

THE DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGES OF NORTH  
NORTHUMBERLAND: A SETTLEMENT HISTORY FROM  
THE TWELFTH TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

(2 Vols.)

Submitted for PHd. Thesis in University  
of Wales, September 1984. By P.J. Dixon.

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## Preface

This thesis originated in the author's determination to try and marry the two disciplines of history and archaeology. A medieval settlement study appeared to present the best opportunities for such work and Professor Jarret my supervisor suggested north Northumberland to me as an option, although initial surveys were made into Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.

I was introduced to Northumberland by working on the excavation at West Whelpington. From that time I developed a love for the county which biased my decision to study its settlement history.

I owe particular gratitude to Professor Jarret in guiding my endeavours and reading my drafts and commenting on them honestly. I also should thank Dr Wrathwell, and David Evans for their encouragement in the early stages.

At the beginning it was necessary to learn the skills of palaeography and diplomatic and the peculiarities of medieval Latin. Dr Percival of the Dept. of Classical Studies helped me with Latin and \*\*\*\*\* of Western History with the former.

I should acknowledge the assistance of Peter Hill in teaching with rudiments of plane-table surveying and for directing me inadvertently into more extensive work in medieval cultivation remains, and for the use of one of his plottings of cultivation remains in the Hethpool area whilst working for the North Cheviot

Survey. I must thank Tim Gates, formerly Northumberland Archaeological Officer for the use of his aerial photographs.

I should like to thank all those who assisted me at the Northumberland County Record Office and particularly Robin Gard and Bob Steward; and David Graham for his friendliness in helping me examine the Duke of Northumberland's muniments at Alnwick Castle.

I am particularly grateful to the various landowners and farmers of north Northumberland who allowed me to wander over their land in pursuit of medieval settlement remains, in particular his Grace the Duke of Northumberland. Also several farmers and landowners were willing to take me into their homes and occasionally showed me items of interest such as the framed estate map at Buckton Farm. The factor of the estates office of the Greenwich Hospital Estates at Middleton Farm allowed me to use his copy of the 1736 survey which was held there.

Discussions and dinner with Dr Brian Roberts of Durham University on more than one occasion proved both stimulating and encouraging. I should particularly thank Willem Van der Reijden for allowing me to use his word processor and putting up with me for a period of nearly two years.

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it. Special mention should be made of Rosemary Hannay who proof read all the drafts and helped check references, and without whom, I doubt that it would have been completed.



## CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

The landscape of north Northumberland between c.1150 and c.1550 was dominated by the nucleated village, but by c.1850 it had been transformed. The nucleated village had disappeared and had been replaced by the dispersed farm and a few larger settlements. So great was the extent of the change in the pattern of settlement that this study involved a complete settlement history of north Northumberland from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries. The discussion divides itself into two parts, first an analysis of the nature of medieval settlement and second an account of the dissolution of the medieval settlement pattern in the post medieval period.

The medieval village lay at the heart of an interrelated system which encompassed the lands of the surrounding township. The township was composed of three constituent parts, the settlement site or village, the cultivated lands of the common fields and the common waste. The connection between the three parts was the bondland, later husbandland, usually a customary tenancy which gave its tenant a toft and croft in the village, a holding of arable and meadow in the fields, and rights of common throughout the township including pasture, fuel and building materials. The toft was the tenant's private house-plot in the village, but farming was communal and the arable and meadow lands of a bondage holding were divided into small parcels or strips in the various furlongs of the common fields. Since farming was communal it depended for its efficiency upon the co-operation and

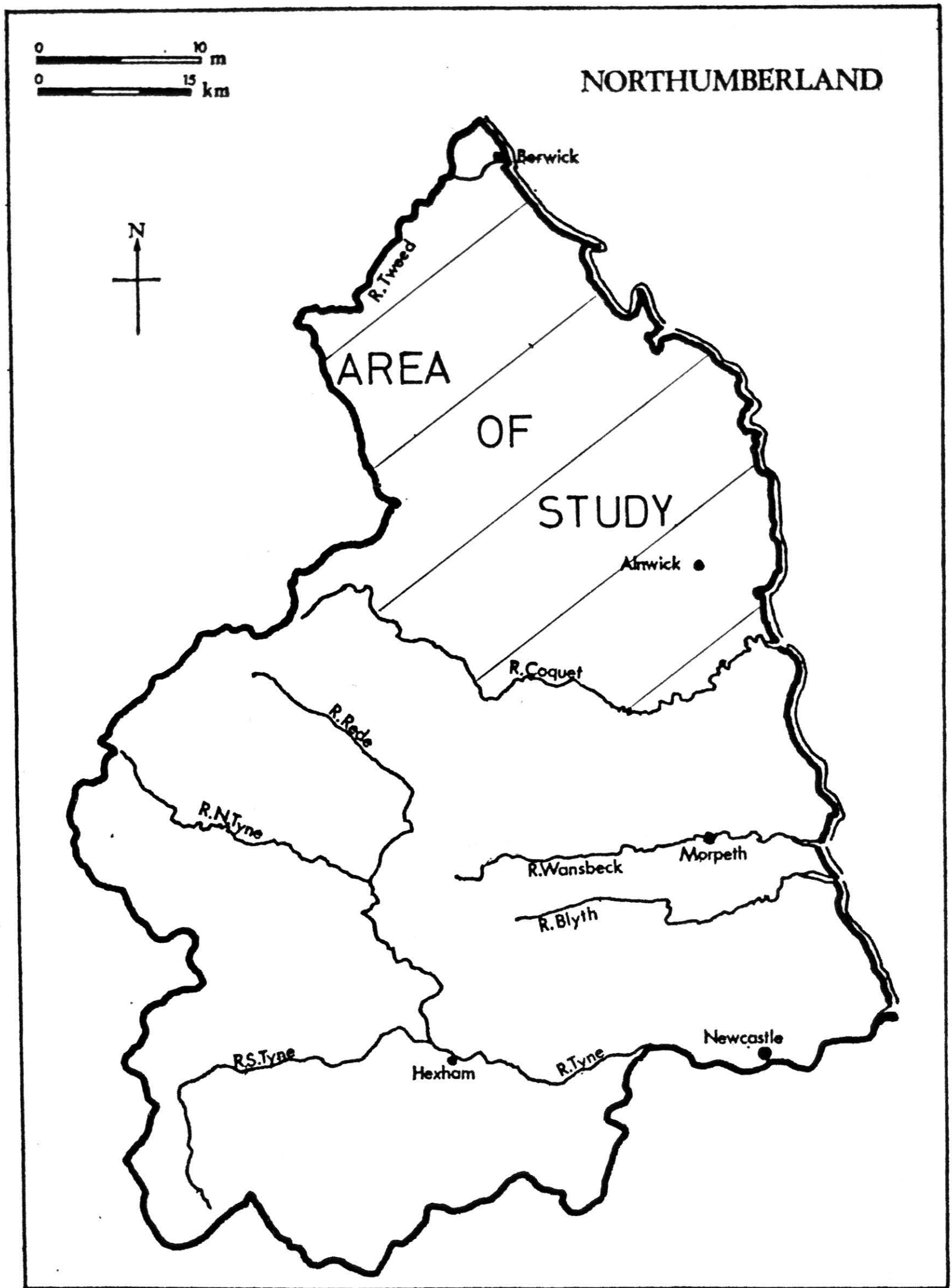


FIG. 1. Map of Northumberland.

agreement of the tenants. In such a system the clustering of the tenants' tofts together in a nucleated village was not only convenient but essential for its equitable operation. The usual arrangement of tofts was juxtaposed to form a row, and where there were two rows, the norm in north Northumberland<sup>(Plan 9)</sup>, they were generally organised to face each other across a part of the common waste called a gate or green. The very organisation of tofts into a row implies order in the layout of the village which may be attributed to the strong lordship prevalent in the area.

The framework of this study depends primarily upon documentary evidence, although archaeological remains and topographical evidence are also described where appropriate. Since the medieval term for township and village was the same Latin word "villa", any place for which the term was applied or implied in the twelfth to fourteenth centuries was assumed to encompass a nucleated village and the evidence where available supported it (see Chapter III). In the sixteenth and early seventeenth century surveys of the Percy estate the term "towne" was used in a similar fashion. However in the 1580 Survey of the decay of Border Service and the 1584 Muster of the East March the word village is used inter-changeably with town or township, in the medieval sense of a township and to distinguish it from a smaller settlement called a "ceit" or "stead" (BP i No. 47 and No. 253). The implication is that the settlement, even a stead, encompasses a territory. The modern concept of a village in current usage as "a group of houses larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town" (Oxford Dictionary 1976) was foreign to

medieval society. A settlement depended for its livelihood on the lands that surrounded it in a predominantly agricultural society. One of the earliest uses of the term village to describe a settlement according to its size in numbers of houses was John Warburton's in his topographical notes on Northumberland in the early eighteenth century<sup>(Hodgson 1916)</sup>.

Although there were some documented dispersed farms in the medieval period<sup>(page 86 ff.)</sup>, it was an insignificant element in the medieval settlement pattern of nucleated villages. Any place documented as supporting four or more households or indeed with the capacity in terms of arable land to support four households was identified as a vill. Two hundred and twenty two vills were identified and given entries in the gazetteer which forms Volume Two of this thesis. Occasionally an entry combines two medieval villages (Gazetteer Nos. 38,69,166,194,201) or includes dispersed settlements but only Milfield and Alesdon are documented after 1400 (Nos. 146 & Misc. No.1). Their late documentation is a reflection of the inadequacies of the documentation rather than their late foundation. In fact few new settlements of any size were recorded in the late medieval period in north Northumberland (see Chapter IV).

Agrarian and economic change in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries destroyed the medieval village system throughout the area. Customary tenures were abolished with the end of the Border wars, farms were engrossed and the communal farming system swept away by enclosures. The extent of these changes was exaggerated by the peculiarities of lordship in



Northumberland which was particularly strong and gave many landowners complete control of their estates. About three quarters of the townships of the area were in the control of a single proprietor and even where there were other proprietors they were few in number. In consequence of this, agrarian change was revolutionary rather than evolutionary.

As the medieval village system was dissolved so the medieval village became redundant and was replaced during estate reorganisation by large dispersed severalty farms. This estate reorganisation was the final part of the process. In some cases the former medieval village site was completely abandoned and in others, the greater proportion, the land continued to be occupied as the site of a modern severalty farm. There is no distinction historically between the one and the other since both were the result of the same factors. The distinction, observable archaeologically, is one of local topography and its effects in the context of agrarian change (Wrathmell 1977 52-4).

The Northumbrian farm that replaced the medieval village is best described as a farm-hamlet since it invariably includes terraces of labourers' cottages, which were usually let by the year as tied cottages to hinds and their families. This does not fit happily within the Medieval Village Research Group's definition of a deserted village, which is as follows:-

Any site with evidence of former village status but now possessing only a farm and/or Manor (with or without a Church and Parsonage). Border-line village/hamlet difficult to draw: intended that village include hamlet

(DMVRG Rep. 5 (1957), App. A).

but equally they are no longer villages and certainly not medieval villages, so that the term shrunken would be a misnomer. For this reason the term deserted medieval village is retained, but qualified for one, the MVRG definition of <sup>a</sup> deserted site, and two, the site occupied by a farm-hamlet, thus: DMV I and DMV II.

A second category of medieval village site was that which was occupied by a modern village settlement (classified OMV). This was a medieval village site whose roads and streets were used in the modern village and whose settlement area was occupied by houses. In fact the category includes two different types of settlement neither of which can be said to be medieval in the sense defined above. The first group is the estate village, a replanned settlement, which continues to occupy the old site, but in essence is no different from the classic model village such as Milton Abbas in Dorset since it is designed to house the estate workers. The continuance of use of a medieval village site is therefore once again seen to be immaterial to the thesis. The point is exemplified by the contrast between Ford and Etal. The former is a nineteenth century model village built next door to the deserted medieval village of Ford, and Etal is in layout an eighteenth century estate village, but occupying the old village site. The second group are those which are in multiple ownership where the community of peasant cultivators has been changed to a community of labourers and rural craftsmen, a development which is paralleled by villages in the Yorkshire Wolds<sup>(Gleave 1973)</sup>. A key element in this group was the availability of a source of employment

other than agriculture which encouraged the continued occupation of the medieval village site. There is however a certain amount of overlap between these two groups so that it was not considered useful to separate them.

The Medieval Village Research Group classification of sites in relation to their modern utilisation as a site for settlement is inadequate for the study of medieval and post medieval settlement in north Northumberland. Firstly it fails to highlight the extent of the change of the settlement pattern in the area since the medieval period when only 26 per cent of former village sites fall within the traditional classification and yet there are only 15 per cent of former village sites still occupied by a village even in modern terminology. The concept of shrinkage whilst relevant to late medieval changes in the area has no relevance to the agrarian changes of the post medieval period, i.e. after 1550, and for that reason alone has been abandoned.

However various recent authorities have questioned the validity of the notion of shrinkage as a separate issue. Dr. Wrathmell argued that the identification of desertion with a particular episode (i.e. sheep depopulation in the period c.1450 - c.1520) and shrinkage with agrarian change post c.1520 was too restricted and that desertion could also occur at many periods and for a variety of reasons (Wrathmell 1977 App. 2). Furthermore as Helen Clarke has recently stated: "There is no fundamental difference between the two types" i.e. desertion and shrinkage since desertion is merely the most extreme form of

shrinkage (Clarke 1984 16-7). Dyer's work in the West Midlands has shown how it was a combination of factors which led to desertion in the late medieval period including the decline in population, the migration of the peasant population, a breakdown in seigneurial authority and a change in land-use from arable to pasture (Dyer 1982 19-35).

In north Northumberland in the late medieval period there is no evidence of any breakdown of seigneurial authority or of any <sup>widespread</sup> change from arable to pastoral farming<sup>1</sup>, but the area was afflicted by the nationwide decline in population, and some desertion, particularly in the upland areas did occur. On the other hand most medieval villages survived despite some shrinkage in population, and the causes of desertion of those few upland sites were not attributable to a single cause. The declining population, the Scots wars and a deteriorating climate may all have contributed to their demise.

Against the background of a declining population in late medieval England, depopulation of medieval villages, whether total or not, occurred in many parts of the country through a combination of factors, but from the sixteenth century as the population began to rise the issue of medieval village depopulation becomes irrelevant. Certainly medieval villages were abandoned, but as Wrathmell recognised in southern Northumberland this was more often connected with the dispersal of farms throughout the township. It is therefore important to examine the change in the settlement pattern "in the context of the township, and the township in the context of land tenure and

1. Note page 159 below



estate organisation" (Wrathmell 1977 *ibid.*).

This study centres its discussion of the demise of the medieval village of north Northumberland around agrarian changes in the individual township in the context of the various estates. Strong lordship allowed Northumbrian landowners to carry out far-reaching changes which led directly to the disappearance of the medieval village and their replacement by dispersed farms. Once it is clear that it is not depopulation but the dissolution of the medieval village system which is at issue then it is possible to get away from an arid listing of deserted and shrunken villages to a discussion of the nature of different forms of settlement in terms of the economy and society upon which it depended.

This study attempts to outline the nature of the medieval village, both its physical attributes and the system of land tenure within which it existed. It is apparent that the medieval village typical of north Northumberland may also be found over a wide area of north eastern England as far south as Yorkshire. The work of geographers such as Brian Roberts in Northumberland and Durham and June Shepperd and P. Allerston in Yorkshire has shown how regular two row villages similar to the two row villages of north Northumberland may owe their origins to acts of seigneurial planning during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, in the aftermath of the Conquest. The validity of this early date for these village plans is a matter of some dispute, but there is little doubt that medieval villages were being planned and laid out some time during the course of the

medieval period on the evidence of early estate maps of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Unlike north Northumberland a higher proportion of medieval village plans have been preserved into the modern period in Durham and Yorkshire. This may be attributed to a different history politically and economically and particularly to a different system of land tenure. Northumberland's exposure to the Border Wars produced unique circumstances which did not apply in Durham or further south. Equally Durham, because of the growth of the mining industry underwent a very different economic development, especially in the coalfield of northern Durham. Partly for this reason and because of Durham's enclosure history, nearly fifty per cent of known medieval village sites are still occupied (Roberts and Austin 1975 13-15). The fact that some fifty per cent of land in Durham was enclosed by agreement or Act of Parliament (Bassley 1974 99) is also in significant contrast to north Northumberland and may have had a bearing on settlement history.

On the north side of the Border it is far from clear how similar the medieval villages of Berwickshire were to those of Northumberland. Certainly there was a similar system of husbandlands in many of the vills of the Coldingham Priory estate in the early fifteenth century (Durham D & C Misc. Ch. 6817) and there is evidence for toft row settlements (Raine 1852 App 43-79) in the charters of the Priory. Of the twelve vills of Coldinghamshire only three are represented by modern villages.

Just as in Northumberland the predominant settlement pattern

is one of dispersed farms. The period of change from the medieval village system in Berwickshire may however begin earlier than in north Northumberland. A large amount of land in Berwickshire was owned by the great abbeys of Kelso, Melrose, Jedburgh, Dryburgh, Coldingham and others. From the early fifteenth century onwards they began to be taken over by local landowners. Coldingham Priory was controlled by the Hume family from the mid fifteenth century and it is from this period that feu-charters of monastic lands begin to appear. Feus are a type of feudal tenure giving its possessor a virtual freehold. This alienation of lands probably gave some impetus to agrarian change so that it is from the mid sixteenth century that new dispersed farms and hamlets such as Fleurs and Highlaws begin to appear in the Coldingham area. Too little is known of the areas further west to ascertain the validity of this picture at present.

Dr. Wrathmell found in his study of southern Northumberland that 1550 marked an important division between the classic period of desertion identified by Beresford and the era of agrarian reform (Wrathmell 1975 11). For northern Northumberland a similar picture emerged and has been presented graphically. A distribution map was drawn up to show those settlements which had been abandoned or substantially reduced by that date, i.e. a fifty percent reduction in the documented numbers of households. (Plan 13)  
Comparable documentation was limited to less than half the vills in the area although there was evidence in the Border Surveys for more than four tenants at most vills. As in south Northumberland there was no evidence that warfare caused extensive permanent

desertion, in fact desertion was confined to a few upland hamlets and some small lowland villages, but there was evidence for substantial reductions throughout the area and from about twenty five percent of vills some decrease in the number of households was documented. <sup>(App. 6)</sup> More pertinently actual increases in the number of households were confined to three examples: at Tweedmouth agriculture had become second to fishing and mining and at Bewick and Etal new villages had been established and presumably new land brought into cultivation. This suggests that the picture of a reduced population in the late medieval period is valid. It confirms Wrathmell's conclusion that there was widespread shrinkage in southern Northumberland at this period (Wrathmell *ibid.*).

The desertion of upland hamlets and villages in the Cheviots is also paralleled in south Northumberland where it was attributed to poor soils (*ibid.* 10). Examination of the soils around the village of Alnhamshelles has indicated that the cultivated lands were standard brown earths quite suitable for cultivation if the climate were not too wet or cold. In view of the parent materials similar soils may be extrapolated to the rest of the Cheviots where boulder clay deposits occur. <sup>(Payton pers. comm).</sup> Consequently it is necessary to look for other reasons for desertion in the Cheviots. Exposure to Scottish raids was an important factor and was identified by Bowes and Ellerker in 1541 (Hodgson 1828 205), but the wider economic decline of the later medieval period and a deteriorating climate may have combined to



produce the circumstances in which continued occupation was no longer viable.

From about 1550 the destruction of medieval villages must be understood as part of the great era of agrarian change. This is paralleled in south Northumberland, but the classification of deserted, shrunken and surviving medieval villages followed by Dr. Wrathmell has been abandoned by the author in favour of two classes of deserted medieval village and sites occupied by a modern village. The Class I DMV may be equated with the deserted medieval village of south Northumberland, but Dr. Wrathmell's so called shrunken village has been replaced by the Class II DMV for medieval village sites occupied by a modern farm-hamlet which is not closely comparable with Dr. Wrathmell's sites. For the purposes of comparing settlement changes in the north and south of the county, the author's DMV IIs and Wrathmell's shrunken villages have been tabled together below; and surviving villages with the author's occupied medieval village sites.

Table 1.1:	DMVI	DMVII	OMV	
North Northumberland	60(26.5%)	+ 131(58%)	35(15.5%)	226(100%)
South Northumberland	125(39%)	+ 107(33%)	91(28%)	323(100%)
Durham	135(41.5%)	32(9.5%)	+ 159(49%)	362(100%)

(Roberts and Austin 1975)

The classification of the Durham sites again is different from the author's. Roberts and Austin's included sites still occupied by one farm and occasionally two so that it includes both classes of DMV in north Northumberland. The shrunken site of Roberts and Austin on the other hand is based upon the survival of earthworks

adjacent to the "surviving cluster". This emphasises the inadequacies of the MVRGs classification when three separate authorities apply it in completely different ways. Roberts and Austin have chosen to discuss what they term "rural clusters" rather than medieval villages but they do use the documented vill as the basis of an entry in their list (Roberts and Austin 1975 5). Austin and Roberts considered that desertion was atypical in Durham since most villages have survived, i.e., including their shrunken villages which are after all still villages (Roberts and Austin 1975 9). This has tended to emphasize elements of continuity in the landscape. The author's system of classification is designed to emphasize change, indeed by any criteria the settlement landscape of north Northumberland has changed more dramatically than that of Durham. It is not just settlement change that has taken place but a change in the social and economic system, even where there has been some continuity in the use of a settlement site and some of its key elements.

## CHAPTER TWO : THE SOURCES, EVIDENCE AND PHYSIOGRAPHY

2.1 Medieval Documentation

The quality of information derived from medieval documentation which is useful in settlement studies is limited, but substantial in quantity. Archaeologists want detailed topographical data which is rarely forthcoming. It is now more widely acknowledged that medieval government and administration dealt not with the village as such, but with the township, the manor or other territorial equivalents (Winchester 1978, Michelmores 1979 7, Taylor 1983 125-6 et al.). This means that population statistics available in taxation rolls deal exclusively with the administrative units and not with villages and settlements. Equally manorial records, be they those relating to the estate or government valuations or surveys, relate to economic units which do not necessarily equate with either village or township, but to parts thereof. Property transactions, deeds and charters are more explicit since the exact nature and position of a property is necessary for both parties, but what was explicit in the thirteenth century may be totally obscure in the twentieth century. Place-names and topographical features change, and references to a property by the name of its former owner are of little help in identifying its situation.

The Book of Fees encompasses a series of Royal Inquests into the holdings of feudal and non-feudal dependants during the

thirteenth century, known as the Testa de Neville. Two main documents were used, the Feudal Aid of 1242 and the Veredictum Hominum de Norhamsyr et Elandesir of 1208-10 (BF ii 1113 and i 26).

The Feudal Aid of 1242 was an inquest initiated because of an expedition by Henry III to Gascony. In the subsequent inquest, the Northumberland section lists the vills held by the barons and other tenants-in-chief, but also includes the feudal sub-tenants and socage tenants. The document was crucial in establishing a comprehensive list of thirteenth century vills and hamlets. There were gaps in the record because the royal Demesne did not appear in the document. This was filled by reference to the records of Demesne Dues found in the Aids of 1212 and 1236. The Veredictum Hominum of Norhamsyr et Elandesir of 1208-10 was a survey of the Bishop of Durham's holdings in North Durham. It was probably executed during the reign of King John when the see of Durham was kept vacant. The document lists the vills which were subinfeudated and how they were held, but excludes the demesne estates. However this gap is largely filled by consulting the Bolden Buke survey of the Bishop of Durham's estates in 1183, which serves a similar purpose for North Durham as the Feudal Aid of 1242 does for Northumberland.

#### Medieval Deeds and Charters

Little attempt was made to study medieval deeds in their original form because so many cartularies have been published.



These include the Cartulary of Brinkburn Priory, the Cartulary of Newminster Abbey, and the Percy Cartulary published by the Surtees Society (Vols. 66, 90 and 117). Deeds of Holy Island Priory were reproduced in abbreviated Latin in James Raine's invaluable "History and Antiquities of North Durham" (Raine 1852 App) and George Tate's "History of the Borough, Castle, and Barony of Alnwick" which includes transcripts of the charters of Alnwick Abbey (Tate 1868/9 App). The Cartularies of Kelso and Melrose Abbeys are published by the Bannatyne Club (the Liber de Melros, Vol. 56 and the Liber de Calchou, Vol. 82). The Laing Charters which deal with lay estates in the Glendale area are published in Archaeologia Aeliana (Macdonald 1950). The Charters of Nostell Priory relating to the Cell at Bamburgh were used as they appeared in the Northumberland County History (Vol. 1). Deeds and charters from the Swinburne MSS were consulted in transcript from a catalogue at the Northumberland County Record Office, although many of them are quoted in the Northumberland County History (Vol. VII). The originals could be and were occasionally consulted (e.g. No. 69).

The only other originals that were consulted belong to the Cartulary of Kirkham Priory and the deeds of Outchester. Kirkham Cartulary is kept at the Bodleian Library; photostat copies of the relevant folios were obtained (Bod. Lib. Fairfax 7). The medieval deeds of Outchester are stored amongst the papers of the Greenwich Hospital Estate at the Public Record Office in Kew Gardens (PRO ADM 75).

Both sets of documents were in general well preserved and

clearly written. The Outchester deeds were originals, sometimes with seals attached, whereas the Kirkham Cartulary was composed of a set of transcripts of the original documents.

The charter or deed was a witnessed record of the transfer of land, rights or services. The type of detail which appears in a charter depends upon the nature of the grant. In general, if a whole manor is being transferred then there will be little information on the topography of the settlement. Occasionally in such cases, the boundaries of the territory may be described. For example, Sturton Grange, granted by Everard de Ros to Newminster Abbey, was so described (Fowler 1878 197-8). Here the boundaries can be compared with recent maps of the township to see if changes have occurred since the medieval period, a difficult process as many medieval names have been lost. Unfortunately few such instances exist for North Northumberland.

Of greater use to this study is the transfer of a small piece of land and a toft in a settlement. The need to define the position of such a small unit in a satisfactory fashion requires some topographical detail. A toft may be described in relation both to natural features such as rivers, or man-made features such as roads and ditches, or in relation to other tofts. For example, Henry de Maners granted two tofts in Killum to Kirkham Priory in the early thirteenth century; one lay on the west side of the village to the south of the Bowmont Water and the other by the road from Kirknewton to Carham (Bod. Lib. Faifax 7 fol.85). On other occasions a toft will be set beside another, as in a grant of the early thirteenth century to Brinkburn Priory:

"unum toftum in inferiori Tirwhit, illud scilicet, quod iacet prominum tofto Henrici molendarii versus aquilonem" (Page, 1893 110).

Descriptions of this type imply some form of clustered settlement. That the settlement may also be nuclear may be inferred from the phraseology common to a number of charters. The above charter of Brinkburn Priory goes on to describe cultivated land which is distinguished by the phrase "in campo eiusdem villae". In other charters the terms "territorio de" or "cultura de" are used to distinguish land-grants from tofts in the village (Fowler 1878 150 and Raine<sup>1852</sup> App. DCLXXXV).

However some circumspection is necessary since the village and its territory invariably have the same name, and the term "villa" itself may be used to refer to either the settlement or the territory. Consequently if there is more than one settlement in the territory of the vill it may not be immediately apparent. On the other hand secondary settlements can be identified because they are usually distinguished by having their own name. For example, Werihil in Kestern is described as "unum partem terrae de Kestern scilicet Werihil ubi fundatae sunt domus meae" (Fowler 1878 118).

Charters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are generally blessed with more detail than later deeds and are invaluable sources both for the study of settlement and the agrarian economy. Grants of land to the big ecclesiastical institutions dried up in the fourteenth century and most late medieval deeds are connected with lay estates. Some of these



deeds have sufficient detail to be of use in settlement studies. In these the term "row" appears; for example a deed of 1425 in the Laing collection referring to a messuage in Chatton "on the north rawe" (MacDonald 1950 125). More usually late medieval deeds are too generalised to be of any help in settlement studies, except in the identification of new settlements.

From the fifteenth century, an increasing number of deeds are written in English rather than medieval Latin; sixteenth century deeds are invariably in English, but are written in secretary hand, a script which is particularly obscure, and use spellings that are rarely consistent. The majority of deeds of this period consulted were in transcript, but the excellent series of Outchester deeds in the Greenwich Hospital MSS were searched. Seventeenth century and later deeds proved unproductive due to increasing repetition and verbosity and a paucity of topographical detail.

#### Inquisitions Post Mortem

Chancery IPMs are an important source of information with regard to the manorial and tenorial establishments of a vill. They have been admirably catalogued in a series of sixteen Calendars covering the reigns of Henry III to Richard II. There are also three Calendars for the reign of Henry VII. For the period from Richard II to Henry VII the only published source is to be found in Hodgson's History of Northumberland (Hodgson iii 1820 41-88), where brief transcripts are available.

Unfortunately, admirable though they are, the Calendars include or omit the manorial extents in a very haphazard fashion. For this reason a number of IPMs were consulted at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. Here they are stored in folders numbering C132 to C135 for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The writs, ordering the sheriff or escheator to hold an inquest before a local jury of freemen, are usually filed together with the extent itself. The state of preservation was extremely variable; some were still very clear and legible, but others had become blacked out by the injudicious use of preservatives (such as ox-gall), and yet others had faded away and required the aid of ultra-violet light to read them. Even so about twenty IPMs were profitably consulted.

An IPM was initiated at the death of a tenant in chief in order to identify the heir to the estate and to establish the extent and value of same. In the appropriate locations an inquest was duly held by a jury of freemen before an official of the king called an escheator. The object of the extent was to allow the King to know what he might expect in revenue, in the event of there being no heir, or during the wardship of a minor. The escheator was responsible for rendering the accounts of the escheated estates to the Exchequer which would be checked against the figures given in the IPM. This was a fertile avenue for profit for the escheator, since by undervaluing the estate at the inquest he could line his own pockets with the unaccounted revenues (Kosminsky 1956, 56 and 59 ff). A further source of error was created by the irksome demands of too many inquests,

causing juries to return "very summary information" (ibid.). In such cases a second inquest might be enforced (e.g. Framlington No. 92). The undervaluing of estates may have been widespread, simply because it was in the jurors' mutual interest.

However unreliable they are as valuations, the IPM represents a very detailed source of information for the size and number of holdings in a vill. It usually describes the capital messuage and demesne lands; the bond holdings; cottage holdings and free tenancies. It is therefore a valuable record of the social hierarchy of a vill as well as the amount of land in cultivation.

The information available in the IPMs is incomparable because there are very few surviving manorial documents. A comparison of the 1298 IPM of the lordship of Embleton with an Account Roll of the lordship some years later in 1313-14 indicates that the sources are complementary. The IPM is more detailed in the listing of tenants' holdings where the Account Roll is general.

The IPM does not necessarily give all the tenants in a township and is often summary in its details of freeholds. If part of a vill is subinfeudated then the feudal dependant alone is listed for that part of the vill. If the vill has been divided into moities by reason of the succession of daughters, then an IPM of one or the other should give a guide to the total since such a partition divided every holding and service equally (e.g. Belford No. 16). There was no physical division, except perhaps in the use of rooms in a manor house.

"Extenta Manorii", the standardized form of manorial survey, were defined in statute c.1275 and this laid down the essential questions and facts which should be asked and recorded (West 1982 49-51).

Manorial Documents, Medieval Account Rolls, Surveys and Rentals

1. Account Rolls:

North Northumberland is poorly served in this respect. Account Rolls survive for Holy Island Priory, Norhamshire, Bamburgh Castle, the lordship of Embleton and the barony of Alnwick. No attempt was made to study them in their original form since useful transcripts of all five estates have been published. James Raine reproduced substantial extracts of the Holy Island Priory Accounts and Norham Proctor's Accounts (Raine 1852). The Northumberland County History has published extracts from the Rolls of the lordship of Embleton (NCH II) and the Surtees Society have published the 1472 Bailiff Roll of the Earl of Northumberland (Hodgson 1921). Extracts from the Accounts of the Royal Demesne of Bamburgh Castle were reproduced in the Northumberland County History (Vol. I).

The Account Roll is a very detailed document which deals almost exclusively with the operation of the household and the demesne. Its interest in the tenants was necessarily limited; usually their rents and services were merely lumped together. On the other hand the Priory Accounts and Proctor of Norham's Rolls



did provide a record of the tithe payments through which the effects of the Scots wars on the local economy could be gauged. They also contained records of building materials and the crops grown on the demesnes, whilst the Percy Bailiff Rolls have some particularly interesting records of the roofing timbers provided for the tenantry.

## 2. Surveys and Rentals:

Manorial surveys and rentals are even more rare than account rolls for north Northumberland. Surviving surveys are confined to Bolden Buke for the Bishop of Durham's estate of North Durham and the Priory of Tynemouth's lordship of Bewick. Rentals are extant from the same lordship of Bewick, the Colville moiety of Spindleston and Budle and a late one from the Percy estate also survives. All these sources are published in the Northumberland County History except Bolden Buke which is published by the Surtees Society (Greenwell 1852).

Bolden Buke was a survey of the Bishop of Durham's estates, carried out in 1183. Since it was a feudal document, it made no attempt to list the subtenants of feudal dependants, so that only for villis held in demesne were any useful details available. It was thus of very little use as most of the estate of Northumberland was subinfeudated, and the neighbouring estate of Islandshire was not included in the survey, presumably because it belonged to the monks of Holy Island Priory.

The 1295 survey of the lordship of Bewick was part of a



wider survey of the Tynemouth Priory estates. The Bewick part included the townships of Bewick, East Lilburn and Eglington. The survey describes the demesne lands and tenants' holdings and their value. In concept this is little different from the subsequent rental of 1378 (NCH XIV). The Colville rental of 1387 for the moiety of Spindleston and Budle has a similar format. Each tenant is named and the exact elements of his holding, be it demesne, husbandland or other land, are described (NCH I 182).

Although much later, the 1498 rental of the demesne manors of the Percy estate is a similar type of document; it is known as Cartington's Rental. It has been partly published in the appropriate parts of the County History, but was consulted in its entirety at Alnwick Castle (Aln. Cas. A.I.i.s).

### 3. Dissolution Surveys of Monastic Estates c.1536-40:

Valuations, rentals and surveys exist for most of the monastic estates at this critical period in their history. By and large they take a form which is not dissimilar from the surveys and rentals described above and may be placed in the same tradition. However, unlike these rentals they include reference to tithes which were an important part of their income. There are published transcripts of these surveys available as follows: Newminster Abbey (Hodgson Pt.2, Vol ii, 412); Brinkburn Priory (NCH VII 466-7); Tynemouth Priory and Nostell Priory's Cell of Bamburgh similarly (NCH XIV 429 and NCH I 92-3); and Alnwick Abbey (Tate 1868/9, ii, 21ff.).

These surveys are useful to this study because they reveal settlement and territorial details of a number of townships prior to the post medieval agrarian changes.

#### Lay Subsidies and Other Parliamentary Taxes

For Northumberland, this class of document is to be found at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane, catalogued under E179/158. The subsidies of 1296 and 1336 are well preserved and comprehensive (158/1 and 7); a fragment of a roll of 1313 also survives (158/6). The Poll Tax returns for 1377 were also consulted (158/29, 31 and 32).

The Northumberland Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296 has been published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, edited by C. M. Fraser (Fraser 1968). A transcript of the 1336 Roll executed by A. J. Lilburn has been deposited in the County Record Office. There was no need to examine the originals except for the fragment of the 1313 Roll.

The assessment of the Lay Subsidy Tax was based on the movable wealth of the individual, but the essential requirements of a taxpayer's livelihood were excluded from the assessment (Willard 1934, 79-85). In addition there was a minimum level below which a person was excluded from tax. In 1297 this was one shilling (Beresford 1963, 2). The 1296 Tax was paid at the rate of one eleventh of the individual's assessed wealth. No assessment is below eleven shillings, so the level of exemption would appear to be the same as in 1297. All those persons not

listed in this way should be exempted, but there may have been evasion and deceit, especially in the 1290s when there were frequent exactions. The bribery of tax assessors is unashamedly recorded in the Account Rolls of Cuxham Manor in Oxfordshire (Harvey 1965, 105-9).

The documents were arranged on the basis of the vill, but the taxation vill was not necessarily the same as the territorial vill. In the 1296 Roll some vills were grouped together; for example Birling and Over Buston or Rugley and Birtwell (Fraser *ibid.*, Nos. 368 and 372). On other occasions large expanses of upland may be included in the assessment of an upland edge vill such as Alwinton, Hethpool or Whitton (Fraser *ibid.*, Nos. 404, 298 and 388).

Despite these limitations the 1296 Roll is a very important record of the inhabitants of North Northumberland at a time of maximum population expansion (Donkin 1976, 75ff.). It is all but comprehensive; a small number of vills in west Coquetdale are missing from the Roll and monastic granges like Sturton and Castron were excluded, but it is otherwise complete. Comparison with the surviving fragment of the 1313 Roll for a few vills in the Glendale area indicates a close coincidence in the numbers of taxpayers (see Vol. II, Nos. 4, 53, 138, 167, 57, 89, etc.).

The taxpaying population can only be used as a minimum figure. There is no certain method of relating it to the total number of households in a vill or indeed to the total population. And, furthermore, it would be rash to relate it to a particular village settlement without good cause.

Comparison of the taxpayers in the Roll with other records was instructive. The Subsidy Roll lists ten taxpayers in Embleton plus a further five men with property there who were jurors for the Liberty of Embleton. In contrast the IPM of Embleton of 1298 lists sixteen bondage holdings alone, besides cottagers and free tenants and a quarter of the manor which was held separately. The 1295 survey of the lordship of Bewick was compared with the number of taxpayers in the Roll:

Table 2.1:	<u>1295 Survey</u>	<u>1296 Roll</u>
Bewick:	23 bondagers	16 taxpayers
East Lilburn:	15 bondagers	4 taxpayers
	2 free tenants	
	1 dreng	
Eglingham:	6 tenants	4 taxpayers

With such discrepancies, a Lay Subsidy Roll must be used very carefully in settlement studies. As a record of the existence of some vills, it was useful. It also, on occasion, revealed the existence of dispersed settlements through the surnames of persons named after their place of origin, known as toponyms. For example in the entry for Ilderton is a taxpayer called Hugh of Flinthaugh which is identified with the post medieval settlement of Flinthill to the south-west of Ilderton (Vol. II No. 124).

The 1336 Roll was the last of its kind in Northumberland since it was the last time that the system of taxation was based directly on the movable wealth of the individual (Beresford 1963, 7). The outstanding feature of the 1336 Roll is the dramatic



decline in the numbers of taxpayers and the tax due from the 1296 Roll. The County History tends to blame it on the effects of the Scots Wars, but it has been suggested that assessments in other parts of the country also became smaller and less realistic (Willard 1934, 345). It is apparent from the 1313 Roll that the decline occurred in the twenty odd years between that Subsidy and the 1336 Subsidy. This coincides with a particularly disastrous period in Anglo-Scottish relations and almost continuous warfare whose effects are well attested in the IPMs of local landowners. It would be strange if twenty years of warfare had not weakened the local economy and thus the ability of the population to pay. However it was also a period of agricultural distress and famine, especially in the second decade of the fourteenth century (Kershaw 1973 1-50). It is probably conclusive that from this time onwards the three northern counties were usually excused from payment of taxes because of their exposure to the depredations of the Scots.

However they did not escape the Poll Tax of 1377. This was a new tax levied at the rate of fourpence a head on all men and women over the age of fourteen except beggars (Beresford 1963, 19). Two groups of acquittances survive for Coquetdale and Glendale Wards <sup>PRO E179/</sup> (158/29 and 32), plus a single acquittance for Whittingham which is catalogued separately from the rest <sup>ibid.</sup> (158/31). The unusual aspect of these returns is the use of French instead of Latin and the frequent listing of taxpayers on the back of each acquittance. Some of the Coquetdale returns proved illegible on account of their poor state of preservation

(e.g. <sup>158/29</sup> Nos. 1-5 and 7). The average population of the Glendale vills was about fifty-two compared with an average of twenty-four for Coquetdale. The relative richness of Glendale compared with Coquetdale was noted by Dr. Fraser from the evidence of the 1296 Lay Subsidy (Fraser 1968 xxii).

Unlike the Lay Subsidy, the Poll Tax was aimed at the whole population. Unfortunately it is not possible to calculate what proportion of the population was under fourteen and it is not known how far there was evasion. In view of this the figures should be used as minimums for the population of a township.

From 1377 until the 1600s there are no lay subsidies dealing with Northumberland. This was largely as a result of the county's continual exposure to war. After the succession of James I, Northumberland again came within the ambit of Parliamentary taxation, but quarrels with Parliament on the part of both James I and his successor kept this form of taxation to a minimum. Anyway from 1334 taxes were assessed differently according to quotas which avoided the detailed assessment of taxpayers, and so are less useful in settlement studies (Beresford 1963, 7).

## 2.2 Post Medieval Documentation

### Sixteenth Century Border Surveys and Muster Rolls

The concern of Tudor monarchs with the defence of the northern border with Scotland produced a rash of surveys which inquired into the state of preparedness of the northern counties for defence. This concern was not new, as indeed the list of Castles, Fortalices and Towers in the East March made in 1415 demonstrates (Bates 1891 13-19). In the sixteenth century surveys considered two separate problems; the defensibility of castles and strongpoints, and the preparedness of the population. The former is of secondary interest to this study. The Bowes and Ellerker survey of 1541 (Bates 1891 29-49) deals with both problems but was primarily concerned with castles and towers. For Glendale it also includes a statement of the number of husbandland tenancies in a township and sometimes the state of occupancy. As a record of population in each village it was usable only as a minimum because it is difficult to establish any definite relationship with either the total population or the number of households in a township.

Most of these surveys were consulted in Bain's Calendar of Border Papers (Bain<sup>BP</sup> 1890-2). This Calendar is a collection of State Papers which are relevant to the Borders and Anglo-Scottish relations in the second half of the reign of Elizabeth I. Only the 1596 "Commission into the Decay of Border Service" was examined in the original at the Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. This revealed that the "Border Papers" had been collected

and bound into a large book (perhaps this was the work of Bain). The document itself was well preserved, but relatively incomprehensible, being written in Secretary Hand. It was selected for study because it detailed the landowners who were responsible for the decay of Border Service as well as the number of decays, and the reasons for it.

Border Service was a peculiarity of the English Border counties as its name suggests. It should not be confused with the Musters which were common to all counties and fell upon all able-bodied men, between sixteen and sixty years old, once every three years (Boynton 1967, 13-16). Border Service was devised to try and combat the almost continual state of war which prevailed upon the Border. Border landowners like the Percies expected their tenantry to turn out, armed and mounted, in their service (James 1973, 67). Up until the 1530s, important landlords like the Percies had been the cornerstone of Border defence, but Henry VIII broke their power. Consequently the expedient of co-opting the "service" of tenants to their lords, for the defence of the Border under the command of the Warden, was employed. The efficacy of the system would seem to be in doubt since each of these surveys was executed to determine the decay of Border Service. In 1584 only two hundred men out of a potential fifteen hundred and twenty two were properly equipped for service (Bain B.P. i No.253). The base date for the survey was 1535 (27 Henry VIII) which probably defines the beginning of the system.

The usefulness of these documents to this study is twofold. Firstly, they refer to the number of tenants or husbandlands in



each village liable for service, the degree of any deficiency and the reasons for it. Secondly, they are good evidence for the continued existence or otherwise of settlements and indeed for the existence of new ones. The 1580 and 1584 surveys follow the format which is based on the village or township. The 1584 survey is less useful because it does not assess the reasons for decay in each case, and is deficient in other details. The 1580 survey was not itself very successful in finding out the causes of decay in every case. In concept these surveys follow the 1541 Survey of Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Ralph Ellerker, except in its concentration on the details of Border strongholds and the description of the nature of the Border terrain. Useful though these details are, it was the township by township record of husbandland tenancies and whether they were occupied that was particularly useful for this study.

Comparisons of the figures in the surveys for the East March indicate that they are generally consistent with other forms of documentation such as estate surveys, rentals and even IPMs. On occasion there are strange discrepancies. IPMs of Cornhill in the early fifteenth century suggest a number of husbandlands which totals ten more than the figure in the 1541 Survey and this is confirmed in the 1580 Survey. This could be a case of scribal error. Comparison of the surveys with the Percy estate surveys revealed a close coincidence of figures for husbandlands. Other alterations are usually explained by the surveys themselves.

The 1596 Survey is arranged under headings of the causes of the decay of service with an entry for each landowner

responsible. This is revealing because it attributes decay to such causes as the turning over of land to pasture or demesne and identifies the landlord who initiated it. Such agrarian change is directly relevant to the decay of village settlements.

It should be noted that the surveys are divided into the three Border Marches, East, Middle and West. For this study both the East and Middle Marches are relevant. The dividing line between East and Middle Marches followed the river Aln westwards as far as Whittingham Vale, but then proceeded north-west to enter the Cheviots south of Wooler. This boundary would appear to be that of the old medieval division of Northumberland into the Wards of Coquetdale to the south and Glendale and Bamburgh to the north.

The detail for the East March was generally of higher quality than that for the Middle March, so that there is an unavoidable geographical bias in the information obtained from these sources. Accident of landownership and documentary survival have left much of Upper Coquetdale and Wittingham Vale with little comparative material for this period. For this reason less weight was given to the figures for the Middle March which often appeared to be unbelievably low. In the 1580 Survey the vills were organised under headings for the various landowners. Although the figure for one or two townships for the Percy or Ogle estates like Over Buston or Sharperton compare with other sources of documentation, in general they appear low, particularly for the Ten Towns of Coquetdale.

Table 2.2	1580 Muster Roll (attendance)	1604 Crown Survey (tenants)
Alwinton	3 & 1	10
Biddleston	14	12
Clennell	7	7
Thirham	1	5
Sharperton	7	7
Burradon	6	24
Netherton	5	22
Fawdon	5 (Percy)	4
Ingram	1 (Collingwood)	12
Lordship of Bewick:		
Old Bewick	11	22
New Bewick	1	3
East Lilburn	7	14
Wooperton	3	14
Eglington & Harrup	n.d.	12

### Hearth Tax

The Restoration Parliament granted Charles II a new tax which was intended to be one of the main financial supports of the Crown. This was known as the Hearth Tax because it was levied according to the number of hearths or chimneys which a householder (of whatever status) possessed. This has left a series of returns of which the most comprehensive are the two 1665 returns for Northumberland and that of 1666 for North Durham (P.R.O. E/179/158/103, 106 and E179/106/28 respectively).

The Hearth Tax return was levied by the township as were Lay

Subsidies. Each entry states the place, the taxpayers and the number of hearths and the non-solvents (those too poor to pay). The North Durham Roll for 1666 lists non-solvents in a separate list. The machinery for assessment and collection resided in the local officials of the shire from the Sheriff to the local constables. However the method of collection allowed local officials to connive at evasions and an attempt to circumvent this was made by farming out the tax to contractors after 1664 (Welford 1911, 49ff). The two 1665 returns for Northumberland would suggest that this had not been entirely successful since there were some glaring omissions of whole townships in the Glendale area. Furthermore some townships are grouped together, whilst others have ridiculously low numbers of householders; for example Adderstone in Bamburgh Ward with two taxpayers. Comparison of the entry for the combined townships of Ellingham, Tinely, Doxford and Preston, which lists just three taxpayers, with the Court Roll of Preston Manor shows a considerable discrepancy. The Court Roll lists a total of fifteen tenants from Preston, Tinely and Ellingham alone (N.C.R.O. ZHG II). The Durham return of 1666 on the other hand would appear to be more complete except for the anomaly of the single taxpayer for the township of Duddo. Comparison of the Court Roll of Scremerston in 1660 with the tax return finds seven tenants and forty five cottagers in 1660 and forty five taxpayers in 1666 (P.R.O. ADM 74 6/1).

For the above reasons the returns must be viewed with caution. The number of taxpayers and non-solvents is certainly a



minimum figure for the number of households in a township. The figure cannot be identified with a particular village, especially at a time when farm dispersal was taking place in some instances. Social distinctions are revealed. A man or woman's title is stated, for example Mr. or Esquire. Invariably it is these members of the gentry who tend to have houses with more than one hearth, for example Mr. John Carr of Lesbury who had six hearths and is recorded in Percy estate records as a prominent tenant.

Surveys of Crown Estates c.1560 to 1608

At the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth I, the North Durham estates of the Bishop of Durham known as Norham and Islandshire were alienated by an Act of Parliament from the See of Durham, and a survey of these lands was carried out. This survey of 1560-1 described the position of each township in relation to its neighbours, the existence of any subsidiary hamlets, the manorial lord, his demesnes, the tenants and any defensive structure (Raine 1852 15ff.).

During the course of the sixteenth century a number of estates on the Borders came into the hands of the Crown. At the accession of James VI of Scotland to the English throne in 1603 a survey was initiated to determine what the estates yielded in rents and to assess what they might be worth if improved. The 1604 Survey was published in 1891 by J. Sanderson. It dealt with the manors of Bewick, Etal, Berrington and the lordships of Redesdale and Tynedale which included Upper Coquetdale. The survey lists the tenants and acreages of land held in addition to the rental and valuation. The acreages are in round numbers and

should be viewed with suspicion. The manor of Bewick was still in Crown hands in 1608 when it was again surveyed. This document was consulted at the Public Record Office (P.R.O. KR2/223). It is more detailed than the edited version of the 1604 Survey. The description of each tenant's holdings included the various farm-buildings and the fields in which the tenant held land as well as rights of common. None of these estates remained for long in Crown hands as they were soon granted to favourites or sold.

The quality of evidence offered by the rentals and surveys of the medieval and post medieval periods is extremely variable and of questionable usefulness in a study of this type which aims to produce a settlement history. This is often because of the abstruseness of the rentals which are chiefly concerned with the annunciation of the services and dues owed to the landlord. With the fossilisation of the tenurial arrangements in the fourteenth century and the introduction of the husbandland in place of the bondland, it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain a representative picture of the numbers of tenants actually present at any one time, or indeed of the actual numbers of resident families or households. The Percy estate surveys of the post medieval period are no better in this respect. It is often apparent that a tenant may hold several husbandlands or cottages or parts thereof, although it is possible for different persons to have the same name, but it is not often clear if this engrossment is what it seems, because many of these engrossed holdings may have been sublet. In this way it is probable that the number of tenements or tenants does not accord with the

number of households in a village. This means that any serious attempt to plot the decline or increase in the size of villages through their recorded tenant holdings is fraught with sources of error.

However changes in the tenurial structure of a village may be significant. It may herald true engrossment and consequently physical changes in farm organisation e.g. Tuggal. This need not be associated with depopulation if the engrosser continues to be involved in the communal system and all that it entails.

#### Post Medieval Estate Records

This type of record encompasses a variety of categories of documents. It includes Surveys, Terriers, Rentals, Enclosure Agreements and Court Rolls, not to mention many other classes of lesser importance to this study, but which have none the less been consulted. By design, estate Maps and Plans are discussed separately from the written records at the end of this section. Surveys, Rentals and Court Rolls are in the medieval tradition of manorial documents, except that they are written largely in English instead of Latin or French.

Estate records are to be found in two main repositories. All records of the Percy estate are to be found at Alnwick Castle in the Muniment Tower. The Surveys, Rentals and Maps were stored in the Middle Room. A catalogue of the contents was made in the nineteenth century and many documents were transcribed. Surveys are classed A, Rentals B, <sup>Enclosure Agreements C,</sup> and Maps class O. No other class of document was consulted. The nine large bound folio volumes of Mayson's Survey with its parchment plans were separately stored

in the vaults of the Keep and were only available on special request (Aln. Cas. A. V). Mayson's Survey was not written in Secretary Hand. As a formal and decorative document, a more ornate but classical script was used. However the original fifteen volumes of terrier notes on which it was based were written in Secretary Hand (Aln. Cas. A.IV).

#### Surveys, Rentals and Terriers

The medieval tradition of a survey was continued. It was often little different from a rental in content, except that a rental might exclude reference to demesne land unless it was leased. But the Survey did on occasion go to much greater lengths in detailing the possessions of a landowner. It could include a description of the bounds of an estate and information about the quality and availability of land and pasture.

Three sixteenth century surveys survive which approach this degree of detail. These comprise a survey of a moiety of the lordship of Ditchburn in 1578 (N.C.R.O. 399), the estate of Sir Thomas Grey of Horton in about 1570 (N.C.R.O. 2088), and Clarkson's Survey of the lordship of Alnwick (Aln. Cas. A.I.i). The first two are very alike in style and format. They are characterised by curious outline sketches of the pieces of demesne or infield mentioned in the description, with measurements in perches. They represent the first attempt at mapping the lands described in a survey. They also are of sufficient detail for topographic detail to be included (e.g. North Charlton in the Ditchburn Survey). Both documents were written in small handbooks with decorated borders.



Clarkson's Survey of the Percy estate in 1566/7 was consulted at Alnwick Castle in manuscript form. It was written in Secretary Hand whose reading was aided by a later written transcript (probably nineteenth century). In fact large parts of the Survey were quoted in the County History, especially Volumes I and II. There are no sketches in Clarkson's Survey, but there are detailed descriptions of the tenants' holdings. The extent of a holding was often "by estimation" rather than by measurement. In addition Clarkson describes the quality of the cultivated land, as well as pasture and waste, recent changes that have taken place, and includes his recommendations for improvement. It is this last feature which makes Clarkson's Survey unique; no other survey is as detailed in its comments.

Clarkson's Survey has been a fruitful source of information to historians, geographers and archaeologists. For this study it was important as a source for its descriptions of tenants' holdings, its topographical details and the references to improvements and agrarian changes current at that time. The rental section of the survey compares well with Hall and Humberton's Survey made in 1569 at the attainder of the Seventh Earl of Northumberland (P.R.O. E 164/37). The topographical detail should be treated with some caution, because without maps the descriptions can be misleading or ambiguous (eg. No. 120).

Mayson's Survey was carried out during the years 1612-20. Unlike previous surveys it aimed to describe and survey every piece of land in each township, strip by strip or rigg by rigg. This constituted a terrier rather than a mere survey. It was

executed in the wake of new survey techniques that were developed at this time. Each piece of land was measured to the nearest sixteenth of a perch.

During the period 1613-29 the engineer Robert Norton was employed to illustrate the survey with maps and plans, many of which were bound into the folio volumes of the formal version. The "Exemplification" as it is termed was commissioned in 1622, but not all the manors and townships were ever included, e.g. Tuggal, Lucker and others, and in other cases the plans were not bound in with the volumes and must be sought amongst the estate maps (Aln. Cas. Class O). Mayson's Survey and its plans form a unique source, partly in the quality of their detail, but perhaps more importantly in the contribution for the first time of a series of plans of the various Percy townships to a high standard of accuracy. To this study the chief interest was the representation of the villages and settlements for the first time. Most disconcertingly it demonstrated that a village plan could be more complex than had been suggested by the survey or terrier, as at Lucker or Longhoughton (Nos. 140 and 120). The plans are highly coloured. Demesne land or freehold land is usually distinguished from husbandlands by the use of a different colour; white for freehold, green for demesne.

Later surveys in the Percy estate records are much less detailed affairs; more in the nature of rentals with a few additional notes concerning improvements and enclosures. In this mould are Stockdale's Survey of 1586 (Aln. Cas. A. II); Locke's Survey of 1685 (ibid. B.I.3); the 1727 Survey (ibid. A. I.4) and

Seymour's Survey of 1755-64 (Aln. Cas. A. I.6). These surveys enable a good picture of the development of the estate throughout this period to be built up. However the limited nature of the information can hide as much as it reveals and there is a suspicion that some of the details are merely copied from the previous survey, especially in the 1586 and 1727 surveys. The form of the surveys had become rather anachronistic by the early eighteenth century. Very often the traditional holdings had been engrossed, but the surveys studiously list each nominal holding as if it were still a separate entity. They also hide the extent to which holdings were sublet; a feature which is fully recognised in Seymour's Survey (see p.37 above).

This survey covers several years, because it would appear to be a list of the new leases taken out after the acquisition of the estate by the Smithson Duke of Northumberland after his marriage to the Duke of Somerset's heiress in 1748. It lists the farmhold leases and cottage holdings in each township, but describes each holding properly instead of using the nominal method of the 1727 Survey. Each entry includes a description of the farm-buildings and cottages as well as the exact acreage of the holding, and to whom it was sublet, if at all.

It is important that the level of information provided by a document is properly understood, in order to arrive at a closer idea of the size of a settlement. It is of course realised that subletting may have engineered a rather different reality to the picture revealed by the Survey. The actual number of households may be higher than the number of tenants. An example of such a



situation would be the township of Lucker. In 1665 sixteen householders were listed (PRO E179/158/103) but in the 1685 Survey five tenants were recorded. Similarly contrasting figures may be found for Longhoughton and Lesbury. The twenty year difference in date might cast doubt on this conclusion, but the 1702 Survey, only seventeen years later, heightens the contrast in the figures. Equally, Seymour's Survey has numerous cottages listed amongst the various farmholds which ought to be included in any estimate of the size of a village.

Later rentals after the acquisition of the estate by the Smithsons show a progressive alteration in the organisation of the estate and a recognition of reality. For example the notional farms derived from the ancient husbandland system were abandoned and replaced by actual tenant farms, consisting of an extent of land and a set of farm-buildings (Aln. Cas. B. 13, 15, 21 etc.).

From the other estates, most of the information is culled from rentals and call rolls (i.e. the list which was attached to the Court Roll of tenants liable to attend the manorial court) which should in theory record the same names but rarely do in practice. The rental was a tool of estate management in which the tenant's name, his holding and its value were entered with the extent of payment and arrears. One possible source of confusion was the absence of freeholders and cottagers, but this could be made good by examining the Court Rolls for the same period. The cottagers are particularly elusive tenants whose presence in the rental is erratic; their inclusion in some



Grey rentals may indicate rights to common pasture (e.g. N.C.R.O. 424, Box 4 A 1693), but their exclusion is proof of nothing.

By and large few rentals survive for the seventeenth century, but a number of stray examples exist from several estates, notably the Swinburne estate of Edlingham (N.C.R.O. ZSW), one of 1669 from the Radcliffe estate (N.C.R.O. ZCK 14/1), the 1693 rental of the Grey estate (N.C.R.O. 424/4A) and a rental from the Forster estate of Bamburgh amongst the Crewe MSS (N.C.R.O. 452 D3/1). From the second quarter of the eighteenth century the rentals proliferate. This is no doubt connected with the advent of enclosure and improvement which made the old arrangements inoperative and their records immaterial (Wrathmell 1975), so that only post-improvement documents were considered worth preserving. The problem with rentals is subletting; there is no guarantee that the tenant is the farmer, or that a tenant sublets to one rather than several persons. This has a bearing on the use of rentals as a guide to the agrarian organisation of a township, the principle being that tenurial change may be equated with agrarian change. A sudden reduction in the number of tenants is not in itself a proof of reorganisation, but it may be an indicator. On the other hand a township exhibiting little tenurial change is indicative of negligible reorganisation, although this is again a poor generalisation (e.g. Percy estate surveys of 1685 to 1727). A useful indicator in the rental of a new arrangement is the appearance of new farm place-names.

The Court Roll in this study was used as evidence of the number of households in a township because it was supposed to

encompass all grades of tenant. In this instance it was a valuable counterweight to the rental. It is a source that is of variable quality in direct relation to the health of the manorial institutions. It is remarkable that the manorial court was resurrected in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with some landowners even attempting to resurrect these redundant institutions presumably in order to enhance their social standing. <sup>(eg. the Brownes of Doxford, see No 181)</sup> Their agrarian roll was still largely minimal, except where common-field management was required as on the Bamburgh estate in the early eighteenth century. The best series of rolls comes from the lordship of Embleton which was purchased by the Grays of Chillingham in the early seventeenth century. The early seventeenth century lists of tenants may be profitably compared with those for the turn of the eighteenth century (N.C.R.O. ZBM 1 & 2).

Even in the eighteenth century estate surveys are not common in this area. Most of the larger estates had surveys carried out with the object of describing the units of land relating to each farm. This was to be accompanied by a set of plans. Surveys of this type are in the terrier tradition rather than that of the Percy surveys which were essentially detailed rentals, except of course Mayson's survey. The written part of the survey is usually entered in a Field Book which tends to survive better than the accompanying plans. Indeed only the Derwentwater estates have a complete set of plans. The Ogle estates in Coquetdale, surveyed in 1724 (NCRO ZAN M13/A12), have none, but the Field Book may be compared with the plans for a 1632 survey

which in this instance has not survived. The Haggerston estate was surveyed in 1757, but whilst a Field Book for the northern part of the estate around Haggerston survives (NCRO 722 F/1), none remains for the southern part around Ellingham, although a plan of Ellingham was found in the Hall at Preston. This survey shows the estate in a state of flux. The inlands of Buckton were partially divided but those of Ellingham completely, while the moor at Ellingham was still not improved. An earlier rental of the estate in 1711, although bare in detail, provides a useful comparison with this later survey (ZHG XVI/3).

Estate Plans and Tithe Maps (Plan 7).

The earliest plans accompanied estate surveys, a tradition that was maintained into the nineteenth century. Simple outline plans on paper of lands under cultivation were incorporated into two sixteenth century surveys preserved at the County Record Office for the Gray of Horton estate and a moiety of the lordship of Ditchburn. These sketches were too rudimentary to be of any consequence. The 1599 plan of Rock township illustrating a reorganisation of the demesne and town-lands of the tenants is also essentially an outline, but is annotated with acreages and titles of land-use and provides the earliest illustration of a village (Bod Lib. Thoresby 2).

Robert Norton's plans to accompany Mayson's Survey of the Alnwick estates (1613-29) were a new departure; executed on vellum and lavishly highlighted in colour, often at large scales such as twenty perches to the inch, these plans were never rivalled in scope until the end of the eighteenth century and



never in aesthetic quality. Some of the plans were bound into leather bound books, but a few remain separately stored in the Muniments Tower of Alnwick Castle with the other plans of later dates. This series is especially important for its unique record of unimproved open and common field systems, and for its unrivalled record of village and settlement layout and site. They were the first Northumbrian plans executed with the newly acquired surveying techniques which enabled area measurement, up to one sixteenth of a perch.

Plans to accompany a survey of the Ogle estates of the Earl of Newcastle in 1632 are preserved in the Nottingham Record Office, but the survey has been lost. Copies were consulted in the Northumberland County Records Office (NCRO 782/11). These are less detailed than Norton's maps, but are of sufficiently large scale to show the settlement plans clearly. The plans may be compared with the 1724 survey of the same estate (see above).

Relatively few good plans survive for the next hundred years and those that do betray a tendency to return to the primitive quality of the pre-Norton outline plans (e.g. a plan of Budle 1653, Aln. Cas. O XIV i). The acquisition of the Derwentwater estate by Greenwich Hospital Trustees saw the preparation of a book of plans in 1736 to illustrate a field survey. These were carried out with a scale of chains, a relatively new departure in Northumberland, and attractively coloured and shaded to highlight the different fields and enclosures. The shading takes the form of lines and not a wash and could be mistaken for an attempt to describe the direction of ridge and furrow: there is no evidence



that this is so (Greenwich Hospital Estates Office, Middleton).

Apart from a small group of maps of variable quality for the Ford estate after it was acquired by the Delavals in the mid-eighteenth century (N.C.R.O. 2DE), and two from the Haggerston estate for 1757 (in private possession), the remainder of the area is poorly served. The great tragedy is the almost total lack of maps from the Grey and Tankerville estates pre-1800, except for one of the village of Embleton in c.1730 and Stamford of 1788 (N.C.R.O. Tankerville MSS). Plans of the Belford estate in 1733, shortly after its purchase by Abraham Dixon, and the Edlingham estate of the Swinburnes in 1731, display certain common characteristics of style with the use of colour shading to differentiate the different farms, a technique common to many eighteenth and early nineteenth century plans. A notable feature of the plans of townships before 1750 is the lack of rectangular or geometric fields, which during the later eighteenth century became more frequent.

There are a considerable number of plans preserved at Alnwick Castle in the Muniments Room for the eighteenth century and after. These may be divided into three main groups. A small number in relatively primitive style carried out during the ownership of the Duke of Somerset (i.e. pre-1748), often by John Robertson; a series after the succession of the Smithson Dukes in the 1760s and 1770s by Isaac Thomson and Thomas Wilkin, several in connection with enclosure; and a third set executed in the early nineteenth century by Thomas Bell which illustrate the reorganised farms and cottage-holdings at large scale, and were

later utilised by the Tithe Commissioners.

The Tithe Maps of the 1840s were of extremely variable quality. The best were the copies of Percy estate surveys carried out by Thomas Bell (N.C.R.O. Bell MSS). Townships in divided ownership also have detailed surveys, e.g. Lowick and Sunderland (Nos. 138 and 191), but by far the majority which were in the hands of a single owner have simple outline plans and a small scale.

#### County Maps

County Maps begin with Saxton's map of 1579 (N.C.R.O.). This merely shows village and hamlet settlement by a symbol and major hills or woodland and parks diagrammatically. It does at least show relative position and the very existence of settlements, but little else. Until Captain Armstrong's map of 1769, no one improved upon Saxton, and often merely copied his work (Morden and Speed). Armstrong's map was a new departure. It was at a scale of one inch to a mile which enabled him to indicate in a simple fashion the relative size of settlements and their basic layout. However, parks and relief features were still rudimentary (N.C.R.O. ZAN PM9). Greenwood's map of 1828 was a distinct improvement upon this (N.C.R.O.). Also at one inch scale, it attempted to represent buildings, roads, plantations and hills with some accuracy, using hachures to indicate hill-slopes. The county was finally surveyed by the Ordnance Survey in the mid-nineteenth century and published in 1861.

It should be remembered when using any maps or plans that

they only represent that which the surveyor considers important or requisite. Features that the archaeologist or geographer might wish to see may be omitted for this reason. The absence of any piece of information, as with any document, is not necessarily proof that it does not exist.

Royalist Compositions, Roman Catholic Registers, and Parish Registers

After the Civil Wars between Parliament and the King in the 1640s, the victors confiscated the estates of Royalists and Roman Catholics. This was both a source of money for the government and a retribution on delinquent royalists. In due course the estates were valued on the basis of their rentals and then sold. The valuations provide information about a number of estates at a period when other records are scarce (Welford 1905). The detail provided by the valuations is often scanty, but it is possible that the valuations were not fully transcribed. Many of the confiscated estates were sold to agents; men like Brownell and Crouch who acted for royalists and in due course sold the estates back to their original owners.

After the 1715 rebellion, the Crown began to look on Catholics as a potential source of disaffection. It was duly ordered that Catholics register both their names and the value of their estates so that the government could identify and control potential traitors (Hodgson 1918). These registers list all the sources of income from their estates whether it be demesne, lease or tithe and even state when they are in debt. Like the Compositions, these Registers are a source of information about

the estates of landowners, which are poorly served by other records. Only for the Collingwood estate does a rental exist which may be compared with the Register and the comparison is close (see Thrunton No.197).

Parish Registers in North Northumberland start from the mid seventeenth century in one or two cases (Norham and Edlingham), but by and large start at the turn of the eighteenth century. Transcripts of the Registers were consulted at the County Record Office. Microfilm copies were also available. For this study they were simply used as a source for identifying new settlements. Absence of an expected place-name was not considered to be proof that it did not exist.

#### Antiquarian and Topographical Writings

From the early eighteenth century topographical works in the Leland tradition proliferate, becoming increasingly detailed and comprehensive. Since their motivations were varied, so the quality of useful data on villages and settlements also varies. A common concern of these men was their interest in genealogy. John Warburton who worked for the Duke of Somerset as Herald collected information in preparation for a History of Northumberland that was never written. These notes shed useful light on the state of many village settlements in the early eighteenth century (Hodgson 1916). George Mark, a little later in 1734, wrote a survey of the county which was useful in detailing an estimate of the population, in numbers of families, and also the state of the chief village or parochial centre and the value of its terrain. The population figures compare well



with the number of families listed in the 1736 Visitation for the Bishop of Durham (Hinde 1869 and Brassley 1974). Mackenzie's History of Northumberland published in 1825 provided comparable detail, but more comprehensively for all settlements of any note; he also wrote a general commentary on the agriculture of the area and includes population statistics from Census returns.

John Hodgson's History of Northumberland does not deal with north Northumberland, but his later volumes provide useful transcripts of important documents in the history of the County. In addition his notes for the parts that were never written are preserved in the County Record Office; these include paper cuttings, topographical notes and further transcripts of medieval documents. A good proportion of this data was later incorporated in the Northumberland County History. Comparison of his work with other antiquarians like Cadwallader Bates has shown that his transcripts should be checked, if possible. James Raine's History and Antiquities of North Durham proved to be a mine of information of both topographical and documentary data. This filled the gap left by the failure of the Northumberland County History to cover this anomalous chunk of North Northumberland.

The official Northumberland County History of fifteen volumes was largely produced at the turn of the twentieth century and deals with the north of the county in Volumes I, II, V, VII, XI, XIV and XV. The early volumes are good both in their topographical detail and in their documentary data for settlement studies, but the later three volumes become progressively more limited in scope and detail, Volume XV being particularly

inadequate.

The pages of the journals of local antiquarian societies were consulted for topographical information. These included the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities, Archaeologia Aeliana and the Proceedings of the Berwick Naturalists Club. By and large, as with <sup>the</sup> County Histories, there was a dominant concern with the genealogy of local families, but interesting topographical details and pieces of documentation of relevance to this study were occasionally forthcoming.

George Tate's History of Borough, Castle and Barony of Alnwick <sup>1866 -</sup> (1868/9) was the only source for the townships of the modern parish of Alnwick as the County History did not cover it. This was presumably to avoid duplication. The work is a useful source both for the Percy family, the Abbey of Alnwick and Hulne Priory and includes a number of topographical details for settlements in the parish of Alnwick.

### 2.3 Archaeological Evidence

This was derived from two sources. Firstly, <sup>RAF vertical</sup> aerial photographs were studied with the aim of identifying areas of ridge and furrow cultivation and plotting the more extensive expanses directly onto tracing-film. This provided information about the extent of former cultivation, particularly of upland regions, and the form of the furlong system and occasional changes therein. Wherever possible these areas were examined on the ground, which provided information about ridge formation and size, and changes therein.

Secondly settlements were identified by extracting likely sites from the Ordnance Survey Record Cards, a valuable source; MVRG lists; and from clues derived from topographical writings, early county maps and estate or tithe maps. These were then visited. Extensive sites so discovered were surveyed by measurement; chiefly by the use of a plane-table and tapes, based upon a set of fixed points. About twenty five measured surveys were carried out thus. A further thirty five or so "paced" surveys were executed at less extensive sites based upon copies of the second and third edition Ordnance Survey maps at twenty five inches to a mile (1:2500).

This body of evidence represents a reasonably comprehensive survey of the earthwork remains of medieval and post medieval activity at former village sites. If one excludes those village-sites that are still occupied, there are still in excess of fifty percent of former village sites for which little or no

earthwork evidence is extant. This is a result of three main factors; firstly the obliteration at an increasing pace of earthwork sites by arable cultivation, secondly the continued occupation of former village sites by the modern farm with its large modern yards and barns, and labourers' cottages, and thirdly the conversion of a number of sites (fifteen) to parkland or woodland with the consequent destruction of earthwork features.

As a combination of the development of several hundred years, earthwork remains must be handled with care. Although medieval features may be present, what is visible may represent nineteenth century activity rather than the lay-out of a medieval village. A good example is the attributed site of the hamlet of Barton, a dependancy of Whittingham. The site is surrounded by ridge and furrow cultivation of reverse-S form, but the settlement is substantially that of a nineteenth century farm. This consists of an E-shaped block of out-buildings, a common Northumbrian format, and another set of foundations beside it which are presumed to be the farm-house. These buildings lie in a rectangular yard with a drove way leading off across the ridge and furrow (No 12). The interpretation was confirmed by comparison with the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1861, which showed the farm of High Barton at this position. Of course the site may still be that of the former hamlet.

There remains some potential for identifying sites that have been ploughed by the plotting of pottery scatters and from crop-marks. This avenue was largely ignored in this study because it



was not very productive. It is considered probable that a proportion of medieval sites, otherwise unsuspected due to late medieval migrations or their very smallness, may be discovered in this way in the future.

Earthwork evidence did provide a counterpart to the evidence of estate plans for village settlements. Of the sixty-five or so earthwork sites which were identified, half were of good quality with surviving house-sites and crofts. These good quality sites show a marked distributional bias towards the Cheviots which may be explained by the predominantly pastoral land-use of that area in the last two hundred and fifty years (Plan 8). Equally the absence of sites of good quality in the arable lands of Tweedside is readily explained by the more intensive nature of arable cultivation. By and large the distribution of sites complements well those villages which have extant estate plans of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (Plan 7).

However there are a small number of earthwork sites for which there are also seventeenth and eighteenth century estate plans. When these were compared, it revealed that there could be a close correlation, down to the smallest kink in a boundary, between the estate plans and the earthwork plans. This gives a *terminus ante quem* for the establishment of the village lay out. At Alnham some earthworks survive directly opposite the church which comprise a rectangular enclosure with house sites; an irregular close to its west and above it in a dominant position a substantial rectangular earthwork of a former building. The estate plan accompanying the survey of 1619 shows that the toft

and house site belonged to a free tenant and that the substantial building was the Tower and manor of Alnham. The coincidence of boundaries was very exact. This gives a terminus ante quem to the dating of the lay-out of this part of the village: whilst the tower itself probably dates back to the late fourteenth century as it was documented in 1405 (NCH XIV 573). Similar correlations of earthwork and estate plan were observed at Tuggal (c.1620), Easington (1731) and Buckton (1757). At Buckton, it was apparent after examining the estate plan that the old crofts had ceased to function as adjuncts to the tofts by that date, so it may be argued that the earthworks represent the medieval village plan and the estate plan the reorganised eighteenth century farm-hamlet. On the other hand Dovecote Close in 1757 matched the earthwork remains found on the ground and was still in use at this period, but was abandoned by 1861 (first edition Ordnance Survey).

## 2.4 Physical Geography

The topography of north Northumberland is strongly dominated by its geological strata. At the hub of the system is the volcanic massif of Cheviot which is formed of andesite lavas around a core of granite. This comprises a block of upland on the western border of the area. The granite core rises to over two thousand feet<sup>(609.8 m)</sup> whilst much of the surrounding andesite is over one thousand feet<sup>(305 m)</sup>. Beyond the volcanic massif are rocks of the Carboniferous age which dip radially from the Cheviot core and outcrop concentrically in belts around it. These consist progressively outwards of the Cementstone Group, the Fell Sandstone, the Scremerston Coal Group, the Carboniferous Limestone Group and the Millstone Grit and Coal Measures. The Cementstone Group are mainly fine grained rocks; sandstones, shales and thin magnesian limestone. They occupy the Tweed Basin and the inland vales of the Till/Breamish Valley, Whittingham Vale and Upper Coquetdale; land which is below five hundred feet<sup>(152.5m)</sup> except at the top of Coquetdale where it rises to eight hundred feet at Newton and Biddleston. The Fell Sandstone ridge defines the eastern limit of these inland vales with a striking escarpment which at Ross Castle above Chillingham rises to one thousand feet<sup>(305 m)</sup>. The Fell Sandstones are comprised of much coarser marine sediments which because of their greater resistance to erosion have had considerable influence upon land use and topography. Next, the Scremerston Group consists of coal bearing sandstones and shales which outcrop in a relatively narrow band

to the east of the Fell Sandstone. This picture is complicated in the Chatton area by the Holburne anticline which causes the repetition of the outcropping of the Fell Sandstone and Scremerston Series. This has created two main north-south ridges of higher land in the Lowick to Chatton region. Most of the coastal area of north Northumberland is composed of the Carboniferous Limestone series, but with a small zone of Millstone Grit to the north of Warkworth. The thin limestones of this series have had little influence on the topography of this region. However the Great Whin Sill makes an important impact upon the coastal topography of north Northumberland. Its intensive hard dolerite outcrops form the foundation for both villages and castles throughout the area in a belt from Embleton northwards as far as the Belford area.

Glaciation in the shape of the Scottish Ice Sheet and the local Cheviot Ice has left its mark on the landscape. The ice cut deep glaciated valleys like the Harthope and College Valleys in the Cheviots. Elsewhere the retreating glaciers deposited drumlins in Tweedside and kettle morrains or hillocks south of Wooler and kames (ridges of sand and gravel) south-west of Bradford in Bamburghshire. In the Millfield Basin north of Wooler, a glacial lake has left deposits of laminated sediments. However these deposits are cosmetic changes to the dominant drift geology of the area which is substantially a glacial till or boulder clay. In the Cheviot foothills this is mixed with coarse glacial debris derived from the andesite, but in the coastal parts the glacial till is "far-travelled" and finer. This



glacial activity has an important bearing on soils.

Physiographically north Northumberland divided itself into four distinct regions; one, the Cheviot massif; two, the Cementstone Vales of the Tweed basin and inland vales; three, the Fell Sandstone ridge; and four, the coastal plain (see plan 1). These are well defined geologically and topographically. The Cheviots and Fell Sandstone ridge are upland expanses with thin acid soils, poorly drained in the latter case, and higher rainfall, i.e. marginal land; whilst the vales and coastal plains are low-lying with cultivable soils derived in the main from the boulder clays described previously. However the soils of the coastal region tend to be heavier, dominated by the finer-grained boulder clays with little coarse glacial debris, and are consequently less well drained than the Tweedside and Vale soils which are derived more frequently from <sup>fluvio-</sup>glacial <sup>sands and</sup> gravels and fluvial deposits, and the coarser glacial till over the parent rocks of the Cementstone Group. <sup>(Payton 1980 5)</sup> This difference in soils was more critical in the medieval period when drainage techniques were more primitive.

Natural drainage is dominated by three main river systems. On the Border drainage centres on the Tweed with its main tributary the Till and its offshoots the Glen, Wooler Water and Breamish; all of which rise in the Cheviots (the Glen on the Scottish side). These rivers are prevented from flowing directly to the sea by the Fell Sandstone Ridge and combine in the Milfield Basin to form the Till. Further south the Aln and the Coquet have cut through the Fell Sandstone Ridge at Hulne Park

and Rothbury respectively to flow directly to the sea: again both rivers rise in the Cheviot massif, the Aln at the top of Whittingham Vale and the Coquet by Chew Green at the Border. Before Coquetdale opens out at Alwinton the Coquet passes through about a dozen miles of steep sided river valley towards the southern edge of the Cheviot massif. Draining into it are a series of burns which have cut steep sided valleys into the andesite to the north of the Coquet. The coastal region is drained by a number of less substantial streams of which the Long Nanny and Waren are the most notable and which cut denes or gorges through the soft upper strata of the lower carboniferous series. At least three medieval settlements are named after the latter; Warenmouth (a port), Warenford and Warenton. Despite their insignificant size, such burns as these were important as territorial boundaries in the medieval period, for example between Spindleston and Outchester or Preston and Ellingham. They were also important as sources of water and therefore on occasion the central feature in the topography of a village e.g. Warenford, Lucker or Fleetham.

The uneven glacial terrain of north Northumberland provided two main situations which were empirically observed to be the sites of villages; first the hilltop, crest or ridge which provided a well drained site and second the burnside which gave easy access to a source of water.

(see Table 2.3 below)

Table 2.3 Medieval Village sites:

	1. <u>Hilltop, Ridge or Crest</u>	2. <u>Burnside</u>
Examples:	Denwick	Old Middleton
	East Ditchburn	South Middleton
	West Ditchburn	Lucker
	Longframlington	Birling
	Acton	Fleetham
	Felton Parva	Lesbury
	Cheswick	Rock
	Shoreswood	
	Swinhoe	

## CHAPTER THREE : MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT

The medieval villages of north Northumberland have been defined as being part of an interrelated system that includes three main elements, the village, the cultivated land and the waste, all of which lay within a territorial unit known as the vill or township.

3.1 Territorial Units : Parish, Estate and Township

In north Northumberland the township (Latin - villa) and not the ecclesiastical parish was the basic territorial unit (Plan 3). Some two hundred such units are listed in the foedaries of the first half of the thirteenth century for the north part of Northumberland and the north Durham estates of Norham and Islandshire (BF). Yet for the same area only twenty five parishes are recorded in an ecclesiastical taxation roll of 1292 (Hodgson <sup>iii</sup> 1830 348 ff.). In only three parishes, Fenton, Branxton and Wooler, was there identity of township and parish, since Howick was technically only a chapel (NCH I 360). More typically the parish encompassed ten to fifteen townships, for instance Norham, Chatton or Whittingham, whilst Holy Island and Bamburgh parishes had in excess of twenty townships. The large parishes were not without subsidiary chapels or chapels of ease. Indeed the chapels of Tweedmouth, Ancroft, Killoe and Lowick were set up by the monks of Holy Island priory in the early twelfth century to serve the population of this extensive parish, but the tithes



were still payable to Holy Island, and rights of marriage, baptism and burial remained under their control. This was also the arrangement in Bamburgh parish which had been appropriated by Nostell Priory. Here the parishioners were served by chapels of ease at Tuggal, Swynhoe, Lucker and Belford. The inconvenience of the size of parish is highlighted by the petition of the landlords of the townships in the neighbourhood of Belford to Nostell Priory during the plague of 1349 that they should be permitted to have the right of burial in Belford Chapel. Tuggal Chapel had already received this privilege from 1217.

The parish bore little relation to the township. They were designed not just to provide ecclesiastical services but to provide a financial mechanism for the support of the church. This was achieved by levying a tithe on the produce of the land within the jurisdiction of the parish. This had been established in legal principle since the reign of King Edgar 959-75 (Platt 1981 47). In Midland and southern England the parish was more frequently identified with the township if not universally as recent work in Dorset and Lincolnshire has demonstrated (Taylor 1983 150), but perhaps because of the relative poverty of the north this was never achieved in Northumberland and other northern counties. This is highlighted by the example of Fenton parish which failed to survive the fourteenth century and was subsumed within Wooler parish in 1313.

The parish system was well established by the thirteenth century and had been largely fossilised by the appropriations of the monasteries in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. <sup>(Table 3.1 below)</sup>

Ecclesiastical corporations were keen champions of their rights. An example of this was the dispute over the tithes of Mindrum and Downham townships by Kirkham Priory which held the advowson of Carham, and Kirknewton Church, which was resolved in favour of the former by the late twelfth century.<sup>(NCH XI 15)</sup>

Table 3.1: Advowsons of Churches in North Northumberland

Brinkburn Priory:	Felton	pre 1135 by Roger Bertram
Nostel Priory:	Bamburgh	Tuggal chapel 2/3 to Alnwick Abbey and right of burial 1216.
Merton College:	Embleton	1274 by Earl of Lancaster
Carlisle Priory:	Warkwork	)
	Whittingham 1/2	) All by Henry I
	Rothbury	)
Alnwick Abbey:	Chatton	W. de Vesce
	Chillingham	" " "
	Lesbury	" " "
	Shilbottle	Richard Tison pre 1147 and Brainshaugh chapelry
	Alnham	W. de Vesce
	Fenton	John le Viscount c.1200
Kirkham Priory:	Carham	Walter Espec mid 12th century
	Ilderton	" " " " " "
	Kirknewton	" " " " " "
Tynemouth Priory:	Eglington	Winnoc the Hunter c.1106- 1116 (later to St. Albans)
	Whittingham	(pre grant to Carlisle c.1132)

	Edlingham	(pre 1174)
Durham Cathedral	Whittingham	1/2 by Henry I
Priory:	Ellingham	Nicholas de Grenville early 12th century
	Howick chapelry	pre 1158
	Branxton	Ralph of Branxton confirmed 1195
	Holy Island and Norham	
	Rothbury and Warkworth	(pre 1132)
	Edlingham	1174

Parishes in lay proprietorship:

Wooler:	Lord of Wooler
Ford:	Lord of Ford, a dependent of Lords of Wooler
Alwinton:	Lord of Redesdale, as Lord of Ten Towns of Coquetdale
Ingram:	Lord of manor, a dependent of Lord of Redesdale as part of Ten Towns of Coquetdale

Formerly the tithes and upkeep of a church had been the right of the lay patron and consequently subject to the accidents of inheritance. Dr. Wrathmell illustrated this with Bywell on the River Tyne, where as a result of the partition of an estate between heirs before the eleventh century two new parishes were established and each heir built a church to serve his estate.

The two late Saxon churches of Bywell, two hundred yards apart, survive to illustrate it (Wrathmell 1975 74-77). There are no such instances in the north of the county, but there are several churches with extant architectural elements of pre-Conquest date, notably the churches of Whittingham and Edlingham (Taylor 1965-78 657-60 and 717-8). The former has a tower, the base of which incorporates Saxon long and short work, but whose belfry was blown up in the nineteenth century by an eccentric vicar. At Edlingham the west wall of the nave includes some long and short stonework and a door with a square lintel and tympanum of semi-circular form, probably of pre-Conquest date. Both may be on the site of the churches referred to in an eighth century grant of King Coelwulf to St. Cuthbert recorded by Simeon of Durham in the early twelfth century, in which the vills and churches of Whittingham, Edlingham, Eglington and Woodhorn were included. <sup>(Hinde 1868 I 68)</sup>

The first three parishes which adjoined one another in the nineteenth century had eleven, five and twelve townships respectively, raising the possibility that the vills referred to in the eighth century grant encompassed extensive estates and that the churches' jurisdiction related directly to them. In the early thirteenth century it was the parishes which bounded one another, but the townships were divided amongst numerous <sup>(Plan 5)</sup> landlords. Indeed Whittingham Church was granted to Carlisle Priory by Henry I. If these three places were the centres of Royal estates which became subdivided after the Conquest, then they may be lost examples of pre-feudal estates called "shires". <sup>(see p.71-2)</sup>

Other examples of this are those where the church was situated at



the eponymous centre of the shire. Holy Island was also the centre of a shire called Islandshire which is where the parish church was sited, but here the townships of Lowick, Barmoor, Howburn and Bowsden were part of the barony of Wooler although they were part of the parish. <sup>(Plan 5)</sup> The Holy Island estate may have been reduced since its original grant.

There is reason to support the conclusion that the parochial pattern of north Northumberland was fossilised by two concurrent developments which took place in the course of the twelfth century. Firstly the appropriation of tithes by the monasteries and secondly the feudal dispensation and the development of the right of primogeniture which became customary in the mid twelfth century. The appropriation of tithes by the monasteries willy-nilly ensured the maintenance of the status quo and preserved the twelfth century arrangements of the parishes they acquired. This applies to the majority of parishes in the area, <sup>(see Table 3.1)</sup> for example Felton church and its tithes were among the first grants to Brinkburn Priory in the early twelfth century (NCH VII 459). The feudal dispensation in Northumberland was effected in the first half of the twelfth century following the final abolition of the old Anglian earldom with the death of Robert de Mowbray in 1095. For this reason many of the estates given to tenants-in-chief were new creations at the very time when it was becoming fashionable to grant churches and their tithes to monasteries. Thus any parish which is wholly in possession of a tenant-in-chief may be a recent creation. Most of the parishes whose lands belonged to the Tison and later de Vescy Lords of Alwick, i.e.

Alnham, Shilbottle, Alwinton, Chatton and Lesbury, were of this type (Plan 5). The implication is that some subdivision of parishes may have occurred at this time. It is probably no accident that the churches of these parishes were often sited at the chief manor of the parish which was usually kept in hand, i.e. demesne manors like Chatton, Alnham, Shilbottle and Lesbury. With the appropriation of churches and tithes the chance for any continued development of churches and parishes in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was lost. On the other hand this did not prevent the proliferation of chapels of ease to serve the population of townships geographically isolated from the parish church, as in Chatton parish where chapels are recorded at Doddington and Humbleton at the opposite limits of the parish, or in Eglingham with chapels at Brandon and Bewick, and Rock and Rennington in Embleton parish.

The feudal dispensation of the twelfth century incorporated within it many Anglian institutions and estates. The survival of the Northumbrian estate known as the "shire" in the post-Conquest period was recognised by Joliffe (1926). At the centre of this estate was the caput to which the inhabitants of the dependent vills owed food renders and light services. The administration of these dues and services in the dependent townships was put in the hands of ministerial officials called drengs or thegns. Norhamshire and Islandshire were estates of this type, although by 1208-1210 only Thornton in Norhamshire was held in drengage and Beal, Goswick and Buckton in Islandshire, but the vills of Lowlynn, Berrington and Kyloe were held in thegnage. Islandshire

is atypical in that the shire-court was not held on Lindisfarne Island, but at the mainland vill of Fenwick (BF i 26-8), presumably for ease of access.

These two shires formed the North Durham Estate of the Bishop of Durham and were excluded from the jurisdiction of the Sheriff of Northumberland. This accident of history has preserved the identity of the two shires, others are less easy to discover.

An expression of the institution of the shire was the custom by which the villis of the shire were permitted to have rights of pasture on a piece of common waste (Joliffe 1926 12 and Barrow 1973 52). Two instances of this practice may be identified. Feltonshire comprised the caput of Felton, its half dozen dependencies, all of which lay on the north side of the River Coquet and three villis Bockenhead, Thirston and Eshott to the south. The villis of Felton parish to the south of the Coquet apparently did not belong to this arrangement, but this need not exclude them from the shire. An early twelfth century charter of Brinkburn Priory refers to the granting of rights of common pasture throughout the entire land of "Feltonshyre" (Page 1893 2-3). As Wrathmell found at Corbridge, not all members of the estate shared a single common (Wrathmell 1975<sup>70</sup>). At the division of Felton common in 1754 it was those villis north of the Coquet which were party to this agreement. Carham is not actually described as a shire, but the villis of the parish had rights of common pasture on the waste known in the post-medieval period as Wark Common, which was enclosed in 1799. This lay to the south



of Carham and may originally have belonged to Carham rather than Wark, its neighbour to the east. A charter of Kirkham Priory refers to the boundary between Carham and Presson as lying along the Howburn which is on the south side of the Common (Bod. Lib. Fairfax 7 fol. 82). One explanation is that the establishment of Wark as the caput of the barony de Ros, and the grant of Carham to Kirkham Priory caused a shift in the centre of gravity of the estate. At some point the common waste of the estate came to be attached to Wark rather than Carham. All the vills of the parish belonged to the barony de Ros, and were party to the division of Wark Common in 1799. Carham was granted to St. Cuthbert in the seventh century, according to Simeon of Durham, who states that this included "quicquid ad eam pertinet" which implies the existence of appended lands. However there is some evidence that this was a fabrication on the part of the monks of Durham to bolster their claim to the advowson.<sup>(NCH XI 12 & 25)</sup>

The use of the term "villa" in these pre-Conquest land-grants suggests that a villa then included an estate more extensive than the immediate settlement (Morris 1977 92-3). Warkworth villa "cum suis appendiciis" was granted to St. Cuthbert. This estate appears to have been much larger than the modern or indeed the thirteenth century parish, stretching fifteen miles north-south and eight miles east-west. This would suggest it formerly included the later parishes of Felton and Shilbottle and perhaps others to the south.

More obscure is the large Anglian Royal estate of Bamburgh. The parish of Bamburgh has the largest number of townships of any



in the north in the county and the term Bamburghshire is sometimes found in medieval documentation, but this would appear to be a descriptive term referring to the coastal plain between Belford and Alnwick, and not sensu strictu a pre-feudal estate. However as an important royal centre since the sixth century, some relics of a substantial estate may be expected, but those that do survive are widely spread from the Cheviots to the coast. In the neighbourhood of Bamburgh, Mousen and Bednall were held in drengage and owed various services and dues including truncage, the carriage of logs, to Bamburgh Castle. At a much greater distance the three Middletons and Roddam in the foothills of the Cheviots to the south of Wooler were also held in drengage and owed truncage to Bamburgh Castle. Similarly in Whittingham parish, Eslington, Callaly and Yetlington and Whittingham and its dependencies were all drengage holdings which owed truncage to Bamburgh Castle (BF I 200-205). The neighbouring dependencies of Bamburgh, including the demesne villis of Shoreston and Sunderland, were connected with Whittingham by the pasture right of pannage in Whittingham wood. This indicates that there were economic ties between the far-flung parts of the estate. This fragmentary picture of related properties is filled out to some extent by Ditchburn and Bewick lordships which continued to owe rents to Bamburgh into the post medieval period, despite the alienation of Bewick to Tynemouth Priory, and the former demesne villis of Budle and Spindleston which were alienated in the early twelfth century. In size and scope the Bamburgh estate may be compared with the substantial multiple estate of Burghshire in

West Yorkshire (Jones 1976 35.ff.), but in Northumberland there is no Domesday Book to provide the equivalent degree of evidence available in Yorkshire.

The essential element in both the Anglo-Saxon estate, such as the shire, and the barony was the vill (Joliffe 1926 3). In illustration of this, after the Conquest the barons of Northumberland inherited the requirement to pay the non-feudal tax called cornage, a cattle render levied upon the vill. An account of the cornage payments for the forty-ninth year of Henry III's reign indicates that the payment for a single vill was fourteen pence; this was what Bradford, Little Ryle, Mousen, Bednall and Eslington paid. The barons paid for their villis in a block sum (Hinde 1857 44-7). Dividing this figure by fourteen, the result should be the same as the number of villis in the barony. Some of the results were not in whole numbers, but even so it was possible to show a correlation with the numbers of villis recorded in the 1242 feudal aid for each barony (BF ii 1113.ff.). Only the baronies of Alnwick and Mitford showed a substantial discrepancy, their payments being too low. Some twelve villis in the barony of Alnwick and eight in Mitford were unaccounted for in the total. It is suspected that these differences are the result of unrecorded exemptions rather than any increase in villis peculiar to these baronies since the Anglian period. In the case of Alnwick, it is surmised that the Ten Towns of Coquetdale which were subinfeudated to the regalian sarjeanty of Redesdale, were exempted. On this basis it is argued that the distribution of villis in the thirteenth century

is similar to that of the pre-Conquest period. In Durham it has been argued that the non-cornage paying vills found largely in the western part of the county are the result of post-Conquest colonisation (Roberts 1972 39). There is little evidence for any such late colonisation in north Northumberland, rather the opposite. North Northumberland was an old settled landscape by the time of the Norman Conquest in which the pattern of townships was well established.

Table 3.2: Cornage Payments (49 Henry III 1264-5)

( ) (Hinde 1857 44-7 )

Estate	Payment		No. of vills (1242)	Payment by 14
	s	d		
Barony de Vescy (Alnwick)	60	0	64	51.4
Barony de Werck (on Tweed)	25	0	24.5	21.4
Barony de Musco Campo (Wooler)	27	8	24.5	23.7
Barony de Comitibus Patricii (Beanley)	20	10	15	17.8
Barony de Gaugy (Ellingham)	7	8	8	6.57
Barony de Bradford		14	1	1
Barony de John le Viscount	8	4	7	7.42
Barony de Ralph fitz Roger (Ditchburn)	4	6	3	3.85
De terra de Whittingham	4	0	3.5	3.42
De John de Eslington		14	1	1
De Callaly	2	4	2	2
Barony de Hepple	9	0	6.5	7.7
De Bedenhal		14	1	1



De Mousen	14	1	1
De Ryle (Parva)	14	1	1
Barony de Warkworth	no data		
Barony de Rothbury	no data		
Barony de Mitford	31 4	35	26.85
Barony de Graystock	no data		

The vill or township, the basic territorial unit of the area, was that expanse of land in which a community of peasants lived and practised agriculture. Farming was invariably mixed, although pastoral or arable farming might predominate according to the terrain, but the existence of suitable arable land was a critical requirement for such a community (Michelmores 1979 7). It is for this reason that townships are not to be found in the central core of the Cheviots. Beyond this basic requirement, other necessities such as building materials, fuel and indeed pasture could be and often were sought outside the township, so that it would be wrong to see the township as an entirely self-sufficient unit.

Archaeologically it is the physical remains of settlement that are most readily identified. A township community may be scattered about in dispersed farms or grouped together in a nucleated village or hamlet. Any combination of these elements may be represented in a township. However there must be a community for a township to exist; if there is no permanent settlement there cannot be a township. In the thirteenth century the lawyer Henry de Bracton defined the township thus: "If a person should build a single edifice in the fields, there will



not be a vill, but when in the process of time several edifices have begun to be built adjoining to or neighbouring to one another, there begins to be a vill" (Twiss 1883 394-5). This is a useful guide, but reality does not always accord with legal definition. The demesne farm treated as a separate vill for taxation is a case in point; there is no community, but essentially a single farm e.g. Bulmer in Longhoughton or Hulne near Alnwick, both demesnes of the Lords of Alnwick which were taxed as vills in 1296 (Fraser 1968 nos. 319 and 340). Where the term "villa" is used or a place is described in context such as an IPM that implies that the place is a vill, then it is assumed to be a township, although in some cases the existence of a community cannot be demonstrated archaeologically or through documentation.

Despite the pre-Conquest antiquity of the vill, the concomitant settlement pattern is not documented until after the Conquest. By the thirteenth century the vill with its nucleated village was typical of north Northumberland, but the origins of this settlement pattern are not known. Usually the vill and the village have the same name, yet which came first is conjectural. Archaeological field walking in the arable lands of the Milfield basin by Roger Miket (pers. comm.) and the author on different occasions has produced no artefactual evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement outside the known nucleated medieval village sites. Aerial photography and survey by T. W. Gates (pers. comm.) have consistently failed to find any Anglian or pre-Conquest sites, apart from the Dark Age palatial sites of Yeavering and Milfield,

the "upper class" site at nearby Thirlings and what may prove to be a "grubenhäuser" site near Powburn. It is possible that the Anglo-Saxon period is aceramic and that their timber habitations were of such a slight structure that they are neither visible on the ground or from the air. Another possibility is that the later medieval village sites occupy the sites of the later Anglo-Saxon settlements. This can be demonstrated by archaeological excavation, but to date there is no rural site in Northumberland which has produced settlement remains datable to this period. This is not in itself conclusive because so little large scale excavation of medieval village sites has been attempted; West Whelpington stands alone in this respect but no conclusive evidence of late Anglian settlement was found (Jarrett 1962 and 1970). Intensive fieldwork by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in Northamptonshire has found evidence for a change in the settlement pattern from that of dispersed farms and hamlets to nucleated villages in the mid-Saxon period (RCHM 1979 III xlviii<sup>Λ</sup> and Hall 1981 35).

When such a transformation took place in Northumberland cannot be stated with any validity in the present state of knowledge.

The vill was a territorial unit which was defined by physical boundaries. These boundaries were of considerable economic significance to the peasant community and had to be recognised both by the inhabitants and their neighbours. The boundary descriptions in the twelfth century charters for the upland vill of Trowhope or the coastal vill of Sturton Grange near Warkworth (Fowler 1878 197-8) reveal close attention to detail, with the use of both natural and man-made features.

The habitual use of natural features such as rivers, streams or watersheds as township boundaries has been recognised in Durham and Yorkshire (Clack and Gill 1981 30 and Michelmore 1979 1-4) The use of these natural boundaries has been observed in north Northumberland and, like Durham, may be of some antiquity. To demonstrate unequivocally that a river boundary of 1861 was used as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century is rarely possible. Where early charters exist that describe estate boundaries, as in the case of Sturton Grange, this may be done, but changes of appellation create difficulties in equating medieval and modern landscape features. Thus in the twelfth century boundary description of Sturton (Fowler 1878 197-8), the Alriburn, between Sturton and Shilbottle, is <sup>now</sup> called the Grange Burn.

The territorial vill in north Northumberland was very often adopted as the administrative vill, but the two should not be confused. The administrative vill was required to perform various duties including the raising of taxes, the giving of evidence at inquests, the apprehending of thieves and the maintenance of roads and bridges (Vinogradoff 1908 475). Consequently tax rolls and assize rolls which list vills may not represent the same area as the territorial vill. The combination of two or more vills to form a "villa integra" is a common feature of Copeland in Cumberland in the medieval period (Winchester 1978 55-69) and is not unheard of in Northumberland, for example the Trewhitts in Coquetdale (Gaz. No. 201), but the coincidence of territorial vill and administrative vill was much



greater in Northumberland than in Cumberland. Indeed, north Northumberland is comparable to the West Cumberland coast in this respect. Just as West Cumberland was apparently an area of nucleated settlement so was north Northumberland which is in contrast to the Lakeland fells of Copeland where dispersed settlement was to be found.

It has been observed that in general "the vill of the thirteenth century is the civil parish of the nineteenth" (Pollock and Maitland 1898 i 560). More recently it has been shown that, even where most Domesday vills can still be recognised in West Yorkshire in the nineteenth century, the situation has not remained static. Townships were amalgamated or divided, and parts thereof detached to create new ones (Michelmores 1979 4). In Copeland the medieval pattern of vills is barely recognisable in the modern civil parishes, and Dr. Winchester has demonstrated that the modern civil parish derives from the Poor Law administration set up in the reign of Charles II in the seventeenth century (Winchester 1978 *ibid.*).

North Northumberland is closer to West Yorkshire than to Copeland in the evolution of its townships since the medieval period. About seventy five percent of the townships identifiable in thirteenth century north Northumberland may be equated with the civil parishes recorded and mapped by the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century. There is at least a *prima facie* case for the boundaries of these townships, as surveyed in the mid-nineteenth century, being much the same as in the thirteenth century. Yet even here the division of inter-commoned waste and



estate boundary rationalisations (e.g. Outchester and Easington, mid-eighteenth century) in the post medieval period may have altered the old boundaries (see table<sup>3.3</sup>). Of the twenty five percent of townships that have disappeared or have been radically altered, the change is the result of settlement abandonment or colonisation during the late medieval period and estate reorganisation in the post medieval period. For example, New Etal was divided from the old township of Etal and the township of Trowhope<sup>was</sup> abandoned so that its boundaries may only be partially reconstructed from the original grant of Trowhope to Melrose Abbey in the twelfth century.

Table 3.3: Township Changes c.1500-1800

New Townships:	New Etal (Etal)
(compare Plans 3 & 4)	New Bewick (Bewick)
	Chathill (Preston)
	Glororem (Spindleston)
	Chillingham Newtown (formerly Trikulton)
	Easington Grange (Unthank)
	Bassington (Shipley)
	Broome Park (Bolton)
	Greens (Evenwood)
	Hartlaw (Hazon)
	Clinch (Fawdon)
	Longridge (Horncliffe)
	Unthank (Orde)
	Milfield (?)
	Newstead (Osberwick)

Broomridge (Ford)  
 Grindon Rigg (Grindon)  
 Flodden (Heatheslaw)  
 Kentstone (Kyløe)  
 Wreighill (Caistron)

Abandoned Townships: Unthank (Bamburgh)  
 Evenwood  
 Heddon  
 Trowhope  
 Alnhamsheles  
 Trikulton

Divisions of Inter-Commoned Waste:

Date of Award	Common	Township Boundaries Altered by Award
1754	Felton	Felton, Old Felton, Acton, Glantleys, Framlington, Swarland, Newton on the Moor
1799	Wark	Wark, Carham, Presson, Learmouth
1777	Howtel	Howtel, Crookhouse, Heatherslaw
1731	Tuggal	Tuggal, Brunton, Preston and Chathill, Swinhoe
1780	Beanley	Beanley, Shawdon, Crawley
1759	Shilbottle	Shilbottle, Whittle
c1750	Belford	Belford, Detchant, Middleton (Atkinson-Clark MSS)

## Boundary rationalisation:

c1750 Easington (Belford estate) and Outchester (GHE) as shown on 1736 plan, being an amendment thereof

## Boundary shift:

c1650 Catfordlaw from Ford to Etal

The first edition Ordnance Survey of Northumberland at six inches to the mile in 1861 records the boundaries of the civil parishes or townships. This was used as a starting point for a retrogressive projection of these boundaries, subject to the aforesaid changes in the late and post medieval period, into the thirteenth century. It was a relatively straightforward process to remove new townships such as Glororem near Spindleston or Chathill near Preston (Nos. 188 and 168) and restore their lands to the old township, but lost vills like Crocklaw near Warenton or Foxton in Coquetdale (Nos. 56 and 91) could only be partially reconstructed. Estate plans of the early seventeenth century helped to confirm the late medieval antiquity of the boundaries of a number of townships in the lordships of Alnwick and Ogle (e.g. Nos. 112 or 44 et al.). This was supported by the "bounder" descriptions in Clarkson's Survey of 1566-7 (Aln. Cas. A I i). There had been superficial changes only in the post medieval period; the most noticeable alterations being observed in areas of common waste referred to previously. No attempt to define medieval boundaries exactly was seriously contemplated. It was more important to establish the existence of medieval vills and the approximate medieval boundary based on that recorded by the Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century, whilst

taking into account the more substantial recorded changes that have taken place.

This process enabled a picture to be drawn up of the pattern of township boundaries. It is immediately apparent that the relief features of the area, that is to say the Cheviots and Fell Sandstone Ridge, played a major part in the formation of the township boundaries. Townships on the edge of these upland expanses are typically oblong in shape taking in their compass both the upland wastes and the low-lying cultivable lands (Plan 2). These townships are usually of greater size than the lowland and coastal townships (i.e. two thousand acres plus). The lowland township is more modest in size (generally less than 2000 acres) and more compact in shape, tending to be a squarish block of land. Similarly diverse patterns have been observed in Lincolnshire, Dorset and Cambridgeshire (Taylor 1983 148-50). Some upland areas were never incorporated into the township structure because of the absence of cultivable land, for instance the forests of Redesdale and Cheviot in the Cheviots and the forests of Rothbury and Alnwick or Hayden on the Fell Sandstone Ridge. In other cases upland waste was appended to upland edge villis like Alnham or Ingram in the Cheviots or Chatton or Bewick on the Fell Sandstone Ridge. In most cases these upland expanses were forest areas e.g. Cheviot, Alnham, Redesdale, Hayden and others.

The vill boundaries are the framework within which the settlement pattern is set; the settlement pattern and changes therein can best be understood once the framework of territorial



units is established. Furthermore the estate and the vill are units which in north Northumberland are often coincident, and were secured for posterity by the adoption of primogeniture in the twelfth century.

### 3.2 The evidence of contemporary documentation for medieval settlement

The settlement pattern of north Northumberland in the medieval period was dominated by the nucleated village, that is to say a clustered group of four or more peasant houses and garths which forms the settlement nucleus of a territorial vill (see Chapter 3.1). In the absence of any overall archaeological framework, it is to the contemporary documentation that this study must direct itself for evidence of medieval settlement.

The discussion of the medieval documentary evidence ranges from that of the detailed descriptions of deeds and charters, through the evidence of taxation rolls to Inquisitions Post Mortem. It would be unrealistic and shortsighted if this evidence were to be viewed in isolation. Although there are dangers inherent in comparing the descriptions of medieval deeds with post medieval and modern maps and plans or with village plans derived from earthwork remains, it would be limiting significantly the potential of the evidence if no attempt were made to do so. The value of this approach will be demonstrated in the course of the discussion.

The most comprehensive evidence for medieval settlement comes from the lay Subsidy of 1296. This was assessed vill by vill and as has been demonstrated previously, in Northumberland the taxation vill was coincident, by and large, with the territorial vill (see Chapter 3.1).<sup>p.78</sup> Thus it provides little evidence for

any dispersed settlements.

The peasant, or indeed any other class or person, bearing a locational surname is "strong evidence for the existence of that settlement" (Faull 1979 40). Furthermore some taxpayers with toponymic surnames may be equated with isolated farms in the post medieval period. Significantly there are few taxpayers with toponymic surnames apart from those who were landowners of vills, e.g. Richard of Heddon, or those whose name derived from outside the area, for example William de Molle in Killum, Molle lying over in Scotland.

#### 1. Upland Settlement: i The Cheviots

Dispersed settlements identified in this way in the Subsidy Roll are chiefly confined to Cheviot edge vills and other upland edge vills, for example the surname of Hugh of Flinthaugh in Ilderton may be identified with the post medieval settlement of Flinthaugh (NU 007197), and that of Nicholas de Punchardon in Biddleston may be equated with the modern farm of Punchardon (NT 935095), a sheep farm dating from the early eighteenth century if not before. Alwinton and Hethpool vills have inflated lists of taxpayers because they included upland territories in their taxation vills (see No. 8). In Alwinton is a taxpayer surnamed Hepden, who may be identified with a place now called Barrowburn (NT 867107) <sup>(NCH XV 437)</sup> and another named Wholehope may be associated with a small valley just east of Shillmoor (NT 889075). The inhabitants of upland farms beyond the main settlement were <sup>thus</sup> included in the taxation vill.

Arable cultivation in these hills is severely limited by the

steepness of the terrain, an aspect of them which is identified by Bowes and Ellerker in their Border Survey of 1541 (Hodgson 1828 222). On the other hand some small areas of broad ridge and furrow cultivation have been observed above Alwinton, Hethpool and in other parts of the Cheviots away from the village sites. In this context the recognition of ridge and furrow, eight metres broad, behind the farm of Barrowburn raised the possibility that Hepden and perhaps other upland farms in the medieval period were involved in mixed farming. Mixed farming requires a more permanent settlement than the sheep or cattle farm which could be managed on a seasonal basis and would thus be more likely to appear in a tax roll.

Summer pasturing or transhumance is well attested in parts of southern Northumberland (Ramm et al 1970). The practice is known to have survived in the Forest of Cheviot until the early seventeenth century when the landowners began to suppress the practice in favour of more settled pastoral farming<sup>P</sup> (PRO SC 8 261/19 & 20). The early abolition of the custom in the Cheviots has made the identification of sheiling sites more hazardous than in Wark forest in south Northumberland (see Ramm et al 1970), but a site consisting of a dozen small house-sites on the east side of the Cheviots in South Middleton township may be an example of this type of settlement (No.145).

Some evidence for the custom on the Fell Sandstone Ridge survives in the names of Chatton Sheles hamlet in Chatton parish, a permanent settlement according to the 1296 Lay Subsidy,

Swynleysheles vill on the edge of Aydon Forest (Nos.44A



and 194), and references in IPMs of the Lordship of Alnwick which refer to the Seles of Holyn, in an Inquisition of Sir John de Vescey's estate in 1265, as well as the Seles of Alnham Moor <sup>in the Cheviots</sup> (PRO C145/29/38)<sup>2</sup>.

There are ~~no~~ <sup>few other</sup> references to the practice in the Cheviot area in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. However enigmatic place-names occasionally hint at its former existence: for example Shielcleugh for a hillside above Blakehope in the upper reaches of the Breamish Valley <sup>in Ingram parish</sup> and Batailshielhaugh in the Uswayburn Valley which is referred to as a lodge in 1255 (Fowler 1878 78). The name of the hamlet of Alnhamsheles is suggestive of its origins in a former shieling ground before being converted into a permanent settlement in the thirteenth century. <sup>pp</sup> The great Abbeyes such as Newminster, Kelso and Alnwick acquired upland expanses above Alwinton in the Forest of Redesdale which they exploited for their value as pasturage for sheep. Newminster possessed the extensive upland estate of Kidland which included a fulling-mill at Hepden on the Coquet (Fowler 1878) <sup>ibid.</sup>. Alnwick Abbey obtained about one thousand acres of upland on the Carlcroft burn <sup>(CNT 83 12) (Charlton & Day 1979 210)</sup> which was formerly known as Stokercleugh Grange, <sup>(Take 1868/9ii22) & MCH XV 437</sup> whilst Kelso Abbey obtained pasture rights and tithes from lands in Redesdale which may be the origin of the extraordinary settlement on the site of the Roman Fort of Chew Green called Kemelpethe (Misc. No. 4).

Permanent upland settlement based on mixed farming is confined to the suitable cultivateable terrain. This is not restricted by soils in the Cheviots since most Cheviot soils are

1. Note also Harthopshede in Cheviot forest referred to in the Poll Tax return of 1377 (App. 3).
2. An IPM of G. de Lucy 1284 records '60 acres "shieling" land in Ingram, but exact site unknown.

free-draining (Chapter 2), but by the availability of a plot of land which is both extensive and level enough to plough. The astonishing aspect of the Cheviots is that areas of broad rigg are to be observed up to heights of about three hundred and seventy five metres above sea level as at Bromley field (NT 959 10<sup>5</sup>) although heights of two hundred and seventy five metres are more typical, as at Alnhamshelles (NT 962153) or Ingram (NU 063150).

Upland farms with small acreages in such isolated situations are poorly documented. Their very size and isolation would serve to preclude their documentation, although occasionally they may be identified from the names of freeholders listed in IPMs. An IPM of Geoffrey de Lucy in 1283 for his manor of Ingram lists a large number of freeholders including William of Grenside with twenty acres of land who may be named after Greenside Hill, a place which appears as a farm in the seventeenth century (Nos. 1028125).

Expanses of broad ridge and furrow ( six metres or more wide) associated with deserted farms have been observed in Alnham township at Aldersfield, Leafield, Hartlaw and Bromeley field, in Ilderton north east of Dodhill at NT 997219, at Flinthill (No. 124A), in the College Valley in the Forest of Cheviot at NT 889254 and also in the Forest of Cheviot at Luckenarks NT 955253. Extensive broad ridge and furrow on Hartside Hill lies at too great a distance from the former hamlet of Hartside at NT 986176 to have been entirely cultivated by the occupants, but as already mentioned there may have been a settlement at Greenside and an IPM of 1387 relates that there were three

husbandlands at Huntelawe, a hill adjacent to Greenside. The site of several loosely grouped house sites were observed here in a gorge between Huntlaw Hill and Hartside Hill. A deep hollow way leads up to the top of Hartside Hill from the site. The dating of these settlements to the high medieval period must remain unproven until excavations have been carried out at one or more of these sites. However broad rigg has been demonstrated by Parry as dating to before the Agricultural Revolution i.e. pre 1800 in the Lammermuirs (Parry 1978<sup>6</sup>). Furthermore in the case of Bromeley Field in Alnham it is known that land with broad rigg was used as improved pasture in the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century (see No. 6) which would appear to limit the formation of ridge and furrow to either the medieval period proper i.e. pre 1500 or to the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The former is preferred on the grounds of the deteriorating climate of this latter period which is known as the Little Ice Age (Lamb 1982 201ff), thus limiting the likelihood of successful high altitude cultivation at this late period. <sup>(but see below 168-170)</sup> It is, after all, at this period that the arable lands of the former village of Alnham Moor went out of use and were sub-divided into smaller enclosures which cut across the former rigg (see No. 7). Documented improvements of moorland waste in the late eighteenth century such as that on Edlingham Moor, exhibit narrow straight rigg which is confined within the enclosures defining the improved land.

In two areas of the Cheviots, around Hethpool and in the Upper Breamish Valley, there is enough cultivateable land to



support village settlement as a result of a more gentle terrain. In the first area are situated the vills of Heddon, Trowhope and Colpenhope and in the second the vills of Alnhamshelles and Hartside. None of these vills are listed in the Lay Subsidy of 1296 except that of Heddon which had five taxpayers. All of these places lie at a considerable altitude, between two hundred and forty and three hundred metres, on land that is at best marginal today, due to rainfall, even with the help of government and EEC grants, although there is little wrong with the soils themselves at Alnhamshelles. In the drier and perhaps warmer climate of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the soil would have been more productive and, against the background of an expanding economy and population, this land supported viable communities. In situation and aspect they are no more extraordinary than farms like Bromeley which lay at about three hundred and forty metres. <sup>(see Plan 11)</sup> Each of these sites, except Trowhope which lies mid-way up a north facing hillside, is situated next to an expanse of gently sloping terrain.

The lands surrounding Alnhamshelles amount to about two hundred and thirty acres, enough to support eleven households in 1314/5, and Hartside's lands were as extensive and supported ten households in 1340. In both townships there is visible broad ridge and furrow in the vicinity of the villages whose extent may be plotted from RAF vertical aerial photographs taken after the last World War. <sup>(see Plan 11 & Figure 2)</sup>

The terrain occupied by Heddon and Trowhope is cut by steep sided valleys which offer less opportunity for cultivation, and



the settlements are consequently smaller. There were eleven and seven adults respectively recorded in the Poll Tax of 1377 which compares with an average of fifty two for Glendale and of thirty two for Coquetdale, but Alnhamshelles and Hartside were completely absent from the rolls.<sup>(Appendix 3)</sup>

The forms of the upland villages of Heddon, Alnhamshelles and Hartside display common characteristics. All three are dominated by the row of juxtaposed garths or tofts. Essentially each site was a single row of square or rectangular tofts and adjacent or attached houses. The size of the tofts was typically about ten to twenty metres in width and twenty to thirty metres in depth.<sup>(Appendix 4)</sup> At each of the sites were small round structures about three to five metres across with sunken centres and openings in one side which suggests they were corn drying-kilns. Round corn-drying kilns were to be found in these hills in the nineteenth century as at Barrow near Alwinton (Philipson 1977 155ff), but a large round corn-drier of late medieval date has recently been found in Kelso.<sup>(Dixon 1985 forth-coming)</sup> The house-sites at these villages are generally between ten and sixteen metres long and four to six metres wide, although there are a number of house-sites at Alnhamshelles of eighteen to twenty metres in length.<sup>(Appendix 5)</sup> The house-sites are attached to the tofts, but it is noticeable that this arrangement was not always so at Alnhamshelles.

The regularity and row lay-out of these upland hamlets suggests the influence of a landlord in the establishment of these villages possibly as a single act of colonisation. This is suggested in spite of the probability that the surviving

earthworks are a reflection of the later stages in the occupation of these sites and cannot without excavation be confirmed as the original lay-out. Recent excavations at the village of Alnhamshelles would suggest that there is a case for the continuity of this lay-out throughout its history. Here the same house-site was re-used twice over a period of about two hundred years' occupation (Dixon 1983 15).

The lay-out of Trowhope contrasts with these settlements. This may well be the result of its origin in a grant of the lands of Trowhope by the lord of Wooler out of his forest of Cheviot to Melrose Abbey in the twelfth century (No. 203). The settlement began life as a grange of the Cistercian Abbey of Melrose only to be confiscated by Edward III in the mid fourteenth century, suffering final abandonment by the early sixteenth century. The site takes the form of an irregular agglomeration of houses and garths terraced into the north-facing slope of Trowhope burn. Traces of cultivation in the form of cultivation terraces and riggs were visible above, below and to the west of the site. This site is more reminiscent of the small hamlets on Dartmoor such as Hound Tor (Beresford 1979) or nearer to home the deserted hamlet of Birdhope in Redesdale (NT 813985). Its origins as a Cistercian Grange do not appear to have governed the lay-out of the site in the same way as Colpenhope. Colpenhope was set up on the extremity of Shotton township as a grange of Kelso Abbey in the twelfth century, yet its form, more than Trowhope, with a square lay-out one hundred by one hundred metres is suggestive of the planned lay-out of a grange (No.50)(Platt 1969).<sup>72 or App. 2</sup>

## ii The Fell Sandstone Ridge

The same sources may be used as evidence for the settlement of the second expanse of upland in north Northumberland generally known as the Fell Sandstone Ridge. The soils here are generally poorly drained or podsolised and this has had an inhibiting effect on settlement. As with the Cheviots most of the area was private or royal Forest, for example Rothbury, Hayden, Felton, Bewick and Chillingham. The royal forests were disforested by King John, but private chases were often retained; for example Felton Forest which was retained by the Lords of Mitford.

There is no evidence that private chases inhibited settlement in the Cheviots, so it would seem more likely that it was the poor soils that were inimical to settlement. Thus large expanses of the gentle dip slope of the Fell Sandstone Ridge were not taken into cultivation until the eighteenth century "Improvements". It was exceptional for land above about one hundred and fifty metres to be in cultivation. The upper limit of cultivation on Alnwick Moor was marked by the tenement called St. Margarets on the edge of Alnwick Moor (No. 175) to the west of Rugley at about one hundred and seventy metres above sea level, and the arable lands of the hamlet of Overswynleysheles in the vill of Swynleys, which lay at about one hundred and eighty metres above sea level.

The villages on this part of the Fell Sandstone bordering Aydon Forest are more in the nature of hamlets than villages. The hamlet of Birtwell, later called Hobberlaw, was combined with the village of Rugley in the Lay Subsidy of 1296 whilst the two



hamlets of the vill of Swynleys were not listed at all. An IPM of Lord Percy in 1314/5 found there to be eight tenants of Swynleys, but these were divided between two hamlets called Over and Nether Swynleysheles (No. 194).

Along the ridge to the south-west of Aydon Forest lies Rimside Moor, in Edlingham township, beyond it lies the forest of Rothbury and on its south-east flank the forest of Felton. It is in this area that assarting activity, typical of the colonisation of forest edge lands in other areas of the country, is to be found (e.g. Forest of Arden)<sup>(Roberts 1968)</sup>. The Bertrams of Mitford granted a large expanse of waste land (de meis desertis) to the canons of Brinkburn Priory in the early twelfth century, notably Heley, Over Heley and Pauperhaugh<sup>(No. 165)</sup> with the right to assart, enclose and cultivate (Page 1893 1). Later these assarts were recorded in IPMs of the Lords of Rothbury in the thirteenth century (PRO C132/9/1) and in 1296 several taxpayers surnamed Heley were listed under the vaccaries of Rothbury Forest (Fraser 1968 388).

To the north of Alnwick, beyond the forest of Hulne in which the de Vescy Lords of Alnwick possessed a demesne (Fraser 1968 No. 340), the Fell Sandstone was divided into extensive wastes belonging to lowland townships like Bewick, the Charltons, Chatton, Holburn, Belford and others. This area of waste is broken only in the Warenford area where there was the now lost hamlet of Crooklaw and the dependent hamlet of Chatton Sheles, just to the west, also now lost. Both these hamlets were combined with their neighbours, Warenton and Chatton respectively



in the 1296 Lay Subsidy.

## 2. The Lowlands: The Inland Vales and the Coastal Plain

The terrain of these inland areas is more favourable in terms of relief, rainfall and soils than either of the upland expanses, but there is a contrast between the rich cornlands of Glendale and the upper parts of Coquetdale and Whittingham Vale. This is reflected in the greater average of adults to be found in the vills of Glendale as compared with Coquetdale in the Poll Tax of 1377 i.e. fifty two to thirty two<sup>(App.3)</sup> and the higher assessment for taxation in the 1296 Lay Subsidy (Fraser 1968 xxi). This may be largely a difference of relief since Glendale is lower lying than for example upper Coquetdale which rises to over one hundred and fifty metres in the Alwinton area, but it may also be due to the greater potential of the well-drained soils of the area which were formed on the gravelly morraines of the retreating glaciers. Equally the heavy glacial clays of Bamburghshire were not as suitable for cultivation as the well drained gravels of Glendale. This is also reflected in the relative wealth of the area evidenced by the 1296 Lay Subsidy Roll which shows Bamburghshire to be poorer than Glendale.<sup>(Fraser ibid)</sup>

The settlement pattern is predominantly that of nuclear villages. The 1296 Lay Subsidy Roll presents a uniform and unrelieved picture which is only broken occasionally. As has been discussed previously, the isolated farm by its very nature and small size is less likely to be documented than the more substantial settlements. On the other hand a number of hamlets in Coquetdale and Whittingham Vale have been identified which

despite their size have not evaded record. In upper Coquetdale in 1369 Henry Tailbois possessed in Sharperton the places called Shetebankes, le Newhall and Foxdene. Of these Foxdene emerged as a separately owned hamlet by the sixteenth century, Newhall was considered a separate estate in 1323/4 and estate maps of 1632 record it as a separate farm of one hundred and twenty six acres (No. 154), whilst Shetebankes, now Sheepbanks, appears as a dependent farm of Sharperton with one hundred and ten acres of meadow adjacent to it (No. 180). In a similar category, although not documented before the sixteenth century, are the farms of Cote Walls and perhaps Elilaw in nearby Biddleston Township which may have been established previously although this cannot be proved (No. 19). In Whittingham Vale the hamlet of Unthank is documented from the thirteenth century when it was said to contain one and a half carucates and was substantial enough to be referred to in the Testa de Neville.

The division in status between a separate territorial vill and a dependant hamlet is a fine one which is governed as much by the hazards of ownership as by size or geography. Unthank in Alnham parish and Brotherwick in Warkworth both of similar size at about one hundred and eighty acres were always treated as townships, but Newton in Edlingham was always considered as a dependent of Edlingham despite a period of separate ownership. An essential point of distinction is the existence of arable fields which are separate from the neighbouring vills' commonfields. This may not have happened at Edlingham Newtown. Manorial dependence may inhibit but not prevent the development

of independence. Despite this factor the hamlet of Broxfield formerly in the township of Rennington became an independent vill. This may be a consequence of it being inhabited by free tenants as well as its location about a mile from the mother settlement, on the other side of Rennington Common. Geography must then play a significant part. Thus Newhall physically isolated from the village of Sharperton became a vill, but Sheepbanks did not, despite a rough similarity in size of cultivated land at about one hundred and twenty acres. Newhall is the smallest unit that supports the status of a vill. Such a vill, if it has access to an intercommoned waste, as Unthank did in Alnham common, could support as many as five or six of the standard-sized bondlands of the area (see appendix 1).  
 Brotherwick<sup>(No. 29)</sup> in Warkworth in the mid sixteenth century had four tenancies using fifty acres of land and the site of a former manor, most of the remainder being common waste.

Settlements of this size were at the lower end of the scale of nucleated villages, but were none the less nucleated with little evidence for any dispersal of farms. Brotherwick township, for example, when it was mapped in the early seventeenth century, still displayed a hamlet consisting of a single row of four garths, whilst the hamlet of Over Prendwick in Prendwick township which was abandoned by the mid sixteenth century comprised a row of at least seven juxtaposed garths. Admittedly this evidence is at best late medieval, but in the absence of any concrete contemporary evidence from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries it provides a working model for the form



of settlement in these centuries.

Such isolated farms as are documented which are to be found outside the two main upland expanses are confined to a few exceptional examples. A deed of 1296 refers to a toft and six acres of land in the township of Edlingham in Whittingham Vale called Rueley which lay perhaps as much as a mile to the west of the village near Roughley Wood (No. 69) and Fowberry Farm to the south end of the demesne lands of Bamburgh Castle. <sup>(N1091334)(NCH I 85)</sup> No other contemporary examples are documented, but it is possible that some of the late medieval references to farms and indeed some hamlets were the successors of older isolated settlements. An example of this might be the post medieval hamlet of Bassington in Shipley which is first documented as a several pasture in 1361 (No. 183), but more concrete evidence is required before the pattern of medieval settlement can be filled out in this way.

// PP  
Some dispersed settlement was the result of the abstraction of the manor and its demesnes from the rest of the village. At Longhoughton the manor of the vill was situated at Bulmer which lies over a mile away from the village and indeed Bulmer was separately taxed in the 1296 Lay Subsidy. Similarly the manor of Belford was situated about five hundred metres to the west of Belford village (NGR NU 103339). The manor is known as Westhall and was at least in part surrounded by a moat. Other examples of this development are Tuggal Hall, Newham Hall, Newlands in Warenton and Procter Steads near Dunstan (Nos. 204, 155, 210 and 65). Chirmundesden, the demesne manor of Harbottle, with five



carucates of arable land was taxed as a vill, but it is not certain if there were ever any bond tenants here or where the labour came from to work it (No. 47). The demesnes of Hulne which were taxed separately in 1296 (Fraser 1968 No. 340), would appear to be in a similar category. Finally the manor and vill of Newstead grew out of the establishment of a new manor for the Lords of Ellingham, but it seems to have been located at a site which lay apart from both Ellingham and Osberwick the vill whose lands it was to inherit.

The great monastic estates created new settlements in peripheral areas, but also changed the nature of the settlements which they acquired in lowland areas. Newminster Abbey, a Cistercian establishment, was given the vill of Stretton (Sturton Grange) which they obtained permission to enclose with a dyke or ring-fence. Here amongst other activities the monks ran a forge, but it is not documented what other aspects of the vill were altered to suit the needs of the monks, although on analogy with Cistercian activities in Yorkshire there may have been a need to maintain a village settlement, but more to serve as source of labour than as bond tenants with lands in the commons (Platt 1969 83-91). There is evidence in Yorkshire for such supporting settlements adjacent to a monastic grange both in the form of earthworks and documentation. Similar arrangements may have occurred<sup>r</sup> at Sturton Grange and perhaps at its other Grange of Caistron in Coquetdale. One effect of the Cistercian acquisition of Caistron was the growth of the hamlet of Wreighill on high land to the west of Caistron, formerly the site of a house of the

lord of the manor (see No. 38). This was probably the result of their gradual acquisition of lands in the vill and the need to exploit them efficiently. The Premonstratensian canons of Alwick were given the vill of Heckley in the mid twelfth century and in the mid thirteenth century proceeded to obtain permission to enclose their field at Heckley (Tate 1868/9 6). Such exclusive rights, in particular enclosure, are a common feature of monastic establishments.

### 3. Contemporary Documentation for the Nature, Site and Form of Medieval Settlement

In the absence of any archaeological evidence, contemporary evidence for the nature and form of medieval settlement comes from charters and deeds of the twelfth to fifteenth centuries which record the property transactions of landholders with tofts or houses either within or outside the villages of north Northumberland. This evidence supports the hypothesis that the settlement pattern of north Northumberland was dominated by the nucleated village (Plan 10).

This form of documentation is by no means comprehensive. A bare ten per cent of the territorial vills of north Northumberland are represented in deeds which have the pertinent details, but the distribution of these vills is widespread throughout the area of study and not confined either to any single geographical region or to any particular estate<sup>(Plan 6)</sup>. For this reason the sample was considered to be representative, since neither estate planning nor environmental influences could be demonstrated to have had any relevance to the type of settlement

thus revealed. The major common factor in these grants is that they were by and large the result of pious gifts or transactions with the great monasteries of the area such as Newminster Abbey or Holy Island Priory. It cannot be argued that the monasteries sought property in villages alone for it is quite apparent from the charters of Holy Island Priory, Alnwick Abbey, Newminster Abbey and others that, if there was a policy, it was to obtain lands in a variety of terrains including upland waste for grazing and fuel and lowland arable. This is evidenced, for example, by the grants of waste on Howburn Moss, a plot in the village of Howburn and land to cultivate <sup>in the ... fields</sup> to Holy Island Priory (see No. 115).

The juxtaposed toft, ie. one that is described as lying next to or between other tofts, is the most unequivocal evidence of clustered settlement. For example one of two tofts in Lucker granted to Nostell Priory in the early thirteenth century is described as lying on the west side of the toft of William de Turbeville, and there are a number of similar instances for the villis of Orde, Presson, Edlingham, Castron, Longframlington, Berrington, Lower Trewhitt, Fleetham, Paston, Chatton, Bowsden and Low Framlington. In itself this does not imply nucleation merely the clustering of tofts, but the wording of the deed may. If such a toft is described as being "in villa de" it could be situated either in the township or in the village since the term is ambiguous. However in a number of instances the village is implied and not the vill, as in the example of a grant by William de Flotterton to Newminster Abbey of a toft and croft and forty



four acres of land "in villa et territorio de Flotterton" (see No. 88). Others state unequivocally that the toft lay "in villa de" but that the accompanying lands lay in the field ("in campo de") of the same village (villa) as at Caistron, <sup>(Fowler 1878 121 ff)</sup> Over Felton, Low Framlington or Paston or in the furlong (cultura) of the same village (villa) as at Barmoor or Tweedmouth. Since a nucleated village (Latin - villa) has the same name as the fields and waste appended to it and which together make up the township some confusion is inevitable. If there are other subsidiary settlements or if the community of the vill is scattered in two or more hamlets or farms then these should be indentifiable because they have a different name from the vill, although, and this is the crux of the problem, their very smallness may preclude any mention of them in the documentation. This does not however detract from the evidence for the nucleation of settlement already cited.

In further support of this hypothesis are those deeds which describe a plot of arable land as lying "iuxta fossatum in exitu ville" or next to the dyke at the exit from the village as at Low Buston and Holburn (Nos. 37 and 115). This would be nonsensical if villa were to be interpreted as the territory of the township, especially in an area where it was common for townships like Holburn to have large expanses of waste land, but makes good sense if it is translated as village. The implication is that there was a recognised exit from the village through the cultivated land which was delimited by a dyke presumably to protect cropped land against straying animals. In other



instances it is the toft which is described as lying at the exit of the village as at Orde and Bowsden, whilst at South Charlton a plot of five roods, which lay at the west side of the exit from the village, was given to the cell of Farne on which to build (No. 43). Although it is dangerous to compare a documentary description of the thirteenth century with a post medieval plan, because of undocumented changes in village plan which may have occurred in the intervening period, it is possible to suggest a site for this plot at South Charlton in c.1620 which fits the description (No.43). Equally at Orde the toft is said to lie at the exit of the village next to the toft of the son of the grantor (Henry of Orde) to the south (as solem). The main axis of the vill in the post medieval period was north-south, so a site for this toft at the north end of either of the two rows of the village might be entertained. That at Bowsden in addition to lying by the exit of the village also lay at its head to the west side (versus partem occidentalem), thus fitting in with the east-west axis which was still apparent in the nineteenth century and even today.

It is possible to be more precise about the situation of some settlements from the description in deeds of topographical features or extant structures such as Churches. At Killum where two tofts were granted to Kirkham Priory in the thirteenth century one was described as lying on the south bank of the Bowmont Water on the west side of the village (villa) between the river and the road to Scotland (No. 126), but there is no settlement in such a situation today nor was there in the

nineteenth century. The present farm - hamlet lies on the south side of the road to Scotland and away from the river Bowmont. At Tweedmouth on the other hand a toft was situated by the bridge to Berwick which cannot have lain far from the present James I bridge, the first feasible bridging-point of the Tweed. Equally one of two tofts in Lucker which was given to Nostell Priory by Simon de Lucker in the thirteenth century lay beside the River Waren which flows through the modern settlement, in front of the Chapel of St. Peter. It is known from an estate plan that a Chapel of St. Hilda's lay on the north side of the Waren Water in the early seventeenth century and Clarkson in his survey of 1566/7 described a Chapel of St. Hilda's in ruins on the north side of the river. Despite the rededication and rebuilding of the Church there is reason to believe that its site did not change. The toft granted to Nostell Priory would have become alienated as freehold after the dissolution. A freehold toft lay on the north bank of the Waren opposite and in front of the Chapel in the early seventeenth century. Chapel sites are not always proof against the vicissitudes of history, but many of the churches of north Northumberland can be shown to have twelfth century or earlier antecedents (e.g. Whittingham, Norham et al). A deed of the early thirteenth century describes a toft in Tweedmouth which lay beside the Chapel of St. Boysilius, but the present structure dates to 1783 and is dedicated to St. Bartholomew, and it is not certain if it occupies the old site.

At Edlingham at the end of the thirteenth century a toft of the Lord of the Manor was described in a deed as situated between

that of Richard Pride and another toft of the Lord of the Manor which, in a confirmation charter of his son, is described as "meum manerium". The manor house of Edlingham was later fortified and became known as the castle of Edlingham<sup>(Fairclough 1982)</sup>. From its position at the edge of a river terrace, the options for the site of the above toft are restricted to the west side of the castle, and here there are no extant signs of occupation due to recent ploughing. The most likely position would have been between the castle and church where the 1731 estate plan shows a couple of houses and their plots.

The wording of deeds of this kind suggests the existence of a row, that is to say, a toft which lies between two others. The idea of a row of tofts is common in sixteenth and seventeenth century surveys and plans of the Percy estate and indeed other post medieval surveys and plans. The antiquity of the arrangement is more difficult to ascertain. The earliest references in the area to a row come from fifteenth century deeds; for example a deed of 1459 for Outchester describes a tenement on the southrawe which lay between the tenements of the Lord of the Manor whilst another of 1425 for Chatton finds a messuage on the north row at the east end of the town (Nos. 162 and 44). In neighbouring Berwickshire a deed of 1326 for Coldingham refers to tofts which lay in Wymillrawe (Raine 1852 App. CCCIII). On the Bishop of Durham's estates the term row is also not known before the fifteenth century and earlier topographical descriptions use the latin term "partis", for example ex parte occidentali or ex parte orientali as in Bishop



Hatfield's Survey for Byers Green (Roberts 1972 41). Similar terminology is to be found in deeds for north Northumberland (e.g. Nos. 17, 24 et al.) and also in south Northumberland (Wrathmell 1975 108). The appearance of the term row in place of this form may indicate a replanning of villages into rows from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries or that the vernacular term only crept into legal documents from this period. Roberts has argued that the earlier form found at Byers Green above refers to a row in much the same way since it often fits the extant plan of the villages described in this fashion, but it has not been possible to demonstrate this with any certainty in north Northumberland. The <sup>Latin</sup> term <sup>" "</sup> pars which may be translated loosely as side is not as specific as the term row; indeed it may have been used in a more general geographical sense. The village of Bowsden as first recorded in 1769 was made up of two rows of tofts facing each other across an east-west street, but a deed of the thirteenth century refers to a toft on the west side. Either there has been a replanning of the settlement on a different alignment or the term side was not used to describe a row or no such row existed. In view of this there can be no certainty that village lay-outs hinted at in this way relate to post medieval village plans. However the row of tofts has a medieval antiquity as suggested by the example of the toft between two others, at Edlingham in 1295, and by the deserted hamlets in the Cheviots. <sup>(page 92 above)</sup>

Despite the medieval evidence for nucleated villages in north Northumberland, it is more difficult to establish the antiquity of village plans as they come down to us in



seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth century estate plans or as earthwork remains. Archaeological evidence has been used to demonstrate the possibilities of change in the lay-out of deserted villages through replanning as at Wharram Percy and Wawne in Yorkshire, Bardolfeston in Dorset (Beresford & Hurst 1971 124 - 131) and at West Whelpington in Northumberland (Jarrett and Wrathmell 1977 113-5) and consequently the difficulty of drawing "firm conclusions about village plans either from excavations or the examination of earthworks" (Beresford and Hurst *ibid.*). However excavations have also shown the possibilities of the continuous use over a long period of toft-boundaries; for example at Faxton, <sup>crofts 1 and 2,</sup> in Northamptonshire, Thrislington in County Durham \*\*\* and indeed in Area Ten of Wharram Percy (Beresford & Hurst <sup>*ibid.*</sup> 130, Roberts 1978A, 311, Andrews and Milne 1979 28-9). Furthermore at Wharram Percy it has now been demonstrated that the basic village plan, that is to say its roads and toft-rows, remained the same over most of the medieval period from the twelfth century to the fifteenth century despite modification and <sup>a</sup> reduction in the numbers of tofts in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries which is coincident with the documentation (Hurst 1983 16). As Dr. Roberts has argued "within the English landscape there is a very wide range of possibilities, from total plan-destruction to total plan-survival". The former is evident in the numerous abandoned villages, but "the latter will be more difficult to establish" (Roberts 1977 138). The settlement landscape is constantly changing, but is influenced by the existing village topography.

This is now recognised by Hurst at Wharram Percy, but has been a central element in the work of historical geographers like Brian Roberts, Pamela Allerston and June Sheppard who have argued from the plans of surviving villages in Northern England that their regularity of lay-out is best explained by a planned episode, probably dating to the late eleventh or twelfth century (Roberts 1972 33-56, Allerston 1970 95-109 and Sheppard 1974 118-135). Indeed C. C. Taylor has extended this argument and collated evidence for regular planned villages from the Midlands and southern and western counties such as Somerset and Shropshire, but has also suggested that the irregular settlement of Preston in Holderness may have been linked to the regular lay-out of the village fields in the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries, with the implication that many villages that do not show any evidence of regularity could be the result of a deliberate planned episode (Taylor 1983 133-147). In other words regulation does not necessarily imply a regular village-plan, but equally an irregular plan may hide its planned origins and the village regulation which went with it. The origins of the Holderness planned fields and their relationship to settlement are as the author, Mary Harvey, says "undocumented ... and its results are still, therefore, a matter for debate. Any further study of the possible origins of Holderness, for example the dating of strips or settlement amalgamation, would depend upon archaeological research" (Harvey 1981 200).

The arguments of Brian Roberts and June Sheppard depend upon the existence of regular village-plans surviving either in old

estate plans of the sixteenth century onwards or in present-day villages, and the survival of good early medieval documentation such as the Domesday Book or the twelfth century surveys of the Bishopric of Durham. The early medieval fiscal assessment of a village or township is related to the village-plan using a metrical analysis. The overall fiscal assessment is related to a combination of the fiscal assessment of the holdings of the various tenants in the village. The assumption is that the size of a tenant's plot or toft in the village bears a direct relationship to his or her holding in land measured in bovates and carucates. A toft will therefore vary in size according to the tenants holding and this may be measured in perches or poles, the basic medieval unit of measurement. If the tenorial structure of a village is known, and also the length and depth of the toft-row and ideally the length of pole in use, since the royal perch of sixteen and a half feet was not necessarily used, then it ought to be possible to establish a relationship between the village-plan and the fiscal assessment. This argument has been taken further in Scandanavia where it has been linked to the "disposition and size of field-strips" (Roberts 1972 42).

The application of these analyses to Northumberland fails at once because there are no equivalent surveys to Domesday or Bolden Buke, but on the other hand there are a substantial number of village-plans derived either from estate maps or earthwork surveys which exhibit some regularity of form. The existence of regular village plans is not in itself proof of any great antiquity since planned villages were being built as late as the



nineteenth century as at Ford estate village. Late examples can usually be identified, but before the documentation becomes plentiful in the mid sixteenth century it is not possible to be sure that a village has not been replanned. Thus it is feasible to establish the plan of late medieval villages, but almost impossible to establish anything more than a working hypothesis for the early medieval period. On the other hand a more exacting approach through archaeological excavation will be costly and time consuming, so there is a place for the full use of the existing documentation in order to establish the plan development of individual villages. In view of the limitations of the documentary and archaeological evidence, any wider theory of a period of widespread village planning as suggested for Durham and North Yorkshire in the twelfth century must remain extremely tentative. The development of row villages and the implied order therein displayed, suggest that village regulation was a feature of medieval north Northumberland, but no special period of activity may be identified.

#### 4. Village Plans (Plan 9)

The extant village plans of north Northumberland were classified according to the number of rows of tofts making up the basic element of the plan, but a village with more than four rows was classified IV as at Longhoughton (No. 120). This follows Roberts classification of Durham village plans, but makes no distinction between the regular and irregular (Roberts and Austin 1975). There are several reasons for this. Firstly it has already been suggested that irregularity does not necessarily



mean a village was not laid out in a particular order at a particular time. Secondly regularity is a matter of subjectivity. Thirdly the toft row which, as already discussed has an early medieval antiquity, in itself suggests an element of order or regularity, and fourthly an irregular row may be as much a consequence of terrain or local topography as of any other reason. Equally no great importance is attached to the presence or otherwise of a village-green because it is viewed merely as an extension of the common waste into the village. If the space is narrow it is called a street or gate, if broad a green. There is no functional difference and after all a green may be an open space adjacent to a village but not within it, as at Sharperton or Castron (Nos. 180 and 38). A deed of Newminster Abbey refers to "viridi placia villae" which lay between the Coquet and the village (Fowler 1878 130). Some villages which are not surrounded by the village fields have no need of a green as at Flotterton or Hartside (Nos. 68 and 102). However on occasion the toft-rows surround a substantial space, and although this is an entirely arbitrary distinction, villages with large greens have been separately identified, as at Orde or Longframlington (Nos. 92 and 160), IIG and IVG respectively, where the letter G stands for a large or dominant green. A fifth category of villages was the dislocated cluster where there were gaps in the toft-rows or slightly dispersed toft-rows but not a large enough gap to consider the parts separately, as seen at Hepple (No. 112). Class V may include villages which have decayed since the medieval period as at Sharperton (No. 180). Class VI villages

were those villages and often hamlets like Trowup (No. 203) which showed no row plan. The remainder of village sites for which no evidence of plan was forthcoming were willy-nilly left unclassified, and constituted about 40% of the total number of former villages.

The two row village was the most characteristic settlement form in north Northumberland, comprising about two thirds of the villages with topographic evidence, earthworks or estate plans, or about forty per cent of the total number of nucleated villages or hamlets. This compares with the evidence from Durham where sixty six per cent of known village plans were of the regular two row type, excluding deserted sites, and sixty five per cent in Cumberland. The dominance of this simple plan type in north Northumberland and Durham lends weight to the suggestion by Brian Roberts that there was a concept of a village or "village-idea" that was current in the north of England in the medieval period (Roberts 1978A 313). The frequency with which the toft-rows adopt the east-west axis wherever possible is further evidence of intent on the part of village planners. The possibilities of village regulation will be examined and it may be that the preference for the east-west axis bears some relationship with a system such as the Scandanavian "solskifte" or sun-division of tofts and holdings in the fields, but good evidence for this was not forthcoming in north Northumberland. However it needs to be reiterated that the regular two row village is not necessarily the only repository of regulation in the division of lands.

It is much easier to interpret villages with regular two row

plans in the light of their fiscal and tenorial arrangements than those of a less regular plan. This does not mean that villages with irregular plans were disorganised, merely that it is difficult to perceive how they developed. This is nicely illustrated by Houghton Magna with its complex arrangement of toft row<sub>λ</sub><sup>S</sup>. The post medieval surveys of the village describe only two row<sub>λ</sub><sup>S</sup> east and west. The 1619 estate plan shows there to be two short rows on an east-west axis in the centre of the village which is mainly composed of two long north-south rows. If it were not for the plan of 1619 these rows would not have been suspected. Similar anomalies were encountered at Lucker, Denwick and Chatton. The post medieval surveyors understood how the village was regulated and so they did not need to state the obvious. An irregular plan does not imply a lack of order so these villages are as likely to have been established in the thirteenth century as the regularly planned villages, but proving a connection between such "irregular" lay-outs and the thirteenth century tenorial structures has not been possible. Village regulation is suggested by the comments of Clarkson in his 1566/7 survey where he describes a division of the fields of Chatton "rigg by rigg" on the basis that "every tenant according to his portion of rent should have like quantity of land"(No 44). Such regulation can take place at the irregular Chatton as easily as the planned village like Sunderland.

The only village for which a metrical analysis of its plan was possible proved to be Sunderland. Sunderland was a member of the Royal Demesne of Bamburgh whose plan consisted of two



parallel rows on an east-west axis of which the core comprised two similar blocks of opposing tofts. From the evidence of the Tithe Map of 1849 it was apparent that the village green or gate was in the process of being divided amongst the villagers, but that the old frontage was visible behind the encroaching buildings. The backs of the tofts were delimited by a back-lane. The eastern part of the south-row had been incorporated into the garth of Sunderland Chapel, a post medieval foundation on the site of a former peel-tower, which may have marked the end of the row. These two central blocks measured two hundred and twenty yards in length and one hundred and thirty two yards in depth. A dispute over the vill's fiscal assessment in the mid thirteenth century records that the old assessment was five carucates, although this was to be raised to eight. As a royal vill, it is assumed that the sixteen and a half foot perch was used. This would give a forty perch row as four perches equals twenty two yards, or eighty perches in toto. This could be easily related to either the old assessment or the new one. The shorter tofts at the east end could either have belonged to cottagers or may have been a subsequent development. Proof that this village plan dates to the thirteenth century is not to be had, but the possibility is one that would merit testing by excavation if the site were not still occupied.

Other villages with regular two row plans are to be found in the coastal area, such as Tuggal, Mousen, Rugley, Beal, Stamford or Buckton, none of which survive as villages as Sunderland has done. The evidence for these sites is partly from estate plans



and partly from earthworks or both. There is no pattern in the occurrence of these regular villages that relates exclusively to any particular estate, but this may be a consequence of the limited survival of many Northumbrian villages. On the other hand, of the five chief villages that were held in demesne on the de Vescy Lordship of Alnwick in the thirteenth century, none display the regular characteristics described above, but other villages including Guyzance, Tuggal and Rugley which were subinfeudated vills of the lordship do have regular plans. In support of metrical analysis it is notable that the Tuggal toft-rows are about twice the size of those of Rugley, although they share a similar number of husbandlands (19.5 and 18). This is explained by the small size of bondlands at Rugley, about eleven acres to Tuggal's twenty four.

Late medieval changes in tenurial structure make it difficult to compare an early seventeenth century village plan with thirteenth century tenurial arrangements. However where there has been little change, as at South Charlton it might be expected that some equation between the village plan and the tenurial structure could be discerned over a long period. Although sixteen husbandlands are identifiable from 1352 to 1620 and eighteen occupied plots are to be found on the estate plan of 1620, this does not account for the eight cottagers in 1352 since only two were occupied in 1620. The absence of six cottage plots on the plan may be related to the engrossment of holdings. However the sixteen tofts of bondholdings and three cottage holdings (one unoccupied) may be identified. What is significant

is that there is no apparent difference between the cottage toft and bond toft. The former cottage tofts could have been abandoned since there is room for more plots on the east row of the village by the Chapel (an east row that is not distinguished in the survey of 1620). Few villages in north Northumberland exhibit such limited changes in the period from the mid fourteenth century to the late sixteenth century.

On the other hand Brian Roberts has argued quite reasonably that there may be a continuing connection between the tenurial structure and the disposition of tofts in the village and plots in the fields and has demonstrated this for the village of Acklington in Warkworth parish (Roberts 1978: 249-252). Unfortunately changes in the tenurial structure in the medieval period cannot be related to a village plan without the evidence of excavation to support it since medieval village plans do not exist outside the Cheviots. John Hurst has shown what may be done in this way at Wharram Percy after two decades of excavation (Hurst 1983). This is not possible in north Northumberland. Recent excavations at Alnhamshelles were not extensive enough to understand fully the original disposition of tofts (Dixon 1980-83). Even at West Whelpington, where large tracts of the village were excavated, it has only been possible to suggest that the present planned lay-out dates to the late medieval period, anytime between the mid fourteenth century and mid sixteenth century, and that prior to this final planned village, the lay-out was more disorganised and scattered (Jarrett 1977: 28).

There are no examples of north Northumberland village-plans

which may be confidently dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century. A small number of villages in the Cheviots which were abandoned by the mid sixteenth century have been identified, notably Heddon, Hartside, Over Prendwick and Alnhamsheles. These are essentially single row villages and thus display the same row order which is characteristic of lowland villages. The tofts of these upland villages were small, never more than twenty metres wide, or thirty metres deep with no evidence of cultivation (by plough) within them. Morphological similarities were discerned for earthwork remains of villages such as Hedgeley, Barmoor, Shipley, Middle Middleton, South Middleton and Alnham, all of which are known to have been abandoned (partially or completely) by the end of the eighteenth century (Nos.6, 11, 111, 144, 145, 183). On the other hand some earthwork sites of villages abandoned by a similar date display evidence of rigg cultivation within the village plots and are somewhat longer in depth, usually in excess of fifty metres, as for example at Tuggal, Buckton, Abberwick and Yetlington (Nos. 204, 32, 1, 218).

However there is some evidence that villages on the Percy estate underwent some re-organisation in the later sixteenth century which resulted in the combining of the tofts or garths and the adjacent crofts. Clarkson's Survey of the estate in 1566/7 distinguishes between the garth or toft and the croft with its selions or cultivation ridges as at Lesbury or Tuggal (Aln Cas A I i). Clarkson recommended that the croft be enclosed with quick-set hedges for defensive and economic reasons (NCH II 371). In effect where crofts backed onto the village tofts the two were



combined to form a single property. The village plans made for Mayson's Survey of the Percy estate in the 1620's and indeed the survey itself, indicate that this had happened at the villages of Bilton, Lesbury, Longhoughton, Tuggal and Denwick, but not at Lucker or Shilbottle, and only partially at Rennington and South Charlton. The medieval toft consisting of a small enclosed garth or yard with a house at its head was not a unit of cultivation as was the croft. The croft appears to be a piece of arable adjacent to the settlement which was not enclosed, but presumably had some specialised purpose. Medieval deeds refer to crofts with selions (eg. Page 1893 72), just as Clarkson does, and to their position adjacent to the tofts of the village (eg. Raine 1852 App<sup>121 No. DCXCII</sup>, Page *ibid.* 23, 26, 63 etc), but their function is not stated. Fieldwork in the vicinity of village-sites usually produces medieval potsherds within two hundred metres of the site, but rarely beyond. Perhaps the crofts were subject to manuring directly from the midden rubbish, and were not dependent upon animal manure as were the fields, but it is not known if they were specially cropped. References to tofts in thirteenth century deeds indicate that they could be as much as sixty metres wide, for example, ten perches at Lucker and ten perches and three feet at Nether Trewhitt, if the twenty foot perch alluded to in a deed of Chatton is assumed (No. 44). The depth at Nether Trewhitt in the same deed was nine perches or about fifty four metres. Longer tofts than this do not seem to be common, though exceptionally another deed of the same period finds a toft at Bokenfield in Felton parish south of the Coquet



to be five by forty perches or about two hundred and forty metres  
 long. <sup>(Page 1893 58)</sup> Sheer size would dictate a function nearer that of the  
 croft than the toft.

The confusion engendered by this post medieval re-organisation of the Percy estate confounds any easy interpretation of these early estate plans as representing late medieval villages. What took place at many Percy estate villages at this time may have occurred elsewhere at places like Buckton which has plots with rigg in them measuring some eighty metres in length. Yet here the regularity of the plan is revealed as much in the backsides of the crofts, if that is what they were, as in the building line, and particularly in the sharp terrace which defines the backsides, and is especially pronounced on the south side. Such a feature must be the result of prolonged ploughing and the maintenance of the boundary. If these terraces encompassed the crofts of Buckton, then they formed an integral part of the village, whether they were actually enclosed or not.

Medieval terminology frequently refers to the toft and croft together as part of the village and not as part of the fields; for example Henry of Orde in the early thirteenth century gave Holy Island a toft "in villa de Orde et unam acram terre ad croftum faciendum in orientali parte eiusdem tofti et quindecim acras terre arabiles de dominico meo" (Raine 1852 App DCXCII). This intimacy of toft and croft, enclosed or not, precludes any dogmatic distinction between the two. However the toft, the site of the peasant farm, can exist without a croft since the croft is merely an appendage of the former.

The influence of topography upon the lay-out of a village is strong, partly because flat land is at a premium except in the Milfield Basin and along the coast. It is perhaps no accident that more regular villages such as Sunderland, Beal, Stamford or Tuggal are to be found in this area (Nos. 191, 14, 189, 204). Minor idiosyncracies can be imposed on a plan by the limitations of natural features such as river terraces, as with the backsides of Stamford on the west side. Equally toft-rows may be laid out to take advantage of natural features such as ridges of whinstone, seen in the main north-south street of Embleton, or river-cut terraces, as in the two east-west middle rows of the village of Longhoughton. The chief axis of some villages is attributable to dominant natural features, particularly the river-cut dene as at Birling with its north-south axis or South Middleton with its east-west axis. In both cases the toft-rows occupy terraces on either side of a dene through which flows a burn, providing the main source of water for the village. The lay-out of Alnham village is illuminated by examination of the local topography. The site is cut by a deep-cut east-west dene, but on the north side is a triangular configuration of terraces surrounding a deep hollow of poorly drained land. At the apex of this triangle to the west stands the church of Alnham, whilst opposite it on the other side of the dene on high ground stands the site of the manor and tower of Alnham. The three main toft-rows of the village occupy the triangle of ridges, although a few tofts are situated on the south side of the dene. Some villages

have composite plans in that one toft-row may be short and the other long. This may be seen at Denwick and Lorbottle. The whole village at Lorbottle lies on the north side of a dene, on an east-west axis. The north row of tofts is short, but the south row is much longer and less irregular. This contrast is not explicable by differences of tenure, but by the fact that the tenants on the north side were confined by the arable fields whilst those on the south side could expand towards the edge of the river-terrace. Equally the south row of the village at Denwick was confined by the steep drop towards the river Aln, whilst the north row could expand as far as the Denwick burn one hundred and fifty metres to the north. Indeed this is what took place at the end of the sixteenth century, the crofts of the north side were enclosed and incorporated within the tofts.

Manorial sites, where they are known, tend to occupy positions of dominance in the village, often slightly apart from or to one end of the lay-out of toft-rows. At Alnham the tower stands upon a high ridge overlooking the village, but Hebburn Tower and Lesbury manor-site stand at their respective east ends on rising ground. Ford Castle stands on rising ground overlooking the Milfield basin, but the village clings in a sinuous curve around it. Doddington Bastle occupies a central position in the four square village of Doddington, and Edlingham Castle lies at the extreme east end of the long village of Edlingham on the edge of a river-terrace. Some, as previously noted, were actually removed from the village.

Churches and chapels are situated more randomly in respect



to settlement. They occupy positions which are either apart from villages as at Alwinton or Ellingham, or intimately related to the village plan as part of a toft row as at Edlingham, Alnham, Ford or Whittingham or at least adjacent to the settlement as at Embleton, Carham or Chatton. Although some churches such as Whittingham or Edlingham are datable to before the Conquest, it has not been possible to assert with any confidence which came first, church or village.



##### 5. Medieval Peasant Housing in North Northumberland

Despite the grading suggested by Beresford and Hurst for the three main categories of medieval house-types according to status; cottar and cottage, bondage and long-house, farmstead and yeoman farmer, the lack of any surviving peasant houses or many excavated examples precludes any discussion of such nice social distinctions. Indeed they may be superfluous to an area in which landlords maintained the equality of bondages, and freehold tenants or lesser feudal tenants, were few in number. Furthermore there are unlikely to be any substantive differences in building style and technique between the bondager and the cottar, except perhaps one of size.

Surviving cottages of early nineteenth century date are invariably constructed of roughly coursed stone, bound by this date of rubble and lime mortar, as seen in ruined houses at Humbleton, Hethpool, Gatherick and East Allerdean. The stone used in the two Cheviot examples is derived from the boulder clay, consisting of weathered andesite and granite. Roofing materials where they survive are rarely original, but can be of pantile or slate. Originally they may have used thatch as is still the case at Etal village today. An engraving of Bamburgh village in about 1800 shows thatched cottages lit with small square windows (Newcastle City Library). Rafters are of simple light scantling type with no evidence for the traditional cruck timbers referred to by nineteenth century antiquarians. However they were identified in the houses of the village of Holburn by

Mackenzie in the early part of the century (No.115) and at Alwinton and Great Ryle in the latter part of the century by Dippie Dixon (Dixon 1895 71 and 1903 217). The internal fittings of these buildings are poorly preserved, but a clay and timber firehood survives in one of the cottages at East Allerdean. This heated one room directly, but the second room of the cottage was unheated. The Reverend Gilly of Norham, writing of the poor state of housing for the labouring classes in the 1840's, found it quite normal for them to be occupying a single room per family with a byre for a cow (Gilly 1842). Windows were few, small and often square, as at Bamburgh above, and on a nineteenth century house in Spittal. The farmers of the area by this time tended to occupy more substantial houses, often of two stories, and architecturally designed, which are a world apart from the peasant farmhouses of pre-Improvement days, and will not be discussed here.

Few houses which date to before the agricultural revolution of the last quarter of the eighteenth century survive in rural Northumberland unless they belong<sup>ed</sup> to the gentry. For information about medieval and post medieval housing the student must turn to archaeology or history.

The available documentation alludes but rarely to medieval house construction. One item in the Norham Proctor Rolls records the use of straw and the tops of trees for covering the houses of the Lord Prior in Shoreswood, a demesne vill of the Prior of Durham (Raine 1852 270). Since there was no manorial demesne it is surmised that this does indeed relate to the houses of the



Prior's tenants. In other situations heather, broom, rushes, bracken and sedge were used for roofing materials and there seems little reason to doubt that a peasant house was as likely to be covered in this fashion as a grange in Tweedmouth in 1344-5 (Raine *ibid.* 277).

There is evidence in the Holy Island Accounts and Proctor's Rolls that some buildings, and indeed garth walls, were walled with clay, and wattles of hazel are occasionally mentioned (Raine *ibid.* 80-130, <sup>but esp.</sup> 270-5). This may be timber framing, but the cob wall technique may also be in use. The clay or cob walled method of construction has been recorded archaeologically at West Hartburn in Durham (Still & Pallister 1966 191), and also perhaps at Eshott south of the Coquet in Northumberland (Dixon 1982) and is well known as a vernacular constructional method in the Cumbrian plain and in the Merse (Fenton and Walker 1981 76ff.). Wood and clay as building materials may have been formerly common in coastal areas of Northumberland. The demise of this vernacular style had probably been effected by the late sixteenth century. It is often suggested by Clarkson that the tenants of the Percy estate would be better off with lime and stone-built houses (e.g. Birling/High Buston) and the 1541 survey makes especial mention of stone houses (Bates 1891 34) but in fact Clarkson notes the use of clay as mortar in tenants houses at Lesbury. A preference for stone walls in the Cheviots, as evidenced by the numerous visible house-foundations in stone, may be related directly to a ready supply of stone rather than an absence of wood. Indeed Clarkson identified the poor quality of

the stone as a cause of the delapidated state of the tenants houses at Lesbury. The medieval adoption of stone for building is well attested in many parts of the country such as Dartmoor and Yorkshire in the thirteenth century (Beresford and Hurst 1971 93). Excavations at West Whel<sup>p</sup>ington would indicate a similar development in upland Northumberland (Jarrett 1970 and 1977), but recent excavations at Alnhamshelles in the Cheviots indicate a fourteenth century change to building in stone after a primary occupation in timber and clay (Dixon 1980-83).

The main roofing timbers or principle rafters were termed 'siles' in both the Norham Rolls <sup>(Raine 1852 273)</sup> and the Percy Bailiff's Rolls. The latter indicated clearly that they were coupled timbers ('copularum syles'). These were the stoutest and most valuable part of a house's structure. The tenants of Embleton in the fifteenth century removed their roofs when they fled to the castle of Dunstanburgh in time of war (NCH II 34). Whether these timbers were designed to rise from the ground or from the wall-tops is not readily apparent. There is nineteenth century evidence for the use of cruck beams (Holburn, Alwinton, Great Ryle) and they were used in roofing a peel house at Blackmiddings in Tynedale (Ramm et al) <sup>1970, 62 & 91</sup>. In 1566/7 Clarkson refers to the use of alder from river denes for roofing timber at Denwick, Lesbury and other villages (Aln Cas A I i). Alder may be found on the sides of the Cheviot valleys, and certainly alder was a commonly used wood at Alnhamshelles where cruck timbers were used in the period 1 stone house (Dixon *ibid.*).

Stone-built houses in Northumberland use a boulder-faced and



earth and stone cored technique (West Whelpington, Alnhamshelles etc.). The height of these houses is unknown. Despite bases three to four feet thick it would be difficult to raise such a wall much above five feet or a single storey. On the other hand, the defended farm-houses of Redesdale and Tynedale indicate the possibilities of boulder and rubble cored construction, if mortar is used.

The long-house is well attested at excavated sites in the north-east (West Whelpington, Alnhamshelles, West Hartburn and Hart). This comprises a house where humans and cattle share the same entrance with the habitation area and cattle-byre all under a single roof. The custom survived into the nineteenth century amongst cottagers at least (Dixon 1895 71). The survey of Bewick manor in 1608 records that the peasant establishment consisted of house, byre and barn (PRO KR2/223). Unfortunately there is no information of the physical arrangement of these three units.

Evidence from excavations at Alnhamshelles indicate that the house and byre could reside under the same roof. Some of the house-sites here and in other parts of the Breamish valley are fifteen to twenty metres long but shorter structures of ten to fifteen metres are more typical as at Hartside, Heddon and Over Prendwick (App.5). Excavations at Alnhamshelles have shown that the smaller house length is late medieval, and the longer house sixteenth century. Earlier medieval houses at Alnhamshelles were built in timber and presumably clay and not stone. The twelfth to fourteenth century settlement of Eshott was timber and clay built. This is also reflected in south Northumberland (Wrathmell

1975). It means that thirteenth century or earlier settlements are likely to be invisible above ground once destroyed. The earthworks visible in the Cheviots, whilst probably fourteenth to fifteenth century do not necessarily represent the thirteenth century lay-out.

### 3.3 Medieval Cultivation

It has been observed that the presence of ridge and furrow cultivation remains is associated with medieval settlement. The antiquity of ridge and furrow or rigg as a method of medieval cultivation may be established from a variety of sources. First the term rigg or selion is widely used by Clarkson in his survey of the Percy estates in 1566/7, both in the context of village crofts as at Tuggal (Aln Cas A I i) and as the way in which tenants held their plots in the fields, "rigg by rigg" in Chatton (Aln Cas A I i) or at Longhoughton where "every tenant had but one rigg lying in one place for the most part" (NCH II 370). Selion was the usual medieval term for a ridge. In south Northumberland the Black Book of Hexham of 1379 describes some lands in the village of Bingfield as "selliones vocate Anglice rigges" (Raine 1864 8). An early example of the use of the term in the north of the county comes from a couple of deeds of Nostell Priory for the village of Fleetham in the late twelfth century: <sup>i.e.</sup> "incipiendo ad sellionem de Fletlowe" or "unam sellionem ex australi parte hop haker lowe" <sup>in one</sup> and in the other "de tribus sellionibus ad Langfurlang". The same deeds list all the various plots "which make up a bovate of land" in the fields, one of which is made up of twenty eight selions, butts, lands and dales in various places such as Langfurlang (NCH I 285). Sub-divided holdings of this kind are evident some three hundred years later in the terrier of the neighbouring village of Elford (No 72) and in the terrier and survey of the Percy estate by Mayson in the



early seventeenth century which uses similar terms such as lands, dales and butts to describe the tenants' plots in the various furlongs or parts of the fields.

The equation of the ridge and the unit of ownership is well attested in other parts of the country by comparison of extant rigged field-systems and sixteenth and seventeenth century maps (Beresford and St. Joseph 1979 25 - 37). Strip fields are evident in most of the townships surveyed at this time by Mayson except those already enclosed like Newstead, both from the survey which describes the sub-divided furlongs with individual lands belonging to a single tenant, and the accompanying estate plans. Unfortunately the individual husbandland strip is not often delineated only the freelands and demesne lands (Over Buston No 36). Thus conclusive identification of the ridge with an individual holding is not possible. It is however possible to show that extant rigged furlongs on the ground match those of estate maps, for example at Northfield in Alnham township, on the grounds of the shape of the furlongs. It is evident that the rigg was customary both on bondland, freeland and demesne land and so is not necessarily evidence of sub-divided and communal-fields merely evidence of open-field medieval cultivation assuming it is not the improved narrow rigg variety (see below). From the descriptions of demesne lands given to the monasteries in twelfth and thirteenth century deeds it is evident that demesne lands were often sub-divided amongst the various parts of the town fields. Walter de Bataille in a grant of a carucate of demesne land in Preston lists lands in eighteen different place



varying in size from half an acre to one block of eighteen acres of which nine were under three acres.

The purpose of the ridge or selion in medieval and post medieval cultivation was essentially drainage. Indeed it persisted as the means of drainage in cultivated land until the introduction of underground drainage became widespread from the mid nineteenth century. Walter of Henley described the ridge and its division one from another by a furrow serving for drainage in his thirteenth century book on estate management (Oschinsky 1971 323). However there is no evidence that its size was related to the differing types of soil but rather perhaps to the type of plough and plough-team in use (Clark 1960). Equally the variation of ridge width and overall shape that have been observed would appear to be chronologically significant (see below).

The formation of a ridge was dependent on a particular method of ploughing. The field or area to be ploughed was laid out into strips. The plough itself had to have a fixed mould-board. The plough-team was directed so as to work outwards from a central furrow, turning the sod inwards, in a clockwise or anti-clockwise manner. In this way a similar process was conducted for every strip in the field and over a period of time, as long as the same strips were used, a series of ridges could be built up. The observed ridge width in Northumberland varied from about four metres to about fifteen metres. Its form was not often straight except where the ridge was relatively narrow at four to five metres. Where it was larger it tended to be curved

to form a reverse-S, or aratral curve which was caused by the use of a heavy fixed mould-board plough drawn by a large team of oxen continually turning the sod to the left. Northumberland was documented as an area in which an eight oxen plough team was in use in the twelfth century (Lennard 1960 200). The reverse-S is formed because of the difficulties of turning such a cumbersome plough-team in the confined space of a headland. As the plough-team reaches the end of the furrow it has to prepare to turn so that it does not disturb the neighbouring ploughlands. The plough had to be kept in the furrow so with a left-turning mould-board the plough-team is directed leftwards on to the headland, pulling the plough leftwards. The team is then turned on the headland and directed up the other side of the ridge. In the course of time this tends to create a reverse-S shape. The broad aratral curved ridge may be observed all over Northumberland, but the narrow, often straight, and low profiled ridge is equally widespread. The latter form of ridge appeared with the change to a lighter plough drawn by horses which was introduced during the agricultural improvements of the later eighteenth century (McDonald 1974 395). The difference is therefore of chronological significance. Typically the narrow low ridge may be found in new intakes, bounded by a hedge bank and ditch which is aligned with it. The abandoned ridges on Edlingham Moor which were laid out following <sup>a proposal for</sup> an Act of Parliament of 1774 (NCRO QRUp1), are an example of this, as are the improvements on Edlingham Moor after an enclosure <sup>Award</sup> ~~Act~~ <sup>(NCRO ZBM 8)</sup> in 1781. On the other hand some narrow ridges are curved. From the early eighteenth century there was a

movement in support of the straightening and reduction of the established broad curving high backed ridges in order to increase the fertility of the soil through improved drainage and the reduction of shadow playing on a growing crop (Parry 1976 12-13). The simplest method was to divide the existing broad ridges in half. The ridges to the east side of Edlingham village or those at NT 886297 in West Newtown township are of this type. Another method included the straightening of the old ridges as well as dividing them in half. This means that the existence of an area of narrow ridges cannot be seen as necessarily precluding the prior existence of broad curved ridges.

Finally some farmers preferred to completely remove the old system by ploughing across at right-angles(No. 113). This was proposed by a Coquetdale farmer in a contribution to the Farming Magazine in 1804, but intriguingly the farmer having gone to the lengths of destroying the old broad ridges continued to use ridges for drainage: "The next consideration was to form the ridges in such a manner as to prevent water from stagnating upon the ground" (Farming Magazine V 1804 448). Occasionally this activity may be observed on the ground. Under conditions of low light it is possible for the traces of the preceding broad ridges to be revealed. Such an instance was recognised on the south-west side of the farm of North Middleton. Under normal conditions only narrow ridges were visible, but under low light from the west or east the old broad ridges at right angles could be made out.

A morphological study of ridges in the Lammermuirs has shown



that in that area narrow straight ridges are to be dated after 1800 (Parry 1976). In Northumberland some areas of narrow ridge cultivation are documented to the last quarter of the eighteenth century such as the improvements on Edlingham Moor. Broad curving rigg on the other hand may be dated to before that period and where it is well formed or high-backed, a much earlier date may be suspected. Proof of its antiquity must however be demonstrated in other ways than mere shape, since it would appear possible for broad rigg to have been formed in theory at any date between the twelfth century and the eighteenth century. A datable example of a ridge and furrow furlong was identified at Tuggal Hall. Here comparison of the rigg plotted from post-war <sup>aerial photographs</sup> RAF vertical <sub>λ</sub> and the estate plan of about 1620 shows that the fields of that date do not respect the furlong units and arbitrarily cut across a furlong called Long Acton Riggs. Therefore the ridge and furrow existed before the enclosed fields of Tuggal Hall Demesne which were laid out by the Bradfords in the mid sixteenth century (No.204). Equally the furlongs of Northfield in Alnham outlined on the 1619 map of Alnham show a marked similarity of shape with the surviving ridged furlongs in this area which provides a terminus ante quem <sup>and Plan 11</sup> of pre 1619 for the lay out of the ridges (No.6) <sub>λ</sub>.

Despite the wealth of evidence for unenclosed strip fields which can be derived from the plans made for Mayson's Survey of the Percy estates in the early seventeenth century it is rarely possible to match extant ridge and furrow with it. Even where there is a coincidence there are the problems of disentangling



the post medieval improvements discussed previously. The best places for identifying medieval riggs are those where there are villages and other settlements which have been abandoned during the medieval period and not reoccupied. Examples of this are confined to the Cheviots, where a preoccupation with sheep farming during the post medieval period has largely precluded any renewed arable cultivation until the last few years.

Within the township of Alnham in particular, there are several expanses of extant ridge and furrow (Plan 11). The largest was that near Alnham Moor Farm already mentioned, lands which used to belong to the former hamlet of Alnhamshelles, abandoned before 1566/7. The riggs surrounded the hamlet on all sides, and covered an area of 219 acres on the evidence of Mayson's Survey. At its highest point it reached 280 metres above sea level. The riggs were surrounded by a bank and ditch which matched the limits of the demesne arable of Alnham Moor described on the plan made to go with Mayson's Survey. The ditch lay on the exterior of the cultivated land and the bank was revetted externally in order to provide a barrier to animals. The ridge and furrow within this area was entirely of broad riggs, but varied in width from eight to fourteen metres. The riggs are divided into furlongs and there is evidence of the classic reverse-S seen in lowland terrain. A second area of broad riggs surrounded the abandoned settlement at NT 970150 to the south of the present Alnham Moor Farm. This was called Barresses and with the Haugh land contained 129 acres in 1620. This field of riggs rose from 190 to 280 metres, but is now used as rough

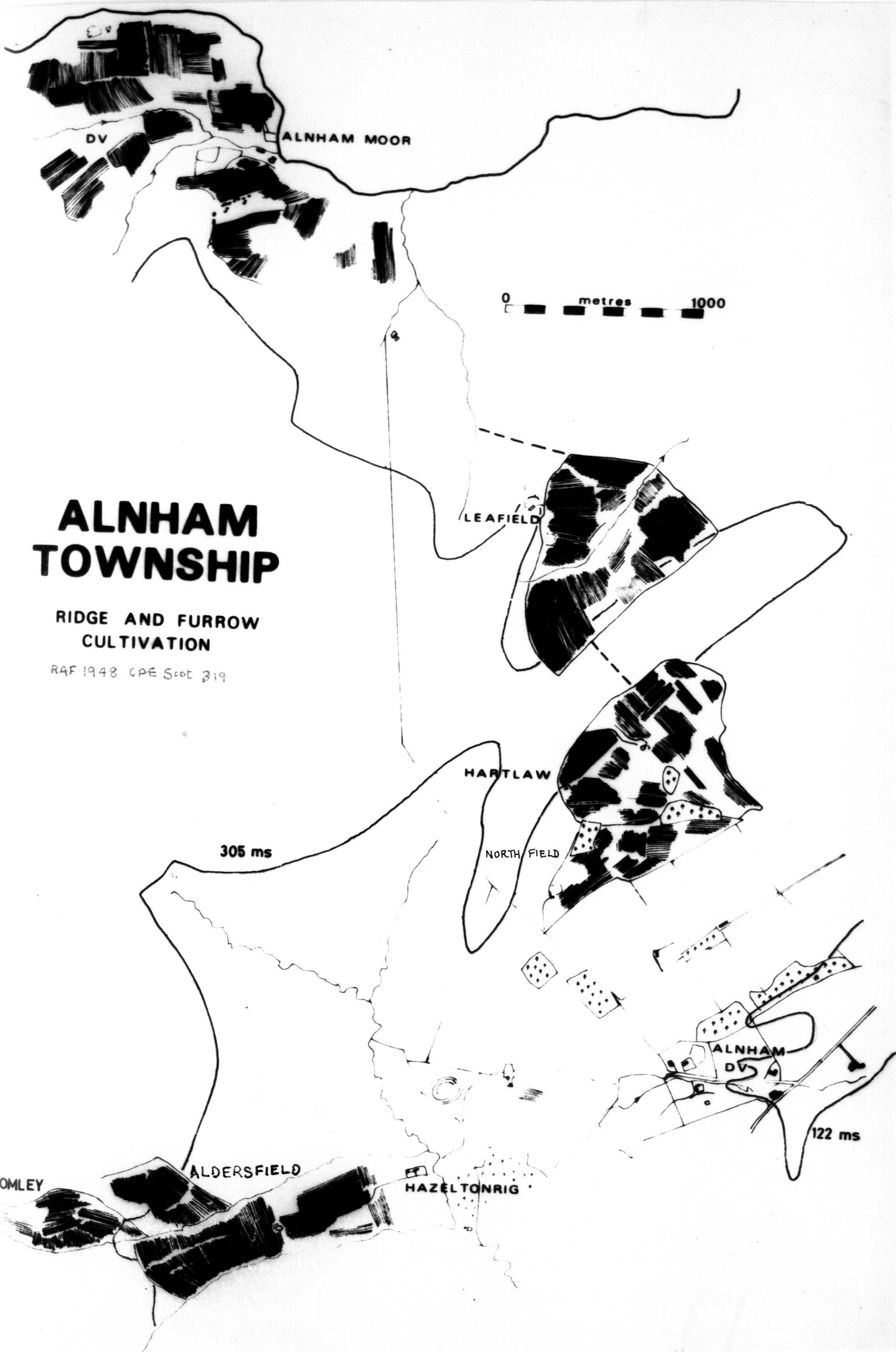
pasture apart from the Haugh. Equally there were four other areas of rigg of this kind enclosed by bank and ditch as at Alnham Moor, but these lay at greater altitude than most of the lands of Alnham Moor. Bromeley Field to the west of Alnham village lay at between 300 and 380 metres and encompassed fifty three acres according to Mayson's Survey, whilst the neighbouring Aldersfield lay between 275 and 335 metres and was thirty nine acres in extent. Leafield to the north of Alnham, of 115 acres in 1620, lay between 260 and 320 metres. On the other hand the nearer Hartlaw field rose from 200 to 320 metres. Each of these fields is now entirely abandoned and used as rough pasture today, and each of them exhibit broad rigg although there is some evidence for narrow rigg in part of Leafield and more extensively in Hartlaw field.

Research by Dr. Parry in south-east Scotland has found a similar abandonment of upland cultivation in the Lammermuirs. <sup>(Parry 1974)</sup> He has argued that there has been a progressive abandonment of marginal land since the thirteenth century which may be related to the deteriorating climate of the late and post medieval period, so that by the mid nineteenth century the upper limit of cultivation was at 200 metres whereas it had been 320 metres in the thirteenth century. The upper limit of land capable of producing crops is dependent upon the length of growing season, that is the number of growing months with a mean temperature of over ten centigrade (Parry 1978 81-6). Some weight has been given to this as an explanation for the desertion of Hound Tor and other upland settlements on Dartmoor (Beresford 1979 144-5).

The climatic argument for desertion is that the increased rainfall and lower temperatures caused an increase in crop failure to a point where farming became uneconomic. This all embracing view has been questioned for Dartmoor and Hound Tor in particular, partly on the basis of the dating of the pottery at Hound Tor, but more importantly on the more general point that other factors such as a declining population after the Black Death and a gradual consolidation of holdings during the late medieval period, or the intervention of demesne cultivation must be first examined before climatic considerations are identified (Austin, Dagget and Walker 1980 55 and see Wright 1976).

There is an opportunity in the parish of Alnham to examine the documentary background to the retreat from the margins (App.2). In 1265 an Inquisition into the lands of John de Vescy found that there were 348 acres of demesne land in the township as well as rents paid for lands by eighteen bondagers, various cottagers, from the seles of Alnham Moor and from free men for their lands held from the lord of the manor. From a later Inquisition Post Mortem of Henry de Percy in 1314/5 it is apparent that the bondmen each held a notional twenty four acres. Assuming that the acre for a bondland and the demesne were of similar extent this would give a total of 780 acres of demesne and bondland and an unknown amount of freeland. It is known from a deed of William de Vescy of the mid thirteenth century that a perch of twenty feet was in use on the lordship of Alnwick (No.44). From this it may be calculated that the medieval acre was 1.47 times the royal acre based on a perch of sixteen and a





# ALNHAM TOWNSHIP

RIDGE AND FURROW CULTIVATION

RAF 1948 CPE Scot 319

0 metres 1000

305 ms

HARTLAW

NORTH FIELD

ALNHAM DV

122 ms

ALDERSFIELD

HAZELTONRIG

BROMLEY

DV

ALNHAM MOOR



half feet or statute acre which became the norm from the seventeenth century. This would mean that the land in cultivation as arable and meadow in 1265 was 1147 modern or statute acres. In Mayson's Survey the four Fields (901 acres) the Oxpastures (198 acres), the demesne arable and meadow (seventy three acres) plus the upland demesne pastures of Leafield (115 acres) and Bromeley (thirty nine acres) total 1326 acres, but 125 acres were freeholdings and so a total for demesne and husbandland holdings of 1201 acres is arrived at for 1615. This compares with the 1147 acres for demesne and bondland in 1265. This discrepancy is less than five per cent of the seventeenth century total and may be accounted for by the more accurate survey techniques used by the surveyors of Mayson's Survey or perhaps by unaccountable factors such as the use of a foot of slightly different size in the medieval perch. The implication of this calculation is that the demesne lands of Bromeley and Leafield were in cultivation in the thirteenth century, but had ceased to be cultivated by the early seventeenth century when they were used as improved pasture. The demesne lands of the manor declined from 348 acres in 1265 to 214 acres in 1314/5 and to 195 acres in 1352 (511.5 to 286.6 statute acres). There is evidence that the demesnes were being let to tenants from the early fourteenth century (Bean 1958 12), but even so they are accounted in the Inquisitions of the period. This would suggest that some of the demesnes were either alienated or going out of cultivation from the early fourteenth century. However there could well have been periodic use of the

land during the late medieval period, before finally going out of use as arable. The late medieval documentation is not specific enough on this point. Bromeley was referred to as pasture in the later sixteenth century (No. 6), but the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century surveys are not detailed enough to indicate if Leafield or Bromeley were ever ploughed. The foundations of a post medieval farmhouse were observed at NT 983136, outside the enclosure bank surrounding Lea field (see plan of Leafield in No. 6), but it cannot be said whether or not the farmer was involved in arable cultivation. The site of what may have been the medieval demesne farm of Leafield in the medieval period lay about 100 metres to the south on the inside of the enclosure.

The pressure of an expanding population and economy during the thirteenth century produced an incentive for the colonisation and cultivation of what were at best marginal lands. The mechanics of colonisation could be organised either by leasing new lands as freehold or by organised plantations to bond tenants if enough land were available, in effect setting up a new township, or, if near to the mother settlement, ploughing up new lands as communal intakes divided amongst the various tenants and finally as new demesne lands worked by wage labour. The new vill of Alnhamshelles which lay about five miles from the village of Alnham was probably established on former sheiling grounds. The amount of cultivateable land and its distance from Alnham provide a suitable context for setting up a new township. The closer fields of Bromeley, Aldersfield and Hartlaw were never large

enough to support a community, although Leafield with 115 acres may be a borderline case. Bromeley field and Leafield, like Alnham Moor were let as demesne in the early seventeenth century, but were used as enclosed pasture. Both lay some two kilometres from the village, too far for communal intakes. Demesne cultivation would have been profitable as long as labour was cheap before the Black Death. Aldersfield and Hartlaw were occupied by freeholders and in the case of Hartlaw at least there was a steading tenement in the early seventeenth century. Aldersfield was formerly called Farneleys and may have been freehold for some considerable time; Hartlaw may be viewed in the same category.

Until recent years ridge and furrow cultivation survived well in the former pastoral lands of the Cheviots, Upper Coquetdale, Whittingham Vale and the heavy clay lands of Bamburghshire, but less well, indeed rarely, in the lighter soils of Glendale and Tweedside. On the gentler terrain of the lowland and coastal areas the characteristic reverse-S shape is common, except for short lengths or butts. Particularly fine ridge and furrow furlongs were to be seen by the village sites of Swinhoe (south side) and Haggerston (see No.100) and the demesne site of Tuggal Hall (see No.204). The lengths of furlongs varied widely from about one hundred and fifty metres to about eight hundred metres, but were mostly in the range two hundred to four hundred metres. The longest furlong observed lay on the south side of the deserted village of Cheswick (No. 45) at about eight hundred metres, but this was exceptional. In the level terrain of the





Plan 12 Cultivation remains: Hethpool Area.



coast, furlongs tend to rectangular plots, but where the land is broken by glacial features such as kaimers or drumlins or on the steeper terrain of the Cheviots, this neat pattern is broken, a feature observed elsewhere in the country by the Royal Commission (RCHM 1979, <sup>III</sup> lxi-lxii). Usually ridge and furrow cuts across the contour in order to assist drainage, but in uneven terrain this is not always possible so that parts of a furlong may run along the contour. This may be seen near the sites of Preston village and Lemmington village where this has had the effect of forming terraces. At the latter in particular there seems to have been a tendency for two ridge width terraces to be formed. This can hardly be accidental and would suggest some positive effort to construct terraces, probably because of the steepness of the slope which is much greater than at Preston.

A singular and unusual set of cultivation features which appear to be part of a furlong system in oddly moulded glacial terrain near to the village site of North Charlton have produced negative ridges in cutting through kaimer ridges. How these were formed is not understood, but the surrounding land is covered with ridge and furrow and terracing making up a system of furlongs.

Where steep slopes are the norm, quite extensive terraced hillsides are to be found. Above Hethpool the terracing is quite dramatic (Plan 12) <sup>† No. 113</sup>. Some of the terraces are eight to ten feet high suggesting that there may have been some constructional element as noted in Dorset (Taylor 1974 77). The terraces relate to "furlong" units, but it might be possible that some of the

# BREAMISH VALLEY

MEDIEVAL PERIOD

- A ALNHAMSHELES ?
- B ALNHAMMOOR
- C SHIELINGS ?
- D HARTSIDE ?
- E GREAVES ASH
- F INGRAM

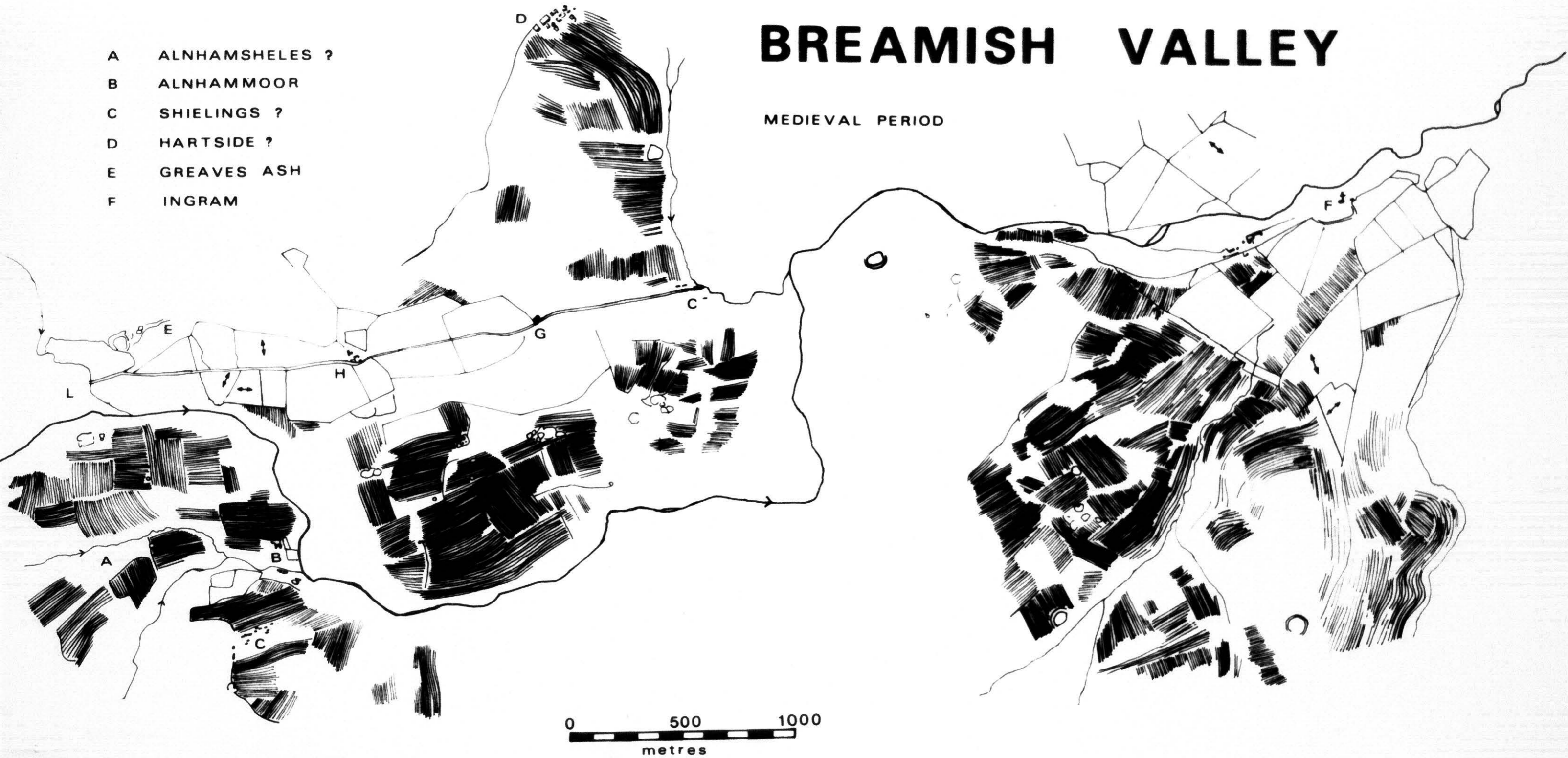


Figure 2: Medieval Cultivation Remains in the Breamish Valley.





terraces were reused Romano-British period cultivation terraces since settlements of this period are so numerous in the area. Indeed the medieval cultivators exploited the abandoned improvements of a thousand years before. On Hartside Hill in the Breamish Valley, the furlong units respect in places the former field boundaries of this period <sup>Fig. 2 and</sup> (No 102). Another feature of the Hethpool area is the relatively slight nature of some ridge and furrow (e.g. to the north of Heddon village). Early desertion in this area would imply a limited period of cultivation for most of the land in the Hethpool area except around the village of Hethpool itself. This would explain the slightness of the features. This activity marks the high tide of medieval cultivation in the area. In the Breamish Valley the isolation of medieval systems is complicated by the adoption of the former village lands of Alnhamshelles as a demesne in the sixteenth century, but farmed from a different site. Consequently the ridge and furrow is particularly well formed, varying from about nine metres to fourteen metres wide and high backed like the ridges in the coastal claylands of Bamburghshire.

The extent to which the lands of a township were cultivated varied considerably. At the turn of the fourteenth century when the medieval population was at its greatest, the amount of land under regular cultivation was at its greatest extent until the agricultural revolution. To use the evidence of ridge and furrow to assess the limits of medieval cultivation at this time, it is necessary to be aware of the post medieval activity in any particular township. The Northumbrian practice of temporary

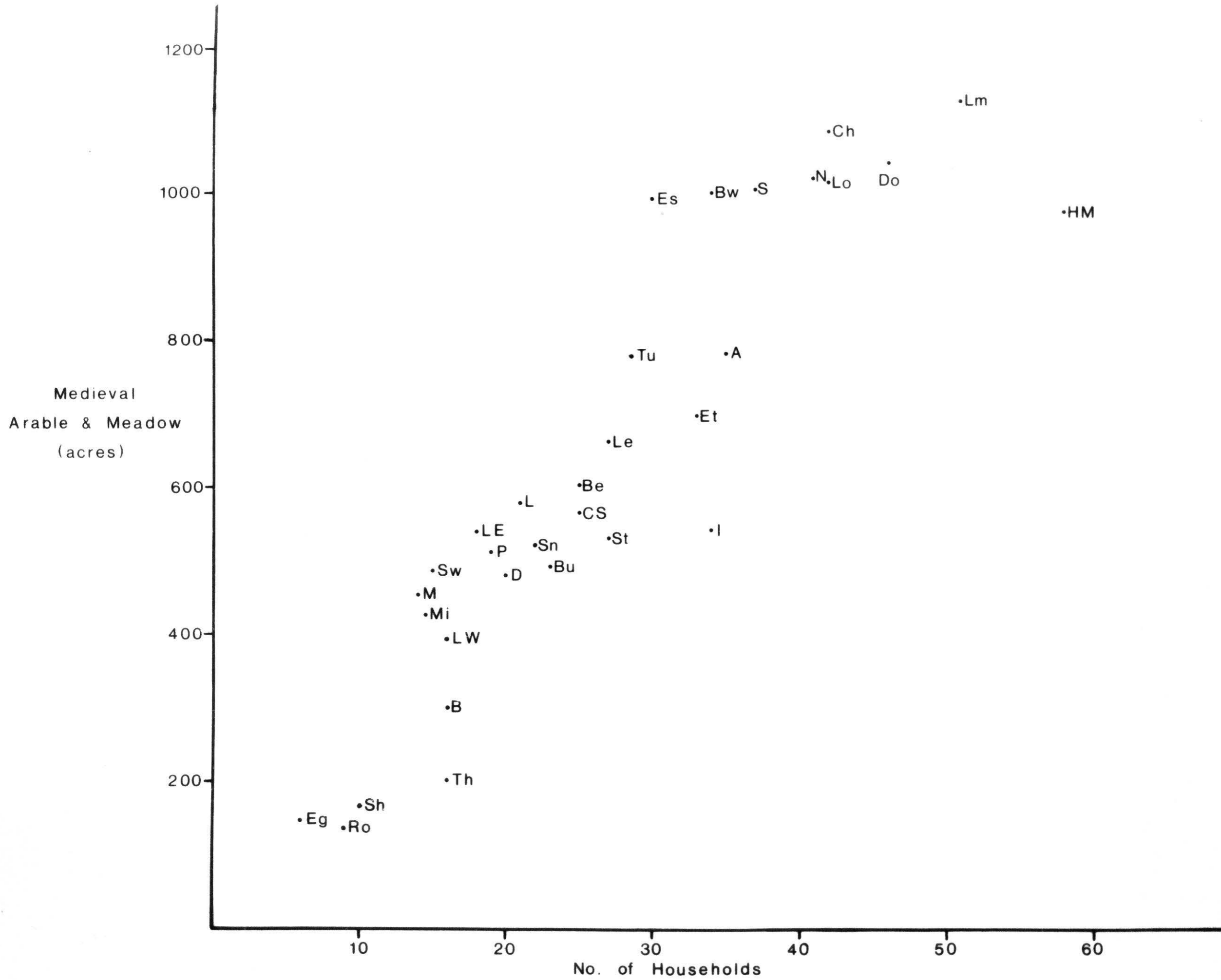
intakes complicates the situation (Butlin 1973 133); favourable areas of waste may be ploughed for this reason, giving a misleading impression of the full extent of the medieval town-fields. However the probability remains that well-formed ridges are not the product of such a temporary expedient. Surprisingly neither the physical remains of redundant ridges nor the evidence of estate plans suggest that all town waste was invariably ploughed at some date in the medieval or post medieval period. Medieval documentation indicates considerable variance in the extent of arable and meadow lands relative to the total land of the township<sup>(App.1)</sup>. This may be regarded as bearing a close connection with the relief of a township and its topography, but also its drift-geology, soils and drainage. Butlin compared the evidence of the post medieval plans for common-fields for the Percy estate in the early seventeenth century with relief and soils (Butlin 1973 112). There is a clear difference between the upland edge township and the lowland township. Large upland edge vills like Alnham, Chatton, Doddington, Bewick and others have a low ratio of cultivated land to waste. Alnham in the thirteenth century had about twelve percent of its 9400<sup>acres</sup> as cultivable lands, Chatton 22.5 per cent, and Doddington 30.5 per cent. The reason for this low proportion would seem to be a reflection of relief. Lands much above 275 metres in the Cheviots were only exceptionally brought into cultivation, on the evidence of extant rigg, whilst in the Fell Sandstone Ridge, the upper limit of cultivation was considerably lower at about 150 metres. On the other hand lowland and coastal vills like Tuggal with 60 per

cent, Lesbury with 63 percent or Sunderland with 68.5 per cent show a much more substantial area under potential cultivation, ranging from about 40 to 70 per cent. These proportions may be compared with the c.30 to 60 per cent found in the unimproved townships of Northumberland in the seventeenth century (Butlin 1973 137). This would seem to point to an unchanging landscape of arable and meadow in relation to waste, bearing in mind the Northumbrian habit of breaking in new land as at Longhoughton in 1289, Swynleysheles or Sunderland in the mid thirteenth century (Martin 1911 251, Cal IPM II 723 and NCH I 310) and also at Bilton and Rennington in the early seventeenth century. Temporary intakes of this type are less likely to produce the high-backed rigg typical of permanent medieval cultivation. Even in townships like Rennington or Denwick on the coastal plain of Bamburghshire, the village and arable core was situated in the more favourable soils and lower ground in the seventeenth century (Butlin 1973 112) and there is no reason to suspect any shift of settlement since the thirteenth century at either site. Since the better drained soils will always be at a premium, conservatism in the use of a particular piece of land for occupation may be expected, assuming that external factors remain the same.

It has been demonstrated how the rigged lands of Alnham township relate both to the cultivated land of the thirteenth century and the improved pasture and cultivated land in the early seventeenth century. Here there was a decline in the amount of arable land under cultivation which may be attributed to a



Figure 3 Area of Cultivation vs. No. of Households



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reduced pressure of population and perhaps a wetter and cooler climate. A similar correlation and expansion of improved pasture (ox-pastures) may be seen at other Percy estate townships such as South Charlton, Lesbury, Tuggal, Shilbottle and Rennington.<sup>(App.2)</sup> The ox-pastures were a stunted and improved common pasture whose origins are obscure, but would probably have been former arable land.

There is also a demonstrable relationship between the number of households recorded in medieval Inquisitions and the amount of lands, both bond, demesne and free, if known (Fig.3), but there is no relationship between the number of households and the size of the township (App.1). If, as at Alnham, the rigged land were plotted, then it ought to be possible to gain an estimate of the number of households in a village. Alternatively where the rigg has been destroyed by modern ploughing, it may be possible to compare the extent of documented lands under cultivation with the amount of good quality land in the township. At Doddington, for example<sup>(see App.2)</sup> it was found that the amount of good quality land, i.e. well drained and alluvial soils around the village, as opposed to the ill-drained podsolised lands of the Fell Sandstone Ridge, was about 600 hectares or 1500 acres. This compared well with the 1545 acres of land occupied by tenant farmers in 1722 and the c. 1500 acres of demesne, bond, cottar and free lands of the manor in 1262/3 which was termed arable and meadow. Only since the improvements of the later eighteenth century have these distinctions between cultivated land and waste been blurred.

The limits of the cultivated lands of a township were



defined by a head-dyke. The physical remains of these dykes were observed in a number of townships, Alnham, Alnhamshelles, Hartside, Ingram, Titlington, Trowhope, Reaveley and others. At Alnhamshelles it took the form of a bank with a revetted exterior and external ditch, which stood about one metre high from ditch bottom to bank-top. The head-dyke is also referred to as a dyke (fossatus) in a number of medieval deeds in the context of the exit from the village (see Nos. 115, 37), where it is better known as a drove way. Such drove ways, usually funnel shaped, are classic features of villages in north-east England (Wrathmell 1975 121 and Roberts 1972). A drove way of this type at Wark on Tweed was described in a document of 1792 as being "20-40 yards" wide (NCRO 424 Box 1D). The existence of a headland-dyke surrounding the cultivated core of the township suggests a degree of permanence in the use of this area. It is noticeable that the documentary evidence for newly broken in lands or intakes comes from two periods, the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, both times of population pressure. The headland-dyke would therefore represent the high-point of medieval cultivation, since after the mid fourteenth century a reduced population relieved the pressure on land until the renewed growth of the sixteenth century. In the lowland vales and coastal plain post medieval improvements have obliterated the remains of medieval cultivation and by and large only small areas of rigg remain as vestigial reminders of this medieval episode. In fact a substantial amount survived until after the last war and is recorded for posterity by the aerial

photographs of the post-war RAF surveys, but even so complete systems with their head-dykes were not found outside the Cheviots. On the other hand some examples of parts of rigged field-systems which were confined by a bank and ditch were observed outside the Cheviots, such as the ridge and furrow bounded by an earthen bank and external ditch on the edge of Titlington Moor (NU 115164) to the north side of the Titlington Burn or the dyked drove-way leading out from Buckton village to the west (NU 081383).  
 ♂ No 32  
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There is no evidence that the common-fields were sub-divided into smaller enclosed units. Indeed enclosures were exceptional in medieval north Northumberland. There is however evidence for several pastures, meadows and even arable which were separate from the common-fields and so necessarily enclosed. At Flotterton the common rights of pasture granted to Newminster Abbey were described thus: "*totam comunam pasturae meae ubique de Flotwaiton extra bladum et pratum, ita quod cum ablata fuerint blada et foena habeant totam pasturae ubique tam in agris quam in pratis, excepta defensa mea ex orientali parte et australi parte villae de Flotwaiton*" (Fowler 1878 152). Arable and meadow lands were generally subject to communal grazing when the harvest had been collected, but some demesne lands of the grantor, in this instance William de Flotterton, were excluded. A similar grant was made by John of Edlingham in the mid thirteenth century to Brinkburn Priory which specifically excluded from the common his demesne furlongs (Page 1893 131-2). Fourteenth century IPMs refer to several pastures, one of which was called the Hayning, a

field-name that appears on an estate plan of Edlingham for 1731 to the east of the village (NCRO 322/C/3). Equally the IPMs of Embleton record demesne enclosure called Newbiggin which is described as a pasture in the Bailiff's Accounts of the lordship in 1348-51 (NCH II 27). The field name is recorded by the Ordnance Survey behind the links to the north-east of the village. The monasteries were often given the right to enclose lands given to them by landlords. The canons of Kirkham Priory were permitted to enclose their lands in Killum (Bod Lib. Fairfax 7 fol.85) as were the monks of Newminster Abbey their lands at Werihill in Caistron (Fowler 1878 120). Indeed the canons of Brinkburn were given the full range of rights to the lands of Pauperhaugh and the Heleys in Feltonshire: "ad claudendum, colendum, fossandum, et assertendum" (Page 1893 6-11). Alternatively some landlords created exclusive enclosed game-parks, examples of which are documented at Felton, Wark, Chatton, Embleton, Rothbury and Ross Northmore (NCH VII 234, <sup>NCH XI 39,</sup> NCH XIV 205-6, NCH XV 354, [NCH II 26], PRO C134/10/18). The physical remains of such park pales survive at Chatton (NU 095289) and Lordenshaws near Rothbury.

It has been shown how the rigg was combined in parallel groups to form the furlong which medieval documentation refers to as "cultura"<sup>(Sheppard 1973, 168)</sup>. The <sup>"</sup>cultura<sup>"</sup> made up the field or cultivated lands of the township and the common term to describe it was the Latin word "campus" (see Nos. 164, 83, 93), often using the form "in campo de". As only the limits of the campus were enclosed with a permanent dyke and not apparently the furlongs, and as there is



no mention of fields as cropping units as found in Midland England, it is presumed that the furlong may have provided the basis for cropping, but in all probability the whole field would have been fenced off from animals during the spring and summer rather than providing temporary fencing for each cropped furlong. Thus some furlongs would have lain fallow, and may have been used as temporary but probably controlled pasture as at Lowick in 1254 where the fallow ground was valued for its grazing (NCH XIV 96). Gray tackled this in his seminal work on English Field Systems (Gray 1915) in trying to compare the Northumbrian system with the three-field Midland system, and concluded that the term *seisona* would have better described the Northumbrian field. Butlin cites Hepscoth as an example of a three-course rotation (Butlin 1973 142) with one third being fallow, but this does not imply a three-field system. Equally the evidence for a three-course rotation of wheat and rye, oats and fallow at Hexham are not proof of a three-field-system. Similar evidence of three-course rotations, wheat, oats and fallow being recorded at Embleton and Bamburgh (Miller 1975/68). A three-course rotation may be carried out on a strip-field system without recourse to cropping units or fields in the midland sense of a discrete block. After all in Northumberland waste was not at a premium. Stock was removeable to the waste in spring and summer. The new intake was easily incorporated into such a regulated scheme whereby the tenants received their share "rigge by rigge" according to tradition, as at Chatton (No.44). There is no evidence for equal sized fields or for tenants holding equal

portions in each of the fields either in the instances quoted by Butlin and Gray for the medieval period or for the fields of the early seventeenth century survey of the Percy estate. The inequality in size of most of the fields in the Percy townships suggest that they were viewed rather as "topographical groupings which were not rotational units" (Wrathmell 1975 115).

CHAPTER FOUR : MEDIEVAL VILLAGE SURVIVAL AND ABANDONMENT DURING  
THE LATE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

From 1296, but particularly from the second decade of the fourteenth century, the Border was disturbed by conflict with Scotland. This was not a temporary malaise but a condition which persisted for nearly three centuries until finally ended by the Union of the Crowns in 1603. In addition to this the local populace had to contend with recurring pestilence, in particular the disastrous plagues of 1349/50 and 1362/3, and a deteriorating climate throughout the same period and beyond into the seventeenth century.

Despite the death and destruction caused by infection and invasion during the late medieval period, there is little evidence for any widespread abandonment of settlement. There were a few abandonments, but these were mainly of small upland hamlets, exposed not only to the constant dangers of warfare but also to the pressures of long-term climatic deterioration on the exploitation of marginal land. Equally a few new villages and hamlets appear in the documents in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, an indication of confidence on the part of some landlords. By and large, most documented thirteenth century villages continued to be occupied in the sixteenth century. This is not to say that there had been no change; replanning, shrinkage and perhaps migration occurred, but the overall settlement pattern was not significantly changed.



The fifteenth and early sixteenth century desertions that took place at many smaller villages in the Midlands did not happen in north Northumberland. This requires some explanation.

Professor Beresford<sup>(1954)</sup> has demonstrated that these Midland desertions occurred against a background of a reduced population in the aftermath of the Black Death as arable was turned to pasture to take advantage of a buoyant wool market. The population of Northumberland also had been adversely affected by the recurrence of plague as were other parts of England. Many village populations were reduced as a result, but this was not followed by abandonment at this period. It must be debateable how far the extreme north of England was tied to national trends in the greater demand for wool as compared with corn. Furthermore

Northumberland unlike the Midlands possessed a large amount of rough pasture, so that changes in the ratio of wool and corn prices were unlikely to have been so critical as in the cornlands of the Midlands. However this factor did not prevent the desertion, albeit temporarily in some cases (e.g. Outchester, Downham), of a few villages (eg. Ross No.174) in the mid to late sixteenth century, as arable lands were put down to grass to provide meat for the markets of Berwick and Newcastle. Yet the number of villages abandoned in this way was relatively insignificant and may be related to local demand. The crucial difference for Northumberland was its position as a Border county. Landlords had an interest in maintaining the able-bodied tenants on their estates in order to provide themselves with troops. This was effected by the Border service required of

husbandland tenants, which was evidently widespread in the county by the sixteenth century, and was enshrined in the customs of the Honour of Cockermouth prevalent on the Percy estate. Border landlords preferred to attract tenants to fill their vacant holdings with beneficial leases of this kind rather than turn land to pasture. Such leases required military service, but kept rents low and allowed a customary right of inheritance.

It is hard to separate the various factors which caused depopulation or vacant holdings in villages during the fourteenth century be it war, famine, or pestilence. However plague was spread nationwide whilst warfare was localised. War, plague and pestilence were all significant factors during the fourteenth century, but warfare alone continued to harass the inhabitants of Northumberland throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and into the sixteenth century. From the time of Flodden (1513) full-scale Scottish invasions gave way to localised raids and cattle thieving which although disturbing allowed a measure of improvement in the agrarian economy.

The turn of the fourteenth century marked the high point in the expansion of the medieval economy and population. In relation to its available technology, England's population had outstripped its natural resources. England could be said to be overpopulated. A reflection of this national trend in Northumberland is the cultivation of marginal lands high in the Cheviots and the extent to which landlords were involved in demesne farming. This was particularly profitable as long as there was a surplus of labour and prices remained relatively high

(Miller 1964 24-5 & 30-3).

From the second decade of the fourteenth century, the classic Malthusian checks of war and plague took effect, culminating in the Black Death in 1349 and its successive outbreaks. This caused a dramatic reduction in the population of between one third and one half during the later fourteenth and first half of the fifteenth centuries, one consequence of which was a recession in the agricultural economy. The chief characteristic of this economic decline as outlined by Professor Postan was the abandonment of demesne farming on the part of lay and ecclesiastical landlords. With labour becoming scarce and therefore more costly from the mid fourteenth century and prices beginning to drop in the late fourteenth century, demesne farming was no longer worthwhile. Whilst the general effects on the population of the Black Death are well accepted, the exact chronology of the decline has been disputed. Indeed it has been argued that it was not until the last quarter of the fourteenth century that evidence of such a decline becomes apparent, and that the agrarian crisis of the early fourteenth century and the first outbreak of the plague merely reduced the surplus population (Bridbury 1973 583-92) which had in any case been invisible in the documentation before the plague. Be that as it may, the visible sign of a scarcity of labour, the abandonment of demesne farming became common from the mid fourteenth century in north Northumberland.

The agrarian crisis of 1315-22 was the first expression of over-population in the countryside and of the susceptibility of



an undernourished populace to famine and disease. Yet it is difficult to separate the effects of cattle murrains from the Scottish invasions and devastations of the same period. A cattle murrain carried off the cattle with the English army at Berwick in 1319 and may be part of the same murrain which afflicted Hexham in 1318 and the rest of the country in 1319-21. There is however little direct local evidence for the harvest failure which affected some parts of the country in the years 1315 and 1316, or the great sheep murrain of 1313-17 (Kershaw 1973).

During this same period Northumberland was invaded by the Scots in the aftermath of Bannockburn and the Prior of Durham was obliged to buy off Robert Bruce from devastating his estates of Norham and Islandshire for the sum of £46.5s. (Raine 1852 270). The tithes of the estate had been at £315 in the year before Bannockburn, but only £24 was collected during the period 1317-21 and the 1320s were little better (Lomas 1973 161). Equally the rents of the Percy estate fell steadily from the pre Bannockburn level until 1319 when very little at all could be collected, while Bamburgh Castle found it impossible to collect rents in 1322 (Scammell 1958 387).

The prolonged warfare of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries took its toll on the economy of the county. The 1336 Lay Subsidy Roll showed a substantial reduction in the numbers of taxpayers and the amount paid since 1296 which may in part be attributed to the wars of the previous twenty years, although reductions from the 1296 levels were apparent in other parts of the country (see Ch.3.1). Shortly after in 1343 the landlords of

the parishes of north Northumberland petitioned the King that they might be treated lightly with respect to the Ninth to be levied on the fleeces of lambs and sheaves of corn because their crops and other goods were burned and otherwise destroyed and their animals plundered by the Scots (Cal Pat. 1343/5 409). Apart from the Poll Tax at the beginning of Richard II's reign, Northumberland was excused payment of Lay Subsidies throughout the rest of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in an effort to offset the destruction caused by Scots' invasions. There are recurrent references in IPMs of the fourteenth century, and particularly in the 1320s, '40s and later in the 1380s and '90s when warfare was heavy, to the value of estates being either drastically reduced or worth nothing because of the destruction caused by the Scots (PRO C132-C135 & CAL IPM XV & XVI). Equally the non-payment of tithes was common for the parishes of Norham and Holy Island during the same periods because of the Scots (Raine 1852 83-130 & 266-282).

The tithes of Norham and Islandshire fluctuated in relation to the events on the Border. Thus they improved after the disastrous 1320s following the Treaty of Northampton and again in the 1370s after a period of relative prosperity and peace. In the 1370s tithes totalled over £100, but decayed to but £13 in 1400 after twenty years of war. During the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries £40-60 was typical, but this was only one fifth of the pre Bannockburn tithe. In comparison the tithes of Ellingham parish fell by about seventy five percent, not quite as drastic a reduction and a reflection of its less exposed



(Lomas 1973 160-2)  
situation.

The <sup>the</sup> ~~state~~ of incomes of great estates were also seriously affected by warfare. The rents of tenants on the lordship of Embleton were frequently remitted or reduced during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries because of the ravages of the Scots, and they were advised to remove their roof timbers in the event of war in order to prevent their houses being burnt since the expense of replacing them fell on the landlord not the tenant (NCH II 34). On the Percy estate in Northumberland for the first half of the fifteenth century there was a decline in the value of rents of between one third and one half as compared with a reduction of one fifth to one quarter on the Yorkshire estate (Bean 1958 35 and 41). A similar relative decay in income on the Durham Priory estates in Scotland and Northumberland, as compared with the rest further south, again reflects the hazardous situation of lands on the Border at this period (Lomas 1973 175). An analysis of the reasons for the reductions in income from tithes on the estate by a monk of Durham in 1420 indicates that he considered the Scots <sup>Wars</sup> to be one of the ~~two~~ major factors, the others being <sup>the laying of land to grass and</sup> the recurrent outbreaks of plague (Lomas ~~ibid.~~ 162).<sup>1.</sup>

Finally there is some evidence that the early sixteenth century saw a degree of recovery. This is evident in slightly improved incomes from tithes from the Durham estates, and a measure of stability in the income of the Percy estate (Lomas 1973 289). Apart from the Flodden campaign, this was a period of relative peace on the Border. There was a change from full-scale invasions to localised raiding which nonetheless maintained the

1. The laying down of land to grass was a factor <sup>(Raine 1852 279)</sup> which may of course be a result of the other factors.



atmosphere of uncertainty. The Lord Warden Dacre was forced to admit the poor state of the county in the face of accusations of his incompetence in dealing with thieves and robbers (Wrathmell 1975 150). It is against this background of relative peace that some of the settlement changes of this particular period, such as new colonisations, are best understood (see below).

It is difficult to isolate the effects of the recurrent plagues of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth century from the devastations of the Scots. The Durham monk of 1420 identified recurrent plague as one of the two main reasons for a reduced income in tithes on the Durham estate. Plagues are documented in the county in 1349/50, 1361/2, 1379 and 1417-21 (NCH III 43), but the full extent of their mortality is not known. It is unwise to assume that its effects were limited in the thinly populated countryside of rural Northumberland. The course of the 1349 outbreak through the Durham Priory estates has been traced by consulting the Halmote Court Rolls. Although severe in Bedlingtonshire in south Northumberland no records survive for Norham and Islandshire (Bradshaw 1907 158-60). But in 1350 the landlords of the villis of Belford, Easington, Ross, Elwick, Detchent and Middleton petitioned the Prior of Nostell to be allowed a dispensation to bury their dead at Belford chapel of ease because of the great mortality and pestilence and the difficulty of transporting their dead to Bamburgh church (NCH I 385). The geographical position of Belford thirteen miles from Berwick itself suggests that the incidence of plague was

widespread. However the Account Rolls for Embleton for 1349-51 relate that £15. 3. 7 1/2d. were remitted to William Pinders, the late bailiff for the rents and services of bondage and cottar tenants who were dead and whose tenements were empty and deserted. This represents about fifty percent of the total rental for one year at 1314 rates (NCH II 28).

Table 4.1:

Waste Holdings On the Percy Estate

		<u>1352</u>	<u>1368</u>
	Tenancies	Waste	Waste
Denwick	19.5b	19.5	
	3c		
Lesbury	20b	4	4
	11c		
Gt Houghton	28b	10	10
	29c	10	11
Chatton	27b	11	9
	13c	8	
Alnham	18b	6	6
	16c	9	6
Tuggal	19.5b	7.5	
	8c	2	
Swynhow	9b	3	
	5c	2	
<hr/>			
Total:	226	82(36%)	46(25%) from 182.

Reason given: 1. defection of tenants

## 2. poverty of country

Alnhamshelles - not recorded

<sup>w</sup>  
Synleys - pasture

An IPM for the year 1351/2 of Henry de Percy for the lordship of Alnwick describes a high proportion of vacant tenements because of the poverty of the country and because tenants had fled, but gives no reason for this state of affairs. 82 out of 226 husbandlands and cottages were vacant in the demesne villis of the lordship of Alnwick (PRO C135/116). In this case plague cannot certainly be identified as the cause, but neither can Scots invasion. The fact that of the lordship in 1368, 46 out of 182 holdings were still waste, suggests the catastrophic scale of the plague on one estate which was widely dispersed throughout the north of the county. The second outbreak of plague in 1362/3 is well attested in the Halmote Rolls for Norham which indicate that its effects were severe (Lomas 1973 162), but there is no evidence of it elsewhere. A stray reference to the third pestilence of 1379 is recorded in the IPM of Robert Wendout for the villis of Hebburn and Newton by the sea which lie about ten miles apart, and... suggests a wider incidence (PRO CAL IPM XV No 289).

The long term effects of recurrent plague and the devastations of war on the population of north Northumberland are impossible to estimate in the absence of any explicit documentation for the fifteenth century. The 1377 Poll Tax returns for Glendale and Coquetdale, coming after a period of



relative peace, suggest a relatively healthy population with small upland settlements like Trowhope and Heddon present and an average of fifty one adults per village for Glendale and thirty two for Coquetdale. Some lowland settlements like Doddington, Killum and Lowick had large populations with 168, 109 and 112 adults respectively (PRO E179/158/29, 31 & 32). This matches the documented number of holdings in those settlements at an average of two to three adults per holding with forty five, thirty seven and forty seven respectively. This confirms the argument that the early outbreaks of plague merely removed the surplus population.

The most characteristic and recognisable feature of economic decline in late medieval north Northumberland from the mid fourteenth century was the abandonment of demesne farming and the establishment of a rentier economy. <sup>The abandonment of</sup> Demesne farming was a response to the increasing scarcity of labour which may have been aggravated by the devastations of the first half of the fourteenth century. The demesnes of Embleton were let to tenants in 1349/51 and this had also happened at several other villis of the lordship of Embleton by 1361 i.e. Dunstan, Stamford and Burton (PRO C135/160). The Percy demesnes of Denwick and Alnham in the lordship of Alnwick and Snitter and Thropton in the lordship of Rothbury were in the hands of tenants at will in <sup>(Tate 1866 I 138)</sup> 1368, and the leasing of demesne lands had become widespread on the estate in the early fourteenth century (Bean 1958 12). It had been effected on the Bewick estate of Tynemouth Priory by 1378, but it is evident that the demesnes of East Lilburn had been leased as early as 1335 to Adam Shipherd of Bewick for a term of

six years. The Umfraville demesne vill of Chirmundesden near Harbottle was let to tenants at will by 1368 (PRO Cal IPM XII No. 250), and at the other end of the area Durham Cathedral Priory began to lease the demesne vill of Shoreswood by Norham from 1405/6, whilst Holy Island Priory leased Fenham manor for the first time in 1398/9 for a period of ten years (Lomas 1973 158 & Raine 1852 114).

Three trends in the development of this rentier economy may be discerned. Firstly whole vills were leased to a third party as at Fenham in 1398/9 or Shoreswood in 1405/6. At Shoreswood there is some evidence that the leasee may have been the head of a syndicate of local inhabitants (Lomas *ibid.* 159). Secondly the demesne lands of a vill were leased to one or more tenants, who continued to maintain the demesne lands as a severalty farm, as apparently had happened at Tuggal, Lucker and Newham by 1472 (Nos. 155, 140 and 204). Thirdly and more significantly the demesne lands were let to the tenants at will as a whole as evidenced by the Percy estate for its demesne vills of Lesbury, Longhoughton, Shilbottle, Rennington, Chatton and South Charlton. The effect of such a move is nicely illustrated by the vills of Spindleston and Budle. Here a rental of 1387 reveals that the demesnes had been divided amongst the various tenants at will. In the course of time the demesnes became indistinguishable from the rest of the tenants' holdings as revealed by Clarkson's Survey of the Percy estate in 1566/7 (Aln Cas A I i) and the manor house itself became redundant. Thus the sites of the manors of Chatton, Rennington and Shilbottle were entirely lost

by the early seventeenth century when the villages were planned for Mayson's Survey of 1613-20.

From the middle of the fourteenth century it became common for bondages to be known as husbandlands as is evident from the extents of IPMs of the 1340s onwards (e.g. PRO CAL IPM VIII 609). This did not occur everywhere at the same time. The bond tenants of the Percy estate were still called bondmen in 1368, but had changed to husbandlands by 1472.

The abandonment of demesne farming was a response to the increasing scarcity of labour which may have been exacerbated by the Scots wars. Another equally important response was the reorganisation of bond holdings. As freeholders were few in number in Northumberland, the most important holdings in a village were the bondages which consisted in the main of a messuage, toft, croft and two bovates of arable and meadow land and the usual common rights in return for rent and services. This change <sup>from bondages to husbandlands</sup> may be the first indication of the development of a new tenure based in part upon the performance of military services whereby each husbandland provided an armed man to serve his manorial lord. This was later known as Border Service in sixteenth century documents. Its appearance during the 1340s, after thirty years of warfare, is circumstantial support for this argument, since it was not explicitly stated at this time.

There is also some evidence that landlords were finding it difficult to fill all their traditional bondlands in the face of a declining population and were forced to reorganise their holdings to accommodate the new situation. Where fifteenth



century evidence is available, as on the Percy estate in 1498/9, there is a marked reduction in the number of holdings. This could take the form of a reduced number of tenants in occupation of engrossed husbandlands, for example at Rugley the eighteen husbandlands were held by seven tenants and at Denwick nineteen and a half by fourteen tenants, or a substantial reduction in the number of independently occupied cottage holdings as at Houghton Magna where only seven survived, the other twenty two having been absorbed into the husbandland tenements (Nos. 120, and also Guyzance No. 99 and Birling No. 21). In addition, prior to 1566/7, and probably before 1537, the nineteen and a half husbandlands in Tuggal had been reduced to eleven, Newham's twenty four husbandlands to twelve and the sixteen husbandlands of Over Buston to eight (see Nos. 204, 155 and 36). In the absence of strictly comparable evidence from other estates it is difficult to assess the extent of the reductions throughout the area. At a number of villages however there is some support for similar reductions from sources of sixteenth century date, e.g. Spindleston, Budle, Burton, Presson, Learmouth, Shoreswood, Cheswick et al (see App. 5). This suggests that even the return of population growth had not recovered the ground lost in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Yet there are two exceptional villages where the numbers of tenants or tenements actually increased, Bewick and Etal (Nos. 18 and 77). At Bewick there were twenty three bondagers in 1295, but in 1538 there were twenty nine copy holders at Old Bewick alone, and another ten at New Bewick. There was a similar development at Etal.

Over the same period (mid fourteenth to mid sixteenth centuries) a number of villages were either totally abandoned or shrunk to a single farm. This was the most extreme reflection of the reductions in tenancies and holdings observed above. Small lowland villages and hamlets like Colwel, Evenwood, Osberwick, Trikulton, Unthank in Bamburgh and Chirmundesden near Harbottle were deserted and replaced in some instances by new settlements on a new site. Small villages have long been recognised as more susceptible to desertion (Beresford 1954)<sup>247 ff.</sup>. These migrations of settlement, during fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, took place at Newtowne Chillingham for Trikulton and Newstead for Osberwick, whilst Evenwood may have been replaced by Greens and Unthank by Easington Grange. The reason for these migrations is obscure; but there is no reason to suppose that desertion was followed directly by the foundation of the new settlement. Indeed Newstead is documented from the thirteenth century as a manorial establishment quite separate from the village of Osberwick which was in due course abandoned. In these cases the lands of the deserted village have been resettled; good land was rarely left empty without good reason. Uniquely the vill of Chirmundesden suffered abandonment because of its peculiar position as the demesne of Harbottle Castle which was owned by the Umfraville lords of Redesdale. Their demise in the fifteenth century, and the subsequent acquisition of the property by the Crown, saw the lordship deteriorate and provided the context for the desertion of the settlement, as the management of the estate foundered through a lack of close direction. The deserted manor

site was replaced by the farm of Peels in the seventeenth century (see No. 47).

The Cheviots contain a number of villages and hamlets and other settlements which were abandoned during the late medieval period.

The Scots wars played their part in providing an uncertain atmosphere which was inimical to settlement, but this does not alone constitute a reason for desertion, except of a temporary nature. Shotton village lay right on the Border and in 1541 was said to have been deserted for the last thirty years, but it was resettled in the seventeenth century, presumably on the same site. Shotton lay in the Bowmont Valley at ninety metres OD. in a relatively sheltered situation in comparison with the Cheviot villages and hamlets most of which lay at over two hundred metres OD. They occupy land which is now considered marginal to arable cultivation, but which in the thirteenth century was capable of supporting the mixed farming regime of communities of medieval peasants. From the climatic optimum of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the climate began to turn cooler and wetter until the so-called Little Ice Age of the late seventeenth centuries. Because of its gradual nature this deterioration would not have been very obvious to contemporary observers, but its effects increased the frequency of harvest failure on marginal land and would eventually have been felt by both the poor inhabitants and their landlords whose rents would not have been paid. Dr. M. L. Parry in a study of the relationship of settlements and climate in south-east Scotland since the medieval



period has shown that there is a direct relationship between the length of growing season (i.e. those months when the mean temperature is greater than ten degrees centigrade) at different heights above sea level and the ability of land to produce crops. For the Lammermuirs he has found that the upper limit of cultivation lay at about one thousand and fifty feet or three hundred and twenty metres in the thirteenth century and that by the nineteenth century this had fallen to six hundred and fifty feet or about two hundred metres. In consequence he has argued that a number of documented medieval settlements were abandoned. <sup>(Parry 1974)</sup>  
In the Cheviots abandonment of settlement similar to that observed by Parry in the Lammermuirs has been found for the villages of Heddon, Trowup, Alnhamshelles, Hartside, Over Prendwick, Alesdon and Colpenhope, and indeed some lesser settlements, particularly in Alnham parish all of which lay at well over two hundred metres OD. However a generalised determinist case of this kind for the abandonment of settlements has to be carefully examined.

The retreat from the margins can be attributed to the decline in population of the late medieval period as well as to a declining climate. With a reduced population and no shortage of vacant tenancies in lowland villages, marginal lands in the Cheviots would have become less attractive. On the other hand the high altitude lands cultivated in the medieval period were not reoccupied when the population began to increase again in the post medieval period. The Cheviots were largely turned over to sheep farming in the seventeenth century, and it has only been in

recent years with EEC Grants that farmers have seen fit to recultivate lands of such marginal character. Ultimately the occupation of marginal lands remains an economic issue. Most villagers in these upland medieval settlements had to both feed and clothe themselves and pay their rents to their landlords. Certainly the higher incidence of harvest failure, caused by wetter and cooler weather, would have affected the ability of tenants to pay their rents. This would only become critical when the landlord could see no prospect of recouping his losses by trying to maintain such a peasant establishment or if no tenants could be found to occupy the tenements and if there was no ready alternative available which there was not until demesne farming became favourable in the mid sixteenth century. There is no strong evidence to support a direct causal relationship between climatic deterioration and the desertion of villages. However it may have been one of the underlying factors behind the failure to reoccupy any of these upland villages with the return of peace in the seventeenth century. By this time a new set of economic circumstances existed which were biased towards demesne or pastoral farming (see next chapter).

There were a number of Cheviot villages and hamlets which were particularly prone to raiding by the Scots since their settlements lay within a couple of miles of the Border. Bowes and Ellerker's survey of the Border and its defences in 1541 makes play with the susceptibility of Cheviot settlements to surprise attack because of the nature of the hilly terrain (Hodgson 1828 222). As government agents responsible in some



degree for administering the defence of the East and Middle Marches, they may not have been entirely disinterested observers. It is strange that exposed lowland villages like Carham, Mindrum and Presson were not deserted when upland settlements like Heddon, Trowup, Alesdon and Outchester were said to have been deserted "since before the remembrance of any man now living". Not unnaturally small upland hamlets were less valuable assets than a rich lowland village, but to isolate any one reason for the abandonment of these settlements in the context of the contracted late medieval economy under strain from exposure to a deteriorating climate and intermittent warfare would be foolish. It is too easy to take refuge in an all-enveloping explanation such as the Scots wars or the climate or plague.

This cautious approach is justified by the example of the village of Alnhamshelles which was finally abandoned in the first half of the sixteenth century and replaced by a demesne farm about half a mile to the east. The demesne farm continued to cultivate the old ploughlands of the village well into the seventeenth century, so that poor climate was not apparently preventing the successful exploitation of lands which lay at between two hundred and fifty metres and three hundred metres OD. What was different was that the economy of a demesne farm allowed the farmer a greater flexibility in terms of organisation and overheads to respond to <sup>the</sup> economic climate than the traditional peasant economy of a medieval village had allowed. What is not known is whether the village was initially destroyed by warfare, as indeed it may have been since it had been completely destroyed



for that reason in 1472, or whether it was a purely economic decision, with the tenants being cleared out by their landlords the Percies, or their surrogates.

The temporary destruction caused by the Scots wars to many villages in north Northumberland allowed great opportunities for the replanning of settlements. The reduction in the number of holdings at many villages has already been discussed. However in terms of the structure and lay-out of a village, it is of considerable significance. For example the fifty percent reduction in husbandland tenements at Rugley and Newham must have been accompanied by alterations in the lay-out of tofts in the village, either by abandonment or amalgamation. An example of replanning is West Whelpington in mid Northumberland which was replanned at some point in the late medieval period, so that the regular plan visible until removed by quarrying a few years ago, was not the original lay-out. The last two seasons' excavation on the site in 1975 and 1976 revealed that the irregular scatter of tofts at the extreme west end of the village predated this replanning and belonged to the thirteenth century (Jarrett 1976 and 1977). Similar late medieval changes have been observed at Wawne in Yorkshire. Amalgamations or what Brian Roberts has termed *in situ* reorganisation are more difficult to spot. John Hurst has argued that Wharram Percy was reorganised in this way in the fifteenth century (Hurst 1983 3-20). Demonstrating this for villages in north Northumberland at this period is impossible at present, because of the lack of extensively excavated village sites but a case for it at a number of sites has been argued

previously (see chapter 3.2). Certainly vacant tofts may be observed at a number of Percy villages surveyed in the early seventeenth century such as Beanley, South Charlton, Lucker and others, but it is possible that most of these are recent abandonments. It is at least reasonable to speculate that Beanley was replanned after its acquisition by the Percies at the end of the fifteenth century. The number of husbandlands changed, and indeed increased, but the site of the manor was abandoned, and was not identifiable on the early seventeenth century map. The village at this date comprised four blocks of seven tofts, two on the north side or row and two on the south, which almost exactly matches the number of cottage plots and husbandlands tenements recorded in the 1586 survey of the village (No. 15). Regular plans of this kind which are suggestive of a particular instance of replanning may be noted at Buckton, Shipley, Stamford and Easington but not the date at which it occurred. All however must have been laid out prior to the eighteenth century when they were becoming redundant, but the date could be as late as the seventeenth century in the present state of knowledge.

Some landlords reacted to the uncertainties of the Scots wars by attempting to defend their property. Substantial local gentry like the Hetons of Chillingham or the Feltons of Edlingham and the Herons of Ford or the Manners of Etal added defensive towers and enclosures to their manors during the course of the fourteenth century. The progress of this development may be traced in the grant of crenellation to local families by Edward

III from the third decade of the fourteenth century (Bates 1893 8-9). Lesser mortals began constructing peel towers from the latter part of the fourteenth century to an extent which is revealed by the distribution of towers in the 1415 list of Border Holds which includes a number of vicar's towers (e.g. Alnham, Bates *ibid*). On the whole the peasantry of north Northumberland could not afford to ape their betters and defend their tenancies and few peel houses are recorded in contrast to the large numbers of defended houses found in Redesdale and Tynedale. <sup>(Ramm *et al.* 1970)</sup>

Although the main trend of the late medieval period is for a contraction of settlement this is not the whole picture. During the century c.1450 - 1550 a number of new settlements are recorded, some of which are substantial hamlets such as Milfield, New Etal and New Bewick, but most of which are small hamlets and even isolated farms. It has already been suggested that the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were a relatively peaceful period on the Border and a time when the incomes of landlords began to show a slight improvement. It may be that this new phase of colonisation is a reflection of this state of affairs, on the other hand it is possible that a number of these newly recorded settlements are merely old sites that were being reoccupied or even just being recorded for the first time. The new villages of New Etal and Bewick would appear to have been rationalisations of the old vills of Bewick and Etal both of which were divided into two parts by the river Till. It is recorded in the 1541 Border Survey that the bridge across the Till at Etal had been destroyed, which may have provided the



impetus for the reorganisation of the estate. There would seem to be no reason for the absence of record of Milfield village before the mid sixteenth century. It lies in good quality arable land near the site of the Anglo Saxon palace of Maelmin. If indeed it was an entirely new foundation at this period it remains to be explained how the lands of the vill were exploited. The name Milfield supports the hypothesis that the lands were used as arable prior to this, the village being established near to the site of a mill. Some hamlets are described at earlier times as fields or pastures. Unthank in Orde is referred to in the fifteenth century as Unthankfield and Bassington in Shipley is referred to as a several pasture in 1361. However former villages like Swynleys or Crocklaw were referred to in this way in the IPMs of the fourteenth century, so that the alternative explanation that these may be recolonisations of places which suffered temporary desertion during the fourteenth century is possible. A similar argument may be raised for places like Cote Walls and Elilaw in Biddleston, Grindon Rigg in Grindon (and there is reference to an Old Grindon in 1300), or Broomridge in Ford and Broome Park in Bolton. Whether these are to be viewed as new settlements or <sup>the</sup> recolonisation of old settlements, it is a reflection of the relative calm of this period, since all these places lay at some distance from the mother settlement and so <sup>were</sup> exposed to raiding parties.

In conclusion the late medieval period in north Northumberland did not see the widespread desertion of villages that typified the Midland counties in the same period, but rather

their preservation and maintenance. The Border wars created an atmosphere of insecurity that encouraged the continued habitation of villages and discouraged economic enterprise. In the Cheviots, as in other parts of the country there was a retreat from the margins but here the added insecurity of Border warfare played a part in the abandonment of upland hamlets (Plan 13).

Table 4.2

Deserted Medieval villages pre 1600

Warenton	A stead 1584
Trowup	1541
Heddon	1541
Newbiggin	3 hamlets 1560/1
Antechester	1541
Elterton (Colpenhope)	1541
Shotton	1541
Alnhamsheles	by 1567
Trikulton	migration to Newtown
Hartside	by 1604?
Chirmundesden	pre 1604
Unthank (Bamburgh)	migration to Easington Grange
Osberwick	migration to Newstead
Colwell	late 14th century?
Evenwood	migration to Greens
Bradford	a stead in 1580
Edmondhills	a stead in 1584
Yeavinging	a stead in 1584
Felton Parva	a farm by 1536

CHAPTER FIVE : AGRARIAN CHANGE AND THE DEMISE OF VILLAGE  
SETTLEMENT C.1550 TO C.1850

5.1 Landownership, Agrarian Change and Settlement

During this period the settlement pattern and agrarian landscape of north Northumberland formerly described altered out of all recognition. The medieval landscape of nucleated villages and unenclosed common-field systems was replaced by a modern landscape of dispersed farms and occasional nucleated settlements amongst geometrically shaped enclosed fields. The broad expanses of common waste were divided and enclosed, and, outside the upland terrain of the Cheviots and Fell Sandstone Ridge, brought into cultivation.

The enclosure of common land and estate reorganisation leading to the redundancy of medieval villages at this period was not exclusive to the north of Northumberland, it is well attested in the Midland Counties at places such as Strixten & Easton Maudit in Northamptonshire (Taylor 1983, 205). What is peculiar to Northumberland (since it is also well attested in southern Northumberland) is the extent of medieval village redundancy and its concentration in in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the progress of enclosure and estate reorganisation was at its height.

This concentration of village redundancy, at a later date than the classic Midland desertions of the late medieval period,



may be attributed to the curious preservation of villages during the prolonged warfare of the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries (see chapter Four). The uncertainties of the Border prevented any widespread agrarian change because landlords like the 7th earl of Northumberland (1557-1569) were concerned about the personal military service of their tenants as well as the levels of their rents (James 1973 66-7).

However this state of affairs was already changing by the mid-sixteenth century. The Tudor government destroyed the power of the Percy earls of Northumberland and adopted the personal service of husbandland tenants to their lord as a means of frontier defence known as Border Service under the command of the Lord Warden. This bound military service for the Crown with manorial custom and acted as a restraint upon landlords who might otherwise have chosen to improve their rentals at the expense of service.

Economic pressures during the later sixteenth to the early seventeenth centuries <sup>encouraged improvement. The period</sup> was dominated by prolonged price inflation (Outhwaite 1969 13-15) whose chief consequence for landlords dependant upon fixed rentals was to decrease their purchasing power. Landlords were afflicted by two conflicting demands, the need to improve their incomes and the requirements of Border Service.

Repeated investigations into the decay of Border Service (ie. in 1580, 1584 & 1596) suggest that it was not an unqualified success. Landlords did not feel obliged to maintain the system efficiently now that it was a government policy and not a

personal service. Yet examination of the reasons for decay listed in the 1596 survey indicate that few landlords were prepared to indulge in any action that was completely contrary to the performance of service, such as the conversion of village tenements to pasture or demesnes (see App. 7). This was a controversial matter as is evident from the letter of Dr James, Dean of Durham, to Lord Burghley in 1595; "The decay of tillage and dispeopling of villages offends God by spoiling the Church, dishonours the Prince, weakens the Commonwealth etc..., but it is nowhere so dangerous as in the northern parts...By this decay the Queen loses 500 horsemen who were bound with their servants to be ready armed, at an hour's warning." (Cal SP. Dom. Eliz. 1595-7<sup>355</sup>).  
 In fact at this period only five clear-cut cases of conversion of villages to pasture can be identified, Outchester, Ross, Hetton, Howtell and Downham; whilst the engrossment and enclosure of husbandland tenements into demesnes was chiefly confined to the two great estates of the Greys of Chillingham and the earls of Northumberland (see below). Dr James may have exaggerated the scale of the problem, but not its impact. Such improvements removed the manpower that provided Border Service and consequently was a threat to the security of the Border. None of the other methods of improvement available to landlords at this period such as increased entry fines, or the neglect of the obligation to repair tenants' farms (Bowden 1967 681), removed the manpower on which the system of Border service depended.

The Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland and the return of peace to the Border after 1604 provided the economic

climate in which landlords were able to introduce improvements unrestrained by considerations of defence and the requirements of Border Service. However this in itself is no explanation of the degree of reorganisation and village redundancy that was to ensue. The extent of change is related to the power that proprietors had over their tenants. This was considerable because in about three quarters of the townships in north Northumberland there was a single landowner. A township in which there was a single landowner could be reorganised without the necessity of obtaining the agreement of other proprietors. This was all the more effective because there were also few free tenants, about nine percent of all tenants in the sixteenth century (Tawney 1912 41), and copyholds of inheritance were only to be found on the Bamburgh estate of the Forsters. The remaining tenants were tenants at will who had no status at law as proprietors and so could not prevent the arbitrary raising of rents(see below), enclosures and estate reorganisation. A landowner with this degree of power had what Yelling termed "unity of control" in relation to the enclosure of common lands (Yelling 1977 7), but it is an equally useful term in discussing all the various facets of reorganisation at this period. Townships with a similar proprietorial control in Leicestershire were reorganised by about 1550 (Hoskins 1950 54), but in Northumberland this did not happen, by and large, until after 1604 for the reasons already cited. As in Leicestershire reorganisations by a single landowner were often accompanied by village redundancy.



Yelling

Butlin, Wordie and have seen enclosures by private agreement as playing a prominent part in the destruction of communal cultivation and pasture rights in the north east during the <sup>early</sup> seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Butlin 1973 136 and Yelling 1977 19). However they assumed that the surviving enclosure agreements were few in number because of the accidents of survival, whereas it would make more sense to see them as a representative sample. In north Northumberland about fourteen percent of townships have some form of extant enclosure agreement. This constitutes a substantial number of the townships with two or more proprietors where such documents might be expected (about twenty five per cent). Therefore enclosure took place in the majority of townships without historical documentation, because it was not required in three quarters of the townships where there was "unity of control". This is an important point for this study since most of the areas deserted villages are to be found in townships where there are no enclosure agreements. Consequently the documentary record provides a biased impression of the agrarian development of Northumberland in the post medieval period which it is difficult to combat.

Dr. Wrathmell in his study of deserted villages in south Northumberland recognised the problem and based his model for the reorganisation of townships and village redundancy on the Clarewood estate of John Douglas which underwent a well documented enclosure and improvement in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Wrathmell 1975 193.ff). Wrathmell

argues that his model was dependent upon the chance survival of estate documents from a small estate which is more typical of southern Northumberland than a substantial estate like that of the Percy's on which much previous work on agrarian change in the county had been based<sup>(eg. Butlin 1961)</sup>, and where it was more common for village sites to continue to be occupied than to be abandoned. There are no equivalent survivals of documentation for any small estates in north Northumberland, so as an alternative the fragmentary records of a number of estates have been examined and collated in order to provide a more balanced picture of the agrarian improvement of the area and its effects upon settlement.

The various elements of agricultural improvement - the engrossment of farmlands, enclosure, the introduction of leaseholds in place of customary tenures, the erection of new farms (e.g. dispersal) and the introduction of convertible husbandry - occurred throughout the area of study during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The pace and exact date of improvement varied considerably, but it occurred both in those townships where village sites are still occupied and where they were abandoned or replaced by a single large farm.

The key element in the process for the settlement historian is enclosure. In general terms enclosure has been defined as "a method of increasing the productivity and profitability of land" (Thirk 1958 4) and in theory was attractive to both landlord and tenant, but in its application it could be inequitable. Its chief effect was to extinguish the rights of common pasture over arable and pasture alike which had formerly been the right of all

village tenants whether freeholder, husbandland tenant or cottager. In practice it involved the delimitation of an area of land by fences in order to exclude the unwanted intrusion of both animals and men. This was of benefit to the occupier since it allowed the exclusive control of cropping, manuring, breeding and grazing. Fitzherbert writing in the early sixteenth century concluded that a tenant who enclosed his farm would find it "twice so good to the tenant as it was before" (Fitzherbert 1767 70). Robert Norden towards the end of the century thought that enclosed land could produce one and a half times that of "champion" land (Rowse 1950 112).

Enclosure need not be to the disadvantage of the customary tenants, it depended on whether the landlord saw fit to provide them with severalty farms commensurate in size with their strip-field farm. On the Percy estate Clarkson, agent the 7th earl of Northumberland, recommended enclosures where they would enhance the value of the existing husbandland farms. This could take the form of enclosing the common waste to prevent the illegal pasturing of neighbouring villages (Newham), the enclosure of tenants' crofts with their adjacent tofts (Lesbury, High Buston, Birling & Lucker), or the partition of the common-fields into quarters (eg Chatton and Longhoughton) in order to confine a tenant's farmhold to one area of the townfields and improve access. Clarkson weighed the benefits of enclosure against the ability of the new arrangements to maintain the equality of tenants' holdings and therefore their service. This was the attraction of partition for Clarkson, it maintained the tenants'



share (James 1973 68). He disapproved of the actions of various demesne farmers who had abused their position to enclose lands at the expense of the other tenants for this very reason. He was particularly critical of Roland Bradford who as demesne leasee had engrossed and enclosed part of Tuggal: "he (the Earl) bothe looseth mooche service and yt ys also the decaye of ther tennaunts" (NCH 1 353). Such conservative views as these towards enclosures in allowing the customary tenant's right to a share in the division tended, at least in the short term, to preserve the medieval village community. Indeed it was the tenants of the Percy villages of High Buston and Lesbury themselves who petitioned the earl for enclosure at the end of the sixteenth century.

As has already been suggested it was the degree of control over the process of enclosure which was the critical factor in determining whether or not a nucleated village continued to be occupied or not. Where there was enclosure by agreement (fourteen per cent of vills) village plans were most likely to be preserved and where there was unity of control (in seventy five per cent of vills) they were most likely to be abandoned or replaced by a single large modern farmstead and labourers cottages. In four out of five townships there was village redundancy, but its explanation lies not in the fact of improved farming, but in the unique opportunities of landownership which allowed far-reaching and unrestrained changes to take place. It was in this context that medieval villages became redundant.

By contrast those townships in multiple ownership were less susceptible to the same degree of change as the interests of all parties had to be satisfied. In consequence there was a greater propensity for the village nucleus and its traditional layout to survive into the modern period. On the Percy estate where the leaseholders were party to the enclosures of the common-fields a similar conservation of the village layout may be observed. There are however anomalous examples where enclosure by agreement occurred and yet abandonment of the village site in due course followed such as Shipley, Cheswick and Alnham.

Villages in multiple ownership became in effect open villages which served as repositories of labour for agriculture, mining, quarrying, fishing and rural crafts and industries as at Glanton, Beadnall and Lowick. The modern village became a place where people who sell their labour live rather than a site of peasant farmsteadings, the *raison d'etre* of medieval villages in Northumberland. However if there were no demand for labour, then a village was susceptible to abandonment. At Shipley, Cheswick and Alnham for example enclosure was followed by the all but complete dispersal of farms from the village nucleus and as there was no alternative source of employment in the township the village lost its inhabitants.

The dispersal of farms from the village to a position central to the severalty holding was a common feature of the improvements and one which contributed to the redundancy of villages, but it occurred in both those townships where villages continued to be occupied and those where they were abandoned or

reduced to a single farm. Although dispersal removed inhabitants from the village, this was only critical if the village ceased to serve as either a farm-site or a repository for labour (see plan 16).

Engrossment, or the amalgamation of farmholds, was a critical element in the process of village redundancy particularly when combined with enclosure (eg. Tuggal). It took place throughout the area to differing degrees and at different times. It was most thoroughgoing for example on the Grey estate where it was common for whole townships to be reduced to a single farm-holding and effectively enclosed during the course of the seventeenth century. Such farms were often referred to as demesnes (eg. Stamford). The old village of peasant smallholders thus became a single large farm with attendant farm-labourers' cottages. Such a village is effectively deserted in the Northumbrian context (e.g. South Middleton), but actual desertion could follow if the old village site were no longer convenient (eg. North Middleton). The old village had become equally redundant in either case. A move to a better site on a main route or emparkment might be the occasion of such a desertion, but the village had effectively become redundant as a result of the improvements already carried out.

In summary then, it was the peculiar circumstances of landownership which prevailed in north Northumberland, in conjunction with the steady economic development of the region through its coal-mining industry during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Brassley 1974 179) which provided the ideal



climate for a thoroughgoing reorganisation of the agrarian economy. It was as a result of these improvements that the traditional medieval peasant village of the area was abandoned or replaced by a modern village (Plan 15).

## 5.2 The Demise of Customary Tenures after 1603

A major barrier to the growth of the improvements discussed above was removed with the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland in 1603. For this study its most important effect was the immediate redundancy of Border Service with the return of peace. At a single stroke the customary tenants of north Northumberland lost their chief defence against improvement. Prior to 1603 it could be argued that an economic rent, like excessive fines, would make a tenant unfit for service. Indeed the low level of rents may have been set by manorial custom to offset the expense of this service. After 1603 the main course of action open to the determined landowner was to raise rents by the introduction of leases set at an economic rate; but this could not be done against the wishes of the tenants except by proving, if necessary by recourse to law, that they did not hold tenures with the right of inheritance.

On the Percy estate, where the tenants held their copies by the custom of Cockermouth, it took a set-case before an assize judge in 1613 to prove that this was only a life tenancy and not a copyhold of inheritance. In fact the ninth Earl had not been immediately convinced of the benefits of introducing leases because it would put an end to fines and other feudal rights and services without adequate remuneration so that it would, as he said, "give away my land for nothing and touch me in Honour" (Watts 1975 161). It was perhaps this conservative viewpoint which ensured the survival of the entry fine on the estate.

Despite the success of the 1613 case it was a number of years before all the copyholders had exchanged their copies for twenty one year leases, often on beneficial terms involving an entry fine and a lower rent than a lease at rack rent (Watts 1975 162/3). This system was to survive until the advent of the Smithson Dukes in 1756.

For other estates in north Northumberland less details are available, but what evidence survives implies a trend towards the introduction of leases. In 1604 it was said of the manor of Bewick that "the most part of the tenants claim to hold the same by claim of custom and tenants right yet not being able to shewe us the particulars of their customs or any ground or certainty thereof; therefore we cannot judge them otherwise than tenants at will" (Sanderson 1891 Add.vi). Without copies the customary tenant had no defence at law and could be more easily manipulated. The copyhold was atypical of the area, confined to the Percy estate to which it was introduced from Cumberland in the 1520s (James 1973 63)<sup>-4</sup> and the former Royal estate of Bamburgh Castle. Here the copyholders of Shoreston and Sunderland were possessed of copyholds of inheritance which had to be taken into account in any divisions and enclosures of common land, which may explain its delay until the late eighteenth century. By 1604 on the Crown estates of Berrington and New Etal customary tenures had already been replaced by leases. The twenty husbandlands of 1561 were replaced by twenty leasehold tenants at Berrington. At New Etal the eight husbandlands of 1541 were replaced by ten leaseholders. By 1693 throughout the whole of the Grey estate



the tenants held twenty one year leases (NCRO 424/4A) where formerly there were husbandland tenants. Indeed such is the rise in income from the estate in the early seventeenth century that it probably had been effected before the Civil War. As early as 1637 Sir William Widdrington could state that leasehold was the most common tenure amongst the "poorer sort" in Northumberland (Watts 1975 160).

The significance and extent of the change may be judged from the scarcity of freehold tenures or indeed copyholds of inheritance in north Northumberland. Tawney, working from sixteenth century materials based mainly upon the Percy estate found that ninety one percent of the tenants were of customary status and nine percent were freehold (Tawney 1912 41). Watts working from the 1604 Survey of Royal estates on the Border found sixty eight percent of tenants were customary (Watts 1975 159). The latter figure is probably too low for north Northumberland because it includes estates in Tynedale and Redesdale outside the area of study where freeholds were more common. Indeed, if these were left out, only about fifteen percent of the tenants were freeholders, much closer to Tawney's figure.

The immediate effect of the introduction of leases was an increase in rents and the income of landlords. On the Percy estate income from their Northumbrian lands rose from £1382 to £2723 between 1606 and 1636 largely as a result of the change. A similar rise took place on the Grey estate: from an income of less than £1000 per annum in the 1590s (Watts 1975 173) it grew to between £2200 and £4400 per annum by 1641 (Stone 1965 761).

Rents on the Percy estate increased two or threefold, but were still kept low by the retention of entry fines, whereas on the Bewick estate customary holdings let at 13s. 4d. per annum in 1538 were let at £7 per annum in 1649 (Welford 1905 315).

### 5.3 The development of village and township c.1650-c.1750.

The evidence for this period, limited though it is, comes primarily from the records of the estates of the nobility and local gentry and in consequence the settlement history of the period is best understood by examining it estate by estate. This method of analysis is also to be preferred because physiographic differences between the two main areas of village settlement are relatively insignificant, and it is the peculiarities of individual townships and estate policy towards them that created the variation in settlement history during the period of improvement. Furthermore several estates are sufficiently widespread geographically to provide a thorough picture of the diversity of agrarian change during the period (Plan 14).

#### 1. Changes in Landownership and the Economy. c.1650-c.1750.

The pace of agrarian change on the smaller estates of north Northumberland varied considerably. Some like the Earl of Newcastle's lands of Hepple lordship or the Forster estate of Bamburgh Castle were slow in introducing change until well into the eighteenth century whilst others such as the Swinburnes of Edlingham, the Radcliffe Earls of Derwentwater, the Carrs of Ford and the Haggerstons were more adventurous. There can be little profit in trying to classify the various estates into different types with respect to agrarian change when so much is dependent upon accidents of inheritance, resulting in few estates remaining intact throughout the period, except for example, those of the Haggerstons, the Claverings of Callaly, the Selbys of Biddleston



and the Swinburnes. Thus some estates which were dilatory in introducing improvements in the seventeenth century passed into other hands and were reorganised immediately by the new owners, for example the Collingwood estates of Brandon and Reaveley which passed by sale to the Allgoods, their creditors, at the end of the seventeenth century. Equally the Radcliffes estates in the north of the county were largely enclosed by the early eighteenth century, but after their acquisition by the Greenwich Hospital estates they remained unchanged until the last quarter of the century, before further improvements were introduced. Despite these variations and interruptions in the pace of change, by 1850 all estates and all townships were enclosed and reorganised with the concomitant effects upon village settlement.

Professor Hughes has argued that this period saw the rise of a new northern gentry who used their prosperity gained from the coal trade and the commercial activity associated with it, to purchase landed estates. They largely replaced the old landed gentry who backed the Royalist cause in the Civil War and incurred debts from which they never recovered. The new gentry were more aggressive improvers who brought their commercial expertise to bear on their new estates and were chiefly responsible for implementing improvements (Hughes 1952 xvii. ff.). This now has been questioned by Brassley who suggested that the random effects of marriage and the failure of heirs should also be taken into account, while families who lost their lands through indebtedness may not have been typical and other families who suffered the same stresses prospered (Brassley 1974 54 ff.).

Of some thirty families who suffered the forfeiture of their estates after the Civil Wars in Northumberland (Holiday 1970 70-71), only one did not succeed in regaining their lands, the Ridleys of Willmotswick in south Northumberland, but many were forced to mortgage their estates to raise the necessary monies to buy them back via the agency of men like John Brownell, John Rushworth, Gilbert Crouch and Robert Stapleton. In north Northumberland these included Sir Edward Widdrington of Cartington Castle, the Haggerstons of Haggerston, the Claverings of Callaly, the Collingwoods of Eslington and of Branton, the Swinburnes of Capheaton and Edlingham, the Forsters of Adderstone, Muschamp of Barmoor, Ramsey of Bewick, Strother of Kirknewton, Hebburn of Hebburn, Orde of Berwick, Carnaby of Thirnham, Carr of Etal, Orde of Westwood, Roddam of Littlehoughton and Wray of Lemmington and other lesser lights (Welford 1905 various). Of these families, some like the Haggerstons and Swinburnes prospered and survived into the nineteenth century, others died out for lack of heirs, for example the Strothers of Kirknewton in the early eighteenth century, and others saw their estate pass by marriage to new families as did the Ramsey estate of Bewick. The Collingwoods of Eslington lost their estate in the 1715 rising, but the neighbouring Claverings survived through influence in high places (Hedley 1968 169), in spite of their treason, and prospered. Only the Muschamps of Barmoor and Collingwoods of Branton lost their estates due to indebtedness in the years after the Civil Wars and bad management was probably as much the cause as Royalist



Compositions. The two major landowners of north Northumberland, the Percy Earl of Northumberland and Lord Grey of Wark supported the Parliamentary cause and so were not forced willy-nilly into indebtedness. Yet shortly after the Restoration the last Percy Earl died leaving an heiress who eventually married the Duke of Somerset. The Percy estate remained intact to be passed in dowry to the Smithsons, a merchant family from London, in the mid eighteenth century. The Grey estate was eventually divided between the heir male, Grey of Howick, and the heir female who married Lord Ossulton, later Lord Tankerville in the early eighteenth century.

The chequered history of these families would suggest that the advent of a new gentry of former merchants and professional men was made easier by the foolish political involvement of the Collingwoods of Eslington or the Radcliffes of Dilston, but the opportunities were there in any case. Furthermore the acquisition of landed estates by such "new" men is not peculiar to this period. In the late sixteenth century, men like the Jacksons of Berwick and the Strothers who acquired Fowberry were willing to invest in land by offering mortgages to landowners who on occasion defaulted. This is very similar to the acquisition of Brandon and Reavely from Collingwood of Branton who defaulted on his mortgage with the Allgoods so that the estate passed in lieu to the lenders. The parallel with the Allgoods is an illuminating one because they, like the Jacksons, a century before, were improving landowners, desirous of raising a substantial income from their estates. Equally the new families



like the Liddells of Ravensworth or the Dixons of Belford were often notable improvers, imbued with new ideas of agriculture. However those old families who survived were often as keen to improve their estate to pay off their debts as the incomers, for example the Claverings of Callaly, the Swinburnes or the Haggerstons.

Royalist compositions were perhaps the disaster which led to the demise of some families after the Restoration. The success of the Haggerston and Swinburne families in running their affairs suggests that the failure of other families like the Collingwoods of Branton and the Forsters of Bamburgh was a result of bad management (cf. Holiday 1970 89-90 and Habakkuk 1965 148). Equally there is no evidence that the confiscated Jacobite estates were more backward than other estates. The criticisms levelled by the Liddells on purchasing the Eslington estate were applied widely to the whole of the Vale of Whittingham. These included a lack of enclosures or hedges between one estate and the next, primitive crop rotations and inertia against "improvement" (Hughes 1963 177-8). It is probable that, imbued with the more progressive notions which were current on their Ravensworth estate, the Liddells failed to recognise any of the recent changes as improvement. It is certain that the Collingwoods of Eslington had undertaken structural changes in the organisation of their farms. This comprised the dispersal of farms to some degree on Eslington township and partition of the fields of Whittingham and Thrunton into quarters farmed by sections of the tenantry rather than the community at large. No

division or enclosure necessarily occurred and it is probable that within each quarter, the old communal methods were employed. Such changes have been noted on the Percy estate in the seventeenth century, but on such a relatively small estate the initiative for change may be proprietorial. The Eslington estate compares well with the neighbouring Jacobite estate of the Claverings of Callaly who survived the '15 Rebellion. It was said that John Clavering of Callaly was driven by a "desperate fortune" to join the rising in the hope of repairing it (Hedley 1968 169 and Dixon 1895 127). Certainly the greater part of the estate was in the hands of mortgagees in 1717 according to the Register of Roman Catholic estates (Hodgson 1918 37), but by 1723 it was all in the possession of the owners once again. In this case the disaster was surmounted, presumably by prudent management if not improvement. The Roman Catholic register shows an estate with several farms and partition arrangements at Yetlington similar to those on the Eslington estate. There is little evidence of an influx of new blood into the area. Of the other Jacobite families, the Forsters of Bamburgh sold up before the rebellion, but the new owner Lord Crewe was no "improver" and enclosures were delayed until the last half of the eighteenth century (Hughes 1963 205-6). The scattered manors of the Derwentwater estate passed eventually to the Greenwich Hospital Commissioners and real improvement on the estate was delayed until the second half of the eighteenth century.

If improvement was not the exclusive activity of the new gentry then it should be asked what motivated landowners and



tenants to improve their estates. The impetus for improvement in the early seventeenth century had been price inflation, but this had disappeared in the middle of the century and was replaced by a period of about a century when prices were either static or falling, causing tenants to default on their rents and thus endangering the incomes of landowners (John 1968 248). Against this background landowners were forced to raise capital by mortgage to service their flagging income, a situation which was aggravated by the indebtedness of many of the local gentry following the Civil War and the imposition of Compositions on royalist supporters. Those who used their capital in investing in enclosures and estate reorganisation to improve the productivity of their farms stood some chance of maintaining or even improving their incomes and paying off their mortgages. The advantages of enclosure and severalty farming were well-known by this time, but the capital expenditure required was often prohibitive. Thus at Clarewood on the Douglas estate in southern Northumberland £9334 was spent on hedging and ditching new fields and new farmsteads in the period 1684-1719 (Wrathmell 1975 193). Thus it was quite common for early enclosures to be limited in extent leaving some large undivided fields of more than a hundred acres as at Edlingham in 1731.

Brassley has suggested that the expansion of the regional economy of the north east which involved the expansion in particular of the mining industry during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the concomitant increase in population, said to be about fifty per cent over this period, kept demand for



agricultural products buoyant and thus countered the depression in the national economy (Brassley 1974 170ff. and Beckett 1982 35ff.) In this situation it is easier to understand the ease with which landowners could raise capital, and with good management improve their estates and service their debts. Improved agriculture, and in particular enclosure and the introduction of severalty farming, improved the efficiency and productivity of farms, thus ensuring the payment of rents and mortgages and allowing the gentry to spend money on improving their standard of living by building new mansions in the latest styles and laying out parkland around it for their pleasure. It is significant that most landowning families whose seat was in north Northumberland and who possessed a large enough estate, i.e., at least one township, enhanced their status in this way during the eighteenth century.<sup>(App. 14)</sup>

## 2. The Great Estates c.1600-c.1750: i. The Percy Estate:

On the Percy estate between 1606 and 1636 income from the Northumbrian lands rose from £1382 to £2723. This improvement may be attributed to the determined approach of the ninth Earl of Northumberland to raising the revenues from his estate. As an absentee landlord he was chiefly concerned with rents so all "improvements" relate to new leases and increased rentals. For this reason agrarian change was incidental to rent increases, and more often instigated at the behest of the tenants and farmers rather than by the Earl and his agents. For example, the tenants of High Buston petitioned the Earl for a division of their arable into severalty holdings to alleviate the inconvenience of their


intermixture and the fencing off of their commons to keep out the cattle of the neighbouring townships (Bilton and Wooden) who abused it. In 1621 the Earl granted a warrant for the partition to be made (NCH V 212). It was to be the tenants of the Percy estate and not the Earl who were responsible for agrarian improvement in the next one hundred years. This is confirmed by the notes on each township in the estate surveys of 1685, 1702 and 1727 where it is regularly stated that the tenants have improved their farms and yet do not pay the economic rent for them (Aln. Cas. A I 4, A VI, and B I 3). The intimate knowledge of the estate that the ninth Earl cultivated was not copied by his successors. However the later seventeenth century saw continuous agrarian improvement on the estate despite the lack of detailed interest shown by the landowners. It is strongly suspected that the conservative policy of the ninth Earl towards his Northumbrian tenants formed the basis of the evolutionary development of the estate during the next one hundred years.


The opportunity for more widespread agrarian change that came with the introduction of leases in place of customary tenures was not taken on the Percy estate. For on the whole, the Earl and his agents recognised the right of husbandland tenants to a share in the commons of a township in the event of a division into severalty farms, be they leasehold or freehold (Watts 1975 169-171), as at High Buston. This approach is in the tradition of the sixteenth century partitions at Chatton and Longhoughton and possibly more ancient traditions of township land division.

For the Percy estate there are two detectable trends during

this period, the steady engrossment of farms and the partition and division of the common fields by private agreement. Engrossing, like enclosures has a reputation for causing depopulation (Thirsk 1967 200. ff.), but on this estate there was a different experience. Just as Border Service helped maintain the individuality of husbandland tenements so its demise allowed the widespread engrossment of tenements throughout the estate. Typically this involved the amalgamation of two or three husbandlands into a single holding by some of the more enterprising tenants. At South Charlton in 1620 three of the tenants each held two husbandlands and two houses and garths in the village so that there were thirteen tenants where there had been sixteen in 1586. This mild form of engrossment is paralleled on some fifty percent of the townships on the estate and it is apparent that it was not the occasion of reorganisation of the townfields to form severalty holdings for the engrosser. In fact there is no reason to believe that it was accompanied by a reduction in the number of households. At Snitter by 1617 Roger Widdrington had engrossed twelve farms, but sub-let each one separately to individual tenants; whilst at Tuggal in 1620 John Forster filled his five garths in the old village with cottagers. Sub-letting may have been widespread even before leasehold tenures were introduced. In 1619 the Earl's agents brought a test case against the tenants of Newham with the intention of frightening copyholders on the estate into accepting leases. One of the tenants was found to have sub-let without licence and his copy was duly forfeit (Watts 1975 163). One may



infer that few tenants had bothered to obtain licences in the past for what  was presumably a commonly accepted practice. How far sub-letting continued is difficult to gauge since the 1685 and 1702 surveys do not give any details, but the housing of cottagers in former tenements, as at Tuggal in 1620, may have been common where substantial engrossment took place. For example there were five substantial tenants at Lucker in 1685 but the Hearth Tax assessment of 1665 records a total of seventeen households (PRO E 179/158/103). In the mid eighteenth century it is apparent that many farms on the Percy Estate were sub-let (Aln. Cas. A. VI). Consequently engrossment cannot be equated with depopulation.

However depopulation did occur occasionally. At Brotherwick in 1616 Lancelot Ogle held a freehold and the tenement lands, all of which he farmed as pasture where formerly there had been arable. The engrossment here was the result of the attempts of the Earl's agents to buy out the tenants and incorporate the township within Warkworth Park. This had foundered on the resistance of the Crown Freeholder who had managed to acquire the empty holdings. This was an uncharacteristic example of depopulating enclosure on the Percy estate which went awry creating instead a single large pasture farm. 

At Beanley in 1612 there were fourteen tenants where there had been twenty four in 1586. In fact the <sup>1612</sup> survey records eighteen inhabited houses besides two waste and <sup>eight</sup> ~~seven~~ empty garths, five tenants held double holdings and one tenant six. Of the latter,

Mathew Forster, it should be noted that he held not only an engrossed holding but a several farm, with his steading in the village. Furthermore three of the tenants with double holdings held their arable and meadow in severalty but shared the pasture. One of these, Nicholas Dunne, had all his arable lands across the river Breamish away from the village; consequently he built a new steading there to serve it which became known as Gallowlaw. Beanley township demonstrates some of the consequences of engrossment, partial depopulation and the creation of separate farming units, in particular the setting up of the dispersed farm at Gallowlaw.

During the seventeenth century some engrossment took place at all but a handful of Percy townships (e.g. Rennington and Birling). Between 1586 and 1685 the number of tenancies on the estate was reduced by about one third. On the whole the tenacity of the small tenant farmer is as remarkable as the acquisition by men like Edward Adams of Longhoughton of ten holdings in his own hand. The engrosser becomes significant in this study when he is able to force a reorganisation as the Bradfords did at Tuggal in the mid sixteenth century, leading to severalty farming, the dispersal of farms and the abandonment of the old village nucleus. However this was not the normal experience on the Percy estate in the seventeenth century. It was more usual for reorganisation to be effected by agreement which was less conducive to individual enterprise of this kind.

Throughout the estate, division by agreement amongst the tenants was common, particularly in the latter years of the

seventeenth century. One facet of this was the division of the town fields into two, three or four parts or quarters. The two early examples of this in the sixteenth century on the Percy estate were at Chatton and Longhoughton. It represented a rationalisation of the common field system without full enclosure. As the 1685 and 1702 surveys make clear partition like other improvements was carried out by the tenants for their own benefit. In due course it may have facilitated the subsequent enclosure of what were merely small versions of the former common fields. It is easier to obtain the agreement of six tenants to a division than of twenty, as was noted by a Percy land agent in 1617 who wrote that a township of some twenty tenants, which was farmed in common, if divided into: "four several quarters, would be the best means, to cause enclosure, which ...in time may cause tenants (to) remove their houses to the midst of their several farms.." (Batho 1956-7 441). For example at Birling in 1640 the town fields were divided into three parts called North, West and South sides. In 1698 the four tenants of North Side agreed to a division so that they might hold their land in severalty; this seems to have improved the value of their farms to £30 (Aln. Cas. A VI 1) in rack value, but they only paid four or five pounds rent. Similarly Bilton was divided by 1685, the fuller 1702 survey shows that not only were the common fields divided into three parts, but the moor had also been divided and added to their "ffarmes...for which they pay no rent or ffine". The evidence of Parish Registers suggests that some dispersal had taken place by 1702, births were



recorded at Bilton Barns and Banks in 1696 and 1693 respectively, but most farms seem to have remained in the old village. Indeed on most Percy townships by 1702 the tenants had divided and enclosed the town fields if not the common waste, yet little dispersal of farms accompanied the process. This is one of the surprising aspects of this type of improvement on the estate; it may reflect one of the consequences of division by private agreement. Although Guyzance had been divided by 1685, a plan of 1731 does not show a single dispersed farm set up as a consequence of enclosure (Aln. Cas. O IV 2).

Division and enclosure by agreement acted as a preservative of the traditional settlement nucleus. Even where dispersal occurred as at Bilton or Lesbury in the late seventeenth century it only involved the setting up of isolated steadings by the more substantial farmers like Mr. George Burrell of Lesbury who in 1702 possessed the farms of Foxton Hall and Field House. This suggests that the ordinary tenant farmer lacked the capital for such an investment even if his holding were at some distance from the village. Consequently the dispersal of farms from the village was rare on the estate at this period.

The experience of the Percy estate in the seventeenth century suggests that the tenants of an estate could be the instigators of improvement rather than the landlord and his agents, and that engrossment, division and enclosure and dispersal were not necessarily causes of village redundancy. It is also important to note the growing differentiation in some townships between the large farmer and the ordinary tenant farmer

as at Longhoughton or Lesbury, largely created by engrossment. Indeed at townships like Beanley or Lucker the small farmer was disappearing altogether. In contrast at Birling or Rennington the tenurial structure remained almost unchanged throughout the seventeenth century. Socially this was an important trend which by implication had economic repercussions. The large farmer was becoming closer in status to the gentry both on account of his increased wealth and as an employer of labour; and as the small farmer disappeared so the dependant labour force grew commensurately.

By the mid eighteenth century when the Percy estate passed to the first Smithson Earl and later Duke of Northumberland, the infields had been enclosed, except at Alnham and only common wastes remained to be enclosed in a number of townships. The first Smithson Duke determined upon establishing his chief residence at Alnwick so that for the first time since the mid sixteenth century there was a landlord in residence. This had a stimulating effect upon the organisation of the estates. The old method of leasing farms by a large entry fine and lease with a small rent was replaced by a simple rent with a small fine in 1749 - 1754<sup>(McDonald 1974, 52)</sup> and some rationalisation of the farms in the various townships was effected. This was usually carried out in the aftermath of the final enclosure of the common wastes as at Rennington, Alnham (by Act of Parliament in 1776) or Longhoughton, if the commons still remained to be enclosed. As a result of this policy of rationalisation significant reductions of farms were effected at Rennington (eleven to six), Birling

(ten to six), Bilton (ten to six), Lesbury (fourteen to seven), South Charlton (ten to four), Shilbottle (twenty one to thirteen) and Longhoughton (twenty two to twelve). A further consequence of this rationalisation was the establishment of a rash of new dispersed farms, notably at Rennington in 1769 where an agent noted the new farms were laid out "without regard to the manner and proportions in which they had previously been parcelled out and let..", but also at Shilbottle, South Charlton and others.

Naturally this broadened the social gap between the decreasing numbers of tenant farmers and the expanding class of labourers, and lessened the numbers of farms established in the village which began to decrease the viability of the village as a settlement. Alnham and Rugley were finally abandoned and at Bilton, where only one farm remained in the village, the south row disappeared altogether. At Newstead the village decayed to half a dozen houses and a farm. At most other villages the number of farms in or near the village remained substantial enough to maintain a labouring population.

The second Duke of Northumberland (1776-1817) was a conservatively minded man who had paternal sentiments towards his estate and his tenants. He proceeded to introduce policies which ran counter to the prevailing mood for improvement and rationalisation in Northumberland (McDonald 1974 139ff.). Firstly he considered large farms of more than 300 acres to be beyond the capabilities of a single tenant to cultivate efficiently (McDonald 1974 140) and divided some farms into dual tenancies. Since he kept a close control on expenditure he



resisted any costly improvements such as new farms which this policy might logically entail. Secondly he determined to establish his labouring population permanently in self-sufficient units or cottage holdings in order to free them from dependence upon farm labour and to prevent their exodus from his estate. The visible signs of this policy on the estate villages of the Duke are apparent in the small square or rectangular hedged closes of two to four acres set up in the vicinity of the settlements (e.g. Lesbury) and the extant layout of estate cottages and gardens. In general the new cottages were situated on the line of former toft rows, but their gardens often took in part of the former common ways. This altered significantly the appearance of the villages, by reducing the open spaces which persisted in Percy estate villages even after enclosure of the fields. Dr. Brian Roberts has termed this process *in situ* reorganisation (Roberts 1978 B 249). On occasion, as at Alnham and Rugley, they were established on an entirely new site, but in both cases the old village had been almost deserted by this date. It is at this time that Percy estate villages began to take on their modern appearance, but it was not completed until the mid nineteenth century under the direction of the improving fourth Duke (1847 - 63). South Charlton village was replanned at the time. It involved the removal of the south row of cottages, the construction of a new chapel, and the establishment of a new row of labourers' cottages on the line of the old north row. Other modern settlements like Lesbury, Longhoughton and Lucker owe their continued occupation to this policy.

Dr. Wrathmell has argued for a substantial increase in the population of some Percy villages due to the policy of setting up cottage holdings by the second Duke, but he showed that population as a whole was rising in Northumberland at this period and not just in Birtley or other Percy villages. In north Northumberland the picture is similar except in the fringes of the Cheviots. <sup>(see page 241 ff.)</sup> The establishment of numerous cottage holdings in Percy villages may be seen not as an encouragement to new labour to settle in Percy villages but as a provision for the established labouring population.

The policy of the Percy estate was but one method by which estate workers were provided with accommodation. It is a method that may be observed on estates like that the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Egremont's outside Northumberland (Chambers and Mingay 1966 101).

ii. The Grey Estate:

The Grey estate underwent more dramatic change than the Percy estate. As with the Percy estate, the early seventeenth century saw a great increase in the income from the estate. On one authority it is said to have increased to between £2200 and £4399 per annum by 1641 (Stone 1965 641) from a total of less than £1000 per annum in the 1590s (Watts 1975 173). In 1693 the total rental was a little greater than the upper figure of 1641 at about £5000 per annum (NCRO 424 Box 4A), suggesting that the early seventeenth century improvement was maintained.

Sixteenth century evidence supports an impression of a more ruthless mould of improver in the successive holders of the

estate as depopulators of Ross(No.174) and demesne farmers(see Chapter 5.1). As resident landlords in the early seventeenth century they were certainly more closely involved in the running of their estate than the Percies; at least until 1624 when they were elevated to the peerage. The renovation of Chillingham Castle and the laying out of the Park by Lord Grey of Wark in the second quarter of the seventeenth century (NCH XIV 301) along with the purchase of a new title were the result of the improvement of their estate, but the source of improvement is less easy to establish in the absence of direct evidence at this period. Increased rents after the abolition of customary tenures and the introduction of leasehold may account for much of the increase in income. Some of it was the result of the acquisition of the Embleton estate from the Crown at this time.

The most comprehensive picture of the estate is provided by the 1693 rental (NCRO *ibid.*). Apart from the now universal appearance of twenty one year leases, the transition to which occurred apparently without protest, the most significant change was the dramatic reduction in the number of farmhold tenancies by about two thirds since 1580 (App.8). The degree of reduction varied from township to township, but two main categories may be identified, those in which the reduction was limited to the order of about fifty percent and those where the whole vill was leased to one or perhaps two tenants.

The former group was composed mainly of villages like Akeld and Shipley where part of the vill belonged to one or more proprietors besides the Greys, but also included a few vills such



as Doddington and Learmouth entirely in Grey ownership where sheer size may have militated against improvements. The difficulties of getting the agreement of all the proprietors for any structural improvement such as enclosure probably explains the lack of improvement at those vills in divided ownership. The common feature of the latter group of vills was the creation of the large severalty farm. In origin this could be a demesne which could encompass the whole vill as at Stamford or part of it as at Detchant. When it occupied only part of the vill, the remainder was frequently leased as the Town farm, which in origin at least comprised the area of land occupied and farmed in common by the former husbandland tenants (e.g. Heaton , Downham, Fenton, Coupland and Detchant). This is evident at the Crown estate of Berrington in the sixteenth century which was let in two separate leases, the Demesne and the Town of which the latter in 1604 comprised twenty leasehold farms (Sanderson 1891 132). The opportunity certainly existed for the Town leasee to engross the farms of sub-tenants on the termination of their lease<sup>s</sup>, and in effect create a severalty farm. For example, Anthony Compton of Berwick, agent to Sir Henry Grey, managed to acquire the leases of all the farms of Learmouth between 1708 and 1722 (NCRO 424 Box 5C).

The demesne farm was one of the chief methods by which the enterprising landlord of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries might take advantage of the rising prices characteristic of the national economy of this period. Most of the demesnes listed in the 1693 rental were established during

this era of rising prices but were subsequently leased to tenant farmers. The demesnes of Detchant and Horton are first described in the survey of the estate of Grey of Horton in c.1570, Heaton had a demesne by 1615 (No. 107), whilst Yeavinger was worked as a single farm by 1580 and Ross had been turned over to a large ranch before 1561. This zeal for demesne farming was continued in the seventeenth century with the conversion of the newly acquired vill of Stamford to a large demesne holding.

On the Grey estate by and large enclosure and reorganisation could be carried out unhindered except by the availability of capital for investment. However the exact chronology of the reorganisation of many of the Grey townships is unrecorded.

The changes effected at Stamford during the seventeenth century may be used as an example of the social and economic changes that could take place where the landowner had unity of control. At the beginning of the century there were fourteen customary husbandland tenants and three cottagers, the traditional tenorial picture of a medieval village in the area, but by 1693 the township had largely been turned over to a demesne and then leased to a Mr. Davison. The remainder comprised a single smallholding and nine coaters (as well as the cottages and crofts in the old village which they occupied) [who] may have had access to a particular field nearby called the "Coate Lands" on a map of 1788 (see No. 189). The fourteen customary tenants had been replaced by a single leasehold farmer and the chief body of inhabitants was now a group of coaters with no rights of common. Although there was no record of enclosure this

was the main impetus behind the creation of a demesne and it may be reasonably assumed to have occurred. This would have extinguished the common rights of the villagers and their husbandland farms. It also gave the landlord and his major tenant greater economic control of the land and its profits. In the process the villager became economically tied to the large farm, despite his "coate lands", and the tenant farmer of the township was now more of a gentleman in status than a peasant. This was a social differentiation which was also observed on the Percy estate, if in different circumstances.

In spite of these changes on the Grey estate in the seventeenth century there was little substantive change in the pattern of settlement. The single farm township such as Stamford or Ewart may have been enclosed, but the cottagers and labourers continued to occupy the old village sites, though not perhaps the old village families (see App. 9), at least until the more drastic improvements of the agricultural revolution. The social and economic changes of this period had made the traditional form of a medieval village, with its husbandland tenants' garths, crofts and related strips in the common fields, redundant.

The occupiers of the various cottages in the villages of Ewart and Stamford recorded on plan in 1787 and 1788 respectively had no close connection with the fields or rights of common such as their predecessors had, and the regulated village with its tenants holding their lands "rigg by rigg" no longer prevailed. It is against this background that the subsequent abandonment of village sites like Ewart and Stamford may be understood.



Exceptionally, in a small number of townships there was a move to establish new farms away from the old village nuclei by the end of the seventeenth century. At Chillingham, the centre of the estate, the farms of High and Low Barns appear in the parish register for 1696, whilst at Dunstan a new farm called Dunstan Steads is listed in the 1693 rental. At Chillingham the new farmsteads were built to work the demesnes which are recorded in the rental of 1693 and perhaps have their origins in the early part of the century when the park was laid out and other reorganisations may have been implemented. Dunstan Steads on the other hand was set up to farm the lands which the Greys received from the division of the vill of Dunstan with the Crasters. The Grey portion did not include any part of the village, so a new steading had to be built to work the new severalty holding. In both these cases there is reason to believe that the villages were occupied until later in the eighteenth century before further improvements swept them away.

The early eighteenth century saw the division of the Grey estate between the heiress who married Lord Ossulton, later the Earl of Tankerville, and the distant male line represented by the Greys of Howick. In the aftermath of the division some of the vills were sold, notably Ewart, Akeld and Coupland, all near Wooler. The change in ownership may have hastened the reorganisation of the vills on the Howick part of the estate. Learmouth was reduced to a single holding by the aggressive engrossment of the other farmholds by Anthony Compton of Berwick, as agent for the estate (Hughes 1963 174). Subsequently it was

found that a township of two and a half thousand acres was too large to farm efficiently from a single steading and so it was divided into the farms of East and West Learmouth. Similar action was taken at Horton. The site of the village of Learmouth was probably abandoned at this time. Ancroft was divided and enclosed in 1737 which enabled the Greys, the major owners, to start laying out a set of new farmsteads away from the village and thus leading in due course to the abandonment of the village. Howick, the family seat, had been entirely in the hands of the Greys of Howick since early in the seventeenth century, and there is evidence that fifteen ploughlands were put to grass at that time (Raine 1852 198) but the old village site was finally abandoned late in the eighteenth century following the construction of the palladian mansion and surrounding parklands; leaving the church standing on its own. A new estate village was built half a mile to the north. By 1803 there were only four farms out of twenty nine with acreages below two hundred and fifty on the Howick estate (Hughes <sup>1748 II, 60</sup> 1963) and four were over one thousand acres. Such large acreages were generally agreed to be the most productive and profitable agricultural units of the time (Bailey and Culley 1805 29).

On the Tankerville part of the estate substantial improvement and estate reorganisation was delayed until the later eighteenth century when Bailey was agent for the estate. However there was some continued reduction in the number of holdings at Doddington and South Middleton in the earlier part of the century and the commons of Embleton and Shipley were divided with other

proprietors in 1730 and 1744 respectively. This led in both cases to the setting up of new farms situated centrally within the new severalty holdings (e.g. Christian Bank farm in Embleton and Shipley Hill in Shipley), whereas at Embleton the village site continued to be occupied, at Shipley it was abandoned. The difference may lie in the larger number of small proprietors at Embleton and the cottage industry in cloth manufacture (see No. 75). In contrast a cottage industry in weaving at Doddington did not survive the division of the Waste into farmholds in the last quarter of the eighteenth century since the weavers were cottagers dependant on the common to graze their sheep.

A peculiar feature of the Grey estate was the limited extent to which farm dispersal was employed in reorganisation. It is common for Grey townships to be operated from one or two large farms e.g. Horton, Ross, North and South Middleton, Hawkhill and others. This was partly a consequence of the Grey policy of demesne farming in the later sixteenth and early seventeenth century and partly due to their policy of leasing whole vills to one tenant. One important result of this is that medieval village sites on the Grey estates are often occupied by a large modern farm or even two farms as at Doddington and Horton.

Where the old village site proved to be unsatisfactory, for example at North Middleton, a new farmstead was constructed at a more suitable spot, in this case half a mile east on a more level site on the road from Wooler. The continued occupation of an old village site was a matter of balancing convenience with the capital outlay required to build a new farmstead on a different



site.

### 3. Township and Village in Multiple Ownership

Most vills in multiple ownership were enclosed by agreement between 1650 and 1750 and the division of townships on the Percy estate by private agreement including leaseholders took place over the same period (see App.12). This form of enclosure was more important than enclosure by Act of Parliament here as in other parts of the country (Wordie 1983). Only at Alnham were the infields enclosed by Act of Parliament and the remaining Acts deal almost exclusively with areas of upland waste. The most important aspect of this form of enclosure for this study was that villages whose common fields were enclosed in this way were more likely to be occupied by a modern village.

Where the division of lands was carried out by agreement, the interests of the various parties were taken into account. Blocks of land were allocated to allow easy access from their farms in the village, by using the old common ways e.g. Cheswick and Guyzance. Thus most proprietors maintained their existing farmsteads in the village and consequently avoided the heavy responsibility of building a new farm which a proprietor with unity of control of a township could more easily afford. This was true of the majority of vills which were divided and enclosed by agreement during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. For example at Guyzance, a Percy village, where the infields were enclosed before 1685, a map of 1730 shows that apart from the older severalty farms of Barnhill and Brainshaugh, no further dispersal of farms had taken place. The blocks of land awarded to the freeholder and seven Percy leaseholders in

Guyzance were delineated as were their steadings and crofts in the village, but it was not until later in the century that the freeholder and the Duke of Northumberland saw fit to build new steadings away from the village in order to farm their lands more efficiently. A similarly slow process of reorganisation may be observed at many townships, for example Beadnall, Sunderland, Branxton, Bowsden, where the village site continued to be occupied and Cheswick, Ancroft, Shipley and Low Buston where it did not. The very process of enclosure, by creating blocks of land to be farmed in severalty, made the medieval village superfluous, for it was appreciated that the best site for a farm was at the centre of the holding, which was rarely the old village site. At Guyzance, Sunderland and Cheswick the severalty holdings themselves tended to be distributed like a fan outwards from the village so that the need to build a new farm was reduced. This helps account for the delay in the dispersal of farms from the village and the tendency for villages enclosed in this way to survive. In the long term the continued occupation of the village site was the result of other factors.

In Northumberland landowners provided cottages for the hinds whom they employed by the year (see No. 188) and then released at the annual flitting. The coaters may have provided this service on the Grey estate on a longer term basis. There was inevitably a certain amount of casual work at peak times such as hay-making and harvest, but the labour force for this work came from outside the estate; for example there is evidence of substantial numbers of casual labourers on Spindlestone estate in the late seventeenth



century (No. 188). There were other forms of employment available for seasonal labourers in the mines and quarries, and accommodation in the larger villages such as Lowick where Thomas Haggerston leased plots for labourers to build cottages in the early nineteenth century (No. 138). The larger villages like Lowick which were in divided ownership may have positively benefited from the closed nature of most estates where there was unity of control, in providing homes and alternative employment. Thus Bednall provided employment in quarrying, mining and the fishing industry, and Tweedmouth in shipbuilding, fishing and brewing, whilst Glanton gave employment in rural trades. On the other hand, where there was no alternative source of employment besides agriculture, a village in multiple ownership was likely to be deserted.

Although Cheswick, having no alternative source of employment, was eventually abandoned after its division and enclosure, it provides a good opportunity to observe the process of enclosure in a vill in divided ownership. The four proprietors, Messrs. Haggerston, Willie, Strangeways and Sibit, came to an agreement to divide the common fields in 1719 and a map showing the allocation of severalty holdings was made. For the most part the holdings radiated from the village. Shortly after the common waste was also divided for which no map survives. Finally in 1814 the village green and common ways were divided, new roads were laid out, which, apart from the Berwick road, took on their modern appearance. The old dispensation of village crofts and houses fronting on to a green or open space

was still recognisable at this date, but by 1841 when the Tithe map was made the village was almost deserted. The Tithe Map shows that the farmsteads lay dispersed in central positions amongst their holdings (see No. 45).

This sequence of events is common to a number of townships; that is the enclosure of the common fields, and then the common waste with the common ways, the gate or green being enclosed last of all. The villages of the Percy estate frequently followed a similar course, although here the common fields were often subdivided into quarters which continued to be farmed in the traditional fashion prior to their full enclosure (see Ch.5.2 i) This piecemeal enclosure was also followed on the vills of the Eslington estate and a number of other vills such as Glanton, Haggerston, Scremerston, Burradon and Lorbottle during the course of the seventeenth century. The quarter was exclusively cultivated by the tenants to whom it was allocated, but it is not clear if this also included pasture rights when the lands were not under crop. This does seem to be the implication since at the final division only the tenants with strips in that quarter were party to the division (see Birling No. 21).

#### 4. The Lesser Estates/i. The Haggerston Estate:

Between c.1650 - c.1750 the Haggerston family managed to increase substantially the size of their estate. In the early seventeenth century this consisted of the township of Haggerston and parts of several other townships such as Lowick and Cheswick, but by the late eighteenth century it had grown to an estate of more than half a dozen townships. This was achieved despite the

Catholic and royalist sympathies of the family in the seventeenth century which resulted in the confiscation of their estates following the Civil War. They reoccupied their estates through the agency of Bronwell and Crouch however and by dint of good management and a refusal to be drawn into any subsequent Jacobite uprisings, they improved their estates and were known for their dairy products and cattle in the eighteenth century (Raine 1852 224).

At the Restoration the Haggerston estates centred around the townships of Haggerston, Buckton and Fenwick. Shortly after in 1670/1 Haggerston township, which had formerly been divided into two parts, was farmed as a demesne and was used for large scale sheep farming (No. 100). Buckton and Fenwick were not directly farmed, but leased to tenants. However as early as 1711 Buckton was leased to a single tenant and Fenwick to three tenants and six coaters. It is not certain if enclosure had been effected at this time, but it had been achieved by 1757 when a survey of the estate showed that Fenwick's three farms consisted of the dispersed farms of Isely Hill and Mount Hooley in the hands of a single tenant, Moor farm and the Town farm, whilst Buckton was now divided between Buckton Town farm and the dispersed farms of Moor Farm and Smeafield.

At Farnham in Alwinton parish, acquired in the late seventeenth century by Sir Carnaby Haggerston, the other freeholders the Potts died out or were bought out in the early eighteenth century so that by 1757 the township had been divided between two farms called High and Low Farnham. The abandoned



village of Farnham lies between the two farms and was probably deserted at this period. Despite the division of Buckton township, the Town farm was largely open field in 1757, but although the village site was still occupied by labourers' cottages the old crofts and tofts had already been abandoned. Fenwick village on the other hand was occupied not only by the town farm but also by the six coaters or smallholders who shared the common of two hundred and seventeen acres with the farmer. By 1852 this arrangement had been dissolved and the village was "considerably reduced" (No. 86). Hazilrig north of Chatton is less well documented, but operated as a single farm in 1796, although it was later reorganised into two severalty farms called North and South Hazilrig and the old village site was finally abandoned.

Ellingham village on the other hand has retained something of its layout since 1757 if not before. Even in 1757 there was only one farm in the village apart from the Glebe farm, the other occupants being estate workers. The old crofts to the south of the cottages in 1757 were part of the Town farm, but are suggestive of the medieval village crofts and indicate that the layout of the settlement in 1757 owes something to its medieval origins.

ii. The Forster Estate of Bamburgh:

The Forster estate of Bamburgh has its origins in the grants of monastic lands and royal estates to Sir John Forster in the sixteenth century. Elford and Fleetham were part of the lands of Nostell Priory, but Beadnall, Shoreston and Sunderland were part

of the Bamburgh Castle estates of the Crown. The Forster family lost possession of the estate at the end of the seventeenth century when the heiress Dorothy Forster married Lord Crewe who proceeded to purchase the other half from Colonel Forster, the representative of the male line. At his death the estate was subsequently operated through Trustees. The estate also included Thornton in Northumberland and Budle near Bamburgh.

The Forsters and Lord Crewe were not it seems great improvers and it remained for the Trustees to implement reorganisation in the later eighteenth century. At the end of the seventeenth century, despite some evidence of engrossment at Elford, Thornton and Shoreston, there was little evidence of change. However Bednall commons were divided and enclosed by agreement of the proprietors in 1707, but Annstead farm, the only steading to be set up away from the village, was not built until later in the century. The village continued to be occupied by labourers involved in fishing and limestone quarrying as well as agriculture (see No. 13).

Over the rest of the estate the main phase of reorganisation came after 1766/7 and is evident in rent increases (Hughes 1963 206). The remaining commons of Sunderland and Shoreston were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1774, an Act that was necessary to satisfy the demands of the copyholders who possessed rights of inheritance. At Shoreston this allowed for the division of the township into a leasehold farm belonging to the Trustees and a copyhold farm belonging to Sir Henry Grey, and led to the abandonment of the village. At Sunderland where the copyholders

were more numerous, the arrangement by 1767 was to keep the copyholders lands separate from the leasehold. There were still ten copyholders at this date (Hughes 1963 II 68). The Act of Parliament of 1774 satisfied their rights, but it is probably due to their presence as small-holders that the medieval village of Sunderland continued to be occupied and was recognisable as late as 1848. By this date the common gate or green of Sunderland had been divided up and a narrow road defined, along the side of which the villagers were building their houses. The distribution of fields and their ownership indicate that little amalgamation of farmholds had occurred. However the establishment of the harbour of Seahouses led to a diversification of employment including fishing and the export of lime (see No. 191).

Of the other villages on the estate little is known of Elford and Budle both of which are occupied by modern farmsteads. Budle township was divided between the Duke of Northumberland and the other proprietor at the end of the eighteenth century and the village may have suffered its final demise at this time. Thornton, already reduced to three large farmholds by 1694, was finally reorganised in the mid nineteenth century when a new farmstead was built and the old village site abandoned.

### iii. The Ogle Lands of Hepple Lordship:

This estate was part of a much larger estate belonging to the Earl of Newcastle who possessed the core of his estate in and around Ogle in southern Northumberland. As an outlying part of the estate it seems to have been largely ignored during the



seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, except for a survey of the estate in 1632 from which a series of estate maps survive (NCRO 782/11). At this date Newhall was an enclosed farm and Hepple had a demesne farm, the estate was otherwise unimproved. This state of affairs still appertained as late as 1724 when the estate was surveyed for the new owner the Earl of Oxford, apart from Lorbottle which had been divided into two parts, but without any reduction in the number of tenants.

The lack of evidence prevents any detailed examination of the process of reorganisation of the estate. However by 1815 Lorbottle township, sold to a Mr. Atkinson in 1795, had been enclosed and the old infield lands divided between four severalty farms. The site of the former village was occupied by a single large farmstead and a few cottages. Flotterton village was similarly affected by reorganisation, but Sharperton and Hepple villages continued to be occupied and survived in layout at least. Here as it said in the 1724 survey of Hepple, the township was "improveable by inclosing and dividing with the freeholder" (NCRO ZAN M13/A12) and it was this necessity for the agreement of the other proprietors, particularly at Sharperton where freeholders predominated, that acted as a preservative of the village as a site for settlement. Mackenzie wrote of the reorganisation of Hepple that there was a reduction in the number of farms from fifteen to three (see No. 112) in the mid eighteenth century, but there is no record of any enclosure agreement. Despite these changes the main elements of the layout of Hepple survived. The detached westernmost croft called West

Hepple Hall was the property of the only freeholder in 1632 and probably continued to be occupied for that reason. The site of the demesne farm became the site of the modern Hall farm and the old north row of the village was used for labourers cottages. However despite the continued use of the site and the preservation of its layout, the modern settlement is not a medieval village. It has undergone what has been termed as in situ reorganisation by Brian Roberts (Roberts 1973 249).

iv. The Radcliffe Estates (Later Greenwich Hospital):

The Radcliffe estates in north Northumberland were a creation of the later seventeenth century, by a mixture of marriage (to a daughter of the last male Fenwick of Meldon) and purchase. The estates included the townships of Scremerston, Spindleston, Outchester and Middleton Hall.

There is some evidence that Spindleston and Outchester (Nos. 188 and 162) had been enclosed in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and Middleton Hall was worked as a single farm by 1669 (No. 143). Scremerston alone was unenclosed, due perhaps to the presence of a freeholder. There is some evidence that Spindleston was farmed as part of an extensive estate in which Spindleston operated as a cattle and sheep farm with over one hundred and fifty cattle and two thousand sheep in stock in the late seventeenth century.

At the transfer of the estate to the Greenwich Hospital Commissioners in 1735 a survey was carried out which indicates that Middleton Hall, Spindleston and Outchester were operated as enclosed farms and Scremerston infields had been partitioned into

north and south sides for greater convenience, but was essentially unenclosed apart from one or two pasture crofts. Enclosure did not necessarily mean improved agriculture. The common waste of Outchester was completely open and the infields were only partly sub-divided into separate enclosed fields, but the village had been deserted and the township was farmed from a single farm steading. Middleton Hall was farmed in similar fashion, but Spindleston was completely enclosed and divided into fields. A second farmstead had been established at Glororem away from the old village site, <sup>of Spindleston</sup> which was itself occupied by a single farm. The unimproved state of all but Spindleston at this date and the evidence for enclosures prior to the acquisition of the estate by the Radcliffes suggests that they themselves did little to improve these townships.

If these townships suffered from being part of a large estate centred around Dilston in southern Northumberland, this neglect could only be increased after its transfer to Greenwich Hospital in 1735. Despite the survey of 1736, there was little attempt at further structural improvement until after a second survey in 1775 except for the establishment of a new farmstead at Outchester in about 1758 (Hughes 1963 205/6). This survey made numerous suggestions for further enclosures and sub-divisions of fields. At Scremerston this involved a complete reorganisation, the enclosure of the waste west of the great north road, the setting up of new dispersed farms and the destruction of cottages in the old village made redundant by this process.

These four townships took on their modern aspect during the



late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In terms of settlement the changes of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had destroyed the medieval villages of Outchester, Spindleston and Middleton Hall. Scremerston parallels more closely the process of changes seen on the Ogle estates, perhaps because of the presence of a freeholder in the seventeenth century which made enclosure and reorganisation the subject of agreement. This did not however prevent the destruction of the medieval village once the freehold had been removed.

v. The Ford Estate:

The Ford estate consisted of the townships of Ford parish except for Etal. In the late sixteenth century these belonged to the Carr family with whom they remained until the Restoration when much of the estate, except that part which remained in the hands of the Bradfords, their creditors, was bought by Sir Francis Blake. The estate then passed to the Delaval family in the mid eighteenth century.

Some improvements were instituted by the Carrs in the early seventeenth century. Ford itself was reorganised and divided into severalty farmholds based on the dispersed farms of Fordhill, Catfordlaw and Ford Westfield. Despite this dispersal of farms the village of Ford continued to house the majority of the labouring population. This state of affairs lasted until the Delavals took possession of the estate. Outside Ford there is little evidence for improvements at this period except for the demesnes of Marden and Flodden in the Crookham and Heatherslaw

townships respectively. During the period of Blake ownership there is no evidence for improvement, although the commons of Crookham may have been divided with the Askews who established the Pallinsburn estate in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

Sir John Delaval was his own best publicist in respect of the improvement of the Ford estate. In reply to the questionnaire sent to him by Bailey and Culley in their preparation of the Agricultural report on Northumberland he declared how the estate was "open and unenclosed" in c.1760 and how he began to "enclose and build farm houses upon such parts of the estate as were most eligible and convenient for subdividing some of the larger farms into small ones." (NCRO 2DE 19/4/50). Thirteen new farms were built as well as additions to old ones and ninety two miles of quickset fences were erected.

It was at this time, during the late eighteenth century, that the townships of Ford, Kimmerston, Heatherslaw and Crookham took on their modern appearance; and the villages were either abandoned as at Heatherslaw, or became repositories of labour as at Kimmerston and Crookham. The site of Kimmerston is occupied by two short rows of labourers cottages to serve the new farmstead which was built about quarter of a mile away, while at Crookham the modern settlement provides services for the community such as a school, chapel and post office, as well as retaining the lay-out of the old main street of the medieval village. However the former triangular green of Crookham has been encroached upon since 1763 and the south frontage has moved

forward (see No.57).

Ford village itself was partially removed with the construction of a park on the west of the castle. It was later in the mid nineteenth century that the village was replanned as a model village by Lady Waterford.

vi. Edlingham Estate of the Swinburnes:

In 1620 there were twenty two tenants in Edlingham and Newtown townships, but by 1630 the estate had been reorganised into five farmholds; the three demesnes known as North, South and Castle Demesnes, Newtown farm, and two separate closes let to a single tenant. It was during this period that Edlingham Castle was the seat of John Swinburne (died 1639), and it was his policy which saw the transformation of the township of Edlingham and Newtown. Although the coaters survived into the eighteenth century, they were no longer closely connected with the system of landholding and were effectively labourers despite their garths in the village. When the estate came to be planned in 1731 the same arrangement still pertained except that Newtown and North Demesne were combined into one farm. It is probably this that accounts for the absence of any steading from which the North Demesnes might have been farmed. The South Demesne was farmed from Hall farm at the west end of the village, Castle farm from the castle and Newtown from Newtown.

In the late eighteenth century a new farm was set up at Lumbley Law to replace Castle farm. The new site was better drained and outside the village. At the same period there was a move to improve the wastes of Edlingham Moor which was in the



long run only partially successful. However it was also at this period that the population of the village began to decline, the 1810 map when compared with that of 1731 shows evidence of shrinkage at both the east and west ends of the village.

vii Belford Estate (Forster and later Dixon):

During the late seventeenth century this estate belonged to Lady Forster, but in 1727 it was purchased from the then owner, Lord Montague, by Abraham Dixon, a merchant of Newcastle upon Tyne. A plan of the estate made in 1733 shows that the infields of Belford had been enclosed and divided between two farms called Westhall, based on the site of the old manor, and the Town farm, each of in excess of six hundred acres. Easington was also enclosed and divided into the farms based on the village and Easington Grange.

Abraham Dixon was an improver. He enclosed the moor and laid out new farms, establishing a woollen factory and corn market in the village. For himself he built a palladian mansion to the north east of the village. The village of Belford was replanned and rebuilt, but Easington village was swept away in the improvements as two new farms were built away from the old village site, Easington Demesne and Easington Home farms.

viii Eslington:

This estate belonged to the Collingwood family during the seventeenth century, but passed by sale to the Liddells of Ravensworth following the treason of George Collingwood in 1716. From a rental of the following year the picture of a partially improved estate is apparent. Eslington was divided into two main

parts called East and West farms, let to one and five tenants respectively, a large dispersed farm called High House farm and two small leases. Equally Whittingham was divided into quarters called Rathill, Whitton Lea, Whittingham and a dispersed farm called Howe's Farm (modern Howbalk). Thrunton was also divided into quarters. There had been some attempt to improve the estate <sup>by establishing new farms</sup> before the death of George Collingwood since a lintel over the door of the Mountain Farm was inscribed "G.C. 1709". Mountain Farm was perhaps the High House recorded in the rental. The various townships had also been partitioned in the fashion seen on the Percy estate in the seventeenth century.

Sir Henry Liddell of Ravensworth the new owner came from an estate which had already been enclosed so that he was at once struck by the backwardness of Eslington, despite these improvements. In 1725 Lord Oxford commented that; "Here are several new good farmhouses on this estate which were begun by Mr. Collingwood and carried on by the late purchaser", but in March 1718/9 George Liddell the son of Sir Henry complained of the absence of hedges between one farm or estate and another, and of the lack of any idea of crop rotations or the use of fallow on arable lands. What is not clear from the writer's comments is whether the farms were farmed in common. The partitions under the Collingwoods may have largely dealt with this problem without actually building the hedgerows necessary to reap any benefit from severalty holdings. The Liddells' contribution was to complete the physical enclosure of the estate and to pursue the building of new farms started by the Collingwoods. John Horsley

noted that by 1729/30 a good deal had been achieved in this respect. Subsequently the Liddells built a new mansion and park to surround it at Eslington, and probably removed what remained of the village by 1769. Thrunton village and Barton hamlet both suffered their demise in the course of these improvements, but the site of Whittingham village continued to be occupied into the modern period as a service centre and repository for labour.

ix. The Clavering Estate:

The Claverings were a Catholic family who supported the royalist cause in the Civil War and consequently had their lands sequestered, recovering them at the Restoration. Again in the 1715 rebellion John Clavering supported the Stuart cause, but managed to gain a reprieve and in due course reoccupied his estate. It was said that he had joined the rebellion because of his desperate fortunes in the hope of repairing it (Hedley 1968 169). Be that as it may a rental of 1717 indicates that much of the estate, in particular Callaly, was in the hand of his creditors, but by 1723/4 these lands had been recovered and the estate was in possession of Ralph Clavering, his son. The Clavering family continued in occupation throughout the eighteenth century and thrived despite their Catholic sympathies.

There is some evidence that John Clavering had begun to improve his estate before the rebellion. The park surrounding Callaly Hall dates to 1704 and on the evidence of the 1717 rental, there was a dispersed farm called High Houses besides the appurtenances of the mansion in Callaly. Yetlington had been partitioned into North and South sides which were farmed in



common by five and six tenants respectively and a dispersed farm had been established at Follions.

The reorganisation of Callaly at the turn of the eighteenth century, with the emparkment of the lands surrounding the mansion, was the most likely occasion for the removal of the medieval village from its vicinity, and the establishment of the labourers' cottages at the present site. The dispersed farm of High Houses was probably created during this period of improvement.

Yetlington was improved more slowly, but a second dispersed farm was evident by 1828 and the south side of the village had been abandoned by this time. The north side was deserted during the nineteenth century. A modern farm and estate cottages now occupy part of the old south row.

x. The Brandon Estate:

Brandon and Reaveley were part of the estate of Sir Robert Collingwood in the later seventeenth century. A royalist supporter in the Civil War, whose lands were sequestered, he was forced to relieve his indebtedness in 1689 by the sale of this part of his estate to his creditors the Allgoods. Little is known of the state of the two townships at this date except that the dispersed farms of Brandon Whitehouse and Field House date to before this sale and Hillhead is documented shortly after, in 1694. This may be evidence of some improvement by Sir Robert Collingwood.

The Allgoods were improvers who continued what had been begun by Sir Robert. By 1770 they had built a park around their

house at Whitehouse (now deserted) and Brandon village site had taken on its modern appearance as a farm and estate cottages. Reaveley was divided as early as 1739/40 into two farms called East and West side, but although Armstrong represents a two row village called Reaveley, the 1770 estate map shows two separate farms called East and West Reaveley.

xi. The Selby Estate:

The Selby estate centred on the township of Biddleston, but it included a moiety of the township of Netherton and a variety of upland farms in the Cheviots including part of the forest of Cheviot. The Selby family were Catholics, but stayed clear of any involvement in the 1715 rebellion. A survey of their estate in 1717 found Biddleston unimproved, the demesnes divided into two farms and the Town lands occupied by eleven tenants. Netherton township also showed no evidence of improvement or enclosure, since the Selby moiety was occupied by only one less tenant than in 1604.

By 1769 Biddleston Hall had been emparked and the village removed. Equally Netherton had been divided and enclosed by 1725 after an unrecorded agreement with the other proprietor. In 1825 there were two public houses and a farm "at each end of the village" (No. 152). This may explain why the village site continued to be occupied.

5.4 Agrarian Improvement and the Development of the Modern Landscape c.1750-1850

Agriculture in North Northumberland in the Mid Eighteen Century:

By the mid eighteenth century, north Northumberland was largely enclosed apart from the intercommoned wastes. Severalty farming allowed the possibility of further agricultural improvements. The most immediate advantage was the ability to manage the land at the will of the farmer. He now possessed complete control over grazing and manuring, subject to the cost of fencing. Even a conservative farmer would benefit since his cattle and sheep would have to be pastured on his own land and not on the common waste (Brassley 1974 151). However many upland edge townships did not undergo any improvement of their wastes despite enclosure and the infield area or land under cultivation often decreased as at Alnham, Ingram and others. Some lowland townships such as Outchester or Kimmerston although enclosed (i.e. common rights abolished) were not physically sub-divided into small fields in the modern sense. There was a commonly held differentiation between the infields, that is to say cultivated land including arable, meadow and pasture, and outfields or ground which was usually the unimproved waste. Thus in 1784 the unimproved Kimmerston farm on the Ford estate had 419 acres of infields and 609 acres of moorland (No.127).

The progress of improved agriculture varied widely from one estate to the next. The eighteenth century is largely seen as a period when managerial improvements took place, as opposed to the



technical changes of the nineteenth century (Thompson 1968 63-5). Managerial improvement comprised enclosures, new crop rotations, selective breeding of animals, and the greater orientation of farming to the demands of the market. This latter point is exemplified by the exports of wool and hides from the ports of Berwick and Alnmouth where the advantages of nearby sea ports may have aided capitalist farming (Brassley 1974 147-150).

Improved crop rotations and selective breeding were essentially developments of the second half of the eighteenth century. The arrival of the Culleys at Fenton near Wooler in 1767 marks a turning-point in the application of selective breeding, especially of sheep, to the north of the county (Brassley 1974 165). The introduction of grasses such as clover, sanfoin and trefoil seems to have taken hold in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. It was considered a very important improvement by Bailey (Brassley *ibid.* 159-161). Turnip husbandry also was becoming quite common in the 1740s (*ibid.* 167). Both new grasses and turnips were used to restore soil after arable cultivation in place of fallowing, but the latter were more suitable to the lighter soils of Tweedside or the Till Valley.

Grassland or alternate husbandry was little practised prior to the second quarter of the eighteenth century. Arable land turned to pasture was not necessarily returned to arable cultivation and time hallowed methods of fallowing were no doubt employed on land in continuous cultivation. The chief method of restoring the soil took the form of applying lime, a material in

great abundance in most of the coastal areas of north Northumberland, its importance was well recognised on the Percy and Ogle estates in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (eg. Locke's Survey, Aln Cas B I 3 and NCRO ZAN M13/A12). It was also recognised as an aid to the improvement of waste land newly taken in for cultivation. Leases of the period, one of the landlords' tools for maintaining the quality of the land, are full of recommendations about the application of lime to fallows as well as the limits to the amount of land that might be in cultivation or permanent pasture (Brassley 1974 155-6).

The comments of George Liddell on visiting the Eslington estate for the first time are indicative of the type of agriculture common to the area in the early eighteenth century, "they grow corne till it will do no more and then lay it down" and he also complained about the lack of hedges between one farmer's land and the next. The subdivision of farms into smaller fields did not become common until later in the eighteenth century. Most farms in the first half of the eighteenth century were made up of a collection of large enclosures, sometimes in excess of one hundred and fifty acres, and a number of smaller closes. The main arable land might well be one such large open field, as at Buckton in 1757. At Alnham in the mid eighteenth century the arable lands were just one part of the ingrounds which had no permanent fencing.

The implementation of crop rotations, selective breeding, sub-division of fields and the enclosure and improvement of lowland wastes were the crucial changes of the later eighteenth

century. By the time Arthur Young toured the area in 1770 the use of turnips was widespread, indicative of the introduction of convertible husbandry. He also noted the existence of large farms throughout the area; this he considered an essential part of improved agriculture. Large farms enabled tenants, with capital enough, to experiment and take risks and to overcome periods of low prices and misfortune. Small farms did not have this capability. Furthermore a large farm could afford the outlay for new machinery and buildings coincident with the improved farming of the period. Northumberland's unique tenurial relationships allowed many landlords to create large farms without the hindrance of smallholders.

## 2. The Economic Background:

Brassley argued that the north east was not subject to the same economic climate current in the rest of the country in the first half of the eighteenth century. The growth of the coal industry and the accompanying increase in population to serve it encouraged the agricultural development of the area in order to provide for the needs of the growing urban population. In this context Mingay's Agricultural Depression<sup>(Mingay 1955-6)</sup> with its disastrous squeeze on the incomes of smallholders and the inability of tenants to pay landlords their rents was not perhaps as calamitous as in other parts of the country as the demands of the Newcastle market kept on increasing. But actual investment in improvements required the driving force of incentive. This may have been provided in part by indebtedness; the need on the part of landowners to raise their incomes to meet the borrowing



of monies by mortgage and the social pressure of maintaining a standard of living consonant with their status (Brassley 1974 170-3).

The later eighteenth century was a time of rising prices and rents and an unparalleled spate of improvement. <sup>known as the Agricultural Revolution</sup> The post war recession c.1815-1850 saw a fall in prices which was offset by landlords investing in improvement. At periods of high prices improvements were intended to increase productivity, whereas in times of low prices they were introduced to reduce the costs of cultivation (Chambers and Mingay 1966 131).

The High Farming of the period 1850-1870, saw an increase in the use of machinery, drainage by pipes, and the use of chemical fertilisers. Although all of these have their origins in the late eighteenth century they were not common until the mid nineteenth century (Chambers and Mingay 1966 170). From the 1870s the farming community was hit hard by the cheap imports of crops from Russia and North America. This resulted in a severe decline in arable cultivation and conversion to pasture especially in the Bamburgh - Belford area (NCH I 10).

### 3. Population:

Population trends in the north of the county during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were generally upwards. Unfortunately the Hearth Tax returns are incomplete so that it is difficult to compare the number of households in 1665 with later evidence. However where there were returns for all the townships of a parish some comparison may be made. These were compared with the evidence of George Mark's survey of 1734 or Chandlers

Visitation of 1736 which, in north Northumberland at least, proved to be in broad agreement, except for the anomalous Whittingham. Here the inflated figure of one thousand families may be explained as an amalgamation of the parishes of Rothbury, Alwinton, Alnham and Whittingham which are not separately detailed in Mark's Survey. The figures for 1734/6 can in turn be compared with the number of inhabited houses in the 1821 Census (Mackenzie 1825 I 243ff.). Stuart Wrathmell found increases of about 50-150 per cent in parishes away from the mining areas except in Thockerington which lay on the margin of cultivation. Yet as he said, these parishes included townships where the village had been "depopulated" (Wrathmell 1975 228-9). But he goes on to recognise that the township was a unit of agriculture and taxation which does not reveal the settlement pattern within the township. It is the settlement pattern that is the central theme of this study not the population. However it needs to be stressed that it does not require a decline in the gross population for medieval villages to be abandoned. This could be accomplished by migration to a new site or the dispersal of farms from the village nucleus. Even where this did not occur, the replacement of a community of peasant farmers by a single large farm might not reduce the population since a large permanent labour force would be required. Indeed the population might actually increase substantially. However actual depopulation did take place, invariably in conjunction with a conversion of arable land to permanent pasture, especially in upland areas like Ingram and Alnham.

Table 5.1	Households 1665 or 66 (N. Durham)	Families 1734/6 Mark/Chandler	Inhabited Houses 1821	Increase since 1734 or 1736
Holy Island			139	
Norham	244		572	134%
Tweedmouth	256		759	196%
Ancroft	171		255	49%
Kyloe	132		185	40%
Longhoughton		140?	130	
Cornhill	40		163	
(figure for Cornhill and Tillmouth too low)				
Lesbury		171	198	16%
Shilbottle	38 (nd 1 ts)	118	226	91%
Ilderton	44	120	105	- 12.5%
Ingram	23	53	37	- 30%
(no data for Ingram itself)				
Alnwick		600	823	
Edlingham	58	111	120	8%
(no data for Learchild)				
Longframlington	43	71	107	50%
Alnham		74B	37(1841)	- 50%
Ellingham		111	157	41%
Carham	87 (nd 3 ts)	220	240	9%
Doddington	77 (nd 3 ts)	202	174	- 14%
Kirknewton	95 (nd 7 ts)	246	283	15%
Branxton		40	47	17.5%
Whittingham	86 (nd 2 ts)	235B	319	36%



Chatton		190	274	44%
Ford		269	352	31%
Chillingham		62B	67	8%
Embleton	148 (nd 2 ts)	330	367	11%
Howick	23	30	45	50%
Belford		140	284	102%
Eglington	95 (nd 4 ts)	223	261	17%
Bamburgh		500	660	32%
Kidland		65	3	- 95%
Alwinton & Holystone		158 B	235	49%
Brinkburn	11	59	44	- 25%
Rothbury		510 B	478	- 6%
Felton		235	172	- 27%

(Max. No. of households in PRO E179/158/103 or 106 was used).

B = Chandlers Survey

From these figures it is apparent that the population in nearly all parishes except the Cheviot edge parishes of Alnham, Ingram, Ilderton, and Kidland grew steadily during the later eighteenth century and the early nineteenth. Too many townships have no returns surviving from 1665/6 for a valid comparison with the later evidence. However for Longframlington, Edlington, Ilderton, Howick and the parishes of Norham and Islandshire some confidence may be placed in the Hearth Tax returns. This indicates increases of the order of one hundred percent plus in most cases. Wherever possible it is more instructive to dissect these figures in order to look at the individual township. The single township parishes of Branxton and Howick confirm the

general trends as do the majority of townships with trustworthy data. Actual decreases over this period are rare; confined to small townships like Crawley, Hedgeley, Shoreston, Wreighill, Clennell and Bassington.

4. Improvement and Settlement, c.1750-1850.

The enclosure and division of common fields in north Northumberland did not immediately bring about improved agriculture and many farms remained largely unsub-divided even though held in severalty, a feature also known in the Yorkshire Wolds (Harris 1958). This was especially true of the Ford estate in about 1760 "in or about the year 1760; the whole of this estate was lying open and unenclosed, many parts covered with Heather, Furze and other nuisances and scarce an hedge, Tree or Fence upon seven thousand acres of land, except a few Trees growing about the ancient Castle of Ford then in ruins;" (NCRO 2 DE 19/4/50). Pennant, the Scottish agriculturalist, remarked on the open and treeless country south of Cornhill in 1769. Yet Daniel Defoe travelling through the area in the 1768 commented on the spirit of improvement that had taken hold of this part of the country (McDonald 1974 5). After all, the Glendale area was attractive enough to draw farmers like the Culleys to take up leases. It is likely that these observers were commenting on different parts of the country and that the progress of improvement and enclosure was markedly at variance from one estate or township to the next.

Although Arthur Young commented on improvers like Cuthbert Clarke, a farmer on the Dixon estate of Belford who introduced a new drainage plough, he travelled too early to see the great

activity that gripped the Glendale area in the later eighteenth century (Young 1770 II 166ff.). Here there was an unique collection of progressive men like the Culleys, Joseph Oxley agent on the Ford estate, and John Bailey agent to the Earl of Tankerville.

The aspect of this movement that most concerns this study is the transformation of the landscape and in particular its effect on the settlement pattern. The Ford estate underwent a relatively well documented <sup>f</sup>transformation, "from a laudable spirit for improvement his lordship began to enclose and build farmhouses upon such parts of the estate as was most eligible and convenient for subdividing some of the larger farms into small ones." Apart from ninety two miles of quickset hedges and stone walls, thirteen new farmhouses were built and old ones were enlarged. Most of these new farms were carved out of the township of Heatherslaw, previously a single large Town farm except for the old demesne farm of Flodden on its southern extremity. On the other hand Kimmerston, a farm of about 1000 acres was not subdivided but a new farmhouse was built <sup>a</sup>quarter of a mile to the north west, although the labourers cottages remained on the old site.

The progress of improvement in the extreme north must have been influenced by the Culleys' new crop rotation which enabled a farmer to maintain a much greater proportion of land in arable and so increase his productivity. The Culleys were not themselves great landscape improvers, largely because they were primarily tenant farmers. It was the landlords and their agents



that initiated such programmes. The Greenwich Hospital Commissioners began to lay out new farms and enclosures on their Northumberland estates during this period (McDonald 1974: 110ff.). The division of Outchester into the two farms of Chesterhill and Outchester dates to the third quarter of the eighteenth century; whilst at Scremerston the moor was being improved and several new farms were laid out and the population of the old village declined proportionately (PRO ADM 66/108). Equally at Ewart, Horace St. Paul built new farms and removed the villagers' cottages from the traditional site by the manor house.

Another aspect of the improvement of the landscape was the planting of trees as windbreaks which also improved its appearance. There was considerable effort to plant woodland on the Ford estate and also shortly after on the Ewart estate. A map of Barmoor dating to about 1800 has the date of plantation inserted by the individual plantation; they all date to the 1770s. The penchant for new plantations may be partly understood as part of the landowners' desire to beautify the landscape as well as providing shelter for crops.

The laying out of the contrived but natural looking parkland was widespread amongst the landowners of north Northumberland. <sup>(Appendix 14)</sup>  
 There were as many emparkments as there were substantial estates. For the most part it was conveniently placed to provide a fine panorama from the great house. By and large the landowners' residence was in or adjacent to the village site, which was in consequence liable to be removed for this purpose. Where a good site was available, the landowner could choose a new site for his

mansion away from the village so that emparking did not encroach on the settlement. This was done at Lorbottle, Swarland, Pallinsburn (in Crookham), Belford and North Charlton. However more often a landowner wished to retain the old mansion site. In this case the common arrangement was to reorganise the whole estate so that the village could be moved away from the house. This took place at West Lilburn or Ewart where the former village was planted with trees. Other probable examples are Howick (121), Callaly (39), Fowberry (90), Shawdon (18), Eslington (76), Biddleston (19), Haggerston (100) and Falloden (79). Since emparking may be seen as part of estate reorganisation and improvement there is no need to look upon it as the isolated cause of the village destruction but it should be seen as part and parcel of the same process of improvement. It should be emphasised that most landowners were outright owners of the lands on their estate, they were not buying out freeholders or necessarily forcing out tenants that did not wish to go. There were few tenants in a position to object in any case. Furthermore by the mid eighteenth century when the emparking movement became fashionable, there were few estates where emparkment impinged upon the common rights of tenants since these had already been extinguished. In place of the cottages in the village most landowners constructed new and improved accommodation adjacent to the new farms. This was done on the Ewart estate (e.g. Newtown) and others, but at Callaly, although the Home farm lay within the grounds of the house, a small village was established outside the grounds on the Whittingham

road to provide for the hinds and labourers.

An important aspect of estate improvement at this period was the taking in of moorland wastes post-enclosure to create new arable land and new farms. With the adoption of convertible husbandry less permanent pasture land was required; as long as the soil could be drained adequately there was little restriction upon the improver. Cuthbert Clarke of Belford designed a drainage plough which was used to improve the former waste of Belford moor. In the lighter soils of the Till, Tweed and Breamish drainage was less of a problem; here it was necessary to control the natural propensity of the rivers to flood. John Bailey was attributed with the programme of diking the banks of the Till in the late eighteenth century (Bailey and Culley 1805 137). This was essential if some of the riverside lands were to be brought into permanent cultivation.

A distinction should be made however between the enclosure of the commons of lowland and coastal townships, like Shilbottle Moor divided in 1762, and the upland waste of townships like Edlingham or Lorbottle. Bailey and Culley recognised this distinction stating in the early nineteenth century that the greater part of commons capable of conversion to arable had been enclosed (Bailey and Culley 1805). For example, Branxton Moor was laid out with new farms (Branxton Hill and Moor Farms) and enclosed, but on Edlingham Moor, although Sir Edward Swinburne invested in an enclosure Bill to obtain backing to improve the moor, only a few small fields were laid out, enclosed and ploughed. These lands did not long survive the harsher economic



climate following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The success of Branxton Moor improvement was even more true of areas like Wark Common or Shilbottle Moor. The taking in and improvement of moorland combined with convertible husbandry must have produced a very large increase in the arable acreage of the area in the late eighteenth century and in agricultural production.

These developments indicate how a rising population was accommodated. Arable cultivation requires a greater proportion of labour than pastoral activity; but with the increasing dispersal of farms from the former village nucleus as part of estate reorganisation this could coincide with village redundancy. However all villages and townships were subject to the same trends. By and large the medieval village had become redundant. A landowner required a farmhouse, cottages for hinds and labourers and the farm buildings; anything else was surplus to requirements. Thus at Scremerston after the new farms were established the empty cottages were pulled down (PRO ADM 66/4/3). Since a farm at this period needed a large labour force which was housed in cottages, rather than in the farm buildings themselves, because of the dispensation which insisted upon a hind providing a woman bondager to work on the estate, a farm and its attendant cottages often occupied a considerable area. For this reason there is rarely any archaeological trace of former villages. Sometimes during the period of improvement, a new site was chosen for the farm which was more conveniently placed, often with regard to access to a routeway. Good examples of this development are Hawkhill (1840s), North Middleton (c.1790 or

earlier), Outchester (late eighteenth century) and Thornton (1850s). At North Middleton it may have been the final amalgamation of the township into a single farm in the mid eighteenth century that precipitated the migration to a new site. Historically there is no special distinction to be read into this site abandonment. It is merely a rational decision to occupy a more convenient site, a question of the best use of the local topography, and therefore a part of the estate reorganisation that prevailed at this period.

As a result of these improvements there was a dramatic shift from a pattern of settlement dominated by the nucleated village to one dominated by the scattered farm with only the occasional large settlement or village. The process of the dispersal of farms from the village nucleus by which this change in part came about, although beginning in the seventeenth century, was essentially characteristic of estate reorganisations of the eighteenth century, gathering pace as the century progressed. In the small township even after enclosure there was little need for setting up new farmsteads to service the new enclosures. This is illustrated by townships like Hawkhill (736a), Warton (649a) and Downham (750a) in the lowland areas, but larger townships with substantial areas of open moorland continued to be worked from a single farm as for example, North Middleton (2082a) and Roseden (1565 a). The factors governing dispersal lie partly in the way in which enclosure took place. A general enclosure carried out by a landowner with unity of control left the distribution of farms in the hands of the landowner. On estates divided amongst

the various interested parties, including the Percy estate, the issue had a different dimension. The decision to establish a farm away from the village nucleus depended on the distance of the holding from the village as well as the ability of the owner to provide the necessary capital investment. Since the sixteenth century it had been recognised that placing the farmhouse in a central position in relation to its lands was a great advantage, saving time spent on travelling to work and the labour of transporting equipment, produce and other requisites to and from the fields. When a landowner reorganised his estate, it was a natural part of the process to place a steading within each severalty holding. On estates like the Percy estate, where first the infields were enclosed and then the waste, the laying out of dispersed farms was dependant on the various stages of enclosure. This dispersal of farms from the village nucleus inevitably drew labour away from the village and increased the likelihood of the abandonment of the old village site.

The reordering of the landscape also had its impact upon those villages which still had a role to play in the modern agrarian economy. This was characterised by the replanning and rebuilding of the cottages and farms using more permanent materials such as tiles for roofing and lime to bond the walls. The days of the traditional thatch and clay bonded stone walls were numbered. The use of lime enabled a builder to employ thinner walls which, if they were architect designed as some estate buildings were, might be constructed of dressed stone. Perhaps the earliest example of village replanning was at Etal.



Here in the latter half of the eighteenth century there was a planned village laid out in two neat rows between the new mansion and the old castle. The Rev. Gilly in his book on labourers' housing in 1841 considered the cottages at Etal as a good example of what could be done if landowners were prevailed upon to improve the standards of their estate cottages. As Gilly says, most housing was of the one room variety for a whole family, and he proposed improved two-room cottages with a yard and outhouses and a garden in front, as used at Thornton (Gilly 1842).

On the Percy estate the second Duke of Northumberland had the notion that labourers and cottagers on his estate should be made self-sufficient and independent of the farm. To this end he saw that each was provided with a smallholding of a few acres and a cottage and garden in the village. This resulted in a face lift or in situ reorganisation of the villages on the Percy estate as new cottages were built, gardens laid out and in the vicinity of the village small enclosures of two to five acres were carved out of existing farms. Where villages were still flourishing, the cottages lay within the village, e.g. Chatton, but where the village had suffered decay, as at Alnham or Newstead, the cottages were placed adjacent to their new smallholdings. The dramatic change was the restructuring of the medieval pattern of gardens and yards. Until this time they were the old toft or garth boundaries; except where these had already become redundant and had been incorporated into the enclosed fields. This was seen at villages like Bilton or Beanley where the old toft boundaries were still extant as late as the 1770s.

The changes were also in a number of cases bound up with the enclosure of the towngreens and towngates, as at Chatton, Rennington and probably Beanley and Longhoughton.

The "emancipation of the cottagers" on the Percy estate resulted in the continued occupation of villages and the preservation of their layouts. It delayed the ultimate demise of some Percy villages until the late nineteenth century (e.g. Beanley, Newstead) and encouraged the continued existence of Percy village communities which might otherwise have died out. This policy was frowned upon by Bailey and Culley (Bailey and Culley 1805). Outside the Percy estate there were few such in situ reorganisations except Belford, and Hepple.

An alternative form of reorganisation was the model village. Ford village is a fine mid nineteenth century example, but the planned village is considerably smaller than the 1760 village and at Rock a new row of cottages and gardens was built for the labourers of the Home Farm. These model "villages" should be seen as the largest of the replanned estate settlements and are little different in concept from Ewart Newtown or the Chillingham cottages for labourers and hinds.

Where there were several freeholders or landowners, the rationalisation of the village was constrained as enclosure had been. The final stage in the division of common lands was usually the enclosure of the green or towngate. As long as this piece of land remained communal, encroachments were jealously guarded and subject to the agreement of the interested parties. At Cheswick the common fields and waste were divided between 1719

and 1724, but the green was not divided until 1814 (see No.45). Similar delays are evident at Sunderland and Longframlington. This would tend to prevent the more drastic alterations in layout seen on the Percy estate. The pushing forward of the street frontages at Sunderland was probably recent in 1848. However the pace of green enclosure, as with that of the common fields, was variable, and at some villages the green was little more than a street in any case (e.g. Embleton).

Villages in multiple ownership were often repositories for surplus labour not permitted on townships in the hands of a single proprietor. There is an element of the "open" and "closed" dichotomy here, except that there is little evidence for the gangs of labourers that developed in other parts of the country (Holderness 1972). The reason for this difference was the Northumbrian habit of housing permanent and semi-permanent labour in cottages close to the farm, with the proviso that each hind supply one female worker called a "bondager". Yet the "open" village in Northumberland did perform a service in providing a source of unskilled labour available for work in rural industries as well as agriculture at the peak times of haymaking and harvest. Where the local demand for labour was confined to agriculture as at Burradon in Coquetdale or Cheswick, there was no encouragement for labour to remain. Those settlements which by virtue of geology (Shilbottle), proximity to the sea or river Tweed (Tweedmouth), or position on a major routeway (Cornhill), offered alternative sources of employment tended to thrive. At villages in divided ownership, landowners



could benefit from the demand for housing: Thomas Haggerston in the early nineteenth century granted leases of land in Lowick to enable labourers to build cottages. Villages like Lowick as Mackenzie remarked in 1825, contained "a few of such tradesmen and artisans as are necessary in an agricultural district" (Mackenzie 1825 I 381). Glanton in Whittingham Vale was a fine example of this type of village, for there were no alternative source of labour except by the provision of rural services like masons, coopers, smiths, joiners and weavers besides husbandmen and hinds (Dixon 1978 64). It seems that here the energy of one landowner in particular, George Hughes, was largely responsible for the transformation of the village of Glanton during the early nineteenth century (ibid. 98ff).

Coal mining, quarrying and its companion lime burning were important industries in the Limestone belt of north Northumberland. At some villages a significant proportion of the labour force was employed in this respect rather than in agriculture, e.g. Bednall. Until the nineteenth century, none of these enterprises were responsible for setting up hamlets and villages away from the traditional agricultural settlements, labour was drawn from the existing settlements. At Ford Moss and west of Shilbottle the <sup>coal</sup> workings warranted a settlement for labourers in the early nineteenth century; but at Shilbottle as elsewhere these early mines quickly became worked out and the settlement died with it. The chief reason for the short life of early mines was the engineering problems of mining at great depths underground and the need to pump up water. These factors

restricted most north Northumbrian mines to a relatively brief existence until the later nineteenth century unless the seam could be followed along the surface. Some collieries such as Bilton, Unthank, Shoreswood and Scremerston have a long history, certainly back to the seventeenth century and longer in the case of Bilton, but there was no attempt to set up mining villages until the nineteenth century and the introduction of improved mining techniques (~~ibid.~~ 102).

Similarly along the river Tweed, at villages like Cornhill, Norham, Horncliffe, Ord and Tweedmouth and on the coast at Bednall, Sunderland and Craster, fishing was an important source of income and was responsible in some degree for the success of villages like Tweedmouth and Bednall during the eighteenth century if not before. On the Tweed, salmon was the chief source of fish, but along the coast it took more varied form with herring being important. This had the effect of altering the face of Sunderland and Bednall in the nineteenth century, with the villages spreading down towards the sea as new harbours were constructed, but at Craster where the old village lay half a mile from the sea a completely new fishing village was established by the newly constructed harbour, and the old village disappeared under a plantation, apart from the manorial site of Craster Tower.

## 5. Conclusion.

By the mid nineteenth century and by the time of the first edition of the Ordnance Survey of Northumberland in 1861, the landscape of north Northumberland had taken on its modern appearance and the last medieval village had disappeared (Plan 16). In effect the social and economic changes of the seventeenth century and the completion of enclosure in the eighteenth century had destroyed the medieval village system before the reorganisation and rationalisation of the landscape brought about by the agricultural revolution, but it was these changes which finally removed the last physical remains of the now redundant system, ~~its villages~~. The major existing settlements of the modern landscape are dependent upon a new set of economic and social relationships. Some are the estate villages which provide the habitations for the labourers on the estate and others are the habitations of labourers in a variety of rural industries and crafts, and also of men engaged in other industries such as fishing, mining and quarrying. Many of these settlements occupy the old medieval village site and retain something of their layout, chiefly their major roads. However these modern settlements are few in number, about thirty, and are in contrast to the modern settlement pattern of the area.



## Appendix 1:

The extent of land under cultivation c.1250 to 1350

Township	Mod. acr.	Date	Demesnes (acres)	Bondland (acres)	Holdings	Acreage per Bondland	Cottagers	Freehold	In Toto
Eglingham	2008	1295	6a	129	4	32 1/4	-	13/1	148
Roddam	1203	1344	40a	96	8	12	-	-	136
Shawdon	1232	1323	40a	126	7	18	2	-	166
Thropton	843	1249	-	210	7	30	8	1	210
Lilburn West	2002	1323	106a	288	12	24	3	-	394
Mousen	791	1268	154a	288	12	24	-	12/1	454
Mindrum	2007	1334	103a	324	13 1/2	24	-	-	427
Rennington	1772	1267	238a	276	12	23	X	24/1	538
Lilburn East	911	1295	-	450	15	30	-	88/3	538
Horncliffe	2020	1183	-	432	18(2bv)	-	-	-	432
Presson	1409	1310	200a	312	13	24	5	-	512
Warenton	1584	1361	124a	288?	12	24?	6	1	412?
Denwick	1582	1289	-	480	20	24	-	-	480
Burton	1084	1244	180a	312	13	24	9	1	492
Brunton	810	1333	260a	312?	13	29?	4	1	572?
Snitter	1083	1249	-	270	9	30	4	270/9	540
Stamford	1661	1245	170a	240	10	24	14	(120/2)	530?

Charlton South	1885	1352	2/3=120a in 1379	384	16	24	8	-	504
Berrington	2604	1354	218a	384?	16(24a)		3(5wt)	-	602?
Ross	1500	1254	200a	384?	16(2bv)		7	3	584?
Embleton	2076	1244	314a	288	12	24	14(13)	4(8)	602
ditto		1298	180a	384	16	24			
Ingram	6522	1284	190a	200	10	20	14	150/9	540
Lesbury	1646	1265	180a	480?	20	24	6	X(??)	660
Etal	-	1354	216a	384	16	24	14	96?/2	696?
Alnham	9405	1265	348a	432?	18	24?	X	X	780
Eslington	1535	1327	413a	576	24	24	5	-	989
Bewick	6653	1295	286a	713	23	31	(10)	(1)	999
Shilbottle	3566	1267	313a	504	21	24	24/4 & 51/5	111/6	1003
Lucker	1309	1352	c.300a	288	12	24	8	(3bv/2)	576?
Lowick	4134	1254	372a	624	26(2bv)		15/5+10	7	1011
Newham	2690	1283	440a	576	24	24?	16	-	1016
Chatton	6554	1352	180a	648	27(11wte)	24	13(8wte)	X	828
Doddington	4917	1262	288a(24bv)	672	28	29	39/13 & 18/3	2/1	1019
Learmouth	2450	1328	-	1122	33	34	18	-	1122
Houghton Magna	3184	1352	264a	672	28(10wte)	24	29(11wte)	-	936
Bradford	560	1265	104a	132	11(bv)	12	X(8)	-	236
Newbiggin		1339	103a	168?	7	24?	4	-	271
Warenford	183	1352	-	56	4	14	-	-	56
Hepple	5881	1369	100a	72	4	18	7	-	172

Lorbottle	2486	1264/5		331	16	20	4+	-	331
Lesbury	1646	1352(68)	277.1/2a	480	20(4wte)	24	11	(120/1)	707
Embleton	2076	1361	258a	444	18.1/2	24	16	4	702
Chatton	6554	1265	340a	648?	27?	24	13?	X?	988?
Alnham	9405	1352	195a	432	18(6wte)	24	16(9wte)	X	627
Houghton Magna	3184	1265	300a	672?	28?	24	29?	-	972?
Tuggal	c.1900	1352	310a	468	19.1/2	24	8	-	778
Swynhoe	1575	1352	270a	216	9	24	5	3 nd	486
Birling	849	1249	-	300	10	30	6	-	300
Moneylaws	893	1298	288a?	24(bv)					
Osberwick		1339	-	84	7	12	5	-	84

See fig. 3



## Appendix 2:

Medieval and post medieval documentation for cultivated land in selected areas compared.

There are references to the length of perch for the lordship of Alnwick at 20 feet at Chatton (Tate 1868/9 App.xi) and the lordship of Felton at 20 feet at Evenwood (Page 1893 24). For Royal estates a 16.5 perch may have been in use (Jones 1979). A change in the length of perch used on the Percy estate in the early 17th century may account for the widespread increase in acreage of arable, meadow and improved pasture between the 14th century and early 17th century on the Percy estate. It is assumed that the acre is based upon a four by forty perch area (Jones 1979); this gives 64000 sq. ft. for an acre with a 20 foot perch and for a 16.5 foot perch 43560 sq ft. The Royal acre is 0.68 of 20 ft perch acre or a 20 ft perch acre is 1.47 of royal acre. The general assumption in calculations was made that the area of the bondland acre is the same as the demesne acre, although bondage land may be based on a fiscal assessment (Jones 1979 10ff). This also might account for discrepancies between the medieval extents and the post medieval terriers.

Case study 1- Alnham township:

## Land under cultivation:-

1265	1314/5	1352	1619
348a dem.	214a dem.	195a dem.	901a in 4 fields
432a acres bondland, ie 18 bondages at 24 acres.			73a dem. 198a past.
<hr/> 780 acres 1.47	<hr/> 646 acres x1.47	<hr/> 627 acres x 1.47	<hr/> 1172a less 125a free
<hr/> 1146.6 + freehold	<hr/> 949.6 + freehold	<hr/> 921.6 + freehold	<hr/> 1047a, but dem. pastures of Leafield and Bromeley (115+39a) excluded

Assumption: the Seles of Alnham Moor, later Alnhamshelles, in IPMS of 1265, 1314/5 incorporate the post medieval demesnes of Alnham Moor and the Barreses. Whatever the details, the lands in cultivation in 1265 must have included lands beyond the immediate core of lands around the village. Indeed about 200 acres (134 acres ancient) had gone out of cultivation, of which at least half would appear to have been outside this core.

Other Percy estates: see Gazetteer for full details.

Lesbury -	1265 = 660a 1352 = 737a 1614 no demesne, 1080 x .68 = 734a (including freehold)
Rennington -	1267 262a dem. + 12 x 23 bondland = 538 x 1.47 = 791 1622 482a in 3 fields, 85a mead., 226 past. = 793
Shilbottle -	1267 Total in 1267 = 997a + past. inc. freehold 1618 Total in 1618 = 1508a x 0.68 = 1025 acres
Newham -	1283 440a dem. + 576a? = 1016? x 1.47 = 1493.5 1620 512a in 2 fields + 26a other land. = 538a + 503a dem. Total = 1041a

Tuggal - 1352 310a dem. + 19 x 24a = 778 a x 1.47 = 1143a  
 1620 494a dem. + 278a(in common) + severalty farms  
 at 42a, 68a, 9a and 175a = 1066 acres.  
 Birling - 1244 300 acres (10 @ 300), x 1.47 = 441a  
 1620 425 acres in four fields. Typical holding 45a.  
 This suggests that the equation above is true.

Case-study 2-Doddington:

1262-3 IPM of Hugh de Bolbec

24 bovates of demesne each of 12 acres (cum prato)  
 = 288 acres of arable and meadow  
 28 bondages each with 24 acres of land = 672 acres  
 13 cottages each with 3 acres of land = 39 acres  
 3 cottagers with 6 acres each = 18 acres  
 & a free tenant with x acres

Total acreage less freehold = 1017 acres

1722 Rental of Tankerville estate:

25 coaters  
 the Mill lease of 4 acres  
 Mr Morton's lease 435 acres  
 Mr watson's lease 318 acres  
 Mr Smart's " 374 acres  
 & five other farms of 91 "  
 77 "  
 87 "  
 82 "  
 77 acres  
 Total acreage = 1545 acres

The manor of Doddington lay within the barony of Alnwick in which a perch of 20 feet was in use. If it is assumed that this was used at this manor, which was subinfeudated by the lords of Alnwick to the lords of Bolbec, then the acreage of 1262-3 may be multiplied by 1.47 to equate it with the post medieval acre based upon the chain of 22 yds.

$1017 \times 1.47 = 1494.99$  acres/compared with 1545 acres in 1722.

NB. Assumption i. use of 20 foot pole and 12 inch foot.

ii. demesne acre is same as bond acre.

iii. coaters in 1722 do not have field lands.

The 1722 acreage is close to that of 1262-3 (ie. 50 acres difference); this error is less than 5% (3.34%). It may be accounted for by the freehold of unknown size in 1262.

Soil surveys of the township by Robert Payton of Newcastle University have indicated that the soils on the Fell Sandstone are of poor quality, ill drained and unconducive to agriculture. This may be said to include most land east of the village above about 300 feet OD. The remaining lands include good quality, well-drained soils in the vicinity of the village and alluvial soils on the flood plain of the river Till, which before the 18th century embanking, must have flooded regularly, but may have been good meadow lands. The 1262-3 IPM indicates that meadow land was an important part of the demesne lands and it may be assumed that the bondagers also had a proportion of meadow in their holdings.

## APPENDIX

6

The quantity of well-drained arable soils = c.340 hectares  
 + c.60 (poorer soils).  
 = 400  
 Plus the quantity of alluvial meadow-lands 200 "  
 Total = 600 "  
 which = 1500 acres.

Appendix 3: Poll Tax population of 1377

## Glendale 158/32

Mindrum	98
Branxton	30
Ford	64
Hetton	12
Horton	48
Yeavinging	14
Killum	109
Shotton	36
Paston	50
Midleton N.	4/5
Moneylaws	22
Holburn	41
Wooler + Hartop <sup>h</sup>	42
Akeld - shèle	62
Fenton	27
Carham	43
Presson	21
Learmouth	63
Bowsden	51
Humbleton	32
Lowick	112
Lyham	39
Hetherslaw	37
Heddon	11
Ewart	77
Hazilrig	42
Coupland	29
Barmoor	49
Weetwood	30
Doddington	168
Howtel	57
Etal	54
East Newton	12
Crookham	24
Trollop	7
Hethpool	70
Wark	<u>135</u>

## Coquetdale: 158/29

Chillingham	28
Ingram	24
Fowberry	-



## APPENDIX

7

Wooden	18	
Botolston	23	
Midelton	9	
Bilton	37	
Lesbury	34	
Thropton	33	
Rothbury	91	
Alnham	60	
Rugley	15	
Acton	19	
Alwinton	73	(inc. Kidland etc.)
Lematon	30	- Coquermore.
Boroudon	43	
Biddleston	24	
Rothbury For.	46	
Scranwood	33	
Botolston	21	
Almout	23	
Brandon	20	
Branton	19	
Trewhitts	39	
Caistron + W	12	
Bokerton	12	
Thernham	11	
Hepple	23	
Hepple	23	
Tosson Parva	24	
Warton	25	
Flotterton	28	
Haysand	49	
Ditchburns	55	
Tosson Magna	56	
Newton	36	
Rosden	34	
Ilderton	43	
Framlington	96	
Yetlington	23	
Cartington	13	
Glanton	33	
Netherton	42	
Abberwick	15	
Lorbottle	27	
Callaly	19	
Hedgely	30	
Benley	28	
Prendwick	20	
Shawdon	25	
Thrunton	38	
Whittingham	61	(158/31)
Ten places unidentified or illegible.		

Appendix 4: Size of Tofts from Earthwork Evidence:-

Heddon	c.30 metres deep	c.17.5 metres wide
Over Prendwick	up to 30 metres deep	10 - 20 metres wide
Trowhope	irregular but small, maximum	about 20 metres
Hartside	c.20 - 25 metres deep,	17 - 20 metres wide
Alnhamshelles	20 metres deep	16+ metres wide
Middleton, Old	c.30 metres deep,	25 - 35 metres wide
South Middleton	25 - 30 metres deep,	c.20 metres wide
Hedgley	28 metres deep,	12 - 16 metres wide
Stamford	c.70 metres deep,	25 metres wide plus
Shipley	26 - 30 metres deep,	20 - 40 metres wide
Yetlington	c.50 metres deep,	20 - 40 metres wide
Farnham	c.35 metres deep,	c.40 metres wide
Low Tewhitt	c.45 metres deep,	30 - 40 metres wide
Rugley	c.35 metres deep	
Easington	40 - 45 metres deep,	30 - 35 metres wide
Barmoor	c.30 metres deep,	12 - 30 metres wide
Alnham	c.40 metres deep,	55 metres wide
Scrainwood	c.35 - 50 metres deep,	12 - 20 metres wide
Buckton	80 metres deep,	but includes rigg
Twizell	c.60 metres deep	
Tuggal	c.115 metres including croft with high back ridge and furrow	
Abberwick	c.75 metres plus rigg	
Detchant	c.60 metres deep	
Low Buston	25 - 30 metres & 1 @ 45 metres deep	
North Charlton	c.50 metres deep	

Size of Toft (and crofts?) From Estate Maps:

1620 Denwick	125 - 200 deep (N side, 70 - 100 south side, 12.5 metres - 75 metres wide (North side)
1620 Tuggal	c. 105 - 115 metres deep
1620 Alnham	c.35 - 60 metres deep, 20 - 40 metres wide,
1620 Snitter	c.60 - 100 metres deep
1620 Thropton	c.70 - 150 metres deep
1620 Charlton South	c.35 - 75 metres deep, 20 - 60 metres wide
1620 Longhouton	50 - 200 metres deep
1620 Lesbury	30 - 150 metres deep
1620 Bilton	75 - 115 metres deep
1620 Shilbottle	c.50 metres, but one of 200 metres deep
1620 Rugley	50 - 60 metres deep
1780 Stamford	70 - 90 metres deep
1719 Cheswick	20 - 110 metres deep, 20 - 80 metres wide
1632 Lorbottle	c.100 metres deep (south side) c.40 metre (north side)
1599 Rock	c.40ms deep
1620 Rennington	100 - 175 deep on west isde and c.40 metres north
1758 Lyham	c.50 metres
1846 Lowick	c.60 metres
1730 Embleton	c.50 - 60 metres deep
1784 Kimmerston	20 - 30 metres

## Appendix 5:

## Appendix 5:

Earthwork Evidence for Size of Medieval Houses:

(all measurements in metres:-)

Alnhamsheles	10 @ 18-20 x 5-7 metres	
	7 @ 10-12 x 5-7 metres	
Alnham Moor (Barres)	12 @ 10-16 x 4-5 metres	
	1 @ 8 x 5 metres	
	1 @ 21 x 6 metres (3r)	
Hartside Village	8 @ 10-15 x 4-5 metres (including	
	3 @ 15 x 4-5, 2r: 3 + 12)	
		22 x 5.5
		14 x 5.5
		22 x 5
		19 x 4
		7 x 4
		18 x 5
		8 x 3.5
	Huntlaw	1 @ 12 x 4
1 @ 20.5 x 4.5 (2r)		
1 @ 8 x 5		
1 @ 21 x 4		
1 @ 13.5 x 4		
1 @ 17.5 x 4.5		
Heddon	3 @ 16-17 x 5	
	1 @ 16 x 6	
	1 @ 10 x 5	
	1 @ 27 x 6 (3r)	
Trowhope	1 @ 18 x 5	
	2 @ 12 x 4.5	
	3 @ 7.5 x 4	
	1 @ 10 x 5	
	1 @ 6 x 5	
Prendwick	1 @ 14 x 6	
	1 @ 13 x 4	
	1 @ 8 x 5	
Middleton, Old	4 @ 20 x 7 (3r)	
	1 @ 13 x 5	
	3 @ 14.5 x 5 (2r)	
Alnham	1 @ 9 x 5	
	1 @ 11 x 5	
	1 @ 20 x 14 (Tower)	



Appendix 6: Evidence for late medieval population declinePercy Estate:

b=bondage holding

c=cottage "

t=tenant

f=free tenant

Denwick

1265

1289

1352

1498-1500

20 b

19.5 b

19 hus

1 c

2 c

Lesbury

20 b

20 b

22.5b 13 c

6 c

11 c

(23 t 13 c)

Longhoughton

28 b

28 b 29 c

29 c

(28 t 7 c)

Chatton

27 b

29.5 h 9 c

13 c

Alnham

18 b

18 b

18 h in 1472 nd

16 c

(31t 2f 2d 1567)

Tuggal

19.5 b

(19 h in 1472)

8 c

(8t 2d 1567)

1266/7

1566/7

Shilbottle

21b, 4c, 6f, 5frm

15h, 1t, 4c, 5w, 4f

Rennington

12b 1f ?c

nd but 12t 3c

in 1566

Guyzance

6b 6c 1f

6.5(1406/7)

6t 2f

1352

Lucker

12h 8c

9t(14h)5c 1d nd 1567

South Charlton

16h 8c

16ht 2c in 1567

1320

Newham

24b 18c

12ht, 3c, 1d, in 1567

Birling

10b 7c (1249)

10b 5c

13t(10h)0c

Over Buston

nd

4t 2f (16ht prev.)

1249

1310

1352

Snitter

9b 9frm 4c

18b 3c

18b 3c

22ht 3c 1567

Thropton

7b 10c +1f

7+1b 8+1c

8b 31/3c

13ht 3c 1567

Rugley

18h (1472)

7t 2dt

## Appendix 6 (cont.)

Late Medieval Population Evidence township by township:

1	Spindleston	1302	9 bondi, 3 cott & Cap Mess. - Colville
		1321	9 bondi, 2 cott - de la Legh
		1387	7 1/2 h + 3 c (6t +3)- Colville
		1580	10 tenants of Mr. Forster & W. Strother
2	Lowick	1254	26 bondi, 7 free, 5 cott, 10 gresmen
		1580	21 tenants
3	Over Buston		formerly 16 husbandlands, but reduced to 8 pre1567.
4	Lucker	1352	12 bondi, 8 cott
		1567	9 tenants, 5 cott
5	Newham	1283	24 bondi, 16 cott, cap mess
		1567	12 tenants, 3 cott Dem.
6	Denwick	1368	19 1/2 bondi
		1499	14 tenants, 2 cott
		1567	12 tenants 2 cott
7	Tuggal	1352	19 1/2 bondi, 8 cott, 1 cap mess.
		1567	8 tenants, 2 dem tenants, but prev. 11 hus tenants, 8 cott and 4 cotterels
8	Wooden	1296	10 taxpayers
		1567	2 tenants
9	Rugley	1471/2	18 husbandlands <del>but</del> 1 cap mess.
		1499	7 tenants, 2 dem & ten. <del>Hesil and Snip house</del>
10	Barmoor	1296	14 taxpayers
		1580	8 tenants
11	Budle	1302	6 bondi, ) 11 bondi
		1321	5 bondi, )
		1387	6 1/2 b (5 t)
		1580	4 tenants
12	Burton	1244	13 bondi, 9 cottars
		1580	7 tenants
		1603	7 tenants 2 cott
13	Cheswick	1403	15 1/2 hus and 8 cott
		1560/1	10 tenants and 3 free tenants
14	Doddington	1262	28 bondi, 13 cott, 1 free
		1580	24 tenants
15	Grindon	1183	10 1/2 bondmen
		1471	15 husbandlands
		1560/1	6 husbandlands
16	Haggerston	1470	15 husbandlands
		1560/1	11 husbandland tenants
17	Heaton	1463	20 husbandlands
		1580	11 tenants
18	Hebburn	1381	8 husbandlands
	moiety	1580	5 tenants
19	Kimmerston	1313	8 taxpayers
		1429	4 husbandlands
		1580	3 tenants
20	Learmouth	1328	33 bondi, 18 cotlands
		1541	20 husbandlands
21	East	1295	15 bondi and 2 smallholders
	Lilburn	1538/9	13 tenants
22	Middleton	1296	14 taxpayers
		1580	7 tenants
23	Fawdon	1566/7	formerly 10 husb. <sup>reduced to</sup> 1 dem and 5 hus

24	Presson	1310	13 bondi, 6 cott, 2 free
		1541	8 husbandlands
25	Ross	1254	16 bondi, 3 cott, 4 gresmen, 3 free
		1560/1	formerly 12 husb, reduced to 1 or 2 tenants
26	Scremerston	1464	15 husbandlands
		1560/1	12 husbandlands
27	Shawdon	1323	7 husbandlands, 2 cott, cap mess
		1543	cap mess, 4 messuages
28	Shoreswood	1360	15 husbandlands, 7 cotlands
		1580	6 tenants
29	Shoreston	1296	14 taxpayers
		1580	11 tenants
30	Thornton	1430	8 husbandlands, 3 cott
		1560/1	6 husbandlands
31	Chillingham	1352	22 bondi
		1580	11 tenants
32	Tilmouth	1424/5	Cap Mess 12 husbandlands, 6 cott
		1541	10 husbandlands
33	Sunderland	1296	30 taxpayers
		1580	20 tenants
34	Stamford	1361	IPM 22 tenants (12 bond, 9 cott, 1 free)
		1603	17 tenants (14 tenants, 3 cott)
35	Shilbottle	1267	36 tenants (bond and cottagers)
		1498	28 tenants (husbandland and cottagers)
36	Sharperton	1296	14 taxpayers
		1604	7 tenants
37	Scremerston	1464	Cap Mess. 15 husbandlands, 10 cott
		1560/1	Cap Mess, 12 husbandlands + cotts
38	Rennington	1267	12 bondi
		1569	10 husbandlands
39	Preston	1333	Cap Mess, 6 1/2 bondi, 4 free
		1569	Manor, 5 tenants at will
40	Mousen	1268	13 tenants (1 free) and Cap Mess
		1580	6 tenants
41	Lyham	1296	8 taxpayers
		1580	7 tenants
42	Lorbottle	1406	24 holdings
		1632	16 houses
43	Lanton	1296	15 taxpayers
		1541	12 husbandlands
44	Ingram	1284	34 tenants, 10 bondi, 14 cott, 10 free
		1604	12 tenants
45	Humbleton	1296	13 taxpayers
		1541	12 husbandlands
46	Houghton	1368	57 holdings, 21 vacant = 36 tenants
	Magna	1498	57 holdings, 35 tenants
47	Lesbury	1352	20 bondi, 11 cot
		1500	22 husbandlands, 13 cott
48	Flotterton	1296	9 taxpayers
		1632	8 houses
49	Felton	13th century	9 tenants
	Parva	1536	1 tenant, formerly 4
50	Etal	1354	33 holdings
		1604	51 holdings
51	Elwick	1283	13 tenants owing services to landlord



		1560/1 14 holdings (inc 2 demesnes)
52	Easington	1296 13 taxpayers 1306 moiety 13 tenants 1580 12 tenants
53	Coupland	1313 12 tofts 1541 10 husbandlands
54	Cornhill	1426/8 23 1/2 husbandlands 1580 22 tenants
55	Cheswick	1403 Cap Mess, 15 1/2 husbandlands, 8 cott 1560/1 17 husbandlands, 13 tenants
56	Horncliffe	1183 18 bondi 1560/1 16 tenants
57	South Charlton	1352 24 holdings (8 cott) 16 bondi 1569 17 holdings (1 cott) 16 husbandlands
58	Birling	1248 17 holdings (10 bondi) 1498 13 holdings (10 husbandlands)
59	Bewick	1295 23 bondi 1378 23 bondi, 10 cottages, 1 free 1538 29 copyholders + 10 in New Bewick
60	Berrington	1354 19 holdings + 5 waste cotts 1560/1 20 husbandlands
61	Belford	1438/9 36 1/2 holdings (inc 7 1/2 hus <sup>b</sup> ) moiety <sub>^</sub> 1580 13 tenants
62	Beanley	1438/9 20 holdings, 20 hus and 1 Cap Mess 1586 30 tenants
63	Beal	1420/1 12 husbandlands 1560/1 8 husbandlands 1580 13 husbandlands
64	Beadnall	1296 18 taxpayers 1580 8 tenants
65	Barmoor	1296 14 taxpayers 1580 8 tenants
66	Alnham	1352 35 holdings, 17 waste 1567 35 holdings
67	Adderstone	1296 11 taxpayers 1580 6 tenants
68	Chatton	1296 40 taxpayers 1352 41 holdings, 19 waste 1541 30 husbandlands 1566/7 40 tenants
69	Guyzance	1267 13 tenants 1498 8 tenants
70	Hethpool	1254 11 cott, 3 drengs, 1/4 manor sub-infeud 1541 6 husbandlands
71	Lilburn West	1323 Cap Mess 12 hus, 3 cott (moiety) 1580 22 tenants
72	Embleton	1361 18 1/2 bondi, 16 cott, 4 free 1603 16 tenants, 13 cott, several free
73	Shipley	1361 7 bondi, 4 cott, and free tenants 1603 6 tenants, 3 cott, moiety

APPENDIX

Appendix 7:

Decay of Border Service in the East March since 1567-8.

		%	No. & % in Middle March
Due to the Scots (inc. 18 tenements occ. by Scots)	150(132)	28(25)	544 (48) 749 (412)
Excessive use of Fines	146	27.5	95 (8) 241 (135)
Neglect of tenements	152	28.5	266 (21) 418 (235)
Conversion of tenements to Demesnes or pastures	39	7.5	105 (8) 144 (802)
Raising of rents	35	6.5	110 (9) 145 (804)
Dividing or conveying of tenements	9	2	77 (6) 86 (505)
	<u>532</u>		<u>1252</u>

(PRO SP 59/31)

## Appendix 8:

Nos. of Farmholds on Estates during 17th-18th centuriesHaggerston Estate

MR= Muster Roll	1580(MR)	1711(NCRO ZHG xvi/3)	1757(722/F/1)
Haggerston	11	CrockMill + closes	-
Buckton	12	1	3
Fenwick	15	3(6 coaters)	4(6 coaters)
Ellingham	9	-	-
Lowlynn	-	-	-
Farnham (Thirnam)	1	3(2 farms)	2
Hazilrigg 5	-	-	1(1796)
Kyloe	5	-	-
Lowick		8	-

Radcliffe Estate

	1580	1669	1736	1775
Middleton Hall	6	1	1	1
Scremerston	12	7(1660)	7	4
Spindleston	10	- 1	1	2
Outchester	1(12)	- 1	1	1
	<u>29(40)</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>

References: (NCRO ZCK 14/1) (PRO ADM 74/6/1, 79/57 &amp; 79/6/1)

Forster/Lord Crewe Estate

(NCRO 452D3/1 & D2/1)	1580	1695/6	1775	1795
Bednall	8	8	9	
Sunderland	20	14	15	7
Shoreston	11	4	1	1
Fleetham	4	3	3	3
Elford	11	5	4	-
Budle	4	6(+Newton)	3	-
Thornton	-	3(1694)	3	3
	<u>58</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>14</u>

Ogle Estate

	1580	1632	1724
Hepple	3	10	10
Sharperton	7	6	5
Flotterton	2	8?	8
Warton	1	6?	-
Lorbottle	8	16	18
Newhall	1	1	1
	<u>22</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>42</u>

(NCRO ZAN M13/A12)

Ford Estate (Carr/Blake - Delaval)

	1669	1714	1763
Kimmerston	3(6 in 1533)	5	2
Ford	7	3 farms	-
Crookham	22	?	-
Heatherslaw	16	-	-

(NCRO 2DE 2/10)



## APPENDIX

16

	1580	1610	1630	1652
Edlingham (Swinburne)	6	22 t Ed & N	5 farms (3 dems)	3 dems
Biddleston(Selby)	12 in 1604	1717	13 (tenements)	(ibid.)
Netherton (moiety)	11 in 1604	10 tenants (inc. E & W Dem 48)	2 farms H.M. Callaly (ibid.)	
Callaly(Clavering)	7	12 farms (inc. Follions)		
Yetlington	6			
Eslington (Collingwood)	4	9 inc. High Monk (ibid.)		
Whittingham	-	15 inc. Howe's Farm		
Thrunton	4	4		
Barton	2	3		
<u>The Grey (Chillingham) Estate</u>				
	1580(MR)	1693 Rental	1722 Rental	1803
Chillingham	11	5	2	2
Yeavinger	1	1		
Learmouth	22	9	1(court roll)	2
Heaton	11	1	1	
Akeld	16	8(1/4 not Gray)		
Elwick	12(1560)	1	1	
Ewart	13	1		
Detchant	7	2(Dem.2 sharing)		
Doddington	24	11	8	
Ancroft	12	9		5
Stamford	13	2	2	
Dunstan	11	2(part Craster)	2	
Embleton	21	1(6 free + 11) ease in Court Roll)	9	
Coupland	8	1(part not Gray)		
Killum	20	1(5 in 1682)	4(court roll + 1 Thornington)	
Fenton	11(+Nesbit)	2		
Downham	4	3		
North Middleton	11	2	1(2 sharing)	
South Middleton	14	7	2	
Ross	1/2(1560)	1	1	
Horton	11	1+1 (Hetton House)		2
Shiple	6	6(court roll)	6	
Newtown	19	1	1	
Milfield	8	5		
Wark	27	7+1(Sunnilaws)	3+1	
Wooler		6+1(Turvilaws)		
Mindrum	11	?	4(1718 c.rl)	
Presson	4	1	1 " " "	1
Nesbit	11(+Fenton)	?		
Hawkhill	9	1		1
Howick	19	1		2
Burton	7	(1?)		
Heddon	0(1541)	1	1(Thompson Walls in C. rolls)	
Antechester	0(1541)	?		
Trowup	0(1541)	2		
Shortup		3		

Total tenants: 375 108+  
(Grey estate)

Tenant Farmers on The Percy Estate

No. of farmholds static over period: no caoters counted.

	Survey Rental 1586	Survey Rental c.1620	Survey Rental 1685	Survey Rental 1702	Survey Rental 1727
Birling	10	10	10	12	9
Bilton	11	16	16	13	8
Alnham	32	27	nd	4	3
Longhoughton	27	25	19	15	11
Lesbury	22	17	15	11	11
South Charlton	15	13	11	12	10
Tuggal	7	7	5	5	5
Guyzance	9	8	6	6	7
Rennington	11	11	10	9	11
Denwick	12	13	12	11	12
Newham	13	7	5	5	8
Newstead	1	1	14	(14)	12
Lucker	9	6	6	6	5(1 tenancy 4 persons =8)
Shilbottle	20	15	18	18	18
High Buston	8	6	(6)	6	-
Rugley	9	2	(2)	2	2
Brotherwick	4	1	(1)	1	1
Snitter	22	21	23	-	-
Thropton	13	7	7	-	-
Pauperhaugh (Healeys)	5	5	(5)	5	5
Chatton	31	22	19	19	19
Fawdon	6			1	1
Lyham	5		2	1	1
Total	<u>302</u>	<u>251</u>	<u>212(?)</u>	<u>170(?)</u>	<u>162</u>

Farms in Percy Estate Rental, (Cottagers Excluded) after accession of Smithsons.

	1756	1772	1784	1794	1801
Birling	9	10		6	6
Bilton	11	10	6	5	5
Alnham	1		4	4	5
Longhoughton	22	18	15	12	13
Lesbury	14	10	9	7	7
South Charlton	13	10	10	4	4
Tuggal	5	5	3		
Guyzance	6		4	4	5
Rennington	11	6	4	4	6
Denwick	12	12	10	8	7
Newham	10	8	6	5	4
Newstead	11	10	8	6	6
Lucker	5	5	5	4	4
Shilbottle	21	17	16	13	14
High Buston	4	4	3	3	3
Rugley	2	2	2	2	2
Brotherwick					

Snitter					
Thropton					
Pauperhaugh					
Chatton	20	17	14	15	14
Fawdon	.				
Lyham	1	3	3		

Based on Aln Cas. B I 13, 15, 21,

Bewick Estate (Crown and Ramsey)

	1538	1604	1608	1649
Old Bewick	29	21	13 + 30	16
New Bewick	10	3	3	1
Eglington ) and		12	4	5
Harrup )				
Wooperton	8	14	14	16
East Lilburn	13	14	10	11
	<u>60</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>49</u>

(NCH XIV, Sanderson 1891, PRO KR2/223, Welford 315).

Appendix 9: Village Population during Improvements:

Denwick

1566	1586	1620	1665
J Rose	T Harper	R Gibson	Th Arkeild
J Gibson	R Gibson	T Shepherd	Ed Shipherd
R Anderson	T Shepherd	W Maxson	Th Reed
W Maxsone	W Maxwell	W Robinson	Wm Thew
Ed Robinson	Ed Robinson	R Clark	W Harper
Ed Robinson	G Robinson	W Robinson	D Trumble
W Waller	W Walker	R Shepherd	Th Shippherd
Ed Robinson	L Pattersone	Ed Robinson	R Ogle
J Thewe	W Thewe	T Reade	W Robinson
W Graye	W Gray gent	G Gray	A Plowham
R Gibsone	G Gibson	R Gibson	J Forster
W Graye	W Gray	G Gray	J Michison
J Clark	T Clark	R Clark	
J Bowden	J Bowden	W Bowden	
J Clark	M Clark	T Clark	
W Thewe	R Thewe	R Thewe	
R Thewe	R Thewe	Ro Thewe	

1685	1702	1727	1758
------	------	------	------

W Reed	W Archbold	R Grieve	J Potts
T Arkle	J Arkle	A Taylor	M Shell
T Shepherd	T Shepherd	T Shepherd	E Shepherd
R Thewe	E Shepherd	T Gare	T Scott
D Trumble	J Shepherd	E Shepherd	J Thewe
E Harper	R Thewe	R Thewe	J Potts
Ruttledge	D Trumble	W Thewe	T Robson
R Robinson	W Thewe	D Trumble	G Grieve
C Forster	C Shell	C Shell	W Thewe



J Shepherd	T Gare	R Richardson
W Archbold	R Robinson	W Forster
E Robinson	C Forster	
W Thewe		
W Shell		

Stamford

1603	1665	1692-3
J Carr	G Davison	G Davison
Th Phillipson	Ra Gray	W Gray
R Hodgson	J Linsey	Ro Graham
T Gray	E Bell	J Busby
Wi Ledyman	Th Greenby	Ra Allison
L Gray		J Daglish
Ro Emylton		J Tate
W Bowdon		R Busby
J Shippard		Ja Simbler
G Farrowes		R Bone
L Graye		Th Richardson
G Bowdon		J Staward
H Cuthbert		D Staward
W Cuthbert		
Gab Myllner		
J Storey		
Th Newlands		

## Appendix 10:

Partitions into Quarters or Sides. (dates = termini ante quem)

Longhoughton	1566/7
Chatton	1566/7 & 1685
South Charlton	1685
Birling (1640)	1685
Bilton	1702
Beanley	1612
Shilbottle	1702
Yetlington	1717
Whittingham	1718
Thrunton	1718
Eslington	1718
Lorbottle	1724
Rock	1599
Burradon	1723
Ellingham	1717
Sunderland	1766/7
Glanton	1696
Scremerston	1723
Outchester	1605
Haggerston	1652
Glanton	pre 1708
Elford	1621

## Appendix 11:

Townships partitioned to create a severalty freehold 1600-1700:

Preston	- Chathill
Kyloe	- Kentstone
Spindleston	- Glororem?
Goswick	- Broomhouse?
Horncliff	- Loanend
Barmoor	- Woodend
Hazon	- Hartlaw
Little Ryle	- Kaisley
Paston	- Hairlaw
Tillmouth	- Harperig & Melkington
Hurton	- Hetton House

## Appendix 12:

Enclosures of infield by private agreement

(date = award or terminus ante quem).

Branxton	1712
Embleton	1730
Glanton	1666 & 1696
Swinhoe	1731
Akeld	1741
Beal	1684
Burradon	1723 & 1774
Orde	1732
Coupland	1728
Lowick	1724
Newton-on-the-Sea	1725
Shiple <sup>y</sup>	c 1744
Cheswick	1719
Lesbury	1686
Birling	1685 & 1697/8
Shilbottle	1684
Rennington	pre 1685
Longhoughton	1674/5 & of waste during 18th century
Denwick	pre 1685/6
Over Buston	1621
Bowsden	1733
Ancroft	1737
Guyzance	pre 1685
Ellingham	1687
Low Buston	1641
Budle	1805
Howick	1605
Chatton	1748, 1769, 1782 (refs. to 3 separate divisions)
Chorlton	pre 1702
Newham	pre 1769
Bilton	1614
Cornhill	1768?

## By Act of Parliament

Alnham	1775 (infields and waste)
Sunderland	1774 (common pastures)

## Appendix 13:

Medieval townships occupied by modern farm-hamlet (Plan 6)  
(where no dispersal has occurred).

Brotherwick  
Beanley  
Broxfield  
Burton  
Caistron  
Clennell  
Crawley  
Ditchburn East  
Ditchburn West  
Downham  
Elwick  
Glantleys  
Low Framlington  
Gatherwick  
Hawkhill  
Horton  
Hethpool  
Hoppen  
Kimmerston  
Lilburn East  
Murton  
Middleton Hall  
Middleton South  
Hoppen  
West Newton  
Newton in Coquetdale  
Paston  
Rosedean  
Ross  
Great Ryle  
Little Ryle  
Scrainwood  
Swinhoe  
Lowlynn  
Easington Grange (Unthank?)  
Wooden  
Wooperton  
Yeavinger  
Middleton North  
Newtown Chillingham  
Trowhope  
Alnham Moor (formerly Alnhamshelles)  
Ingram  
Harehope  
Overgrass  
Unthank (Alnham)  
Warton  
Thompson's Wall (Outchester)  
Crookhouse  
New Bewick  
New Etal



Appendix 14: Emparkments

- Pre 1769 (source Armstrong's Map)      V = Village site
- V Biddleston (Selby)
  - V Howick (Gray)
  - V Folloden (Gray)
  - ?V Chillingham, early 17th century, (Gray & Tanderville)
  - V Eslington (Liddell)
  - V Haggerston (Haggerston)
  - Roddam (Roddam)
  - ?V Tillmouth, post 1769 (Blake)
  - V Shawdon, post 1769 (Hargreave)
  - V Ewart, post 1769 (St. Paul)
  - ?V Fowberry (Carr)
  - V Callaly (Clavering)
  - Swarland (Grieve)
  - Palinsburn Hall (Askew)
  - Belford Hall (Dixon)
  - V Ford (Delavel)
  - V Etal (Carr)
  - Newton on the Moor Hall (Cook)
  - V Rock (Earl of Jersey)
  - Twizel Newhall (Bacon)
  - Broome Park (Burrel)
  - Felton Park (Riddel)
  - ?V Lemmington Hall (Fenwick)
  - Eglington Hall (Ogle)
  - Alnwick Abbey (Doubleday)
  - Hulne and Cawledge Parks (Percy-Smithson)
  - Shoreswood Hall (Craster) not on Greenwood map
  - V Barmoor, 1769-1828, (Phipps)
  - Charlton Hall, (Cay) post 1767-pre 1828
  - Carham Hall, post 1769-pre 1828
  - ?V Paston Hall, post 1769-pre 1828
  - Lorbottle Hall, post 1769-pre 1828
  - V Collingwood House, Unthank (Collingwood)
  - Acton House post 1769-pre 1828
  - Brandon Whitehouse (Allgood)

Appendix 15: 17th Century Reorganisation and Dispersal of Farms

Etal  
 Ford  
 Kyleo  
 Longhoughton  
 Bilton  
 Lesbury  
 Dunstan  
 Felkington  
 Hartside  
 Twizell?  
 Alnham?  
 Brandon  
 Chillingham  
 Lemmington  
 Crookham

Spindleston  
Tillmouth  
Horncliffe

Appendix 16: Demesne Farming c.1550-c.1650

(The dates are *termini ante quem*).

- a) Percy estate - Newham 1566/7  
Lucker 1566/7  
Bilton 1566/7  
Alnham 1566/7  
Beanley 1612  
Shilbottle Woodhouse  
Tuggal Hall 1566/7  
Newstead? 1620  
Fawdon 1566/7
- b) Grey estate - Stamford 1693  
Heaton 1615 (Raine App. 157)  
Detchant 1693 (c.1570)  
Coupland 1693  
Fenton 1693  
Chillingham 1693  
Downham 1693  
Horton c.1570
- c) Royal estates - Berrington 1604 under lease  
Etal 1604 under lease  
New Bewick (Ramsey - 1649)
- d) Others - Marden ) 1663  
Flodden ) Ford 1620?  
Grindon )  
Newbiggin ) W. Orde 1649  
Felkington )  
Hepple 1632  
Kirknewton )  
West Newton ) Strother 1649  
Edlingham 1630 (Swinburne)  
Scremerston c.1660 (Fenwick of Meldon)  
West Orde 1602  
Shoreswood 1670/1  
Spindleston 1568 sold to Forster of B.  
Elwick 1631  
Hoppen - Conyers 1649  
Weetwood - J. Orde 1649  
Learchild - T. Clavering 1649  
Lemington - G. Wray new demesnes 1651  
Cartington - Sir E. Widdrington 1654 (c.1620)  
Haggerston - 1670/1  
Rock pre 1599  
Biddleston 1717

Appendix 17: OMVs or  
Modern Villages in Northumberland, North of the River Coquet

Beadnall	NU 23 29
Birling	NU 24 06
Bowsden	NT 99 41
Branxton	NT 89 37
Buston, High	NU 23 08
Belford	NU 10 33
Chatton	NU 05 28
Cornhill	NT 85 39
Crookham	NT 91 38
Denwick	NU 20 14
Eglingham	NU 10 19
Ellingham	NU 17 25
Embleton	NU 23 22
Etal	NT 92 39
Glanton	NU 07 14
Guyzance	NU 21 02
Hepple	NT 98 00
Houghton, Magna	NU 24 15
Horncliffe	NT 92 49
Lesbury	NU 23 11
Longframlington	NU 13 00
Netherton	NT 98 07
Newton-on-the-Moor	NU 17 05
Lucker	NU 15 30
Lowick	NU 01 39
Orde	NT 97 51
Rennington	NU 21 18
Snitter	NT 02 03
Shilbottle	NU 19 08
Sunderland	NU 21 31
Thropton	NU 02 02
Whittingham	NU 06 11
Tweedmouth	NT 99 52
Warenford	NU 13 28
Etal	NT 92 39
Sunderland	NU 21 31
Guyzance	NU 21 02
Denwick	NU 20 14
Milfield	NT 93 33



## Appendix 18:

Deserted Medieval Villages in north Northumberland, Class I

Acton	NU 185025
Adderstone	NU 140305
Alnham	NT 990109
Alnhamsheles	NT 965154
Antechester	NT 867305
Barton	NU 077122
Biddleston	NT 955083
Birtewell	NU 173117
Buston, Low <sup>Bradford</sup>	c. NU 152322 NU 226072
Callaly	NU 053098
Chirmundesden	U
Colwell	U
Cocklaw	NU 116291
Craster	NU 250196
Edmondhills	NT 964470
Ewart	NT 963316
Fallden	NU 206236
Fowberry	NU 038293
Foxton	NT 968054
Hartside	NT 985176
Hawkhill	NU 215119
Hazelrig	NU 056332
Heckley	NU 18 16
Heddon	NT 861284
Learchild	NU 101110
Lilburn, West	NU 023242
Lowlynn	NU 035422
Middleton	NU 099354
Middleton, North	NT 990239
Moneylaws	NT 873356
Newhall	NT 950064
Osburwick	U
Outchester	NU 146335
Overgrass	NU 144034
Rugley	NU 165099
Shawdon	NU 093143
Shipleigh	NU 154182
Stamford	NU 226193
Sturton Grange	NU 215070
Tillmouth	NT 870428
Trickley	c. NU 030260
Trowhope	NT 879264
Twizell	NT 884425
Unthank (Bamburgh)	U
Unthank	NU 017112
Wreighill	NT 977020
Over Swynleyshiels	NU 138060
Evenwood	U
Alesdon	NT 871286
Colpenhope	NT 845268
Kemylpethe	NT 789085
Howick	NU 248175
Coldmartin	NU 008268
Felton, Old	NU 179023

Trewhitt, Low	NU 003048
Eslington	NU 041120
[Doxford	c. NU 186241] DMV II
Haggerston	NU 041437
Lemington	NU 121113
Over Prendwick	NU 003129

## Appendix 19:

Deserted Medieval Villages in north Northumberland, Class II

Abberwick	NU 125131	Kyloe	NU 058397
Akeld	NT 957295	Lanton	NT 921311
Allerdean	NT 975464	Learmouth	NT 849376
Ancroft <small>Alwinton (next page)</small>	NU 000450	Lilburn, East	NU 043236
Barmoor	NT 998397	Lorbottle	NU 033065
Beal	NU 065427	Lyham	NU 068309
Beanley	NU 081183	Middleton South	NT 997233
Berrington	NU 006433	Middleton Hall	NT 989254
Bewick, Old	NU 066215	Mindrum	NT 841328
Bilton	NU 227107	[Mousen	NU 117314] DMV I
Bolton	NU 106136	Murton	NT 968486
Branton	NU 046163	Brandon	NU 042171
Brunton	NU 248208	Nesbit	NT 983336
Broxfield	NU 201166	Newton-on-the-sea	NU 235252
Buckton	NU 083384	Newham	NU 174284
Budle	NU 155350	Newstead	NU 151272
Burton	NU 178328	Newtown	NU 100083
Burradon	NT 982062	Newtown	NT 944070
Carham	NT 798384	Paston	NT 855327
Cartlington	NU 037045	Pauperhaugh	NZ 101996
Caistron	NT 997013	Prendwick, Nether	NU 004123
Charlton, North	NU 167228	Presson	NT 836358
Charlton, South	NU 164202	Preston	NU 183254
Chillingham	NU 060260	Reaveley	NU 020170
Clennell	NT 928071	Rock	NU 203201
Coupland	NT 936311	Roddam	NU 023203
Crookhouse	NT 905317	Roseden	NU 031215
Detchant	NU 086365	Ross	NU 133369
Ditchburn, East	NU 139214	Ryle, Little	NU 019111
Ditchburn, West	NU 130207	Ryle, Great	NU 020126
Doddington	NT 99 32	Scrainwood	NT 991094
Downham	NT 865339	Scremerston	NU 016480
Duddo	NT 937426	Shotton	NT 842303
Dunstan	NU 248198	Shoreswood	NT 939465
Edlingham	NU 11 09	Shoreston	NU 204326
Elford	NU 187309	Sharperton	NT 957038
Elwick	NU 115368	Spindleston	NU 152332
Easington	NU 123347	Swarland	NU 162018
Farnham, Low	NT 969023	Swinhoe	NU 210284
Fawdon	NU 032155	Thornton	NT 946481
Felkington	NT 944442	Thrunton	NU 089108
		Titlington	NU 098152
Fenham	NU 086407	Trewhitt, High	NU 010056
Fenton	NT 969336	Tuggal	NU 210263
Fenwick	NU 065401	Warton	NU 006028
Flotterton	NT 999024	Weetwood	NU 015296

## APPENDIX

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Ford	NT 943374	Wooden	NU 235096
Framlington, Low	NU 138001	Wooperton	NU 038202
Gatherwick	NT 959049	Yetlington	NU 022097
Goswick	NU 058451	West Newton	NT 904303
Grindon	NT 915447	Yeavinger	NT 924302
Hazon	NU 193044	Newbigging	NT 897457
Harehope	NU 094203	Warenton	NU 106304
Heatherslaw	NT 929378	Glantlees	NU 140055
Heaton	NT 900418	[Whittle	NU 183066] DMVI
Hebburn	NU 069246	Cheswick	NU 029464
Hedgeley	NU 063177	Crawley	NU 069165
Hethpool	NT 895283	Earle	NT 987262
Hetton	NU 040334	Horton	NU 027308
Holburn	NU 04 36	Kirknewton	NT 914302
Houghton, Little	NU 231164	Doxford	NU 186241
Howtel	NT 897340	Brotherwick	NU 228057
Humbleton	NT 976284	Fleetham	NU 19 28
Ilderton	NU 016218	Hoppen	NU 160307
Ingram	NU 019163	Alwinton	NT 920063
Killum	NT 884324	Tinely	NU 170239
Kimmerston	NT 956353	Nether Swynleyshields	NU 151062



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- ZBM Bolam (Berwick) MSS
- ZBU Butler MSS
- 2DE Delaval MSS
- 683 Crossman MSS
- 722 Haggerston MSS
- ZHG Haggerston MSS
- ZSI Simpson MSS
- Atkinson-Ckark MSS  
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