



“a valuable and distinctive feature”

How the People's Roman Remains Park was created.

A resource for use with
Campaign! Make an Impact

Roy Lawson
June 2011

CONTENTS:

	page
Introduction	3
How to use this Resource	4
Outcomes for the Pupils	4
Planning a whole project	4
Evidence Framework	4
Evidence contents	6
Scrutator's Letter	7
Tactic Letter	10
Invitation to Subscribers	13
Subscribers List	14
Alderman Stevenson's Letter of Support	15
John Clayton's Letter of Support	17
Bishop of Durham's Letter of Support	19
The Opposition View	23
Public Visits to the Site	27
Public Lecture Handbill	29
Campaign Success	31
Background Handouts	
The story of the Roman Remains Park	33
Robert Blair	35

INTRODUCTION:

During the 1870's South Shields Town Council wanted to build new houses on land known as The Lawe at the mouth of the River Tyne. A local solicitor called Robert Blair started a campaign to have the site excavated and finds displayed in the local library.

The campaign was successful, the finds were displayed in the new museum in the Public Free Library and the site became the People's Roman Remains Park. Today the site is known as Arbeia Roman Fort and is managed by Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums.

Blair kept Sketch and Scrapbooks throughout his life, the majority are held by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne (see <http://www.newcastle-antiquaries.org.uk/index.php?pageld=277>). The volume that deals with his campaign to excavate and preserve Arbeia is held by the Local Studies Collection at South Shields Central Library (<http://www.southtyneside.info/article/8862/Local-history-zone>)

The Scrapbook contains articles from the South Shields Gazette (a local newspaper), letters and photographs.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE:

The resource contains images from Robert Blair's Scrapbook, with instructions on how to use them as part of the Campaign! Make an Impact model explained elsewhere in this Toolkit and in the Teacher's Handbook.

The sources tell the story of the campaign and answer the questions or 'steps to success' described in the model.

The resource is formatted so it can be printed out and the images used as handouts enabling small group work. If it is printed 'double sided' then the transcripts should appear on the reverse of the source. The images could be projected on a whiteboard for large group study. There are transcripts of the more difficult to read sources and suggestions on how to make these more accessible.

OUTCOMES FOR THE PUPILS:

Curriculum links for Campaign! Make an Impact are detailed elsewhere in the Toolkit. Specifically the pupils will have the opportunity to :

- study a historical campaign, using the Campaign! Make an Impact model (links to History and Citizenship)
- use copies of original sources (the originals can be seen in the Central Library, South Shields, but the Local Studies Collection is not suitable for visits by large groups).
- Explore how people in the past campaigned and use this to inform their campaign.
- Discover that people working together can change things for the better.

PLANNING A WHOLE PROJECT:

The Campaign! Make an Impact model works best as a 3 step model. The resources here can be used as Step 1, studying a Historical campaign. Read through the Teacher's Handbook, the PROJECT PLAN - ARBEIA and the rest of the Toolkit place these resources into the 3 step model.

EVIDENCE FRAMEWORK:

This framework uses the questions the pupils will ask of the sources and shows which sources contain the answers. It is not exhaustive and there is room for discussion. It shows how some of the evidence from the South Shields campaign can be used to explore the issues, discover the methods used, and learn about the people involved.

(adapted from Teacher's Handbook, page 29)

Evidence Framework - Arbeia historical campaign

Steps to success	Key questions	Evidence
What was the campaign about?	What was the problem that was being addressed? Which communities did it involve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutator letter
What was the goal of the campaign?	How has the community been improved as a result of the campaign? What was the vision for a better tomorrow? Who ran the campaign?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutator letter
How did the campaigners become experts on the issue?	What information and statistics were available to support their position? How did they learn about both sides of the issue?	Gained support of other experts on Hadrian's Wall, eg John Clayton, Reverend Bruce, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subscribers Letter
Was there a resource pool? Who were their allies?	Money may not have been the only resource! What skills and talents did they have? Who did they know that could help?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subscribers list • Letters from supporters, eg Bishop of Durham
Who were their opponents and what stood in their way?	Who were their opponents and why? What other issues may have been a problem for them?	Many people in the town wanted new housing as they thought it would help to improve public health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMJ Aug 1893
How did they plan for success?	Was there a leader or a campaign champion? Did they look organised? Was there a plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactic letter • Scrutator letter
What campaign tactics and media did they use to get their message across?	Which different media were used to communicate the campaign message? These might have included newspapers, posters, meetings, badges, events, cartoons, and letters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactic letter • public meeting flyer • public visits to site – images • wrote letters to the newspapers

The following pages show the sources. They are formatted to enable double sided printing with the source and the transcripts appearing together.

Evidence contents

Scrutator's Letter	6
Tactic Letter	10
Invitation to Subscribers	13
Subscribers List	14
Alderman Stevenson's Letter of Support	15
John Clayton's Letter of Support	17
Bishop of Durham's Letter of Support	19
The Opposition View	23
Public Visits to the Site	27
Public Lecture Handbill	29
Campaign success	31

Background Handouts

The story of the Roman Remains Park	33
Robert Blair	35

Scrutator's Letter to the 'Gazette

is Adderley's

AW.

ures recently
s by Dr. Ben-
ply important
amyl:—"One
te of amyl—
obtained a re-
extraordinary
shed chemist,
ver nitrite of
at the vapour
on, and made
ere was flush-
is heart, and
reful and pro-
ngular body,
ffect by cons-
blood-vessels,
s of the body.
hus relax, I
etanic spasm
thus discov-
e its use for
expectations.
e of the most
, called agina
such control
ly prevented,
her removed.
ubdued by
me kind so
what may be

hot will pro-

idow of Mr
of age.

ntly manu-
solid silver,

its origin in
-the "hus-

t transit of
nposed to a

in beggary"
nishes dogs
ren of un-
ries of the

Correspondence.

ROMAN REMAINS IN SOUTH SHIELDS.

To the Editor of the Shields Gazette & Daily Telegraph.

SIR,—It is doubtless known to many, but there are probably also a great number of the inhabitants of South Shields who are not aware, that South Shields was as important a place in very ancient times as it promises to be in the future. Among the fortified towns of the Romans, from fifteen hundred to seventeen hundred years ago, the Lawe held a prominent position, and there is every reason to conclude that the fields, now being laid out for building purposes between Ocean Road and the river, contain beneath their soil most interesting evidences of the fact. In years gone by such things as altars, gold coins, and sculptured stones, have been discovered, and, only a few days ago, a dish of Samian ware, of large size and nearly perfect, was found in excavating for the cellar of a house just commenced erecting. This is in the possession of Mr Brown, grocer, Green's Place, and may be seen by the curious in the window of his shop. The fact that this interesting relic was found at a depth of seven feet below the surface gives reason to expect that, at a like depth, higher up the rising ground, the foundations of walls and gates and buildings might be uncovered. My object in drawing attention to these facts is to suggest that now, before the whole ground is covered with streets and houses, an effort should be made to unveil the buried city, and to reveal, before the opportunity has passed for ever, the exact position, the extent, the character, and the surroundings, of the great fort, which in those long past times guarded the entrance to our important river. If a committee could be formed, and leave obtained from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who, I believe, own the site of the old Roman town, the explorers would doubtless be rewarded by the discovery of many articles, illustrative of the military and domestic habits of our warlike predecessors, and these, if presented to the town, and lodged in the Free Library, would form a valuable and distinctive feature of that important municipal institution.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

SCRUTATOR.

South Shields, 20th Feb., 1875.

on good
BLACKLOC
Newcastle

INDU

MON
be
repayable
can be tak

ALLIANC

OFFIC

THE
MED
to 9 p.m.,
the payment

SOUTH

£2,0

South Shield
ness; by the
be consulted

KL

5th H

MEETI
Hall, Chapt
-1875 WA
half-yearly.

New Share
This Socie
Building &
security is gu

PROVIDENT
16 KL

JT

W

A

£1,50

Deposit, at 5
Apply at 16
or to Mr G. H

CASH A

Tradesm
line and effect
out publicity;
jewellery, and
rate. Trade B
Street, Newcas

ROMAN REMAINS IN SOUTH SHIELDS

To the editor of the Shields Gazette and Daily Telegraph

SIR, - It is doubtless know to many, but there are probably also a great number of the inhabitants of South Shields who are not aware, that South Shields was as an important a place in very ancient times as it promises to be in the future. Among the fortified towns of the Romans from Fifteen to Seventeen Hundred years ago, the Lawe held a prominent position, and there is every reason to conclude that the fields, now being laid out for building purposes between Ocean Road and the river, contain beneath their solid most interesting evidences of the fact. In years gone by such things as altars, gold coins, and sculptures stones, have been discovered, and, only a few days ago, a dish of Samian ware, of a large size and nearly perfect, was found in excavating for the cellar of a house just commenced erecting. The is in the possession of Mr Brown, Grocer, Green's Place , and may be seen by the curious in the window of his shop. The fact that this interesting relic was found at a depth of seven feet below the surface gives gives reason to expect that, at a like depth, higher up the rising ground, the foundations of walls and gates and buildings might be uncovered. My object in drawing attention to these facts is to suggest that now, before the whole ground is covered with streets and houses. An effort should be made to unveil the buried city, and to reveal before the opportunity has passed for ever, the exact position, the exact, the character, and the surroundings, of the great fort, which, in those long past times guarded the entrance to our important river. If a committee could be formed and leave obtained form the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who , I believe, own the site of the old Roman town, the explorers would doubtless be rewarded by the discovery of many articles, illustrative of the military and domestic habits of our warlike predecessors, and these if presented to to the town, and lodged in the Free Library, would form a valuable and distinctive feature of that important municipal institution,

I am Sir,

Yours Faithfully

SCRUTATOR

(the pen name of the REVEREND HOOPELL)

South Shields, 20th Feb., 1875

Using the 'Tactic Letter' by Robert Blair:

- This is the first page of a letter by Robert Blair, discussing the best way to raise awareness amongst the people of South Shields
- It demonstrates the Campaigners are thinking about tactics to get their message across in the most effective way.
- They have developed a plan with 2 letters in the local paper and a visit to the Mayor and intend to use interest in the recent finds to build interest and support.

Tactic Letter by Robert Blair

South Shields
27 Feb^r 1875
Dear Sir
I don't think we
will go to the ~~meeting~~ today.
I think it will be better to
let R.C. Ellison's letter
in the Gazette today, appear
first. It will lead to
fresh interest in the
Subject, & to conversation
between this & Monday,
which will doubtless
materially advance our
cause in all quarters.
I think a letter from
you in Monday's Gazette,
briefly enumerating the
reliefs that have been
found in past years, &
lately, would be very
effective. There is the
hypocrite, the gold
coin, the altar, the raised

South Shields

27th Feb^{ry} 1875

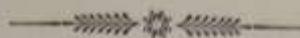
Dear Sir,

I don't think we will go to the mayor today. I think it will be better to let R. C. Ellison's letter in the Gazette today appear first. It will lead to fresh interest in the subject, & to conversation between this and Monday which will doubtless materially advance our cause in all quarters.

I think a letter from you in Mondays' Gazette briefly summarising the relics that have been found in the past years & lately, would be very effective. There is the hypocaut, the gold coin, the altars...

Invitation to Subscribe to the Campaign

Exploration of the Roman Remains
at the Læwe, South Shields.



84, King Street,
South Shields,

16 March, 1875.

Dear Sir,

Herewith I have the pleasure
to enclose a List of Subscribers to
the Exploration Fund, and should
be glad if you would kindly allow
me to place your name on the same.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

ROBERT BLAIR,

Hony. Secy.

List of Subscribers to the campaign

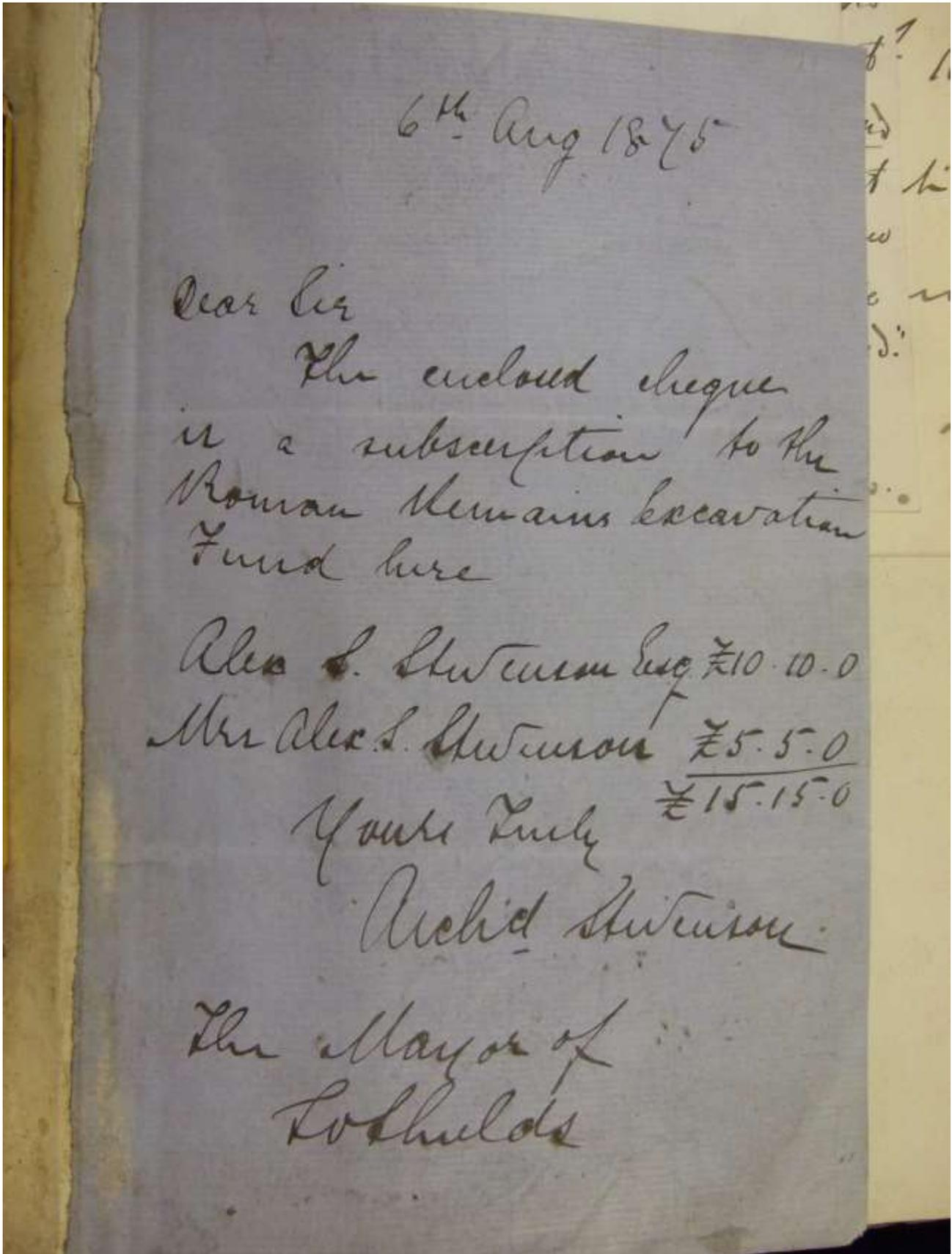
C O M M I T T E E
 FOR THE
S Y S T E M A T I C E X P L O R A T I O N O F T H E
R O M A N R E M A I N S
 EXISTING AT THE LAWS, SOUTH SHIELDS.

Chairman—The MAYOR OF SOUTH SHIELDS
 (J. Broughton, Esq.)
 Vice-Chairman—Mr. J. LYALL.
 Treasurer—Mr. L. MACKAY.
 Bankers—Messrs DALE, YOUNG, & CO.
 Secretary—Mr. ROBT. BLAIR, Solicitor, 84 King
 Street, South Shields.

S U B S C R I P T I O N L I S T.

	£	s	d
Mr Ald. Williamson	25	0	0
Mr Ald. Stevenson, M.P.	10	10	0
Mr Robt. Ingham, Q.C.	6	11	0
Mr R. Carr Ellison The services of a man to superintend the excavation			
The Mayor	3	3	0
The Rev. Dr Bruce	2	2	0
Mr J. Phillison	2	2	0
Mr J. M. Moore	2	2	0
Mr J. B. Dale	1	1	0
The Rev. H. Morton	1	1	0
Mr L. Mackey	1	1	0
Mr E. B. Percerley	1	1	0
Mr T. J. Bell	1	1	0
Mr T. Lincoln	1	1	0
Mr W. Lawson	1	1	0
Mr T. Pyke	1	1	0
Mr J. H. Morton	1	1	0
Mr M ^r . Hall	1	1	0
Mr Wm. Wright (Westoe)	1	1	0
Mr E. B. Dawson	1	1	0
Dr Lunge	1	1	0
Dr Young	1	1	0
Mr T. T. Dale	0	10	6
Mr J. Pollard	0	10	6
Mr W. N. Lightford	0	10	6
Mr P. Drake	0	10	6
Dr Denham	0	10	6
Mr Geo. Scott	0	10	6
Mr E. Suddards	0	10	6
Mr Thomas Binks	0	10	6
<i>Mr Earl of Durham</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Mr John Claxson</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>W. J. Smith</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>W. H. Green</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>W. Lambton</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>W. Legat</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>

Alderman Stevenson's Letter of support



6th Aug 1875

Dear Sir

The enclosed cheque is a subscription to the Roman
Remains Excavation Fund here

???. S Stevenson Esq	£10-10-0
Mrs ??? S Stevenson	<u>£5-5-0</u>
	£15- 15-0

Yours Truly
???? Stevenson

The Mayor of
So Shields

John Clayton's Letter of Support

Chester,
Hunshugh-on-Tyne.

March 14. 1875

My dear Sir,

Please to add my
name to your list as a
Subscriber of £5 -

You must have much
Engineering Talent amongst
you at South Shields, which
by means of mechanical
appliances may diminish
the extent of manual labour
in the Excavations -

I am
Yours truly
John Clayton

Recd. Please En

Chesters
Humshaugh-on-Tyne

March 1875

My Dear Sir,

Please to add my
name to your list as a
subscriber of £5

You must have much
ingenious talent amongst you
at South Shields, which
by means of mechanical
apparatus may diminish
the extent of manual labour
in the excavations

...I remain
...sincerely yours
John Clayton

Rob Blair Esq.

Bishop Durham's Letter of Support

ATHELSTAN CASTLE
BISHOP AITCHISON

The Bishop of Durham presents
his Compliments to Mr Blair
& has pleasure in enclosing
a donation of five pounds
towards the Expulsion of the
Roman Mission as South Shields,
March 22. 1175

The Bishop of Durham presents
his compliments to Mr Blair
& has the pleasure in enclosing
a donation of five pounds
towards his subscription of the
Roman Remains at South
Shields

March 22 1875

Using the Letters and Subscriber's List:

- There are images of an invitation to join the list of subscribers, a copy of the list and some letters from supporters giving money to the campaign. Not all of the handwriting is readable.
- The subscription list demonstrates the campaigners are building support by inviting local and important people to contribute money to the campaign.
 - The Bishop of Durham, important as the Roman Remains are on Church Commissioners land.
 - The Mayor of South Shields
 - Ralph Carr-Ellison, influential local mine owner and coal merchant
- The letters show they have gained allies,
- They have experts on their side,
 - the Rev Dr Bruce (John Collingwood Bruce) was an acknowledged expert on the Roman Remains in the region. He was the first person to prove Hadrian was responsible for the building of the Wall)
 - John Clayton, who owned large sections of Hadrian's Wall near Hexham and had excavated the fort at Chesters. Clayton was Town Clerk for Newcastle Council.
- Each person on the list has pledged the money, listed in pounds, shillings and pence in the column
- Handwritten additions show the list is growing.

Alderman Stevenson's letter is quite difficult to read, it's possible that it is not the Alderman, whose initials were John Cochran, but his brother Archibald

Blank Page

The Opposition View

1.

requently witnessed an illumination of the pleasure gardens.

South Shields.—A party of about 150 visited South Shields at the invitation of the Mayor, by whom they were entertained at luncheon. The toast of "The British Medical Association" was proposed by the Mayor, who said that South Shields was the most rapidly-increasing town in the district; in fact, its rate of increase during the last decade (40 per cent.) was the second largest of any town in the kingdom. In that time fine municipal offices had been erected, and the Marine Parks had been laid out near the seashore. He acknowledged the assistance which municipal authorities had received from the medical profession, and said that in South Shields great attention had been given to the carrying out of sanitary improvements. By acting on the advice of a succession of able medical officers of health the death-rate had been reduced, and the sewage had been so disposed of that the excellent sea-bathing was not in any way contaminated. The toast was acknowledged by Sir W. Moore.

A vote of thanks to the Mayor, proposed by Dr. Berry Hart, seconded by Dr. Arnison, was carried by acclamation. The party then visited the pier, and witnessed an exhibition by the South Shields Volunteer Life Brigade of their mode of saving life. The North and South Shields lifeboats also were launched and manned. Subsequently the party divided, some visiting the Roman Camp and others proceeding by special train to Marsden.

Elswick.—A large party visited the great Elswick Works of Messrs. Armstrong, Mitchell, and Co. The visitors were received by the directors, and taken over the works in parties

taken from

The British Medical Journal – August 1893, page 436
'Excursions at the Annual General Meeting'

South Shields.-A party of about 150 visited South Shields at the invitation of the Mayor, by whom they were entertained at luncheon. The toast of "The British Medical Association " was proposed by the Mayor, who said that **South Shields was the most rapidly-increasing town in the district; in fact, its rate of increase during the last decade (40 per cent.) was the second largest of any town in the kingdom.** In that time fine municipal offices had been erected, and the Marine Parks had been laid out near the seashore. He acknowledged the assistance which municipal authorities had received from the medical profession, and said that in South Shields great attention had been given to the carrying out of sanitary improvements. **By acting on the advice of a succession of able medical officers of health the death-rate had been reduced, and the sewage had been so disposed of that the excellent sea-bathing was not in any way contaminated.** The toast was acknowledged by Sir W. Moore. A vote of thanks to the Mayor, proposed by Dr. Berry Hart, seconded by Dr. Arnison, was carried by acclamation. The party then visited the pier, and witnessed an exhibition by the South Shields Volunteer Life Brigade of their mode of saving life. The North and South Shields lifeboats also were launched and manned. Subsequently the party divided, some visiting the Roman Camp and others proceeding by special train to Marsden.

Using the Opposition viewpoint:

- Many people felt that the new housing was essential. There was widespread disease and poor sanitation. Much of the housing was of poor quality and needed to be replaced.
- The quote from the BMJ is after the main thrust of the campaign, but demonstrates why much of the site was built over after the excavation. The People's Roman Remains Park was only a small part of the Fort and became surrounded by terraced housing with running water and individual outside toilets for each property. A new school and a clay pipe factory were built on part of the Fort

Blank Page

The Public visits the site of the Roman Fort





- The Excavations were opened to the Public on a regular basis. Many Hundreds of local people came to see the Roman 'Station'.
- On one Saturday afternoon a Police man had to be called to control the crowds.
- Smaller finds, like pottery, were displayed in local shop windows.

Handbill advertising a Public Lecture on the excavations

ROMAN REMAINS
IN SOUTH SHIELDS.

LECTURE
ON ROMAN BUILDINGS, ANTIQUITIES, &c.,
WILL BE DELIV. RED BY

H. ECROYD SMITH, ESQ.,
IN THE
LARGE HALL OF THE FREE LIBRARY,
ON TUESDAY, MAY 4TH, 1875.

CHAIR TO BE TAKEN AT 7.30 P.M. BY MR.

ALDERMAN DALE, J.P.

After the Lecture a Public Meeting will be held.

Admission Free, by Ticket Only,

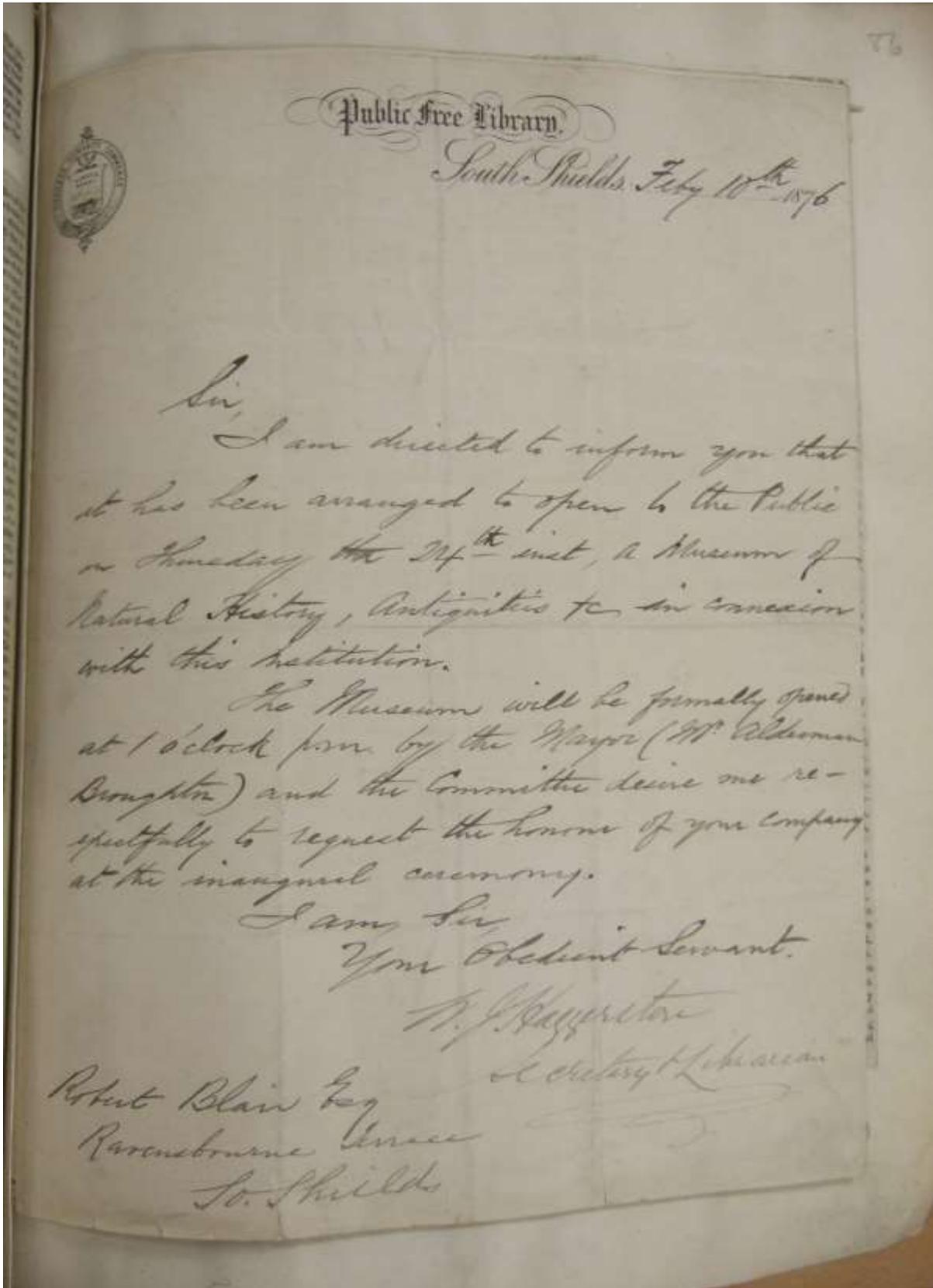
which may be obtained at the Free Library, of Mr. Dunn, Confectioner, Fowler Street; the Rev. Dr. Hooppell, Marine School, Mackey, Draper, Market Place; Mr. John Hutchinson, Pilot, Grubb Street; Mr. Robert Blair, Solicitor, 84, King Street; V. D. Learmount, 75, King Street; or any member of the Exploration Committee.

After the Lecture a Collection in aid of the Funds for the Excavations at the Lavender Green will be made.

- There were frequent Public meetings and Lectures to inform the local people on the progress of the campaign and the Excavations
- The campaigners continued to raise awareness after the excavation until the Town Council agreed to tidy up the site and display some of the large finds in the People's Roman Remains Park.

Campaign Success

- an Invitation to the Opening of a Museum, displaying the finds.



Public Free Library

South Shields Feb 10th 1876

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that it has been arranged to open to the Public on Thursday 24th inst., a museum of Natural History, Antiquities etc., in connection with this institution.

The Museum will be formally opened at 1 'o' clock by the Mayor (Mr Alderman Broughton) and the Committee desire me respectfully to request the honour of your company at the inaugural ceremony.

I am Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
N J Haggerston
Librarian

Robert Blair Esq
Ravensburne House
So. Shields

Background Handouts 1

The story of the People's Roman Remains Park

In South Shields is an area known as the Lawe. It overlooks the entrance to the River Tyne. Over the years the River Pilots had collected Roman artefacts for the field behind the Watch House. There had even been some excavations in the 1850's

In 1875 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners (who look after land owned by the Church of England) and South Shields Town Council began to allow the building of houses on the land.

As the building began the River Pilots dug up a Roman Column and other Roman objects

Dr Hoopell, a local antiquarian (someone who studies the distant past) and Robert Blair thought that the remains should be investigated properly before building destroyed them.

Letters were written to the local newspapers. As a result an 'Excavation Committee' was set up to raise money to investigate the site and preserve the artefacts and remains. Money was raised by 'subscription' where people paid to join the committee.

The excavations used labour provided by the building contractors and were often reported in the local newspaper, the 'North and South Shields Gazette'. Many local people visited the site.

The finds were first displayed in the Free Library of South Shields. Then in 1876 the finds were housed in the new 'Museum of Natural History and Antiquities'. At the Public Library.

Some of the site was not filled in or built on, but left open. It quickly became a target for treasure hunters and vandals.

The campaign to preserve the site continued and in 1880 the Town Council was finally persuaded to tidy up the site and make it into the 'People's Roman Remains Park'. The Council promised to look after the site.

Over the years the site has been explored many times. In 2005 the Time Team excavated the area outside the Fort. Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums now look after the site for South Tyneside Council and it is known as Arbeia Roman Fort.

1875



2005



Background Handouts 2

Robert Blair

He was born in South Shields in 1845 and was the son of a River Pilot. The Pilots' House was on the Lawe and overlooked the entrance to the River Tyne so the pilots could go out to the ships and guide them in.

Over the years the River Pilots' had collected Roman artefacts from the fields near the Pilots' House. Robert must have spent time with them on the Lawe.

He trained as a Solicitor at the Mechanics Institute in South Shields and worked in the town.

At the age of 29 he joined the Society of Antiquarians of Newcastle upon Tyne, where he became Secretary and then Editor of the Societies books and other publications.

He became involved in the campaign to excavate and preserve the Roman remains at South Shields and kept a scrapbook with sketches and letters. This scrapbook is now kept in the Local Studies Centre at South Shields Central Library. Many of the letters and articles copied here came from this scrapbook

He was a man of great enthusiasm and had a gift for publicity. With other antiquarians (people who study the past) he wrote letters to the local newspaper and campaigned for excavations on the site.

In 1923 the Society of Antiquarians of Newcastle upon Tyne had a medal made to recognise how much he had done.



