

CREATING HOMES FOR HEROES



Pendower Estate and the architects who designed it

St James' Heritage and Environment Group
Local History Series



Acknowledgments: This book is based on research carried out by St James' Heritage & Environment Group, but it would not have been possible without the help of a number of individuals and organisations. Special thanks are due to Mike Barke, former lecturer in Human Geography at Northumbria University and member of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, who gave advice on the housing and planning background and contributed information and images about Robert Burns Dick and his achievements. Thanks are also due to the staff of Tyne and Wear Archives and Newcastle City Library for their help and patience, and to Neil Barker of Mackellar Schwerdt Partnership/ Neil Barker Associates Limited, the successor organisation to the Cackett and Burns Dick partnership, who provided information from the firm's original financial records. As always we owe a debt to Newcastle Photo Archive for generously sharing photographs from their unique collection of images of West Newcastle.

Sources: The main sources for this book were the minutes and associated records of Newcastle City Council, articles published in local newspapers, and material provided by Mike Barke and others. The key references are:

Minute Books of Newcastle Corporation: 'Housing of the Poor' Minute Books, March 1917-Feb 1921 and February 1921- August 1923, held in Tyne and Wear Archives (MD.NC/106/2 and MD.NC/106/3).

Set of original plans for Pendower Estate, held in Tyne and Wear Archives (MD/NC/BC/plan A/T186/A1832 and others).

Michael Barke, 'Robert Burns Dick: Newcastle Architect and Planner', *Tyne & Tweed*, Vol 62, 2008, pp. 28-35, updated by private communication.

Pendower Good Neighbour Project et al (2011) *Pendower Estate: Homes for Heroes*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Newcastle Community Heritage Project.

Faulkner, T. "Architecture in Newcastle" in Colls, R. and Lancaster, B. eds (2001) *Newcastle upon Tyne: a Modern History*, London: Phillimore and Co. pp213-244.

It is worth noting one source which we were unable to search, but which may provide a treasure trove of valuable information for future researchers. Tyne and Wear Archives holds more than twenty boxes of documents deposited by the successor firm to Cackett and Burns Dick, which are as yet uncatalogued and inaccessible.

Introduction

January 2026 saw the unveiling of a heritage plaque on the Pendower Estate in Newcastle's west end to commemorate the visionary Newcastle architect Robert Burns Dick. In preparation for this event, St James' Heritage & Environment Group agreed to produce a booklet bringing together a short history of the estate with an account of the achievements of its architect, Robert Burns Dick. This seemed a simple enough task but soon after the work began a critical question arose. Did Burns Dick really design Pendower?

The belief that Robert Burns Dick designed Pendower has become established as fact over the years. The main source for this appears to be the second edition of Pevsner, the architects' bible. Published in 1992, this states simply that Pendower was "An early council housing estate laid out from 1919 according to Garden Suburb principles and continued into the 1920s by Cackett, Dick and Mackellar" (p515). While this was certainly the architectural firm of which Robert Burns Dick was a partner, the authors do not specifically identify him personally as the architect.

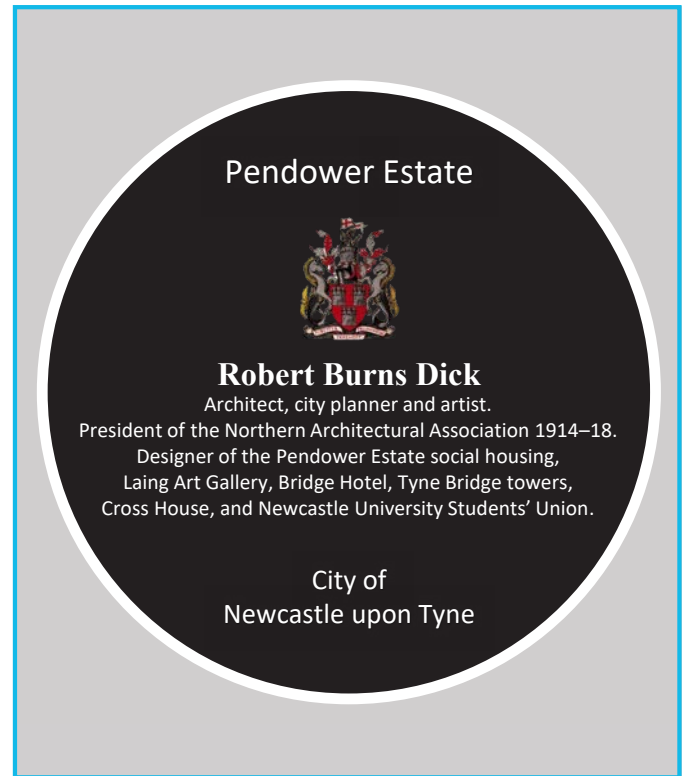
In 2008 Mike Barke, based on a reading of Pevsner, attributed the design of Pendower to Burns Dick in an article about his career and achievements, although Barke has since withdrawn this statement in light of more intensive research.

The identification of Burns Dick as the architect of Pendower has continued to be cited, and was restated in the submission made by the Northern Architectural Association, of which Burns Dick was a past president, which proposed a plaque to commemorate his work.

In the wake of the plaque unveiling, Newcastle City Council continues to hold the view that Burns Dick would have had some involvement and oversight in the design process.

Issues of attribution within architectural practices are notoriously difficult. However, further research carried out for this book found no evidence that Burns Dick personally contributed significantly to the design or development of the Pendower Estate. This is not to detract in any way from Burns Dick's achievements or his importance as an architect and planner, recognised as one of the most talented of Newcastle's many architects in the first half of the 20th century.

The choice of Pendower as a location for the commemorative plaque was made by the City Council. It reflected an interest in extending the plaque scheme to areas such as the west end which have tended to be underrepresented by it in the past.



Pendower, as one of Newcastle's first major council housing estates built in the aftermath of the First World War as part of the movement to provide homes fit for heroes to live in, offered a particularly interesting location worthy of celebration in itself. The issue for this book is the link between the estate and Robert Burns Dick.

This leaves the question of who did design Pendower. The answer proved to be unexpectedly complicated. The evidence shows that several other architects contributed in different ways to the design and development of the estate, most notably the long-forgotten R.G.Roberts, the City's first council architect, who was responsible for the original design of the estate. This book acknowledges the contribution of Pendower's other architects whose names have largely disappeared from the public memory, but whose work deserves to be commemorated alongside Robert Burns Dick.

It is important to recognise that, as with all historical research, this is a work in progress. Most of our findings were derived from old records lodged in the Tyne and Wear Archives which previous authors may not have had access to, and there is every possibility that further research may uncover new evidence to cast doubt on our conclusions. Maybe a postcard will suddenly come to light sent by Burns Dick from Chicago to his family at home saying how much he is enjoying the break from drawing up plans for a new council estate in Newcastle.

Newcastle's housing crisis

Pendower Estate was one of Newcastle Council's first major council estates, built just after the First World War. The interwar period saw a massive growth of council housing in the city with more than 13,000 homes built between 1920 and 1940. Pendower stands out among these as a special case because of the quality of the overall design and the individual homes, and it continues to be a popular place to live today.

The story of the Pendower Estate has tended to focus on the 'homes for heroes' narrative, but equally important for understanding the context is the serious under-provision of housing locally. In the later years of the 19th century, the rapid development of private, mainly terraced, housing to the east of the Pendower site had transformed Benwell from a semi-rural area with a population of about a thousand people into a township with some 18,000 residents.



High Cross Farm stood at the west end of Adelaide Terrace until the 1890s. The parish church of St James' can be seen in the background at the corner of Benwell Lane. By 1914 almost the whole length of Adelaide Terrace was filled with shops, pubs, banks and other businesses.



This photograph dating from 1920 looks west towards the church. A tramline ran along the Terrace linking Benwell with the city, and terminating at the junction with Benwell Lane. The site which was to house Pendower Estate was a short distance further west from here.

The new homes did not come near to meeting the needs of the growing numbers of families drawn into the west end of Newcastle by the rapid development of major industries along the riverside. Armstrong's engineering and armaments works in Elswick and Scotswood alone employed almost 80,000 people by the end of the First World War.



Because of the acute shortage of housing, unfit homes across the area continued to be inhabited for many years. Thirlwell's Cottages were in Old Benwell Village, a short distance from the Pendower site. They are pictured here just prior to demolition at the end of the 1930s. The Hawthorn pub was built on the site.

The neighbourhoods of Benwell and Scotswood had been incorporated into the City of Newcastle in 1904, having previously been administered by Benwell and Fenham Urban District Council. Newcastle Council inherited the legacy of under-provision and unfit housing in Benwell to add to the city's own serious housing problems. Tyneside at that time was second only to London in terms of the high density of its living conditions, with many families crammed into unsafe and unhygienic tenements and single-room dwellings.



Boathouse Cottages, pictured here in 1937, were among many unfit dwellings in the Benwell riverside area to remain occupied for decades despite their poor condition. These cottages stood on Scotswood Road to the west of Paradise Bridge.

Newcastle's housing problems were well known. A survey in 1866 showed that nearly 50,000 people (40% of the population) lived in tenements comprising one or two rooms, 8,000 people had no water supply at all and 14,500 people had no water closet or toilet provision of any kind. A similar survey in 1885 demonstrated that 44,000 people (34.2 % of the population) were still living in one or two-roomed dwellings, and fewer than half of self-contained homes had an indoor water supply. Official census figures showed that overcrowding was a serious and growing problem, with more than a third of the city's population living at a density of more than two people per room by 1921. The effects of these housing conditions on health had been well documented by successive Medical Officers of Health.

Time for action

Despite awareness of the city's housing problems, Newcastle Council, unlike other more forward-looking local authorities, had no active commitment to providing housing for the less well off on any significant scale. The government's 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act, which enabled councils to intervene in the local housing system, was used by a number of urban areas in the 19th century, but not by Newcastle at this period.

Newcastle's first full-scale council housing programme was part of a national movement. Faced with the high expectations of soldiers returning from service in the First World War and fears of civil unrest among the unemployed, the government took the lead in the provision of housing across the country. For the first time councils were required to assess housing need in their areas and provide housing for rent. Funding was made available to councils for a crash building programme. Just as important as the numbers of homes to be provided, these were to be built to minimum standards laid down nationally.

The key document was the Tudor Walters Report of 1918. This was strongly influenced by the examples of model towns and the garden city movement. It recommended that housing of a 'cottage' style should be provided in new, low-density suburban estates and set in a landscape of trees and green open space. This soon became known as the 'garden suburb' form. A manual set out recommended examples of estate layout for councils to follow, with a maximum density of twelve houses per acre for urban areas. Garden areas would be provided. The standards of house design were extremely high. In fact they were higher than those laid down 40-50 years later. Although variations were possible, the standard house was to consist of three bedrooms, a living room, a kitchen/scullery a bathroom and an internal W.C.

The first part of the Pendower Estate was built under the provisions of the 1919 Addison Act which was the first piece of legislation to subsidise the provision of decent housing for ordinary working people. The recommendations of the

Tudor Walters Report were largely adopted in the Addison Act, and across the country this style was favoured for government-supported housing for working-class families.

The second part of Pendower Estate was built under the provisions of the 1924 Wheatley Act passed by the first Labour Government. It was intended to be the first stage in a plan to provide every working class tenant of the private rented sector with decent publicly-owned housing at a reasonable rent. The Act laid the basis for a huge expansion of council housing nationally, resulting in the construction of more than half a million council houses. The aim was to provide good housing for all rather than just to re-house slum dwellers and the poorest families.



This photograph in the *Illustrated Chronicle* of June 1920 shows one of the earliest homes built by Newcastle Council under its postwar programme. Pictured below: a group from Norway on a fact-finding visit, seen exploring a building site on the Walker Estate where development began slightly earlier than at Pendower.



Pease Avenue, pictured here in 1925, was one of the earliest streets to be completed on the Pendower Estate.

Newcastle's response to the city's housing problems was shaped by local pressures as well as the national policy context. An important factor was that the City Council (sometimes referred to during this period as the Corporation) included a small contingent of Labour councillors whose influence on housing policy far exceeded their numbers. Their commitment was an important factor in shaping the council's response. As well as pressing for the direct provision of housing by the council, they were early advocates of 'garden city' and 'garden suburb' ideas. The garden city model had originated in the late 19th century as an alternative to urban sprawl and high density living. Although the intention of the founders was that a garden city would be a freestanding, self-contained settlement, it became fashionable to apply some of the housing design features and layout of the garden city model to existing urban areas. Over time, the terms 'garden city' and 'garden suburb' came to be used interchangeably to describe the provision of low density housing with generous green space. This idea gained popularity in Newcastle, promoted by a number of key individuals and organisations.

In 1902 John Whitburn, president of Newcastle Trades Council, ILP member and councillor for Elswick South, published a booklet *'The Housing Problem in Newcastle and District'* suggesting that the 800 acre Walker Estate should be developed on garden city principles. The idea gained momentum and in 1903 a petition from 2,500 rate-payers was received, encouraging the council to initiate a garden suburb type of development. In 1907 a mass meeting of workers at the Armstrong Works was held, and a petition sent to the newly formed Housing of the Poor Sub-Committee pressing for the adoption of garden city principles. David Adams, who was elected in 1902 as the Labour councillor for All Saints North Ward, was also a forceful standard bearer for garden city or garden suburb style development in Newcastle. He was responsible for organising a national Garden City Conference in Newcastle in 1908. Another important advocate of these ideas was James Smith, who went on to chair the Housing Committee, and was quoted as saying at the opening of the first section of the Walker Estate in 1921 that he looked forward to the time when Newcastle should have five garden suburbs.

It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the idea of providing good quality council housing was universally welcomed locally. Throughout the 1920s critics continued to echo earlier objections to the principle of public provision of housing. Within the council, supporters of the high quality council housing schemes faced proposals from fellow councillors to lower the quality of homes and to offer some of the new houses for sale to individuals, as well as pressure from the Ministry of Health to reduce the specifications significantly in order to cut costs.

In contrast to its earlier reluctance to engage with the task of ensuring the provision of housing for the working classes, Newcastle Council moved quickly in the aftermath

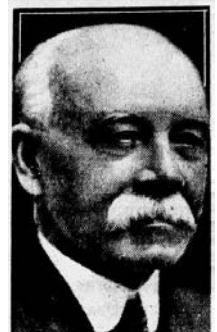
of the war to respond to the challenge of providing large numbers of new homes to rent. Pendower was one of the first of a series of land purchases providing substantial sites for new house building outside the city centre. The council already owned a large area of land in Walker which was available for development. By the summer of 1919, with development already underway there, the council had agreed to purchase land for new housing developments at Pendower, Fenham Nurseries, Gowlands and North Elswick, Montague, and Heaton adjacent to Newton Road and Benton Road. Walker and Pendower were the first major schemes to be developed in the city.



James Smith, Chair of Newcastle's Housing committee, is pictured here in June 1920 with a Norwegian delegation on a visit to Newcastle to learn about the council's housing plans. This photograph appeared in the *Illustrated Chronicle* under the heading 'Newcastle gives hints to Norwegians'.

Newcastle Council soon realised that they needed to increase their capacity in order to deliver these major house-building programmes. In July 1919 they appointed Newcastle's first housing architect. R.G.Roberts. Chosen from among 45 applicants, Roberts had previous experience of working on urban housing schemes. When he was appointed to the new post in Newcastle, he was initially located in the Property Surveyor's Department, but he was soon given his own department and seven architectural assistants to support the huge workload which faced him. Roberts started work immediately on the major housing project at Walker. His importance to the council was reflected in the fact that he was able without any argument to obtain a 50% increase in salary less than a year after starting work, with a promise of almost doubling it the near future.

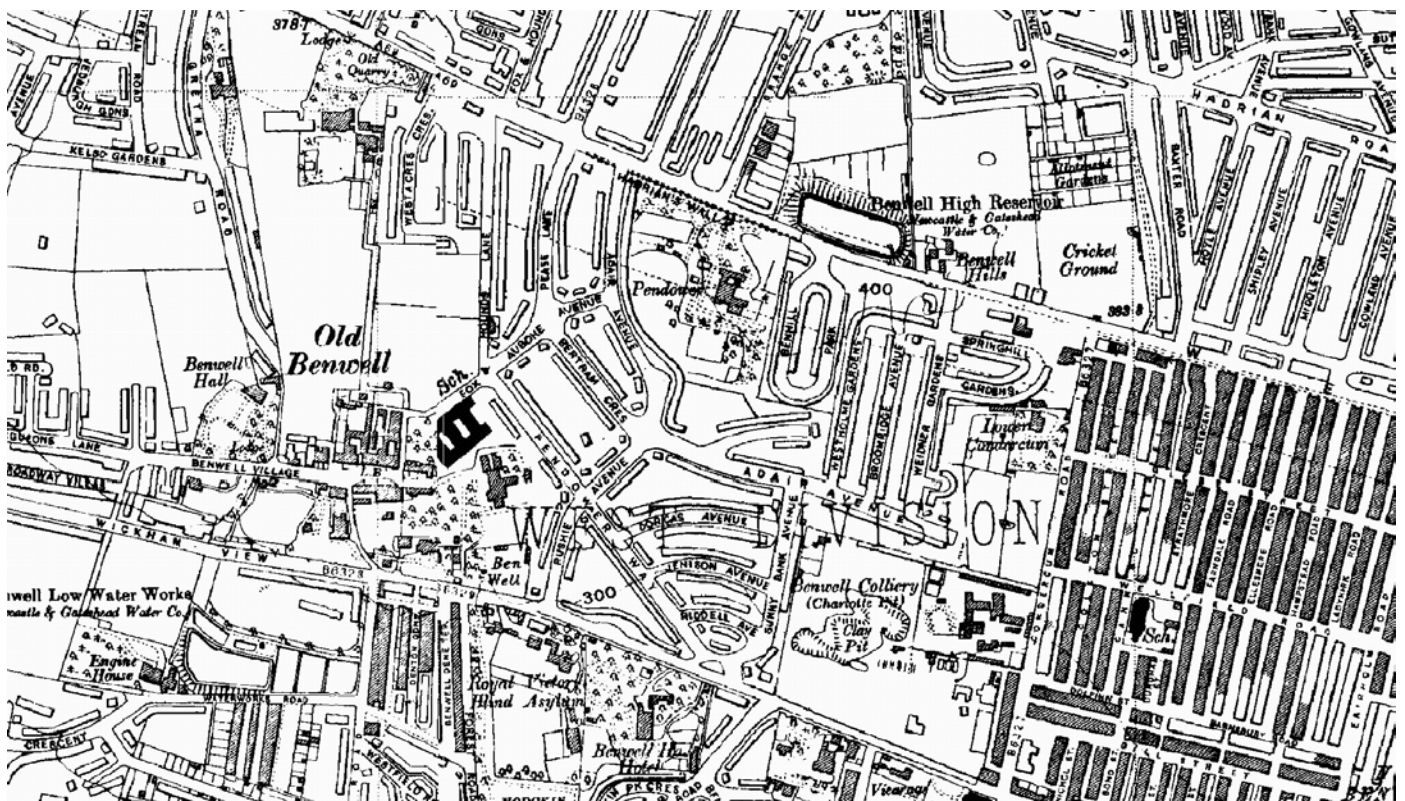
The council housing programme provided lucrative opportunities for local businessmen. In 1920 Newcastle Council issued bonds to fund the early housing schemes. This was a sound investment as it was secured against the rates, property and revenue of the City Council. Investors were paid interest at a rate of 6%. Ald J.F.Weidner was the first to take advantage of this with an investment of £50,000 from his shipping company. Weidner lived near to the Pendower site in a grand mansion called Condercum House. This was demolished in the 1930s, and the Condercum Park Estate was built on the site with one of its streets named Weidner Road after the former owner.



Pendower: Benwell's Garden Suburb



The 1898 OS map shows that this area of Benwell lying between the West Road to the north and Benwell Lane to the south was mainly occupied by large houses and mansions set in landscaped grounds and wooded areas. The small village of Old Benwell lay to the west. The future site of Pendower Estate is in the centre of the map. The name 'Pendower' marks the location of the large house occupied by the Pease family who owned the land.



This 1938 map shows the site fully occupied by Pendower Estate with its distinctive layout. The big house still stands in its original position, with a recently built estate of owner occupied homes immediately to the east. At the bottom right hand side of the map can be seen the terraces of North Benwell built in the years before the First World War to the traditional grid pattern.

How many architects does it take to design an estate?

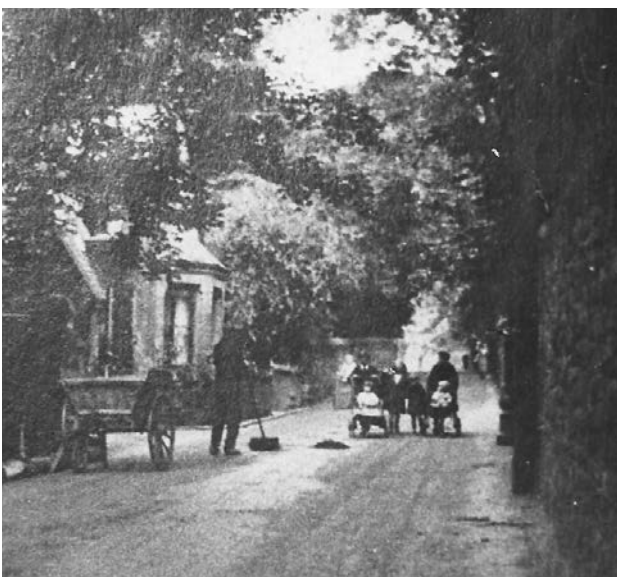
There is no doubt that it was Roberts and his team who produced the initial plan for the Pendower Estate which formed the blueprint for its development. The council's unanimous decision in May 1920 to approve Roberts' plans was publicised in the local press. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* reported on May 22nd 1920 that "Mr Roberts presented a lay-out scheme for the Pendower Estate. It was approved and will be sent to the Housing Commissioner", and on July 10th confirmed that "the Report on the laying out of the Estate which has been done by the Housing Architect Mr R.G. Roberts whose plan has been unanimously approved by the Housing Committee." Sadly there is as yet no trace of these original plans.

Shaped by both national and local influences, the chosen design was a garden suburb model, influenced by the much more ambitious garden city idea. The intention was to re-create the best aspects of a traditional English village. A contemporary council report described the plans for the Pendower Estate as embodying: "Houses so designed and grouped as to be sequestered among the natural world, and the reproduction of an old English village."

This differed from the style of working-class housing prevalent in the area in that period, which consisted of long terraces, mainly of Tyneside flats, built to a grid pattern with most of the streets running up the steep slopes from the riverside. Following the Tudor Walters Report, the estate was built to a relatively low density of about 12-14 houses to the acre at a time when private builders were putting up houses in other parts of Benwell at 20 or more per acre. Standards of internal design were similarly generous, with electric lighting and

gas cooking facilities, and separate toilets and cupboard space. Each home would have on average 200 square yards of garden space. There were to be significant areas of trees and green space. The estate conformed to the progressive town planning ideas of the period. This sort of quality cost money: more than £400 was spent on each house on the Pendower and Walker Estates, which contrasts with the much lower figure of about £250 for each home on Newcastle's later slum clearance estates.

It would be tempting to decide that Roberts should replace Burns Dick on the plaque as the designer of the Pendower Estate. However, nothing about this story is as simple. Only a few months after the enthusiastic adoption of Roberts' designs for Pendower the council came under intense pressure from the Ministry of Health (the government department responsible for overseeing national housing policy) to speed up the development of the housing scheme by abandoning its intention to manage it in-house. At first the Housing Committee resisted the Ministry's proposal to bring in private architects to manage the development of Pendower, but they were soon forced to capitulate under the threat of losing the housing scheme altogether. An initial suggestion that one private architect be employed to plan and develop the estate became in a short time a proposal to appoint three local architectural practices who would act as "Joint Architects" for the whole scheme, dividing the estate into sections and taking a section each and pooling fees among them. Matters moved with surprising speed, with the final selection of architects having been made at a special meeting of the Housing Committee, apparently even before the decision had been formally approved by the City Council in November 1920.



Pendower Estate was bounded on the south by Benwell Lane, pictured here in 1922, which was then a narrow country lane lined with grand houses in landscaped grounds, sheltered behind high stone walls.



The West Road, which followed the line of Hadrian's Wall, formed the northern boundary of the site. This area was predominantly rural, as shown by this photograph of Fox and Hounds Lane prior to the 1920s.

The process of appointing the architects was managed by the council's Property Surveyor. At the request of the Housing Committee he drew up a shortlist of six "architects of repute practising in Newcastle" provided by Charles Errington, the President of the Northern Architectural Association. The names included Robert Burns Dick's firm, Cackett and Burns Dick. Errington himself, who was already well known as the designer of working class housing locally, was added to the list by the Property Surveyor as well as several other names, giving a total of ten local architectural practices for the committee to choose from. The first vote went as follows: Errington 11 votes, Marshall and Tweedy 8 votes, and Cackett and Burns Dick 5 votes. The top two, having received a majority of votes from the councillors present, were immediately appointed architects for the Pendower scheme. On a second vote, Cackett and Burns Dick received 6 votes, and were appointed as the third.

This account of the appointment process as set out in the Housing Committee minutes shows clearly that the idea that Robert Burns Dick was appointed to design the Pendower Estate on account of his experience in designing garden suburbs can be discounted. It is also clear that the local architects, both individually and collectively through their official organisations, already had an interest and involvement in the new council house building projects and the lucrative opportunities they offered. The Minutes of the Housing Committee report that early in 1919 the Northern Architectural Association had written to the council suggesting that "in the interests of efficiency the development of the Walker Housing Area should be entrusted to a number of local architects" and arguing for higher payments for work on these schemes, while the architects' professional body RIBA had been active in putting forward complaints about the way in which tenders were dealt with for the Walker project.

Cackett and Burns Dick were not newcomers to the scene. The firm had won second prize in 1919 for their proposals for the Walker Estate, and Cackett also had a pre-existing interest in Pendower having represented the owners in relation to the purchase of the land.

There is no evidence that the decision to commission private architects to manage the development of Pendower was a reflection of the council's view of the abilities and expertise of Roberts, the council architect. In fact, the decision to involve private architects may have been welcome to Roberts. Managing the Walker development was an onerous responsibility. Walker was a much bigger site than Pendower, more than twice as large. It was intended to accommodate 1,246 homes, and involved several distinct phases, whereas the plan for Pendower envisaged 540 homes. The challenges arose not only from the scale of the development but from the fact that municipal housing development was completely new to the council both in terms of scale and procedural matters. The Walker scheme was encountering many problems which the council had little experience in tackling, as well as the necessity of addressing new demands such as the government's concern with creating jobs for the unemployed on these schemes. When asked his opinion during the committee discussions, Roberts himself stated he could not manage to take on Pendower in addition to Walker.

The decision to involve private architects should be seen as a response to the lack of capacity within the council rather than stemming from a desire to attract any specific expertise in relation to the garden city and garden suburb ideas which were then in vogue.



To the west of the site stood the grand mansion known as Benwell Towers. Designed by John Dobson, this was the official residence of the bishops of Newcastle until the Second World War.



Immediately to the east of the stone boundary wall of the Pendower site was the Charlotte Pit, the last working coalmine in Benwell.

Building Pendower

In contrast to the situation in Walker where the council already owned the land, the development of Pendower was beset with complications around the acquisition and competing uses of the site. In June 1919 the Housing Committee agreed to start negotiations with the owners of the Pendower Estate about purchasing the land, and the first challenge was to negotiate the price. A complicating factor was that the 60 acre site on offer included the former residence of the wealthy Pease family, and there were disagreements within the council about whether this should be included in the purchase or whether acquisition should be restricted to the 45 acres available for housing. More than a year passed before the purchase of the full site was finalised at a price of £37,500. A belief has persisted that this was a generous gesture by the trustees of the Pease Estate, who represented the owners, who agreed to reduce their initial asking price of £60,000 in view of the intention to use the land “for the purpose of housing the labouring classes”. However the fact that the site had been valued independently at £36,000 suggests that their decision was more pragmatic.



Pendower Hall was a beautiful arts and crafts style mansion designed by the well known architect R.J.Johnson for the Pease family who lived there from 1867. It was probably named after a place in Cornwall near where Helen Pease had lived before her marriage to her banker husband. The hall, pictured here in 1992, still stands today.

Although the site was now in the hands of the council, the future of the Hall and the 15 acre site on which it stood was as yet undecided. After options such as demolition and resale were considered and rejected, various uses were discussed at length until, after protracted wrangling about costs and boundaries, it was handed to the Education Committee for use as a school for ‘delicate’ children with conditions such as tuberculosis.

There were a number of other important factors to be taken into account. There was disagreement within the council and with central government as to whether a new elementary school was needed in the area and,

if so, whether it should be built on the Pendower site. It was not until August 1923 that this question was finally settled with the decision that a new school would be built on the north-west portion of the site.



Benwell Lane is pictured here in 1929 after it was widened to accommodate the development of the Pendower Estate. This enabled an extension of the tramway which had previously terminated at the end of Adelaide Terrace. The work was carried out as part of a national government scheme to provide work for unemployed men, many of whom had served in the war.

Other issues which had to be resolved before the boundaries of the housing development could be finalised included the fate of the stone boundary wall surrounding the Pease estate, the details of an exchange of land with the Anglican Diocese whose Bishop’s residence adjoined the site to the west, and the need to widen Benwell Lane which lay at the southern boundary of the estate. Such factors impacted on the details of the planned layout, requiring several minor amendments to the plans over time.

In the end 45 acres of land were developed for housing. Initially the responsibility for managing this project had rested with the council’s in-house architect Roberts whose designs for the layout of Pendower Estate had been approved in May 1920. This role was taken over by the Joint Architects in December 1920. The initial generous provisions embodied in the Addison Act of 1919 had rapidly given way to a much more cost-conscious management. Under pressure to meet the government’s timescale and within the centrally imposed cost regime, the private architects got to work immediately. For the crucial first few years they operated under the leadership of Burns Dick’s partner James Cackett who was well placed to pick up this responsibility as he was an experienced business manager as well as a skilled architect. Perhaps in the knowledge that the Ministry of Health would support him, Cackett had no compunction about challenging the council about their inefficiency and inadequate procedures for dealing with a project of this size and urgency, even on occasions using implicit threats to achieve his aims.

It was Cackett who took on the lead in the early years. This apparently included the financial arrangements for the contribution of the other architects, as evidenced in the original Cash Book Ledgers of the Cackett and Burns Dick practice. His role included managing a myriad of detailed issues such as checking the appropriate size of sewers, negotiating prices and contractual terms with builders, and overseeing the sale of Pendower Hall, as well as detailed amendments required to the layout plans to accommodate the widening of Benwell Lane and other emerging issues and cost pressures. This was the sort of detailed practical work at which Cackett excelled, and on which much of his reputation rested. The detailed reports available in the records of the Housing Committee and relevant Sub-committees show Cackett's involvement to be hands-on, certainly during this crucial early period. He was at the centre, involved in almost every detail of the development and attending committee meetings, briefing council officers and negotiating with builders and other key players, in the role of "representing the joint architects".

The design work of the private architects comprised drawing up the details of different dwelling types and dealing with amendments and additions to sections of the layout plan in order to accommodate factors such as the widening of Benwell Lane and earmarking a site for the new school, as well as the changing requirements of the Ministry of Health. While other members of the Joint Architects group appear to have actively contributed, there is no evidence to indicate either a leadership role or indeed any participation by Robert Burns Dick. There is no direct evidence from the proceedings of the Housing Committee or the Sub-committee which dealt specifically with Pendower to show that Roberts' original layout plan was replaced, although it may have been modified in some respects to meet the demands of the Ministry for "a more economical scheme of development" (in the words of an unattributed letter found within the records). As a group, the Joint Architects' project management role expanded over time as they accrued delegated responsibilities for matters such as approving tenders and negotiating the details of contracts with builders. As well as ensuring that the project was delivered efficiently and within budget despite the difficulties encountered along the way, the main contribution to the final appearance of the estate of this group of established local architects with a range of experience of innovative design work may have been to incorporate a variety of house types and styles within a single estate, although it is not known how much of this variation had been built into Roberts' original design. Meanwhile the council architect was not completely absent from the process. Not only was he referred to as the final arbiter for some detailed decisions, but the original plans for the estate show that he was personally responsible for designing a group of 12 homes which was added at to the scheme at the final stage.



This photograph of Pendower Way, originally known as Pendower Lane, dates from the first phase of the development.

Work began on site in July 1922. The construction of the estate was completed over a number of phases, each of which brought its own difficulties, not least the financial collapse in 1922 of the building company already working on site. The first two years saw 150 houses built on Pendower Way, Fox and Hounds Lane, Pease Avenue and the West Road. The first tenants, many of whom came from private rented accommodation elsewhere in the west end of Newcastle, moved into houses in Fox and Hounds Lane and West Road at the end of 1922. As the rate of building progressed, a showhouse, furnished by the Cooperative Society, was opened on the estate in January 1923.

The Newcastle Daily Chronicle greeted the new estate with enthusiasm. Following a visit to view the first 62 houses in April 1923, it reported favourably that they "are delightfully situated near Benwell Lane..... The houses are of a semi-detached type, each having a small garden, and they look very picturesque with their roofs of Bridgewater and Somerset tiles. The roads, too, are good, and intersect the estate in sweeping curves."

The peak years for completions were 1927 and 1928 when more than 250 homes -almost half the total -were built. By 1931 the estate was fully occupied.



This photograph, taken in 1976, shows the original "Willowcrete" garden walls with hedges which were a feature of the estate.

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Illustrated Chronicle

No. 3,906. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1922. PRICE ONE PENNY

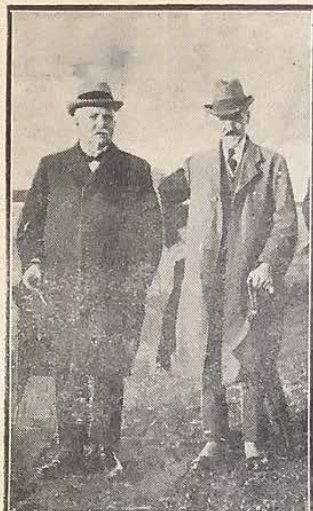
Your Breakfast Table

is incomplete without a copy
of the "Newcastle Daily
Chronicle and North Mail."

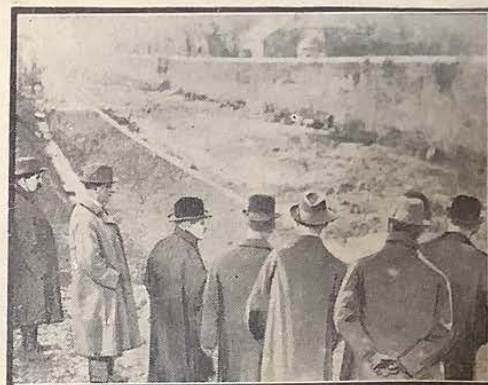
NEWCASTLE HOUSING COMMITTEE SURVEY PENDOWER ESTATE.



Rear view of one of the streets on the estate.



Sir George Lunn and Ald. W. Bramble.



The City Engineer acting as guide to the Committee.



Front view of some of the model dwellings.



The Committee discussing details on the ground.



The portion of the estate that will be included in Benwell Lane.



Mr. Steele giving information to the Committee on points of interest.



Committee members with Mr. Telfer, Vice-Chairman, in the centre.

Newcastle's latest garden suburb, the Pendower Estate, in the Benwell area, now boasts a number of houses which are ready for tenants, and many more will soon be completed. Yesterday the Housing Committee of the Newcastle Corporation visited the Estate for a formal survey under the City Engineer, Mr. Steele, who explained the housing details. Among those present were Sir George Lunn and Ald. W. Bramble, the Lord Mayor Elect.—("I.O." photos.)

Printed by the Proprietors of the Newcastle Chronicle, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Published by H. M. Thompson, Saturday, October 28, 1922.

This feature in the *Illustrated Chronicle* in October 1922 reports on a visit by members of the Housing Committee to view building work in progress on Pendower. The estate was described as Newcastle's 'latest garden suburb'.

Who designed Pendower?

The reputation of architects rises and falls over time. Even John Dobson, the architect largely responsible for the design of the much admired city centre of Newcastle, is overshadowed today by the builder and developer Richard Grainger. A whole area of the city centre has been renamed Graingertown, while Dobson's memory lives on inappropriately in the unattractive John Dobson Street which bypasses the centre.

Robert Burns Dick was highly regarded in his time. He won several prestigious awards for particular buildings, and was also recognised as a prominent influence in promoting wider ideas about urban planning. Burns Dick was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1906 and was an active member of the Northern Architectural Association, serving as its President from 1914 to 1918.

However, thirty years after his death in 1954, Burns Dick had largely disappeared from the public memory, despite his impressive record of designing high profile buildings and promoting large-scale planning projects in the north east and beyond. A major exhibition was organised in Newcastle in 1984 which had been designated Festival of Architecture Year to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of RIBA. This highlighted the work of Robert Burns Dick (albeit without any mention of Pendower) under the title "The Unknown Architect".

Since then, interest has waned once more and Burns Dick's contribution to architecture and town planning appears to have become generally underrated. The new plaque, proposed by the Northern Architectural Association, seeks to raise awareness of Burns Dick's place in the history of Newcastle.

Although there is no real evidence that Robert Burns Dick made any personal contribution to the design or development of Pendower, he is part of the story by virtue of his position as a partner in the firm of Cackett and Burns Dick, and the influence of his work as an architect and planner on the city of Newcastle and beyond merits recognition. Beyond this, there is no evidence to indicate that he deserves the title of Pendower's architect. On the contrary there were several other architects who could equally lay claim to the title. The following pages look not only at Burns Dick but also at other architects who were involved in different ways in the development of the estate.

In the early 20th century there were more architects practicing in Newcastle than in any other city outside London, and most of the important building work in the city was done by local architects. Between them the three firms commissioned to work on the Pendower scheme

had an impressive track record of a variety of projects, and deserve to be recognised for their contribution to the built landscape of Newcastle. While James Cackett very clearly took the lead role in the early stages, it is impossible to identify from the currently available evidence exactly what each member of the Joint Architects contributed, as the plans bore the titles of all three practices with the firm of Cackett and Dick appearing top of the list. From 1924 onwards the emphasis shifted and Marshall and Tweedy headed the list with the phrase of "associated architects" applied to the two other practices. However, individual architects were not entirely invisible. Names were given on the occasions when they attended council meetings and site visits. For example, attendance at a well-publicised site visit by councillors to Pendower in August 1923 included Cackett, Marshall and Errington - a representative from each of the three firms. Significantly, the name of Burns Dick does not feature in any context.

Finally, although he disappears from the story at an early stage, Newcastle's first council architect Roberts deserves to feature in a place of honour.



Robert Burns Dick pictured in 1910

Robert Roberts

The original sources we have examined show clearly that the original layout of the Pendower Estate was designed by the council's own Housing Architect, R.G.Roberts.

Born in Blyth, Roberts had been appointed to the post in 1919 as Newcastle Council's first in-house architect. Prior to this appointment, he had worked for Sheffield Corporation on housing projects, bringing to Newcastle a wealth of experience which the council lacked. Described by the architectural historian Thomas Faulkner as highly capable, Roberts was responsible for producing a plan for the layout of Pendower which was inspired by the garden city movement of the early 20th century. It envisaged low-rise homes, built at a low density and set among extensive landscaping.



In addition to his housing work, Roberts designed other buildings, including Fenham Library. Built in 1938, this is recognised as a fine example of municipal architecture of that period.

Of all the architects involved in the development of the estate, he deserves the title of the 'unknown architect' as well as arguably the original designer of Pendower.



Roberts and his staff had their own offices at 18 Cloth Market. This was adjacent to the Town Hall which stood in St Nicholas' Square between the Cloth Market and the Bigg Market. Pictured here about 1911, the Town Hall dated from 1858. It was demolished in 1973 after being replaced by the present day Civic Centre.

In 1936, Roberts was appointed the first 'City Architect' for Newcastle, by which time 11,000 homes had been built under his overall charge. When he resigned from his post in Newcastle in October 1946, the Newcastle Journal commented:

"Attractive lay-out and pleasing variety of types of houses at Walker, High Heaton and elsewhere are witness to his successful union of the utilitarian with dignity of design."

Roberts died in 1967, and appears to have disappeared from public view. Despite his long and successful career, Roberts remains an obscure figure in contrast to other architects of the time. A search for photographs of Roberts or even an obituary in recognition of his death has so far yielded no results.

EXTEND SCOPE OF CHARITIES

Suggestion by Sir George Lunn

OPENING OF NEW CITY HOSPITAL

A suggestion that the scope of Newcastle charities should be extended was made yesterday by Sir George Lunn, a Freeman of the city, at the opening of the new Holy Jesus Hospital at Spital Tongues, which replaces the 250-year-old Manors hospital.

The new hospital was opened by Alderman Gilbert Oliver, chairman of the Schools and Charities Committee. Councillor James Grant presided.

Sir George said: "I am hoping that the day will come when the privileges of the ancient charities, of which there are so many in this city, will not be strictly limited to one section of the community — to the wives, daughters, and sons of Freemen, but that while conserving their rights, as we must, the borders will be enlarged.

"Now that it is possible to take advantage of the growing surpluses of the Mary Magdalene Fund, I hope that, by and by, we shall all be Freemen of this city and share in the benefits of the charities."

REFUGE FOR THE OLD

Mr J. R. Andrews, chairman of the Freemen, replying to this suggestion, said: "I entirely agree with Sir George, but already some of the charities have been extended to other people. All the charities of this city are not solely for Freemen. We are always amused at people trying to take something from us, they never seem to think of extending their privileges to Freemen."

Alderman Oliver said that the charity enabled the old people to spend the eventide of their lives peacefully.

"I wish I could think," he said, "that all the aged folk in our city who have carried life's burdens could enjoy similar conditions."

Councillor James Grant said that the old hospital at Manors had been established for more than 250 years, and had been a house of refuge for old people. The beneficent work of the hospital was not only recorded in the pages of history, but was enshrined in human hearts.

ONE-STORY COTTAGES

The Lady Mayoress of Newcastle (Mrs J. Grantham) was presented with a bouquet by a representative of the inmates. The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor R. J. Richardson) accepted the buildings on behalf of the charity.

A dedicatory prayer was offered by the Rev J. H. Lunn, Master of St. Thomas's, Newcastle, and of St. Mary Magdalene Hospital.

The new hospital provides accommodation for 40 people in one-story cottages. There is a central common room, which contains a bronze tablet commemorating the opening. The buildings are laid out in quadrangular formation, and were designed by Mr R. G. Roberts, Newcastle City Architect.

Another of Roberts' works was the Holy Jesus Hospital at Spital Tongues, opened in 1937.

James Cackett

A tight network of apprenticeships and partnerships existed between architects during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The highly successful partnership of Cackett and Burns Dick was formed in 1898-99 (sources differ on the exact date) when Robert Burns Dick joined the already well established architect James Cackett who was eight years his senior. Their partnership lasted for over twenty years. It retained a central location in Newcastle, being based successively at Grainger Street West, Pilgrim House and Ellison Place. Although it won several contracts to construct important public buildings in other towns, it was the firm's work within Newcastle which established its reputation as capable of designing and building structures beyond the norm.

It is unclear at what point the partnership dissolved. Some sources (such as the Biographical Dictionary of British and Irish Architects) say that Cackett retired in 1920 and that Burns Dick continued to run the practice single-handed for several years after this, but evidence from the years immediately after 1920 show clearly that not only did the firm continue to trade as Cackett and Burns Dick but that Cackett himself carried out a significant amount of work on the development of Pendower and possibly other areas of activity. It is plausible to suggest that Cackett's health may have been failing during this period. When Cackett died in 1928, Burns Dick wrote an obituary in the RIBA Journal which stated that Cackett's work during the First World War had exacted a big toll on his health. Contemporary records indicate that, after the initial development phase, elements of his work on the Pendower project were taken over by other colleagues, including Norman Mackellar who had joined the firm in 1920, later becoming a partner.

During the lifetime of Cackett and Burns Dick, the partnership was responsible for a number of distinctive buildings which came later to be attributed solely to Burns Dick.

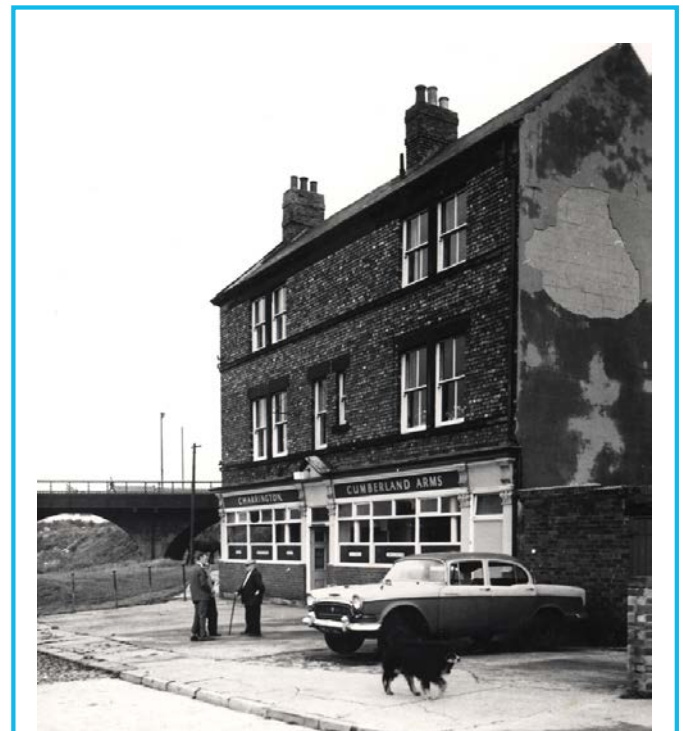
It has become received wisdom to say that James Cackett was the business brain of the partnership while Burns Dick was the creative force. In reality, Cackett had an excellent track record of his own as an architect and planner before Burns Dick joined the firm, and this carried on afterwards. During the 1890s Cackett had already built a successful career as an architect and expert in the valuation of land and buildings. He was associated with improvement works to projects such as the widening of Westgate Road and the extension of Market Street. On his death, an obituary in the Newcastle Journal of March 27th 1928, stated that "there were few important local improvements in which his services were not in request."

Much of his work took the form of alterations and extensions to existing buildings, but he had also gained a reputation for having designed a number of impressive

new buildings which had considerably enhanced the appearance of parts of the city centre. Notable among these was the Goldsmiths' Hall (now known as Northern Goldsmiths) on one of the most prominent sites in the city centre. This success was followed by the design of new premises in 1895 for T.&G. Allan, adjacent to the Goldsmiths' Hall, in what was described as an innovative modern treatment of the Renaissance. The Newcastle Daily Chronicle of December 7th of that year pronounced that:

"Fate has evidently destined Mr Cackett to figure in local history as the reconstructor of Blackett Street."

During this period Cackett was responsible for several other building projects including an extension to Bainbridge's Department Store in Grey Street in 1894, the Presbyterian Church in Elswick Road in 1896, and public houses such as the Millstone Inn on Haddricks Mill Road in South Gosforth and the Cumberland Arms in Ouseburn, both 1898.



In 1898 Cackett was responsible for designing a new facade, extension and internal alterations for the Cumberland Arms in Ouseburn. His plan survives largely unchanged today.



When the Goldsmiths Hall was opened in 1892, Cackett's design was highly praised. The *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* described it as "the most satisfactory piece of street architecture that modern Newcastle can boast of". This accompanying sketch shows the grand six-storey building at the corner of Blackett Street and Pilgrim Street. The clock with the gold statue above it was added in the 1930s as part of alterations carried out by then practice of Burns Dick and Mackellar."

One of the aspects of his work on which Burns Dick's reputation rests is his grand planning proposals to reshape the centre of Newcastle. Cackett too was an innovator with an interest in wider planning issues as well as the design of individual buildings. While serving as President of the Northern Architectural Association in 1905, his Presidential Address, published in the *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects* in 1906, contained the first comprehensive plan for Newcastle City Centre since the 1830s.

The catalyst was a proposed extension of Market Street by the City Council which Cackett considered inadequate in width for modern traffic and likely to result in significant loss of building frontages. His revised proposal was impressive in scope, suggesting a new north-south road in the east of the city centre almost parallel to Pilgrim Street and Northumberland Street, meeting the latter at Barras Bridge, and a suite of new municipal buildings including a much-needed new Town Hall.

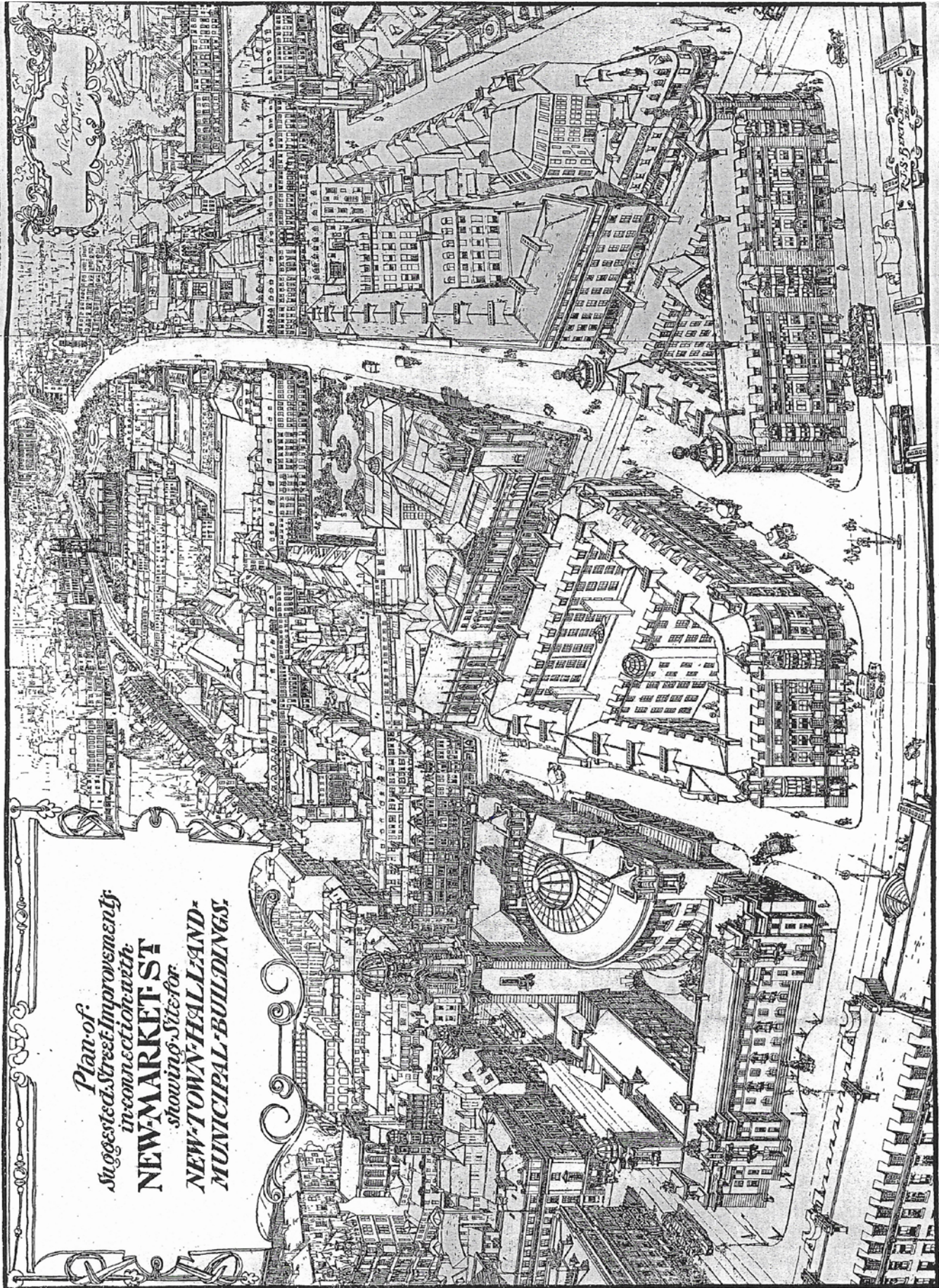
After the formation of their partnership, Cackett worked with Robert Burns Dick on many of the firm's projects. The precise role of each partner in each case is difficult to assess, but it is evident that Cackett was a major contributor to several projects often attributed solely to Burns Dick. Cackett's major role in the work of the partnership was confirmed by Burns Dick himself in the obituary he wrote after Cackett's death where he seems to be suggesting that Cackett was chiefly responsible for two large government projects:

"Apart from the architectural works with which we were associated, the most important undertakings of his career were the planning and carrying out of the great Naval Shipyard at Walker for Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth, completed soon after the outbreak of the war, and the well-known Government Airship Works at Cardington, Bedford."

The continuing importance of Cackett's input into the work of the partnership was confirmed in the obituary of Burns Dick, written in 1955 for the *RIBA Journal* by his then partner Norman Mackellar who lists:

"works executed in conjunction with Mr Cackett included the Laing Art Gallery, Cross House, Northern Conservative Club, Armstrong Naval Yard and Offices, Walker shipyard offices, Short Bros, naval aircraft works ..., Robert Sinclair Tobacco Company's buildings, and the reconstruction of the Gas Company's buildings in Newcastle".

However, in later years, Cackett tended to be overlooked while Burns Dick was often given credit for the bulk of the firm's work. Burns Dick was undeniably the more innovative and eclectic architect, but there is a case for seeing Cackett as yet another significant architect who has been largely forgotten by history.



James Cackett's plan of suggested street improvements and new municipal buildings in Newcastle.

Robert Burns Dick

Born in Stirling, Robert Burns Dick became deeply attached to Newcastle and Tyneside and spent most of his working life within the region. This attachment to place and its impact on the character of his work became more and more evident throughout his career. But this did not take the form of conservative nostalgia – quite the opposite. He sought to put into practice relatively new ideas regarding the built environment and to combine the design of individual buildings with their wider visual and environmental impact. Unlike so many of his contemporaries, he was far more than a designer of individual buildings, and the two descriptive terms – architect and planner – are accurate accompaniments to his name.

Burns Dick's biography is impressive. Before forming his longstanding partnership with James Cackett, he had worked with some of the most important Newcastle architects and then started an independent practice in 1892. Inevitably, such close inter-relationships led to a degree of convergence of styles. But Burns Dick could claim to be rather different. His eclectic output in a wide range of architectural styles showed more imagination than many of his contemporaries. Indeed, his impatience with the standard of design produced by many of his fellow architects in the city is evident in his comment:

“Is Newcastle still trading on the brains of Grainger and Dobson and Clayton? It has done nothing since worth mentioning in the same breath.”



Financial success allowed Burns Dick to embark on a notable project for his own house, 'Millmount' at Cowgate, in 1907. His versatility is demonstrated by the Arts and Crafts style of this building with its Tudor-style chimneys.

During his long and productive career, Robert Burns Dick was responsible solely or in partnership with James Cackett and, later, Mackellar, for designing many significant buildings in Newcastle and elsewhere. As well as the buildings pictured on the opposite page, these included the Mining Institute lecture theatre (1902), a major extension to Northumberland County Hall, which is now the Vermont Hotel (1929-34), and the General Electric Company Building in Gallowgate (1933-36). One of the earliest buildings attributed to him is the Laing Art Gallery which he designed in conjunction with Cackett. Built in 1901-4, it won special praise from

fellow professionals for the ingenious way that it made maximum use of the available space on an awkward site.

It is instructive to look at what Burns Dick was doing in the years after the First World War when the council housing scheme at Pendower Estate was in development. He was by this time much more than a commercial architect. As well as designing a number of public buildings, he was at the forefront of wider efforts to improve the built environment of Newcastle in the tradition of Grainger and Dobson. He saw the physical development of the city in symbolic terms, making a statement about Newcastle as a great city, as well as in improving the quality of life of its residents.

Burns Dick is often cited as a proponent of the garden suburb movement but, if we dismiss the idea that he played a significant role in the design of Pendower, the only substantial example of the implementation of this philosophy in his work appears to be Shortstown, the small housing development accompanying the Short Brothers Naval Aircraft works near Bedford during the First World War. Probably more important is his growing fascination with the 'City Beautiful' movement. This was a product of town planning in the USA, developing in the 1890s and early 1900s in cities like Chicago in response to the burgeoning rate of growth. It was completely different from the garden city philosophy. Whereas the garden city idea was a response to the perceived excessive growth of urban areas, the City Beautiful movement sought to celebrate the city.

The former was essentially anti-urban: the latter was the opposite. Burns Dick became increasingly engaged with buildings as statements, and pursuing plans to create an urban environment which was visually stimulating with features such as distinctive, strategic sites for public buildings and tree-lined boulevards. As part of his efforts to get his ideas for the City Beautiful adopted, Burns Dick assisted in creating a new civic society to act as a pressure group. The Newcastle upon Tyne Society whose stated intention was to promote 'the City Beautiful' still exists today as the Northumberland and Newcastle Society.

From a practical point of view, Burns Dick was very busy with a number of major projects during the key years of the design and development of Pendower. The contract with the Admiralty for the Short Brothers airship works, for which he had been seconded from military service since 1915, continued until 1919. In the same year, the firm of Cackett and Burns Dick was building a large warehouse for the Robert Sinclair Tobacco Company in Westgate Road. In the following year it participated in a design competition arranged by the Egyptian Government for a massive project to design an enormous hospital with over 1200 beds and an associated Medical School near Cairo, submitting their proposal in April 1921.



The Bridge Hotel (1899), which stands in the Castle Garth at the Newcastle end of the High Level Bridge, is one of the earliest examples of Cackett and Burns Dick's work.



Cross House in Westgate Road (1911) was another building designed by the Cackett and Burns Dick partnership before the First World War.



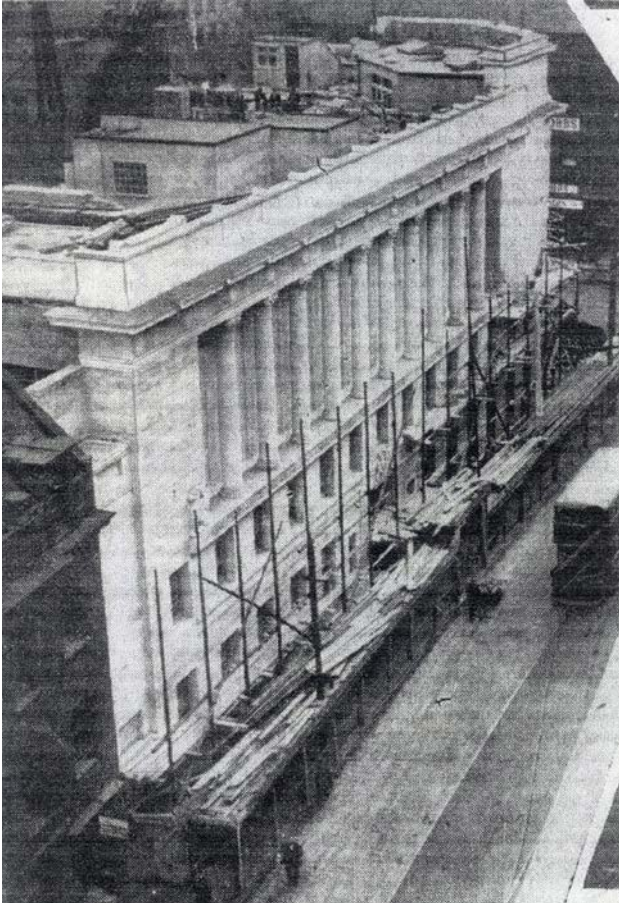
The Spanish City in Whitley Bay (built 1908-10) is one of the many high profile buildings designed by the Cackett and Burns Dick partnership.



The Students Union of what is now Newcastle University (1923-5) is another fine example of the firm's work which still stands today.



Durant Hall (1938), the former Unitarian Church in Ellison Place, was built in what came to be known as the 'stripped classical' style, demonstrating Burns Dick's versatility. It is illustrative of his later output after his partnership with Cackett had ended.



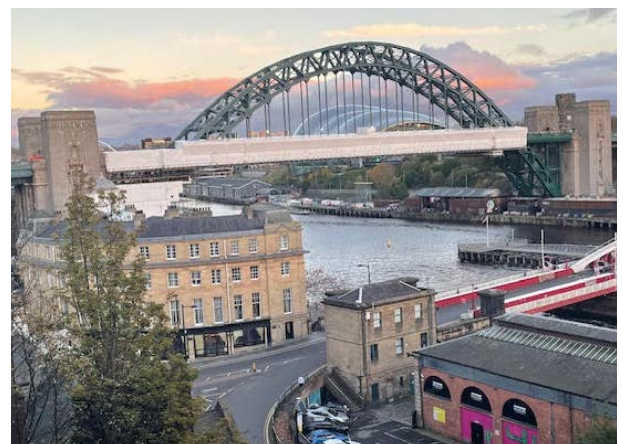
Pictured here under construction in the early 1930s, the Police Station in Pilgrim Street illustrates Burns Dick's growing interest in public buildings. It was part of an impressive suite of buildings also housing the Magistrates Court and Fire Station at the junction of Pilgrim Street and Market Street, designed by Burns Dick in association with his then partner Mackellar. They were built on the site where Cackett had proposed more than twenty years earlier that the new Town Hall be built.

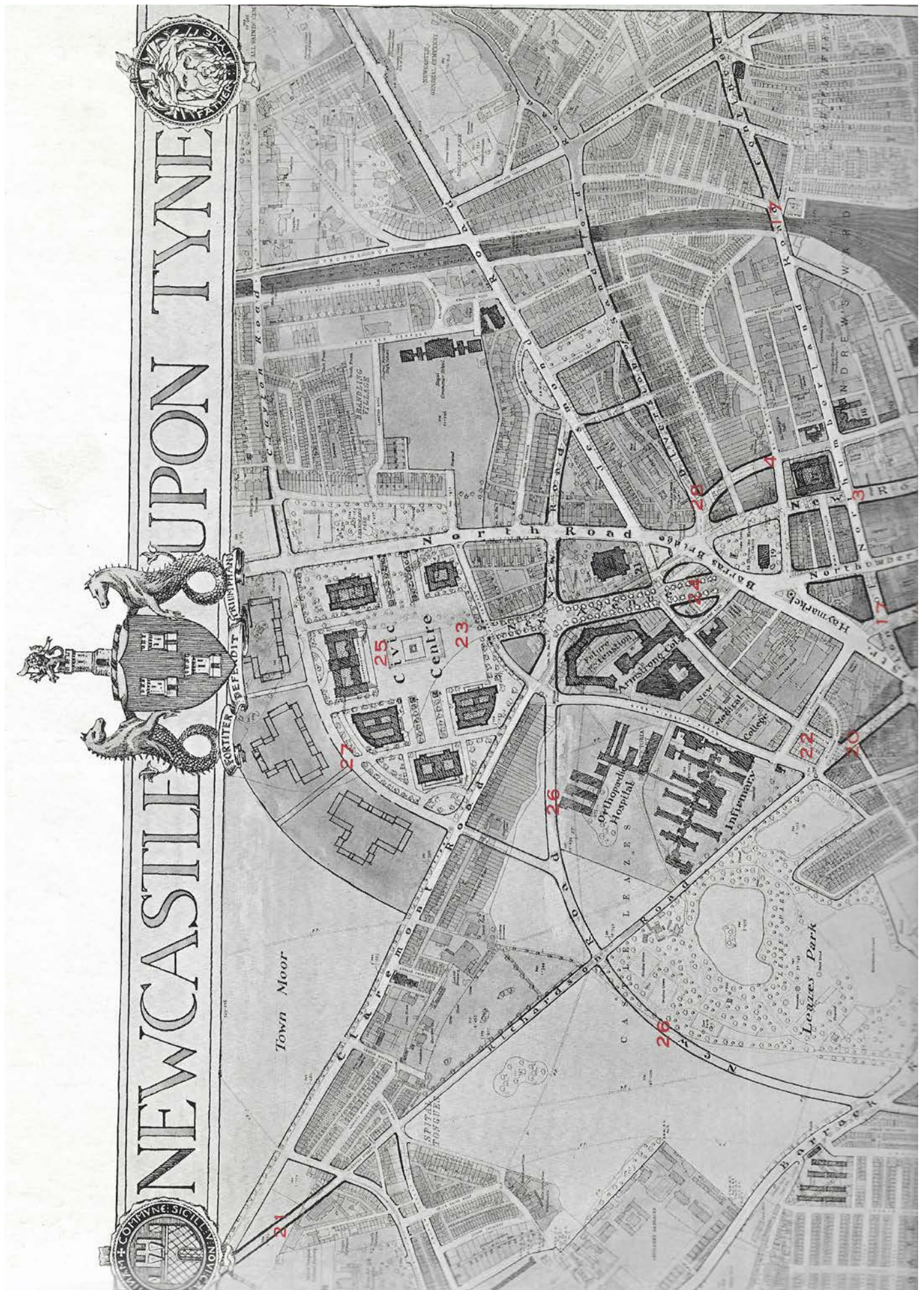
Perhaps more importantly Burns Dick was increasingly preoccupied by his growing focus on urban planning. He visited the USA in 1919 and possibly again a year later, and was much impressed with the ideas of the City Beautiful movement. In the early 1920s he began to draw up a grand plan for central Newcastle which was published in 1924. This was underpinned by two key elements: the opening of a new Tyne crossing and the need for new municipal buildings. It included proposals for a new civic centre, new public buildings and new streets including a broad tree-lined avenue. Although the plan was never implemented in full, elements of it were to be influential later. In the mid-1920s Burns Dick acted as the architect for the new Tyne Bridge, although it fell short of his original idea of a monumental arch which would have made an impressive entrance to the city.

We can never be certain that Burns Dick had no influence on some aspects of the design of Pendower, but on balance it seems unlikely that he would have taken a great interest in the details of a small number of houses on the outskirts of Newcastle at a time when his main interest was in considerably more prestigious plans and building projects. Furthermore, the practical scope for creative design of council housing was strictly limited, partly by financial constraints but also by the norms enshrined within national legislation. In such circumstances, the task of designing groups of council houses does not seem likely to have had much appeal to a creative architect like Burns Dick. In contrast, it is probable that, without Cackett's assiduous attention to detail and willingness to address personally the multitude of problems and complications that arose during the development process, the completion of the Pendower Estate might not have been as successful as it was.



The pillars for the Tyne Bridge (1925-8), designed by Burns Dick, while impressive, are much less spectacular than those envisaged in his original design where they featured as a monumental entrance into the city.





Extract from Robert Burns Dick's plan of Central Newcastle showing the detail of the Barras Bridge area and the proposed Civic Centre.

Charles Errington

The confusion over who actually was responsible for the design of Pendower is exacerbated by the fact that some obituaries of Errington credit him with having designed the estate. He does appear to have been a significant contributor to the scheme, as he was often involved in representing the Joint Architects at meetings and site visits to view the progress of the building works, sometimes in company with Roberts the council architect.

Errington was yet another highly versatile architect. He had trained with the firm of Hicks and Charlewood, successors to John Dobson. A resident of Benwell Lodge, a short distance from Pendower, he was responsible for the design of several buildings in the west end of Newcastle. Among these were the church hall of St Matthew's Church in Summerhill Street, the Sutton Housing Trust estates in Barrack Road and Benwell, and private housing developments in North Benwell. Later he designed the social hall in the heart of Pendower Estate, which incorporated a dance and concert hall. He also designed buildings in other parts of Newcastle such as West Jesmond School and Lloyd's Bank, and amongst his work is the Rutherford Memorial Fountain in the Bigg Market, originally located outside St Nicholas Cathedral.



The Adelaide Picture House in Benwell was designed by Errington. After the cinema closed in 1937, the building changed use several times, becoming a Woolworth's store for several years. It still stands on Adelaide Terrace today.

Errington was a past president of the Northern Architectural Association and, for a period, he served as Surveyor for the Newcastle Anglican Diocese, a role which may have helped to facilitate negotiations with the diocese over the exchange of land between the Bishop's residence and the new housing development of Pendower.



Charles Errington designed both the Suttons Trust estates in the west end, including this one in Adelaide Terrace built in 1935.

Marshall & Tweedy

The third architectural practice comprising the Joint Architects was the firm of Marshall and Tweedy. Their main work on Pendower appears to have been undertaken by Charles Marshall whose role increased over time as the development of the estate progressed, a shift which may have reflected Cackett's failing health.

There was already a track record of joint working between this practice and that of Cackett and Burns Dick. Charles Marshall and Robert Burns Dick had been in partnership together from 1895-97. In 1899, the same year that Burns Dick went into partnership

with James Cackett, Charles Marshall and William Tweedy formed their partnership, based in Newcastle.

The firm of Marshall and Tweedy was clearly a versatile architectural practice. Among the buildings they designed in Newcastle were Akenside House in The Side, a warehouse in Nelson Street and the bus depot in Portland Terrace. They are credited by some sources with contributing to the design of Milburn House in Dean Street along with Oliver, Leeson and Wood. The firm was also responsible for the design of buildings elsewhere in Britain, and opened a second office in London in the late 1920s.



The bus depot in Portland Terrace was designed by Marshall and Tweedy for United Automobile Services. Built in 1930 in painted concrete, it has a frontage of Greek Doric columns. The building is listed but is currently vacant.

Images courtesy of:

Front cover: Pendower Estate (1976) © Derek Smith. *Back cover:* Pendower Estate various images (2025) Judith Green. *Page 1:* Commemorative plaque, Newcastle City Council. *Page 2:* High Cross Farm (undated) and Adelaide Terrace (1920), Newcastle Photo Archive; Thirlwell's Cottages (1937) and Boathouse Cottages (1937), Newcastle Photo Archive/Newcastle City Library. *Page 3:* *Newcastle Illustrated Chronicle*,; Pease Avenue (1925) NCJ Media. *Page 4:* *Newcastle Illustrated Chronicle*, 1 June 1920, p10; *Evening Chronicle* 21 March 1933. *Page 5:* Extracts from 1898 and 1938 OS maps, courtesy of Ordnance Survey and www.old-maps.co.uk. *Page 6:* Benwell Lane (1922) Josephine Briggs; Fox and Hounds Lane (pre1920) Newcastle Photo Archive. *Page 7:* Benwell Towers (undated) Newcastle City Library; Charlotte Pit (1890s) Newcastle Photo Archive. *Page 8:* Pendower Hall (1992) Newcastle Photo Archive; Benwell Lane (1929) Newcastle City Library. *Page 9:* Pendower Way (1920) Newcastle Photo Archive; Pendower Estate (1976) © Derek Smith. *Page 10:* Excerpt from *Newcastle Illustrated Chronicle*, 8 October 1922. *Page 11:* Robert Burns Dick (1910) ©Newcastle University Special Collections GB186 ref RBD 1/1/4. *Page 12:* Old Town Hall (c1911) Newcastle City Library; Fenham Library (undated) Tom Yellowley; Holy Jesus Hospital extract from *Newcastle Journal*, 9 October 1937. *Page 13:* Cumberland Arms (1966) Newcastle City Library. *Page 14:* Goldsmiths Hall, sketch in *Newcastle Daily Chronicle* 1 September 1892. *Page 15:* James Cackett's Plan of Suggested Street Improvements, *Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, Third Series, Vol X111, 1905-6. *Page 16:* Millmount (undated) ©Newcastle University Special Collections GB186 ref RBD/2/1/1. *Page 17:* Bridge Hotel, Spanish City, Cross House, Newcastle University Students Union, Durant Hall (2025) Mike Barke. *Page 18:* Police station under construction, © Mackellar Schwerdt Architects; Tyne Bridge (2025) Mike Barke. *Page 19:* Extract from Robert Burns Dick's plan of Central Newcastle (1924). *Page 20:* Sutton Estate, Benwell (undated) Newcastle Photo Archive; Adelaide Cinema (1930s) Newcastle Photo Archive. *Page 21:* Portland Terrace Bus depot (2013) Andrew Curtis cc-by/sa/2.0.

Creating Homes for Heroes

Pendower Estate and the architects who designed it

This book tells the story behind the building of the Pendower Estate in the west end of Newcastle. This was one of the city's first council estates, built in the aftermath of the First World War as part of the movement to provide homes "fit for heroes to live in". It is an example of the garden suburb model which aimed to create good quality homes set in an attractive environment with plentiful green spaces. The success of this vision can be measured by the continued popularity of Pendower today.

The architect Robert Burns Dick is widely credited with being the innovative designer of the Pendower Estate, and his role here has been officially celebrated as part of the City Council's commemorative plaque scheme. In fact, the reality is much more complicated. In the rush to build thousands of new homes in Newcastle to meet the desperate housing crisis, several architects contributed to the development of the estate, while it is doubtful whether Burns Dick himself played any significant role. This book describes the story behind the involvement of these long forgotten architects within the wider context of the development of mass council housing in the UK.



St James' Heritage & Environment Group

St James' Heritage & Environment Group is an independent voluntary organisation and registered charity dedicated to exploring the history of West Newcastle and preserving stories and images from its past. The group provides activities and resources for people of all ages to explore and celebrate the history of the area. Its local history books, heritage guides and films can be viewed on the website. The Group also maintains the historic graveyard of St James' in Benwell.

Write: St James' Heritage & Environment Group, c/o Sunnybank Centre, 12/14 Sunnybank Avenue, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6SD

Email: stjamesbenwell@gmail.com

Website: <https://stjamesheritage.com>

Visit: The Group meets every Wednesday between 10am and 1pm at St James' Graveyard, Benwell Lane. Visitors are welcome. If you would like a guided tour of the graveyard or have a particular query, it is advisable to contact the Group in advance to make arrangements.