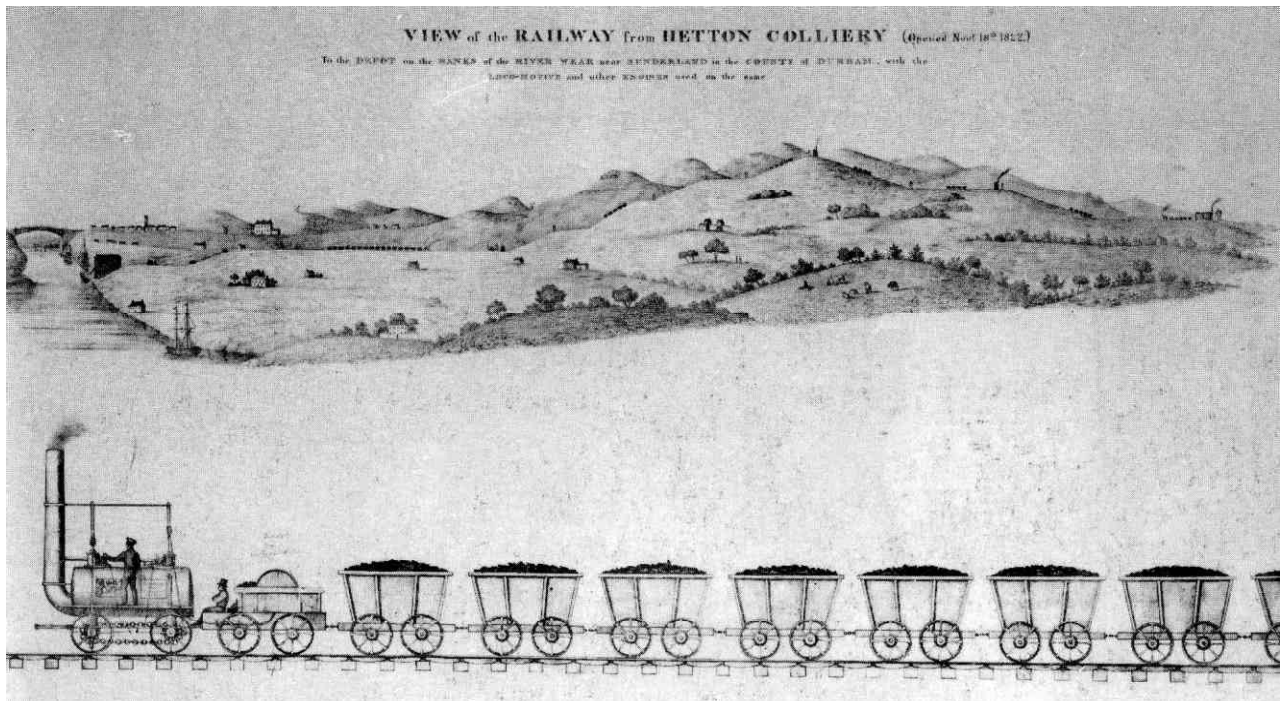


THE HETTON VILLAGE ATLAS

A Community, its History and Landscape



HETTON LOCAL & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

THE HETTON VILLAGE ATLAS

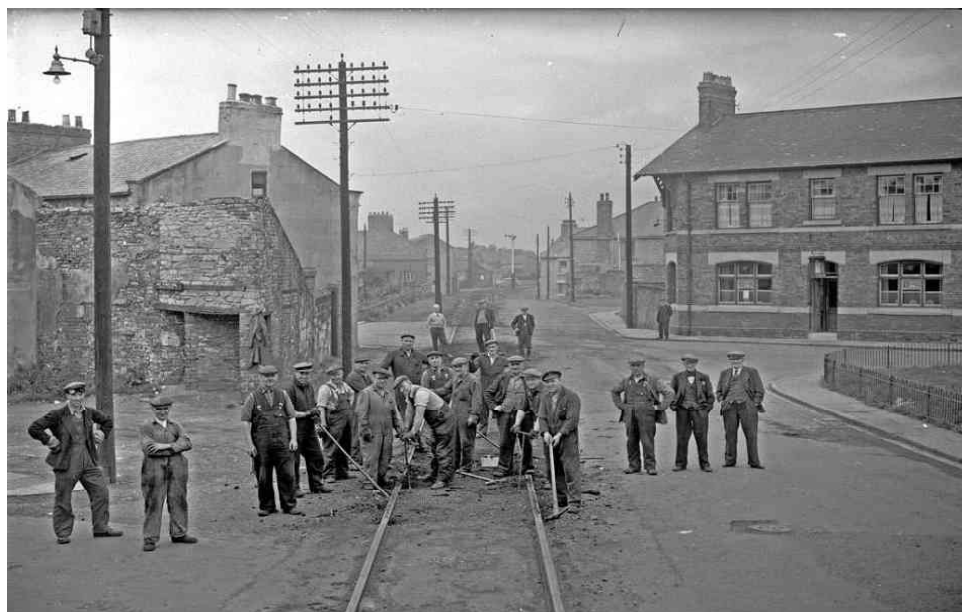
THE LANDSCAPE, HISTORY AND ENVIRONMENT OF
HETTON-LE-HOLE AND NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES



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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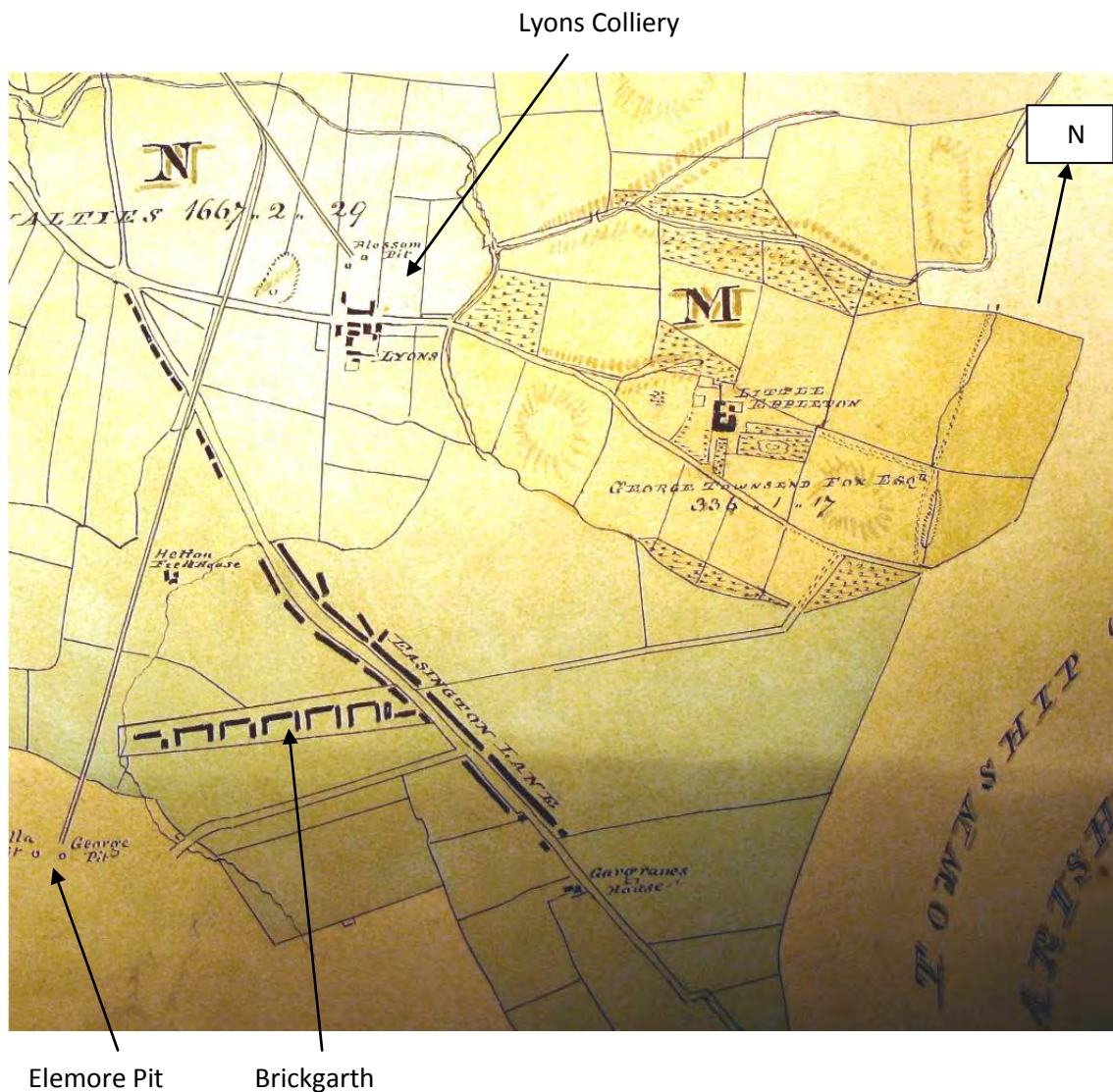
23/02 Saxton's map of County Durham 1576, DRO D/XP 26 Map of Durham County by John Speed n.d. [1611], DRO D/CL 23/14 Morden's Map of County Durham 1695, DRO D/CL 23/46 'A new map of the county of Durham' by Jones & Smith 1808, DRO NCB I/X 228 Rainton estate plan late C18, DRO D/Br/P 165 Hetton Coal Company 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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19. EASINGTON LANE



Easington Lane



Thurlow's Houghton-le-Spring Parish Map c. 1827 by J. Bell

If you had been living around 1800 and travelled from Easington Village to Houghton-le-Spring your journey would have been along a dusty lane surrounded on all sides by rural countryside, a few fields and an occasional farmstead dotted here and there on the rolling countryside. There is no South Hetton, Easington Lane or Lyons, or Hetton as we know it today. In the vicinity of what we now know as Easington Lane there were four farmsteads, Moor House Farm, Gargles (Gargraves) Farm, Prospect Farm and Hetton Moor House. Now if you were to come back and travel the same road 30 years later there would be a wholesale transformation. The rural idyll has vanished, the countryside has not changed much but, as you follow the hill down towards Hetton in the Hole there is activity, all around. New houses are taking shape and a High Street has been erected to form a street on the lane.

Passing down High Street there is a likelihood that smoke and steam would be seen rising from new industrial buildings springing up to the left and right, i.e. Hetton Colliery, later to be called the Lyons Colliery, to the east and Elemore Colliery to the west. Houses have already been erected in an area known as the Brickgarth, part of the Elemore estate, and surrounding the Hetton Colliery at Lyons and Four Lane Ends, and at intervals along the length of the High Street. According to Michael Sill writing in 1951, (*Land Ownership and the Landscape, A study of the Evolution of the Colliery Landscape of Hetton-le-Hole, Co. Durham*).

“Here, in an elongated field of 8.75 acres with overall dimensions of 700 yards by 70 yards, owned by the Hutchinson family and leased to the Coal Company, miners’ cottages were built rapidly after the opening of the Hetton and Elemore Collieries. By 1827, 101 houses had been constructed on this plot.”

The figure of 101 houses in the Brickgarth is the first indication that the Colliery Company was prepared to provide accommodation for its workforce. They were used to attract the large body of workers needed in the area but also displayed a certain responsibility by the Company towards its expanding workforce, a pattern that was to be repeated over the next eight decades to the turn of the century.

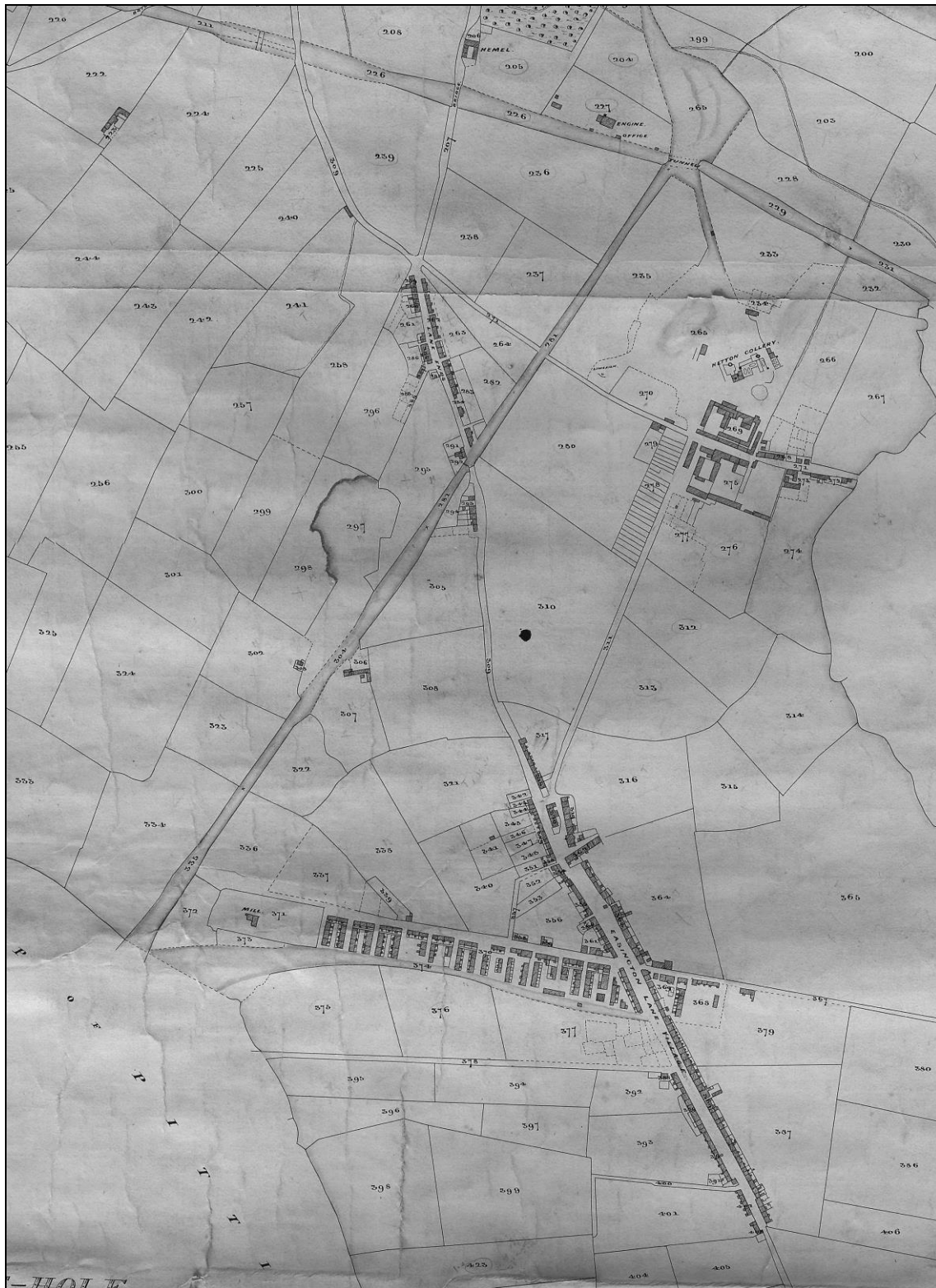
In order to maximise the number of dwellings on the Brickgarth plot Sill, goes on to explain,

“.....This narrow field, the Brickgarth, was planned as a series of twenty two short rows aligned cross the width of the plot, with eleven head rows disposed along its long axis. Two short rows and one head row formed a three-sided unit of up to eighteen dwellings, in the case of the complete examples facing onto a small court. In this way the most efficient if not humane use of this awkwardly shaped parcel of land for housing purposes was achieved.”

A view of the map above illustrates the layout of the Brickgarth but only six units are shown. Whether the map is just representational of the building format or whether this was the total number of units actually built when the map was drawn will never be known. One suspects the former since later maps such as the 1839 Tithe map of Easington Lane shows the correct number of units together with a mill at the west end of the Brick Garth.

The houses were all built of magnesian limestone, not a particularly good building material. Later in the 19th century brick yards, toilets and coal houses were to be added. These small houses comprised just two rooms downstairs, described as a kitchen and living room, and an attic above which was more often than not used as bedroom space. The houses were built to an identical layout and size at a price of around £14.00 each and similar houses became the norm throughout the village and Hetton over the next twenty years. The growth of an established workforce and their families in the developing village soon began to attract businesses, most of which established themselves in and along the High Street.

1839 Tithe Map Easington Lane & Lyons



A few houses developed close to the Hetton Colliery at the Lyons but it seems that they were built of wood and were for the use of the sinkers who dug out the pit shafts. A small enclave of miners' cottages clustered along the lane close to the Four Lane Ends, most of which were removed when Pearson built an estate in the early 1960s. Today a small number of modified original cottages can

be seen opposite the Lyons Tavern on the A182. The houses in the Brick Garth were demolished in the early 1950s and replaced with council houses. The Brick Garth was a thriving community during its early years as most of the tenants were men who worked at either Elemore Pit or Hetton Pit. Today it is still possible to see a large number of these cottages located on the north side of the Pittington road as it leads to Elemore.

Easington Lane as a village developed very quickly during the early years of the third decade of the nineteenth century. In the early years shops made and sold all kinds of goods including nails, ropes, furniture, clocks, candles, boots and shoes as well as clothes. As well as shops, the building of a place of worship soon became a priority for the community. The first chapel was the Wesleyan Chapel, formerly a plain stone structure erected in the Brickgarth in 1827; it was rebuilt and enlarged in 1870 to seat about 500 people. There was also a Sunday school to accommodate about 200 pupils. A second chapel, the Primitive Methodist Chapel, was built in 1840 followed by a larger building in 1869 at a cost of £1800 which seated about 700 people. There was also a Sunday School for 400 children.

The 1841 census for Easington Lane shows that there were 302 coalminers within the growing village. This represented 59% of the male work force at this time, so the collieries of the Hetton Coal Company at Elemore Colliery, the Lyons Colliery and to a lesser extent Eppleton Colliery offered the greatest opportunity for paid work and the greatest range of different types of job opportunities. As the coal industry had been established for less than 20 years one might assume that there was an over-reliance on a single type of employment but this does not appear to have been the case as coalminers could move out of the village to find employment elsewhere both locally and farther afield. In fact the terms of the miners' bond often acted as an incentive for miners to move to other collieries where slightly better working conditions were offered. The coal industry at this time throughout Durham and Northumberland, in spite of employment difficulties and the constant threat of industrial action by the miners, was buoyant and constantly developing so providing additional opportunities for miners to move. From the census for 1841 and 1851 it is apparent that families did move around throughout the coalfield.

Easington Lane began to show from 1828 onwards a more stable environment as the village infrastructure developed and matured to meet the needs of the miners and their families. Again the census shows that there was a growth in the number of apprenticeships in a variety of jobs, many of which had little or no connection with the mining industry. Additionally there was a rash of retail developments to sustain the growing community such as grocers, butchers, bakers, millers, fishmongers, inn keepers, shoemakers (cordwainers), tailors etc. as well as tinkers and licensed hawkers visiting the village. Taking just one example of such opportunism, a family of Irish tinkers came to live in the village and within a short time had started up a tinsmith's business on High Street making metal water bottles for the miners who needed to take water underground.

Additionally there were employment opportunities in what we would now refer to as 'service industries', examples being, cartmen, cartwrights, firemen, gardeners, horse keepers, janitors locksmiths, labourers in abundance, male servants, schoolmasters, storekeepers etc. What was more important was that there were jobs for men and boys of a variety of ages which helped with family permanence, so that the community began to put down lasting roots. It is apparent, by comparing the 1841 census with at of ten years later, that many of the same families were still in the village

even though some of them had moved, often to larger premises.

Not surprisingly many of the jobs were unskilled but in 1841 some professional roles were also listed. Two schoolmasters and two teachers were noted serving a school and a modern academy in the Lane, and by 1851 there were four schools, two having schoolmistresses. The growth in the population by 1841 was sufficient to support two surgeons, Thomas Dickson, aged 30 and Robert Conyer a young man of just 20. It beggars belief that a young man of this age could classify himself as a surgeon.

It appears that there was no attempt to exploit young children as was the case elsewhere in the country in the 1840s, which resulted in the introduction of a number of Factory and Mines Acts in that decade to protect children and young people. There appear to have been only two children, one eight and one ten, listed as working as trappers in the local mines.

By 1851 there was a much wider range of occupations available within the village e.g. boilersmiths, enginewrights, nail-makers, upholsterers, watch and clock makers, cabinet makers, printers, book-binders, opticians, druggist, iron puddlers, medicine traveller etc. There were also greater opportunities for females to find work although they were still mainly tied to house and family duties. A number were employed in shops and businesses such as seamstresses, milliners and dressmakers but the majority were domestic servants such as house maids, kitchen maids and other such positions. There were 403 men and boys employed as miners out of a total male employment of 608, representing 31% of the total workforce. Comparing this with the 1841 percentage of 59% one can see the growth in alternative forms of employment throughout the decade.

It wasn't until 1870 that the first church was built in the village as part of the newly established Lyons parish. The church hall was erected in 1891 at a cost of £400 and used for lectures, concerts and as a Sunday school for 500 persons. Within a few years of the start of the village there were four private schools, two blacksmiths, fourteen public houses, three chapels, a reading room and library and a common lodging house. The latter was an important element in the village since it provided accommodation for single men, many of whom were working. It was customary in mining villages for single miners to become lodgers with mining families. It also provided a valuable source of income to single mothers with children where their husbands had died or been killed in an accident.

The village itself was surrounded by countryside and no doubt this gave an opportunity for miners to engage in poaching to supplement family meals, even though the punishment during the early part of the 19th century could amount to shipment to Australia's penal settlements. Easington Lane began to build a reputation as a lawless place in spite of the influx of chapels. The Independent Methodist Church was one of six in the village, the others being the Church of England, the Methodist, the Salvation Army, the Pentecostal and the Roman Catholic. Throughout their 89 years here the "I.M.s" have built up such a reputation that many people regard it as "their church" even though they may not have been inside for many years. This status in the village was not easy to attain, for in the early days a lot of religious prejudice had to be overcome. The Independent Methodist church was first established as the "Christian Lay Church" and it did not take long for those who wished to denigrate its members to play upon the word "Lay" and dub them "The Clay Dollies". This tag remained for many years even after the connectional and proper name of Independent Methodists was adopted.

The cause began on March 22nd 1881, when a few earnest men and women met in a cottage for a prayer meeting. This resulted in the formation of a new church with the old miner's hall used for Sunday services. Funds were accumulated and on Good Friday 1884 the foundation stone of the present church was laid.

It did not have an easy time at the start, in fact it got to such a low ebb that the few who had tried to carry on decided to close and wrote to the Minister appointed for the following Sunday telling him not to come to the church as it was closing because the number of the congregation had diminished substantially. It so happened that he, the Minister, at one time had been shipwrecked in a sailing vessel, so he wrote to the Secretary saying "Hang on and I'll come". He forthwith purchased a hand bell and came to Easington Lane well before the service, and toured the streets, ringing the bell and announcing "Come to the Church tonight to hear the shipwrecked sailor". The church was filled to capacity and he commenced to tell his story. Since then there has never been any thought of closing.

During the 1830s and 1840s Easington Lane attracted tinkers; travellers and gypsies, many of whom over-wintered in the Gypsy Yard on Murton Lane. Some stayed on in the village and made a living doing much of the itinerant building work as well as such trades as knife grinders, barrel makers, tin-makers, quilters, gardeners and agricultural labourers. Easington Lane for a time became known as "Tinker Town". The Catholic church was situated at the top of the " Lane" on the way out to Easington Village, while the Salvation Army was established on Pemberton's Bank, and the Apostolic Church developed in Elemore Lane.

No. of individuals per household	No. of households in the Brick Garth
1	4
2	12
3	34
4	20
5	23
6	26
7	15
8	8
9	2
10	0
11	1
12	0
Total	145

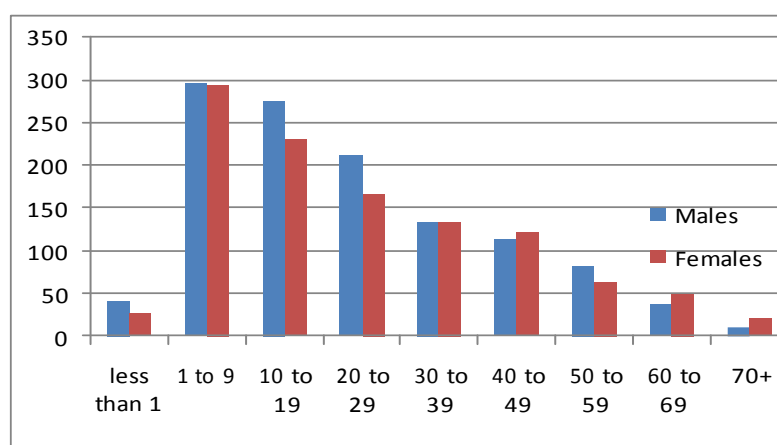
Examination of the 1841 census, the earliest national census, shows that there were a total of 145 households living in the Brick Garth area. The table on the previous page gives the family size for each of the households. The average size of a family was just 4 so one can assume that in approximately half the houses there was little overcrowding, but in 75 dwellings the number of individuals was 5 and over. This indicates that the small miners' cottages had some overcrowding as many of the cottages were housing mature families. The Matheson family had nine children, six boys and three girls, ranging in age from 15 years down to 2 months.

In 1841 there were 178 coal miners living in the Brick Garth, the youngest being 14 and the oldest 65. Ten years later this number had risen to 218. Of course other miners were housed throughout the rest of the village but this concentration in one place was a community of its own. The Brickgarth was the nucleus of the village. Many miners were mates (marras) at work, often working in teams and helping each other out, as well as being friends away from work too. It was quite usual for men to be paid as a group, particularly those on piece work, and their wages would be distributed on pay day by one of the group, often in a pub or miners' social area. Men worked hard in the mine for up to six days a week and pay day came round once every fortnight. Spare time was often spent in the many pubs in the village and it was not unusual for a number of miners to be found in the police cells at a weekend having drunk themselves into a stupor, or following a fracas having been arrested for their behaviour.

The following information is taken from the 1841 census, and relates to the people the people living in Easington Lane, Lyons, the Four Lane Ends. Also included are a number of isolated farms and houses stretching from Hetton Moor to Peat Carr.

Altogether there were almost 2,300 people listed as living in the above locations. There were 1,200 males and 1100 females. There was a smaller number of females in the 20 to 29 age range than in the previous age range 10-19. This drop can be explained by the fact that many young females left the family group in their middle and late teens and early twenties to take up employment away from the area. The opportunities for female employment were very limited in the Hetton area and since large numbers of young women found work in domestic service they would be likely to have moved away. Additionally many of them, being of marital age, may well have left to marry and live in other local towns and villages.

Age Distribution graph for Easington Lane in 1841



Living conditions in Easington Lane in 1841 were no worse and no better than in most of the mining villages in the area. There were fluctuations in the total population between 1825 and 1841 but overall the trend was upwards. These fluctuations were often caused by the terms of employment that the miners were subject to, namely, the bond. The coal owners consistently tried to control the system of employment to their satisfaction which often conflicted with the terms which the men were prepared to accept. As a consequence there were a number of lockouts and strikes during 1825 – 1845. Hence miners often left the area to work elsewhere while others came into the area, sometimes being brought in by the Coal Owners as black-leg labour. In spite of these troubles life went on and during times of strife miners and their families bonded together to help each other through the troubled period.

Easington Lane set the pattern for coalminers' dwellings and also for village development in the area. By the middle of the nineteenth century the vast majority of the village still relied on water deliveries by barrel on a cart, although there was a water pant at the top of Pembertons Bank. This pant, according to Robert Logan in his History of Easington Lane, was a standing pipe from which water occasionally flowed. Eventually in 1865 The Hetton and Easington Lane Water Company was formed and, with the construction of a service reservoir located at the very top of the Easington Lane adjacent to where the old Primary and Secondary Schools were located, water was made available to the majority of houses in the village. Gas lighting was also installed in the village soon after 1856. The Gas Company was formed by the Hetton Coal Company in 1856 with a gas works located close to the colliery at Lyons. The cost of the gas works was £1600. Around 1883 some of the gas lights were replaced by electric lights when an electrical installation was introduced at Elemore Colliery.

It was mentioned earlier that the first schools were privately run and located in George Street and Murton Lane. Generally they delivered a poor standard of education and it was not until the Coal Company took an interest in education in the 1860s that improvements in education occurred. Prior to this, apart from the private schools, young people had to be satisfied with the Sunday Schools which flourished largely due to the activities of the Methodist chapels of which there were a number in the Lane. Religious fervour had been a binding aspect of the village from the 1830's until the start of the 20th century. Religious activities were supported by a number of Methodist churches, an Apostolic Church, a Church of England, a Roman Catholic church and a strong contingent of the Salvation Army.

There was another aspect to the education in the village, the activities of the Easington Lane Literary and Reading Society which came into prominence about 1860. The purpose of this Society was to encourage reading and an interest in literature in general and it successfully carried out these aims for more than 50 years. Initially the library and reading room was lodged in the school but eventually was transferred to the Welfare Hall. The mechanics Institute, as it became known was erected with funds provided by the Hetton Coal Company in 1860. It held 1200 books in its library. Following the arrival of the Rev. Hutt, the first vicar of the Lyons Church in 1870, his sons took an active interest in cricket and it wasn't long before a number of teams were established in the village. Other sports and pastimes soon developed in the village, and a favourite known as the game of "Ball" or fives soon developed. It was played in a ball alley one of which was developed at the Three Tuns public house. It was also played on corner ends both in the main street and in the Brickgarth.

Quoits was a sport played in many of the back yards of pubs as well as on areas of waste ground close to houses. Foot running and racing was also encouraged and many of the long distance races occurred on the roads and lanes, while grass track running took place in meadows and specially prepared flat ground. Many of these sports attracted gambling and betting took place at all the meets. Cycling became important close to the end of the century while a number of discreditable sporting activities also took place, including hare and rabbit coursing, bare knuckle fighting and pitch and toss. Groups of men congregated in locations away from the houses where the local constabulary could easily be spotted to carry out these sporting moments. Many a miner lost his wages taking part in these illicit activities.

For much of the nineteenth century transport to and from the village was not sustainable and people had to be prepared to walk if they wished to go anywhere. The coming of the railways, and particular the opening of the Durham to Sunderland line in 1837, improved the travel arrangements although people from the Lane still had to walk to Hetton station or walk the two miles to Haswell to get on a train there. By the 1850s transport by rail was well established and frequent journeys were made from the Lane to towns and cities further afield. A postal connection was setup after 1855 by pony and trap from Fence Houses, from which the railway network improved communications for those who wished to avail themselves of the service. By the end of the nineteenth century entertainment in the village was well established. The churches and chapels often put on concert parties as well as dances although these tended to be rather formal affairs and strictly for a purpose, e.g. to raise funds. However some outside Concert Parties did visit the village on a regular basis while a theatre was established in the village by a man called Lloyd in Neil Street, and according to Robert Logan, a dilapidated shed built over the stables at the back of the Free Gardeners' Arms was referred to as "The Music Hall".

Churches and chapels did much to promote vocal and instrumental music. Concerts were organised by them in support of organisations such as the Reading Room or the Cricket Club. Concerts were also held in the schoolroom, the Miners' Hall, and the various chapels. Throughout the year travelling circuses and shows, including waxworks and menageries, paid visits to Easington Lane providing light entertainment for young and old alike. Famous names of the time such as Allen's Circus, Mander's Waxworks, Bostocks Menagerie often came to the village.

Many of the older street names enshrine the history of the village. Smith, Bradley and Girvan were all builders of houses and have given their names to streets. Walter and Cambell Streets are named after the Secretary, Walter Cambell, of the Sunderland Building Society which provided much of the funding for the houses as well as promoting the building of the streets. Lilywhite Terrace, an unusual name, is named after the Hetton Lilywhite Cricket club whose ground was close to the location of the present terrace on the west side of the road. The club itself was named after the famous English cricketer, James Lillywhite, born in 1842 and who captained the English side against the Australian team in the first ever test matches in 1876-77. He toured Australia and America in the decades prior to the end of the century before becoming a famous umpire. He died in 1929. Pembertons Bank takes its name from the famous Sunderland mining family who owned land on the east side of the road in the lower part of the village.

The Pigeon Club.

One of the pastimes that miners engaged in was looking after an allotment in which was grown vegetables to feed the miner's family. In fact miners were encouraged to take on an allotment and land was generally made available by the local mine company. Thus a small amount of land enabled miners to spend their leisure time in a worthwhile fashion and a number of them soon began to take up another hobby, pigeon racing. With the development of the Miners welfare and the Working Mens club, groups of miners got together and soon organised a pigeon fanciers group. During 1908/9 this happened in Easington Lane where the hobby developed under the auspices of the Working Mens Club. Within a short time membership had grown and many members although not members of the Working Mens Club, supported the hobby of pigeon racing. Dotted throughout the village were pigeon crees on allotments in Elemore Lane, behind Store Terrace in the Brickgarth, down in Elemore Vale, behind James Terrace and behind the Cosy cinema in High Street. Others were based in Neil street, Lyons Avenue and Girven terrace. Affiliated to the Up North Combine which started prior to World War 1, pigeon racing flourished in the Lane. Many village names such as, Turnbull, Robson, Wilson, Ashcroft, Clough, Williamson Brass, Purvis, Bruce, Loscombe and Anderson were involved. Partnerships and groups developed as the sport progressed. Incidentally Timmy Williamson, a well known pigeon fancier, was also a schoolboy international footballer.

Both short inland races as well as long distance international races were organised, though most of the technology associated with modern-day racing was absent. Returning pigeons were clocked in and then the owners of the birds had to run to a central point, normally the Post Office, to register the return through steel rings put on the birds for the race. Brass and Bruce won the Up North Combine cross Channel twice in 1921/2 against birds from all over the north east, their pigeons having been released from Mons and Troyes in France. Johnson and Chappell were two other fanciers from the Lane who achieved success in these trophy races.

Distances flown by the pigeons varied from 70 miles (from Bubworth or Pontefract) then in stages up to 300 miles from Folkestone or Eastbourne. The longest races were from France, Clermont (411 miles), Fontenay (460 miles) and the longest of them all Bourges (562 miles). During both World Wars pigeons were used to carry messages. Bomber crews took pigeons with them and if an aeroplane went down in the sea the birds were liberated with a message giving the latitude and longitude of the crash. In this way a number of aircrews were saved. Some pigeons were rewarded with a medal called the "Dickin Medal" for their bravery in returning home even when they were wounded.

The Pigeon Club still exists today in Easington Lane but with a much reduced membership of ten to twelve stalwarts. One man R. Elliott has dominated the records for the last 10 to 12 years. The pigeon fanciers of the Lane have been recognised by a sculpture erected at the village boundary showing a pigeon fancier and his birds, an important gesture for a wonderful hobby.

(This information was kindly provided by Jackie Greaves a member of the Easington Lane Workingmen's Club, Pigeon Club.)



*Pigeon Fanciers 1910 at one of the
allotments in Easington Lane*

An Alphabetic Chronology of Easington Lane

Population of Easington Lane area

1801	212	1821	919	1831	5887
------	-----	------	-----	------	------

1891 12,726

Blacksmith..... George Lowdon started business in 1856

Carnival..... Easington Lane first held 1931.

Cemetery.... Easington Lane opened opened 6 May 1891. Cost including house £2,500.

Chapel.... Bethel (Pembertons Bank) started 1832, enlarged 1842.

Chapel..... Independent (Christian Lay) started March 1881, opened 6/9/1884.

Chapel..... Primitives, Brickgarth erected 1828, became Miners' Hall after 1869.

ChapelPrimitives, Brickgarth erected 1869 at a cost of £1800. Replaced old chapel.

Chapel..... Primitives Brickgarth Sunday School erected 1832.

Chapel..... Wesleyan Brickgarth erected 1827.

Church....Apostolics, Murton Lane opened October 1837.

Church....Lyons Church Hall (Pembertons Bank) erected 1891, cost £400.

Church....Lyons erected 1869, cost £3040, restored 1906, cost £1500.

Club..... Easington Lane Workmens (High Street), opened 1909, James Chapman, Steward.

Club..... Easington Lane Workmens (High Street), affiliated 30/12/1911 CIU.

Club..... Easington Lane Workmens (High Street),burnt out 1939.

Club..... Lyons Boys started about 1935, officially opened by Lord Joicey 7/1/1941.

Club..... Lyons Boys reopened Tuesday 25th June 1963 following renovation by H.M.Queen Mother

Colliery.....Elemore sinking started March 1825 (Hutton Seam reached February 1827), closed February 4th 1974.

Colliery..... Elemore explosion at 2.55 a.m. 2/12/1886. Happened between Dale Way and Greaser in the George Pit (low main). 28 men and boys lost their lives.

Colliery.....Elemore baths opened 2nd December 1933 by Tom Clish and Percy Barks at a cost of £15,000.

Football..... Easington Lane AFC 1949-50 won League Challenge Cup, Lambton Amateur Cup, won Murton Amateur Cup, Hetton Charity Cup.

Football..... Easington Lane AFC 1950-51 won Durham Amateur Cup.

Gas Supply..... Installation at Easington Lane 1856. Gas Works at Lyons Colliery, cost £1600 by J.H. Little Nestle.

Handicapped Club..... Easington Lane, inaugural meeting 7th May 1959.

Institute..... (Mechanics) erected 1860 by Hetton Coal Company , up to 1200 books.

Miners..... Welfare (Brickgarth) opened by Tom Clish and Percy Barks 1928. The building had previously been a series of flats (living accommodation) and a pub the Roslyn Castle.

People.....Annie Robson(Flatt Annie) of the Knaggs Head Brickgarth died 10/1973 aged 93.

People.....Dr. Laws died 29/12/1961.

People..... Frankie Carr died 24/2/1976 (72), Katie Carr died 12/4/1976 (7 weeks later)

People..... John Pearson shot himself and his dog in Brickgarth Dec. 1st 1965.

People..... Robert Logan, tailor and local historian died 1972

Pictures.... "Star Electric Cinema" opened 1912 on Pembertons Bank, closed 1930.

Pictures...."Cosy" erected 1938 by Teesdale Cinemas of Bishop Auckland. Roger Dixon one of the first projectionists.

Pictures...."Cosy" First film shown was " Feather in your Nest" with George Formby, cinema closed in 1959 and became a bingo hall for many years.

Post Office..... William Trotter sub-postmaster 1890.

Post Office..... Mrs Sarah Emma Riley was sub-postmistress in 1910.

School..... Elemore Lane (Infants) built 1873 by Hetton Coal Company for 294 children.

School..... High Street (Mixed) erected 1859 by Hetton Coal Company for 420 children.

School..... High Street (Mixed) closed October 1928, became a church hall.

School..... Top of bank, (mixed primary and secondary) opened by Tom Clish 24th October 1928.

School.....New Primary school built and opened 2002-03.

Shop..... Bolt and Wright, Cycle Repairers 1894

Shop..... Easington Lane Co-operative Society established 1874. Foundation Stone for new shop laid 9/8/1879.

Shop..... Holmes (Grocers) High Street started trading 1866.

Shop..... James Watson (Pawnbroker) established in Smiths Terrace.

Shop..... Kays the Butcher High Street established 1873.

Shop..... Pringles High Street (grocers and general dealers) Edward Pringle 1890-1894, John George Pringle 1904.

Shop..... Ralph Lawson (Cabinet Maker) Lilywhite Terrace there 1894 closed 1930s.

Shop..... Thomas Gardner (Brickgarth) there in 1834.

Shop.... Wylies, High Street built 1880.

Trams..... Working through to Easington Lane (Terminus) 9th June 1906, last tram 1925.

Trams.... Illuminated tram for the Coronation of Edward VII ran to Easington Lane July 6th 1911.

Transport..... First charabanc making an appearance in January 1912.

War Memorial..... High Street unveiled Saturday August 1921 by Lord Joicey.

Water..... Easington Lane reservoir opened in 1892 by Hetton and Easington Lane Water Company.

Easington Lane, like many Durham pit villages, had its fair share of pubs and other licensed premises. Without making excuses for excessive drinking, the amount of ale drunk by families during the early part of the nineteenth century was of necessity as much as choice because the drinking water available was of such a poor quality and disease ridden that beer offered a safer alternative. The beer sold was invariably much stronger in alcohol level than the beer sold today which accounts for the level of drunkenness. Miners were also known for their hard drinking and for long periods Easington Lane was judged to be a lawless place with high levels of disorder. The list below shows the majority of pubs, and, although not complete, gives an indication of the main 'watering holes' available to the populace.

No.	Name	Location	Opened/in place	Closed
1	Albion (Monkey House)	148 High Street	1879	1938
2	Black Horse	Lyons lane	There 1834	1934
3	Bonnie Pit lad	131 High Street	1828	Still open
4	Commercial	205 High Street was Joiners Arms	There 1851	1990s
5	Cross House	63 High Street	There 1835	1960s
6	Davy Lamp	140 Brickgarth	There 1834	Still open
7	Free Gardeners Arms	181 High Street	There 1828	Still open
8	Grapes	124 High Street	There 1879	Still open
9	Inkerman	Murton Lane	There 1850s	
10	Letters	Elemore Vale	There 1834	1855
11	Lord Seaham	57 High Street	There 1855	Closed 1990s
12	Lyons Tavern	Near Hetton Lyons Cricket Club	There 1828	Still open
13	Nags Head	25 Brickgarth	There 1851	1934
14	Three Tuns	261 High Street	There 1855	early part 21st century
15	Three Tuns (The Vale)	Elemore Vale	There 1855	2005/6
16	Travellers Rest	Lyons Lane	There 1834	1934
17	William IV (May have become the Grapes)	? High Street	There 1834	1851

In addition there was The Roslyn Castle in the Brickgarth which may have doubled up as accommodation for homeless families while also offering the services of a pub. Seemingly the Cross House at 63 High Street was originally known as the Seven Stars. There was of course the Easington Lane Working Mens Club which opened in 1911 and still continues today in its original position in the High Street. Two other old pubs the Ship Inn present in 1834 and lasting until the late 1840s, and the Board Inn opened in 1828 and closed around 1855. There were also pubs close to the Lyons colliery, one of which was the Golden Lion while another on Pemberton's Bank was latterly nicknamed the Bat Cave but was originally known as the Lord Seaham. There was also the Turf Hotel.



The Golden Lion public house at the Lyons close to the colliery. It was demolished in the 1950s.

Another public house which was located a short distance along the road to Hetton from the bottom of Pemberton's Bank was the Abyssinia Hotel. Opened at some point during the mid nineteenth century it lasted until the end of the 1920s before closing.



The Abyssinia Hotel in the 1920s

By the turn of the 19th century there was an air of stability to the village. Many of the families and businesses had been established for decades and were part of the community. It had taken until the 1870 for the terms of employment of the miners to become settled, getting rid of the "miners' bond" took many twists and turns. By the last quarter of the century not only was the local miners' union strong but it reflected the desire of its members to better their working conditions. The coal owners for their part understood their social as well as their employment responsibilities. Occasionally times were difficult in Easington Lane, none more so than in the 1890s when there was a substantial fall in the world demand for coal coupled with an over-supply which forced down prices. Wage cuts in these circumstances were inevitable and employment levels were also cut. To make matters worse it looked as if Elemore Pit had come to the end of its working life in 1893 as some of the coal seams ran out. The Hetton Coal Company reduced the man-power but the majority of coalminers were transferred to the local Eppleton Pit so fewer jobs were lost. It was to be five years before the colliery reopened. As a result some businesses in the village closed but most stayed open.

Easington Lane Businesses 1895 Whelland's Directory

Post and Money Order Office.—William Trotter, postmaster. Letters arrive from Fence Houses at 7.30 A.M. and 6.40 P.M. ; despatched at 2.15 and 8 P.M.

Abbott, Miss Alice, draper	Hall, Michael, house agent
Adamson, J., vict. <i>Three Tuns</i> , Elemore vale	Hardy, John, vict. <i>Free Gardeners' Arms</i>
Armstrong, Henry, vict. <i>Bonny Pit Lad</i>	Hart, Mrs. Barbara, shopkeeper
Atkinson, Robert, hairdresser and tobacconist	Hesler, William, fruiterer
Aunger, Knight, fruiterer	Heslop, Robert Hind, mason
Bailey, Wandlers, shopkeeper	Hill, W., farmr. & wholsl. fruitr., & <i>Sunderland</i>
Bradley, Peter Burnip, builder and painter	Hodgson, James shopkeeper
Brass, Hiram, greengrocer	Holmes, Thomas, grocer and draper
Brass, Hiram, junr., greengrocer	Horney, Wm. & Thos., nail and spike manfrs.
Bolt & Wright, cycle agents and repairers, and <i>Sunderland</i>	Horsley, William Thomas, greengrocer
Brown, Rev. James R., vicar, Vicarage	Houston, William, shoemaker
Brown, John, overman	Jefferson, James, schoolmaster
Cartwright, Wm., shopkeeper and beerhouse	Kay, William, butcher
Chapman, Henry, grocer and printer	Kennedy, Robert, grocer and draper
Charlton, Robert, under colliery manager	Lawson, Ralph, cabinetmaker
Coulson, Henry, vict. <i>Travellers' Rest</i>	Logan, Mrs. Hannah, tailor and hatter
Crow, Henry, vict. <i>Three Tuns</i>	Lovett, Mrs. Jane, schoolmistress
Dixon, Joseph, shopkeeper	Melvin, Mr. John George
Dobson, Edmund, photographer	Nauton, Alfred, confectioner
Dodds, Robert, fruiterer and greengrocer	Nichol, George, vict. <i>Nag's Head</i>
Dover, J., shopkeeper	Nicholson, Arthur Darling, under colly. mgr.
Easington Lane Co-op. Soc., Ltd., grcrs., dprs., and butchers; Geo. Hall, mgr.; J. Robson, sec.	Nicholson, Richard, butcher and farmer
Easington Lane Lit. Institute; J. Smith, sec.	Oliver, Brian, general dealer
Elgie, Frederick, hairdresser	Parker, Albany Jno. Errington, surgeon
Elliott, Michael, vict. <i>Black Horse</i>	Pearson, Mr. Edward
Farrow, William Gill, & Son, painters	Perry, Thomas musical instrument dealer
Fawcett, John, tallow melter, refiner, and tallow chandler	Pringle, Edward, grocer
Flannigan, Michael, greengrocer	Reed, Mrs. Hannah Louisa, draper
Foster, Mrs. Jane, boot and shoemaker	Richardson, Robert, grocer
Gardner, Martin, butcher	Robinson, Stephen, grocer
Gibson, Ralph, superintendent to Prudential	Robson, John, secretary to Co-oper. Society
Girven, William Henry, joiner	Robson, Thomas, clerk
Hall, George, manager, Co-operative stores	Rowdan, George, blacksmith
	Rowell, Robt. Hy., chemist; T. L. Scott, mgr.
	Sara, James, grocer
	Scott, Joseph, vict. <i>Cross House Inn</i>

The list of businesses above and below reflects the wide range of retail outlets, many of which had been there for many years and were to remain for a good many years to come. Names such as Hiram Brass, greengrocer; Kay, Butcher; Holmes, Grocer; Pringle, Grocer; Logan, Tailor; were still there in the mid 1920s.

Scott, Thomas, superintendent of cemetery
 Severs, Thomas, vict. *Lord Seaham Inn*
 Sexton, William Robert, tailor and shoe dealer
 Smith, Thomas, vict. *Three Tuns Inn*
 Smith, William, butcher
 Smithson, Richard, shopkeeper
 Speed, Mrs. Isabella, *Commercial Inn*
 Stephenson, Thomas, butcher
 Storey, Robert, vict. *Albion Hotel*
 Straughan, Robert, manager, Hetton colliery
 Tonks, Mrs. Christina, furniture dealer
 Trotter, William, general dealer, emigration
 agent, and post office

Waites, Thomas, medical botanist and patent
 medicine vendor
 Wharton, Jno., shopkeeper
 Whittle, James, painter
 Wile, John, butcher
 Wylie, Hugh, hardware dealer

Farmers.

Adamson, Joseph, Gargles house
 Elliott, Charles, Moor house
 Milven, Robert, Prospect house

We have seen how the village grew and developed through the industrial revolution. In a hundred years the population increased from a mere handful to over 6000. The start of World War 1 was a traumatic time for the whole country but to some extent the village was protected from the losses on the fields of Flanders and the Middle East due to the fact that the miners were a reserved and protected employment, so many of them did not see active service.

There were losses, however, and their names are written on the War Memorial, the clock erected in 1921 in the High Street. There was grief in the village throughout the period of the War and beyond but life went on as normally as possible. Like other parts of the country many of the people went hungry on occasions and suffered from a lack of goods on sale. The War slowed up developments which would have led to improvements in living standards which were put on hold until better times prevailed.

During the 19th century the working conditions in mines were notoriously bad. Men were expected to work in unsafe conditions. This led to great unrest throughout the coalfields of England and Wales and it was many years before the mining unions were strong enough to have their grievances rectified. Not only were there no health and safety standards established in the coalmines but danger was treated as an acceptable risk. As a consequence many men died needlessly, but it was the family who paid for the consequences. Additionally payments to the men were often delayed or never paid at all which brought great hardship on the families. Miners could be sacked from their job for infringing the slightest of rules established by the coal owners and their names put on a blacklist which made it very difficult for them to find employment anywhere in the immediate locality.

Accidents in the community were also common and fighting and rioting was a common method of resolving disputes and issues. Women too were involved in incidents which could be construed as criminal behaviour. On the next page are a number of 19th century incidents and accidents which were researched by the children of the Easington Lane Primary School back in the early 1960s. They merely exemplify the violent past of the village.

BOILER BLAST

On September 171834, one of the very large boilers of the steam engine at Elemore Pit, suddenly blew up. It was thrown into the air for a full 40 yards. It burst in its flight and rolled 10 yards further.

A surface worker, George Bell of Hetton, was killed on the spot. Peter Thornton of Four Lane Ends and William Smith of Easington Lane were severely scalded.

Another man, John Potts, was thrown a great distance and landed in a dung hill in which he was buried completely. He was eventually rescued, terribly injured, and close to death with asphyxia.

SAVAGE RIOTS

Savage riots broke out at Hetton Downs and Easington Lane on the night of March 2nd1833. The trouble arose between the "old" pitmen and the "new". The latter were the Derbyshire miners whom the owners had brought into the area to break the strike.

The public houses frequented by the Derbyshire men were attacked and the "new" men were savagely set upon. They retreated to their houses in Downs Lane and barricaded themselves in. The "old" pitmen smashed their windows and hurled themselves against the doors.

The Derbyshire men retaliated by firing on their attackers with muskets loaded with shot, ball, marble and broken spoons. A man called Dodds fell severely wounded. Several pieces of pewter were later taken from his body by the Hetton surgeon.

Similar riots were taking place at the Brickgarth, Easington Lane where two men were wounded by marbles and slugs. It was only with the greatest difficulty that the rioters were dispersed and not before every pane of glass in the "new" pitmens' homes had been broken.

The following information is taken from the Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Hetton for the year 1919. It describes not only the difficulties facing the population in a variety of areas but gives an insight into the things that were happening in the Urban District. It should be noted that many of the figures relate to the Urban district as a whole while others examine in detail what goes on in Easington Lane.

The estimated population for the whole of the District in the absence of an accurate census was between 15,993 and 16,600 for the year 1919. There were 475 live births (262 males and 213 females) during the year. The birth rate was 28.5 per 1000 compared with a national figure of 18.5 for England. During the year there were 284 deaths (155 males, 129 females), a rate of 11.5 per 1000 for specific causes.

The causes of death varied but the following were the highest levels:-

Influenza- 42 deaths (remember that the Spanish Flu which had ravaged the whole of Europe for the previous 2 years was still very active). **Pulmonary tuberculosis** – 16 deaths out of 53 cases recorded during the year. This figure was still too large to be ignored and it was spread due to inadequate housing, particularly overcrowding and from improper isolation of the infection when it struck. **Bronchitis** – 25 deaths. arose from a variety of causes including working conditions in dust, smoking, and damp and often cold housing. **Pneumonia and other respiratory diseases** – 29 deaths. **Violence** not including suicide- 9 deaths. The death rate for violence throughout England and Wales was 47 in every 1000, while in the Hetton Urban District the rate was 56 per 1000 of the population.

	Birth rate per 1000	ANNUAL All cases	DEATH Measles	RATE Scarlet Fever	PER 1000 Whooping Cough	POPUL Diphtheria	ATION Violence	DeathRate per 1000Births Under 1 Yr
England /Wales	18.5	13.8	0.10	0.03	0.07	0.13	0.47	89
96 cities towns	19.0	13.8	0.13	0.04	0.07	0.14	0.45	93
148 small towns	18.3	12.6	0.10	0.10	0.08	0.12	0.47	90
Hetton	28.5	17.7	0.50	0.12	0.43	0.12	0.56	109

An examination of the figures above spell out certain aspects of the health and welfare of people living in Hetton compared with elsewhere in the country. One should be aware that these figures for 1919 are only one year after the end of the War and deaths may be higher than normal due to the contributory factors of illness, disease and injury caused by the War itself.

Although the Urban District was clear of epidemics except for measles there were still 533 cases of notifiable diseases including Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Pneumonia, Erysipelas (skin disorder).

In spite of all the changes which had occurred throughout the Urban District there were still a number of severe inadequacies which needed immediate action. These problems were solvable only in the long term and a number lingered right through until after the Second World War. It was recognized that Easington Lane had an inadequate water supply, in scarcity of supply rather than quality. Much of the delivery was through pipes only 1.5 inches in diameter, too narrow to supply all the houses adequately. The Brickgarth and Elemore Lane suffered more than other areas, along with parts of the High Street above Elemore Lane. It was to take almost ten years to alleviate all of these problems. Due to colliery subsidence pipelines often fractured or distorted and it was necessary to carry out an effective maintenance programme on the distribution service. In spite of the hardness of the water, which was in the main pumped from the colliery workings, it was of good quality with a palatable taste.

Sewage disposal was generally good throughout the Lane but the sewage treatment beds needed constant maintenance. Again colliery subsidence caused problems with pipework and flow inclines had to be managed on a regular basis. The major problem was the inadequacy of household toilet provision. The prevailing type of toilet convenience was known locally as the ash-closet which represented about 90% of the toilets in Easington Lane. They were so constructed that the full seat lifted up for the full internal width of the building to enable ashes and other refuse to be deposited. These toilets were emptied once per week by men known as scavengers and the waste was taken well away from dwelling houses. Two tips existed for this refuse from Easington Lane, located at

the Bull Wells and the Ghyll Tip. Approximately two hundredweights (224 lbs) (101.6 Kg) of waste came from each closet per week, a large proportion being cinders and ash from the house fire which had to be kept going twenty four hours of the day to cope with cooking and washing.

Pollution from these tips was common as often they fired and became a public nuisance and it took time before the fire could be controlled. In the summer months the smell from the tips was terrible and the council regularly sprayed the toilets and the tips with disinfectant as a precautionary measure. Only by doing this could epidemics of diarrhea be contained. It was also necessary to disinfect houses which had been subject to infectious diseases. During 1919 the Urban Council disinfected 64 houses.

Many of the houses in the District had privies instead of ash closets, a privy being a toilet in a small hut normally built in a garden or allotment. These privies also stored ash from house fires but the refuse was often dumped on the garden or on a communal tip which had to be removed on a weekly basis by the scavengers. Scavengers, at the beginning of 1919, received a sum of 15/- per day for horse, cart and man but during the course of the year the payment was increased to 21/- per day and eventually 25/- per day. The District Council was doing its best to get rid of privies and replace them with water closets and ash closets. A number of privies were removed along Elemore Lane and the Brickgarth during 1919 and replaced by water closets. Most of the privies were inaccessible by cart as there was no roadway to them. However this venture was not successful because there was insufficient water because of the inadequacies of the pipework for the toilets to function properly.

The District Council was also responsible for the oversight of Schools, Cowsheds, Pigsties, Slaughter Houses and defective paving. The total number of closets in the district was as follows:- water closets – 261, ash closets – 2688, ash-pit privies – 57. There were 13 slaughter houses which had to be controlled as well as a number of farm buildings where milk was handled and distributed. District inspectors also examined bakehouses, common lodging houses, factories and workshops as well as supervising scavenging carters.

Generally the schools within the district were overcrowded and, as the population was growing, more accommodation would have to be provided. The temporary school in the Brickgarth - part of the Easington Lane Girls' School - had only ash closets which were totally unsatisfactory, three of them being without hatch doors, and the doors of the other two were practically perished beyond use.

The biggest single problem facing the Urban District Council was the amount of unsatisfactory and overcrowded housing. A survey carried out in 1919 showed that there were 3,392 dwelling houses within the district including 436 tenements with more than two persons per room, the total numbers of occupiers being 3,500. There were 162 houses intended for one family only, occupied (without having been specially adapted) by two or more families. It was estimated that 700 houses would be required during the next three years to meet the unsatisfied demand for housing (taking into account the growth of population and the degree of present overcrowding). 80 houses would be required to re-house persons to be displaced by the clearance of unhealthy areas; 100 houses to replace other dwellings which are unfit for human habitation and cannot be made fit; 4 houses to replace obstructive or other buildings (now inhabited) which should be demolished; 600 houses which, although at present they cannot be regarded as unfit for human habitation, fall definitely below a reasonable standard; - a total of 1484 houses.

It was the intention of the Council to build houses in both Hetton and Easington Lane.

Details of the Accommodation Census 1919

The findings of the Sanitary Inspector's Census and Report can be found below.

"Taking the basis for overcrowding dwellings as that given by the Registrar General - namely two persons per room - the returns show that Easington Lane Ward is suffering the most as regards overcrowding. This is what we might expect, when we find that the percentage of one and two roomed houses, or tenements, in this ward, is far in excess of that in either of the other two wards, Hetton and Hetton Downs.

I Contend that two-roomed houses ought not to be occupied by more than two persons, for the kitchen, which is often the dining and living room also, ought not to be utilized as a sleeping apartment also. Generally speaking the sleeping accommodation of our district is bad, for in the majority of houses, one or more of the sleeping rooms is nothing more than an attic.

There are more than one family living in the same dwelling in 162 cases, and it appears that 34 of them are overcrowded. The more flagrant cases of overcrowding, however, are in the small houses occupied by one family. It will be seen from the tables that there are 436 overcrowded dwellings in the district.

1.Houses or tenements in the whole District:-

Easington Lane Ward.....	1040	
Hetton Ward	1074	
Hetton Downs Ward.....	1278	Total 3,392 dwellings

2.Classification of House sizes:-

1 Room.....	45	5 Rooms.....	450
2 Rooms.....	728	6 Rooms.....	100
3 Rooms.....	950	7 Rooms or more.....	86
4 Rooms.....	1033	Total.....	3392

3.The following table shows the number and size of overcrowded dwellings:-

12.....	one roomed overcrowded dwellings
206.....	two roomed overcrowded dwellings
99.....	three roomed overcrowded dwellings
90.....	four roomed overcrowded dwellings
29.....	five roomed overcrowded dwellings
436.....	Total

4. Overcrowding in each Ward

Houses with	Easington Lane Ward	Hetton Ward	Hetton Downs Ward
1 room	7	4	1
2rooms	149	51	6
3 rooms	37	20	42
4 rooms	32	18	40
5 rooms	1	28
	Easington Lane Ward	Hetton Ward	Hetton Downs Ward
TOTAL	226	93	117

5. The following statistics relate to Easington Lane:-

Total Number of Houses or tenements = **1040.**made up as follows:-

1 roomed houses or tenements..... 30
 2 roomed houses or tenements..... 399
 3 roomed houses or tenements..... 184
 4 roomed houses or tenements 293
 5 roomed houses or tenements..... 74
 6 roomed houses or tenements..... 36
 7 rooms or more houses or tenements..... 24
Total..... 1040

6. Number of occupants to each one roomed dwelling:-Total 30 in E. Lane Ward

12 are occupied by 1 person
 11 are occupied by 2 persons
 5 are occupied by 3 persons
 2 are occupied by 4 persons

7. Number of Occupants to 2 roomed dwellings:- Total 399 in E. Lane Ward

250 are occupied by 4 persons or less
 149 are occupied by more than 4 persons
 48 are occupied by more than 6 persons
 9 are occupied by more than 8 persons

8. Number of occupants to 3 roomed dwellings :- Total 184 in E. Lane Ward

147 are occupied by 6 persons or less

37 are occupied by more than 6 persons

15 are occupied by more than 8 persons

5 are occupied by more than 10 persons

9. Number of Occupants to 4 roomed dwellings:- Total 293 in E. Lane Ward

261 are occupied by 8 persons or less

32 are occupied by more than 8 persons

4 are occupied by more than 10 persons

One 5 roomed house is occupied by 11 persons

One 6 roomed house is occupied by 2 families and 14 persons.

Examination of the above tables suggests that Easington Lane Ward has the worst statistics, both in the number of smaller properties and in the level of overcrowding. This is probably due to the fact many of the properties had been built right at the start of the coal mining venture almost a hundred years previously. Also the houses were small as this was the norm for that period and, building land being in short supply, many of the houses were crammed into small building plots. Most of the older properties belonged to the Hetton Coal Company and there was not much interest from other private developers to build large amounts of property during the intervening years.

The need for improved housing conditions was obviously pressing at the start of the second decade of the 20th century but unfortunately a world-wide economic recession soon took over and little could be done to remedy the situation. Some new houses were built in Easington Lane but not enough to meet the need. Building took place behind the Cosy cinema on High Street and later on the Prospect farm estate. Following the Second World War, it was not until the late 1940s that a real building programme kicked into gear with the removal of many of the old single storey cottages in the Brickgarth and in High Street. The first years of the 1950s saw a massive clearance with replacement Council houses built to meet the shortfall. Thus Easington Lane, like many mining villages in County Durham, at least made progress after many years of delay due to circumstances beyond their control.

Easington Lane has grown in stature and in strength and the future is no less bright and no less exciting than it was when it entered the world of industry and commerce almost 200 years ago. For with the coming of the new millennium many new houses have been built, and a new primary school, one of the best in Sunderland, will offer the children of the village a flying start in life. Much of the area surrounding the village has been reclaimed and it can claim to have one of the best local golf clubs, much of the course built on the remains of the Elemore Colliery Pit heap, now just a memory.

*Easington Lane Cycling
Club c.1890.*



*High Street Easington
Lane c.1950 showing
the clock and the old
school.*

*Courtesy of Bob
Moody Collection*



*High Street from
the top of the
village c.1925*

*Courtesy of the
Bob Moody
Collection*



High Street in the 1950s. Note the Cosy cinema on the left and below it the Free Gardeners Arms said to be the oldest pub in "The Lane"

Courtesy of Bob Moody Collection



Wood's shop (cobblers) on Pembertons Bank c.1900

Courtesy of Bob Moody Collection



Pembertons Bank c.1920. The houses on the left were called The Quay. The building below them was the Old Church Hall. The second building on the right was the old Star Cinema which showed silent films only.



Looking along the Brickgarth c.1902. The building on the left is the Old Union Hall. Beyond it is the Primitive Methodist chapel and in the far distance the Co-op buildings.



Colliery housing in the Brickgarth in 1935. Brick coal houses and outside toilets had been added to the original cottages.



This picture taken in 1936 shows the Old Church Hall obtained in 1928 and replacing the one on Pembertons Bank. The building was originally a school opened by the Coal Company in 1870 which was replaced by a Council School in 1928. The building shown was burnt down in an arson attack in 1987.

Courtesy of J Sanderson Collection

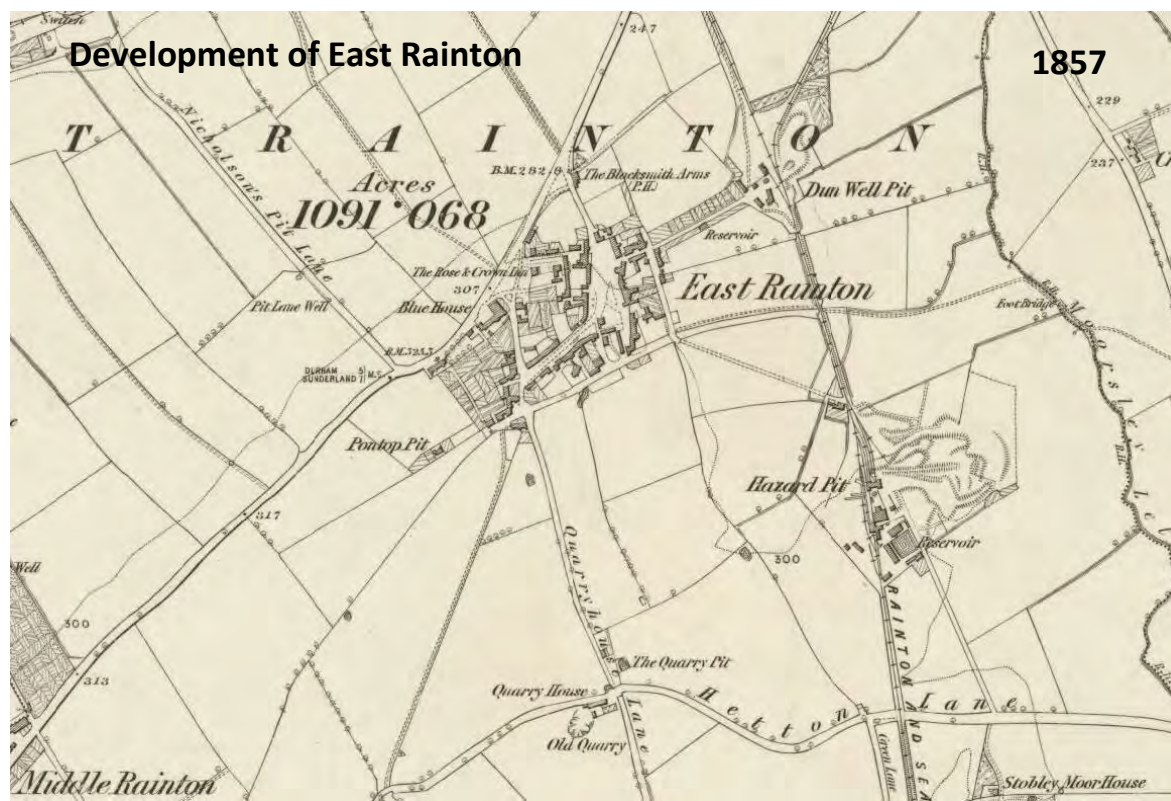
20. EAST RAINTON

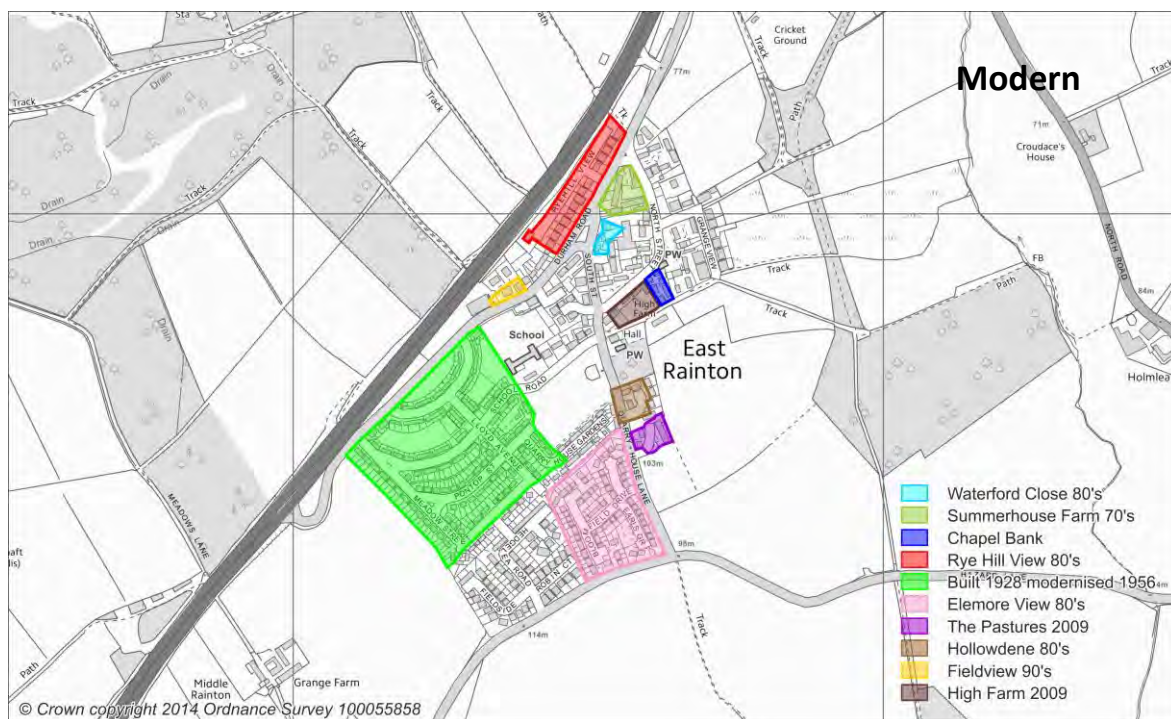
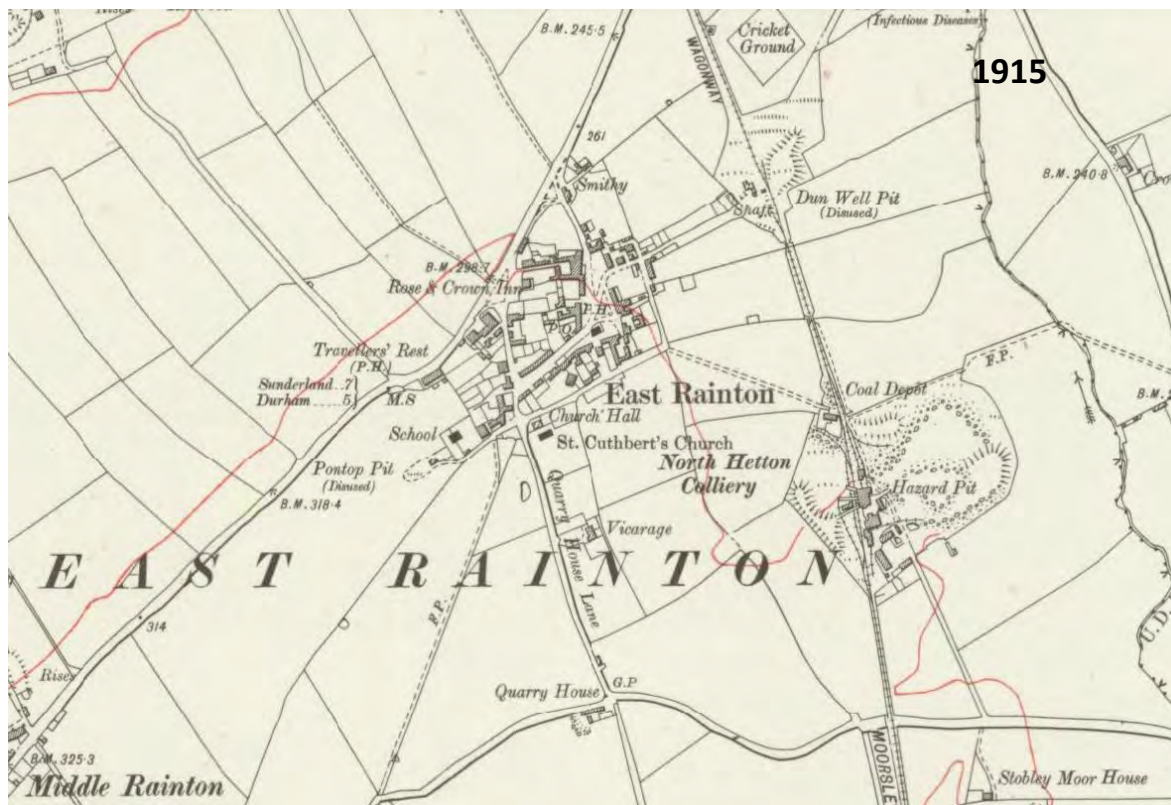
East Rainton is a former mining village which lies on the main road in a north easterly direction between Durham and Sunderland. It is one of five places with Rainton as their place names. Travelling from Houghton-le-Spring to Durham, one passes through Rainton Bridge, East Rainton, Middle Rainton, West Rainton and finally Rainton Gate.

Rainton first appears as 'Raegnwalds Tun' a farming settlement or estate established in the early 900s by Raegnwald, whose father, Franco, was one of the seven monks who escorted St Cuthbert's coffin from Lindisfarne to Chester-le-Street in AD 883, a hundred years before it was brought to Durham city. By the 12th century two distinct settlements had emerged — 'Raintona et alia Raintona' — East and West Rainton. At this time the place name was spelt in a bewildering variety of ways, e.g. *Reinington*, *Renigton* and *Rainton*.

In the Middle Ages Rainton (both East and West) belonged to Durham Priory who had a manorial farm and park there. The appointment of a park keeper is recorded in 1338 and in 1508 Prior Thomas had a grant of free warren from Bishop Bainbridge. By the 19th century the Dean and Chapter of Durham were Lords of the Manor and the Marquess of Londonderry is the chief landowner (Robert Surtees *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* 1816-1840)

The old Durham-Sunderland road, running past East Rainton, also probably dates back to the Middle Ages. It has been improved over the centuries, beginning in the 1700s when it became a turnpike road, which is still commemorated by the name of the hamlet, Rainton Gate, where one of the road's toll gates was located, and culminating more recently in its transformation into the dual-carriageway A690.





Plan of the Old Village
in the 1920's
with groups of dwellings and
other buildings and the
people who lived there

A hand-drawn map of the Old Village in the 1920s. The map shows a network of streets including North Street, South Street, Earth Lane, and School Road. Various buildings are labeled, such as the Church Hall, Green House, and several dwellings. The map also depicts fields, pastures, and a cemetery. A large area is labeled 'THE FIELDS' and 'THE FIELDS CHURCH'. The map is oriented with North at the top. A scale bar indicates a distance of 100 yards. The map is titled 'Plan of the Old Village in the 1920's with groups of dwellings and other buildings and the people who lived there'.

GUIDE TO THE GROUPS OF COTTAGES ON THE PLAN OPPOSITE AND THE FAMILIES WHO LIVED THERE

By Robert Hope

- 1 Cottage where I was born, also families: Trevett, Darby, Pritchard, Lowerson Gay, Watson (Engineer - Hazard Colliery)
- 2 Families Green, Inman, Hackett
- 3 Brown, Cooper
- 4 Herd's Cottage (Walker)
- 5 Larks (shop), Buckley, Cummings
- 6 Browell (my Uncle Jack), Langley, Ramshaw, Young (Hardware shop)
- 7 Browell (my Uncle Charlie) Matthew, Coxon, Matthews
- 8 Walkers shop (later Post Office)
- 9 Mr Darby's Greenhouses
- 10 The Old C. Of E. School
- 11 Schoolmaster's House (Mr Tilley) Bailey (Wheelwright & ladder makers)
- 12 Policeman's House (PC Cuthbertson) Matthews, Bassick
- 13
- 14 Walker Family (with cellar type room), Scorer
- 15 Hunter, Gibbney, Chesney, Cummings
- 16 Rainton House (Fred Hutchinson)
- 17 An old public house in earlier days
- 18 Oliver's House and Walkers Farm entrance and buildings
- 19 Paddy's Row (5 or 6 houses)
- 20 Butcher's shop (Sager) later went to Australia
- 21 Nelson, Jones, Walker's Farmhouse
- 22 Makepeace, Henderson, Henry, Miss Forrest's shop
- 23 Swinburne, Hodgkiss, Tubman, Village Tavern (Matthews) Browell (Esther)
- 24 The Folds, Handley (Councillor), Darby, Hunter, Hodgkiss, Robinson, Redfern
- 25 House called 'Church View' (Adamson)
- 26 Weatherall (upstairs), Langley (my Uncle-downstairs) Travellers Rest Pub (Landlord Bones), Rowan, Fox
- 27 Jobling (on corner)
- 28 Wheelwright & blacksmith shop
- 29 Baileys Workshop, sign writers and farm vehicle repairers
- 30 Hutchinson's High Farm buildings
- 31 Mallinson, Crake
- 32 The cherry tree
- 33 What we children called 'Style Bank' when sledging



East Rainton has always been a popular place to live, John Gilpin said in 1800 when doctors fees where expensive, mothers would take their children with whooping cough to where the East Rainton Village Hall used to be 'so that they could breathe the pure air from where four currents met'. And a famous Elizabethan, Lord Burghley, after he had visited John Gilpin in Houghton-le-spring, was reputed to have said after he reined in his horse at Rainton Bank and looked over the surrounding countryside "Here is the enjoyment of life indeed! What more can a man want to make him great, or happier or more useful to his fellow man".

Now, one significant factor in the popularity of East Rainton is the re-routing of the A690 which makes for a pleasant bypassed residential area with quick links to two major centres, Durham and Sunderland and the A1. Many of the older properties encircling the old village green have been demolished and replaced with modern housing, yet it still retains enough of the older housing stock to keep the village feel. Herd's House (dating back to the 19th century and demolished in 1963), Rainton House (built in 1850 and demolished in 1965) and The Vicarage and rookery demolished in 2007, have all been replaced by modern estates. Only one village shop remains instead of the variety it once had; a bicycle repairs shop, butchers, tailor and draper, blacksmiths, boot and shoemaker, even the Post Office had gone by 2012. Industrially East Rainton was based on coal mining and once there were no fewer than eleven collieries operating in the Raintons area. Today there are few signs that the village was based on coal other than landscaped woods and footpaths. Fortunately East Rainton has retained the Church Hall and the Primary School, which provide a hub for the village. In 1937 East Rainton, which had previously



View from Stobbley Moor Farm by the Old Village Green

been included in the Houghton-le-Spring Rural District Council area, was transferred to the Hetton Urban District Council where it remained until 1st April 1974, when it was absorbed into the Borough of Sunderland, in accordance with the 1972 government act which created the county of Tyne and Wear, removing Hetton District from Co. Durham.

The Parish Church - St Cuthbert's

St Cuthberts church was erected in 1866. It is a stone building built in the English style, with nave, chancel, south porch, vestry and turret and bell. There is a burial ground attached. It was built by

order of the Council in the Parish of West Rainton on the 10th November 1866, for what was to be called the 'Perpetual Curacy of East Rainton.' Dr Charles Baring, Bishop of Durham was invited to consecrate the church on the 19th December 1866 for the new Parish of East Rainton, formed by the amalgamation of East Rainton and Moorsley.

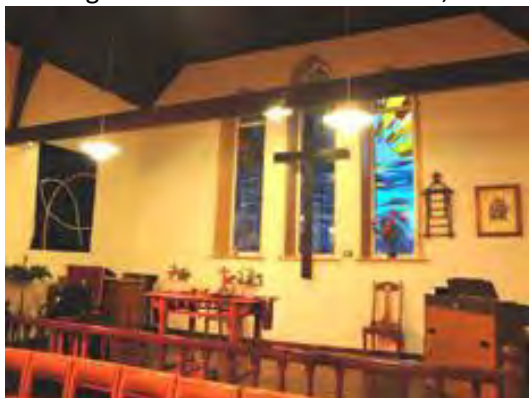


The church hall was built in 1882 with funds from the church, a sewing party, British Legion etc. and every member of the Mothers Union promised a chair for use in the hall.

It was the custom in earlier times for the Vicar to go out into the fields on 'Rogation Sunday' in a procession with his parishioners to bless the sown seed. Two harvest festivals were held, one on a week day when the grain was safely gathered in, followed by another in the church on the following Sunday.

The Wesleyan Chapel

The Chapel in North Street in the old centre of the village was built in 1823, rebuilt and enlarged in stone in 1889, at a cost of £400. John Wesley preached here and wrote on Monday 6th April 1747 "Having been informed that there were many collieries three or four miles north or north-west of Durham I rode to a village called Renton in the midst of them and proclaimed the Lord God, gracious and merciful". He preached to a very large crowd and as he went into the building there were shouts of "A, tha'



not come sooner".

Stained glass window by village resident

East Rainton Primary School



A school was built in 1822, probably a 'Sunday School' provided by an arrangement with the chapel, as education was virtually unknown at this time except in Sunday Schools. The North Hetton Coal Company would have taken an interest in the school around 1828 when the Hazard Pit became the principal work-place in the village. 136 children were in attendance due to the employment level at the pit. It was enlarged in 1868 to cater for the expected influx of pupils prompted by the 1870 Education

Act. The school was replaced by the present school in 1933 built by Durham County Council. It provided education for 5-14 years, then after the war it was raised to 15 years. With the building of Hetton and Houghton secondary schools it now caters solely for primary age children. Mr James Tilley was the Headmaster in the 'old' school for twenty six years and in the 'new' school until

1948 when he retired. The present school is run by Sunderland Education Authority. The school is built on the top of the old Pontop Colliery which had developed little more than the original shaft which was used as a ventilating shaft. The playground was part of the original colliery yard. The well known murderer Mary Ann Cotton, who resided for a time in East Rainton, was said to have disposed of two of her babies down this mine shaft. The story goes that she administered soap pills to them so that they died of diarrhoea. So the playground songs included "Mary Ann Cotton she's dead, but not forgotten".



Old school with new build behind

An Account of 1888 20th September

I, Robert Hall Jeffrey, lately first assistant of St Pauls School, High Elswick Newcastle and last year a Senior Student at St Bede College Durham, took charge of this school. Since the late Master's death the school has been in the charge of Mr J. McCulloch the assistant, who seems to have fulfilled the duties creditably.

I found the school in a very bad condition indeed, and it will need a great deal of labour, time and pains to raise it to anything like a state of proficiency.

The order is disgraceful, the children coming into school and simply sitting down. They have no orderly way of getting in and out of the desks or passing books. They make a disagreeable noise with their feet in walking about the room. They are lazy, seeming quite content to sit with folded arms doing nothing. They shirk work at every opportunity and much addicted to copying and talking. If not closely watched they will do no work at all.

The children come into school in a very dirty and untidy state. Very few have clean boots and many come with unwashed faces. The morals of the children seem to be low, swearing, fighting and lying being very common amongst them. They have scarcely the least sense of politeness and in many cases they even approach rudeness. Right through the school there is a very bad tone.



East Rainton School 1949 class3

Five pubs of East Rainton

There were five pubs in East Rainton, The Fox and Hounds, Rose and Crown, Blacksmith's Arms, Travellers Rest, Village Tavern, but now only one remains, the Traveller's Rest, which has been renamed The Olde Ships Inn.



Holiday outing from the Travellers Rest

The Travellers Rest Troughs



Two water troughs still remain at Rainton Bank and are equi-distant between Durham and Sunderland. These troughs were used to water horses travelling on the main road. Legend has it that they saved the life of Bernard Gilpin, Rector of Houghton in 1558. He was a protestant who had been summoned by the Catholic Queen Mary for trial and possible execution. As he stopped to water his horse on the way to London, he slipped and broke his leg so that he could ride no further. By the time his leg had

healed Queen Mary had died and as the next Queen, Elizabeth 1, was a protestant, the Rector's life was saved.

The collieries of East Rainton

Mention of coal outcrops were made as early as 1531 and the colliers Richard and Robert Wright opened an open cast mine in 1604. With the development of mining in what proved a rich area the population increased and the standard of living improved enormously. Several shafts were sunk in and around Rainton and small collieries sprung up. The Hazard, Dunwell, Pontop and the Quarry Pit being some of around 20 pits in the near vicinity. It was the Hazard pit which opened in 1825 which lead to the major increase in population in the village. In 1896 the Hazard Colliery, owned by the North Hetton Coal Company, worked the Five Quarter seam at a depth of 53 fathoms, the seam being 3' 7" thick. The Maudlin seam at 73 fathoms at 3' 8" and the Low Seam at 84 fathoms. The output was 340 tons a day with employment of 293 men and boys. Tram lines were laid from Rainton through Colliery Row, Junction Row, Shiny Row and to the river at Penshaw Staithes where the coal was placed in flat bottomed keels, from where it was transferred to the holds of ships on the River Wear for export to the continent and London.



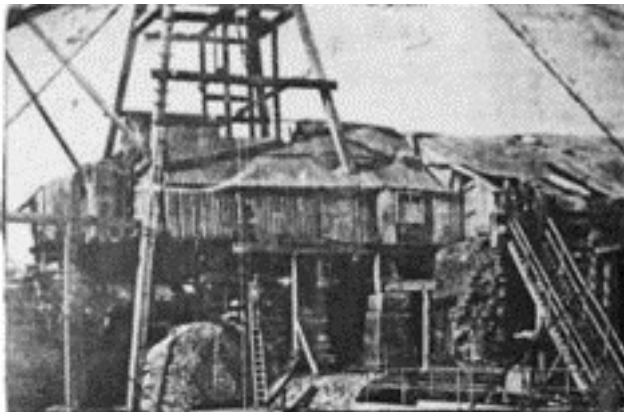
Miners at Hazard Colliery Circa 1920

In East Rainton in 1825, there were approximately 100 miners and their families.

Miners were hired to a certain pit by a yearly

bond. This was usually signed by a cross as most were illiterate, and sealed by their employer with a sum of money, usually half a crown. For breach of this agreement they could be imprisoned. Later the bond was for a week and then a month. Miners needed to know their rights and to this end the Miners Gala Day was initiated, where men could air their grievances to their fellow workmen from a public platform. Their grievances were then looked into and settled by the Miners Union. Often local Methodist preachers were chosen for the Union, men of strong faith, courage and goodwill. Great difficulties had to be overcome to reach the seams of coal beneath the 58 yards depth of magnesian limestone which covers the area. There were problems with safe lighting -originally lighted fish skins and candles were used before the Davy lamp,- problems with flooding - steam pumps replaced horse

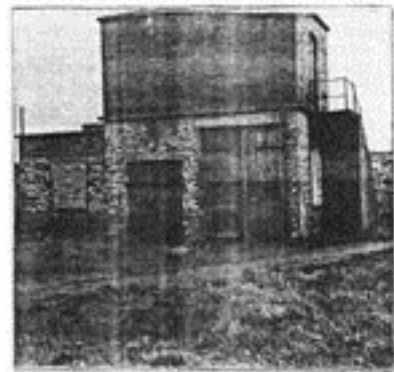
driven pumps used to combat the pressure of water in this strata - and problems of access- originally they used the hazardous loop method of lowering men by means of a loop of chain passed between the legs attached to a support structure. This was replaced with a cage to lower men to the coal surface. Eventually tubs of coal were brought to the surface by cage instead of being dragged along by women and children and later by pit ponies. With improved mining methods came the need for a better means of transport to take the coal to the customer at a reasonable cost and with this in mind, in 1819, the proprietors of the newly formed Hetton Coal Company invited George Stephenson to undertake the building of the necessary locomotives and machinery and the laying of a railway from Hetton to Sunderland. This success established not only the beginnings of the world's railways but also the mining industry as one of prime importance in the North east.



Hazard Pit - Situated within 400 metres of the village, Hazard Colliery was located to the east of East Rainton. Hazard Colliery was sunk in 1818 and opened in 1825. It was originally owned by Francis Ann Vane Tempest and then by her husband, Lord Londonderry. In 1850 it was transferred to the North Hetton Co. (Earl of Durham) then in 1911 it became part of Lambton and Hetton Collieries. It

closed in 1935 due to the depressed nature of the Durham coalfield around this time. The site where the colliery was located was cleared and environmentally improved during the late 1970's. The railway track between Moorsley and Hazard is now a footpath and where the colliery buildings stood trees have been planted. A railway embankment made from mine waste continues north and runs down past the cricket ground to Rainton Bridge.

Dunwell Pit - The precise opening date of the Dunwell Pit is unknown and it could have been as early as 1780. The ownership of the Dunwell is also a mystery, but when the Hazard opened it was still in production. For a short time the shaft may well have been used as a ventilation shaft for the Hazard colliery and its pump house existed into the 20th century. Little is known about it, other than it was a second shaft to the Hazard Colliery and connected to the Vane Tempest waggonway. There is a report that the cage could only take four men and a boy, and that Mr Tommy Rogers, the colliery winding engineman, had to work from 12am on Saturday till 6 pm on Sunday without a break to get one weekend off in three.



Pontop Pit - was the earliest pit in the area. It was situated on the site of the present primary school. Its owners and closing date are unknown.

Quarry Pit - Little knowledge has survived other than it being at the junction of Quarry House Lane and Robin Lane

East Rainton Cricket Club



The cricket ground is reputed to be the oldest in County Durham. It was not known when the club had been founded until a newspaper clipping was found dated Monday 14th July 1851 which gave details of a game between Rainton Bridge Cricket Club (the original name) and Houghton-le-Spring Church Cricket Club. Rainton Bridge originally played in a field next to the Hazard ground and in 1888 the name changed to 'Hazard Colliery Cricket Club'. It was in this period that the club moved from it's old ground – which at one time held a Durham County

cricket match- to its present ground. By 1907 the club was playing in the North Durham Junior Division. The original buildings contained changing rooms, which still stand and now house the toilets, and the Groundsman's storage building. The old tea hut burnt down in the 1950's and a new one was erected, running water being introduced in 1982. Before that water had to be collected from a well at the top end of the field, and this spring water was also used for watering the square and making the tea, but it was shared with the farmers cows!. Electricity is still not connected in 2013 and so the water is still heated by a copper boiler! The original plans show a two storey pavilion with viewing gallery but this was later scaled down to the present tea hut. In 1935 with the demise of the pit, it changed its name to East Rainton Cricket Club. The club has been part of the North-East Durham Cricket League since its formation and it is the only original club to have survived into the present day. The club has won many league cups and other competitions including the City of Durham/ Vaux Scorpion lager plate, Glenn Pattinson cup, Vinton trophy, Roseberry Group trophy and were the North East Durham Division 1 winners in 1941,48,50,57,58,59,60, 63,65,83,87,89,90,91,98,2000,01,02,03,04,05,06.



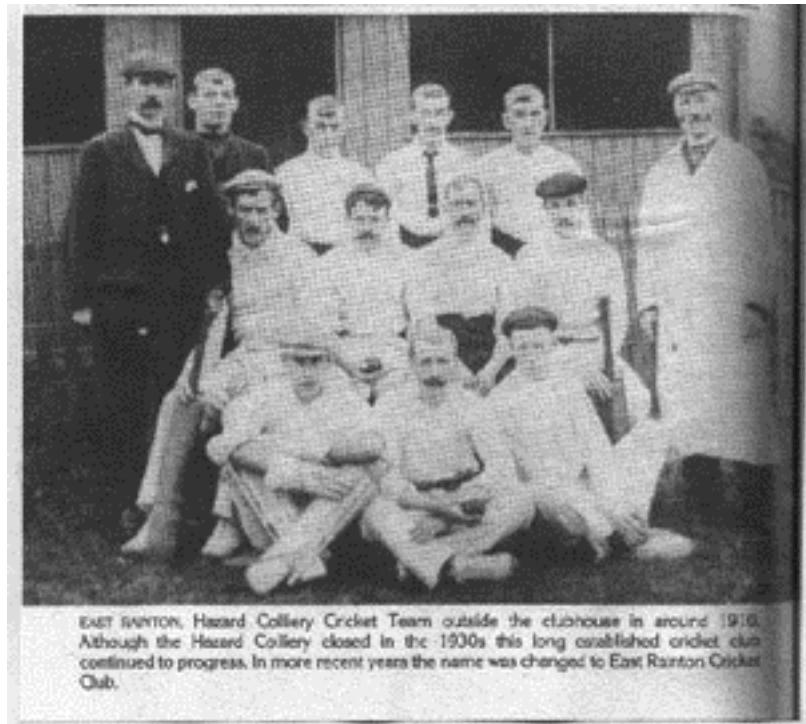
Cricket Ground overlooking Houghton Cut

Taken from <http://eastraintoncc.webs.com/>

The Hazard Colliery Cricket Club by Robert Hope (Taken from his book 'Recollections of Life in the Village of East Rainton in the 1920's') Now the East Rainton Cricket Club since the colliery closed. It is blessed with a lovely pitch in a rural setting with other fields on three sides. The rest of it is partly circled by the embankment carrying the railway from the Hazard (colliery). I have happy memories of Hazard cricket field –my dad was groundsman there for two or more years. Each year, about May, a pit pony would be brought out of the Hazard pit and loaned to the club to pull the grass cutting machine. There was a small shed next to the pavilion where he was stabled. On practise evenings we children would play cricket on the margin of the field and help push and pull the big roller over the pitch. The exciting day was of course Saturday's game.

My dad and us would arrive at the field early to prepare things. Dad would light a fire in the brazier at the back of the pavilion to boil water for tea in a big pan. The water, we brought from the well in Bailey's field.

The best moment for us was when the teams had their teas supplied by the ladies, then we would have ours. There would be salmon sandwiches and cakes. Great summer days – my dad received £5 (old pounds) for the season as a groundsman.



A Potted History



In East Rainton Mr J. Bailey brewed beer and Mr Tom Sutheran manufactured bottled mineral water as well as bottling beer and stout. The mineral waters were sold in bottles with glass marbles in the necks of the bottles, the gas from the mineral waters made the marble fit tight and the marble had to be forced down with the thumb to open it. This small business known as Sutherans bottling factory in Sutherans Yard North Street employed 4 men inside and 2 cartmen who travelled as far away as Consett and Stanley.

In 1892 when a colliery dispute occurred the Co-operative Society installed a soup kitchen to provide meals for the needy. They supplied goods free to the soup kitchen, allowed their goods to be sold at

wholesale prices and gave generous donations to the relief fund. Such acts endeared the Co-Op to the miners and their trade expanded. The Moorsley Co-Op purchased some land in Durham Road



The Folds

East Rainton in 1925, but because of the coal strike in 1926 the building was delayed till 1931, although trading occurred in a rented house from 1927. In 1931 the new branch was opened, business was transferred to it and it became the foremost premises in the area, capable of satisfying the whole of the requirements of the people of East Rainton. About this time Co-operative Dairies were founded and modern, fully equipped dairies were built. Milk was purchased from local farmers and

pasteurised and bottled before being sold to the Co-operative customers. Up until then milk had to be bought from the local farmers who measured the milk to the customers requirements, having been strained and cooled but not pasteurised.

The women played a vital role in the household such as collecting water from wells and springs. Water in East Rainton was brought from the seven local wells to the village on a donkey cart and sold to customers at a penny a pail. Later water was laid on in pipes by means of a pump or tap at the end of the street so families could fetch their own water. Inside the house, the water was kept in stone jars and covered with wooden tops. The fireplaces were all built with round ovens and set pots, which were used to boil water for the baths, for the miners always had a daily bath when they returned from work. There were specific days for baking, washing and cleaning and polishing the brass. Evenings were spent knitting, sewing and mending. When her husband worked shifts his meals and hot baths had to be ready. Miners were paid fortnightly, the week when they were not paid was known as 'baff week'. In 'baff week' it was often difficult to make ends meet. Washing tubs and poss-sticks were a common sight each Monday when the weekly wash was done, including the starched table and bed linen, the 'pit-hoggers' and dress clothes of her husband, and the elaborate pinafores which were all meticulously clean. Then to the ironing which was a tedious task. Irons had to be heated in the fire, removed by placing a poker into a hole in the heater which was placed in a 'box-iron'. The heat in the iron did not remain for long and spare heaters had to be kept in the fire in readiness. In earlier times women used the communal wash house at Rainton Bridge Farm but when wages increased they preferred to use their own tubs, poss-sticks and mangles.



WW1 Victory Bonfire

Women made proddy mats and patchwork quilts out of disused clothes. They made 'Durham Quilts' which were light but warm enough to be used as eiderdowns on beds. They were made of wadding or feathers put between two pieces of material and stitched together in beautiful patterns, a kind of quilting synonymous with County Durham and still practised today. Gypsies in Fleming field near Rainton Bridge taught the women how to crochet and knit for a few pennies. On special occasions such as 'Houghton Feast', the fair at Durhams Sands on Easter Monday, and the Durham Miners Gala Day, the gypsies made their money by selling their wares and telling fortunes.

Also the housewife had to bake her bread on certain days of the week, when it was her turn to use the communal oven which was located at Rainton Bridge Farm, in the boiler house. Each woman knew her bread by a special 'stamp' on top of the loaf. The 'stamp' was made by hammering nails into a piece of wood to form a pattern.



Almost everyone kept an allotment and regular leek shows were held in the 'Tavern' and the 'Travellers Rest'. Scraps of food from the table were given to the pigs and hens on the allotment. Hens provided eggs and meat, while the pig was usually killed around the time of Houghton Feast or Christmas, to provide extra meat for such festive occasions. The village had one butcher who killed three beasts each week. Mr Robson carried on this business for sixty years.

Paddy's Row

In the village there was a small street of houses known as Paddy's Row. Every Saturday night Paddy, an Irish miner, got drunk, and when the pubs closed he moved very slowly and deliberately along the street trailing his coat behind him. This was a recognised challenge to anyone in the village wanting to fight him for the right to live for a week in the first house in Paddy's Row. The house appeared to belong to no-one, but Paddy had taken possession of it and if anyone accepted the challenge and beat him (which few did!), Paddy slept under a hedge. He was probably one of the many Irish labourers imported into Rainton and Seaham by Lord Londonderry during the strike of 1844. Not surprisingly the strike breakers were resented and fighting was common. Such expressions as "He's in a rare paddy" stem from the bitterness and brutality of those times.

The Village Hall

In 1926 the Miners Welfare Hall was constructed, with reading rooms and a sprung dance floor. But with the closure of the Hazard Pit in 1934 it was given to the village as a Village Hall. The organisations that used it included the football and cricket clubs the British Legion and the Women's Institute. The WI started in East Rainton in 1948. Many of the women were members at Leamside and West Rainton but it was decided to start one in the village to include women from Rainton Bridge too, and the membership soon rose to 130. The British Legion was founded after the First World War. In the past the members attended the church armistice service and their banner was carried into the church. After the service the 'last post' was played over the grave of the only soldier of East Rainton who was brought home to be buried, a Mr William Kirtley of the Durham Light Infantry. His grave is looked after by the war graves



commissioners. The Church hall was built and then the village hall fell into disrepair so it was demolished in 1990 and the Field View houses were built on the site after some controversy over who owned the land.

Farms

There were six farms connected with East Rainton and these have been farmed by some families for several generations. The only working farm at the present time is Mr J Bailey at Rainton Bridge Farm. Although originally a racing stable and dairy farm, it is now solely arable and has been in the Bailey family for two hundred years. The High and Low Farms were farmed by the Hutchinson family, Summer House Farm by the Walkers and North Pit Farm by the Weightmans, who were all mainly



Stack at Summerhouse Farm



Summerhouse Farm

much needed employment to the village.

Except for Summer House Farm, which was owned by Lord Londonderry, the farms were the property of the Dean and Chapter of Durham. The High and Low Farms were leased from the Hetton Coal Company and then the National Coal Board. Years ago when the last cart-load of corn was brought in from the fields some was made into a 'corn betty' and carried in the cart with great rejoicing to the stack yard. Afterwards there was a barn supper with free beer, followed by dancing. Many farm labourers were needed before mechanisation and this gave

Oral History

Iris Langley

"I started East Rainton School in 1934 on the day I was five years old, there were no set dates to start school then, you started on the day you were five. I remember my first day, it was raining and I fell down the steps. We had a teacher called Miss Turnbull, there was a huge open fire with a very large fireguard on which Miss Turnbull dried our socks. The toilets were outside where the cars are parked now. In the winter the toilets froze!! The top class were two rooms when I came to this school. In the top class was a very naughty boy, we used ink pens to write with and the ink powder had to be mixed with water, having done this the naughty boy threw the ink at the teacher. The boy was caned by Mr Tilley, the Headmaster, who was very strict, he insisted on the boys playing at one side of the yard and the girls at the other. The dinner hall was used for woodwork, science and cookery lessons. After the war had started and everything was rationed we were making meatless broth, I peeled a turnip but the peelings were too thick so I had to peel the peelings! During the war if the air raid sirens went when we were at school we went into the air raid shelter in the school field and had concerts. We carried our gas masks in a cardboard box with a string through to hang round our necks. There were no school dinners and everyone went home at lunch time. We stayed there

until we were 14 years old, unless we were clever, then we went to Houghton Grammer School which is no longer there. We played hopscotch, skipping, 'tiggy touchy' and 'hitchy dabbers'. The boys played 'oily gigs and bowlers' this was hoop and stick. In the winter they played football with jackets as goalposts and a heavy leather football, there were no free kicks, penalties or fouls, it was just a hustle and bustle! When the snow came the sledges came out. These were made of wood and two pieces of iron fastened to the wood runners and a rope handle. Our two favourite places to slide were Chapel bank in front of Stobbley Moor Farm and the back lane behind Baileys farm known as Style bank".

Mr Walker and farm hands at Summer House Farm



Growing up in East Rainton by Keith Rennie

"I was born in East Rainton at 30 Pontop Street. I had a brother, George and two sisters, Dorothy and Betty, who unfortunately passed away some years ago. I, like my siblings before me, attended East Rainton School, played football for both junior and senior teams, as well as on the cricket team and cross country running. My sister Betty never left the village and resided at Stobbley Moor Farm. I spent lots of time on the farm, used to play in the granary and help at milking time, the old byre has gone now. I remember the shops, Joneses having the shop and fish shop, now gone and replaced by the Highfield Hotel. Remember going to the Co-Op (now the Mini centre) with my mum. Then there were the Larks, Larky as the kids called him, he ran the shop and the ice cream parlour. Great gentleman he was, organizing annual bus trips to the seaside. At 13 I delivered newspapers in the old village, cycled along to Middle Rainton delivering papers to Yeomans Farm and up the street, the Rectory where the Vicar for East and West Rainton lived (both morning and night), even remember the old Coulson's fish shop at Middle Rainton. We moved to Quarry House Gardens. Here I stayed until I was 21, got married and moved to Gilesgate. East Rainton was a place where everyone knew one another, certainly a great place to live as a kid".

Gertie Bowden

Gertie Bowden is 100 years old and has lived in her present house in Handley Crescent, East Rainton for 72 years. Gertie was born on 10 July 1913 in 10 Lane Cottages Front Street (which is now The Folds). She had two sisters and her father was a pitman at the Hazard Pit and at Hetton Downs. She went to the village school which was a three roomed building. The first room had 5, 6, 7 years old, the second room 8, 9, 10 years old and there was a partition for the Head master and the third room 11, 12, 13 years and then you left school at 14 years old. She can remember a happy time, coming home for lunch and delivering 7 cans of milk from the farm twice a day around the village. At 15 she became a home help and a nanny in Houghton. At 17 she moved to Lanchester to become a housemaid for Sir Francis and Lady Greenwell at Greenwell Ford, they were 78 and 76 at the time. She had ½ day off a week and 1 day off a month for 30 shillings a month. Gertie became ill and needed to go to the isolation hospital at Langley Park, whilst there Lady Greenwell visited and said they wouldn't be needing her anymore and within a short time they had both died within 24 hours of each other. Gertie then moved to Ramside Hall and worked for Judge Pemberton for 7 months as he resided in London in the winter, she moved to Elemore Hall to work for an Admiral as a parlour maid. He had a summer house in High Buston near Alnmouth, but then he also died so she left at 19 to work at St Mary's College Durham. In 1933 she married her husband Billy, who she had met originally in Greenwell Ford, but met again at the College whilst being presented with a medal for a world speed record in cycling. Billy was a pitman at High Pittington, Houghton Meadows and Cocken Drift as well as Finchale Abbey and East Herrington. For the first two years they lived with his mother but they fell out and her father offered them a cottage in Sutherans Yard next to the Tavern and bottle house. There were two bedrooms in the loft space but they made a staircase in one room. After the birth of her fourth child in this one roomed cottage, the doctor asked the council if they could be rehomed. So in 1942 they moved to Handley Crescent. In the house they had a scullery, a set pot and slab, an enormous range that covered one wall and a coal house. Her husband had to dig 20 tubs of coal a day, he could take home the 21st. He was paid 35 shillings a week and felt lucky when he could work on a Saturday for £2.

During the war Billy had an allotment out the back and her father also kept a large allotment. Although there was rationing and life was a struggle the war didn't affect Gertie or East Rainton. At the time in the village in North Street there were the two pubs, the Ramshaws and Langleys who kept a bike repair shop, Miss Forest who had a general dealers selling paraffin, Mr and Mrs Jones general dealers, a butchers shop, bakery and blacksmiths. Gertie had two more boys in Handley Crescent. Gertie knitted for the whole family as well as making clothes, often using old sheets put to another use by hand sewing, she was given a treadle machine that eventually had an electric motor put on. She walked everywhere, into Houghton to get the tram into Sunderland, walking to Leamside to get the train into Durham, and Fencehouses to get the train to Newcastle. In 1943 Billy was enlisted into the army, then in 1947 he returned to coal mining at the Dorothea (Dolly) pit in East Herrington. He was injured in an accident and eventually went to work as a wagon driver for Reg Vardy. She can recall Middle Rainton which was very dilapidated, there was the Wilsons pub, a junk shop and a few houses. Billy had a motorbike which he made a single and double sidecar for, he regularly took all the children to Seaham Harbour but petrol was expensive at 11 1/2d a gallon. Gertie has 17 grandchildren, 23 great grandchildren and 9 great great grandchildren at the last count!



Hazard Colliery (Courtesy of the Bob Moody Collection)



Nicholson's Pit Heap



Meadows Pit

21. MOORSLEY



North Hetton Colliery

The township is old and was first mentioned during the reign of Henry II (1154- 1189) as Moreslav or Moreslawe. In a document the land owned by Adam de Moreslawe was given away by him to the monks and Prior of Durham. As a result he was admitted into the Prior's household to carry out menial tasks. His son Helyas followed him but his wife, because she was a woman, was not allowed and was given a toft and 2 acres of land rent free for the rest of her life. Adam may have been admitted to the church to atone for some indiscretion.

There were still a small number of freehold pieces of land left in Moorsley although one of 7 acres was given to the Convent of St. Cuthbert. Thus a large part of Moorsley passed into the possession of the church while the rest became leasehold land belonging to the Dean and Chapter.

By Elizabethan times a hay tithe was paid to the Rector of Houghton. Much of the land was being cultivated but one must assume that there were still areas of rough grazing and heathland. Roads to and from the hamlet on the hillside existed merely as simple tracks, one leading west in the direction of Pitlington the other east toward the hamlet of Hetton.

High Moorsley farmhouse was possibly Tudor, as legend has it (from Mr Richard Swinburn) that when it was demolished, due to subsidence, a Priest Hole was discovered! so it had been occupied by Catholics after the dissolution of the monasteries.

A Poor Law Book compiled by the overseers in 1821 suggests that there were 7 inhabited houses accommodating 10 families. There were 8 families employed in agriculture, 1 independent and 1 employed in craft work. The total population comprised 28 males and 20 females.

IN 1831 the population had grown to 748, due to the opening of local collieries. These included Hetton, Eppleton, Elemore, Dunwell, Hazard, Alexandrina (Lecht), Pitlington, Belmont and Lady Seaham and of course North Hetton colliery at Moorsley.

It seems likely that sinking at Moorsley began in 1821 with the colliery opening within four years. Even though the Dunwell colliery had been in operation for a few years the Hazard colliery was developed around the same time as the North Hetton colliery at Moorsley. The principal owners were the Marchioness of Londonderry, Thomas Bellerby and Thomas W. Robinson and they leased the land from the Dean & Chapter.

The population expanded during the 1820s, 1830s 1840s and throughout the remaining decades of 19th century.

The Lamb Inn is mentioned in the 1838 Tithe register as being a homestead owned by George Robinson esq. and tenanted by an Edmund MacDonnell esq. The first title deeds currently held by the present occupants are dated Aug 1939 when Robinson Brothers Brewers Ltd of Castle Street, Sunderland, who became insolvent in May 1939, transferred ownership to Vaux. There does not seem to be any connection with Lamb's Brewery in Hetton.

The population of Moorsley

1801	36
1811	43
1821	48
1831	748
1841	821
1851	942
1861	973
1871	1025
1881	1078
1891	1108

The chief land owners in those days were the Dean & Chapter, Lord Londonderry, Hon Francis Bowes Lyon, Robert Greenwell and the Robinson Family.

Two chapels were built by the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists as well as a Mission church belonging to St. Cuthberts of East Rainton. (situated 50m below the point where the houses forming Valley View now exist). The latter was known as the tin church and it was demolished in the 1940s. The land on which it stood is still visible today behind a rubble wall. Due to the fact that it is church land no building has taken place at this location. The church seated about 180 people.

The first houses were located close to the colliery in Low Row (later to become Blue Row), Jewitt's Row, Back Row, Green Row and High Row. The houses which formed the four rows at High Moorsley were not built until the 1860s Rows 1-3, and Westgarth's Row. High Row housed the officials. Opposite the school was a group of 5 houses known as the "Half Way Houses", (i.e. half way between Low Moorsley and High Moorsley). The church was set back about 15 feet from the road with a hard stand 10-12 feet wide leading from the road to the entrance of the church. On the lower side some 20 feet from the end of the church was a rough dirt track which ran alongside the gable end of the uppermost Half Way House.

During the 1940s and 50s the top cottage was occupied by Mr and Mrs Thompson and their two sons. One son was a hawker by trade and his horse was stabled in a large wooden shed which also acted as a cart shed, situated on rough ground behind the Mission Church. Unlike most of the miners' cottages, the coal houses were built on to the end of the pantry which projected from the back wall. Due to poor access the coal had to be carried to the coal houses in sacks. Pit workers in those days received an allowance of 12 cwt (approx 1200 kgs) every 3 months. The other houses were occupied by Mr and Mrs Parkin, Mr and Mrs Crake, Mr and Mrs Turnbull and Mr Sidaway the Church Army Captain who took over the house from Mr and Mrs Bilton who moved to the Lyons Colliery .Mr Bilton was responsible for training the pit ponies at the colliery. Mr Sidaway did much work for the Mission Church. All five houses had concrete floors in the rear room (kitchen) and the pantry and wooden floors supported on joists in the front room. A straight flight of narrow stairs led from the front room up into the loft. The two bedrooms were exposed to the roof of the cottage

supported by two cellar beams and purlins holding up lathe and plaster beneath slate external roofs. The exposed roof beams, lathes and plaster were all painted white with whitewash.

There was a dormer window complete with sash cords in one roof and a metal skylight in the other. If one looked out of the front window in 1948-50 it was possible to see the middle reservoir on the right hand side, where the pit yard had been and beyond it the Moorsley pit heap. The present Moorsley hut at the bottom of the hill would have been obscured by the size of the pit heap which has since been removed and landscaped. Below the houses there was a dirt track leading from the main road to the reservoir which was made of brick and concrete. The reservoir was in use long after the war and was surrounded by a 9 foot wooden fence with access through locked wooden gates. The reservoir held water pumped up in two stages, firstly from the Hazard Colliery and then up the to the reservoir which was constructed on the top of the hill at High Moorsley. Apparently tap water from the reservoir was on occasions totally undrinkable due to the amount of chlorine added every few weeks. The people who lived at High Moorsley in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Rows as well as Westgarth's Row regularly used water from a well (spring) which came out of the ground some 300 metres below in a field on Moorsley Banks. This water was not only sweet but really clean and during hard winters became the only source of running water when water froze in the pipes from the reservoir to the standpipes in the streets and houses in High Moorsley. The spring was one of two accessible to villagers, the other being in a field to the north, below the location of the colliery. It was said that the "Green Lady", a ghost who frequented Moorsley Bottoms where the well was situated, looked after the well. This water from the well brought luck to all who drank it if the Green lady had passed that way.

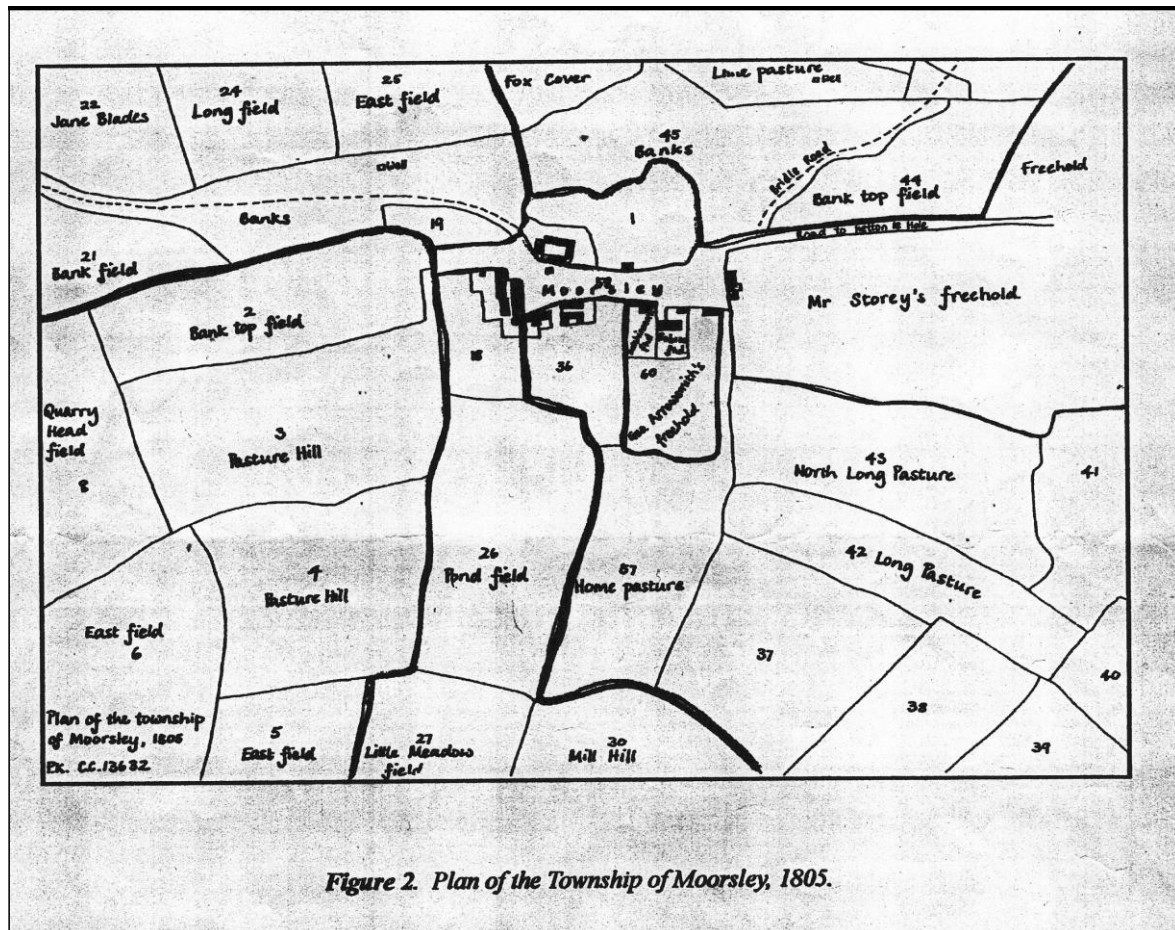
Of the two wells used for drinking by the people of High and Low Moorsley the one at Low Moorsley was capped when the site was ploughed over, but the other, the lucky well, still runs with benefit to those who drink its sparkling water. The Ranters, an old singing group, used to extol the virtues of the lucky well by chanting their old refrain "Hurrah for the well, hurrah, its blessings are pure and free. Hurrah for the well, hurrah, she's the best girl for me".

Moorsley has an SSSI that contains rare grasses brought down by the glaciers which is why the present owners named the re-built school 'Moon Fern Lodge' as 'Moon Fern' was the gypsy name for the sort of grass found on Moorsley bank. The school itself was demolished (having also been a fibreglass factory after the school closed) and the bungalow was built in its footprint using the stone from the school as facing material.

The wood next to the old Lamb Inn at the top of the bank, was replanted in the 1980s/90s as the southern-most section of the Great North Forest (not a huge success as it has been left to run wild – it isn't managed. Possibly the money for maintenance ran out). Other sections of the Great North forest were planted in the valley to the north of the villages.

Low Moorsley Village Hall (where the current Hut is) was erected in c1927 by the North Hetton Coal Co. and was paid for, in part, by miners' subscriptions. It was extremely well used with something going on every day of the week. It was transferred to the management of Moorsley & District Community Association in the early 1970s but then demolished in 2005 due to its disrepair and the discovery of asbestos in the construction. The newly formed Community Association then acquired the new Hut in December 2012, having been successful in winning a £30K grant from the

Neighbourhood Challenge scheme promoted and run by NESTA in conjunction with the Big Lottery Fund. It is run successfully, entirely by volunteers. There was also a Moorsley & District Working Men's Club and Institute on the site of the house called 'Rainton View'.



During much of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century there were at least 7 pubs in the village and occasionally an eighth. As far back as 1828, Joseph Winship held the Black Boy, George Muster was at the Wheatsheaf, John Waugh at the Lamb, Matthew Brown the North Hetton Tavern, James Cook held the Dun Cow, Henry Gardiner was at The Bonny Pit Lad, Joseph Timperley at the Crown, and Mary Ann Fenwick at The Grey Horse. There is a reference to the existence in 1820 of a Board Inn and later in 1856 of a Lambton Arms. By 1894 Whelland's Directory lists only seven pubs left in the village, the North Hetton Tavern, Lamb Inn, Crown Inn, Grey Horse, Bonnie Pit Lad, Black Boy Inn and Wheatsheaf Inn. Today there are just two pubs left and both are hanging on to a tenuous existence, namely The Wheatsheaf and The Black Boy. At High Moorsley the building which was once the Lamb Inn and then the Ponderosa stands on its own near the crest of the hill as a private house. One must assume that the large number of pubs in the two relatively small villages must have been remarkably well attended by thirsty miners for them to have lasted for so long.

The school was erected in 1871 by the North Hetton Coal Company for infant and mixed age pupils up to 14 years of age. It could accommodate 360 children and in the 1890s the average attendance was 320. There must have been some form of school before this time, probably run by one of the chapels, since listed among well-known residents in the 1850s is William E. Cochrane (Schoolmaster)

and Jane Brown (Schoolmistress). Low Moorsley had two butchers in residence around this time, John Scott and William Westgarth. Westgarth Row at High Moorsley was named after the family to which William belonged as they were in some part responsible for putting up money to build the houses. William Bellerby and Hunter Emmerson were the two principal farmers in the village and various colliery officials are listed, William H Carry, Ralph Day, William Little, William Ramshaw and George Spoor. Ralph Day was later to become Viewer at the Hazard Colliery and he took a great interest in the promotion of sport in both East Rainton and Moorsley by encouraging football and cricket teams.

The Co-op (Part of Pitlington Co-op?) was formed in the 1870s. There was a post office, 2 grocery shops and a butchers shop. There were 3 farms, High Moorsley, Coal Bank and a small farm just below the school.

North Hetton/Moorsley Colliery was sunk by the North Hetton Coal Company but had fallen in the hands of the Lambton group by 1910s, a sister pit to the Hazard Colliery. Situated north of Front Street Moorsley (though the shafts were more to the west) the Mine was close to those of rival coal owners. The Alexandrina Colliery (Londonderry) was to the west and to the east was the Lyons Colliery, (Hetton Coal Co.), to the north the Hazard Pit (Hetton Coal Co.) and to the south the Elmore Colliery, (Hetton Coal Co.) and Pitlington (Londonderry) and Lambton pits, giving it a limited life expectancy. It closed in 1935 and other than the former Wagon Way to the North the area has been landscaped and nothing now remains. It merged with Hazard Colliery in 1915 as part of the Lambton and Hetton Collieries Group and then taken over by the Joicey company in the late 1920s to become part of Lambton, Hetton and Joicey Empire.

Both the Hazard Pit and Moorsley colliery worked the same seams of coal even though they initially acted independently. When they combined they continued to work separate areas. The five quarter seam was worked at a depth of 52 fathoms (312 feet) and was 3 feet 8 inches thick. Mr Ernest Gilliland of Brookside, Rainton Bridge indicated more than 50 years ago that early in the 20th century three miners who were hewing in the five quarter seam suddenly found themselves in the open air and emerged in a field close to the road leading to Pitlington. Their names were Dick Metcalf, Jos Patrickson and George Hawkins. This is really no surprise since that particular area was subject to the earliest form of coal mining, namely bell-pit mining during the 17th and 18th centuries. Bell Pits worked the seams close to the surface.

Other seams worked by the collieries included the Main Seam found at 62.5 fathoms (375 feet) and four and a half feet thick as well as the Low Main seam located at 83.5 fathoms deep (501 feet) and three feet thick. The coal was generally of good quality but the narrowness of the seams inevitably led to the closure of the mines when working became uneconomic. Long before the advent of gas and electricity at Moorsley the "cowpie" wagons brought the coals from the Hazard to the Moorsley Bottom to be discharged into the Hetton Drops for loading on to the Durham to Sunderland Railway. In front of each set of wagons was a loud clanking bell perched on a small bogie warning people of its approach. On its return the bogie was at the back of the set so the clanking bell once again came into operation both by day and night.

The Colliery had an extensive firebrick works attached, producing in excess of 60,000 bricks per week. Clay pipes for agriculture and water and sewage distribution were also made here. They used

Seggar, a clay-like material found close to seams of coal. In the mid 1880s a gas works was founded with a number of retorts and coal gas was distributed locally for domestic use.

A waggon way ran down hill to link in with the Hazard Pit and then on to the Hetton Railway. There was also a link with the Durham & Sunderland Railway. Much of the downhill section including a bridge over the D&S line was raised on a wooden gantry.

Initially the miners' cottages were made of limestone which came from the two local quarries, High Moorsley quarry and Low Moorsley quarry. In addition agricultural lime was produced in a lime kiln in the quarry at Low Moorsley. Lime plaster decorated the inside of many of the old miner's cottages both in Moorsley and in Hetton. The limestone from the quarries was taken to the lime kilns and then the cured lime was taken to a lime depot where it was stored and distributed. Altogether about 80 -90 men were engaged in the lime trade in one capacity or another.



The Lamb Inn on the right and the miners cottages at High Moorsley just before demolition in the 1950s.

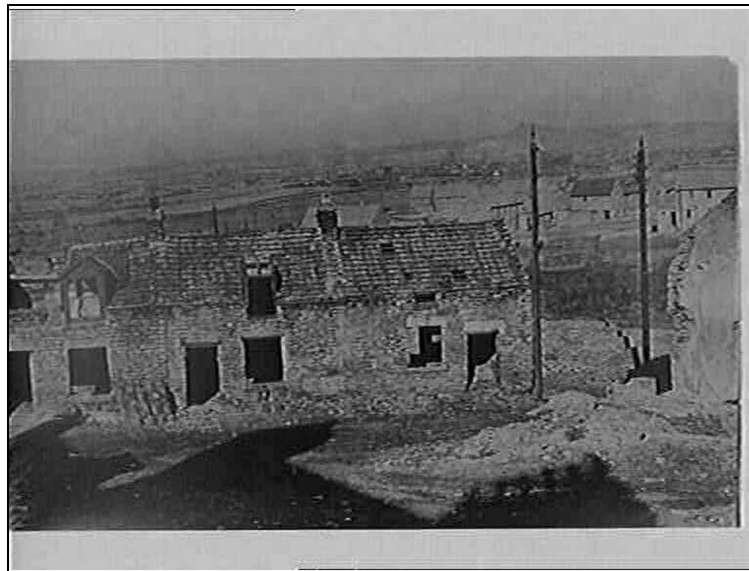
Following the closure and demolition of Moorsley Colliery in the 1930s, by the 1950s the houses at High and Low Moorsley were in a poor state of repair. It was decided by the then County Durham Council to classify both villages as "Schedule D" where "D" stood for demolition. Thus most of the old miner's cottages were demolished and High Moorsley ceased to exist as a village. Today the site where the rows of miners' houses once stood is a small piece of woodland close by a track which leads across the fields to Hetton-on-the-Hill.

In Low Moorsley the old miners cottages which stood behind the main Hetton road on the steepest part of the bank were also demolished with a view to replacing them with new post-war council houses. Today these houses form part of the small community of Low Moorsley next to the much larger Coalbank and Peat Carr estates. The old limestone built Co-op building, half way up the bank, was eventually closed and demolished in the 1970s as was probably the nearby oldest house, and the first to be built in the village(this fact really can't be confirmed), called "The Castle". One chapel remains alongside the road and is used as a storage for boats and fibre-glass boat hulls.

Very few of the original families who lived in the village still live there. There is however a highly active Community Group who meet in a small portable building situated at the bottom of the bank at Low Moorsley.



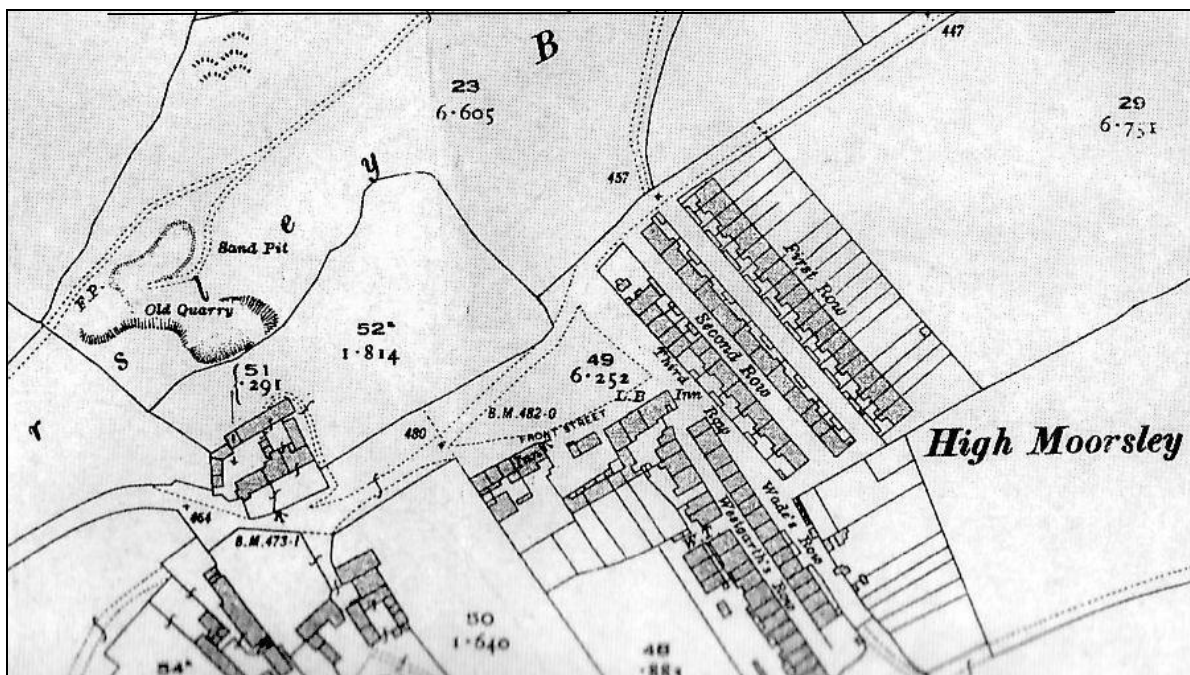
North Hetton Colliery Banner setting off for the Miner's Gala circa 1905



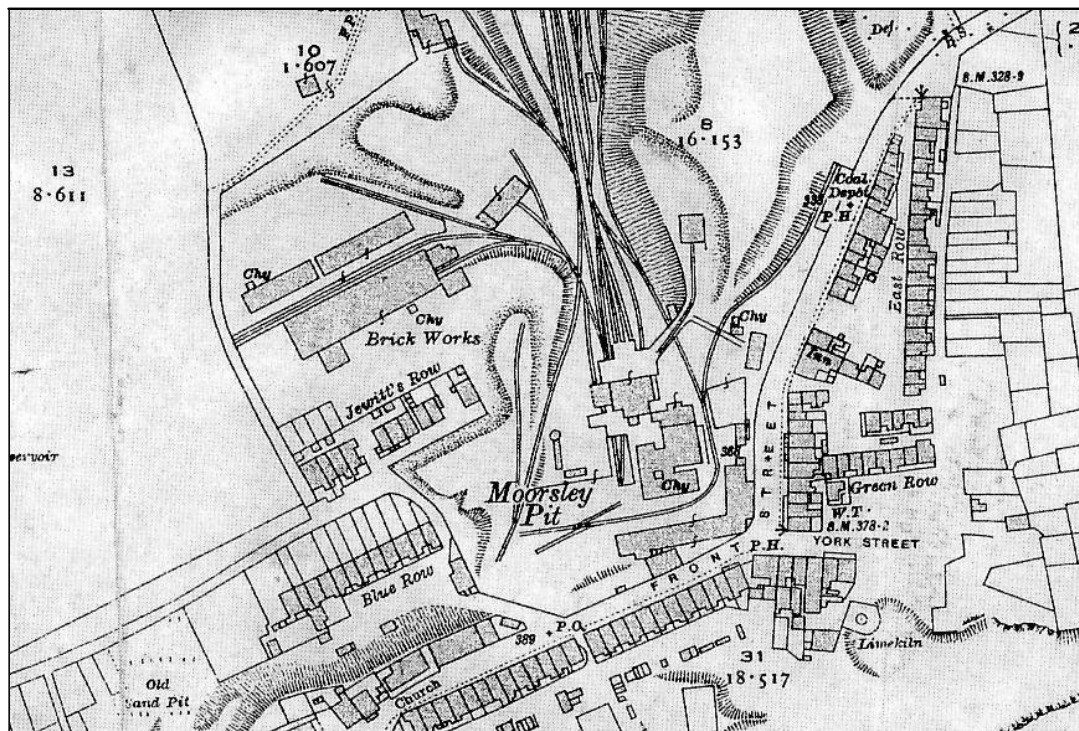
Miners' cottages being demolished at Jewitts Row Low Moorsley in the 1950s. In the background can be seen the new council houses being built. Hiding behind the top of the 2nd pole is Eppleton Colliery pit heap.



A view of Moorsley c 1880 showing the pit on the right and the chapel roof middle background. On the left is one of the miner's cottages and on the right the coal depot where coal was emptied into carts to be distributed. Part of the pit heap can be seen behind the depot. Note the unmade road and the broken down walls.



High Moorsley in 1896



Low Moorsley in 1896

Moorsley Co-operative Society

1868 April 20th - First general meeting, Society formed.

1868 Summer - First premises rented and opened (a house in Low Moorsley).

1868 October – First P/T employee started work.

1868 October – P/T assistant becomes full time employee.

1872 April. New business premises bought in York Street, Low Moorsley (close to Black Boy pub).

1872 Staff increased as new Drapery, hardware and furnishing departments were opened in addition to grocery.

1878 Ten years of steady growth. The present check (metal token) system for sales was withdrawn.

1892 Significant miners' strike. Co-op gave goods to the soup kitchen to relieve distress among miners' families.

1894 Green grocery business opened as part of the grocery department. Progress steady with 4s 2d in the £ being paid out as dividend.

1895 New rules for capital spending and employee hours drawn up.

1896 Society needed to expand. In September land below the PM Methodist chapel purchased from the Hetton Coal Company to build new premises which would include a butchery department and stables for horse and carts.

1897 New premises opened in April. Property built of bricks purchased from the Coal Company.

1898 Decision made to build a house next to Butchery Dept. for the butchery manager.

1899 Full-time appointment of General Secretary.

1901 Shop rented at No. 39 Front Street Low Moorsley for the expanding green grocery dept.

1907 Introduction of a Collective Life Assurance Scheme for members. This proved very popular and was free for all Co-op members.

1908 July Bankers changed from North Eastern Banking Company to the C.W.S bank. (Co-operative Wholesale Society).

1909 More land purchased at rear of central premises in order to open a cobbling business. A new warehouse, Committee room and offices opened on the site.

1910 Boot and shoe section opened along with a cobbler. Rented shop near to Black Boy purchased.

1914-18 Sales soared to a very high level due to inflation. All goods, including food were scarce and queues built up on a daily basis to get whatever was available. Profit margins reduced to help people.

1915 North Hetton Colliery (Moorsley) closed and this affected sales. Some staff had left the store to join up and fight. Temporary female staff brought in for the first time in 1915. Rationing started in 1917 sugar, and flour in addition.

1919 Separate dividends paid to grocery and butchery sales due to restrictions.

1920 Bonnie Pit Laddie bought and converted to trading purposes. Motorised transport used for the first time with the purchase of a 3 ton Daimler lorry.

1921 First Miners' strike and another difficult period for the Co-op. Unemployment became common. To reduce expenses the trading premises were closed for one or two days each week.

1922 Dividend down to 6d in the pound due to poor sales.

1925. Dormant capital held by the Co-op was used to buy land at East Rainton but a further coal strike in 1926 and poor trade delayed the opening of a new building until 1931. However the first branch of the Society opened in 1927 at the White House in East Rainton

1931/2 New premises opened and the Society became members of the East Durham Co-op Dairies.

1936 The Northern Co-operative Boot Repairing Society was formed (A Federal Society) and as a consequence the Boot and Shoe Dept at Moorsley Joined and their operation closed down.

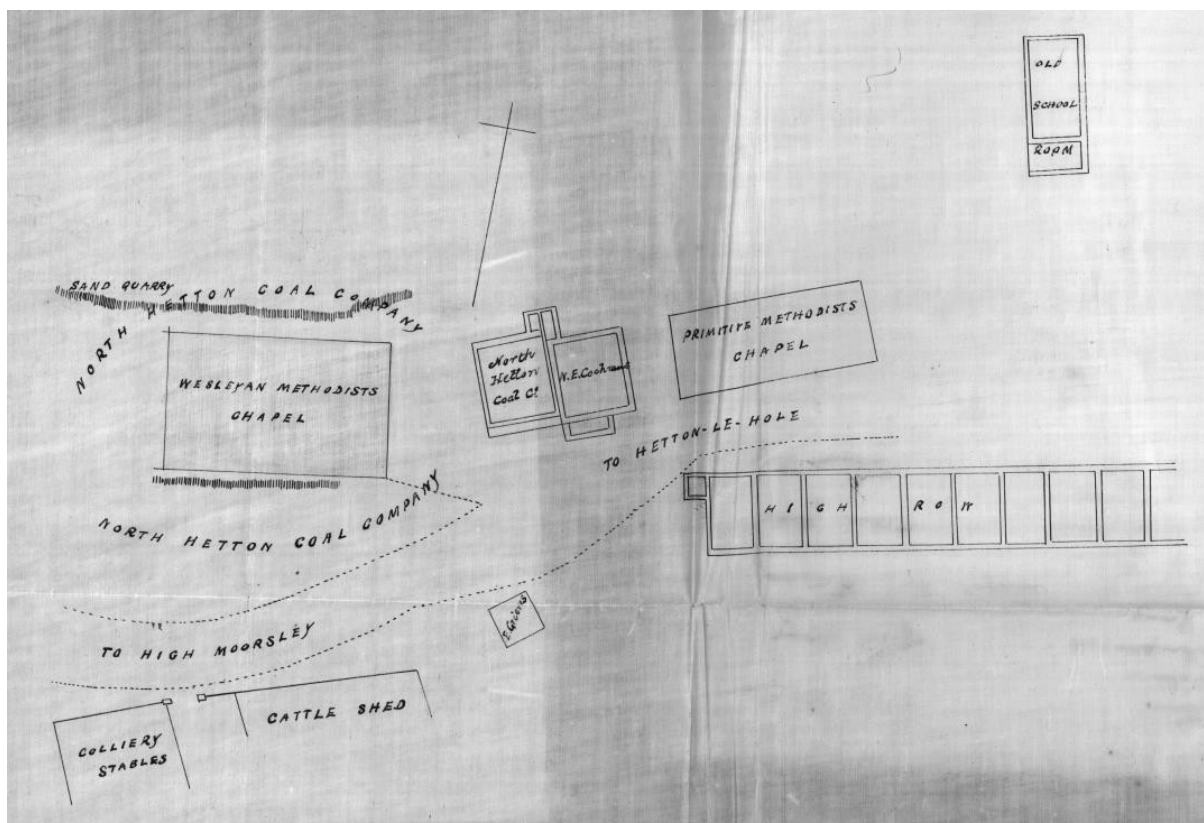
1939 Pressure to open a new premises in Hetton resulted and a new branch was opened later that year. The Pittington Branch in Hetton closed and a new agreement drawn up between Moorsley and Pittington Co-ops to realise a new joint venture in Hetton in 1940.

1939-45. Travel restrictions meant that a new building was opened in 1942 at Coalbank Terrace. Rationing however continued after the war and sales in the co-ops fell dramatically. At the end of the war there was a revival but by the 1950s competition from other businesses increased. The whole co-operative movement suffered decline in the late 1950s and early 60s. Branches closed including the Hetton Branch.

1960s By this period families were becoming more mobile. The first supermarkets were making their appearance. Some of the trading operations were closed at Moorsley. In spite of new houses being built in Low Moorsley to replace old miners' cottages, trade failed to pick up.

1970 The writing was on the wall. Poor trading results at Moorsley Co-op meant that it had eventually to close having traded for 100 years. The empty buildings were pulled down as part of a general clear up in the village in the 1970s.. This was the end of a piece of important village history.

Chapels and a Church.



The sketch map shown above is a drawing of the location of the two chapels in Low Moorsley. Both were built within a stone's throw of the colliery and both were built initially on Coal Company land. The larger of the two was the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel built in 1855 and this building stands today but is used as a store for fibre glass boats. The Primitive Methodist Chapel was demolished during the late 1940s as the population of the village had by this time decreased to level where the chapel could no longer be supported.



The former Wesleyan Chapel in 2008

Below is a photo taken around 1910 of the Mission Church which was a Mission Church for the C. of E. ST Cuthbert's Church at East Rainton. Constructed with a corrugated iron skin it was referred to as the "Tin Church" and was located a short distance up the hill from the Wesleyan Chapel high enough to be located in High Moorsley. As stated earlier the church was demolished in the 1940s and only a broken-down limestone wall on the roadside below Valley View indicates its location.



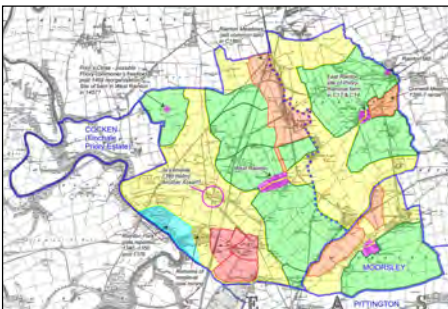
The Mission Church



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.



School and chapel, cottage and mansion, workhouse and factory, lord and labourer, tranquil pond and rugged quarry, all can be found within.



Hetton Local & Natural History Society

