

ART. XV.—*Denton Holme, Carlisle : Part II, The growth of a suburb.* By ALAN HARRIS, M.A., Ph.D.\*

*Read at St Mary's College, Durham, July 7th, 1967.*

BY the early years of the 19th century Carlisle had outgrown the circuit of her ancient walls and had spilled beyond. Fingers of building extended along Botchergate, Rickergate and Caldewgate, the three main entries into the city, and by the side of the lanes and alleys behind these thoroughfares (Fig. 1). There were still open spaces within the old town, but as the population grew from 11,000 in 1811 to 22,000 in 1841, these places too were seized upon and filled with buildings.<sup>1</sup>

The disappearance of open spaces from within the main built-up area was but one aspect of a wider process of change affecting Carlisle at this time, as Robert Rawlinson observed.<sup>2</sup> "A great portion of the present crowded state of the buildings in the centre of the city is comparatively modern", he wrote in 1850. "Many of the confined lanes, yards, courts, and alleys, were, in the first instance, gardens attached to houses, fronting the main streets. These houses have gradually been changed from private dwellings into shops, hotels, taverns, stables, workshops, offices and out-houses, until every available open space is now built upon". By 1850 there had accumulated within the old city

\* It is hoped to publish part one of this paper by C. Roy Hudleston in vol. lxxviii. It is omitted from this volume for reasons of economy.

<sup>1</sup> The plan of the city in D. and S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia* IV (1816), affords interesting points of comparison with Richard Asquith's plans of the same area in 1853. Asquith's plans are in the Record Office, Carlisle (hereafter referred to as C.R.O.).

<sup>2</sup> R. Rawlinson, *Report to the General Board of Health on a preliminary inquiry into the sewerage, drainage, and supply of water, and the sanitary condition of the inhabitants, of the city of Carlisle* (1850), p. 91.

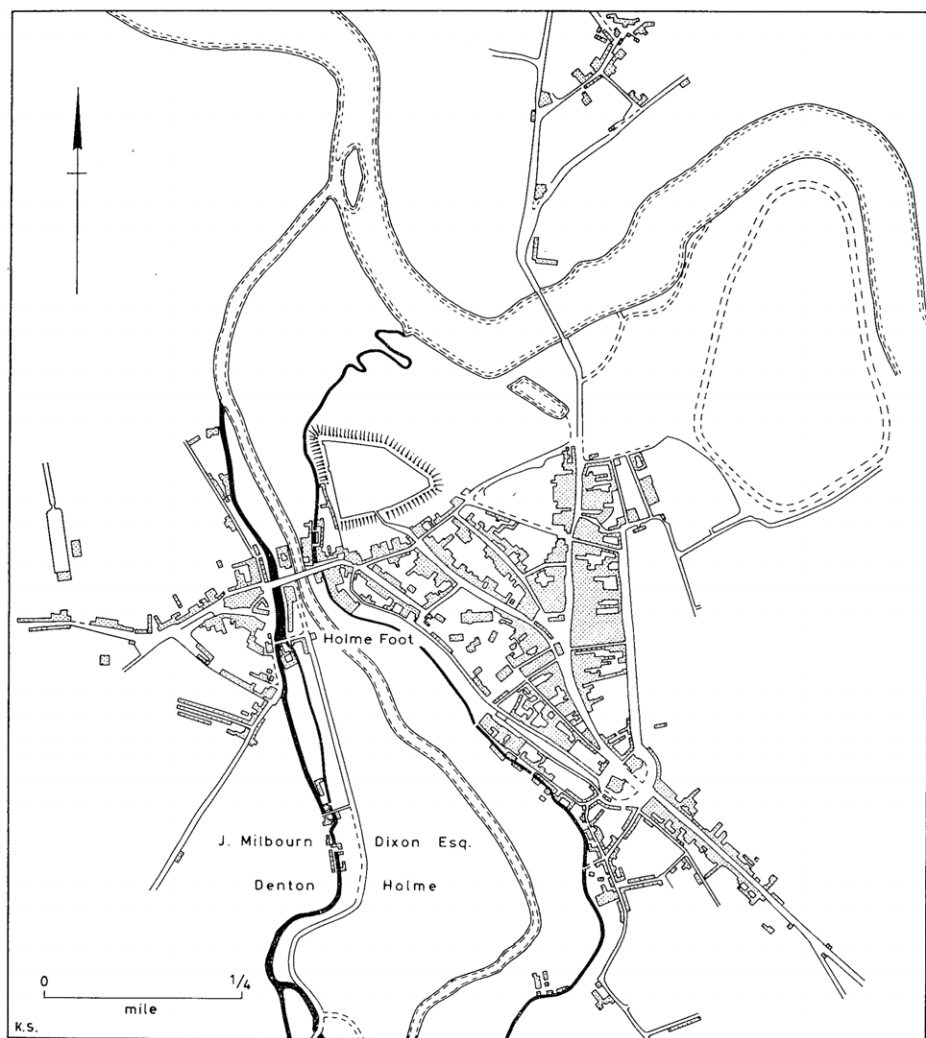


FIG. 1.—Carlisle in 1821. The map, which is redrawn from John Wood's plan of the city, shows very clearly the old nucleus and the growing suburbs.

a mass of tightly packed and often insanitary property in which commercial, industrial and residential uses were frequently juxtaposed. Many of those who could afford to move had already left the central area, but a great many of the city's poor still lived within its noisome courts and passages. The worst of these were "the receptacles of every kind of filth", unpaved, unswept and "containing almost invariably pigsties, open privies, dunghills [and] stagnant pools".<sup>3</sup> All were overcrowded. "Many of the lanes are entered by a covered passage [Rawlinson noted] and some are closed at one end, forming a *cul de sac*. They are in general only a few yards in width. Some of the cottages are in single rows, but more have the back-to-back arrangement".<sup>4</sup> Conditions in the old city improved only slowly, and long after 1850 were still a source of complaint.<sup>5</sup>

But even the innermost parts of Carlisle were seldom far removed from open country, for green fields occupied much of the valleys of the Eden, Caldew and Petterill and provided an open setting for the built-up area. The Denton Holme estate formed part of this urban fringe, which was outwardly still largely rural in aspect though closely linked by social and economic ties with the nearby city. Most of the valley floor between Holme Head and Holme Foot belonged to the Dixons of Holme Foot. The same family also owned property on the right bank of the Caldew, but the amount was small whereas on the left bank their control extended over a large and compact estate (Fig. 2).<sup>6</sup>

The landscape of Denton Holme was changing throughout the first half of the 19th century, slowly at first and then, during the 1840s, with great rapidity.

<sup>3</sup> Rawlinson, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>5</sup> C.R.O., Town Council *Minute Book* 1867-75, 10 June 1873; *Carlisle Patriot*, 11 December 1874.

<sup>6</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 21 April 1848.

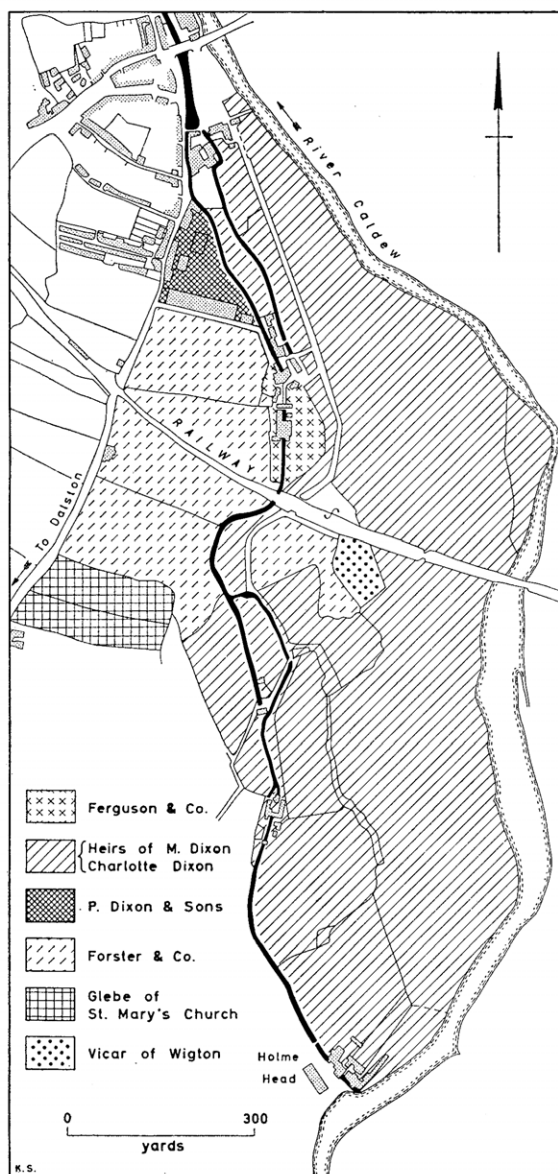


FIG. 2.—Denton Holme in 1841 showing the ownership of land. The map is based on the Tithe Plan of Caldewgate in the Record Office, Carlisle.

Along the northern edge of the district, in the vicinity of Shaddongate and the New Brewery, the suburbs advanced southwards and westwards by a twofold process of ribbon development along main roads and piecemeal infilling behind.<sup>7</sup> As this happened, the population rose sharply. Caldewgate township, which included the western suburbs, contained 3,900 inhabitants in 1821, 5,500 in 1841 and 7,700 in 1851.

The growth of population in Caldewgate was encouraged by changes in both regional and local systems of communication. Industrial and commercial activity in the area was stimulated by the opening of the Carlisle Canal in 1823 and, fourteen years later, by the arrival of the Canal Branch of the Newcastle & Carlisle railway. This line, which was shortly to be followed into the Caldew valley by others, had a considerable effect on Denton Holme, for it was carried across the estate on an embankment which severed what hitherto had been a compact unit lying within a ring-fence.<sup>8</sup> Communications between the growing western suburbs and the town centre were improved by the construction in 1820 of new bridges across the Caldew and its tributary the Little Caldew, or Mill Dam.<sup>9</sup>

The suburbs at the lower end of Denton Holme were strongly industrial in character.<sup>10</sup> Their inhabitants were employed in such occupations as brewing, biscuit-making, and the service industries that were growing with the city itself. Most important of all as a source of employment were the various branches of the textile industry which had grown up there since the middle of the 18th century. By the 1840s most of the streets

<sup>7</sup> The changes can be traced on the maps of John Wood (1821) and Robert Anderson (1841-48).

<sup>8</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 11 March 1837, 14 October 1843.

<sup>9</sup> William Parson and William White, *History, Directory, and Gazetteer of Cumberland and Westmorland* (1829), p. 148.

<sup>10</sup> This paragraph is based on the unpublished Enumeration Schedules of the 1841 Census of Population in the Public Record Office (H.O. 107/176).

in the vicinity of Shaddongate were inhabited principally by factory hands, handloom weavers and textile finishers.

There were also many textile workers in the heart of Denton Holme. In 1819 two cotton mills, two print-works, a wool carding mill, a weaving shop and a corn mill occupied sites by the mill-race between Holme Head and Denton Mill.<sup>11</sup> The industrial character of this area became even more marked during the next thirty years, and the waters of the race were employed eventually at a succession of streamside works. They spun cotton and ground indigo for use in local dyeworks and were drawn upon by bleachworks, print-works and a corn mill. At last they were allowed to pass downstream into Willow Holme, where they performed similar duties. But important though they were, mills and bleachworks occupied only a small part of Denton Holme, most of which was used for agricultural purposes. The higher parts contained a good deal of arable land, but the low-lying and occasionally flooded areas close to the Caldew were normally under pasture.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the growth of manufacturing industry, the number of people living in Denton Holme remained small. As late as 1841 fewer than 500 persons lived in an area bounded by the Dalston road and the Caldew and extending from Holme Head to the Caldew bridges.<sup>13</sup> And of these roughly one-third were crowded into the northern corner of the district. The others formed small communities at Denton Mill, Denton Hill, Frigate and Holme Head, close to the mills and works which provided employment for almost two-thirds of the local working population.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 1 May 1819.

<sup>12</sup> C.R.O., Caldewgate Tithe Award and plan (1840-42); *Carlisle Journal*, 1 May 1819, 14 October 1843.

<sup>13</sup> Enumeration Schedules for 1841.

<sup>14</sup> Some of the residents in Denton Holme lived in accommodation attached to the mills. This was the case, for example, at Holme Head, where the manager and some of the employees of the cotton twist mill were provided with houses (*Carlisle Journal*, 1 May 1819).

Several circumstances combined between 1840 and 1850 to quicken the pace of change. The most important of these was the disposal for building purposes of parts of the Denton Holme estate. After the death of John Milbourne Dixon in 1824, at the age of 32, the estate had passed to his brothers, Richard and George, to be held in trust for John's young family.<sup>15</sup> The trustees were to provide an annuity for Charlotte Dixon,<sup>16</sup> John's widow, and in due course, when the youngest of his four children had attained the age of 21, they were to sell Denton Holme, "either by private contract or public auction for the best price that could be obtained", and to divide the proceeds equally between the children.<sup>17</sup> Margaret Elizabeth Dixon, the youngest child, came of age in 1845, thus making possible the sale of the estate.

Meanwhile, other potent agents of change had been at work nearby. During the 1840s the lines of the Maryport & Carlisle, Lancaster & Carlisle and Caledonian railway companies pushed their way into the Caldew valley.<sup>18</sup> The opening of Citadel station in September 1847 emphasized the rise of Carlisle to a railway junction of national importance and by concentrating on the western fringes of the old town an increasingly large and complex system of railway works, thereby profoundly altered its character. Developments of another kind were also taking place in this area. Following a decision by Carlisle Corporation to make land in Borough Mills Field available for building purposes, the ground near the new station was quickly occupied by both houses and industrial

<sup>15</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 28 February 1824; deed, Sisson and others to Rome, 29 May 1852 (Jackson Collection, 2BC/333, Tullie House, Carlisle).

<sup>16</sup> Charlotte Dixon survived her husband by a half a century. She died in 1873 at the age of 85 (*Carlisle Patriot*, 28 November 1873).

<sup>17</sup> Deed, Sisson and others to Rome (1852), Jackson Collection, Tullie House.

<sup>18</sup> A useful account of some aspects of the complex railway history of the city is G. O. Holt, "The battle of Carlisle Crown Street", *The Railway Magazine*, August 1963.

establishments.<sup>19</sup> By 1852 "a sort of New Town", centred on Mill and Wood streets, had sprung up between the station and the river Caldew.<sup>20</sup> This contained besides "houses of a superior character [for] the working classes" such assorted activities as a gas-works, a biscuit factory, a hatworks, a marble works and a timber yard.

For a while the relative isolation of Denton Holme prevented it from sharing in this boom. Although only a short distance separated the area near the station from the open land of the estate, the Caldew interposed an effective barrier between them. So long as the physical links between the left bank and the old town consisted of a footbridge at Holme Head and the road bridge below Holme Foot, much of Denton Holme could be reached from the city only by devious routes.<sup>21</sup> This situation was changed in 1853 by the opening of Nelson Bridge, which spanned the river close to Citadel station and placed Denton Holme in direct communication with a rapidly growing part of the town. Although it was named in honour of Thomas Nelson,<sup>22</sup> the mayor of the city in 1851-52, and built with financial assistance from the Corporation, the principal cost of the new bridge was met by the proprietors of land and factories in Denton Holme, including members of the Dixon family, who contributed £1,000.<sup>23</sup> It was a good investment, for land values in the holme rose sharply once work on the

<sup>19</sup> C.R.O., Minute Book No. 1, *Various Committees*, 7 January, 10 March 1845, 30 March 1846; Town Council *Minute Book*, 1850-61, 10 June, 9 September 1851.

<sup>20</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 25 June 1852.

<sup>21</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 25 June, 2 July 1852. The footbridge at Holme Head appears to have been erected about 1840, primarily to serve the works at Holme Head (C.R.O., Minute Book No. 1, *Various Committees*, 24 January 1840).

<sup>22</sup> Nelson, a Scot by birth, started life as a journeyman mason. He owned a builder's yard and marble works in Borough Mills Field *circa* 1850 and was described in 1861 as a railway contractor employing 1,000 men. He had acquired land in Denton Holme by 1852 and was then living at Murrell Hill House. His name is commemorated also in Nelson Street, Denton Holme.

<sup>23</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 25 June 1852.



bridge had begun.<sup>24</sup> But the bridge was welcomed outside the holme also as a means of relieving congestion in the heart of the city by opening up the left bank of the Caldew for residential purposes.<sup>25</sup>

Even before the bridge was finished, the builders were at work in Denton Holme. Land was advertised for sale there on several occasions between 1848 and 1850 and the lines of projected streets appear as corrections to Anderson's plan of the city in 1841.<sup>26</sup> Richard Asquith's plans of the same area in 1853 show that although much had been achieved since 1848, the residential development of the area was then still in its infancy.<sup>27</sup> It is likely that greater progress waited on the provision of improved means of access to and from the city by way of Nelson Bridge.

Support for this view is afforded by the sequence of building operations before 1853. The first areas to be laid out for housing formed an extension of the existing suburbs near the New Brewery. Building appears to have started here in 1849 or 1850 and to have gathered momentum in the next year or two.<sup>28</sup> The earliest houses, most of which can still be seen, were built along the old road, known as Denton Holme, that joined Holme Foot and Holme Head. The northern end of this road, under its new name of Milbourne Street, had been built up along one side by the end of 1852 (Fig. 3). During the following year part of Charlotte Street was also filled with houses, and building on a small scale spread to the vicinity of

<sup>24</sup> *The Builder*, 3 July 1852.

<sup>25</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 2 July 1852.

<sup>26</sup> e.g. *Carlisle Journal*, 21 April 1848; *Carlisle Patriot*, 26 October 1850. Anderson corrected his plan to the year 1848.

<sup>27</sup> The maps are *A Plan of Carlisle* (1853) at the scale of 2 ft. to 1 mile, and a *Map of the City of Carlisle* (1853) at the scale of 10 ft. to 1 mile. Both are in the C.R.O.

<sup>28</sup> This paragraph is based on information derived from the Minute Books of the Local Board of Health, the sales of land and houses recorded in the advertisement columns of the *Carlisle Journal* and *Carlisle Patriot* and Asquith's plans of the city in 1853.

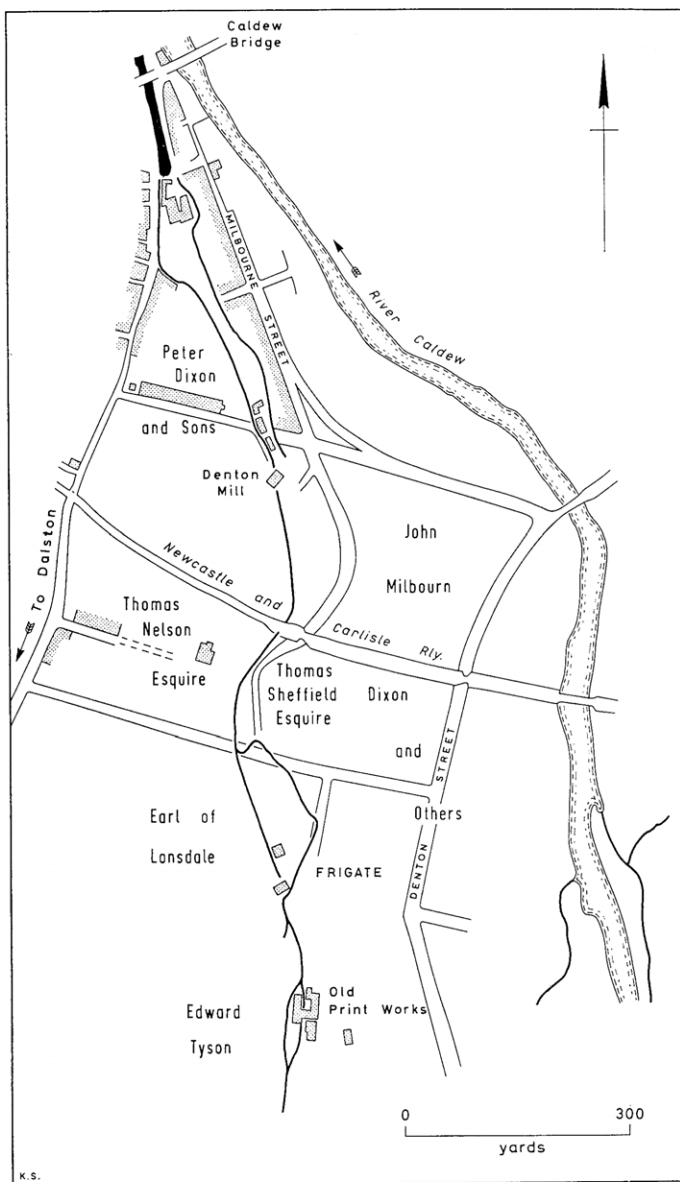


FIG. 3.—Denton Holme in 1852. The original of this map was prepared for legal purposes and is sketchy in certain respects. Its main interest lies in the depiction of roads (some of which cannot have been finished in 1852) and built-up areas at an early stage in the development of Denton Holme. The original is in the Jackson Collection at Tullie House, Carlisle.

South Vale and Frigate, following the sale of this part of the estate in the previous year.<sup>29</sup>

The outlines of the present ground-plan of Denton Holme had been created by 1853. Comparison of Figs. 2 and 3 will show that several new roads were constructed to connect Nelson Bridge with various parts of the holme. One of these roads, Denton Street, replaced the southern end of the old Denton Holme road and was to become the principal thoroughfare and retail centre of the new suburb. Most of the other roads were designed to connect the bridge and the nearby streets with the Dalston road and the suburbs in the vicinity of the canal basin. The most important of these cross-streets were Charlotte and Junction streets, which allowed traffic to move between the western and southern parts of the city without having to penetrate the crowded streets of the old town.<sup>30</sup>

From its inception as a residential area, Denton Holme catered for the needs of a working-class population. Indeed, given the circumstances of the time, it is difficult to see how it could have been otherwise, for a thickly-populated district lay close at hand and the area was already too heavily industrialized to attract the middle classes. Moreover, both its natural and acquired attributes ensured that Denton Holme remained attractive to manufacturing industry. Its water resources continued to be highly regarded in the finishing branches of the textile industry long after they had ceased to be important as a source of power; both local and regional systems of communication were good, and with time became even better; and not least important, neither the Dixons nor the Carlisle Board of Health attempted to place obstacles in the way of

<sup>29</sup> Deed, Sisson and others to Rome (1852), Jackson Collection, Tullie House; *Carlisle Journal*, 17 September 1853. See below, p. 217.

<sup>30</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 25 June 1852.

further industrial growth.<sup>31</sup> It is thus not surprising that as building progressed, Denton Holme quickly assumed the character of an area in which industrial and residential uses of land were closely interwoven.

The sale of land piecemeal for building purposes meant that numerous owners were soon concerned in the development of the district. One or two of the established landowners, like the Dixons of Holme Foot and Messrs Ferguson Brothers, built houses on their own account,<sup>32</sup> but a more usual course of action was for newcomers to purchase freehold land on the open market, with the intention either of selling it at an opportune moment or building on it. It was not uncommon for land to change hands several times before finally coming into the hands of the builder. This was the case, for instance, with the estate of the Cumberland Co-operative Benefit Building Society in the upper holme.<sup>33</sup> The Society purchased this land on very favourable terms in 1852 from Joseph Rome, a former mayor of the city and friend of the Society, who had acquired it earlier in the same year. In March 1853 the ground was assigned by ballot to 71 members of the Society, some of whom subsequently disposed of their allotments at a profit. A detailed plan of the proposed estate was drawn up by the Society's surveyor, and by the end of 1854 "a considerable number" of houses had been erected in the vicinity of the present Westmorland, Cumberland and Dale Streets as part of this project. There was also the kind

<sup>31</sup> The Board kept a watchful eye on possible nuisances from industrial establishments (e.g. the emission of smoke), but the Minute Books for this period show that permission to build and enlarge factories and workshops was seldom withheld.

<sup>32</sup> C.R.O. Urban Sanitary Authority *Minute Book* 1878-82, 26 September, 3 October 1879; Carlisle New Brewery deeds (information communicated by Mr C. R. Hudleston).

<sup>33</sup> This account is based on the Society's earliest Minute Book (1850-57) and the Annual Reports for the period 1850-54, which are in the Society's offices in Fisher Street, Carlisle. The origins of the Society can be traced in the *Carlisle Journal*, 19 April, 5 July 1850. The 71 allotments made in 1853 appear on Asquith's plans of that year. Rome's estate is mentioned in the deed at Tullie House referred to on page 216.

of transaction represented by the one in 1849 between the trustees of the Denton Holme estate and John Jackson, a clogger,<sup>34</sup> in the course of which Jackson acquired a plot of building land in an "intended new street called Millbourn Street" and with the help of another local building society, the Carlisle & Cumberland Benefit Building Society,<sup>35</sup> subsequently erected on it a group of houses known as Jackson's Court. Much of the development of Denton Holme at this time in fact seems to have stemmed from the activities of numerous small investors and jobbing builders who worked on an equally modest scale. The evidence for their activities is to be found chiefly in the records of the local Board of Health, the body responsible for the sanitary regulation of Denton Holme and the supervision of building plans. In May 1854, for example, William Hetherington sought permission to build a group of houses in Charlotte Street, to be known as Hetherington Court:<sup>36</sup> three years earlier a similar request had been made on behalf of George Reid for six houses in a place to be called Reid's Court.<sup>37</sup> And John Corrie, who is described in the 1861 census as a proprietor of houses, lived in Corrie's Court, Milbourne Street.<sup>38</sup> But there were also men like Thomas Jones, a builder, who by 1853 had constructed on his own behalf between 80 and 100 houses in Milbourne and Charlotte streets.<sup>39</sup> The results of piecemeal development are obscured to some extent by the uniformity of architectural style which prevails

<sup>34</sup> Corporation of Carlisle Deeds, Packet 19, Milbourne Street and Jackson's Court. Details of these deeds were kindly supplied to me by Mr C. R. Hudleston.

<sup>35</sup> There are references to this society in *Through Two Half-Centuries: A History of the Cumberland Co-operative Benefit Building Society* (1950), p. 10, and in the *Carlisle Journal*, 11 February 1848.

<sup>36</sup> C.R.O., *Minute Book 1853-57*, 30 May 1854.

<sup>37</sup> C.R.O., *Minute Book 1850-53*, 16 December 1851.

<sup>38</sup> Enumeration schedules (1861) in the Public Record Office (R.G. 9/3920, District No. 10, p. 9).

<sup>39</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 17 September 1853. There are many references to Jones in the early Minute Books of the Board of Health.

over so much of Denton Holme. Old property-boundaries are revealed, however, by such signs as variations in roof-level, the use of different building materials and an occasional break in the building line.

Although the new suburb was the work of many hands its development came under the general supervision of the local Board of Health, which had been formed in 1850. The Board's members appear to have been fully aware of the potential dangers of unco-ordinated and haphazard building and to have dealt with the problem firmly and, on the whole, in an enlightened manner. Thus an application from the trustees of the Denton Holme estate in 1852 to lay out certain new streets, was met by a request "that the whole of the streets connected with the scheme, of which these streets form a part, be laid out on the plan the proper width (including those on Mr Rome's ground . . .) [and] that this plan be then signed by the whole of the parties . . .".<sup>40</sup> Plans were freely rejected if they failed to conform to the Board's bye-laws, which became more stringent with the passage of time. Most of the building bye-laws were designed to deal with such matters as the minimum size of rooms and the thickness of walls, but a far-reaching step was taken in 1859 with the prohibition of new houses built on the back-to-back principle.<sup>41</sup> The Cumberland Co-operative Building Society had its own bye-laws, which were drawn up in preparation for the development of the Denton Holme property. Their principal object appears to have been to secure uniformity within the Society's estate.<sup>42</sup> No dwelling-house was to "be built . . . of a less height than two nine-feet stories" and houses were to have "a uniform frontage". It is perhaps fortunate that the rapid growth

<sup>40</sup> C.R.O., *Minute Book 1850-53*, 31 August 1852.

<sup>41</sup> The bye-laws are set out in the Board's *Minute Books*, *passim*.

<sup>42</sup> The bye-laws are contained in the Society's first *Minute Book* (1850-57), 27 January, 24 March 1853.

of population in Denton Holme took place when it did, at a time when new administrative machinery had been created for dealing with the kinds of problem that were likely to emerge in such an area. The impression gained from contemporary sources is that there were certainly many worse places than Denton Holme in the Carlisle of the 'fifties and 'sixties. Many years later the city's Medical Officer of Health was able to say of the district, "The houses consist entirely of cottage property occupied by the artisan class, and are, in their sanitary arrangements and structural aspects, unsurpassed by any similar property in Carlisle".<sup>43</sup> (But see Fig. 4.)

Although a substantial increase in population occurred in the holme between 1841 and 1851, during the following decade the influx of new residents was even greater. Where there had been about 460 persons in 1841 there were 780 ten years later, and 2,800 by 1861.<sup>44</sup> Striking though these figures are, they are perhaps less remarkable than the economic changes which accompanied them. The most notable of these was a decline in the relative importance of the textile industry. Whereas in 1841 this had been virtually the only source of employment for those living in Denton Holme, by 1861 it had become one of many. Railway-men, joiners, fitters, bakers, shopkeepers and general labourers, amongst others, had now made their home in the district. The old, narrowly-based textile economy tended to persist in the parts of the holme which had been settled before 1850. Thus, 70 per cent of the working population of Brewery Row and Denton Hill were engaged in some branch of the textile industry in 1861, but the comparable figure in Charlotte Street, which was new, was only 20 per cent.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Report of the M.O.H. for 1887*, p. 7.

<sup>44</sup> These figures have been calculated from the Enumeration Schedules of 1841, 1851 and 1861 (H.O. 107/176; H.O. 107/2430/4; R.G. 9/3919-3921).

<sup>45</sup> These figures have been calculated from the Enumeration Schedules for 1861.

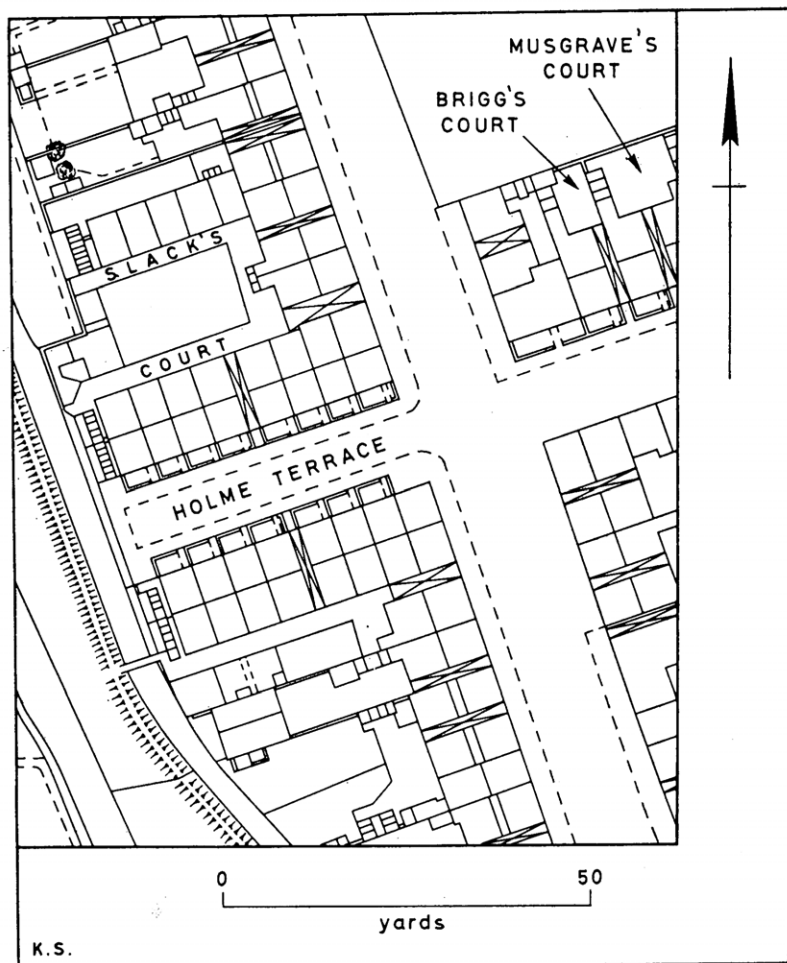


FIG. 4.—Part of Milbourne Street in 1865. The earliest houses in Denton Holme were built as courts, in which some dwellings faced the street whilst others lay behind and were reached through a covered passage. Many of the back-to-back houses in this area were converted to "through-houses" between 1938 and 1940.



The great change in the occupational structure of the district may be accounted for in two ways. On the one hand the growth of population undoubtedly generated a demand for services in the form of shops, schools, public houses and similar amenities, which helped to broaden the local economy. But the most important reason for the change must be sought not in Denton Holme itself but in the wider context of Carlisle.

The new suburb was peopled very largely from other parts of the city. Thus, of the population in 1851, 79 per cent had been born in Cumberland and 56 per cent in Carlisle itself. And of the 700 inhabitants of Charlotte Street in 1861, 79 per cent had been born within Cumberland and 55 per cent in Carlisle. The Enumeration Schedules show that the newcomers were drawn from a wide range of working-class occupations. Many of them must have moved for one or more of the reasons mentioned by Dr Buchanan in 1866.<sup>46</sup>

Even with the improved means of cleanliness given in the poor houses of the lanes it is most satisfactory to observe [that] the class of people who formerly lived in them have got dissatisfied with living in these close and confined alleys. They have profited so well by the sanitary education of their sight and smell that they now demand a better sort of dwelling altogether. The artisan class are, therefore, in large numbers leaving the central parts of the town, and going to live in the more suburban parts where, for nearly the same rent as a room in a court, they can have a trim new self-contained cottage . . . . To this cause, even more than the destruction of courts for warehouses and to the demolition of some places by the railway, is ascribed the diminution of population in the central parts of the town.

By the mid-'sixties the daily movement of workers on foot across the Caldew bridges to places "in or about the centre of the town" was sufficiently great to

<sup>46</sup> *Parliamentary Papers* (1867), XXXVII, *Ninth Report of the Medical Officer of the Privy Council*, pp. 107-108.

give rise to complaints about the state of local roads.<sup>47</sup> It seems reasonable to believe that many of those who made this journey were returning to their old places of work. In short, whilst Denton Holme remained for some individuals both a place of work and a place of residence, by the 'sixties it had become for many a place of residence only.

The physical expansion of the suburb may be summarized briefly. A phase of rapid growth in the early 1850s was followed by a period of modest building activity, which appears to have continued into the early 'sixties.<sup>48</sup> This period saw the completion of Charlotte Street and the development of most of Milbourne Street. Some building also occurred further south on the estate of the Cumberland Co-operative Building Society, but in 1865 there were still many fields in this part of the holme. Progress during the 'sixties was erratic, probably because of the prevailing bad times in the local textile industry which caused the abandonment of building projects.<sup>49</sup> But at the end of the decade and during the early 'seventies the builders were again busy. Collingwood, Trafalgar, Metcalfe, Sheffield and Lorne streets were developed at this time, either wholly or in part, thus bridging the gap between the older development to the north and the building society's estate near South Vale. Denton Street began to acquire a façade of shops and houses at about this time and new streets were opened off it towards the Caldew. There were other changes, too. A chapel was built for the Congregationalists in

<sup>47</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 13 January 1865. The complaints were said in 1865 to have been going on for "the last seven years". They must therefore have started in the early days of the new suburb.

<sup>48</sup> This account is based principally on the records of the Carlisle Board of Health and the Urban Sanitary Authority. Detailed references are given only where these appear likely to be useful in indicating promising lines of research.

<sup>49</sup> e.g. C.R.O., Minute Book, *Various Committees, 1848-72*, 18 August 1863; the *Annual Reports* of the Cumberland Co-operative Building Society contain comments on the state of trade in the city.

Charlotte Street in 1861 and the parish church of St James, Denton Holme, was erected in 1867, four years after the creation of the new ecclesiastical district which it was designed to serve.<sup>50</sup>

No less striking than these changes was the growth in importance of the railways. These had been part of the local scene since 1837, but it was only after about 1845 that their contribution began to assume major proportions. Their development affected the city in a number of ways. It was pointed out in 1874, for instance, that although "the working classes are chiefly employed in cotton and ironworks . . . an increasing number find employment in the construction and working of the railways".<sup>51</sup> The companies could take away, however, as well as give, as the city's Sanitary Inspector observed a few years later:<sup>52</sup> "Overcrowding is, I am afraid, rather prevalent in the poorer parts of the City, which is no doubt owing chiefly to the large number of houses acquired and pulled down by the Railway Companies, thereby unhousing a large number of families, and causing a great scarcity of suitable houses for the working classes". There was some difference of opinion about this side of the companies' activities, however, and it was pointed out that the railways had "conferred a sanitary as well as a mercantile benefit" on Carlisle by ridding the city of much insanitary slum property in such places as Irish Damside and Watergate Lane.<sup>53</sup>

Some of the implications of these things for Denton Holme have been touched on already: the direct contribution of the railways to the present scene remains

<sup>50</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 13 January, 1 May 1860; *Carlisle Patriot*, 26 September 1863, 16 September 1865, 26 July 1867; C.R.O., *Bishop's Register Book* (1850-72), 25 July 1867 (DRC 1/10).

<sup>51</sup> Report by W. H. Power in *Urban Sanitary Authority Minute Book* 1874-78, 27 November 1874.

<sup>52</sup> *First Annual Report* of the Sanitary Inspector for Carlisle in the printed *Minutes of Carlisle Corporation* 1878-79, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 6 January 1871, 21 September 1877; *Carlisle Journal*, 4 August 1874.

to be discussed. The most important stimulus to change was provided by the construction of the Settle and Carlisle railway for the Midland company. Since Citadel station already served six railway companies, it became a matter of some urgency during the late 'sixties and early 'seventies to make provision for handling a greater flow of rail traffic once the new line had been completed. Extensive alterations to the local railway system at this time included the construction of new lines of railway which were designed to facilitate the movement of goods traffic through the city.<sup>54</sup> As part of this scheme a new line was built for the Caledonian and L.N.W.R. companies in 1877: after entering the holme near Rome Street junction this line ran for a short distance along the left bank of the Caldew before again crossing the river and rejoining the main line at Caldewgate bridge (Fig. 5). Meanwhile, other companies had been acquiring land in Denton Holme for railway purposes. The North British company, working in association with the Midland, had made extensive purchases in the riverside area by 1870<sup>55</sup> and though some years elapsed before this land was occupied by railway works, its acquisition effectively prevented further residential development between Milbourne Street and the Caldew. During the 1880s this area became the scene of much railway construction, primarily for goods purposes. In this way a broad belt of railway-owned property was interposed between the edge of the new suburb (parts of which were demolished in the process) and the western fringe of the old town.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> This brief account of the railways does scant justice to the importance of the subject in the history of Carlisle, but this is not the place for such a study. The main sources of information have been the local newspapers for the period 1870-1880, the Railway Deposited Plans in the C.R.O., and Ordnance Survey maps and plans for the period *circa* 1860-1900.

<sup>55</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 7 May 1867; C.R.O., Railway Deposited Plan No. 75 (1875).

<sup>56</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 19 May 1876.

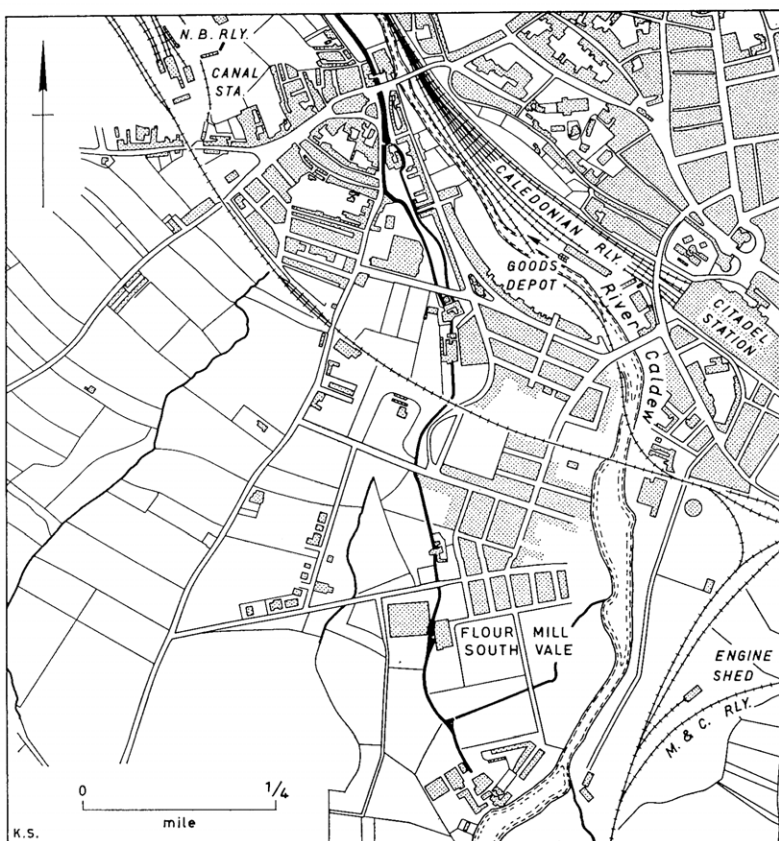


FIG. 5.—Denton Holme in 1880, redrawn from Arthur's plan of the city. The abbreviations are as follows: N.B., North British; M. & C., Maryport & Carlisle.

These alterations were accompanied between 1874 and 1880 by the enlargement of Citadel station and the reorganization of the road approaches to the old town from the west, where these were intersected by the lines of the new railways. Nelson Bridge was reconstructed in 1876 to become part of a new high-level road known as Victoria Viaduct, which joined city and

suburb. The new viaduct, a structure "more massive than beautiful", was opened in 1877. Its construction led to substantial alterations in the level of the approach roads on the Denton Holme side and also served to emphasize the close ties that existed between Denton Holme and the heart of the city nearby.<sup>57</sup> Many years later the viaduct carried the first electric trams to run into the holme.<sup>58</sup>

By 1880 the character of Denton Holme as it appears today had been largely formed (Fig. 5). The outlines of the present built-up area had been firmly established, most of the roads had been laid out and a closely-built working-class suburb had come into existence. There would be further expansion before 1900, particularly off the Dalston road, where the terrace houses which are a characteristic feature of the holme, give place to more substantial dwellings. And the local textile industry would experience acute depression and begin to adapt itself to radically changed circumstances.<sup>59</sup> There would also be further sales of land from the Denton Holme estate until practically the whole of it had been disposed of.<sup>60</sup> But none of these events would alter fundamentally what had been described in 1864 as "a friendly village within a city . . . a spot with a character all its own".<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The building of the Viaduct is fully documented in the *Carlisle Journal* and *Carlisle Patriot*. Particularly useful accounts appear in the *Journal*, 24 September 1877 and the *Patriot*, 21 September 1877.

<sup>58</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 29 June, 3 July 1900. An electric tramway was opened between the city centre and Holme Head in 1900.

<sup>59</sup> There is a brief but useful account of the later history of the cotton industry in Carlisle in D. A. Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry, 1850-1896*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Manchester (1953), p. 89. *Ferguson Brothers, Carlisle, 1824-1924* (1924) also contains some material of general interest. A thorough survey of the textile industry in this area is overdue.

<sup>60</sup> C.R.O., Plans deposited by the City Surveyor's office, No. 962 (1898).

<sup>61</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 6 March 1864.

**Acknowledgements.**

Most of the material for this paper has been collected in Carlisle, where the staff of the County Record Office, Tullie House and the Cumberland Building Society have been very helpful. I am also most grateful to Mr C. R. Hudleston, who first suggested that I might be interested in the history of Denton Holme, and who subsequently lent me a collection of his own transcripts and notes on the district.