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**HIGH CAYTON
DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGE**

EARTHWORK SURVEY

SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT NO: 465
NORTH YORKSHIRE
SE 28670 63000

HARROGATE MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERY SERVICE

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INTRODUCTION

High Cayton Deserted Medieval Village is a scheduled ancient monument of national and local significance, which has not previously been investigated in any detail, and consequently its development and function have never been completely understood. The study area contains an extensive and well-preserved complex of multi-period earthworks which include a medieval manor house, fishponds, holloways, a rectilinear boundary ditch with associated crofts, and medieval field systems. The chronology and phasing of the existing earthworks need to be understood in order to properly interpret the site.

As a first stage in understanding a site of this complexity, a full and detailed survey of the surviving earthworks is required. The aims of this evaluation are to create a detailed earthwork survey of the study area, complemented by a written report. The survey will assist the landowner, Mr N A Hudleston, in continuing to manage the site, and to make it accessible and understandable to the many walkers who cross the site as part of the Nidderdale way.

The popular long distance walk known as The Nidderdale Way passes through the western extent of the site on route for Fountains Abbey and beyond. As well as the Nidderdale Way there are numerous other footpaths and bridle-ways which intersect the site, all of which are in regular use. It is hoped that by increasing public awareness of the remains at High Cayton, a more complete picture of the medieval landscape will be presented to the casual visitor. This will help to counteract the prevalent image in the popular imagination of a medieval landscape which consists primarily of castles and churches.

Geographically located between Knaresborough and Fountains Abbey, the site will form a physical as well as a historical link between these major tourist attractions. High Cayton formed part of the manor of Knaresborough prior to being granted to the monks of Fountains Abbey as a very early land grant. The association with these two well known monuments helps to highlight the sometimes dispersed nature of medieval landholding which is so foreign to modern minds.

Following the results of the survey, leaflets will be produced which outline the location, access routes, history and description of the site. Harrogate Borough Council is initiating a series of year round walks throughout the District, through their Countryside Officer. The most popular of those already established have been the historically based walks. It is planned to incorporate High Cayton into this series, walking the old road from Ripley Village through High Cayton and on to Markenfield. The leaflets would act as a guide, describing the prominent features of the site, placing these into a chronological and historical context, emphasising the strong historical links between the market town of Knaresborough with the medieval village of High Cayton and Fountains Abbey.

HISTORICAL SOURCES

The site has been the focus of previous historical research, notably N.A.Hudleston's publication Stainley and Cayton [1956] which contains a concise history of the locality and presents all the known documentary references to the history of these two settlements. This publication has been the cornerstone for all subsequent research on High Cayton.

The site has been referred to in a number of other publications and articles, these include Colin Platt's The Monastic Grange in Medieval England, [1969, p.88-91, 196-197] and Maurice Beresford's article in the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal [Vol.38, 1953, p.234]. These are very general references, and are largely concerned with the portrayal of the earthworks as being "classic" examples of early Cistercian depopulation. These articles recognise only two main types of earthworks on the site, those belonging to a street pattern and the other to house earthworks. It was previously believed that these fell into two classifications, those associated with the peasant settlement and those relating to the subsequent monastic grange.

The site at High Cayton has been depicted on various Ordnance Survey drawings dating back as far as 1847. These greatly simplify the earthworks found across the site, and are largely dominated by the main rectilinear enclosure bank. The most recent O.S. drawing of the study area which appears on the Pathfinder 1:25,000 series maps [Sheet SE 26/36, No.653] was surveyed between 1968-1976 and accurately depicts the principal earthworks across the site.

The study area has been subjected to aerial reconnaissance and two photographs from the winter of 1973 clearly depict the complexity of earthworks across the study area, and have proven an invaluable source during this survey.

The site has not been subjected to any archaeological investigation that has resulted in ground disturbance, although a geophysical survey by Arnold Aspinall and Carl Heron with students from the University of Bradford Department of Archaeological Sciences has been conducted in sample areas across the site. This project included an extensive earth resistance and fluxgate magnetometer survey, with the sample areas including the site of the medieval manor house and the late medieval pottery kiln. A note on the geophysical results has been published in Medieval Archaeology, vol. 38, 1994, pp 177-182.

A small number of chance archaeological finds have been recovered from across the study area, including a hoard of silver that was recovered in 1830. The hoard consisted of silver ingots, each bar measuring between 12"-20" in length and weighing between 12 oz-20oz. The discovery was made by a group of labourers as they were cultivating waste ground within the field formerly known as Bull Park (Silver Hills). The occasional sherd of medieval pottery has been recovered from mole hills and rabbit scattings during recent years, together with an assemblage of late medieval fired clay roof tiles that have been recovered from the lower slopes of the escarpment overlooking Cayton Gill. These tiles were found within close proximity to the recently identified pottery kiln site.

SITE CHRONOLOGY

There is every likelihood that the study area was initially settled during the prehistoric period, as the surrounding landscape provides a commanding view over the undulating foothills of the Pennines, and also offers a reliable fresh water supply. N.A. Hudleston's historical research at High Cayton would corroborate this, with the place name evidence indicating a possible Iron Age settlement. The name Cayton could mean 'Caega's tun' or translated as 'Caega's farm' or 'settlement', is indicative of this period. As of yet there is no physical evidence to confirm prehistoric activity on the site.

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There are no surviving records for the immediate area during the early medieval period, and therefore without the excavation of the site it is difficult to establish the foundation date of the High Cayton settlement. The first documentary reference to the site appears within the Domesday Book, 1086 where it is recorded as 'land of the king, Knaresborough, 6 carucates, 11 berewicks' of which one is 'Chetune, 2 carucates'. This would indicate that Cayton had approximately 200 acres of land at this point in time and was therefore a well established settlement by the mid 11th century.

During the early 12th century the settlement was situated upon the north western fringe of the Forest of Knaresborough, and was one of a small number of villages surrounding the market town of Knaresborough. During this period the vill was the property of Serlo de Pembroke, a member of the household of Henry I, and on the death of de Pembroke, the settlement passed into the ownership of Eustace Fitz-John.

In 1136, King Stephen confirmed a grant from Eustace Fitz-John, the lord of the Honour of Knaresborough, of 2 carucates in Cayton to the Cistercian foundation at Fountains. The vill of Cayton was one of the first land parcels to be granted to the new foundation, and shortly after this transaction the Vill became a monastic grange. Cayton was ideally situated to serve as demesne grange to the Abbey, benefitting from the passing trade between Fountains Abbey and the market town and principal secular administrative centre of Knaresborough.

By the late 12th century the grange at Cayton was already active in supplying freshwater fish to Fountains Abbey, the growth of the on site fish industry is confirmed between 1175-1206 when William de Stuteville, the acting Constable of Knaresborough Castle confirmed grants to Fountains Abbey of Cayton, Golle-Croft, and Cayton dam partly in Ripley. Shortly after this, Bernard and Richard de Ripley confirmed the grants of two dams, the second of which was situated within Ripley land. According to Mr. Hudleston there is still a trace of this second smaller dam at High Cayton, in Stainley Parish.

During the early 14th century the grange suffered from the Scottish incursions that also resulted in the raids on the surrounding market towns of Knaresborough, Ripon and Boroughbridge. It would seem that the level of destruction at Cayton was high as by 1363 a petition was forwarded from Fountains Abbey to the mother house at Clairveaux asking that the Abbey might convert Cayton along with eight other of their ruined granges into villis and farm these holdings out to laymen. No further details survive concerning this transfer of management arrangements.

References to Cayton reappear in the late 15th century when it is noted that in 1485 the Horner family from Kirby Malzeard arrived at Cayton as Fountains Abbey tenants. In 1500 half of the Cayton estate went to the Vavisor family. It is known that the Horners continued to farm at Cayton after the Dissolution in 1539, at which time the Cayton Estate was valued at £21.

Little attention has so far been directed to the post-medieval archaeology of the site. It was during this period that the Old Hall at High Cayton was constructed within the existing farm complex. This would indicate that the focus of the settlement had shifted once again from the former grange buildings which are thought to have remained occupied until the construction of this detached sandstone property in 1607.

The estate remained almost in its entirety of 631 acres up to 1920 when it was reduced by 110 acres when the southern part of the estate was sold off.

The earthworks at High Cayton were scheduled as an Ancient Monument in 1955, since which time those fields within the scheduled area have been set aside for grazing.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

THE FARMSTEAD

High Cayton is an isolated farmstead situated within the western extent of the rural parish of South Stainley with Cayton. This parish within the Harrogate District is located on the western edge of the Vale of York, on the fringe of the Pennine foothills. The farm is situated at 100 metres above sea level on a naturally formed area of rising and undulating ground that is immediately adjacent to Cayton Gill. The surface geology of the area is a pink-grey sandstone, known as the Cayton Gill Bed, the subsoils are boulder clays with a relatively heavy top soil.

The farm is situated approximately 1-1/4 miles to the west of the small village of South Stainley from which access is gained via a trackway called Cayton Lane, that runs from the A61 Harrogate to Ripon road to High Cayton and to a number of other isolated properties including Cayton Gill Farm.

The building complex of High Cayton Farm is centrally located within its estate, with large sub-rectangular shaped fields of arable land to the north and east, and with smaller fields of un-improved pasture to the south, the latter of which contain the earthworks of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The farm complex consists of two sandstone properties with adjacent walled gardens and orchards. These are situated to the south and west of an intense complex of out-buildings and open yard areas. The out-buildings date from the post medieval period to the present, many of which have undergone major alterations. The fabric of these buildings varies from magnesian limestone quarried from the South Stainley beds to brick and the locally quarried pink-grey sandstone.

A number of buildings within this complex were scheduled as buildings of historic and architectural interest in March 1966. The eastern farmhouse (Grade II) known as The Old Hall at High Cayton is a detached sandstone property that dates back to 1607, but the building has been subjected to 20th century alterations. The structure is rendered with large, external corniced stacks and has a purple slate roof. The western farmhouse (Grade II) is a detached property built during the mid 19th century, the building has also been subjected to 20th century alterations. The house is built of locally quarried sandstone with a purple slate roof.

The complex straddles a public bridle-way, at the western extent of Water Lane, many of the farm buildings are situated to the north of this lane. These include former stables, cart-sheds and byres. The stable building (Grade II) is late medieval/early post-medieval with later alterations, the building is constructed out of the pink-grey sandstone with a pantile roof, this fabric encloses the remains of a timber frame structure. It is believed that the stable contains the oldest remains within the entire building complex. In the north western corner of the farm complex an early 19th century threshing barn and a polygonal shaped wheel house are situated (Grade II). These buildings have been constructed out of the pink-grey sandstone with pantile roofing.

The site occupied by the farmstead and adjoining yard, garden and orchard areas is situated at the northern extent of the study area. The close proximity of earthworks to the immediate west, south and east would suggest there is a high probability that the building complex occupies a site of archaeological interest. However, given that the surrounding earthworks are largely the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation and that from the inspection of aerial photographs taken during the early 1950's similar patterns of cultivation were identified to the immediate north of the farm, it would appear that the existing farmhouse complex was situated at the interface between the medieval infield and the area of settlement, the site therefore may not have been previously developed or occupied.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

The study area consists of four fields which occupy the gently undulating plateau situated to the immediate east of Cayton Gill. This steep-sided, naturally formed narrow valley is also included in the area designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The total acreage of the site is 39.422 acres, and in compliance with the scheduling the fields are all presently managed as unimproved grassland and are grazed throughout the year by cattle and a small number of horses.

The site is contained to the north by Water Lane, to the east by the comparatively recent fenceline that has been chosen as the likely extent of the medieval settlement, to the south and west the boundary is delineated by a change in land ownership.

THE FIELDS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

Horse Park

This field, previously known as 'The Orchard' is a small, trapezoid shaped field, 4.564 acres in area. The field is situated at the northeastern extent of study area.

Horse Park is contained to the north by a mature hedgeline that runs parallel and adjacent to Water Lane, to the east by a modern fence line that follows the line of a medieval holloway, to the south the field is contained by mature hedgeline that is situated on the southern side of spring fed ditch line. To the west and north west the field is contained by a modern fenceline that separates it from the complex of farm buildings.

The natural gradient of the slope within the field is relatively shallow and falls from the north west to the east. However, the ground levels within the central area of the field have been significantly altered by the complex of earthworks.

At the time of inspection, the field was found to have been well grazed and consequently the visibility of the earthworks was reasonably good.

With the field being situated immediately adjacent to the farm, it has for some considerable time been subject to a relatively high level of disturbance. This has included the excavations in advance of the installation of a concrete septic tank located in the north west corner of the field, and the excavation of a spring fed pond in the western extent of the field. This sub-circular shaped feature was backfilled with builders' rubble in recent times. Unfortunately it can not be established as to whether this was a historical feature. Furthermore the field's close proximity the farm outbuildings has led to a high level of trampling within the north west corner of the field as a result of intense animal activity. The size and nature of the earthworks within the field will have no doubt presented problems to vehicular access across the field and therefore it would seem highly likely that a number of breaches within the larger linear earthworks within this field have been formed or enlarged for this reason.

Silver Hills

This field, previously known as 'The Bullpark' is a relatively large, irregular shaped field, 7.552 acres in area. The field is situated at the eastern and south eastern extent of the study area.

The field is defined to the north by a mature hedgeline, to the north east by a banked hedge line that runs parallel and adjacent to the curvilinear line of a medieval holloway, to the south east the field is contained by immature hedgeline. To the south the field is contained by the fragmentary remains of a mature hedge line and a modern fenceline that is situated on the east and southern banks of a main rectilinear earthwork. The field is partitioned from the Hall Garth field to the west by an immature hedge line and fenceline.

The natural gradient of the slope within the field is relatively shallow and undulating. From a centre high point the field falls away to the north east and south east. To the southern extent the topography of the field changes, falling away on a relatively steep slope to the south, forming the head of a narrow tributary valley that falls into Cayton Gill.

The field contains numerous features that were found to be in a good state of preservation. The majority of these features are concentrated to the west of a rectilinear bank that bisects the field on a north south alignment. At the time of inspection the field was found to have been well grazed and consequently the visibility of the earthworks was reasonable.

Hall Garth

This field, also known as 'The Garth' is a large, rectilinear shaped field, 11.675 acres in area, and is centrally located within the study area.

Hall Garth is contained to the north by a dry-stone wall that has been constructed from sandstone fragments of a regular size. This re-used masonry almost certainly originated from one of the more prestigious buildings of the medieval settlement. The wall forms the boundary between this field and Crag Wood End to the immediate north as well forming the southern boundary of the raised gardens and orchards of High Cayton Farm. To the east the field has been partitioned from Horse Park and Silver Hills by a fragmentary immature hedgeline and modern fence line. To the south the field is contained by a low dry stone wall that has been constructed from large fragments of roughly dressed sandstone, that has the appearance of a late medieval monastic boundary wall. To the west the field has been previously contained by a dry stone wall that has since been dismantled, the line of the boundary can be still determined as following the ridge line of the west facing slope of Cayton Gill, at present there is no boundary between Hall Garths and Gill Bottom.

The field is relatively level with the northern and central areas sloping on a very gentle gradient to the east. However, to the south the ground level falls away on a relatively steep slope to the south and south west into the lower section of a narrow tributary valley that falls into Cayton Gill.

Hall Garth contains a large number of earthworks. These appear to include industrial and settlement areas interspersed with areas of ridge and furrow. In the northwest corner of the field a large square platform marks the site of the medieval manor house/grange complex. The earthworks were found to be in a good state of preservation. At the time of inspection the field was found to have been well grazed and consequently the visibility of the earthworks was reasonably good.

The line of a public footpath until recently crossed the entire length of the field on a north-south alignment. Emerging in the northeastern corner of the field, the path converged with a bridle-way at the southern boundary of the field. It would appear that the footpath originally connected the villages of Markington to the north with Ripley to the south.

Gill Bottom

This land parcel, also known as 'Bottoms' is a large, L-shaped area of waterlogged ground situated within the base of Cayton Gill, and is 12.664 acres in area. The water course known as Cayton Beck drains to the south and is situated on the lower slope of the east facing scarp of this narrow valley. A hedge at the far side of the beck marks the boundary of the Cayton and Ripley estates and the western extent of the study area. The centre line of this valley also marks the parish boundary between South Stainley with Cayton and Ripley.

This area of Cayton Gill is contained to the north by a fenceline that forms the property boundary between this estate and a deciduous plantation known as Crag Wood to the north. To the east the valley has been previously contained by a dry stone wall that has since been dismantled, the line of the boundary can be still determined as following the ridge line of the west facing slope of Cayton Gill. At present there is no boundary between the gill and Hall Garths. To the south east the field is contained by a low dry stone wall that has been constructed from large orthostats of roughly dressed sandstone. This structure has the appearance of a late medieval monastic boundary wall. However, from the earliest Ordnance Survey maps it is evident that during the 19th century the southern extent of the field was situated to the north of this ancient boundary and forming the south west section of the Hall Garths boundary wall.

At present the south western boundary is marked by the large earthen bank that contained the medieval fishpond complex. The water-management programme of the medieval period also resulted in the re-direction of Cayton Beck, the present course of which marks the western extent of the field and study area.

The field rises gently to the north and more acutely to the east rising from a 10 acre area of artificially level, waterlogged ground that was formerly the extent of the medieval fishpond complex.

The field contains a small number of earthworks which are situated on the lower slopes of the hillside and include a complex of building platforms associated with the medieval fish processing industry together with more recent areas of water meadow. The earthworks were found to be in a good state of preservation. At the time of inspection the field was found to have been well grazed and consequently the visibility of the earthworks was reasonably good.

A frequently used public footpath known as the Nidderdale Way passes through the field running along the base of the west and south west facing aspects of Cayton Gill on the fringe of the area of waterlogged ground. Within the north eastern corner of the field the footpath converges with the South Stainley to Sawley bridle-way.

Crag Wood End

This field is small, sub-rectangular in shape, and 2.985 acres in area, situated to the immediate west of the farm building complex and at the northern extent of the study area.

The field is contained to the north and west by a modern fenceline. This boundary also partitions the field from the farm buildings within the north east corner of the field. To the east a 19th century sandstone garden wall forms the boundary between the field and the farm's orchard. To the south by a dry-stone wall that has been constructed from re-used sandstone masonry, it is suspected that the fabric may have originated from one of the more prestigious buildings of the medieval settlement.

The field is relatively level, sloping gently from a high point in the north west corner. Within the south west corner the ground level falls away on a relatively steep slope to the south and south west down into Cayton Gill.

The field supports a high quantity of earthworks, these are largely situated within the north western half of the field and include a wide variety of forms and types ranging from industrial workings to agricultural enclosures, it would appear that these structures date from the medieval to the present. The earthworks were found to be in a reasonably good state of preservation.

The field lies adjacent to the existing farm complex and as such it has been subjected to a relatively high level of modern disturbance associated with the installation, during the 1930's, of a wind generated electricity supply.

At the time of inspection the field was found to have been well grazed and consequently the visibility of the earthworks was reasonable.

The line of a bridle-way bisects the field on a north easterly alignment, this public right of way runs from South Stainley to Scarah Bank and was in existence by the mid 19th century. It would appear that a second transport structure may have originally crossed towards the north west corner of the field and beyond towards Markington and Fountains Abbey.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was undertaken as a long term project organised by Harrogate Museums and Art Gallery Service, utilizing the enthusiasm of volunteers from the Knaresborough Archaeology Group, under the professional supervision of Kevin Cale, an independent archaeologist. The time spent surveying was largely dictated by the availability of the volunteers and the prevailing weather conditions. The programme of works included a number of days that were set aside for the familiarisation of the surrounding topography. This involved the accessing of the study area and the general instruction of surveying techniques and conventions to the volunteers. This was followed by the making of annotated sketch drawings and the classification of all earthworks within the study area.

A site grid of 30 metre increments was imposed upon the study area, and from which all off-set measurements were taken. The scale of the on site survey drawing was 1:250. This high level resolution was chosen so as to facilitate the instruction process and it also allowed a standard of definition that would encompass all the earthworks identified across the site. For the purposes of publication it would be necessary to reduce the overall survey drawing.

Following the completion of the survey, the drawing was levelled with over 869 stations being taken. This information was retained for archive purposes. On the completion of the drawn survey the study area was photographed, these included general shots of the topography and detail shots of the well defined earthworks.

The final report was compiled and written by Mr.K.J.Cale, and edited by Mary Kershaw.

The survey was undertaken with the following equipment:

<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Product</u>
1 No.	Nikon AX-1 Level
1 No.	Olympus OM 20, 35mm SLR Camera with a 35-125 mm zoom lens.
1 No.	Minolta XG2, 35 SLR Camera with a 50 mm fixed lens
6 No.	30 metre nylon surveying tapes
	drawing Boards, drawing film, graph paper, pens and pencils, photographic film, 2 metre long surveying staffs, wooden survey pegs.

SUMMARY OF EARTHWORKS

The Scheduled Ancient Monument at High Cayton contains an intense complex of well preserved medieval earthworks. These structures are multi-phased and reflect at least five hundred years of development and cultivation on the site.

The survey has revealed that the site does not follow the typical development patterns recognised at other deserted medieval village (D.M.V) sites. It would appear that the layout and development of this site was largely dictated by the growth and diversification of the economy of a monastic grange and was not dictated by the fortunes of a civil settlement as is most often the case with the D.M.V.

The earthworks identified within the study area fall into four main functional categories, these include structures relating to transport, agriculture, industry and settlement.

TRANSPORT STRUCTURES

This category includes an inter-connecting network of tracks, lanes and holloways. These structures radiate from the site towards the neighbouring medieval settlements including the villages of South Stainley, Markington and Ripley, and the administrative centre and market town of Knaresborough, together with the monastic establishments of Fountains Abbey and its demesne grange at Brimham. These structures are generally narrow and sinuous with little evidence to indicate that they were surfaced. Together with this arterial communication network the site was serviced by a small number of minor trackways. These appear to have afforded access to the industrial complexes such as the quarry and fishpond complex.

The majority of the medieval transport structures are still in use today as providing agricultural access into the surrounding fields and as public bridleways and footpaths. Those medieval thoroughfares that have fallen in to disuse appear to be the holloways. It is possible that this reflects an increase in size of vehicular traffic and the high level maintenance required to keep these structures operative.

AGRICULTURAL STRUCTURES

Prior to the commencement of the survey it had been assumed that the principal activity of the medieval community at High Cayton had been agriculture, and this included arable cultivation and animal husbandry. Whilst both of these farming practices have been identified in the documentary sources and confirmed by the physical evidence, it would appear that the community was principally concerned with the fish industry.

A large number of agricultural structures have been surveyed. This category is dominated by the large rectilinear multiple bank and ditch feature that extends the full length of the site, this is the most prominent earthwork identified within the study area, and has been frequently mistaken as the main communication axis within the medieval settlement. The recent survey has revealed that whilst its exact function can not be determined it is likely that it had both a defensive and agrarian role, and was not a transport structure.

The category also includes the interconnecting network of banks and ditches that delineate the remains of the medieval in-field pattern. These boundary features, in places, contain the remains of the medieval cultivation processes, evidence of which survive today as areas of ridge and furrow. The broad gauge of the ridge and furrow confirms that the majority of these structures are medieval in origin, with occasional areas of more recent cultivation, the latter of which have been identified adjacent to the existing farm buildings and these would appear to be horticultural allotments associated with the farm. Other earthworks that reflect post medieval cultivation are the water meadows situated on the area of waterlogged ground that was formerly occupied by the medieval fishponds.

From the size and frequency of drainage channels identified across the site it is clear that the area suffers from waterlogged ground conditions. This is corroborated by the frequent inspections made to the study area during the winter months when it was found that water retention was high resulting in the collection of surface water. When maintained it is likely that these channels not only alleviated this problem but also supplemented the water supply to the fishponds.

The medieval field systems would have been serviced by the occasional field barn and stock enclosure. Whilst the location of these structures can not be positively determined it is likely that a number of the sub-rectangular shaped earthwork platforms that were surveyed across the site had originally supported such structures.

A small number of agricultural features were surveyed that were clearly post-medieval in origin and associated with the more recent management of the farm, these included a small complex of corn drying platforms and a sheepwash.

INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES

The Industrial remains on the site are dominated by the large medieval fishpond and the adjoining complex of sub-rectangular earthwork platforms that would have supported timber buildings associated with the management and processing of the fish stock. The size of this on-site industry would indicate that it was the principal concern of the grange and may well have been the primary source of freshwater fish for the large monastic community at Fountains Abbey. The rearing and processing of large quantities of fish at High Cayton would generate work in related on-site industries that would have included the maintenance of the fishponds, the filleting and smoking of the fish, together with coopering and the transporting of the product.

Documentary evidence suggests that the existing area of fishpond would have been originally partitioned into a network of submerged compartments for the purpose of managing the fish-stock. This would have involved the segregation of fry from the young and mature fish. Although there is no physical evidence apparent at present to substantiate this, it is probable that a drainage channel would have circumnavigated the fringe of the fishpond so as to act as a catchment for water run off and help prevent interference with the pond management.

The general management of the fishpond would require the frequent removal of sediment from the base of the pond. With the silts having a high nitrogen content, it would seem likely that they were led onto the adjacent farmland and spread as fertilizer. It would be therefore necessary to have vehicular access between the fishpond and adjacent farmland. The medieval fish industry involved a high level of on site processing before the produce could be transported any distance. The complex of building platforms identified around the periphery of the pond would almost certainly have supported timber built smoking sheds, maintenance and storage huts. The successful management of the fishponds would have required a number of small, timber boats. The depth of the pond would have almost certainly exceeded 2 metres. It is possible that an artificial island may have been created within the pond for the purpose of breeding wildfowl and swans.

Other large scale industrial processes on and adjacent to the site included the quarrying and extraction of sandstone from the Cayton Gill beds. The quarry is situated out of the study area in the adjacent woodland known as Crag Wood. The site has not been included within the present survey as the land is under different ownership. However it is evident that large quantities of sandstone were extracted from this site during the medieval period and it is suspected that it was transported only a short distance for the construction of the Manor/Grange House. The methods of extraction employed at the site would indicate that sandstone continued to be quarried into the post medieval period.

It was during the late/post medieval period that a pottery kiln was established at High Cayton. The kiln was constructed on the ridge line of the steep escarpment overlooking Cayton Gill. Clay pits have been identified in two locations across the site, a series of workings have been excavated adjacent to and displacing a section of the large medieval rectilinear bank and ditch, other shallow scoops excavations have been identified to the immediate east of the kiln platform. From the high quantity of broken, fired clay roof tiles and wasters that have been recovered from disturbed ground on the lower slopes of the escarpment it would appear that these were locally manufactured and then discarded down the slope during the late 15th century.

CIVIL STRUCTURES

This classification includes those earthworks that have been purposely built for human habitation. At High Cayton two principal areas of medieval settlement have been identified. The most prominent earthwork of this classification is the large sub-rectangular platform that has been referred to as the manor house platform, this structure occupies a relatively isolated position within the study area, with the surrounding ground levels being undisturbed by earthworks of the former categories.

It would appear that the platform supported a rectilinear arrangement of buildings surrounding a central courtyard area, it is likely that the principal buildings within this complex were constructed out of the locally quarried sandstone, and whilst no extant fabric survives on this site the adjacent dry stone wall has been constructed out of a regular sized, dressed, sandstone block work, masonry that is almost certainly medieval in origin.

The site supported the principal building of the monastic grange and as such would been the administrative centre of the entire complex and would have also provided accommodation for the granger and guest facilities, together with outbuildings and stables. It is likely that the site was developed from as early as the 12th century and remained in use throughout the period of the monastic management of the grange, it is likely that during the late 16th century the building was demolished and the stone transported a short distance for the construction of the post reformation hall and garden walls.

The second area of medieval settlement is less well defined and diffused across the southern extent of the study area. These earthworks consist of relatively small sub-rectangular building platforms and adjacent banked enclosures. The earthworks will have originally elevated timber built structures above the surrounding waterlogged ground levels. It is suspected that these features are the remains of the pre grange settlement, although it is likely a number of these sites continued to be occupied during the late medieval period by grange workers.

INTERPRETATION

This detailed earthwork survey at High Cayton has identified four main phases of activity within the study area.

PHASE I

The earliest known activity at High Cayton involved the growth of the small village during the early medieval period. The remains of this settlement have been identified towards the southern extent of the site. It is likely that this phase of occupation resulted in the subdivision of the surrounding land into a number of small property parcels that were defined by a series of shallow banks and ditches. It is unclear as to the land-use within these plots, although it would seem that this may well have varied across the site from small areas of cultivation to space for huttage and other timber structures. It is suspected that it was during this period that the main rectilinear bank and ditch feature was constructed and effectively contained the eastern extent of the settlement. This massive earthwork would appear to have had a dual function as a drainage and defensive feature.

PHASE II

The second phase of activity relates to the Post Conquest settlement and the growth of the monastic grange. It would appear that it was during the 12th and 13th centuries that the site was most intensely developed. This involved the construction of the large fishponds and associated industrial buildings identified within the Gill Bottom. It was during this period that the local source of sandstone was quarried in large quantities for the construction of the grange's administrative centre, known as the Manor House. It was during this period that the communication network both internally and to the surrounding settlements were improved and new routes constructed such as the track affording access to and from Fountains Abbey.

At the same time a field system was imposed upon the surrounding landscape which absorbed pre conquest areas of cultivation and also incorporated areas of previously uncultivated land located on the fringe of the settlement. Remnants of this field system survive today as an interconnecting network of enclosure banks and ditches that in places contain traces of ridge and furrow cultivation. It is likely that the estate was actively involved in both animal husbandry and arable cultivation, although during this period these activities would have been secondary to the fish industry which was the primary economic concern of the grange.

From the historical sources it is known the site suffered from the Scottish raids during the early 14th century, the impact of which on the economy of the grange should not be underestimated, as it would appear that the economic viability of the estate declined and shortly after these raids Fountains Abbey farmed the site out to secular management. Without the assistance of archaeological excavation techniques the evidence of the Scottish raids is restricted to the identification of the transition in agricultural management. It is likely that the raids accelerated the depopulation of the site, that led to the abandonment of the southern area of occupation.

PHASE III

During the later medieval period the economy of the estate diversified. This was no doubt due to a number of contributing factors that will have included the decline of the on-site fish industry. The consequences of this can be identified across the study area and includes the exploitation of indigenous clay deposits for the on-site pottery industry. These shallow workings are situated across the southern extent of the study area and have been excavated in to the rectilinear earthwork which has resulted in the truncation of a section of it's bank and the backfilling of a length of its ditch. This would suggest that even the principal boundary feature had by this time fallen into disrepair. It is likely that estate continued be engaged in the rearing of livestock, particularly cattle, and also the cultivation of cereals and root crops.

PHASE IV

Following the Dissolution the Manor House, the only remaining site of medieval occupation, was abandoned and the settlement contracted still further with the construction of The Old Hall at High Cayton in 1607. This building still remains the principal farmhouse at High Cayton. The post-medieval earthworks across the site consist of those areas of narrow-rig cultivation that were associated with the domestic requirements of the farm, and the construction of a number of tracks and accessways that were built to replace the redundant holloways. It is clear that the existing farming practices that are allowed within the study area are not dissimilar to the post medieval management of these fields, the excellent state of preservation of archaeological remains is testimony to this.

This survey has furthered our understanding of the site by bringing to our attention previously unidentified features and by revealing the complexity and the intensity of the surviving earthworks. However, there remains much work to be done before a more complete understanding of the inter-relationships and the chronology of the earthworks can be reached. The site would almost certainly benefit from further non-destructive methods of investigation, the furtherance of the recent programme of geophysical prospecting would be welcomed, as would a more general landscape study of the surrounding fields and parishes, including a detailed survey of the medieval quarry within Crag Wood.

It has been brought to my attention that Mr. Hudleston has recently purchased a field that is situated to the immediate east of the study area, adjacent to the field known as Silver Hills. Whilst it is known that this field contains no prominent earthworks as it has until recently been ploughed, there remains a high potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains, and as such the field would benefit from a geophysical survey, and in light of the results from such an investigation should be considered for scheduling.

FIGURE 1 SITE LOCATION PLAN

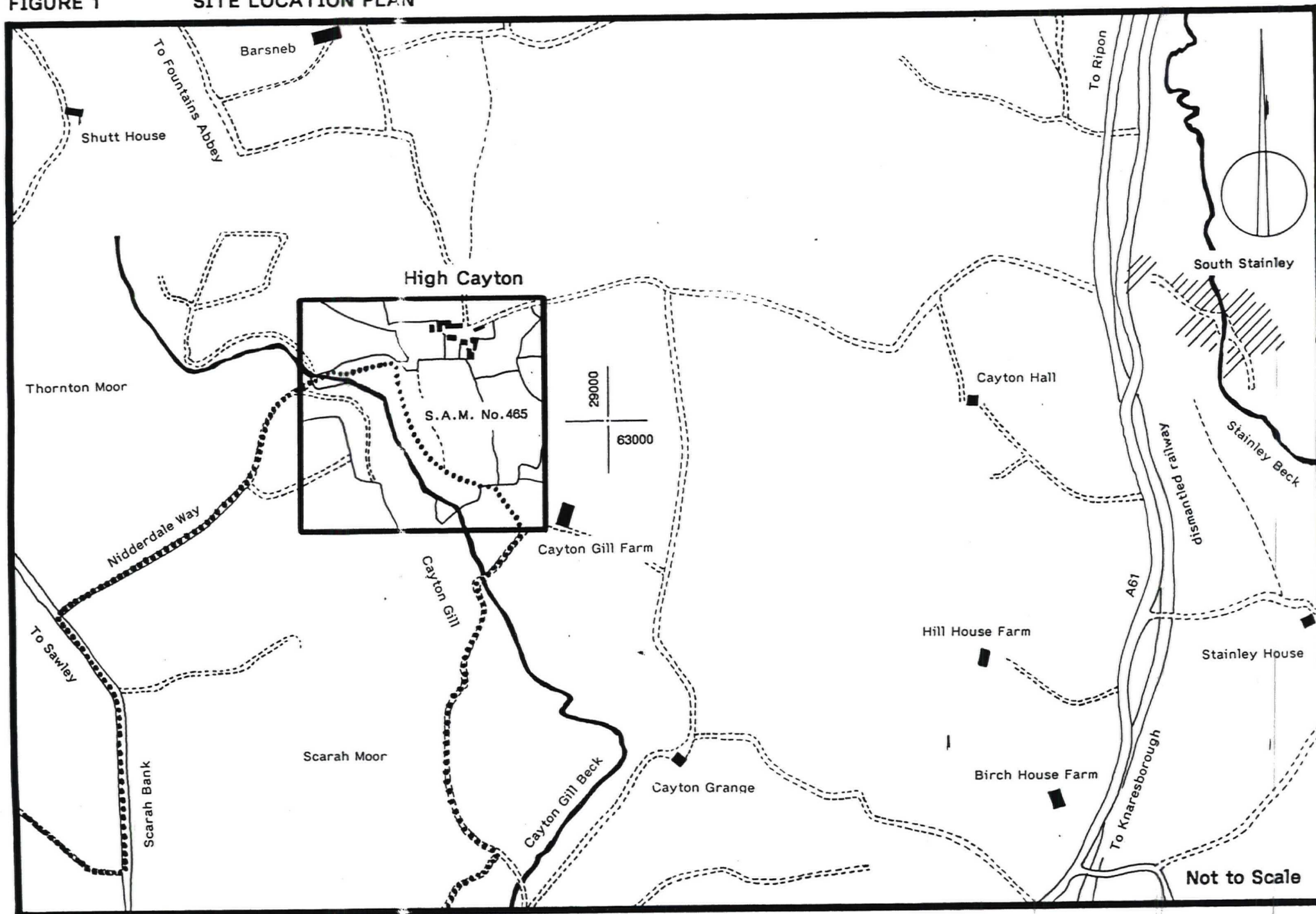


FIGURE 2 SITE PLAN AND FIELD NAMES

