THE MEDIEVAL GRANGE AT ROYSTONE GRANGE

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INTRODUCTION (RH, MW)

The Roystone Grange Project began in 1978 to study the evolution of settlement in a small valley in the White Peak from the earliest times until the present day. A second but related aim has been to set up an archaeological trail linking the settlements of different periods in the valley, and thereby illustrating the antiquity of an isolated hillfarm. Both aims are now well advanced after five seasons of excavations and survey at Roystone Grange. We have already outlined, for example, the Romano-British settlement pattern in the previous volume of this journal (Hodges and Wildgoose, 1981). The archaeological trail has been planned, and some aspects of it are about to be put into effect, as a result of the Peak Park Planning Board's support of Jonathon Wager's report on historic landscapes in the National Park (Wager, 1981). However, an important aspect of the valley's history from an academic as well as a 'public' point of view is the medieval grange at Roystone. Monastic farms are a common feature of the settlement pattern in the White Peak, yet their history remains strikingly obscure. In 1980 we decided to follow our study of the Romano-British settlement at Roystone with a comparable study of the grange. There are strong academic reasons for such a research project as we shall outline in the following report, but it was equally clear that the grange might become a public attraction along the proposed trail through the valley.

The archaeology of the medieval grange appeared a promising new venture when Colin Platt's monograph on this subject was published in 1969. Yet after more than a decade of unprecedented activity in medieval archaeology we are hardly any the wiser about such farming communities. At the moment the history of the grange is almost entirely drawn from the comparatively rich archival sources available for the extensive Yorkshire and Midlands farms. The overwhelming impression is that these monastic manors were substantial farms with more than a hint of elegance. It appears from the documentary sources that they were readily distinguished from neighbouring secular hamlets and villages. Platt (1969), moreover, has drawn attention to the organised administrative arrangements maintained on these farms, where efficient cash-cropping, in effect, was the raison d'être. Platt's study, however, was principally confined to the richer agricultural zones in Yorkshire, and he gave little attention to the numerous grange farms to be found in highland zones.

Some of these upland farms have been briefly reviewed in Hart's recent archaeological survey of North Derbyshire (1981). Nearly every other settlement in the White Peak is termed a grange, although a proportion of these was named in more recent times. Hart's survey also illustrates the variety of earthworks close to the extant grange farms at places like Biggin, Cronkston, Mouldridge and Smerrill. But were these Peakland granges comparable with the lowland farms described in Platt's monograph? Furthermore, what form did a grange actually take in these remote upland valleys. Were the monks who ran the granges the first medieval farmers in the White Peak? And what type of farming system did they create on these limestone hills? The well-preserved landscape in the valley of Roystone Grange as well as an alignment of earthworks close to the post-medieval farm have offered us the opportunity to investigate these

questions. In addition Margaret Poulter's research in the Public Record Office and at Matlock Record Office has made it possible to put the archaeology into some detailed historical setting. This short report is a summary of our research on this aspect of the Roystone Grange Project.

ROYSTONE GRANGE: THE HISTORICAL OUTLINE (MP)

The earliest documentary evidence for the existence of Roystone Grange would appear to be the reference contained in the Cartulary of Garendon Abbey, Leicestershire (B. M. Lansdowne 415, printed in Nichols, 1804: III, part 2). This was a Cistercian abbey founded as a daughter house of Waverley in 1133. Most of this abbey's possessions were in Leicestershire but it eventually acquired several pieces of land in Derbyshire, most although not all of which were sited within the Peak District.

The Garendon Abbey cartulary contains references to only one grant of land at Roystone. This is a grant to the Abbey by Richard de Herthill of a place called "Revestones" and three acres of land with pasture for three hundred sheep and their lambs up to the age of one year for one mark annually. The cartulary is written in twelfth and thirteenth century hands, which places the grant no later than this period. More precise dating is difficult. Lysons and Lysons (1817) give the date of the original grant as 1219, but no confirmatory evidence for this has yet been found. From other sources, however, a date early in the thirteenth century would seem to be the most likely. The Bill brought by Sir Anthony Ashley in 1614 as a result of the dispute over grazing rights states that the original grant or grants were made in the reign of King John and King Henry III. This would place the earliest of these some time before 1216. The other grants referred to in the above Bill are to be found in an Inspeximus Charter of 14 Edward III (1340). This lists a series of grants and confirmations by Adam son of Richard de Herthill as follows.

(1)   Grant and gift of one cartload of thorns with appurtenances in Ballidon.

(2)   Grant and confirmation of all the site of the place called Revestones with its appurtenances.

(3)   Grant and confirmation of all the lands, tenements and fees which the same abbot and monks had in the vill of Ballidon and all other lands, liberties and tenements which they held in his fee wherever they might be.

(4)   Gift, grant and confirmation of common of pasture for all manner of beasts with appurtenances in the said vills of Ballidon and Revestones and in the moor of Ballidon.

(5)   Grant of free ingress and egress with their beasts of whatever kind to common of pasture.

(6)   Gift, grant and confirmation of one mark of rent with appurtenances in the same vills.

It is therefore probably safe to assume that on the death of Richard de Herthill his son Adam not only confirmed his father's original grant but set out more precisely the terms of the grant relating to the pasturing of the three hundred sheep. In view of the confusion and bad feeling which were evident in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries over the pasturing of sheep in this area, it is possible that there had been trouble from the very beginning owing to the vagueness of the terms of the original grant and that Adam de Herthill was simply trying to clarify the position, probably at the request of the Abbot of Garendon. Unfortunately by the seventeenth century the original documents seem already to have been lost and could not be produced on demand.

In the same Inspeximus Charter following the grants involving Ballidon are

confirmations of those made by Robert and his grandson William de Ferrers, Earls of Derby, of land in Heathcote, New Biggin, Wolstoncote (Wolfscote), Hartington and Bradbourne. It would seem that long before 1340 Garendon Abbey was acquiring, whether by accident or design, significant amounts of land in this area of Derbyshire.

If Heathcote was granted to the abbey in or about the year 1214 as is suggested by the Hundred Rolls, and if the grants listed in the Inspeximus Charter of 1340 run in chronological sequence, it could point to the fact that the grants relating to Roystone were made prior to 1214; but this is not at all certain.

Precise dates for the grantors, Richard de Herthill and Adam son of Richard de Herthill, are almost impossible to ascertain because of the prevalence of the names Adam and Richard in the Herthill family. Adam follows Richard follows Adam with monotonous regularity for at least two hundred years from the late twelfth to the late fourteenth century. A Richard de Herthill is mentioned in the late twelfth century charter granting land in Ballidon to one Adam Malet (Jeayes, 1906). An Adam son of Richard, who may be the one in question, grants land to his daughter Alice and her husband Roger Deincourt in 1220-1221 (Yeatman,1886). There is an Adam son of Richard who appears in the Pipe Rolls of 1213, 1232 and 1233. Another Adam witnesses a charter in 1243, another in 1272. In an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1325 an Adam son of Richard is described as upwards of 32 years of age and so on.

The land and appurtenances at Ballidon were obviously of sufficient size and sufficiently consolidated to warrant the setting up of a grange on this site. A grange was certainly in existence in 1330 (Cameron, 1959).

There is no indication of the number of years during which the grange was farmed by the monks themselves or by the Cistercian lay brothers generally responsible for managing such outlying estates. Roystone is still and must have been then remote from civilisation and practically inaccessible during the winter months. Although a certain amount of arable farming was necessary in order to supply the needs of those running the grange, most of its value to the monastery was the considerable number of sheep it could support. This remained the case until the early seventeenth century, when at least two court cases were brought over the grazing rights attached to the property. It was then alternatively described as a sheep-walk for six hundred sheep (Chancery Proceedings. P.R.O. C2/Eliz/F4-39). However the number of sheep is stated in the cartulary to be calculated at six score to the hundred making a total of seven hundred and twenty sheep. This point is stressed by several witnesses in the court cases of the early seventeenth century. In the surrounding area, for example in Peak Forest, not only sheep but cattle and to a large extent horses were kept by several monasteries, but at Roystone and other nearby granges sheep were the main source of income.

At some point in the centuries before the Dissolution of the Monasteries the grange at Roystone was leased to lay tenants. It is possible that the Cokaine family, who inherited the manor of Ballidon from the Herthill family by marriage in the late fourteenth century, leased back the grange at Roystone as part of the consolidation of its lands there. Certainly in 1437 John Cokayn, Knt, leased to John Taylor of Ballidon the manor of Ballidon at a rent of 66s 8d per annum. Whether the grange was included in this is unclear.

The earliest reference to the leasing of the grange by the abbey is contained in a letter from the Abbot of Garendon to Thomas Cromwell dated 15 March 1535/6. This is in answer to a letter from Thomas Cromwell brought to Garendon by Francis Basset and requesting on behalf of the latter a new lease of the grange called 'Rewestones'. In his efforts to explain why he cannot accede to this request the abbot states that the grange was let to one Rowland Babyngton, brother to Sir Anthony, eight years before. William Basset took the grange by lease (presumably as a tenant of Rowland Babington) but died within the term. Henry Cokyn married his wife and occupied the grange, but later forfeited his lease for lack of payment while the young Francis Basset was still at school.

The abbey thereupon repossessed the grange. Later Henry Cokyn was allowed to return for the remaining two years of his lease, Rowland Babington having signed an agreement not to interfere in matters until the lease expired. Thus conflicting interests

amongst the lessees and would-be lessees of the grange are seen to be of some importance.

Several years after the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1544 the grange was granted to Rowland Babington, together with other lands including the manor of Normanton and the granges of Mouldridge and Cardelhaye, which had formerly belonged to Dunstable Priory, Bedfordshire (*Cal. Letters and Papers Foreign or Domestic: Henry VIII* Vol. XIX Grants in November 1544). Roystone Grange was then described as being in the tenure of William Basset. As William Basset had supposedly died before his lease expired and his wife had remarried, it may be that his son Francis is meant here, or that there was another son William.

The subsequent history of the grange is somewhat confused. In 1599 Sir Humphrey Ferrers brought a complaint against Sir Anthony Ashley, Knt, Philip Okeover, Esq. and Francis Cokayne, gent, claiming that through enclosure and other means they had impeded his and his tenants' rights to pasture sheep and other animals on the common pasture in Ballidon and on Ballidon Moor.

In 1612 the suit between Sir Humphrey Ferrers (now taken on by Sir John Ferrers) and Sir Anthony Ashley was still unresolved and this delayed the division and enclosure of the manor of Ballidon by John Milward, Baptist Trott and Nicholas Hurt. The manor was subsequently divided without waiting for a decision on the earlier lawsuit.

By Letters Patent of 7 Jas I (1609) Roystone Grange was granted to John Shepherd of Wimborne St. Giles, a yeoman. Sir Anthony Ashley and John Shepherd, a nominee of Sir Anthony's, then conveyed the property to John Milward. Nicholas Hurt promptly bought the moiety from John Milward in order that a "perfect and absolute division might be made between them". The tenant at this time was Richard Kinge or his assigns at a yearly rent of 10s.

By purchase and descent the grange eventually became the property of Thomas Taylor and through him descended to William Webster who owned the property at the time of the Title Commissioners Survey in 1843. Roystone Grange does not however appear on the Tithe Map, probably because of the Cistercian exemption from paying tithes. In a Glebe Terrier of 1786 (a copy of an earlier one of 1635) it is stated that "there are diverse granges within the parish of Bradbourne to wit How Grange, Aldwark Grange, Mouldridge Grange and Roystone Grange but what is due to the Vicar of Bradbourne forth of these granges we know not — I never heard that they paid anything".

There remain further sources to be investigated, principally in connection with the court cases mentioned above, which may prove or disprove certain of the assumptions made in the above outline.

THE MEDIEVAL GRANGE COMPLEX (RH, MW) (Fig. 1; Plate 1)

After three seasons of research it is now clear that the grange at Roystone lay in the very bottom of the valley between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. The earthworks appear to be roughly aligned in a north-south direction, with the principal building being at the southern end, nearest to the only well in the valley. At the moment it appears that there are two parts within the alignment. The manorial complex lay within a walled field to the south of the road running up the valley since Roman times; the other earthworks lie north of the road and may have accommodated a secular workforce. It is now clear that there are three major structures within the (southern) grange complex. The southernmost building (B) is an extremely large structure which was ultimately linked to a central building (A); next in the line is a large structure (C) with a well-constructed rampway on its eastern side. During 1980-82 we totally uncovered the central building (A) in this alignment, and uncovered the end walls of buildings B and C. (These buildings were found in Trench XXV which will be described below.) We have virtually no information on the second line of structures north of the road. A test pit 1m × 1m (Trench XVIII) revealed eighteenth century potsherds in some numbers immediately below the turf on the largest of the platforms (Fig. 2). Similar sherds have been found in molehills all across this part of the site. It must be borne in
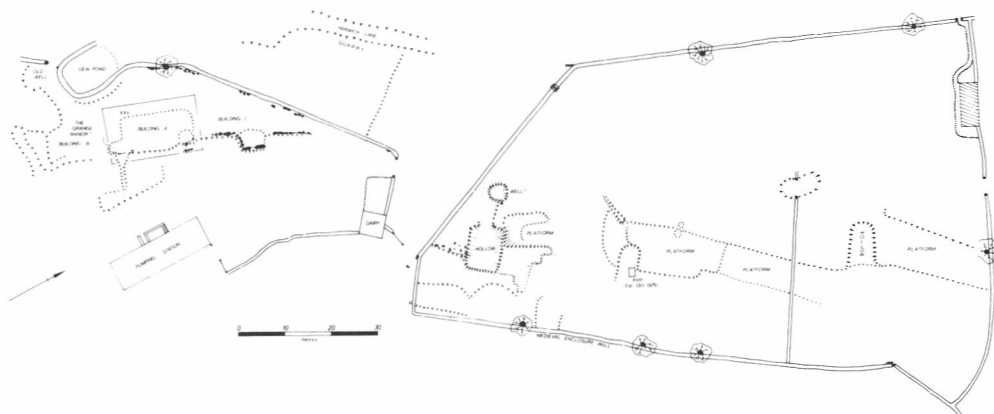
Fig. 1   The medieval earthworks at Roystone Grange.

Plate 1   A general view of the medieval grange at Roystone Grange. The excavations of Trench
XXV can be seen behind the twentieth-century pumping house. The earthworks extend
from this point into the paddock to the right of the lane. At the top right of this paddock
lies the post-medieval grange farm.

mind, therefore, that this second line of structures might be grange buildings constructed after buildings B-A-C were abandoned, rather than part of the medieval settlement.

An unusually dry May in 1980 emphasised these earthworks, and in some places walls showed through the turf. At this time moles were especially active, and from platforms A and C we obtained a range of probable thirteenth century glazed pottery. We began excavations of one of these platforms, because the area clearly defined by walls during this dry spell seemed substantially larger than any peasant or ancillary building known from recent comparable excavations (cf. Hurst, 1971). It now appears that we were partly misled, but even so the excavated results are highly satisfactory.

In Trench XXV we have uncovered the remains of a dry-stone sub-rectangular building (building A) (Fig. 2; Plate 2). At the south edge of this building stands a finer structure which we have termed building B, and which appears to be the principal structure in the settlement. We have also just clipped a building to the north of building A which we have termed C. The architectural history of the site has yet to be properly resolved but several features are already apparent. Building A has at least two major phases as well as several minor ones. *In its first phase,* the building was probably about 10m long and roughly 10m wide. There were doors at the north and south ends, and possibly a door on the east side entered by climbing a ramp constructed of dolomitic limestone blocks. The limestone footings of a surface have been uncovered at the south end of this building, while to the south of it were traces of a clay surface overlying the natural subsoil. Beyond this lay building B, separated by this clay surface from A. Building C almost certainly existed at this time beyond the north end. *In its second phase,* building A was extended southwards so that the structure measured roughly 17m long and about 10m wide. The extension walls were built over an earthen deposit on top of the clay surface which initially separated buildings A and B. The construction of these walls included cut stone and some finely worked ashlar, which must have come
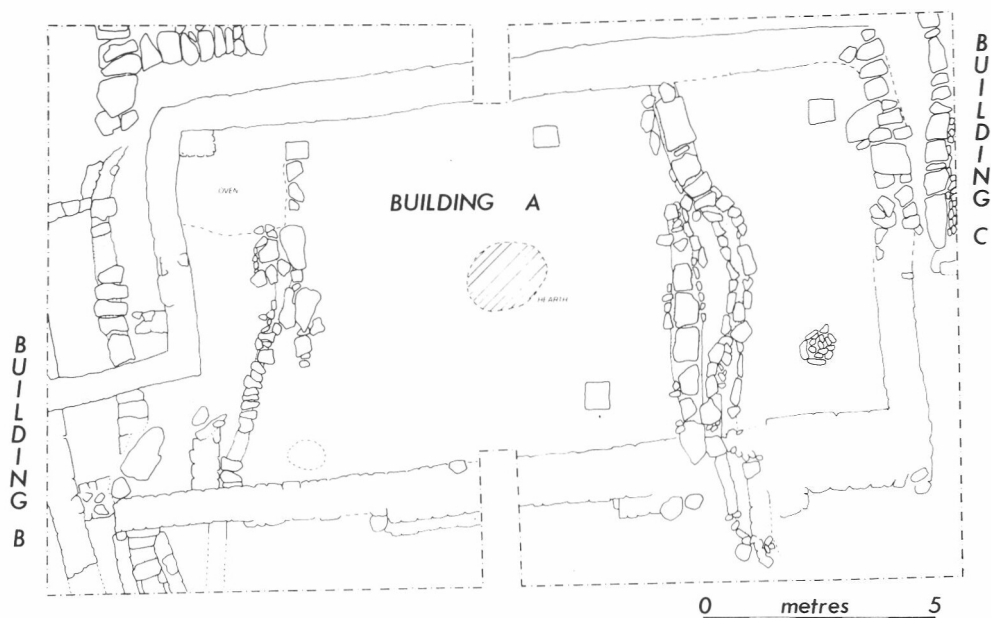

Fig. 2   Roystone Grange: a sketch plan of Trench XXV, showing building A in the centre, the north wall of building B, and the south wall of building C. North is to the right.

Plate 2   Roystone Grange: Trench XXV under excavation. Building C can just be seen in the
foreground; beyond it lies building A, and in the far (south) section can be seen the
north wall of building B.

from alterations to building B (see below). The original south door of building A was
knocked down and the floor level was raised, with carboniferous limestone slabs being
employed in some parts of the building. A new door was constructed on the east side
which was entered by a ramp made of dolomite limestone blocks. This second phase
building appears to have contained three rooms. At the north end there is a clear area
paved with slabs, divided by a drain. This end may have been a small dairy for eight to
ten cows. (The discovery of ceramic milking pans in the trench tends to support this
interpretation — see below.) The central area of building A in its second phase is less
easy to interpret. There are traces of what may have been a hearth, but we need to study
the farm buildings before we can be certain of this. At the south end of the building
there are traces of an oven complex. Another drain channel led water away from this
area. It was probably at this time that a finely coursed retaining wall was built parallel
to the west side of building A. A wall similar to this one exists on the west side of the
post-medieval Roystone Grange Farm, where it keeps water away from the farmhouse.
In the archaeological example the retaining wall was probably intended to prevent
damp and water penetrating the site from the large dew pond and well a matter of
metres up the slope to the west. This retaining wall, however, evidently failed to do its
job: a substantial drain was constructed along the west side of building A between the
retaining wall and the west wall of A, leading to a trough at the southwest corner of the
building. From this trough the drain continued eastwards, passing between the two
buildings A and B, which were detached at this time.

Late in the life of building A two passageways were constructed between it and building B. The first passageway was evidently not suitable, so a second one was constructed, giving direct access from the fine doorway of building B into the oven end of A. At this time the door in the centre of the east wall of A was blocked. Finally, after building A was abandoned, a step was inserted into the passageway, suggesting that the link between the two structures was no longer in use, but that an upper part of building A was used, possibly for storage.

The north wall of building B shows that it is a structure of considerable style. In its first phase this finely coursed farmhouse was approximately 20m across with a carved stone entrance. At some point in its history, however, B was divided in two by a new wall, and stone was robbed from the walls constituting the eastern half of the building. The alteration may have provided the stone for the southward extension of A. The quality of the stonework in B, and the size of this building, strongly suggest that it is the grange farm itself. Undoubtedly it was an impressive farmhouse and more substantial than we anticipated.

The south wall of building C is similar to building A in its construction. Two parallel lines of roughly hewn dolomite limestone blocks have been filled with carboniferous limestone, rubble and earth. It had a south door up against the north door of building A. Like the byre end of A, it may have been employed to accommodate stock.

Building A appears to have been a roughly rectangular structure in its first phase. It almost certainly had low dry-stone walls built up from the dolomite stone footings. In its second phase this was replaced by a large edifice, in which the roof was supported by three pairs of internal posts resting on cut-stone post-pads set just less than half a metre in from the side walls. As an aisled building it must have closely resembled the Romano-British aisled farm excavated behind the dairy (Area 1) (Hodges and Wildgoose, 1981). This building was in striking contrast to the finely coursed walls of the grange(?) to the south. It was possibly an annexe to the main building in the complex, where some of the Cistercian monks may have been accommodated.

The finds from these excavations include half of a thirteenth century silver penny, a range of metalwork, schist hones and an interesting assemblage of pottery. The pottery is probably the most important dating evidence, and it also provides another insight into the medieval occupation of the site. Frances Paget and Teresa Tavares of Sheffield University have made a detailed study of the sherds from the first two seasons' excavations. Their work is described in the following three paragraphs.

Nearly a thousand sherds of medieval pottery have been found in the excavations of Trench XXV. Of these about two thirds are glazed, whilst one third are unglazed. The glazed wares mostly consist of tall jugs, although a few bowls and jars have also been found. The glazed wares were divided into fourteen provisional fabric groups following a macroscopic analysis. Of these, three groups dominate the assemblage. The jugs appear to be Midlands' types and some parallels have been recognised at Chesterfield, South Wingfield, Derby and Nottingham. Dating these vessels accurately is far from straightforward, but short sequences of wares were found at Full Street, Derby (Coppack, 1972) as well as at Barton Blount (Beresford, 1975). These suggest that the Roystone Grange pottery is mostly later twelfth to fourteenth century in date. Three sherds of later fifteenth century Cistercian ware from the uppermost contexts on the site are all that can be attributed to the latest medieval period. These particular three sherds may belong to a phase when the grange was no longer inhabited but used instead for storage or housing stock. It has to be stressed, however, that East Midlands' medieval pottery is relatively unknown and some of the conservative potteries may have continued to produce the same fabrics and forms throughout the later medieval period. We badly need a good stratigraphic sequence of later medieval pottery from this region.

There are very few cooking pot sherds, and the majority of the unglazed pottery consists of shelly wares of the St. Neots' ware tradition. These limestone-tempered pots occur only as large dishes or pans with heavily blackened surfaces. It has been suggested to us that they are dairy pans in which milk was warmed, resulting in the sooty exteriors (S. Moorhouse, *pers. comm.*). Of course, these pans are difficult to date accurately, but

the distinctive limestone inclusions indicate that these vessels were made close to the jurassic ridge running southwards from Lincolnshire towards the Cotswolds (Hunter, 1978). They are, therefore, the crudest wares on the site, but they reflect some of the most far-flung contacts maintained by the grange.

Finally, the high proportion of glazed to unglazed wares may provide an independent confirmation of the comparative wealth of the site. The absence of cooking-pots might indicate that more expensive metal containers were used instead; alternatively, their absence may reflect functional differentiation across the site, with different activities taking place in different buildings.

The excavations suggest that the Cistercian grange complex was an impressive affair, and that the economy of the place, reflected by the pottery, matched the scale and fineness of its buildings. However, the construction of the western retaining wall, followed by the drain between buildings A and B, followed by the linking passageways, all suggest that the site was vulnerable to dampness and perhaps flooding. (This was vividly apparent to us during our June 1982 season when we suffered severe thunderstorms and found it impossible to excavate at certain times. It is equally apparent each winter when streams of water overflow from the nearby well.) The grange was probably constructed at this spot, some distance from the Romano-British settlement, because it was particularly dry during the climatic optimum of the tenth to early thirteenth centuries. When the weather deteriorated the site probably became very susceptible to damp; with the cold winters and wet summers of the fourteenth century, this spot must have been distinctly unattractive for habitation (cf. Beresford, 1979: 142-46; but note Wrights' 1976 critique of the environmental interpretation of late medieval settlement desertion). The site must have been abandoned principally for these reasons, and a new grange was constructed higher up the valley. (Whether this grange is concealed within the fabric of the post-medieval farms remains to be seen.) The move may also have been related to Platt's general model of changing tenure on medieval granges: in the fifteenth century he suggests there was a shift from direct farming to leasing the land (Platt, 1969).

THE MEDIEVAL GRANGE ESTATE (RH, MW) (Fig. 3)

We have already described the discovery of the Roman-period field walls within the valley of Roystone Grange, and the existence of banks of the same date which once divided cultivation plots (Hodges and Wildgoose, 1981). The Roman-period walls are readily distinguished because they consist of two dolomitic slabs with a rubble core. By contrast, the medieval walls appear to have had a simpler construction, consisting of large dolomitic limestone boulders placed in a line with smaller dolomitic boulders making up the upper fabric of the wall. These through-boulder walls have not been accurately dated at any point within the valley. At present, we can demonstrate only that the boulder walls are stratigraphically later than double-orthostat (Roman-period) walls, and earlier than the carefully hewn boulder walls which are historically dated to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on Ballidon Moor.

An excavation through one of these walls (Trench XXVIII) showed that the boulders were placed directly on top of the soil, unlike the Roman-period walls which were constructed on a rubble foundation (Hodges and Wildgoose, 1981). Even so, substantial lengths of boulder walls survive within the valley and, as a result, it has been possible to detect the extent of the grange estate as well as some of the smaller cultivated fields. It is also clear that sheep pens were built using this wall technique, just as Roman-period pens were constructed with double orthostat walls.

The grange boundary encloses about 400 acres or 154ha. It is a similar area to the property of the present farmer, Mr. David Twigge. The south boundary runs from just behind the grange (building B) westwards along the line of a wood and crosses to the next valley down which now runs the Pikehall-Parwich road. Behind the wood, on the top of the hill to the south of this boundary, are the remains of a pen constructed of boulders. Another pen with an internal division exists in a hollow up against the boundary wall just to the west of the wood (Plate 3). The western side of the estate

Fig. 3   The medieval grange estate at Roystone Grange. (The map measures 2000m west/east by
         1750m north/south.)

follows the valley next northwards to the point where Gallowlow lane crosses it in an
east-west direction. At this point the grange boundary turns east and follows the lane
for a considerable distance. The southeast corner of the estate lies just beyond Minning
Low barrow. However, this southern stretch of the boundary is a little confused: at
several points the line takes right-angled changes of direction, suggesting that individual
fields were brought into cultivation early in the history of the grange. Furthermore,
there are traces of walls which were begun but never completed. This ragged side may
reflect unsuccessful attempts to assert Ballidon Moor in medieval times. A third pen
exists close to this southern stretch, directly behind the Roystone Grange barrow which
dominates the eastern side of the valley immediately above the grange.

Unlike the Roman agricultural system, with its fields confined to one paddock south
of the settlement, the monks created a series of walled fields in the bottom of the valley.
There are traces of rig and furrow in several fields which may be medieval in date. Some
rig and furrow is also apparent in the air photographs of the eastern side of the valley
previously cultivated in Roman times and focusing upon the Roystone Grange barrow.

The medieval economy at Roystone was probably determined by the need for wool.
The post-medieval documentation suggests that as many as 750 sheep were run here
(see above, MP), roughly the number recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture

Plate 3   Roystone Grange: a shearing or milking pen, constructed against the south wall of the
grange estate.

nowadays. The walled fields in the valley, as well as the few cultivated enclosures on the
tops, suggest that the nucleus of the estate was cultivated to support the considerable
population accommodated in the alignment of large buildings forming the grange farm.
The sheep were presumably run in the outer zone beyond these fields as they are now,
and the common gates set in the boundary wall suggest that in the summer months
flocks were also pastured beyond the estate itself. The stone-walled pens on the tops, at
points where cultivated fields and pasture met, were probably designed for shearing the
sheep and possibly for milking them as well. In the winter months, however, the sheep
must have been driven into the valley bottom as they are nowadays. A study of the
animal bones from the excavations, now in progress, should provide further important
evidence for the farming system at the grange. The slight rise in the winter temperatures
and the longer, more clement, summers characteristic of the climatic optimum in the
later twelfth and thirteenth centuries would probably have led to improved hay crops. It
should have been possible, therefore, to feed a large flock through even the hardest of
winters just as Mr. Twigge finds it possible to feed his stock now. However, a slight and
continued deterioration in the climate, such as occurred in the fourteenth century,
would have shortened the growing season and endangered the hay crop in this marginal
valley. It seems likely that in these circumstances the grange could not have maintained
750 sheep through the course of the fourteenth century if Beresford's recent estimations
of the likely climatic changes, calculated for Dartmoor, are correct (1979: 143-45). The
valley would have experienced more snow than in the previous two centuries, the spring
grass would have been delayed, and the hay crop would have been impaired. The

economic viability of the farm may thus have been called into question. Whether Garendon Abbey chose to lease the grange during this traumatic century, whether there was a shift to an autumnal culling of the flock, or whether the number of sheep was reduced with cattle being introduced as a safeguard (cf. Wright, 1976: 149-50) — these are all questions we must resolve in the future. But like their Roman-period forebears, the monks of Garendon Abbey had to face a grave European economic recession which coincided with climatic deterioration and epidemic plagues, and Roystone Grange was not immune from these events.

GRANGES IN THE WHITE PEAK (RH, MW)

Grange farms occur all over the White Peak plateau, but comparatively few of these are medieval in date. A preliminary analysis of the archaeological and documentary evidence suggests that Roystone Grange is fairly typical of the estates and communities which occupied the Peak District in the later Middle Ages. The well-preserved earthworks at Smerrill Grange (Hart, 1981: Plate 7) consist of a similar number of buildings arranged in a line. The well-preserved boundary around Cronkston Grange (Hart, 1981: fig. 10:20; 10:21) defines an estate of much the same size to the one owned by Garendon Abbey at Roystone. Hart's survey and our work at Roystone begin to suggest that the first extensive medieval cultivation of the White Peak was initiated by the Midlands abbeys, who recognised the potential of these grasslands. In Saxo-Norman times the population was evidently small and concentrated in the valleys where mixed agriculture could be practised (cf. Holly, 1962: fig. 73). The rapid expansion of the European economy during the twelfth century called for cash-cropping of a kind which had not existed since the zenith of the Roman Empire. The abbeys were not slow to recognise the potential of valleys like Roystone Grange, and to judge from the excavated buildings as well as the miles of massive walls, they put a considerable investment into making the Peakland economy succeed.

It will be clear from this brief account that further archaeological investigations should show in greater detail how this economic system functioned. In the investigation so far we are already providing a long overdue corrollary to Platt's documentary study of granges, and have begun to illustrate a sequence of general significance to the evolution of an historic landscape in this part of the National Park.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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