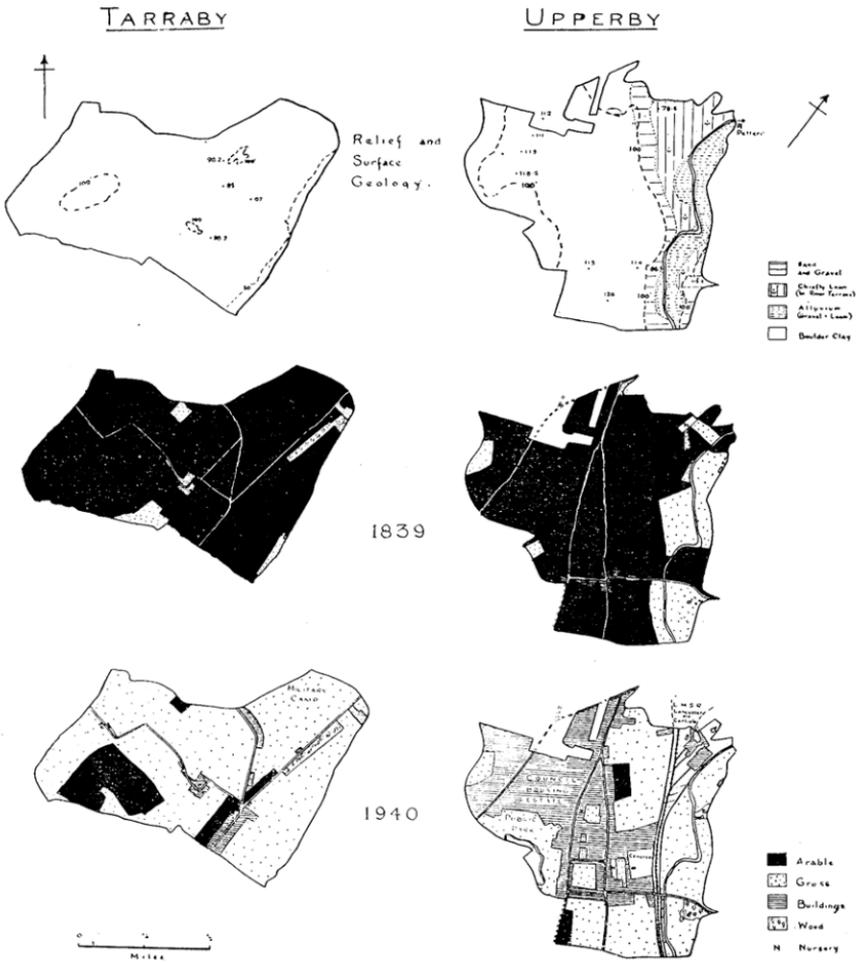


CHANGES IN LAND UTILISATION IN THE PARISHES OF



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ART. XI.—*Land Utilisation in Cumbria in the Mid-Nineteenth Century as revealed by a Study of the Tithe Returns.* By T. H. BAINBRIDGE, M.Sc.

IN order to implement the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, of which a Cumbrian, William Blamire was "architect and builder," it was necessary to carry out an extensive survey. The results of this survey took the form of a plan or series of plans of every parish on which each plot of ground was numbered and also described in an accompanying schedule. These schedules are interesting as they provide, amongst other things, facts concerning the state of cultivation of each plot of titheable land. In this North West part of England the data relates chiefly to the period from about 1838 to 1850 and an examination of these records gives valuable information concerning land utilisation in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century.

To a present day investigator the most striking feature of the tithe records is the relatively large amount of arable land.* This is well demonstrated in Figure 1 which shows the land utilisation in the neighbourhood of Carlisle in 1839 and 1940. In the year 1839 Upperby was outside the boundary of Carlisle and was a township within the parish of St. Cuthbert. In 1940, Upperby formed the greater part of the Currock Ward of Carlisle, with a rateable value of £24,386. The chief housing areas are on land formerly arable. Had the 220 acres of arable land of 1839, been entirely devoted to the growing of wheat (there is no direct evidence that this was so) and had the production averaged 30 bushels per acre then at 7/0 $\frac{1}{4}$ per

* When studying the arable acreages given in the following table it must be remembered that the total area of the whole parish is necessary in order to obtain a true picture of the conditions prevailing at that time.

LAND UTILISATION IN CUMBRIA

LAND UTILISATION IN SOME PARISHES OF CUMBRIA—
BASED ON TITHE RETURNS.

| Year. | Parish or Township. | To nearest acre. | | | Wood-land. | Average Charge per acre of titheable land. | Tithe Charge. |
|-------|---------------------------|------------------|---------|--------------------|------------|--|---------------|
| | | Titheable land. | Arable. | Meadow or Pasture. | | | |
| 1839 | Tarraby | 485 | 409 | 64 | | 3/10½ | £93 18 0 |
| 1840 | Warwick | 1157 | 839 | 186 | 133 | 2/11½ | 171 12 6 |
| 1839 | Upperby | 428 | 220 | 228 | | 3/8 | 7 8 0 |
| 1849 | Dalston | 11585 | 6360 | 1593 | 362 | 1/9½ | 1037 16 0 |
| 1847 | Holme Cultram* | 18000 | 12000 | 3930 | 20 | 1/- | 900 0 0 |
| 1840 | Dalton in Furness | 9727 | 8332 | 399 | 996 | 10d. | 405 0 0 |
| 1840 | Borrowdale† | 9194 | 499 | 2772 | 623 | 7½d. | 919 11 6 |
| 1840 | Over Derwent‡ | 8563 | 1801 | 2160 | 1101 | | |
| 1840 | Underskiddaw | 5188 | 1369 | 669 | 109 | | |
| 1840 | St. John's Castlerigg§ | 4956 | 1800 | 2656 | 500 | | |
| 1840 | Keswick§ | 410 | 133 | 175 | 100 | | |
| 1845 | Irthington | 285 | 237 | 46 | 1 | 2/11½ | 42 12 0 |
| 1838 | St. Bees | 1365 | 1086 | 254 | 25 | 2/6½ | 173 0 7 |
| 1841 | Camerton | 317 | 163 | | | 2/- | 32 1 0 |
| 1848 | Kirkby Lonsdale | 3165 | 392 | 2492 | 195 | 1/6 | 233 10 9 |
| 1839 | Pennington | 2765 | 1074 | 1684 | | 1/10 | 255 4 3½ |
| 1844 | Buttermere | 2094 | 238 | 694 | 162 | 3½d. | 29 12 0 |
| 1838 | Temple Sowerby | 1177 | 800 | 233 | | 2/7½ | 155 0 0 |
| 1847 | Orton (Cumb.) | 4264 | 3243 | 610 | 241 | 1/11 | 411 0 0 |
| 1840 | Uldale | 2281 | 1666 | 543 | 32 | 1/2 | 132 5 0 |
| 1841 | Hayton | 4324 | 3659 | 293 | 373 | 6d. | 105 12 0 |
| 1838 | Whicham¶ | 7400 | 1800 | 600 | 4 | 5½d. | 167 0 0 |
| 1846 | Aldingham | 4458 | 3257 | 1139 | 63 | 4/7 | 1016 12 0 |
| 1842 | Shap Hardendale | 2435 | 92 | 393 | | 4d. | 72 9 7½ |
| | Mardale | 156 | 32 | 29 | | | |
| | Swindale | 459 | 36 | 13 | | | |
| | Tailbert & Rayside | 213 | 27 | 9 | | | |
| | Thornshap & Keld | 223 | 215 | 7 | | | |
| 1842 | Toathman | 172 | 23 | | | | |
| | Wet Sleddale | 471 | 60 | | | | |
| 1838 | Rosegill | 535 | 75 | 21 | | 5½d. | 12 1 8 |
| 1839 | Bewcastle§ | 30000 | 4040 | 17192 | 268 | ½d. | 60 0 6 |
| 1846 | Warcop Burton** | 3035 | 234 | 800 | | ¾d. | 11 1 0 |
| | Bleatarn | 1882 | 500 | 1382 | | 10d. | 75 16 0 |

* 1,480 open marsh, 500 uncultivated moss.

† Acreage of Common 5,300.

‡ 3,500. § 10,000 (jointly).

|| 3,219.

¶ 5,000. ** 2,000.

ASKHAM TOWN FIELD.

BASED ON THE TITHE MAP OF 1842.

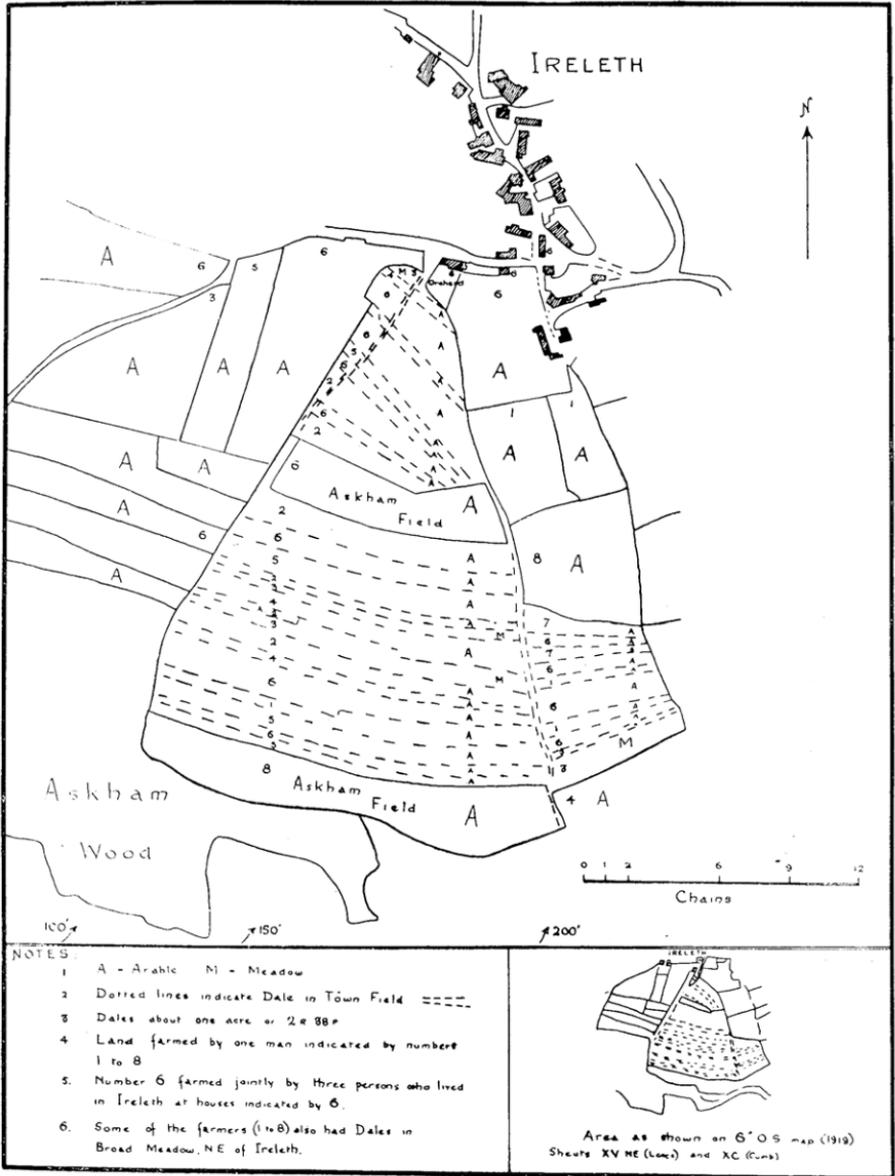


FIG. 2

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bushel (the price given in the tithe returns) the wheat would have been worth £2,317 or one tenth of the present rateable value.

Travelling now to the south of Cumbria the returns show that in 1840 the parish of Dalton in Furness covered the whole of the western part of the Furness peninsula including what is now the County Borough of Barrow-in-Furness and Walney Island. The estimated quantity of all lands in the parish was 15,594 acres of which 1,384 acres was absolutely exempt from the payment of tithes, 4,483 belonged to the Earl of Burlington and the tithes had been merged and extinguished in the freehold, leaving 9,727 acres subject to tithes. Thus, 8,332 acres out of a total of 15,594 acres were arable or 53.5 per cent. of the whole parish. By 1930 this did not reach 25 per cent.

The tithe maps for this area show that by 1842 the industrialisation of Furness had not begun. Barrow was a port with a harbour formed by four piers but there were not more than two dozen buildings and it had no separate civil existence, being included in Hawcoat, part of the parish of Dalton. There were no docks between the mainland and Barrow Island, which contained eleven buildings surrounded by a large expanse of arable land. To-day the island is the industrial 'heart' of Barrow being entirely covered with the engineering works and shipbuilding yards of Messrs. Vickers-Armstrongs.

A striking feature of one section of the Dalton tithe map—the " Plan of Ireleth in the Division of Above Town and Parish of Dalton "—is the Askham Town Field, the lay-out of which is clearly seen in the accompanying map Figure 2. Whereas many of the Open-fields of the Midlands had hundreds of tiny strips divided by balks or furrows, here there were about thirty-five strips or 'dales' as they were termed. As the map shows, in 1842, eight farmers shared the town field and only four dales were meadowland the remainder being devoted to arable

cultivation. The map affords clear evidence of the disadvantages of such town fields with small mixed parcels detached from the farm, which was often in the near-by village—well exemplified by owner number six.

Added interest is given to the Askham Town Field because there were relatively few common fields in North West England at any time. According to Dr. Darby* the percentage of the total area covered by Acts of Parliament for inclosing common fields in Cumberland was 1.7, Westmorland 0.6, and Lancashire 0.0, which can be compared with Northamptonshire where the percentage was 51.5. Professor Gonner's calculation for Cumberland was greater than this, being 4 per cent., equivalent to approximately 39,000 acres. Garnett stated that in 1874 there were only eight townships in Westmorland with Common Fields and the total extent was 425 acres.

Apart from the existence of these Town Fields the tithe maps show that the field system of that time was very analogous to the present lay-out. The chief differences are the almost total disappearance of the common fields and the combination of two or more fields to produce the larger fields of later times. A comparison of present day field names with those given in the schedules indicates very little change. This is supported by the facts shown on Figure 3 which is the plan of a Solway Plain farm with its lay-out and field names in 1849 and 1940 respectively. It can be seen that Sevey field and the Meadow are now one, these having been combined after draining with three inch tiles. Far Bank Top and Near Bank Top are also one large field and Low Pasture field is now known as Honeypot. The farm is essentially as it was ninety years ago and is still owned by the original family.

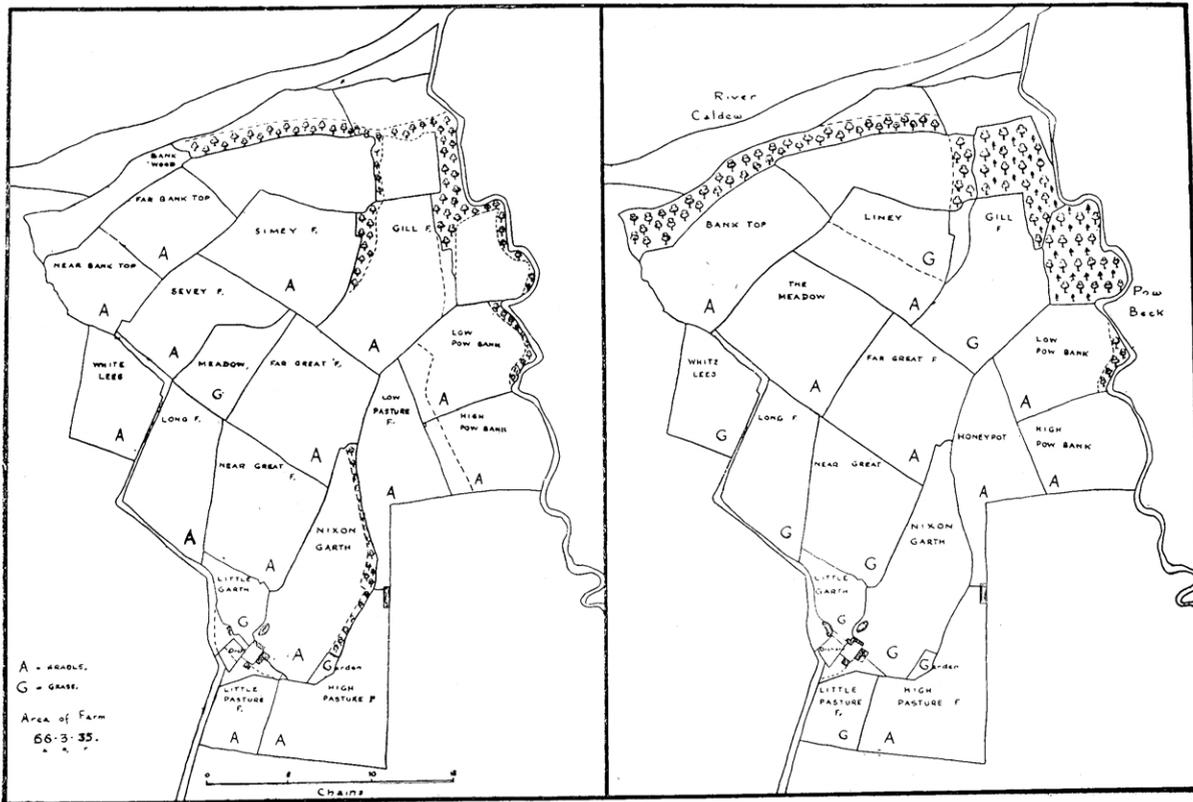
It is interesting to notice that a study of this map also supports the fact previously stated that arable cultivation

* P. 469 H. C. Darby. *An Historical Geography of England*, before A.D. 1800.

LOW FLANDERS FARM IN THE PARISH OF DALSTON.

1849

1940



was more extensive in the middle of the nineteenth century than in recent years. In 1849 only 3 a. 2 r. 26 p. were laid down to grass but in 1940 grass occupied 31 a. 1 r. 34 p., which is not far short of fifty per cent. of the farm acreage. This is what the present tenant calls "a ploughing farm," the arable portion being devoted to growing chiefly oats and turnips. The latter are fed to the fat sheep for which the farmer is noted. Some of the oats is sold in order to obtain the sheep feed to supplement the roots. 150 to 250 sheep are kept according to the quantity and quality of the arable products.

When the tithes on this farm were commuted in 1849 the rent charges were fixed at £1. 3s. 7d. payable to the Vicar for tithes other than corn, grain, lamb, wool, calves and certain hay tithes; 2s. 11d. payable to the Vicar for lamb, wool and calves; £5. 15s. 0d. payable to the Bishop of Carlisle, and 4s. 0d. payable to Lydia Martindale. The present occupier informed me that he pays only the last of these.

This farm is situated in the parish of Dalston which like most of the lowland parishes included land enclosed from the common, 2,840 acres according to the tithe returns. Apparently by this time most of the common land which was fit for cultivation had been enclosed for little is in evidence on the tithe maps which I studied. In 1849 some 51 per cent. of the total area of the Dalston parish consisted of arable land but in recent years this has fallen to about 15 per cent.

Attention should be called to the returns for the parish of Hayton because it appears that in 1841 over 83 per cent. of the total area (4,359 acres) was scheduled as arable land. The central portion of this parish includes part of the Brampton Kame-belt which provides "a soil well suited for most agricultural purposes, indeed one of the best in the whole of North West England." East and west of this sandy central portion the soil is loamy and very useful

for farming hence the 83 per cent. arable land was resultant upon the outstanding soil conditions together with the relatively low rainfall (less than 40 inches). It is surprising therefore to find that by 1936 only some 15 per cent. of the area of this parish was then under the plough. Where one hundred years ago arable farming was dominant now dairy farming is of prime importance, showing even in a parish with excellent soil conditions a marked change in land utilisation.

Whilst as we have just seen the lowlands of Cumbria had in some parts over fifty per cent. devoted to arable cultivation, yet a study of the statistics in the preceding table makes clear the existence of two major agricultural regions. Tilled land was much less extensive within the Dome than on the surrounding lowlands but nevertheless is was greater than at the present time. In the typical Lake District parish of St. John's, Castlerigg and Wythburn the percentage of arable land has declined from some ten per cent. to less than one half per cent. The amount of woodland has increased however, due to afforestation by the Manchester Corporation on the slopes around Thirlmere—or Leathes Water as it was named on the Tithe Map. In the adjoining parish of Underskiddaw there was at least one farm which had almost as much arable land as some of the farms outside the dome. Of the 303 acres, 103 were covered with woodland, and of the land remaining for cultivation 80 acres were tilled, 58 acres were partly arable and 62 acres wholly meadow and pasture.

There is clear evidence from the tithe maps and schedules of this same area that cultivation was carried on at this time at a greater altitude than in later years. All the land on Lattrigg above 1,000 feet which on the Land Utilisation Map for 1931* is classified as permanent grass

* Land Utilisation Survey of Britain Sheet 12. Keswick and Ambleside.

was in 1840 arable, as the following extract from the schedule indicates.

LATRIGG (Applethwaite)—Extract from Tithe Schedule 1840.

| <i>No. of Plot.</i> | <i>Name.</i> | <i>State of Cultivation.</i> | <i>Acreage.</i> | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | <i>A.</i> | <i>R.</i> | <i>P.</i> |
| 549 | Low Latrigg | Arable | 14 | 1 | 28 |
| 550 | High Latrigg | " | 47 | 1 | 35 |
| 551 | Mallen Dod | " | 12 | 0 | 32 |
| 552 | Round How | " | 11 | 1 | 16 |
| 564 | Rainsgill Beck | " | 12 | 0 | 11 |
| 569 | Intack | " | 8 | 1 | 8 |
| 585 | High Intack | " | 4 | 1 | 28 |
| 580 | Middle Field | " | 9 | 2 | 22 |
| Longscale and Brundholm. | | | | | |
| 604 | Snab | Arable and Pasture | 33 | 3 | 37 |
| 605 | Great Intack | " | 123 | 0 | 28 |
| 606 | Little " | " | 34 | 1 | 15 |

The tithe maps also revealed that by this time some of the fells were completely enclosed, as for instance the ridge between Watendlath and Rosthwaite. Such land was parcelled out in very large fields, some exceeding one hundred acres in extent, and forming a striking comparison with the small fields in the valley bottoms.

Another very impressive feature which becomes evident after a number of tithe maps have been consulted is the relationship of the general 'field pattern' or lay-out to the physiographical features. This was well exemplified when the Warcop and Holme Cultram (East Waver District) maps were examined. In the latter district the fields are in general much larger than in the former, being on the average five or six chains in width or more than twice the width of those in the Eden valley Warcop parish. But, most conspicuous was the regular, often perfect rectangular shape of the Holme Cultram fields compared with the very irregular fields of Warcop.

The field names too are often suggestive, for instance, "Corn Intack" indicates an 'intake' from the open fell. 'Oak Rigg,' Close and Garth are self explanatory. Wadholme Close was the name given to the field in which

was situated the famous "Blacklead" (wad) mine of Borrowdale. By contrast, on the lowlands "Parrock" and "Ing" appear frequently in the schedules, the latter in such field names as Calf Ing Meadow, Mill Ing, New Ing, Deepdale Ing, Humple Ing, Mean Ing, Broad Ing. Not unexpectedly 'grassing' is also common.

Some of the present parishes were not separate civil units when the tithe returns were made. A notable instance is Buttermere which was then a township in the parish of Brigham which also included such places as Cockermouth, Lorton, Embleton and Wythop, and extended some twelve miles in length from north to south and nine miles in breadth from east to west.

It is of interest to note that in 1840 at Buttermere the same inns were indicated on the tithe map as exist to-day. Evidently some tourists were following in the footsteps of the Rev. Wm. Gilpin who may be said to have "discovered" Crummock and Buttermere in 1772.

Buttermere also serves to show, by its very small tithe apportionment, averaging $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per acre, how these charges have in the main, a distinct relationship to the major regions of Cumbria. The lowest charges are in the parishes of the Dome or Uplands and the highest on the surrounding plains, with a few outstanding exceptions, for example Hayton with the unexpectedly low average of 6d. per acre.

It is surprising to find that in the mountainous county of Westmorland the total amount of rent charges have been calculated to be £7,644. 13s. $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. with a further £1,425. 1s. $5\frac{1}{2}$ d. for the parish of Kendal, making a total of £9,069. 14s. 11d. "which is equal to more than $4\frac{3}{4}$ d. in the £ on the present county rate basis."*

It is possible from the schedules to show that at the time of the Tithe Surveys, as was also the case later in the

* F. W. Garnett, *Westmorland Agriculture*, p. 89. Section IV, pp. 79-89, is devoted to tithes.

century, the majority of the farms were tenanted. In Upperby, of 64 occupiers only eleven were also owners, whilst in the township of Warwick there were only six owner-occupiers amongst 41. In the township of Temple Sowerby in the parish of Kirkby Thore, Westmorland, owner-occupiers were more numerous, being 21 out of a total of 55 and in Holme Cultram owner-occupiers (153) formed approximately fifty per cent. of the total.

Although so much useful and interesting information can be obtained from a careful study of tithe maps and schedules it is unfortunately not possible to construct from them a Land Utilisation map for the whole of Cumbria. Returns were only obtained from the tithe paying land and so a complete picture is not available. Sufficient has been extracted however to provide a general background and to enable us to appreciate the great changes in land usage in the last hundred years. Those desirous of amplifying the information given here are advised to consult the Prize Reports published in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. Volume XIII for 1853, contains the report on Cumberland written by William Dickinson who had been a surveyor in connection with the Tithe Commutation Act. The Farming of Westmorland was described by Crayston Webster in Vol. IV (2nd Series) in 1868, whilst the Furness District was included in the Prize Report on The Farming of Lancashire (Wm. J. Garnett) in Vol. X (1849).

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

The tithe maps and schedules of North Western England were studied in the Diocesan Registry, Castle Street, Carlisle, by permission of G. W. Graham-Bowman, Esq., Registrar.