

Lemington

Little is known about prehistoric or Roman or Lemington, the closest finds being from adjacent sites south of the river and at Newburn and Ryton. The neighbouring lowland area known as Newburn Haugh was probably a part of the agricultural holdings of the medieval Manor of Newburn, where coal mining is also mentioned in 1367. Lemington is first mentioned in 16th century documents, by which time its coal staithes (HER 4036) had already been built, although they are first known from a map depiction of 1625.

Lemington was important in the coal transport network as the highest point on the River Tyne suitable for staiths. Wagonways such as the Newburn-Wylam wagonway (HER 1032), built around 1748 and used up to 1968, from an early date brought in coals from the north and west. Other 18th century wagonways included the Throckley Wagonway, North Walbottle Wagonway and Baker's Main Wagonway. A number of railway and wagonway bridges (HER 1621-3, 4698 and 4961) were built as part of the communications infrastructure in this crowded industrial zone.

In addition to the coal trade, a variety of other industries developed at Lemington. Most important were the glass works (HER 4035), opened in 1787 by the Northumberland Glass Company (only one of the four large glass cones survives), and the Tyne Iron Works (HER 4346), parts of which survive, which was in operation between 1797-1876. There were also a number of brickworks, chemical works, lime kilns (HER 4038) and at least one shipyard, Oliver's Shipyard (HER 4934). The industrial importance of Lemington declined in the mid 20th century, particularly after the re-routing of the River Tyne (and creation of Lemington Gut). Later industrial developments included a First World War munitions factory (HER 4943), known locally as 'Canary Island', and Lemington Power Station (HER 4960), operational between 1903 and 1919, which later became a substation powering the local tramway. Mid-20th century developments included the Stella North Power Station and a graphite plant, both recently demolished to make way for a business park. The village of Lemington grew as a residential area for industrial workers and contains a number of interesting 19th century residential and other buildings. Remains of the industrial heritage of the area survive in and around Lemington Gut, notably in the form of 19th century quay walls near the former power station and ironworks manager's building.