Village Plans in County Durham: 
A Preliminary Statement

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THIS paper examines some facets of rural settlement-morphology within co. Durham and demonstrates the way in which all villages involve particular combinations of universal structural components. These provide grounds for a logical classification and a framework within which to explore the origins of some of the plan-types that can be identified. A close analysis of the most regular series, the two-row plans, indicates that a strong measure of deliberate ordering was involved and evidence is presented to suggest that some villages, which were first mapped in the 19th century, possess a plan-type that developed before 1200. Furthermore there are grounds for arguing that there may be traces of village-regulation, such as found in Scandinavia and has been described by G. C. Homans. A possible date for the imposition of this regularity would be the years immediately after the widespread devastations in the north at the end of the 11th century.

The last decade has seen enormous advances in our understanding of the medieval village in archaeological terms and the question of the origin of present villages is receiving increasing attention from archaeologists, historians and geographers. In 1949 Professor Harry Thorpe drew attention to the large number of 'green villages' within co. Durham, that is to say village settlements incorporating within the structure of their plan an area of open grassy ground 'on which the inhabitants of the village have a customary right of playing lawful games' and more particularly of grazing certain beasts. As Thorpe pointed out in a later paper, such villages are by no means confined to the county, or even England, but have a wide distribution throughout Europe.

These plans are distinctive and this raises certain questions concerning their origin and, in particular, whether their regularity indicates a measure of purposeful planning. The difficulties raised by these questions were admirably summarized by Thorpe (1951, 179) when he wrote: 'Although we know that many of the sites of these villages were occupied in early Anglian times we cannot be certain that these primary settlements had a central green. If the green tradition were introduced later, a considerable amount of replanning of pre-existing villages is implied.

1 Addyman (1964) and Med. Archaeol., passim; Allerston (1970); Beresford and Hurst (1971); Beresford and St. Joseph (1958); Roberts (1970a, 1970b and 1971); Sheppard (1966); Thorpe (1951). For a brief review of some of the problems by L. A. S. Butler see Current Archaeol., no. 16 (Sept. 1969). For key to shortened references see Abbreviations, p. 55 f.
and it would appear difficult to find an adequate reason for such a drastic change, not only in Durham, but throughout the whole of the Lowland zone, where green villages of various forms can be found. In the light of more recent studies Thorpe's conclusions concerning the continuity of site cannot be uncritically accepted, but his paper raised questions which have yet to be satisfactorily answered. The study of settlement-morphology is beset with problems of interpretation; there are many pitfalls and few clear paths, but when used in combination with documentary and archaeological evidence plan-analysis is a valuable source of new data and new questions.

This paper, a statement of work in progress on the morphology of villages in co. Durham, involves two scales of investigation; one is concerned with the details of individual settlements, including their forms, the other with patterns of settlement viewed on a county scale. It offers some generalizations and hypotheses concerning forms rather than patterns of settlement. The need for such work is pressing; field-evidence is being destroyed and villages are rapidly changing their character as the development of motorways carries commuter populations into all but the most remote and most inhospitable rural areas.

MORPHOLOGY OF VILLAGES: SOME DEFINITIONS

Rural settlements reveal a surprising degree of morphological complexity, even within a single county, and few classifications are wholly satisfactory. Nevertheless, three basic categories of plan can usefully be recognized:

Street plans, where ribbons or rows of tofts (house-plots) are located along one or both sides of a street or long, narrow green;

Green plans, where the toft compartments or rows are located around the margins of, or as islands within, a spacious open green;

Agglomerated plans, where the toft compartments or rows line more than one street, with the streets lying at angles to one another.

Each category can be further divided into regular or irregular forms, and each plan-type can occur either singly or as a component of a complex plan-type. Regular forms can be defined as those where clear rows of tofts are present, or where some standard shape of toft is repeated, such as a crescent of wedge-shaped tofts around a circular green. All other forms are classed as irregular even where some regular features occur. Although subjective, this classification has proved useful in Yorkshire and Durham.

Turning from the plan-types to the structural components of each plan, every village comprises two groups of plan-elements: those in which all members of the

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3 The site changes found at Maxey (Addyman, 1964), to cite but one example, must inevitably raise questions concerning the stability of at least some village sites. Conzen (1968) has demonstrated the value of morphological studies in giving a 'clue to distinct stages in town growth of which a defective historical record may give no hint'.

4 A useful summary of the problems of classifying rural settlement-forms is to be found in C. T. Smith, An Historical Geography of Western Europe before 1800 (1967), ch. 5. The working classification outlined in the text is based upon discussions I have had with Dr. June Sheppard (University of London, Queen Mary College).
community have rights, i.e. common land and communal structures like the pinfold, and those in which usage rights are restricted to individuals, i.e. private land and buildings. Much of the common land consists of the routeways necessary for the movement of persons and animals, both within the settlement and leading out from it to its associated fields, meadows and pastures. The routeways that may be specifically distinguished include the village street, on to which the majority of the dwellings face; the back lane, which runs behind the house plots and often separates these sharply from the fields; and the cattle drift (or outgang), which characteristically takes the form of a funnel-shaped track widening away from the village and giving direct access to an area of common grazing. In one sense the village green itself may be regarded as a particularly spacious routeway, which, because it lay in the heart of the settlement, was in the past used not only for grazing but also as the site of such communal structures as the smithy, the pinfold, the bakehouse, the stocks and the village pond. It is frequently difficult to draw a precise distinction between a broad village street and a narrow village green. Greens, streets and lanes form a continuous nexus surrounding the privately-held land, often dividing the latter into island-like compartments.

The privately-held land comprises a number of separate tenurial units, each of which normally contains at least one dwelling and ancillary buildings. The churchyard with the church, and the hallgarth with the manor house may be regarded as special types of such units, present in some, but not all, villages. The individual tenurial plot was known as a ‘toft’ or ‘garth’ in medieval Durham and Yorkshire, and although in subsequent legal usage the term was restricted to the house site, while other associated enclosed plots were called ‘crofts’ the need for a term for the complete tenurial unit justifies a return to medieval usage, and the term ‘toft’ is here applied to the yards and garden land attached to each dwelling.  

**PLAN-TYPES IN COUNTY DURHAM**

A comparison with Yorkshire, one of the few areas where comparable work is in progress, shows that co. Durham is not notable for a great diversity of village forms, and this may well be a point of great significance when set against the peculiar administrative history of the land between Tyne and Tees. Nevertheless, as TABLE I and FIG. 19 show, it is possible to recognize eight basic types of plan. In the county there are about 181 rural clusters, ranging from small hamlets with sufficient homesteads to possess an observable form up to villages indistinguishable from small market-towns, while in addition about fifty-two deserted sites are known.

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5 The distinctive nature of these enclosures is made particularly clear by G. Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West* (1962), trans. C. Postan (1968), 6-11. Beresford and Hurst (1971), 129, make the distinction between toft (backyard) and croft (back-garden or paddock), but FIGS. 20 and 21 show the difficulties of consistent application. In the present context the important boundaries are tenurial, though it is recognized, of course, that an internal boundary of one period can become a tenurial boundary of another and vice versa.

6 TABLE I, to be discussed more fully below, is based upon data mapped in FIG. 19 and derived from the 1st editions of the 6-in. and 25-in. Ordnance Survey maps (1856-62), supplemented by estate maps, tithe maps and enclosure maps lodged in the Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic (Durham), Durham County Record Office, and (by kind permission of Lord Barnard) the Raby Estate Offices.
Two-row villages, comprising two rows of tofts facing each other across a street or green (e.g. Ferryhill, FIG. 20), account for some 60 per cent. of all the plan-types (deserted villages being excluded from the calculations as it is not always possible to determine the plan-type). The division between 'street' and 'street-green' types is necessarily subjective. The question of precisely what width of mud, stones and struggling grass separated a two-row street village from a two-row street-green village in a pre-tarmac era is difficult to answer, but the distinction is usually sharp enough to warrant the recognition of separate categories. These villages are rarely very long and normally comprise two compact rows of tofts, the total length of the green or street being of the order of 300–600 yd. (275–550 m.). Regular villages usually possess a clear, well-defined, straight or gently curving building-line, accordant depths of toft, rarely exceeding 150 yd. (137 m.), and widths of toft which occasionally appear to be multiples of a standard unit. Irregular villages lack such clear-cut building-lines; indeed buildings, frequently set at various angles to the street, are strung out along an irregularly-shaped street-space which, at each end, merges with former outgangs. The toft-patterns of these irregular plans are often markedly asymmetrical; on one side a series of very long tofts, in excess of 220 yd. (200 m.) can give an impression of marked regularity, while on the opposite side, the short tofts, below 150 yd. (137 m.) in depth, are frequently very irregular, with no consistency of size or shape (e.g. Cockfield, FIG. 20). Some seventeen villages in the county take this form. Closely allied to these two-row forms is a group of twenty-one one-row settlements, in effect lacking the completeness of the two-row types (e.g. Headlam, FIG. 20).

As has been remarked, the distinction between a small market-town and a
This Annual Report comes with Medieval Archaeology vol. XVI, publication of which should coincide more or less with the publication of Monograph 5 The Moated Sites of Yorkshire by Mrs J Le Patourel. Orders for the monograph should be sent to Mrs A Morley, 6 Church Grove, Little Chalfont, Bucks. The cost of the monograph will be £3.50 (£2.50 to subscribers to the series).

The annual conference for 1974 will be held in Southampton from 5-9 April. The subject will be 'The Trade of Southern England in the Middle Ages (with special reference to pottery)'.

The Council has decided to hold the annual conference for 1975 abroad, either in Denmark or Germany: enquiries are now in hand.

The annual general meeting will be held on 10 December 1973, when Mrs Charlotte Blindheim will lecture on aspects of the excavations at Kaupang.

Nominations for officers and members of the Council for the session 1974-5 should be submitted to the Secretary by first post on 1 October 1973.

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COUNTY DURHAM: THE MORPHOLOGY OF RURAL CLUSTERS

MAP SHOWING MORPHOLOGY OF SURVIVING RURAL CLUSTERS IN CO. DURHAM AND SITES OF DESERTED AND SHRUNKEN SETTLEMENTS

Note sharp distinction between the S. and E. and the N. and W. of county (see Roberts, 1970b, 233-8) and how the total known pattern indicates gaps needing further investigation. Settlements in S. and E. are very dense but many are less reliable and correlate with the major mapping grid. This map forms the basis for further study of the settlement system in the county (pp. 35, 38 f., 50, 54 f.).

The inset map attempts to identify ‘generations’ of settlements. Being based on an objective mapping grid, which slightly distorts some locations, it cannot be directly correlated with the main map (p. 39).

Counties of Settlements:
- Groups:
  - Urban settlement
  - Multiple-row settlement (complex)
  - Multiple-row settlement (simple)
  - Two-row regular street settlement
  - Two-row irregular street settlement
  - Winding street settlement
  - Irregular cluster without green
  - Irregular cluster with green
  - Settlements with long-tofts
  - Settlements with short-tofts
  - Deserted or shrunken villages
  - Linked form group

Symbols:
- Symbols (o and x) indicate less reliable information.

Fig. 19: Map showing morphology of surviving rural clusters in Co. Durham and sites of deserted and shrunken settlements. (If. Roberts, 1970b, 233-8) and how the total known pattern indicates gaps needing further investigation. Settlements in S. and E. are very dense, but not always regularly spaced, owing to the uneven distribution of arable, meadow and grazing land. This map forms the basis for further study of the settlement system in the county (pp. 35, 38 f., 50, 54 f.).
large village is often difficult to draw, and within the county some fifteen settlements have been classified as multiple-row clusters (e.g. Heighington, Fig. 20), while a further four (all two-row settlements) show signs of intensive plot-utilization, what Conzen in an urban context has termed 'burgage repletion', with cottages being packed in at the rear of the plot-dominants, often at right angles to the street. All these settlements possess large greens. In the multiple-row settlements of Wolviston, Aycliffe, Billingham, Easington, and Heighington (Pl. VII, A) four rows were arranged around roughly rectangular greens of the order of 100 by 150 yd. (90 by 137 m.), while at West Auckland and Staindrop street-greens of conventional shape are inflated to dimensions in excess of 500 by 100 yd. (450 by 90 m.). Clearly these complex settlements are more than mere agricultural centres. A number possessed market rights, while others were administrative foci for groups of manors.7

A final category of villages, agglomerations with or without greens, are by definition clusters which show few definable plan-structures, and they will not be discussed in this paper. It is, nevertheless, important to stress that this is not merely a residual group; the clustering is notable and it is generally possible to distinguish these from incomplete or partially-decayed versions of other plan-types. One such village is Evenwood (Fig. 20), an agglomeration with a green.

ORIGINS OF THE DURHAM PLAN-TYPES

The Durham plan-types have been identified on the basis of mid or early 19th-century maps, although sometimes 18th-century maps are available to carry the plans back in time. Indeed sufficient evidence exists to show that the varieties of plan-types that have been recognized were already present during the early decades of the 18th century. These maps document certain changes, notably the infilling of building-lines, and the enclosure of greens, either by subdividing the open area amongst those farms and cottages fronting directly on to it or by the piecemeal encroachment of buildings and gardens. In his conclusion Thorpe postulated great antiquity for the Durham village plans, but Beresford and Hurst, drawing upon archaeological evidence over a wide area, have strongly opted for the view that many green villages go back no earlier than the 13th century. This paper contends that a proportion of the Durham villages, particularly the more regular two-row examples, represent settlements re-established after the Harrying of the North in 1069–70 and that some, at least, were carefully-planned, regulated foundations. Unfortunately, direct documentary evidence is only rarely available and we can but express probabilities rather than certainties.

My argument is based upon a series of case-studies which vary in character and depth according to the documentary material available, and I attempt in Fig. 19 to provide a wider framework within which particular studies can be seen.

7 Heighington, Easington, Aycliffe and Billingham were administrative foci for groups of manors, Heighington, Billingham and Staindrop being 'shire' centres: Jolliffe (1926); Lapley (1905). [A 'shire' comprised a series of dependent village communities grouped together in a federal estate and owing rents and services to a central settlement or caput.]
FIG. 20

PLANS OF FIVE VILLAGES IN CO. DURHAM

showing a characteristic range of village patterns. Cockfield (pp. 36, 54); Evenwood (p. 38); Heighington (p. 38); Ferryhill (pp. 36, 46); Headlam (p. 36)
The map is in no sense complete and will require constant revision as new studies are made or new source-materials become available. It represents a useful tool, but there are hidden dangers, as my discussion will indicate.

Thorpe's conclusions on green villages raised important questions about possible links between settlement-generations and distinctive plan-types and the inset on Fig. 19 attempts to examine some of these relationships. In general most English villages existed by 1200 and, as place-name evidence is too coarse a criterion, the problem is to differentiate between 'generations' before this date. On the assumption that a settlement which pays an ancient form of rent is older than one which does not, the render of cornage has been used to identify the oldest generation of Durham villages. The antiquity of cornage was cogently argued by Jolliffe and the distribution of villages paying this ancient, possibly Celtic, render on horned beasts is striking and significant; they are concentrated in the south and east of the country, but absent from the north and west, a region which from the 12th century onwards has been the focus of colonizing activity and in practice very much a cattle-raising area. It has been argued elsewhere that this contrast is of ancient foundation and of fundamental importance in the historical geography of the county, the two areas evolving differing economic and social patterns throughout the middle ages. Furthermore, it must be noted that the group of bishopric vills focusing on Darlington pay no cornage, while the group focusing on Stockton are specifically excluded from payment. These circumstances clearly have implications which extend beyond the scope of the present discussion.8

The relationships which exist between Fig. 19 and its inset are analysed in Table 1. The clearest relationship is between cornage-paying settlements and regular plan-types, notably two-row regular green villages, multiple-row villages, and two-row irregular green villages. The first two categories account for 63 per cent. of all cornage-paying villages, and, if irregular two-row green villages are included, over 70 per cent. of all villages known to render cornage are accounted for.

There appears to be a degree of correlation between the presence of a regular plan and the 'early generation' of villages, but this relationship is by no means proved beyond doubt and could easily be transferred to the villages of the 'post-cornage' generation were more evidence available. Thorpe, however, does hint that the 'green tradition' may have been the result of replanning after settlements had been founded, although he found it difficult to account for such drastic

8 Jolliffe (1926); Lapsley (1905). Fig. 19, inset, based in particular upon Greenwell (1832, 1857 and 1872) and Lapsley (1905) supplemented by H. Hinde, Symeonis Dunelmensis i (Surtees Soc., LII, 1867) and A. Mawer, The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham (Cambridge, 1920), is an attempt to obtain a synoptic view of the county using the date of the earliest recorded documentary reference to each settlement. The cornage-paying bishopric vills are mapped from the Boldon Book, but for the estates of the cathedral priory a Terrar's Roll of 1504-5 appears to be the earliest surviving account to record the payment of cornage (Prior's Kitchen: Dean and Chapter Muniments). Data are absent for the non-ecclesiastical estates, but there are no reasons for assuming that the overall distribution would be altered. The map inevitably reflects both the character and spatial distribution of the documentation and the changing importance of individual places, rather than their actual date of foundation, but the two broad datum lines, the date 1200 and the payment of cornage, result in a pattern of spatial variations which are clearly related to basic differences of terrain (Roberts, 1970b). At the county scale the exercise seems warranted and at the lowest threshold of resolution the map suggests three broad settlement 'generations': pre-1200 paying cornage, pre-1200 paying no cornage, and post-1200.
Ancient enclosures

1805 enclosures

FIG. 21
PLANS OF FOUR VILLAGES IN CO. DURHAM
Kirk Merrington/Shelom (pp. 44 ff.); Middlestone (p. 46 ff.); Carlton (pp. 48 ff.);
Byers Green (pp. 41 ff.)
changes. With these problems in mind the argument must now turn to detailed case-studies.

I. BYERS GREEN

The village of Byers Green provides a useful beginning for the discussion. This settlement was much altered in the mid-19th century by the construction of close-packed terraced rows of miners' houses on the green, but before enclosure, as the Enclosure Award map of 1809 indicates (FIG. 21), it took the form of two N.-S. rows of cottages and farmsteads facing each other across an open green. Throughout much of its history the village has been in the hands of the bishops of Durham and is mentioned in their great medieval surveys. In 1183 (Boldon Book) 'the assart of Byres' was held by Ralf of Binchester for half a marc, but by 1381 the Hatfield Survey records a farm which seems to occupy the site of this assart, together with eight messuages and nine cottages; a village had come into being. A late origin for this settlement is reinforced by two other facts: first, the total absence of bondage land and associated labour services, paralleled by a complete emphasis on money rents; second, an absence of regular tenemental assessments, oxgangs or bovates, the carucate being by the 14th century a conventional way of assessing the demesne land. The holdings recorded in 1381 reveal a marked lack of regularity. Thus the messuage-holders' farms range in size from 9 to 67 acres, and the cottage-holders' tenements from 1½ rods to 12 acres, although these properties are often said to lie in diversis campis or in diversis locis, implying a form of subdivided field system. Nevertheless this village is significant in the present enquiry, for in 1381 many of the cottages and farms are described as lying on the E. side or the W. side of the village (ex parte orientali and ex parte occidentali), implying that the 1809 map contains within it a basic pattern which has been inherited from former centuries. It is to be regretted that such locational details occur in only this one entry of the Hatfield Survey.

Of particular importance for the study of Durham village plans is a rent schedule, in its present form drafted between 1424 and 1440, concerning a customary payment called 'gillycorn' rendered to the almoner of the cathedral priory. Both free and unfree tenures were involved and the document uses methods of assessment which caused its editor to assign it to the late 13th century, although a date as early as 1100 cannot be discounted. Evidence for the date is to be found in the fact that tenants of lands known to have been assarted from the waste after 1200 were specifically acquitted of payment, and this applies equally to whole villages and manors and to individual tenements. Gillycorn was a contribution towards the provision of alms by the monks of Durham and for present purposes the significant point is that the schedule frequently gives the location of the tenements in terms of the rows within which they lay, 'Northraw', 'Southraw', 'Eastraw' or 'Westraw'. Such details are given for only five villages, Billingham and Wolviston, which are clearly multiple-row settlements, and Ferryhill, Kirk

9 Greenwell (1852), 27 and 63, and id. (1857), 34 and 43. A copy of the Enclosure Award map of Byers Green is lodged in the Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic (Durham).

10 Fraser (1955), 35-60.
Merrington and Hett, two-row settlements. However, the *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis* and the *Inventarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, both of which appear to draw upon a lost survey made upon the orders of Prior Melsamby (1233-44), frequently cite locational descriptions of the same type, and in every known case they use the terms one could predict from the present orientation of the settlement. There is a strong presumption that these descriptions were incorporated in the Melsamby Book, perhaps in a manner comparable to those found in a rental of Guisborough Priory dating from about 1300.

This evidence securely carries some row-orientations back to about 1200, although unequivocal evidence exists for a total of only eighteen villages. Confirmation that we are in these cases dealing with plan-types which have persisted for eight centuries is particularly welcome. With three exceptions the villages documented all fall within the category of two-row regular green settlements and it is the repeated appearance of such settlements throughout the east and south of the county, the repetition of a common plan slightly adapted to local site-conditions, which stimulates questions concerning the possibility of deliberate planning. Furthermore, the use of these particular locational terms emphasizes the frequency of cardinal orientations in Durham village plans, a fact commented upon by Thorpe.

Strikingly similar village plans can be found on the continent, particularly in Germany and Scandinavia; studies in Denmark and Sweden by Hastrup and Göransson provide particularly close parallels with the Durham material. In Scandinavia such regular plans have been linked with regular fiscal arrangements and Göransson has argued that, in parts of Sweden, metrical relationships existed between the breadth of the toft, the fiscal assessment of the farm, and, ultimately, the disposition and size of the field strips. Current opinion holds that such arrangements were introduced into Scandinavia between the 11th and the 13th centuries (although views differ about the precise date), and that they took the form of the gradual elaboration of basically simple prototypes.

One of the more complex systems of village-regulation is known as ‘sundivision’ (*solskifte*), an arrangement by which the order of the tofts in the village, conventionally seen in terms of a clockwise pattern related to the supposed course of the sun, determined the order of the strips belonging to these tofts in the fields, and in such cases a cardinal orientation of the settlement was usual. Göransson has argued that these arrangements were introduced into Scandinavia from England during a period of close political, ecclesiastical and cultural contact between the two areas, particularly in the 10th to the 12th century, and that by the time it was well developed in Scandinavia it was already in full decay in England as a consequence of subdivision, transfer and consolidation of land. In his view its origin lies in the obscure organizational processes of the dark ages. One of the hall-marks of such regulated villages is a regular series of tofts. At Byers Green, in

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11 Greenwell (1872), introduction, i-v, and, for examples, Southwick, 16; Eden, 21; Hesleden, 23; Wolviston, 27; Billingham, 40; Benton, 30; Aycliffe, 57; Ferryhill, 64; Kirk Merrington, 68; Elvet (a borough), 73; Claypath (a borough), 76. See also Booth and Longstaffe (1889), 51 f., 61 f.

12 Brown (1894), 412-50.

VILLAGE PLANS IN COUNTY DURHAM

spite of the tenurial irregularity in 1381, FIG. 21 strongly suggests a proportional relationship between the tofts on the W. row, from north to south, in the ratios 2:1:2:2:1:1:3. Although land measures based upon rods of 18, 20 and 21 ft. are known to have been used in co. Durham, the measurements involved in this example seem to fall closely into units based on the standard or royal land rod of 16·5 ft. (5·03 m.), the total street frontage being 96 rods, or twelve eight-rod units. The W. row of Byers Green is particularly clear-cut, but the E. row has suffered considerable alteration, making even tolerably accurate measurements difficult. Furthermore the E. side of the village possesses long tofts, and it must be stressed that we are here dealing with a structural element which may not be contemporary with the W. row and is not necessarily subject to the same metrical arrangements.

The margin of error which can be tolerated in reconstructing such measurements is difficult to evaluate. It seems improbable that an actual rod of 16·5 ft. (5·03 m.) was used, and in practice a shorter rod, one-half or even one-quarter of this, would be more convenient. Even on flat ground, and if care were taken, an error could be expected to accumulate as the result of the repeated measurements; on sloping, uneven ground, or if the work were not done carefully, this error could be substantial when a line of 50 or 100 rods in length was being laid out. Furthermore it is well to recall that at a scale of 1:2,500 a normal engraved line on a map is about 2 ft. wide (0·6 m.) while the expansion or contraction of paper by no more than 1/10 in. (0·25 cm.) accounts for 20·8 ft. (6·3 m.) on the ground. Tithe and enclosure maps are rarely accurate enough for exact measurements to be derived from them, although it must be noted that they do tend to reinforce the argument for the regularity of toft-patterns. The earlier surveyors often regarded tofts as regular even when the clinical accuracy of the Ordnance Survey shows they are not. TABLE II (cf. FIG. 21) illustrates these points.

**TABLE II**

BYERS GREEN: WEST ROW (N.-S.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>G</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>260±</td>
<td>150±</td>
<td>285±</td>
<td>230±</td>
<td>135±</td>
<td>145±</td>
<td>440±</td>
<td>1,645 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>264±</td>
<td>132±</td>
<td>264±</td>
<td>264±</td>
<td>132±</td>
<td>144±</td>
<td>396±</td>
<td>1,584 ft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>288±</td>
<td>144±</td>
<td>288±</td>
<td>288±</td>
<td>144±</td>
<td>144±</td>
<td>432±</td>
<td>1,728 ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16·0</td>
<td>8·5</td>
<td>17·5</td>
<td>14·0</td>
<td>8·2</td>
<td>16·0</td>
<td>26·5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>18·0</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>+18</td>
<td>+21</td>
<td>-34</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+13</td>
<td>+44</td>
<td>+61 ft.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Measurements derived from the Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map (sheet xxxiv/8, county series).
2. 'Predicted' measurements if a 16·5-ft. rod was used in the ratio 1 unit = 8 by 16·5 (cf. line 6 below).
3. 'Predicted' measurements if an 18-ft. rod were used, i.e. 1 unit = 8 by 18.
4. Measurements in line 1 divided by 16·5 ft.
5. Measurements derived from the enclosure map of 1809 divided by 16·5 ft.
6. Suggested pattern of regularity in terms of 8 by 16·5 ft. units, in all 8 by 16·5 ft. by 12, i.e. 96 by 16·5 ft.
7. Degree of variation between lines 2 and 1 in feet.
Toft A is markedly larger than expected, but clearly had opportunities for encroachment southwards which were denied all other tofts, even toft G, which was bounded on its N. side by a roadway. It seems reasonable to suggest that E and D could very well represent a 4 by 8 by 16·5 ft. toft which has been subdivided rather unevenly.\(^{14}\)

II. THE MERRINGTONS

The village of Kirk Merrington is a settlement described in the gillycorn schedule of 1424-40 (p. 41) and, while trying to locate a 'lost' village of 'Shelom', I noted that this settlement was in fact part of Kirk Merrington and this provided the key for seeing regularity in the village plan in Fig. 21. The relevant portion of the 1424 schedule is:

> 'In the vill of Est Meryngton [Kirk Merrington] the Commoner of Durham [a minor monastic official] freely holds 2 messuages and 1 carucate of land, containing 80 acres, and renders yearly 1 thrave [a measure of grain]. Item, John Jakson of Elstob freely holds there 1 message on the Southraw and 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) bovates, containing 37\(\frac{1}{2}\) acres, called Cukeland and he renders yearly 15 sheaves. Item, Richard Heghyntgon freely holds there 1 message on the Northraw and 3 bovates, containing 45 acres, and renders 18 sheaves. Item, there is 1 message there by the vicar's house and 3 bovates of land, containing 45 acres, called Massamland, and lying among the 24 bovates of Shelam, and it renders 18 sheaves.

> In the vill of Shelam ['Shelom'] John Wyndilson freely holds 1 messuage on the Westraw at the end of the village and 2 bovates, containing 30 acres, and renders yearly a half-thrave. Item, the same John freely holds there 1 toft and 1 bovate in exchange for land in Aycliffe, and renders nothing. Item, Robert Denome holds there 1 messuage and 2 bovates, containing 30 acres, and renders yearly a half-thrave. Item, in the vill of Shelam there are 8 tofts and crofts and 16 bovates of bondland, each of which bovates contains 15 acres and all render similarly by the year 8 thraves.'\(^{15}\)

A number of points may be extracted from this account. First, the corres-

\(^{14}\) A rod of 16·5 ft. has been selected because it is felt that over seven tofts the accumulated errors would be positive rather than negative. The total variation between the actual measurements (Table II, line 1) and the 'predicted' measurements (line 2) is about 61 ft.; over a distance covering 96 rod-units four have been gained, an error of nearly 4 per cent, not an intolerable discrepancy. The presence of modern buildings makes it impossible to check these measurements in the field. For a modern example of such imposed 'regularity', based upon a 24-fathom rope 'or simply by 24 men standing, arms outstretched, fingertip to fingertip', see J. M. Hunter, 'Cocoa migration and patterns of landownership in the Densu valley near Suhum, Ghana', Trans. Inst. Brit. Geographers, xxiii (1963), 61-87.

\(^{15}\) A number of pieces of evidence suggest that the northern land-rod was longer than the royal or statute rod, pole or perch of 16·5 ft. (5·03 m.). F. W. Maitland in Domesday Book and Beyond (1960 reprint), discussing land measures in the first section of his essay on 'The Hide', notes that in the north the rod can be as long as 24 ft. In the copy of Bishop Hatfield's Survey in the Public Record Office (P.R.O. S.C.12 Porf. 21, no. 26, 143) a note states that a rod is 21 ft. long (6·4 m.) and the context suggests that this is a Durham measure. In the Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis (Greenwell, 1872) the editor has appended various documents which sometimes state quite precisely the length of the land rod used. This is usually either the 18-ft. (5·5-m.) rod (pp. 59, 154, 169) or the 20-ft. (6·09-m.) rod (pp. 99, 111, 173), although there appears to be one reference to the episcopal perch of 21 ft. (p. 24).

Fraser (1955), 58 f.
pondence between the orientations described in the document and the street axes in FIG. 21 is clear. Second, in both villages 15-acre bovates were normal. Thirdly, 'Shelom' appears to have been more 'regular', with its eight servile tofts and crofts and three other holdings, and indeed one can argue that this village at some stage possessed only ten holdings, for the single bovate not paying gillycorn is best viewed as a late-comer. Finally, a tenurial distinction between Kirk Merrington and 'Shelom' may be noted, the former being a freehold vill, while the latter was almost entirely a servile vill; the very name appears to mean 'at the huts' as distinct from the patronymic form found in the adjacent settlement. The economic dependency of 'Shelom' is clear, a point reinforced by the fact that at least some of the holdings were intermixed, and separate field-systems are to be doubted.

'Shelom' was considered to be a vill assessed at 24 bovates, but three of these were attached to a toft which lay in Kirk Merrington, while one bovate was not assessed for gillycorn; in fact the settlement seems to have been a 20-bovate vill, with 16 of the bovates in bond hands, and 4 of the bovates in free tenure. A close examination of the property boundaries on the tithe map and the earlier editions of the Ordnance Survey maps revealed that the village street of 'Shelom' was 800 ft. long, and some of the toft divisions visible on 19th-century maps hint at multiples of 20 ft. as the basis for regulation. The 20-ft. rod is known to have been in use on the priory estates, and FIG. 21 contains a reconstruction of the regulated pattern which lies beneath the surviving boundaries, a pattern which conforms with the details of the fiscal assessment. Each toft had a 2-bovate farm associated with it, and the street frontage was measured at a rate of four 20-ft. rods per bovate, so that each toft was 160 ft. (8 by 20 ft. wide). It can be seen that while modern property boundaries conform in only two cases, several boundaries may reasonably be interpreted as proportional subdivisions of the original units. The toft depth was 120 ft. (6 by 20 ft.) and the site of the village occupied an elongated hollow in the dip slope of the Magnesian limestone; no doubt the pond was a significant factor in selecting this site, but it must be noted that the place-name 'Shelom' may well relate to an unregulated antecedent of the settlement present in about 1200, reconstructed in FIG. 21. The 'extra' bovate may have possessed a toft at the N. end of the village, a precursor of the tight cluster of houses and cottages which were to spring up between the two nuclei.

Kirk Merrington presents further problems. Turning first to 'Northraw', one messuage pertaining to 3 bovates of land is known to have lain there, and as the messuage associated with 'Massamland' lay next to the vicar's house it may be

16 The gillycorn schedule gives the size of the bovate in a number of villages: 12 acres, East Rainton, 'West Merrington' (Westerton); 16 acres, Moorlesley; 15 acres, Burdon, Bampton, Ferryhill, Kirk Merrington, 'Shelom', Hett; 24 acres, Aycliffe. This list may be compared with the bovate sizes found both in the Boldon Book (Greenwell, 1852) and Bishop Hatfield's Survey (Greenwell, 1857), where the most usual size is 12 or 15 acres, but figures as low as 8 and as high as 20 acres occur.

17 'Shelom' would appear to be derived from the O.E. *scelum, the dative plural of sceal, meaning 'at the huts'. I am indebted to my colleague Mr. V. Watts for his comments on this possible etymology. 'Merrington' of course presents all the problems associated with a name of this category.

18 Booth and Longstaff (1889), 10, 18, 121. The splitting of former 'whole' tofts can be demonstrated from a series of priory rentals falling between 1332 and 1347; two of the eight tofts belonging to the servile tenants in 'Shelom' were already subdivided into two (Prior's Kitchen, Durham: Dean and Chapter Muniments, Bursar's Rentals). The same period saw an increase in the number of cottage holdings.
presumed that it also lay on ‘Northraw’. The vicarage toft clearly lay adjacent to the church and is indicated at this location both on the tithe map and on the earliest editions of the Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map. As Fig. 21 shows, the toft abutting this to the west has a frontage of 240 ft. (12 by 20 ft.) and a depth of 240 ft.; this frontage, corresponding to 3 bovates at a rate of 4 by 20 ft. per bovate, must surely be the toft attached to ‘Massamland’. The next toft, however, is only 190 ft. wide, not 240 ft., as would be expected for a 3-bovate toft; this short measure is surprising, but an examination of both the map and the ground suggests the presence of an ancient routeway up the escarpment to the north, and the additional 50 ft. would have necessitated an awkward diversion of this road. There are no grounds for assuming that the two tofts in ‘Northraw’ were necessarily contemporary and it is worth noting that 190 ft. is very close to the 198 ft. required if a 16·5-ft. rod were used at a later stage in the history of the vill (4 by 16·5 ft. by 3, for 3 bovates).

‘Southraw’ in Kirk Merrington presents difficulties which have so far proved insoluble. It is a reasonable assumption that the two messuages belonging to the Commoner of Durham occupied the site of the ‘Hall Garths’, marked on mid 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps; these are known to have comprised one messuage with 4 bovates attached (implying a frontage of 16 by 20 ft.) and one messuage with 20 acres (not a bovated holding), while ‘Cukeland’ accounted for a further 2½-bovate messuage, which should have possessed a frontage of 200 ft. (2½ by 4 by 20 ft.). There is in fact ample room for these tofts along ‘Southraw’, but the correspondence between the documents and the boundaries on the ground is insufficiently close to warrant a reconstruction.

There emerges from what has been said a remarkable picture of a village in about 1200, comprising two distinct structural complexes. It can reasonably be argued that the ground between them was originally open, except perhaps for a smithy. A comparison between the gillycorn schedule and the early 14th-century rentals of the priory estates strongly suggests that the 13th century saw the addition of many new cottage holdings to the settlement, whose tofts can be viewed as the antecedents of the structures between the two villages seen in Fig. 21. In the context of this evidence for carefully measured plans it comes as no surprise to find amongst a group of charters relating to Kirk Merrington one which records the transfer of one bovate of land propinquorem solem, an expression taken by Göransson to be a hallmark of solskifte.19

The problems involved in the recognition and reconstruction of regulated patterns of this kind are well illustrated by the remaining villages of Kirk Merrington parish. Ferryhill, a large very regular two-row green village, presents insuperable difficulties because of its large size and the complexity of the toft-patterns present in 1838 (Fig. 20). Middlestone (‘Middle Merrington’, Fig. 21) seems to have suffered a major reorganization which makes the identification of any surviving traces of the earlier pattern impossible. While the 1424 schedule records the presence of 12 bondages, each of 2 bovates, by the early 16th century the old tenements had clearly been amalgamated, regrouped and allotted to lessees in

19 Prior’s Kitchen, Durham: Dean and Chapter Muniments, Speciales, 2a 13e, no. 8.
blocks of equal size, and it is surely no accident that there are seven large tofts and one small one clearly visible in the structure of the present village and seven tenants held the land in 1539. Nevertheless, this village is remarkable because an air-photograph (PL VII, B) reveals the surviving traces of the older plan beneath the present tofts (FIG. 21), so that Middlestone before the 16th century can be seen as a very regular two-row green village with a pattern of tofts according remarkably closely with those predictable for a 24-bovate village (12 bondages, each of 2 bovates), where a ratio of four 20-ft. rods of frontage per bovate was used. Before amalgamation in the early 16th century the original tofts had suffered subdivision, and it must be appreciated that these two processes, amalgamation and subdivision, are in constant operation, with each generation adapting the village plan it inherits to meet new demands and new pressures.

In his discussion of village plans and planning Homans made what he termed a 'properly guarded' statement when he said that 'in certain English villages of the thirteenth century the existence of the debris of a scheme resembling in some respects the Scandinavian solskifte may be inferred from the phrases of charters and final concords'.

It is pure chance whether or not a charter is cast in a form which reveals the underlying regularity of a village and, even where documentary evidence is available, field evidence may be absent. In the early 13th century Durham Cathedral priory received a grant of land in Hulam, comprising 'xij aeras terre in villa de Holum, in xij culturis meis in eadem villa, in quibus praedictas xij jam praedictis monachis assignavi, scilicet j acrem propinquiorem adversus solem in qualibet cultura, cum tofto, quod fuit Torkilli, quod habet viij rodas in latitudine et vij rodas et dimidiam in longitudine'. This holding is later described as a single bovate: the regular field-structure suggested by this document is remarkable, and the inclusion of precise measurements of toft would seem to imply a linkage between toft-frontage and fiscal tenements. At a later stage in its history Hulam was deserted. It has recently been deep-ploughed, but air-photographs reveal no patterns which can be related to the early regularity, although shrinkage had clearly occurred before it was finally deserted. In an adjacent village, Eden, also recently ploughed, the priory was granted 'dimidiament partem tocius terrae quam habui in villa de Edene, scilicet, ubique partem propinquiorem soli', while a later charter refers to 'medietatem tocius tofti versus borialem in villa de Edene, et unam dimidiam bovatum terre in eadem villa'. These references do not prove the presence of regulation, but the use of the term propinquiorem soli, the hint of a cardinally orientated village and the proportional division of both lands and toft combine to suggest that it was probably present.

These examples provide grounds for suggesting that true regulation was present in at least some Durham villages providing a metrical relationship between toft-frontage (and possibly total street-frontage), fiscal tenements, and perhaps

10 Greenwell (1872), 302-27: the rental of Robert Bennett, bursar, for 1539.
11 Homans (1960), 100.
12 Greenwell (1872), 22, 135.
13 Ibid., 132, 134, 135. Feet of Fines, Northumberland and Durham (Northumberland and Durham Record Society, x, 1931), contains a number of entries incorporating the expressions 'towards the sun' (propinquiorem solem, etc.), and 'towards the shadow' (propinquiorem umbra, etc.). See Göransson (1961), 83, note 27, for a comprehensive list of expressions indicating the possible presence of solskifte.
field-layout. There are of course no grounds for arguing that regulation was present in every Durham village with a regular plan-type, and still less for arguing that, at any one date, villages were all in the same stage of development. It is significant that the references indicating regulation in the Durham documents do not increase in number as the 13th century passes; indeed the reverse occurs. It is probable, as Homans argued, that the arrangements were already in decay when first documented; they belong to an earlier phase of development.

III. CARLTON AND MIDDRIEDE

The village of Carlton (PL. VIII, A; FIG. 21) provides an excellent example of a regular two-row green village for which Boldon Book reveals a remarkable regularity of tenemental structure in 1183. Some twenty-three farmers (\textit{firmarii}) held 46 bovates; a further four persons held 10 bovates between them, and William son of Orm held, probably by drengage, 1 carucate. This totalled 56 bovates or 7 carucates, plus William's carucate, making a total of 8 carucates.\textsuperscript{5} Such regularity is clearly artificial and it is logical to seek a link between these regular fiscal tenements and the regular plan. There are grounds for arguing the persistence of this tenemental structure between 1183 and the early 17th century, because in the Hatfield Survey of 1381 and documents of the early 17th century the 64 bovates can be accounted for. Piecemeal enclosure during the 17th century caused the old assessments gradually to be abandoned, and in the Halmote court entries the bovates were gradually replaced by named, allotted parcels whose limits are traceable on the tithe map.

In view of this stability and the evidence for the long survival of row-structures in other Durham villages, it is reasonable to argue that the basic layout of Carlton is derived from two rows present in the late 12th century, and the frontages of the present village may well relate to the 64 bovates of 1183. Certain 17th-century Halmote court entries do indeed hint at a relationship between tofts and fiscal assessments in terms of 2 by 21 ft. of frontage (two bishopric rods) to each bovate. Applying this to the plan (FIG. 21), the N. row accounts for some 35 bovates (35 by 2 by 21 ft. = 1,470 ft.) and the S. row 33 bovates (33 by 2 by 21 ft. = 1,386 ft.), in all 68 bovates: the length of the row-structures is securely demarcated by an ancient boundary at the W. end and road exits at the E. end.\textsuperscript{5} The 'extra' 4 bovates or 168 ft. of street-frontage can be accounted for in two ways: either the drengage may have possessed some measure of preferential rating, with each bovate having 3 by 21 ft. of frontage (i.e. the difference between 3 by 21 ft. by 8 and 2 by 21 ft. by 8 being exactly 168 ft.), or the westernmost toft of the N. row, some 230 ft. wide today, and in 1838 known as 'The Green', may incorporate a triangular area originally excluded from the measured street-frontage together

\textsuperscript{5} Greenwell (1852), 15 and 53; Greenwell (1857), 177 f.; Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic (Durham): Halmote Court Rentals; box 9, bundles 6-7 (1618 no. 194784); Ritchie's card index to the Halmote Court books; O.S. 25-in. Halmote Court series, L 6; Carlton tithe map, 22 May 1840.

\textsuperscript{5} The western boundary extends as an almost continuous hedge-line to enclose an oval area of about 80 acres. Significant breaks and irregularities occur where the roads enter this enclosure. It is tempting to compare this feature with that found by June Sheppard at Wheldrake, Yorks., E.R. (Sheppard, 1966) and ascribed by her to the 11th century; this was, however, 450 acres in extent.
with a severed portion of the original westernmost toft (i.e. 168 ft. + 62 or 63 ft.). Air-photographs certainly show traces of what could be a former toft-boundary at the appropriate location. Conclusive proof is unobtainable, but if no link exists, the chain of coincidences is indeed remarkable, and in my view a relationship between the total street-frontage of Carlton and the 12th-century fiscal assessment of 8 carucates seems probable.

This conclusion led logically to an attempt to reconstruct the 12th-century village. As Table III suggests, the basic building blocks, the 2-bovate tenements,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE III</th>
<th>CARLTON AND MIDDRIEDE: PATTERNS OF FISCAL TENEMENTS FROM 1183 TO THE EARLY 17TH CENTURY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1183</td>
<td>1381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drenage</td>
<td>Drenage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 carucate</td>
<td>4 bov. + 4 bov.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firmars</td>
<td>Bondages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 firmars</td>
<td>2 bov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>hold 46 bov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(23 messuages</td>
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<td>each with 2</td>
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<td>bov. or some</td>
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<td>of this pattern)</td>
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<td>4 bov.</td>
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<td>2 bov.</td>
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<td>2 bov.</td>
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<td>2 bov.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64 bovates</td>
<td>64 bovates</td>
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</table>

had been regrouped in varying ways between 1183 and 1618, but a card-index of all Halmote entries between 1600 and 1840 made it theoretically possible to take farmholding-toft relationships shown on the tithe map and project them back to 1600 and then, knowing the fiscal assessments recorded in 1618, reconstruct earlier patterns. Nevertheless, in practice it has proved impossible to produce any coherent reconstruction, in spite of the exceptionally-detailed data, and similar attempts in Middridge, another very regular two-row green village (Table III) have also failed to reach any conclusion. Further study in Carlton showed that in 1397–8 some 24 bovates of land had gone to waste and lay extra tenuram, while in
1412-13 rent was owing for 12½ messuages and 25 bovates which some time previously had been demised to one man for twelve years. The significant ‘regularity’ of these figures may be noted. The scribe was clearly thinking in terms of 2 bovates to each messuage, but these entries do not necessarily mean the complete physical destruction of a portion of the village, for even through a period of dereliction old boundaries tend to persist and are reused when new development takes place.

It is hoped that further work will produce a fuller understanding of the links between the tenemental pattern and reality. But how do these negative results relate to conclusions reached above concerning the stability of row-structures? It is difficult to escape the conclusion that a fundamental difference exists between the ‘reality’ of the administrative documents and the ‘reality’ of the landscape and the patterns of landholding which evolved. Thus the bovated tenements recorded in the early 17th century may be little more than cultural fossils and bear only a tenuous relationship to the working farms. The failure to create a satisfactory reconstruction using the toft-boundaries shown on late maps, in spite of the relative wealth of evidence available, suggests that toft-patterns have changed considerably. This conclusion is in accord with the archaeological evidence cited by Beresford and Hurst, but these changes, in some Durham villages, seem to have taken place within the stable basic framework of the row-structures. On the other hand, if the reconstructions in Kirk Merrington and Middlestone are valid, traces of late 12th-century toft-patterns can at times survive many vicissitudes, a conclusion in accord with June Sheppard’s reconstruction of 11th-century Wheldrake. Perhaps the most satisfactory approach is to talk in terms of conditions of stability or instability. Both can affect one village, but it may, on a wider scale, be possible to think in terms of stable and unstable villages, and even stable and unstable regions.

Two points however, must be stressed. First, there is at the moment almost no information from elsewhere with which to compare this Durham material, and the peculiar nature of the land between the Tyne and the Tees must never be forgotten. The steward of Bishop Antony Bek claimed in 1302 that ‘there are two Kings in England, namely the Lord King of England wearing a crown in sign of his regality, and the Lord Bishop of Durham wearing a mitre in place of a crown in sign of his regality in the diocese of Durham’. There are other views, but this claim serves to emphasize the distinctiveness of the bishopric and the wide powers of its ecclesiastical rulers. Second, studies within Durham are necessarily biased towards the rich documentation of two great estates, those of the bishop and the cathedral priory. FIG. 19 incorporates all villages, ecclesiastical and secular, large and small, and preliminary analyses of possible links between plan-types and estate-patterns fail to reveal any significant contrasts between those on the ecclesiastical and those on the lay estates. Thus on both the bishopric and the Neville lands two-row villages with greens constitute 59–60 per cent. of the total numbers. It is possible, however, that the distribution of plan-types may be meaningful in terms

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26 Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic (Durham): Halmote Collector’s Account Rolls, nos. 188357 (1397–8), 188799 (1412–13). The rents for the drengages appear on the Halmote Coroner’s Account Rolls, e.g. 188879 (c. 1415), where the carucate (8 bovates) is accounted for.
of the internal arrangements of each estate, and may reflect chronological, social and functional variations between the component members.\textsuperscript{27}

One example drawn from this case-study of Carlton will illustrate this point. The \textit{firmarii} (farmers) present in that village in 1163 represent an interesting class of tenant; broadly they were villeins, but they owed none of the heavy week work. Lapsley argued that villages containing \textit{firmarii} were 'relatively new communities, allowed or encouraged by the Bishop to grow up on his demesne land' and suggested that 'where farmers occur in connexion with villeins we discern something that resembled rather an offshoot from an older vill than the creation of a new one'.\textsuperscript{28} Significantly, all of the final category of settlements, namely Sedgefield, Norton, Stockton, Darlington, Blackwell, and Cockerton, achieved places in the settlement-hierarchy above the level of the average village. All were in effect multiple-row settlements and two obtained borough status.\textsuperscript{29}

If Carlton were a newly-founded vill, it would explain the tenemental regularity. However, as Finberg has shown, the name Carlton was usually applied to a 'village on an estate which includes more than one unit of settlement' and the 'dues and services of its husbandmen are vital to the economy of the estate as a whole'.\textsuperscript{30} Carlton was closely related to Stockton but it is clear that its services could not have been 'vital to the estate as a whole'. The dilemma is resolved if Carlton were refounded following some catastrophe such as devastation, that 'ingredient of no mean importance in the life of England during the earlier Middle Ages'.\textsuperscript{31}

Here it is worth recalling Symeon of Durham's description of the Harrying of the North by William the Conqueror's armies in the years 1068–70:

'In consequence of the Normans having plundered England—in the preceding year [A.D. 1068] Northumbria and some other provinces, but in the present and following year [A.D. 1069, 1070] almost the whole realm, yet principally Northumbria and the adjacent provinces—so great a famine prevailed that men, compelled by hunger, devoured human flesh, that of horses, dogs and cats, and whatever custom abhors ................. Meanwhile, the land being thus deprived of anyone to cultivate it for nine years, an extensive solitude prevailed all round. There was no village inhabited between York and Durham; they became lurking places for wild beasts and robbers, and were a great dread to travellers.'\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{27} Lapsley (1905) and Jolliffe (1926) provide important clues to this, but see also G.R.J. Jones, 'The multiple estate as a model framework for tracing early stages in the evolution of rural settlement' in \textit{L'Habitat et les paysages ruraux d'Europe}, Les Congrès et Colloques de l'Université de Liège, LVIII (1971), 251–67. The historical context for co. Durham is summarized in J. C. Dewdney (ed.), \textit{Durham County and City with Teesside} (British Assoc. for the Adv. of Sci., Durham, 1971), pt. 3.

\textsuperscript{28} Lapsley (1905), 261–2.

\textsuperscript{29} It is significant that most urban foundations in Durham, established in either the 12th or the 13th century, are two-row plan-types (notably Elvet, Gilsegate, Gateshead and Stockton) or multiple-row structures (Sunderland, Bishop Auckland and Darlington). Bishop Auckland and Darlington are clearly divided into (a) a multiple-row plan-component—the borough, focusing on the open market-place, and virtually indistinguishable from a green village, and (b) a two-row plan-component—the agricultural village, in each case known as 'Bondgate'. See M. W. Beresford, \textit{New Towns of the Middle Ages} (1967), 430–2; for recent comment, H. P. R. Finberg, \textit{Lucerna} (1964), 144–60, esp. 159.

\textsuperscript{30} Lapsley, (1905), 266. See also H. C. Darby, \textit{A Historical Geography of England before 1800} (1951), 166–78.

\textsuperscript{31} J. A. Stevenson, 'Symeon of Durham' in \textit{Church Historians of England} (1885), m, pt. 2, 551. I am indebted to Mr. Edwin Millar for this reference.
This account could be dismissed as exaggeration, but the testimony of Domesday Book in the North Riding of Yorkshire is impressive, for one half of all recorded settlements contain waste. The royal troops were scarcely withdrawn when Malcolm, king of Scotland, penetrated into Durham at the head of a marauding army, while in 1080, following the slaying of Walcher, bishop of Durham, in Gateshead, the area was again ravaged by Norman armies. It is perhaps easy to overemphasize the importance of these events, but in these devastations, accompanied no doubt by the burning of villages and the slaughtering of plough-beasts, we see one context within which to view the creation of refounded, ordered settlements, particularly on the larger ecclesiastical estates. Here is one adequate reason for drastic changes in village morphology. Wastings provided opportunities for landlords to reorganize, replan and perhaps regulate. It was natural that given such an opportunity it was the areas which were the most prosperous, the corn- and cattle-rich south and east of the county, areas containing an early generation of cornage-paying vills, which were first to be revitalized and restored to production. In this conclusion there is an explanation both of the anomalous situation in Carlton and of the fact that the cornage-paying villages tend to possess the most regular plans.

The bishop's village of Middridge (Table III and Pl. VIII, B) is only one half the size of Carlton, but is very similar in plan and in 1183 possessed a similar tenurial structure. This village was part of the ancient estate of Heighingtonshire and the villein services were important for the working of the home farms. It is probably significant that, although neither village contains demesne land, both possess a dominant tenement and, although neither is described as a drengage in 1183, the Hatfield Survey makes clear that the Carlton holding was of this status, while the services rendered by the Middridge carucate are identical with those attached to drengages elsewhere on the estates.

A comparison between the known drengages on the bishopric estates and village plan-types suggests two linkages, first, with two-row plan arrangements, frequently very regular ones, and second, with deserted villages. In the former the exceptionally large holdings are best seen as a reward offered to a tenant acting in an organizing capacity on the bishop's behalf, while in the latter the settlements, usually described as vills, are rarely more than a single farm today, frequently with signs of several destroyed structures near by. An element of choice may have been present, underlined by one entry in Boldon Book, where we learn that 'Guy of Redworth holds a new vill near Thickley in exchange for

33 The lack of documentary evidence between the wasting and the early 13th century tends to exclude the possibility of documenting the process of regulation, but two pieces of evidence may be relevant. In Darlington Boldon Book records the presence of 48 oxgangs, which 'as well of the old villeinage as of the new, the villeins hold, and render etc.,' (xlviij bovatae, quas, tam de vteri villinagio quam de nvo, quas villani tenent, et reddunt etc.). This may well refer to the reorganization necessitated by the founding of the new borough, and the relocation of the servile population in the regular two-row green village of Bondgate near by; cf. Greenwell (1852), 16 and 54. Greenwell (1872, 119) prints a document concerning the building of South Shields (in 1235 occupied by a significantly regular number of tenants—24) in which it is recognized that before 1235 there was a village at that place. Several interpretations are possible, but as Shields was sundered from Westoe at a late date, it may be that this is a reference to the replacement of an older, perhaps less permanent settlement, by a regulated village. Unfortunately all the maps available fail to show the area free of industrial accretions.
Redworth (a village successfully developed and in the hands of sixteen firmarii) and renders one mark and finds 12 men one day or one man 12 days\(^{34}\) in autumn for mowing, and ploughs one day and works at the milldam and goes on the bishop's errands, and carts wine with four oxen'. A close examination of Boldon Book shows many inconsistencies. The figures reveal no universal pattern of fiscal regularity; rather we are seeing a pattern recorded which, while it contains frequent indications of intentional tenemental regularity, is at once in process of mutating and fossilizing; mutating as new land is added, as new vills are founded, and as small established settlements grow to achieve independent identity, but fossilizing because the very act of recording the situation in 1183 ensured the permanent preservation of an essentially ephemeral set of circumstances.\(^{35}\)

In Scandinavia it is recognized that regulated villages were sometimes refounded on fresh sites, and from several Durham parishes, notably Middridge, Cowpen Bewley (PL. VIII, c) and Bolam, 'Old Town' sites are known, set amid the field-lands of the present regular two-row green villages. This early generation of deserted villages offers exciting possibilities for further study, for in the process of village-regulation can be seen the reasons for fundamental changes of site while the name, the fields and traditional territorial limits of the older settlement are still preserved. Furthermore, it may be that a process of 'settlement-balling' has taken place in some areas, with smaller villages being regrouped at one centre. In the gillycorn schedule the parish of Aycliffe, focusing upon a multiple-row village with a large green, contained the villages of Newton Ketton, Chilton, Woodham and the hamlet of Newhouses. The entry for Newton Ketton is revealing: 'In the vill of Newton Ketton anciently there were 16 bondages, as is shown by the feodary of Thomas the prior [de Melsamby, 1233-44], and all used to render yearly 8 thraves.' The village had suffered depopulation between 1235, the date of the earlier feodary (now lost), and the early 15th century. The village of Woodham has also disappeared, possibly about the same time, for the entry in the schedule is incomplete, while Chilton shows signs of shrinkage on air-photographs, and Newhouses cannot at present be located. It is tempting to suggest that the folk from these destroyed settlements were concentrated in Aycliffe.\(^{36}\)

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34 My italics [B.K.R.].
35 The logical extension of these remarks is that drengs were similar in function to the 'locators' of the continent. This may well be so, and I intend to discuss this material in another paper. Drengs and drengage are discussed at length by Lapsley (1905) and Jolliffe (1926) and a comparison in Lapsley (1905) of West Auckland, Carlton, Houghton le Skerne, Norton, Oxenhall and Whessoe, with Wincheste, Bafferton, Butterwick, Herrington, Hutton Henry, Sheraton, Urpeth and Great Usworth reveals significant contrasts between vills with a drengage holding and vills with a dreng. This, in my view, reflects a chronological as well as a tenurial distinction. Of these fourteen vills, eight are two-row regular settlements, usually with a green, while six are deserted villages or possible deserted villages (i.e. where there are no earthworks and the documentation is ambiguous). Lapsley (1905), 321-6, in a critical evaluation of Boldon Book, shows the way in which attempts to incorporate changes after 1183 have distorted the texts we now have.
36 The fields known as 'Old Town', Middridge, are shown on the 1st ed. of the O.S. 6-in. map (sheet xlii) and the site is mentioned in a note appended to the Hatfield Survey of 1381 (Greenwell (1857), 20). The field-names 'Old Bolam' and 'Tofts' near the township boundary of Bolam are mentioned by V. Chapman in 'The inclosures and village of Bolam', Trans Archit. and Archaeol. Soc. Durham and Northumberland, 11 (1970), 89-100. Similar sites have been detected on tithe maps in the Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatie (Durham) in Cowpen Bewley and Elswick, with possible examples in Burdon and Elswick. All these sites await detailed field-investigation and are shown in fig. 19 as 'Old Town' sites, or where 'garths' and 'tofts' (in the plural) occur as field-names away from an existing village.
The question of linkages between fiscal tenements and reality carries the argument into deep waters, and it is inevitable that this preliminary statement about Durham plan-types raises more questions than it answers, particularly as only a limited range of plan-types and specific examples can be discussed in detail. One note of caution must be entered: the Harrying of the North of 1068–70 was but one episode, an important episode, but such devastations were a permanent feature of life in the north until the borders became quiet after the Act of Union, and the process of village regularization and regulation may have extended for a considerable time both before and after 1068–70. The antecedents of the regular two-row and multiple-row plan-types must lie in earlier forms and it is pertinent to ask if the ‘generation’ of settlements reorganized after the Harrying represents the earliest group of organized villages. One group of plan-types may be significant in this context, irregular two-row villages with long tofts. None of these is known to pay cornage, and surviving examples are concentrated in the Pennine foothills and dales (FIG. 19). Using the datum line of 1183 there are grounds for suggesting that villages of this type continued to be established up to the 1st half of the 13th century; indeed Byers Green was one such. However, a close examination of those dales villages well established by 1183—Stanhope, Wolsingham, and Fossterley, and probably Middleton and Eggleston in Teesdale—reveals that they possess long tofts. This type of village may have had a long history and, if we are indeed seeing the survival of an early plan-type, a measure of ordering is surely to be seen in the long strips which form one side of these markedly asymmetrical settlements, strips which at an earlier stage were almost certainly open. The layout of Cockfield (FIG. 20) seems to indicate the use of a 20-ft. land rod. Uhlig has demonstrated that this particular form is of considerable antiquity and has a wide distribution throughout northern Europe.

CONCLUSIONS

The discussion so far has argued that in some Durham villages the basic plan-type originated before 1200 and that traces of 12th-century property-boundaries, which indicate the presence of a system of village-regulation resembling that documented more completely in Scandinavia, sometimes survive, although in general the action of the land-market in the succeeding centuries has destroyed the early toft-patterns beyond recall. There are grounds, particularly on the estates of the bishop and the cathedral priory, for suggesting that this regularity is a product of reorganization following devastations during the late 11th century, and Boldon Book and the priory schedule of gillycorn show a cross-section of a dynamic situation after approximately one hundred years of recovery. The absence of comparable documentation makes it impossible to extend these studies to lay estates. On FIG. 19 a multiplicity of genetic levels are all

37 H. Uhlig, ‘Old hamlets with infield and outfield systems in western and central Europe’, Geografiska Annaler, XLIII (1961), nos. 1–2, 285–312. At Cockfield traces of such infield strips separated from each other by low baulks extend beyond the terminal wall of the present enclosed strips so that the distinction between toft and field parcel becomes blurred. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names (1960) gives 1291 as the date of the earliest known reference to this village.
telescoped into one map, and the documentation available does not at present permit these to be resolved with any certainty. Furthermore, this discussion has been primarily concerned with the regular, possibly regulated, two-row village forms, but many questions remain concerning the evolution of other plan-types and the interrelationships, temporal, spatial and organizational, between the varied forms making up the total pattern. The distinctiveness of the Durham villages cannot be fully evaluated until it is possible to compare the sequence of plan-types found between the Tyne and the Tees with those elsewhere. We will then be able to assess the way in which variations in economy and terrain, the nature of manorial control or the accidents of history have influenced regional village plans. The study of plan-types raises questions and permits some hypotheses which can thereafter be tested in the archive and the field.

It seems that two further methods of enquiry will then prove fruitful. The Durham villages are only a small sample, and the absence of Domesday Book, which provides relatively consistent information on fiscal tenements for large areas, makes extensive analysis difficult. Other regions do not suffer from these deficiencies, and June Sheppard’s current work on Yorkshire, in which a larger sample is used, may produce significant generalizations. In contrast the evidence of the Durham court books should make it feasible to examine the processes of development in some detail and to document the way in which tenurial patterns, and possibly toft-patterns, mutated within the row-structures, and this will permit an appraisal of the chronology of change and the recognition of the genetic levels present within single settlements. A third method of enquiry, the archaeological investigation of existing villages, is also required, for the transformation of old village cores under the impact of urban pressures makes such work essential in the near future. There are important implications here for the archaeologist, not least in that it means the extension of resources, already under severe strain, over a potentially large number of new sites. Nevertheless, the archaeology of successful settlements cannot be ignored.

ABBREVIATIONS

Brown (1889, 1894) W. Brown, Cartularium Prioratus de Gyseburne, i–ii (Surtees Soc., lxxxvi, 1889 and lxxxix, 1894).
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NOTE

The Society is much indebted to the University of Durham for a grant to cover the cost of the block for FIG. 19.