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A HISTORY OF SHIELDS HEUGH, SOUTH SHIELDS, INCLUDING FIELD HOUSE FARM, THE COTTAGE AND MILE END HOUSE

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A History of Shields Heugh, South Shields, including Field House Farm, the Cottage and Mile End House

The names (Figs 1-4)

Field House Farm was part of an estate called Shield Heugh (also Sheelhugh, Shieldheugh) or, and increasingly, Shields Heugh (also Shieldsheugh), owned for most of its existence by Durham Cathedral. From at least 1619 the sole farm on the estate was known as both Shields Heugh Farm and Field House Farm (or more rarely Shields Field Heugh, Field Heugh or Heugh Farm). The farmstead consisted of a farm-house, a number of attached cottages, out-buildings, and eventually a number of smaller detached cottages in garden plots, which outlasted the farm itself, and it appears the term 'Field House' was sometimes used as a place-name rather than the name of the farm building. At some time before 1827 a villa was built on slightly higher land just to the north of the farm buildings. This was generally known as The Cottage or, according to the OS maps, Fairle's Cottage (and very occasionally Field Cottage, Shields Cottage or Field House Cottage). When the farm buildings were demolished after the land was sold for housing in about 1874 the name Field House was transferred to the Cottage.

'Heugh' means crag, ridge or spur of land,¹ and was used on farms to mean 'sloping meadows', which is a very apt description of the property. The word 'Shield' comes from 'shele', a temporary or seasonal shelter made by farmers and fishermen.² Although the property shared a name with the nearby riverside settlement of South Shields, for most of its history the estate was part of the township of Westoe, roughly 1.5km to the south, and only became part of the much closer town of South Shields when Westoe became a ward of the new Borough of South Shields in 1850. 'Field House' is a very common name for farms, relating to a building out in a field or open land rather than in a settlement.

Location (Fig. 1)

The estate was situated on a hill called the Lawe at the mouth of the River Tyne, surrounded on three sides by the sea and river. The property was roughly square, bounded by steep banks above the river to the north, with land falling away to a wide valley to the south with a drop of approximately 50m. To east and west the land also fell away to sea level, but here the lie of the land has been hugely altered by the dumping of massive quantities of ballast on both sides. Also to the west was the village and later town of South Shields. This consisted of a very narrow ribbon development on either side of a single road along the bank of the river until the 1760s, when a more regular planned development expanded the town to the south and east, where it started to impinge on the Shields Heugh estate. The property was divided towards the west by a major north-south road (now called Mile End Road) that lead from the northern end of South Shields and eventually to Sunderland. The farm buildings and cottage were built on the southern slope of the hill, with the Cottage above it, facing south-west. The estate also included the site of a Roman fort, civilian settlement and cemetery. The most famous person associated with the property was Nicholas Fairles, murdered in 1832.

¹ Ekwall 1991, 237.

² It can also refer to the pasturage on which the shelters are built. *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, 2004, Scottish Language Dictionaries Ltd. Accessed 23 May 2018; Eckwall 1991, 417.

Images

Field House Farm

There are very few images of the farm itself. South Shields Museum and Art Gallery holds an undated painting entitled 'Field House Farm' by a local artist called James Cleet (1840-1913), but Cleet is known to have drawn views at the later date than the scene shown, and inaccuracies in the scene depicted in this painting indicate this is not a contemporary illustration (Fig. 5). While details of the Cottage and its entrance match up with maps, the farm does not: Cleet shows only two separate buildings facing the road when the 1856 OS Town Plan shows four of different dimensions, and he has blue sky where the actual farmhouse (with projecting porch or bay) should be, while he shows hay-stacks where buildings are indicated on the map (cf Fig. 3).

Another painting by Cleet, of a paint factory converted from an old bath-house down by the coast, shows the farm in the background behind the chimney stacks (Figs 6-7). It depicts the farm from the opposite direction, the south-east, but it is impossible to say if the collection of buildings shown are accurate.³ The position of the farm, about half-way up the hill (and with the Cottage closer to the crest of the hill above it) matches the position in a watercolour by Ernest Black, who used old photographs as the basis for his paintings. In this case the photograph has not survived, but he was usually quite accurate, although here he has only drawn one building of the farm (Fig. 8).⁴ Both paintings show some of the lower fields belonging to the farm, with a mixture of stone walls and wooden fences, as well as the slope up to the trees towards the top of the hill that surrounded the Cottage and the other garden plots and small cottages.

The Cottage (Figs 9 – 11)

More images survive of the Cottage (called Field House after c.1871), including some photographs taken not long before it was demolished.⁵ The main body of the house was two storeys high with a single storey service wing projecting from the east end at the back. At the front was a single storey block, with French windows at the front, that sat at a slight angle to the front of the main body of the house, but joined to it at both ends, creating a small light-well in the centre (cf Fig. 3). It looks as if this was an addition to the original building, although a map of 1827 (ie probably not very long after it was built) appears to show a building in the same position, although not of the same dimensions or shape as shown on later plans (Fig. 15).

Figure 9 shows this single-storey frontage, with the slightly projecting central section for the larger doors (see Figs 3-4). Behind it can be seen the roof of the two-storey part of the house, with a slight change in the roof outline on the corner towards the right. Figure 10 shows that on the left-hand side the two-storey building has a roof-line projecting out towards the front, tiled on three sides (just to left of tree).

Figure 11 is a view of the back of the house. There are three large upper windows, set immediately below the pantiled-roof, while to the right (south end) the roof is lower and the window much smaller. The main body of the house has plastered walls, while the end of the service wing is plain brick, with a long single-pitch roof and a tall chimney; the lower floor

³ 'Workhouse and Paint Factory', South Shields Museum and Art Gallery, acc. no. TWCMS : G4529. The bath-house was converted into a paint factory, hence the name of the painting.

⁴ 'Paint Factory – Foot of the Lawe c.1866', South Shields Museum and Art Gallery, acc. no. TWCMS : J12985. Purchased in 1944, and possibly painted in the early 1940s.

⁵ The photographs are thought to date c.1890-1895 (South Tyneside Libraries).

window is visible just above the wooden fence. The 1896 Town Plan shows out-buildings parallel to the main house projecting off the side of the wing (Fig. 4), which is presumably what the low building is to the left.

Hodgson's 1903 *The Borough of South Shields* includes a small black and white image of a painting of the building by Duncan McLea dated [18]99, just months before it was demolished, showing part of the south gable end and east-facing back wall (Fig. 12).⁶ It shows a length of wooden fencing on what is probably a stone wall, all that survives of the back wall of some of the farm buildings, since the map of 1897 shows that the boundary of the reduced property on this side followed the line of the northern arm of the farm courtyard (cf Figs 3 – 4). The mature trees in this image do not appear in the photographs and are either artistic license or else the photographs are later in date than the McLea painting and come from the period immediately before the demolition of house when the trees had already been cut down.⁷

A final line drawing of the house is included in local historian A. Flagg's notes on the Lawe (1958), drawn by one W. Robson (Fig. 13). The view is from the same angle as McLea's picture, and although Robson includes some extra details (while converting the stone wall into a grassy bank) the figure looks very similar to that by McLea, albeit facing the other direction, and this is likely to be a drawing using McLea's image as its source.⁸

Field House, the Cottage and the Fairles family

The Fairles (or Fairless)⁹ family had the longest association with the estate, from first leasing the entire estate of at least 155 acres (63ha) in 1761, to selling off the final fragment of it - a single acre - in 1899. The leasehold records of the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral show that the estate was leased by the Burdon family from 1690 until 1754, at first by Nicholas Burdon, and then his son, John (1711-1792).¹⁰ In 1761 the lease was taken on by John's nephew Nicholas Fairless Snr, a few years after he married Barbara Kent. After Nicholas died in 1776 the renewal of the lease was once more taken on by his uncle John Burdon (the name 'Barbara Fairless' being crossed out in the book), but in 1790 and again in 1797 she finally took on the lease in her own name. She died in 1799 and when the lease was renewed in 1804 it was in the name of her son Nicholas Fairles Jnr (1761-1832). He renewed it in 1811, along with various other properties owned by the Dean and Chapter, including salt pans and buildings, but when the leases were due for renewal in 1818 he did not renew any of them, and presumably ended up paying rent to the new lessee,¹¹ as he was still dealing with

⁶ Hodgson also includes in his book an illustration of Bents House by McLea painted the same year; the original colour painting of this is in South Shields Museum and Art Gallery, but the whereabouts of the original painting of Field House is unknown.

⁷ See Fig. 3 for numerous trees in 1857, while both the Cleet and Black paintings show a large grove of mature trees on the top of the hill (Figs 5 - 8).

⁸ There is also a watercolour ('Old Fairles Estate') by William Thomas Nichols Boyce of the house from the back, in winter, dated 1907 (and therefore after its demolition): Anderson and Garland Pictures Auction, 18 June 2020, lot 1106.

⁹ The change happens with Nicholas Fairles Jnr; his mother Barbara signs her name with a double S, but he and his siblings all sign their names with a single S, although 'Fairless' was still occasionally used in newspapers etc. Cf DCA DPR1/1/1799/F2-1-2; DPR1/3/1835/A61.

¹⁰ Renewals Books 3A and 4 (DCA DCD/F/CA/3A and DCD/F/CA/4) property no. 110.1. The estate passed from the Burdon family to the Fairles through John's sister Sarah Burdon, who married Edward Fairlis in 1712; their son was Nicholas Fairless Snr.

¹¹ Renewals Book 4 (DCA DCD/F/CA/4) and Notitia Book South Shields volume 1 (DCD/F/CB/5), p206; Notitia Book South Shields volume 2 (DCD/F/CB/6), p12, 187, 141, 203.

the renting of the farm in 1823.¹² This lack of renewal was probably because of on-going money troubles.

Over the years Nicholas had income from tenants on the estate, a ballast-quay, ballast hills, salt-pans and various houses in the town, as well as building and later owning ships, but he was not always a successful business-man. He was first declared bankrupt in 1812, and had to sell off some of his property, which at the time included Shields Heugh, ships, a shipyard, a quay, saltworks, houses and a site for building.¹³

In 1820 he was again in financial trouble and asking contacts for government jobs, and in 1822 he had the indignity of having his household goods seized so he could pay his debts. A printed handbill of the time survives:

Sale of Furniture To Be Sold BY AUCTION, (By Virtue of a Writ of Fi. Fa, directed by the Sheriff of Durham,) On Tuesday & Wednesday, The 2nd and 3rd Days of July, 1822, At the House of N. Fairles, Esq. South Shields, ALL HIS HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE comprising Four-pole and Camp Beadsteads, with Hangings; Feather Beds; Hair and other Mattresses; Moreen and other Window Curtains; a large quantity of Bed and Table Linen; Silver Plate; Mahogany Dining, Card, and other Tables; Mahogany Dining, Drawing-Room, and other Chairs; double and single Chests of Drawers; Night Tables; Dressing Tables and Glasses; Brussel and Kidderminster Carpets; Looking Glasses; Piano Forte: Dinner and Tea China: Fire Irons and Fenders; with the KITCHEN UTENSILS, etc – Also 3 good Milch Cows, and a one-year old Quey.

ALSO A VALUABLE COLLECTION OF BOOKS.

This Sale of Furniture will commence each Day at 10 o’Clock in the Forenoon, -The Sale of Books at 6 o’Clock in the Evening of the first Day,- and the Cows at 6 o’Clock in the Evening of the second Day.¹⁴

Nicholas Fairles had married Jane Watson in 1797, when he was 36. This is also said to be the year his ship-yards built their first ship, so it is possible he moved to a house near the docks bearing his name (if he was not already living there), as well as having use of the family estate at Monkton.¹⁵ He was certainly living near the docks in 1820, when a newspaper records that his mother-in-law, Margaret Watson, died ‘at the house of Nicholas Fairles, Esq, of South Shields’, and the burial register records her address as ‘Fairles Street’.¹⁶ This is shown on Wood’s map of 1827 (Fig. 15), near to the riverside properties identified by his name; it is now the northern end of Long Row.

It is unclear when the Cottage was built, but it first appears on the 1827 map, and a trade directory of the same year records Nicholas Fairles living at ‘Field Cottage’.¹⁷ It is unknown why this location was chosen for the house. It was placed near the top of the hill and was in a

¹² *Durham County Advertiser*, 29 March 1823.

¹³ Marshall 2009, 22-3.

¹⁴ Dated 28 June 1822; spelling as on original. A writ of *fieri facias* is when a sheriff seizes and sells goods belonging to a debtor who cannot, or will not, obey a court order to pay money to another party. TWA DX1151/55. See also Marshall 2009, 21.

¹⁵ Parson and White’s 1928 Directory lists him as living at both Field Cottage and Monkton (1928, 3-4, 166). Being a gentleman he is usually simply referred to as simply ‘of South Shields’, as, for example, with the handbill of 1822, which just says the sale will be at his house without further details of its location.

¹⁶ *Newcastle Courant*, 4 November 1820. This Fairles Street is not the same as the current road of that name, which did not exist before 1874 at the earliest, being one of the rows of new terraced housing built on the old farm.

¹⁷ Parson and White 1827.

still largely rural spot which stood in contrast to their house in the narrow, crowded streets of old Shields next to the ship-yards, but the views would have included the ballast and rubbish hills of the town, and was positioned immediately next to a working dairy farm.

It was in this house that Nicholas Fairles died in 1832. The story of his murder is well-known, his death resulting from injuries sustained during an attack by two men, Ralph Armstrong and William Jobling.¹⁸ Only Jobling was captured, and after his execution he became one of the last people in Britain to have his body exhibited in a gibbet.

Nicholas and Jane Fairles had 10 children; seven of their surviving children were christened on the same day, 30 December 1812, when they ranged in date from 12 years to 18 months. As their eldest son, Nicholas Fairles III had died at sea sometime between 1830 and 1835, and their third son, William Watson Fairles, was living in Hartlepool at the time of his father's death, when Jane died only a year after her husband it was their fourth son, Edward Kent Fairles, who moved into the Cottage.¹⁹ In 1830 he had married Elizabeth Smith, who was then 33 years old. They had two children, but she died a few years later aged only 36 and was buried on 3 December 1833 along with her baby daughter Jane Elizabeth, who had been christened just a week earlier.²⁰

In 1834 Edward was a tile and brick manufacturer, but in the following years the trade directories refer to him as 'gentleman', and newspaper advertisements show he was involved with renting out various properties. In 1840 the Cottage was advertised for sale, along with the whole estate (see below):

Lot XVI

All that desirable Villa, called "The Cottage", with the Gardens and Pleasure Grounds thereto belonging, most delightfully situate on an Eminence near the Sea, and well known as the favoured Residence of the late Nicholas Fairles, Esq., held by Lease for 21 years, from the 3rd May, 1839, and will be sold subject to an annual Out-rent of 2s.²¹

However, it apparently did not sell, as Edward continued to live in the cottage for another 20 years until 1855, at which time he joined the 1st Durham Militia and sold up before moving away:

Mr Glover Has been favoured with Instructions to sell by Auction, On Monday, the 17th day of September, 1855, at 11 o'clock in the Forenoon, The whole of the household furniture belonging to Captain Fairless, who is declining Housekeeping, on the Premises, at the Field House, South Shields, the whole of his Valuable household furniture, consisting of Dining and other Tables, Mahogany Drawers, Piano, Carpets, Feather Beds, Hair Mattresses, Mahogany, French, and other Bedsteads, etc.²²

¹⁸ Marshall 2009.

¹⁹ In 1834 William Watson married Barbara Miller at Hart, County Durham, and five of his children were born in Hartlepool, the birthplace of his wife. He was still living at Hartlepool when he signed the Probate Bonds for his father, his mother and his elder brother on the same day, 30 May 1835 (DCA DPR1/3/1835/A61 to A63). The third son, William, had died shortly after birth. Jane Fairles had been given an annuity of £300 by the Queen in response to her husband's death, but she did not live long enough to make use of it (*Albion and Star*, 8 August 1832).

²⁰ Within just a few years Edward had lost his wife and daughter, both his parents and a brother.

²¹ *Newcastle Courant*, 25 Sept 1840.

²² *North and South Shields Gazette and Northumberland and Durham Advertiser*, 13 Sept 1855. This is the first reference to the Cottage being called Field House, but it seems to be a one off, as it was still called the Cottage until the 1870s; the 1st Edition OS map, surveyed in 1855, has it as 'Fairle's Cottage' [sic].

Edward died at Montrose nine years later, one year after he had retired as Quartermaster.

After Edward moved out of the Cottage in 1855, newspapers show that a 'Mrs Fairles' was at the Cottage in 1856. As his elder brother William Watson Fairles returned to South Shields at some point and is recorded as living at the Cottage in 1859 this was possibly William's wife Barbara. William had worked as a shipwright and agent, but by 1861 is described as a 'gentleman'. In the 1861 census the household contains a lodger and by the end of the decade one of William and Jane's four daughters, presumably the eldest, Joanna, was running a school: 'Education. The Duties of Miss Fairle's School will be resumed on Thursday, July 29th, Field House, South Shields'.²³

Various Acts of Parliament allowed and encouraged cathedrals to either sell ('enfranchise') their leasehold properties or at least convert them into normal tenancies and by 1870 church leasehold as such no longer existed. The Shields Heugh estate was sold off piecemeal from 1861 onwards and at some point William Watson bought about one acre (0.6ha) of land round the Cottage, including a number of cottages and gardens.²⁴ From 1855 there was an increased tendency to refer to the farm, the Cottage and the various nearby cottages under the general term 'Field House' but Christie's Directory for 1871-2 and the 1871 census are the last to refer to farmers living there so the farm buildings themselves must have been demolished soon afterwards and the land made available for house-building.²⁵ After this the name 'Field House' was transferred to the Cottage, as seen on the 1896 OS 1:500 Town Plan and in trade directories. William and his family lived in the house for 30 years until his death in 1890. His widow and daughter were still there the following year, but within a few years they moved to London to live with her son Ambrose, ending almost 190 years of the Fairles' association with the estate.

History of Field House

The property was owned by the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral, and was let on 21-year leases, usually renewed every seven. The earliest mention of the estate is in 1489, although the first mention of Field House is not until 1619.²⁶

1700-1750

In 1742 an early advertisement for the farm gives its size as about 120 acres (49ha), although it gradually reduced in size over the years. It remained a mixture of arable and pasture, but increasingly became principally a dairy farm.

To be Lett [sic] ... A Farm of Land, call'd Shields Heugh, containing 120 Acres, or thereabouts, consisting of Arable, Meadow and Pasture Ground, adjoining to South Shields, in the County of Durham, and such Farmer or Tenant thereof to have the Benefit and Advantage of employing his Stock, both Horses and Cattle, in conveying and leading of Ballast off and from the Ballast Key there, close by

²³ *Shields Daily Gazette*, 27 July 1869.

²⁴ Land enfranchised: Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1. A South Shields Council Meeting in 1897 was shown a 'copy of plan of land sold by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to the late Mr Fairles ... Mr Fairles' family having been in possession for over 20 years'. The property consisted of '1a 1r 9p or 6,410 square yards'. Minutes for 1897, pp408, 418.

²⁵ Christie's called it Shields Heugh Farm and the census Heugh Farm House.

²⁶ Flagg 1958, 8, 26; for the early history of the estate see p24-7, 45-52.

and adjoining such Farm. Enquire of Mr Nicholas Burdon in South Shields aforesaid.²⁷

The disposal of ballast was to remain an important part of the business of the estate throughout its existence.

1750-1800

Richardson's estate map of Westoe and Harton townships in 1768 (see Fig. 1).

Richardson's map shows the estate taking up most of the high ground of the peninsula, with the low ribbon of medieval South Shields along the riverside to the west, and the new formal town development built up by the Anglo-Saxon church of St Hilda to the south-west, just above the Mill Dam inlet. There is one main north-south road through the centre of the estate (modern Mile End Road) and a bridle road through the sand-dunes to the east. The fields of the estate are already being encroached on by ballast and rubbish hills, and the east-west road from the new town (modern Ocean Road) is already being planned. One field is occupied by the brickyard and tilery run by the family and one field, Mill Field, contains a windmill owned by the Corporation of Newcastle (HER 8407).²⁸ The farm is shown in a schematic way of the front view of a house and row of farm buildings.

*Fryer's plan of the lower part of the River Tyne 1772*²⁹

This is very similar to the 1768 map, although it includes the road leading down to the farm, and the two buildings of the farm, one long and thin, and one L-shaped, shown in plan. The long building is likely to be the original farm, since linear farmsteads (where house, barn and byres were built side by side) were common in the area, with the separate farmhouse a later addition.³⁰

1789

The well in front of the farm is said to be the scene for the inspiration of William Wouldhave's life-boat design:

The idea for the peculiar construction he adopted as his model, was suggested to him, as he stated to a friend, by the circumstance of a woman at the Field-house Well, asking him to assist her to put a skeel of water on her head. She had a piece of a broken wooden dish floating on the water, which he observed floated with the points upwards. He turned it over several times and remarked that it always righted itself.³¹

The well is called Anderson's Well on the 1st edition OS map. The Andersons were long-term tenants of the farm between at least 1727 and 1791; first Francis Anderson, his son Joseph and then, until her death, Joseph's widow, Mary Anderson.³²

²⁷ *Newcastle Courant*, 25 December 1842.

²⁸ This may be the mill that was in derelict by 1816; a notice listing leasehold property for sale includes 'a small cottage, and the ruins of wind corn mill. Near [the Rubbish Hills], excellently situated upon Shields-heugh, in the Township of Westoe': South Tyneside Libraries, ref. no. B6-6. Available at: <https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/archive/kelly-collection-commerce/1327947-leasehold-property-for-sale-at-south-shields?q=auktion>.

²⁹ Currently (2022) available at: https://www.maggs.com/departments/travel/all_categories/225958/.

³⁰ Lake and Edwards 2006, 39.

³¹ Richardson 1843, 227.

³² See Appendix 5. Francis Anderson (d.1769): Flagg 1958, 28. Mary's will says she was 'of the Field House in the Township of Westoe': DCA DPRI/1/1792/A1/1-2.

1797 Matthew Woodfield's valuation of Shields Heugh (Fig. 14).

In 1797 a new evaluation was made of the estate,³³ which noted that Ropery Close had been built on (Mile End House: see Appendix 1), so when the leases were renewed this part of the estate was given a separate lease. There were either three or five houses built on the Bents, two other (unlocated) houses and 24 garden plots on the estate. The document also mentions the ballast hills and records that: '4225 tons [4293 tonnes] of ballast laid upon the above hills, being the seventh part of the ballast laid down the past 7 years and for which Mr Fairles receives 1/4d per Ton'.³⁴ Henry Mayhew said the average amount of ballast (in 1850) was 80 tons [81 tonnes], so this is equal to about 58 ship-loads every year.³⁵ The valuation records that it was barley being grown in the arable fields.

1820s

In 1820 the farm was to let:

To be let, and entered upon the 1st May next, either together or in two separate Parcels, as may be agreed upon. All that desirable Farm called the Shield Heugh, immediately contiguous to South Shields. This land is in a high State of Cultivation, and that Part which is in Grass is admirably calculated for a Milk Farm, Milk in general selling in the Neighbourhood at 5d. per Quart.

N. B. If the Land should not be let in one or two Farms, it will be divided into Parcels for the Accommodation of Butchers and others in the Neighbourhood. The Farm may be viewed on Application at the Office of Nicholas Fairles, Esq. in South Shields, where Particulars may be known, or at the Office of Jonathan Cockerill, Solicitor, North Shields.³⁶

By 1820 Nicholas Fairles was in fact no longer the primary lessee to the estate, which from 1818 had been John Russel Rowntree, but Fairles was still dealing with the farm in 1820 and 1823, according to the newspapers, and collecting rent from garden plots on his property.³⁷

John Wood's 'Plan of South Shields made in 1827'³⁸ (Fig. 15)

Wood's map shows that the east-west road called German Street (later Ocean Street, modern Ocean Road) had been built across the two southernmost fields of the estate. At some point before 1827 the Fairles built a ballast railway (HER 2349) running from the riverside (there are three separate docks marked 'Mr Fairless') across the fields towards the coast. Colliers returning to the Tyne from taking coal south, especially to London, came back in ballast (mainly gravel), which had to be dumped somewhere but which could not legally be thrown into the river. For many years ship-owners had relied on adding it to the great ballast hills near the quays on the river, but these were now of a massive size: Henry Mayhew mentions ones 'of two or three hundred feet high' by the late 1840s. He continued:

New places on the banks of the river have to be discovered for this deposit, as the ballast mounds keep increasing, for it must be recollected that the vessels leave these parts, no matter for what destination, with coal, and may return in ballast. Indeed, a railway has been formed from the vicinity of South Shields to a waste

³³ Valuation notebook: DCA DCD/E/AB/6.

³⁴ DCA DCD/E/AB/6, p1.

³⁵ *Morning Chronicle*, Letter XXII, available at: <https://www.victorianlondon.org/mayhew/mayhew22.htm>.

³⁶ *Newcastle Courant*, 20 February 1820. Fairles is also mentioned in the *Durham County Advertiser*, 29 March 1823.

³⁷ Notice regarding rents due: South Tyneside Libraries, ref. no. B3-428, available at:

<https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/archive/kelly-collection/kelly-collection-commerce/1327988-gardens?>

³⁸ Published in Wood 1827.

place on the sea-shore, hard by the mouth of the Tyne. where the ballast may be conveyed at small cost, its further accumulation on the river bank being found an incumbrance.³⁹

The railway took the ballast to the least productive part of the farm, the rough grasslands or sand dunes of the Bents (Figs 1, 14, field 141A; Fig. 17, field 85), and meant that the estate could continue to make an income from ballast. The western section of the railway was raised on a high embankment to cross the north-south Mile End Road, as shown on a later Cleet painting (Fig. 16),⁴⁰ and must have been a major barrier between the two sections of the farm, which could perhaps explain why the farm was offered in two parcels in the 1820 advertisement.

The farm buildings themselves are shown in some detail on the 1827 map. Additional buildings join the two shown in the 1772 map to create a courtyard farmstead, and a large building has been added to the east, in a more open courtyard at the back. There are also the first of the enclosures with small cottages that would grow up round the farm and on its access road (cf Fig. 16). On land to the north of the farm and slightly above it the house called the Cottage has been built. It had an extensive garden at the front and stables to one side; in Cleet's painting of the farm the entrance to its driveway is shown as being flanked by tall stone pillars, but only parts of the roof and chimney stacks of the house visible behind the thick band of trees (Fig. 5).

1830s

By 1835 the farm was half the size it had been 90 years earlier:

'To be let by proposal, and Entered upon by the 13th May, 1835, The Shields Heugh Farm, in the Township of Westoe, in the County of Durham, containing 68½ Acres [28ha] or thereabouts, now in the occupation of Mr John Potts. This Farm lays contiguous to the Town of South Shields, and is well adapted for keeping a large Stock of Cows.'⁴¹

In 1837 a Union Workhouse for 200 occupants was built just outside the estate to the south of the new German Street (seen on the 1840 map: Fig. 17), and a set of public baths were probably built the same year (Fig. 17, at the junction of fields 82, 84 and 85; cf. Fig. 18).⁴² In 1833 the Dean and Chapter of Durham had given wayleave to the Stanhope and Tyne Railway Company to construct one main road (railway line) and one side road no wider than 14 yards [13m] in total, that cut through the ballast hills of Shields Heugh. This ballast railway is visible on the 1840 tithe map, curving through the existing ballast hills and the brick yard belonging to the estate (Fig. 17, fields nos 94, 98, 97; cf. Fig. 18), with the depot

³⁹ Mayhew was presumably writing about Salmon's ballast railway of 1846 (see below): both dumped ballast in the same location. *Morning Chronicle*, Letter XXII, 1 January 1850, available at:

<https://www.victorianlondon.org/mayhew/mayhew22.htm>. South Tyneside Libraries have numerous historic photos of the ballast hills before their removal, such as:

<https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/archive/photographs/transport/railways/railway-lines/621695-ballast-hills-north-of-thames-street?q=ballast%20hills>; see also Fig. 16.

⁴⁰ See also acc. no. TWCMS : G4550, possibly earlier in date: image available from [Collections search | Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums](#).

⁴¹ *Newcastle Journal*, 13 December 1834.

⁴² Workhouse: HER 11777, demolished c.1877. Baths being built near the Lawe: *Northern Liberator*, 23 December 1837; see Figs 7 - 8 for paintings of this building after it had been converted to a paint factory. William Hunter, an established paint manufacturer based on the Lawe, owned the 'Baths (public)' by 1855 (Slater's Directory) and by 1857 (Ward's Directory) it was a paint factory. The factory was still in business in 1874, but was probably demolished soon after for house-building.

and station visible on an 1873 map.⁴³ The company took a much wider strip than just 14 yards, and at one point had 14 main roads on the estate, while they took away the ballast to use elsewhere on their lines. In 1838 the lessee of Shields Heugh, Leonard Wilson,⁴⁴ brought a court-case against the Railway Company:

The plaintiff, Mr Wilson, is now in possession of a certain property, called Shield Heugh Farm, near South Shields, held by lease under the Dean and Chapter of Durham for 21 years, through a portion of which the defendants, who are proprietors, etc. of the Stanhope and Tyne rail-way, have cut a line of way, laid down railing, for the purpose of continuing the said railway to the river. They have also taken up a considerable space of ground as a depot for coals, and a station for passengers ... Mr Ambrose Stodart [a land-surveyor reported that:] A station and depot are on the estate. Queen-street, Salem-street, North-street and King-street open into and adjoin the property ... the cutting and embankment divide part of the Shield Heugh property.⁴⁵

As the town of South Shields grew in size more and more of the Shields Heugh estate came under pressure.

1840s

In September 1840 the estate was put up for sale by auction, broken up into 33 separate lots. These included a quay, the ballast hills, the tilery, the ballast deposit ground on the Bents, houses and other buildings, selections of the garden plots and cottages, and ground staked out as building plots along Mile End Road, Field House Road and German Street. Both the remaining farm land and the Cottage (see above) were included:

Lot XXXIII

The residue of this extensive and valuable estate, comprising a good Farm House and Out-Buildings, a Thrashing Machine, and every other Farming Convenience, and about 65 Acres [26ha] of rich Arable and Pasture Land, the Whole in a capital state of Cultivation, and known as the Field House Farm, a Ropery, Ballast Railway, and a considerable number of Gardens and Cottages well tenanted, held by lease for 21 Years, from the 3rd May 1839, and will be Sold subject to an annual Out-rent of £2 18s. The Ballast Railway is also subject to a Lease to the Stanhope and Tyne Railway for 21 Years, from the 22nd November, 1839.⁴⁶

There were few takers, and in February of 1841 most of the estate (now in 22 lots) was again offered for sale, this time 'by private contract'.⁴⁷

1840 tithe map (Fig. 17)

In 1840 Andrew Stoddart drew up a tithe map of Westoe township, with an accompanying survey. This shows that three of the large fields towards the north of the farm were arable,

⁴³ Available at:

<https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/historical-maps?map=north-and-south-shields-and-tynewmouth-1873>.

Stanhope and Tyne Railway (HER 2290): between 1847 – 1870 its successor companies, York and Newcastle Railway Co. and North-eastern Railway Co., leased docks, staithes and a house from the Dean and Chapter of Durham, which had all earlier been leased by the Fairles (Notitia Book, South Shields volume 2: DCA DCD/F/CA/6, pp141, 203).

⁴⁴ Dunn (1848, 323-7) says Fairless brought the case, which went to arbitration rather than a court of law; it is unclear how Wilson's case fits in. The arbitration ended up with the railway company paying minimal damages.

⁴⁵ *Newcastle Courant*, 27 July 1838.

⁴⁶ *Newcastle Courant*, 25 September 1840.

⁴⁷ *Newcastle Journal*, 27 February 1841.

while the sloping fields to the south were all grass. By this period a new ropery had been built in the southern part of the farm (Fig. 17, field 79), and small garden plots and cottages tucked away behind tall stone walls laid out along both sides of the upper part of Mile End Road and the road leading to the farmhouse (sometimes called Field House Road) (cf Fig. 16). The map also show that rows of terraced houses have also been erected along Mile End Road and into the southern Field Close field (Fig. 17, field 80). A building in the position of the Cottage is shown, but the farmstead itself is shown as only two buildings, as in the 1772 map, rather than the more complex range shown in the 1827 map.

The 1841 census lists three households living at 'Shields Heugh Farms'. William Fairles, listed as a shipwright, lived with his wife and an elderly relative (both described as being 'of independent means') and a single female servant in the Cottage. The farmer, John Potts (aged 45), lived with his wife, five children, two male and three female servants in the farmhouse, and a labourer with a household of seven lived in one of the other dwellings in the property. The Potts farmed the property for at least seven years, and probably much longer (see Appendix 5).

In December 1844 the Dean and Chapter of Durham took back some land in one of the northern fields next to Mile End Road for the building of a new church. St Stephen's Church was consecrated in 1846 and further land was provided for a parsonage and a cemetery which opened in 1848 (see Figs 18 – 19; also Fig. 16).⁴⁸ The farm was again advertised for rent in 1845, described as 'about 72 Acres [29ha] of rich Arable and Grass Land'.⁴⁹

E. Killwick Calver's 'Entrance to the River Tyne' 1849⁵⁰

The embankment of Fairles' east-west ballast railway is still present, but is labelled as 'old' and was probably no longer in use, since the new railway (HER 2447) that opened in 1846, running diagonally across the northern fields of the farm, partially crosses it. It took ballast from Thomas Salmon's wharf across the farm to be dumped on the coast at the same place that the earlier railway had used, and Roman material was uncovered when it cut through the remains of the western ramparts of the fort (Fig. 18).⁵¹ It closed in 1856. A third ropery has been built on the farm, running alongside the embankment of the old ballast railway (cf Fig. 18).

1850s

1st OS map, surveyed 1855 and published 1862 (Fig. 18)

The farm lost yet more land as the fields to the east of Mile End Road started to be built over. The map shows some of the roads and tracks across the fields that featured in an alleged trespass in 1859.

⁴⁸ Hodgson (1903, 258, fn 1) reports that Edward Fairles protested during the foundation ceremony in 1844 that the land actually belonged to his family, possibly because part of that field had been the Homestall at the top of Mile End Road (see Fig. 1, field 123).

⁴⁹ *Newcastle Journal*, 27 December 1845.

⁵⁰ Available at: <https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/historical-maps?map=entrance-to-the-river-tyne-1838-1849>.

⁵¹ *Newcastle Courant*, 24 October 1845; 1846 a public notice announcing its opening is in South Tyneside Libraries archive, available at: <https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/archive/kelly-collection/kelly-collection-commerce/622495-salmons-ballast-wharf?q=>.

1857 – 59

In 1857 the Lamb family, who had been the farmers at Field House for at least 11 years, sold their farming stock and move away.⁵² The new farmer was one George Willis, who farmed for at least six years, and it was he who became tired of people crossing his farmland:

At the last meeting of the South Shields Town Council, a numerously signed memorial was presented to that body, setting forth that the occupiers of the Shields High [sic] Farm, at the foot of Bath-street, had stopped the roads leading from it by the top of the field to what is commonly called the “big hill”. This road, it is contended, had been used by the public for thirty years, and it was a great convenience to persons going to and from the Lawe In the meantime. Thomas Moffett and William Usher, two young men, were summoned for having wilfully damaged certain grass growing in a field in the occupation of George Willis – the tenant of Shields Heugh Farm. [The case] excited considerable interest ... Mr Willis, the occupier of the Farm, stated that the defendant, after walking along a path a certain distance, had been seen by Mr W. Fairless to leave it, and cross one of the fields. ... There was no cross-path, and the defendant was trespassing. Mr Willis was then cross-examined with respect to the road in dispute, which runs from his farm by the top of the field. This he said, was a private road. The public had made use of it. It was shut up about two months ago. In order to render the case intelligible, we may state that near the Shields Heugh Farm there is one road at the bottom of the fields leading to the Baths at the Lawe, while there is another running from the farm to the top of the field, at the foot of the latter road is a gate, which latterly has been locked to prevent the public from proceeding in that direction. This is considered an invasion of the rights of the public, by whom the road has been used for a long period ... Mr Stoddart and Mr K. E. Knowles were called to prove the road in question was private. Mr Fairless stated that the tenants of the farm were also informed that the road was private and that the public had no right to use it. The road had been kept open for the convenience of persons going to the farm for milk.⁵³

The charges against the men were dropped and the Council were to carry out further research into the nature of the road, although the results were never reported on.

1860s

In the 1861 census the farmer was still George Willis (49 years old) who lived with his wife Mary, seven children and two servants, but by late 1862 he was trying to find a new tenant for the farm. The farm is described as ‘containing Seventy Acres [28ha] or thereabouts, with the Farm Offices, Cottages, and Gardens belonging thereto ...A great portion of the Farm is in Old Grass; the remainder is fine Turnip and Barley Soil’.⁵⁴ By early 1863, however, the farm and his belongings had to be sold as Willis was behind with his rent:

Shields Heugh Farm, otherwise known as Field House Farm, South Shields, to be sold by auction, On Monday, 2nd February, 1863, at Shields Heugh Farm, South Shields, in Tenancy of Mr George Willis (under a Distress for Rent), Mr Arthur Crow, Auctioneer,

The Valuable Farming Stock, Implements of Husbandry, Farm Produce, and Household Furniture, detailed Particulars of which will be found in Hand-bills.⁵⁵

⁵² *Newcastle Courant*, 27 March; 1 May 1857.

⁵³ *Shields Daily Gazette*, 12 August 1859.

⁵⁴ *Newcastle Journal*, 29 December 1862.

⁵⁵ *Shields Daily Gazette*, 29 January 1863.

As early as 1797 the original estate of Shields Heugh had been divided up into 47 different leases (although at least 44 of these related to individual houses), and there were further divisions in 1839, 1853 and 1860. In 1867 what remained of the estate under its original Dean and Chapter property number was divided into four separate leases, which were then sold outright to the lessees in the same year and in the following year.⁵⁶

1870s

At some point in the late 1860s or early 1870s William Watson Fairles bought the acre (0.4ha) of land round his house, including some of the garden plots and cottages, but the town of South Shields was in great need of new housing, and towards the end of 1874 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners prepared the rest of the farm for building, laying out Baring Street and Fort Street, thereby dividing the land into four sections which were then offered for sale.⁵⁷ The farm was still occupied at the time of the 1871 census, although now under the name Heugh Farm House.⁵⁸ William Hindmarsh (aged 40), farming 58 acres (23ha), lived there with his wife Jane, their six children and two servants. It is not clear exactly when the farmhouse and associated buildings were demolished, although after 1871-2 there are no more mentions of the farm in adverts or directories. The buildings are still shown on Christie's 'New Plan of North and South Shields' of 1873: this was partly based on the OS map surveyed in 1855, and while it had been updated to include buildings constructed in the intervening years (including housing on the bit of field belonging to the farm that ended up south of German Street), it is unclear if any existing elements of the map were removed at the same time. If the buildings were still standing they were likely to have been demolished soon afterwards, and in May of 1875 grassland was for let on the farm only on a temporary basis 'until required for building purposes'.⁵⁹ Excavation of the Roman remains was carried out in 1875, and streets of terraced housing were gradually built on the farmland in the following years.

From 1873 the directories and newspapers start to call the Cottage 'Field House' instead, and this is the name given it on the OS 1:500 Town Plan of 1896 (Fig. 4). However, there were also still a number of cottages in the gardens in the plot of land bought by William Fairles, and sometimes the term 'Field House' seems to be used more as a place-name than purely a house-name.⁶⁰

1880s

The housing-building continued through-out the 1880s, until all the farmland was covered in terraced houses, schools and churches. The work was carried out by a number of different builders at different times, to an overall plan laid down by South Shields Corporation, with

⁵⁶ It is unclear how the renewals and then sale of the Shields Heugh leases as recorded in the Notitia book (DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p3) marries up to the fact that the Ecclesiastical Commission still owned most of the farmland six years later in 1874; it was the Commission who prepared the farmland for house-building, gave permission for antiquarians to excavate the Roman remains in 1875, and donated the land for the Roman Remains Park in 1879 (*Shields Gazette*, 3 July 1879).

⁵⁷ Hooppell 1878, 126; pl. V; Hodgson 1903 (205) says the building plots were offered as freehold or on 999-year leases.

⁵⁸ It was still called Field House Farm in an advertisement that same year (*Shields Daily Gazette*, 23 May 1871), while Christie's Directory of 1871-2 calls it Shields Heugh Farm. In both census and the Directory the Cottage is now called 'Field House'.

⁵⁹ *Shields Gazette*, 3 May 1875.

⁶⁰ To add to the confusion, the 1871 census and notices in newspapers of 1882-1896 refer to one 'Fairless's Cottage' (described as being in both Baring Street and St Aidan's Street), which appear to refer to a houses or houses in the garden plots round the 'new' Field House.

the only areas left untouched being the Roman Remains Park, Marine Park and the island of land round the Cottage owned by William Fairles (Fig. 19).

1890s

In 1890 William Fairles died at Field House, aged 89. Born in 1802, he had seen the area change from a rural setting of open fields and gardens full of trees to being in the heart of the terraced streets of an expanding town. The newspapers pointed out: ‘in recent years the Heugh Estate, in the immediate vicinity, formerly owned by the family, has been almost entirely built up, the old residence itself, with the garden enclosed by a high wall, being in contrast to the newly-laid out streets round about it.’⁶¹ This can be seen very clearly on the 2nd edition OS map: the southern boundary of the land William Fairles bought from the Commissioners was marked by the northern wall of the demolished farm-buildings, which projected awkwardly out into the line of Bath Street making it impassable to traffic (Figs 4, 19). A few months after William Fairles’ death a report by the Borough Surveyor was recorded:

I beg to lay before you a plan I prepared in 1883, for the opening out of Bath Street by taking down the south boundary wall and outbuildings of the then Mr Wm. Fairles’ Field House, and setting them back to the new line of the street which was given by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners when they sold that portion of the Shields Heugh Estate. There is very urgent need for this street being opened out, and it was only kept back so long in deference to the ill health and old age of Mr Fairles. As he has passed away, I think it should now be got on with as soon as possible, and with that end in view, I think a small committee should wait upon the family and obtain their consent for its being done.⁶²

It appeared that 89-year-old Mrs Fairles and her daughter also wished to remain in their old home, and when the new survey for the 2nd edition OS map was carried out in 1894 or 1895 the grounds round the house still remained. By 1897, however, Mrs Fairles was living in London with one of her sons, and tenants called the McClures were living in the house. In the same year Mrs Fairles agreed to sell the plot of land to the Council for £2500 with a few conditions, including: ‘3rd. Two mahogany doors and two shutters, with their fixtures, in the drawing-room of the house, to be retained. (These will not be needed until the house is demolished).’⁶³

The sale was completed the following year and the last tenants ordered to leave in May 1899.⁶⁴ By November of that year the demolition of the house was underway, as recorded in a court case regarding stolen lead pipes. One John Jones was:

charged with being found on the enclosed premises at Field House. P. C. Whitehead said yesterday afternoon about a quarter to one, from information received, he proceeded to the Field House in Baring Street, which is at the present time being razed to the ground ... [He] found that 17 flooring boards had been pulled up’ to get to the gas pipes below. He ‘afterwards found the piping lying at the back door wrapped up and ready to be taken away.’⁶⁵

⁶¹ *Northern Echo*, 19 September 1890.

⁶² *Shields Daily Gazette*, 5 March 1891.

⁶³ South Shields Corporation Minutes of Proceedings Jan-Dec 1897, p644, 26 August. The negotiations were carried out by Ambrose Fairles in London, where Mrs Fairles lived until her death a few years later in 1903.

⁶⁴ South Shields Corporation Minutes of Proceedings Jan-Dec 1899, p402, 16 May.

⁶⁵ *Shields Daily Gazette*, 14 November 1899; *Shields News*, 14 November 1899; *Shields Daily Gazette*, 22 December 1899.

The Council sold the cleared land for house-building at a public auction on 8 January 1900 and the last of the Shields Heugh estate vanished beneath the terraced housing.⁶⁶

Appendix 1: Mile End House

Appendix 2: Field names

Appendix 3: Table of principal lease-holders

Appendix 4: Table of the occupants of the Cottage

Appendix 5: Table of the occupants of Field House Farm

Appendix 1: Mile End House

The name

The name ‘Mile End House’ is first mentioned in print only in 1857, and the building may have been known by other names during the previous fifty-odd years since its construction, but for convenience in the following discussion this name will be used throughout. ‘Mile End’ is taken from the name of the road that ran alongside the house; the three roads in the area, Mile End Road, Shadwell Street and Wapping Street all reflect the close shipping ties with London.

The property

The 1768 estate map shows a house and gardens (‘Homestall’ Fig. 1, field 123) at the north end of the estate, at the corner of Mile End Road and Military Road. This may have been where members of the Burdon or Fairless families lived, but perhaps as early as 1781 it became part of the property of Nicholas Fairles Jnr’s elder sister Sarah, and passed into the family of her husband, the Greens.

The house

A number of photographs of Mile End House survive, showing a grand brick-built house that had replaced an earlier building or buildings on the same plot of the land. The 1768 estate map shows two stylised buildings, depicted upside down as if their entrance was on Military Road to the north (Fig. 1). Fryer’s plan of 1772 shows an L-shaped building, but all later maps shows a rectangular building with a wing on the centre of the east front,⁶⁷ so if Fryer’s plan is accurate, it suggests a new building replaced older buildings after 1772 but before 1827, when the new shape is shown on John Wood’s map (Figs 20 – 22; cf Figs 23–5). A valuation of the Shields Heugh estate in June 1797 records that: ‘in the above [Ropery] Closes Mr Green has lately built an elegant Mansion House which must be valued next renewal’, which suggests Mile End House was built in the mid-1790s.⁶⁸ The same document describes the ropery building itself was ‘ancient’; this was presumably replaced by the longer covered structure attached (or extremely close to) the south wall of Mile End House, as shown on the 1827 map (see Fig. 20) at much the same time. The design of the house is very similar to the architecture of nos 83-5 Green’s Place, which were presumably also built at this period.⁶⁹

The Greens of ‘Green’s Place’ were Robert and Sarah Fairles Green. The Greens were a local family who owned a lot of property in the area and Robert became chief magistrate of Shields

⁶⁶ South Shields Corporation Minutes of Proceedings Jan-Dec 1899, p766, 4 September.

⁶⁷ Just visible on an aerial photograph of 1927: Britain from Above, image no. EPW019782 at <https://britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EPW019782>.

⁶⁸ DCA DCD/E/AB/6, p6. The house had not been built at the time of the 1790 lease renewals.

⁶⁹ HER 4520. No. 83, the largest building, was originally called Bone’s Hall and later became the Pilot’s Office.

(often working closely with his brother-in-law Nicholas Fairles Jnr). Robert and his family lived in both South Shields and Cleadon, and had property in Westoe.⁷⁰ In October of 1781 the 24-year-old Robert took out an advertisement to say he had taken over a rope-making business, the ropery itself being that on the Shields Heugh estate. In November of the same year he married Sarah, and it is possibly at this point he received the ropery and other property as part of Sarah's dowry, since sometime in the period between 1790 – 1797 'Mr Green's House and Ropery' were separated out from the Shields Heugh estate and in 1797 were given a separate lease arrangement with the Dean and Chapter of Durham.⁷¹

Robert's will indicates that at some point in or shortly before 1819 he had moved from Cleadon to South Shields with his wife and at least some of his 11 children; he died in that year, and burial records give his address as Military Road, which show it was at Mile End House.⁷² Early in the following year the ropery was advertised for sale or lease, and 'the ground ... covered in for 166 Fathoms, ... about 28 or 29 Feet broad' and the 'large and commodious dwelling-house adjoining the Ropery' are visible on Wood's map of 1827 (Fig. 20). The house was described as:

consisting of four Sitting Rooms on the Ground Floor, five excellent Lodging Rooms on the first Floor, five other good Lodging Rooms in the Attic Story, with large Kitchens, Cellars, and every convenience. Also, a large Garden, six-stalled Stable, and Granary, behind the house.⁷³

At this point the entrance to the house was from Military Road to the north (called Bank Top on Wood's map), as the Ropery blocked any entrance from Mile End Road.

Whatever the outcome of this advert Sarah Green was still (or back) living in the house by 1827. Parson's and White's Directory of that year (as well as Slater's 1848 Directory) both have the widow living on Military Road. The 1840 tithe map (Fig. 17) shows the covered section of the ropery had been demolished, which also resulted in the creation of a new entrance to the house from Mile End Road, as the 1841 census records Sarah's address as Mile End Road, and maps from 1856 show this new arrangement (Figs 21, 23).⁷⁴

Sarah Green died in 1856, and her daughters were found some other accommodation, as the house was advertised for let the following year. It is called Mile End House at this point, but the description shows it was the same building as the house attached to the ropery:

'The very commodious Family Residence, *Mile End House*, South Shields, with Coach House and Stabling, if required. The House comprises on the Ground Floor,- excellent Dining, Drawing, and Breakfast Rooms, and Library. On the First Floor,- Four large Bed rooms, and One Dressing Room. On the Second Floor,- a Suit of Five Bed Rooms. On the Basement,- an excellent Kitchen, Larder, Cellar, Coal Store, etc etc. Also, a Portion of ground in Front'. The House is completely fitted up with Gas and Water Pipes, and contains every other convenience requisite for a Gentleman's Residence'.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ Of the six unmarried daughters (born between 1782 and 1801) living with the elderly Sarah Green at the time of the 1851 census, the first, second and fifth had been born in South Shields and the others in Cleadon.

⁷¹ Notitia Book, South Shields volume 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1.

⁷² His burial records give his address as Military Road.

⁷³ *Newcastle Courant*, 22 January 1820.

⁷⁴ No house-name or number is given. The 84-year old Sarah was living here with seven unmarried daughters. In the 1851 census the address is given as 55 Mile End Road.

⁷⁵ *Newcastle Journal*, 30 May 1857; *Shields Daily Gazette*, 22 June 1857; see also *North and South Shields Gazette and Northumberland and Durham Advertiser*, 23 April 1863.

In 1857 the house was let to one William Power and then, by 1859, to Thomas Barker, a ship-builder and owner.⁷⁶ The house was again advertised for let a few years later in April of 1863, and by December it was up for sale, but there were apparently no interest in a large house in an old part of town, and in 1876 Sarah's eldest son, the Rev. Robert Green, handed the house over to become a home for disadvantaged boys who would progress to the Wellesley Training Ship.⁷⁷ It was known at this point as Green's Sailor Boys Institution or Green's Home (the latter on the 1896 OS 1:500 Town Plan). When the training facility moved away from South Shields the Home was no longer required and in the early part of the twentieth century the building became a Working Man's Hostel and was finally demolished in 1937 along with many of the nearby buildings.⁷⁸ It was replaced by the first purpose-built flats in South Shields (HER 14427).

Appendix 2: Field names

Field name	Comments
Docken Field	'Docken' is another name for the dock plant.
North Low Bank Field	Fields that were surrounded by low banks (with or without a hedge on top) rather than just a hedge or fence.
South Low Bank Field	In 1768 'These are divided by Rails only – are both light Sand on the East Side'. In 1840 the south field is called Low Bank Field and the other just North Low Bank.
Mill Field	By at least 1768 this field contained a windmill owned by the Corporation of Newcastle upon Tyne; it was probably a ruin by 1815.
North Park	In northern England/lowland Scotland 'park' refers to any enclosed piece of land. In 1768 both fields had the comment: 'This is daily decreasing by the Ballast Hill daily increasing'. By 1840 North Park survives but South Park has been divided into three, one Ballast Hill and two fields called 'Garden etc' and 'Garden's etc', with small enclosed garden plots along the road.
South Park	
Field Close	A 'close' was a field 'enclosed' with hedges in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
Garden Close	(1840 only) A field created in the corner of Field Close, containing small (market-) garden plots.
Ropery Close	(1768 only) This close is near the early Shields Heugh ropery. By 1840 it is no longer part of the estate.
Ropery Field	(1840 only) A field created when German Street cut across Field Close. There was a second, later, ropery nearby.
Hunger Hole	A hollow or depression with poor soil that required a lot of enrichment. in 1768 this had 'Very dry sandy Soil'; in 1840 the field was

⁷⁶ *Newcastle Journal*, 10 October 1857; *Shields Daily Gazette*, 27 June 1859.

⁷⁷ *Newcastle Journal*, 8 April 1863, 2 December 1863; *Shields Daily News*, 8 September 1876. The sign on the building itself gives a date of 1875 (Fig. 23).

⁷⁸ According to a photograph by A. Flagg it was still standing on 18 July 1937, although clearly derelict: see South Tyneside Library image STH0003166, available at:

<https://southtynesidehistory.co.uk/archive/photographs/streets/south-shields/619243-long-bank?q=Green%27s%20Home>.

	reduced in size and was known as Hungry Hole.
Hungry Hill	(1840 only) The northern half of Hunger Hole, after it had been divided in two.
Bent Hills	‘Bent’ is a coarse form of grass, such as rush. Known as ‘The Bents’ in 1840.
Freehold Butts	‘Butts’ was an old term for a ridge or strip of ploughed land. In 1768 ‘These Freehold Butts, being 17 in Number, are very conspicuous tho’ they have never been fenced off from the Leasehold – they are plowed the contrary Way from the other Ridges or Lands, as represented in the Plan by the red dotted Lines. The Dimensions which appear upon the Boundaries in the Plan are exclusive of the Road leading to Field House’. By 1840 this field was no longer part of the estate.
The Sheep Garths	(1840 only) A garth is a small enclosure, yard or fold close to a building. It is made up of part of the old Homestall of Mile End House and a strip of Docken Field, and consists of a line of small enclosures or garden plots along the road.
Homestall	Originally the place of residence, although it also came to mean a small enclosure near the house for rearing young stock; in 1768 the homestall on Military Road was larger than that at Field House.

Appendix 3: Principal leaseholders for the estate from 1700

Year	Lease holder for Shields Heugh	References
1694	Nicholas Burdon	Renewals Book 3a: DCA DCD/F/CA/3a
1742		<i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 20 November; 25 December
1749	John Burdon	Renewals Book 4: DCA DCD/F/CA/4, p121 according to Richardson map
1761	Nicholas Fairless (Snr)	
1768		
1768	John Burdon	Renewals Book 4: DCA DCD/F/CA/4, p121
1790	Barbara Fairless	Barbara was the daughter of John Burdon
1804	Nicholas Fairles (Jnr)	Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1
1818	John Russell Rowntree	Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1; vol 2 DCD/F/CA/6, pp12, 187, 141, 203. Rowntree was a barrister in Stockton. When he died in 1831 he left all his property to his unmarried sister Elizabeth
1832	Elizabeth Rowntree	Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1; <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 27 July 1828
1835	Leonard Wilson	lease passed to Wilson 5 Oct: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 27 July 1828

		renewed in 1839: Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1
1841	John Atkinson (part of estate)	1841 tithe map of Westoe township
1846		Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1
1860-1867	Joseph Snowball (part of estate)	Notitia Book, South Shields vol 1: DCA DCD/F/CB/5, p1
	from 1864 the estate is split up and sold off (enfranchised) piece-meal	

Appendix 4: Table of the occupants of the Cottage

Year	Occupants of the Cottage	References
1827	Nicholas Fairles (Jnr)	Field Cottage: Parsons and White Directory
1828		Shields Cottage: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 19 April
1832		Nicholas died in the house a few days after being attacked
1835	Edward Kent Fairles	Cottage: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 17 January
1837		The Cottage: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 24 December
1841	William and Barbara Fairles	census: on the night of the census Edward was not in the house, but his brother William (described as a shipwright) was, with his wife and an elderly relative (both of independent means), and a single female servant.
1846	Edward Kent Fairles	Field House Cottage: White's Directory
1850	Edward Kent Fairles	The Cottage: Ward's Directory
1855	Edward Fairles sells furniture and moves away	The Field House: <i>North & South Shields Gazette & Northumberland & Durham Advertiser</i> , 13 Sept; <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 25 July
1856	Mrs Fairles	The Cottage: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 25 July
1859	William Fairles	Fairles Cottage: Ward's Directory
1861		Field Cottage: Ward's Directory census: William, now described as 'gentleman (formerly Ship carp[?])', lives with his wife, their four children, Barbara's sister and nephew, one female servant and a lodger
1865		Field Cottage: Whellan's Directory
1867		The Cottage: Ward's Directory
1871		The Cottage: Ward's Directory Field House: Christie's Directory
		Field House: William was not in the house on the night of the census, but Barbara, their four children, sister-in-law, female servant

		and a lodger were
1873		Fieldhouse: Post Office Directory; Field House: Christie's Directory
1875		Field House: Ward's Directory
1881		census: William (now described as a 'civil engineer (retired)', Barbara, their children and another lodger
1885		Field House: Kelly's Directory; <i>Shields Daily News</i> , 12 January
1890		Field House: William dies 13 September: <i>Northern Echo</i> , 19 September
1891	Barbara Fairles	census: Barbara lives with her adult daughter and a female general servant
1892		Field House: <i>Shields Daily Gazette</i> , 3 February
1898	Mr McClure	Corporation of South Shields Council Meeting Minutes for 1898, p814
1899	Mrs McClure	Corporation of South Shields Council Meeting Minutes for 1899, p402

Appendix 5: Table of the occupants of Field House Farm

Year	Farm tenants	References
1727	Francis Anderson	Flagg (1958, 28) says he was at the farm in this year, and that it remained in his family, but in 1742 the farm is to let
1742		Shields Heugh: farm advertised to let: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 20 November; 25 December
1769 (post)	Joseph Anderson	Flagg (1958, 28) says that two of his daughters were married from Field House
1791	Mary Anderson	'Mary Anderson, widow, of Field House in the township of Westoe' died 1791: probate record DCA DPR1/1/1792/A1
1823	Moor (John or William)	Shield Heugh: <i>Durham County Advertiser</i> , 29 March 1823
1827	James Shotton	Parsons and White Directory
1834	John Potts	Shields Heugh Farm: <i>Newcastle Journal</i> , 13 December 1834
1841		census: Potts lived in the farm with his wife Mary, their five children, two male servants and three female servants.
1846	John and Ralph Lamb	White's Directory
1851	Jane Lamb	census: Jane, aged 71, is described as 'farmer of 76 acres' (31ha). Living with her were her two sons Ralph and John and two female servants
1857	John Lamb	Field House: John sells up sometimes after May: <i>Newcastle Courant</i> , 1 May
	George Willis	Field House: George's wife, Ann, dies in September, within five months of moving there: <i>Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury</i> , 5 September

1859		Ward's Directory Shields Heugh: <i>Shields Daily Gazette</i> , 12 August
1861		census: George lived with his wife Mary, their seven children, one male farm servant and one female house servant
1862		Shieldsheugh: <i>Newcastle Journal</i> , 29 December
1863		Shields Heugh/Field House Farm: the farm is sold as Willis is in arrears with his rent; between 1865-1871 he is living at 17 Denmark Street, just to the south of Ocean Road, and described as farmer or cow-keeper (Ward's Directory)
1871	William Hindmarsh	William, a farmer of 58 acres (23ha) who employs one boy, lives with his wife Jane, their six children, a female dairy maid and a male farm servant (15 years old); also in Christie's Directory
1881	no farmers	census: under the heading 'Field House' 38 people are listed in seven households (other than the Cottage); two blacksmiths, two brick-makers, iron driller, engine fitter and a glassmaker and their families
1891	no farmers	census: under the heading 'Field House' there are now only four households (excluding the Cottage), consisting of 21 people.

Abbreviations

DCA Durham Cathedral Archive
 HER Historic Environment Record
 OS Ordnance Survey
 TWA Tyne and Wear Archives

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