentary evidence associated with this activity, from the records of Durham Priory and its Finchale cell relating to the medieval mining, to the large collections, such as the Londonderry Estate Papers and the Watson Collection in Durham Record Office and the North-East Mining Institute (NEIMME) respectively, which cover the early modern mining operations.

Hetton played an equally if not more prominent role as coal prospection and mining moved eastwards onto the Magnesian Limestone Plateau of East Durham in the 19th century. Hetton was the site of the first mine to be sunk through the magnesian limestone to reach the underlying coal measures, in 1820-22, a feat only made possible by improvements in coal mining technology (Chapter 11). This achievement, which unleashed a wave of colliery expansion across the East Durham Plateau, was driven forward by a public company, the Hetton Coal Company, the first major enterprise of its kind in County Durham (see Chapter 13). Furthermore the development of the pits was accompanied by the construction of a railway to transport the mined coal all the way to staiths at Sunderland, where it could be loaded onto ships for the voyage to London.

The Hetton Colliery Railway was not simply another horse-drawn waggonway with occasional rope-hauled sections as was being developed elsewhere south of the Wear. Instead it represents the first designed and built to be operated, in part, by steam locomotives and the first to be powered throughout by steam engines – locomotive and stationary – with little use of horses, making it one of the most significant of all early railways. Moreover the involvement of both George and Robert Stephenson in its design and initial operation confers additional significance. Nevertheless, individually none of the railway's constituent structures have been regarded as possessing sufficient architectural or historical merit to deserve listing or scheduling which would have accorded them some measure of protection from the processes of development. The result is that, with very few exceptions, the structures in the Hetton Study Area have been demolished and for the most part all that survives is the course of the line (see Chapter 14). This makes the preservation of those elements that remain, such as the cottage where Robert Stephenson lived in Colliery Lane and the Hetton and Joicey Waggon-shop all the more important.

The social history of Hetton, the community's involvement in political radicalism and the development of trade unionism, and the developments in religious worship in the 19th and 20th centuries have been covered in Chapters 16, 17 and 18 respectively. The treatment is thorough but in truth such is the abundance of documentation available in county record offices and other archival repositories that almost any aspect covered could have been pursued further. Similarly, the

chapters devoted to the peripheral settlements of Easington Lane, East Rainton and Moorsley (19-21) demonstrate that even the smaller communities have fascinating micro-histories to be explored.

### Recommendations for further study

The following recommendations for further research, archaeological investigation and heritage protection work are made:

1. The **Tomb of Nicholas Wood** located in the churchyard attached to the now demolished St Nicholas Parish Church in the centre of Hetton-le-Hole is becoming somewhat dilapidated. Though listed its status is more vulnerable now that the church has been demolished, raising the question of the future role and ownership of the churchyard. The tomb is an important monument, relating to a figure of the utmost significance in the industrial development of the region (as a visit to the Mining Institute in Newcastle will testify). Appropriate measures to ensure its protection are therefore essential.
2. The site of **Hetton Mill** and the various water management features – leats, pond, dam – associated with that mill and with Rainton a little further downstream (now built over) would merit further study and recording of the earthworks, plus targeted excavation. The site could form part of a multi-disciplinary historical/archaeological-ecological-hydrological project focussed on **Hetton Bogs** and the mills to better understand the area as a whole and how its past has influenced the present form of the Bogs.
3. The ancient trackway of **Salters Lane** skirts the eastern edge of Hetton District. It is thought to have been involved with the transport by packhorse of salt from the bishop's salt-pans on the Wear to markets further south, but its origins are unclear and it is possible that it has a much older history. It would merit further documentary research as a first step.
4. Detailed examination of **Little Eppleton Hall** could attempt to disentangle the development of this complex building and determine whether the building still preserves parts of the three-hearth, 17th-century farmhouse, Eppleton Field House, mentioned in contemporary documents. Earthworks to the east of the settlement, including the remains of the pond shown on the tithe map and 1st edition Ordnance Survey also merit analysis. These were presumably closely associated with house at some stage and may indicate that it originally faced east, rather than west as at present.
5. The site of the manor house of the de Latons, lords of Hetton, and their successors remains uncertain – did it lie on or adjacent to the site of **Hetton Hall**? Some charter evidence exists which would be compatible with that interpretation. **Elemore Hall**, the present 18th-century mansion, stands on the footprint and incorporates elements of a house newly built by the Newcastle merchant, Bertram Anderson, in the third quarter of the 16th century, but Finchale Priory's medieval manorial farm, **Haswell Grange**, was probably located a little further south at **Elemore Grange Farm**. A project to study and compare the 'Halls of Hetton', both those still standing and those which have been demolished could yield interesting results.
6. A wider programme of **field-walking** may over time identify new archaeological sites and begin to fill the blanks in the area's past. Targeted excavation could explore those sites which are already known through aerial photography and geophysical survey.

7. More detailed study of **medieval documents** associated with the settlements of the Hetton Study Area held by Durham Record Office (principally the Greenwell Deeds) and in particular Durham University Library Archives and Special Collections (DCD Durham Cathedral Muniments) has the potential to yield further significant information regarding the medieval villages, their surrounding landscape and agricultural economy,.
8. East and West Rainton are important in the history of early coal-mining from the Middle Ages to end of the 18th century. Although that history has been described here, more work is possible to accurately plot the sites of the old pits, stationary pumping engines and waggonways shown on historic maps, and then identify and investigate the surviving remains on the ground.
9. The **development of local government** in Hetton, including the history of the **Hetton Urban District Council**, the Poor Law Unions and preceding system of parochial poor relief, has not been explored in this work, and certainly merits study,
10. Similarly, **transport**, other than railways has not been covered in the foregoing chapters – the development and closure of the tram network, and the motor buses which replaced them, for example – and would merit further research.

# SALTERS LANE



*Salters Lane, looking north of Carr House Farm*



*Salters Lane, looking south of Carr House Farm*



*Extract from the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey  
1857 6" per mile, with Salters Lane highlighted*



## GLOSSARY

<b>Advowson</b>	the legal right to appoint a priest to a parish church.
<b>Agistment</b>	the grazing of livestock on pasture belonging to someone else.
<b>Alienate</b>	to grant land to someone else or to an institution.
<b>Assart</b>	land cleared for cultivation.
<b>Assize</b>	a legal procedure
<b>Bailey</b>	large enclosure attached to a motte or ringwork, usually fortified by a ditch and bank furnished with a timber stockade. Sometimes a castle might have more than one bailey.
<b>Barony</b>	the estate of a major feudal lord, normally held of the Crown by military tenure.
<b>Borough</b>	a town characterised by the presence of burgage tenure and some trading privileges for certain tenants.
<b>Bovate</b>	measure of arable land, normally equivalent to approx. 12-15 acres. This measurement especially popular in eastern and northern counties of England.
<b>Burgage</b>	a form of property within a <b>borough</b>
<b>Capital Messuage</b>	a <b>messuage</b> containing a high status dwelling house, often the manor house itself.
<b>Cartulary</b>	a book containing copies of deeds, charters, and other legal records.
<b>Carucate</b>	a unit of taxation in northern and eastern counties of England, equivalent to eight <b>bovates</b> or one <b>hide</b> (96-120 acres).
<b>Charter</b>	a legal document recording the grant of land or privileges.
<b>Chattels</b>	movable personal property.
<b>Common land</b>	land over which tenants and perhaps villagers possessed certain rights, for example to graze animals, collect fuel etc.
<b>Common law</b>	a body of laws that overrode local custom.
<b>Copyhold</b>	a tenure in which land was held by copy of an entry recording admittance made in the record of the manor court.
<b>Cotland</b>	a smallholding held on <b>customary tenure</b> .
<b>Cottar</b>	an <b>unfree</b> smallholder.
<b>Croft</b>	an enclosed plot of land, often adjacent to a dwelling house.
<b>Custom</b>	a framework of local practices, rules and/or expectations pertaining to various economic or social activities.
<b>Customary tenure</b>	an unfree tenure in which land was held "at the will of the lord, according to the custom of the manor". In practice usually a copyhold of inheritance in Cumbria by the sixteenth century.
<b>Deanery</b>	unit of ecclesiastical administration consisting of a group of parishes under the oversight of a rural dean.
<b>Demesne</b>	land within a manor allocated to the lord for his own use.
<b>Domain</b>	all the land pertaining to a manor.
<b>Dower</b>	widow's right to hold a proportion (normally one-third) of her deceased husband's land for the rest of her life.
<b>Dowry</b>	land or money handed over with the bride at marriage.
<b>Enfeoff</b>	to grant land as a <b>fief</b> .
<b>Engross</b>	to amalgamate holdings or farms.

<b>Farm</b>	in medieval usage, a fixed sum paid for leasing land, a <b>farmer</b> therefore being the lessee.
<b>Fealty</b>	an oath of fidelity sworn by a new tenant to the lord in recognition of his obligations.
<b>Fee/Fief</b>	hereditary land held from a superior lord in return for <b>homage</b> and often, military service.
<b>Fine</b>	money payment to the lord to obtain a specific concession
<b>Forest</b>	a Crown or Palatinate hunting preserve consisting of land subject to Forest Law, which aimed to preserve game.
<b>Free chase</b>	a forest belonging to a private landholder.
<b>Freehold</b>	a tenure by which property is held “for ever”, in that it is free to descend to the tenant’s heirs or assigns without being subject to the will of the lord or the customs of the manor.
<b>Free tenure</b>	tenure or status that denoted greater freedom of time and action than, say, customary tenure or status, a <b>freeman</b> was entitled to use the royal courts, and the title to free tenure was defensible there.
<b>Free warren</b>	a royal franchise granted to a manorial lord allowing the holder to hunt small game, especially rabbit, hare, pheasant and partridge, within a designated <b>vill</b> .
<b>Furlong</b>	a subdivision of open arable fields.
<b>Glebe</b>	the landed endowment of a parish church.
<b>Haybote</b>	the right to take undergrowth for the construction or repair of enclosures
<b>Headland</b>	a ridge of unploughed land at the head of arable strips in open fields providing access to each strip and a turning place for the plough.
<b>Heriot</b>	a death duty, normally the best beast, levied by the manorial lord on the estate of the deceased tenant.
<b>Hide, hideage</b>	Anglo-Saxon land measurement, notionally 120 acres, used for calculating liability for geld. <i>See carucate</i> .
<b>Homage</b>	act by which a <b>vassal</b> acknowledges a superior lord.
<b>Housebote</b>	the right to take undergrowth for the construction and repair of buildings
<b>Knight’s fee</b>	land held from a superior lord for the service of a knight.
<b>Labour services</b>	the duty to work for the lord, often on the demesne land, as part of the tenant’s rent package.
<b>Leet</b>	the court of a vill whose view of frankpledge had been franchised to a local lord by the Crown.
<b>Manor</b>	estate over which the owner (“lord”) had jurisdiction, exercised through a manor court.
<b>Mark</b>	sum of money equivalent to two-thirds of a pound, i.e., 13s. 4d.
<b>Merchet</b>	a fine paid by <b>villein</b> tenants.
<b>Messuage</b>	a plot of land containing a dwelling house and outbuildings.
<b>Moot</b>	a meeting.
<b>Motte</b>	earthen mound deliberately raised or occasionally sculpted partially from pre-existing topography.
<b>Multure</b>	a fee for grinding corn, normally paid in kind: multure can also refer to the corn thus rendered.
<b>Neif</b>	a hereditary serf by blood.
<b>Pannage</b>	payment for the fattening of domestic pigs on acorns etc. in woodland.
<b>Perch</b>	a linear measure of 16½ feet and a square measure equivalent to one fortieth of a <b>rood</b> .
<b>Quitclaim</b>	a charter formally renouncing a claim to land.



<b>Ringwork</b>	alternative form of earth and timber castle – an enclosure smaller but more formidably defended than a typical bailey. Some ringworks were converted into mottes.
<b>Relief</b>	payment made by a free tenant on entering a holding.
<b>Rood</b>	measure of land equivalent to one quarter of an acre; and forty perches.
<b>Serf</b>	an unfree peasant characterised by onerous personal servility.
<b>Severalty</b>	land in separate ownership, that is not subject to common rights, divided into hedged etc., fields.
<b>Sheriff</b>	official responsible for the administration of a county by the Crown.
<b>Shieling</b>	temporary hut on summer pasture at a distance from farmstead.
<b>Socage</b>	a form of tenure of peasant land, normally free.
<b>Stint</b>	limited right, especially on pasture.
<b>Subinfeudate</b>	the grant of land by one lord to another to hold as a <b>knight's fee</b> or <b>fief</b> .
<b>Subinfeudation</b>	the process of granting land in a lordship to be held as <b>fiefs</b>
<b>Suit of court</b>	the right and obligation to attend a court; the individual so attending is a <b>suitor</b> .
<b>Tenant in chief</b>	a tenant holding land directly from the king, normally termed a baron.
<b>Tenement</b>	a land holding.
<b>Tenementum</b>	a land holding (Latin).
<b>Thegn or Thane</b>	Title given to a local lord during the Anglo-Saxon period, roughly equivalent to a Norman knight. His landholding his term a <b>thanage</b> .
<b>Tithe</b>	a tenth of all issue and profit, mainly grain, fruit, livestock and game, owed by parishioners to their church.
<b>Toft</b>	an enclosure for a homestead.
<b>Unfree tenure</b>	see <b>customary tenure</b> .
<b>Vaccary</b>	a dairy farm.
<b>Vassal</b>	a tenant, often of lordly status.
<b>Vill</b>	the local unit of civil administration, also used to designate a territorial township community (prior to the 14 <sup>th</sup> century)
<b>Villein</b>	peasant whose freedom of time and action is constrained by his lord; a villein was not able to use the royal courts.
<b>Villeinage</b>	see <b>customary tenure</b> and <b>unfree tenure</b> .
<b>Virgate</b>	a quarter of a <b>hide</b> ; a standardised <b>villein</b> holding of around 30 acres. Also known as a <b>yardland</b> .
<b>Ward</b>	administrative division; the word implies a guarded or defended unit. The term most commonly relates to large administrative subdivisions of the county (usually 5 or 6) from the 13 <sup>th</sup> century.

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### Journal and Corpora Abbreviations

- AA*<sup>1</sup>      *Archaeologia Aeliana*, First Series etc.
- Corpus*      *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture. Volume I: County Durham and Northumberland.* R Cramp, (1984), Oxford University Press for the British Academy; Oxford.
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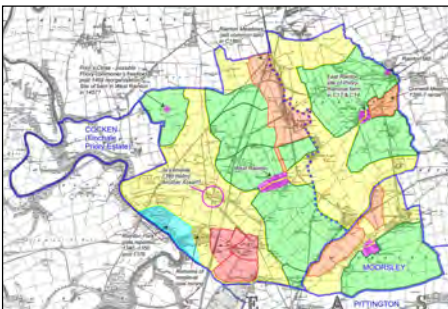
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This book explores the landscape and history of Hetton from its geological origins to the present day. Whether it is Hetton's dramatic setting on the edge of the Magnesian Limestone Plateau and the rich ecology which it supports or the lives of medieval farming communities, the pioneering collieries and steam railways or the sporting life of the Victorian and Edwardian town, the Hetton Village Atlas will guide you through the area's rich heritage.



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