

ART. VIII. – *The Medieval Vill in the Western Lake District: Some problems of definition.*<sup>1</sup> By ANGUS J. L. WINCHESTER

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RECENT years have witnessed a welcome revival of interest in the origins and development of the parish and township boundaries which divide the English countryside into territorial cells and provide a framework to the settlement pattern (Bonney: 1972; Sawyer: 1976). Little work has so far been carried out in Cumbria, but this paper aims to provide an introduction to the study of townships in upland areas of northern England, where the settlement pattern normally consists of a scatter of hamlets and single farms.

The first edition Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 maps, surveyed in the middle of the last century, provide the earliest complete picture of the territorial structure of northern England. They identify the basic units of administration, the *civil parishes* which formed the lowest level of the local government hierarchy, and set down for the first time the detailed boundaries between these territories as known to the local countrymen of that time.

The antiquity of these territorial units is often accepted without question in the light of Pollock and Maitland's conclusion eighty years ago that "in general the vill of the 13th century is the 'civil parish' of the 19th" (Pollock and Maitland, 1898, i, 560). The medieval *vill* or *township* (rendered *villa* in Latin) was, like the modern civil parish, the basic unit of local administration, "a tract of land with some houses on it which was a unit in the national system of police and finance" (Maitland: 1960, 38), and continuity in the use of a particular administrative unit can often be shown in areas containing large nucleated villages, where each civil parish consists of a village and its appendant territory and "the parish boundaries seem almost to draw themselves" (*ibid.*).

Although large village clusters are found in places along the West Cumbrian coast, the area chosen for study (the Ward of Allerdale above Derwent or Copeland) like most of upland northern England, is an area characterized by predominantly dispersed settlement, the boundaries of civil parishes embracing a scatter of single farmsteads, small hamlets and looser groupings of farms. In such areas Maitland noted that "On the face of the map there is no reason why a particular group of cottages should be reckoned to belong to this parish rather than to the next" (1960, 39), an observation which prompts one to delve beneath the face of the map in an attempt to seek the origins of the pattern of territorial boundaries in areas of scattered settlement.

As a starting point, this paper aims to examine some of the problems of definition which are encountered immediately such a quest is begun.

### The Post-medieval Poor Law Township

The Act of Parliament of 1889 which constituted the civil parishes, stated that a civil parish was to be "a place for which a separate poor rate is or can be made" (Stat. 52/53 Vict. c. 63, sec. 5). The pattern for poor relief during the 17th to 19th centuries was laid down by the Poor Law Act of 1601 (Stat. 43 Eliz. I. c. 2) which established the appointment of overseers of the poor in every ecclesiastical parish in England. By the middle of the 17th century pressure had been brought to bear on Parliament to allow the huge ecclesiastical parishes of northern counties to be subdivided into a number of smaller units for poor law administration, and the 1662 Act allowed for the appointment of overseers "within every Township or Village" in these areas (Stat. 14 Chas. II. c. 12. sec. 21). The Ordnance surveyors mapped these units of poor law administration and we can fairly safely assume that the basic cells of territorial organisation on the 19th century Ordnance maps represent the fossilisation by the 1662 Act of territorial entities in existence by the mid-17th century. For convenience these parochial sub-divisions which were used for the administration of poor relief in the post-medieval centuries will be termed *poor law townships*.

Figure 1 reproduces the pattern of civil units of administration in Copeland shown on first edition Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 maps, surveyed between 1860 and 1864. Of the 68 units into which the surveyors divided the surface of Copeland, 17 are coterminous with ecclesiastical parishes, the remaining three-quarters (51 units) representing the subdivision of parishes into their constituent townships for the administration of the poor law. In only one instance is a township split between two ecclesiastical parishes.<sup>2</sup>

In size the townships of Copeland fall into two distinct groups; the smaller townships of the coastal lowlands generally contain between 1,000 and 3,000 acres (400-1200 ha), while the vast Lakeland townships, whose boundaries encompass whole fellsides, contain tracts of up to over 17,400 acres (7040 ha).

That the townships mapped by the Ordnance surveyors in Copeland were equivalent to the units of poor law administration, and that the origin of these units reached back into the 17th century, is confirmed by a series of parochial returns of 1777<sup>3</sup> in which the division of each parish for poor law purposes is stated. Typical is the return from Brigham parish: "Brigham Parish is Divided into six Townships for Time immemorial; viz: Brigham, Greysouthen, Eaglesfield, Blindbothell or Lowside, Whinfield, Mosser".<sup>4</sup> Each of these divisions is found as a unit of civil administration, bounded and named on the Ordnance maps.

In only one instance, that of Parton township, carved out of Moresby parish in the early 18th century,<sup>5</sup> is a known date given for the constitution of a separate poor law division, the phrase recurring regularly in these returns being that the parochial subdivisions had not been made within memory.

In some cases the returns hint that ecclesiastical parishes not subdivided for the purposes of poor law administration nevertheless exhibited a composite structure, being composed of a number of constituent parts: "Haile Parish is divided into two separate Divisions (Haile and Wilton), but maintain their poor jointly . . . - Lowcay is in the Parish of Harrington and their is No Division but is all under one". Indeed, if the pattern of poor law townships is compared with units used for other administrative purpose in the 17th to 19th centuries, it becomes clear that, in mapping only those parochial divisions which appointed separate overseers of the poor, the Ordnance maps conceal

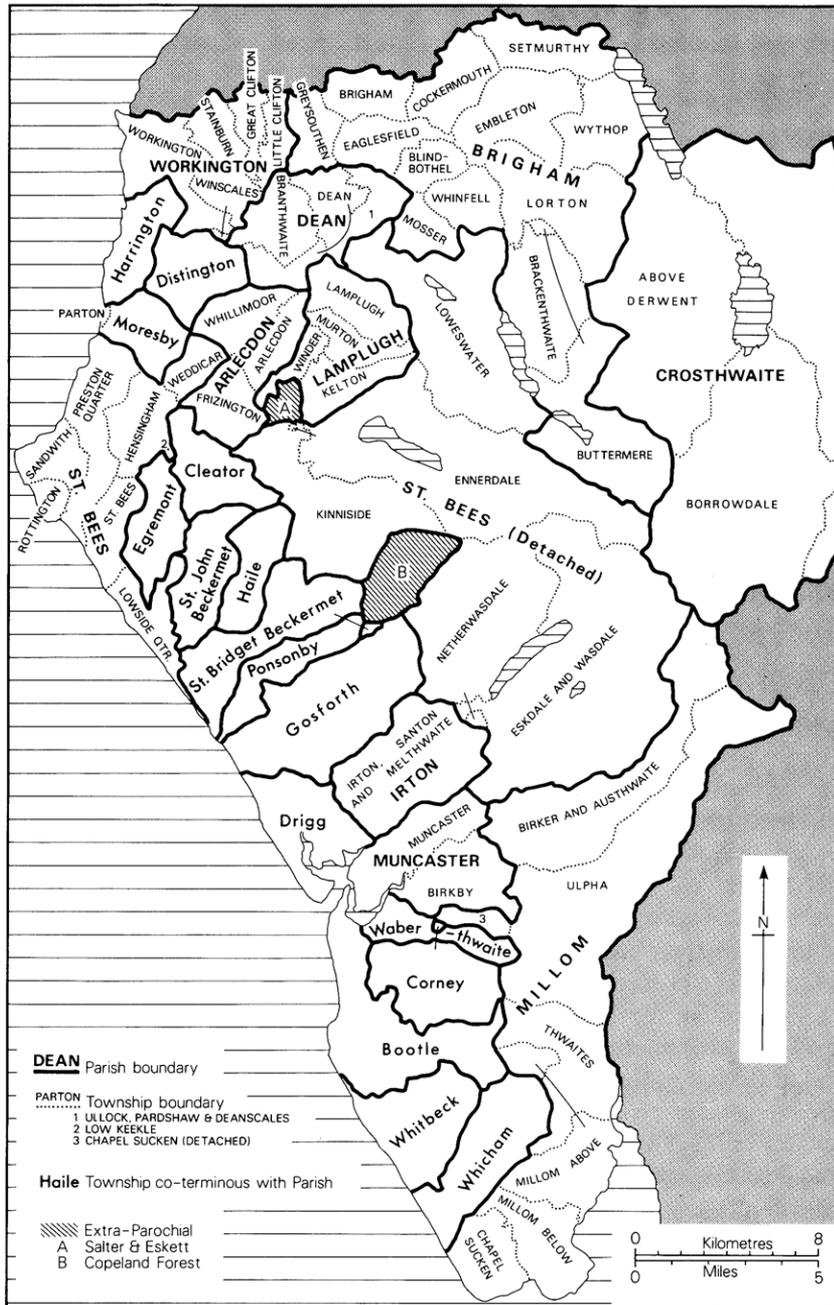


FIG. 1. - Copeland: Poor Law Townships.

many other territorial units used as the basis of administration until comparatively recently.

Gosforth may be cited as an example. Here the ecclesiastical parish was not subdivided for poor law purposes yet contained within its bounds four distinct territories used as separate administrative units until the last century (Fig. 2). In 1842 Jefferson described the parish of Gosforth as containing "the four townships or constablewicks of Gosforth, Boonwood and Seascale, High Bolton and Low Bolton" (Jefferson, 1842, 295), a structure which is confirmed by the 1831 Census Enumeration Abstract.<sup>6</sup> The late-18th and early-19th century Land Tax returns used in the construction of Fig. 2 (cf. Williams, 1956, 161, 221-2) name four divisions; Gosforth, Boonwood, Bolton and Newton.<sup>7</sup> As the parish was not divided for poor law purposes and consequently is not divided into townships on the Ordnance maps the boundaries between these 18th and early 19th century civil administrative units have been lost and only an approximate reconstruction is possible.

Gosforth is one of four ecclesiastical parishes in Copeland which were divided into smaller units for administrative purposes (other than poor relief) during the 18th and 19th centuries.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, such a composite structure is also found in some poor law townships which were themselves subdivisions of parishes. Above Derwent township, one of the poor law subdivisions of the vast Lakeland parish of Crosthwaite,<sup>9</sup> is found to be an umbrella unit incorporating four smaller territories which recur as *graveships*<sup>10</sup> from the 15th century, and as the units on which Hearth Tax and Land Tax were subsequently assessed (Fig. 3). The general correspondence elsewhere in the Honour of Cockermouth between the manorial rent-collection unit – the *graveship* – and the poor law township, and indeed the equation of the terms *graveship* and *township* in a document of 1567,<sup>11</sup> suggest that the poor law division of Above Derwent, like those undivided ecclesiastical parishes such as Gosforth, did not replicate the 17th century territorial structure of the locality and should thus not be thought of as one single *township*, but as embracing a number of smaller territories to which the label *township* would have been given.

The conclusion drawn from this discussion must be that, although frequently reflecting in detail the pattern of territorial subdivision used for other administrative purposes during the post-medieval centuries, in a significant minority of cases the poor law units mapped by the Ordnance surveyors do not reflect the division of the land surface for other civil administrative purposes. In most cases these discrepancies seem to correspond to the use of the undivided parish, the basic cell of ecclesiastical as opposed to civil jurisdiction, as the poor law assessment unit. From its origin in the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 the oversight of the poor was based firmly on the ecclesiastical parish, and it seems probable that when the opportunity arose to organise relief at a more local level after the Poor Law Act of 1662 inertia may have acted to prevent the subdivision of some moderate-sized parishes.

Where an ecclesiastical parish was subdivided for poor law purposes but the townships do not correspond to other contemporary administrative territories, it seems probable that the poor law townships represent the planned subdivisions of a parish for this particular purpose. Above Derwent is thus merely an artificial grouping of four otherwise separate territorial units, taking its name from its position as that part of Crosthwaite parish lying in the ward of Allerdale Above Derwent outside the clearly defined valley of Borrowdale.

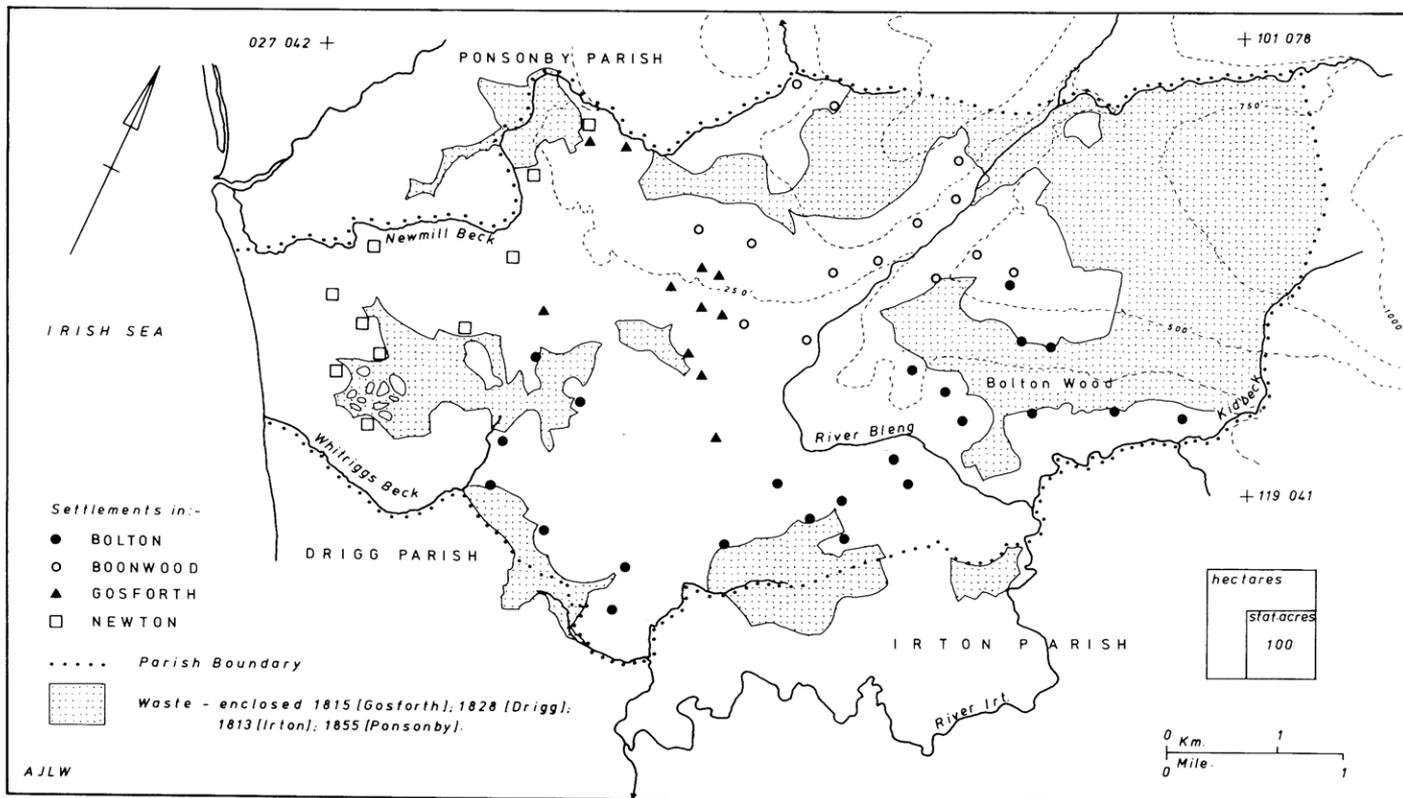


FIG. 2. - Gosforth Parish: Land Tax Collection Units. Source: C.R.O. QRP/1/46 (1825 Land Tax Returns).

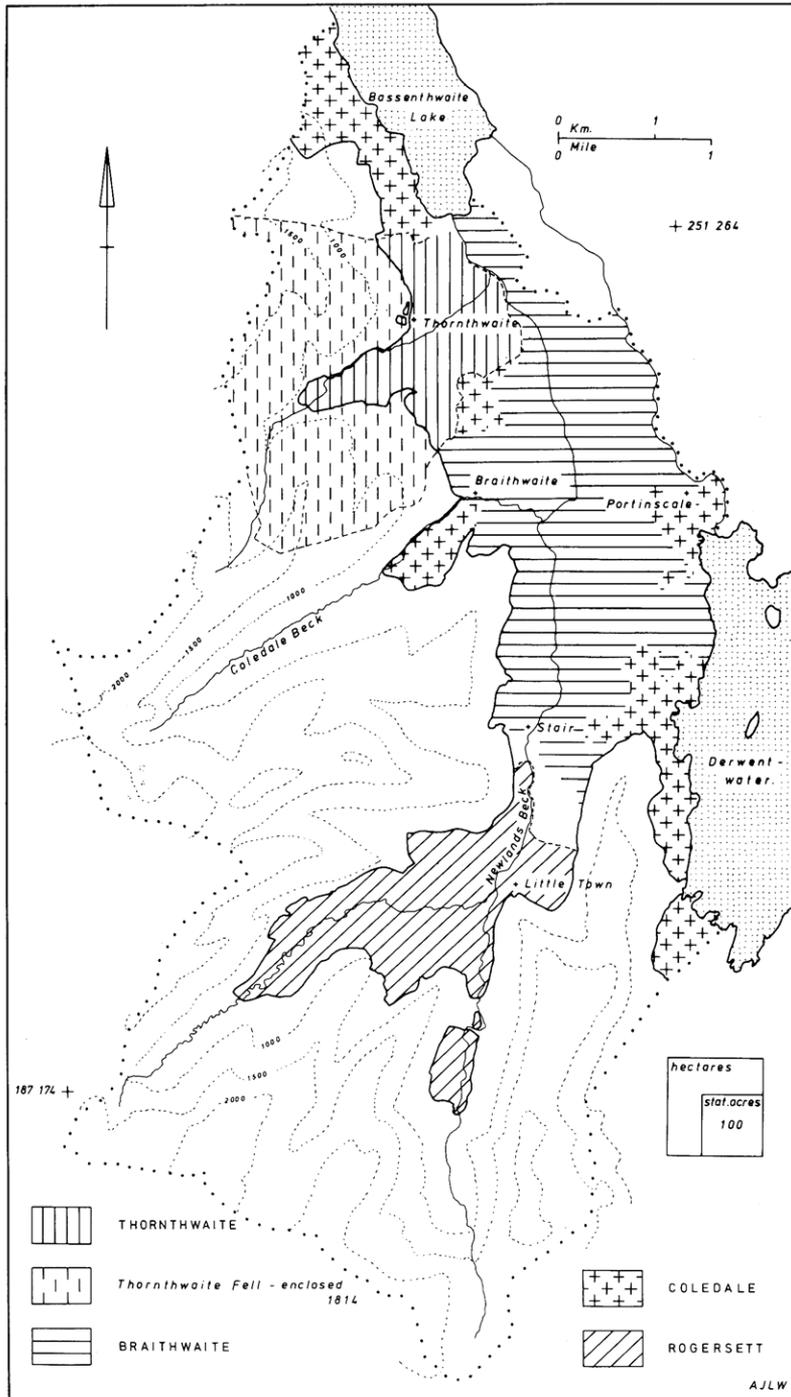


FIG. 3. - Above Derwent Township: 16th Century Graveships. Source: based on reconstruction of 1578 Survey and General Fine Book of 1547 (C.R.O. D/Lec/301 and 314/38) in which holdings in the area are listed under the name of the graveship to which they paid their rents.

The pattern of poor law townships shown in Fig. 1 must therefore be thought of in a narrow sense as the pattern of poor law administration from the 17th to 19th centuries, and in a sizeable minority of cases one has not to delve much earlier than the compilation of the Ordnance maps to discover an underlying pattern of territorial structure which does not correspond to that of poor law administration.

### The Medieval Administrative Vill

The range of administrative obligations falling on the inhabitants of a medieval vill have been neatly summarised by Vinogradoff:

[The vill] is called upon to perform various administrative duties – to deliver evidence at inquests, to catch and watch thieves, to mend roads, to contribute in keeping up bridges and walls, to assess and levy taxes, to witness transactions etc. (Vinogradoff: 1908, 475).

As such a vital cell in the organisation of local government the inhabitants of the vill may be regarded as “a community conscious and active in its own right” (Cam: 1950, 1) regardless of the patterns of manorial organisation imposed upon it. Once again we may contrast the inhabitants of a tightly nucleated village whose communal administrative obligations may be thought of as an extension of their communal agricultural operations, with the small scattered hamlet communities of the north and west.

In parts of England the response to a situation in which the units of settlement were considered too small to be utilised as administrative units seems to have been to group settlements together for policing and other purposes into larger units referred to as *villae integrae* or “entire vill”. When drawing attention to this term half a century ago, Lees quoted a 12th century example from Suffolk referring to the grouping of 24 vills (*villae*) into 6 *leets que dicuntur ville integre* (Lees: 1926, 102). Clearly, when interpreting a reference to *villa de A* the use of the term to describe an administrative unit which did not necessarily coincide with the basic unit of territory must be borne in mind. Since Lees’ work little further exploration has been made into the relationship between administrative and settlement units, but her examples from Lincolnshire, Rutland, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Suffolk show a wide distribution of the concept of the entire administrative vill, as opposed to the basic settlement unit, even in areas of village settlement. Although Lees does not quote examples from more northerly counties the concept of a larger administrative vill embracing a number of settlements should be borne in mind when examining the territorial structure of parts of England characterized by hamlet settlement.<sup>12</sup>

In the absence of any list of administrative units in medieval Cumberland comparable to those found in the Hundred Rolls and *Nomina Villarum* for some other English counties, the territorial units used for the assessment and collection of the Lay Subsidies of the 1330s are taken as the basis for this discussion. Unfortunately the precise nature of these Lay Subsidy assessment units is unclear: the rolls do not specifically state that each is a *villa* and Glasscock (1975), in his recent introduction to the 1334 Lay Subsidy, has not explored the nature of the assessment units, assuming presumably that each represents a later township or borough. Indeed, in many parts of England such an assumption would appear to be valid. Even in a county of such dispersed settlement as Westmorland Fraser has shown how, with some discrepancies, the 110 units named in the 1332 Subsidy Roll do approximate to the townships of later centuries (Fraser, 1966,

141). However, it appears that the units by which the lay subsidies were collected in Cumberland were markedly different. Fraser points out how the Cumbrian assessment units cannot be related directly to later townships but, although she suggests that in some cases ecclesiastical parishes or manorial groupings were utilized, she reaches no firm conclusions on the precise nature of the taxation units in this county (*ibid.*, 134-7).

The pattern of Lay Subsidy assessment units in Copeland (Fig. 4) has been produced by a comparison of the 1336 roll published by Glasscock (1975, 36-41) with the slightly incomplete rolls for 1332 and 1340.<sup>13</sup> The units appear to be standardized, the same list of territorial names occurring in each roll. When an attempt is made to map these units problems are immediately encountered. As only 32 taxation units are listed for the whole of Copeland in the rolls, while the Ordnance maps show 68 poor law divisions,<sup>14</sup> it seems that the medieval administrative villi must frequently have embraced more than one later township. The discrepancy may be resolved in some cases by references in 14th and 15th century deeds and inquisitions which specify that a later poor law township was considered at that date to lie "in the vill of A", a name which invariably recurs in the list of Lay Subsidy assessment units.<sup>15</sup> The spatial reconstruction of medieval administrative villi attempted in Fig. 4 is based on such references. The incomplete nature of the pattern shown in Fig. 4 highlights the problem encountered when attempting to produce a neat cellular structure of territorial divisions from no more than the list of place-names given in the rolls and the chance survival of documents which elaborate on the spatial extent of a particular administrative vill.

In the Honour of Cockermouth (the north-eastern section of Copeland) it has proved possible to reconstruct fairly certainly the relationship of the 8 administrative units listed in the Lay Subsidy rolls to the 19 poor law townships mapped by the Ordnance Survey. The lowland area south-west of Cockermouth, anciently known as the Five Towns (*quinque villae*), does indeed contain five medieval administrative villi (Brigham, Eaglesfield, Dean, Clifton, Greysouthen) but embraces 10 poor law townships, while the whole free chase of Derwentfells (the land between the rivers Cocker and Derwent) was known for administrative purposes as the vill of Braithwaite. Covering seven poor law townships and over 42,000 acres (17,000 ha) the wealth of the inhabitants of the vill of Braithwaite was assessed in 1332 at almost four times that of the inhabitants of the borough of Cockermouth.<sup>16</sup>

The relationship between medieval administrative villi and poor law townships in Copeland outside the Honour of Cockermouth cannot be reconstructed in full from surviving later medieval deeds. However, the evidence which has been collected suggests that a similar composite structure was frequently found. In particular, attention may be drawn to the vill of Morton to which the poor law townships of Mosser, Whillimoor and Weddicar are assigned in later medieval deeds. Covering at least these four later townships, this administrative unit appears to have been not a compact block of territory like the vill of Braithwaite but a discontinuous tract of land along the margin of the Lakeland fells.

As large parts of the liberties of Egremont and Millom cannot be assigned to any one Lay Subsidy collection unit, attention may perhaps be focused briefly on these areas. The land which cannot be accounted for in Fig. 4 may be divided into two categories. First are the free chases of Egremont and Millom, which included most of the Lakeland fells and dales, and for no part of which is there corroborative evidence pointing to their

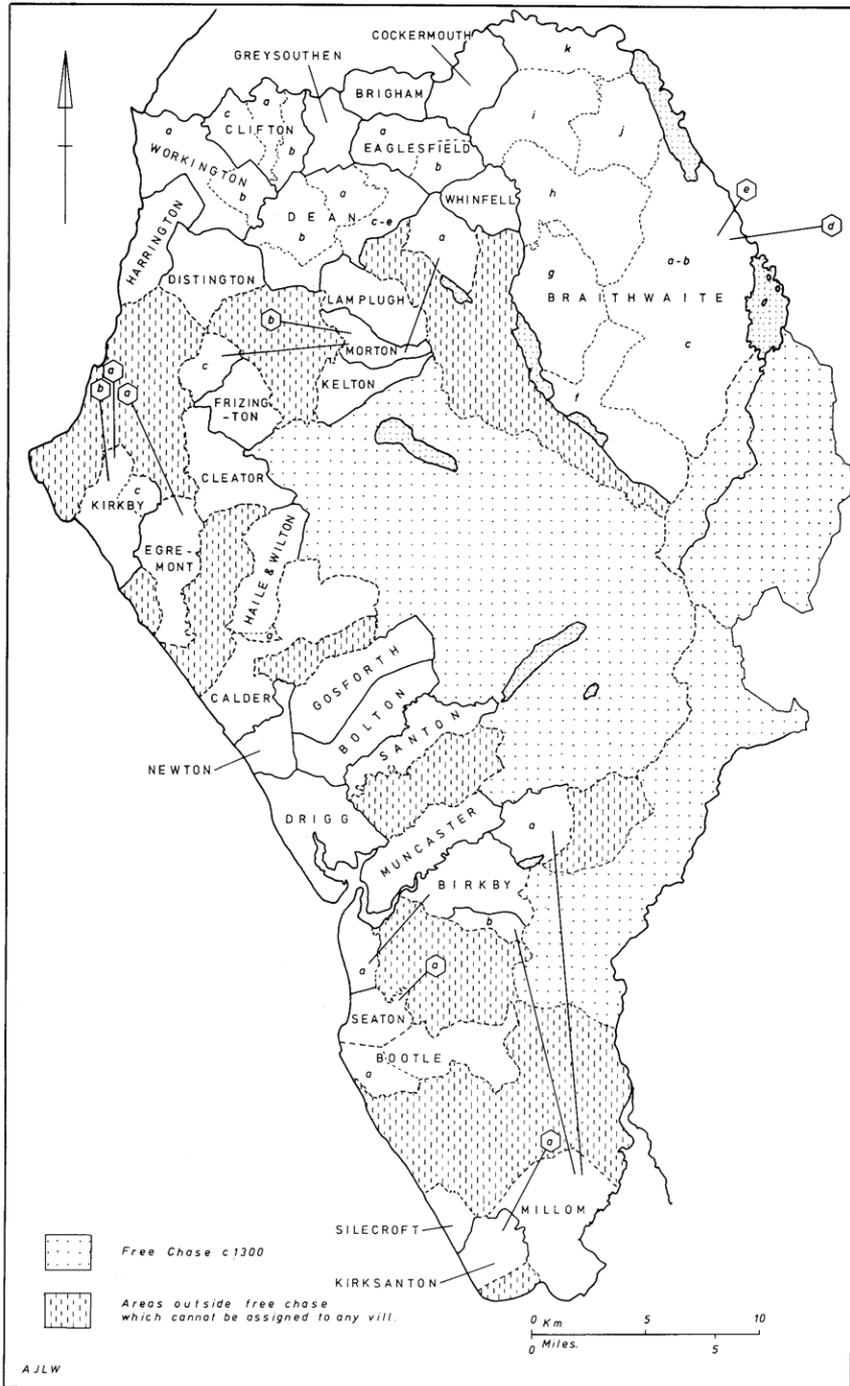


FIG. 4. – Copeland: Lay Subsidy Assessment Units, 1332-40.

inclusion in one of the villas centred on the coastal lowlands. Nor, assuming the completeness of the list of lay subsidy units in the Liberty of Egremont, were they embraced within umbrella-like units in the way in which the whole free chase of Derwentfells was placed in the administrative vill of Braithwaite. As substantial peasant communities are known to have inhabited the Lakeland valleys of the free chases in the early 14th century<sup>17</sup> their apparent exemption from lay subsidy assessment cannot be explained.

The second category of land which cannot be allotted to any administrative vill comprises all those areas outside the free chases and unaccounted for in Fig. 4. Such areas are probably the result of the chance lack of survival of references akin to those which enable reconstruction of the Lay Subsidy administrative units elsewhere in Copeland. Less conclusive evidence for the extent of the administrative villas can be gleaned from an examination of the names of people appearing in the 1332 Lay Subsidy Roll, published by Steel (1912, 57-60). For example, the inclusion of the lord of Ponsonby under the heading of Newton, and of the lords of Whicham, Thwaites and Whitbeck under the headings of Silcroft, Kirksanton and Millom respectively<sup>18</sup> suggests under which unit these places (which cannot on other evidence be assigned to a particular administrative vill), were included for taxation purposes.

The pattern of early 14th century administrative villas in Copeland reconstructed above would seem to bear close similarities to the *villae integrae* (administrative villas embracing a number of smaller units) found elsewhere in medieval England. The Lay Subsidy assessment units appear to be "entire villas"; villas for administrative purposes yet frequently embracing a number of later townships. Identified initially on the basis of the list of units appearing in the Lay Subsidy rolls these administrative villas have been chronicled so far only from sources dating from after 1250, although earlier sources were searched when collecting evidence of their composite nature.

The concept of *villae integrae* ("entire villas") which is seen in these early 14th century units is however paralleled by earlier sources from Copeland which, rating blocks of territory for various dues and services, describe them in terms of proportions of villas. The rental of the Fortibus' portion of the Honour of Cockermouth in 1270 includes a list of mesne tenants which begins: *Johannes de Ireby tenet Embltone pro quarta parte unius ville*. The list names six tenants each holding a named territory, which with one exception, can be identified with a later poor law township, and which is similarly rated as a proportion of a vill as the table below shows:

TABLE I  
*Free Tenements in the Honour of Cockermouth, 1270*

Holding	Identification	Rating
<i>Embltone</i>	Embleton	1/4 vill
<i>Dene</i>	Dean	1/2 vill
<i>Brigham</i>	Brigham	1 vill
<i>Eglesfeud</i>	Eaglesfield	1 vill
<i>Clyftone</i>	Little Clifton	1/3 vill
<i>Hotweyth</i>	Hewthwaite, Setmurthy township	1/6 vill

Source: P.R.O. S.C. 11/730/m 14v

The exact meaning of the phraseology used in this list – “A holds B as the nth part of a vill” – is obscure but is mirrored word for word in lists of settlements in Nottinghamshire rated for military purposes in 1316 which are quoted by Lees (1926, 102-3). In Copeland the ratings in the 1270 rental do not appear to be reflected in the amounts of cornage or free rents paid for the estates in question<sup>19</sup> which would seem to imply that the terminology had other than tenurial connotations.

A parallel is perhaps to be found, however, in a clause in the grant of the later township of Mosser in 1203 which specifies that the grantee shall render “as much foreign service as pertains to one-third part of a vill of Copeland”.<sup>20</sup>

The implication of these references is that the term *villa* had a specific administrative meaning in the 13th century, and that the whole of Copeland was presumably divided notionally into villa units. In spatial terms such notional divisions appear, like the Lay Subsidy villas identified earlier, frequently to have covered an area of ground greater in extent than the poor law townships of the 17th century and afterwards.

Despite the similarities between the Lay Subsidy villas and these notional villas, it is difficult to clarify the precise relationship between the two sets of units. Some sort of general correspondence does occur however. Brigham, rated at one vill in 1270, occurs as a discrete Lay Subsidy assessment unit and forms one complete “town” in the Five Towns area. Little Clifton, on the other hand, rated at one-third of a vill in 1270, was combined with two other poor law townships (Great Clifton and Stainburn) to form the administrative vill of Clifton, another of the Five Towns. Similarly Mosser, the foreign service of which was assessed at the rate of one-third of a vill, is not found as a 14th-century administrative unit in its own right, but merely as one member of the fragmented administrative vill of Morton.

The conclusion to be drawn from the evidence presented above is that the post-medieval poor law township in Copeland was not in many cases the direct successor to the basic unit of medieval administration. In the Honour of Cockermouth, where the details of the pattern of early 14th century administrative villas have been reconstructed, of the 19 poor law administrative units mapped by the Ordnance Survey, only the borough of Cockermouth and the townships of Whinfell, Brigham and Greysouthen are found to be coterminous with early-14th century villas. The evidence from Copeland suggests very strongly that Pollock and Maitland’s hypothesis that the 19th century civil parish is generally the direct descendant of the 13th century vill must be rejected if the *vill* is interpreted as being the unit of administration used in the collection of the later medieval Lay Subsidies.

Consequently we must conclude that the medieval administrative vill had a composite structure, frequently embracing a number of *members* or *hamlets* (phraseology often found in the references gathered to construct Fig. 4). These members are frequently the predecessors of the post-medieval poor law townships, or where the poor law division embraced a number of smaller administrative territories, of other post-medieval administrative units.

### **The Fore-runner of the Post-medieval Township**

Attention is now turned to these *members* or *hamlets* of the administrative villas described above. Their later use as administrative units in preference to the larger *villae integrae* raises the question of whether they possessed some identity as territorial divisions at an earlier date.

An examination of the proceedings of the Assize in Copeland in 1278 would suggest that they did. In the Assize Roll for that year the *villatae* or townships, which are amerced for failing to capture felons, or for concealing the true worth of a convicted man's goods, are in general equivalent to the post-medieval administrative units, rather than to the 14th century *villae integrae* discussed above. Thus, the vills which are amerced for failing to pursue thieves who burgled a house in Portinscales (in Above Derwent poor law township; part of the 14th century administrative vill of Braithwaite) are named as Braithwaite, Thornthwaite, Lorton and Embleton,<sup>21</sup> each of which recurs as a post-medieval administrative division, but all of which lay within the *villa integra* of Braithwaite.

This apparently double level of usage of the term *villa* in medieval documents (already hinted at in Lee's discussion of the *villa integra* (1926, 102)) suggests that a careful examination of the use of the term is called for. When used in territorial contexts, the Latin *villa* is generally used to render the English words *town* or *township*, terms derived from the old English *tūn*, which has survived as by far the commonest element in English place-names. In his discussion of the meaning of *tūn* Smith (1956: ii, 188-198) has shown the wide range of senses in which it was applied. Essentially having the sense of an enclosed piece of land (i.e. a tract of territory defined by boundary), its use was extended at an early date to describe a settlement, whether single farmstead or nucleated village. Thus when used to render words derived from *tūn* the Latin *villa* would appear to describe a basic unit of settlement, a farmstead, hamlet or village and its appendant delimited territory.

In Copeland the use of the term to describe both the administrative *villae integrae* of the later medieval centuries and the earlier notional vills has been noted. However, the term is by no means restricted in use to the 32 place-names by which the administrative vills were identified. In a search of land charters of before 1350 it is found referring to 23 other territorial names (i.e. names of post-medieval townships or divisions of townships) as well as to two "lost" territories which can now only be approximately identified.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand it should be noted that in no instance is the term applied to names of territories other than the 32 early 14th century administrative divisions later than the closing decades of the 13th century.

Clearly the discrepancy between the phraseology which locates land granted in 1195 "in the vill of *Emelton*", and that two hundred years later (c. 1400) which grants land "in *Embleton* in the vill of *Braythwatt*"<sup>23</sup> confirms that the term was used in two distinct senses, one referring to those basic territorial divisions which often survived to the 19th century as poor law townships, the other describing the larger late-medieval administrative vill.

From the references collected, hints of a change from the use of *villa* in the first sense in the 12th and 13th centuries to its use in the second sense during the 14th and 15th centuries may be noted. The example of Embleton quoted above may be compared with references to Whitehaven, described as a *villa* in c. 1270 but as part of the vill of *Kirkby* (i.e. St. Bees) in 1324,<sup>24</sup> and to Hyton to which the term *villa* is applied in a charter of c. 1200, but which is described as a hamlet of the vill of Bootle in 1320 and 1357.<sup>25</sup>

It would seem that the term *villa* gained a more specifically administrative sense as the organisation of local government became standardized after the Statute of Winchester in 1285. It is perhaps interesting to compare the description by Bracton (writing between

1235 and 1259) and Fortescue (writing c. 1470), of what constituted a *villa*. To Bracton it was a group of houses, a community living in close proximity to each other as in the typical nucleated village,<sup>26</sup> while the later writer saw a vill as a tract of territory sometimes embracing "certain hamlets",<sup>27</sup> a description which fits closely the concept of an administrative *villa integra*.

On the other hand the references to *villae integrae* collected by Lees date from as far back as the 12th century (Lees, 1926, 102), and the evidence presented in the previous section of this paper for the existence of notional vill units in Copeland from the early 13th century suggest that the system of grouping territories together into administrative units was not simply a consequence of the Statute of Winchester and increasing central government control in the decades either side of 1300, but had its origins in earlier times.

### Conclusions

The examination of evidence concerning both medieval and post-medieval administrative units in Copeland presented above allows two main conclusions to be drawn. First is that the pattern of civil administrative divisions mapped by the Ordnance Survey must be interpreted as no more than the pattern of poor law administration in the 17th to 19th centuries and cannot be used unmodified as the basis for discussion of the territorial framework of medieval settlement in an area such as Copeland. Second is that, when talking of the medieval vill, care must be taken to distinguish between the *villa integra*, the administrative unit frequently composed of a number of later poor law townships, and the basic territorial entity to which the term *villa* was sometimes applied in early-medieval land charters. This latter was frequently, but not invariably, taken as the local unit of poor law administration in the 17th century, and thus as the civil parish of the 19th century.

Questions which have been raised in the foregoing discussion, and which it would be interesting to attempt to answer in other parts of the north, include:

- (i) The organisation of forest and free chase areas for administrative purposes. The inclusion of the whole of Derwentfells, the free chase of the lords of the Honour of Cockermouth, in one administrative vill has been noted, but one is almost tempted to suggest that the free chases of the liberties of Egremont and Millom were "extra-villar" in the 14th century.
- (ii) The precise nature of the 13th century notional vill units and their relationship to the 14th century administrative vill.
- (iii) the use and precise meaning of the term *villa* (presumably translating the vernacular *town*) in areas of hamlet settlement in the 12th and 13th centuries. An extension of this question is the use and meaning of the place-name element *tūn* in such areas.

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## Notes

### Abbreviations

C.R.O. – County Record Office, The Castle, Carlisle.

P.R.O. – Public Record Office, London.

- <sup>1</sup> This paper was presented to a seminar entitled "Upland Settlement in Northern England", held at the Department of Geography, University of Durham on 12 February, 1977. It is based on Chapter IV of a dissertation, entitled "Territorial Structure and Agrarian Organisation in Medieval and Sixteenth Century Copeland, Cumberland", which it is hoped to submit for the degree of Ph.D. in the University of Durham. I should like to record my thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Brian Roberts, for his help and encouragement.
- <sup>2</sup> The enclosed land and farmsteads at Eastwaite (NY 1303), in the township of Irton, Santon and Melthwaite, are part of the vast upland portion of St. Bees parish, while the remainder of the township is otherwise coterminous with Irton parish.
- <sup>3</sup> C.R.O. QCF/21/2.
- <sup>4</sup> The parochial chapelries of Cockermouth and Lorton (each also embracing more than one township) made separate returns and are not included here.
- <sup>5</sup> "Morresby and the Township of Parton. Divided About the year 1726. Each to maintain thir Owne Poor" C.R.O. QCF/21/2.
- <sup>6</sup> "The Return of the Parish of Gosforth includes High and Low Bolton and Bornwood (sic) Townships" *1831 Census Enumeration Abstract*: i, 83.
- <sup>7</sup> The Land Tax Division of Newton (returned with neighbouring Ponsonby) appears from the farms named in the return of 1825 to have been more or less coterminous with that part of Gosforth ecclesiastical parish now in the civil parish of Seascale.
- <sup>8</sup> The other parishes are Irton, Ponsonby and Haile.
- <sup>9</sup> C.R.O. QCF/21/2: Return of Crosthwaite parish, 1777. The parish is divided into first, Keswick, St. John's and Wythburn; second Borrowdale and Underskiddaw; and "Third and last the Division Call'd above derwent Mentains its Poor altogether".
- <sup>10</sup> *Grave* or *grieve* appear to be equivalent to the southern English *reeve* (cf. *English Dialect Dic.*: Grieve – "an officer who collected rents for the lord of the manor"). Hence the territory under his control was called *grieveship* or *graveshipp* for which the *Oxford English Dic.* quotes examples from Yorkshire (West Riding) and Northumberland.
- <sup>11</sup> C.R.O. D/Lec/300/ Return of Commissioners in Cumberland, 1567. Mines in Derwentfells are described as being "in the townshipp or graveshipp of Coldale".
- <sup>12</sup> Only one instance of the use of the term *villa integra* has been found in Cumberland. A list of free tenants in Allerdale in 1270 includes: *Walterus de Wygeton' tenet. v. villatas integres in Dominica feodis* (P.R.O. S.C.11/730/m14v).
- <sup>13</sup> i.e. the units listed under the headings *Libertas de Cokermuth* and *Libertas de Egremound*. The Lay Subsidy Rolls used are those for 1332 (Steel: 1912, 52-60); 1336 (Glasscock: 1975, 36-41); and 1340 (P.R.O. E179/90/22).

- <sup>14</sup> This number includes the extra-parochial place of Salter and Eskett, but excludes the township of Parton (The early 18th cent. origin of which has been shown – see note 6), the township of Low Keekle, an anomalous 33.6 acres (13.6 ha) not otherwise recorded as an administrative unit, and Copeland forest (an extra-parochial block consisting solely of unenclosed waste).
- <sup>15</sup> e.g. *Embleton in villa de Braythwatt* (c. 1400 – C.R.O. D/Stn/1/33); *Brounrig in villa de Moreton* (1338 – *Reg. St. Bees*; no. 220).
- <sup>16</sup> Steel, 1912, 54-56. The total sum for Braithwaite was £163 2s. 5d. compared with £42 16s. 10d. for Cockermouth. The inclusion of Brundholme and Lizzick (in the neighbouring ward of Allerdale Below Derwent, outside Derwentfells proper) in the administrative vill of Braithwaite perhaps suggests that the Lay Subsidy assessment unit of that name covered a larger extent, possibly including the market centre of Keswick.
- <sup>17</sup> I. P. M. John de Multon, 1334 (PRO C. 135/41/1) mentions 31 tenants at will in Ennerdale, 57 at Kinniside, 22 in Wasdale, and 46 in Eskdale and Miterdale.
- <sup>18</sup> Alexander de Ponsonby held Ponsonby in 1334 (extent of Knights' Fees, Copeland – P.R.O. C135/41/1). The families of William de Corbot (or Corbeth) and William de Morthing have been shown to have been lords of Whicham and Whitbeck respectively (*Reg. St. Bees*, pp. 108n, 114n, 180n). William de Thwates was probably an ancestor of John Thwates who held the manor of Thwaites in 1510 (C.R.O. D/Lons/W/Millom Court Book, 1510-23, p. 51).
- <sup>19</sup> The relationship between the rating of holdings in Allerdale and Copeland in 1270 and the free rents due from them is as follows.

<i> Holding:</i>	<i> Rating:</i>	<i> Cornage:</i>	<i> Free Rent:</i>	<i> Cornage/vill:</i> (shillings)
<i>Allerdale:</i>				
Wigton	5 vills	66s 8d	—	13.333
Threapland	1/3 vills	6s 8d	20s 0d	20.000
Ireby	1/4 vills	6s 8d	—	26.666
Oughterside	1/9 vills	2s 6d	1d	22.500
<i>Copeland:</i>				
Embleton	1/4 vills	—	—	—
Dene	1/2 vills	6s 8d	26s 8d	13.333
Brigham	1 vill	5s 0d	—	5.000
Eaglesfield	1 vill	6s 8d	—	6.666
Lit. Clifton	1/3 vills	2s 10d	17s 0d	8.500
Hewthwaite	1/6 vills	—	—	—

- <sup>20</sup> C.R.O. D/Lec/301/Grant by Richard de Lucy to Adam de Moserthe of all *Moserthe* (Mosser). 15th cent. copy printed in *Reg. St. Bees*: Illustrative Doc. No. 28.
- <sup>21</sup> *vill' de Brayuthweyt, Thornthweyt, Lorton, Embleton non fecerunt sectam post ipsos ideo in misericordia* (P.R.O. just 1/132/m31v). Braithwaite and Thornthwaite lie within the poor law division of Above Derwent but are listed separately for Land Tax and Hearth Tax purposes. Lorton and Embleton recur as poor law, Land Tax and Hearth Tax divisions.
- <sup>22</sup> These are the vills of *Ingilberdhop*, apparently around the farms of Hope and Hopebeck, Brackenthwaite township (NY 1623) and *Holegate* apparently around the farms of Thornholme, Priorscales, Skaldersceugh in St. Bridget Beckermet parish (NY 0708). (For full discussion see my thesis, Appendix AIII, Nos. 12a, 72a).
- <sup>23</sup> Grant of land in vill of Emelton, 1195 (*Cal. Docs. Rel. Scotland: i, 233*); Emelton in Braythwait, 1303 (P.R.O. C.143/21/1); E. in villa de B., c. 1400 (C.R.O. D/Stn/1/33).
- <sup>24</sup> c. 1270; *Reg. St. Bees*; No. 159, 1324; *ibid.*; No. 183.
- <sup>25</sup> c. 1200: *Monasticon Anglicanum*: vi, 558, 1230: *Cat. Ancient Deeds*: iv, A8846; 1357; *ibid.*; iv, A8804.
- <sup>26</sup> "As if a person should build a single edifice in the fields, there will not be there a vill (*villa*), but when in the process of time several edifices have begun to be built adjoining to or neighbouring to one another, there begins to be a vill" (Henricus de Bracton: *De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae*; ed. T. Twiss, HMSO, 1883; vol. iii, 394-5).
- <sup>27</sup> "Hundreds again are divided into vills . . . the boundaries of vills are not marked by walls, buildings, or streets, but by the confines of fields, by large tracts of land, by certain hamlets and by many other things such as the limits of water courses, woods and wastes . . . there is scarcely any place in England that is not contained within the ambits of vills" (Sir John Fortescue; *De Laudibus Legum Angliae* ed. S. B. Chrimes, Cambridge, 1942, 54-55).

