

Wartime Great Ayton

- The following sections record what evidence remains of wartime events in Great Ayton
- Home Guard Anti-invasion Measures
- Auxiliary Units
- Tree Bridge AA Guns & Searchlight site
- The bombing raid on Great Ayton
- Great Ayton Camp
- The bomber decoy site.

Home Guard and Anti-invasion Measures



GREAT AYTON HOME GUARD 1945

Joe Harbottle	Rob McDonald	Jim Bennison	Jim Wittup	Herbert Atkinson	Percy Clark	Joe Elsdon	John Hird	William Metcalfe	Robert Hodgson	Jock Carr	Archie McDonald	George Sissons	Tom Johnson	Bill Johnson	
Tommy Donnelly	Harry Honeyman	Simon Dunn	Dennis Dawson	Bill Grimston	Squib Bailey	Ivan Johnson	Horace Grainger	Albert Simpson	Ron Grimston	Ernie Flintoft	Rob Dunning	Ernie Atkinson	Tom Marsay	Reg Peacock	Ted Atkinson
Donald Hoggart	Charlie Grout	Laurie Smith	Herbert Johnson	Charlie Wood	Bill Megginson	Len Hatfield	Robert Shaw	Frank Suggitt	Dorothy Bradley	Reg Cobbold	William Grimston	Alan Suggitt	Jack Bradley	George McKay	
	Wilf Ellis	Alfred Geary	Raymond Readman	Sgt Major Pratt	QMS Smith	Sec Lieut Chaplin	Capt Roy Bradley	Major Cundy	Lieut Alf Johnson	Lieut Ted Jones	Sec Lieut Whinpenny	Stan Lane	Ernest Hodgson	Jack Greenwell	

Not on Photograph: Vincent Fawcett, Austin Marsay, J Robinson, Howard Simpson, Victor Taylor, George Armstrong

D Taylor 1998

Home Guard and Anti-invasion measures

Removal of the word 'AYTON' from the carved name on the stone bridge.



Home Guard and Anti-invasion measures

A rifle position in the sandstone wall at the entrance to Firbeck House in Easby Lane. The slot in the wall was made by Mr. Robert Pickersgill, shown in the photograph, whilst he was a member of the Local Defence Volunteers.



Home Guard and Anti-invasion Measures

The rifle position from the rear. In 1940 the soil level was about 6 ft lower and would allow the defender to be in a standing position.



Home Guard and Anti-invasion measures

This building at Ayton Banks Farm is a Home Guard ammunition store.

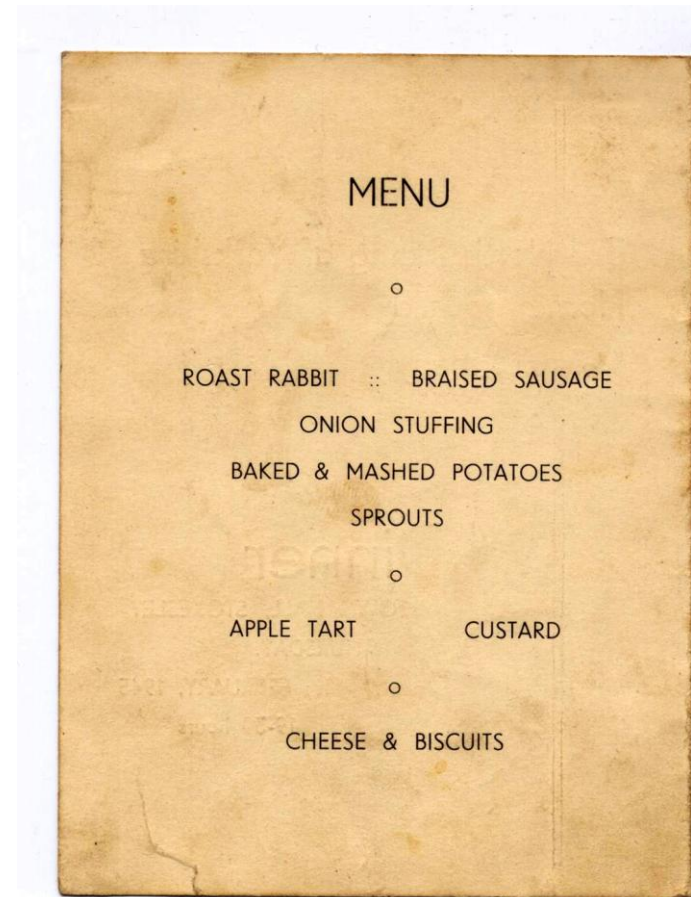
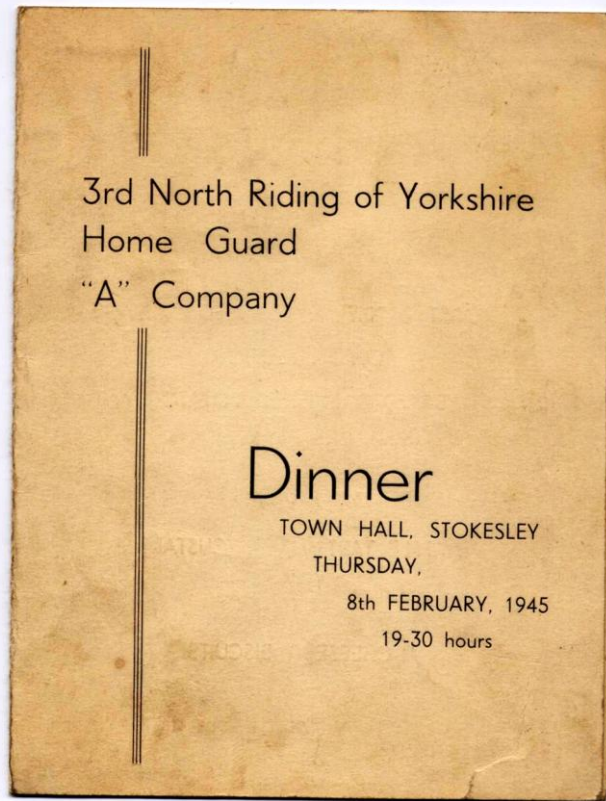


Home Guard and Anti-invasion Measures

Ammunition Store entrance



Home Guard Dinner Menu



Auxiliary Units

'Auxiliary Unit' was the codename given to a force of civilian volunteers. They were to carry out sabotage, guerrilla warfare and spying from behind enemy lines in the event of a successful German invasion of the British Isles during World War II.

Formed in 1940 there were 640+ Patrols with a total force of 4,200 men.

Auxiliary Unit Badge



Auxiliary Units

The badge contains the numbers :-

201

202

203

These numbers are the three organisational groups for the Auxiliary Units for the whole of the UK.

The units around Great Ayton were in the 202 numbered area.

Auxiliary Unit Operational Base

This is a “standard” Operational Base. The entrance would have been disguised, for example, as a tree stump.



Auxiliary Units

In 1960 whilst carrying out a survey of the old Ironstone mine an Auxiliary Unit Operational Base was found within the mine.

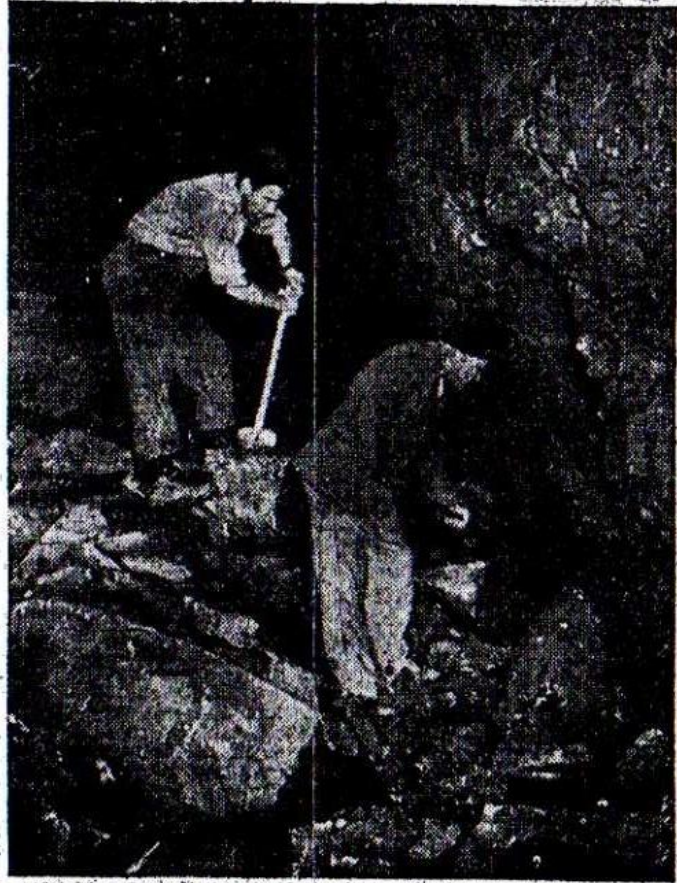
The base consisted of an underground chamber containing bunk beds and a table.

Access to the chamber was via a hidden trapdoor and tunnel off the main mine shaft.

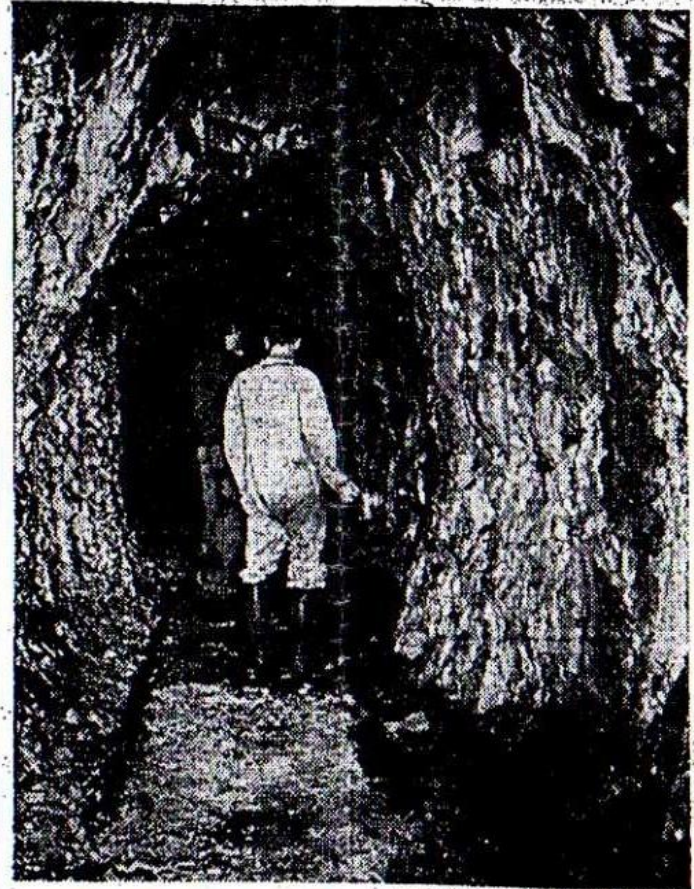
The trapdoor was well camouflaged and would not have been visible to anyone walking along the main shaft.

Evening Gazette 1960

Checking old mine workings



HEAVY HAMMER in hand, Mr. Gary Nimmo (left), manager of the Cliff Rigg Quarry, and one of his men look at the whinstone deposits in the old mine which they are reopening. (EG).



IN THE HEART of the hill at Great Ayton the old mine tunnels such as this one run into a series of caverns, some of which are as much as 50 feet high. (EG).

Great Ayton Auxiliary Unit Operational Base



Great Ayton Auxiliary Unit

Lieutenant J F Pain, Ryehill

Pvt F G Forster, Westbrook (Hay & Straw
Merchant)

Pvt G W Brown, 12 Deuchar Terrace (Miner)

Pvt R Whitworth, Westbrook (Electrical Eng)

Pvt R S Williamson, High Green (Chemist)

Pvt C Raw, Craginair (Moody's Agric Supplies)

Auxiliary Units

The now-sealed
entrance to the
mineshaft
containing the
Auxiliary Unit
Operational
Base in Cliff
Ridge Wood.



Auxiliary Units

In 2005 the site of an Auxiliary Unit Observation Post was found close to Airyholme Farm. This could have been connected by telephone to the Operational Base in the mine



Auxiliary Units

**Site of an Auxiliary Unit Observation Post
close to Airyholme Farm.**



Auxiliary Unit – Observation Post ?

The Observation post was excavated but no evidence of its construction was found. It was thought that it was demolished at the end of the war.

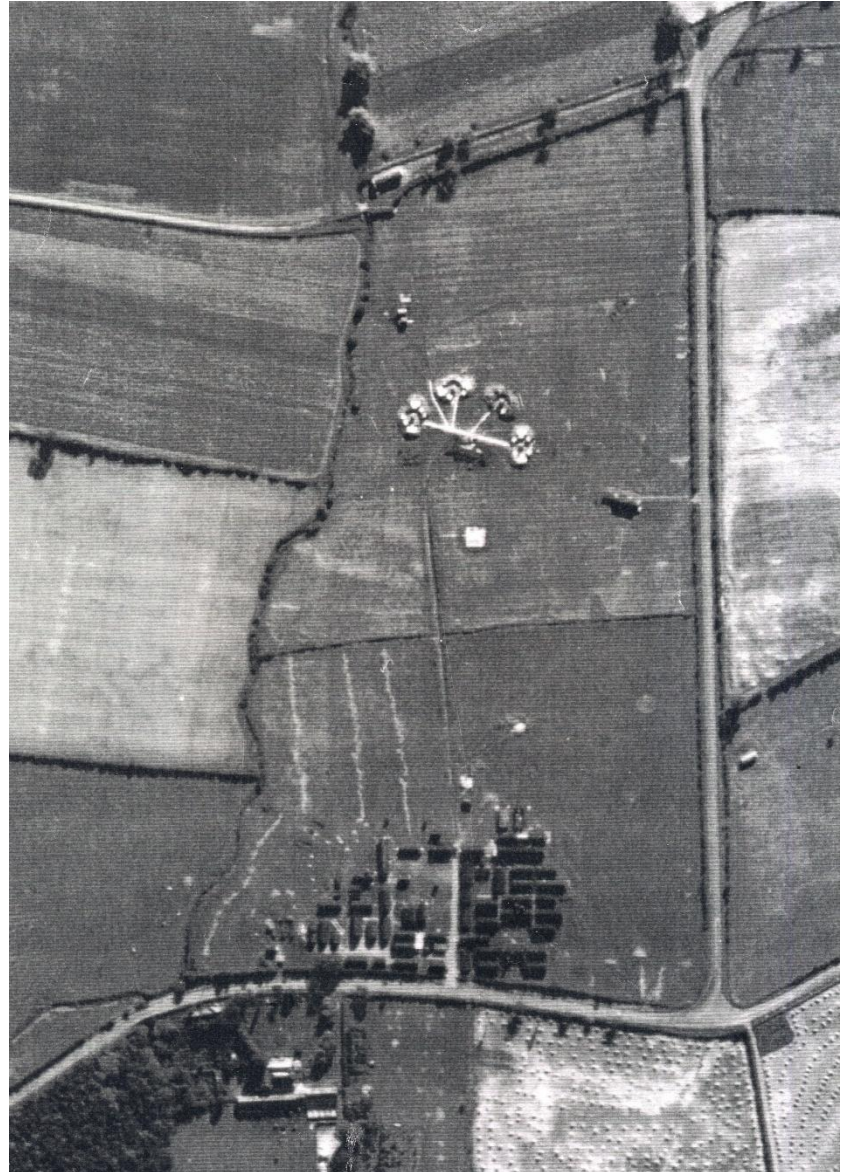


Auxiliary Uniform

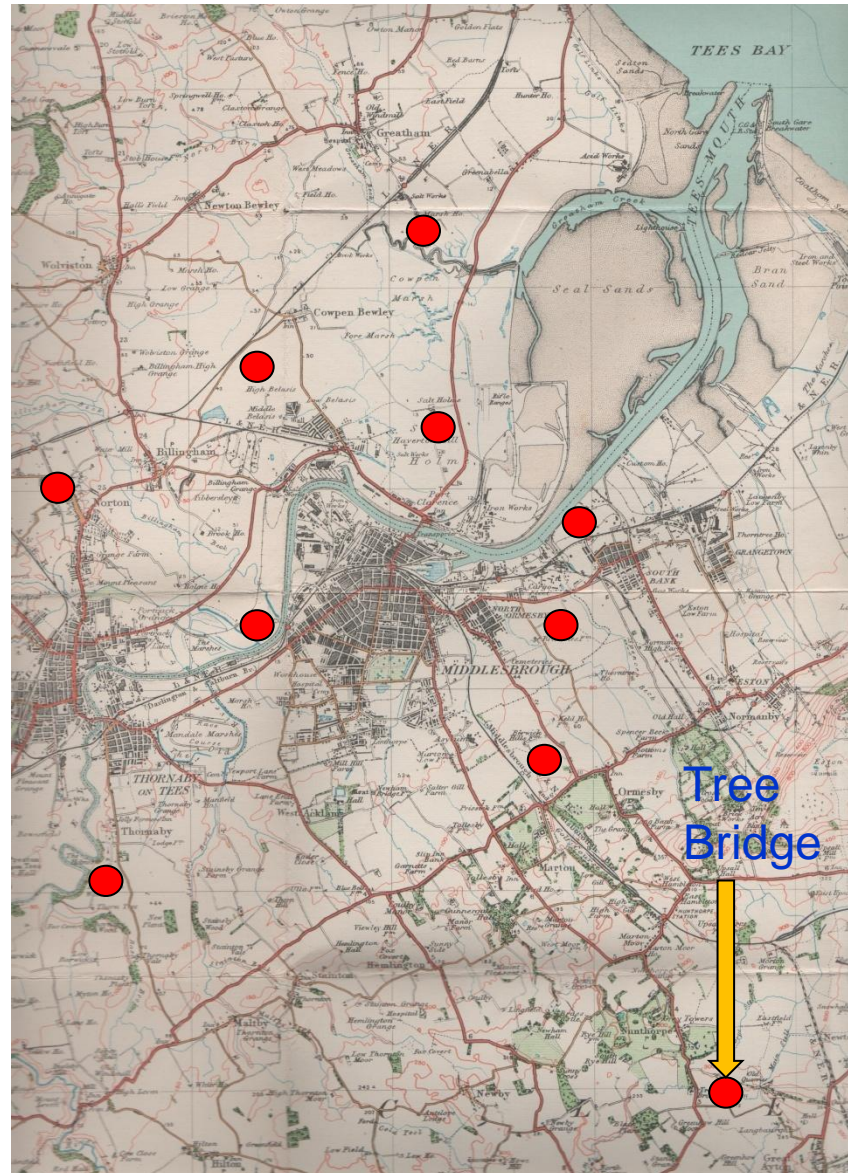


Tree Bridge Anti- Aircraft gun site

This was the site of four 4½ inch Heavy Anti-Aircraft (AA) Guns which formed part of a ring of AA sites around Teesside.



TEESSIDE AA SITES



4½ inch Anti-Aircraft guns





Shell case from Treebridge

Tree Bridge anti-aircraft gun site 2002

The only visible evidence remaining at the site is a block column with metal pin.

It is thought to be either an alignment post associated with the guns or a mounting post for a Lewis machine gun.



Same Site in 2005



Searchlight Position

In the Council minutes of October 1941:-

Petition from residents residing in the immediate vicinity of the searchlight unit being erected in the field adjacent to Newton Road asking for site to be moved.

Site position to be reconsidered.



Searchlight Site

Searchlight Position



Remains of Searchlight Cook-house range at the side of Newton Road



The Bombing of Great Ayton

Recollection from Mrs Joan Taylor

“I saw that thing come down, what was it, a bomb or something. I think Vic was on nights. I was looking out of the house, across that area, in the middle of the night. There must have been an air raid warning. I was looking out of the bedroom window and saw it come down. It seemed as if it was on strings.” The raid took place on May 8th 1941.

What Joan had seen was a German parachute mine



Damage caused by German parachute mine in Hull, 1941



It was thought that the stone bridge was the target for the landmine but it is more likely that the mine was being jettisoned after a raid on Middlesbrough. Landmines because they were on parachutes were susceptible to the direction of the wind. In this case the wind seems to have carried the mine away from the village





Landmine Crater 1946



Great Ayton Camp

A camp was built in Great Ayton during the early part of the war.

It is thought (although no documentary evidence has been found) that the camp was built to house evacuees from the expected bombing raids on Middlesbrough.

Great Ayton Camp

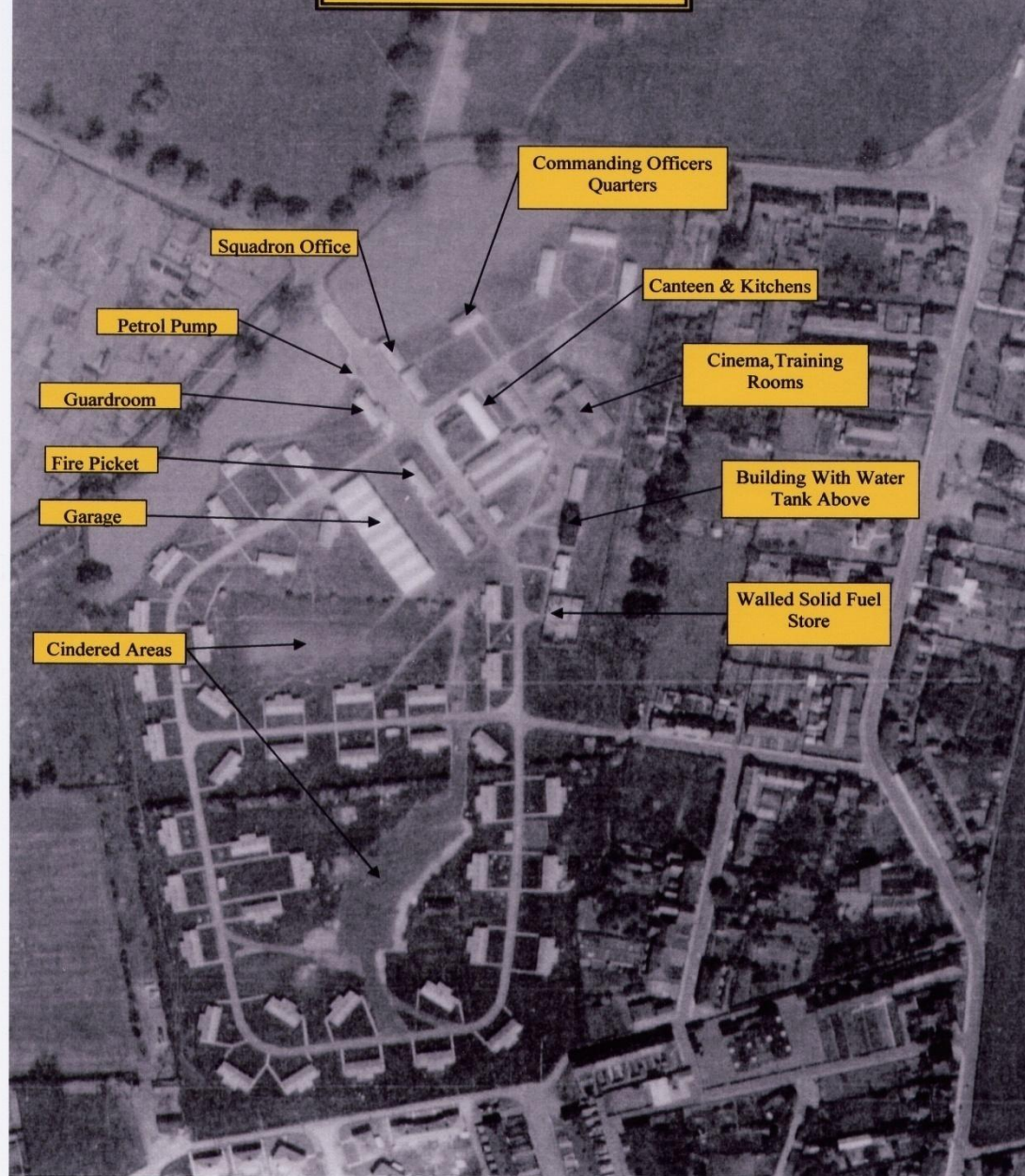
This is the entrance to the camp as it is today.



Great Ayton Camp



AYTON CAMP



Maurice Stockdale with camp huts in the background



Perforated Steel Plate (PSP) from Ayton Camp



Air-raid Precautions

Village air-raid shelters

Ayton had 36 public air-raid shelters.

34 Shelters Each Holding 48 people = 1632

2 Shelters Each Holding 24 people = 48

Total Shelter Places = 1680

70% of Village Population provided for.

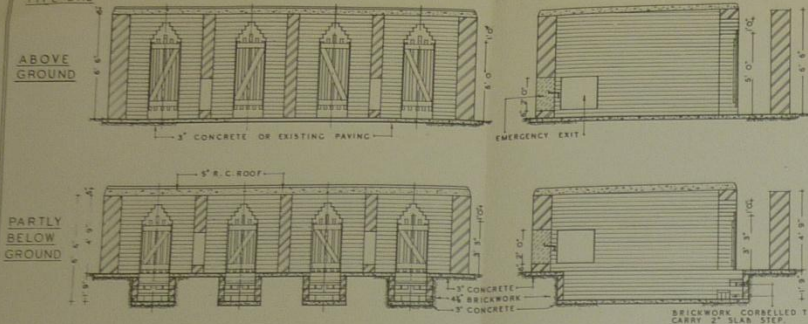
(Council Minutes November 1940)

Anderson Shelters

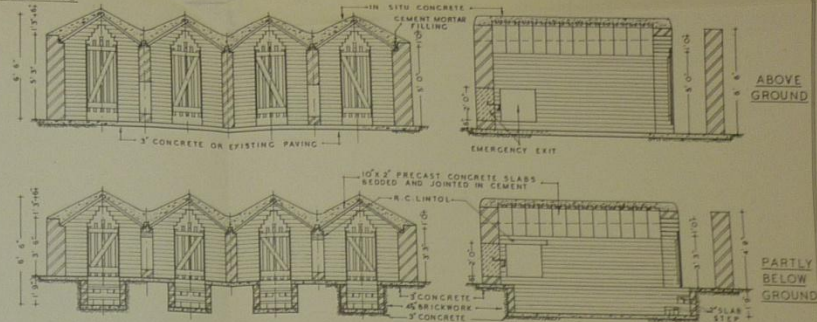


Plans for Great Ayton Shelters

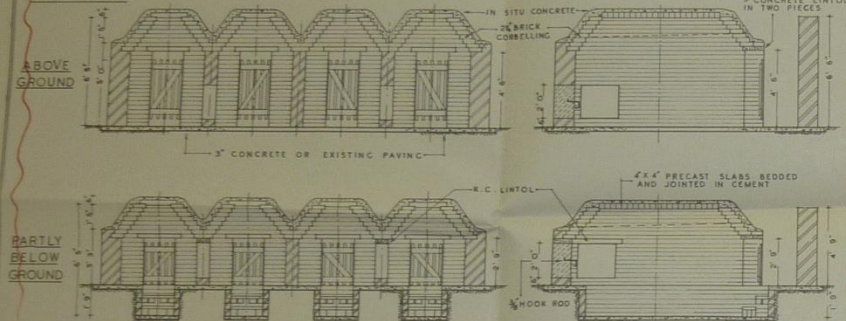
TYPE ONE



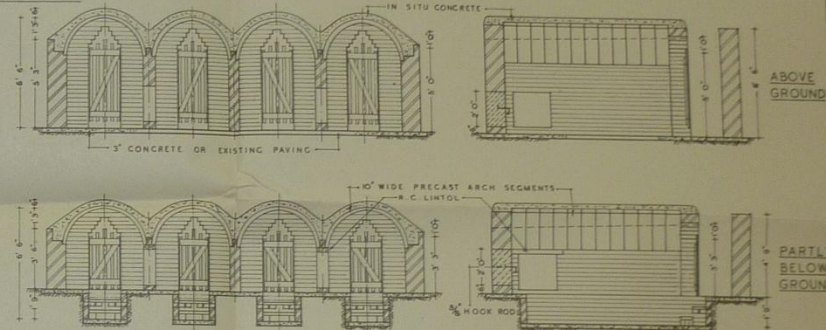
TYPE TWO



TYPE THREE



TYPE FOUR

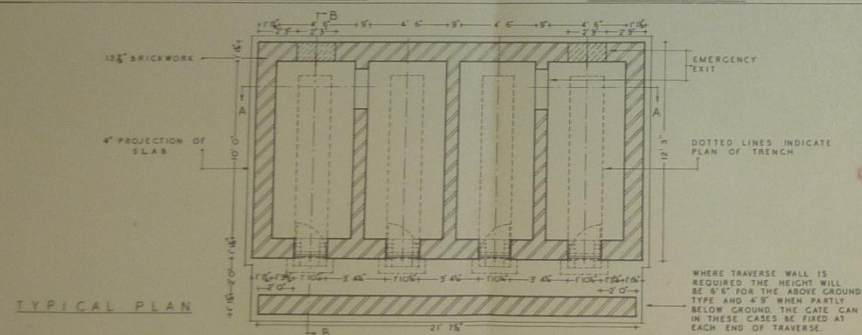


SECTION A-A

SECTION B-B

SECTION A-A

SECTION B-B



TYPE ONE SHELTER

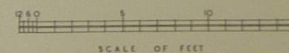
ROOF Laid TO FALL 1 IN 40

ROOF REINFORCEMENT W.S. ROUND RODS TO B.S. 785/1938 MAIN STEEL SHORTER SPAN $\frac{1}{2}$ " DIA @ 6" CS. $\frac{3}{4}$ " COVER; DISTRIBUTION STEEL LONGER SPAN $\frac{1}{2}$ " DIA @ 11" CS. COVER $\frac{3}{8}$ "

EXTERNAL EMERGENCY EXIT TO BE FILLED IN WITH BRICK IN DRY SAND, POINTED ON BOTH SIDES. PROVIDE AND FIX $\frac{1}{2}$ " HOOK ROD

ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF WALLS TO TRENCH CAN BE IN CONCRETE 4" THICK.

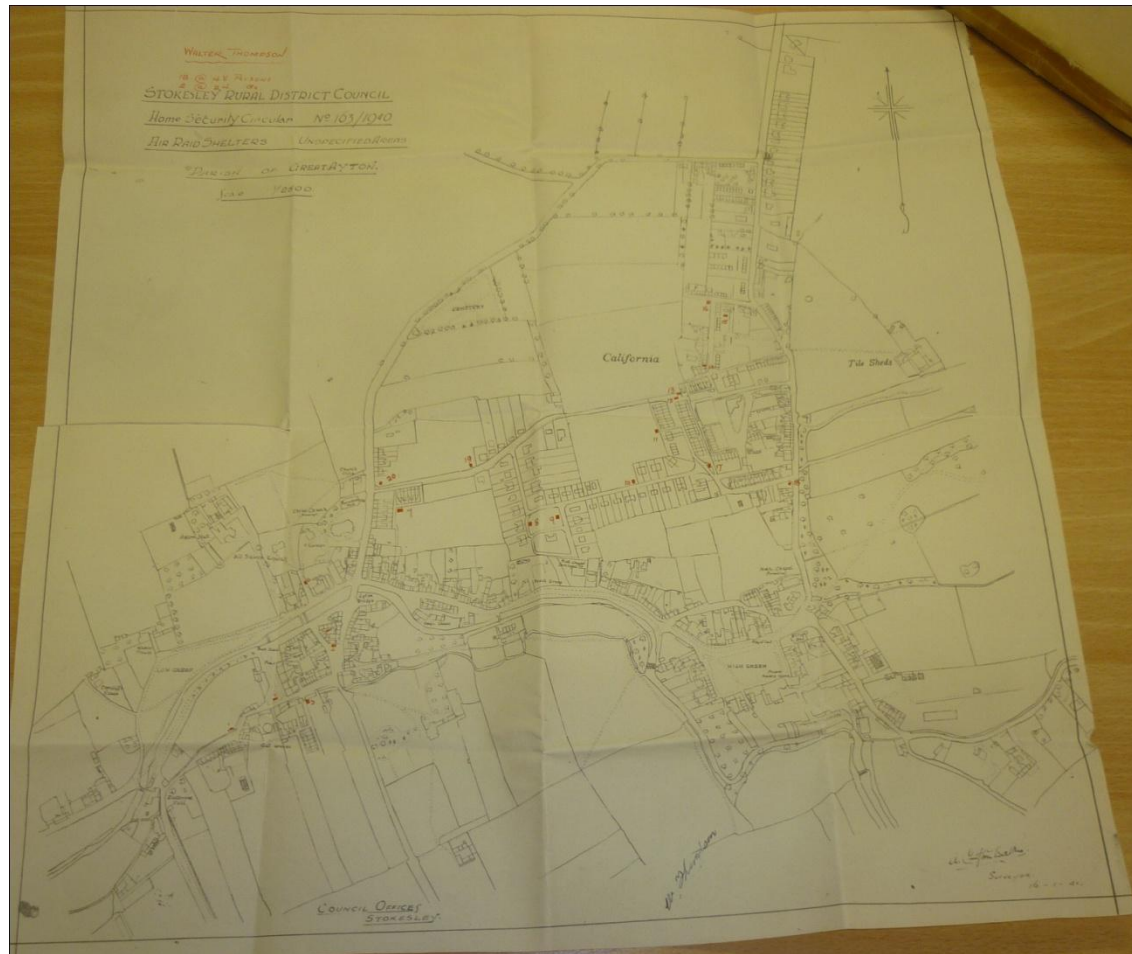
DOMESTIC SURFACE SHELTER FOR 48 PERSONS
ON THE BASIS OF $3\frac{3}{4}$ SQ FT OF FLOOR SPACE PER PERSON.
FOR TYPICAL DETAILS SEE DRAWING D.S. 11/40



FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
J. T. TARRAN & SON LTD.
J. T. Tarran

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY
A.E.P. DEPT. DRAWING D.S. 12/40

Location of Great Ayton Shelters 1



Only Surviving Surface Air Raid Shelter



Positions of Access Doors



The Grange Great Ayton



Air-raid shelter entrance at Ayton Grange



Inside the Grange air-raid shelter



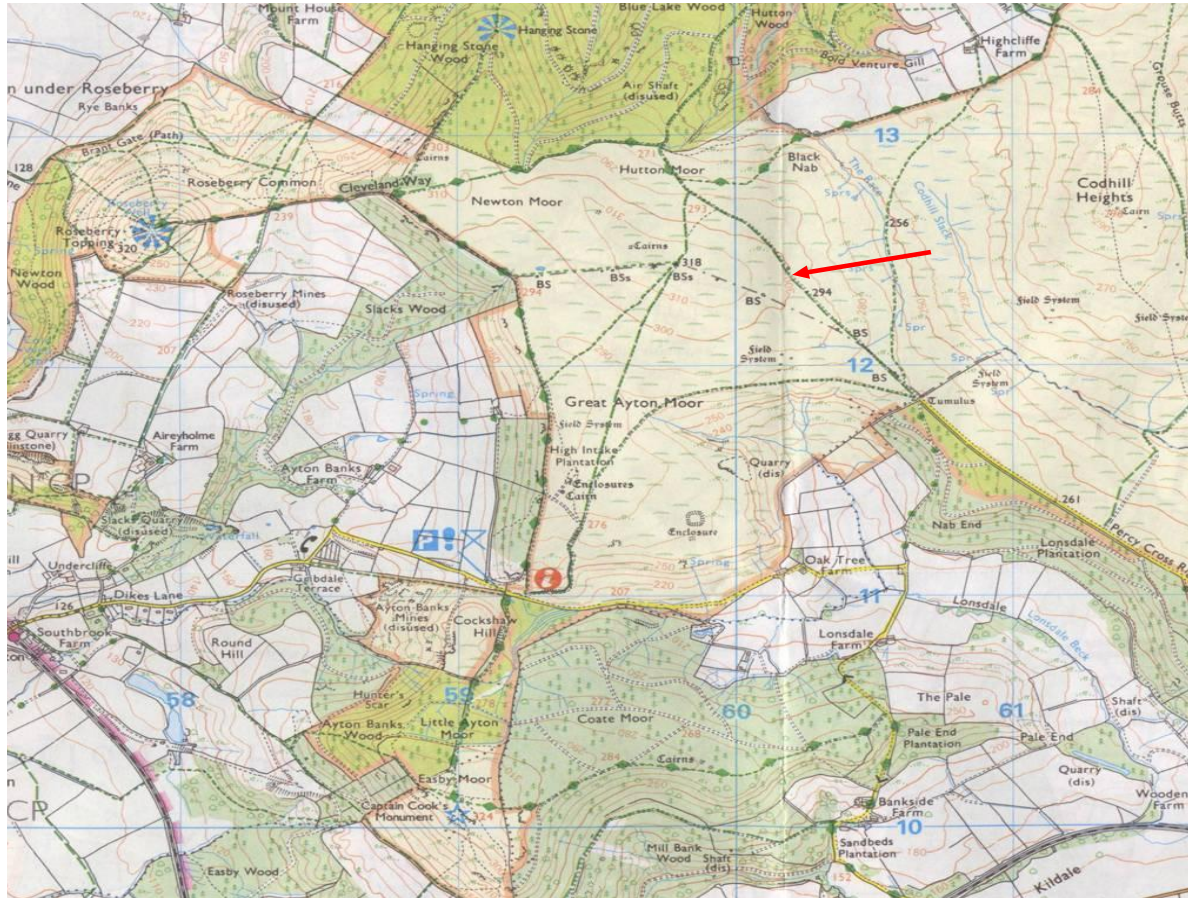
Decoy Sites

- **Decoy sites were constructed to try to try to draw bombers away from their targets.**
- **They were called SF or Special Fire.**
- **Later changed to Starfish sites.**
- **These were fire decoy sites for major towns or cities.**

Middlesbrough Starfish Decoy Sites

- **Middleton**
- **Kirkleatham**
- **Osmotherley**
- **Guisborough**
- **Sneaton Moor**
- **Newton Bewley**

Guisborough Moor Starfish decoy site



Control Bunker



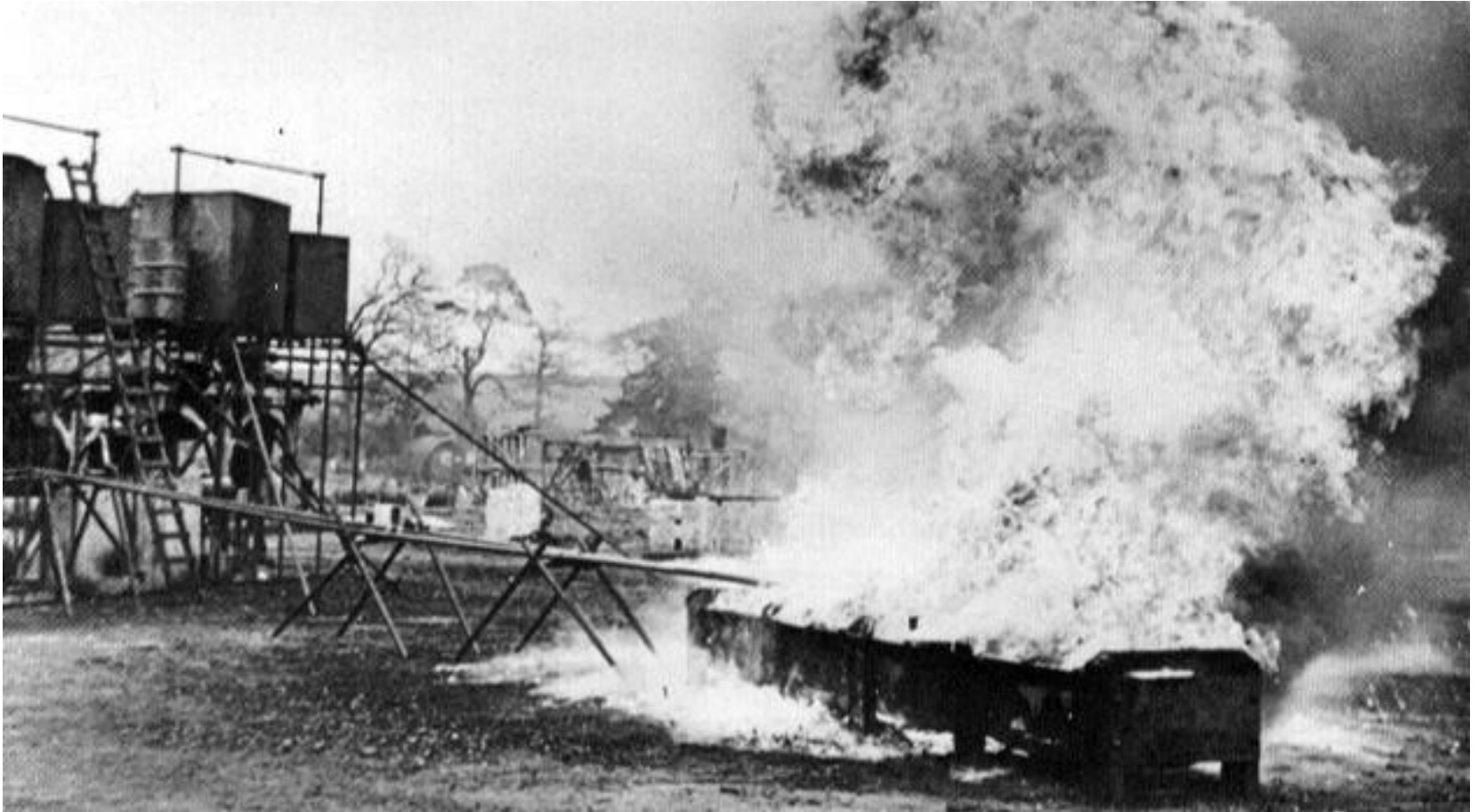
Control Bunker



View Down to Decoy Area



A Starfish site in operation



Great Ayton VJ Day Parade

