

# The Wharram Research Project: Results to 1983

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*CONTINUING ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION of the church, manor house, parsonage and peasant homes of a deserted medieval village has widened into a multidisciplinary enquiry into the evolution of the total landscape of the two parishes bearing the name of Wharram which once contained six villages, now reduced to two. The microtopography of the medieval site is related to its antecedents, and the post-desertion settlement pattern to renewed arable farming on the Wolds without the re-creation of villages.*

## SITUATION

Wharram is a name shared by two adjacent parishes near the NW. scarp of the chalk Yorkshire Wolds at a height of 150m above sea level. They were once in the E. Riding but are now in N. Yorkshire, about half way between York and Scarborough, 10 km SE. of Malton, which was an important centre in both Roman and medieval times. Wharram le Street stands at the head of the Great Wold Valley: the Gypsy Race rises just E. of the present village and runs intermittently through the Valley to enter the North Sea at Bridlington 30 km to the E. In Wharram Percy parish the chalk plateau is dissected by a network of deep narrow winding valleys, which cut through the chalk to expose the underlying Upper Jurassic clays. The springs emerging from the junction between the chalk and the clay provide a constant supply of water at points which became foci for settlement. Wharram Percy village is unusual in that seven springs rise along a 600 m stretch of the valley, thus making this site potentially an area of preferred settlement, as opposed to other valleys where only one or a few springs emerge. Settlements on the plateau away from the valleys were watered from ponds, which are a typical feature of many of the medieval Wolds villages. Periglacial action formed a number of shallow side valleys, which have been utilised since prehistoric times for easier access up the steep valley sides from the water supply to settlements on the plateau edge.

## MESOLITHIC AND NEOLITHIC

Some of the earliest evidence for human activity in the Wharram area comes from late Mesolithic flints found round the source of the Gypsy Race, which was

frequented by hunters in the forest which became established on the Wolds in the post-glacial period. Neolithic farming practice resulted in clearance of forest areas on the Wolds by 3500 B.C. Two phases of clearance with cultivation separated by a period of woodland regeneration have been recognized by Mr T. G. Manby in the fossil soil preserved beneath the Kilham long barrow;<sup>1</sup> other long barrow sites on the eastern Wolds were similarly constructed in cleared grassland areas. Long barrows have been excavated at Hanging Grimston<sup>2</sup> and Raisthorpe, SW. and S. of Wharram. Evidence of forest clearance is provided by a number of imported Langdale stone axes in the Wharram parishes and possible tree-holes filled with characteristic brown forest soil at Wharram Percy. Actual occupation sites are indicated by scatters of Neolithic flints, scrapers, knives and arrowheads but the exact nature of the settlement is hard to determine on the high Wolds because of the erosion of the thick brown forest soils which would have covered the area. There is clear evidence for this erosion in the valley at Wharram Percy, caused by continued disturbance of the ground for arable cultivation in Neolithic and later times.

In the later Neolithic there were changes in the economy and ritual. Monuments of a new type appeared, the round barrow becoming the principal form of burial monument. The largest round barrows in eastern Yorkshire are located along the Great Wold Valley: the most westerly of this series is the great Duggleby Howe, 38 m diameter and standing 6 m high. Only 2 km from Wharram le Street and 3.5 km from Wharram Percy, Duggleby Howe stands at the centre of the cropmarks of a large Neolithic ceremonial monument recently recognized by Mr D. N. Riley.<sup>3</sup> This enclosure with interrupted ditches is 370 m in diameter and is about 10.5 ha in extent, which makes it larger than either Avebury or Mount Pleasant in Wessex. There can be no doubt that this was a major ritual centre for the western Wold area as Rudston appears to have been for the eastern Wolds with its concentration of cursus monuments and the largest stone monolith in the country.

#### BRONZE AND IRON AGES

Extensive utilisation of the Wolds, at least in terms of mortuary practice, in the earlier Bronze Age is shown by the numerous barrows along the ridgeway to the S. of Wharram Percy, but Manby has shown that these were more widespread, suggesting a denser concentration than that indicated by those previously known. The most significant feature of the Wolds, however, is the series of linear earthworks which divide the landscape into large enclosures. They are hard to date, but it is likely that the first examples are Middle Bronze Age, becoming more complex in the Iron Age. The very fact of their existence, however, presupposes full exploitation of the landscape, whether for grazing or arable, as there would otherwise have been no need for land allotment and division. It does not matter whether they were used as boundaries, enclosures or trackways, for however they are interpreted<sup>4</sup> they imply extensive clearance of the landscape during the Neolithic period, increasing during the Bronze Age until the whole area was fully exploited by the Late Iron Age. In the Iron Age there are far fewer and more scattered, square barrows<sup>5</sup> on the western Wolds than to the E., which has led to suggestions that there was a greater

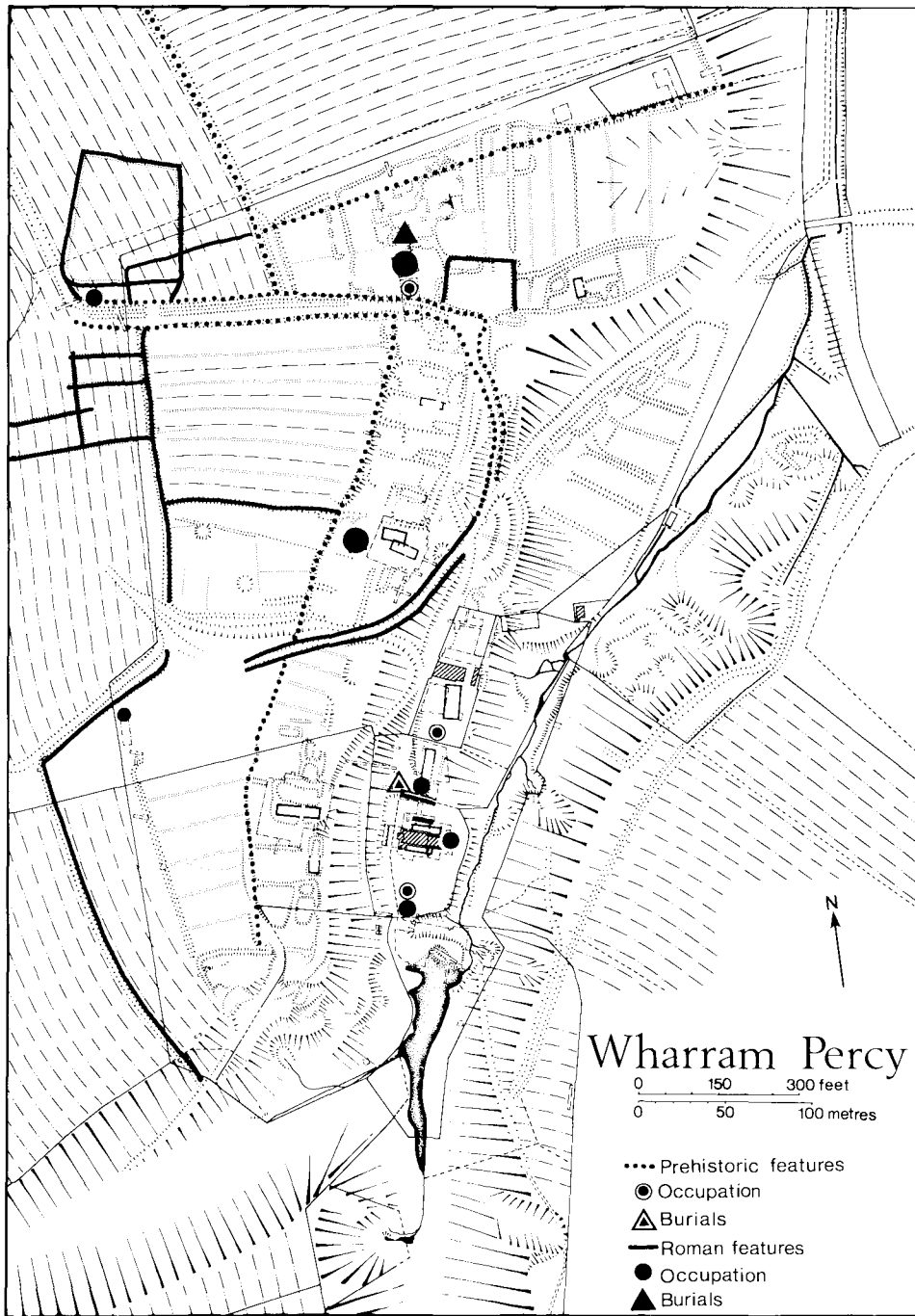


FIG. 1

Plan of the area of the deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy showing prehistoric and Roman features which largely determined the outline plan of the medieval village

concentration on grazing to the W. and arable to the E.<sup>6</sup> The higher element of Early Iron Age society in E. Yorkshire is represented by chariot-accompanied burials giving way in the 1st century B.C. to warrior burials furnished with swords and military equipment. Such a warrior burial with two swords, one with an anthropoid hilt, was found below Grimston Brow.<sup>7</sup>

At Wharram Percy one of the main early foci of settlement was at the junction of three major prehistoric linear earthworks forming an enclosure at a point where a periglacial valley facilitates access from the plateau to the valley below with its water supply (Fig. 1).<sup>8</sup> Recent excavations by Professor P. A. Rahtz have shown remarkable continuity on this site, with a long sequence of ditches, post lines, and tracks culminating in the medieval boundary wall of the N. Manor and the sunken road up into the open fields leading to Malton. Finds in the area include a Langdale stone axe, and Neolithic and Bronze Age flints, but the only features which might predate the Iron Age are the linear earthworks: this remarkable configuration must imply an early settlement in the enclosure, which has been barely sampled as yet. In the Iron Age there was considerable activity, with chalk quarries and ditch systems.

On a terrace, below the plateau to the W. and above the stream in the valley to the E., Iron Age features have been found over an extensive area from the present cottages to the S. edge of the medieval graveyard. These include ditches, a hearth and post-holes possibly forming a round house, together with pottery, metal objects<sup>9</sup> and an unusual crouched burial NW. of the church with a radiocarbon date of 800 B.C.  $\pm$  60. The nature of this second focus of occupation on the terrace is uncertain as it has been observed only in widely separated excavations but it seems to be more extensive than a single farm, and includes ditches of a field system.

#### ROMANO-BRITISH

For the Romano-British period the pattern becomes clearer as aerial photography by Mr A. Pacitto and fieldwalking by Dr C. C. Hayfield<sup>10</sup> have demonstrated scattered habitations, usually at intervals of nearly 1 km, with associated ladder-type enclosures and joined by double-ditched trackways. This pattern is particularly clear in the Thixendale valley where the medieval villages of Thixendale, Raisthorpe, Burdale and Fimber, about 2 km apart, have remains of Romano-British sites spaced equally between them.<sup>11</sup> In addition there are two villas only 2 km apart in Wharram le Street, one to the W. of Wharram Grange and the other just to the E. of Wharram le Street village close to the source of the Gypsy Race. Geophysical surveys by the Ancient Monuments Laboratory have shown a regular layout at each, and sample excavations have produced evidence for stone buildings, mosaic pavements, painted wall plaster and Mediterranean imported pottery.<sup>12</sup> On the site of the N. manor at Wharram Percy the only Romano-British buildings so far excavated were of timber but the presence of massive stone blocks reused in a corn dryer, together with other architectural masonry and fragments of tile and tesserae, suggest the possibility of a third villa at Wharram Percy itself.

This would give a remarkable concentration of three villas very close together, with the two Langton Villas only another 5 km to the NW. at the foot of the Wold

scarp.<sup>13</sup> One Langton villa was built on the site of an Early Iron Age farmstead represented by ditches and a rectangular ditched enclosure, occupied down to the Roman conquest.<sup>14</sup> This grouping in an area near the northern limit of known villas must be connected with the proximity of the Roman centre at Malton. The villas could be either the centres of estates formed to provide produce for the population at Malton, or the country houses of Malton officials. Either way there is no doubt that the NW. part of the Wolds was very fully exploited. It is hoped that more light will be thrown on the nature of the agricultural economy at this period by further excavation and by the processing of finds already made.

The villa or farm in the N. manorial enclosure at Wharram Percy was by no means the only Romano-British settlement in the area of the future nucleated medieval village; there were at least four or five other settlement units (Fig. 1). 150 m to the W. there was a trapezoidal enclosure of which the W. and S. boundaries have been excavated by Dr C. Treen to reveal a massive ditch 4.6 m wide and 1.8 m deep. 150 m to the S. of the N. manor, 9 and 10 Toft and Croft was originally a Romano-British enclosure, perhaps including habitation but certainly a field. 150 m to the W., and 250 m S. of the NW. enclosure, Mr P. Herbert has found part of other Romano-British structures to the W. of 8 Croft where the boundary earthworks of the medieval village change alignment as if to take in some pre-existing feature. A road to it from the valley utilises a shallow periglacial valley similar to that by the N. manor.

On the terrace N. and S. of the church there are several Romano-British ditches, and remains of structures extend over at least 100 m. It is not certain whether these comprised one farm with its outbuildings or more than one; certainly there are several enclosures. The spacing of habitations 150 m apart, rather than the normal 800–1,000 m, may be due either to special economic circumstances or to the long line of springs in this section of the valley encouraging occupation to concentrate and form a loosely nucleated settlement, rather than scatter over the plateau-top away from water. A similar valley, that of the Gypsy Race between the E. Wharram le Street villa and Duggleby has a closely set series of Romano-British type ladder-enclosures on both sides of the stream, though it is not clear how many separate farms were involved. The similarity of these Romano-British ladder patterns to the W. row of the medieval village raises the interesting possibility that the whole layout of this row was Romano-British in origin. The sub-Roman period in the 5th century is at present the only major gap in the continuity of settlement at Wharram from prehistoric times. This is almost certainly because of our inability to recognise finds from this period. The recent preliminary thermoluminescence dates by Durham University on coarse Roman-type pottery give readings in this period which, with more work, may help to fill the gap.

#### ANGLO-SAXON

In the Anglo-Saxon period it is more difficult to identify the settlement pattern; it was clearly still scattered though perhaps with fewer sites and these not always in the same place as the Romano-British habitations. Fieldwalking by Hayfield has

produced early and middle Saxon sherds at several of the medieval village sites as well as in isolated positions, for example to the W. and N. of Wharram Percy where Romano-British finds have not been made. But the nature of possible occupation still has to be determined. On the site of Wharram Percy itself there is Saxon pottery and building evidence from three of the four possible Romano-British farm sites on the plateau, though as yet there is none from the terrace, which appears to have been unoccupied in the early and middle Saxon periods: only about ten Anglo-Saxon sherds, and no structures, have been found in the large areas excavated. Such lack of intensive occupation is surprising in this sheltered position so close to a water supply. In the N. manorial enclosure Rahtz has excavated two *Grubenhäuser* (sunken-featured buildings) of the 6th century, and Mr G. Milne has found post-holes from several superimposed Saxon structures. 200 m to the NE. Milne found another *Grubenhäuser*, filled in the 8th century or later, containing 200 sherds of middle Saxon pottery, including imported Tating Ware and Hamwih Class 14 from northern France, thus suggesting aristocratic status for the settlement in the N. manorial enclosure.<sup>15</sup> There is no Saxon material from the site of the NW. trapezoidal enclosure, but there has not been any excavation of its interior. In 9 and 10 Toft and Croft excavation of a single 10 m square by Dr P. Stamper and Mr R. Croft has produced the post-holes, hearth and boundary ditch of a middle Saxon smithy with 1,000 sherds in this small area alone. This is a remarkable concentration for any site in N. England, bearing in mind the almost total lack of middle Saxon pottery at York, for example. It looks as though certain sites in Yorkshire used more pottery than others, as is also shown by the Saxon monastery at Whitby.<sup>16</sup> The sherds are large, so profiles can probably be reconstructed. The animal bones are also numerous and large: a radiocarbon date of a.d.  $730 \pm 80$  for the smithing hearth might support a middle Saxon date. The presence of a smithy may denote that this enclosure too was of aristocratic status; only a small sample area has so far been excavated and the other half of the smithy will be excavated in 1984. The Romano-British site in 8 Croft West has produced pottery and structures of the middle Saxon period, suggesting that this also continued through into the Saxon period. The general picture for the early and middle Saxon periods is therefore of a continuation of the pattern of scattered settlement typical of the prehistoric and Roman periods, but perhaps slightly reduced, and with some greater concentration on the sites of the future medieval villages.

#### NUCLEATION AND PLANNING

No pottery from the late Saxon period has been found on any of the scattered occupation sites except those that were already nucleated villages. It is therefore likely that it is in this period, either just before or shortly after the Scandinavian invasions, that settlement was nucleated into a series of villages  $1\frac{1}{2}$ –2 km apart, causing the desertion of the intervening farms as well as of other scattered sites which appear to have been formed in the Anglo-Saxon period. The open fields were laid out over these earlier settlements, and the curving tracks of the prehistoric period were

straightened to go through or round the blocks of ridge and furrow, as for example S. of the Wharram Grange villa.

Although an intensive ground survey has been made of the village site by Mr R. T. Porter and many air photographs have been taken, mainly by Professor J. K. S. St Joseph, over the last 30 years, the full implications of the surviving earthworks for the origins of the village plan have only become apparent since a remarkable series of oblique colour air photographs was taken by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in 1979. These showed that the surviving earthworks, while they have always been recognised as forming a regular plan with two parallel rows of tofts and crofts, derive only from the late medieval fragmentation of the village caused by its gradual desertion and the obliteration of disused croft boundaries. In particular, although it has been realised for many years that the gap in upstanding earthworks in the W. Row between 8 and 9 Tofts and Crofts was originally filled with tofts and crofts which had been levelled, the E. Row seemed to contain only three tofts, with two less certain ones to the S. The 1979 air photographs, however, show at least three further parallel croft boundaries which are not distinguishable on the ground, while excavation by Dr D. D. Andrews in these crofts has shown that they date to the 12th and 13th centuries, having been abandoned in the later medieval period. In 1983 excavation to the N. and S. of the cottages by Dr S. Wrathmell and Mr J. Wood confirmed that this area also contained peasant houses, as had been suspected, although no actual toft boundaries have as yet been located. Including the enclosed areas of the parsonage, graveyard and pond there is a clear plan of a regular E. Row extending for 500 m mainly along the terrace. The W. Row extends in a regular fashion for 400 m along the edge of the plateau. A wedge-shaped central green, formed mainly by the valley side between the plateau and the terrace, separates these two rows.<sup>17</sup>

The N. Manorial enclosure had always been thought of as a separate economic entity but this again proved deceptive, since the surviving earthworks represent only the position of the manorial complex in the 12th and 13th centuries. Underlying the E. enclosure, with its courtyard farm 20–22, the 1979 R.C.H.M. air photographs not only revealed a regular series of N.–S. boundaries, defining a further series of at least six crofts, but also showed that the boundary N. of the farm was a division between tofts and crofts, with the farm lying over the earlier peasant-house sites. The original layout of the medieval nucleated village therefore formed a regular two-row street-green village with a head-row at the northern end (Fig. 2). Moreover, although there have been some changes, and there are certain exceptions, each toft and croft was laid out on a module of 60 ft (18 m) or two selions, which at Wharram are on average 30 ft (9 m) wide.

This is most clearly seen in 12–17 Crofts where each croft appears to be laid out over two earlier selions, with the central furrow between the two ridges still visible on air photographs and locatable by geophysical survey. This is quite remarkable symmetry, bearing in mind the constraints first of the topography and then of the sequence of earthworks from the prehistoric and Roman periods which provided the framework within which the nucleated village had to be arranged. Sections have not been dug through the 12–17 toft boundaries but it is possible that the area to the E. of

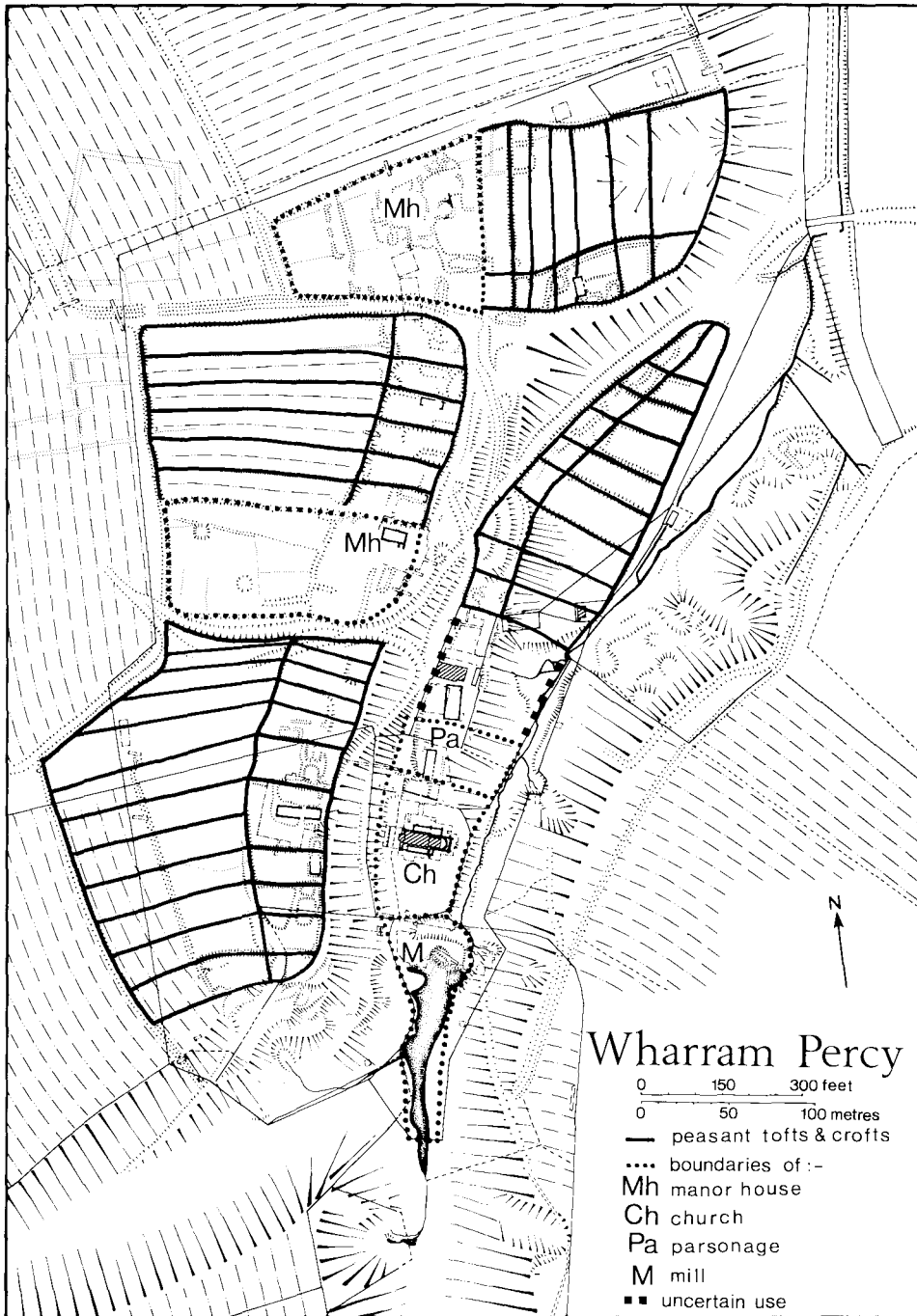


FIG. 2

A possible reconstruction of how Wharram Percy may originally have been laid out in the pre-Norman Conquest period as a regular street-green village



the great N.-S. linear earthwork, later the boundary between the tofts and crofts, was laid out in the Roman period, or even earlier since the boundaries resemble Celtic fields. This is hard to determine without further excavation, but some of the boundaries are too upstanding to be simply medieval toft boundaries.

The medieval village at Thixendale was also laid out with regular rows but most of the other villages around Wharram Percy seem to have been irregular. However, 19th-century maps of Wharram le Street, together with a field survey by Hayfield of the surviving earthworks of medieval peasant houses and croft boundaries in this shrunken village, show that the present T-shaped plan is quite recent and that the village was originally regularly laid out as a double-row village. The same seems to be the case at North Grimston, which has changed its plan and orientation entirely during the last 100 years. Perhaps these Wolds villages are therefore comparable with the other planned villages known from Yorkshire, and there may be many more planned villages than is apparent from modern maps.<sup>18</sup>

Mr D. N. Hall has surveyed Wharram Percy and its surrounding townships with most remarkable results. Not only has it become apparent that all the available flat ground on the plateau was laid out in ridge and furrow, but it is almost all laid out N.-S., often in long selions up to 1,000 m long which ignore the topography, coming to the edge of a dale and then starting again on the other side,<sup>19</sup> unlike those in the patchwork Midland furlongs. This has important implications, as clearly the whole system must have been planned at one time and not assarted gradually from the waste. When the villages and fields were laid out the area must have been fully exploited, with all the cultivable land ploughed, leaving only the steep valley sides for grazing and trees. There would also have been no room for extra houses in the village except by sub-division; there are some signs that this took place, but the basic layout of 30 tofts is remarkably similar to the 30 house sites which may be deduced from the medieval documents.<sup>20</sup> There are a few blocks of ridge and furrow on different alignments, that under 12-17 Crofts at Wharram Percy being one which with others just outside the village boundary banks may survive from the field systems associated with the pre-nucleated scattered settlement, but if so it is not clear why those outside the village tofts and crofts were not included in the replanning. Some of these right-angled blocks might be later changes or sub-divisions, such as consolidated demesne, but certainly the ridge and furrow under 12-17 Crofts and the E. enclosure of the N. Manor at Wharram Percy must be earlier. This uniform layout suggests that the *Solskifte* system, which it is clear from medieval documents was in general use in the area, dates back to the period of replanning when the villages and fields were laid out.

This regular layout is not confined to the immediate Wharram area, and has been noted for some time in Yorkshire.<sup>21</sup> More recently Miss M. Harvey has found it to be common in Holderness,<sup>22</sup> but it now looks as though regular planned villages and long selions are common on the Wolds, particularly along the Great Wold Valley.<sup>23</sup> There are three periods when planning might have taken place: (1) at the period of initial nucleation in the middle/late Saxon period; (2) following the period of Scandinavian invasion and settlement; or (3) in the late 11th or early 12th century following the disruption of the Harrying of the North. To dispose of the third

possibility first: there has been considerable recent discussion about the replanning of villages in the 12th century in the north<sup>24</sup> but there are serious difficulties in suggesting that this was when the Yorkshire Wolds settlements were replanned. However great the disruption of the Harrying, and this has recently been doubted in its previously argued extreme form,<sup>25</sup> Domesday Book clearly shows extensive divided ownership; at Wharram Percy itself there were two manors and many other villages were similarly, if not more, divided. While it would have been quite possible for single lords to replan their villages, it now looks as though whole areas, not just single estates, were replanned. Although full documentation does not become common before the 12th century, such a major replanning over large areas of the country is unlikely not to get some mention or reference. The first possibility, of planning at the time of the initial move from scattered settlement to nucleation, seems the most logical as this must have been an important period of change. But there is no evidence that nucleation all took place at once: it might have been a gradual process over a long period, like the later enclosure. A serious objection is the size of the population. It seems unlikely that the population of the Wolds would have expanded to its greatest extent in the 8th or 9th century.

At the present time the second possibility, of reorganisation during the Scandinavian period, seems the most likely: this has recently been put forward by Miss Harvey as a development of her earlier theories.<sup>26</sup> In the first place, however great or small the extent of Scandinavian settlement, this must have been a great period of change. Perhaps most telling is the almost complete replacement in the Wharram area of English by Scandinavian place-names. This cannot denote completely new settlements filling gaps, as was once thought, because most of the places were certainly occupied as part of the prehistoric and Roman pattern of scattered settlement. They must therefore have been renamed after a redivision of the land by the new Scandinavian aristocracy. This would provide the obvious point at which whole areas could be replanned and villages and long strips laid out without any regard to previous ownership or vested interests, something which would have been very difficult before even if there were large Saxon multiple estates, and certainly after the Norman Conquest with divided ownership. An alternative might be that in the Wharram area the Scandinavian reorganisation included not only both the replanning and laying out but also the actual nucleation of the villages at the same time. This would be a tidier hypothesis, but in many areas of the country nucleation appears to be more likely to have taken place before rather than after the Scandinavian invasions and may not have been affected by the Scandinavians at all.

Until recently it was believed that 8th- and 9th-century settlement in Scandinavia was scattered but the recent discovery of settlement sites of that period in Denmark, some of them nucleated, partly removes this problem. In fact there is now increasing evidence that the Danish pattern of scattered settlement was changing at just about the same time as nucleation was happening in England.<sup>27</sup> There is also the matter of *Solskifte* which was clearly in use on the Yorkshire Wolds and should logically go back to this period of planning. Until recently there has been little early evidence from Denmark and some scholars have put its introduction quite late, even suggesting that it might have originated in England. The remarkable work by

Professor A. Steensberg at Borup (in which I was privileged to take part) has shown that the village with its three farms and associated long strip fields was laid out according to *Solskifte* as early as the 8th century.<sup>28</sup>

A Scandinavian replanning and laying out of long strips would therefore fit in best with the present available evidence and be comparable with the long strips and planned villages laid out by the Carolingian colonisers in Germany.<sup>29</sup> If Scandinavian reorganization happened in the 10th century, as seems likely from the many -thorpe names, which are thought to be late, it would link with the extensive evidence for expansion of settlement at this time as shown by the growth of towns, trade and industry, which, together with the rising population, would provide that extra impulse leading to the need to reorganise. The 9th and 10th centuries were as much a period of planning as the later medieval period, as is shown by the late Saxon planned towns. There remains the problem of how, if the population had fully expanded by the Norman Conquest, account can be taken of the undoubted evidence for rising population in the post-Conquest period. Miss Harvey<sup>30</sup> has provided a possible answer for Yorkshire by suggesting that the landscape was fully exploited and laid out by 1066, but that the population was in fact reduced by the Harrying of the North and then took some time to recover. This might mean that the population was able to expand into the planned layout of the fields and tofts without the need for further reorganisation or subdivision. Further work needs to be done to examine the distribution of these planned villages and it would be particularly important to see if they are confined to the area of the Danclaw. Parts of the country where the patchwork open fields are common might well be areas which were not fully utilised before the Conquest, and indeed there is often evidence here for later assarting. Nearer at hand this may apply to parts of the Vale of York where Miss Harvey and Hall are now examining sample areas to test this hypothesis.

At Wharram itself the environmental evidence for the pre-Conquest period, studied by Miss M. Girling, suggests an area of mixed arable farming and grazing land, with very few trees, which indicates an early full clearance of the area. In fact it is likely that after the initial exploitation in Roman times, any Anglo-Saxon setback was slight and there was general continuity of settlement throughout, with the Scandinavians perhaps making more impact on the countryside than the Anglo-Saxons, who retained the earlier pattern of scattered settlement.

#### DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

It is unfortunate that there is no Anglo-Saxon documentary evidence for the Wharram area in the pre-Conquest period which might throw some light on these important events. There is only one Saxon charter surviving for the Wolds, that for Newbald in 963. This is of interest as it shows the same assessment at that time as at Domesday and in the post-Conquest period, suggesting that the organisation was very much the same in the 10th as in the 12th century, certainly without any major reorganization.<sup>31</sup>

Domesday Book of 1086 provides the first documentary evidence for Wharram and it is unfortunate that the Yorkshire entries are so short, with only basic

information and no population or other extra information. Wharram Percy belonged to the king; it was assessed for nine carucates and divided between two manors. There is little information for the late 11th and early 12th centuries but Professor M. W. Beresford has worked out the manorial descent from the middle of the 12th century onwards when the ownership appears as divided between the Percies and the Chamberlains.<sup>32</sup> The village remained under dual ownership until the Percies acquired the whole property in 1254.

The Percies retained Wharram Percy until 1403 when they exchanged it with the Hiltons for land in Northumberland. The Hiltons completed the desertion of the village about 1500 and were subsequently prosecuted as depopulating landlords under the anti-enclosure Act of 1489. The medieval manor house sites have yielded no artefact later than 1300 when they probably fell into decay. The Percies had their principal Yorkshire residence elsewhere and they may never have been resident; the Hiltons certainly were not and the estate was simply treated as an investment by Archbishop Hutton and his family (1573–1634), the next owners, the Lincolnshire family of Buck (1634–1751), and by the Berkshire Englefields (1751–1833). The East Riding family of Middleton, who owned Wharram Percy and most of Wharram le Street by 1833, already had a residence at Birdsall House in the next parish. No documents survive from the administration of the medieval manor, perhaps through the changes of ownership and the absenteeism; after the prosecution of 1518 evidences of this sort might have been embarrassing. A limited range of documents survives from the private estate papers of the post-medieval owners, which have been studied by Beresford.

#### CHURCH AND MANOR SITES

The first evidence for Christianity at Wharram is the fragment of a Saxon cross which has been dated by Professor R. J. Cramp to *c.* 800.<sup>33</sup> Dr J. Lang has identified the stone as not being the local Wolds sandstone but sandstone from the North Yorkshire Moors, thus linking the cross with that school of sculpture. The fragment was not found on the terrace by the church but in the boundary ditch on the plateau between the valley side and 6 Toft.<sup>34</sup> The assumption was that it had been carried up to 6 Toft for some purpose, but it was found in an early medieval context — certainly before the building of stone peasant houses, and possibly before the construction of the 12th- and 13th-century timber peasant houses, as the ditch contained hardly any pottery and so is likely to have been filled in by the early 12th century. The ditch had been interpreted as the boundary between grazing on the valley side and another activity, perhaps arable cultivation, on the plateau. There is now a possibility that it was the boundary of a second religious enclosure, additional to that on the terrace below. To the SW. of Area 6 a pit was found containing parts of about ten burials. It had been assumed that these might be Romano-British burials disturbed and reburied by the 12th-century peasants who laid out the toft. The bones had not been sent to Harwell for radiocarbon determination as they seemed low on any list of priorities. In view of the radiocarbon results from the terrace, which suggest that the earliest church was no earlier than the 10th century, Dr R. Morris suggested that the

church might have moved and that a pre-Scandinavian church might have been in 6 Toft.

Bones from five skeletons from the pit were therefore sent to Harwell in 1983 and the radiocarbon uncalibrated results give a range in the late Saxon and early medieval period between the 9th and 14th centuries. This is not very helpful, for besides suggesting that the charnel resulted from a burial ground which lasted several hundred years, it seems to be contemporary with, rather than earlier than, the church on the terrace. None of the post-hole patterns in the area excavated in 6 Toft can be interpreted as a structure which might have been a church, while there are no obvious empty graves. Any late Saxon features therefore must have been further W. or S. but finds included a *sceatta* and a 9th-century strap-end. If there is a second church, which might have had earlier origins than the surviving building on the terrace, then the date range of the burials suggests that it continued till after the 12th century, when the various proprietary churches were grouped into a large parish centred on the church in the valley. From the evidence of other proprietary churches, like Raunds in Northamptonshire, several hundred burials might be expected over this period,<sup>35</sup> so it is odd that only a dozen were disturbed and reburied and also, if there was recent knowledge of a church, that they were not reburied in the terrace graveyard. There would be no reason why an earlier church site should not be built over and it might have provided the land for some of the supposed 12th-century expansion of population to be housed within the limits of the original laid-out rows. Finally, far from suggesting that the W. Row was laid out in the 12th century, the date of the earliest peasant houses, the cross fragment and the burials in 6 Toft might have been part of a much earlier layout including a second religious site.

Surprises abound at Wharram so it is perhaps unwise to speculate too firmly, but if there was a Saxon proprietary church in Area 6 and another on the terrace below we seem to have two religious sites and two manorial enclosures, not linked in two groups, each of one church and one manor, but on four different locations. When there appeared to be two manor sites on the plateau with a church on the terrace it could be argued that the church served both manors, but this now seems less certain and might suggest, if there were two religious sites and two manors on four different sites, a more fragmented Saxon ownership than just the two Domesday manors, which is the reverse of what might be expected from the period of Scandinavian reorganization.

The above discussion shows how far we have progressed from the simplistic interpretation of the 1960s when it was thought that the Saxon settlement started on the terrace by the church and then expanded up on to the plateau in the 12th century.<sup>36</sup> It had been assumed on the evidence of *sceattas* and *stycas* of the 8th and 9th centuries, plus the fragment of Saxon cross, that the sequence of churches on the terrace started in the 8th or 9th century, though a shorter, Scandinavian chronology was always considered.<sup>37</sup> The Saxon finds in 10 Toft and the North Manor have revolutionised our ideas of the development of Saxon settlement, while Harwell radiocarbon determinations have resulted in the dating of the earliest timber and stone churches on the terrace to the Anglo-Scandinavian period in the later 10th and

early 11th centuries. There is still the major problem of the use of the terrace in the period between the Romano-British farms of the 4th century and the 10th-century building of the small proprietary church. The obvious possibility is that on the terrace there was a third Saxon manor, in addition to those proposed for the N. Manor and 10 Toft, which has not yet been located. There was certainly some activity, as is shown by the 8th- and 9th-century coins, but during twenty years' excavation only a handful of Saxon sherds has been found and no structures belonging to the period between 400 and 900. This lack of evidence is, however, by no means conclusive, as there might have been a Saxon manor site S. of the church where it has not been possible to excavate because of recent graves, or further N. under the medieval vicarage where excavations are just commencing. The remarkable fact that in 10 Toft a major excavation over ten seasons failed to reveal any middle Saxon remains when these were only a few metres to the W., suggests caution. The interpretation is further complicated by the radiocarbon dating of an animal bone associated with one of the earliest burials E. of the church. It was assumed that this might be either residual Romano-British or rubbish thrown in with the 10th- or 11th-century burial. The result, a.d.  $710 \pm 90$ , was again paradoxical, suggesting middle Saxon occupation nearby. Until the full nature of Saxon settlement on the terrace is understood it would be unwise to speculate further about a possible area reserved for trading purposes, or an area linked with a water cult—possible solutions proposed by Mrs H. E. J. Le Patourel and Professor G. Jones.

#### THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARTIN

The results of the complete excavation of the church and the study of the standing fabric have been published by Mr R. D. Bell and Mr J. Thorn<sup>38</sup> so there is need for only a basic summary here. Unlike the Continent, Britain has had very few complete large-scale medieval parish church excavations.<sup>39</sup> It is usually only in redundant churches that such work is possible, and even then, as at Barton-upon-Humber, limitations may prevent a total examination. At Wharram Percy, however, as the church had become ruinous by the time it was taken into care by the Department of the Environment in 1972, it was possible not only to excavate the church and its immediate surroundings totally but to take off the plaster and for Thorn to examine fully the standing fabric, with quite striking results. The only limitation has been in the area to the S. of the church where there are recent burials, but it has been possible to sample the N. and W. parts of the graveyard and to excavate all the church burials.

In the two earliest, pre-Conquest, timber and stone phases the church was small and could not have held the population from the five townships comprising the present parish of Wharram Percy. It is therefore probable that St Martin's was proprietary, though, as explained above, it is not certain to which manor or settlements it belonged. If however the village plan was laid out in the 10th century, it could have been part of that layout irrespective of where the previous Christian centre (or centres) might have been. The first Norman church was much larger in size, probably of the early 12th century, a period of major church rebuilding on the

Wolds generally as is shown at Weaverthorpe and other villages. This is the likely time for the parishes to have been formed from a grouping of earlier scattered churches. It could be argued that the large size of the Norman church might be linked with the arrival of the Chamberlains and the Percies and their desire for major architectural showpieces such as the Area 10 manor house, but in this instance parish formation is a more probable explanation. The parish is not likely to have been formed in pre-Conquest times, for example at the same time as the proposed Scandinavian replanning, for at the time of Domesday the present parish of Wharram Percy was split between two different Hundreds, and the shape of the parish, with Towthorpe sticking out oddly, looks like an amalgamation of convenience (Fig. 3).

One problem still to be resolved is why Wharram Percy parish was formed from five townships, Wharram Percy to the N. of the Wolds ridge and the other four to the S., while the neighbouring parishes of Wharram le Street, Birdsall and Fridaythorpe were one-settlement parishes. Three other nearby parishes are also multiple:

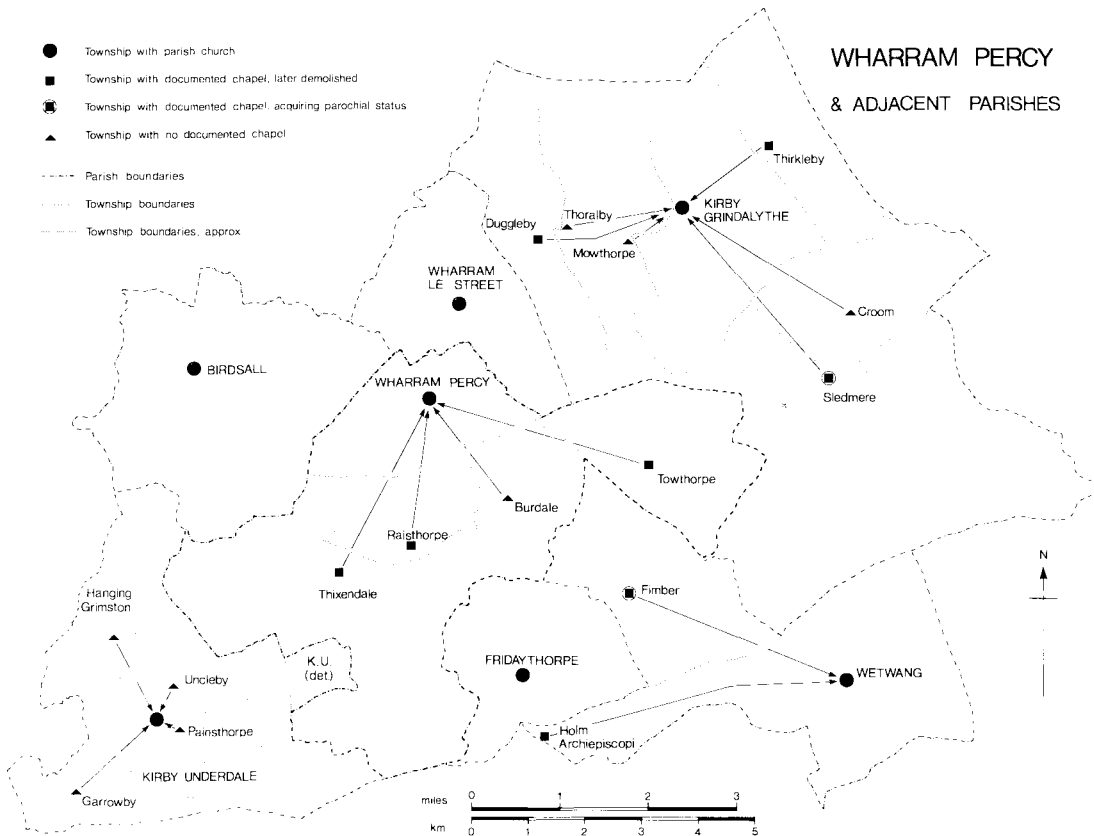


FIG. 3

Wharram Percy and adjacent parishes showing the parish and township boundaries together with the parish churches and chapels

Wetwang, another odd-shaped grouping, Kirby Underdale, and Kirby Grindalythe, the two latter comprising five and seven townships respectively. All these have Scandinavian names, suggesting that they are part of the same replanning and renaming operation, but the kirk- element in the two Kirbys raises the interesting possibility that these were pre-Conquest church centres which linked the settlements in their parishes. But without any pre-Domesday documents the reasons for these groupings of townships must remain obscure if tantalising. The present structure of Wharram Percy parish raises the question whether there was original unity across the watershed to the four townships on the S., or whether this was purely a post-Conquest development, with earlier links having been northwards to Wharram le Street.

In the later 12th and 13th centuries the parish church at Wharram Percy was considerably enlarged by the addition of S. and N. aisles and chapels. Though there may well have been some population expansion at this period, it is clear from the early full utilisation of the local resources and the pre-12th-century provision of tofts for 30 families at Wharram Percy, and (from the open field evidence) presumably similarly full exploitation of the other four townships, that there would not have been the need for the additions just to take a greatly increased population: the expansion of the church may have been for liturgical reasons or simply the result of the conspicuous spending of the Chamberlains and the Percies. As the work at Wharram progresses it becomes clearer all the time that the development of the area was much more complex than was ever considered in the early years of the project. In the same way that it is now probable that the village did not develop from one single centre, the simplistic concept of the expansion of the church epitomising the expansion of population and settlement in late Saxon and early medieval times is also becoming doubtful; the church may have been enlarged for quite different ecclesiastical or seigneurial reasons.

#### BURIALS

Excavation in the St Martin's graveyard has produced significant evidence for the Wharram Percy parish populations. The series of stone coffins and grave slabs, three of which were found *in situ*, presumably marked the burials of the last lords of Wharram Percy before the Norman Conquest, while the later foliated cross grave slabs with their swords continue the series. By the 14th century the lords buried are likely to have been from the other four townships: the Chamberlains had departed in 1254 and the Percies were probably not resident in the 14th century nor were the Hiltons in the 15th. A grave slab with a chalice would have covered the burial of a priest, while two actual priest burials with their chalices and patens were excavated, one in the chancel and the other in the NE. chapel.

For the ordinary peasants 600 burials (and another 400 disturbed remains making a total of about 1,000 individuals) have been excavated in the church, its immediate surroundings and two sample areas to the N. and W. of the church. Unfortunately, because of the quantity of the material, it was not possible to complete a full human bone report in time for the church monograph and this will



have to follow as a separate volume to be published by York University. Preliminary results by Dr D. R. Brothwell, however, suggest that there will be important evidence for the physical anthropology, mortality, disease and nutrition of a medieval rural population.<sup>40</sup> One of the puzzling results is the apparent change in skull type which has also been identified in York.<sup>41</sup> The graves were regularly laid out in rows, and the graveyard seems to have been used for at least four cycles of burial as the ground built up, at any rate on the N. side. The burials cover a period of 1,000 years but are hard to date absolutely as there were few datable grave goods or other associated material.

One major problem still to be resolved is the significance of the domestic rubbish found in the graves. The date of the large quantity of animal bones, for example, is uncertain and there are too many to arrive in a grave by chance. It is known that graveyards were used for all sorts of secular purposes in the medieval period, so the debris may come from these activities. It is less likely that the graves were used for the disposal of general rubbish as this was put on the fields rather than buried.

#### PARSONAGES

Before 1983 it was known that there had been several different sites for the parsonages but it had been thought these were all N. of the church. Then a trench dug by Mr M. Atkin, to check the boundary between the mill area and the present S. boundary of the graveyard, produced evidence for a 12th- and 13th-century building, with pottery suggesting higher status than a peasant house. It is possible that it was the mill house, but as it was firmly separated from the mill area by a boundary ditch, and later a wall, it is more likely to have been part of the ecclesiastical complex and perhaps an early site of the parsonage. This building was demolished in the early 14th century, when a considerable amount of rubbish was dumped to build up the level of the graveyard. There may have been a later building at the higher level since there are slight traces on air photographs of what might be the rectangular foundations of a building. In addition no graves were found in this SE. corner of the graveyard though they come right up to the modern boundary in the SW. corner.

Excavation to the N. of the church by Miss C. Harding located a 14th-century stone wall only a few metres N. of the 19th-century N. boundary of the graveyard. This wall separated the graveyard from the supposed site of the late medieval parsonage, which trial excavations suggest lay against the hillside NW. of the church. Atkin will start excavating in 1984 to check this hypothesis, but there was certainly a major sandstone ashlar building in this position. Excavation has taken place in the courtyard to the E. of this building, with the surprising result that 12th- and 13th-century graves have been found extending N. beyond the 14th-century wall; this suggests that the 14th-century parsonage was built over the northern part of the graveyard and that it was unlikely to have been in this position in the 12th and 13th centuries for, even if the graveyard does not extend W. as far as the hillside, the area would be too restricted. In view of the 1983 evidence for a building of some

substance S. of the church which is datable to just this 12th- and 13th-century period, there is a strong possibility that the parsonage was at this time S. of the church while the graveyard was expanding northwards.

The development of the parsonages, however, was even more complex, since it is not certain that the earliest parsonage was also S. of the church. In the area N. of the church under the 12th- and 13th-century extension of the graveyard Miss Harding found a series of post-holes which seems to form a major late Saxon or early medieval building. Interpretation is hampered by the presence of earlier prehistoric and Romano-British occupation, and the disturbance of later graves, but it is possible that this was the site of the earliest parsonage, though it is also possible that it might have been a third manor site. But with the lack of pottery it might have been a barn related to domestic buildings as yet to be identified.

The documentary evidence is confusing because of changes between rectories and vicarages, but it is most likely that the major new building NW. of the church, over the northern part of the graveyard, was the rectory built by Haltemprice Priory after they were given the advowson in 1327, while the 'former vicarage house' mentioned in an extent of 1323 might be the earlier building S. of the church. As both the rectory and a former vicar's house are mentioned in the assignment of dower in 1368 this suggests continuity on two sites N. and S. of the church,<sup>42</sup> in which case the N. building would not so much be a change of site as the addition of a new one.

#### MEDIEVAL MANORS

In the 12th century a stone-built camera block was constructed in 10 Toft. The large number of sandstone blocks found in the rubble fill of the cellar made it possible for Thorn to reconstruct the general appearance of the building, its fireplace, doors and windows showing it to have been of high quality and well up to the standard of other manor houses of the 12th century.<sup>43</sup> It was not possible to find traces of the timber hall which it is thought would have accompanied the stone building, though the projecting wall to the W. of the approach passage may have formed the sill for its eastern wall.<sup>44</sup> The area where the hall might have been had been extensively quarried after the destruction of the stone building. It was hard to associate any other structures with the camera block: there would not have been any to the N. as the camera was close to the N. boundary of the enclosure. To the E. there were timber slots and post-holes which might have been contemporary, but they were not quite on the same alignment. To the SW. a deep pit was found by Stamper which has been interpreted as the cold meat and dairy store for the manor house. This site was abandoned after 1254 when the Percies acquired the whole manor, so it is assumed that this was the manor house of the Chamberlains. In the second half of the 13th century the area was used for chalk quarrying. An open-fronted shed found to the SW. in 1983 may have been in use during the life of the manor as it was of better quality than might be expected of one of the later peasant houses, much less an outbuilding.

The 9 and 10 Toft and Croft enclosure in which the 12th-century manor house was built appears to be Romano-British in origin, as a section across the N. croft wall

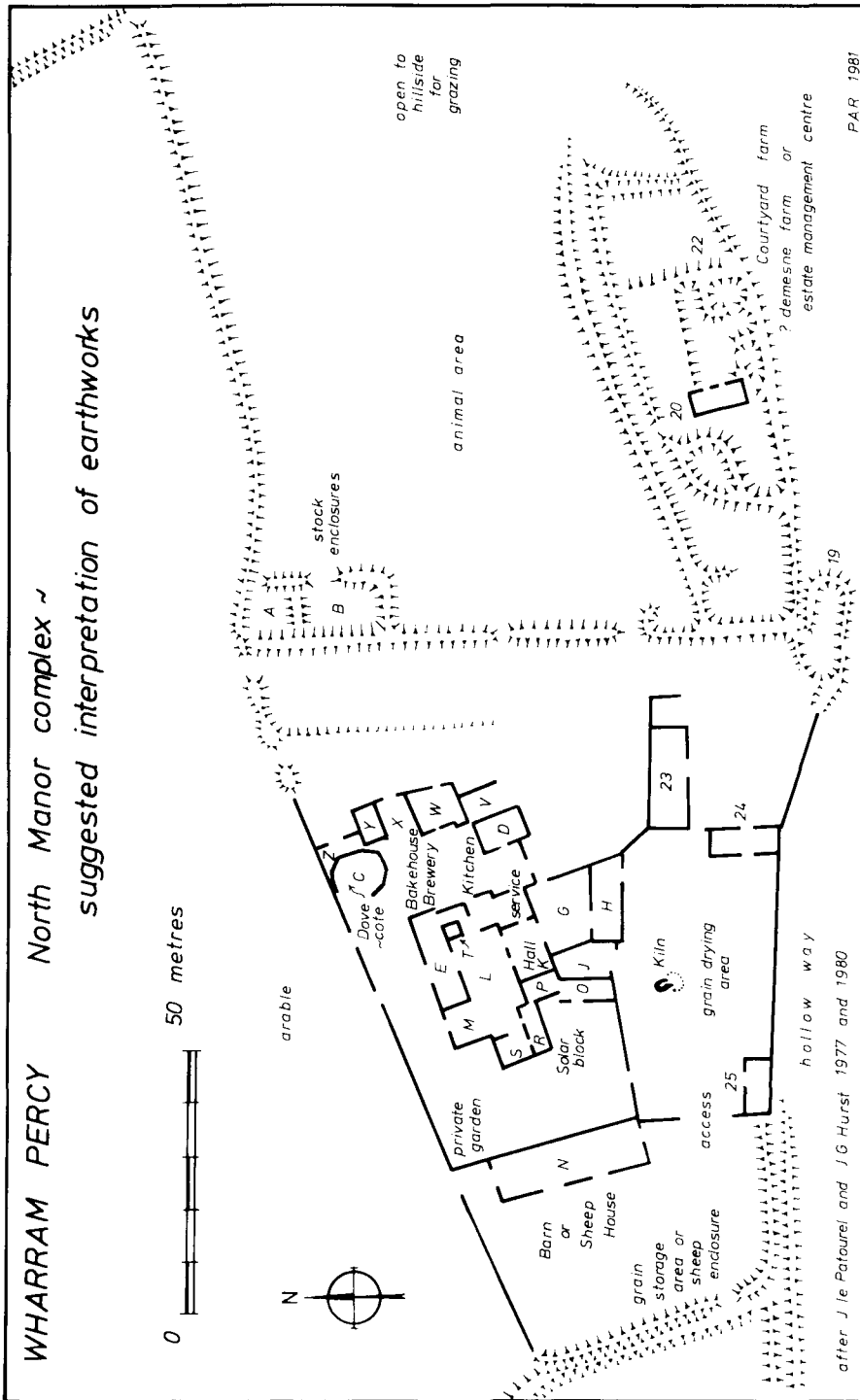


FIG. 4

Wharram Percy North Manor complex showing a suggested interpretation of the earthworks

showed a Romano-British ditch parallel to and slightly to the S. of the surviving earthwork. This comprises a substantial bank which may have marked the boundary of the middle Saxon site with its smithy. In the 12th century it was capped by a stone boundary wall. No remains have as yet been found of either a Romano-British farm or late Saxon and early post-Conquest occupation to provide evidence for continuity. But in view of the sequence in the N. Manor it seems highly unlikely that the large Romano-British enclosure should not have contained a farm complex and it seems too much of a coincidence that the major middle Saxon site should have been in the same enclosure as the later medieval manor if there was no continuity. This is especially so since the extensive excavations of the medieval manor in the 1950s showed no evidence for the Saxon occupation which was only a few metres away. Similarly, there could well be Romano-British and late Saxon occupation nearby to be located in future excavations, which will be designed by Stamper and Croft to determine the full nature of this enclosure and its use since Romano-British times.

The N. manorial enclosure was always one of the prime settlement points in Wharram Percy, with occupation, which may already have been aristocratic, by the Iron Age and through the Romano-British period. There is increasing evidence for Saxon occupation in the general area though not all periods are represented in the areas so far excavated by Rahtz and Milne. In the 12th century this enclosure was chosen as the site for the Percy manor house and it is hard to believe that this was not replacing the site of one of the late Saxon manors, with continuity of aristocratic status at least back to the Iron Age.

The medieval buildings have not been excavated but an attempt has been made in association with Mrs Le Patourel to interpret the earthworks (Fig. 4). The core of the manor comprises a central enclosure which contains the hall with a raised area, which may have been the dais, at the W. end. To the W. of this is a range of buildings which would have formed the solar block. Further W. is an area, with no exit to the western enclosure, which may have been the private garden of the manor; the blank E. wall of the barn would have been ideal for bushes and climbing plants sheltered from the W. wind. To the E. of the hall would have been the kitchen and service buildings. A raised part of the service area looks like the foundation for an oven in the bakehouse and brewhouse. The circular structure against the N. boundary may have been a dovecot. To the W. of the main enclosure is the western enclosure which contains a large barn set against its E. boundary with both end doors and two large doors opening into the western enclosure. To the S. of the main buildings was the southern enclosure which contained a corn-drying kiln of 12th- and 13th-century date together with chalk quarries. To the E. an access track from the village to the open fields occupied the site of one of the earlier tofts and crofts and divided the manor from the large eastern enclosure which contained, in the NW. corner, two rectangular enclosures; as these would have been hard to roof, they may have been animal pens. The open nature of the eastern enclosure suggests that it was used for animals which had access to the valley sides. It is not clear if this area was so used during the main period of occupation of the Percy manor house as the enclosure may then still have been covered by peasant houses. It may have been made into an open

animal area after the lords ceased to be resident in the 13th century and might be equated with the park recorded in 1320.<sup>45</sup>

Although the main buildings have not been excavated, the excavations in the southern enclosure indicate that the main period of occupation was in the 12th and 13th centuries. There is no pottery datable to the 14th and 15th centuries, suggesting that the Percies and Hiltons did not live there after about 1300. If this is so, then the courtyard farm, which was built over the sites of earlier peasant tofts 20–22, may be the centre from which the manor was run in the late medieval period. There was some trial excavation by Beresford in 1951 but unfortunately the pottery cannot be found in the Wharram pottery store; from memory it was 15th century. There is just a possibility that this was the site of the 16th-/17th-century sheep farm after the desertion of the village, as this type of courtyard farm is more typical of the post-medieval than the late medieval period in the area.

#### PEASANT HOUSES

Two sample peasant tofts were excavated at Wharram Percy in the 1950s and 60s. A full report has been published as the first Wharram monograph<sup>46</sup> so only the most important conclusions are given here. In fact it now appears that both Areas 6 and 10 were atypical in their origins and in many ways deceptive. Area 6, with a rubbish-free eastern boundary, seemed to suggest that this was open ground with no occupation in the vicinity, before the peasant houses were laid out in the 12th century, and therefore that this might be the time that the southern part of the W. Row was laid out. If it was a religious site, however, its enclosure could have been formed at a much earlier time, even, from the evidence of the cross fragment, in the 8th century. In Area 10 the earlier use of the site for one of the manor houses meant that the peasant house sequence was only 14th and 15th century. Therefore, for different reasons, neither toft excavation takes peasant house types back before the 12th century and there is as yet no evidence for the type of medieval structures built before this time at Wharram. Both tofts do, however, show the basic change from timber to stone peasant house building which has now been shown to be universal even where building stone was readily available.<sup>47</sup> In Area 10 the timber structures may not be typical of peasant building as they may be manorial, while in Area 6, although there were plenty of timber slots, post-holes and hearths, it was not possible to reconstruct any buildings: the houses must have been insubstantial to have left such slight traces. The stone-built peasant houses of the 14th and 15th centuries were built of chalk blocks quarried by the peasants from their own tofts. Many of these individual quarries were found, averaging about 2 m across and 4–5 m deep. The peasant could not afford the sandstone, which was used in the church, manor houses and parsonages, except when they acquired odd blocks left from the building or demolition of these structures. It is difficult to reconstruct the walls of peasant houses, much less the roofs, from the archaeological evidence but some of the buildings, from the width of their walls, and the amount of rubble lying about, must have been built in stone to eaves level while others with narrower footings would have had timber and cob walls.

The flimsy character of the peasant houses is indicated by the frequency with which they were repaired or rebuilt, often on quite different alignments as well as in different positions. The slight nature of peasant buildings is due mainly to the lack of security of the tenure of a medieval peasant and the resulting fact that he would have had no incentive to build for several generations even if he had the resources so to do. He was able at Wharram to acquire his own stone for building simply by digging but there would have been little large timber available in the parish so most of this would have had to come from other areas. Whether the lord provided building materials or not, and this varies very much in different parts of the country and on different estates and at different periods, the archaeological evidence suggests that only poor timber was used, so there is unlikely to have been any full timber-framing. Professor M. W. Barley has shown that this was not from lack of expertise<sup>48</sup> but may well have been as much from lack of materials as of incentive. The roofs in any case are likely to have been constructed of thin poles of ash which could have been grown in the limited woodland in the parish valleys.

The small finds provide important information on many aspects of peasant houses, for example by the discovery of hinges, locks and keys both for doors and for caskets. There must have been solid wooden doors rather than insubstantial wattle hurdle, mat or sack hangings, which anyway would be impractical in the Yorkshire winters. The windows would have had shutters and the doors have been solidly hung and fitted with locks. These, together with chest and casket keys, suggest not only a clear sense of private property but that the medieval village was hardly crime-free; perhaps the whole family must have been absent, either in the fields or further away, fairly frequently, for if someone was usually left in the home there would be no need for these precautions, though the peasants may have locked themselves in at night.

Interpretation of the peasant house plans demonstrates the limitations of archaeological evidence. In both Areas 10 and 6 the 14th-century small one- or two-roomed houses were succeeded in the 15th century by the classic large long-houses, 90 ft (27 m) long. Although an actual sump was found in only one period in Area 6<sup>49</sup> it is likely that the other long buildings also housed cattle as the liquids would easily drain into the chalk without any need for a soak-away. Nevertheless there are several possible interpretations for the change from the small houses to the long-houses. There could have been a change in the tenancy, from a landless peasant, or one without animals, to one owning cattle. There could have been a change in the balance of agriculture, with peasants having more animals, or it may have been only with a deterioration in climate that there was need to bring them inside. It is thus very difficult to draw economic or social conclusions from house plans alone.

#### DAILY LIFE

Many activities are clearly demonstrable. It was usually assumed in text books that the medieval peasant lived in some squalor and filth and that thick floor and rubbish levels would accumulate. It was in this expectation that the intensive recording of finds was made in the 1950s.<sup>50</sup> In fact excavations of peasant houses at Wharram have demonstrated the cleanliness of the medieval peasant to such an

extent that, far from rubbish levels building up within the houses, the peasant must have swept out so often that U-shaped depressions appeared, which themselves contributed to the shorter life of the houses, as the walls were often undermined. This was particularly clear in the latest long-house in Area 6 where the walls had to be constantly supported and repaired over the period of its use. During the whole of the project only two rubbish pits containing pottery have been found. The stone quarries were also backfilled with clean chalk rubble, and so were difficult to date since there were often only one or two sherds of pottery in their fills.

The fieldwalking evidence by Hayfield shows the reason for this, for rubbish from the peasant houses and their tofts was not buried in rubbish pits but gathered into heaps and then spread on the fields as manure. The resulting pottery scatter, however, was not found over the whole township but mainly on the fields immediately to the N. and W. of the village, and a few across the valley to the E. Again the limitations of the interpretation of archaeological evidence make it hard to determine whether this partial manuring was due to an in-field out-field system or whether it was simply a matter of distance and convenience. This lack of rubbish pits and the use of rubbish for manuring illustrates the important ways in which archaeology can expand our knowledge of medieval farming practice.

Mrs A. R. and Dr I. H. Goodall have shown how other copper-alloy<sup>51</sup> and iron<sup>52</sup> objects discovered in and around the peasant houses throw interesting additional light on daily life in the home and in the fields. In the home there is evidence for details of furnishings from casket and box keys, for heat from the central hearths with firecovers, lighting from candle holders (but there were no pottery cressets) and food preparation and eating from pottery. There was an overwhelming preponderance of cooking-pots, other hollow ware and open bowls for dairying, while jugs were rare, which suggests that they were usually made in wood or leather. There were no exotic pottery forms; for example aquamaniles, salts or money boxes.<sup>53</sup> There was evidence for items of dress with copper-alloy brooches, buckles, strap-ends, dress-fasteners and pins; for sewing with needles, thimbles and scissors, and for recreation with bone dice.

The system of roads and access tracks to the fields, including terraced ways up and down the valley sides, shows the complex pattern of movement necessary to carry out the numerous village activities (Fig. 5).<sup>54</sup> The use of animals is demonstrated by the bones which throw light on their use for traction, meat, hides, dairy products, wool,<sup>55</sup> and spinning.<sup>56</sup> The large number of horse bones, together with items of horse equipment, show that horses were already used for ploughing on the light chalk soils by the 13th century,<sup>57</sup> and also hint that in the later medieval period Wharram was already a horsebreeding centre, as the area between Wharram and Malton still is and has been since at least the 18th century. Horses were in fact still bred at Wharram Grange farm till the 1930s. Besides the more routine work in the fields, major works, like the levelling up of the graveyard, the constant rebuilding of the mill and fishpond dams, and other earth shifting provide archaeological evidence of heavy labour services.

Other objects found provide evidence for local industry and markets. There is the middle Saxon smithy together with large later groups of iron slag, and coal which

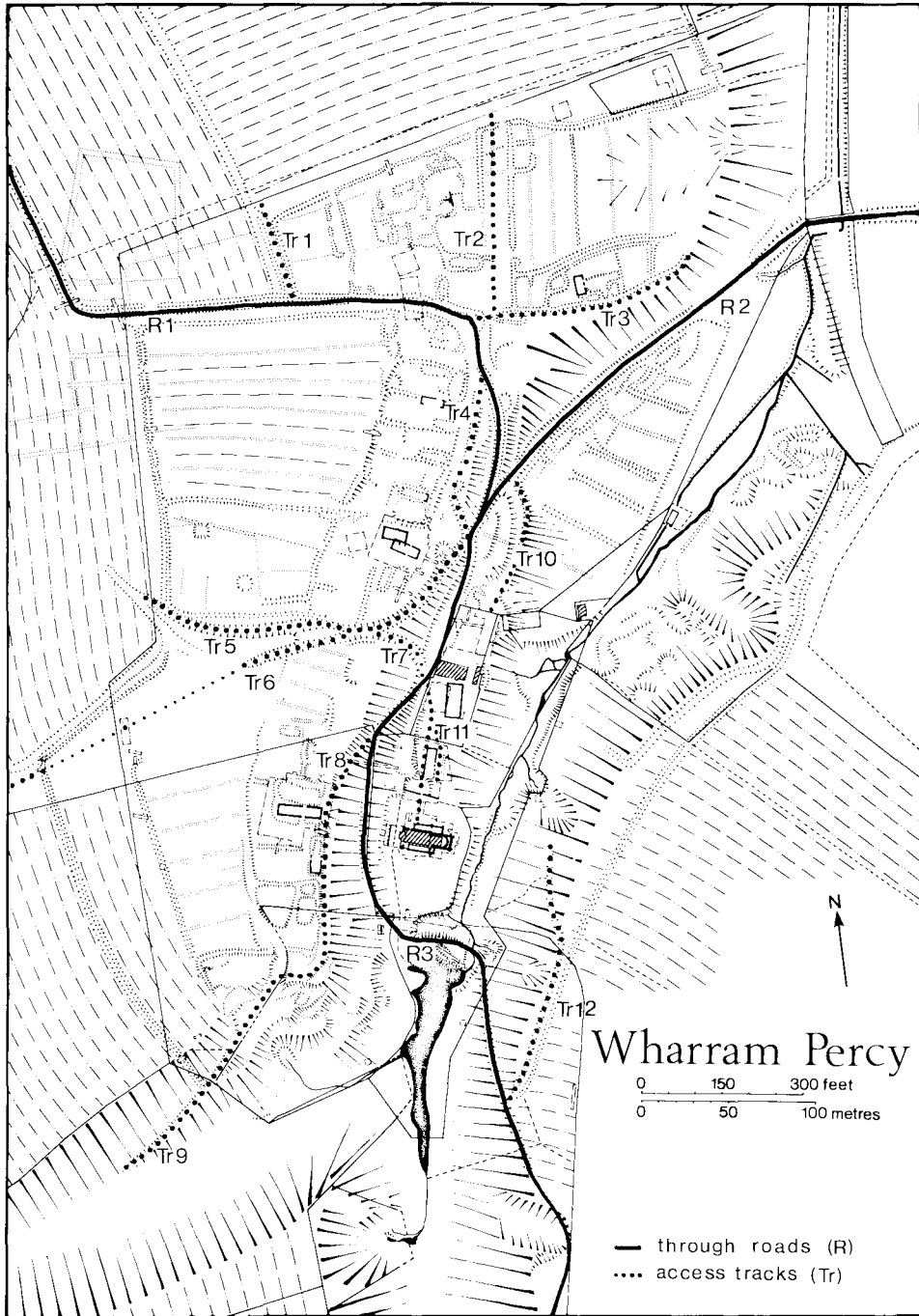


FIG. 5

Plan of Wharram Percy showing the network of through roads and access tracks



is likely to have been used for industrial rather than domestic purposes. Other trades are shown by tools for stone, wood and leather-working. The pottery evidence suggests that Wharram looked to Malton, on a York-Scarborough axis, as its main market centre, rather than to Hull. Long-distance trade is shown by the sea fish brought 32 km from the coast and coal 60 km from the Castleford area in the W. Riding. Continental imports include large numbers of Mayen lava querns from the Rhineland and even SW. French Polychrome pottery and Mediterranean maiolica found in Area 10. Significantly, nothing similar was found in Area 6, so they may come from the period of manorial quarrying before the peasant houses were built in Area 10. The finding of imported pottery vessels in peasant houses does not, however, necessarily mean that they were bought new by peasants from a market or fair, as they might have been thrown out or otherwise obtained from the manor, especially if single examples are found. By the late 15th century sufficient examples of Langerwehe and Raeren stoneware were to be found in both Areas 10 and 6 to show that by 1500 peasants had easy access to these ubiquitous drinking jugs. This shows a fundamental change in trading patterns in such items, which were by this time being imported by the thousand rather than the hundred and must have been sufficiently low in price to enable everyone to buy them, right down to the bottom of the social scale.

#### WATER UTILIZATION

A stream runs along the bottom of the valley, to the E. of the terrace, collecting water from a series of seven springs which emerge from the junction of the clay and the chalk in a 600 m stretch, leaving both Deep Dale and Drue Dale dry in their upper parts, except in the wettest times of the year and during major storms when water emerges along the valleys further S. From at least Bronze Age times, if not before, this large supply of water must have made the area a preferred site for settlement with the special facility of providing plenty of water for animals and easy access up the valley side to the grazing areas on the plateau. There is at present no archaeological evidence for intensive use of the water until the Saxon period, when Treen has shown that the stream was dammed, just S. of the church, possibly at first for fishing and then for a series of water mills which were in use from late Saxon times until the 13th century, when there was a N. mill (at a site unknown) and a S. mill. Presumably the S. mill became redundant with the amalgamation of the manors, so by the 14th century a N. mill and a S. pond are recorded.<sup>58</sup>

The archaeological evidence for the S. watermill comprises a series of clay dams which were constantly repaired and rebuilt. Some of the silts from the S. pond were preserved under the massive chalk rubble dam, which was built in the 14th century to form the fishpond which succeeded the watermill. Although the mill was situated so close to the water source, and utilised only the southernmost three of the seven springs, there would have been plenty of water to drive a horizontal mill. Unfortunately, although many fragments of millstone have been found, together with carbonised grain and both plaster and furniture beetles, the actual structure of the mill building itself has not been found. The precise dating of the mill sequence awaits

a series of radiocarbon determinations from Harwell on grain, wood, bone and leather; it is hoped that these will give a better result than the first dates obtained from the carbonised grain which was dumped by the stream in one of the earliest phases of water exploitation. This deposit produced radiocarbon dates of a.d.  $650 \pm 80$  and  $750 \pm 80$ , which were surprisingly early for a possible mill. It now appears from further research that if chalk water flows through such a deposit the radiocarbon dates may be several hundred years too early. The sequence of mills at the S. pond is therefore provisionally dated to the late Saxon and early post-Conquest periods; the first mill may have been established at the same time as the replanning of the village, the mill and pond forming the southernmost part of the E. Row. The major works necessary to form the late medieval fishpond may have been undertaken by Haltemprice Priory when they acquired the rights in the early 14th century, and at the same time as the major levelling took place in the graveyard and the new parsonage was built to the N. of the church.

#### MEDIEVAL POPULATION

From the limited evidence available the population of Wharram Percy and the extent of arable land appear to have fluctuated considerably. At whatever period the village tofts and crofts and open fields were laid out, the village comprised about 30 households, with every part of the chalk plateau under the plough, although the relative lengths of the cropped and fallow periods are unknown. At the time of Domesday in 1086 half the nine carucates were uncultivated but there are no population data.<sup>59</sup> In the conveyance of 1255-56 there were eight and a half carucates (or 68 oxen) which is the same as in the earliest extent of 1323, when there were 68 bovates, but at this time there was extensive waste and only sixteen peasant households. This, however, seems to have been a limited reduction, possibly due to the great famines of 1315-17 or the Scottish invasion of 1319, since, by 1368, even after the ravages of the Black Death, all 68 bovates were under cultivation and there were again 30 households. Only ten years later in the Poll Tax of 1377 there were about 15 families, after which the population seems to have been fairly stable during the early 15th century with the I.P.M.s of 1435 and 1458 each recording 16 messuages. In the later 15th century there seems to have been a steady decline until the final desertion and changeover from arable to sheep soon after 1500.

If the evidence of the 1368 partition is to be taken at its face value it raises two difficulties, one historical and one archaeological. The sixteen householders of 1323 match the fifteen or so families of 1377 and assume recovery from the Black Death although there had been tax relief in 1352. The archaeological problem is to find room for 30 houses within the earthworks, since no pottery later than 1300 has appeared in the excavated crofts at the centre of the E. Row, presumably abandoned. The archaeological evidence shows about sixteen house sites with substantial earthworks, which are likely to have been those surviving through the 15th century.<sup>60</sup> Both Areas 10 and 6 were deserted about 1500 but the date of the desertion of the other peasant houses is not known and pottery dating is not precise enough to give dates closer than a generation.

## POST-MEDIEVAL

Of the other townships in Wharram Percy, Burdale was probably also deserted about 1500 but both Towthorpe and Raisthorpe lasted till nearly 1700, and it is uncertain why they were then abandoned. Thixendale still survives and it was this that ensured the survival of Wharram Percy church, though it was reduced in size by the removal of the aisles and the chancel was shortened; the extra space was not required, nor would sufficient funds have been available for the upkeep of a larger church. Wharram le Street is very shrunken so the six settlements in the two parishes illustrate a full spectrum of settlement history.

The Wharram Percy vicarage was burnt down in the mid 16th century and a new one was built. The 18th-century vicarage, further E. near the edge of the terrace, has now been excavated by Miss Harding and its plan matches 18th-century Glebe Terriers, according to which two rooms were flagged and a third floored with deal. Remains of the stone flags have been found, as have the supports and remains of the joists for the deal floor. Underneath were found needles, a thimble and marbles which throw light on the activities of the vicar's family on winter evenings in the parlour. Mrs B. Hutton has drawn interesting parallels between this structure and other surviving vernacular buildings in Yorkshire.

After the depopulation of Wharram Percy the fields were let, probably as a single unit, to a succession of graziers whose needs for accommodation could not be met by the manor house, long decayed. No evidence for a 16th- or 17th-century farmhouse has yet been encountered but it was probably adjacent to the vicarage, where after the 16th-century fire there were a tithe barn and other farm buildings used in working the small area of glebe. A large courtyard farm was built here in the 1770s when improving landholders were returning the sheep runs of the Wolds to arable. A second farm of this type was also built at Bella, nearer to the Malton-Beverley road. The S. range of the Wharram Percy farm courtyard is comprised within the three cottages now standing. Standing remains of similar farm buildings can still be seen at the deserted site of Towthorpe. The improved husbandry at Wharram le Street and Thixendale, where open fields survived until Parliamentary Enclosure of the second half of the 18th century, was coordinated partly from a pair of rebuilt farms in the village streets and partly from new farms standing out in the newly fenced fields.

The Wharram Percy farmhouse itself was to the S. of the standing cottages, while the other three ranges of the courtyard to the N. have been located by excavation and are at present under full investigation by Wrathmell; the farmhouse will be excavated by Wood in the next few years and the cottages will be fully investigated during the later 1980s. The vicarage became disused after the amalgamation of the parishes of Wharram Percy and Wharram le Street in 1834 and had already disappeared by the time the estate map of 1836<sup>61</sup> was drawn. This first large-scale plan of the township still showed the 18th-century courtyard farm, but in the late 1840s Wharram Percy farm was moved nearly 1.5 km up on to the plateau to the SW. where farm buildings had been constructed earlier and where there was more room for expansion; the terrace site was restricted and did not afford easy access. The surviving S. range of the old farm buildings was converted into two

single-storeyed cottages which appear as Low House on the 1851 O.S. map. They were heightened and redivided into three in the later 19th century and used for farm labourers, though most of these lived in the large farmhouse. The whole township was farmed from these two farms at Wharram Percy and Bella: thus there was a reversion to scattered settlement. The 19th- and 20th-century development of Wharram Percy Farm has been studied by Miss R. Hellier and surveys are to be made of other farms, farm buildings and vernacular architecture in the area.

The parish church in its reduced form continued to serve the villagers of Towthorpe, Raisthorpe and Thixendale through the 16th and 17th centuries, and Thixendale alone during the 18th and 19th centuries, until a new church was opened at Thixendale in 1870. The burials were recorded in the parish registers from 1570. These burials were all inside or to the S. of the church: the destruction levels of the N. aisle were not cut by any burials after the desertion of Wharram Percy. Thirty-one memorial stones survive with a date range from 1770 to 1906: these have been published by Rahtz and Miss L. Watts<sup>62</sup> while the post-medieval graves found in the church are published in the church monograph together with a study by Miss Harding of the coffin fittings.<sup>63</sup>

In the late 18th century the fishpond was landscaped and faced with a sandstone ashlar wall, presumably as part of the improved farm. In the 19th century it was used as a sheep wash until in the 1930s the springs were tapped by Norton Rural District Council and pumped into the mains water supply; a new concrete sheep dip was then constructed further N. along the stream; this too has now gone out of use.

A major event of the 19th century was the construction of the Malton to Driffield railway in 1847-53. This came up the valley from Wharram le Street and tunnelled through the chalk watershed to emerge at Burdale. It was never a financial success, as the expected traffic did not materialise. It was closed to passenger traffic in 1950 and dismantled in 1959. A study is being made of the railway by Mr W. R. Burton, together with the adjacent chalk quarries at Wharram le Street and Burdale, which were exploited until the Second World War.

#### LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGY

The present landscape is dominated by intensive arable cultivation of the chalk plateau, with few hedges, giving the area an open look similar to medieval times. The scattered farms are a return to the pattern existing before village nucleation, reminding us that the village site, the initial reason for the Project, was a relatively short-lived and exceptional feature in the period of at least 5,000 years in which the area has been settled and exploited by man: the nucleated village at Wharram Percy lasted only 10% of that time. The steep-sided valleys are the only remaining areas of permanent grass in this sea of arable; they can be used only for rough grazing, and carry patches of hawthorn scrub, with scattered elder and rose. The hawthorn hedgerows still have the occasional ash tree, and elsewhere isolated ashes are the sole relic of former hedge-lines. These fine ash trees are survivals from the planting carried out by the Middletons when they acquired the estate in the early 19th

century. After 150 years many of them are now past their prime and over the last 30 years others have decayed and fallen, or have had to be felled as they were dangerous.

As tree roots damage earthworks and archaeological deposits no replanting is proposed on the main village site on the plateau, the more so as the environmental evidence suggests a largely open landscape in the medieval period. In the valley and on the valley side, ash are being replaced and hawthorn, elder and rose planted to ensure a full range of ecological habitats: some areas of scrub may have been present in medieval times following major population decreases. The environmental evidence shows that the medieval population could draw on a wider range of trees than is present in the immediate vicinity today. The existence of woods with a full range of broadleaved species in the medieval period is also suggested by the composition of the few surviving species-rich hedges in the neighbourhood.

To allow the visitor to gain an impression of what a medieval wood may have looked like, an area of the valley floor has been planted with those species present in the charcoal found in the excavations. It is planned to allow the oaks to grow up to become the standard trees, and to coppice the other species. The coppicing will be done in rotation throughout the wood, so that different stages in the process can be compared. The planting is at a very close density initially, to suppress the coarse-growing grasses, and hence create an impression of woodland as quickly as possible. Medieval woodland was normally located on the poorest soils or near the parish and township boundaries, but it is dangerous to over-generalise: in the vicinity, though not on the Wolds, some apparently ancient woodland fragments persist close to villages or village sites. Other landscape reconstruction projects include a species-rich hedgerow and an orchard of eighteenth-century apple varieties and bullace.

At Wharram Percy two small plantations, one of ash and one of hornbeam, have already been planted on the plateau and others of common lime, beech and wych elm are planned to create an impression of the 18th-century landscape of the improving landlords. In addition Scots pine and European larch plantations may be introduced: these were used to some extent in the 18th century. These clumps of woodland will provide an interesting contrast with Nut Wood, the W. side of which, facing the village site, is dominated by Norway spruce, typical of the 20th century. Landscape considerations are being planned and directed by Treen.

The botanical composition of the grasslands on the site is being investigated by Dr R. Gulliver. In the Wharram Percy village area the only chalk grassland in the strict sense of the word is on the steep slopes on the W. side of the valley. This is fairly species-rich, but the longer runs of slope elsewhere in the valley are proving to carry a wider range of species. The grasslands of the plateau are not of great interest as they are rather fertile and also are being improved by herbicide and nitrogen application. Some records of species composition are however being made. A survey of the botanical records of the area in the 19th century has been carried out: the available information is not very complete, but suggests major changes in the complement of arable weeds. Some groups of animals have been investigated fairly thoroughly, e.g. birds, mammals and butterflies, and it is hoped that further faunal surveys will be carried out. Grassland management trials to create colourful swards

in the absence of grazing animals are being carried out: these include planned hand mowing on the valley side W. of the churchyard, partial shading under the orchard, and enrichment of established swards by seeding into molehills. It is also hoped to try experimental dumping of a new, infertile surface soil, e.g. pure chalk or sand, on some swards. The use of sand as a surface medium in the vicinity of the dam is showing promising results in the first stages of colonization.

#### THE WHARRAM RESEARCH PROJECT

The earthworks of Wharram Percy deserted medieval village were first planned by Capt J. Bayly in 1851 for the first edition of the Ordnance Survey six-inch map,<sup>64</sup> one of several which he plotted on the Wolds at a time when other surveyors neglected them. It was another hundred years before the next major input, which quite by chance took place on two occasions within four weeks of each other just after the Second World War. On 26 June 1948 Beresford visited Wharram Percy as part of his programme of studying Yorkshire D.M.V.s after his move to the University of Leeds, while on 22 July St Joseph flew over to take the first oblique air photographs, though the R.A.F. vertical air cover of 1946 produced clear pictures which were already known to Beresford. Between 1950 and 1952 Beresford carried out trial excavations to confirm that the rectangular earthworks did derive from medieval peasant house foundations, and that the houses were not occupied after *c.* 1500. I joined him in 1952 and the sample area under excavation in 5 Toft showed that underneath the latest wall there was an earlier one on a different line, while underneath this there was the fill of a quarry.<sup>65</sup> In another part of 5 Toft a post-hole was found cut into the natural chalk, thus showing the complexity of the site and its promise for a research project.

The Deserted Medieval Village Research Group (D.M.V.R.G.) was founded at Wharram in August 1952 and Wharram Percy was chosen as the site for its main research project, which started in 1953 with the excavation of Area 10 in an attempt to investigate a sample medieval peasant house. During the first twenty years, the objects were perforce limited since the work was voluntary and limited to a three-week season each year. At a time when other bodies were carrying out a series of research and rescue excavations all over the country, mainly to establish a corpus of different peasant house forms, the D.M.V.R.G. took the view that as the first results at Wharram Percy were so promising it should continue to study other aspects of the village; during the 1960s, after the completion of Area 10, it therefore embarked on a second ten-year programme to excavate another peasant toft (Area 6) and also the parish church of St Martin, together with a sample of its graveyard.

The status of the project was fundamentally changed in the late 1960s with the generous offer by Lord Middleton to place Wharram Percy D.M.V. in the care of the then Ministry of Public Building and Works. The church was placed in the care of the Department of the Environment by the Diocesan Board of Finance in 1972 and the D.M.V. by the Birdsall Estates Co. in 1974. With a limited but regular input of finance it was then possible to draw up a twenty-year programme of excavation, consolidation, marking out, and display to the general public of all the major aspects

of a medieval village. It was the Department's intention that this site should counteract the partial impression of daily life gained from visiting castles, religious houses and other major buildings, which were used by only a small fraction of the medieval population.

The Wharram Research Project has therefore developed to study the multi-farious aspects described above.<sup>66</sup> It has not been practical for financial or staff time reasons to work for more than three weeks each season, though there are now other activities in progress throughout the year, especially long weekends in May and October. This has in fact been a considerable advantage, for over the last 30 years the input has amounted to some 160 weeks. It is salutary to consider what the academic results would have been if the same funds had been available in 1952 for three years' continuous work. The Project has greatly benefited by having the time to consider the results of the previous season each year before starting the next. But, more importantly, concepts of the medieval village, together with its development and antecedents, have fundamentally changed over the years so it has been possible to take advantage of all this new work in developing the Project. The main aim of the D.M.V.R.G. at its formation was to co-ordinate work by people in different disciplines to give the best chance of advancing our then limited understanding of medieval peasant life. Over the years this concept has grown remarkably: the scope of the very wide range of multidisciplinary activities now in progress could hardly have been foreseen 30 years ago.<sup>67</sup> An archaeological sideline generated in recent years by the excavation itself has been the excavation by Wood of the project's cesspits from the 1950s and 60s which has brought the archaeology right up to date, demonstrated the difficulty of giving absolute dates to quite recent deposits and at the same time provided useful environmental evidence for the decay of cess.

The present programme aims to complete the current work at Wharram by 1990, by which time there will have been some archaeological investigation of all the main aspects of the medieval village, together with a study of the development of the site from prehistoric times to the present day to set the visible remains in their chronological framework. The parish survey, extending the work at Wharram Percy by air photography, fieldwalking, geophysical survey and documentary research has greatly increased our understanding of the total landscape history of the area, thus putting Wharram in its context in space as well as in time. In addition to regular annual interim reports which are summarized in the *M.V.R.G. Annual Reports* and the 'Medieval Britain' section of *Medieval Archaeology* each year, two monographs have been published by the Society for Medieval Archaeology: the first on the two sample peasant tofts 10 and 6 and the 12th-century manor house found in Area 10;<sup>68</sup> the second on the church of St Martin.<sup>69</sup> Two further volumes are in active preparation, by Treen on the water utilization of the valley and by Hayfield on the evolution of the landscape of the two Wharram parishes. Other monographs on special topics are being published in the York University *Archaeological Publications Series*; the first, on the Memorial Stones in Wharram Percy churchyard, was published in 1983.<sup>70</sup> Others in preparation include the sample excavations on the two Wharram le Street Roman villas<sup>71</sup> and the report on the burials in the graveyard. It is planned that the full publication of the project will appear successively in the two series. The finds,

together with the original archive, are being gradually deposited in the Kingston-upon-Hull City Museums. There will be copies of the archive in the National Monuments Record and with the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission.

Hand-in-hand with the academic research over the last twenty years there has been a developing plan<sup>72</sup> for presenting the site to the public, which was one of the main aims of the Department of the Environment's (and now of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission's) Guardianship programme. As a first step the ruins of the parish church, the only standing remains from the medieval period, were consolidated. The earthworks present a much more challenging problem of interpretation. The most substantial earthwork, the dam across the valley, is the easiest: this has been reconstructed as it was in the 14th century, to recreate the late medieval fishpond with its deep pool near the dam and a marshy area to the S.; varied ecological habitats as well as a very pleasant amenity area for visitors have thus been developed. The present much photographed view of the church from the south-western hillside may well be replaced by the remarkable new vista opened up from the SE., showing the church reflected in the water of the fishpond. A small nature reserve has been formed on both sides of the stream E. of Low Houses and the church.

The other aspects of the village are much more difficult to explain to the general visitor. It is not possible to consolidate and lay out the peasant houses and other buildings excavated since most of them, except the church, are built of chalk which would crumble into dust after only a few winters. The Department's policy has therefore been to mark out a series of sample buildings which will give the visitor a simplified view of the position and plans of typical peasant houses and other buildings. As a first step the excavated foundations of the late Saxon church, and the later extensions, have been marked out by York stone slabs, and stones set on edge infilled with Breedon gravel, respectively. In Area 6 four of the peasant houses comprising two 14th-century small one- and two-roomed peasant houses and two 15th-century long-houses have been marked out with upright York stone edging infilled with Hovingham gravel for the earlier period and Breedon gravel for the later. It would not have been practical, and it would have been confusing for the visitor, to mark out all the periods of building, reconstruction and repairs which gave the excavated remains such a complex appearance. The four sample buildings have been chosen to demonstrate the main building types and the fact that the peasant houses were often rebuilt in new positions and on different alignments. The 12th-century undercroft in Area 10 will be marked out in 1984 together with one of the small peasant houses. It is not possible to lay out the later peasant houses, as they overlie the earlier features. It is therefore proposed to mark out some of the 13th-century quarries which succeeded the manor. Area 10 will thus demonstrate the 12th-century manor, the later quarrying and the earliest 14th-century peasant house, while Area 6 will show a later medieval sequence of peasant houses. It is planned during the later 1980s to mark out in a similar way the various parsonages and the post-medieval farm buildings on the terrace so that the visitor may follow through the development of the site from its medieval nucleation to the single later farm. Much more difficult is the problem of showing Saxon, Roman and prehistoric



elements, but it is hoped that this will be possible, for example in the case of the middle Saxon smithy in 10 Toft and some of the early features in the North Manor.

Over the thirty years of the Research project only 5% of the site area has been excavated, so that although some aspects, such as the church, have been completely explored there is still a very large part of the archaeological record left undisturbed, comprising a complete manorial complex, at least twenty peasant tofts and crofts, and large expanses of possible pre-medieval occupation. Interpreting these extensive earthworks for the general public presents a challenge. The Department has been experimenting on the best way this can be done as part of its policy of extending site graphics on Guardianship monuments. Until recently this was difficult because of the problems of making notices weather-, animal- and vandal-proof, especially on a site like Wharram which is grazed by cattle. A major advance has been the development of stainless steel plaques set in concrete which can not only reproduce simple plans but complex line drawings and photographs; coloured enamels enable different periods or features to be emphasized. In 1982 a series of these plaques was placed at Wharram at salient points with the aim of making the various parts of the D.M.V. more intelligible to the visitor. These plaques show plans of each area, accompanied by a basic text and reconstructions of that part of the site. It is hoped in this way to explain and bring to life the pattern of earthworks and other features. A pamphlet guide is in preparation and it is hoped to provide more detailed graphics to explain the site and its context in space and time both to the general public and to the informed or academic visitor. These will cover not only archaeological aspects but also the ecology and the landscape in an attempt at a multidisciplinary approach to the presentation of the site to increase its appeal to a wider range of visitor interests.

It is therefore hoped that after 30 years work the M.V.R.G. has demonstrated the value of concentrating on a single research project rather than moving from settlement to settlement. Every time a new area is opened up quite unexpected finds are made which continue to widen the horizons and scope of the project. It is clear that if work had stopped earlier any conclusions drawn would have been very misleading. Even large area excavations of most of a toft have failed to provide the complete picture, as is evidenced by the recent reinterpretations of both Areas 10 and 6. Each year new research problems are being identified, so that on the completion of the present programme in 1990, both the M.V.R.G. and the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission will have to consider how the potential of Wharram can best be used for both academic and presentation purposes in the 21st century, building on the major results which will have accrued from the work of so many people with such wide interests since 1948.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Wharram Research Project now comprises the work of over 100 specialists in a very wide range of multidisciplinary activities which form the major effort of the Medieval Village Research Group. This article is not therefore a report of my work but an attempt to summarise and synthesise the work that all the experts have carried out over the years and to record the thanks due to all the supervisors, students, volunteers and other helpers who, over more than 30 seasons, have provided the base without which the project would not have been

viaible. Over the last 30 years at least half the cost of the project has been met from other than government sources and by voluntary effort. Beresford has organized the project since its inception while Rahtz joined me as joint-director in 1980 bringing with him parties of archaeological students from York University. I am grateful to them both for help and suggestions with the text. Manby has advised on the prehistoric section, Hayfield on the results of the parish survey and Gulliver on the ecology. I am especially indebted to Porter, chief surveyor of the Wharram Project for 30 years, who has greatly improved the text and saved me from many errors and inconsistencies, though the responsibility for the various interpretations remains my own. Work by Mrs A. Clark, finds co-ordinator, and Mrs M. E. Ewins, archivist, ensures the smooth running of the project.

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