

# *The Medieval Bridge*

The bridge was built late in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was a joint venture between the town of Newcastle and the Bishop of Durham. The towers with gates, the drawbridge and portcullis reflected the bridge's military significance.

There was great rivalry, at times, between Newcastle and the Bishops of Durham and eventually Newcastle controlled more arches than the Bishops.

The bridge was almost 14 metres high and was 216 metres wide. It was built from stone and consisted of 12 arches, each supported by a pier at the base.

There was a prison on the bridge as well as shops and twenty one houses. The houses were mainly at the Gateshead end. The magazine tower was used as a gunpowder store. Bridge dwellers could worship at St. Thomas' chapel.



*View of the Medieval Bridge from the east*