

FACSIMILE REPRINT

# THE HISTORY OF SOUTH SHIELDS



*Issued under the authority of the  
South Shields Education Committee*

Reprinted by South Shields Local History Group



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# Introduction

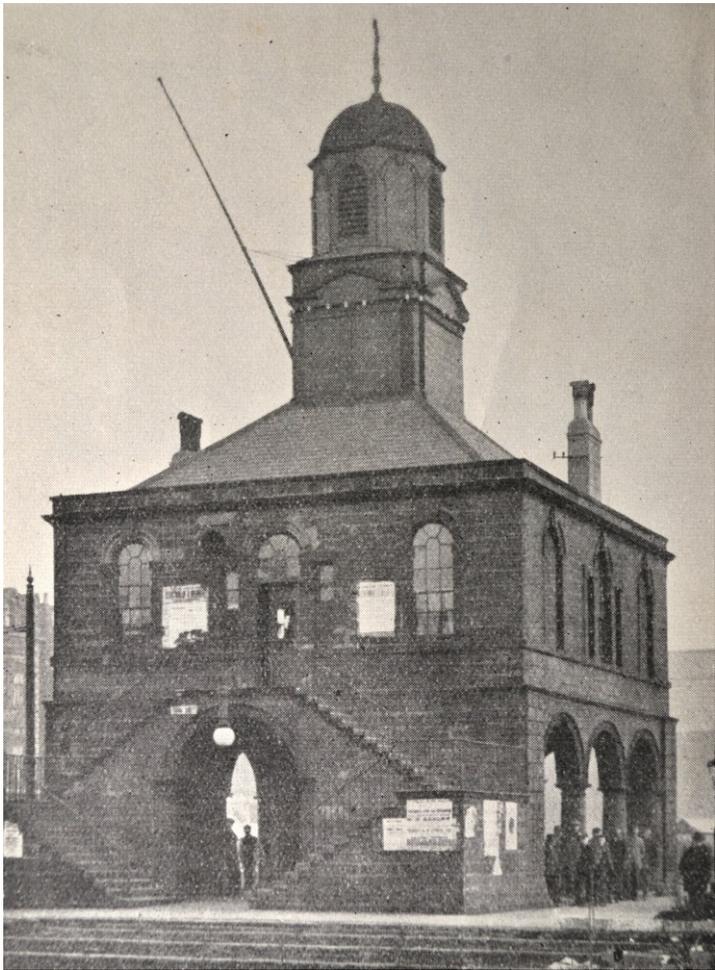
George B Hodgson was the editor of the Shields Gazette from 1892 till 1917. He died in 1926 aged 62.

George B Hodgson based this book on his 1903 masterpiece, "The Borough of South Shields" which was much larger in size and 510 pages long.

The book was made at the request of South Shields Education Committee and was reduced in length and size to make it easier for children to follow. This book was first printed in 1924, and multiple copies were given to every school in South Shields. It is sometimes called the "Scholars' Edition" as it was originally intended for schoolchildren. The book was still used in schools in the 1960s.

The book has been out of print since 1924 and copies are scarce and very expensive.

Originals of the book are usually faded with age, often discoloured, torn or creased which makes photocopying difficult. South Shields Local History Group therefore decided to digitise it then reprint it to make it easier to read, cheaper and more readily available especially for modern day scholars in the borough.



THE OLD TOWN HALL IN MARKET PLACE.

THE HISTORY OF  
SOUTH SHIELDS

BY

GEORGE B. HODGSON

FORMERLY EDITOR OF THE "SHIELDS DAILY GAZETTE"



*Issued under the authority of the  
South Shields Education Committee*

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# SOUTH SHIELDS

HISTORICAL AND INDUSTRIAL.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS.

THE Parliamentary and County Borough of South Shields is situated in fifty-five degrees north latitude and one degree twenty-five minutes west longitude from Greenwich. It is 277 miles north north-west of London, and nine miles east by north from Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It occupies the most northerly point of the County of Durham, on a promontory bounded on the east and north-east by the sea and on the west and north-west by the river Tyne. The Borough owes much of its prosperity to its position at the mouth of that great industrial river, the fourth in point of commerce in the Kingdom. It is formed by the junction, near Hexham, of the North Tyne which rises on Carter Fell in the Cheviots, and the South Tyne which rises on the north slopes of Cross Fell in the Pennine Range. Just on the north-western extremity of the Borough, the river broadens into the expanse known as Jarrow Slake, formerly half a mile in width and covering an area of 400 acres. The Don, now a narrow meandering stream which forms the west and south-western boundary of the Borough, was in ancient times

navigable for the small ships of that day to some distance above the point where it enters the Slake. The remains of a Saxon Cyul (hence our Keel) was found some years ago in the channel near Bilton, above East Jarrow.

In ancient times the Tyne entered the sea by at least two and probably three mouths. The most southerly branched off from the main stream about the Mill Dam, and its course is clearly traceable through the depression south of St. Hild's Church-yard, through Waterloo Vale and so to the sea. Thus the high ground running from near the Market Place to the Pilots Lookout on the Lawe was originally an island, and is so shown in the oldest known map of the district, made in the sixteenth century and now in the British Museum.

Geologically the site of the Borough is interesting. It overlies the coal measures, in a gap in the magnesian limestone cliffs scooped out by the great slow moving glaciers which, on the break up of the ice age, ground their way down from the Cheviots and Pennines, gouging out in their progress the picturesque valley of the Tyne. The strata in the magnesium limestone rises gradually as it runs northward. Hartlepool Heugh belongs to the upper limestone, which appears again in Cleadon Hill and in the higher and southern parts of South Shields. Both the lower and the middle limestone are visible in the cliffs of Frenchman's Bay, and the lower limestone only in Tynemouth Castle Rock on the north side of the river mouth. The cliffs immediately to the south of Shields contain many variegated and beautiful types of the limestone rocks. Their wonderful variety adds to the

beauty of this, one of the finest pieces of coastline in the country.

At Souter Point is found the cannon ball formation. In Marsden Bay are examples of the thin layer-cake or laminated structure, while Marsden Rock and the Pillars afford examples of the harder species of limestone, the softer having yielded to the action of the sea. Between Marsden and Frenchman's Bay, in addition to the fantastic shapes into which the rocks have been eroded by the action of the sea, there are several breccia gashes, as Professor Lebour termed them; that is crevasses in the original rock filled up by angular fragments fallen from the sides, which have become cemented together by the formation of fresh limestone deposited by the action of the water. The Trow rocks, or so much of them as the Tyne Improvement Commissioners have not quarried away, form a remarkably diversified mass of limestone, including compact crystalline, brecciated and cellular structures, and showing in places the scored surface due to glacial action. The limestone cliffs are not particularly rich in fossils, but fine casts of Permian shells have been obtained in the great limestone quarries at Marsden. In these quarries was found a sea cave, 140 feet above the present sea level, and corresponding with that of the raised beach which could formerly be traced round the Cleadon Hills.

The site of the town itself is partly sandstone of the Permian formation, partly boulder clay, containing some alien boulders deposited by glaciers, and partly alluvial deposits, that is, land regained from the river. A hitherto

unknown mineral, and one not elsewhere found in Europe, although occurring in considerable quantities in the Salt Lake district of the United States of America, was found among the alluvial deposits during the excavations in Jarrow Slake for the construction of Tyne Dock, about the middle of the nineteenth century. It was very porous and friable, yellowish in colour and of a doubtful crystalline structure, with a dull roughish earthy surface. Its chemical composition was roughly ninety-six and a quarter per cent. carbonate of lime, and three and three-quarter per cent. carbonate of magnesia. It was given the name of Jarrowite to commemorate the place of its discovery.

Apart from the prehistoric forests which grew and decayed to form the rich coal seams underlying the town, the whole district was well wooded down at any rate to the fifteenth century. We find frequent references in the records of the Prior and Convent of Durham to Hayning Wood, a hunting ground of the monks, which extended westward from Shields. Its name is preserved to this day in that of a farm near Pelaw. Many wild animals now extinct roamed these forests. Bones found in the sea cave at Marsden, also during the excavations for Tyne Dock and at different times in various parts of the Borough, prove the existence in these woods of the gigantic Irish elk (*Cervus megaceros*) the great wild ox (*Bos primigenus*) called by Cæsar the Urus, both long extinct - the red deer, the badger, etc. Undoubtedly the wolf also haunted the woods, since he was not extinct in the County until the fifteenth century.

There are remains of extinct birds also, from the great awk downwards. So late as the seventeenth century a writer records that the sea fowl on this part of the coast were so abundant that "In the tyme of breeding one can hardly set his foot so warylye that he spoyle not their nests." The raven bred on Marsden rock down to early last century. The flora of the district was greatly enriched by the importation of alien plants and seeds among the loam or sand brought as ballast by the old sailing ships, and dumped to form the great ballast hills which once studded the sea and river front. No fewer than eighty-eight species of alien plants found in the neighbourhood of Shields are enumerated in the transactions of the Tyneside Field Club. Twenty-four were natives of South Europe, two each of South Africa and North America, and others from Eastern Europe, Greece, Egypt, Mexico, and South America. Many of these species have now disappeared from the district.

## CHAPTER II.

### PRE-HISTORIC SHIELDS.

THE aboriginal inhabitants of this part of the country - or at any rate the earliest of which there is any trace - were a small, dark, non-Aryan race of men, who were tattooed all over their bodies - the “painted people” of Rudyard Kipling's vivid stories of the Roman Wall. They were similar in type to the Basque peoples who inhabit the Biscayan provinces of Spain and the Bayonne district of France. Probably five or six centuries before the Christian era this aboriginal race was conquered and driven northward by the Celts, a race of tall fair-haired, blue-eyed invaders from the east. St Bede says they came from Amorica, that is, the coast of Brittany, in France. But if so, that was only their temporary home or halting-place. They were of Indian or Central Asian origin, the first of the Aryan peoples to begin the great trek westward which overran and peopled modern Europe.

The Celtic tribe that occupied the country between the Tyne and the Humber were the Brigantes, a brave, hardy and adventurous race. There is strong circumstantial evidence that they established one of their settlements or strongholds on Shields Lawe. The earliest name of the town – Caer Urfa - is British. Under that name it is included by Henry of Huntingdon in his list of the twenty-eight British Caers or Cities. Leland, the 16th century antiquary, twice refers to Caer Urfa as being on the opposite bank of the Tyne from Tynemouth. Celtic

place names moreover, are not infrequent in the neighbourhood. Tynemouth Rock was originally Penbal Crag. Westoe is probably derived from the Celtic Urfa Stow and Harton from Heortedun the Hill of the Stag. Cleadon is also of Celtic origin. So is the name of our great river, the Tyne or Tin in its British form, which means the twin stream, alluding to its formation by the junction of North and South Tyne.

The early settlers possessed a rudimentary civilization. Their tools and weapons were of flint, laboriously chipped into rude shape and sharpness, and fastened to wooden shafts by thongs of hide or sinew. We have examples in the flint axeheads and arrowheads now in the Borough Museum. A number have been found below the ruins of the great Roman fortress on the Lawe; in Jarrow Slake during the construction of Tyne Dock; and in the burial-ground of the chiefs of the race, which was on the cliff tops at Trow rocks. These Celtic graves or burial barrows were destroyed by the quarrying operations for the construction of the Tyne Piers, but fortunately they were first examined carefully by the late Canon Greenwell of Durham. The principal barrow was circular in shape, 30 feet in diameter and 3 feet high. In the centre was a cist, or stone sepulchre, constructed of six flat stones set on edge, with two others as a cover. It contained a human skeleton with its head to the south-east. Beside it lay a flint knife and some fragments of charcoal. These early Shieldsfolk were fishermen using first coracles or light skiffs of basketwork covered with skins, and later rude boats hollowed out of the trunks of trees. One of these, found in the Tyne near Scotswood, is

now in the museum of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries.

As time went on our Celtic predecessors reached a higher level of civilization. Their religion was Druidism, which seems to have originated in Britain, and spread hence to the Continent. It was a form of nature worship, with the Sun as chief Deity. The oak also was an object of worship. The Druids or priests, according to Cæsar and other Roman writers, believed in the immortality of the soul. They taught, as the three principles of their religion, to worship the gods, to do no evil, and to be brave. They were acquainted with a Runic alphabet, and possessed considerable knowledge of astronomy. They drew auguries from natural phenomena - the movement of the clouds and winds, the flight of birds, the position of the stars. But their religious rites were marred by human sacrifices, at any rate of the prisoners taken in battle, and by incantations, divinations, and other practices resembling those of the witch doctors in savage Africa to-day.

Socially and politically, the Brigantes were comparatively free. The land was owned in common, but each family was allotted a plot of arable land on which to grow their corn. The chief was neither landowner nor over-lord, but simply the leader, chosen probably for his or her superior skill or cunning. "King" indeed originally meant the cunning or clever one. The office seems to have been in some cases hereditary. It was not infrequently held by women. Everyone has heard of the warrior Queen Boadicea, who ruled one of the southern

tribes in the time of Nero. The Brigantes had a Queen, Cartismunda, at a little earlier date, for it is recorded that Caractacus, the King of the Welsh Britons, fled to her for refuge after his defeat by Vespasian in A.D. 51. History says she delivered him up to his enemies, probably in the vain hope of averting the invasion of her own territory.

At the time of the Roman invasion the Britons had acquired the art of smelting and working in metals. They forged swords, axes, spear heads, shields and breastplates of bronze. Specimens of their metal work have been found from time to time in South Shields, notably a fine bronze axehead at Trow Rocks, now in the British Museum, a bronze sword, 1 ft. 11½ ins. long, found near the foot of the Lawe and some bronze axe and spear heads now in the Borough Museum.



BRITISH COIN OF TASCIOVANUS

They had coined money also. A brass coin found in the Borough, in the late Robert Blair's collection, was struck by Tasciovanus, the father of Cunobelinus (Shakespeare's Cymbeline), and as the latter died A.D.

43, the coin was probably minted about the beginning of the Christian era. The Britons made use of chariots, armed, according to Roman writers, with curved sword blades, projecting from the axles, and drawn by their small, but sturdy and spirited horses. There is reason to think they used crude solid-wheeled cars for transport.

Chariots would be useless without some kind of road. Robert of Gloucester, the thirteenth century Chronicler, tells us that there were in British days many "faire weyes in Englonde" made by King Belin (Belinus) the Wise. He especially enumerates four, Erminge Strete running from south to north, Ikeneld Strete, from east to west, Watling Strete from Dover to Chester, and one from the south-west to the north-east, "Unto Englonde's end." While Robert is not the most reliable of historians, we may conclude that there was some foundation for his story. Tradition has it that the "wey" from the south-west to the north-east ended at Shields. Some corroboration is furnished by the existence of British remains at various points on the line such a road would follow, notably, "The Castles," the remains of a British stronghold in the woods between Wolsingham and Hamsterley, the pre-Roman "standing stones" near Egglestone, and the Druidical circle which formerly stood on Stainmore, the desolate Fell on the borders of Yorkshire and Westmorland.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ROMAN OCCUPATION.

ALTHOUGH Julius Cæsar made his first landing in Kent, 55 B.C., the Britons offered such stout resistance that it was over a century and a quarter later before the Roman Eagles reached the Tyne. Agricola defeated the Brigantes in a great battle in A.D. 79 and advanced northwards as far as the isthmus between the Forth and the Clyde, where he constructed a line of earth-works to keep back the Picts the "little painted people." It failed to achieve this purpose, and about forty years later, in A.D. 120, Hadrian constructed another earthwork known as the Vallum, between the mouth of the Tyne and Solway Firth. The Roman Wall, running for seventy miles over hills and through valleys, was constructed under the orders of Severus, who died at York in A.D. 211. Bede tells us that it was eight feet broad, and twelve feet high, with towers a mile apart between the fortified stations. The Watling Street or Great North Road ran through the wall at Hunum-Halton Chesters, near Corbridge. The existing remains of this wonderful military work afford a good idea of its strength and the ingenuity of its builders. Its eastern terminus, on the foreshore of the Tyne, was uncovered a few years ago within the famous shipyard of Messrs. Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson at Wallsend, during the excavations for lengthening the slipways for the construction of the great Cunard liner,

the "Mauretania." The Borough of Wallsend, of course, takes its name from the termination of the wall.

We have no definite information as to when a Roman fortress was first erected on the Lawe at South Shields. Presumably it would be soon after the Romans occupied this part of the country, since the position of Caer Urfa, commanding as it did, from its island eminence, the entrance to the Tyne, would naturally commend itself to the military genius of the Roman invaders, alike on strategic and commercial grounds. It was vitally necessary to protect the garrison against attack from the sea, and also to safeguard their communications with the Continent. It was also important as covering the eastern terminus of the wall. There was probably a corresponding fortress on the North side of the river at Tynemouth, although its existence has not been so conclusively established. Dr. Bruce, the historian of the Roman wall, believed that South Shields was an important commercial and trading port of the Romans, affording the natural outlet to the sea for the produce of the rich inland valleys. Corn, cattle, and wool, and also probably iron and lead, which we know the Romans wrought in Weardale and Allendale, were exported from the port, and Continental produce imported in exchange. The remains of at least two Roman quays or landing-places have been found in Shields Harbour. One, uncovered towards the close of the seventeenth century, was at the west end of South Shields, probably about where Tyne Dock is now, since apparently it gave on Jarrow Slake. The other was on the north side of the river, "near the end of the Roman wall." Both were so constructed, Dr. Hunter states, as to be

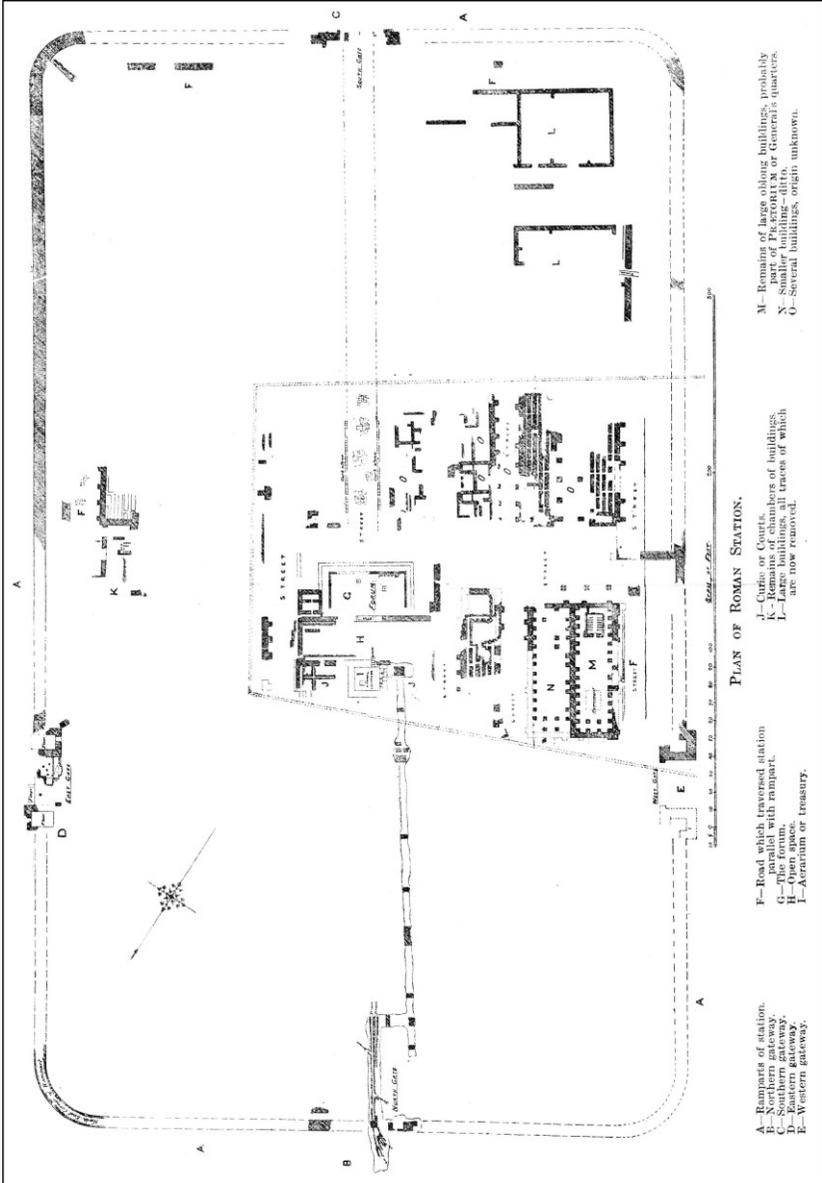
proper for safe landing at different stages of the tide. Seaborne commerce implies facilities for inland transport, and of these there is abundant evidence at Shields. The town seems to have been the terminus of two or three Roman roads. Of these the principal was the Wrekendike, which ran westward to the Watling Street at Lanchester, and probably on thence by Wolsingham and Eggleston to the other great Roman highway, the Maiden Way, crossing Stainmore into Westmorland. The route of this road within the town is still followed by the misspelt Rekendyke Lane, and gave its name to Rekendyke Ward. It is frequently mentioned in ancient documents as forming the boundary of parishes and estates. Another Roman road appears to have run southward by where St. Mark's Church now stands, passing by East Boldon, and crossing the Wear by a paved ford, which gave its name to the village of Ford. On the south side of that river it divided, one branch running south-south-west to the Roman station at Binchester on the Watling Street, and the other, much later called "the Salter's Trod," along the coast by Seaton Carew, crossing the Tees into Cleveland at Billingham.

That a Roman Station existed at Shields had been known for centuries, by the discovery from time to time of inscriptions, altars, etc. The earliest of which there is record was in the reign of Charles II., when, in 1682, three Roman altars were found, two on the Lawe, and one in a quay wall alongside the old main street. The most interesting of these, now in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, bears an inscription stating that it was erected on the departure for Rome in 211 of Caracalla and Geta, the

sons of the Emperor Severus, who had just died at York. The brothers jointly assumed the title of Emperor, but Geta was murdered soon afterwards by Caracalla, and, in accordance with custom, his name was erased from this and other inscriptions. In 1791 a portion, and in 1798 the whole of a Roman hypocaust or vaulted heating chamber was uncovered on the Lawe, while coins and other relics have been found from time to time.

Thanks to the public spirit of a number of Shieldsmen, a systematic exploration of the site of the station was begun in the Spring of 1875, which revealed its extent and characteristics. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, to whom the estates of the Dean and Chapter of Durham had just been transferred, commenced to lay out the land on the Lawe for building, and to that end constructed a new thoroughfare called Baring Street, after the then Bishop of Durham. During the excavations for this street a number of relics of Roman occupation were brought to light, including Samian pottery, a perfect column and parts of others, and portions of a paved road. A town's meeting was called, funds raised, and a Committee appointed to carry out the careful excavation, under expert direction, of the site of the station. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners readily gave their assent to the work, on the wise condition that all antiquities found should be lodged in the Public Library, thus forming the nucleus of what is now the Borough Museum. The work of exploration commenced on March 13th, 1875, and continued with intervals until August, 1877. Much of the work was done voluntarily by the pilots, and the whole was carried out so economically that, at a total cost of

under £300, we had revealed, more completely than had hitherto been done in the north, the whole plan and arrangements of a Roman fortress.



The station or stations, for it had been twice destroyed, once at least by fire, proved to be amongst the largest in the north of England, the fortified area was about five acres. Alike from its natural position and its artificial defences it was also one of the strongest. The citadel occupied roughly the quadrangle bounded by Fort Street on the south, the east side of Roman Road on the east, Edith Street on the north, and Baring Street on the west. A space of 615 feet from north to south, and 315 feet from east to west was enclosed by a rampart of massive masonry, which evidently had been of considerable height, although the ravages of the Saxon and Danish invaders, and of generations of builders, had left little but the foundations. These showed that the wall had been five feet thick - broad enough for two soldiers to march along it abreast. In one or two places five or six courses of the masonry remained in position. A paved road ran all round the station within the wall, which was pierced by four gateways, on the north, south, east and west. The eastward or seaward gate was in the best preservation. It was a massive double arch-way, with two portals, each having two doors, and was flanked on each hand by guardrooms. southern gateway had been blocked up and converted into a dwelling-house, probably in the later days of the occupation.

The centre of the citadel was occupied by the Forum, or open Market Place, 74 feet from east to west, and 34 from north to south, paved with flagged stone, with a raised footway of massive but much worn squared stones on the east and west sides, and drained by an open channel of paved stones, leading to the main drain, which

discharged through the northern gateway into the river. On the east, south, and west sides the Forum was surrounded by a covered portico, some of the pillars of which still remained. On the north side had stood the wall of a lofty building, at least thirty feet in height. The lower courses remained, but the upper part of the wall had fallen, bodily and unbroken. The large accumulation of soil beneath the overthrown portion showed that its fall must have occurred long after the abandonment of the station.

To the north of the building of which this wall formed part, and separated from it by an open space, were the remains of another large building in three divisions. The two outer, of which only the red concrete flooring remained, were the Curiaë, or Courts of Justice, while the centre was the Aerium, or Treasury. This was a sunken chamber, access to which was afforded by a flight of much-worn stone steps. The walls were of massive squared stones, originally bound together with iron clamps, long rusted away. The chamber had been lighted by a splayed window, defended by stout iron bars, which also had perished. Near the north side of the paved floor was a well or recess, evidently the "strong room" of the station, in which possibly the military treasure chest was kept. The remains of this interesting building are still to be seen, near the north-east corner of the little park in which the foundations of the central part of the station are preserved.

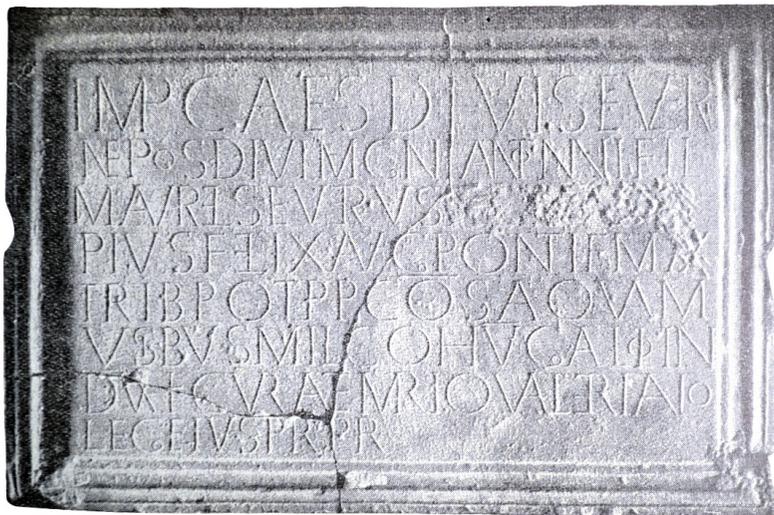


TREASURE CHAMBER.

Inside the western gate, the principal approach to the camp, were the remains of a large building, probably the Pretorium or headquarters of the General. It had a portico on its south front, and a large hypocaust or heating chamber with a tiled floor. South-west of this were the remains of other large buildings and hypocausts. One of these was coated with coal soot, showing that the Romans were acquainted with the coal deposits of the district. Outside the walls of the citadel especially on the level ground between the eastern walls and the edge of the Lawe, were the remains of a number of villas, which had apparently been the residential quarter for the well-to-do civilian population.

The original water supply of the station was from a deep well at the foot of the Lawe, which existed until near

the end of the nineteenth century, when, in 1897-8, it unfortunately was destroyed, during the levelling of the Lawe Ballast Hill for the extension of the north Marine Park. Its position was nearly in a direct line between the Trinity Towers, now enclosed in the park, and the Pilots Lookout. It was a circular shaft, lined with Roman brick, and down to the time of its destruction yielded a fine flow of pure water, which, prior to the introduction of the Sunderland and South Shields Water Company's mains, formed the principal supply of the inhabitants of the eastern part of the town. It was extensively used again in the early nineties of last century, when the town's water supply became very brackish. With the growth of the population of Roman South Shields in the early part of the third century this supply became insufficient, for, during the reign of Alexander Severus (222-235) water was brought into the town, probably from the high land of Westoe or Harton. The completion of these waterworks is recorded in an almost perfect inscription which expanded and translated is,



INSCRIPTION RECORDING COMPLETION OF  
WATERWORKS.

“The Emperor Cæsar Marcus Aurelius Severus, (Alexander) grandson of the Divine Severus, son of the Divine Antonius the Great, pious happy august, high priest, endowed with Tribunitial power, the father of his country has brought water into the fortress for the use of the soldiers of the Fifth Cohort of the Gauls, under the direction of Marcus Valerianus, his legate, Proprætor.”

In accordance with custom, the name Alexander was obliterated on his murder in A.D. 235. This inscription, together with one referring to the Sixth Legion, are the only references which have been found to the troops that garrisoned the station. Nothing has been discovered which would enable the Roman name of South Shields to be definitely fixed.

The cemetery of the station stretched along the southern slope of the hill, and covered roughly the area now bounded by Roman Road on the east, James Mather

Street on the west, Julian Street on the north, and Bath Street on the south. Both earth burial and cremation had been practised, probably at different times. Several of the graves resembled those in the British burial barrows, as they were formed by limestone slabs enclosing the sides and covering the top. One of the cists contained a perfect skeleton, five feet nine in height. A large number of interesting tombstones were discovered. One, found a little to the south of Baring Street, and west of Bath Street was unique in that it affords the only known example in Britain of an inscription in both Latin and Palmyrene. It contains the sculptured figure of a woman, elegantly dressed, sitting in a chair, with housewifely implements in her hands. The Latin inscription is translated:-

“To the Divine Shades of Regina, the freed woman and wife of Barates of the Palmyrene Nation (of the) Catuallaunian (tribe: She lived) 30 (years).”

The Palmyrene inscription is translated, “Regina, the freed woman of Barates, alas!” A similar inscription was discovered in Palestine in 1899. The monument apparently was to a British woman, originally a slave, but freed and married by Barates, a native of Palmyra - the Tadmor in the Wilderness built by Solomon in the Syrian Desert, and known in Roman days as Hadrianopolis, a great centre of commerce. This monument furnishes evidence of the commercial importance of Roman South Shields. Barates was probably a merchant, attracted to the town by trade during the period of its greatest importance, the end of the second or beginning of the third century.



Another interesting monument contained finely sculptured figure clad in a toga, and reclining upon a couch. The inscription is perfect, with the exception of three or four letters, and shows that it was erected by Numerianus, a horseman of the First Ala of Asturians - which garrisoned Condercum (Benwell, near Newcastle), to the memory of Victor the Moor, his freedman, who died at the age of 20, and whose master "affectionately followed his former servant to the grave." It is possible that this kindly master had sent his servant Victor to Shields for the benefit of the sea air in his last illness.



MEMORIAL TO VICTOR THE MOOR.

Altars to several of the Roman gods were found. The oldest, certainly not later than the second century, is dedicated to Esculapius, the god of physicians. Another was dedicated to Mars, the god of war, and a third to “Dea Brigantiæ,” the goddess of the Brigantes, an illustration of the way in which the Romans assimilated the gods of the nations they conquered. A similar example is afforded by another very interesting find, a bronze patera, or dish, on which the offerings to the gods were presented. It was of late first, or early second century workmanship, and was dedicated to Apollo Anextiomarus the British sun god. A wealth of other relics of Roman occupation unearthed during the excavations form the chief treasure of the Borough Museum. They include a practically complete series of coins of gold, silver or brass, of every ruler during the Roman occupation of Shields, from Claudius (A.D. 41-45), to Arcadius and Honorius (A.D. 395-423). The more notable finds included a “tribute penny,” the denarius of Tiberius referred to by our Lord (Matthew XXII, 21), and a fine brass of Constantine the Usurper.

Many objects of art were found in and around the station, including a fine torso of Apollo, a bronze figure supposed to represent Jupiter, and admirably modelled statuettes of Venus, suggesting that the Roman town, like the Shields of to-day, had its colony of artists. There are many good examples of enamelled work, curiously wrought rings and other articles of ladies jewellery, including jet ornaments. A large collection of Roman pottery was obtained, varying from fine specimens of the ornamented Samian ware to a coarse brown ware

resembling that still used by country people. Bricks and tiles were found in abundance, amongst the latter one which in its plastic state had been used as the “slate” of some tavern since it records that a certain soldier “owes for a pint.”



GRAFFITI; RECORDING A PUBLIC-HOUSE SCORE.

The collection is also rich in examples of metal work, perhaps the finest an engraved cheek piece of a bronze helmet. There are several fragments of bronze and iron chain armour, swords, axes and spear heads, and an almost complete set of bronze buckles and harness ornaments for horses, not unlike those which form the pride of the present-day carter. A remarkable variety of bronze and iron work was found, including a trones or steel yard, such as was used by butchers until quite recent times, bronze lamps, skillets and other household

utensils, and not least interesting, a child's top, made of hard bone and painted green.

In the later years of Roman rule, the station was apparently frequently attacked from the sea by the Scandinavian Vikings down to the final withdrawal of the Roman forces from Britain early in the fifth century. The Roman occupation of Shields thus lasted about 330 years. It is probable that during the latter part of this occupation Christianity was introduced into this country, since a Bishop of York is recorded as present at the Council of Arles in A.D. 314. But beyond the great military works and highways constructed throughout the district, the Roman occupation on Tyneside, as elsewhere in Britain, left few permanent effects. The native Britons were neither exterminated nor driven out by the conquerors. They continued to dwell in their own country, retained their individuality and language and to a large extent their old customs. They remained essentially British, "less modified by Roman influences than the inhabitants of the other provinces of the Empire."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PAGAN INVASION.

The centuries of prosperity and security under Roman rule seems to have sapped the old war-like spirit of the Britons. They were unable to resist the incursions of the Picts, who followed hot upon the heels of the retreating Roman garrisons. Guorteryn or Vortigern, the British chieftain, appealed for aid to the Roman general Actius in Gaul, but the latter was too busy trying to stem the invasions of Attila the Hun to spare any troops for the defence of Britain. Vortigern, turning from King Log to King Stork, invited Hengist and Horsa, the earldormen of the Saxons, who inhabited the German coast between the Elbe and the Weser, to come to his help. They came over in their war cyuls or keels accompanied or followed by their kinsmen the Angles and Jutes, and after beating back the Picts, conquered or drove out the Britons also, except in Cumberland, Wales and Cornwall, and settled down in the country themselves. The new invaders were Low-German tribes of the Gothic or Teutonic branch of the Aryan race, who had never come under Roman rule or influence. They were pagans, and introduced the worship of their own heathen deities - Tiu, Woden, Thor, and Frigga, whose names are still preserved in our Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The Anglo-Saxon conquest of Britain, with the exceptions just named, was completed by about the middle of the fifth

century - within a generation The Saxons after the departure of the Romans. settled in the south and south-east, and the Angles along the east and north-east coast, which thus became the original Angleland, or England.

At first the new settlers were a mere collection of independent clans or tribes, sometimes uniting in a loose confederacy for attack or defence against the common enemy, and at other times warring against each other. Almost a century after their settlement here, there arose the first super - chief, Ida, who had married a British Princess Bebba, and named his seat Bebbanburgh (Bamburgh) for her. He welded the scattered tribes inhabiting Northumberland, and perhaps Durham also, into the kingdom of Bryneich or Bernicia with Bamburgh as its capital. About the same period the tribes to the south as far as the Humber were consolidated in the kingdom of Deifr or Deira with its capital at Eoforure or York. Ida's grandson, Ethelfrith, united the two kingdoms under the name of Northumbria, and by defeating the Scottish King Aidan in 603, extended its boundaries northwards to the Forth. His son, Oswald, exiled to Iona, the outpost of the Western or Celtic Church, embraced Christianity and, after defeating in 635, at Heavenfield, near Hexham, the heathen who had conquered his father, he invited Aidan, a monk of Iona to re-convert Northumbria. Aidan came and was made bishop of Lindisfarne.

Oswald appears to have had one of his royal seats at South Shields, or at any rate to have resided there occasionally, for according to monkish tradition his son Oswin was born at Caer Urfa. Leland, the sixteenth

century antiquary, thrice records this, once in the definite statement that the monks of Tynemouth reported that "King Oswin was born in a certain fortress, anciently called Burgh, the foundations of which in parts still remain on the south side of the water of Tyne, near Southe Sheles in territory which now belongs to the Prior of Durham." Since the Anglian strongholds were built of wood it is not surprising to find few traces of this seventh century South Shields. Dr. Hoopell believed that a curious stone table - an upright pillar with a large flat stone laid across it - found above the remains of the Roman station was a sacrificial altar of the Angles.



SAXON ARGON OR JAVELIN.

A few scattered relics of the Anglian occupation have been found - a heavy javelin or argon, with long iron shaft, and deeply barbed point, discovered during the excavation of the Roman station, an Anglian rock grave at East Boldon, and a fine bronze axe-head at Whitehill Point.

It is practically certain that one of the earliest Christian Churches in the north was established in South Shields. Oswin gave "the land of one family," that is about 15 acres, for the erection of a Church in Shields. This donation probably represents the origin of St. Hild's glebe. At St. Aidan's desire the Princess Hild, granddaughter of Ella of Deira and a near relative of King Oswin, established on this church land a small religious

house. As she, with a few companions, remained for a year in this convent before going to Hartlepool, where we know she settled in 649, the foundation of the first South Shields Church may be dated about 647-8, or some thirty years before the establishment of the more famous monastery of Jarrow. Bede records how St. Cuthbert in his youth and before the death (in 651) of St. Aidan, dwelt in a cell near the mouth of the Tyne, and how, when some monks were bringing ships laden with timber up the river to the monastery on the south side of the Tyne, they were blown out to sea by an adverse wind, but were saved from destruction by young Cuthbert's prayers, the wind miraculously changing and driving the ships back to shore.

St. Hild did not remain long at Hartlepool but proceeded to take charge of the monastery built by King Oswin at Streonshalh, or Whitby, over which she ruled until her death in A.D. 680. Here was held in 664 the historic Synod, which, following Oswin's lead, decided in favour of the Roman as against the Irish or Ionian observance of Easter. Thereupon the Northumbrian priests and monks of the school of Aidan withdrew to Iona, and Wilfred, the champion of the Roman cause, became Bishop of York, his diocese including all Northumbria to the Forth.

Oswin, the greatest of the Northumbrian Kings, died in 670. His successor Egfrid was also a liberal friend of the Church, and endowed with forty hides of land (between 4,000 and 5,000 acres), including the modern townships of Harton and Westoe, the monastery founded

at Jarrow by Ceolfrid, the friend of Benedict Biscop, and dedicated in the presence of the King in A.D. 685. It was to this - then new - monastery of St. Peter and Paul, erected on the site of the Roman buildings overlooking the mouth of the Don, that the seven years old boy Beada or Bede was sent to be educated, and here he lived for fifty years his busy studious life. Here he taught, wrote the earliest of our English histories both secular and ecclesiastical, and made his translation into English of the Gospel of St. John. Here he died, in mid-Lent of A.D. 735, the "first among English scholars, first among English theologians, first among English historians," as Green styles him.

Within a century of his death the Kingdom of Northumbria disappeared. Its thegns submitted to Echberht or Egbert of Wessex, who thus became in 829, in fact if not in name, the first King of England. It is interesting to note that while Roman rule left little impress upon the language, the laws, or the customs of the people, the Anglo-Saxon invasion brought in its train the English language of to-day and left its lasting impress on our national life and social polity.

The modern name of the town, Shields, and that of the eminence on which the Roman station stood - the Lawe, are both of Anglian origin. The late R. O. Heslop, the author of *Northumbrian Words*, said that in no part of the country is the impress of the Anglian tongue and Anglian customs more marked than in, and around South Shields, where "the folkspeech to-day is English in origin, probably affected in its vocalization by subsequent

Danish invasion, but inherently and essentially English or English in the original signification of the term.” Teutonic laws, customs and language replaced the British. Anglian institutions dominate our modern systems of government and jurisprudence. In the Folkmotes, or assemblies of the chief men of the village, we have the prototype of our Town and District Councils; in their Shiremotes, of our County Councils, whose meeting-places are still called Moot Halls; and in their Witenagemote or meeting of the wise, the germ of our national Parliament. They also established the principle of trial by jury. The only thing that was not materially modified was the land system. The Angles, like the Britons, adopted communal ownership of land, each family being assigned sufficient arable land to produce the corn required for its sustenance.

The Anglo-Saxon rule was temporarily overthrown by another invasion of heathen sea-rovers, the Norsemen or Danes, from the old home of the Angles and Saxons and the Norwegian Fiords. In their war dragons or long ships they entered the Tyne A.D. 787, and again in A.D. 794, when according to the Saxon Chronicle, they plundered the monastery at Done Mouth (Jarrow) not without the loss of some of their leaders and the wreck in a storm of part of their fleet, tradition says upon the Herd sands. Another raid, recorded in the Cotton MSS. preserved in the British Museum, was made in 865 under Hinguar and Hubba, when Tynemouth was sacked and the “Virgins of the Nunnery of St. Hild” - presumably those of South Shields, not of Hartlepool as some historians have it - who had taken refuge in the Priory there were massacred,

or as the Chronicler has it “translated by martyrdom to heaven.”

An expedition in force arrived in A.D. 875, when Halfdene, the Danish Drake, entered the Tyne with a large fleet, and established his winter quarters on an island off "Tonemouth." Probably this was the mouth of the Don - Jarrow Slake, and the island which Halfdene made his winter quarters was Shields Lawe. This is corroborated by the statement of Hutchinson the historian of Durham, that the Danes wintered in Jarrow Slake, and that their forces were so large that they had to repair the old Roman Road, the Wrekendyke, in order to victual their camp. Halfdene conquered the whole of Deira and the southern part of Bernicia and settled in the land with his followers, but the Danish occupation of this part of the coast was not general or of long continuance. The Danish termination “by” is hardly found north of Yorkshire.

The Danes were driven out of Durham about 883 as the result, the Monkish Chronicler claims, of the special interposition of St. Cuthbert. The Saint appeared in a vision to Eadred the Abbot of Carlisle, and informed him that Guthred, the son of the late Anglian leader Hardacnut, was held in captivity by the Danes. Eadred was directed to find him, redeem him from slavery, and conduct him to Oswigedun (the hill of Oswin, probably the Lawe at South Shields, where Oswin was born), and there invest him with the royal insignia as King of Northumbria. This was done. Guthred attacked and completely defeated the Danes, and Shields with the rest

of Durham came again under Anglian rule. Guthred, in gratitude for his release and victory, and with the assent of the people, for the land was common property, bestowed on the Church of God and St. Cuthbert the whole of Werehele, or as the records of the Church put it the whole territory between the “Weor” and the “Tyn.” King Alfred, of burnt cakes fame, as Guthred's over-lord confirmed the grant, and added to it the privilege of 37 days sanctuary in whatsoever Church the remains of St. Cuthbert should rest, for persons accused of crime. The great bronze knocker on the main door of Durham Cathedral is a relic of this privilege of sanctuary, which attached to the Cathedral for centuries. Other donations prior to the Conquest added to the domain of the Church all the land between the “Teys” and the “Weor,” in other words the remainder of the County of Durham.



## CHAPTER V.

### THE DOMAIN OF THE CHURCH.

IT is probably due to this ownership of the land by the Church, rather than to the commonly alleged reason, that the County had been utterly laid waste by the Conqueror in his march against the Northumbrian rebels in 1069-70, that no records of Durham land-holdings appear in Domesday-book. A full list appeared in the Boldon Buke or Survey of the Bishopric lands compiled in 1183. The Church claimed that the grant to St. Cuthbert included Royal privileges over the whole County. In virtue of these the Bishops of Durham exercised the powers of temporal princes, or rather of Counts Palatine, within the County. The Bishop was entitled to all fines, forfeitures and deodands (penalties imposed on animals or articles which had caused the death of any person), to all Royal fish (whales, sturgeon, etc.), and to flotsam and jetsam and wreckage cast up on the coasts of the County. The Bishop levied taxes and raised troops. Down to quite recent times the leases of Church lands in the County contained a clause requiring the leaseholder to serve with jack and spear for thirty days when called upon in defence of the Church or its possessions. This obligation was frequently urged by the Halliwerfolk as absolving them from military service beyond the Tyne or the Tees. The Judges of Assize sitting in the County acted under the Bishop's commission, and he presided in person at the opening of

the Assizes. He appointed magistrates, had his own Attorney and Solicitor General - officials still existing in the Palatinate, and his own Court of Chancery, which also continues to this day. Offences were indicted as against "the peace of the Bishop," instead of the "peace of the King," and writs ran in the Bishop's name. These Palatinate powers were surrendered to the Crown in 1836, and by virtue of that surrender one of the minor titles of the King is "Count Palatine of Durham and Sadberge."

The area of South Shields Borough formed part of the endowment which Bishop William Carilef gave in 1082 to the monastery he founded at Durham. Thenceforward it is chiefly to the records of the Prior and Convent of Durham that we have to look for the history of the vill or town, which had already attained sufficient importance as a fishing and shipping port to arouse the jealousy of Newcastle. Soon after the Conquest, the latter town claimed a monopoly of the trade and navigation of the Tyne, and sought to prevent the discharge of ships or the landing of fish on the south bank of the river. This claim was promptly challenged by the Bishop, who adduced in evidence a list of twenty fisheries on the southern foreshore of the Tyne, of which at least two - St. Hildeyare and Ebbyare - were in Westoe and six in Jarrow - probably in the Slake. The Bishop, by an inquisition held in 1099 or 1100, established his claim to "one moiety of the water of Tyne on the south side." One moiety on the north side belonged to the Earl and County of Northumberland, yet so that the middle of the river remained free and common to ships going to moor on

either side. A Charter of Henry I. to Bishop Flambard, confirming this finding, stated that the Northumbrians had falsely claimed a right of hunting in the Bishop's forests, and to have yearly therefrom a cartload of firewood for a penny, and the largest tree in the woods for shipbuilding for a piece of silver.

Confirmatory Charters were granted to the Bishops of Durham by each succeeding sovereign - except Richard the Lionhearted - down to John. The latter's Charter is dated February 2nd, 1204, eight years before he granted to Newcastle letters patent to be a Corporation and to hold the town in fee farm at a rent of one hundred pounds per annum - the grant upon which Newcastle subsequently based its claim to monopolize the trade of the river. The Convent's title to South Shields was confirmed as the result of an enquiry held in 1228, which incidentally showed that the town must have been in existence for some time, since the Prior had acquired the right to take timber from Hayning Forest for the repair of his Manor House at Westoe, to which doubtless the Reverend Brethren of Durham resorted for the benefit of sea air. Indeed, in their centuries - long dispute with Newcastle the Prior and Convent always maintained that "from time immemorial a town with bakers and brewers had existed at 'South Sheles'."

The earliest mention of South Shields by its modern name occurs in the Melsamby Buke, a rent roll of the Prior and Convent compiled in 1235. The book itself has disappeared, but this particular extract is quoted frequently in the monastic records. Under the heading

“South Scheles” is recorded by name 24 tenants holding divers tofts (small holdings of arable land) and tenements. William, son of Roger, held a tavern on lease at the rent of one mark (13s. 4d.). Already, apparently, the town enjoyed a considerable trade, for in 1256 Newcastle indicted the Prior of Durham and his men before the judges of Assize for founding “a large ville” in the port of Tyne with 27 houses, two bakeries, and four breweries, at which they baked bread and brewed beer for sale to strangers, and also that the men of “Suthcheles” sold their fish at home wholesale, thus “regrating and fore-stalling the market at Newcastle.” A complacent Northumberland jury found in favour of the claims at Newcastle. Possibly the Prior was not represented, since he and his successors consistently claimed that the King's Judges had no jurisdiction in matters affecting the possessions and privileges of the Church of Durham.

A quarter of a century later a Newcastle jury presented as a trespass that the Prior of Tynemouth had built a town on the north bank of the Tyne, and the Prior of Durham another on the south bank of the Tyne at “Seles,” where no town ought to be except lodges only in which fishermen might abide; that fish was sold at Shields instead of Newcastle, where it would pay toll to the burgesses; and that the Prior of Durham had made a brewery at Shields, and had ships there where only rowing boats should be. Newcastle appears to have obtained judgment in its favour, but this was reversed in 1293, under curious circumstances. By the Statute of Gloucester of that year, all prelates and peers who claimed any franchise under Royal Charter, were

required to prove their claim before the King's judges. Bishop Bec refused, whereupon the Sheriff of Northumberland seized the Bishop's Franchise in the name of the King. Bec appealed to the Privy Council, asserting that the Bishops of Durham had, "time out of mind, enjoyed and exercised Royal rights and privileges." The King and Council decided that the seizure was wrongfully made, and fully restored all the privileges of the Palatinate.

Bishop Hatfield in the middle of the fourteenth century directed the thunders of the Church against persons violating the liberties of St. Cuthbert and the Prior and Convent of Durham by hindering boats from landing and selling their fish at South Shields and compelling them to go to Newcastle, whereby the Churches of Durham and Jarrow lost the tithes of fish. This brought the Mayor and Burgesses of Newcastle to reason, and by an agreement with Prior Fossour in March, 1353, they "acknowledged and confessed expressly that the fishermen of South Scheles, with their boats, were free to go to sea to fish, and to return freely with the fish, and to land and sell it at South Scheles, without any interference, provided that they would bring the remainder of the fish, after satisfying the home market, to Newcastle, and there freely sell it, without molestation or disturbance."

The attacks of Newcastle on the trade of the Borough appear to have been revived early in the fifteenth century, when the Burgesses lodged an indictment, claiming that by ancient Charter, no vessels ought to load or discharge

in the river except at Newcastle; and no market ought to be held within a radius of twelve miles except in Newcastle, whereas one was held at South Shields. Newcastle claimed the right of towage over (i.e., the right of passage for the trackers who towed ships by hand) and anchorage on the lands of the Prior at South Shields. The Burgesses complained that the Prior had built at Shields "a town where no town should be" and that the inhabitants of that town encroached on the King's rights; that the Prior claimed wrecks and deodands which belonged to the King, and maintained fishers, bakers and brewers at South Shields against the rights of Newcastle; and had at that town great ships where he ought only to have boats.

The Prior's reply constitutes an "Abstract of title" to his possessions and to the town of South Shields. It cites the grant in 883 to St. Cuthbert and the Church of Durham of the whole of the land between the "Weor and the Tyn," and later of all the land between the "Teys" and the "Weor" together with Royal liberties over all the Halliwerfolk between Teys and the Tyn. It alleges a series of confirmations of these grants and liberties by "the Noble Kings of England" from the Conqueror to John, and denies the right of the King's Justices Itinerary to hold any inquisition against the liberties of St. Cuthbert and the Church of Durham. Moreover as John's Charter of Confirmation of the possessions and liberties of the Church of Durham was granted in the fifth year of his reign, and the grant to the Mayor and Community of Newcastle not until the 14th, the latter could not prejudice the older and prior grants to the Church of

Durham. King John, when he made his grant to Newcastle, was “not seized of any parcel of land where is the vill of South Shields nor of that part of the water of Tyn which pertained to the liberties of St. Cuthbert,” therefore he could not have granted any rights over them, “for it must not be thought that so noble a King gave that which he had not in his possession.”

As to port rights, the Prior and his tenants only loaded and discharged within the port their own proper goods, brought to the town of South Shields in ships and boats for their own use, and that of the Monastery of Durham, as it was lawful for them to do. As to Newcastle's claim to an exclusive right of market within a twelve miles radius, by law the distance between market and market ought to be six miles and a half; Newcastle's claim was therefore invalid, according to the common law and custom of the Kingdom. As to towage and anchorage, the Prior denied any right or custom of sailors to trespass upon his or his tenants' lands or to damage their green crops and herbage. As to the “town where no town should be” the Prior's predecessors “before the time of memory” built on their own proper ground the vill of South Sheles as was lawful for them to do, and from time immemorial he and his predecessors had in that vill bakers and brewers, who freely sold bread and ale to whomsoever wished to buy, to the great advantage of those navigating there. He denied the allegation that there should be at South Shields “no ships but only boats and cibles with eight or ten oars at the most.” Apparently this comprehensive reply settled the matter as the Prior and

Convent's rights were not again challenged down to the time they were dispossessed of their lands by Henry VIII.

These disputes afford circumstantial evidence of the growing prosperity of Shields as a shipping and fishing community. The Conventual records yield more. The Shields brewery, which, judging from the frequency of Newcastle's indictments, evidently did a good shipping business, was let in 1296 for twenty shillings per annum. There is mention of a herring-house belonging to Jarrow in 1299, in which year the Convent of Durham paid the large sum of £12 17s. for four hundred dogdrave (dried cod), eight thousand white herrings and thirteen lasts of herrings from the local fisheries. During the fourteenth century nearly a fourth of the entire revenue of Jarrow was derived from tithes on fish landed at Shields. One of the local fisheries, called Hildeyare, apparently belonged to St. Hild's Church; the produce thereof figures in the Church accounts as "Sanctehylde fish." The mill belonged to the Prior and Convent and the tenants were bound to grind their corn thereat. Its site is defined by the local place-name of the Mill Dam. There was also a market in the town at least as early as the thirteenth century.

Westoe and Harton were the agricultural parts of the Borough. The Monks apparently were good landlords and followed a system of land tenure which many farmers would welcome to-day. Only two freeholds, both in Westoe township, are mentioned in the Conventual Records - one of 30 acres with toft (farmstead) and croft (enclosure for the safe keeping of cattle at night) and

common pasture - the other a messuage or dwelling-house and 40 acres. Both were held by military service, on the payment of a free rent of 16s. and 5s. 4d. respectively. Most of the land, however, was held on customary tenure, which was something like the modern copyhold. The tenant held for life, and his widow and heirs after him. Only when there was "no one of the blood" of the tenant to succeed was the holding let to a fresh tenant. Each heir or tenant on entering upon a holding paid a fine, which, like the annual rental, was assessed by a Jury of his fellow tenants.

A third class of tenants were the neifs or Bondagers who held their land "at the will of the Lord" and could not leave the Vill without his permission. In other words, they were Serfs, rendering the chief part of their rental in the form "Dargs" or daysworks on the demesne lands of the Prior and Convent, or otherwise riding on the Prior's messages, etc. While employed on such work they were entitled to an allowance of food called a "corrody" - hence the localism "crowdy" for a hastily prepared kind of porridge. The neif and his family could not marry without the Prior's permission and a fine called "Merchet" was imposed on the marriage of a neif's daughter.

The recorded size of the holdings ranged from 5 to 48 acres but this referred only to the arable land, which was divided into "rigges," that is, the different sheaths or holdings were separated by balks or ridges of earth or by boundary stones, any interference with which was severely punished. The grazing land was held in

common. Each tenant was entitled to graze a certain number of cattle or sheep on the common land, or to run so many swine in the forests. A shepherd and swineherd were employed to look after the livestock, each having a cottage and small holding, with right of common pasture, in payment for his services. There was a pinder for the protection of the crops and arable land. His duty was to impound all stray animals in the "pinfold." That at Harton still exists, now as the District Councils storeyard. There was also a communal carpenter, wheelwright and smith, each with small holding. The Vill, indeed, was largely self-dependent, supplying most of its requirements from within its own borders, and having a surplus to dispose of in the public market.

## CHAPTER VI.

### EARLY LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

THE municipal life of the community centred round the Manor House at Westoe, where three times a year was held the Halmote Court. This was a democratic and semi-representative system of local government. The Prior of Durham occasionally presided in person. Usually, however, the Court consisted of the Seneschal or Steward of the Convent, the Terrar or Land Agent, and the Bursar or Treasurer, assisted by a jury of four or five of the tenants of the Vill. The Court had a wide range of duties, now distributed between the Town Council, the Bench of Magistrates and the County Court, with some functions to-day discharged by the Probate and Chancery Divisions of the High Court. It decided disputed successions to the holdings, the jury fixing the fair rental to be paid by new tenants. It adjusted the boundaries of the "rigs" of arable land, enforced the discharge of the communal duties rendered by the tenants - the cleansing and fencing of wells and water courses, the repairs of highways and bridges and of the Mill Dam, etc.

It prohibited the game of football, probably because it interfered with the practice of archery on the Butts, which lay on the east side of what is now Mile End Road, then the highway leading from the Bishop's ferry at Monkwearmouth to the Convent's ferry at Shields. The road at that day passed straight over the face of the hill down to the ferry, where is now the Coble landing,

somewhat eastward of the direct ferry of to-day. The use of the ferry was also controlled by the Court, which prohibited the carrying of fish to the north side until the wants of the Bishop and Prior and the dwellers between the Tyne and Tees had been satisfied. On the other hand the bringing of fish from North Shields was prohibited, so long as the South Shields fishermen had any to sell.

The Court appointed ale tasters and bread weighers, to ensure correct weight and measure and good quality for the townsfolk. It was also an anti-profiteering tribunal. Innkeepers were fined for selling beer above the fixed price of a penny halfpenny the tankard or for vending inferior liquor or refusing to sell for consumption off the premises. It administered wills, appointed guardians for orphan children, licensed the marriage of neifs, punished runaway servants, enforced the payment of debts, sometimes even by outlawing the debtor, imposed penalties for assaults, brawling and theft, trespass in growing crops, poaching in the game preserves of the Prior or Convent - Shields Heugh was one of their rabbit-warrens - for carrying on objectionable trades, such as the making of fish oil, and for sinking coal pits in cultivated land. From this it will be seen that the Shieldsmen of six or seven centuries ago possessed very considerable powers of self-government.

It was apparently under the rule of the Prior and Convent that South Shields grew into "a town of importance," which an entry in the earliest minute book of the Ancient Vestry of South Shields states to have occurred about the middle of the fifteenth century. That

probably coincides with the establishment of what was long a staple trade of the town, the manufacture of salt from sea water. By early in the following century this trade had attained such dimensions as to give the distinctive name of the Panns or West Panns to what is now the Holborn district of the town, in which it was chiefly carried on. The fifteenth century also marks the period when the shipping of the Tyne, and especially of Shields, experienced a great expansion, owing to the rapid development of the coal trade with London.

The rule of the Prior and Convent lasted until the surrender of the Monastery to Henry the Eighth in 1540. That merry monarch did not, in this instance, confiscate the possessions of the Church. He granted at least a considerable part of them for the endowment of the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral Church, to which he converted the ancient Monastery of Durham. His grant included "Symonsyde, Harton, Westoe, Southe Sheles," the great tithes of "Harton, Westow, Shieldhough," and the advowson of the Curacy of the "Chapelry of St. Hilde Juxte Shelles."

The new proprietors created no little perturbation amongst the Shields tenants, by substituting for the old customary life tenancies a system of leases for 21 years, subject to a fine of four years' rental at each renewal. A series of actions at law followed, and the matter was finally carried to the Council of the North, which, on August 17, 1577, directed that the tenants at will and the tenants claiming by tenant right should relinquish all claims to tenant right and take leases, but provided that

they should retain many of their old privileges. A tenant's widow was to enjoy the tenancy for life, if she chose, without payment of any fine. At her death the eldest son, or failing him any other son in order of succession, or failing sons the brother or nephew of the late tenant, had the right to succeed at the old rental, paying only three years' rent as fine. Only where there were no descendants or relatives within the prescribed limits, could the Dean and Chapter choose a new tenant, and the leases were only forfeitable for treason, rebellion, murder or felony.

The townsmen still retained their considerable powers of self-government, although the title of the governing body was changed from the Halmote Court to the Court Leete, while the number of jurymen was increased from four or five to twelve or fourteen. The Leete exercised an even wider range of powers than the Halmote, as is shown by an interesting code of bye-laws, drawn up in 1588, and confirmed and added to from time to time during the following four-score years.

Four honest men were to be chosen yearly as ale-cunners and bread weighers, who must once every week, or fourteen days at the most, hold assize of bread and drink. Any person warned by these officials that his or her weights and measures were deficient and failing to adjust them, was to be fined one mark ( $13/4$ ). Salt measurers were to be also appointed to try all measures by which salt was sold, by comparison with the brazen measure the cooper was appointed to keep, and to seal all measures passing the trial. Any person selling salt by an unsealed measure to be fined 10/- for each bowl sold; any

salt maker or dealer failing upon demand to deliver his bowl or vessel to be tried, would be fined 3/4, while if the measure was found unjust, the owner was fined 20/- for each offence and the measure either adjusted at his cost or destroyed.

The importance to which the shipping trade and the manufacture of salt had attained by that time is shown by the many bye-laws in reference to both. Staiths, quays or walls built on the foreshore were to have the fore wall next the river and the two side walls raised two feet higher than the surface of the staith to prevent ballast falling into the river. No coals, ballast or other matter to be discharged from ships, keels or boats except upon staiths and wharves approved for the purpose. Any staith owner who allowed his or her staith to fall into disrepair to the damage of their neighbours; and failed to repair it was to be fined 20/-, plus the damage as assessed by other neighbours.

Other bye-laws provided that no ashes or other rubbish from salt-pans, staiths or dwelling-houses, must be cast into or deposited where it might be washed into the river by any spate or Spring tide. No saltpan owner or other inhabitant on either side of the dam ("Panners" or "Fishers" as they were called in later days) must deposit any rubbish on the top of the bank without leaving a road three yards broad, spread level for people to pass, and any person casting ashes or rubbish upon his neighbours' ground must remove the same within 20 days. No person must encroach upon the High Street from the west end of the Panns to the east end of South Shields (that is from

the modern Tyne Dock to the foot of the Lawe), by building walls or excavations, so as to hinder the common passage either for horseman, footmen, sack or sea cart or "carryage." No inhabitant in the Sheeles or Panns must go or send their children or servants to take coals or cinders from the salt pans.

The Court exercised strict supervision over the food supplies of the Community. Millers were ordered to cover their horses' backs with a saddle or covering when delivering meal or flour - (which apparently was carried in sacks across the horses' back) so that the meal or flour be not damaged. Butchers were forbidden to "blow" (inflate with the breath) any meat, or to kill any bull which had not been baited. (The bull ring where this barbarous sport was carried out existed on the north-west side of the Market Place where the fish market is now held - until less than a century ago.) Alehouse keepers were forbidden to sell any ale or beer in time of Divine Service or keep any guest in the house above ten days without notifying the constables and the churchwardens. No person was to suffer any man's children or servants to drink or play cards, dice or other unlawful games in their house after 9 p.m.

The owners and farmers of the ferry boats, who had claimed a monopoly of the ferry traffic, were enjoined to ferry passengers across as soon as they presented themselves, instead of keeping them waiting, sometimes an hour, for a boatload, while the horse boats were to be moored always afloat, in readiness to convey horses, cattle and other goods over the river. The ferry men were

also charged under penalty not to bring any beggars or strangers to beg in the town, while the inhabitants were forbidden to entertain or take any sub-tenants, except they entered bond with surety that the sub-tenants would not be chargeable to the town - an outcome of the Poor Law Act of Elizabeth, which made each parish responsible for the maintenance of the poor resident therein, and also of the harsh vagrancy laws of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

There were also some interesting municipal enactments. Penalties - usually of a quarter mark (3s. 4d.) were directed against any man or woman refusing to "come to neighbourhood" (render their due services to the Commonwealth of the town, or to the Lords of the Leete); any person abusing, by word or deed, the bailiff, constable, or other officer while on the business of the King, the Lords of the Leete or the community; any person refusing upon request to assist the bailiff or other officer in the execution of his duty; any juryman repeating or discussing, except with his fellow jurymen, the business done by the jury; any person washing clothes so near a well as to be thought hurtful, or refusing when called upon to "dress," (cleanse and repair) the wells, or any man servant or woman servant hiring to two masters.

The Court inflicted smart fines for "forestalling the market" that is, by buying provisions before the townspeople could be served therewith; for killing unwholesome or insufficient meat; for failing to grind corn at the manorial mill - an obligation which the jury held did not rest upon the tenants of Shields and Panns,

but only on those of Westoe and Harton. With even-handed justice the millers and for were mulcted for “ill grinding corn,” retaining for an undue time corn sent to be ground; also for an undue use of “the miller's thumb,” that is, keeping for their own use part of the corn sent to be ground. Tenants were fined for allowing the footpath leading along the Mill Dam to the church to become dangerous and for failing to repair the bridge over the “clower” (sluice) at Shields mills. Heavy fines - no less than £4 in one case were imposed for neglecting to reopen “an usual way from the Deane Bridge along to the Lay Gate and soe to the new Close Gate”; for digging up a footpath from the Chapel Close; for failing to keep highways and hedges in repair; for leaving dangerous holes unfenced; for failing to cleanse the highways in front of their dwellings, or permitting their “sinckes” to overflow the highways, and for permitting puddles of mire and water in front of their houses.

By the end of the sixteenth century South Shields had grown into importance. Its shipping had become so prosperous as again to arouse the opposition of Newcastle. Its trade and commerce already attracted merchants and adventurers from many parts. Its system of local government had been extended by the creation of the Ancient Vestry or four and twenty of St. Hild's, which for over two centuries constituted the main instrument of municipal administration, controlling poor relief, policing and cleansing the town, etc. The “four and twenty” which still exists, although its functions are now confined to church affairs, was probably established in compliance with the first Poor Law - the famous 43rd

Elizabeth cap. 2 (1601) which required the appointment of overseers in every parish to “set on work” (1) the children of parents unable to keep and maintain them and (2) such persons who having no means to maintain themselves used no ordinary and daily trade of life to get their living by; and also to relieve the lame, old and blind, and such persons as were poor and not able to work.

The Church continued to exercise a sharp oversight of the morals and habits of the townsfolk. Its principal weapon at this period was the Bishop's Consistory Court at Durham, whose records contain some curious entries of South Shields cases. In January, 1619, Rowland Coulthard, Thomas Bowrie, Robert Grey and William Hutchinson were indicted for disgracefully riding a stang, publishing “that one Elizabeth Muschamp had beat her husband and broken his head.” The evidence was very contradictory and the Court found both parties to blame, all the four defendants along with Muschamp and his wife were ordered to do penance in their parish church. “Riding the stang” was a sort of lynch law, occasionally resorted to even in the nineteenth century, for the punishment of wife- or husband-beaters. A man was carried astride of a stang or pole through the village, repeating in rhyme the charges against the accused.

Although, as Police Court records show, a belief in witchcraft lingered locally until almost within what was probably the last living memory, prosecution for witchcraft is recorded in October, 1621, when Catherine Richardson of South Shields was indicted as a common user of sorcery and witchcraft, by bewitching the children

of William Green, farmer, and Robert Joplin, tailor. Her defence was that she had simply prescribed a remedy compounded of herbs for their ailments. The Court forbade her to use spells, or minister to any sick person and ordered her to confess her folly in the parish church. Flogging round the market place at the tail of a cart was the punishment ordered in 1634 upon four men for “abusing the constable and watch.” Catherine Meaburne for calling Thomas Hopper a “Heretick and Hell ratchet” was ordered to confess her offence before the congregation in St. Hild’s church on three successive Sundays. A like punishment with a fine of a hundred marks (£66 13s. 4d.), subsequently commuted to forty shillings, was imposed upon Andrew Whitfield who had incurred sentence of excommunication by making a written order for the distribution of the goods of Elizabeth Atkinsone, deceased, before administration had been granted. His defence was that he had only acted at the request of the Executors.

## CHAPTER VII.

### WARS AND COMMOTIONS.

SHIELDS, where the old Faith retained many adherents, seems to have been active in the Rebellion headed by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland against Elizabeth and in favour of the restoration of the Catholic religion in 1569. The rebels rallied at Durham Cathedral, where the Protestant bible and prayer book were torn to pieces and Mass said before the High Altar. The rebellion was speedily and savagely suppressed. Of five Harton men who joined the rising two were executed, and the Act of Attainder included the name of Cuthbert Fenwicke, gent, late of South Shields. The town was not unnaturally suspect during those dangerous times and frequent mentions of Shields occur in the reports of the army of spies organized by Walsingham, Elizabeth's Secretary of State. In 1585, when the Armada was mobilizing in the Tagus, the landing at Shields from Dieppe of "one Brown alias Wawton, a dangerous Papist," was reported to Walsingham and two years later William Lawson of South Shields, and Brandling "a mariner whom he secretly harboureth" are reported amongst those "who hear and bring all advertisements through this part of England and Scotland to and from the traitorous Papists on this side and beyond the Seas."

South Shields as an important seaport naturally figured with some prominence in the Civil War. It was one of the first places Charles I. sought to secure and

fortify when his illegal exaction of ship money had driven the country to the verge of rebellion. In 1636, on the report of the Bishop of Durham, the Mayor of Newcastle and the Sheriffs of Durham and Northumberland, the Privy Council ordered a blockhouse to be built on the north side of the harbour mouth (probably the precursor of Clifford's Fort) while two years later, 1,500 arms and 500 culvers (small cannon) were ordered to be sent to the Tyne. Sir Jacob Astley, Major General of the Forces in the north reported that both the North and South Shields presented difficulties in the erection of forts, and recommended that the defence of the port should be entrusted to the Navy, two of the King's ships to be stationed near the harbour mouth.

On the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642-3, William Cavendish, Earl (afterwards Marquis) of Newcastle, to whom the defence of the Tyne was entrusted, commandeered 600 foot and 100 horse from the trained bands of the Bishopric of Durham, and sent 300 men to South Shields to construct fortifications and trenches. He also forwarded six pieces of ordnance for the defence of the town. A strong fort, with walls nine feet high and surrounded by a ditch twelve feet broad and eleven feet deep, was constructed on the Lawe and armed with five of the guns. It was garrisoned by 70 musketeers and 30 pikemen. The other cannon apparently was mounted on the low ground where the oil tanks now stand, so as to sweep the entrance to the harbour. The Parliament retaliated by sending two of "the King's ships" to the mouth of the Tyne "to prevent the inconvenience that might happen by the fort there in the building." The port,

however, remained in Royalist hands, and was one of their principal means of communication with the Continent.

Early in March, 1644, the Scots under General Leslie besieged and captured Sunderland. The Marquis of Newcastle marched to attack them with 14,000 troops, who entrenched themselves on Boldon Hills. The Scots Army advanced from Sunderland and apparently occupied the Cleadon ridge but after two days inactivity the Royalist troops drew off towards Durham and after a skirmish with their rearguard the Scots returned to Sunderland. They were short of provisions, three of their store ships having been lost at sea, and two driven into the Tyne by storms and seized by the King's forces. The Scots consequently decided to attack South Shields. A hot assault was made on Friday, March 15, on the fort, which was defended by Captain Chapman, a native of the town. The attack was repulsed, but was renewed on the following day and again on Wednesday the 20th, when, after desperate fighting, the Scots captured the fort. The Royalists fled across the river to Tynemouth, having lost sixteen killed and a lieutenant and five men prisoners. Their ordnance, ammunition, and colours, also fell into the hands of the Scots. The Royalists claimed that 300 Scots were killed in the attacks on the fort but the victors only admitted seven casualties.

Three months later, Montrose, supported by Sir John Marley, the famous Mayor of Newcastle, attacked and recaptured the fort. The Parliamentary Governor, Captain Thomas Rutherford of Ranfertlie, was afterwards tried

and sentenced on a charge of having treacherously surrendered South Shields to the enemy. The Parliamentarians recaptured the town by aid of the Fleet. Ten ships of war entered the Tyne late in July to assist in the blockade of Newcastle, which was captured on October 19. The fall of Tynemouth Castle, shortly afterwards, virtually ended the Civil War in the north.

The War - as wars invariably do - brought loss and ruin to some Shieldsmen and great profit to others. The blockade of Newcastle had closed the port to trade for months. Fishing was stopped and the salt trade almost ruined by the dismantling of works by the Scots and the admission of untaxed Scotch salt. The earliest minute book of the ancient vestry of St. Hild's - for 1660-1 contains a significant list of "arrears" of assessment with such illuminating notes as "Tho. Ewbanke, whose estate is ruined and hee in prison," "Antho. Smith whose estate is ruined and hee absent," "George Harle whose pannels are in decay."

Many Shields tenants, too, were forced to buy their property twice over, so to speak. As we have seen, practically all the land was held on lease from the Dean and Chapter of Durham, the tenants enjoying a practically unquestioned right of renewal on payment of a fine of one year's improved value every seven years. The Commonwealth Government abolished the Dean and Chapter and offered their lands for sale. The Shields lease-holders, faced with the alternative of either buying their leaseholds from the Commonwealth Government or losing the properties they had erected thereon, petitioned

Parliament, asking that if they were compelled to buy their land the recognized right of renewal of their leases should be taken into account in fixing the price. The Committee on August 17, 1649, reported in favour of the tenants' claim, and the purchase price was fixed at ten years rental, afterwards reduced to eight years.

At the Restoration the Dean and Chapter, like the King, came into their own again. They refused to recognize the sales by the Commonwealth Government, but insisted that as no leases had been renewed since the commencement of the Civil War, the Shields property owners must either pay cumulative fines for the renewal of their leases or forfeit their holdings. The unfortunate Shieldsmen petitioned the King in 1661, and, as no satisfaction was obtained, a Chancery action was entered against the Dean and Chapter, which came on for hearing on May 3rd, 1664. In the course of the trial the Dean and Chapter agreed to renew lapsed leases on payment of four years' fine, but without any compensation for the purchase money paid to the Commonwealth Government. Lord Chancellor Clarendon thereupon dismissed the action, but without costs. Most of the tenants accepted the terms and retained their holdings. Thereafter the practice of automatically renewing leases on payment of one year's improved rent every seven years continued unbroken until the transfer of the Dean and Chapter estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1870. After the settlement of 1664 the old system of grazing and cultivating the land in common was further restricted. The nine tenants of Westoe. had, in 1618, divided the township into separate farms - the five

southern ones having the Deans and the four northern ones the Lay as their common pasture. The farm houses remained grouped together in what is now Westoe Village, and Dean Lane and Laygate respectively represented the accommodation roads to the farms and grazing grounds. In 1667-8 the Deans and the Lay were divided amongst the farmers and enclosed and an improved system of agriculture introduced. This left the common field running from Westoe to the site where the Municipal Buildings now stand and from the Sunderland high road to the sea, the only unenclosed part of the Borough.

The Restoration brought with it also a change in the tide of religious persecution. The Commonwealth Government deposed and imprisoned the curate of St. Hild's. The Royalist Government retaliated on the Dissenters. In August, 1661, Bess' "Sufferings of the Quakers" states, a large number of Friends were arrested at a meeting in the house of Robert Linton, a wealthy saltmaker, in West Pan Way, South Shields (now Laygate), by Major Graham, the Deputy Governor of Tynemouth Castle and "cast into nasty Holes there, where they lay a full month, and then turned them out, having, so far as appeared to them, neither Order, Authority or Warrant for any part of his proceedings." Linton's garden was used for many years as the burial-ground of the local Society of Friends. Robert Whitfield and Robert Wilkinson, Quakers, of South Shields, were excommunicated by the Consistory Court in 1663 for not attending their parish church. William Wilkinson of South Shields, in the same year, was indicted for refusing

to bury his father according to the rubric of the Church of England, but was pardoned upon submission. Hester Bell, a Quakeress and Elizabeth Davison an Anabaptist, both of South Shields, were a little later excommunicated for not having their children christened.

Three of the leading South Shields Baptists, Lewis Frost and Michael Coatsworth, joint owners of the Lay farm, and Cuthbert Coatsworth, were amongst those accused in 1664 by the “infamous scoundrel,” as Surtees called him, John Ellrington, of Blanchland, of participation in what was known as the Muggleswick plot. He alleged that the three named, together with Baptists from other parts of the north, had attended seditious meetings in Muggleswick Park, with a design to rise in rebellion against the Government, to destroy the Parliament which had passed the Act of Uniformity, and to murder all Bishops, Deans and Chapters, and Ministers of the Church, and pull down all churches. The announcement of the plot - afterwards proved to be false - created great alarm. The Bishop of Durham called out his trained bands, and many Baptists, including Lewis Frost, were apprehended. They lay at Durham for at least a month without trial, since on April 26 Sir Thomas Davison wrote the Bishop of Durham pressing for an information against the prisoners, that they might be brought to trial. Apparently none was forthcoming, for there is no record of any trial.

In February, 1666, Christopher Sanderson, of Eggleston Hall, another informer, reported “that the fanatics about Shields pray and hope for deliverance by

the Dutch and French.” The reference is to the war with Holland, Denmark, and France, during which Shields was again put in a state of defence. In July, 1666, the King's ship “Pembroke” left Shields harbour and, after a stiff fight, captured a Dutch man-'o-'war with 22 guns and well fitted out, killing 20 of her crew and taking 16 prisoners. In the following December the news that the Dutch Fleet under Van Tromp had entered the Thames, created great alarm in the north. The Earl of Carlisle was created Lord Lieutenant of the four northern counties, with headquarters at Newcastle, and hastened to Tynemouth to provide for the safety of the port. The South Shields tenants of the Dean and Chapter, reinforced by trained bands from other parts of the County Palatine, were called on active service under Ralph Sanderson. Fortunately the town escaped attack.

The local distress was aggravated by a severe attack of the Great Plague which ravaged London in 1665. There had been previous epidemics in South Shields in 1626 and 1637 but in 1665-6 the outbreak was of a much more serious character. In July, 1665, Quarter Sessions at Durham prohibited ships from London or Yarmouth, where the plague was bad, landing either grain or goods in the County Palatine. No one was to go aboard an arriving ship until the vessel had completed quarantine, and coal ships were to be loaded from the keels, without any person boarding or being allowed to land from them. The virulence of the plague at Shields and Sunderland was so great that collections were taken in the churches throughout the diocese for the relief of the sufferers and

the County Justices had to levy so high a rate as 5s. in the pound for the same purpose.

South Shields had its first taste of electioneering in 1675. Up to that time - except for three years during the Commonwealth - the County of Durham had been unrepresented in Parliament, owing to its peculiar status under the Bishop as Count Palatine. At the election of 1675 there were three candidates, John Tempest of the Isle, Thomas Vane of Raby Castle, and Sir James Clavering of Axwell. As the franchise was confined to the owners of freehold property worth forty shillings a year, very few Shieldsmen were entitled to vote, since nearly all the property in the town was leasehold. Only four voted - Henry Woofe, Richard Parke and John Chilton of South Shields, and Richard Carr of Westoe. Each candidate received two votes from South Shields. Tempest and Vane were elected. At the ensuing election, in February, 1679, only two votes were recorded from South Shields - those of the Reverend Stephen Bordley, curate of St. Hild's, and Richard Parke. In August the same year there were only three votes.

A pathetic memorial of the Civil War and the unfaith of Charles II. exists in St. Hilda's church-yard in the tombstone of Sir William Hamilton. He was the third son of the first Earl of Abercorn and served Charles I. for four years (1636-40) as resident at Rome. His salary of £1,200 a year was never paid. He fought for the King during the Civil War, accompanied Queen Henrietta Maria in her long exile on the Continent, and spent his fortune freely on her maintenance. Charles II., in March, 1660, gave

Hamilton a written acknowledgment of a debt of £4,150, but the obligation was ignored when the merry Monarch ascended the throne. At the Restoration Sir William sailed from Hamburg to South Shields, where his niece Margaret, the daughter of the second Earl of Abercorn, was married to Andrew Logan, gentleman of the family from whom Logan Terrace, derived its name. On the voyage the ship was in danger from a storm. Sir William vowed that if he reached land in safety the sun should never again shine upon him. He kept his vow by occupying a small semi-underground room in the rear of his niece's house, on the south side of what is now Wapping Street, westward of Comical Corner, until his death on June 8, 1681.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE eighteenth century witnessed a practically unbroken period of development in the Borough. The town was, by the standards of that day, highly prosperous when the century opened. It had its postal service and postmaster, who complained, in 1706, of an attempt by Sir Henry Liddell to deprive him of that office, which he held since the Revolution of 1688. The great growth in the export of coal, the increasing size of the ships employed, and the gradual shoaling up of the river, had perforce broken the embargo Newcastle had consistently imposed upon the discharge of ballast at Shields. Ballast quays were constructed and the artificial hills which formerly disfigured the town commenced to raise their heads. To the salt trade, which was still considerable, had been added the manufacture of glass, introduced by some noble Huguenots, and Isaac Cookson had founded the chemical industry by the establishment of the modest factory which gave its name to the Alum House Ham.

We can derive a faint idea of the contrast between South Shields of that day and of this, from the fact that Cookson's house, which occupied the site of the modern Ferry Hotel, had a beautiful garden sloping down to the river, where now is Cookson's Quay. Indeed, the Borough of the early eighteenth century bore little resemblance to the wilderness of bricks and mortar we know to-day. What is now the business centre of the town - the market

place, King Street, etc. was open fields, amid which stood isolated St. Hild's, a pretty little country church of antique design. The tide ebbed and flowed past the churchyard up the Mill Dam Gut as far as the Westoe Road of to-day. The Gut, bordered by bright green grass, was crossed where is now Waterloo Vale by stepping-stones, which formed the connecting links of a footpath running from St. Hilda's churchyard through Paradise the district south



ST. HILD'S IN 1760

*(drawn from an old plan of Green's Estate).*

of the Mill Dam Gut now occupied by the Gas Works and St. Hild's Colliery southward, to the Sunderland highway. Except the farmsteads at Westoe, and the houses of the well-to-do families in and around what we now know as Wellington Street, the town was confined to the long, narrow crooked street, which ran parallel with the river from the foot of the Lawe to Jarrow Slake. The summit

of the Lawe - the Bank Tops - was covered with wormwood scrub.

The ferry landing appears to have been removed early in the century from its original position near the Coble landing, westward to what is now Comical Corner, and at



the same time the high road which previously ran straight up the face of the cliff was diverted to the easier gradient

now known as the Long Bank. The abandoned portion of the road constituted one of the two or three pieces of freehold land in the Borough, and probably for that reason was chosen as the site of the old Scotch Church, built in 1718. The ferry, as affording the only means of crossing the river between Newcastle and the sea - except by small boats - was naturally closely guarded in times of national emergency. When the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715 threatened, Lord Scarborough, commanding the Royal Forces in the North, seized the ferry and removed the ferry boats lest the rebels should use them on their march south. All guns and arms on the ships lying in the harbour were also seized. Similar precautions were taken 30 years later when Lord Derwentwater headed the Northumberland rebels in the rising of the '45. Burrells regiment was then quartered in South Shields, and no fewer than 17 transports arrived in the harbour with troops.

East of the highway to Sunderland, the Westoe Common Field consisting of over 400 acres, was divided in 1715, by order of the Durham Court of Chancery, amongst the four tenants, Mary Eden, Robert Adamson, George Harle and Barbara Bentley. The Award making this division set out several private roads, including what was afterwards known as Jingling Gate Road from the high road to what is now Commercial Road, and the Bent House Road from the highway to the seashore. Incidentally contemporary documents state that Frenchman's Bay "has its name from a French ship which drove ashore there." In 1731 an Act of Parliament was obtained for repairing and amending the high road from

South Shields to Monkwearmouth which “was by reason of the deepness of the soil and the many carriages passing along become very ruinous and much out of repair.”

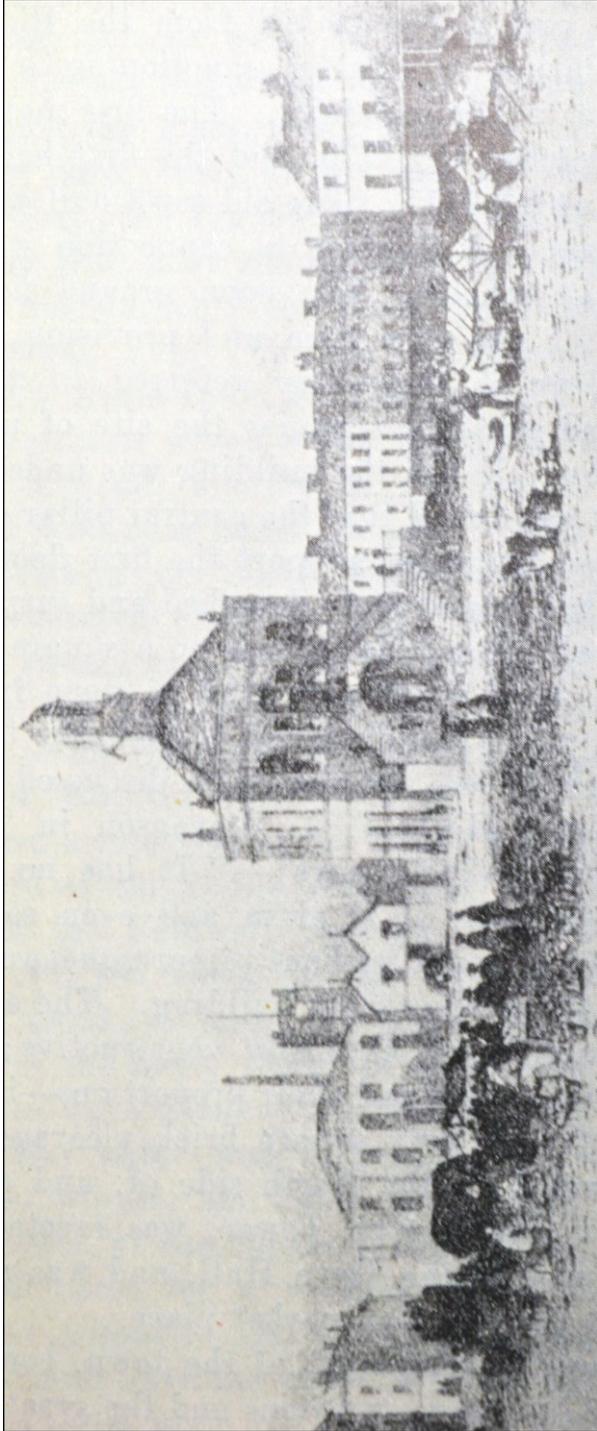
At the north-west corner of St. Hild’s churchyard a narrow wooden bridge across the Gut formed the line of demarcation between the “Fishers” as the inhabitants of the eastern part of the town were called and the “Panners” who occupied the western or Holborn district. On the western side of the wooden bridge the road divided. A steep narrow lane called the Newcastle Road followed the line of the Commercial Road of to-day, having on its east side the large stone mansion of the Green family, who held on lease a considerable part of the modern borough. The other branch ran westward on the line of East Holborn up Durham’s Bank past the Poor House, whose site is fixed by the landing of that name, and so to a bridge across the Dean Burn. From this point the road circled round Jarrow Slake, but was frequently impassable at high water and always in a storm. Travellers at these times had to proceed by Boldon Lane (the Hudson Street of to-day) and Harton Green Lane. From the bridge across the Dean Burn, a by-road called Cuthroat Lane ran south-east to the Sunderland highway at Westoe.

A bird’s eye view of the South Shields of that day is afforded by this quotation from the *Universal Magazine* of 1748. “South Sheeles, as it is commonly pronounced, on the south bank of the Tyne eight or nine miles (sic) from Monkwearmouth, is a large village in which are 200 pans for boiling sea water into salt, of which such large

quantities are made here as not only furnishes the City of London but all the towns between the Thames and the Tyne where there is water carriage. ... The river before this village is full of ships either to load salt or coals, which are brought from the steathes or loading places in barges or lighters or keels as they are called by the inhabitants on this coast, all of which greatly contribute to the trade and improvement of Shields, which on this account is well inhabited by the manufacturers of salt and several substantial Captains or Masters of ships and such tradesmen and artificers as are necessary and depend upon the said works and the sea service.”

The modern town may be said to date from the latter part of the 18th century. In 1768 the Dean and Chapter of Durham made a remarkably good bargain with the then curate of South Shields, the Reverend Samuel Dennis, by which, in return for an addition of £30 per annum to the stipend of himself and his successors, he transferred to the Dean and Chapter eight acres of St. Hilda's glebe land. Two acres and one perch of the eight acres was laid out as a market place. On the remainder of the land, let on forty years building leases, West King Street, East Thrift Street, Dean Street, West Street and Church Row were built. Modern incumbents of St. Hild's must lament the short-sightedness of their predecessor, who parted with property of such potential value for so miserable a mess of pottage.

The Dean and Chapter, in the Act of Parliament confirming the bargain, took power to hold markets



OLD TOWN HALL AND MARKET PLACE

and fairs, and also obtained from the Bishop, as Count Palatine, a Charter sanctioning a weekly market and two annual fairs. The first market was held on October 15, 1770, and the first half-yearly fair on June 24, 1771. The old town hall was built by the Dean and Chapter in connection with this development scheme. The open ground floor was intended for use as a corn and provision market. The building is frequently referred to as "the Cross" and possibly occupies the site of an older market cross. When the building was under repair in 1901, it was found that the central pillar did not, as had been supposed, support the first floor of the building, but was entirely detached and surmounted by a capital. The pillar stands on a square base of four steps, is of a different kind of stone from the remainder of the building and is probably the relic of an earlier Cross. Of the much discussed style of the old Town Hall, J. J. Stevenson in "House Architecture" (1880) says:-"It has no pretensions to elegance; it is plain and even somewhat clumsy, but it is not without picturesqueness and is an eminently commonsense building. The architecture is purely and naturally constructive; it has forgotten the orders and their proportions - it thinks for itself." An ugly square brick vicarage which formerly stood on the North side of, and at right angles with the Church Tower, was erected about the same time as the Town Hall, and was removed in 1862 to improve the market place.

The rapid development of the town, consequent upon these building operations and the great growth of the glass and chemical trades, soon outstripped its water supply, then derived exclusively from public and private

wells in various parts of the Borough. Of the former the principal were Caldwell, from which the glassworks drew their supply; the Beau, or Bore, Well at the foot of what is now Eldon Street, the Pigeon Well at the edge of the Mill Dam Gut, near the entrance to Oyston Street Tunnel, the Market Place Well, the Brewers Well in Waterloo Vale (its site is covered by the Mechanic's Arms Inn), St. Cuthbert's Well, Field House Well near where is now Baring Street, a well in Westoe Road, another at the Deans, and the Cobbler's Well near Bents' House. "The Company of Proprietors of South Shields Waterworks" was incorporated under an Act (28th, George III. Cap. 15) passed in 1788 for the supply of water to the town and neighbourhood, and to the shipping resorting to the Harbour. Five of the six proprietors named in the Act were brewers. The Company constructed a reservoir at the Deans for impounding the waters of the Deans Burn and its tributaries, and from the Caldwell Springs. The water was pumped into the Town through wooden pipes - the hollowed trunks of trees, the top of one fitted into the butt of the next. Some of these wooden water pipes were discovered within recent years in Dean Street. The water was distributed originally by barrels on wheels, and later by "pants" in the public streets, at the charge of a farthing per skeel (the local name for a wooden bucket containing about 3½ gallons). Manufacturers and private residents could have the water laid into their houses at charges based upon the bore of the supply pipe, but not exceeding £2 10s. 0d. for dwelling houses, £5 for beer houses, £10 for licenced victuallers brewing their own beer, and £50 for common brew houses.

Towards the close of the century the huge accumulations of sand and gravel brought in as ballast by sailing ships had become a nuisance. John Wesley refers in his Journal to the discomfort caused by the sand blowing from these hills while he was preaching in the Market Place on June 19, 1767. The Corporation of Newcastle, who were the lessees of the Mill Dam Gut, filled up that fine sheet of water with ballast in order to make building land, although Smeaton, the famous engineer who built the Eddystone lighthouse, had in his report to the Corporation on the improvement of the navigation of the Tyne (January, 1769), recommended that the Gut should be converted into a wet dock. The heaps of clinker and rubbish from the salt pans in the western part of the Town developed a new danger owing to the material of which they were composed taking fire. There is an eighteenth century picture in possession of the Dean and Chapter of Durham of "The burning hills at Shields." The first recorded mention of what came to be known as "the underground fire" occurs in 1786, when Sykes records that a Presbyterian meeting house (on Academy Hill) was so damaged by the fire that only the east and north walls were left standing, and in one day ten men were nearly suffocated by the sulphur from the fire under the building. The Dean and Chapter, in December, 1793, advanced £20, to Mr. Hargreive "towards the expense of extinguishing the fire in the rubbish hills at South Shields." Several similar grants were afterwards made, and Counsel's opinion was taken in regard to the fire, which continued intermittently for many years.

By the eighteenth century the Ancient Vestry had become practically the sole instrument of Municipal Government in the Town. It still discharged its primary function of administering the Poor Law and providing Medical Relief. It appointed a surgeon, or Poor Law Medical Officer as we would call him to-day, who, during epidemics was directed to "attend all poor people who had the fever and to provide them with needful medicine at the charge of the township." The Poor House, in West Holborn, was originally used for Westoe and Harton as well as for South Shields, but in later years each township had its own institution. The cost of poor relief to the Vestry about 1734 was £130 to £160 per annum. Various methods of dealing with the indoor poor were adopted during the century. At one time they were maintained directly by the Vestry, who purchased all the necessary provisions, etc., but towards the close of the century the Poor House was farmed, the farmer receiving a fixed sum and providing all provisions, clothing, etc., for the inmates, making what profit he could get out of their labour. In 1780 the amount so paid to the farmer was £400 per annum, three years later it was increased to £500. Subsequently 2/- per head per week for ordinary cases, and an additional shilling per week for lunatics was paid by the Vestry.

The Vestry was also the Lighting, Watching, and Sanitary Authority of the town. It arranged the lighting of the principal thoroughfares by oil lamps. A serious outbreak of fever in 1790 set the City fathers to the mending of their ways. Orders were issued to cleanse the streets and remove all reservoirs of filth in the different

wards, whilst the owners of pigs were prohibited from allowing them to roam in the streets. The Vestry appointed the Inspectors of Weights and Measures and the Parish constables. Four substantial householders were elected yearly, as constables, one for each of the four wards - the East, Middle, East Panns and West Panns - into which the town was divided. These substantial householders had the right to appoint deputies, and women ratepayers were not exempt from the duty. In 1794 Mrs. Ann Smart, a considerable landholder, was selected as constable for the East ward.

Special constables were sworn in when trouble threatened, as in November, 1795, when riots broke out in Newcastle and Durham as a protest against the high price of corn and food, due to the war with France. An attempted riot in South Shields on November 13, was quickly checked by the action of the Magistrates and special constables. The Vestry on that occasion also offered a reward of ten guineas for information leading to the conviction of any person monopolizing grain and potatoes so as to force up the price. In the same year the Vestry requested the magistrates to refuse licenses to all publicans who did not pay poor rates. At that time there were 160 public houses in the town, and temperance reformers would probably consider it more than a coincidence that the Poor Rate was excessively high. About that date it reached the figure of 14/- in the pound per month. Stock-in-trade, and shipping, as well as real property, was subject to assessment.

The Vestry was also the authority for raising the town's quotas of men for service in the Navy and Militia, and frequently offered bounties, from the rates, to as much as 25 guineas per man, for the enlistment of a sufficient number of "volunteers" during the long Continental wars which were raging when the century closed. In addition to voluntary enlistment, compulsory service was so frequently enforced, through the medium of the Press Gang, that the Shipwrights' Association and other eighteenth century Friendly Societies in the town made regular provision in their rules for the payment of relief to the families of members who were "pressed to serve" or held as prisoners of war by the enemy. The Vestry also, in July, 1797, contributed £50 to the funds of the South Shields Loyal Volunteers - then being formed under command of "Sir" Cuthbert Heron. The volunteers - principally tradesmen - drilled on the Bents on Sunday afternoons after Church service. Their colours, presented by ladies of the town in June, 1798, were handed over to the Corporation in April, 1867, by Mrs. Lockey Harle, grand-daughter of the first and only Commander of the Corps.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE MODERN TOWN.

WHEN the nineteenth century dawned, South Shields, although a small community as compared with the modern County Borough, was by the standard of that day, a town of considerable importance. It had a population of over 11,000, as compared with about 33,000 in Newcastle, 8,500 in Gateshead, and 12,000 in Sunderland. The town itself was still confined within narrow limits. By far the greater part stretched along the narrow crooked line of lanes, officially known as "The King's Majesty's High Street," and now as Shadwell, Wapping, and Thrift Streets, Holborn, etc., which ran alongside the river from the foot of the Lawe to Jarrow Slake, then extending to the site of what is now the West Dock Shipyard.

This line of streets was a busy and prosperous thoroughfare. The majority of the buildings were shops, warehouses, or taverns. No Licensing Act then restricted the hours during which public houses might be open, and many were never closed, except possibly during the hours of Divine Service on Sunday, since the Churchwardens still possessed power to prosecute tavern keepers selling liquor in Church time. Sailors landing at all hours from the shipping in the Harbour were, therefore, constantly faced with the temptation to waste

their hard-earned wages in dissipation. The “Low Street,” as it was popularly called, was connected with the Market Place by Saltwell Lane, which derived its name from a salt spring reputed a certain cure for sore eyes.



THE LAWE HOUSE.

King Street, opening eastward from the Market Place, was only built upon to the point where it was crossed by the “Horse Track,” a bridle-path which later became Waterloo Vale. With the exception of the Golden Lion Hotel, the principal coaching house, with its brewery

alongside, and a few small shops, most of the buildings in King Street were dwelling-houses. Some had gardens and even fruit trees in front.

To the south of King Street, Chapter Row faced the "Broken Gardens," an open space which ran down to the verge of the Mill Dam, and was bounded west by St. Hild's Churchyard and east by the bridle road before mentioned. This space, part of St. Hild's Glebe, was in 1801 let on 999 years building lease by the then Curate-in-Charge of St. Hild's, the Rev. Richard Wallis. The lessees were Nicholas Fairless, the principal local Magistrate, and Henry Robson, and the rental was £115 per annum. Only one house, the site of which is now occupied by part of the works of the Northern Press Engineering Company in Cornwallis Street, had been erected on this leasehold by 1806. The only buildings on the Lawe were the Cross House (which had been used as a barracks during the long wars with France and Napoleon, and at the time of which we write was a shipowners' club and news room); an inn, the predecessor of the Baltic Tavern, and a ropewalk. To the westward Wellington Street was the residential part of the Town, chiefly occupied by shipowners, and contained a large theatre erected in 1792. With the exception of a ropewalk where St. Thomas' Church now stands, the land lay open and unbuilt upon between the highway - now Mile End Road and Fowler Street - and the sea, as far south as the village of Westoe, which was still a group of farmhouses with a horse-pond at each end of the village green. The only places of worship in addition to St. Hild's Church, were the Scots Church at the top of Mile End Road, the

Secession Church on Academy Hill, and the Wesleyan Chapel in East Street.

Westward of the Market Place lay the manufacturing district. Although the salt trade had decayed, new industries had more than filled the gap. To Cookson's Chemical Works at the Alum House Ham had been added the Glass Works belonging to the same firm. The site is now occupied by the staithes of the Harton Coal Company. The ballast landed from Cookson's quay and the rubbish from the glass works were piled up in a high mound on the north bank of the Mill Dam. A similar ballast hill on the south side of the Dam, on whose site the Goods Station now stands, had a small vitriol factory on its summit and hence was called Vitriol Hill. Holborn was becoming the centre of a growing glass-making trade. The Bottle Works occupied part of the site now covered by the graving dock of the Middle Dock Company, and Shortridge's Glass Works were near the Penny Pie Stairs, adjoining the Old Hall, once the mansion of the Burdon family, and long since reputed to be haunted.

Soon after the opening of the century, South Shields became a coal mining as well as a coal shipping town, the Jarrow and Templetown collieries being sunk in 1803 and 1810 respectively. Watt's invention of the steam engine, gave an immense impetus to the coal trade in two directions, first by enabling deeper seams to be worked, and second by increasing the demand for coal, including the smaller varieties hitherto regarded as little better than waste. This, together with the demand for shipping

during the long Continental wars, created what would now be called a boom in shipbuilding. The river front from the Lawe to Dean Street, and again at the west end of the town was occupied by wooden shipbuilding yards, which collectively launched a greater tonnage than was produced at any other port on the north-east coast.

While the Napoleonic wars brought prosperity to shipowners and shipbuilders, they inflicted much hardship and suffering on the poorer classes in the town. Both seamen and landsmen were subject to impressment for service in the navy. Conflicts with the press gangs were frequent and occasionally violent. The receiving ship lay always in the mouth of the harbour. Once impressed, the seamen and marines were liable to capture by the enemy. Scores of Shields men lay for years prisoners in France, with little or no provision by the Government for their families. As always in war-time, food prices were high. The magistrates had to issue repeated orders that only bread made of whole-meal - that is brown bread - or of rye and other coarser grains should be sold. Orders fixing the price of bread were also issued. One forbade a higher price than a shilling to be charged for the eight-pound loaf. Subscriptions were opened from time to time for the relief of the distress. A town's meeting held in 1805 to decide what form should be taken by the local celebration of the victory of Trafalgar, wisely decided to abandon the illuminations which usually formed part of such rejoicings, and instead to open a public subscription for the relief of the local men who were prisoners of war or wounded. Over £450 was subscribed. Two years later, another public fund was

raised for the relief of about one hundred and fifty South Shields men held prisoners in France. The distress was aggravated by a great strike of coal-miners in 1810.

The peace which followed Wellington's victory at Waterloo on June 18, 1815, for a time intensified the sufferings of the poor. The harbour was crowded by idle ships. In North and South Shields alone there were seven thousand seamen idle. One of the measures taken for the relief of the unemployed was to raise the surface of St. Hild's churchyard, by the use of material from the adjoining ballast-hill. The graveyard was greatly overcrowded, and the Churchwardens had tried in vain to obtain additional land for burials. A great strike of seamen, attended by serious outbreaks of rioting was one of the consequences of the prolonged scarcity of employment and dearness of food. As the four regular constables were quite unable to cope with the disorders, a large number of special constables were sworn-in; but it was not until some years later that anything in the nature of an efficient police force was established in the town. An attempt was made in 1810 to obtain a Lighting and Watching Act, but it was defeated by lack of support. After the seamen's strike in November, 1815, a Lighting and Watching Act was again projected, but the Dean and Chapter of Durham opposed the application, which was defeated. A number of regular watchmen were appointed in December of that year, and paid by public subscription, while about the same time the South Shields and Westoe Association for the prosecution of felons was established. It continued in being nearly to the end of the nineteenth century.

The period of distress soon passed away, and the second and third decades of the century witnessed a remarkable development in the industries of the Borough. Chemical manufacture was extended by the opening of alkali works at Templetown, which soon developed into the largest in the world. Coal shipment was greatly stimulated by the construction of waggon-ways, the forerunners of the modern railway. These enabled coal to be brought from more distant collieries for shipment in Shields Harbour. The growth of population and of business rendered better means of communication with the country imperative. As early as 1806 a stage coach service had been established between South Shields and York. The coach left the Golden Lion Hotel at 8 a.m. travelling via Stockton and Thirsk to York. The return coach reached South Shields at 7 a.m. In spite of this quicker method of travelling, letters still took 40 hours to reach South Shields from London. Communication with the district to the west of the town remained very difficult and even dangerous. In 1826 a private Act of Parliament was obtained for the construction of a turnpike road from South Shields Market Place across the foreshore of Jarrow Slake to the Sunderland and Newcastle Highway at Whitemere Pool, and thence to a junction with the Great North Road at Chester-le-Street. There was also a branch road leading from Jarrow Slake to East Boldon - the Boldon Lane of to-day. The construction of the new highway proved very costly, half a mile of quay having to be built to carry it around the Slake, besides the two bridges at Templetown and the Dean Burn. The section from Whitemere to Chester-Le-Street was abandoned.

The promoters were reimbursed by tolls on the traffic, one of the toll gates being at the junction of the new road and the Boldon Lane, at what is now Tyne Dock entrance.

Cross river communication with North Shields and Northumberland still was maintained by the clumsy old oar-propelled ferry boats, a horse boat for animals and vehicles, and another for pedestrians. Both were slow and awkward, with often long intervals between their passages. The regular ferries were supplemented by a fleet of scullerboats, usually manned by old naval men, who plied chiefly from the Alum House Landing, now occupied by the Market Place Ferry Station, although some used the Penny Pie Stairs in Holborn. Their fare for a single passenger across the river was twopence, or two persons for threepence, but the greater part of their trade lay in carrying persons to and from the hundreds of sailing ships using the harbour. Facilities for quicker communication with the north side of the river had long been demanded. In 1824, Captain Samuel Browne, R.N., projected a suspension bridge to run from Mile End Road, behind Wellington Street, to the south end of Camden Street, North Shields. It was to have a span of 800 feet between the river piers and a height of 115 feet above high water. The estimated cost was £110,000. A company was formed in November 1825, to construct the bridge, but, owing to the depressed state of the money market, failed to raise the necessary capital, and the scheme was dropped.

In 1827, a private company was formed for the establishment of a steam ferry between North and South

Shields. An Act incorporating the Company received the Royal assent on June 1, 1829. Incidentally the Act prohibited the plying of other steam ferry boats of more than four tons burden. The Dean and Chapter of Durham took legal action to uphold their old monopoly of ferry rights at Shields, and the Company had to undertake to pay that body one-fifteenth of their profits as compensation for the ancient charter rights. The Ferry Company had also to compensate the Duke of Northumberland for his landing rights on the North side. The capital of the Company was £9,950, but the two steam ferries, the provision of landings at Dean Street in place of the old Dean and Chapter Ferry at Comical Corner, and at North Shields, cost £10,415. The Company paid no dividend until 1831, when the shareholders received 2 per cent. Four years later the dividends had risen to 10 per cent., and the £50 shares were worth £120.

In 1835 a prospectus was issued of "The New Ferry Company," with a capital of £10,000, formed to give a speedier service across the harbour, in view of the expected opening of the Brandling Junction and the Newcastle and North Shields Railways, but the scheme fell through. In 1847, the Tyne Direct Ferry Company was formed with the modest capital of £2,500. The Company proposed to establish a direct steam ferry from the old landing at Comical Corner to the New Quay, North Shields, by the use of steam-boats of less than four tons burden, and to give a five minutes service each way. The Direct Ferry Bill was promoted in the following session of Parliament, when, as a result of the opposition

of the old company, a compromise was arrived at. The Bill was passed with a clause empowering the old company to buy up the new on condition that the Direct Ferry authorized by the Bill was run in addition to the existing ferry. This was done and the dual service has ever since been maintained.

South Shields was one of the earliest towns in the North to be lighted by gas. A Town's Meeting on December 5, 1823, decided to form a Gas Company with a capital of £4,000 and the works were constructed during the following year in the district called Paradise. Gas was first supplied to shops and houses on October 1, 1824. The streets were not lit by gas until November 1st, 1829. The South Shields New Gas Company was formed in May, 1829. A site for the works had been obtained and the foundation stone laid, when an agreement was arrived at whereby the old company undertook to reduce the price of gas, and the new company was wound up. Another company, projected in December, 1840, was defeated by the like tactics.

## CHAPTER X.

### A PARLIAMENTARY AND MUNICIPAL BOROUGH.

THE Census of 1821 found South Shields a town of 1,500 houses and 16,500 inhabitants, figures which point to a great deal of overcrowding. Its municipal needs had outgrown the powers of the Ancient Vestry. Several unsuccessful attempts were made in the early years of the century to obtain a better instrument of local government, but it was not until 1829 that the South Shields Improvement Act was obtained. This constituted the Magistrates resident in the Townships of South Shields and Westoe, the Vicar and Churchwardens, the Bailiff of Westoe, and all inhabitants rated at £30 per annum or possessed of property worth £2,000, as the Town Improvement Commission. The area under its control was limited to that portion of the modern borough which had then been built upon - roughly the area lying between the river and a line running by what is now Ocean Road, Wouldhave Street, Ogle Terrace, High Shields and the Barnes to Jarrow Slake. The Commission was the Police, Highway, and Sanitary Authority. Its borrowings were limited to a maximum of £4,000 and the rates it could levy to 1s. 4d. in the pound on dwelling-houses and 8d. on agricultural land, docks and factories.

The Police Force was still in a very primitive state. Its total cost for the first year under the Commission was £246, reduced in the following year to £95. The "Police Station" was a small building in Dean Lane,

supplemented by two dark cells under the steps of the Town Hall in the Market Place. The County Magistrates held a weekly Court in the Town Hall, but could not deal with any offences arising in the Harbour nor could the Town Constables follow or apprehend an offender who took to the river. Newcastle claimed exclusive jurisdiction over the tidal waters of the Tyne, and all offences arising thereon had to be tried in that town by Newcastle Magistrates. The first regular Police Force appointed by the South Shields Commissioners consisted of a Captain, who was paid 15/- per week, a deputy Captain at 14/-, and four Constables at 12/6 each per week. In addition to policing the Town they were responsible for working the four primitive hand fire pumps - three belonging to manufacturers and one to the town. The first Police Buildings, which also housed the Commissioners Offices, were erected in Waterloo Vale in 1844, and the first County Court was held there on October 26, 1847.

The Improvement Commissioners found the town in a filthy sanitary condition. In its early days the Commission did good work in paving and cleansing the main streets and the Market Place. It was unable however to effect a radical reform in the sanitation of the town, and the consequence was seen in a great epidemic of Asiatic Cholera in 1831-2. The principal inhabitants formed a voluntary association called a Board of Health, to organize medical relief and other means of checking the disease. They called on the Commissioners to take steps to appoint a number of watchmen for restricting the entrance of vagrants into the town and to assist the Board

in other directions. The Commissioners resented this interference, but appointed additional street sweepers and took measures for cleansing and whitewashing the numerous courts and closes in the town.

The next stage in the development of the town was reached when it obtained separate representation in the House of Commons. A Town's Meeting on December 31, 1830, adopted a petition to Parliament representing that the commercial and maritime importance of the town and district justified the concession of this privilege. South Shields was one of the nineteen new Parliamentary Boroughs scheduled in Lord John Russell's Reform Bill of 1831. The Boundary Commissioner under the Bill, Mr. H. W. Tancred, suggested alternative areas for the new constituency. The larger comprised the townships of South Shields, Westoe, Monkton, Jarrow and Heworth, including all the area between the Sea and the Borough of Gateshead. The smaller consisted only of the townships of South Shields and Westoe. The shipowners of the town strongly opposed the larger area, which they believed would reduce their political power and influence. The smaller area was adopted in the Bill.

South Shields made energetic protests, by public meetings and petitions, against the rejection of the Reform Bill by the House of Lords on October 8, 1831. When the Representation of the People Act at last received the Royal Assent on June 5, 1832, its passing was celebrated by bonfires and illuminations in the new Borough. The area then fixed constituted the

Parliamentary Borough for eighty-six years. A proposal to include Jarrow was made in Mr. Disraeli's Franchise



ROBERT INGHAM.

Bill of 1867, but was strongly opposed by both towns and was dropped. On the passing of the Representation of the People Act, on February 6, 1918, the area of the Parliamentary Borough was made co-extensive with that

of the Municipality, which had been enlarged a few years before. The first list of Parliamentary Electors included only 540 names of which 45 were duplicates, as compared with over 52,000 on the present day (1921) Electorate List, of whom over 21,000 are women.

The Parliamentary Representatives of South Shields since its enfranchisement have been :-

Robert Ingham, December, 1832 - June, 1841: July, 1852 - November, 1868.

John Twizel Wawn, June, 1841 - July, 1852.

James Cochran Stevenson, November, 1868 - July, 1895.

William Snowdon Robson, July, 1895 - October, 1910 (created Lord of Appeal, October 7, 1910).

Right Hon. Russell Rea, October, 1910 - March, 1916.

Cecil A. Cochrane, March, 1916 - October, 1918.

Joseph Havelock Wilson, October, 1918 - November, 1922.

E. A. St. A. Harney, K.C., November, 1922.

The last remaining civil powers of the Ancient Vestry, as distinct from its administration of the affairs of the Church, disappeared in 1836, when, under the Poor Law Act, the South Shields Poor Law Union was constituted. It comprised the townships of South Shields, Westoe, Harton, Whitburn, Boldon, Hedworth, Monkton and Jarrow, with an area of about 16,000 acres and a population of a little over 25,000, of whom nearly 20,000 resided in the townships of South Shields and Westoe. The first meeting of the Poor Law Guardians was held in the Town Hall on December 13, 1836, when Mr. Richard

Shortridge, the principal magistrate in the town, was elected chairman, a position he occupied for over 17 years.

The old system whereby each township maintained its separate workhouse was abolished, and it was decided to build a new institution for the whole of the Union. A site of an acre and a half was bought at what is to-day the angle of Ocean Road and Park Terrace. The cynic may moralize on the fact that the land so purchased was known as Hungry Hole Field. Buildings capable of accommodating over 200 inmates were erected, and the new work-house was occupied on August 1, 1838. Modern economists may be interested to learn that the average cost of maintenance of the inmates in the first year was only 2s. 5½d. per head per week. This may account for the complaint that the dietary scale was below that allowed to convicted prisoners. The administration of outdoor relief was very indiscriminate, some 2,000 persons or nearly 8½ per cent. of the population of the Union being in more or less regular receipt of the doles. In South Shields township the proportion was 10 per cent. By 1866 the proportion of paupers had fallen to one in nineteen, in 1875 it was one in thirty-nine, while in 1920 it was less than one in fifty.

The rapid growth of the population outside South Shields led to recurrent divisions of the Union into more relief districts and by 1870 had rendered the existing Institution, in spite of repeated extensions, too small for the number of inmates. In 1875 a site of 17 acres, adjoining Harton Moor Lane, was acquired for the

erection of a new block of buildings to accommodate 700 inmates. The first block was occupied before the end of 1877, and the main building in 1880, the total cost having been £48,700. The buildings are on the pavilion system, the different classes of inmates being accommodated in separate blocks, each subdivided into male and female pavilions. The Institution has been repeatedly enlarged, and an additional 20 acres of land purchased, which is cultivated by the inmates.

The Guardians were amongst the first in the country to adopt the principle of sending the children inmates of the Institution to attend public elementary schools, instead of maintaining a separate Poor Law school. In 1910 a further forward step was taken by the erection of cottage homes at Cleadon, each in charge of a foster mother. In these the children are brought up as far as possible under the influence of family life. They wear no distinctive dress and are educated in the ordinary elementary schools of the village. About the same time the nursing arrangements in the Poor Law Infirmary were placed on a modern footing, a nurses' home being provided for the accommodation of the nurses and probationers under training, and resident medical officers appointed.

It was not until 1850 that South Shields attained incorporation as a Municipal Borough. Sanitary administration under the Improvement Commissioners had by no means kept pace with the growth or requirements of the town. Attendance at the meetings of the Commission was scanty and it was found difficult to

obtain a quorum. South Shields was scheduled for incorporation as a Borough under Lord Brougham's abortive Bill for the Better Government of Towns in 1834. In 1839 a movement was set on foot for obtaining a Charter of Incorporation. The scheme was approved by a small majority at a town's meeting on New Year's Day, 1840, but the application was opposed strongly before the Privy Council, which declined to grant the Charter.

A local Committee, formed in 1843 for the purpose of preparing evidence for the Royal Commission on the health of towns, reported that in the older parts of the town the houses were two or three storeys high, closely built in narrow streets and alleys along the bank of the river, many of them back to back. The number of families in each house varied from one to seventeen. The tenement houses were always badly ventilated and almost destitute of necessary conveniences and their condition "had led to the formation amongst the poorer classes of habits not only disgusting and unwholesome but inconsistent with the high tone of morals." The supply of water to the poor was inadequate, many of the streets and courts were unpaved, and favourable only for the retention of water and accumulation of refuse. The arrangements for draining were very defective. The nuisances most strongly complained of were smoke from the gas works, the exhalations from the alkali works, the overcrowded condition of St. Hild's Churchyard, and the want of suitable slaughter-houses. In the following year a special Committee of the Improvement Commissioners, reporting on the water supply of the town, stated that of 3,911 inhabited houses in the town

only 180 had the water laid on and 977 obtained a regular water supply from the pumps or standpipes at a weekly charge. The remaining 2,754 houses depended upon casual supplies from water carts, or their own resources. The total available daily supply for domestic consumption was only about 9,000 gallons. The Deans reservoir, from which the principal supply was received, contained large quantities of impurities from the Deans Burn, to which the horses, cattle and poultry from the neighbouring farms continually resorted; in addition the accumulated filth of the stables and byres of the adjoining farmhouses was discharged into the burn and by it conveyed to the reservoir. Nothing material was done to remedy the evils reported.

Not unnaturally another epidemic of cholera visited the town, raging from December, 1848 to November 1849, and carrying off over a hundred and fifty victims. The Holborn and Corstorphine Town districts, both filthy and ill-drained, were chiefly affected. The epidemic was aggravated by the custom, in the poorer parts of the town, of retaining the bodies of the dead an undue time before burial, and the Sanitary Authorities and police had to intervene to insist upon speedy interment. This led on one occasion to a riotous outbreak in the high part of the town, the Superintendent of police, James Buglass, being violently assaulted for insisting on the early burial of a cholera patient. This epidemic aroused the townspeople to the need for a more efficient system of local government. A public meeting in January, 1850, decided to renew the application for a Charter of Incorporation. One of the reasons urged for that step was that it would

give the town greater weight in the fight then being waged to transfer the control of the Tyne from the Corporation of Newcastle to a representative Commission. The petition in favour of the Charter was signed by a majority of the rate-payers and received the unanimous support of the Improvement Commissioners. After a local inquiry, the Charter was granted, being signed by Queen Victoria on September 3rd, 1850, on the eve of her first railway journey to Scotland, in the course of which she opened the Central Station at Newcastle and inaugurated the Royal Border Bridge at Berwick. The Municipal Borough was co-extensive with the Parliamentary. It comprised the townships of South Shields and Westoe, with an area of 1835 acres, a population of over 27,000 and rateable value of £42,188. It was divided into three wards, as a larger number would have required a rateable qualification of £30, instead of £15, for Councillors, and this would have greatly reduced the number of Burgesses eligible for election to the Council. The first burgess roll contained the names of 879 electors.

The election of the twenty-four original councillors took place on Friday, November 1, 1850; Mr. Richard Shortridge, the senior magistrate, having been nominated in the Charter as returning Officer. The declaration of the poll next day was celebrated by merry peals of St. Hild's bells.

At the first meeting of the new Town Council on November 9, John Clay, banker, of Cleadon Meadows, was unanimously elected Mayor. Mr. Thomas Salmon,



THOMAS SALMON.

Clerk of the Improvement Commission from its formation, was elected Town Clerk, and in his final report

to the Commissioners boasted, with pardonable pride, that no portion of that body's funds had been "spent or wasted in law." The new Council adopted as its meeting-place the Town Hall in the Market Place, which remained the Municipal headquarters until the erection of the present Municipal buildings. The Corporation's Coat of Arms was designed by a native of the town - Mr. Robinson Elliott. It contains in the centre the lifeboat, manned by South Shields pilots, and representing Humanity. The supporters are a South Shields Sailor representing Courage, and a figure of Commerce. The Borough motto, suggested by Mr. Robert Ingham, was "Always Ready," a motto peculiarly appropriate to the birthplace of the lifeboat. The Mayoral chain was presented, on the re-election of Alderman Clay for a second term of office, by the ladies of the town, who also later presented robes of office to the Mayor and the Town Clerk. A gold badge embossed with the Borough arms was presented by the Mayor (Alderman Donald) on behalf of the Mayoress and his family in commemoration of the jubilee of the Borough incorporation, on October 3, 1900. The Mayoress' chain, subscribed for by members of the Council was presented to Mrs. J. R. Lawson as Mayoress on February 2, 1905, for the use of herself and her successors in office. The silver Mayoral snuffbox was presented by Alderman T. G. Mabane on December 2, 1897. Lady Robson presented to the Corporation on November 3, 1920, a silver bowl in commemoration of her husband's long connection with the Borough as Member of Parliament and Solicitor and Attorney General.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE MUNICIPALITY.

THE new Town Council inherited a debt of £1,800 from the Improvement Commissioners. The cost of obtaining the Charter, preparing the first burgess roll and holding the elections, amounted to about £850. Although the Commissioners had for some years levied the maximum improvement rate, its proceeds only averaged in the latest years about £1,730 per annum. The Town Council obtained no rating powers in its Charter; consequently it could only levy the improvement rate over the old improvement area. The Small Tenements Act, under which the rates were payable by the owner instead of the occupiers of tenement property, had not been adopted, with the result that a large proportion of the dwelling-houses in the Borough were not assessed to local rates.

The Council adopted that Act and promoted a private Bill, which became law as the South Shields Improvement Act, 1853. It authorized the levying of the improvement rate over the whole of the Borough except East Jarrow, which was not to contribute until either a public dock had been constructed in Jarrow Slake, or a continuous line of buildings erected between South Shields and Jarrow. The Act empowered the Corporation to purchase or otherwise extinguish the tolls charged on all traffic on the highways leading out of the Borough; to purchase the Gas Works, the Town Hall and Markets, and to provide a public cemetery in substitution for the

overcrowded Churchyards of St. Hild and Holy Trinity. The new rating powers were promptly put into operation. The Town Hall and Markets with market rights were purchased from the Dean and Chapter of Durham for the very moderate sum of £500, but, with this exception, the powers of the Act were dropped or not put into force for several years. The tolls on the highroad to Jarrow and Whitmere Pool were purchased and the road freed from toll on December 1, 1867. The tolls on the highway to Sunderland were extinguished a month later.

One of the earliest acts of the Town Council was to apply for the issue of a separate Commission of the Peace for the Borough. This was granted on October 23, 1851. The difficulty in regard to the policing of the harbour was in part removed by the Tyne Conservancy Act of 1850 which gave concurrent jurisdiction over cases arising on the river to the magistrates of North and South Shields. A more efficient Borough police force was also organized, consisting of a Superintendent, two Sergeants and fourteen Constables, the latter receiving a wage of 18s. per week with uniform, which included the orthodox tall hat. The new force received its baptism of fire in a serious riot which broke out on May 29, 1855, after the races which were then held on South Shields sands. These races were originally instituted about the beginning of the eighteenth century, were prohibited by the Act of 1740 directed against Jacobite gatherings, and were revived in 1825. In later years they had degenerated into an excuse for drunken orgies. A disturbance broke out shortly after midnight amongst a number of Irishmen in one of the drinking tents. When the police interfered, they were

attacked with bludgeons and broken seats, while a pistol was fired at the Superintendent. Order was finally restored by the arrival of strong reinforcements of the North Shields and River Tyne police. Twenty-six of the rioters were more or less seriously injured, one of the ringleaders, named Campbell, dying the following day. A large number of arrests were made, and nine men sent for trial at the Assizes, where they were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. The magistrates, at the request of the Corporation, prohibited the holding of the races thereafter.

One of the earliest questions to engage the attention of the Corporation was that of the water supply, which was still in the hands of the old Water Company. The original sources of supply from the Dean Burn and Caldwell had been supplemented by the water from the Pigeon Well near St. Hilda Pit and the Westoe Lane Well, but the total supply for domestic purposes was only thirteen gallons per head per day, and the supply for manufacturing purposes was wholly inadequate. The water was very hard - Dr. Lyon Playfair certified that it possessed thirty-eight degrees of hardness, or nearly three times the average, and contained over fifty grains of solid matter per gallon. Mr. Henry Briggs, a member of the Council, proposed that the Corporation itself should provide a new water supply, but found no support. As the result of negotiations between the Council and the Sunderland Water Company, which had in February, 1850, begun to supply Sunderland from a deep well at Humbleton Hill, the Company agreed to extend its mains to South Shields, buying up the old South Shields

Company for £13,000. The Sunderland and South Shields Water Act, sanctioning the purchase and extension, received the Royal assent on May 28, 1852. An additional well was sunk at Fulwell, from which water was pumped to a reservoir on Fulwell Bank, 200 feet higher than the highest part of the Borough. In 1855 the Company obtained powers for the constructions of a pumping station and reservoir on Cleadon Hill, but about forty years later this source of supply had to be temporarily abandoned, in consequence of the brackishness of the water.

The Town Council, after deciding to purchase the Casten Quarry, behind where Meldon Terrace now stands, for use as a cemetery, rescinded the bargain and allowed the matter to drop. The question of additional burying ground became so acute that, as a result of a movement outside of the Council, a Burial Board for the two townships was formed in March, 1854. Much difficulty was experienced in obtaining a site for a cemetery as the Dean and Chapter of Durham, Lords of the Manor, refused to sell any land for the purpose. Eventually Mr. Robert Ingham, Member for the Borough, offered a site of sixteen acres off the Westoe Road, on which the old or Westoe cemetery was laid out. A circular plot was reserved for the burial of men who had rendered distinguished service to the Borough. By Order in Council further burials in the old Churchyards were prohibited as soon as the cemetery was available. St. Hild's Churchyard was closed after October 1, 1856, and Holy Trinity after January 1, 1857. With the growth of the population, additional burying ground became

necessary, and in 1886 the Burial Board purchased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners 31¼ acres of land between Westoe and Harton, on which the Harton Cemetery was constructed at a cost of £24,000. The powers and duties of the Burial Board were transferred to the Corporation as from November 9, 1901. In 1917 the Town Council purchased an additional 20 acres of land for cemetery extension.

The Improvement Commissioners had done little to improve the narrow crooked streets which constituted the principal thoroughfares. Many proposals were made, both to the Commissioners and the Council, without success, for the construction of a wide street leading westward from the Market Place, in lieu of the two narrow crooked lanes, one of which led down through the Glass works to the Mill Dam, and the other over a steep and dangerous hill into the Green Street district. In 1861, the then Borough surveyor (Mr. Clemence) proposed to construct a new wide road, practically straight and almost on a level, from the Market Place to Holy Trinity Church, and thence across what were then open fields to Tyne Dock. Although the estimated cost was only £3,000, the Council rejected the scheme. Up to that time all street improvements, etc., had been paid for out of the current rates. The Progressive party on the Council, after a long fight, carried into effect the principle that the cost of permanent works should be raised by loans repayable over a given period. This system of finance was first applied to the reconstruction of the road (then narrow and dangerous) leading from Tyne Dock to the Don Bridge at

Old Jarrow. A daily service of omnibuses started to run over this road in May, 1863.

An era of development in street-planning and construction commenced about 1870, when the estates of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, the ground landlords of the Borough, were transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. That body proceeded to lay out a number of fine thoroughfares, in order to develop the unoccupied portions of the Borough for building purposes. One of these roads was to run from East Holborn across Green Street and Westoe Lane to the seashore. The only portion actually constructed was Victoria Road. Another parallel road was to run from Hardwick Street, East Holborn, to the seashore. A third, starting from the east end of Tyne Dock at Corstorphine Town, was to run through the Smith Street tunnel and by Eldon Street to the junction of Dean and Laygate Lanes, and by a continuation of Dean Lane to the sea-front near Trow Rocks.

Thoroughfares constructed as a result of the laying out of the Commissioners' estates were Chichester Road, later continued by Stanhope Road, together giving a continuous thoroughfare a mile and a half long and fifty feet wide; Mowbray Road, from Westoe Road to the sea; Baring Street, and Roman Road from Ocean Road to Military Road. Roman Road was not completed throughout for many years, owing to the refusal of the freeholder of Field House Estate, which did not belong to the Commissioners, to sell the necessary land. The Corporation also at length (in 1870) provided a new road



FIELD HOUSE.

from the south-west corner of the Market Place to Coronation Street and the Mill Dam in place of the two lanes before mentioned. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles M. Palmer a few years later proposed the removal of the Market Place ferry landing westward of its present site, so that it could be approached in a straight line from the Market Place by a continuation of Dean Street. He also proposed to make a new street running direct from the new ferry landing across St. Hild's Churchyard into Barrington Street, continuing that street by a tunnel under the railway into Fowler Street. The scheme, which included the abolition of the old police buildings in Waterloo Vale, and the construction of new municipal

buildings on the adjoining site, was also rejected by the Council.

One of the most pressing requirements of the commercial community was a public quay, to give facilities for landing and discharging sea-borne traffic. The Act of 1850 which created the Tyne Improvement Commission, provided that when a public quay was constructed in South Shields, only half the import duties levied under the Act should be charged on goods landed thereon. After several schemes had been considered and dropped, the Town Council, in 1860, purchased for £10,000 a quay adjoining the Mill Dam, formerly owned by the Brandling Junction Railway Company. The quay was used for some time for goods and passengers carried by the vessels of the Shields Shipping Co., formed in June 1860, and the Tyne Steamship Co., both trading between the Tyne and London, but it was too small to be of general use. The adjoining Stone and Bottlehouse quays came into the market a few years later, and were bought on behalf of the town by a number of public-spirited men, but the Council declined to take over the bargain and the opportunity was lost. The engineering works of Messrs. Toward and Eltringham were erected on the site, which is now occupied by the Middle Dock Company's dry dock.

In 1878 the Council decided to promote a Bill for the extension of the Borough by the inclusion of Harton township. The Bill proposed to increase the number of wards, aldermen, and councillors; authorize the purchase of the Stone and Bottleworks quay, the construction of a

fish quay between Shadwell Street and the river, and of a new road along the cliffs by Trow Rocks to Marsden and Whitburn, the erection of a Town Hall and Municipal Buildings; the provision of salt water baths; the purchase of land for parks, the purchase of the gasworks, etc. At the statutory meeting of the Council in January, 1879, the vote fell one short of the majority necessary to authorize the Bill, which was, therefore, dropped.

A bold scheme for the construction of a large public quay and fish dock was suggested by the late Mr. J. R. Lawson, and designed and planned by Mr. J. Watt Sandeman, C.E., in 1879. It included a concrete quay, nearly half-a-mile in length, running eastward along the river between the Market Place and the Coble Landing, with a fishery dock four acres in extent at the eastern end. Dock and quay would be connected with the North Eastern Railway by a branch line, and a new road sixty feet wide would be constructed from the Market Place alongside the quay and around the foot of the Lawe to the end of Ocean Road. The scheme, which would have involved the demolition of all the slum property on that part of the riverside, was estimated to cost £280,000. The Town Council refused to sanction this expenditure, and rejected also a modified scheme proposed by Mr. J. C. Stevenson, for a timber quay three hundred yards in length, to accommodate both fishing craft and trading vessels, at a cost of £27,000.

For some years the Town Council was faced with a curious problem by a fresh outbreak of the Underground Fire. A considerable part of the older houses in the High

Shields and Holborn district had been erected on artificial hills, composed in some cases of ballast from the shipping, and in others of the refuse from the salt pans ashes, partly consumed small coals, waste salt and lime. Some of these latter hills had from time to time taken fire, the refuse smouldering for long periods, and, of course, destroying the buildings erected upon them. The modern outbreak occurred in February 1872, when the ground on which Harrison's Court, in Carpenter's Hill was built, was found to be on fire. Gradually, surrounding streets and courts were affected, as far south as Commercial Road and eastward to Nile Street, twenty houses in all being destroyed. Many expedients were adopted to extinguish the fire, which was eventually done in July, 1876, by cutting wide trenches down through the salt pan debris into the natural clay along Hill Street, Nile Street and Commercial Road. A similar fire broke out in Laygate Street in 1881 and burned for several months. The Town Council had to purchase and demolish a number of houses in order to construct similar trenches to prevent the spread of the fire to other streets.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE COUNTY BOROUGH.

THE Local Government Act of 1888, transferred to elected County Councils and to the Councils of all Boroughs of over 50,000 inhabitants, the administrative duties up to that time discharged by the County Magistrates in Quarter Sessions. Under that Act South Shields became, as from 1st April, 1889, a County Borough, responsible for the care of all lunatics within its area, the prevention of pollution of rivers, the licensing of places of amusement, and pawnbrokers, etc. The Borough Magistrates, under successive Licensing Acts, had long controlled the hours and conditions of the sale of liquor. It was proposed that the Borough should also take power to establish its own Court of Quarter Sessions, so that all persons accused of crime locally, with the exception of offences which could only be dealt with at Assizes, might be tried in South Shields, instead of at Durham. The Council did not entertain the proposal, which would have involved the appointment by the Crown of a paid Recorder. Possibly the not very satisfactory experience of the appointment of a stipendiary magistrate some years earlier (1875-9) turned the scale against the scheme. The Council did go so far, however, as to erect, in 1890, new Court Buildings, which could have accommodated Quarter Sessions. They were erected on the site of the Phoenix Glass Works in

Kepple Street, adjoining the old Police buildings, which had been condemned as unsanitary. The Court buildings comprise two spacious court rooms, with magistrates and witnesses rooms, police officers and fire station. They were opened on June 6, 1893, having cost £22,000.

In order to obtain greater powers for the good government of the Borough and to carry out a large scheme of street improvements, the Council, in 1894, decided to promote a comprehensive Improvement Bill, which, after long and costly contests before Private Bill Committees of both Houses of Parliament, received the Royal Assent on July 2, 1896, as the South Shields Corporation Act. It incorporated the existing Improvement Acts, Tramways and Electric Lighting Orders; provided for an increase in the number of Aldermen and Councillors and of the Municipal Wards. It authorized the borrowing of £132,000 for street widening and improvement works, £24,000 for the construction of new tramways, £2,500 for the provision of a Quay at the Electricity Works, £7,000 for the extension to the deep water line of the Corporation Quay at the Mill Dam, authorized the provision of public slaughterhouses, the purchase of the sea-water baths erected in Pier Parade in 1884 by a private company, the provision of fish and other quays, warehouses, etc. It empowered the Council to regulate the user of the sands and foreshore (which were declared a public place within the meaning of the Police and Vagrancy Acts) and to make new bye-laws to regulate the laying out of new streets, buildings, infectious diseases and sanitation.

The compulsory powers for the purchase of the properties required for street improvements proved insufficient. Another Act was obtained without opposition (July 30, 1900) giving the requisite powers, under which a number of important street improvements were carried out including the widening of the Church Way exit from the Market Place (which necessitated the absorption into the street of part of St. Hild's Churchyard including the grave of William Wouldhave the inventor of the lifeboat), Fowler Street, Ocean Road, Mile End Road, St. Mary's Terrace, Corstorphine Town, Smith Street and its tunnel, Laygate, South Eldon Street, Derby Street and Jarrow Road, the reconstruction of the Little Don and Dean Lane bridges, etc. The Derby Street Works entailed the removal of the baths and wash-houses originally built in 1854, and the erection of new buildings, which were opened September 5, 1907. One of the most essential improvements sanctioned in both Acts, the reconstruction and widening of the Low Street from the Lawe foot to the Market Place was carried out only very partially.

Under the provision of these and the Public Acts, the appointment of Overseers of the Poor, who are responsible for the assessment and collection of rates, and of assistant overseers, and other powers of the vestries and overseers, were transferred from the vestries of South Shields and Westoe townships to the Town Council. As from May 3, 1897, these two townships were united as the parish of South Shields with its boundaries coterminous with those of the Borough. This reform simplified and consolidated the assessment and

collection of rates. On the same date, by Order in Council the membership of the Town Council was increased from thirty-two to forty - ten Alderman and thirty Councillors - and the number of Wards increased from four to ten. In November, 1905, the number of Wards was again increased to fourteen and the membership of the Council to fifty-six-an Alderman and three Councillors for each Ward.

Repeated efforts to obtain the inclusion in the Borough of the adjoining parish of Harton had been made without success. In 1900 the Town Council promoted a Provisional Order for that purpose. The proposal was strongly opposed by the ratepayers of Harton and the Railway and Colliery Companies, but as the result of a local inquiry, the Local Government Board approved part of the proposal, involving the addition to the Borough of Simonside, West Harton, Harton Colliery and a small portion of Westoe Village, hitherto included in the Parish of Harton. The opposition was continued before the Parliamentary Committees, but the Order became law with the addition of a clause providing that the added area should be assessed at lower rates than the rest of the Borough for a term of twelve years. The extension, which added 355 acres of the area and a population of 3,595 to the Borough, took effect in November, 1901, although the added area remained part of the Parliamentary Division of Jarrow until the passing of the Representation of the People Act, 1918.

South Shields experienced in a fuller measure than most towns, owing to the existence of the lease-hold

system, the difficulty of securing adequate housing accommodation for a rapidly growing population. Many houses in the older parts of the town were barely fit for human occupation. From the point of view of public health if not also financially, it would have been a profitable undertaking had the Council reconstructed on modern lines the old low street and its adjacent property from the Lawe to the West Dock. From various causes the building of new dwelling-houses in the Borough had almost ceased before the Great War. That, of course brought it entirely to a standstill, and the housing problem reached an acute stage. A survey showed that over 4,000 additional houses were required to meet the needs of the population. In 1918 the Town Council, under the powers of the Housing and Working Classes Acts, bought for £18,000 the Cleadon Park estate, lying to the south of Harton Village. It comprised the mansion house and 196 acres of land, which, with 15 acres adjoining it, purchased in 1907 as a site for an isolation hospital, gave over 200 acres available for building purposes. The Town Council decided to erect on part of this land a model village of 1,360 semi-detached houses, with garden plots. The work involved the constructions of a new sewer from Brinkburn, of an accommodation road from the Sunderland highway, a light railway from the Borough tramways, and some miles of streets and sewers. The foundation stone of the new suburb was laid on November 3, 1920, by Alderman James Dunlop, Chairman of the Housing Committee.

In order to include this estate and the village of Harton in the Borough, a Bill was promoted in the Parliamentary

Session of 1921, and, after a long and costly contest before Committees of both Houses of Parliament, received the Royal Assent on August 19, as the South Shields Corporation Act, 1921. It included within the Borough the whole of Harton Village and the Cleadon Park estate, as well as a strip of land on the south side of Green Lane from the Borough boundary at Simonside to Boldon Lane and a similar strip, including the Poor Law Institution, on the south side of Harton Moor Lane which formerly formed the boundary. The new boundary thence runs due south on the line of Harton Parish boundary to Holder House Farm thence in a westerly direction past Cleadon Laws Farm to the Cleadon waterworks which are included in the Borough, thence in a northerly direction through Cleadon Quarry, joining the existing Borough boundary at the south-east corner of Harton cemetery. The Bill also fixed low water mark at the lowest Spring tides as the Borough boundary on the sea front, and mid-stream of the river Tyne wherever that waterway forms the boundary. In all the Bill added 778 acres with a rateable value of £11,464 to the area of the Borough making the total area 3,419 acres, with a rateable value of £507,377, and a population of 120,376 according to the Census of 1921.

The added area became part of the civil parish of South Shields and under the jurisdiction of the Council as the burial, education, electricity and police authority. The Act provided for lower rates to be levied on the added area than on the rest of the Borough for a term of years. It also increased the number of wards from fourteen to fifteen, the membership of the Council from

fifty-six to sixty, and the number of Poor Law Guardians representing the Borough from twenty-three to twenty-four. Most of the added area was formed into the Harton Ward, returning one Alderman three Councillors and one Guardian. The Act, in addition to other powers, authorized the amalgamation as from March 31, 1922, of the Borough and District Fund and the consolidation of the Poor Borough and District rates as the Consolidated rate. It empowered the increase of market rates and tolls by 50 per cent., and the construction of a new fifty-five feet road from the Jarrow Road into Leam Lane, in substitution for the steep and dangerous approach to Tyne Dock by the Whitemere Pool Road.

We have seen that various attempts were made to purchase the Gas Works for the town. Although these failed, the Council was able to secure, in successive Parliamentary Bills promoted by the Gas Company, clauses providing that the dividend to the Company's shareholders could only be increased as the price of gas to the public was decreased. No attempt to introduce electric light or power in the Borough was made until 1891, when a private company sought to include the Borough in its area of supply of electricity. The Council refused its consent and obtained (June 11) a Provisional Order, giving the Corporation the exclusive right to generate and distribute electricity within the Borough. The power station, constructed on riverside site joining the Penny Pie Stairs in East Holborn, was not completed till five years later. Including site and plant it cost £27,000 and was of very modest capacity. It had two engines of 400 i.h.p. combined and generators capable of

supplying current for 6,600 eight-candle-power lamps. The generating pressure was 2,000 volts and the single-phase alternating current was delivered at voltages of 110 and 220. The works were put into operation on August 17, 1896, when the Market Place, King Street and Dean Street were lighted by thirty-one arc lamps. The supply to the public commenced on September 1, and the demand quickly outstripped the capacity of the station. Extensions were carried out almost every year.

In 1906, to meet the requirements of the Electric Tramways and to supply power to the works in the Borough, new plant was installed, supplying direct current for power purposes at 550 volts. In 1920 what amounted to a practical reconstruction of the plant was carried out, in order to supply the modern type of three-phase alternating current at a voltage of 2,250, the plant having a capacity of 5,800 kilowatts. The Electricity Works have proved a success both practically and financially.

The capital expenditure to March 31, 1921, amounted to £316,575 of which practically half had been repaid. The outstanding debt was £159,235, the revenue for the year was £93,066 representing the sale of 8,000,000 Board of Trade units as compared with a revenue of £2,441 from a sale of 150,000 units in the first complete year. The net profit for the year after meeting all charges including interest and redemption was £16,438. The Electricity Committee own and work a deep water quay fronting the works and this proved of great value in the economical handling of fuel during the War.

South Shields was amongst the latest of the large towns in the Kingdom to possess a system of electrical tramways. A tramway running from Tyne Dock entrance to the seaward end of Ocean Road was constructed by the Town Council under the powers of a Provisional Order obtained in 1881. The Board of Trade refused its license, because the tramways had been constructed on a narrow gauge of 3 feet 6 inches instead of the standard gauge, as provided in the Provisional Order, and a second Order had to be obtained sanctioning this change. The tramways, operated by horse traction, were opened on August 1, 1883, but the Company which originally leased them failed, and the system remained unworked for some time. It was leased by the South Shields Tramway and Carriage Company in January, 1887, and by them carried on, still by horse traction, until January, 1906.

Under the Act of 1896 the Council took power to make considerable extensions of the system, still on the narrow gauge and to work it by electrical or mechanical power. The Act, however, made no provision for the cost of electrifying the system. In 1902 the Council decided to reconstruct and very considerably extend the system, and to work it by electric power. A Bill for this purpose was defeated on a poll of the ratepayers, but was re-introduced the following Session. It provided for the construction of eight and a half miles of electric tramway, running from the South Pier to Tyne Dock, thence along Hudson Street, Stanhope Road, Dean Lane and Westoe Road to the line at King Street, with a loop line from Dean Lane down Laygate to High Shields, and branches up Mile End Road and Mowbray Road, the estimated cost

being £176,000. In the same Session The British Electric Traction Company, who in 1901 had obtained power for the construction of an electric tramway to Jarrow, promoted a Bill for the construction of a Light Railway from a junction with the proposed tramways of the Corporation at Westoe, along the Sunderland Road through Harton, Cleadon and Whitburn to the terminus of the Sunderland Corporation tramways at Roker. A House of Commons Committee rejected the Traction Company's Bill, but passed that of the Corporation.

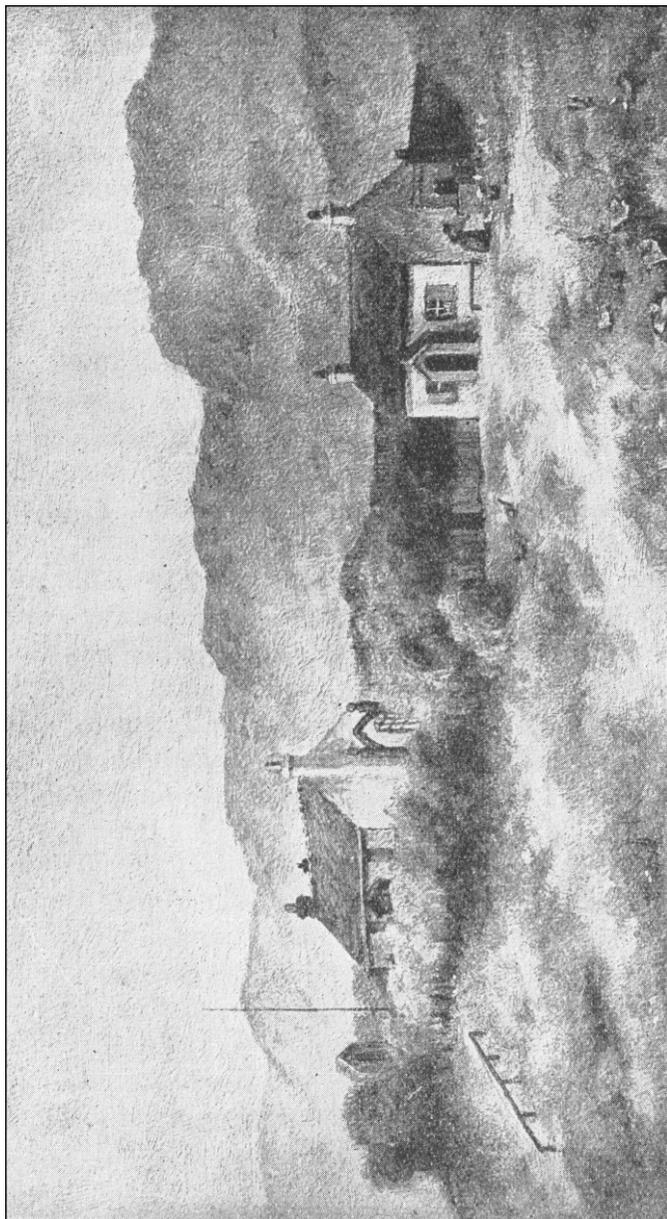
The main lines,  $5\frac{3}{4}$  miles in length, were promptly constructed, but the Mile End Road and Mowbray Road branches were not then made. The capital expenditure to March 31, 1921, was £211,817 of which there had been redeemed, or paid out of revenue, £55,426, leaving an outstanding debt of £156,391. The revenue for the year ended that date was £102,086 and the working expenses £98,708. After paying interest and redemption charges, there was a credit balance of £550. The tramways undertaking, in addition to contributing £20,350 for the relief of the Borough's rates, had accumulated a reserve fund of £31,713.

In 1915 the Corporation obtained another Act, reviving the powers for the construction of the Mile End Road branch, and authorizing the extension of the tramways from Westoe along the Sunderland Road to the Borough boundary, and also the running of omnibuses within the Borough. Owing to the War, only the powers in regard to omnibuses were exercised. These at first were electrically driven from storage batteries, but

proved too slow, and petrol engines were installed with success.

In October, 1920, in consequence of the proposed construction of the new suburb at Cleadon Park, power was obtained for the construction of a Light Railway, about a mile and a half in length, from the tramway in Sunderland Road at Cauldwell across the fields, passing to the west of Harton Village and by the occupation road near Cleadon Laws Farm into the new village. The Act of 1921 also revived the powers for the construction of the tramways sanctioned in 1915, and authorized the Council to run omnibuses on two routes outside the Borough - along Boldon Lane and the new road thence to Boldon Colliery, and via Boldon Lane through East Boldon and Cleadon to the terminus of the Light Railway in the new village at Cleadon Park.

The Parks, of which the Borough is so justly proud, had a very modest origin. Between the site of the old Workhouse and the sea was, sixty years ago, an open waste, which had been a brickyard, and was in process of being filled in with rubbish. The Town Council leased four acres of this land, had it levelled and furnished with swings, etc., and opened it, in 1869, as a children's recreation ground. It proved so popular that a demand soon arose for more.



THE BENTS BALLAST HILLS, 1901

*(From a painting by R. J. S. Kell)*

The Council approached the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, then engaged in laying out new land for building, and represented the need for preserving open spaces for recreation. As the result the Commissioners made a free gift to the town of 31½ acres of land, including the recreation ground and the Washhouse Hill (a ballast hill occupying part of the site of what is now the South Park). In the great depression of trade which began in 1884, the unemployed of the town were set to work on the levelling of these ballast hills and excavating for the large ornamental lake in the South Park. The land was laid out in terraces and walks, and planted with trees and shrubs. The pessimistic predictions that these would not flourish on such poor soil, or so near the sea, have been abundantly falsified. The two Parks were opened by Sir John Mowbray, one of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, on June 25, 1890.

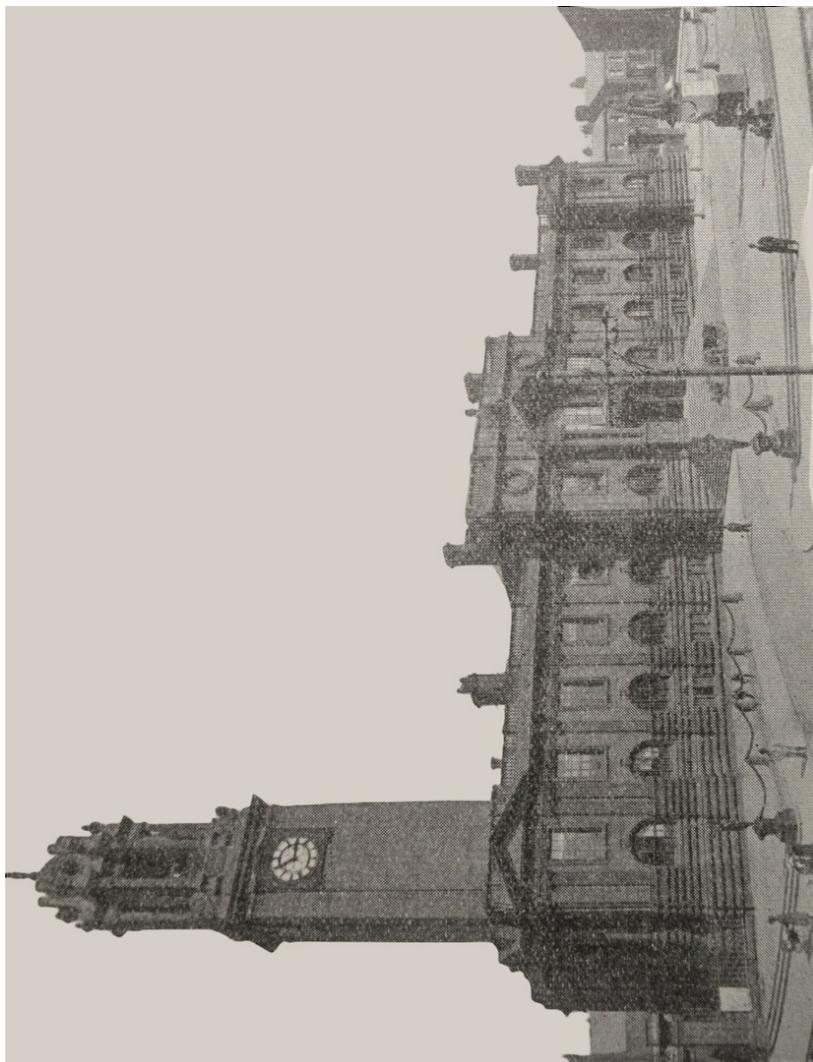
The Town Council purchased for £2,000 fourteen acres lying to the north of the North Marine Park on which stood a great ballast hill. By separate purchase the old Pilots' Lookout, known as Trinity Towers, and the site of the ancient Battery on the Lawe were also acquired. The ballast hill was levelled to give work to the unemployed in the trade depression of 1893-9. Unfortunately the fine old Roman well, which lay in a direct line between Trinity Towers and the present Pilots Lookout, was filled in and destroyed in the process. The land so levelled was afterwards enclosed and laid out as an addition to the North Park, but the projected carriage road along the seaward side from the Pier to the Lawe was not then constructed. In 1896, in consideration of the

Town Council's sanction to the extension of the Harton Coal Company's railway, that Company and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners transferred to the Council all their rights in the Bents, a strip of land sixty-two acres in area running along the foreshore from the South Park to the Trow Rocks. Ballast hills at the north end of this land were levelled and a new road constructed to Trow Rocks. The Commissioners also transferred to the Council their rights in the sands and foreshore. The town thus came into possession of a continuous chain of open spaces extending for nearly two miles along the seaward front of the Borough.

The little park of one and a half acres, enclosing part of the Roman remains on the Lawe, was leased to the Corporation by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at a nominal rent, for the preservation of those remains. The spacious West Park adjoining Stanhope Road was formerly the Brinkburn Dene, thirty-one acres of which the Town Council bought from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1894 for £3,500, undertaking, as part of the bargain, to construct Stanhope Road. While part of the Park is laid out in beautiful flower beds and shrubberies, ample provision is made for recreation, and a large area was wisely reserved as a playground for children. During the Great War part of the Park was broken up into allotments, but this area was subsequently restored to the public. Alderman R. Readhead, then "father of the Council," to which he was first elected in 1883, presented to the Town in 1920 eight acres of land between Westoe Village and the approach road to Harton Cemetery, for the purpose of straightening the sharp

curve in the Sunderland Road, the remainder of the land to be laid out as a public park to be called the Readhead Park. The capital expenditure on the parks has exceeded £76,000, and has been, in the higher sense of health and recreation, a profitable investment.

In few towns, probably, have more proposals for the erection of adequate Municipal buildings been discussed and rejected. Soon after the incorporation of the Borough in 1855, a Committee of the Council recommended the construction of Municipal buildings on the site of the Golden Lion Hotel. An alternative scheme was for the erection of a new public hall in the Market Place with covered Markets beneath. Parliamentary Notices were prepared for a Bill empowering the acquisition of the Golden Lion site, but this was dropped. In 1860, a scheme was prepared by the then Borough Surveyor for the erection of a block of public buildings on the south side of the Market Place on the site of the old Vicarage, to include Custom House and Shipping Offices, as well as Municipal Buildings and Fire and Police Station. Powers were sought in a Bill promoted in the following year to carry out this plan, but it was never proceeded with. The same Bill authorized the purchase of the Mill Dam Quay from the Railway Company. In 1869, plans were accepted for the erection of a building on the site of the old Town Hall.



TOWN HALL

The removal of the latter, however, was strongly opposed by the famous North Shields Artist, Birket Foster, R.A., on artistic grounds. A Town's meeting denounced the scheme, which was dropped, as were also proposals to erect new buildings on the east side of the Market Place on the site of Thomas Salmon's old house, and on the west side, between Dean and West Streets.

In 1877 the Council, through the foresight of the then Town Clerk, Mr. Joseph Mason Moore, acquired a 999 year lease at £60 per annum of the commanding site of two and three quarter acres of land in front of Ogle Terrace, on the condition that it should be used only for the erection of public buildings. After many schemes had been discussed, the Council decided in 1900 to erect on this site Municipal Buildings capable of accommodating all the principal departments of the Corporation at an estimated cost of £45,000. In open competition the plans of Mr. E. E. Fetch, of London, were accepted in March, 1902. The foundation stone was laid by the then Mayor, Alderman J. R. Lawson, on September 27, 1905, the top stone of the tower by Councillor W. G. Wylie, Mayor on April 23, 1908, and the completed building was opened by Councillor G. T. Grey, Mayor, on October 19, 1910, when the meeting-place of the Council was transferred from the old Town Hall in the Market Place. The total cost of the Municipal Buildings was £78,387. The bronze statue of the late Queen Victoria, in front of the main entrance was erected by public subscription and unveiled on May 7th, 1913.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### PUBLIC HEALTH AND SANITATION.

THE primary duty of a Town Council is to promote and safeguard the health of the community. Borough, Urban and Rural Councils alike, were in the first instance called Sanitary Authorities or Boards of Health, but too often this obligation is not sufficiently realized. We have seen that the Improvement Commissioners did little for the permanent improvement of the sanitary conditions under which many of their townsmen had to live. The Town Council, in its early years, certainly arranged for a purer and ampler supply of water, and initiated a much needed system of main drainage, but the elaborate organization for checking preventable disease and developing a healthier race is of comparatively recent date. So late as 1868 a regulation preventing the keeping of pigs in close proximity to dwelling-houses was made the subject of bitter opposition in a Parliamentary election. It required two serious epidemics to rouse the Town Council to the necessity for appointing a full time Medical Officer for the Borough.

An outbreak of cholera imported from Hamburg in 1866, brought a proposal from the Town Council to their colleagues in Tynemouth, Newcastle and Gateshead, to unite in providing a cholera hospital. The other towns declined and South Shields provided a temporary wooden cholera hospital on the Lawe. The epidemic, which involved several deaths, lasted from June till near

the end of November. In October, 1870, smallpox, which was ravaging the north of England, broke out in South Shields. The only building available for treating the disease was this wooden hospital at the Lawe, which speedily proved inadequate to treat the large number of cases reported, and the Council leased the Poor Law hospital in Ocean Road. The epidemic lasted until June, 1871, 4,000 cases occurred in the Borough, of which 373 proved fatal, the death rate for the Borough for that year reaching the high figure of 34.8 per thousand. The Council closed some of the slum property which had proved the worst breeding ground of the disease, and in 1872 organized a separate Sanitary Department under the Borough Engineer, to carry out the scavenging of the town, hitherto left to contract.

The real advance in sanitary organization only began in 1874, when after long and acrimonious debates the Town Council decided to appoint a full time medical officer. The Borough was fortunate in the first appointment. Dr. John Spear of Wigan was an enthusiast in his office. He threw all his energies into the work of revolutionizing the sanitary condition of the town, a work carried on with equal enthusiasm by his successors in that office, although they have not always received adequate support from the Council. The first forward step was to protect the community from the importation of disease by the shipping, and so guard against such epidemics as those of 1866 and 1870. On the initiative of the Medical Officer the South Shields Town Council took the lead in organizing a voluntary association of the Sanitary Authorities on the Tyne for the inspection of all vessels

arriving at the port. Medical officers and inspectors were appointed and an old ferry steamer fitted up as a floating hospital. This voluntary organization developed into the Tyne Port Sanitary Authority, established in May, 1882, which controls an efficient staff of medical officers and inspectors, and maintains a well equipped floating hospital in Jarrow Slake.

After frequent recommendations by successive medical officers, the Council, in May, 1883, opened at the Deans a small isolation hospital, of two pavilions and sixteen beds, for the free treatment of infectious diseases. The Infectious Diseases Notification Act was adopted in May, 1891, and has from time to time been extended to the notification of additional diseases. A temporary smallpox hospital was erected in 1892, at White Leas between Harton Colliery and East Boldon. Dr. Eustace Hill, the then medical officer, considered that the building would last for twenty years, by which time he predicted "smallpox would be as extinct as the dodo." A permanent hospital was completed in 1902, and is now the East Durham Joint Smallpox Hospital, managed by a Board representing the Boroughs of South Shields, Sunderland, and Jarrow, the District Councils of Felling, Hebburn and Southwick, and the Rural Councils of South Shields and Southwick. The old iron building was re-erected as an annexe to the Deans Isolation Hospital.

For many years the Health Committee had considered the provision of an isolation hospital more adequate to the requirements of the Borough, and on a more suitable site than the Deans. In 1907 a site of fifteen acres on the

south-western slope of Cleadon Hills was purchased for the erection of such an institution. On the acquirement of the Cleadon Park estate in 1918, it was decided to erect an isolation hospital of 88 beds with administrative block, nurses accommodation, etc., on that estate. One pavilion will be devoted to scarlet fever, another to enteric, and a third to diphtheria, with a ward on the cubicle principle for mixed infections, while there will also be a properly equipped discharge block for convalescent patients. The new isolation hospital will enable the existing building on the Deans to be used for clinics. The Mansion House in Cleadon Park was converted into a Tuberculosis Sanatorium.

Even before the incorporation of the Borough, strong protests had been made against the unsanitary and objectionable system of slaughtering animals for food on private premises, often most unsuitable for the purpose, frequently open to the public view, and without any official inspection. Proposals for the provision of a public slaughter-house or abattoir were made to the Improvement Commissioners without result.

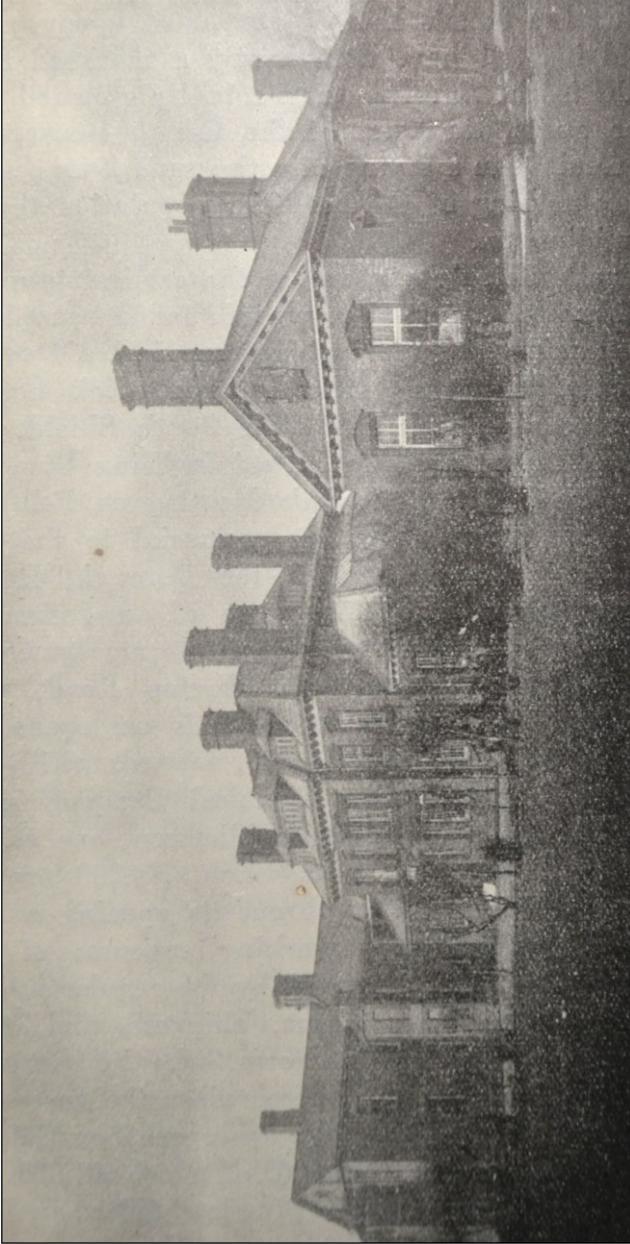
In 1866 the Town Council provided in its estimates £1,500 for this purpose, but nothing was done. The Act of 1896 required the provision of a public slaughter-house within three years. The failure of the Council to carry out this provision was made a strong point by the opponents of the Extension Order in 1901. The Local Government Board inserted a clause in that Order declaring that, unless steps were taken within twelve months to provide a public slaughter-house, and the work

completed within three years, the Board would compel such provision to be made. Council sought to modify this peremptory clause by deciding to license private slaughter-houses, but the Board emphatically refused its consent. An up-to-date group of buildings for use as a public slaughter-house was erected on a site of about an acre in Station Road, opposite St. Hilda Colliery offices, with a subway enabling cattle to be brought direct from the goods station yard without traversing the public streets. The slaughter-houses, which cost £20,000, were opened on October 24, 1906, and slaughtering on private premises was thereafter prohibited.

Probably the most valuable work of the Health Department from the point of view of its permanent effect, is the attention devoted to infant and child welfare in the Borough. An Infant Welfare Centre was opened in 1913 with a competent staff, and the Infant Clinic is rather inadequately housed in the Health Department. Great attention is devoted to the supply of milk and milk foods, and this was especially the case during the War. The medical inspection of school children, which is now coordinated with the Infant Welfare work, was originally commenced by the Education Committee, but was perforce suspended during the War. When, in July, 1919, all the Public Health Services in the Borough were coordinated under the supervision of the Ministry of Health, the work of the school clinics was transferred to the Health Department. In addition to the general inspection there are Eye and Dental clinics, and the health nurse visits the homes of defective children. The considerable opposition to this work at first displayed by some parents,

gradually died down as the beneficial effects of the Department's work became more evident. The Department also supervises the provision for feeding necessitous children.

The Municipal Tuberculosis Clinic is proving of increasing value. The annual attendances at the clinic number over 12,000. The Department, in addition to the Sanatorium at Cleadon Park, maintains beds in the Sanatoria at Stanhope and Wolsingham, and the Poor Law Guardians send tuberculous children to the special sanatorium at Stannington. The clinic also examines applicants for sanatorium benefit under the Insurance Act and discharged soldier and sailor applicants for pensions. The Health Department possesses a well equipped municipal laboratory for microscopic and bacterial examinations. The Department also controls the inspection and analysis of food and drugs, the inspection of lodging houses, factories, work places, etc. The chief Medical Officer, who is also chief Tuberculosis Officer and principal School Medical Officer, has a staff of four assistant M.O.'s, School Operating Surgeon, School Dental Officer, Analyst, Doctor, Health Nurses, a Health Visitor and six Inspectors, in addition to the hospital and clerical staffs. The Department has two motor ambulances, presented in 1919 by Mr. F. A. O. Laing and Alderman Robert Readhead respectively. The work of the Department has resulted in very remarkable saving of life. Had the death-rate which prevailed during the decade 1871-80 continued to-day, there would in 1921



THE INGHAM INFIRMARY

*(Photo W. Parry, South Shields)*

have been nearly a thousand more deaths in the Borough than actually occurred. In other words, the work of the Health Department has resulted in a saving of a thousand lives a year, to say nothing of the healthier population that it is building up.

South Shields was one of the earliest towns in the North of England to provide for the supply of free nursing and medical and surgical aid to the poorer inhabitants. The Indigent Sick Society was established in 1818. The South Shields and Westoe Dispensary was opened in King Street in February, 1821. A Town's Meeting on February 22, 1869, decided that the memorial to the first member of Parliament for the Borough, Robert Ingham, should take the form of an Infirmary, with which the Dispensary should be amalgamated. The Ingham Infirmary in Westoe Road, with accommodation for twenty-one beds was opened on June 3, 1873. It cost £6,815, towards which the partners in the Jarrow Chemical Company gave £4,000. Alderman John Williamson, one of the partners, contributed, in addition, £1,200 towards the cost of furnishing. From its opening a considerable part of the working expenses of the Infirmary has been provided by the regular weekly contribution of the miners, shipyard and other classes of workers in the town, who by virtue of their contributions are represented on the governing body. The Readhead wing was opened on October 14, 1899, at a cost of £9,600, of which £4,000 was contributed by the family of the late Alderman John Readhead as a memorial to their father.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### EDUCATION.

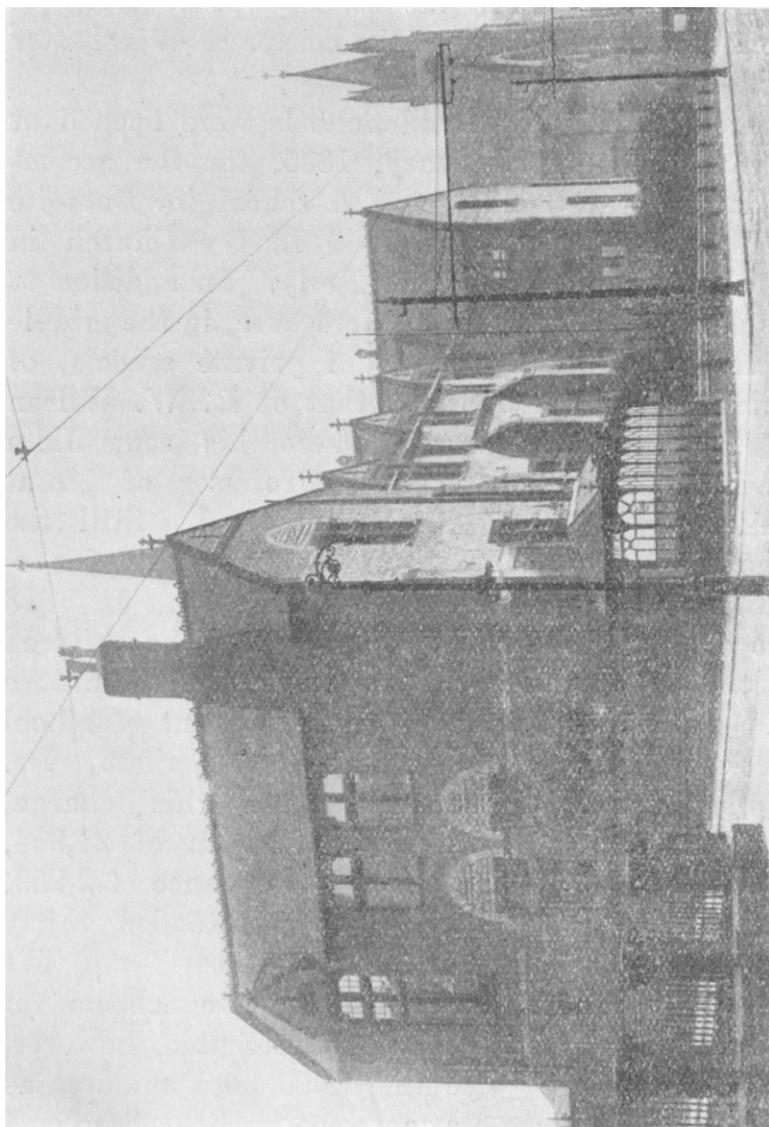
SOUTH SHIELDS had no ancient endowments for education. No public provision for the teaching of the young was made until 1769, when, as the outcome of three legacies of £100 each left by Christopher Maughan (1749), Ann Aubone (1760) and Lockwood Brodrick, which with other donations and interest had accumulated to £800, a charity school was opened on October 20th. The School Committee were the incumbent of St. Hild's and four members elected by the subscribers. Scholars had to be recommended by subscribers and nominated by the Trustees, preference being given to orphans. At first it was accommodated in private premises rented at £5 a year. From a population of at least 7,000 to 8,000, only sixteen scholars were obtained. After a time the school was transferred to the Town Hall. In 1783 a two-storey building was erected for it at the Alum House Ham. It is interesting to know that William Wouldhave, the inventor of the life-boat, was for some years Singing Master.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the endowment fund had increased to £2,000, and in 1810 it was augmented by a bequest by Margaret Lazonby of £200 for the education and clothing of poor children - now known as the Lazonby Charity. About the same time a third storey was added to the school building, and used partly as a residence for the school mistress and partly as a Public Library. In 1848 the school was transferred to

new buildings in Coronation Street facing St. Hild's Church. It was amongst the earliest to be organized on the Madras system of Dr. Bell, which developed into the National School organization. A second Church school was opened in the Chapel of Ease in Fowler Street in 1817.

The first Undenominational school - known as the Union British - was established as the result of a public meeting in December, 1833, when it was stated that there were in the town 1,200 to 1,400 children absolutely without education. In both the existing schools the children were trained in the religious doctrines of the Church of England, and required to attend the Services of that Church. The school was opened in April, 1834, in temporary premises, with Mr. Richard Howse as master. The building in Waterloo Vale, now incorporated in the Gas Company's premises, was opened in the same year. For half a century the Union British held high rank amongst the schools of the North. Its most famous master was Mr. John Thomas (1854-81). A second undenominational school was established in 1844 by the Jarrow Chemical Company, for the education of the children of their workmen, and transferred in 1849 to new schools built at the Barnes to accommodate 600 children. From 1856 to 1883 its master was Mr. John Johnson. In 1846 the St. John's Sessional school was opened in the Seamen's Hall, Fowler Street, with eight pupils, one of whom became the famous Baptist Minister, the Rev. Richard Glover, D.D., of Bristol. In 1847 the school was removed to premises erected for it at the corner of Winchester and Anderson Streets.

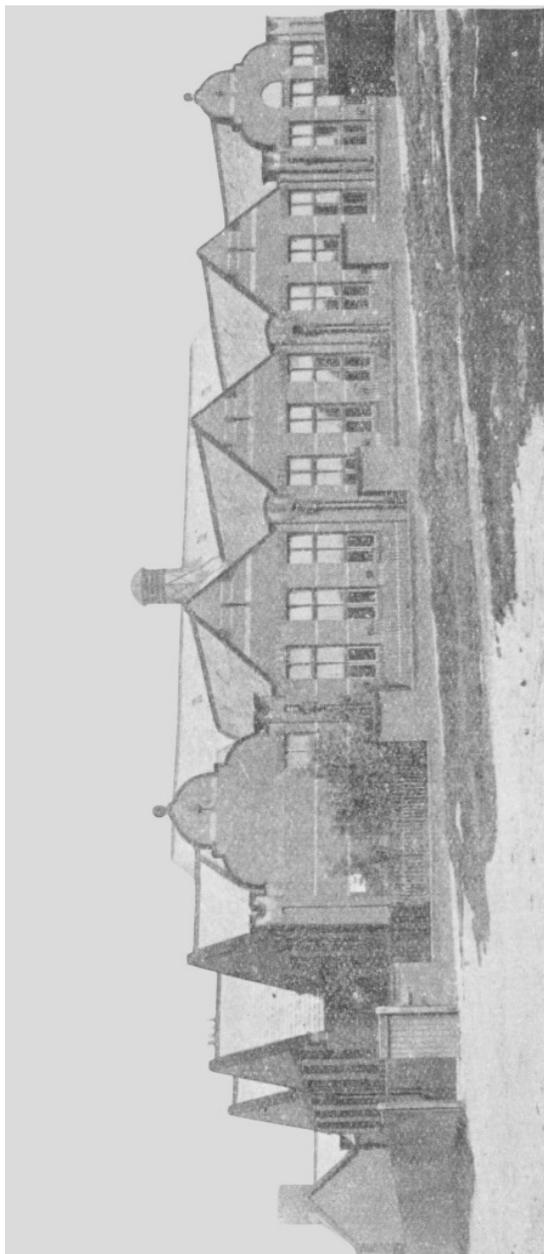
Holy Trinity National Schools were opened at High Shields in February, 1836, for the accommodation of 330 children. A school for Catholic children was opened in 1849 in the Church in Cuthbert Street, by Father Kelly. In addition to these seven public schools, there were, in the middle of last century, a number of private schools, of which the most noted was that of R. W. Wilson in East Smithy Street, where his son, John Mathias Wilson, afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford, was educated. Still the school accommodation available was quite inadequate to the requirements of the town. In 1853 one of H.M. Inspectors reported that the children of the Borough were "beset by much ignorance and many moral evils through the want of school accommodation." The Dean of Durham, Dr. Waddington, indignantly denied this charge, pointing out that, with a population of 28,954, the public schools had a daily attendance of 2,209, and in addition 1,271 children attended thirty private schools for the lower classes and 571 children attended eighteen "private schools for the middle classes." It is questionable, however, whether anything like the 4,000 here enumerated were in regular attendance. St. Stephens National Schools, for 600 children, were opened about that date, the Lake Chemical Company's schools at East Jarrow in 1864 and the Templetown Colliery School in 1868.



OCEAN ROAD COUNCIL SCHOOL OPENED 3RD AUGUST, 1873.

In October of that year, also, the Tyne Dock British Schools were opened in temporary premises with 400 scholars, and transferred to permanent buildings in January, 1868. St. Mary's National School for 500 pupils was opened in 1868 and St. Mark's the following year. The Catholic schools were transferred to new buildings in Victoria Road in 1867.

South Shields was amongst the earliest Boroughs in England to elect a School Board under Mr. W. E. Forster's great Education Act of 1870, which rendered school attendance compulsory and required the necessary school accommodation to be provided. The first School Board was elected on January 27, 1871. It found that the existing public schools only provided places for 5,092 out of 10,848 children of school age in the Borough. A big building programme had, therefore, to be entered upon at once. Ocean Road Schools, with 1,500 places, the largest at that date in the north, were opened on August 3, 1873, and Cone Street a little later. The Tyne Dock British Schools were leased to the Board in 1876, and were afterwards known as the Hudson Street, the East Jarrow School in 1878 and St. Mary's in 1880. Schools with 1,116 places were opened at Laygate, 1882, and with 716 places in Baring Street in 1883, in which year the Barnes schools were taken over. An infant school was erected at the Deans in 1887 and the Westoe Road schools, with accommodation for over 2,000 scholars in 1890. The latter then ranked amongst the largest in England. The Union British Schools were transferred to the Board in 1893, and the Stanhope Schools with 1,772 places, opened in April, 1896.

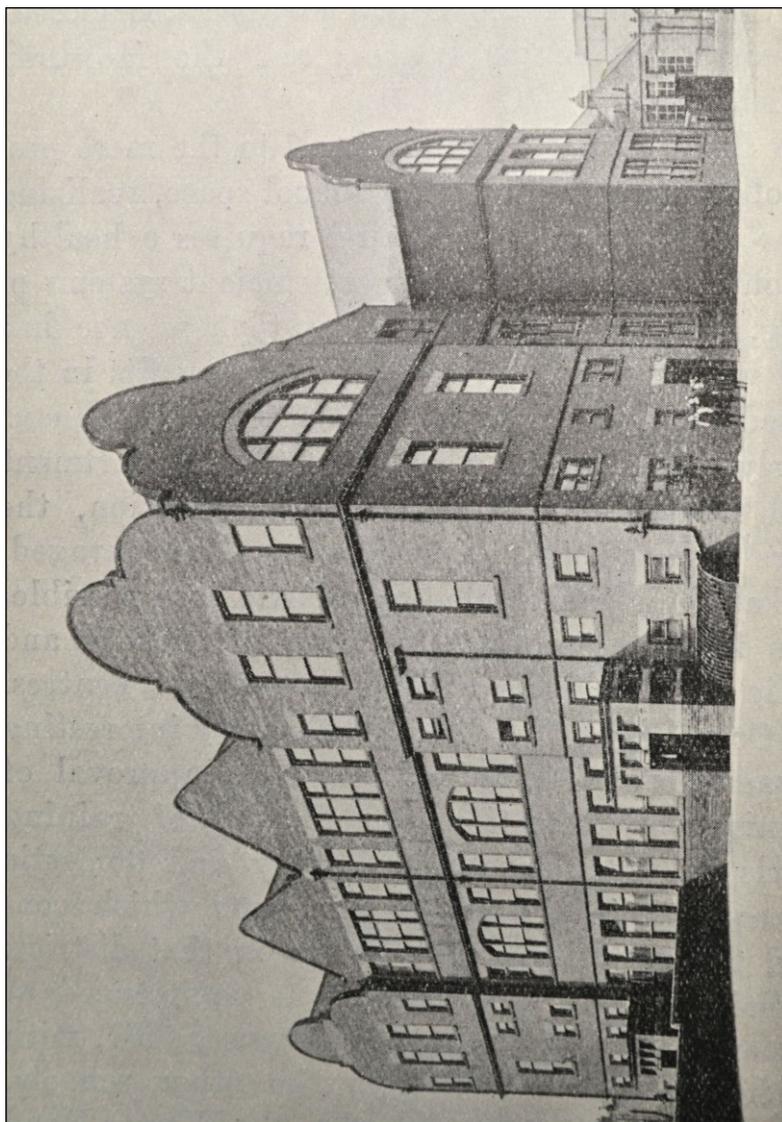


MOWBRAY INFANTS COUNCIL SCHOOL – OPENED 16<sup>TH</sup>, AUGUST 1909.

The British Schools in Hudson Street were thereafter closed. The Mortimer Road Schools, for 1,812 children, were opened in August, 1901, when the Union British was closed ; the Dean Road Senior Schools and the Mowbray Road Schools in 1909.

The Board did not confine itself to the mere provision of so many cubic feet of school space, realizing that the cultivation of the mind requires a healthy condition of the body. The most efficient systems of lighting, heating and ventilation that science had devised were adopted, with satisfactory results in the decreased loss of school time through illness. Similarly, so soon as the Education Department relaxed its cast-iron "code" of instruction, the teachers were not only permitted, but encouraged, to make their curricula as elastic as possible. Schools for the practical teaching of cookery and domestic work were instituted at various centres, and at Cone Street Girls' School the very interesting experiment, which obtained the high approval of the Minister of Education, was adopted, of training the girls in the marketing, cookery and domestic work required in the small tenements which constituted the majority of the houses in that district.

A Science and Art section was commenced at the Ocean Road Boys School in August, 1887, with free scholarships thereto from the other schools. This department was transferred to the Westoe Road Senior School, which formed part of the Westoe Road block of schools, consisting of boys' girls' and infants' departments. Four years later an organized Science School was created at the Senior School with 540 places



WESTOE SECONDARY SCHOOL

which were speedily filled. A new Science School for 680 pupils was erected in 1902 on an adjoining site and the pupils transferred. It was opened in March, 1902, and was recognized as a Secondary Day School under the Act of 1902. The premises vacated were utilized for a new Senior School, absorbing the senior scholars from the boys' and girls' departments. The Westoe group of schools thus provided 2,853 school places.

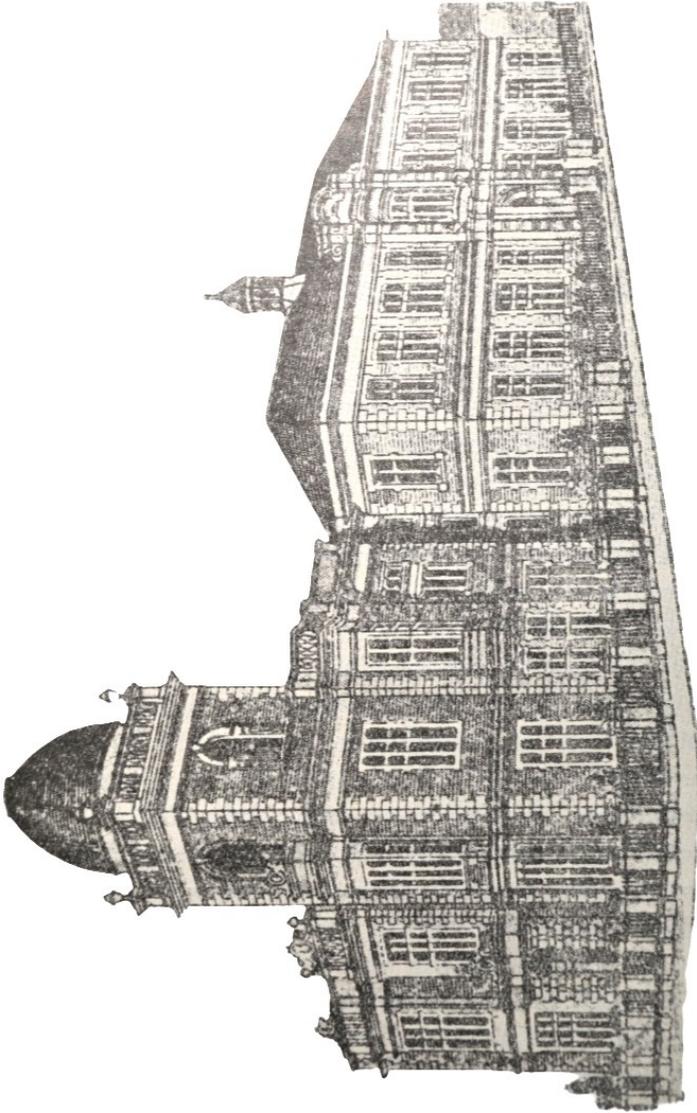
Under the Act of 1902 the Council became the Local Education Authority as from May 1, 1903. Its powers are exercised through the Education Committee of twenty-four members, sixteen members of the Council, two representatives of the Church of England, one of Catholic schools, and one of higher education; two persons having experience in education, and two women with knowledge of elementary or higher education. The school buildings of the Borough of to-day represent a capital cost of £215,000 while since the formation of the School Board down to March 31, 1921, a total of £800,000 has been levied in education rates, apart, of course, from Government grants and fees.

Under the powers conferred by the Education Act of 1918 a comprehensive scheme was prepared, designed eventually to provide a free education from the infant school to the university for "all scholars who possess the required standard of attainment and physical fitness, even though their parents do not possess the necessary funds to enable them to meet the expenses thereof." The first practical step was taken in 1920 by the conversion of the Westoe Senior School, into a Central School, organized

in two departments, one for 300 boys, and one for 300 girls. The school course in each is progressively arranged over a period of four years. Admission is restricted to scholars between eleven and twelve years of age. The aim of the school is to give a sound secondary education. Vocational subjects are not to be commenced until the third year's course. The Education Authority also set up a Joint Advisory Committee of the teaching staff to secure an even closer co-operation than hitherto, and invited the assistance of representatives of Employers and Employees Associations in considering schemes for continuation schools, vocational teaching, etc. Various other changes were contemplated by the scheme which has for its object "to provide for the broader educational needs of South Shields as a community."

The house known as Wyvestou (in Westoe village) was bought by the Managers of St. Bede's School with a view to its being utilized for the purpose of a Roman Catholic Central School. The Board of Education recognized it as supplying accommodation for 150 pupils. It has been extensively furnished and equipped by the Local Education Authority and was opened in November, 1921.

The Borough, in spite of its lack of ancient endowment, is well provided with facilities for secondary and technical instruction. In the latter category first place is taken by the Marine College. Dr. Thomas Masterman Winterbottom, in 1837, gave a plot of land, and the reversion at the death of his sister of shares valued at £30,700 for the erection of a school for education in the



MARINE SCHOOL

principles of Navigation and Astronomy. Dr. Winterbottom died in 1859 at the age of 93, and the school was opened in the Mechanics' Hall on the 26th March, 1861, the anniversary of the birthday of its founder; with the Rev. R. E. Hooppell as Master.

The excellent building in Ocean Road was opened on the 12th June, 1869; it contains well arranged lecture and class-rooms; there is some very fine wood carving by T. W. Rowe the South Shields sculptor; the 7 inch equatorial telescope was made by John Thomas Martin a self taught genius who was for many years Inspector of Weights and Measures in the Borough. In 1903 a department in marine engineering was instituted, which soon necessitated increased accommodation. In 1909 the school building was doubled in size by the addition of five class-rooms and two engineering laboratories. One of the large rooms in the old building was converted into a seamanship room and equipped with a mast 17 feet high with full rigging, as well as other nautical apparatus. In 1914 a further extension provided an engineering laboratory containing a marine type water-tube boiler, a 60 horsepower quadruple expansion experimental steam engine, two dynamos and other apparatus.

The total number of certificates gained by students of this school in navigation during the years 1862 to 1921 was 6,713, and in engineering during the years 1903 to 1921 was 3,317. Thus a very considerable proportion of the officers and engineers who obtain certificates in the United Kingdom are trained in the Marine school of South Shields. Of the last twenty-five appointments as

Engineer Surveyor to the Board of Trade made on the results of competitive examinations during the years 1918 to 1921 no fewer than seventeen have been obtained by students of the Marine school. A department in wireless telegraphy, equipped with a full size set of apparatus as used on board ship, was established in 1916.

The first High School owed its origin to private enterprise. A public meeting on January 19, 1882, invited the Boys' Public Day School Co., just formed, to erect a school in South Shields. The invitation was accepted, subject to £2,000 being subscribed in the Borough. A site of four acres was secured in Mowbray Road, on which the main building of two storeys, including halls, classrooms, laboratories and private rooms for the head and assistant masters, was erected. The school opened in August, 1885, with twenty-seven pupils, one of whom, Walter Runciman, was to become Minister of Education with Cabinet rank. In that capacity he opened on September 12, 1899, a new wing, including art classrooms, laboratories, etc. Although an educational, the school was not a financial success, and in May, 1908, was transferred, for £8,500 to the Education Authority, by whom it is carried on as a Higher Grade Secondary School and training centre for teachers.

St. John's Sessional School was re-organized as a Higher Grade School in January, 1886, with nearly 500 pupils. In October, 1890, it was removed to the new buildings joining St. John's Church, and carried on as a higher grade school for science, art and technical classes, absorbing the Art School which, since 1881, had been

held in Albany Chambers, King Street. In January, 1905, St. John's ceased to be a Science School and the Local Education Authority decided to convert this section of the school into a department of the Commercial type, which organization exists to-day.

The Wellesley training ship for destitute boys was established on the Tyne as the outcome of a public meeting in Newcastle in January, 1868. The frigate "Cornwall" lent by the Admiralty was re-christened the "Wellesley" and the first boys admitted on July 30 of that year. She soon proved too small and in 1873 was replaced by the "Boscawen" also renamed the "Wellesley." She was destroyed by fire on March 11, 1914, and the boys, temporarily were housed ashore at Tynemouth. They were transferred from the Palace, Tynemouth, in June, 1920, to premises in Links Road, Blyth, formerly occupied as a Naval establishment. In 1877 the family mansion of the Greens in Mile End Road was presented to the Committee and used for a time as a hospital, but after 1883 as a home for junior boys. These boys were transferred to Blyth on April 1st, 1922.

South Shields was amongst the earliest towns to adopt the ideas of Lord Brougham and George Birkbeck for the better education of the working classes through the medium of Mechanics' Institutes in which reference libraries were provided, lectures given, etc. The Literary, Mechanic and Scientific Institution as it was called, was opened in November 23, 1822. For some years it occupied the basement of the Glebe Chapel in Cornwallis Street. The first Mechanics' Hall in Fowler Street was



*(Photo W. Parry, South Shields)*

PUBLIC LIBRARY AND MUSEUM

opened on February 20, 1835. A second building, now the Public Library and Museum in Ocean Road, was opened on April 10, 1860. It contained a large hall for public meetings with reading rooms, a library with over 5,000 volumes, and class-rooms, etc. Then the Working Men's Club and Institution - the first in Great Britain - was established on March 11, 1850, in the schoolroom of Salem Street Chapel. It founded the Microscopical Society and Geological Club and a Library and Museum. In 1870 it was amalgamated with the Mechanics' Institute. A Mechanics' Institute for Tyne Dock was opened in 1839.

The Borough was prompt to avail itself of the powers in the Public Libraries Act of 1871, which was adopted at a town's meeting on April 14 that year. The Committee of the Mechanics' Institute offered to hand over their building and library, subject to the Town Council taking over the liabilities, amounting to £2,100. This was done, and after alterations the building was re-opened as the Public Library on October 15, 1873. The Museum was opened on February 24, 1876, to house the large number of relics of Roman South Shields discovered during the exploration of the station on the Lawe. In 1895 the large hall on the first floor was utilized to house the Reference Library and Museum. The Museum is frequently used for temporary exhibitions of pictures. Through the generosity of a former citizen of the town, Mr. Thomas Reed, F.C.A., a small art gallery was opened in 1921 in a room on the first floor of the library buildings, to which Mr. Reed has already contributed more than fifty pictures. These are all by artists of local repute or by

painters of national fame. They comprise for the most part works in landscape painting. The pictures are intended by the donor to be the foundation of an art collection which will be in the future one worthy of a great seaport like this. The Library comprises nearly 35,000 volumes of which about one-third are in the Reference Department. Reading rooms were opened at Tyne Dock in 1875 and Laygate Lane in 1894. Under the Education Act of 1918, the Free Library Committee have opened school reference libraries in twelve of the public schools and have also fitted up a large room at the Central Library as a reading room and reference library for scholars attending the respective schools in the Borough.



## CHAPTER XV.

### SOUTH SHIELDS IN WAR TIME.

FROM its early days South Shields has been intimately associated with War by land and sea. Under the Prior and Convent and the Dean and Chapter the tenants were bound, when called upon, to render thirty days' military service in defence of the Bishopric. This obligation, we believe, was still embodied in leases down to the time of the transfer of the Dean and Chapter estates to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners about 1870. In 1615 the Parish of Jarrow, the principal part of the population of which was resident in South Shields, sent 294 men to a muster of the forces of the Palatinate on Gilesgate Moor. When the Civil War broke out in 1643 the South Shields trained bands were reinforced from other parts of the County to a total strength of 600 foot and 100 horse. The town was again in jeopardy during the Jacobite Rising of 1715, when it was feared that the rebels would march South via the town. Lord Scarborough, for the Government, seized the ferries. The trained bands were again called out and the townsfolk required to sign an undertaking to stand by the Government and King George I. These precautions were renewed, and reinforced by a number of warships, in 1745, when the Northumbrian Jacobites rose under the unfortunate and last Earl of Derwentwater. In this emergency the Shields pilots appear to have manned the guns on the Lawe battery.

In 1797, when England stood alone in the War with France, and invasion seemed possible, the South Shields Loyal Volunteer Corps were raised, with Sir Cuthbert Heron as Commander. It was recruited mainly from the tradesmen of the town and numbered 230 to 300 members. The corps was presented by the ladies of the town with its colours, which were duly consecrated at St. Hild's on June 4, 1798. The drills usually took place on the Bents after morning service on Sundays. The Corps remained in existence for about twenty years. Its colours were, on April 4, 1867, presented to the Corporation by Mrs. Lockey Harle, a grand-daughter of Sir Cuthbert Heron, and are now in the Public Library. A second volunteer force of Yeomanry was raised in 1804-5, when Napoleon had assembled his famous fleet of flat-bottomed boats at Boulogne for the invasion of England. This was the South Shields Loyal Independent Armed Association, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Bulmer, of Laygate House. The pilots at the same time formed a body of Sea Fencibles under Captain Praed, and were drilled in the use of the "big" guns on the Lawe, and also on board a number of armed vessels which were sent to the Tyne for their training.

It was again a threat of French invasion, by Napoleon III. in 1859, which led to the establishment of the modern Volunteer Force in South Shields. At a town's meeting on November 28, 1859, at which Alderman George Potts, who had held a commission in Sir Cuthbert Heron's Corps, was present, the South Shields Rifle Volunteer Corps, the 6th Durham, was established and a subscription raised for its equipment. Alderman John

Williamson was the first Commander, and the ranks were soon filled. Mr. J. C. Stevenson, Alderman Williamson's partner, at the town's meeting advocated the formation also of an Artillery corps for the defence of the harbour and coast. The idea was endorsed by another town's meeting on December 2, and the 3rd Durham Artillery Corps was enrolled on February 17, 1860, with Mr. Stevenson as Captain Commandant. The Rifle Corps amalgamated with the Artillery in December, 1863, but another Rifle Corps, afterwards the 5th Durham, was formed at a meeting at Tyne Dock in April, 1867, with Captain Russell as Commander.

At the outbreak of the war with the South African Republics, familiarly known as the Boer War (October 1899 to May, 1902), a considerable number of the South Shields volunteers individually offered and were accepted for Active Service. The fortunes of the war were followed with keen interest in the town. The relief of Mafeking was celebrated with great enthusiasm. On May 10, 1900, on their return, the freedom of the Borough was conferred upon 107 of the men resident in the Borough who had fought in the war, in recognition of the manner in which they had performed their duty to the Empire.

Under Lord Haldane's scheme of Army Reform, the volunteers became the Territorial Army and the South Shields Artillery was transformed into a unit of the Northumbrian Howitzer Brigade, having charge of the great coast defence fort erected a few years before near Frenchman's Bay. The Fort was inspected by Field-

Marshal Earl Roberts, V.C., then Commander-in-Chief, during his visit to South Shields on June 24, 1903.

On the outbreak of the Great War with Germany and her Allies, on August 4, 1914, the greater part of the Shields members of the Howitzer Brigade volunteered and were accepted for active service. The South Shields Battery, as a unit, went through the whole of the War, several of its members winning decorations, and its Commander, Lieut.-Col. R. Chapman, the D.S.O. and the French Legion of Honour. A civic reception was given by the Mayor and Town Council to the 7th Durham Light Infantry, largely recruited in the town, prior to the Battalion leaving for the Front on March 31, 1915. The response of the manhood of the Borough to the country's call was equal to that of any community in the land. Apart from the many engaged in war work at home, at least 13,000 South Shields men served in the Army or the Navy and its auxiliaries. The toll of the War was heavy. Some 2,000 Shields men laid down their lives. At least one townsman won the V.C., Private Henry Howey Robson, 2nd Battalion Royal Scots, by conspicuous bravery near Kemmel, Belgium, on December 14, 1914. During an attack on the German position he left his trench under very heavy fire and rescued a wounded non-commissioned officer, subsequently attempting to bring another wounded man into cover while exposed to heavy fire. He was presented with the freedom of the Borough on October 6, 1915. A civic reception was also accorded to Lieutenant Michael O'Leary, V.C., when he visited the town on the occasion of the Flag day for the Tyneside Irish Regiment on March 18, 1916. At least 800 South

Shields women served in the W.A.A.C., W.R.E.N., and the W.R.A.F.

Shields seamen maintained and gloriously enhanced in the Great War the reputation for bravery won by generations of their predecessors. When, soon after the declaration of war, the first mines sown by the enemy at sea shattered the North Shields trawler fleet, practically every surviving trawlerman in the Port volunteered for the extra-hazardous task of mine-sweeping, in which fully 2,000 local men were engaged throughout the war. Of the perils braved and risks run by the merchant seamen of the Port to ensure supplies of food and ammunition to the troops, fuel to the Navy, and food stuffs for the home population, volumes might be written without exhausting the subject. The pilots, too, paid heavy toll when, on December 31, 1916, the Pilot Cutter Protector was blown up off the harbour by a German mine, and all on board - 10 pilots, 4 apprentices, and the crew of 5 - perished. Nearly 200 merchant seamen from the Tyne were with their ships in German ports when the war broke out, and were interned throughout its duration. Starved for food, ill-clad and ill-treated, not one man of them yielded to the blandishments which, in the early days of the War, offered them freedom and high pay to take service with the enemy. When their plight became known, the townspeople, especially the seamen and shipyard workers, contributed handsomely to feed and clothe these prisoners of war. A total of nearly £10,000 was subscribed. The interned seamen were released when peace was signed, the balance of the fund being

distributed amongst them at a reunion in St. Paul's Hall on December 17, 1918.

The town itself, although it escaped the great destruction and loss of life which befell Hull and Hartlepool, had some trying experiences during the War. It was at least four times subjected to zeppelin raids. The first was April 15, 1915. On June 15, that year, the fitting shop at Palmer's Jarrow Works was struck and a number of men killed. Five bombs were dropped in South Shields - on the Fair ground near the Market Place, in Ferry Street, on the Bents, and the South Sands, but fortunately no one was injured. On April 2, 1916, two or three bombs were dropped near Harton, in the raid which did such extensive damage at Whitley Bay, where several houses were set on fire, fortunately without involving loss of life. On August 8, 1917, a raid took place over Cleadon, South Shields, and Tyneside.

The Borough loyally supported the men in the field with material and money. Two motor ambulances, costing £600, were despatched to the Front as the gift of the town in August, 1915. Innumerable working parties and flag days were organized to supply comforts to the soldiers and sailors on service. Toward the enormous national expenditure entailed by the war the Borough made notable contributions. Tank Week (January, 1917) was a combined effort between South Shields, Tynemouth, and Jarrow.

The amounts realized were:-

	£
South Shields .....	665,472
Tynemouth .....	557,821
Jarrow.....	16,137
	<hr/>
	£1,239,430
	<hr/>

South Shields on its own account raised in –

	£
War Weapons Week (July, 1917) .....	121,792
Guns Week (October, 1918).....	642,720
Business Men's Week.....	287,606

When the War Savings movement commenced in July, 1916, the schools in the Borough immediately took up the movement with enthusiasm, and a number of Associations were formed for the purchase of sixpenny coupons weekly. When thirty-one had been purchased they were exchanged for a fifteen and sixpenny certificate, which, in turn, produced £1 at the end of five years. A number of certificates were also purchased outright. In all twenty-one Associations were formed in the schools, and over £70,000 War Saving Certificates purchased through their means.

The Borough shared in the national relief when the armistice between the contending armies was signed on November 11, 1918. The signing of the Peace Treaty the following July was made the occasion of a special thanksgiving in St. Hild's on July 6, 1919, while the Town gave itself up to general rejoicing on the 19th. The

Mayor, Councillor Sykes, organized a War Memorial Committee, who prepared a three-fold scheme :-

- (1) To give a reception to the men on their return.
- (2) To present a suitable souvenir to every man and woman who served on sea or land during the War.
- (3) To erect a Town's War Memorial.

To meet the first object a reception fête was given in the South Marine Park on Saturday, August 9, 1919. Upwards of 10,000 invitations were sent out, these including not only the recipient, but also his or her family, covering over 30,000 people in all. A musical and orchestral programme was rendered during the afternoon.

The souvenirs consisted of an illuminated certificate setting forth that it was presented by the people of South Shields in grateful appreciation and recognition of gallant services rendered in the Great War, 1914-19. Each bore the name of the recipient. These were distributed from the Town Hall, while 24,000 souvenirs were presented by the Education Committee to the scholars attending the schools.

It was proposed that the Town's Memorial should take the form of a children's hospital on a site adjoining the Ingham Infirmary grounds at a cost of £20,000.

Tyne Dock erected a Cenotaph as a memorial to the men of the west end of the Borough. It was unveiled on October 16, 1921.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE CHURCHES.

ST. Hild's, the Mother Church of the Borough, represents, if it does not occupy the actual site of, one of the earliest Christian Churches on Tyneside, that founded by St. Aidan about A.D. 647, endowed by the Saxon King Oswin, and placed in charge of the Northumbrian Princess Hild, afterwards the famous Abbess of Whitby. Although no trace of the original Church remains, there is a relic of one of its early successors in a Norman arch in the foundation of the tower. The Church of St. Hild's at South Shields is mentioned in Charters of 1154 and 1204, in the Assize Records for 1256 and the Halmote Court Rolls for 1296 and 1303. It was, and remained for six centuries, a Chapelry within the Parish of Jarrow. Robert De Dalton was appointed perpetual Chaplain in 1322, having under his care the parishioners of "Le Sheels, Harton and Wynestou" - the ancient name of Westoe. He had a manse, and his stipend was derived from the glebe, half the offerings placed in the Pix (or Alms-box) of the Holy Cross in the Chapel, half the wax offered for the use of the Church, the fees for Churchings, Baptisms, and Funerals, the "Hedemespenys" (probably the accustomed offering at the Mass of Requiem), the pence for blessed bread, the tithe of fish called Saynte Hyldeffysche, with all the ancient usages of the Parish and one mark (13s. 4d.) annually from the Master of Jarrow Monastery, who received the tithes of the Parish.

The references to the Church and its chaplains in the ancient records are sufficiently numerous to establish its continuous existence down to the time of the Reformation. The Advowson was given to the Dean and Chapter of Durham by Henry VIII. when he endowed the Cathedral Church in 1546. There is a fairly complete list of its clergy since that date. At the time of the Civil War, the incumbent, a strong "Church and King" man, known as Cavalier Wandles, was ejected and imprisoned when the Parliament got the upper hand, and a "Mr." Thomas Lupton appointed minister. The first register of the Church was opened on September 20, 1653, in accordance with an Act of the Commonwealth Parliament a month earlier, directing the registration of all marriages, baptisms, and funerals. Mr. Lupton was deprived of the living at the Restoration, or under the Act of Uniformity in 1661, and the Rev. Patrick Watt appointed. He had been lecturer at St. Hild's prior to the Civil War. This office, which endured into the nineteenth century, entailed preaching on Sunday afternoons and festivals, the stipend being raised by voluntary subscription.

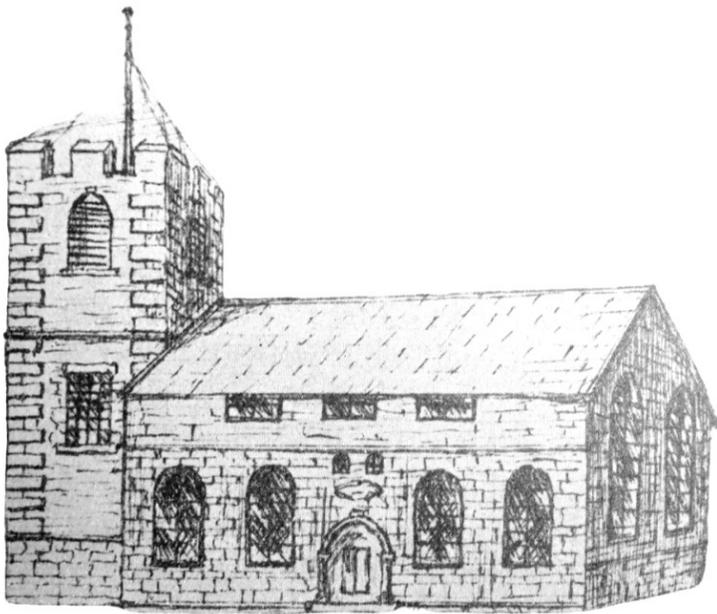
The Church at that period was a small building consisting of a nave and south aisle, divided by five arches, and without a chancel. Another aisle was added before 1682, when the additional pews were allocated to different householders. At that time, and down to after the middle of the nineteenth century, churches were not open freely to everyone as they are now. The pews were regarded as private property, either attached to the ownership of particular premises or owned by individuals. It

was this fact, no doubt, which induced the Masters and Mariners of Whitby, who frequented the port, to provide, at their own cost, in 1688, a gallery with three pews, in one of the arches, as they were “unwilling to be uneasy to the inhabitants in their own seats.”

The Church was rebuilt or considerably restored about 1728, at a cost of £1,595. At that time it appears to have been well attended, for six years later the Curate, the Rev. Thomas Simpson, reported the number of families in the Parish to be about 700, and the number of Communicants at the monthly Sacrament about 80, and at the Festivals a hundred or more. There were about forty families of Presbyterians and Anabaptists, each of these bodies having a Meeting House. The income of the living was between £70 and £80 per annum, and the Parish assessments to the poor £150 or £160 per annum. A further extension of the Church was made about 1764, when a West Gallery was added and an organ placed therein, the steeple raised twelve feet, and a peal of six bells purchased from the Whitechapel Foundry in London.

In 1784, on the ground that the Church was “not capable of containing above a quarter of the inhabitants who wished to be accommodated with pews there,” a faculty was obtained for its enlargement, by removing the south wall, adding ten feet to the breadth of the building,

and continuing the north wall to the full length of the Church. At the same time the roof of the middle aisle was raised, and new galleries constructed, and other internal improvements made, at an expense of £3,000, including £378 paid in compensation for pews which were removed, while £2,800 was raised from the sale of the new pews at prices varying from £7 to £60 per pew, or



ST. HILD'S IN 1802.

36s. 6d. to £4 per single seat. The Church Tower formerly contained a very ancient clock with only an hour hand. This was replaced in 1809 by a new clock provided by public subscription.

In 1810 the building had again fallen into a ruinous condition, necessitating the support of the roof by props, while the north and east walls were also insecure. A Town's meeting authorized the Churchwardens to carry out its restoration, raising the necessary funds by loan, the interest and redemption to be met by a special Church rate. The work involved practically the reconstruction of the building, with the exception of the tower, and left it in its modern form - plain, but commodious. The interior pillars were all removed, leaving the new roof the largest single span unsupported by pillars in the diocese. A uniform gallery was constructed round the south, west, and north sides, and at the east end an apse. This contains a fine painted window in three panels; the centre represents the Crucifixion with the three Mary's at the foot of the cross, the right, the baptism of Jesus, and the left, His breaking bread with the disciples after the Resurrection. The Ascension is portrayed in plaster work above the window. The rest of the ceiling was flat and plastered. The enlarged Church contained 1,520 seatings, of which only 180 were free. The cost of the rebuilding was £6,860. Much difficulty was experienced in raising that amount, bankers refusing to advance so large a loan, as they doubted the legal right of the Churchwardens to levy a rate. A private Act of Parliament had, consequently, to be obtained, authorizing the levying of Church rates of 1s. in the pound until the debt was liquidated.

South Shields was separated from the Parish of Jarrow, and created an independent Ecclesiastical Parish and Perpetual Curacy, by Order in Council dated June

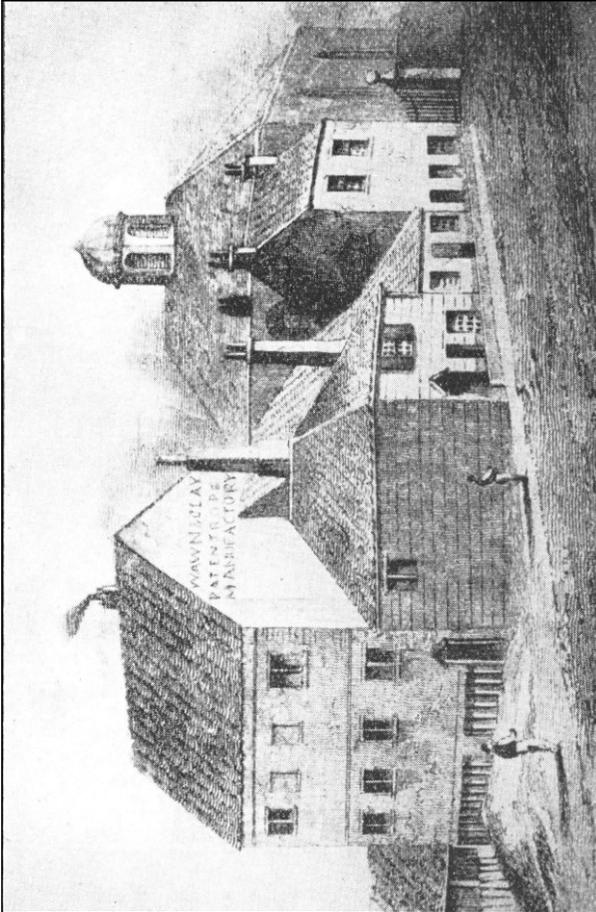
30th, 1845, which provided that the inhabitants of the new Parish were to continue to contribute to the repair of the Jarrow Church. The Rev. James Carr, who was the first incumbent of the independent parish, was succeeded in 1862 by the Rev. T. H. Chester, who may be called the father of the forward movement amongst the Churches of the Borough. He founded St. Hild's Y.M.C.A. in 1868; a new building was erected in Waterloo Vale for its accommodation in 1876. Other Church and Parochial organizations were set on foot. Pew rents were abolished, and all seats in the Church made free, while the interior of the building was entirely renovated. A new organ was provided, the choir and organ transferred from the west gallery to the Chancel, which was stalled for their reception, the old, cumbrous, box pews replaced by open seats, the Church re-roofed, and the flat ceiling replaced by open woodwork, while the old fashioned mahogany three-decker pulpit was replaced by the present pulpit of marble and Cæn stone, a memorial from his sisters to the late William Anderson, of Bent House. The font was presented by Mrs. Chester, and the brass eagle lectern was given in memory of Mrs. Jane Maxwell by her children. The Mother Church has continued to be the centre of religious life and progress amongst the Anglican Churches of the Borough under a succession of distinguished vicars, one of whom, the Rev. H. E. Savage, D.D. (1891-1904), became Dean of Lichfield, and another, the Rev. H. E. Bilborough D.D. (1904-1910), Bishop of Dover.

The rapid growth of the population in the early part of the nineteenth century rendered St. Hild's inadequate to meet the religious requirements of the town. Accordingly, in 1817, a building, at what is now the corner of Fowler Street and Denmark Street was acquired and used as a chapel of ease and day and Sunday school in connection with the mother church. It was consecrated on July 30, 1819, and was served for some time by the curate of St. Hild's. A separate chaplain, the Rev. William Coward, was appointed in 1829. He also held service for some time in a farm-house in Harton Village, where, in 1836, a small chapel or oratory was erected. In 1834, in consequence of a memorial to the Dean and Chapter of Durham, pointing out the spiritual needs of High Shields, and its rapidly increasing population, the Dean and Chapter erected Holy Trinity Church, to accommodate one thousand two hundred worshippers, and appointed the Rev. William Maughan first curate in charge. It was consecrated by Archbishop Vernon Harcourt, grandfather of the famous politician, on September 10, 1834. Similarly the needs of the East end of the town were met by the erection of St. Stephen's - the "Pilots' Church" - consecrated in October, 1846. Soon after St. Hild's became an independent parish, it was divided, the parishes of Holy Trinity and St. Stephen's being created by Order in Council on August 12, 1848.

The influx of population in the west end, due to the opening of Tyne Dock, resulted in the erection of St. Mary's Church, partly built and endowed from money obtained by the Dean and Chapter for the land on which the Dock was constructed. The Church was consecrated

on October 22, 1862, with the Rev. J. Jeremy Taylor as curate in charge. It was enriched by one of the finest organs in the country, built by Schultze and Co., of Panlinizele, and presented by Alderman John Williamson, who had also been a liberal donor to the new church. A further division of the parishes was made on August 27, 1864, when the parishes of Westoe (St. Thomas), St. Mary's (Tyne Dock), and Harton, were carved out of the three existing parishes. Each of the six at once began to prepare further schemes of development. St. Peter's Church, consecrated on August 15, 1867, replaced the old oratory at Harton. A mission from Holy Trinity Church led to the erection of St. Mark's Church - originally an iron building - in March, 1870, and to the constitution of St. Mark's parish in February, 1873. The present church was consecrated on May 26, 1875. St. Mary's threw off a new parish, St. Simon's, in October 1875, in anticipation of the erection of a large number of workmen's dwellings to the west of Tyne Dock, but the project was hindered by depression in trade, and the church was not consecrated until July 20, 1880. In August, 1883, the parish of St. Jude's was created out of the remainder of Holy Trinity, the church being consecrated on March 20, 1886.

The old school-chapel in Fowler Street was replaced by the present substantial stone church of St. Thomas, consecrated on October 11, 1877.



WESTOE CHAPEL OF EASE.

Shortly afterwards the parish of Westoe was divided, that of South Westoe being formed on May 24, 1878. Services were held in the schoolroom in Derby Terrace until the erection of the present handsome church of St. Michael's, consecrated on February 5, 1882. In 1902, the parish was

again divided by the creation of the ecclesiastical district of St. Oswin's, Stanhope Road, for which the nave of a new church was shortly afterwards erected. St. Aidan's parish, on the southern slope of the Lawe, was formed in November, 1885, and the church consecrated on March 5, 1888. All Saint's parish, West Harton, was formed in 1887, to provide for the large colony of mine and railway workers in that district. The church was consecrated on June 30, 1890.

Presbyterianism, as we have seen, was established in South Shields at a very early date. The present day churches represent four, if not five, of the great divisions which have existed in that body. The oldest existing Nonconformist church in the Borough, and one of the oldest in the North of England is that now known as St. John's. It was founded about 1662 by one of the ministers expelled from the Church of England under the Act of Uniformity. Possibly - although we have no evidence of this - he was the Mr. Thomas Lupton for some time Commonwealth minister of St. Hild's. One of the original members of the congregation appears to have been Ralph Milbourn, part owner of the Lay farm, who died in January, 1668, and was buried in the garden of his house, whose site is now occupied by the Adam and Eve hotel in Laygate. The first chapel of which there is record was the "Low Meeting," built in 1718 on the piece of freehold at the head of what is now Mile End Road, left vacant by the diversion of the high road to the Long Bank. The first recorded minister was the Rev. W. Stodart; and the registers date from 1744. A secession from this church in 1778 led to the formation of the "Independent Protestant

Dissenting Congregation," which erected a chapel in Heugh Street. In the same year, a United Presbyterian church belonging to the Burgher branch of the secession Church, under the Presbytery of Kelso, erected a meeting-house on Academy Hill, afterwards destroyed by the underground fire. In 1809 an Anti-Burgher Secession Church was formed from North Shields and acquired the old Wesleyan meeting-house in East Street or Society Lane, as it was then called. The building is now incorporated in Lloyds Bank.

A second secession from the original congregation in Mile End Road built the old St. John's Church in Saville Street in 1833, but the two bodies were reunited in 1842, and worshipped in the Saville Street building until March, 1877, when the present handsome church of St. John's was opened. The Heugh Street congregation joined the Relief Synod in 1835, and built their present church in Ingham Street in 1858. The Burgher and Anti-Burgher Churches united in the East Street chapel in 1822, and occupied it until the erection of St. Paul's in Westoe Road on February 16, 1880. The old pulpit in East Street, in which John Wesley is said to have preached, was removed to the lecture hall of the new church. The English Presbyterian Church in Laygate, erected largely through the efforts of Mr. James Stevenson, the senior partner in the Jarrow Chemical Company, was opened on August 8, 1840, and its offshoot the Tyne Dock Presbyterian Church in 1902. All the five churches have belonged to the Presbyterian Church of England since the union, in 1876, of the Presbyterian Churches in England.

The first Baptist (or Anabaptist, as it was called) Church in South Shields was formed during the Commonwealth. It appears to have been an offshoot of the famous Tuthill Stairs Church in Newcastle, of which Lewis Frost, a co-owner of the Lay farm at Shields was a member in 1654, as was his partner in the Lay farm, Michael Coatsworth. A relative, or possibly a son, was the Cuthbert Coatsworth falsely described by Ellington as having been concerned in the mythical Muggleswick plot, and it was probably his house at "the West Pans South Shields" which was registered as a Meeting House under the Act of Indulgence on May 13, 1672. There was a Baptist meeting house and burial ground on the site now occupied by Holy Trinity Schools down to 1734. The chapel, "now in ruins" is mentioned in Richardson's Survey, 1768. The burying-ground was destroyed by brickmaking operations about the beginning of the nineteenth century. A number of skeletons were found and reinterred in St. Hild's churchyard.

A few remnants of the congregation rejoined the Mother Church at Tuthill Stairs until, in 1797, the Baptists in North and South Shields were formed into a congregation with the Rev. Robert Imeary as pastor. On his death in 1814, the South Shields members opened a meeting place in two cottages in Waterloo Vale. Their first chapel was erected in 1821 on the site now occupied by the Guardians' offices in Barrington Street. A secession from this church in August, 1824, formed the Particular Baptist Church, and built a chapel in Salem Street. In 1833 the two congregations were reunited in the Barrington Street chapel, except a small body of the

Particular Baptists. They migrated to a little chapel in Mile End Road, where they worshipped for fifty-eight years under the pastorate of George Lawson, a chain and anchor-smith, who gave his services gratuitously. This church became extinct at his death in 1891. The present chapel in Westoe Road was opened on April 5, 1881, by a famous South Shields Baptist, the Rev. Richard Glover, D.D., of Bristol. Another secession from this church, in August, 1892, led to the erection of the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Imeary Street. The Baptist Tabernacle in Laygate, opened in 1871, was the outcome of a mission held in "Bella Booth's Long Room" at an inn near the old Ferry landing in 1840. The congregation migrated successively to the Union British School, the old Distillery in East Holborn, and the original station of the Brandling Junction Railway Company in High Shields, before erecting the old Durham Hall in Cuthbert Street. This was sold in 1847 to the Roman Catholic Church, and subsequently the congregation settled in the Ebenezer Chapel in Cambridge Street, which was occupied until the removal to the Tabernacle.

Methodism was introduced in South Shields about eight years after John Wesley returned from Georgia in 1738, to commence the great work of evangelization which created the Methodist Church. In 1746 there is a record of the preaching at Westoe of John Nelson, one of Wesley's earliest disciples, and then, or very shortly afterwards, a Society was formed, which first met in the Cockpit in Thrift Street, but afterwards built a chapel in East Street, in which, tradition says, Wesley himself preached. If so, the chapel must have been built before

1760, for the only recorded visits of the great evangelist to South Shields were on June 19, 1757, when he preached at noon in the Market Place, much incommoded by the dust from the ballast hills, and later indoors; and on July 24, 1759. By the end of the century the congregation had outgrown the East Street building, and the large chapel in Chapter Row, accommodating 1,700 worshippers, was opened on February 21, 1809. For years the congregation was hampered by the heavy debt, which was not liquidated until 1867, when the chapel was entirely restored and redecorated. Originally South Shields was in the Sunderland circuit, which extended from Shields to Easington and Hetton. To realize fully the self-sacrifice entailed on local preachers, mostly working men, in fulfilling engagements in this great circuit, it must be remembered that there were neither trains, trams, nor omnibuses in those days.

The second Wesleyan chapel was opened in Shadwell Street in 1814. As the site was required for the extension of Barker's Dock in 1843, the congregation exchanged it for the old Presbyterian church at the head of Mile End Road, which they occupied until the opening of the school chapel in Baring Street in 1892. The present fine building adjoining was opened in 1903. A chapel for the mining population at Templetown was built in 1826, and one for the chemical workers at East Jarrow in August, 1849. Additional Societies were formed in 1863, one in the old Congregational church on Johnson's Hill, the other at Harton Colliery; the present chapel at the latter place was opened in April, 1882, and the large chapel in Frederick Street in the same year. The spread of

Methodism in the rising towns of Jarrow and Hebburn had meanwhile rendered the Sunderland circuit unwieldy, and South Shields, Jarrow, and Hebburn, with the adjoining villages, were formed into the South Shields circuit. This again was divided in 1895, when Jarrow and Hebburn formed a separate circuit.

In 1834 a considerable section of the Wesleyan body seceded and formed the Wesleyan Methodist Association. The South Shields members of the new body leased the chapel formerly belonging to the Particular Baptists in Salem Street, and opened it on Christmas Day that year. The building was considerably enlarged in 1850. A second secession from the Wesleyans took place in 1849, headed by the Rev. James Everett, then minister at Blyth, who was expelled by the Conference for his support of what was known as the Reform Movement. The Wesleyan Reformers had a considerable following in South Shields. They commenced services in the Seamen's Hall, Fowler Street, in January, 1850 and in August, 1854, opened the Wesleyan Reform Chapel in Cambridge Street. In July, 1855, the Association and the Reformers were united as the United Methodist Free Church, the South Shields congregation worshipping in the Salem Street Church. This was rebuilt and enlarged in July, 1864, the lecture hall adjoining being opened in the following year. A Society was formed at Tyne Dock in 1859, and the church opened in September, 1863. It was replaced by a larger building in 1884. The Victoria Road Church was built in 1868.

The first Primitive Methodist congregation in the town was formed in January, 1822, by John Branfoot, of Hutton Rudby, one of the "Primitive" pioneers. The first meeting house was two cottages thrown into one in Oyston Street. Soon the church numbered a hundred members, and, in October the same year, rented a sail-loft in Wapping Street. Another Society was commenced in two cottages in Slake Terrace, for Templetown, in 1823, and by September that year South Shields was made the head of a circuit including some two dozen chapels, and extending from Whitburn to Bill Quay and westward to Chester-le-Street. The first chapel erected by the Denomination in South Shields, and known as the Glebe, in Cornwallis Street, was opened in August, 1823. In 1829, the Slake Terrace congregation removed to a disused blacksmith's shop at Templetown, which a few years later was replaced by a chapel, largely built by the members themselves, near what is now the eastern entrance to Tyne Dock. This in turn was abandoned for a chapel in Corstorphine Town opened in 1859, and now included in the premises of High Dock. In 1858, the Denomination acquired the Heugh Street Chapel vacated by the Presbyterians on their removal to Ingham Street. A Society was opened in the Mechanics' Institute at Tyne Dock in 1863. The present large chapel was built in 1869, and in the same year another was opened at Harton Colliery.

The original chapel in Cornwallis Street was rebuilt and considerably enlarged in 1866, but it was sold in 1900, when the Glebe Chapel in Westoe Lane was opened on March 12. The church in Heugh Street was rebuilt in

1873, and the Laygate Lane Chapel in 1882, in substitution for the Corstorphine Town building, which had been bought for the extension of the High Dock. A new chapel was opened at Harton Colliery in 1888, and the large Baring Street Church early in 1903. The large increase in the number of chapels and members has twice necessitated the division of the circuit; the latest, when Jarrow and Hebburn were made a separate station.

The date when the Independent or Congregational body was first established in South Shields is uncertain. An old chapel on Johnson's Hill, West Holborn, was originally built for Lady Huntingdon's Connexion, a form of Congregationalism, but the date is unknown. A Congregational Church was formed by the Rev. W. H. Stowell, D.D., pastor of the North Shields Church, in June, 1822. It had for its meeting place the old Burgher Church on Academy Hill. A few months later, the meeting place was transferred to the cottages just vacated by the Baptists in Waterloo Vale. The church in Wallis Street, now the Temperance Hall, was opened on April 5, 1825, and the present spacious church in Ocean Road nearly sixty years later, on December 9, 1884. A Congregational Mission commenced in the Mechanics' Hall at Tyne Dock in 1871, and the present church in Boldon Lane was opened in December, 1879.

Down to nearly the middle of the nineteenth century, there was no organized Catholic Church in South Shields, the local adherents of the old faith worshipping at the North Shields Church until 1849, when Durham Hall, the chapel originally built for the Bristol Brethren in

Cuthbert Street (afterwards the Salvation Army Hall), was purchased, fitted up as a chapel, and opened on December 4. The church in Westoe Lane was consecrated on August 22, 1876, and is dedicated to St. Bede. In 1889 a school chapel dedicated to S.S. Peter and Paul, was opened at Tyne Dock.

The Unitarian Church was formed prior to 1870, and the Church in Derby Street was opened in 1874. A Seamen's Mission was established by the British and Foreign Sailors' Society in 1818, but died out. It was revived in 1845 by the North and South Shields Auxiliary of that Society, but again lapsed four years later. It was revived in 1852, by the Shields Town and River Mission, which did good work for over thirty years. The Church of England Mission to Seamen commenced work on the Tyne in 1857, at first using H.M. gunbrig "Diamond" as a mission ship. A permanent mission church, with reading-room, etc., was opened at the Mill Dam in 1885. Just prior to the Great War, a large building was erected as a German Seamen's Mission in Coronation Street. This was used as a hospital during the War, and was afterwards utilized for the Church of England's Seamen's Mission. Sunday schools are connected with most of the churches in the Borough. The South Shields Church Sunday School Society was formed in April, 1837, and the South Shields Sunday School Union in 1851.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE PORT OF SHIELDS.

WE have seen how, from the earliest times, South Shields was used as a seaport, successively by the Romans, Angles, and Danes. It had a foreign trade at any rate soon after the Norman Conquest, when the Bishops of Durham established their right to a third of the waterway of the river on the South side, the Northern third belonging to Newcastle, while navigation was free in the mid-stream third. Newcastle obtained a charter from King John in 1213 establishing a Corporation and granting to that body the Crown's rights in the town, on payment of a rent of £100 a year. On the strength of this grant the Corporation claimed a monopoly of the trade and navigation of the river. It contended that South Shields had no right to possess any ships, but only boats, that its fishermen should not land their catch in their own town, but carry it to Newcastle, where a toll or primage of 100 from every boat load of herrings or haddock, and the best fish from each boat, was to be rendered to the Corporation. No ships should load, discharge, or take in any provisions at Shields or any other part of the Tyne except Newcastle. Only freemen of Newcastle were to load or discharge ships or to pilot vessels in or out of the river. Only freemen of Newcastle should be employed to build or repair ships in the Tyne. Bishop Bury obtained judgment in the Court of Exchequer forbidding Newcastle to hinder the mooring of ships on the South side of the Tyne, while

Edward II, issued a mandate ordering the Mayor and Burgesses of Newcastle to allow the free loading and discharge of ships and the sale of fish and merchandise on the South side of the Tyne.

The earliest mention of the coal export trade occurs in 1325, when Thomas Rente, a merchant of Pontoise, complained to the Parliament of Edward II, of the seizure of his ship with a cargo of coal from the Tyne. The trade was probably at that date well established, for we have mention about the same period of "keelers" who carried the coal down the river for shipment in Shields Harbour. As early as 1356 the keel carrying twenty chaldrons was recognized as the standard measure for coals. As the demand for sea-borne coal grew, the ships carrying it could not always obtain return cargoes, and had to bring in as ballast sand, gravel or stones, for which a place of deposit had to be found on their arrival in port. Newcastle claimed that only freemen of that town should discharge ballast, and that it must only be deposited on land owned by the Mayor and Burgesses. In this way, not only could higher charges be made for landing ballast, but also it could be deposited on Newcastle's low lying land adjoining the river, and transform marsh or mud-flats into sound ground for the benefit of that town.

Under Henry VIII, in 1529, the year in which Cardinal Wolsey, who had been Bishop of Durham, fell from the Royal favour, and was disgraced, Newcastle obtained an Act of Parliament prohibiting the shipment or discharge of any goods, except salt, fish, and provisions for the ship's use, anywhere in the Tyne except at Newcastle.

Henry also, in 1536, granted the Trinity Brethren of Newcastle a charter empowering them to make ordinances “for the Maintenance of our Shipping in the Haven of Tyne Mouth,” a clear indication that Shields Harbour was an important shipping place on the river. The monopolist claims of Newcastle were confirmed and extended by the “Great Charter” granted by Elizabeth in 1600. It directed that all ships using the Tyne should load or discharge at or near Newcastle “unless the ship be of such capacity, or for any other reasonable cause, it cannot conveniently arrive at Newcastle,” a provision dictated by the larger ships then frequenting the port and the increasing shoalness of the river above Shields. The Charter also incorporated the Fraternity of Hostmen, who were given the exclusive right of vending, lading and unlading coals in the port, on payment to the Crown of a duty of twelvecence per chaldron (53 cwt.) on all coal exported, except to the Hartlepool saltpens.

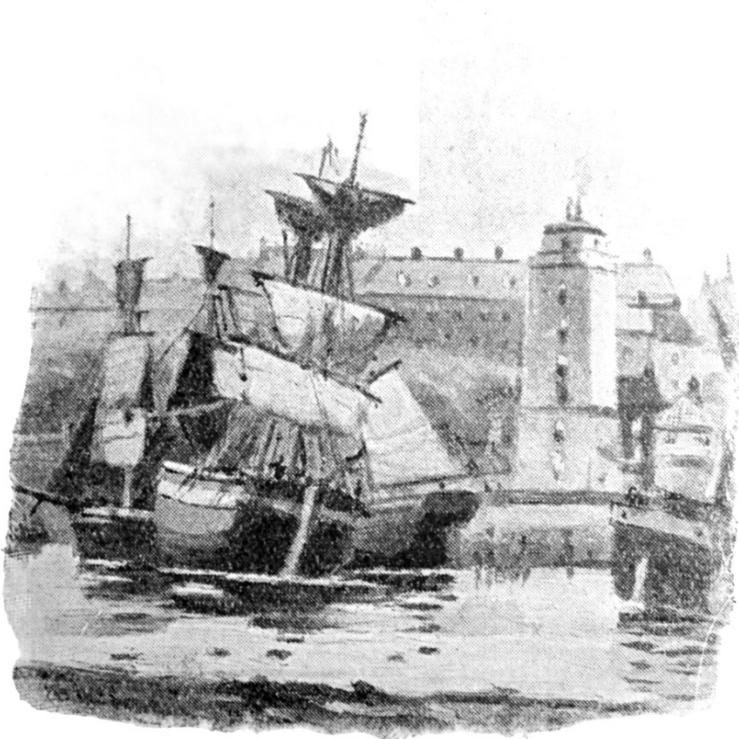
The Hostmen rigorously enforced their monopoly as far as they were able, but shipowners became more and more reluctant to allow their ships to encounter the dangers of ascending the river to Newcastle, and they began to demand facilities for the discharging of ballast and loading of coal in the deeper water of Shields Harbour, where, according to a Trinity House report, there was then fourteen feet at low water all along the foreshore of South Shields. Soon after he came to the throne, James I granted the Lordship of Jarrow to Sir Henry Gibb, who, to take advantage of this deep water berth, began to erect a ballast shore or wharf on Jarrow Slake, but “the town of Newcastle used such measures

and gave such reasons to His Majesty and the Council that Gibb was utterly hindered and disappointed.” James in 1613 created a Commission, comprising the Magistrates of Durham and Northumberland and the Mayor and six Aldermen of Newcastle, to whom was transferred the control of navigation in the Tyne, hitherto exercised by Newcastle alone, with injunctions to permit loading and discharge of vessels, but not the discharge of ballast, at Shields. These regulations were rescinded three years later, and loading and discharging at Shields again prohibited. By that time the trade of the port had grown so great that Bishop Neil, in October, 1625, reported that there were often 200 to 300 ships in Shields Harbour.

The growth of the salt trade in South Shields intensified the fight for Harbour rights. Sir Robert Heath, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, having acquired an interest in some salt works, began in 1629 to erect a wharf in the west-end of South Shields (probably where Tyne Dock is now) where his ships might discharge their ballast and load cargoes of salt “always afloat,” as charter-parties phrase it. Although the erection of the wharf had the approval of the Trinity House of London, Newcastle took action against Heath, and the case was carried on appeal to the Privy Council, which twice decided in Sir Robert's favour. The rapid growth of shipping led to the construction of other ballast wharves in Shields. Charles I in 1637, leased Jarrow Slake to James Talbot and Richard Allan, who began to erect ballast wharves. The Dean and Chapter of Durham, who had already leased the Slake to Sir Harry Vane, of Raby

Castle - later famous as a leader of the Parliamentary Party - challenged the Crown's right to the land. Newcastle also claimed the Slake on the ground that all the soil of the Tyne within high water mark was their property. The Privy Council decided in favour of the Dean and Chapter, whereupon Newcastle took "direct action," and pulled down the ballast wharf Sir Harry Vane had erected. Judgment was given against the Corporation of Newcastle for trespass, with £500 damages, but they continued their opposition down to the disruption caused by the Civil War.

The war accentuated the importance of Shields as a seaport. The records of Trinity House abound with references to Shields seamen and the coal trade. The navigation, for centuries, of a stormy sea, with a dangerous coast, had bred up a race of hardy and skilful seamen, whose services were so greatly valued by naval officers that as early as 1635 the captains of press-gangs were ordered "as they had frequently been" not to take more men out of Newcastle ships than necessity required, on account of the importance of the coal trade. In November, 1646, it was reported that nearly 300 ships, most of them for London with coal, sailed from the Tyne, where they had been detained six weeks by bad weather, while in 1647 there is record of over 100 ships being detained in Tyne Mouth Haven (Shields Harbour) by the same cause. During the Commonwealth's War with Holland (1652-1654), fleets of 200, 300 and 400 vessels are frequently mentioned as sailing from the Tyne together for mutual defence against attack, occasionally with a convoy of armed Government ships.



SAILING COLLIERS AT "PEGGY'S HOLE," LOW LIGHTS.

The Commonwealth Government showed itself consistently in favour of free navigation on the Tyne. In March, 1646, on the petition of Barbara Hilton and other shipowners of Shields, the Committee on Trade ordered that ships be allowed to load and unload at South Shields. Newcastle, especially the Hostmen, defied this order, and Shieldsmen who acted on the decree of the Committee on Trade were arrested and imprisoned by the Newcastle

Authorities. Amongst their victims was Ralph Gardner, a brewer of Chirton, North Shields, who was imprisoned in the "common stinking gaol" of Newcastle, but escaped and arraigned the policy pamphlet entitled of monopoly and restraint of navigation in a "England's Grievance Discovered in relation to the Coal Trade." He stated that Shields ships' carpenters had been fined and imprisoned for working on ships in the Tyne, because they were not freemen of Newcastle; that ships were wrecked and cast away by being forced to go up to Newcastle to load or discharge, the river having become shoaled through the casting overboard of ballast which should be landed on shore; and that, even if the vessels reached Newcastle safely, the delay in going up and down the river prevented the possibility of their making ten or twelve London voyages in the year, as they formerly did. The Corporation of Newcastle issued a reply denying the charges, but so far admitted the justice of the Shields case as to erect a large ballast quay in Jarrow Slake, which was leased to Benjamin Ellison, the founder of the Ellison family of Hebburn.

Petitions of shipmasters praying to be allowed to cast ballast and to load and discharge at Shields, and from Newcastle in opposition, were in 1653 referred to the Committee on Trade, who not only found in favour of Shields, but, according to Gardner, drafted a Bill providing for the transfer of the control of the river from Newcastle Corporation to a body of paid conservators; the erection of ballast wharves at Shields; the prohibition of casting ballast into the river; freedom of shipmasters to load, discharge and buy provisions where they chose,

and to employ what shipwrights and artificers they chose. The Bill was down for consideration in the House of Commons on December 13, 1653, but on the previous day Parliament resigned its powers into the hands of the Lord Protector Cromwell. With the Restoration, the Corporation of Newcastle regained its old power. Sir Harry Vane's property was forfeited to the Crown, but the Dean and Chapter reasserted their claim to Jarrow Slake, which they leased to Sir Charles Adderley. Newcastle contested his right to erect a ballast shore, and obtained judgment in their favour. The litigation lasted until 1698, when the House of Lords confirmed the judgment in favour of Newcastle. Thereafter, although owing to the exigencies of the shipping many ballast wharves were constructed on the Shields foreshores, they were all erected under the license of Newcastle.

Shields shipping prospered greatly during the long wars with France, which lasted, with little intermission, from 1689 to 1713, covering the greater part of the reigns of William and Mary, Anne, and George I. Large numbers of Shields seamen were impressed for the navy, creating such a scarcity of crews for the coal trade that the wages of ordinary seamen went up from 36s. to £9 per London voyage. By the middle of the eighteenth century, at least 600 ships were employed in the coal trade alone. These were mostly brigs, snows, or schooners of 130 to 200 chaldrons (350 to 550 tons burden), making eight to ten London voyages a year. The eighteenth century also witnessed the inauguration of the whaling industry from the Port, the first whaler – “The Swallow” - sailing in March, 1751. Whaling continued to be carried on from

Shields until nearly the middle of the nineteenth century. One of the most famous local whalers was the "Cove of Cork," owned and commanded by the father of Sir Charles M. Palmer, the founder of Jarrow.

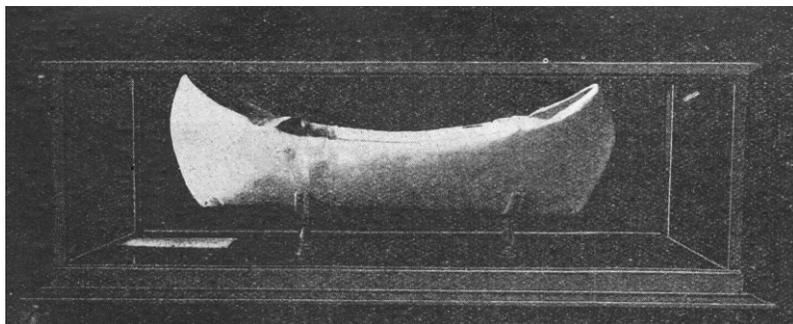
On the outbreak of the war with France over her support of the American Colonists in 1778, the Shields coal ships were armed. Many were employed as transports or privateers, a number of the latter being fitted out by the Shields shipowners at their own expense, trusting for repayment to their share of the prizes. The press gang was very active throughout this war. Even the pilots had frequently to appeal for the protection of Trinity House, which had obtained for them exemption. In consequence of the number of seamen imprisoned or captured by the French, the old South Shields Friendly Societies for Seamen, Ship-Carpenters, and Shipwrights, had rules authorizing benefits to the families and relatives of members who were impressed for the Navy or imprisoned by the enemy. The press gang was not unfrequently employed to suppress strikes by impressing the ringleaders. The last "press" in South Shields was made in 1812 but the system of forcible impressment for the navy was not formally abolished until about the middle of the nineteenth century.

By the end of the eighteenth century the amount of shipping owned in North and South Shields was over 40,000 tons. The Baltic Fleet which left Shields Harbour in May, 1800, numbered 144 vessels, and, in addition to other goods, carried over 30,000 tons of coal. The close of the long war with the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo

on June 18, 1815, put a sudden check to the prosperity of local shipping. At that time between 300 and 400 ships valued at nearly a million pounds sterling, were laid up at Shields Harbour, and some 7,000 seamen were idle in the two harbour towns. In the hope of creating employment, the seamen, in September, endeavoured to enforce a manning scale, providing that no ship should sail with a smaller crew than five men and a boy for each 100 tons burden. The owners refused, but offered a wage of £4 per summer and £5 per winter voyage to London. The strikers held up the shipping of the port for six weeks. Although good order was preserved, troops were brought from Newcastle and warships stationed in the harbour, while the Newcastle magistrates took "vigorous measures," which had the desired effect. The strike collapsed on October 24, when 200 vessels sailed.

Possibly as a combination to protect themselves against strikes, South Shields shipowners, about the middle of the eighteenth century, formed the first shipowners association of which we have record, the "Coal Trade Committee." Its club, or exchange and news-room, was the Cross House on the Lawe. The Committee appears to have been organized on Parliamentary lines, with its Speaker and Serjeant-at-Arms.

To this body was primarily due the invention and construction of the first lifeboat.

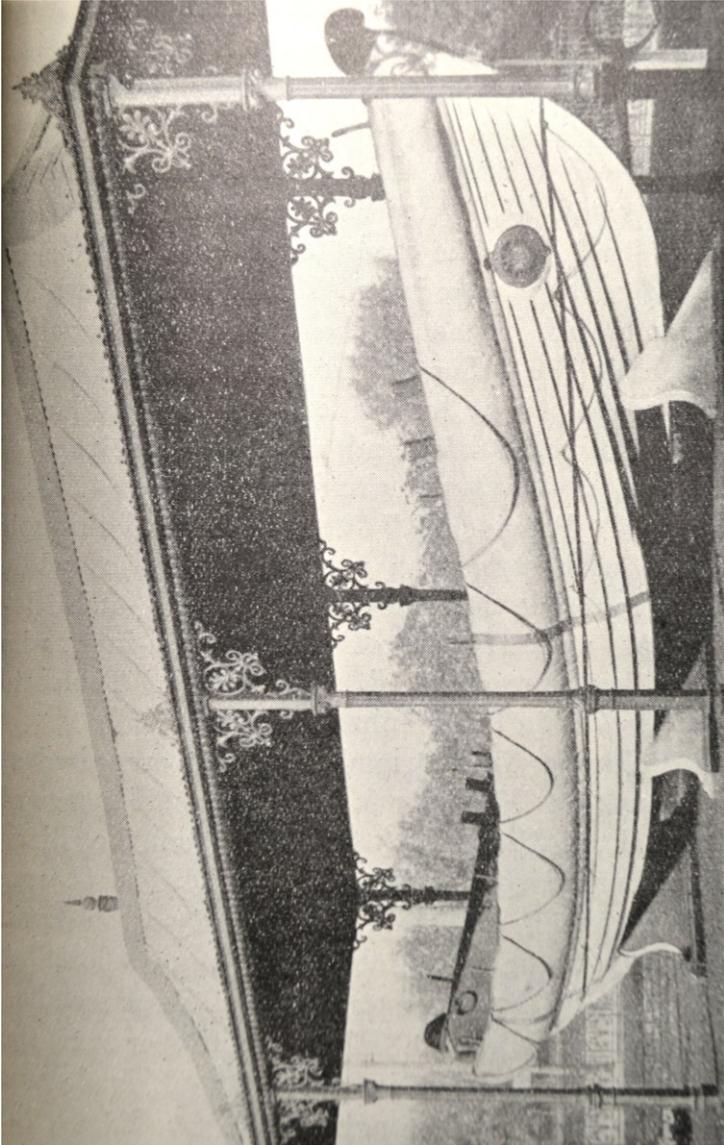


WOULDHAVE'S MODEL OF THE LIFEBOAT.

The number of wrecks on the Herd Sand and the rocks at the mouth of the Harbour, when seamen were drowned within sight of hundreds of helpless spectators, led “the Gentlemen of the Lawe House” to appoint, in April, 1789, a special Committee to consider the qualities essential in a boat for saving life in broken water. They decided she should be buoyant, staunch, each end alike to avoid having to put about in heavy seas, high at bow and stern, to prevent her shipping seas, and, if possible, unsinkable. The munificent award of two guineas was offered for the best design of boat to fulfil these conditions and carry twenty-four persons.

Of the many models and plans sent in, only two appeared to be practicable. One was by William Wouldhave, the parish clerk of St. Hild's who submitted a tin model, now preserved in the Borough Museum. Wouldhave claimed that a boat on his principle would neither sink nor capsize. He suggested that it should be built of copper,

which would not tear on the rocks, and fitted with air boxes at the ends and along the sides, to obtain buoyancy. The other model, by Henry Greathead, a boat builder, is described by the Chairman of the Committee as a long flat boat, with no buoyancy by air boxes or cork, and dissimilar at bow and stern. Neither was considered entirely suitable. Greathead was commissioned to build a boat under the directions of the Committee, and Messrs. Nicholas Fairless and Michael Rockwood, two of the members, claimed to have made the actual model from which the boat was built. It certainly embodied all the important features in Wouldhave's model except that, on the suggestion of Greathead, the keel was cambered or curved instead of being straight. The cost of construction was £91, and the boat was first used on January 30, 1790, when with a crew of pilots - who always since have manned the lifeboats - she rescued the crew of a vessel wrecked on the Herd Sand.



THE LIFEBOAT

Greathead claimed the credit of the invention, and was voted £1,200 by the House of Commons on June 3, 1802, but the credit of the original design is now generally accorded to Wouldhave. Both are commemorated in the Lifeboat Memorial unveiled on June 25, 1890. The Shields lifeboats have always been maintained by local effort, and are used only for the saving of life, and not for the salvage of property. A disaster occurred on December 4, 1849, when the "Providence" lifeboat capsized through collision with some iron work in the river, while seeking to rescue the crew of the "Betsy," of Littlehampton, and twenty of the twenty-four who manned her were drowned. A Memorial Tablet to the victims is in St. Stephen's Church.

A Volunteer Life Brigade was first organized at Tynemouth on December 5, 1864, in consequence of the wreck of the S.S. "Stanley" on the Black Middens on November 24, when the lifeboats were unable to reach the ship, and twenty-seven lives, including two of the lifeboat crew, were lost. A South Shields Brigade was formed in December, 1865, and the Brigade House at the end of the South pier erected for its use. The Brigade was the first in the Kingdom actually to save life by the use of the rocket apparatus, from the wreck of the S.S. "Tenterton" on April 2, 1866. This wreck is the subject of the popular picture "Saved." In 1909 the Brigade was provided by the proprietors of the *Shields Gazette* with a searchlight and motor generator for use at wrecks in the darkness. An efficient ambulance corps was organized in connection with the Brigade, and during the War rendered great service.



*(Photo W. Parry, South Shields)*

THE LIFEBOAT MEMORIAL

The Committee of the Lawe House were pioneers of the mutual system in the insurance of ships, now so general. The first insurance club on these lines, "The Equitable Association" was founded at a meeting at the Golden Lion Hotel in May, 1797. The movement rapidly spread, and within half a century it was estimated that the South Shields shipowners had by this means saved at least £100,000 in insurance premiums. The Shields shipowners were also the first to establish a system of examinations for proficiency in seamanship. The South Shields Coasting Board of twelve members, of whom nine must be experienced seamen not then following the sea, two persons competent to examine in matters relating to Charter Parties, Bills of Lading, etc., and one to examine in Navigation, Nautical Astronomy and Plane Trigonometry, was formed in October, 1837. It issued three classes of certificates one for the coasting trade, another for the foreign trade, and a third the forerunner of the extra masters' certificate of to-day. The first examination was held on August 19, 1838. The masters of all vessels insured in the Shields Clubs, as well as the Tyne Pilots, were required to hold the Board's certificate. The system proved so successful that the Government adopted it as the model for the national scheme of examination for foreign-going masters, embodied in the Mercantile Marine Act of 1850. Under that Act a Local Marine Board was constituted for the port of Shields, but the Coasting Board continued to grant coasting certificates. For years a contest was maintained as to whether the examinations should be held in North or

South Shields. Eventually, on November 9, 1865, the Board of Trade created a separate local Marine Board for South Shields.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE MAKING OF THE TYNE.

As the shipping of the two harbour towns increased in numbers and tonnage the restrictions imposed by Newcastle, and that Corporation's neglect of the navigable water-way, formed the subject of repeated protests by Shields' shipowners. As early as 1706, and again in 1726 and 1764, the River Jury, all Trinity Brethren and therefore freemen of Newcastle, strongly recommended the removal of the Black Middens and all other shoals and hindrances in the harbour, but nothing was done. In 1765 shipowners and masters in the coal trade petitioned the House of Commons against the heavy charges for discharging ballast and the import and export dues levied by Newcastle, the greater part of the revenue being devoted to Municipal purposes. The petition pointed out that the Tyne had so deteriorated through neglect and the dropping overboard of ballast that where ships used to load and lie afloat at low water was then dry in several places. The only place remaining for great ships to load afloat was at Shields, and even there the river was shoaling up. The petition also asked that Newcastle should be made to account for the large sums received in shipping dues during the previous 7 years. Newcastle counter-petitioned, and both were referred to a Select Committee of the House, which, after hearing evidence, reported that sands and banks had been increasing for years in the Tyne, and rendered the river

difficult and hazardous, and if not soon removed would become most dangerous obstructions. The House, however, negated the report.

Early in 1800 the shipowners of Shields took combined action to prevent further deterioration of the navigable river. They preferred an indictment against the Corporation of Newcastle for obstructing "The King's Highway of the Tyne." The case was heard at the Newcastle Assizes in August, when the prosecution proved that obstructions of the channel existed, notably in great shoals called the Insand and Middle Ground in Shields Harbour, and that it was possible to remove them, but admitted, on cross examination, that they would probably be replaced by the currents in the river. The Jury thereupon, by direction of the Judge, gave a verdict for the defence. An attempt by the Shields shipowners in the same year to promote a Bill transferring the control of the river from the Newcastle Corporation to a representative Conservancy Commission was equally unfortunate. Newcastle, jointly with Trinity House, obtained the Newcastle Port Act, 1801, which increased their river powers, increased also the dues and tolls they could levy on shipping, authorized the appointment of Harbour Masters, and the regulation of the pilotage service. Rennie, the most famous engineer of the day, engaged by Newcastle in 1814, presented a comprehensive scheme of river improvement by cutting off projecting points, and the construction of a pier on the Herd Sand, at a total cost of about half a million. Nothing was done to carry out the scheme.

The Shields shipowners also long agitated for the removal of two serious inconveniences. Under the Coal Turn Act of 1766, the arrival of every collier ship off the bar had to be reported immediately to the Coal Turn Office in Newcastle, in order to secure her proper turn for loading. The shipowners twice promoted Bills requiring the establishment of a Coal Turn Office at Shields, but without success until 1800. They also protested against the Customs business being concentrated in Newcastle. After much agitation, as the result of a local inquiry, it was decided that the Port of Tyne should remain undivided, but that auxiliary Custom Houses should be established at North and South Shields. The Customs Board issued an Order accordingly on May 20, 1847, but the agitation for an independent Custom House was continued, and eventually, on March 30, 1848, Shields Harbour Eastward of a line drawn from the East end of Jarrow Quay to the East end of Whitehall Point was constituted a separate Customs Port. The Custom House at North Shields was opened on April 6, 1848. South Shields was not satisfied with this arrangement, and carried on a vigorous agitation for a Customs establishment of its own. In order to meet the objection that there were no suitable premises available, the Corporation in 1864 erected a Custom House on the Corporation Quay. On August 29, 1865, the separate Customs Port of South Shields was created, an event which was celebrated with great rejoicing in the town.

The movement for transferring the control of the navigation of the Tyne River to a representative Commission took a practical shape in 1848, when strong

committees of business men were formed in North and South Shields, and funds raised to promote the Tyne Conservancy Bill, which was introduced in the Session of 1849. It proposed that the entire control of the navigable waterway of the river should be transferred from Newcastle Corporation to an elective Commission of fifteen members, with the right to levy all dues then collected from shipping in the river by Newcastle, and to raise loans for the improvement of the navigable waterway. Newcastle naturally opposed this proposal to the utmost. An Admiralty inquiry on the Bill was held in North Shields, when its promoters gave evidence to show that Newcastle had received in shipping dues in the preceding forty years £958,000, and had spent less than £400,000 on the river, including salaries of officials, etc., the total amount spent in actual river improvements being only £40,000. The channel had deteriorated until there was only 2 feet 4 inches at low water in some of the best parts. Upwards of 800 acres of sand banks were left dry at low tide, and there was only 6 feet of water on the bar at low tide. Indeed, on low tides some pilots had waded across. The Admiralty reported in favour of the measure. Newcastle continued their opposition so persistently that the Bill did not reach the House of Lords until nearly the end of the Session, when their lordships declined to consider it.

The North and South Shields Committees, nothing daunted, reintroduced their Bill the following year. The necessary funds were raised by a voluntary rate in the two towns of 2d. in the £1 per month for three months. Newcastle, as an alternative, introduced the Tyne

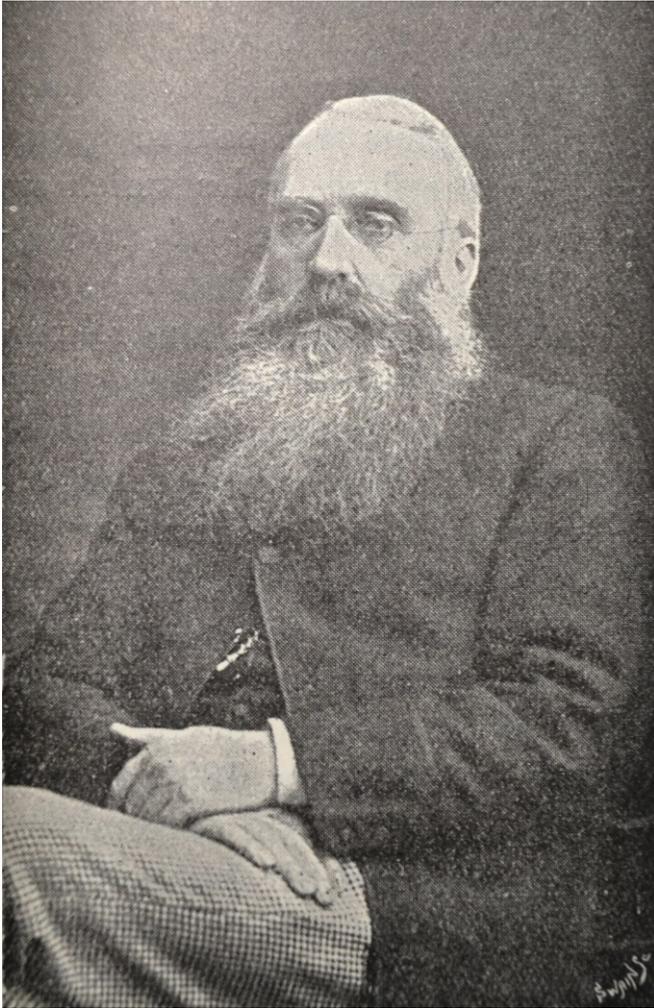
Navigation Bill, which proposed to create a Commission of seven-teen, nine appointed by Newcastle Corporation, two members of Newcastle Trinity House (who must also be Freemen of Newcastle) and two each elected by Gateshead and North and South Shields, the Mayor of Newcastle to be ex-officio Chairman. It proposed that Newcastle should retain three-fourths of the coal dues, and that as a condition of the remaining river dues being handed over to the Commission, the latter must accept responsibility for the debt of £67,000 for the building of Newcastle Quay. Parliament ultimately decided in principle in favour of the Shields measure. The control of the Tyne was transferred to a Commission of eighteen, six elected by Newcastle Corporation, two by Gateshead, three each by North and South Shields, while four were nominated for life by the Admiralty. Newcastle, however, was allowed to retain five-eighths of the coal dues, while the new Commission became liable for the debt on the Newcastle Quay, and the cost of the Parliamentary contest and local inquiries, which amounted to about £30,000. The first meeting of the Tyne Commission was held on November 14, 1850. The financial arrangements fixed by Parliament left the new body a revenue of about £10,000 per annum, nearly the whole of which was absorbed by standing charges and salaries. With remarkable courage, the Commission engaged the foremost river engineer of the day. Mr. J. M. Rendel, to report upon the possibility of making the Tyne a safe and commodious port. In October, 1851, he submitted a comprehensive scheme, including the constructions of two outer and two inner piers at the harbour mouth, for

the dual purpose of making a safe entrance and of scouring the bar. He also proposed to straighten and deepen, by dredging and training walls, the navigable channel throughout the tidal river, and to construct a dock in the bight at Hayhole. The total cost he estimated at £570,000. Mr. W. A. Brooks, the Newcastle River Engineer whom the Commission had retained, presented an alternative scheme, including two shorter piers and the narrowing of the channel by groynes and jetties, at an estimated cost of £213,000. The Commissioners in 1852 promoted a Bill authorizing the carrying out of Mr. Rendel's scheme, and also transferring to them the control of harbour moorings and the River Tyne Police, a force established by Newcastle in 1845. The Hayhole or Northumberland Dock of fifty-five acres was opened in October 1857.

Differences between the Newcastle members of the Commission, who preferred Mr. Brooks' plan, and the Shields members, who wished Mr. Rendel's scheme to be carried out, deferred the river work for some years. The Admiralty, which then exercised over harbour works the control now belonging to the Board of Trade, declined to sanction the detailed plans prepared by Mr. Rendel for the construction of the piers. The Commissioners asked the Admiralty to nominate an engineer in whose plans they would have confidence, and they appointed Mr. James Walker, then President of the Institute of Civil Engineers. He designed a North pier to run out 2,100 feet from Tynemouth Castle rock, and a South pier, 4,200 feet long from the Herd Sand, to terminate in a depth of 30 feet at low water. The Commissioners accepted the plan,

purchased Trow Rocks as a quarry for material, and laid the foundation stones of the two piers on June 15, 1854. The Harbours of Refuge Committee five years later, recommended a government grant of a quarter of a million towards the cost of the piers, on condition that they were carried out to a depth of 36 feet at low water. The plans were extended accordingly, but the grant was never made.

It was not until the retirement of Mr. Brooks, and the appointment as his successor in December, 1858, of Mr. John F. Ure, then engineer of the Clyde Trust, that the work of improving the navigable channel was commenced. Mr. Ure's first report proposed an expenditure of nearly a million sterling, in cutting away a number of projecting points on either side of the river; dredging, on an enormous scale, to make a channel 1,000 to 1,400 feet wide and 30 feet deep at low water as far as Jarrow Slake, narrowing thence to 500 feet wide and 26 feet deep at Newcastle, and to 400 feet wide and 23 feet deep at Hedwyn streams, near Ryton, the limit of the tidal flow. The scheme involved the removal of the old stone Tyne Bridge at Newcastle, and the substitution of a hydraulic swing bridge, to admit large vessels to the upper reach of the river; the cutting of a new channel at Lemington; and the construction of a 40 acre dock for coal shipping at the Low Lights, North Shields. For nearly half a century the Commission was engaged in carrying out this great scheme. As a preliminary, it was necessary to reorganize its finances. The bewildering variety of dues charged on ships were, with the exception



J. C. STEVENSON.

of the coal dues, abolished, and substituted by a simple tonnage tax. The coal dues were made 1d. a ton, instead of 2d. per chaldron of 53 cwt., and eventually, in 1870, the five-eighths of the coal dues retained by Newcastle was purchased for £130,000. The only part of Mr. Ure's scheme not realized was the Low Lights dock, in lieu of

which the Commissioners constructed a 46-acre dock in Coble Dene, opened on August 31, 1884, by the then Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, and called after him the Albert Edward Dock.

Much delay and heavy additional cost in the construction of the piers was caused by damage to the structures, by the fierce gales which sweep this part of the coast. In 1867, 400 feet of the North and 300 feet of the South pier were carried away in a storm. As a consequence, the foundations of the remaining part were carried to a greater depth. In November, 1893, the North, and in October, 1894, the South pier again suffered great damage, and two Titan cranes used in their construction were both destroyed by the sea. The damage was repaired, and the piers, it was hoped, completed in November, 1895, when the lighthouses on the seaward ends were first lighted. A succession of terrible gales in December, 1896, and January, 1897, drove a breach in the North pier about 200 yards from the seaward end. Under the advice of Sir James Wolffe Barry, the seaward end of the pier was rebuilt from a point 2,200 feet from the shore, and carried out in a straight line 750 feet. The foundations of the new part were carried into the boulder clay, 40 to 44 feet below low water, while the remaining parts of both piers were underpinned a long and costly operation. The North pier measures 2,950 feet in length, the South pier 5,155 feet or just under a mile and the width between the pier heads is 1,200 feet.

In 1864 the Commission permitted the public to use the completed portions of the pier as a free promenade,

except in rough weather. The Tyne Commissioners' Bill of 1897 sought power to make by-laws and charge tolls for the admission of the public to the piers. South Shields Town Council opposed the proposal, which, however, was approved by Parliament, with the proviso that it should not affect the public rights-of-way, if any. On December 31st, 1897, barricades were erected at the entrance and upon the South pier to preserve the Commissioners' rights. These were removed by order of the Town Council. The Commissioners brought an action for trespass against the Mayor (Alderman Imrie) and others concerned in the removal, while the Town Council applied for an injunction to restrain the Commissioners from obstructing the rights of the public on and over the pier, which they claimed was a highway. Mr. Justice Phillimore, on April 28, 1899, gave judgement that the barriers at the commencement of the pier had been improperly erected and properly knocked down, but that the barrier on the North side of the pier and the barricade at the Brigade House had been improperly knocked down and the storm gates improperly forced. He found that a public highway existed along the Pier from its commencement to the South-West side of the Brigade House, and thence along the causeway or bathing platform commencing at the Brigade House, and running in a South-Easterly direction to the sands, formerly belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Durham, but now to the Corporation of South Shields. The pier beyond the Brigade House was for some time closed to the public, but they are now admitted in calm weather to the full length of the structure.

The Commission's activities have extended to everything which could improve and make safer the port. They took over from Trinity House, Newcastle, the control of the lights, buoys, and beacons in the harbour and river. The Commission actively supported the transfer to a representative body of the control of the pilotage service of the port, which had been in the hands of Newcastle Trinity House since its incorporation in 1536. Originally only members of Trinity House, who must also be Freemen of Newcastle, were permitted to act as pilots. When that restriction was relaxed, about the end of the seventeenth century, the pilotage service was recruited more and more from Shields seafarers, who for convenience resided on the Lawe, and as preference was given to the sons of pilots as apprentices, the calling became to a large extent hereditary. There were three classes of pilots. Bar pilots took charge of ships in and out of the harbour, but were not allowed to take them up or down the river, that being the prerogative of the up river and down river pilots respectively. Trinity House appointed Pilot Masters at Newcastle and Shields. The Trinity Towers were erected as the residence and look-out of the latter. The officials were paid from contributions of so much per ship levied upon the pilots, Freemen of Newcastle paying only half the rate charged to Shieldsmen. The balance of the contributions went to the Superannuation Fund, from which old or disabled pilots were paid a pension of £6 or £8 per annum, but no account of the fund was ever furnished the pilots, although repeatedly asked for.

The dissatisfaction of the pilots came to a head over what was known as "Reciprocity Money." When the compulsory pilotage of foreign ships was abolished by the Reciprocity Act of 1824, the Government paid to Trinity House yearly, as compensation to the pilots, the difference between the fees actually received for piloting foreign ships and what would have been received had pilotage still been compulsory. Trinity House refused, however, to pass on all the compensation to the pilots, but would only pay the difference on the foreign ships actually piloted. In 1861, for instance, of £6,400 received from the Government, only £3,325 was paid to the pilots. The latter appointed, in October, 1862, two of their body, John Hutchinson and Robert Blair, as a deputation to the Master and Brethren of Trinity House, to request the distribution of the whole amount of the compensation, and also an account of the Superannuation Fund. The Trinity Brethren refused, and suspended the license of the two pilots, whereupon the whole body of Shields' pilots refused to contribute their ship money, and demanded the removal of the control of Trinity House.

The Tyne Commissioners supported the movement, and the South Shields Town Council and the shipowners promoted a Provisional Order for the creation of a representative Pilotage Board. This was strongly opposed by Trinity House, but passed on June 19, 1865, as the Tyne Pilotage Act. It created a Board of seventeen members, two appointed for life by the Board of Trade, five by Trinity House, and two each by the pilots, the Tyne Commissioners, and the shipowners of Newcastle, North Shields, and South Shields. This was the first board

in the United Kingdom on which the pilots were given direct representation, and Hutchinson and Blair were unanimously elected their first representatives. The Bill also transferred to the Pilotage Board the Superannuation and Widows' Funds in the hands of the Trinity House. These amounted to nearly £20,000, and shortly after the Government commuted the compensation money for a lump sum of about £25,000, of which over £15,000 was distributed to the pilots, and the balance carried to the Superannuation Fund. The latter was reorganized with a fixed scale of contributions, and the pensions substantially increased.

The separate class of River Pilots was abolished, the examination for certificates entrusted to a committee of pilots, and the Pilotage Board undertook the collection, for a small commission, of all pilotage fees. To meet the difficulty created by the system of constant pilotage, that is, pilots who took in and out of the harbour all the vessels belonging to a particular firm or firms, and to ensure a constant service of pilots at sea on the look-out for incoming ships, the Board, after much difficulty, secured the sanction of the Board of Trade to a by-law providing that the first pilot hailing an incoming ship, if he was not engaged but another pilot was, should be entitled to half the inward pilotage. Later, instead of the pilots "seeking" in cobles, a steam cutter was provided, in November 7, 1907, in which the pilots on duty were put on board and taken off ships at sea.

The Tyne Commissioners, in 1862, acquired the Shields Harbour Ferries. A service of steamers between

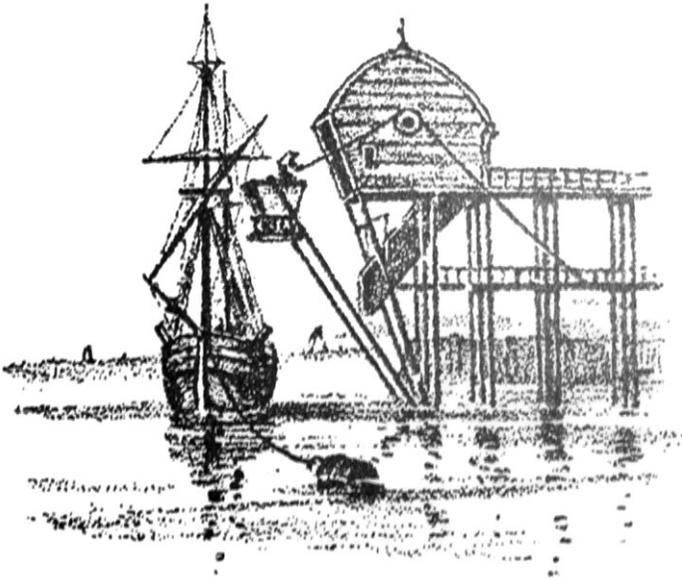
Newcastle and the Harbour, established in August, 1859, was in 1862, incorporated, by Act of Parliament, as the Tyne General Ferry Company. In that Act the Commissioners secured a clause empowering them to purchase the undertaking of the Shields Ferry Company, including the Market Place, the Direct, and the Penny Pie Stairs Ferries. The price fixed by arbitration was £38,250. Improved ferry steamers and landings were provided, and the Commissioners still carry on the service - not always to the public satisfaction. The Tyne General Ferry Steamers ceased running on December 5, 1908, in consequence of the competition of the tramways on each side of the river. The Commissioners successfully opposed - on the ground of the danger to navigation - a Bill promoted by the Shields Bridge Company in 1901, for the construction of a Transporter Bridge across the Narrows between Mile-End Road, South Shields, and Camden Street, North Shields, at a cost of £150,000. In the following Session a company, including many of the same promoters, obtained the North and South Shields Electric Railway Act, authorizing the construction of a tunnel and electric railway under the Tyne between South and North Shields Railway Stations. It was, however, found impossible to raise the authorized capital of £200,000, and the scheme was never carried out.

The seventy years work of the Commissioners has involved an expenditure of roundly twenty-two millions sterling seven millions from capital account and fifteen millions from revenue. This represents the cost at which the entrance to the river has been converted into the only harbour of refuge on the North-East Coast between the

Humber and the Forth, with a depth at the entrance of thirty feet at low water of spring tides, and the river has been made navigable for large ocean-going vessels for a distance of nearly nineteen miles from the sea. By constant dredging, involving the raising of about a million tons of silt, etc., every year, a channel of thirty feet deep at low water of spring tides is maintained to the Northumberland Dock, three and a quarter miles from the pier heads, and of twenty-five feet deep for eleven miles above that Dock. In a normal year some 30,000 vessels, of an aggregate registered tonnage of over twenty-five million tons, visit the Port, which is the principal outlet for twenty million tons of coal from Durham and Northumberland Collieries. The old adage about carrying coals to Newcastle finds its modern exemplification in the elaborate arrangements made in the river for the storage of oil fuel and the rapid bunkering of vessels therewith. The eulogy made by Mr. Gladstone on his passage down the Tyne on October 8th, 1862, is as appropriate to-day as when it was first uttered:

“It has never been my lot to witness a group and mass of labour so comprehensive, and - I will presume to say, in a favourable sense - so daring as those in which you and the Commissioners of the Tyne, to whose labours so just a tribute has been paid, are now engaged - I cannot say so much for the improvement as really for the reconstruction of these ports and of this noble river. And great as has been in the past the development of your industry for the profit and advantage of all classes of the community; great as has been the development of capital and industry for the profit of all classes in time past, I

cannot but entertain a sanguine hope that even what has been hitherto achieved will at some future time be eclipsed by that which you are about to accomplish, and that, strong as is our beloved country in the union of the various classes of the community and in the industry and intelligence of our citizens, that strength is about, with the lapse of time, not to undergo diminution but increase, alike for our own benefit and for the maintenance of peace, and the progress of civilisation in the world at large.”



## CHAPTER XIX.

### SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING.

IN shipbuilding, as in everything else connected with the Tyne, Newcastle long claimed and enforced a monopoly. None but Freemen of Newcastle were allowed to build or repair ships on the river. When, about 1720, a South Shieldsman, Robert Wallis, opened a shipyard adjoining the Coble Landing, the Corporation of Newcastle did all they could to hinder the construction of the first ship. Wallis persevered. When the ship was ready to launch he was served with notice that the Newcastle Water Bailiffs would seize the vessel as soon as she was afloat. He defeated this intent by hauling her up, immediately she was launched, on to the foreshore, which belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Durham. Newcastle brought two actions at law against him, both of which Wallis successfully defended, and so broke down that town's monopoly of shipbuilding on the Tyne. Mr. Wallis and his descendants carried on shipbuilding in the same yard until the demand for wooden vessels ceased. His example was quickly followed by others. By about the middle of the eighteenth century there were eleven shipbuilding and three repairing yards in South Shields, in addition to rope works, block and mast shops, etc. By early in the nineteenth century, the South Shields shipyards were turning out as much tonnage as the rest of the North-East ports.

The shipwrights and ship-carpenters were amongst the earliest craftsmen to form trade unions. South Shields Shipwrights' Association was founded on March 16, 1795, and the Amicable Association of Shipwrights in February, 1798; but the most powerful, the South Shields Union Society, was formed at a somewhat later date. Its rules were many and intricate. Several were concerned with the allowance of beer which the shipbuilders had to supply at given hours of the day, both to workmen and apprentices, with extra allowances for particular classes of work and at the laying-down and launching of new ships. The Union accumulated large funds, and at times of distress wisely employed these in building ships on their own account, to provide employment for the members. Two long strikes, however - in 1841, against a proposal to abolish the beer allowance and for a standard week's wage; and in 1851 to enforce a seven years' apprenticeship, a 4 o'clock stoppage of work on Saturdays, and an advance in wages - both of which failed, exhausted its funds. The refusal of the Union to allow members to adapt themselves to the change in shipbuilding materials - a heavy fine was imposed on any member accepting work in an iron shipbuilding yard - completed its downfall.

The heyday of sailing shipping, was reached about the middle of the nineteenth century, when over 1,500 sailing ships of nearly 400,000 tons were registered in the Port of Tyne, nearly three-quarters of this tonnage at North and South Shields. The introduction of steampower soon led to a marked diminution in numbers. The first steam vessel built on the Tyne, and the seventeenth in the world,

was the packet "Perseverance" with engines of three horse-power, launched at Gateshead on March 31, 1814, which began to ply daily with passengers between South Shields and Newcastle on June 20 that year. A similar boat, "The Swift," was launched the same year, but the passenger traffic did not pay, and the boats were laid up. In 1816, Mr. Joseph Price, of Gateshead, purchased the two little steamers to employ them in towing vessels in and out of the harbour, but it was two years before shipowners would adopt this swifter method, instead of the vessels being "foyed" out by boatmen. After 1818, the adoption of steam towage soon became general. On August 11, 1823, the first sea-going steamer, the "Rapid," a small passenger boat, left the Tyne for London, but broke down off Whitby. In May, the following year, however, she made the trip to London in 59 hours, and returned in 60. A steamship service from the Tyne to Leith was established in 1824, and one between the Tyne and London in June, 1827, by the Hylton Joliffe, of 100 horse-power. By that year there were twenty-three steamers of 505 tons aggregate registered on the Tyne.

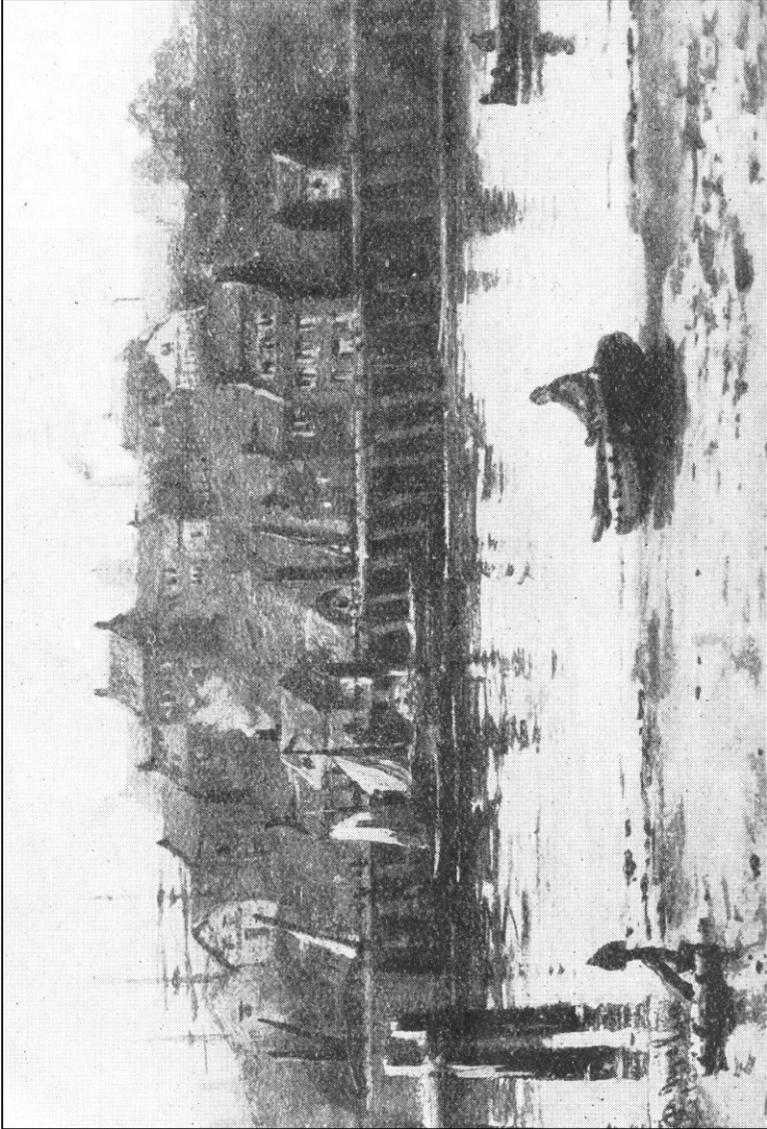
Shields shipbuilders were quick to adapt themselves to the new era in shipping. As early as 1826 George Rennoldson commenced building engines for steam tugs in Wapping Street. He was succeeded by his son J. P. Rennoldson, who later acquired Wallis's old shipbuilding yard, and added shipbuilding to engineering. The yard was afterwards extended by the acquisition of that primarily used by Marshall. This pioneer firm is now represented by two, that of J. P. Rennoldson and Sons, Ltd., on an extension of the original site and Charles

Rennoldson and Company, Ltd., both still carrying on operations as shipbuilders and engineers in the same street. Thomas Dunn Marshall, who had started business prior to 1830 as a shipping and general smith in Wapping, soon afterwards commenced building engines for tugs. About 1839 he bought a wooden shipyard at the Lawe, and began building iron steam-boats. The first iron vessel launched on the Tyne was the passenger and tug steamer "Star" from this yard in 1839.

The adoption of steamers for the carriage of coal was brought about by the competition of the railways, which were carrying South Durham coal to London for as little as 5s. per ton. The Bedlington Coal Company, in 1842, had an iron screw steamer of 211 tons built by T. D. Marshall, at South Shields, for the conveyance of coal in wagons from Blyth, to discharge into sailing colliers in Shields Harbour. This system did not prove a success. "The Bedlington," as she was called, was sold to a Scottish firm, who converted her into a cargo boat, and she was sunk by a Russian battery in the Baltic during the war of 1854. An iron barque, the "Q.E.D." of 240 tons burden, with auxiliary engines of 20 horse-power, was launched at Walker in July, 1844, for the London coal trade, but the first steam collier depending entirely upon her engine power, built for the London coal trade, was the "Conside," an iron screw steamer of 259 tons register, with engines of 80 horse-power, built in South Shields by T. D. Marshall in 1847 for John Clay, the banker, later first Mayor of the Borough. The delays entailed by the Coal Turn Act rendered her unprofitable, and she was sold to Australia.

The cargo steamer was rendered a practical proposition largely by the introduction of water ballast, avoiding the laborious and costly discharge of gravel ballast each voyage. Water ballast was the invention of Dr. David Blair White of Newcastle, and was first used in the brig "Benton," of South Shields, in June, 1851. The first successful steam collier was the "John Bowes," built at Messrs. Palmers' shipyard at Jarrow, and launched on June 30, 1852. She was an iron screw steamer of 270 tons nett register, with engines of 70 N.H.P., cellular double bottom for water ballast, and carried 600 tons of coal. As she loaded from the owners' own staiths, the Coal Turn Act did not affect her, and the rapidity of her voyages soon demonstrated the superiority of steam transport. Other colliers on similar lines were rapidly built. By 1859 there were 255 steamers of 12,200 tons registered on the Tyne alone. In order to facilitate the loading and discharge of these vessels, the Tyne Commissioners, by a clause in their Act of 1855, secured the repeal of the Coal Turn Act, and thereafter steamers were loaded as they arrived.

Marshall's Shipyard was removed to Willington Quay about 1860, when John Softley and John Readhead, who had been respectively Manager and Engineer to the firm, commenced business as shipbuilders and engineers on their own account in the yard vacated by Marshall. They carried on business until the great depression of 1874,

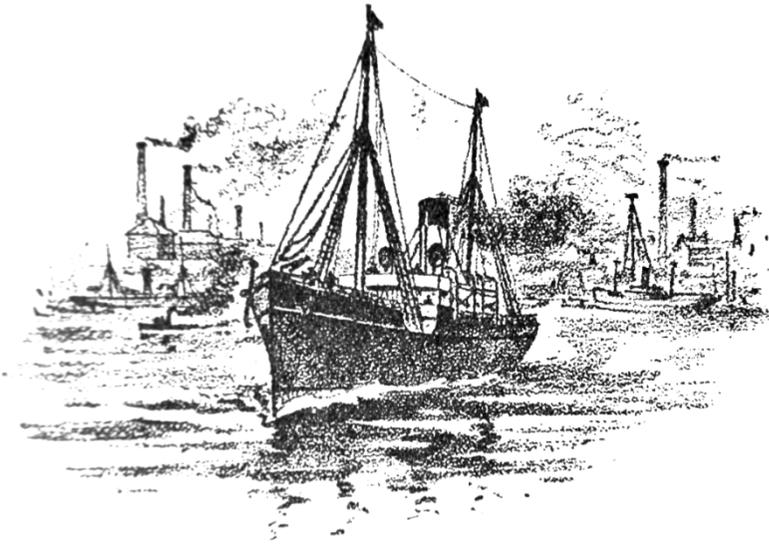


WEST DOCK SHIPYARD ABOUT 1850

when the firm was dissolved. Mr. John Readhead afterwards commenced business on his own account as a shipbuilder and engineer in the same yard. It soon became too small for the output of the firm, and a site of ten acres, including James Young's West Dock Shipbuilding Yard, adjoining the east end of Tyne Dock, was bought and opened as the West Dock Shipbuilding Yard in 1881. It comprised large engine works in addition to a number of shipbuilding berths. The firm - now John Readhead and Sons, Ltd. - have specialized in constructing an economical type of cargo boat, more than sixty vessels having been built in the yard for one firm. In 1920, despite the depression in shipbuilding, the firm launched 28,455 tons of new shipping. Messrs. Hepple and Company, in Wapping Street, carry on the building of small steamers, originally commenced by Toward and Company.

An important branch of work in the Borough consists in ship repairing. There are a number of large graving docks, including those of Messrs. Readhead at the West Dock, Smith's Dock Company adjoining (originally H. S. Edwards and Company, formed in 1768), the Middle Dock Company in East Holborn (originally established in 1885), the Tyne Dock Engineering Company (established in 1889), and that of Messrs. Brigham and Cowan, in Wapping Street. Prior to the Great War, many efforts were made, without success, to induce the Admiralty to establish a naval repair depot on the Tyne, where the services of skilled shipbuilders would have been available in emergency. Soon after the War began, however, the Admiralty had to send down to Jarrow Slake

a large floating dock, to which nearly all the capital ships of the Grand Fleet came for overhaul, including the sorely damaged “Lion” after the battle of Heligoland Bight, and several of the “lame ducks” from the great sea fight off Jutland.



## CHAPTER XX.

### COAL MINING.

THERE is no doubt, as the exploration of the station on the Lawe shows, that the Romans wrought and used mineral coal, probably from the shallow seams in the Deans which were certainly worked from the thirteenth century, as frequent regulations of the Halmote Court show. Four very ancient shafts found in that district show that the seams must have been worked systematically long before the modern collieries were opened. About the middle of the eighteenth century, a systematic search for coal seams was made in the Borough. Five borings were put down between 1759 and 1779 to depths varying from 38 to 70 fathoms (228 to 420 feet) at the Deans, Westoe, and the Bents, and at some of them coal appears to have been won, as there is reference to “the new collieries in South Shields” in 1759.

The first of the modern group of collieries was the Templetown Pit, named after its proprietor, Simon Temple. The sinking occupied five years, owing to the quantities of water encountered, and was completed in 1810. The upper seam, 3 feet 6 inches thick, was struck at a depth of 750 feet, and the second, 6 feet 3 inches thick, at a depth of 840 feet. During the sinkings, it was necessary at one period to pump over a million gallons of water per day from the shaft. The first coal was drawn amidst great rejoicings on April 23, 1810, but in October the same year the colliery was laid idle by the great strike

of miners against the "Yearly Bond." Men and boys - and the latter commenced work at the age of six - were compelled once a year to sign a bond to remain at work at the same colliery for a year without striking, combining, or absenting themselves, under a penalty of £10. A miner who broke the bond or refused to sign it was "black-listed," and could obtain work at no other colliery, so that the men were practically serfs. After seven weeks' strike, the miners had to accept the bond, although the binding day - generally a day of dissipation, for the men received either binding money or beer in lieu thereof - was altered from October to April.

In 1819 Temple's Collieries at Jarrow and South Shields were acquired by Messrs. J. and R. W. Brandling, of Gosforth, whose family mansion is now the hotel at Gosforth Race Course. They also owned the Felling Colliery, and leased soon after from the Dean and Chapter of Durham coal royalties extending four and a half miles southeast and seven miles west of South Shields, with power to make railways on the surface. What is now the Hilda Pit was commenced in 1822 to work the Bensham Seam, which there lay much nearer the surface than at Templetown. Again much difficulty was experienced in sinking owing to great feeders of water, which necessitated pumping over two and a half million gallons per day. The water was eventually dammed back by the use, for the first time in Northern collieries, of metal instead of wooden tubbing for lining the shaft. The sinking was completed in 1825, the Bensham Seam being reached at 477 feet, the Hutton Seam at 560 feet, and the Brockwell Seam at 900 feet.

Templetown Pit was shortly afterwards closed, although the miners continued for many years to reside in the rows of cottages erected there.

Another great strike followed the opening of the Hilda Pit. The Combination Laws, which rendered what are now called Trade Unions illegal, were repealed in 1825, and the local miners promptly formed a Union - the Association of Colliers on the Rivers Tyne and Wear - which soon had 4,000 members. It was much helped by a powerful pamphlet issued by the South Shields miners, setting forth their grievances. These included the "Yearly Bond," low wages reduced still further by heavy fines, bad ventilation, and the system of "tommy-shops," under which the miners were given part of their wages in tickets to be exchanged for provisions at certain shops, which were popularly supposed to be owned by the coal-owners or their nominees. The Union provided for accident and death benefits, and one curious rule forbade members to earn more than 4s. 6d. per day. A seven weeks' strike for better conditions in 1826 failed.

Two other great strikes occurred in 1831 and 1832. In the former year the men refused to sign the "Yearly Bond" as a protest against the withdrawal of the guaranteed minimum wage of 14s. per week, and also against the "tommy" system. The strike lasted ten weeks - April to June - and also failed of success. In March the following year the Manager of the Hilda Pit required the men to sign a declaration that they did not belong to the miners' union, and would not join any similar association. The majority refused, and were discharged, other men

being engaged in their places. A serious riot occurred on April 12, when the shaft and heapstead of the pit were considerably damaged, and the windows of men who refused to join the union were smashed. The strike was attended by a grim tragedy. Nicholas Fairless, the senior Magistrate in the town, was attacked by two miners, William Jobling, of South Shields, and Ralph Armstrong, of Jarrow, near Jarrow Slake, on June 11, dragged from his horse and killed. Armstrong escaped. Jobling was tried at the Durham Assizes on August 1, and sentenced to death, with the addition that his body should afterwards be hung in chains opposite the scene of the murder. This barbarous sentence was carried out, for the last time in England. Jobling's corpse, enclosed in an iron cage, was hung from a gibbet in Jarrow Slake, on August 9, but, although guarded by soldiers, was carried off some days later, and tradition says, was buried in Jarrow Church Yard.

The South Shields miners took an active part in the formation of the Pitmen's Union in the early forties of last century. Its objects were similar to those of its predecessor, namely, the abolition of the "Yearly Bond," weekly payment of wages in cash with a guarantee of five days work a week, and a minimum wage of 3s. per eight-hour shift, hewers to be paid by weight and furnished with particulars of all fines and deductions, which often amounted to nearly the whole of the wage earned. Any fines for sending out foul coal were not to exceed the amount paid for hewing the tub. Men to be allowed to attend delegate meetings of the Union without being fined for absence. Men injured by accident to receive 10s.

per week, with medical attendance, during its duration, and the widows or orphans of men killed in the mines to receive 5s. per week for twelve months. The Union also adopted the "Ca' canny" principle, instructing its members to restrict their output, and forbidding any hewer to earn more than 18s. per week. This summary of the Union's rules shows the contrast between the conditions of mining life 80 years ago and now. The coal owners refused to agree to what they called "revolutionary proposals," and "The Great Strike" began on April 5, 1844, when 34,000 Durham and Northumberland miners brought their gear to bank. It lasted for over four months, and ended in the defeat of the Union. The "Yearly Bond" was not abolished until about 1870.

A terrible explosion occurred in the west working of Hilda Pit, nearly two miles from the shaft bottom on June 28, 1839. Fifty men and boys were killed. The colliery had always been considered safe, and both naked candles and gunpowder were used in its working. The Jury found that the explosion had been caused by a miner taking a naked candle into a "board," which was foul with gas, and added a special recommendation that the use of candles be abandoned, and the use of lamps adopted in their stead. The most important outcome of the disaster was the appointment on July 1 of the South Shields Committee for the Prevention of Explosions in Coal Mines. James Mather and Thomas Salmon were the honorary secretaries, and Robert Ingham, M.P., the chairman. The Committee's investigations extended over three years, during which its members descended a

number of collieries, experimenting with methods of ventilation, safety lamps, etc. Its report, published in 1842, was for years the text book on the cause and prevention of explosions in coal mines. It was translated into several languages, and in 1851, reprinted in the report of a select committee of the House of Commons which investigated the same subject. The report recommended many reforms which seemed revolutionary then, but are now commonplaces of mining practice.

It started with the premise that the cause of explosions was carburetted hydrogen, called by the miners firedamp, which was released from the coal seams by low pressure of the atmosphere or high temperature. No satisfactory safety lamp had then been invented. The Committee found that the only certain means of safety in inflammable mines was good ventilation. Every mine ought to have at least two shafts (this was made compulsory by Act of Parliament after the Hartley Colliery disaster in January, 1862). The Committee also recommended the use of barometers and thermometers to give warning of changes of air pressure, instruments for testing the speed of air currents in the mine; and the substitution of steam jets for the open furnaces then used for creating a current in the upcast shaft. The Committee also proposed that it should be made compulsory on mine managers to keep up-to-date plans of the workings, and that all responsible mining officials should receive a scientific training.

For this purpose it was recommended that a Chair of Mining and Engineering should be established in connection with Durham University. All mines should be placed under Government inspection. The employment of boys underground before they reached the age of 11 or 12 should be prohibited, as several explosions had been traced to trapper boys of 6, 7, 8 or 9 years of age falling asleep or leaving their posts to play. The employment of women underground should also be prohibited.

Subsequently the Hilda Colliery passed from the ownership of the Brandling family to that of the Harton Coal Company, by whom the Harton Colliery was sunk. Coal - the Bensham Seam - was won at a depth of 215 fathoms (1,290 feet) on July 10, 1845. The pit cost nearly £60,000 to sink. It was the theatre of the pendulum experiments by which the Astronomer Royal, Sir George B. Airy, in September and October, 1854, determined the weight of the earth. Two observation stations, connected by electric signals, were established, one on the surface, the other at the bottom of the shaft, In each, on a solid foundation, was fixed an astronomical clock with compensated pendulum exactly regulated. In front of each of these was a free Kater's pendulum suspended on a knife-edge of very hard steel. The principle on which the experiment was based is that the number of vibrations of a free pendulum is an exact measure of the power of gravitation. The difference in the number of vibrations in a given time of the free pendulum on the surface and that at the foot of the shaft enabled Sir George Airey to calculate that the weight of the earth was 6,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 tons.

The Harton Coal Company sunk the Boldon Colliery, coal being won in 1869. The sinking of Whitburn Colliery was begun by the Whitburn Colliery Company in 1874, but it proved very costly and difficult, owing to the presence of quicksands and the enormous quantity of water encountered. Some 12,000 gallons per minute, or seventeen and a quarter million gallons per day had to be dealt with. Eventually the sinking was carried on by the King-Chaudron System, by which the shaft was bored out from the surface until the water bearing strata was pierced, and a suitable foundation had been obtained for the cast-iron tubbing which dammed back the water. The coal was won in May, 1879. The working of the colliery extends a considerable distance under the sea. It is intended to work the coal to seaward of the "fault" in St. Hilda's Pit from a new colliery at the Bents. The colliery company have constructed their own system of railways, uniting all four collieries with their staiths which occupy the site of the old plate-glass works adjoining the Mill Dam.

The Shields miners have always been noted for their devotion to sport and music. In the latter direction, the Hilda Colliery has specially distinguished itself. Largely owing to the generosity of one of the owners of the colliery, the late Mr. James Kirkley, of Cleadon Park, a fine brass band was formed at the colliery, which, in addition to many other victories, has on three occasions - September 28, 1912, September 25, 1920, and September 24, 1921 - won the 1,000 Guineas Trophy at the Crystal Palace Contest, which carries with it the Championship of the United Kingdom.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### RAILWAYS.

THE railway system of to-day owes its origin to the Tyneside coal trade. In early days the pits exporting coal were near the river, and the coal was hauled on sledges or barrows, by hand, to the adjoining staiths to be dumped into the keels. As new mines were opened farther from the river, the coal was carried to the staiths in ordinary carts. There were no macadamized roads, and the cart wheels soon wore the soft surface into terrible ruts. Some ingenious colliery manager adopted the expedient of laying balks of timber end-to-end, for the wheels of the carts to run upon. The next step was to nail flat plates of iron on the timber to make the waggonways last longer. To prevent the wheels slipping off these ways, another genius turned up the outside edges of the iron plates. The next step was to use what would now be called angle irons instead of the broad flat plates, and to put a flange on the inner edge of the tyres of the wheels to keep them on the "ways." These tramways, as they were called, gradually developed into the modern railway. The standard gauge of British railways - 4 ft. 8½ inches - evolved naturally from the fact that the original "ways" were made to accommodate the wheels of ordinary country carts, which were just that width apart.

A scarcity of horses, due to the Napoleonic Wars, led to the adoption, about the end of the eighteenth century, of fixed steam-engines, which, where the gradients were

suitable, hauled and lowered the train of trams or waggons by ropes, as may still be seen on the waggonway from Urpeth to Pelaw Main Staiths, which passes underneath the railway at Pelaw. Engineers long sought some self-propelling form of motive power for long hauls, where the road was comparatively level. Some extraordinary engines were produced. So early as 1784, James Watt patented a low-pressure locomotive engine, but never built one. An "iron horse," in which the pistons of the steam cylinders were used to move iron levers or "legs" by which the "horse" was to be pushed, was tried at Newbottle Colliery, but exploded, killing 18 persons. The first practicable locomotive steam engine was built by Richard Trevithick, a Cornishman, in 1801, to run on the ordinary roads, and in 1804 he built one to run on railways. Both were high-pressure engines, which Watt contended were dangerous. Trevithick laboured under the fallacy that a smooth tyre would not give sufficient grip on a smooth railway to enable an engine to draw a load, so he roughened the tyres of the driving wheel by projecting bolts and sunk grooves. Naturally this created great friction and vibration, which rendered the engine of little use as a locomotive.

Trevithick's engine was seen by Christopher Blackett, the owner of Wylam Colliery, who had two similar locomotives built at Gateshead, but neither was a success. In 1811 John Blenkinsop, manager of the Leeds Collieries belonging to the Brandlings of Gosforth and Felling, built a locomotive to run on ordinary smooth rails, but having a large cog-wheel, through which the power was transmitted, working in a rack laid between

the rails. It was fairly successful, but the frequent breaking of the cogs caused much trouble. A similar locomotive was started on September 2, 1813, on the five-mile tramway belonging to Brandlings from Coxlodge Colliery to Wallsend Staiths. William Hedley, the viewer at Blckett's Colliery at Wylam, had meantime come to the conclusion that the weight of the locomotive would give sufficient grip to smooth tyres on smooth rails without the use of cogs and racks, chains or other devices. He put his theory into practice. After two or three failures, the first really successful locomotive was built in the Wylam Colliery shops, and started to run on the Wylam Colliery waggonway on May 13, 1813, drawing eight loaded waggons at a speed of five or six miles per hour.

At the same time, George Stephenson, who starting as herd-boy at 1/- per week, had by the age of 35 risen through the grades of trapper-boy, fireman and engineman to the post of engineer to the Killingworth group of collieries, was also devoting his mind to the problem of the locomotive. He built a two cylinder engine with smooth tyred wheels, which was christened "My Lord," in deference to the Earl of Ravensworth, the principal owner of the collieries. The engine made its trial trip over the colliery waggonway from Killingworth to Willington Quay on July 23, 1814, and is preserved in now the Central Station, Newcastle.

Stephenson patented many improvements in succeeding engines which he built, and as the result of his successes was appointed engineer to the first public railway, the Stockton and Darlington. It was commenced

in 1821 and opened on September 27, 1825, when one of Stephenson's locomotives, now preserved in Darlington railway station, drew the first train.

The example of Darlington was quickly followed on Tyneside. The Newcastle and Carlisle Railway Company was formed on April 29, 1825, but its first Bill was rejected by Parliament. The Act authorizing the construction of a railway from Newcastle to Carlisle was passed in May, 1829. The first section of the line was opened on March 9, 1835, but the whole line not until June, 1838. In the Autumn of 1831, the South Shields and Monkwearmouth Company was formed to construct a line from the Stone Quay, South Shields, to Monkwearmouth Shore, but the Bill was rejected on the opposition of the landowners. In the following year the Stanhope and Tyne Railway Company was formed for the construction of a railway from the foot of Long Row, South Shields - where the staiths known as the Stanhope drops were built - by Boldon, Washington, and Burnhill to Stanhope, in order to ship the coal from the North-West Durham collieries and the limestone and lead from Weardale, in Shields Harbour. No Act of Parliament was obtained for this railway, as the promoters had arranged with the landowners to pay wayleaves, amounting in some cases to as much as £100 per mile of line per annum, for the right to construct the line across the various estates. The railway, which was opened throughout on September 10, 1834, was worked partly by stationary engines operated over inclined planes, and partly by locomotives. It had a primitive passenger service between South Shields and the point at which it

crossed the great North Road near Chester-le-Street. The passenger coach was an open truck fitted with seats. The guard, stationmaster and booking clerk, combined in one person, travelled in the coach, collected the fares, and issued the tickets, which were tin checks. At the Great North Road, the passengers, of course, could transfer to the mail coaches running North and South.

The Blaydon, Gateshead, and South Shields Railway Company was formed in 1832 to make a line from a junction with the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway at Blaydon, through Gateshead and Pelaw to South Shields Harbour; but the Act as passed on May 22, 1834, fixed the eastern terminus of the railway at Hebburn Quay. Messrs. John and Robert William Brandling, the owners of the Felling, Jarrow, and South Shields Collieries, projected a railway from the Blaydon and South Shields line via Washington to Jarrow, while the Durham Junction Railway Company - composed chiefly of the proprietors of the Stanhope and Tyne Railway - promoted a Bill in the same Session for the construction of a railway from the Blaydon and South Shields line at Heworth by Washington, where it would cross the Stanhope and Tyne, to Rainton Meadows near Leamside, where the Hartlepool Dock Railway was to terminate, with a branch from Washington to Monkwearmouth. Owing to the opposition of the Brandlings, only the line from Washington to Rainton Meadows was sanctioned.



ROBERT WILLIAM BRANDLING.

Its opening, on August 28, 1838, was marred by a collision between two trains on the fine Victoria Viaduct

over the Wear at Washington, several persons being injured.

The Brandling Junction Railway, running from Gateshead by Brockley Whins to South Shields and Monkwearmouth was sanctioned by Parliament in 1835. The Company took over the powers of the Brandling and South Shields Railways east of Gateshead, the part of that line west of Gateshead being transferred to the Newcastle and Carlisle. The Brandling Junction Railway crossed on the level at Brockley Whins the Stanhope and Tyne, the South Shields branch running parallel with that line to a shipping place at what is now the Corporation Quay at the Mill Dam. The South Shields and Monkwearmouth section of the line was opened on June 18, and the whole railway on September 6, 1839. The original passenger station in South Shields was a wooden building near the Windmill Hill, its site now being included in the North Eastern Foundry. This station was the scene of a terrible accident on October 8, 1839. An early morning passenger train from South Shields collided at Brockley Whins with a light engine travelling in the opposite direction. Both drivers reversed their engines and jumped off before the collision, but the passenger driver omitted to shut off steam, and his train, with no one in charge, ran back to South Shields, attaining a speed of fifty miles an hour before it crashed into a mail train standing in the station. Five persons were killed, and many injured. None of these local railways proved financially successful as independent concerns. The Great North of England line, intended to run from York to Newcastle, had exhausted its capital by the time it reached Darlington. George

Hudson, a York linen draper, afterwards known as the "Railway King," bought the Great North of England, the Durham Junction, Stanhope and Tyne and Brandling Junction Railways, obtained Parliamentary powers to link them up by a railway from Darlington to Rainton Meadows (Leamside) and amalgamated the five lines as the York and Newcastle railway. By this means the first through railway route from London to Tyneside was opened on June 18, 1844. A special train carrying the Directors left Euston at 5 a.m. and travelling over the London and Birmingham line to Rugby, the North Midland thence to Normanton, the York and North Midland to York, and thence by the York and Newcastle, reached Gateshead, then the terminus, at 2.24 p.m. Allowing for the stoppage for luncheon at York, the running time for the journey of 308 miles was  $6\frac{3}{4}$  hours, representing an average speed of over 45 miles per hour.

Soon the York and Newcastle became the York and Berwick railway, which obtained Parliamentary powers in 1847 for the construction of a coal shipping dock, 40 acres in extent, in Jarrow Slake. Simon Temple, then owner of the Jarrow and Templetown pits, had unsuccessfully promoted a Bill in 1803 for enclosing the Slake as a wet dock. Companies for the construction of a dock in the Slake were formed in 1834 and 1837, and both failed of success. The construction of the railway company's dock was commenced in February, 1849, and was almost immediately suspended through the financial crisis which led to Hudson's downfall. The work was recommenced in 1853, on an enlarged plan providing for a dock of 60 acres, and the water was let into the dock on

December 26, 1858. It was by that time the property of the North Eastern Railway Company, formed on July 31, 1854, by the union of the York, Newcastle and Berwick, the Leeds Northern (Ferryhill and Hartlepool to Leeds) and the York and North Midland. The two former had been in such furious competition that the return fare from Ferryhill to Leeds (140 miles) was reduced to 2s. The Leeds Northern Company had promoted a Bill for the extension of their line from Hartlepool to Shields when negotiations began which resulted in the amalgamation. The North Eastern, as originally constituted, represented a combination of forty-one separate railway companies exercising their powers under sixty-eight private Acts of Parliament. Under the Railways Act of 1920 it was merged in the Eastern group known as the London and North Eastern Railway.

The "Monopoly" thus established has never been broken, although several schemes for the constructions of other railways to or passing through South Shields have been projected at various times. These included in 1864 a Riverside line from Gateshead through Hebburn and Jarrow to Tyne Dock, and about the same period an extension of the Blyth and Tyne Railway from North Shields by a High Level Bridge across the Tyne to South Shields and on to Sunderland. In 1865 the Tyne, Wear, and Tees Railway Company was formed to construct a line from South Shields Market Place through Sunderland to a junction at Stockton with a proposed new railway thence to Leeds. The scheme never materialized. The direct line from South Shields by Jarrow to Pelaw was opened on March 1, 1872, and the extension of the

railway from High Shields Station to the new station in Mile End Road was opened on June 2, 1879, when the old terminal station near the Mill Dam was converted into a goods station. Tyne Dock has several times been extended, notably in 1891-2, when the first electro-pneumatic system of signalling adopted in this country was installed on the railways feeding the dock. In pre-War times the coal shipped from this one dock averaged over 7,000,000 tons yearly, which is believed to be the largest amount shipped from any single dock in the world.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### SALT, GLASS AND CHEMICALS.

OF three manufactures, in each of which South Shields once stood pre-eminent - Salt-making, Glass-making and the Chemical manufacture - the two former have entirely disappeared, but chemical manufacture is still carried on at East Jarrow. The necessity of preserving the fish landed at Shields, so as to ensure a supply for the Monastery and the public during Lent, when the eating of meat was strictly prohibited, led to the establishment at an early date probably in the thirteenth century - of the manufacture of salt by the evaporation of sea-water. Large shallow pans heated by coal fires were used to evaporate the brine. Originally these pans were of lead, but by the fifteenth century iron had been adopted, for in 1489, we have record that Lionel Bell erected two iron salt pans on a parcel of land he had leased for sixteen years near St. Hild's chapel. The industry seems to have had its seat along the river bank, west of the Mill Dam, and by, at any rate, early in the sixteenth century, had given the name of "West Panns" to what is now the Holborn District of the Borough. The pans were built in pairs on bricks walls. The brine, collected in pits at high tide, was pumped through lead pipes into the higher pan above the fire hole or furnace, and after it had boiled for a time was drawn off into a lower pan, kept hot by the waste heat passing beneath it from the furnace to the chimney. Each pan cost about £100 and was fifteen feet

long by ten and a half feet broad and two feet three inches deep, made of iron plates riveted - so that boiler-making is also a very old industry of the Borough.

The regulations imposed by the Halmote and Court Leete in regard to the trade - quoted elsewhere in this book - afford circumstantial evidence of its early importance. By the middle of the sixteenth century there were in North and South Shields, 153 salt pans, which produced 7,000 to 9,000 weighs of salt, worth 20/- to 22/- per weigh. The trade employed 430 salters and 120 keelmen - the latter in bringing coals from the pits higher up the river - without counting the "cadgers" and "wayne-men" employed in distribution where the salt was not carried by water. The inland distribution was originally carried on by pack horses or asses. The tracks they followed became known as "the Salters' trod," a name which endured down to modern times. One of these ran along the Coast by Whitburn, Sunderland, Hartlepool and Seaton Carew across the Tees into Cleveland, and possibly as far south as Whitby, then an important seaport. The fishermen of Yarmouth and other East Coast ports called at Shields for salt on their way to the distant fisheries of Iceland and Westmony, or Greenland.

So considerable was the trade that Elizabeth made it the subject of one of the many monopolies she created. Casper Seeler in 1564 was granted the sole right to manufacture and sell white salt for twenty years. The local saltmakers, as well as their principal customers, the fishermen, protested in vain against this monopoly. About 1600 the Durham Court of Chancery issued a

Commission to enquire and report as to the damages sustained to Westoe Ley from the salt pans, while in September, 1618, the nine tenants of the Westoe farms were awarded £13 6s. 8d. per annum compensation from Nicholas Cole and Christopher Mitford, salt pan owners for damages caused by the smoke of the salt pans to the great pasture of Westoe - a considerable sum, seeing that the total rental of their farms was then only £27.

The trade attracted to the town many powerful and wealthy men, including, as we have seen, Sir Robert Heath. About 1634, Charles I granted another Salt monopoly to Sir Richard Broke, Almott Clinch, John Duke and Edward Nuttall, who represented that they had erected works at Shields and discovered a perfect way of making Salt from sea-water as good as the bay salt imported from Spain, which they could sell at £4 per "wey" (2/- per bushel) for home consumption, and £3 10s. for fishery purposes. They proposed to come to terms with the other salters of Shields and to pay the King 10/- per "wey" of fine salt and 3/4 per "wey" of fishery salt in consideration of their being granted a monopoly. The other Saltmakers as well as the fishermen of Yarmouth petitioned against the monopoly on the ground that it would double the price of salt, but without success, and in December, 1634, the monopolists were incorporated as the Society of Saltmakers at North and South Shields, with a monopoly of the sale of salt on the coast between Berwick-on-Tweed and Southampton. The Society stated that they had bought and built salt pans to the value of £14,000, and bargained for others to a further value of £4,000.

About that period, fishing vessels came to the port by two hundred at a time for salt, and so extensive was the trade that Thomas Horth and his partners paid £9,000 a year for the privilege of farming the salt duties of the port. Horth also apparently bought under contract the whole output of a number of the Shields saltmakers. The monopolies, however, do not appear to have been very profitable to anyone but the Crown. In January, 1640, the Shields Society complained that they had lost over a thousand pounds by their undertaking, and in the same year Horth alleged that he had lost £2,893 on his bargain. The creation of a monopoly in salt in Shields was one of the counts of the indictment brought against Charles I by John Pym in his famous speech in the House of Commons on April 17, 1640.

The Civil War, with the dislocation of trade it caused, seriously affected the local salt trade. Part of the pans, moreover, were destroyed by the Scots army during its occupation of the town, while the admission of Scottish salt to the English market at the same rate of duty as charged on the Shields - made salt was also alleged as a grievance. A petition from the Shields saltmakers and the Newcastle Society of Hostmen in December, 1654, to Cromwell, praying for protection for the Shields salt trade was without effect. An application to Charles II at the Restoration for compensation for the losses of the Shields saltmakers was no more successful; and when the Dean and Chapter of Durham demanded fines for the renewal of leases on the local property which had been "bought" at the sale of Church lands, under the Commonwealth, many saltmakers, unable to pay the

finer, allowed their leases to lapse and their pans to go to ruin. The trade, however, gradually recovered itself, for the number of salt pans assessed in South Shields had by 1696 increased to 143. From 1739 to 1746 North and South Shields produced 74,574 out of a total of 88,886 tons of salt produced in Durham and Northumberland; while in 1748 there were two hundred salt pans in the town. Daniel Defoe, in his description of his visit to the North in 1768, wrote:- “Prodigious are the quantities of coals which these salt pans consume; and the fires make such smoke that we saw it ascend in huge clouds over the hills four miles before we came to Durham which is at least sixteen miles off”; while in describing his ascent of the Cheviots he says:- “We could plainly see the smoke of the salt pans at Sheals... which was about forty miles south.”

But the industry had reached its zenith. The growing demand for coals, and the introduction of steam early in the nineteenth century, opening another avenue for the small coal which the salt-makers originally obtained at a nominal price as waste, increased the cost of production, while the development of the great deposits of salt in Cheshire introduced a new and fatally effective competition. In 1820 only five South Shields salt pans remained. One of these, on the north side of West Holborn, whose site lay to the west of where the Hilda Coal Co.'s line now crosses that street, survived until after the middle of the nineteenth century. Its produce was chiefly used for curing purposes, for which the Shields salt was highly valued.

Although in the seventeenth century Benedict Biscop, when he was building Monkwearmouth Monastery, brought makers of glass from France, we have no record of any glass-works on the Tyne until 1616. In that year Henry Mansell, Vice-Admiral of England, who had bought a glass-making patent and had been granted a monopoly of glass making by James I, on payment to the Crown of £1,000 per year, erected glass-works at the Ouseburn, Newcastle. Soon afterwards a glass manufactory was established in South Shields by Isaac Cookson. Thomas Salmon in his "South Shields Past and Present" states that there was in existence a mixing book of the ingredients used at these works in 1650, and also letters written by Cookson from his glass-works in 1680. These works produced flint and crown or window glass, and also blown plate glass. They occupied the site known as Cookson's Quay, later covered by the plate glass works. To provide one of the raw materials used in glass-making, Cookson, about the end of the seventeenth century, erected the first chemical works in the town, on a site adjoining his glass-works. Here he made alum from the alum shale brought by sea from the cliffs north of Whitby and landed at what became known from that circumstance as the Alum House Ham. Bye-products of the manufacture were magnesia and Epsom salts.

The second glass-works in the town were established by John Dagnia, whose father and uncle owned the Closegate glass-works at Newcastle. The date of the establishment of these works is uncertain. They probably occupied the site afterwards known as the bottle-works on the east side of the Mill Dam. Here broad plate glass

was made by Dagnia's improved process, certainly before 1737. It is said that the first pair of bevelled glass plates produced by this process were placed in the garden door of the mansion which Dagnia built at Cleadon. At his death in 1742 the works passed to his son James and his daughter Sarah, the wife of Evan Deer. Shortly afterwards James sold his share to John Cookson, who was carrying on the original works established by his father or grandfather Isaac. The plate glass-works, where apparently bottle glass-making was also introduced, were carried on by Cookson and Deer to about 1783, when both works are registered as belonging to J. Cookson and Company. Simon Temple, who sank the Templetown Colliery, established, about the end of the eighteenth century, crown and bottle glass-works on the south side of where is now Coronation Street. Early in the nineteenth century Cuthbert and Co. established flint and crown glass-works, and by 1827 there were eight large glass-works in the town, three, including a plate-glass works, belonging to Cookson and Co., two crown glass-works at the Mill Dam belonging to Shortridge and Co., Cookson and Cuthbert's bottle-works in West Holborn, and Shortridge Sawyer and Co.'s flint glass-works in West Holborn.

The invention of sheet glass by French glass-makers about 1825, gave a serious blow to the crown glass, which was chiefly produced at Shields. The latter was "blown" by the glass-maker's breath through a blow pipe into circular sheets, each of which had a disfiguring knob or "bull's eye" in the centre, where the end of the blow pipe had been. The sheet glass was made in squares of

about four feet by three feet without any "bull's eye." The English made glass was also subjected to an excise duty, which at some periods amounted to 300 per cent. of the cost. In 1832 the eighteen works in South Shields and Sunderland paid £133,196 in duty. In response to the complaints of the Shields glass-makers, a Royal Commission in 1835 recommended the total repeal of the duties on English glass, but the recommendation was not acted upon until ten years later. Meantime Mr. Swinburne, manager of Cookson's glass-works, with the assistance of a foreman mason, managed to obtain from France the secret of sheet glass-making, and induced some French workmen to settle in South Shields, where he commenced to make sheet glass in 1837, the manufacture of crown glass rapidly declining thereafter.

About 1845, by the retirement of Messrs. Cookson and Cuthbert, Mr. Robert William Swinburne became head of the firm and formed a new company, which included George Stephenson the railway engineer, George Hudson the "railway king," Nicholas Wood, engineer of the Brandling Junction railway, Ralph Park Phillipson and Sir William Hutt, M.P. The firm introduced the manufacture of rolled plate glass and shared with Messrs. Chance of Birmingham, the contract for the supply of the whole of the plate glass required for the erection of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park in 1850, for the great Exhibition of the following year. The glass manufacturers were greatly hampered by frequent prosecutions through the emission of smoke. Many thousands of pounds were spent in experiments to overcome this nuisance with only partial success. The

industry also suffered from the arbitrary policy of the Glass-makers' Society, which opposed the adoption of new processes or new machinery, prescribed the number of hands to be employed, and the rate of wages to be paid, limited the number of apprentices and insisted upon their "allowance" of beer to the workmen.

In 1858 the South Shields works formed part of those acquired by the Imperial Plate Glass Co., which, with a capital of a million sterling, bought up the whole of the plate glass works in the United Kingdom. The Company was dissolved a few years later, when the South Shields works were purchased by the Tyne Plate Glass Co., of which one of the principal members was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Charles M. Palmer, the founder of Jarrow. This company carried on the works until 1891 when it failed, having lost the whole of its capital of £89,000. By that date all the other glass-works in the town had been closed except the flint glass works of Messrs. Edward Moore and Co., in West Holborn. This was carried on until about 1910, when the industry became extinct in the Borough, once the largest glass-making centre in the Kingdom.

As we have seen, the first chemical works were established by Isaac Cookson for the production of Alum. Later that ingredient was replaced in the glass-making by kelp - the ashes of sea-weed - brought from Scotland. That in turn gave place to soda crystals made from barilla, and Messrs. Cookson's works were re-modelled for the manufacture of the new substance. About 1752, a Mr. Fordyce established a barilla works near where the gasworks are now, but this was unsuccessful, and was

converted into a soap factory. Towards the close of the eighteenth century, Messrs. Cookson erected new chemical works at Templetown for the manufacture of alkali by the conversion of common salt into carbonate of soda, under the process introduced by Messrs. Losh and Doubleday at their Walker-on-Tyne works in 1796. This process was superseded about 1832 by the Le Blanc system of decomposing salt into soda by the use of vitriol. A small vitriol factory was erected near where the goods station now stands, hence called Vitriol Hill. Messrs. Cookson extended their operations about 1835 by the erection of the Westoe soda works, on a site now incorporated in St. Hilda's Colliery yard. They were much harassed by prosecutions for damage to crops by the gases released during manufacture, and in 1842, both the Templetown and the Westoe works were closed.

The former were bought in the following year by the Jarrow Chemical Company, consisting of Messrs. James Stevenson of Glasgow, J. C. Williamson of Hull, J. Tennant of Glasgow, and William Stevenson of London. The firm adopted the most modern methods of production, and succeeded in greatly reducing, though not entirely abolishing, the issue of noxious gases. On the retirement of Mr. James Stevenson in 1854, the works came under the sole control of Messrs. J. C. Stevenson and John Williamson, sons of the principal partners in the original firm. The business was rapidly developed until the works became the largest alkali factory in the Kingdom, employing at one time 1,400 hands. The firm were the first to adopt the Saturday half-day holiday. They provided an institute for their workmen and schools

for the workmen's children. The firm established the Willington Quay copper works, afterwards transferred to the Tharsis Copper and Sulphur Company, and in conjunction with Messrs. Tennant and Co., sank salt wells at Haverton Hill in the Teesside salt field. The American system of diamond drill boring was first used in this country in the sinking of their wells. In May, 1891, the Templetown works were acquired by the United Alkali Company, Limited, an amalgamation of the principal alkali works in the Kingdom. In pursuance of a policy of limiting the output, the works were closed at the end of that year. The Don Alkali works at East Jarrow were established by Robert Imeary, son of a Baptist Minister at North Shields, about the close of the eighteenth century, and were afterwards carried on by Solomon Mease and Co., till their transference to the United Alkali Company. They are still in operation. Other chemical works established at East Jarrow by Thomas Bell are now carried on by the Hedworth Barium Co. for the production of Binoxide of Barium and other chemicals.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### SOME NOTABLE SHIELDSMEN.

THE Borough of South Shields has numbered amongst its sons not a few men of note in their day and generation. Of some of these brief sketches, arranged in alphabetical order, are appended:-

REV. JOHN BLACK, for many years General Secretary to the Presbyterian Church of England, was the son of James Black, merchant, of South Shields, and from an early date was connected with St. John's Church. Although trained for a business life, he decided to study for the Presbyterian ministry. He was for over twenty years minister of the North Bridge Street Church at Sunderland and filled the post of General Secretary to the Synod for eleven years preceding his death, which occurred in London, October 20, 1888.

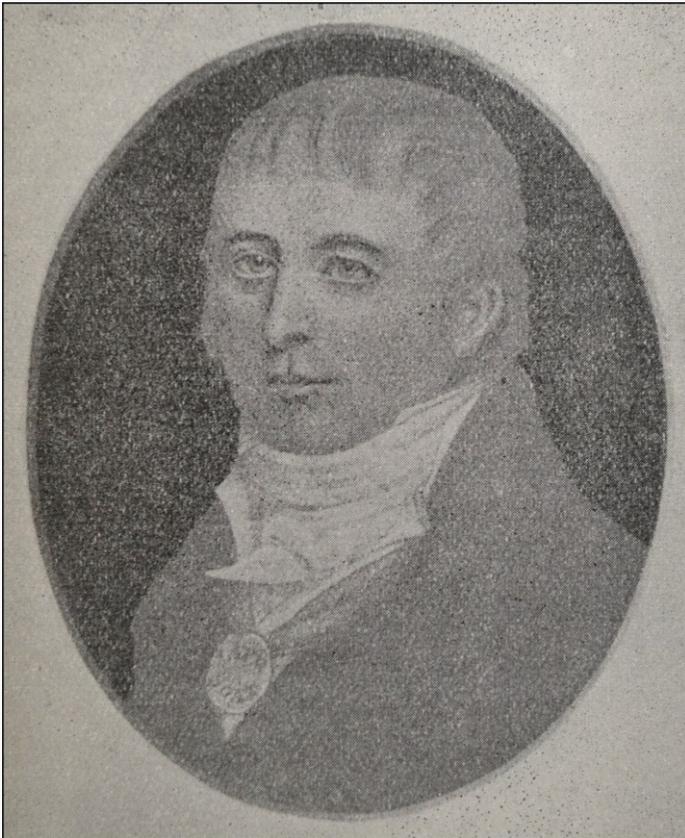
ROBINSON ELLIOTT, landscape artist, was a member of an old South Shields family, his father being a hatter in the town. He studied art in the school of Henry Sass, where one of his fellow pupils was Sir J. E. Millais, afterwards President of the Royal Academy. Returning to the North, Elliott settled in Newcastle, where he established a studio in Grainger Street, and founded and taught for many years the first art class in South Shields, held in the Mechanics' Institute, now the Public Library. Among his pupils were James Shotton, the North Shields artist, and Mrs. Grey, the water-colour artist of

Newcastle. Mr. Elliott, who designed the Borough coat of arms and seal, was also a poet of no mean order, his poems being collected and published during his lifetime. He was a frequent exhibiter in the Royal Academy, and other exhibitions, his last academy picture being "Cast Ashore," a wreck in Frenchman's Bay.

WILLIAM FOX, the son of George Townsend Fox of Harton, was born on January 20th, 1812. He was educated at Durham Grammar School and Wadham College, Oxford, and called to the Bar in 1842. He emigrated to New Zealand where he was a leader in the agitation which resulted in responsible Government being granted to the Colony. He was a member of the first legislative Council elected in 1848 and eventually became Prime Minister and was knighted. He was four times Prime Minister, was created K.C.M.G., in 1879, and died in 1892.

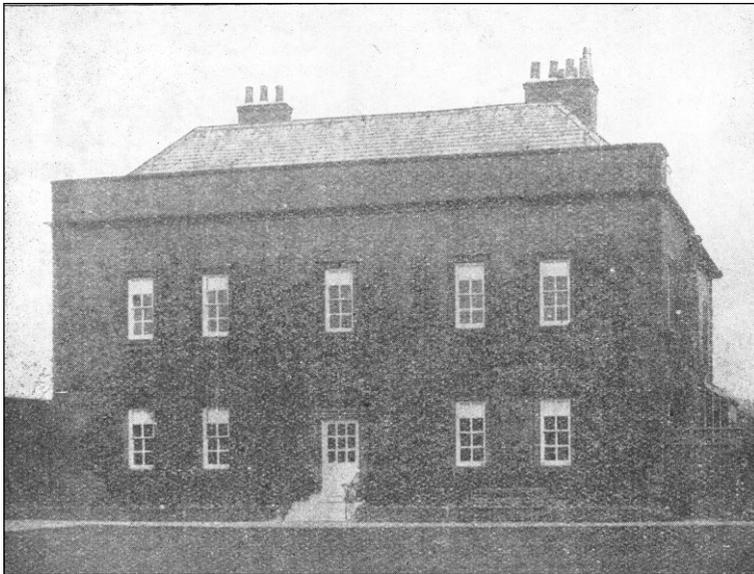
SIR JOHN GLOVER, who rose to be Chairman of Lloyd's and one of the largest shipowners in London was born in 1829, and was the son of Alderman Terrot Glover, thrice mayor of the Borough. He was educated at William Wilson's School in King Street and went to London at an early age. He took an active part in shipping questions and in the Suez Canal controversy, being a member of the small committee which negotiated with the Messrs. Lesseps the agreement under which the Suez Canal affairs have since been regulated. He was knighted on June 24th, 1900, and died March 24, 1920.

HENRY GREATHEAD, the builder of the first lifeboat and in the opinion of some its actual inventor, was born on January 27th, 1757, at Richmond, Yorkshire. He served his apprenticeship as a boat builder and followed the sea for seven years. In 1785, he settled down in South Shields where he commenced business for himself. He is said to have had a career of great prosperity but to have died penniless, where or when it is uncertain.



HENRY GREATHEAD.

ROBERT INGHAM, Q.C., M.P., the second son of William Ingham, surgeon, and Jane, the only daughter and heiress of Robert Walker (a wealthy shipowner and butcher who owned the leasehold estate of Westoe Hall) was born in 1793, educated at Ovingham, Durham, Harrow, and Oriel College, Oxford, where he obtained a fellowship in 1816. He was offered the Greek chair of his College, but choosing the law for his profession he was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1820, choosing the Northern Circuit. On the death of his mother on March 7, 1824, he succeeded to his grandfather's estate and



ROBERT INGHAM'S HOUSE, WESTOE

resided thereafter at Westoe Hall, where his friend, Samuel Warren, wrote the greater part of his famous novel "Ten Thousand a Year." In 1832 Mr. Ingham was appointed Recorder of Berwick, and in the same year

elected first M.P., for South Shields, a position he held, with an interval of ten years, until 1868. He was for many years Attorney-General of the County Palatine of Durham, a Bencher of the Inner Temple, and took silk in 1851. On his retirement from Parliament his constituents and fellow townsmen in appreciation of his long and faithful services to the town, erected the Ingham Infirmary, which bears in front an inscription commemorating his public usefulness. He died unmarried at Westoe on October 21, 1875, and was honoured by a public funeral.

SIR CHARLES MARK PALMER, BART., M.P., eldest son of George Palmer, master mariner and shipowner, was born in King Street on November 3rd, 1822. He was educated at William Wilson's School, Dr. Bruce's Academy in Newcastle, and in the South of France. In 1845 was formed the firm of John Bowes & Partners, coal-owners, consisting of John Bowes, then M.P. for South Durham, William Hutt, M.P. for Gateshead (afterwards President of the Board of Trade), Nicholas Wood, the railway and mining engineer and Charles Mark Palmer, the latter for many years sole acting partner. In 1851, Mr. Palmer and his brothers commenced a small iron shipbuilding yard at Jarrow (then a rural village). Amongst the early vessels launched was the famous screw collier "John Bowes." During the Crimean War the firm built in three and a half months the first iron warship constructed on the Tyne, H.M.S. "Terror," a floating battery of two thousand tons displacement, 250 horse-power, carrying 26 68-pounders and the first vessel sheathed with rolled instead of forged

armour plates. Messrs. Palmer Bros., in 1854 commenced operations as iron masters, acquiring two blast furnaces at Wallsend and laying down puddling furnaces and rolling mills at Jarrow. In 1857, the works at Wallsend were discontinued and four blast furnaces were erected at Jarrow. In 1865 the works at Jarrow were transferred to a limited liability company with a capital of a million sterling. Mr. Palmer was one of the founders and first chairman of the Tyne Steam Shipping Company established in 1864 and became chairman of the Tyne Plate Glass Company. He entered Parliament as one of the representatives of the Northern Division of Durham in 1864 and sat continuously (after 1885 for the Jarrow Division) until his death in June, 1907.

THOMAS SALMON, the younger son of John Salmon, shipowner of Wellington Street, was born May 6, 1794. In 1817 he commenced practice as a solicitor in South Shields. He was one of the promoters of the old Town Improvement Act, and became first joint and afterwards sole Clerk to the Improvement Commissioners. It was largely owing to his energy and persistence that the Church leaseholders of South Shields so successfully opposed the attempts to deprive them by legislation of their ancient right of renewal. He served as honorary secretary of the Leaseholders' committees, and on several occasions gave valuable evidence on their behalf before Parliamentary Committees. On the incorporation of the Borough he was unanimously elected' as first Town Clerk, a post he filled until his death. He rendered great service towards securing a separate Customs Port for South Shields, the creation of

a Local Marine Board, and the establishment of the Pilotage Commission. He filled many public offices. In 1865 Mr. Salmon was presented with a valuable testimonial in acknowledgment of his services in connection with public matters, while his portrait and bust were placed in the Town Hall. His principal literary work was "South Shields, past, present, and future," published in 1856, with a supplement in 1866. Mr. Salmon died suddenly on May 29, 1871, at the age of seventy-seven.

JOHN SCOTT, the marine painter, was born in Laygate Street, South Shields, in 1802. He followed a seafaring life for some years, then studied art under Carmichael, and returned to his native town, where he took up the profession of marine painter. He was a painter of the sea in all its moods and tenses, a fine colourist and his seascapes are now much prized. He died in 1885.

GEORGE FREDERICK STOUT, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at St. Andrews, son of George Stout, was born in South Shields on January 6th, 1859, educated at the private school of Charles Addison, M.A., in Charlotte Terrace, and St. John's College, Cambridge, where he took his degree of M.A., graduating with distinction in Classics, Ancient Philosophy, Metaphysics and Moral Science. He was elected Fellow of his college in 1884, appointed Examiner in Philosophy in the Indian Civil Service in 1894, Examiner in Moral Science Tripos in 1897, Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy in the University of Oxford, 1898, and Examiner for the University of London, 1899. In 1896 he was elected

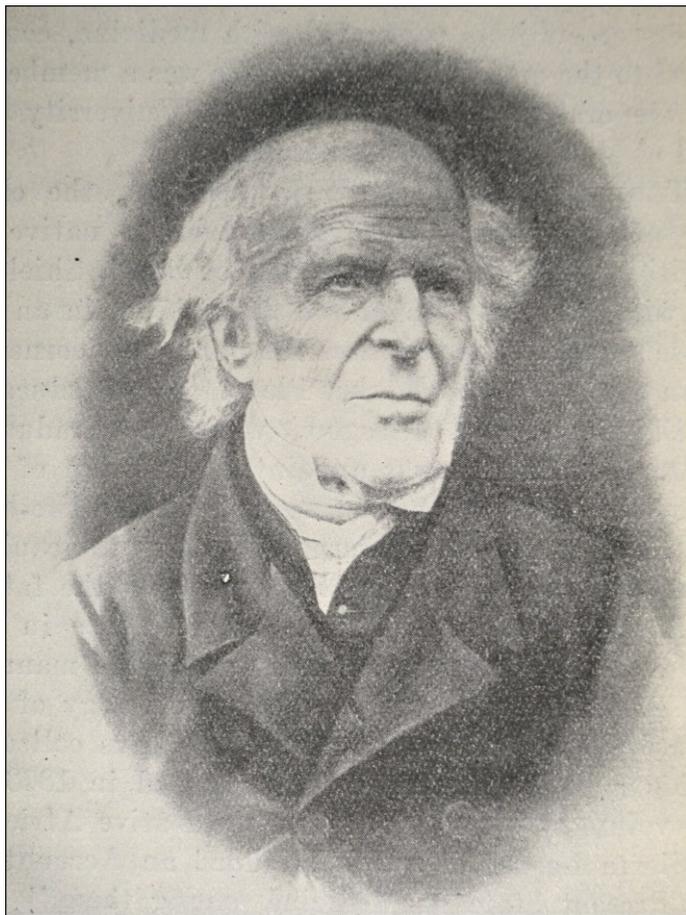
Anderson Lecturer in Comparative Psychology at Aberdeen University, but resigned this for the Professorship of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge. He has for many years been Editor of *Mind*.

ERNEST SETON THOMPSON, the famous Canadian animal painter, was born in South Shields in 1860, migrating early in life with his family to the Dominion. He studied at Toronto College and the London Royal Academy. From 1890 to 1893 he studied art in Paris and exhibited pictures in the salon there. His specialities are animal life and habits, wildlife in the woods, and works on the aborigines of the North American Continent. His "Arctic Prairie," an account of a summer spent in our Great Lone Land," and "Wild Animals I have Known," are two of his most popular books. As author he writes under the name of Thompson Seton, and as such was the originator of the "Boy Scout" movement which has done so much to encourage among boys a healthy love of birds, animals, woodcraft, and outdoor life, as well as a spirit of altruism.

DR. JAMES MANN WILLIAMSON, the famous specialist in pulmonary diseases, was the son of Dr. James Williamson of South Shields, where he was born in 1849. He was educated at the Barnes School and at the University of Edinburgh, where he graduated as M.B., and C.M. in 1872, and as M.D. with honours in 1875. In 1873 he was elected Resident Medical Officer at the Royal National Hospital for Consumption, Ventnor, an office he continued to hold for about three years, when he was appointed physician. He was the author of many

papers on subjects connected with medicine, contributed to the medical journals. He was a member of the General Council of Edinburgh University and died at Ventnor on November 12, 1901.

THOMAS MASTERMAN WINTERBOTTOM, the elder son of Dr. Thomas Winterbottom, a native of Whitby, and Lydia (Masterman of South Shields), his wife, was born on March 26th, 1766, in an old house situated where is now the north-east corner of Dean Street and the Market Place. He was educated at Edinburgh and Glasgow, where he graduated M.D. In 1792 he was appointed physician of the Colony of Sierra Leone, where he formed a life-long friendship with the governor, Zachary Macaulay, afterwards the great anti-slavery leader (the father of Lord Macaulay). During his residence in the colony Dr. Winterbottom investigated the manners and customs of the natives, the meteorology of the country, etc., utilizing the materials thus collected in his most important work, published in 1803 in two volumes, "An Account of the Native Africans in Sierra Leone, to which is added an Account of the Present State of Medicine among them." In 1796 he returned to his native town, married Barbara, widow of James Wardle, shipowner (who died in 1840, leaving no family) and took up his residence at Westoe, where he was visited in 1818 by George Macaulay, who died there and was buried at St. Hild's. Dr. Winterbottom made numerous contributions to scientific and especially to medical literature and in various series of papers showed himself well in advance of medical opinion of the day.



DR. THOMAS MASTERMAN WINTERBOTTOM.

The principal existing charities in the town were created by Dr. Winterbottom. In addition to founding the Marine School, he built the twenty-three cottages which form the north side of the Master Mariners' Asylum, as an endowment for the Master Mariners' Asylum and Annuity Society founded in 1839. Subsequently he built and furnished the Library and left an endowment fund for

the maintenance of the buildings. He also left bequests to the Royal Standard Seamen's Association, established in 1824, and wound up in 1896.

He bequeathed £354 in trust to pay annual rewards to unmarried family domestic servants with the longest record of service in one family, £5,000 in trust to pay the income to seamen's widows belonging to the town, £600 for pensions to scullermen born, apprenticed, and resident in South Shields, and £300 to provide coal for the poor of Westoe. Dr. Winterbottom died on July 8, 1859, aged 93.

WILLIAM WOULDHAVE, generally reputed the inventor of the lifeboat, was born in 1751. He served his apprenticeship as a house painter. On reaching manhood he is described as "distinguished for his eccentricity of manners, versatility of mind, and peculiarly inventive genius." He suggested an important improvement in the building of dry docks, by which the sides of the dock were made sloping instead of perpendicular, to give more light to the workmen, a principle ever since adopted; and he weighed up a ship which had been sunk and abandoned at the mouth of the harbour. He amused himself also by constructing various curious instruments, among which were an organ, a clock, and an electric machine. With his share in the invention of the lifeboat we have already dealt. He was appointed Parish Clerk, supplementing his income by teaching singing to the children of the Charity School. He died poor and



BUST OF WOULDHAVE.

neglected, in a cottage now in ruins on Nelson's Bank near the Mill Dam, on September 28th, 1821, aged seventy-three years, and was buried in St. Hild's Churchyard. A fine picture by Ralph Hedley, in the Borough Art Gallery, represents Wouldhave at work on the model of his lifeboat.

## CHRONOLOGY OF SOUTH SHIELDS.

A.D.

- 647-8 ..... St. Hilda's Nunnery founded.
- 685-March ..... Jarrow Monastery Dedicated.
- 883 ..... Guthred endowed “The Church of St. Cuthbert” with all the land between Tyne and Wear.
- 1204-February 2 ..... King John confirmed the title of the Church at Durham to the townships of Westoe and Harton and the Church of St. Hild.
- 1235 ..... The Melsanby Buke enumerated twenty-four tenants of the Prior and Convent in South Shields together with a tavern and brewery.
- 1306 ..... North and South Shields reported jointly able to lade and victual 100 to 200 vessels.
- 1335-August 20 ..... Edward I. forbade Newcastle to hinder ships loading at Shields.
- 1353-March 7 ..... The Mayor and Burgesses of Newcastle acknowledged the right of Shields to free fisheries and free markets.

- 1499..... Iron saltpans existed near St. Hild's' Church.
- 1529..... Newcastle obtained an Act of Parliament (21st Henry VIII.) giving that town a monopoly of the trade and navigation of the Tyne.
- 1540..... South Shields, Westoe, and Harton included in Henry VIII.'s Endowment of the Cathedral Church of Durham.
- 1639-December..... Shields Society of Saltmakers granted a monopoly.
- 1644-March 20..... South Shields fort captured by the Scots (re- captured by Royalists in June).
- 1650..... Glassworks in operation in South Shields.
- 1653-September 20 .. First Register of St. Hild's Church opened.
- 1718..... First Presbyterian Church erected (at head of Mile End Road).
- 1720..... Robert Wallis commenced the first shipbuilding yard in South Shields.
- ..... First Chemical Factory established by Isaac Cookson.
- 1731..... Act for constructing a highway from South Shields Ferry to Fulwell passed.

- 1746.....First Wesleyan Methodist  
Congregation formed.
- 1751-March .....First Whaler, "The Swallow," left  
Shields Harbour.
- 1756.....First Ballast Wharf in South Shields  
(Cookson's Quay) licensed.
- 1768.....The High Dock (H. S. Edwards')  
opened.
- June 24 .....Dean and Chapter of Durham  
    purchased eight acres of St. Hild's  
    Glebe on which the Town Hall,  
    Market Place, and surrounding  
    streets were built.
- 1769-October 20.....First Charity School opened.
- 1770-October 17.....First Weekly Market held.
- 1771-June 24 .....First Half-yearly Fair held.
- 1786 .....Underground fire broke out in  
Academy Hill.
- 1787 .....Act incorporating South Shields  
Water Company passed.
- 1789-May 16 .....South Shields Shipowners'  
Committee offered a reward for best  
design for a lifeboat.
- 1790-June 30 .....Lifeboat first used for saving life  
from shipwreck.
- 1795 March 16.....South Shields Shipwrights  
Association (first Shipbuilders' Trade  
Union) formed.

- 1797-May 23 ..... First Mutual Club for insurance of ships formed.
- 1797 July ..... South Shields Loyal Volunteer Corps formed.
- 1806 ..... Mail Coach started running between South Shields and York.
- 1810-April 23 ..... Templetown Colliery opened.
- 1812 June..... Last "Press" for seamen in South Shields.
- 1814 June 20..... First steamboat, the "Perseverance," began to ply between South Shields and Newcastle.
- 1818 September 3..... First Baptist Church formed.  
 ..... Indigent Sick Society formed.
- 1821-February..... South Shields and Westoe Dispensary opened.
- September 28 ..... William Wouldhave, inventor of the lifeboat, died, aged 73.
- 1822 January ..... First Primitive Methodist Society formed.  
 June 25 ..... First Congregational Church established on Academy Hill.
- 1824 March 17 ..... Gas Company constituted.  
 October 1 ..... Gas first supplied to shops and houses.
- 1825 ..... St. Hilda's Colliery opened.  
 April 23 ..... Company formed to construct Suspension Bridge between North and South Shields.

- November 23 ..... Literary, Mechanical, and Scientific Institution formed.
- 1826-March 22 ..... Act for making a road from South Shields via Whitemere Pool to Chester-le-Street passed.
- 1828 September 24 ..... Public Meeting decided to promote a Town Improvement Bill (Bill passed in following Session).
- 1829-June 1 ..... Shields Ferry Act passed, authorising steam ferries across the harbour.
- July 1 ..... First Meeting of Town Improvement Commission.
- November 1 ..... Streets first lighted by gas.
- 1830-December 31 ..... Town's meeting petitioned parliament to create South Shields a Parliamentary Borough.
- 1832 June 5 ..... Reform Bill creating South Shields a Parliamentary Borough received Royal Assent.
- July 4 ..... Durham University Act passed, appropriating the South Shields Estate of the Dean and Chapter as endowment for the University then founded.
- December 11 ..... First Parliamentary Election. Robert Ingham returned.
- 1834 ..... Wesleyan Methodist Association Congregation formed.
- September 10 ..... Stanhope and Tyne Railway opened to South Shields.

- 1836-December 13 ..... First Meeting of South Shields Board of Guardians - Richard Shortridge elected Chairman.
- 1837 ..... Manufacture of sheet glass commenced at Cookson's Works.
- 1837-October ..... South Shields Coasting Board for examinations in seamanship formed.
- 1839 ..... First Iron Vessel built on the Tyne - the tugboat "Star"- launched from T. D. Marshall's Yard.
- January 28..... Master Mariners' Asylum and Annuity Society founded.
- June 18 ..... Brandling Junction Railway, Gateshead to South Shields, opened.
- June 28 ..... Explosion in St. Hilda Colliery - 50 lives lost.
- July 1 ..... South Shields Committee for prevention of explosions in coal mines formed.
- October 8 ..... Collision between runaway engine and mail train in South Shields Station - five killed.
- 1841 ..... Chamber of Commerce established.
- 1842 ..... Report of South Shields Committee for prevention of explosions in coal mines published.
- March 24..... First twin-screw iron steamer, the "Bedlington," launched from Marshall's Yard.

- 1843 ..... Jarrow Chemical Company bought  
Templetown Alkali Works.
- 1845-February 13 ..... Waterloo Vale Police Buildings  
opened.
- June 30..... St. Hild's constituted an independent  
    Ecclesiastical Parish.
- July 10 ..... Harton Colliery Won.
- 1847 ..... First Iron Screw Collier, the  
    “Conside,” built by T. D. Marshall.
- March 2..... Shields Direct Ferry Company  
    formed.
- June 26..... First County Court held in South  
    Shields.
- 1848- March 30 ..... Shields Customs Port created.
- 1849-February ..... Construction of Tyne Dock  
    commenced.
- February 24 ..... Shields Gazette first published.
- June 22..... The two Shields Ferry Companies  
    amalgamated.
- December 4 ..... Lifeboat Providence capsized.  
    Twenty lives lost.
- 1850-January 30 ..... Town's Meeting petitioned for a  
    Charter of Incorporation.
- March 11 ..... First Working Men's Institute in  
    England Established.
- 1850-July 18 ..... Tyne Improvement Act, constituting  
    the Tyne Commission, passed.
- September 3..... Charter of Incorporation granted.
- November 1 ..... First Municipal Election.

- November 9 ..... First meeting of Town Council. John Clay elected Mayor.
- November 14..... First Meeting of Tyne Improvement Commission.
- 1851-January 7 ..... First Wesleyan Reform Class formed.
- July 11 ..... Borough Commission of the Peace granted (received October 23).
- 1852-May 28..... Sunderland and South Shields Water Act passed.
- 1854-March 31 ..... Burial Board formed.
- June 15 ..... Foundation stones of North and South Piers laid by Mr. Joseph Cowen, Chairman of Tyne Commission.
- October ..... Sir G. B. Airy, Astronomer Royal, carried out his pendulum experiments at Harton Colliery to determine the weight of the earth.
- 1855-April 2 ..... Town Council acquired Town Hall and Markets for £500.
- 1856-October 1. .... Westoe Cemetery opened. St. Hild's Church-yard closed for burials.
- 1858-December 26 ..... Tyne Dock opened.
- 1859-July 8 ..... Dr. Winterbottom, founder of the Marine School and several charities, died aged 93.
- August ..... Tyne General Ferry Steamers began to ply between Shields and Newcastle.

- November 28 ..... Volunteer Rifle Corps (6th Durhams) formed. John Williamson commandant.
- 1860-February 17 ..... Artillery Volunteer Corps (the 3rd Durham) enrolled. (In 1863 amalgamated the Rifle Corps).
- April 10 ..... New Mechanics' Institute in Ocean Road (now Public Library and Museum) opened.
- 1861-March 26 ..... Marine School (founded by Dr. Winterbottom's bequest) opened in Mechanics' Institute
- 1862 ..... Tyne Improvement Commissioners purchased Shields Ferries.
- October 8 ..... Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P., inspected North and South Shields Piers.
- 1864 June 24 ..... Custom house Buildings on Corporation Quay opened.
- 1865 June 19 ..... Tyne Pilotage Act passed - first to give direct representation to Pilots.
- August 29 ..... South Shields Customs Port established.
- November 9 ..... South Shields Local Marine Board established.
- December ..... South Shields Volunteer Life Brigade established.
- 1866-April 2 ..... South Shields Volunteer Life Brigade, at wreck of "Tenterden," were the first to save life by the rocket apparatus.

- 1867-September 24..... Local inquiry into proposal in Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill to incorporate Jarrow with the Parliamentary Borough of South Shields. Proposal strongly opposed both by Shields and Jarrow.
- 1869 ..... Recreation Ground (now part of North Marine Park) opened.
- June 12 ..... Marine School Building opened.
- 1871-January 27 ..... First School Board elected.
- April 14 ..... Public Libraries Act adopted.
- 1872 March 1 ..... Direct Railway to Jarrow and Pelaw opened.
- 1873-June 3 ..... Ingham Infirmary opened.
- August 3 ..... Ocean Road Schools (first built by School Board) opened.
- October 15 ..... Public Library opened.
- 1875-March 13..... Exploration of Roman Station on the Lawe began (completed August, 1877).
- 1876 February 24 ..... Borough Museum opened.
- 1877-September 7 ..... Memorial Stone laid of Harton Poor Law Institution (completed 1880).
- 1879 June 2..... Mile End Road Railway Station opened.
- 1880-November 15..... H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh visited South Shields.
- 1883-May 9 ..... Deans Isolation Hospital opened.
- August 1 ..... Horse Tramways opened.

- 1885-May 4..... High School for Boys opened.
- 1887 July 28..... Site of North and South Marine Parks presented to the Borough by the Ecclesiastical Commission.
- 1889-April 1 ..... South Shields became a County Borough.
- 1890 June 25 ..... Marine Parks opened. Lifeboat Memorial unveiled.
- 1891-June 31 ..... South Shields Electricity Order became law.
- 1892 ..... Whiteleas Smallpox Hospital opened.
- 1893-June 6..... Court Buildings in Keppel Street opened.
- 1894 ..... West Park opened
- 1895-June 19..... Mr. J. C. Stevenson admitted first freeman of the Borough.
- 1896-August 17..... Electric light first used for street lighting. (Electricity works formally inaugurated September 1).
- 1897-May 3..... Parishes of South Shields and Westoe united. Membership of Town Council increased from 32 to 40-10 Aldermen and 30 Councillors.
- December 21 .... Barricades erected on South Pier by Tyne Improvement Commissioners broken down by order of Town Council. (Justice Phillimore on April 28, 1899, gave judgment in favour of the Tyne Commissioners in regard to the barricades beyond the Life Brigade House, and in favour of the

- Town Council in regard to the barricades at the entrance to the Pier).
- 1899-October 14 ..... John Readhead Wing of Ingham Infirmary opened.
- 1900-May 10..... Freedom of the Borough conferred upon 107 residents who fought in the South African War.
- 1901-November 9..... Harton Colliery and Simonside included in Municipal Borough; Burial Board dissolved and its powers transferred to Town Council.
- December 17 ..... South Shields and Jarrow Tramways Order passed.
- 1903-May 1 ..... School Board dissolved. The Town Council became the Education Authority.
- June 24 ..... Lord Roberts, V.C., Commander-in-Chief, visited South Shields.
- 1905 September 27..... Foundation Stone of Municipal Buildings laid.
- October 23 ..... Membership of Town Council increased from 40 to 56-14 Aldermen and 42 Councillors.
- 1906 March 30 ..... Corporation Electric Tramways.
- 1906-October 24 ..... Public Abattoirs opened.
- 1907-September 5 ..... New Baths and Washhouses opened.
- November 7 ..... Shields Pilots' steam cutter began service, superseding the use of separate cibles.

- 1908 December 5..... Tyne General Ferry Steamers  
between Shields and Newcastle  
ceased running.
- 1910 ..... Cottage Houses for Poor Law  
Children opened at Cleadon.
- January 28 ..... Searchlight (presented by Proprietors  
of Shields Gazette) first used by  
Volunteer Life Brigade in shipwreck.
- October 7 ..... Sir William Robson, M.P., Attorney  
General, appointed a Lord of Appeal.
- October 19 ..... New Municipal Buildings opened.
- 1912 September 28 ..... St. Hilda's Colliery Band first won  
the 1,000 Guineas Challenge Cup at  
the Crystal Palace.
- 1913 ..... First Infant Welfare Centre opened.
- May 7 ..... Statue to Queen Victoria unveiled.
- 1915-June 15..... Zeppelin Raid: five bombs fell in  
South Shields. Several men killed in  
Palmer's Works, Jarrow.
- October 6 ..... Private H. H. Robson, V.C.,  
presented with the Freedom of the  
Borough.
- 1916 April 2 ..... Zeppelin Raid on South Shields and  
Whitley Bay - great damage in latter  
town.
- December 31 ..... Pilot Cutter "Protector" blown up by  
German mine. All hands (19)  
perished.

- 1917-June 16..... King George V. and Queen Mary called at South Shields on their progress down the Tyne.
- 1918 ..... Town Council purchased Cleadon Park estate.
- February 6..... Area of Parliamentary Borough made coterminous with Municipal Borough by the Representation of the People Act.
- December 7..... Shields Merchant Seamen interned in Germany during the War given a public welcome home.
- 1919-July 6..... Thanksgiving Service in St. Hild's Church on the signing of Peace with Germany.
- August 9 ..... Public reception and fete to Shields men and women who rendered service in the great War.
- 1920-October 19 ..... Order for extension of Borough Tramways to Cleadon Estate received Royal Assent.
- 1920 November 3..... Foundation Stone of Municipal Houses on Cleadon Estate laid.
- 1921 ..... Art Gallery opened.
- July 28 ..... Cleadon Park Sanatorium opened.
- August 19..... South Shields Corporation Act, including Harton and the Cleadon Estate in the Borough passed.
- October 16 ..... Cenotaph to victims of the Great War unveiled at Tyne Dock.

1922-April 20..... Alderman Robert Readhead  
presented to the town  $7\frac{1}{4}$  acres as the  
Readhead Park

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