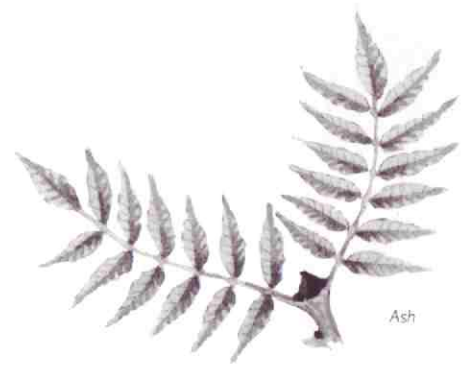
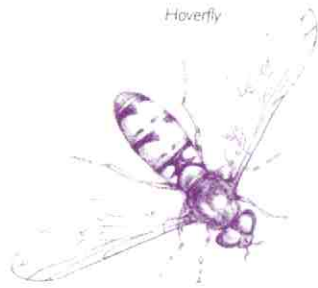


COXHOE & CORNFORTH



A KICKING CUDDY Public House - the name probably originates from the cuddy (pony) races which were run from near the West Hetton Lodge to this hotel.

F SITE OF a brickworks, opened by Goodyear of Durham in 1864. Ponds have formed in disused clay pits and the one nearest the railway became known as Johnny Snowdon's Pond, after the man who operated the gates on the nearby level crossing on Thinford Road.



B THE WILLOWS was formerly known as Paradise Farm. In September 1906 there was an epidemic of typhoid in Coxhoe which resulted in nine deaths. The source of the infection was traced back to the milk supply from this farm, where it was found that water being used to wash milking utensils was being drawn from a polluted well.

C COXHOE STATION was located close to the road with an adjacent pub - known as the Blue Bell and later the Railway Tavern - acting as a booking office and post/parcels office for the Clarence Railway. The building is still standing. Earlier still it is possible that the stage coach 'The Expedition' called here on its 3 hour journey from Durham to Sedgefield and Stockton. This service, which operated from 1822, used the old turnpike road through Coxhoe.

G THE GRASSY AREAS along this central section of the walkway are a real delight in late spring and summer, with wonderful displays of flowers including meadow cranesbill, crown vetch, field scabious, red campion, birdsfoot trefoil, St. John's wort, common knapweed, tormentil and black meddock. Butterflies such as the common blue, ringlet, tortoiseshell and peacock, and the six-spot burnet moth can also be seen.

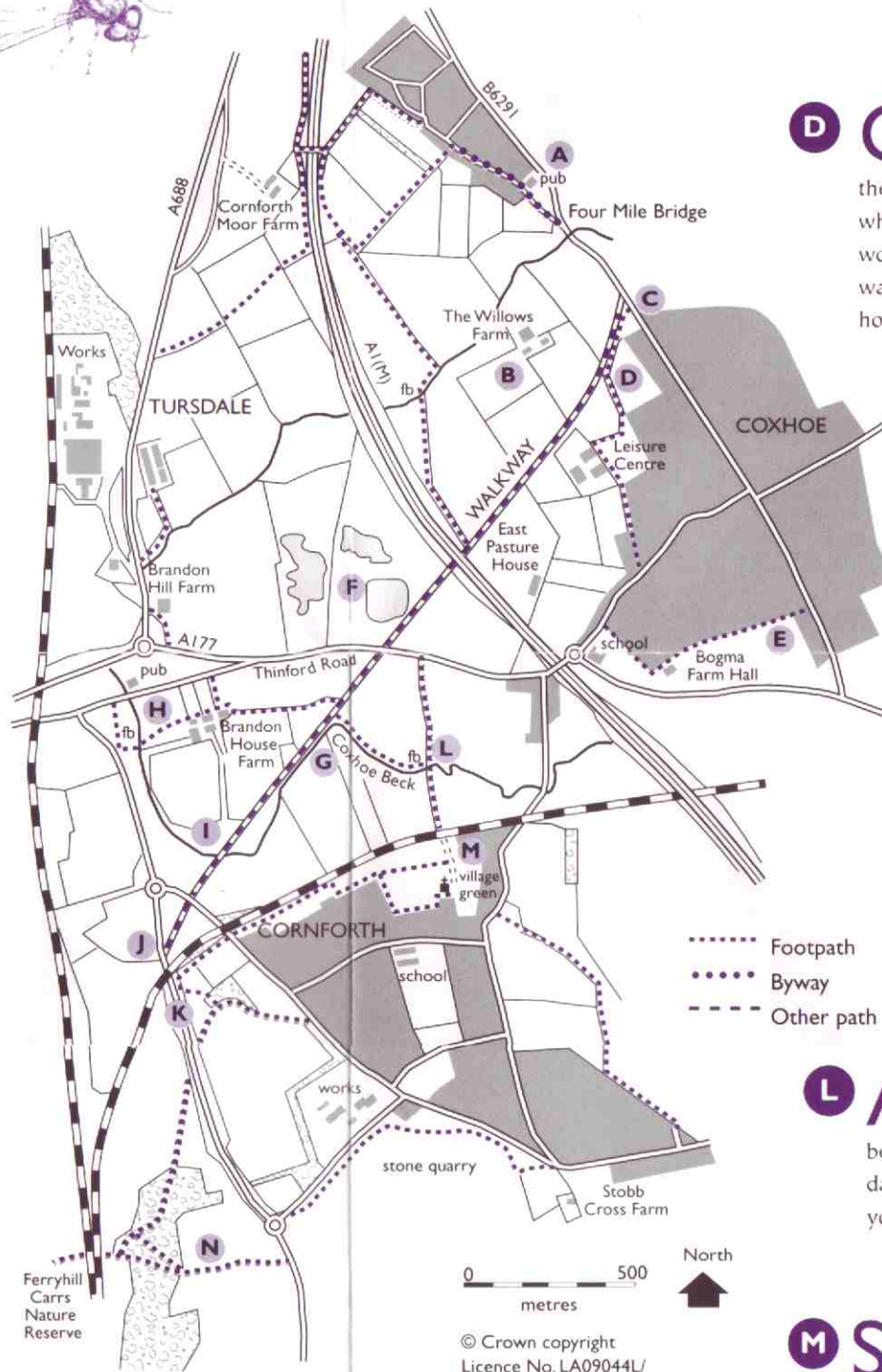
H THINFORD MILL - recorded as a corn mill in the second half of the nineteenth century but the building is now in use as a pub. It is possible that this was the site of an earlier fulling mill, where wool was processed.



I A MILL RACE once diverted water from Coxhoe Beck around the hill side to Thinford Mill. There is no sign of water today but looking down from the bridge you might be able to imagine the water flowing underneath. A channel then followed the curving field boundary which runs away towards the mill (point H).

J AN OLD BRIDGE abutment stands adjacent to the road at this point. Built by a rival railway company the bridge carried a line over the Clarence Railway and then on to join the Byers Green branch line a short distance to the west. The Clarence Railway strongly resisted this development on the grounds that it would result in a loss of trade. The bridge was only completed after a seven-year dispute, with court battles and even attempts to sabotage the new bridge. You might like to have a look around the back of the remaining wall to see if you can find a stone block inscribed with a cross. It is said that this commemorates a worker who was killed when struck by this stone during the construction of the bridge.

K IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE today but the by-pass crosses what was once one of the most heavily industrialised sites in the area. Iron works operated here between 1859 and 1890 using local coal and limestone together with iron ore brought in by rail from the Cleveland Hills. In the late 1870s there were ten blast furnaces. Slightly further south was the first Thrislington Colliery, sunk in 1835. The owners, Messrs. Wain & Co., constructed a village for their employees called New Thrislington, which is what is known today as West Cornforth. Other industries later moved onto this site - coke ovens were constructed and replaced in 1915 by a tar distillation works.



D GRANGE HOUSE (also known as 'The Gas House') was built in 1872 for the proprietor of the Coxhoe Gas Works, which were located behind the house. The works burnt coal to produce gas which was piped to street lamps and houses in Coxhoe.



E THIS PATH is known as Parsons Walk - the old vicarage stands at its eastern end. Stone from the former Temperance Hall (which stood at the opposite end of the village) was used to build the wall, which runs parallel to the path on the north side. See if you can spot a stone which carries part of the inscription 'Temperance Hall and School Room 1859' - the year the original building was opened. Parson's Walk also takes you past Bogma Hall Farm - its former name, Bogmire Hall, gives us an indication of what the surrounding land must have been like in those days.

L A FOOTBRIDGE crosses Coxhoe Beck. Kingfishers are occasionally seen along the beck - their metallic blue plumage and direct, darting flight makes them easy to recognise if you're lucky enough to be there at the right time.

M SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS around the village green include the former girls school (built in 1851), the Square and Compass pub (standing at the top of the green and closed for business at the time of going to print), Blue House (the oldest house in the village dating from the early 17th century) and the church (a relatively recent addition, opened in 1867 - prior to this Cornforth was in the ecclesiastical parish of Bishop Middleham).

N SITE OF THE former Thrislington Hall. A much older mediaeval village once stood to the east while to the west lies Thrislington Woods - better known locally as Doggy Wood. Stands of ash, sycamore, wych elm, birch and willow cover the valley side, which slopes away steeply to the railway line.

