

Jesmond

Evidence for prehistoric human activity in Jesmond is provided by finds of flint artefacts (HER 1409) and bronze age cist burials found in the garden of Crag Hall in 1844 (HER 147) and at Villa Reale in 1828 (HER 148). The first documentary reference to the village of Jesmond dates from the late 12th century and refers to Jesmond as a member of the barony of Ellingham. The shape of the village cannot be deduced from historic maps, but it is assumed that the site of the original village was south of St. Mary's Chapel, and aligned along the Grove, where two stretches of stone wall survive on the south side. St. Mary's Chapel in Jesmond Dene is first recorded in 1272 and was a place of pilgrimage in the Middle Ages, until dissolved in 1548.

Up to the end of the 18th century, however, a part of the ruins was known as the Hospital, having been the hospice of the pilgrims. Lord Armstrong gave the ruins to the City in 1883. The nearby St. Marys Well was once thought to be medieval in origin but has recently been shown to be relatively modern. Jesmond Manor House (HER 1871) was rebuilt by William Coulson in 1720 on the site of Nicholas Grenville's 12th century house and lay just north of where the present Manor House Road joins Grosvenor Road until demolished in 1929. Another early residence, the 17th century Stote's Hall (HER 1407), lay on the east side of Jesmond Dene Road, and was rebuilt in the early 17th century, but demolished in the mid-20th century. Medieval documents record the existence of a mill at Jesmond in 1272 (HER 1403). This was almost certainly on the Ouseburn and may have occupied the site of one of the later mills on that stream. Later mills include Jesmond Old Mill (HER 1402), a water corn mill in existence by 1739, Jesmond Vale Mill, originally a flint mill (and site of the first standing engine made by George Stephenson after he commenced business for himself), but converted to grind flour in the 1880s, and Busy Cottage Corn Mill (HER 4137), on the site now occupied by Millfield House, a corn mill with a forge, converted from former ironworks buildings (see HER 5680) by 1855.

Although coalmining was carried out there – records show that Jesmond Colliery was open by 1727 - Jesmond developed in the industrial age primarily as a residential, rather than industrial district. This status was consolidated by the opening of the Armstrong and Heaton Parks (HER 5005), established in the mid-19th century up to 1894, which straddle the Ouseburn and occupy around 18 hectares (see also HER 5686-5726 and 5734-5760). Also at this time Jesmond acquired a railway station (HER 1939), built in 1864, as well as improved road connections, including the Armstrong Bridge, opened in 1878 (HER 4332). Jesmond Dene House was used as a Home Guard HQ during WW2 and various modified tunnels and a pillbox survives there (HER 1953-4).