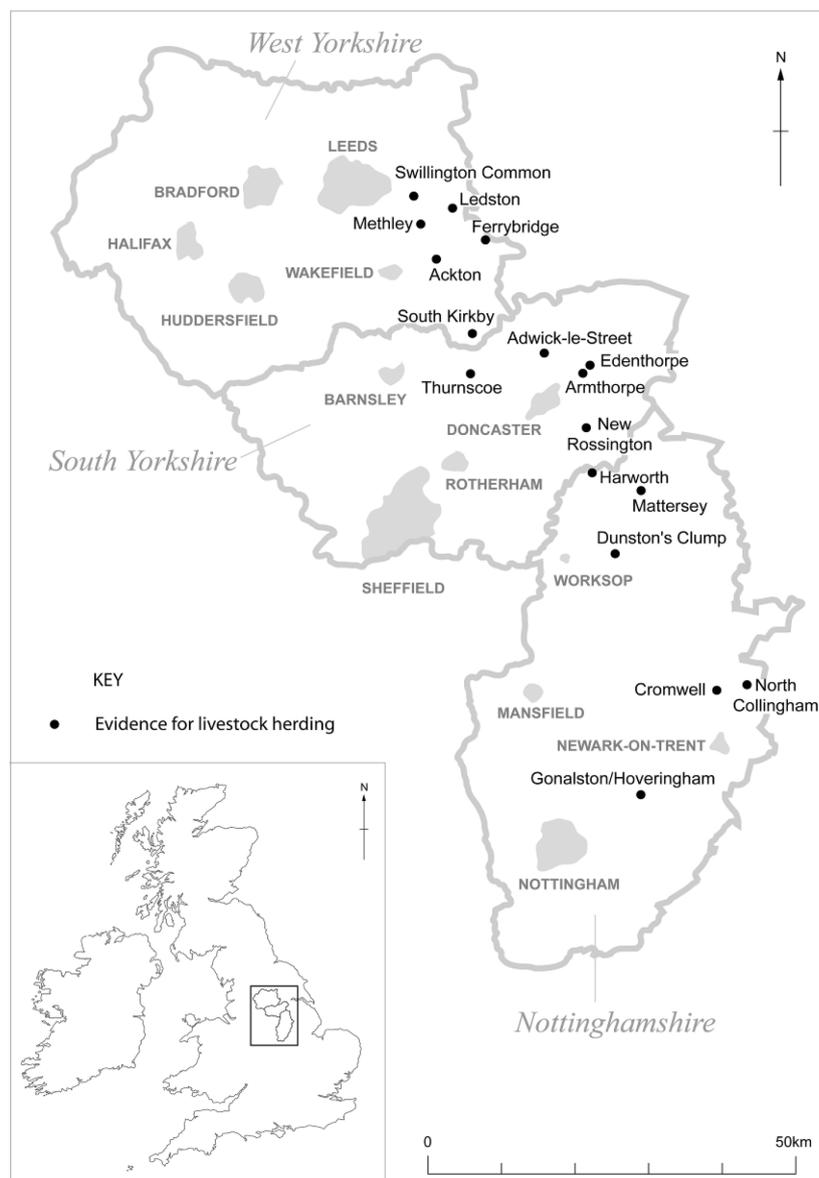


## CHAPTER 6

### Trackways and Hooves Part II – Livestock Movements in the Study Region

In this chapter, I develop my interpretation of the regional evidence for animal husbandry during the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods begun in Chapter 5 by examining features that might have been associated with these husbandry practices. Appendix D lists the detailed data concerning this.



**Figure 6.01.** *Map of the study region, showing some of the sites where especially notable features associated with livestock movements and animal husbandry have been identified. (Drawn by A. Leaver).*

## Features linked to animal husbandry within the field systems

### *Trackways*

Double ditched trackways or droveways within the study region were sometimes sinuous, elsewhere regular and rather straight, especially in areas of co-axial or ‘brickwork’ fields, where in the latter the usual distance between the ditches was 3-8 metres (Riley 1980: 23). He suggested that the majority of double ditched features were boundaries with a single bank between them, rather than trackways. Some earlier excavations over double ditched boundaries appeared to confirm this. An excavated section at Green Mile Lane near Babworth recorded a gap of 2.7 metres between two ditches, and the asymmetry of the ditch fills along with the apparently undisturbed subsoil between the ditches was interpreted as indicating that a bank had once existed between the two (Samuels and May 1980: 75-77, fig. 13). Closer examination of the published section, however, suggests that the northernmost, recut ditch was originally the boundary ditch of the enclosure immediately to the north, with a ditch added at a later date to the south in order to create a trackway. On the aerial photograph (Riley 1980: 31) (Fig. 6.02), there is an entrance visible from the enclosure into the double ditched feature, and another from a field as well, on one side only so these were probably not entrances through a central bank. Cropmark lines running across the trackway either reflect stratigraphic complexity (extensions of ditches pre- or post-dating the double ditched feature), or possible gateways.

Modern ploughing had truncated the space between the ditches, explaining the smooth subsoil, but the excavators noted bands of ‘dirtier and evidently disturbed gravel’ extending along the inner edges of the ditches (Samuels and May 1980: 77), probably resulting from human and animal trampling. As routine maintenance of these ditches would have made them gradually deeper and wider over time (Chadwick 1997, 1999: 161; Magilton 1978: 72), the ditches might have been slightly further apart when originally created. The narrowness may also have been intentional, as many post-medieval droveways in parts of Britain were only 3-4m wide, making it easier to control animal movements. This suggests that the vast *majority* of double ditched features recorded on aerial photographs were probably trackways (*contra* Riley 1980).



**Figure 6.02.** *Enclosures, fields and a double-ditched feature at Green Mile Lane, Babworth, Notts. The arrows mark the positions of sections excavated across the ditches in 1976. SK 667 820. (Source: Riley 1980: 31, plate 7).*

As shown in Appendix D, some trackways seem to have been the earliest components of field system landscapes, possibly originating in the earlier or middle Iron Age. Many might have followed pre-existing, traditional routes, as suggested for Iron Age trackways in East Yorkshire (Fenton-Thomas 2003, 2005, forthcoming). At Swillington Common, a trackway ran close to an earlier Bronze Age ‘open’ settlement of roundhouses and pits (Howell 2001: 49-54, figs. 29-30). It might have formed a conceptual boundary, as although three ring ditches were excavated on the western side of the trackway, there were few traces of Bronze Age occupation. This implies that in some instances the demarcation or ‘formalisation’ of routeways by trackways was of equal if not more importance than issues of land division.

Elsewhere, it is likely that some trackways were fully integrated into field systems from an early date, or post-dated blocks of fields. This is most apparent in parts of the ‘brickwork’ field systems, such as the area south-east of Torworth in Nottinghamshire (Riley 1980: 114-115, map 19) (Fig. 6.05). Although Riley argued that these were double-ditched boundaries, they were more probably trackways associated with large-scale livestock movements. Some were associated with clusters of small enclosures

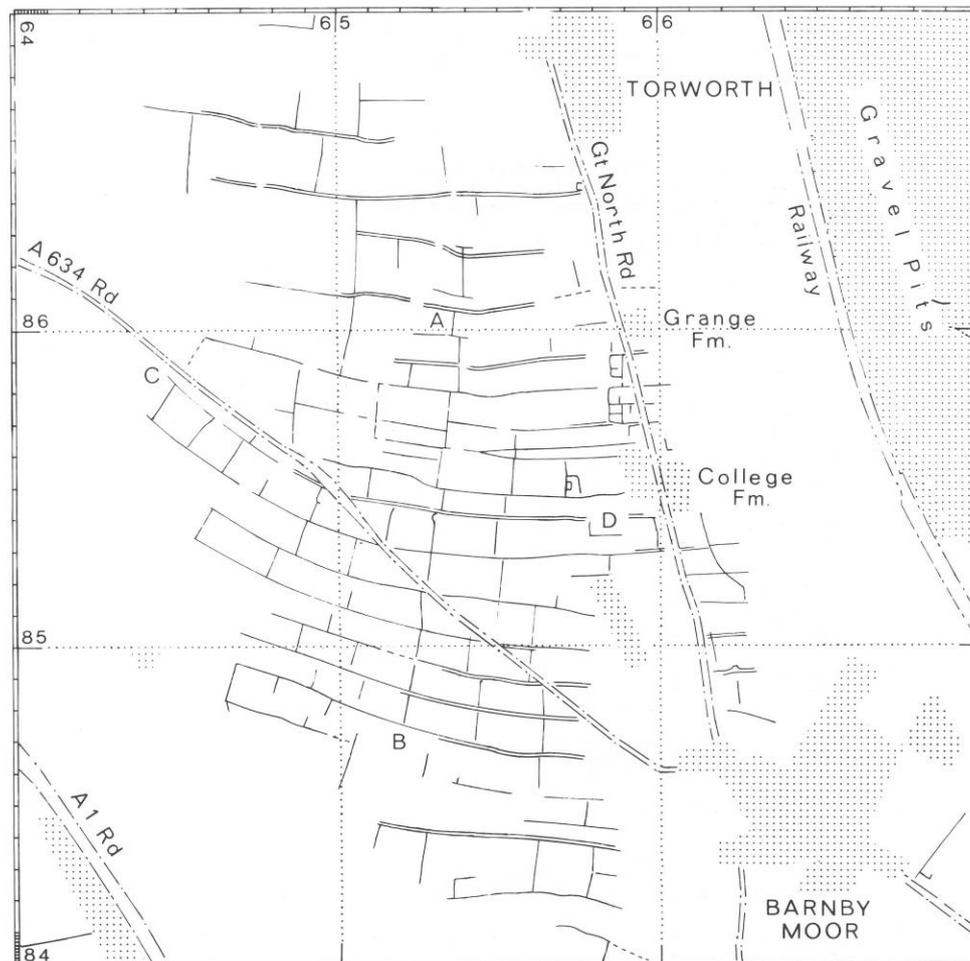
that were likely to have been pens or corrals (see below). The number of trackways might also suggest that different individuals or groups had rights of tenure and access over blocks of fields in this area, rather than all of them forming one land holding.



**Figure 6.03. (above left).** *Post-medieval droveway near Mynydd y Garn, Brecon Beacons, Wales, now a holloway between two tumbled down walled banks. (Source: author).* **Figure 6.04. (above right).** *Woman walking along a trackway or droveway in Ireland. (Source: Porter 2000: 66).*

As demonstrated in Chapter 7 and Appendix D, many trackways and boundaries were orientated towards rivers and streams (q.v. Deegan 1996, 1998; Robbins 1998). Near to the Rivers Idle, Ryton, Don, Torne, Trent, Poulter, Maun and Meden, whose courses all varied in orientation, fields and trackways were nevertheless deliberately laid out to be roughly perpendicular to these watercourses. Although within the ‘brickwork’ fields the two predominant axes of orientation were broadly north-south and east-west, alignments again often changed near to watercourses so that boundaries approached at approximate right-angles to them. More significantly still, trackways were often more common on the edges of blocks of fields, rather than within them. This strongly suggests a concern with access to water and floodplains, and areas of open unenclosed land, and funnelling livestock to them for watering and for grazing.

Trackways were not necessarily droveways, but the orientation of many to watercourses and floodplains, the large width of some and/or their association with funnels and crushes, pens and corrals (see below) suggests many were linked to movements of livestock. The social importance of these features lay not only in the fact that they linked different tasksapes such as fields and areas of pasture, but that



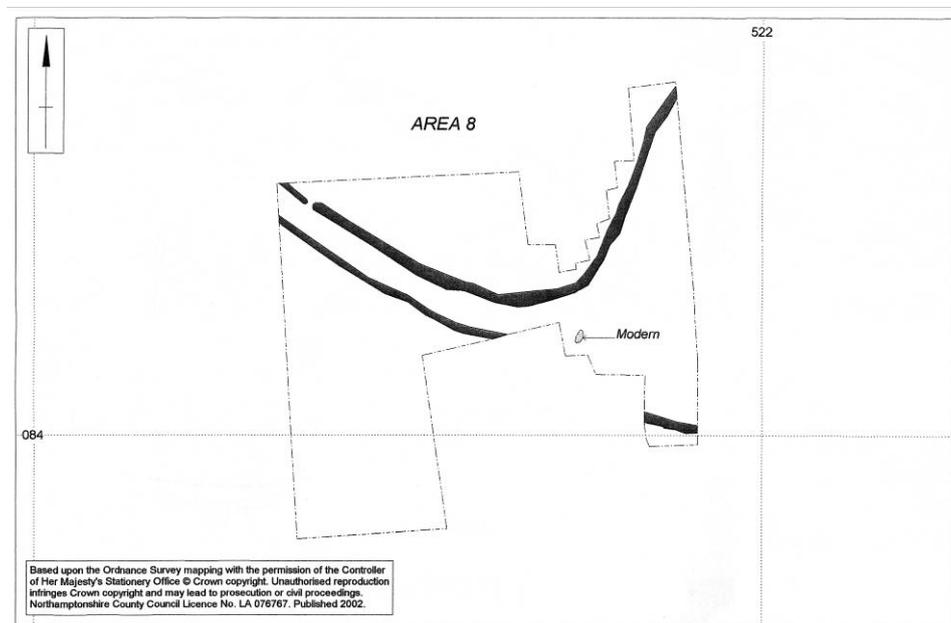
**Figure 6.05.** 'Brickwork' fields and trackways (not boundaries, contra Riley) near Torworth and Barnby Moor, Notts. (Source: Riley 1980: 114-115, map 19).

they were often very substantial constructions (q.v. Merrony 1993: 51), used and maintained over long periods. They also suggest that routeways through the landscape became more formalised or 'hardened' over time, perhaps subject to greater social control and surveillance. As Melanie Giles suggested for the Yorkshire Wolds:

It is one thing to pass along the base of a slack or hill ridge, and see the houses and pens of households at a distance...It is quite another to be scrutinised as you are forced to pass through a series of embanked enclosures to either side. Access to these tracks could have been controlled through a series of gates or fences. It enabled inhabitants to monitor and permit passage through [or past] their settlement, as well as funnelling people into close contact with each other in their routine movements across the landscape. (Giles 2000: 179, my addition in parentheses).

### *Funnels and crushes*

Pryor (1996, 1998) outlined some features associated with stock handling in field systems, including ‘funnels’ or ‘crushes’ where animals can be gathered together prior to driving them along trackways. ‘Funnels’ are large, flared entrances into trackways or fields, whilst ‘crushes’ are the end points where animals can be concentrated. Herd animals such as cattle and sheep are reluctant to enter confined spaces, so the open end of the funnel aids this process, with people and dogs driving them from behind (Pryor 1996: 318). Pryor’s examples are from Bronze Age fields in East Anglia, but such features should be apparent wherever pastoralism formed part of agricultural practices. Appendix D lists many of the identified funnels within the study region.

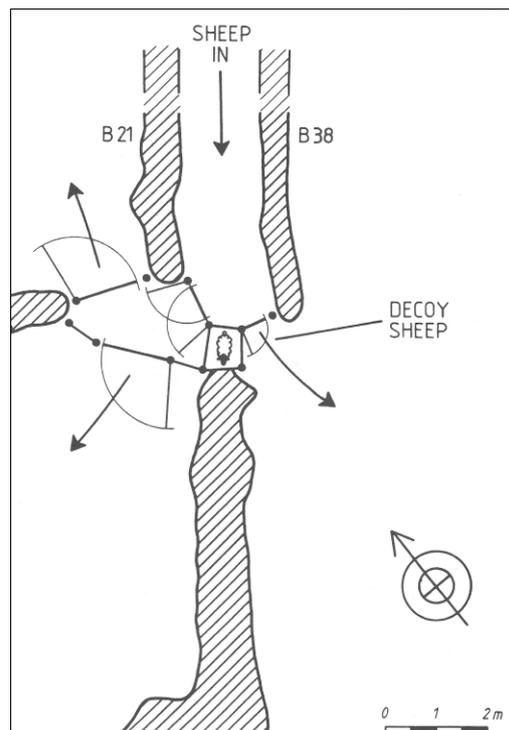


**Figure 6.06.** *Area 8/E6 at Adwick-le-Street, S. Yorks., where a trackway opened out to the east in a pronounced funnel c. 50m wide. (Source: Upson-Smith 2002: fig. 9).*

There was an apparent association between many funnels and river floodplains, with funnels either orientated towards the rivers and valley bottoms, so that trackways opened ‘out’ onto the flat low-lying areas, or were located close by, sometimes in conjunction with large enclosures or corrals (see below). A plausible inference is that floodplains and the slightly higher ground on either side often saw the movements of substantial numbers of livestock. Funnels were especially large and numerous on Sherwood Sandstone areas, where herding might have been particularly prevalent, and some households and communities may have concentrated primarily on pastoralism.

### *Races*

These are narrow linear features normally less than two metres wide where individual animals belonging to different individuals, families and groups can be separated from larger herds or flocks of animals for counting, sorting, breeding, shearing or culling (Pryor 1996: 318, 1998: 103-105). They may be associated with ‘drafting gates’ that once separated from each other allowed animals to enter several different fields (Fig. 6.07). Races are harder to identify, especially as cropmarks, although there is a possible race on one side of the Marr Thick enclosure (Fig. 1.24). Some excavated ditches with a narrow gap between them might result from stratigraphic complexity and alterations over time, as may be the case with Enclosures A and D at Ferrybridge (Martin 2005: 90-91, 110-111, figs. 77-78, 97, 99). Great caution must be exercised in interpretation, but possible examples of races are detailed in Appendix D.

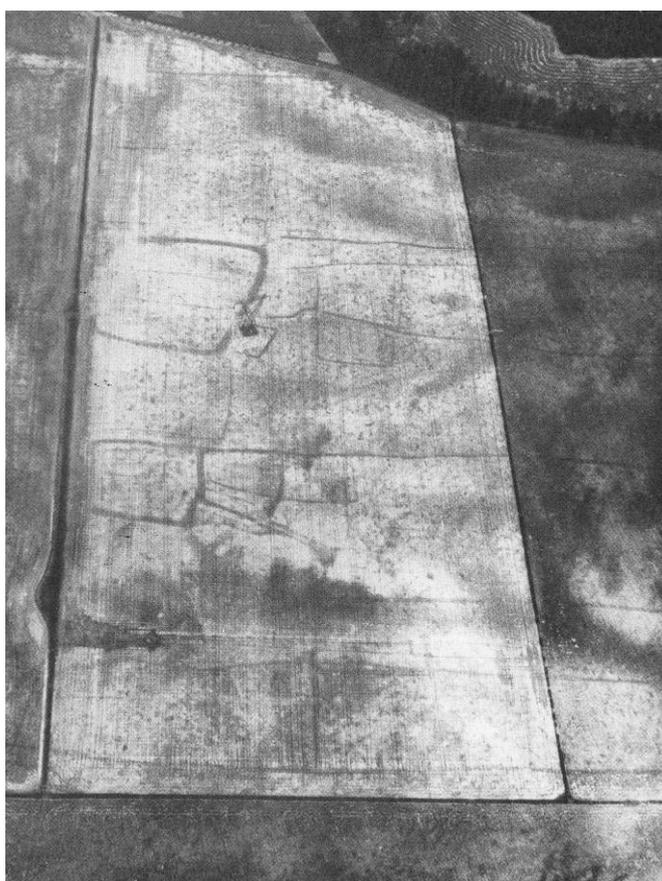


**Figure 6.07. (left).** *How a race and a drafting gate work. (Source: Pryor 1998: 104).*

### *Pens*

Many enclosures had features such as pens or corrals that were likely to have been associated with handling livestock. I have drawn a rough distinction between ‘pens’, which I consider to be small regular enclosures generally (but not exclusively) less than 40m by 40m in size or less than 1600m<sup>2</sup> in area; and enclosures larger than this

but probably still associated with concentrating and confining livestock, which I have termed ‘corrals’. Pens were particularly associated with settlement enclosures, and corrals were often more isolated. I acknowledge that this is my own broad classification, and it should not be considered a formal typology, although as I suggest below there may have been functional differences between them. Alison Deegan has identified many examples of enclosures with associated outer compounds or pens (Deegan 2007: fig. 6.16). Pens might have been associated with animals belonging to particular households, rather than entire communities. Where they were located next to settlement enclosures, these might have served as byres where livestock could be over-wintered, castrated or sheared, or monitored for breeding or during births. Pigs were probably kept in pens within or next to settlement enclosures. Manure could also have been collected from these pens and byres.



**Figure 6.08.** *The Romano-British enclosure complex at Dunston’s Clump, near Babworth, Notts., partly excavated after this photograph was taken (Garton 1987). One funnel-ended trackway approached the larger, northern Enclosure 1 from the west (not visible on this photograph), whilst another ran into the smaller southern Enclosure 3 from the south-east, by the centre of the image. Both enclosures had small pens on their eastern side, some linked by races. (Source: Riley 1980: 40).*

The eastern side of the enclosure complex at Dunston's Clump had four to six subrectangular pens up to 40-50m long and 50m wide (Riley 1980: 41, fig. 6). A series of gaps or races allowed movement from pen to pen. To the south, the main excavated enclosure (Enclosure 2) was approached from the south-east via a narrow trackway (Fig. 6.08), associated with five subrectangular pens. These pens and the trackway were not investigated during the 1987 excavations, but these did reveal evidence for pens within Enclosure 2, especially during Phase III (Garton 1987: 30-35, figs. 10-11). Further examples of probable pens are listed in Appendix D.

### *Corrals*

I have defined corrals as features that appear to have been where much larger numbers of animals could be concentrated, or which existed in isolation. Some corrals might have been used by larger communities, rather than particular households. The vast majority were ditched enclosures, with some more irregular than many settlement enclosures. Examples are presented in Appendix D. A few closely resemble the 'banjo' enclosures found in southern England, where excavations have suggested that they had middle Iron Age origins, and to have been associated with livestock herding (e.g. Cunliffe 2005: 247; Fasham 1987: 8-9). Until recently, only a few had been identified within the study region (e.g. Deegan 1999b; Yarwood and Marriott 1988), but several other examples have been recorded as part of the Magnesian Limestone Project (AS WYAS 2006; Deegan 2007: fig. 6.13).

The corrals appear to have consisted of two groups. There were a small number on higher hilltops or plateaus, either as single enclosures as at Marr (though linked to other features); or in small clusters as at South Kirkby (Fig. 6.09), South Hiendley and at Wombwell Wood and Jump. The majority of the larger 'corrals', however, were closely associated with trackways and river floodplains (Fig. 6.10). In some cases they might have pre-dated field system boundaries, in others they were probably contemporary with them, but they were almost certainly linked to the movements of large numbers of animals. This corresponds with the evidence of trackways and funnels (see above). Prior to early modern drainage schemes, these low-lying areas

may have been almost semi-permanently flooded during winter and spring, but during the summer and autumn would have provided rich summer and autumn grazing.



**Figure 6.09. (above).** *Cropmarks of enclosures identified around the possible hillfort (just to the right and below centre) at South Kirkby, W. Yorks.*

*Many of the enclosures were linked to trackways, and some were banjo-like forms. This complex was probably used during the summer for keeping animals on this elevated area. (Source: © WYAAS).*



**Figure 6.10. (right).** *Trackway leading to a large, subrectangular enclosure or corral (just left of centre) on the floodplain of the River Poulter, near Bothamsall, Notts. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 1147, SK 6745 7425).*

### Pit alignments and floodplain occupation

During the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods, river floodplains across the study region were used for the seasonal grazing of large numbers of animals. These areas do not seem to have been enclosed to the same degree as the rest of these landscapes. At Hoveringham Quarry, Bottom Osiers, Gonalston in Nottinghamshire, the River Trent floodplain terrace and adjacent alluvial areas was divided up by a middle Iron Age boundary system, contemporary with the earliest enclosed settlements (Knight and Elliott forthcoming; Knight and Howard 2004: 100-101), but this was unusually early enclosure for the study region.



**Figure 6.11.** *Excavation of an Iron Age pit alignment at Fleak Close, Barrow-on-Trent, Derbyshire. (Source: Knight and Vyner 2006: 1).*

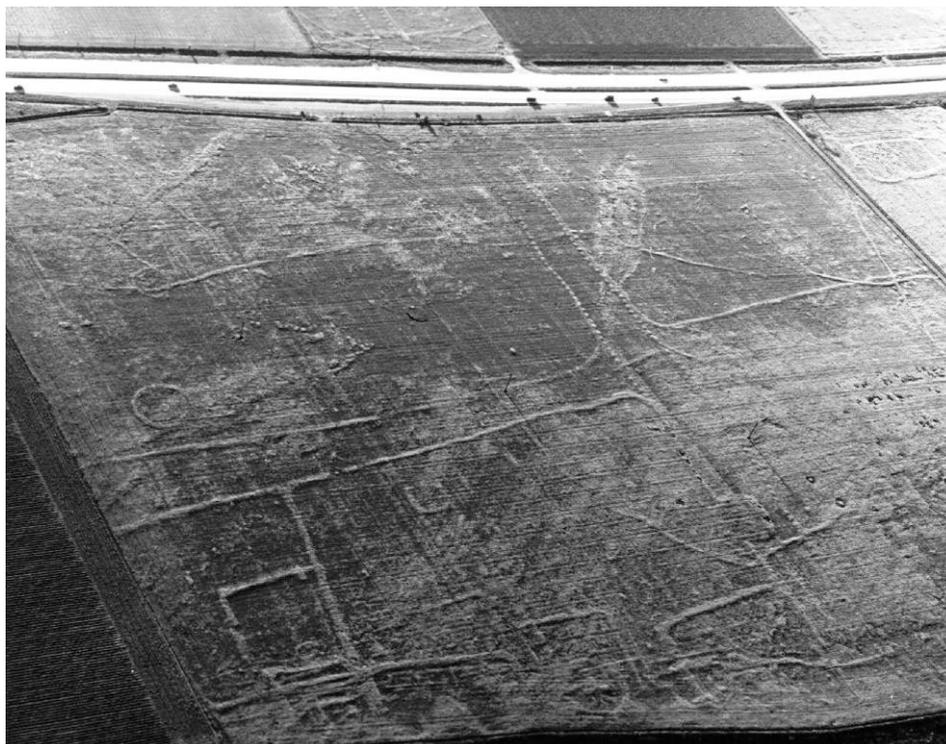
Some of the first land divisions on many of the floodplains were probably pit alignments. Elsewhere in Britain, these were mainly late Bronze Age or early Iron Age in date (John Thomas 2003, forthcoming; cf. Guilbert 2006). In the study region, the few excavated examples have often been difficult to date, but small quantities of coarse pottery were recovered at sites such as Besthorpe Quarry (Southgate, Garton, Morris and Priest 1998), and Aston Hill and Barrow-upon-Trent (Garton and Abbott

1998; Knight and Southgate 2001). A later Iron Age origin has been proposed for Trent Valley pit alignments (Knight and Howard 2004: 102-103), and at Moor Pool Close, Rampton (Fig. 6.15), Romano-British sherds were recovered from pits defining the eastern edge of the agglomerated settlement (Knight 2000a; Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 139). Away from floodplains, the pit alignments at Ferrybridge contained artefacts and human burials from the later Iron Age through to the twelfth or fourteenth century AD (Richardson 2005a). This suggests that some boundaries retained considerable social importance for extremely long periods. Further examples of pit alignments from the study region are presented in Appendix D.



**Figure 6.12.** *Sutton-on-Trent, Notts. A single pit alignment can be identified running from the centre of the photograph towards the bottom left. This formed a land division on the floodplain of the River Trent. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 1321, SK 796 648).*

A few locales within the Trent Valley seem to have been foci for both more intensive and extensive occupation. Following Knight and Howard (2004: 100), I have called these *agglomerated enclosure complexes*. This term incorporates Whimster's separate categories of nucleated enclosure complexes, polyfocal enclosure complexes and



**Figure 6.13.** *North Muskham, Notts. Exceptional positive cropmark formation allows the identification of Bronze Age ring ditches or round barrows (centre left); and Iron Age or Romano-British fields, enclosures and even individual roundhouses (as at lower left). Crossing the photograph from upper centre to lower right are two parallel lines of pits, some of which seem to have been later recut to form part of a double-ditched trackway. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 1314, SK 799 600).*

developed polyfocal enclosure complexes (Whimster 1989: 73-77); but I believe that these separate ‘types’ actually have much in common, and probably reflected similar social practices. At Low Marnham and Normanton-on-Trent (see Gazetteer, Appendix G), North and South Muskham (Figs. 6.13.-6.14) and at North Collingham (Fig. 6.16), large complexes of trackways, enclosures, corrals, pens and roundhouses have been identified (Whimster 1989: 73-77, figs. 51-54, 56-57). These complexes seem to have developed accretively over time, and they display considerable stratigraphic overlap. They were all located on the Trent floodplain at less than 5-10m OD, and include many features associated with the management of livestock.

Only a few of these sites have been investigated. At Moor Pool Close, Rampton, an extensive Iron Age and Romano-British settlement extended for up to six hectares across the gravel terraces (Knight 2000a; Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 139-140).



**Figure 6.14.** *South Muskham, Notts., where a complex of enclosures, fields and trackways can be seen at the lower centre of the photograph. Individual roundhouses can once again be identified, as within the enclosure just to the lower left of centre. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 859-19, SK 788 575).*

Stratified archaeological deposits preserved beneath alluvium contained large quantities of artefacts and material from domestic and industrial hearths. Occupation began in the early to middle Iron Age with an open settlement of a roundhouse and pits, but in the late Iron Age field system ditches and two large enclosures were constructed. These large enclosures were subdivided into smaller enclosures and pens (Fig. 6.15). The eastern boundary of the settlement may have originally been a pit alignment constructed parallel to a marshy palaeochannel of the River Trent. Numerous roundhouses were excavated (Knight 2000a, 2000b), in addition to several annular gullies that might have surrounded hay stacks or fodder ricks. *Tegulae* fragments and stone rubble suggest that Roman style buildings were also present.



**Figure 6.15.** *Moor Pool Close, Rampton. Plan of all excavated features at the centre of the complex. (Source: Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 141, fig. 6.16).*

Part of a similar settlement of late Iron Age date was excavated immediately north of Brough-on-Fosse (H. Jones 2002; Vyner forthcoming) (see Gazetteer, Appendix G), and again had enclosures, pens, roundhouses and annular gullies. At Ferry Lane Farm Collingham (Fig. 6.12), part of the agglomerated settlement (Whimster's developed polyfocal complex) was evaluated (Bourn, Hunn and Symonds 2000), and has been subsequently excavated. Late Iron Age and Romano-British enclosures, roundhouses and other structures were found. Unfortunately, to date only the evaluation has been published, and this utilised a rather unhelpful narrow trial trenching methodology that severely limited the amount of information about the development of the settlement. At Aslockton, on a low ridge next to extensive areas of floodplain, a nucleated group of trackways, funnels, enclosures and pens extended over approximately eight hectares (Hampton 1975; Knight and Howard 2004: 94-95). One evaluation trench found substantial ditches up to 6m wide and 2m deep, and the levelled remains of wide banks. There was occupation at Aslockton from the middle Iron Age through into the Romano-British period (Palmer-Brown and Knight 1993: 147).



**Figure 6.16.** *Ferry Lane Farm, North Collingham, Notts., where a complex of enclosures, fields and trackways can be identified at the centre of the photograph. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 1364, SK 820 623).*

Near Cromwell, aerial photographs of the Trent floodplain have revealed at least four long pit alignments (Frere and St Joseph 1983: 199-200). Two pairs of converging lines of pits met at two separate foci, with a 100m wide gap in between (Whimster 1989: 79, fig. 59). They may have defined an approach to the river. Alternatively, the pits restricted the movements of people and animals before channelling them towards a specific part of the riverbank. The later agglomerated enclosure complex of late Iron Age or early Romano-British date partly overlay one pit alignment, and a Romano-British villa complex defined by double ditches post-dated these enclosures (Fig. 6.17). Interestingly, the later settlements lay in the gap between the two pairs of pit alignments, on low-lying land at only 5-7m OD.



**Figure 6.17.** *The agglomerated enclosure and villa complex at Cromwell, Notts., on the floodplain of the River Trent, which is visible running left to right across the top of this photograph. In addition to the enclosure and villa complex (centre right), one of the pit alignment boundaries is clearly visible running from left to right across the lower part of the image. (Source: D. Riley, SLAP 1331, SK 802 626).*

The specific locale at Cromwell defined by the pit alignments thus continued to be important long after the pit boundaries themselves had silted up and fallen out of use. This hints at a potentially lengthy time period for the continued significance of this particular place within the landscape, and the continued social and economic importance of floodplains. Like the possible villa site at Stancil (Whiting 1943), the economic success, wealth and status associated with these Roman-style buildings may have been generated through animal husbandry rather than arable agriculture, unlike Roman villa estates in central southern England.

There are few parallels for the continuity at Cromwell, but a similar situation might have occurred at Lockington in Leicestershire (Clay 2001: 9), where several long pit alignments located close to a stream formed the focus for later Iron Age and early Romano-British enclosure groups. Part of the complex was later partially overlain by a Roman villa, but the spatial relationships between them suggest that some enclosures and roundhouses were still occupied when the villa was constructed.

Pit alignments seem to have been caught up with ideas of tenure and access, but perhaps also memory and identity too. The potentially ‘permeable’ nature of their boundaries remains one of the most inexplicable factors about them, particularly for examples not apparently associated with any upstanding banks. It has been suggested that these boundaries reflected group rather than individual or kinship based claims of tenure, and were therefore not too restrictive (Pollard 1996: 110; John Thomas 2003: 84, forthcoming). The permeability could indicate a form of ‘loose’ tenure, with communal rights to resources and access to water and grazing, rather than direct ownership. Some pit alignments may even have been designed to flood, so that pools of standing water would heighten their visual or symbolic impact (Gardweb 1998; Rylatt and Bevan 2007: 221; John Thomas forthcoming).

The permeability of pit alignments may have been conceptually linked to ‘open’ earlier Iron Age settlements. Where pit alignments were recut and incorporated into ditched boundaries, this may have reflected a ‘hardening’ of tenure, and a shift towards the direct control of land by specific households or clans. In other parts of Britain this seems to have taken place in the middle or later Iron Age. The field system and enclosure ditches had no such permeability, and were thus much more definite statements about land allotment and land ownership. Rather than referring to the ties and obligations identity of larger communal groups, people were stressing their individual and family identities (R. Thomas 1997: 215-216). So although pit alignments within the region may have originated later than in other parts of Britain, they were sometimes extant for much longer periods, and formed the alignments of subsequent field system and trackway ditches. At Ferrybridge, the pits must still have been recognisable features in the landscape well into the historic period.

Some agglomerated settlements may have developed as seasonal sites associated with summer grazing on the floodplains, and their size and complexity suggests entire communities were using these sites, rather than individual households. They have many similarities with later Iron Age and Romano-British sites in the Upper Thames Valley such as Farmoor, Claydon Pike and Thornhill Farm that seem to have been specialist seasonal pastoral settlements (e.g. Jennings, Muir, Palmer and Smith 2004;

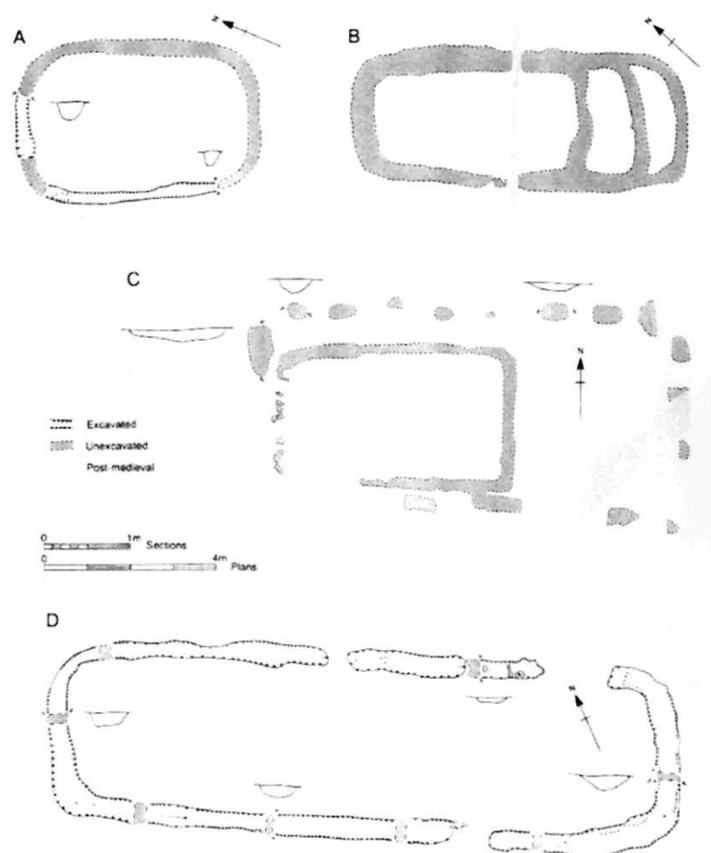
Lambrick 1992; Lambrick and Robinson 1979; Miles and Palmer 1990; Miles, Palmer, Smith and Edgeley Long forthcoming). Some Trent Valley sites became more permanent and prosperous in the pre-Roman Iron Age and Romano-British periods, and this prosperity was probably based principally on pastoralism. Nearby Roman towns such as *Ad Pontem*, Littlebrough (*Segelocum*), Little Chester (*Derbentione*) and Brough-on-Fosse (*Crococolana*) (see Chapter 2) may have stimulated the development of these floodplain settlements.

### **Lowland transhumance?**

Schuyler Jones (2005) complained that transhumance and nomadic pastoralism are often confused in the ethnographic literature, and noted the clear connections in transhumance between permanent villages, arable agriculture and the seasonal movement of livestock. He also accepted that transhumance does not necessarily have to be undertaken between lowland and highland areas, and cited Evans-Pritchard's (1940) account of the Nuer, and their seasonal movements from grassy plains to elevated areas adjacent to the villages and cultivated fields (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 55-57). This related to a specific wet : dry season dynamic. In reverse though, this form of seasonal transhumance took place within the study region. The inter-commoning of livestock on fenland pastures in the medieval period might be a more apposite analogy, however (Darby 1940); and also the seasonal movements proposed for late prehistoric fen-edge communities (Evans and Hodder 2006: 3, 320-323).

At East Carr, Mattersey, around seventy rectangular structures were found on the River Idle floodplain, to the east of a complex of enclosures, pens and trackways (Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 128-129, fig. 6.8, 142, fig. 6.17; Morris and Garton 1998a). These features were 2-14m long and 2-4m wide, and defined by steep-sided but generally shallow gullies that were not beam slots as they seem to have been left open (Morris and Garton 1998b: 139) (Figs. 6.18.-6.19). The silts in these gullies contained a few Romano-British pot sherds, although Romano-British ditches truncated at least three of them so some could have been very late Iron Age. They

might have been rectangular versions of the annular gullies recorded at Rampton, Brough-on-Fosse and Ferry Lane Farm, Collingham in Nottinghamshire, and may have been hay or fodder ricks, turf stacks or used to store reeds, wood or withies (Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 128; Morris and Garton 1998b: 139).



**Figure 6.18.** Plans of a few of the c. 70 subrectangular features excavated on the River Idle floodplain at East Carr, Mattersey, Notts. The larger examples might have been temporary structures. (Source: Morris and Garton 1998b: 139, fig. 2).

Not all of the gullies were continuous (*contra* Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 128), and there was also some evidence for compartmentalisation or re-modelling. In at least two instances, surrounding postholes formed an outer structure up to 14m long (e.g. Morris and Garton 1998b: 139, fig. 2C). Some of the larger examples, especially those associated with postholes, could have been drainage gullies around tents or shieling-like temporary buildings of peat, earth or turf. Their insubstantial nature, lack of hearths and domestic refuse suggests short-lived, transient occupation by people during summer. This was proposed in the archive report (Morris and Garton 1997: 6), though it seems to have been edited out of subsequent published accounts.



**Figure 6.19.** *One of the subrectangular gully features excavated at East Carr, Mattersey, cut by a Romano-British field ditch. (Source: Knight, Howard and Leary 2004: 129, fig. 6.8).*

This is not an outlandish suggestion. Many shielings in the Scottish Highlands and Western Isles were turf, cob or peat-walled structures (Fig. 6.20); along with many of the *bathóg* or booleys in Ireland and *hafodydd* in Wales (e.g. Curwen 1946: 82-83; Horning 2001, 2004; O’Conor 1998, 2002; Ramm, McDowall and Mercer 1970; K. Roberts 2006; Ward 1997). In Iceland and parts of Scandinavia, shielings, barns, byres and even some farmsteads had turf-built walls well into the twentieth century (Sveinbjarnardóttir 1992; Vésteinsson, McGovern and Keller 2002) (Figs. 6.21-6.23). The ‘tents’ reported by Dio (*Epitome* 76. 12.1-5) may even record similar structures.

This use of the floodplain was likely to have been seasonal, but the sheer number of structures found at East Carr, Mattersey (whatever their function) must indicate short-lived but repeated occupation over time. The structures excavated at Mattersey are without clear regional or national parallels. At Ledston, two partly excavated rectangular structures were also defined by shallow gullies. Although neither was fully exposed in plan, both were about 6m wide, and the one most fully excavated was at least 11m long (Roberts 1995: 16-17, fig. 11). This latter example had one or two entrances, and the gullies were interpreted as slots for horizontal timber sleeper beams (Fig. 6.24). The nature and date of these structures is unclear, however.



**Figure 6.20. (top left).** Hebridean shieling of cut peat, boards and tarpaulin, photographed in the 1930s. (Source: Curwen 1946: plate x). **Fig. 6.21. (top right).** Turf-built early medieval shieling in Iceland after excavation. **Fig. 6.22. (bottom left).** The same buildings under excavation. **Fig. 6.23. (bottom right).** Restored nineteenth century Icelandic farmhouse, again built mostly of turves. (All Icelandic images source: author).

No internal features or artefacts were associated with the two structures excavated at Ledston, but they were *c.* 200m south-east of the main enclosure and pit complex, on a limestone shelf rather than on a floodplain. It is thus not clear if these were buildings or drainage structures around ricks, although the possible entrance in one does suggest a building. If so, the lack of hearths and domestic refuse may be evidence of seasonal occupation. Some broadly similar structures excavated at Swaythorpe in East Yorkshire were interpreted as bields or cattle shelters (Mackey 2001)<sup>1</sup>. *If* some of the structures at Mattersey were temporary buildings, and the Ledston examples too, then their rectangular shape was different from the dominant roundhouse tradition of late Iron Age and Romano-British northern England (see Chapter 9). Many roundhouses in upland areas of Britain probably had peat, turf or earth walls (Pope 2003, forthcoming; cf. Reynolds 1979: 43), and may have been used on a seasonal basis. Some rectangular structures are known from Iron Age sites (Moore 2003), although most do not seem to have been domestic residences.

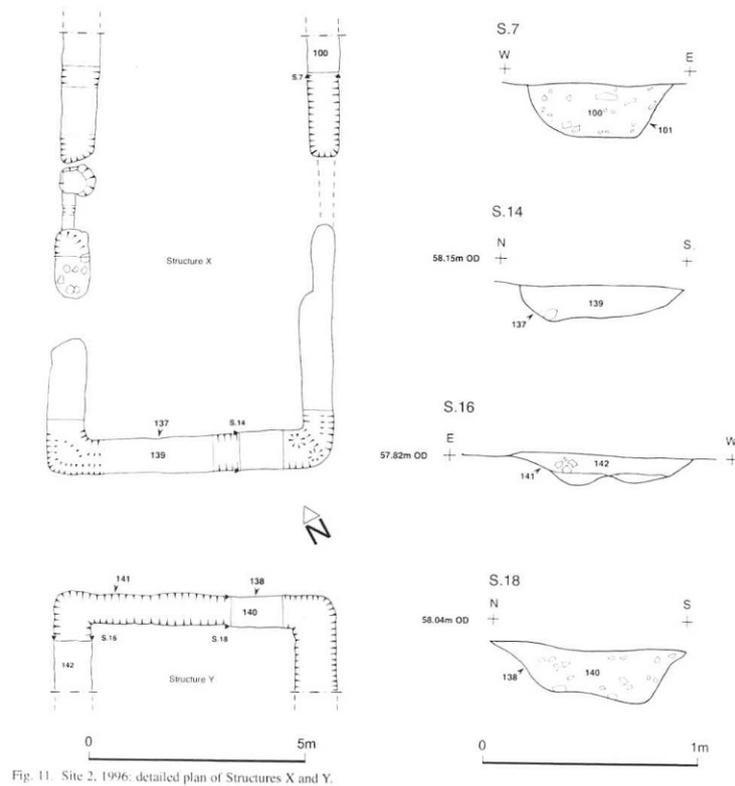


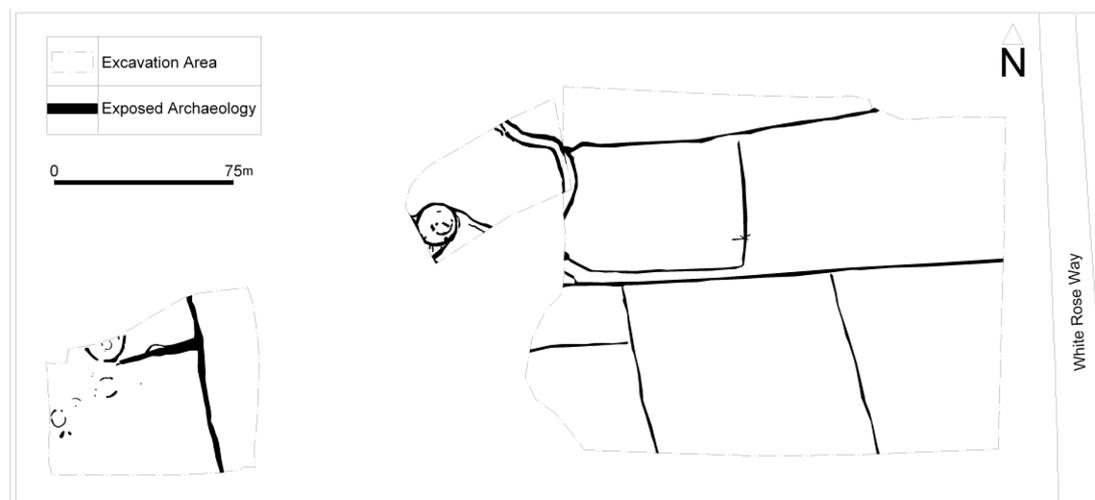
Fig. 11. Site 2, 1996: detailed plan of Structures X and Y.

**Figure 6.24.** *Rectangular structures of possible late Iron Age or Romano-British date excavated at Ledston, W. Yorks. (Source: Roberts 1995: 16-17, fig. 11).*

One possibility is that the rectangular shape reflected functional and social differences in how these buildings were inhabited. The seasonally-inhabited buildings of late Bronze Age and Iron Age date excavated on the Gwent Levels were rectangular, and many also lacked hearths and much artefactual evidence. The people who used them were taking livestock (predominantly cattle) to graze on wetland edge grasslands and salt marsh on the Gwent Levels during the summer months (Bell 2000; Bell, Caseldine and Neumann 2000; Gardiner et al. 2002; Locock 1999). It is likely that only certain members of the community would have been involved with these seasonal movements. The rectangular shape of these buildings may have reflected a subconscious, social ‘grammar’ that did not regard such structures as ‘domestic’ or household dwellings in the same manner as roundhouses.

Compelling evidence for the seasonal occupation of low-lying floodplain areas has come from Balby Carr, on the southern edge of Doncaster, where a series of investigations were undertaken in advance of the construction of a business park (L.

Jones 2002, 2005; O'Neill 2005; Richardson and Rose 2005; Rose and Roberts 2006). There were several phases of roundhouses, initially perhaps in an open settlement but later associated with trackways and rectangular fields or paddocks (Fig. 6.25). Late Iron Age artefacts were recovered, and a small quantity of Romano-British finds.



**Figure 6.25.** Excavated roundhouses, enclosures, trackways and fields at Balby Carr, Doncaster, S. Yorks. (Source: Roberts forthcoming).

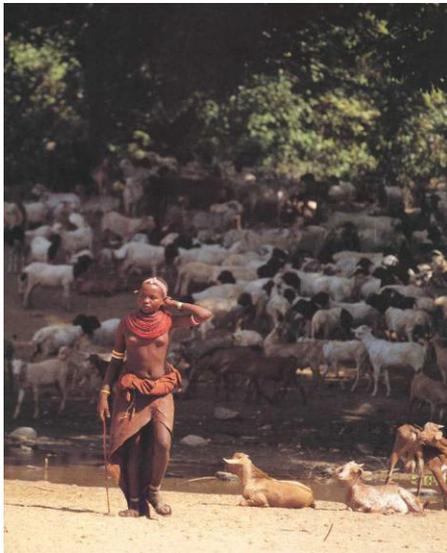
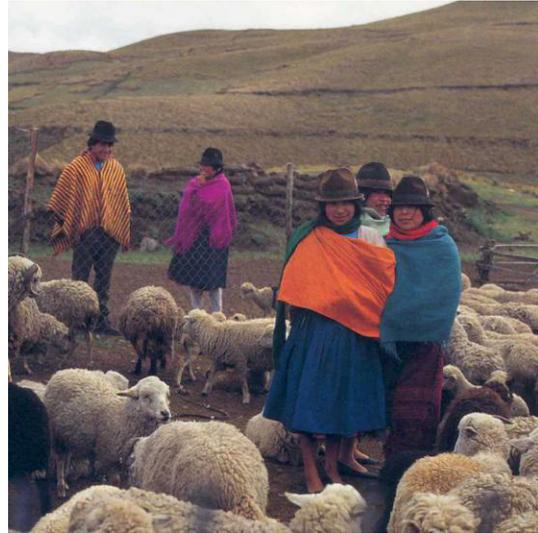
The palaeo-environmental evidence at Balby from waterlogged wood, leaves, seeds and insect remains suggested quite a mixed landscape of alder and willow carr, with oak and beech on higher, drier ground nearby. Reed swamp of rushes, water crowfoot and sedges was indicated, but also areas of wet grassland with meadowsweet, sedge and marsh thistle; and drier meadows with buttercup, white clover and self-heal (Allen 2005; Carrott 2006; Carrott and Gardner 2006; Gale 2005; Greig 2005; Hall et al. 2005; Smith and Tetlow 2005). Insect and mollusc remains included those from standing and flowing water, but also grassland. Several of the beetle species are associated with the dung of large grazing animals. This occupation was likely to have been seasonal because of the generally wet and low-lying nature of the area, which would have partially flooded in winter and was still waterlogged marshland in the medieval and post-medieval periods. East of Doncaster at Sandtoft, a ‘considerable dung beetle fauna’ was recorded from late Roman palaeochannel deposits (Samuels and Buckland 1978: 72). This indicates the presence of large numbers of grazing animals, probably cattle.

### **Movement, trackways and inhabiting the landscape**

Trackways linked some settlements, and allowed people to visit kin or to trade, and thus aided the spread of goods and ideas. Arguments and feuds were played out along them, but lovers and marriage partners travelled them too. Animals from one herd or flock could be taken to mate with those belonging to other groups. For both humans and animals, blood lines and lines on the land merged and mingled with one another. The digging of ditches to create trackways was the result of much embodied, socialised community-based labour. Trackways might sometimes have acted as neutral corridors through areas inhabited by different communities, but it is possible that some were created to control access and movement to or through certain areas.

In their routine movements, people and animals returned from communal grazing on river floodplains or heathland past or through large corrals and trackways, by more tightly bounded infields and into enclosures and pens that were much more well-defined expressions of individual or family/kin tenure and identities (q.v. Robbins 1998). Over time, ‘fostering’ settlements originally established as seasonal camps to exploit lowland pastures became more permanently occupied (Evans and Hodder 2006: 321), as perhaps happened at Gonalston (Elliott and Knight forthcoming).

Certain age-grades of people would have been associated with varied daily and seasonal movements, and different livestock would have required different directions and scales of movement. Proximity to water sources would have been necessary for cattle, which need large amounts of water daily. Sheep and goats require much less water, and can go without drinking for days at a time. They can also do well on poorer grazing. Upland hills and heath-covered ridges would have been more suitable locations for them. In some cases these would have been daily journeys, undertaken with the sunrise and the sunset. Where farmsteads were close to rivers and streams, cattle and horses could have been watered twice a day under the watchful gaze of a few people, perhaps older children. Daily movements may also have taken cattle, sheep, dogs and people from infields to outfields and back again. Pigs would have been kept much closer to settlements, but might have been driven to nearby areas



**Figure 6.26. (top left).** *Young Samburu girl milking a goat, Kenya. (Source: Pavitt 1991: 44).* **Fig. 6.27. (top right).** *Zumbahua sheep herders in the Andes, Ecuador. (Source: Mendell 2000: 39).* **Fig. 6.28. (centre left).** *Young Samburu woman with goats, Kenya. (Source: Pavitt 1991: 155).* **Fig. 6.29. (centre right).** *Young boy with pigs in the 1950s. (Source: Ward 1991: 23).* **Fig. 6.30. (bottom left).** *Feeding Highland cattle hay during winter in the 1930s, Scotland. (Source: Porter 2000: 268).* **Fig. 6.31. (bottom right).** *Samburu men driving cattle, Kenya. (Source: Pavitt 1991: 94).*

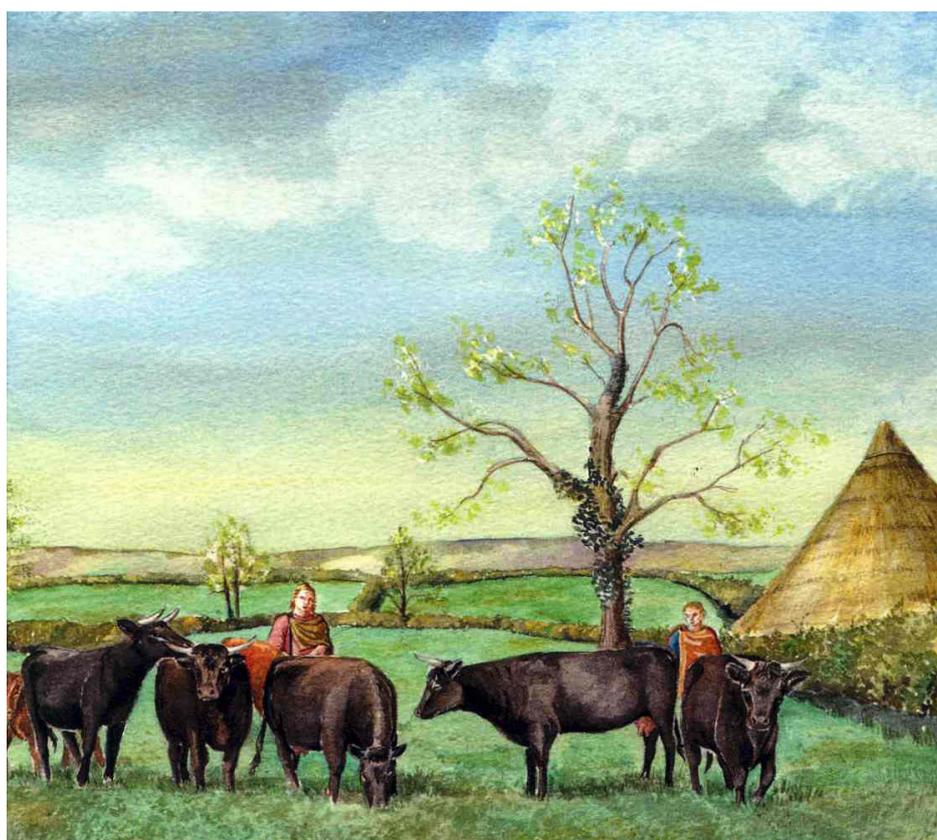
of heath, scrub or wooded copses for foraging. They may also have been used to strip vegetation from bracken-choked fields, bark from trees, and to break the earth on arable fields that had lain fallow for periods. Pigs are often quite difficult to control, especially boars, but sows and gelts are tamer, and as in some contemporary small-scale societies, young children or women might have been in charge of them.

During spring, cattle and sheep often find their own birthing places, but some pregnant animals were probably confined to infields or pens, so births could be monitored and assisted. People may then have brought young animals in to control feeding. In the autumn and early winter, people returned some animals to infields, folds and byres, and many pigs fattened since spring were slaughtered and their meat salted or smoked. There was perhaps alternation between winter household or family-held fields, and summer communal grazing. Households further away from river floodplains may have undertaken trips to and from grazing areas mostly during the summer months, and some people may have stayed with their animals for days or weeks in small satellite enclosures. Some corrals located next to valley bottoms were used to keep large numbers of animals at night to prevent straying or theft, and were places where their herders slept or sat on watch. This grazing is most likely to have involved cattle and horses more often than sheep, because of the latter's intolerance of damper conditions. Some hay cropping may have taken place too. On higher heath-covered ground, daily and seasonal movements with sheep and goats were probably important, with hilltop enclosures and corrals used to protect flocks overnight.

What size herds and flocks were the people in these communities maintaining? Some trackways, funnels and crushes and large corrals seem to have been designed to cope with the movements of hundreds of animals, although these animals may not have all belonged to one household resident at one farmstead. It is unlikely that most individual enclosed settlements had more than 10-30 cattle and 100-200 sheep (see Pryor 2006 for slightly larger figures though). Greater numbers of livestock would probably have required bigger settlements. Larger, agglomerated settlements including those that became villas may have kept many hundreds of animals, but these were probably exceptions for the region as a whole. If the floodplains were grazed in commons, large corrals were probably used by several extended households who

pooled their labour during drives and round ups. These would have been important social occasions, as with the Icelandic *réttir* where people round up and sort sheep or horses after summer grazing on open land (Aldred forthcoming).

At agglomerated floodplain sites such as Moor Pool Close, Rampton and Ferry Lane Farm, Collingham, people from several different households and lineages came together at certain times of the year. Linked to more distant settlements by trackways, these places had access to good grazing and allowed herders and their animals to keep close company for weeks or months at a time. Some buildings and settlements may have only been occupied during the summer months, like lowland versions of shielings or *hafodydd*. Individuals or families would have worked amongst each other and their animal charges, communal affiliations were reinforced through work and talk (Robbins 1998), and bonds between human and animal were strengthened.



**Figure 6.32.** *Reconstruction of Iron Age cattle herding at a seasonal, floodplain-based settlement near the River Thames at Thornhill Farm, Fairford, Gloucestershire. (Source: Jennings et al. 2004, cover image).*

Ethno-historical accounts from Britain suggest that young women and men often accompanied sheep and cattle to temporary summer settlements (Arensberg and Kimball 1948; Davies 1984-5; Dodgshon 1981, 1992; Fenton 1976; Howell 1977; Ó Danachair 1983-4; O’Dowd 1981; Sayce 1956, 1957). Caution must be exercised in using such geographically varied and historically specific evidence, and some accounts undoubtedly over-romanticise such practices (Ward 1997). In many African herding societies, it is often young men who look after cattle and young women and children who tend sheep and goats (e.g. Dyson-Hudson 1973; Pavitt 1991). Whilst away from the main settlements young men and women may flirt or have sexual relationships. In the Western Isles of Scotland, it was mainly women and children who were away from the main settlements (Curwen 1946: 81-83), providing women with an opportunity to create or reinforce female social networks and to look after children without the presence of men.



*Cattle husbandry. Figure 6.33. (top left). Cattle drove in Devon during the 1930s. (Source: Porter 2000: 112). Fig. 6.34. (top right). Tending stalled cattle in the French Alps. (Source: Berger and Mohr 1982: 24). Fig. 6.35. (centre). Cows I. (Source: Jennings et al. 2004, rear cover). Fig. 6.36. (below). Cows II. Dexter cattle. (Source: [www.brambledexter.co.uk](http://www.brambledexter.co.uk)).*

More widely dispersed households or kinship groups might have come together in spring or autumn to retrieve or store seed grain, to breed and exchange livestock, exchange news and goods, trade, and undertake sexual liaisons both approved and illicit. They remembered past journeys and meetings, and looked forward to future ones. Many landscape features held memories of dead relatives, times of sadness and of laughter; and in some cases may have been the focus for ideas about their ancestry and the past. Equally, some abandoned sites and boundaries might have elapsed from memory, and surviving traces of them may have evinced little interest.

But even for people who live in the same place for generations and work ‘within their knowledge’, there are always other places (real, or encountered through hearsay, story and imagination). The familiar topography gives way to the unfamiliar...How do people deal with the part-familiar or the unknown? Walking along seasonal pathways, a person part-knows the way, part-knows that each time of return there will be change and unfamiliarity; part-fears, part-revels in the chance encounter, the possible adventure. (Bender 2001: 83-84).

Memory and tradition were thus continually being caught up and reworked in journeys along trackways and relationships between people, animals and the land. Some journeys were taken into death. At Ferry Fryston<sup>2</sup> for example, if the carriage was part of a funerary procession this would have been a dramatic spectacle, as would at later dates the cattle driven along prior to their killing, butchering and consumption. Iron Age carriages might have been ‘technologies of power’ that compressed time and distance for those riding in them (Giles 2002). If so, then trackways could be conduits for such power. Significant places in the landscape and the journeys along trackways were thus vital to the social relations manifested through such practices.

### **Conclusions – journey’s end**

I believe that there is still an unacknowledged tendency for some archaeologists to regard late Iron Age or Romano-British settlements as somewhat static places at the centre of resource catchment areas. These peoples and their landscapes were much

more dynamic, however, and journeys of different lengths and scales would have been very much part of their everyday lives. In one sense Piggott (1958) was right in stating the importance of livestock to these communities, but he saw them as primitive peripatetics pursuing an unsophisticated lifestyle compared to the more socially developed and complex Iron Age groups further south. Instead, the archaeological evidence from the region demonstrates that these people often had deep attachments to place, and to their long-term histories and genealogies. In their daily and seasonal taskscapes people were continuously reminded of previous generations, and in some cases they deliberately structured trackways to reference earlier features or vestiges of occupation. These daily and seasonal movements were hardly those of ‘primitive’ people. Instead, they reveal a sophisticated knowledge of landscapes and seasonality, and an acutely intuitive understanding of animal behaviour.



**Figure 6.37.** *Double-ditched trackway recently excavated at Normanton Industrial Estate, West Yorks. (Source: © AS WYAS).*

As outlined in Chapter 3, bodily movements and actions reproduce peoples’ identities and memories (e.g. Butler 1993; Connerton 1989; de Certeau 1988; Ingold 2000, 2004; Lefebvre 1991; Mauss 1973; Merleau-Ponty 1962). Identities are also based on the relationships between people and non-human beings, and with the landscape. Tim Ingold has drawn distinctions between transport and wayfaring (Ingold 2004, 2006).

Transport is a relatively modern experience, where a transported passenger (in a vehicle) has much less experiential contact with the world she or he moves *across*. For the wayfarer, speed is unimportant, for they are instantiated *within* the dynamics of the lived-in world. Ingold has stressed how in small-scale societies the world is ‘perceived through the feet’ (2004), where walking is vital to the construction of people’s notions of Self, place, tenure and memory. To follow a path is to remember the way (Ingold 2000: 147). Journeys take place not only as spatial and bodily movements, but also as paths between these memories, reflections and expectations (Chadwick 2004a: 20). People would have been negotiating relations of kinship and exchange through these movements and encounters (Bender 2001: 84), and were engaged in a continuous, recursive process of immersing themselves in the past, negotiating paths and practices in the present, and projecting themselves into futures as yet untravelled.

For the Foi people of Papua New Guinea, travelling from one place to another is never simply an uneventful journey between two nodal points:

Foi paths are the graphic effect of intentional, creative movement. They transform the ground, partition the earth and create human space...People pause to inspect trees for signs of fruiting, or for the spoor of animals. A length of good-quality rattan may be found, cut down, made into a coil, and placed in a string bag...In these and other casual ‘productive’ acts, Foi men and women truly turn these paths into conduits of inscribed activity. (Weiner 2001: 17-18).

The Foi live in a forested, montane landscape where gathering and hunting are still important, but these ideas are applicable to many rural communities. During the study period, if a broken fence or gate was seen, or a gap in a hedge, they would have been fixed on the spot wherever possible. Switches or staffs might have been cut from boughs along the way, honey collected from a newly identified bees nest, or edible mushrooms picked from the side of the trackway. Plants used in herbal medicines for people and animals would also have been gathered during such everyday journeys.

Animals would have remembered many of these same paths and trackways, and may often have taken themselves along them with little urging by humans or dogs, following older, more experienced animals (Gray 1999; Lorimer 2004), but these would not have necessarily been smooth, uninterrupted journeys. Sheep and cattle would have sometimes clustered in confusion, or lingered wilfully to browse on trees or hedges. Some animals would have responded well to the directions of people and dogs, but other individuals might always have been more obstreperous. Hedges and fences would have been breached, and crops trampled or eaten. Animals would have had preferred places for browsing, grazing and drinking, and favoured spots to scratch against rocks, posts or tree trunks, lie in shade, or shelter from wind, rain and snow.

Animals also partly shaped the boundaries, trackways, fields, funnels, gateways, enclosures and pens within these landscapes – the form of these features depended on people's understandings of the behaviour of cattle, sheep and goats, pigs and horses. If a fence was not stout enough to withstand the concerted attentions of pigs, if cattle breached a hedge or bank and strayed or damaged crops, or if a gateway was in an unsuitable place, then it was animals who would have demonstrated this agency to their human herders. In a very real manner, people *and* animals created these landscapes together, through the interplay between animal agency and human agency, animal memories and human memories, animal movements and human movements.

## Notes

1. I must thank Melanie Giles for drawing this reference to my attention. Cattle are not as robust as sheep, and often require shelter in bad weather, even during the summer months.
2. Although initially reported as the Ferrybridge carriage burial, this was subsequently re-named as the Ferry Fryston burial. This is more accurate, as the excavated square barrow is closer to the village of Ferry Fryston than it is to the settlement at Ferrybridge, and marks Oxford North's desire to separate their scheme of A1-M1 works from those previously undertaken by AS WYAS. Interestingly though, it seems that this also reflected the desire of the local community who wished to assert their separate identity through the discovery of the carriage burial. Clearly, issues of identity and community and associations with past monuments are as relevant today as they were in the Iron Age and Romano-British periods.