

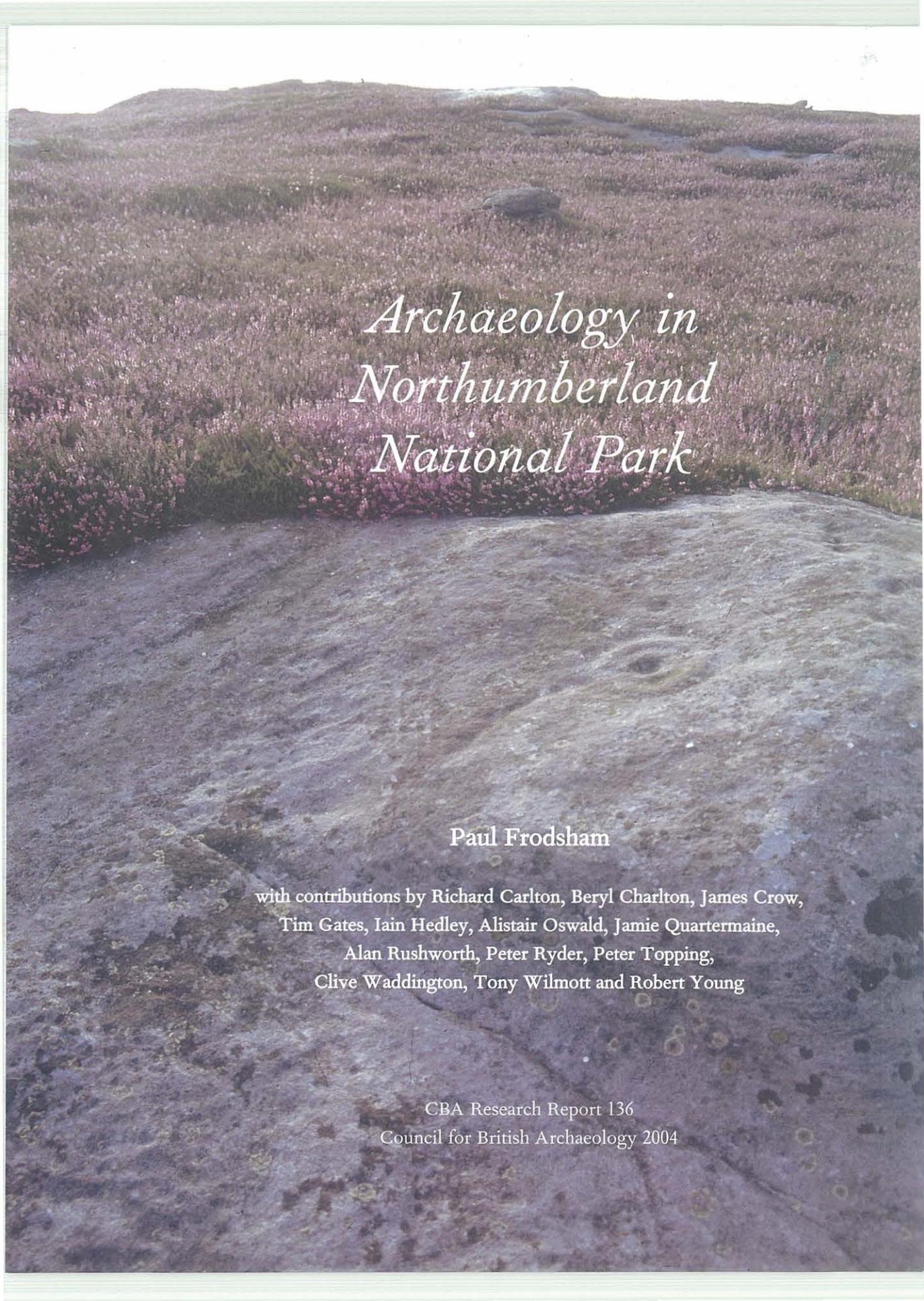
# Archaeology in Northumberland National Park

Paul Frodsham



ARCHAEOLOGY IN  
NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK

*This volume is respectfully dedicated  
to the memory of  
GEORGE TATE  
(1805–1871)  
in recognition of his outstanding contribution  
to the study of archaeology, history and  
geology in Northumberland.*



*Archaeology in  
Northumberland  
National Park*

Paul Frodsham

with contributions by Richard Carlton, Beryl Charlton, James Crow,  
Tim Gates, Iain Hedley, Alistair Oswald, Jamie Quartermaine,  
Alan Rushworth, Peter Ryder, Peter Topping,  
Clive Waddington, Tony Wilmott and Robert Young

CBA Research Report 136  
Council for British Archaeology 2004

First published in 2004 by  
the Council for British Archaeology  
Bowes Morrell House, 111 Walmgate,  
York, YO1 9WA

Copyright © Authors and Council for British Archaeology

ISBN 1-902771-38-9

*All rights reserved*

*British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication data*

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Designed, typeset and originated by Carnegie Publishing  
Printed and bound in the UK by The Alden Press, Oxford

The CBA acknowledges with gratitude a grant from the  
Northumberland National Park Authority and English Heritage towards the publication of this volume.

Main image: Aerial photograph of a complex multi-period archaeological landscape on  
Hartside Hill in the Breamish Valley (© Tim Gates)

Small images: front: *left* The horseshoe rock, Lordenshaws (see fig 2.9)

*centre* Hadrian's Wall from Cuddy's Crag (see fig 5.7)

*right* General view of the Cheviot Hills (see fig 0.2c)

back: *left* Harbottle Castle excavations (see fig 17.6)

*centre* Broomlee Lough (see fig 4.11)

*right* The Goatstones (see fig 3.5)

# Contents

List of contributors	vi
List of figures and tables	vii
Foreword (by NNPA chairman)	xvi
A Note on Dates	xv
Preface & acknowledgements	xvi
<b>Part I</b>	
<b>'Long ago, in the land of the far horizons ...'</b>	
<b>An introduction to the archaeology of Northumberland National Park</b> <i>by Paul Frodsham</i>	
Introduction. The past in the present	2
1. Foragers in the forest. The Mesolithic	7
2. Agriculture, ancestors and sacred circles. The Neolithic	12
3. Roundhouses for the living, round cairns for the dead. The Bronze Age	25
4. Hillforts and homesteads. The Iron Age	36
5. On the edge of the Empire. The Romano-British period	49
6. Bede, Beowulf and Bernicia. The early medieval period	64
7. From castles to bastles. The medieval period	78
8. From trauma to tranquillity. The post-medieval period	111
9. Tanks, trees and tourists. The twentieth century	132
Part I References	147
<b>Part II</b>	
<b>'A decade of digging in the hills'</b>	
<b>Recent archaeological research in Northumberland National Park</b> <i>Edited by Paul Frodsham</i>	
Introduction	154
10. Peat, pollen and people. Palaeoenvironmental reconstruction in Northumberland National Park <i>Rob Young</i>	156
11. The Breamish Valley Archaeology Project, 1994–2002 <i>Paul Frodsham &amp; Clive Waddington</i>	171
12. Hillforts, farms and fields. Excavations on Wether Hill, Ingram, 1994–2002 <i>Peter Topping</i>	190
13. An Iron Age Hillfort in an evolving landscape. Analytical field survey on West Hill, Kirknewton <i>Alistair Oswald</i>	202
14. Survey and excavation at Bremenium Roman fort, High Rochester, 1992–98 <i>James Crow</i>	213
15. Aspects of recent archaeology on Hadrian's Wall <i>Tony Wilmott</i>	224
16. Flying on the frontier. Recent archaeological air photography in the Hadrian's Wall corridor <i>Tim Gates</i>	236
17. Harbottle Castle. Excavation and survey, 1997–99 <i>James Crow</i>	246
18. Towers and bastles in Northumberland National Park <i>Peter Ryder</i>	262
19. Thirlwall Castle. A gentry residence in medieval Tynedale <i>Alan Rushworth &amp; Richard Carlton</i>	272
20. Low Cleughs. A bastle in its landscape <i>Richard Carlton &amp; Alan Rushworth</i>	295
21. Metal hills and kelties. Signposts to an industrial past <i>Iain Hedley</i>	306
22. The Archaeology of Otterburn Training Area <i>Beryl Charlton</i>	324
23. Simonside. From prehistory to present <i>Iain Hedley &amp; Jamie Quartermaine</i>	338
Part II References	350
Appendix: Getting involved	367
Index <i>by Peter Rea</i>	370

# List of contributors

**Richard Carlton**

*School of Historical Studies, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU.*

**Beryl Charlton**

*The Bastle House, High Rochester, Otterburn, Northumberland, NE19 1RB.*

**James Crow**

*School of Historical Studies, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU.*

**Paul Frodsham**

*Northumberland National Park Authority, Eastburn, Hexham, NE46 1BS.*

**Tim Gates**

*23 Hampdon Street, Bishophill, York, YO1 1EA.*

**Iain Hedley**

*Northumberland National Park Authority, Eastburn, Hexham, NE46 1BS.*

**Alistair Oswald**

*English Heritage, 37 Tanner Row, York, YO1 6WP.*

**Jamie Quartermaine**

*Oxford Archaeology (North), Storey Institute, Meeting House Lane, Lancaster, LA1 1TF.*

**Alan Rushworth**

*School of Historical Studies, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU.*

**Peter Ryder**

*1 Ford Terrace, Riding Mill, Northumberland, NE44 6EJ.*

**Peter Topping**

*English Heritage, Brooklands, 24 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge, CB2 2BU.*

**Clive Waddington**

*School of Historical Studies, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU.*

**Tony Wilmott**

*Centre for Archaeology, English Heritage, Fort Cumberland, Fort Cumberland Road, Eastney, Portsmouth, P04 9LD.*

**Rob Young**

*Northumberland National Park Authority, Eastburn, Hexham, NE46 1BS.*

# List of figures and tables

*Unless otherwise stated, copyright belongs to Northumberland National Park Authority/individual authors*

- 0.1 Map showing the Northumberland National Park and the locations of some of the main sites and projects discussed in this volume
- 0.2 Historic landscapes of Northumberland National Park a) Hadrian's Wall; b) North Tynedale; c) Cheviot Hills
- 0.3 Time chart, showing the conventional archaeological periods on which Part I of this volume is structured
- 1.1 Elements of Mesolithic life in the Milfield Basin, taken from a display panel at the Maelmin Heritage Trail in Milfield village (© Dave Hall)
- 1.2 The unmistakable profile of Yeavinger Bell looming above the southern edge of the Milfield Plain
- 1.3 Reconstructed Mesolithic house at the Maelmin Heritage Trail
- 1.4 Simonside from the south
- 2.1 Bellshiel Law long cairn, Redesdale (© Tim Gates)
- 2.2 Devil's Lapful long cairn, Kielder Forest (© Tim Gates)
- 2.3 The Five Kings, drawn by John Turnbull Dixon (from DD Dixon 1903)
- 2.4 Threestoneburn stone circle
- 2.5 The Mare and Foal standing stones
- 2.6 Coupland Henge during excavation in 1995 (© Tim Gates)
- 2.7 Reconstruction of the Milfield North henge at the Maelmin Heritage Trail
- 2.8 The Battle Stone, Yeavinger
- 2.9 The 'horseshoe rock' at Lordenshaws
- 2.10 Detail of a cup-and-ring marked boulder from Powburn Quarry
- 2.11 Stan Beckensall examines a cup-and-ring marked boulder in a ditch at Biddlestone
- 2.12 Some Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowheads and late Neolithic/early Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged arrowheads
- 3.1 Probable Bronze Age settlement on Crane Sike, discovered in 1996 (© Tim Gates)
- 3.2 The Bronze Age village at Standrop Rigg (© Tim Gates and Stewart Ainsworth)
- 3.3 A Bronze Age house at Houseledge during excavation (from Burgess 1984)
- 3.4 Three massive round cairns on Thirlmoor, Upper Coquetdale (© Tim Gates)
- 3.5 The Goatstones, a 'four-poster' near Simonburn
- 3.6 The Three Kings 'four-poster' in the forest above Byrness
- 3.7 Central cist exposed within a burial cairn, Lordenshaws
- 3.8 Three beautiful food vessels from nineteenth-century excavations in Coquetdale (from Greenwell, 1877)
- 3.9 Beaker from the Sneep
- 3.10 Late Bronze Age swords and spearheads from Thrunton Farm, Whittingham
- 3.11 Wether Hill burial cairn, looking south with Simonside clearly visible on the far horizon
- 4.1 Yeavinger Bell hillfort (© Tim Gates)
- 4.2 Yeavinger Bell reconstruction (© Eric Dale)
- 4.3 Prehistoric field system south-east of Yeavinger Bell
- 4.4 Late Bronze Age or early Iron Age palisaded enclosures at High Knowes, Alnham (© Tim Gates)

- 4.5 Humbleton Hill hillfort (© Tim Gates)
- 4.6 Gleadscleugh hillfort (© Tim Gates)
- 4.7 Harehaugh hillfort (© Tim Gates)
- 4.8 Reconstructed timber roundhouse at Castell Henllys hillfort, south Wales
- 4.9 Cord rig cultivation at Carshope, Upper Coquetdale (© Tim Gates)
- 4.10 Mid Hill, College Valley (© Tim Gates)
- 4.11 Broomlee Lough (©Derek Proudlock)
- 5.1 Dere Street, followed by a modern road on the Otterburn Training Area (© Tim Gates)
- 5.2 Birdhope Camp (© Tim Gates)
- 5.3 Chew Green in landscape setting (© Tim Gates)
- 5.4 Vindolanda Roman fort and *vicus* (© Tim Gates)
- 5.5 The construction of Hadrian's Wall (reconstruction by Ronald Embleton, © Frank Graham)
- 5.6 An aerial view looking west over Housesteads Roman fort towards Crag Lough (© Airfotos Ltd)
- 5.7 Hadrian's Wall, looking east from Cuddy's Crag towards Housesteads Wood (© John Williamson)
- 5.8 a & b Two reconstruction views of Housesteads fort (reconstruction by Ronald Embleton, © Frank Graham)
- 5.9 Reconstruction of the gateway at Portgate, north of Corbridge (reconstruction by Ronald Embleton, © Frank Graham)
- 5.10 The Roman army could deal ruthlessly with native communities showing any resistance (reconstruction by Ronald Embleton, © Frank Graham)
- 5.11 Greave's Ash, Linhope (© Tim Gates)
- 5.12 Brands Hill, near Wooler (© Tim Gates)
- 5.13 Roundhouse at the Brigantium archaeological reconstruction centre, Rochester
- 5.14 A reconstruction of the Romano-British settlement at Riding Wood, North Tynedale (reconstruction by Ronald Embleton, © Frank Graham)
- 5.15 Stone altar at Great Chesters Roman fort
- 5.16 Remains of the Carrowbrough mithraeum
- 6.1 Bamburgh Castle on the Northumberland Coast
- 6.2 Reconstruction of the village of Thirlings by Terry Ball (© Bede's World)
- 6.3 Reconstructed Anglo-Saxon house, based on excavated evidence from Thirlings (© Bede's World)
- 6.4 Suggested shires of Gefrinshire and Bromie (from O'Brien 2002)
- 6.5 Reconstruction of Gefrin (Yeavinger) by Richard Dunn (©English Heritage)
- 6.6 Gefrin roadside monument
- 6.7 The apparently unique Ingram Hill settlement (© Tim Gates)
- 6.8 Simonburn cross and Falstone cross (from Collingwood 1927)
- 6.9 Rothbury cross (from Collingwood 1927)
- 6.10 The church of St Oswald, Heavenfield
- 6.11 Lady's Well, Holystone
- 6.12 Adoration of the Magi, carving in Kirknewton church (© Andrew Hayward)
- 7.1 Map showing the Liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale
- 7.2 Aerial view of the village of Elsdon
- 7.3 Harbottle Castle
- 7.4 Reconstruction sketch of Dally Castle (©Peter Ryder)
- 7.5 Aerial view over Bradley Green (© Tim Gates)
- 7.6 Part of the thirteenth-century deer park wall on the north face of the Simonside hills
- 7.7 Excavations in progress on a shieling at the Bogle Hole

- 7.8 Medieval buildings within Sewingshields milecastle on Hadrian's Wall (from Crow and Woodside 1999)
- 7.9 Alnham Tower
- 7.10 Tosson Tower
- 7.11 The monument on Branxton Hill commemorating the Battle of Flodden
- 7.12 Map of the Border Marches
- 7.13 Russell's Cairn on the Border Ridge (© Tim Gates)
- 7.14 Reconstruction sketch of West Whelpington medieval village in the early fifteenth century
- 7.15 Hartside deserted medieval village (©Tim Gates)
- 7.16 Aerial view over Middleton Old Town, taken in 1977 (© Tim Gates)
- 7.17 Linbriggs deserted medieval village, Upper Coquetdale (©Tim Gates)
- 7.18 A moonlight raid, by Angus McBride (from Durham & McBride 1998)
- 7.19 'The Street', one of numerous tracks crossing the Border that were used by the reivers (©John Steele)
- 7.20 The Hot Trod, by Angus McBride (from Durham & McBride 1998)
- 7.21 The 'Old Palace' at Yeavinger
- 7.22 Evistones 'bastle village' (©Tim Gates)
- 7.23 St Michael's Church, Ingram
- 7.24 Biddlestone Roman Catholic chapel
- 7.25 Father Bernard Gilpin preaching in Rothbury church in c1570 (© National Trust)
- 8.1 Enclosures at Yearning Law (© Tim Gates)
- 8.2 Reconstruction of General Wade's army (by Ronald Embleton © Frank Graham)
- 8.3 View westwards along the B6318 (General Wade's Military Road)
- 8.4 Extract from Armstrong's map showing Breamish Valley
- 8.5 Harehaugh House (from Grundy 1987)
- 8.6 a & b Ruined farmstead at Grandy's Knowe
- 8.7 Black Middens Bastle
- 8.8 Longsyke Farm (© Simon Fraser)
- 8.9 Hotbank Farm
- 8.10 Shillmoor Farm, Upper Coquetdale (© Simon Fraser)
- 8.11 Rows of farm worker's cottages at a) Kilham b) Akeld
- 8.12 Hesleyside Hall, North Tynedale
- 8.13 Holystone Grange and Woodhouses Bastle (© Simon Fraser)
- 8.14 Biddlestone Manor in the 1950s (© English Heritage)
- 8.15 High Green Manor
- 8.16 Causeway House
- 8.17 Harbottle millstone quarry
- 8.18 St Cuthbert's Church, Elsdon and two gravestones from the churchyard
- 8.19 Church of St Frances of Assisi, Byrness
- 8.20 Falstone Presbyterian church
- 9.1 Ingram in the early twentieth century
- 9.2 Aerial view of Biddlestone Quarry (© Tim Gates)
- 9.3 Stone quarries on the line of Hadrian's Wall a) Cawfields, b) Walltown
- 9.4 Hethpool House, College Valley
- 9.5 The estate workers' cottages at Hethpool
- 9.6 WP Collier's photograph of the Shooting Lodge at Kidlandlee in about 1915 (from Owen 1996)
- 9.7 Kilham House (from Grundy 1987)
- 9.8 Terraced houses in Stonehaugh Village

- 9.9 An old tank, used for target practice, Otterburn Training Area
- 9.10 The earthworks of the 'target runway' on Otterburn Training Area
- 9.11 The Cheviot Memorial, College Valley
- 9.12 A Bronze Age cairn on Fredden Hill being destroyed by forestry ploughing (© Tim Gates)
- 9.13 Kielder Forest and Reservoir a) a view across the site of the reservoir during construction b) today's landscape
- 9.14 Makendon, towards the top of Upper Coquetdale (© Simon Fraser)
- 9.15 Uswayford, on the Usway Burn, Upper Coquetdale, photographed in about 1914 by W P Collier (from Owen 1996)
- 9.16 View over Alwinton (© Simon Fraser)
- 9.17 An archaeological walk around Yeavinger Bell, led by the Park Archaeologist
- 9.18 The Roman toilets at Housesteads fort, particularly popular with children
- 9.19 Northumberland National Park: a very special place

#### PART II

- 10.1 Examples of *Polygonum* (knotgrass) and *Tilia* (lime) pollen grains
- 10.2 Pollen coring in progress on the Milfield Plain
- 10.3 Extracted peat core, showing changes in peat colour and differential sediment layering.
- 10.4 Percentage pollen diagram from Caudhole Moss (after Moores, 1999)
- 10.5 Location map of pollen sampling sites within Northumberland National Park
- 10.6 Current woodland in North Tynedale (© Simon Fraser)
- 10.7 The present day Cheviot landscape (© Simon Fraser)
- 11.1 Ingram Farm: map showing the locations of the main excavations (© Crown Copyright)
- 11.2 Turf Knowe (© Tim Gates)
- 11.3 Plan of Turf Knowe South
- 11.4 Turf Knowe North cairn: excavations in progress, 1997
- 11.5 Excavation of a food vessel urn from Turf Knowe North cairn, 1996
- 11.6 Haystack Hill, with Middle Dean hillfort in the background (© Tim Gates)
- 11.7 Excavation of agricultural terraces at Plantation Camp, 1999
- 11.8 A model showing the development of the Plantation Camp terraces
- 11.9 The stone-faced revetment of one of the Plantation Camp terraces
- 11.10 Air photograph of the Ingram South enclosure (© Tim Gates)
- 11.11 Air photograph of the Fawdon Dean enclosures (© Tim Gates)
- 11.12 Exposure of House 1 scooped into the hillside within Enclosure 1 at Fawdon Dean (2002)
- 11.13 Excavation at Fawdon Dean (2002)
- 11.14 The surviving arc of a stone roundhouse wall within Enclosure 2 at Fawdon Dean (2000)
- 12.1 An aerial view of the hillfort on Wether Hill (© Tim Gates)
- 12.2 The archaeological landscape of Wether Hill (© Pete Topping, based upon RCHME survey)
- 12.3 Some of the earliest pottery so far recovered from Wether Hill (© English Heritage: photograph Alun Bull)
- 12.4 The beaker/food vessel burial pit in Area 3 (© Pete Topping)
- 12.5 The burial cairn in Area 4 during excavation (© Pete Topping)
- 12.6 The middle to late Iron Age palisaded sites in Area 3 (© Pete Topping)
- 12.7 The trench across the defences of the hillfort on Wether Hill at an early stage of excavation (© Pete Topping)
- 12.8 The excavation of one of the later stone-built roundhouses (© Pete Topping)

- 13.1 View south-westwards along the College Valley from Great Hetha (© English Heritage: photograph S Ainsworth)
- 13.2 Henry MacLauchlan's plan of the hillfort on West Hill (© His Grace the Duke of Northumberland)
- 13.3 Ordnance Survey plan of the hillfort (© Ordnance Survey)
- 13.4 George Jobey's plan of the hillfort, published in 1964
- 13.5 English Heritage's detailed plan of the hillfort (© English Heritage: NMR 2000)
- 13.6 View of a series of facing stones on the south-west side of the hillfort (© English Heritage: photograph A Oswald)
- 13.7 The development of the hillfort over time (© English Heritage: NMR 2000)
- 13.8 The landscape around the hillfort in the Romano-British period (© English Heritage: NMR 2000)
- 13.9 Aerial photograph of the hillfort on West Hill in its local context (© Tim Gates)
- 13.10 The medieval longhouse, turned cottage, turned sheepfold (© English Heritage: photograph A Oswald)
- 14.1 Students excavating on Dere Street
- 14.2 The north, inside face of the west gate, showing the moulded impost block still in position
- 14.3 Excavation of the west gate in 1850 (reproduced by courtesy of Tyne & Wear Museums)
- 14.4 General plan of the fort and associated features
- 14.5 Petty Knowes (© Tim Gates)
- 14.6 Oblique air photograph of Bremenium from the south (© Tim Gates)
- 14.7 A computer generated visualisation of the fort
- 14.8 Cross wall at rear of headquarters building, excavated in 1997
- 14.9 Excavation adjacent to the bastle in the SW of the fort, looking NE across the village green
- 14.10 The Old School House, Rochester village
- 15.1 Map of Hadrian's Wall
- 15.2 Excavations at Appletree near Birdoswald in 1999
- 15.3 The foundations of Hadrian's Wall at milecastle 71
- 15.4 Ard marks beneath the south mound of the *vallum* at Black Carts, west of Chesters
- 15.5 The counterscarp bank of the Wall at Black Carts
- 15.6 The excavated counterscarp, built of blocks of dolerite
- 15.7 Plan of the recently excavated area of the north-west *praetentura* of the fort of Birdoswald, Cumbria
- 15.8 Plan of the cavalry barracks at Wallsend
- 15.9 The north gateway of milecastle 37 near Housesteads
- 16.1 Fold Hill, near Sewingshields (© Tim Gates)
- 16.2 Green Brae, Crindledykes (© Tim Gates)
- 16.3 Greenlee Lough, Bardon Mill (© Tim Gates)
- 16.4 Yatesfield Hill, near Otterburn (© Tim Gates)
- 17.1 Air photograph of Harbottle Castle and village from the south (© Tim Gates)
- 17.2 General view of the 1999 excavations at the Middle Gate and cross wall, taken from the motte
- 17.3 Excavation at Alnwick Castle gatehouse (W H Knowles, 1909)
- 17.4 Excavation of drawbridge pits (1999)
- 17.5 Plan of gatehouse and adjacent features
- 17.6 Excavations in progress in 1999, showing the gatehouse, cross wall and later features
- 17.7 General view of the Tudor construction on the motte
- 17.8 View from the interior of the motte showing west embrasure and north gun port
- 18.1 Elsdon Tower
- 18.2 A medieval tower, loosely based on Tosson (© Peter Ryder)
- 18.3 Hole Bastle, Bellingham

- 18.4 Boghead Bastle: the basement doorway and its quenching hole
- 18.5 Woodhouses Bastle
- 18.6 Door head reused in the nineteenth-century High Shaw farmhouse
- 18.7 Stokoe Crags
- 18.8 Branshaw Bastle (© Tim Gates)
- 19.1 Armstrong's map of Northumberland 1769, showing the castle in a ruinous condition
- 19.2 General view of Thirlwall Castle
- 19.3 Reconstruction drawings of Thirlwall Castle (by Peter Ryder)
- 19.4 Aerial view of the castle from the south-west showing cropmark of a possible circular enclosure
- 19.5 The remains of a wall discovered during excavations on the east side of the castle
- 19.6 Fourteenth-century grave covers in Haltwhistle Church bearing the arms of Thirlwall (drawn by Peter Ryder)
- 19.7 *A Tract of ye Bounders of ye Weste Marches of Englande towards Scotlande*
- 19.8 Sketch of Thirlwall Castle by Hutchinson, c1776
- 19.9 Watercolour by T Allom, 1832
- 20.1 Location map: Low Cleughs Bastle
- 20.2 General view of Low Cleughs Bastle, from the south-west
- 20.3 An elevation drawing of the south-facing main frontage
- 20.4 Aerial view of Low Cleughs Bastle and High Cleughs farmstead complexes (© Tim Gates)
- 20.5 Low Cleughs and High Cleughs and associated features derived from a tracing of rectified aerial photographs
- 20.6 Extract from the Corsenside tithe plan of 1839
- 21.1 An aerial view showing the large nineteenth-century shaft mounds of the PENCHFORD colliery and a cluster of shallower bell pits (© Tim Gates)
- 21.2 Plashetts Colliery in the early twentieth century (photograph by WP Collier, from Owen 1998)
- 21.3 The Thirlwall Colliery coal drops
- 21.4 Slag cake from a bloomery iron smelting furnace at Hogger's Cleugh in the Grasslees Valley
- 21.5 The remains of the lower dam of the Hareshaw Ironworks, Bellingham a) today; b) during the flash flood of 1911 (b: photograph by Rod Thompson, from Owen 2001)
- 21.6 An exceptionally well-preserved section of the rampart on Sinkside Hill (© Alistair Oswald)
- 21.7 Evidence of feather and plug stone splitting at Queen's Crag, north-east of Housesteads
- 21.8 Tosson limekiln
- 21.9 Limekilns at Crindledykes and Low Alwinton
- 21.10 A millstone abandoned during dressing at Harbottle millstone quarry
- 21.11 Workers' village during the construction of the Catcleugh Reservoir
- 21.12 The sole surviving workers' hut from the construction of the Catcleugh Reservoir
- 22.1 World War I practice trenches (© Tim Gates)
- 22.2 Map showing the location of areas of high archaeological value (ALAs and HSAs)
- 22.3 Barracker Rigg Romano-British settlement (© Tim Gates)
- 22.4 Section of Roman road excavated near Yatesfield (© Robert Manners)
- 22.5 Ironhouse Bastle, with the remains of other buildings (© Tim Gates)
- 22.6 Loaning Burn corn-drying kiln (© Beryl Charlton)
- 22.7 Headshope Boundary Stone (© Beryl Charlton)

- 22.8 The shrine to Cocidus (© Beryl Charlton)
- 22.9 Chew Green – a complex of pre-Antonine Roman military earthworks adjacent to Dere Street (© Tim Gates)
- 22.10 Trows Law palisaded settlement (© Tim Gates)
- 22.11 Windy Hause West (© Tim Gates)
- 23.1 Simonside viewed from the north-west
- 23.2 The Simonside Hills as depicted on Greenwood's map of 1828 (© Northumberland Records Office)
- 23.3 A distinctive rock overhang situated above the Cambo Bridle Road (© LUAU)
- 23.4 Bronze Age cairn with central cist and capstone in the foreground (© LUAU)
- 23.5 Large summit cairn on Simonside Hill (© LUAU)
- 23.6 Late Bronze Age sword recovered from the lower slopes of Spital hill (© ASUD)
- 23.7 Boundary stone on Simonside Hill (© LUAU)
- 23.8 The Iron Age hillfort of Tosson Burgh (© Tim Gates)
- 23.9 Unusual carved surface of a boulder on the course of the Cambo Bridle Road (© LUAU)
- 23.10 General view over the summit of Simonside (© ASUD)

TABLES

- 10.1 Pollen sites in Northumberland
- 10.2 Relevant pollen sites outside Northumberland
- 10.3 First appearance of cereals on pollen diagrams
- 12.1 Wether Hill timeline
- 12.2 The structural phases of the hillfort
- 20.1 Census data relating to Low Cleughs held at Northumberland County Records Office

DIAGRAM

- 12.1 Sequence in the beaker pit

# Foreword

The National Park Authority has recently set out a new approach to managing Northumberland National Park, which is based firmly on sustainable development and sees the special qualities of the area as an asset to both the region and the nation. One of the area's special qualities is without doubt its historical legacy. Recent investigations have greatly improved our knowledge of the early history of this land but we must now move forward, working with local communities, to ensure a secure future, both for the rich legacy of our past and for the people who will live in and visit the area for years to come. Much basic survey work and research remains to be done in order to achieve this aim.

The Authority has only been able to carry out this work due to the support of a wide range of organisations and individuals and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved.

On a final note I hope that people will find the contents of this volume stimulating. At the back of the book there is a section on 'getting involved'. I hope that many readers will take advantage of this, and actually involve themselves in the future of our past.

John Riddle  
Chairman, Northumberland National Park Authority  
November 2003

# A Note on Dates

Dates throughout this volume are expressed in calendar years BC (Before Christ) or AD (Anno Domini). For the latter, the prefix 'AD' is employed up to and including the early medieval period, with dates from the medieval period onwards expressed simply as numbers.

While we have occasional historical dates from Roman and early medieval sources, the chronology of most archaeological sites prior to medieval times is reliant on radiocarbon dating. This revolutionary technique was pioneered by Professor Willard F Libby of the University of Chicago in the 1950s. It has been much refined over recent decades. Today, radiocarbon dating is a complex science in its own right, but it is important to note that the obtaining of meaningful dates is primarily dependent on the acquisition of good samples from secure contexts during an excavation.

Briefly, the process of radiocarbon dating relies upon the fact that all living things on earth contain carbon, and that a small proportion of this carbon (known as carbon-14 or C14) is radioactive. This carbon-14 decays at a steady rate once an organism is dead, so that careful measurement of the quantity of it in a sample (which can be of plant material, bone, shell, or virtually any organic material) will generally date the death of the organism from which that sample originated. Complicating factors conspire to ensure that radiocarbon dates cannot be expressed simply as calendar years. However, radiocarbon years can be 'calibrated' to give decent estimates in calendar years. Calibration is in itself a complex exercise, but is based essentially on relating C14 determinations to the known calendar dates obtained from tree-ring studies.

In this volume, radiocarbon dates are expressed as estimated calendar dates BC or AD, based on the mean calibrated date. Academically, this is not good practice, and it can be misleading. However, it is deemed the most appropriate way of presenting approximate dates to the general audience at which the volume is targeted.

By way of example, the C14 determination of 3740+/-60bp (bp = 'before present') from a sample of charcoal from the central cist in the Turf Knowe north cairn (see Chapter 11), when calibrated, gives a 95.4% probability of the actual calendar date lying between 2360–1970 calendar years BC. In this volume, the date is expressed simply as c2165BC. Readers are warned to regard all such dates as no more than reasonable estimates. Further details of all dates quoted here should be obtainable via the references provided.

Readers wishing to find out more about scientific dating techniques are encouraged to consult *Science-Based Dating in Archaeology* by M J Aitken (Longman, London, 1990). Up to date information about radiocarbon dating is provided by Oxford University on the website [www.rlaha.ox.ac.uk](http://www.rlaha.ox.ac.uk).

# Preface and acknowledgements

In September 1992, I was fortunate to find myself starting work with the Northumberland National Park Authority as its first full time archaeologist. I was immediately struck by three things. First, I was amazed at the fabulous nature of the archaeological landscapes of the Park. I had read a little about the prehistoric landscapes of the Cheviots, the medieval landscapes of the Border reivers, and the much better known Roman military remains of the Hadrian's Wall corridor. But experiencing them for myself was something else, and ten years on it is still an emotional experience to wander and wonder amongst the signs of past times in the beautiful Northumberland hills. Second, given the quality of these landscapes, I was alarmed at the general lack of basic archaeological survey, in comparison with many other regions, which was available to inform land management decisions. Of course, much important work has been done, as will be immediately clear from a glance at the references throughout this volume. But, despite the excellent work of the RCHME in the south-east Cheviots and along Hadrian's Wall, and the efforts of others including George Jobey, Tim Gates, Stewart Ainsworth, Peter Topping and Beryl Charlton, vast tracts of archaeological landscapes, of a quality unsurpassed anywhere in England, remained unsurveyed at even a basic level. Where survey work had taken place, precious few excavations had been completed to help us understand these landscapes. Third, I was struck by the intense level of interest in the Park's archaeology amongst virtually all groups of people that I met, be they local farmers or landowners, other residents of the Park, or people from areas further afield such as Tyneside. This level of interest is reflected in the consistently high levels of attendance at countless public events (including evening lectures in village halls and guided walks ranging from evening strolls to all day expeditions) that I have organised over the years.

The National Park Authority, with very limited resources, has undertaken numerous initiatives over the past decade to further our understanding of, and thus enable better management of, the Park's archaeological landscapes. In order to help cater for the ever growing level of public interest generated by this work, the Authority set up a day conference in October 2000 entitled '*Long Ago, in the Land of the Far Horizons ...*'. At this event, a number of archaeologists who had been active in the Park were invited to present the results of their work to a general audience. The event was a resounding success. It was attended by nearly 300 local people, several of whom asked whether we could publish a book based on the conference so that they could have a permanent record of the various projects discussed on the day. It was always the Authority's intention to publish such a book. Although it has taken three years to complete it, I hope that this volume meets the expectations of those who requested it, as well as being of interest to a much wider audience. The book presents a general overview of the archaeology and history of the Park, followed by reports on particular projects, most of which are based on presentations given at the conference. The opportunity has been taken to update some of the contributions to include work subsequent to the conference, and three further contributions will be found here that it was not possible to include on the day. Many other projects could also have been included,

but those presented here have been chosen to cover, so far as is possible, all archaeological periods from prehistory to the present, and also all areas of the Park from the northern Cheviots down to Hadrian's Wall in the south.

Needless to say, neither the conference nor this volume would have been possible without the generosity, expertise and enthusiasm of the contributors, none of whom have received any kind of payment for either the conference or this publication. I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to all the contributors for their offerings presented here, and also for their wider contributions to our understanding of local archaeology. I would particularly like to thank Tim Gates for his magnificent air photographs which have contributed so much to the study of Northumberland archaeology, and which are used to splendid effect throughout this volume. My grateful thanks go also to everyone who attended the conference and helped to make it such a success, including Graham Taylor, National Park Chief Executive, who opened the conference and who has provided much personal and professional support over the years. I am also greatly indebted to Andy Wilson and Jonathan Mullard, successive Directors of Park Management, who have done much to further the cause of archaeology in the Park.

Many other National Park colleagues helped in various ways with the organisation of the conference and the administration of the projects discussed here. I would particularly like to thank those individuals in finance and administration whose faces are often hidden in the background but whose contributions are vital, namely Liz Allcock, Jean Patterson, Pauline Wright, Erin Ruddock, Gail Weatherson, Karen Bousfield, Helene Adams, Hazel Findlay, Steve Gray and Stuart Evans. The input of Alison Jeffrey and Linda Carroll in the design office has also been essential to the success of many projects, as well as to the production of this volume. I would also like to record my gratitude to the National Park Ranger Team, whose members (especially Derek Proudlock, Russell Tait, Paget Lazzari, Shaun Hackett, Jane Riddell, John Smith, Mark Bolton, Peter Moorhead, Keith Weeks, Mick Bolton and Dave Brown) have made crucial, but often inadequately appreciated, contributions to most projects. Members of the National Park Authority also deserve credit for backing many projects which more conservative authorities may not have approved: special thanks go to the Authority chairmen of the past decade, namely John Riddle, Frances Rowe and the late Eddie Teasdale.

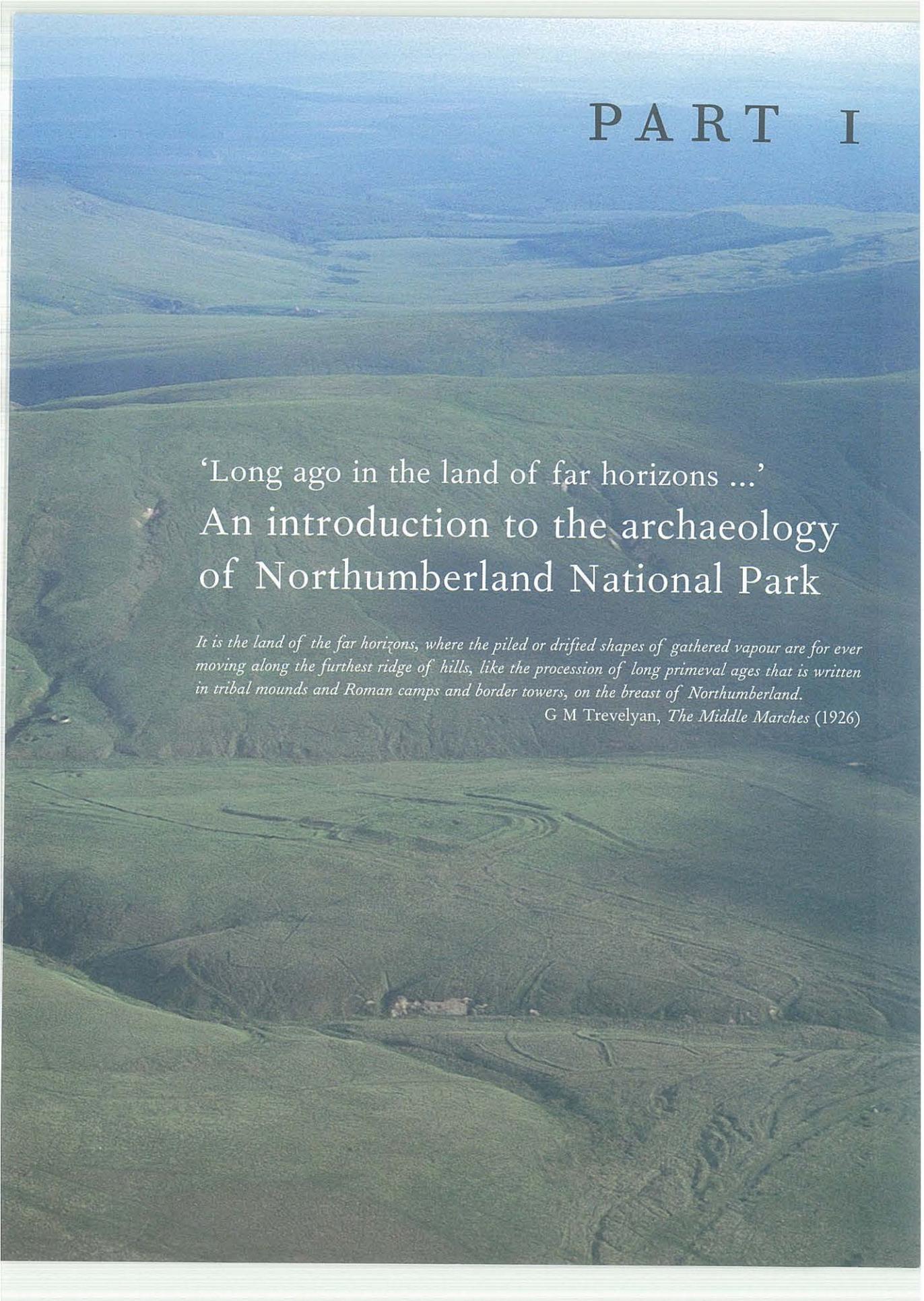
Thanks are also due to the numerous farmers and landowners who have supported the various initiatives discussed here. Many such individuals, with whom it has been a pleasure to work, are acknowledged elsewhere within this volume: my personal thanks go out to them all. Also deserving of thanks are the staff of various bodies which have helped to fund the initiatives discussed in the pages which follow, principally the Heritage Lottery Fund (especially Henrietta Ryott and Keith Bartlett), The Tweed Rivers Heritage Project (thanks to Luke Comins and Quentin McLaren), the European Union, Government Office North-East (principally Richard Flood and Sinead Maloney) and English Heritage (especially local inspectors Henry Owen-John, Kate Wilson and Paul Austen). The biggest thank-you of all is reserved for Jane Thorniley-Walker at the CBA, who enthusiastically adopted this project and has guided it through to eventual publication. I hope that everyone who has been involved in any way with any of the projects discussed here will find the book to be of some interest.

Many people have told me over the past decade that I must have the best archaeological job in the country. Of course, these people don't get to experience the tediously frustrating

hours spent filling in forms and attending seemingly endless meetings necessary to secure the funding and consents needed for projects such as those presented in this volume. However, when the results of all this hard work are presented as they are here, then all that effort does seem somehow worthwhile, and the job doesn't seem all that bad after all! Indeed, being the first ever Northumberland National Park Archaeologist is a privilege for which I will be grateful for the rest of my life. I remain indebted to Terry Carroll for taking the decision to appoint me: this volume is a direct result of that decision.

If the National Park Authority continues to be successful in attracting funds for archaeological research, then this book will soon be out of date. Hopefully, a new version will be produced in a few years' time to explain how our thinking has progressed. New projects should enable new facts to be stated, and interpretations developed, but also many new questions to be asked, for such is the nature of archaeology.

PF  
Hexham  
November 2003

An aerial photograph of a vast, rolling landscape of green hills and valleys. The terrain is covered in lush vegetation, and the hills recede into the distance under a clear blue sky. The overall scene is serene and expansive, capturing the natural beauty of the Northumberland National Park.

# PART I

‘Long ago in the land of far horizons ...’  
An introduction to the archaeology  
of Northumberland National Park

*It is the land of the far horizons, where the piled or drifted shapes of gathered vapour are for ever moving along the furthest ridge of hills, like the procession of long primeval ages that is written in tribal mounds and Roman camps and border towers, on the breast of Northumberland.*

G M Trevelyan, *The Middle Marches* (1926)

# Introduction

## The past in the present

People today have a tendency to regard the past as somehow separate from the modern world, something that belongs in the pages of a book or within the confines of a museum. In the landscape of the Northumberland National Park, however, the distant past exists very much in the present. It is the subtle interplay between the fascinating physical remains of this past, often in sublime landscape settings, and the mysteries of the essentially unknowable, that gives the Park's archaeological landscapes their much appreciated, yet often indefinable, special qualities. Here, people can reach out and touch mysterious Stone Age rock carvings, clamber over the ramparts of spectacular Iron Age hillforts, explore the northern extremity of the mighty Roman Empire, stand amongst the dramatic ruins of medieval castles and bastles, and wander amongst the miles of lonely stone walls which wind their way over the wild, empty hills. This past is a continuum, extending from the earliest times right through until the present day. It belongs, not to a museum, but to each and every one of us, and we are all in a position to enjoy it. Part I of this book aims to tell the story of the past 10,000 years in what is now the Northumberland National Park, and thereby to help people appreciate and enjoy the qualities of this very special place. It also sets the scene for the more detailed case studies to be found in Part II.

It should be noted at the outset that this National Park is a curious creature (fig 0.1). It is not a landscape entity like, for example, the Lake District or Dartmoor, but is entirely an artificial construction arising from negotiations in the 1950s about which areas should be included within the Park boundary. The line of the boundary results from the decision to exclude all sizeable settlements (such as Rothbury, Bellingham and Wooler) while including the best stretches of unimproved moorland which give much of the Park its distinctive open character. The southern portion of the Park is formed by the dramatic Hadrian's Wall corridor, the northern sector by the magnificent Cheviot Hills, and the central area by the beautiful, if occasionally rather bleak, valleys of Coquetdale, Redesdale and North Tynedale (fig 0.2). To try to present the archaeological story of such an area in isolation would be futile. Therefore, many references will be made to sites outside the Park boundary. The emphasis, though, will be on the landscapes of the National Park and the people who have lived in, and influenced the development of, these landscapes over the past 10,000 years. With regard to its consideration of 'the people', it would be fair to criticise this account for its lack of specific discussion of the role of women, or of the family, through time. Future projects need to uncover more evidence on these subjects to correct this imbalance.

Northumberland is often thought of as a 'marginal area', forming the distant north-east corner of England where developments in the past were generally of little consequence to more 'important' parts of England further south. This apparent marginality is reinforced by the presence of Hadrian's Wall, conventionally thought to mark the northern edge of the Roman Empire, as well as the present Anglo-Scottish Border. However, Hadrian's Wall was in commission for less than three hundred years, and for most of the period covered by this book the concept of an 'England' is irrelevant. Of far more relevance is the fact that the

Northumberland National Park lies at the centre of Britain. Consequently, in seeking to place the Park in a wider context, we must look north, into what is now Scotland, as well as south. Indeed, much of the archaeology of the Park has closer affinities with that of southern Scotland than with neighbouring English counties. While the presence of the Anglo-Scottish Border brought chaos and misery to medieval Northumberland, modern studies of the medieval Border lands should help to increase perceptions of shared identities either side of the line. Similarly, the effective study of earlier periods must be built upon cooperation between those living north and south of the Border (Frodsham 2000).

Fascination with the two great imponderables of time and space seems to be a characteristic of the human mind, and there is no reason to believe that this has not been the case ever since anatomically modern human beings (*homo sapiens sapiens*) first walked the earth, perhaps 40,000 years ago. Many developments in the Park landscape covered in the following account were clearly influenced by things that had happened many generations earlier. In the distant past, already ancient monuments must have been understood by reference to myths and legends. For example, Iron Age people living in some hillforts must

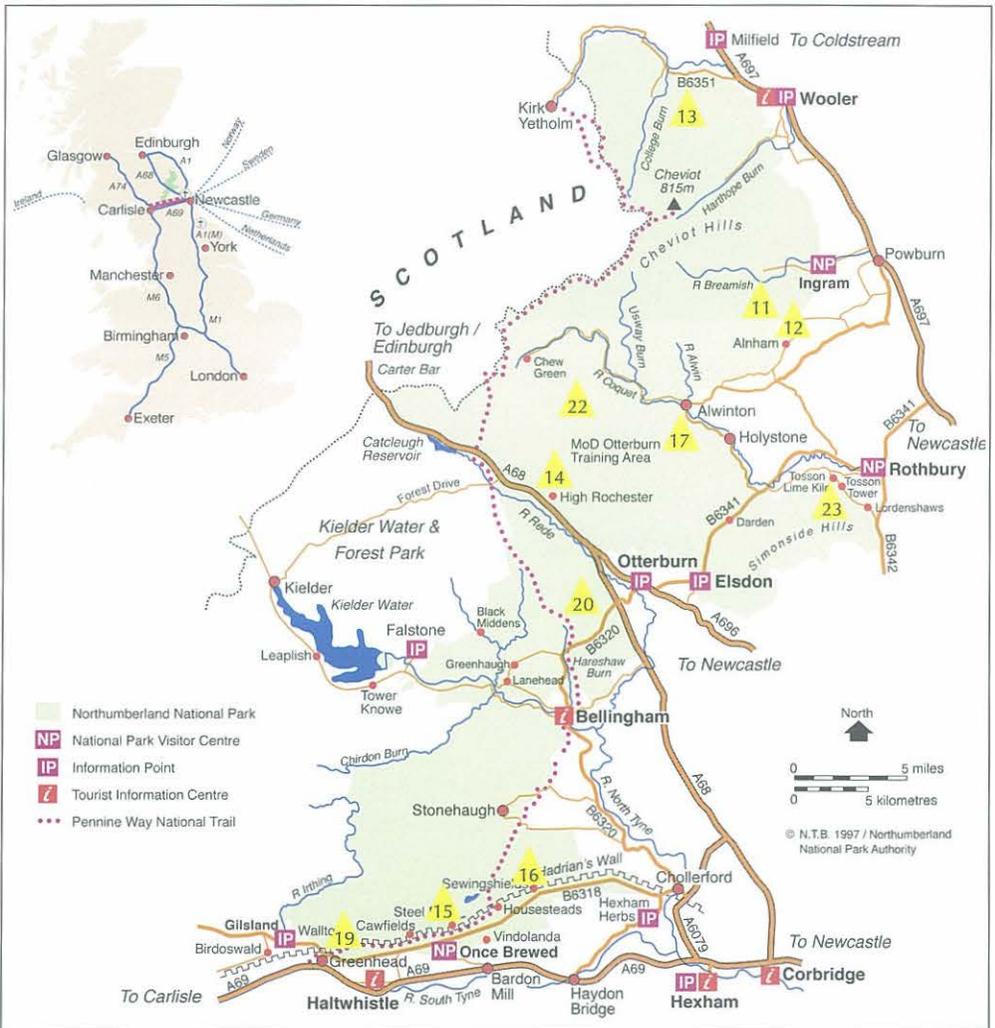


FIGURE 0.1 Map of Northumberland National Park and the locations of projects discussed in Part II of this volume. (Note, Chapters 10, 18 and 21 are syntheses covering sites throughout the Park) 11, Breamish Valley Project; 12, Wether Hill, Ingram; 13, West Hill, Kirknewton; 14, Bremenium Roman fort; 15, Hadrian's Wall; 16, Hadrian's Wall air photo survey; 17, Harbottle Castle; 19, Thirlwall Castle; 20, Low Cleughs Bastle; 22, Otterburn Training Area; 23, Simonside.



FIGURE 0.2 Historic landscapes of the Northumberland National Park. All of these landscapes are the result of complex interaction between people and the environment over thousands of years: a) (above) Hadrian's Wall corridor; b) (left) North Tynedale; c) (right) Cheviot Hills. (PHOTOGRAPHS: SIMON FRASER)

have had some explanation for the mysterious panels of Neolithic rock carvings littering the surrounding hills. Today, using our scientific minds, we try to understand complex issues by sorting information into little boxes, and the complexities of archaeological time are usually simplified in this way. We have a number of conventional time periods, from the Mesolithic to the twentieth century, and seek to place archaeological remains and the people responsible for those remains into the relevant boxes. Thus, for example, a person or a monument can be considered 'Neolithic' or 'medieval'. However, such terms have now become laden with values as well as being purely chronological, and archaeologists spend much time arguing about issues such as when the Bronze Age ended and how it changed into the Iron Age. Archaeologists are aware that the conventional time periods are inadequate, and that in many instances they tend to exaggerate change and disguise continuity. In some circumstances they can actually hinder rather than aid research, but in the absence of a better system the following account will use the conventional terminology (fig 0.3). It is important to remember, though, that no individuals ever considered themselves as 'Mesolithic' or 'post-medieval'. These are simply terms that we have imposed on ancient societies to help us try to understand them. Nobody ever went to sleep in the Neolithic and woke up in the Bronze Age, and no Bronze Age mother ever gave birth to an Iron Age baby!

This account has been written with the general reader in mind, and is not littered with references in the manner of an academic report. However, where someone's original research is discussed this is duly acknowledged and appropriate references are cited: not to do so would be very bad practice. Inevitably, a synthesis such as this is reliant upon the



past work of many archaeologists. To mention some runs the risk of omitting others, but a few are worthy of particular praise. Henry MacLauchlan and George Tate built the mid-nineteenth-century foundations on which the subsequent study of Northumberland's prehistory has been built, while George Jobey's work in the later twentieth century is essential to our current understanding of the subject. Colin Burgess' contribution is also critical, and resources must be found soon to enable his important excavations in the Park to be fully published. Scholars of the Roman Wall who have worked in the National Park are among the most famous names in British archaeology, including John Horsley, John Collingwood Bruce, Ian Richmond, and successive generations of Birleys. Brian Hope-Taylor's excavations at Yeavering are fundamental to our understanding of the early medieval period in northern England. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century historians, of whom John Wallis, William Hutchinson, Eneas Mackenzie and Rev John Hodgson are arguably the most important, provide the foundation for the study of the medieval period in Northumberland. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a number of very useful syntheses were published, including the fifteen volumes of 'A History of Northumberland', and, arguably the most beautiful book ever produced on local archaeology, David Dippie Dixon's 'Upper Coquetdale'.

The contributors to this volume are all very aware that they tread in the footsteps of many illustrious predecessors. The greatest respect we can pay to these people is surely to continue to make new discoveries, and to develop new ways of thinking about the wonderful resource left to us by the 400 or more generations of our ancestors who lived and died in the hills and valleys of what is now the Northumberland National Park. The following account, which is unavoidably selective in content, attempts to present an accessible summary of this resource as we understand it today. In completing it, the greatest difficulty has certainly not been in sourcing relevant subject matter, but in deciding what to leave out. Had further time been available to allocate to it, then without doubt it could have been improved in a multitude of ways. Nevertheless, it hopefully goes some way towards doing justice to the wonderful archaeological landscapes of *The Land of the Far Horizons*.

FIGURE 0.3 Time chart, showing the conventional archaeological periods on which Part I of this volume is structured.

HISTORIC PERIOD (contemporary written sources available)	20TH CENTURY	AD2000
	POST-MEDIEVAL	AD1901
		AD1603
	MEDIEVAL	
		AD1066
PREHISTORIC PERIOD (no contemporary written sources)	EARLY MEDIEVAL	
		AD410
	ROMANO-BRITISH	AD79
	IRON AGE	
		c 800BC
	BRONZE AGE	
	c 2,000BC	
	NEOLITHIC (New Stone Age)	
		c 4,500BC
	MESOLITHIC (Middle Stone Age)	
		c 8,000BC
	PALAEOLITHIC (Old Stone Age) (No evidence from Northumberland National Park)	



# Foragers in the forest

## The Mesolithic

(c8000–4000BC)

**E**vidence, mostly in the form of stone tools, from various sites throughout Britain proves that people have lived here intermittently for over a quarter of a million years. Such evidence, however, is only preserved in particular circumstances, such as buried deep in caves in Wales or within deposits of gravel in southern England. While there can be little doubt that people would have set foot in what is now the Northumberland National Park in those unimaginably distant times (known to archaeologists as the Palaeolithic, or Old Stone Age), the earliest evidence we have for people in this region follows the end of the last glacial period (or Ice Age) which ended some 10,000 years ago. During glacial periods much of the National Park's landscape would have been buried under sheets of ice up to a mile thick, and these scoured away any evidence of human occupation in earlier times that might have been present. As the ice retreated for the last time, the environment gradually changed, over many centuries, from tundra to scrubland to mixed deciduous woodland. Britain was still joined to Europe in this early Mesolithic period, and bands of people could wander freely over what is now the North Sea to exploit the new opportunities offered by this virgin land. Some groups may have been forced to move westward into what is now Northumberland as the sea level rose (due to the gradual melting of the Ice Age glaciers), permanently flooding traditional settlement sites, sources of flint and other raw materials, and hunting grounds beneath the North Sea. Indeed, the loss of lowlands to the sea, coupled with the development of dense deciduous woodland in the uplands, must have profoundly affected Mesolithic society, causing people to develop new strategies of food procurement along, no doubt, with new belief systems and attitudes towards their world.

By about 6500BC Britain was an island, cut off from mainland Europe. People may well have been capable of sailing across the North Sea, but communities were now increasingly looking to inland Northumberland for food and other resources. The climate was somewhat warmer than today, and people exploited a wide variety of natural resources including deer, wild cattle and boar, wildfowl, fish, and naturally occurring fruits, nuts and vegetables. Animals would have been killed using bows and arrows, and fish caught with hand-held harpoons, nets and traps.

Although Mesolithic flint tools (including knives, scrapers and tiny flakes called 'microliths' which were used for the manufacture of composite tools) have been recovered from several places in the Park, they are usually found during fieldwalking or through the investigation of later sites as there is rarely any surface evidence to suggest the location of Mesolithic settlements. For example, Mesolithic artefacts were recovered from the excavation of the Anglian 'palace' at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977), and from the site of a Romano-British settlement at Kennel Hall Knowe in North Tynedale (Jobey 1978). In

addition, many Mesolithic flints have been picked up from the furrows ploughed in advance of forestry plantations. These finds suggest the presence in the hills of numerous Mesolithic hunting camps. We know from fieldwork elsewhere in Northumberland that some upland hunting camps made use of natural rock shelters (Weyman 1984, 40), and although none has yet been excavated there are several examples in the Park (eg fig 23.3) which have the potential to tell us much about the local Mesolithic. Such places would have been occupied temporarily by bands of mobile people who moved around the landscape in a seasonal cycle, following herds of wild cattle over the hills, or salmon upriver, along long established routes. These bands of 'hunter-gatherer folk' (as they are often referred to in the archaeological literature) would probably have been based on extended families, and would have returned to more permanent settlements, perhaps in the river valleys or even on the coast, for the winter, where interaction with other bands, including ritual and ceremonial gatherings, exchange of marriage partners, and exchange of commodities could have occurred. Figure 1.1 is intended to give a flavour of Mesolithic life, between about 7000 and 6000BC, on the northern fringes of the Park.

Rob Young (2000) has stressed the need to consider the wider landscape if we hope to gain a better understanding of upland Mesolithic sites. Communities may have had 'base camps' on the coast, with some or all of the community moving inland for part of the year. We can only hope to gain something of an understanding of such Mesolithic communities if all sites within a given region are considered together. A major recent contribution, using just such a landscape approach, is Clive Waddington's very important programme of research in the Milfield Basin. This included the painstaking collection of lithic material from a thousand hectares of ploughed fields, in a transect extending from the Cheviot foothills, across the Milfield Plain, to the fell sandstones in the east (Waddington 1999). Some of the stone tools

FIGURE 1.1 This illustration by Dave Hall shows many elements of Mesolithic life in the Milfield Basin. It is taken from a display panel at the Maelmin Heritage Trail in Milfield village.

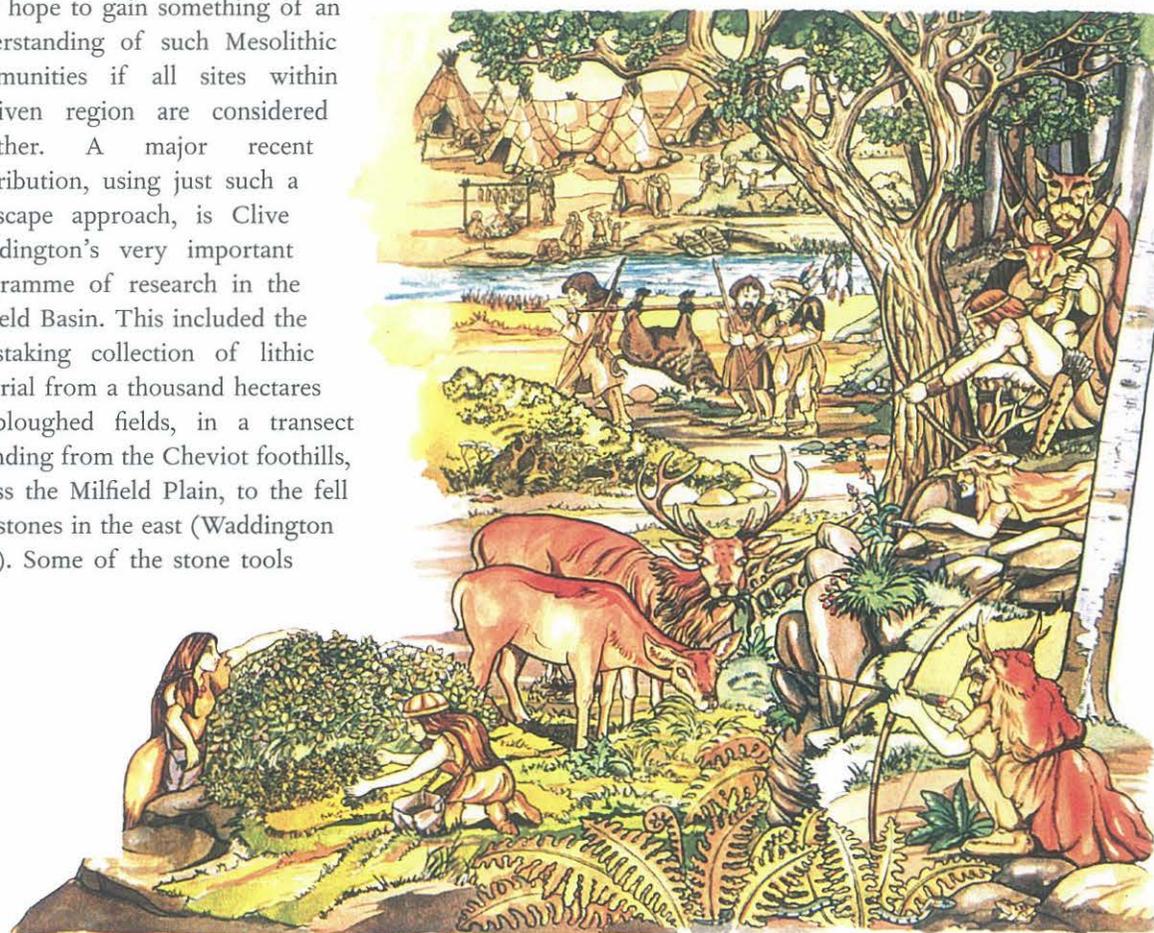




FIGURE 1.2 The unmistakable profile of Yeavinger Bell looming above the southern edge of the Milfield Plain.

recovered were of locally occurring agate and chert, so flint may have been in short supply. However, some flint was apparently being imported from north-east Yorkshire, suggesting that inland exchange networks of some kind were already well established. Waddington (2000, 174) believes that during the Mesolithic the Milfield Basin was exploited relatively intensively by 'semi-mobile extended family groups', from which small task groups would be formed to undertake specialised activities in certain parts of the landscape as required. Some such groups would presumably have travelled into the forest-clad Cheviots on hunting expeditions. Yeavinger Bell, which towers over the southern edge of the Milfield Basin (fig 1.2), may have acquired some special status as a ceremonial site during the Mesolithic. If so, then such early importance may ultimately have underlain the special status that was clearly afforded to Yeavinger in later prehistoric and early historic times.

On the southern fringes of the Park, work by Chris Tolan-Smith (1996) has examined Mesolithic settlement in Tynedale. Although this work did not extend up North Tynedale into the National Park, there seems little reason to doubt that patterns of landscape exploitation here would have been essentially similar to those identified by Waddington at Milfield, with semi-permanent base camps in the lower Tyne Valley or perhaps even on the coast. Similar patterns must have existed in Redesdale and Coquetdale.

Although no Mesolithic structures have been recorded from within the Park, a recent very important excavation on the Northumberland coast (fig 1.3) has demonstrated the potential for the survival of such sites. Here, at Howick, evidence for the timber frame of a circular 'house' six metres in diameter has been excavated (Waddington 2003). The site is located on a low headland fifteen metres above the present day foreshore, although the coast may have been several hundred metres away at the time the house was occupied. Over 16,000 worked



FIGURE 1.3  
Reconstructed  
Mesolithic house at the  
Maelmin Heritage  
Trail, Milfield, based  
on the recently  
excavated example at  
Howick.

pieces of flint (mostly tiny waste flakes from the manufacture of artefacts, but also including scrapers, microliths and blades) together with organic remains such as burnt bone, hazelnuts and shellfish were recovered. The bones included those of fox, dog or wolf, wild pig and birds. A series of radiocarbon determinations have dated the the initial occupation of the site to *c*7800BC. There must be potential for the discovery of similar sites beneath the peat in upland settings within the National Park, but finding them will be difficult.

Further evidence for the presence of Mesolithic people in the area of the Park comes in the form of palaeoenvironmental evidence for artificial clearings in the natural forest. Much of the landscape would have been clothed in mixed deciduous forest by the middle Mesolithic, with birch and pine on the higher ground and perhaps only the tops of the highest hills visible above the tree line. Artificially created clearings would have attracted deer and other grazing beasts, thus contributing to more effective hunting strategies. However, over exploitation of some upland regions may have resulted in the erosion of soils, leading to the creation of extensive areas of blanket peat and preventing the regeneration of any woodland. The nature of the relationship between Mesolithic people and the environment is considered by Rob Young in his contribution to Part II of this volume.

No Mesolithic burials have yet been discovered in our region, but across the North Sea in Scandinavia, some people were buried with great ceremony. The living clearly had respect for the dead, and it is important to stress that Mesolithic people were not 'simple folk'. They would have lived within a complex symbolic landscape not unlike that of native American tribes of not so very long ago. Over time, the routes they followed around the landscape would have become imbued with special meaning, linked by mythological associations with the ancestors. Systems of belief not dissimilar to those of Australian Aborigines, with landscapes dominated by song lines and sacred places, would probably have existed in Mesolithic Northumberland. Stories would have been told around camp fires which reinforced and enhanced cultural memory, reminding everyone of their place in the world and the importance of those who had been here before them. While it will never be possible

for us to recreate such landscapes, or to understand exactly how Mesolithic people interacted with their surroundings, there are some clues about which it is fascinating to speculate. For example, we know that societies throughout the world associate particularly unusual or impressive landscape features with aspects of their cosmological and religious belief systems. The best known example of this phenomenon is the Aboriginal sacred mountain of *Uluru* (Ayers Rock), but there are hundreds of others. It is not difficult to identify elements of the ancient landscape that may have been regarded as special or sacred, and on a local scale there can be little doubt that Simonside (fig 1.4) would have fulfilled this role, conceivably from the moment that Mesolithic people first set foot in Northumberland. From many miles away, to north and south, Simonside's dramatic profile forms a familiar landmark. People would have been drawn to its summit, where the curious rock formations and natural fissures would have helped to create an aura of mystery that we can still sense echoes of today. The recent recovery of Mesolithic flints from Simonside demonstrates beyond doubt that Mesolithic people were active here, and they must have given this place a name. That name, forever lost to us, would probably have been intimately bound up with the mythology and 'religious' beliefs of the time. Although we will never be able to prove it, there is every chance that this dramatic natural hill would have been seen as their principal 'sacred mountain' by the Mesolithic inhabitants of central Northumberland.

FIGURE 1.4 Simonside from the south. Its distinctive profile probably gave it a special status amongst Mesolithic communities (see also fig 23.1).



# Agriculture, ancestors and sacred circles

## The Neolithic (c4000–2000BC)

**M**any archaeological textbooks refer to the ‘Neolithic Revolution’, which saw a dramatic change from hunting and gathering to the domestication of farm animals and the adoption of agriculture, along with the development of polished stone axes and pottery. However, it is now generally accepted that the onset of the Neolithic (New Stone Age) was a rather more gradual process, occurring at different rates in different places. It seems to have resulted largely from the development of new ways of life amongst the native Mesolithic population, rather than from invasions of large numbers of farmers from the continent. As we will see below, the Neolithic was as much about new ways of thinking about the world as it was about new ways of living in it.

Dozens of Neolithic polished stone axe heads have been recovered by chance over the years from in and around the National Park, with notable concentrations around Milfield and Rothbury (Burgess 1984, 134). A few of these axes are of flint, but most are of hard volcanic rock. The majority can be sourced to Langdale in the Lake District, where axe production was practised on an industrial scale during the Neolithic: Langdale axes are found throughout Britain, and long distance exchange networks of some kind were clearly in operation. The axes were essential tools, used for felling trees, woodworking and numerous other tasks including, probably, the breaking up of new ground for ploughing. Some axes were buried with some ceremony in ritual monuments, suggesting that the axe was also of considerable symbolic importance to Neolithic people. This reminds us that the modern distinction between ‘functional objects’ and ‘religious symbols’ did not apply to the Neolithic world. The distribution of these axes, along with other Neolithic artefacts such as leaf shaped flint arrowheads (the bow and arrow was an effective weapon which could be employed in both hunting and inter-group conflict) provides proof that people were present in the Park’s main valleys during the Neolithic.

Although no occupation sites within the Park have been excavated, we can assume that settlement, at least during the earlier Neolithic, retained a considerable degree of mobility related to the patterns of previous millennia. This should come as no surprise when it is realised that many communities still moved between lowland winter dwellings and upland summer pastures into the seventeenth century AD. However, it was during the Neolithic that people began keeping ‘domesticated’ animals rather than passively following wild herds around the landscape as their predecessors had done. Domestication of livestock, with people overseeing breeding and slaughter within a controlled environment, can be traced back to the Near East several thousand years before it was heard of in Britain. The concept

spread gradually across Europe, reaching Britain by 4000BC. Although hunting remained important throughout the Neolithic and beyond, wild cattle (aurochs), red deer, wild boar and other naturally occurring species were gradually replaced in importance by domestic cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. All of these must have been introduced from abroad, although the mechanisms by which they were first brought into Britain, and the first breeding stocks established, remain poorly understood. We know from excavations on the Milfield Plain, and from palaeoenvironmental work elsewhere (eg in Redesdale and Upper North Tynedale), that primitive varieties of wheat and barley were being cultivated by c4000BC (see Chapter 10). As with domesticated beasts, these cereals must originally have been introduced from abroad. Wild resources were still harvested, but cereals and other domesticated crops provided an increasing proportion of the dietary requirements of Neolithic people as time progressed. The adoption of agriculture is often regarded as a natural progression or development, leading to an 'improved' way of life. However, it also brought potentially serious problems, not the least of which was the possibility of disease to crops and stock, leading to famine, especially as populations rose and became more concentrated in specific areas. The effort necessary to clear ground, and the time needed to tend and harvest crops and manage stock, were in stark contrast to the Mesolithic exploitation of natural resources. It should come as no surprise to discover that agriculture was adopted only gradually, and it may well be that 'backward, traditional' Mesolithic groups and 'innovative' Neolithic communities occupied overlapping territories for many generations. People would not give up long-established, successful ways of life until the 'new ways' were guaranteed to work. Thus the first crops may have been grown as experiments to supplement existing food sources, and would only gradually have replaced these traditional sources as their reliability was demonstrated.

The new reliance on cultivated crops would have necessitated the production and maintenance of fields, and this may have influenced the development of more permanent settlements, allowing some people to tend the crops while others travelled the traditional seasonal routes at certain times of the year. The increasing reliance on domesticated resources was a profound development, and domestic stock and crops must have provided a rich source of metaphor for everyday life. Whereas wild resources were simply hunted or gathered when required, crops had to be sown, nurtured and harvested. The cycles of birth, death and rebirth must have been related in people's minds to the lives of individuals and of the wider community. To each succeeding generation, the domestic stocks and arable fields were the legacy of the ancestors, and had to be managed and passed on in a healthy state to those who would need them in future.

A more sedentary lifestyle would have enabled the development of pottery, which is clearly not suitable for essentially nomadic communities due to its fragility. Early Neolithic pottery (characterised by round-based, undecorated forms with out-turned rims, known to archaeologists as 'Grimston ware') has been recovered from at least five sites just north of the Park boundary, including Thirlings and Yeavering. Later Neolithic pottery (termed 'Peterborough ware', which was developed from early Neolithic traditions, and 'Grooved ware', which was a new development) has also been found at Thirlings and Yeavering, although continuity of occupation throughout the Neolithic cannot be proven at either site. Detailed examination of some of this pottery has proved that it was manufactured locally using clay from the nearby River Till. Organic remains from pits at the Thirlings settlement returned radiocarbon dates ranging from c4000BC through until c2500BC. While this might

suggest that some sites could have been occupied continuously throughout the Neolithic, it is equally possible that breaks in occupation occurred during this immensely long period covering sixty or more generations. A little further afield, another early Neolithic settlement, possibly occupied seasonally over several years, was recently excavated near Bolam Lake (Waddington and Davies 2002). Here, a few postholes were interpreted as the remnants of a temporary shelter, consisting of a skin or turf covered timber superstructure. Hazelnut shells from pits (which also contained fragments of pottery and stone tools) provided radiocarbon dates of c3700BC. As with Mesolithic campsites, these early settlements leave no surface trace and are only discovered by chance or by careful fieldwalking. Many similar settlements almost certainly await discovery in and around the Park. It is possible that more permanent timber buildings stood at Thirlings, but it has proved impossible to identify any such structures amongst the remains of later, Anglian buildings on the same site. A massive timber framed hall dating from c3500BC has been excavated at Balbridie (near Aberdeen), and it is quite possible that similar structures will eventually be identified in Northumberland.

The extent to which an agricultural transformation occurred in the uplands during the Neolithic is still debated by archaeologists: it was probably not until the Bronze Age that large numbers of permanently occupied, self-sufficient farmsteads appeared in the hills. On the Milfield Plain, Waddington (2000a, 3) paints an image, throughout the Neolithic, of 'many small-scale settlements distributed over the raised terraces of the plain in close proximity to the rich resources of the River Till and the adjacent wetland fringes (eg wildfowl, fish, rushes, watering animals, edible green plants) over what is now the modern alluvial flood plain.' During the later Neolithic, although there must still have been much seasonal movement around the landscape, occupation of some of these settlements became more permanent, with cultivated crops and domestic stock providing an increasingly high proportion of the diet. Although no investigative work has taken place elsewhere around the Park, we can envisage similar populations to those in the Milfield Basin existing around Rothbury, and also further south in Tynedale, with the uplands being exploited on a seasonal basis. Palaeoenvironmental evidence suggests increasing amounts of woodland clearance in the uplands from about 2500BC, in the late Neolithic and extending into the early Bronze Age, but whether or not permanent villages were present in the uplands prior to 2000BC remains unresolved.

This increasing reliance on domesticated resources was probably mirrored in people's relationship with the wider landscape. As we are about to discover, this relationship was increasingly understood and discussed by reference to cultural monuments, rather than to natural places and transient settlements as it had been since the early Mesolithic. The increasing level of control over the environment occurred alongside the development of a belief system in which people regarded themselves as more detached from nature. Such a belief system cannot be likened to modern, western religion. It would have been 'lived' rather than 'believed', with all aspects of everyday life bound up within a web of ritual and superstition. The Neolithic landscape was still dominated by the ancestors, but these ancestors were now located within, and worshipped at, artificially constructed monuments, some of which actually contained their physical remains. Ceremonies at these monuments were probably overseen by shamans (sometimes referred to as 'witch doctors'), who were thought to be able to mediate between the everyday world of living people and the 'otherworld' of the ancestors. Such individuals must have been amongst the most important

FIGURE 2.1 Bellshiel Law long cairn, Redesdale.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 2.2 Devil's Lapful long cairn, Kielder Forest.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



and respected individuals within Neolithic society, just as in native American and Australian aboriginal groups and numerous other anthropologically studied pre-industrial societies throughout the world.

The earliest monuments visible in the National Park landscape are the 'long cairns', linear burial monuments which excavations elsewhere in Britain have demonstrated were built to contain communal burials of many individuals (Masters 1984). The massive Bellshiel Law long cairn (fig 2.1), 110 metres in length, is sited high above Redesdale, offering a wide view over the valley. In plan, the monument is trapezoidal, 18 metres in width at its east end tapering to 8 metres in the west. This suggests that the east end, where burial chambers may originally have been located, was the main focus of the monument. The cairn was partially excavated in the 1930s, but unfortunately little information relating to its origins or function was recovered. The Devil's Lapful (fig 2.2) is located in a not dissimilar position, high in North Tynedale at Kielder. This cairn is similar in form to that at Bellshiel, but is only about half the size. The long cairn at Dour Hill, located only about two kilometres west of Bellshiel

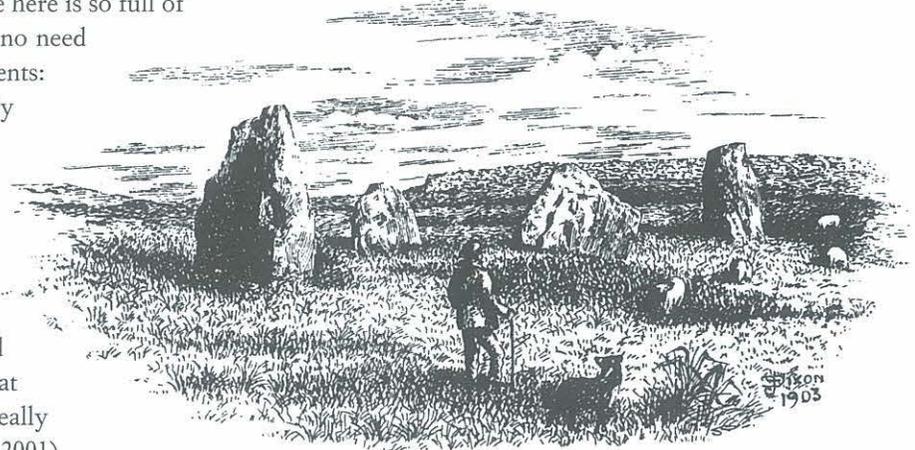
Law, has recently been surveyed and reinterpreted as a 'chambered tomb', containing accessible corbelled chambers in which the dead could be laid to rest and from which relics could be taken for ceremonies at certain times of year (Waddington *et al* 1998). The examination of bones from excavated Neolithic cairns in Scotland suggests that average life expectancy was no more than thirty years, with high levels of infant mortality. Under such circumstances, death was never far away, and it is understandable that so much effort went into the construction of great 'houses for the dead'.

A handful of other possible long cairns exist in and around the Park, such as the recently recognised linear mound adjacent to the Harehaugh Camp hillfort. In addition, it is highly probable that some of the really massive hilltop round cairns, usually thought to be of Bronze Age date, may prove to have had Neolithic origins. Examples might include the massive cairns on Simonside, or that on Crigdon Hill (Upper Coquetdale), but the investigation of such monuments would represent an enormous logistical exercise and is unlikely to occur in the near future. These burial cairns provided resting places for the ancestors, and must have been of immense significance to people living their lives in the surrounding landscape. No doubt, over time, myths and legends would have grown up about these monuments, linking the world of the ancestors with the everyday world of the living. The cairns may well have stated the rights of certain kinship groups to territories in the uplands, perhaps for seasonal grazing land, and it would be a brave individual in the superstitious world of the Neolithic who would risk incurring the wrath of the ancestors by questioning the rights of such a group to its 'ancestral' lands. Regardless of their exact purpose, the effort that went into the construction of these monuments was substantial, demonstrating that they must have been very important to the people who built them.

In other parts of England, early Neolithic burial monuments exist in association with large earthwork enclosures. These are often referred to as 'causewayed camps' on account of the frequent causeways across their surrounding ditches, allowing easy access to the interior. They were used for a variety of ritual activities including exchange of commodities between groups, feasting, and funerary activity. Such monuments were constructed at significant places in the landscape, apparently often at liminal locations towards the edge of territories. They were probably visited at particular times of the year relating to seasonal patterns of movement. No certain examples of early Neolithic enclosures have been recorded in the National Park, suggesting that they may not have been necessary here.

Perhaps the 'natural' landscape here is so full of 'special' places that there was no need to construct special monuments: natural places, perhaps only slightly modified, could have performed a similar function to the causewayed enclosures of southern England. However, it is equally likely that such enclosures do exist but have not yet been recognised on account of the fact that archaeologists have never really looked for them (Waddington 2001).

FIGURE 2.3 The Five Kings, drawn by John Turnbull Dixon.  
(FROM D D DIXON 1903)



Recent surveys of Iron Age hillforts in the Park have suggested that some may overlie earlier enclosures, and it is possible that future excavation will uncover evidence of early Neolithic ritual enclosures in such locations. At Harehaugh Camp, Coquetdale, the recovery of probable Neolithic flints, and a radiocarbon date of  $\approx 3000\text{BC}$  from a sealed context beneath the fort ramparts, coupled with the presence of the nearby Five Kings stone row (fig 2.3) and a probable long cairn, suggest very strongly that some form of early Neolithic enclosure may exist beneath this Iron Age hillfort (Waddington *et al* 1998). Indeed, a Neolithic complex of considerable regional importance may exist here at what is undeniably a strategic location, where the Coquet Valley meets the uplands and the Grasslees Burn provides a natural route through into Redesdale.

Later Neolithic monuments, from 3000BC onwards, include the great stone circles and henge monuments such as Stonehenge and Avebury in southern England, the Stones of Stenness and Ring of Brodgar on Orkney, and Callanish on Lewis. Closer to home, the great Cumbrian stone circles, such as Castlerigg, Swinside and Long Meg, date from this period. These magnificent monuments may have played a role in the distribution of stone axes from Langdale, which extended over much of Britain during the Neolithic. There are no stone circles of comparable grandeur in the National Park, although remnants of substantial examples can still be seen at Hethpool and at Threestoneburn in the Cheviots. These may well have been associated with as yet unidentified stone axe sources in the Cheviots, as it is now known that some axes were made of Cheviot andesite. The equivalent of medieval fairs may have been held at such places, with communities coming from some distance to exchange goods, to socialise, and even to seek marriage partners. The Threestoneburn circle (fig 2.4) consists of sixteen stones, of which only four remain standing, in a flattened circle up to 36 metres in diameter. A further four stones lying outside the circle may have been 'outliers', forming an integral part of the monument (Waddington and Williams, in press). George Tate excavated here in 1856, finding charred wood and a single flint tool which had



FIGURE 2.4  
Threestoneburn  
stone circle.

'two cutting edges and seems a portion of a small knife' (Tate 1862, 452). He assumed the circle to have been a Druid temple, but today we know that these circles were built some 2500 years before the earliest known reference to the Druids. An excavation using modern techniques could certainly tell us a great deal more about the people who built and used this particular circle. The Hethpool circle, on a wide plateau above the College Burn near the mouth of the College Valley, is also a flattened circle, measures 41 by 36 metres, and consists of at least 23 stones. Both circles have apparent outliers to the north, and both have a relationship with the summit of Cheviot: Threestoneburn being due east of the summit, and Hethpool not far off due north. While we cannot currently explain them, such alignments are certainly not coincidental and the Neolithic architects who planned the circles would have been very much aware of them. Peter Topping (1997, 120) argues that one of the functions of the Hethpool circle may have been to 'ritualise' access along the College Valley towards the Cheviot, the vast bulk of which dominates the view southwards from the circle. Several smaller stone circles, some of which may be of early Bronze Age date, survive in the Hadrian's Wall corridor. These include the beautiful little circle at Greenlee and a recently discovered site, which may contain burials, at Gibbs Hill.

Not all Neolithic monuments were circles. The aforementioned stone row known as the Five Kings (of which only four survive, the fifth having been carted off to be fashioned into a gatepost in the nineteenth century) stands beneath Harehaugh Camp in Upper Coquetdale. In Hadrian's Wall country, 3km north of Sewingshields in a lonely moorland setting appropriately marked on the maps as 'Standingstones Rigg', is another stone row. This may originally have been an 'avenue' of standing stones associated with a burial cairn. It is most unusual in a Northumbrian context, and would be more at home on Dartmoor, where such monuments are relatively commonplace. Other standing stones exist singly or in pairs, such as the intriguingly named 'Mare and Foal' near Cawfields (fig 2.5). Some of these may once have formed part of larger monuments such as rows or circles, or may have been associated



FIGURE 2.5 The Mare and Foal standing stones.

FIGURE 2.6 Excavation in progress at Coupland Henge in 1995. Although the bank of this henge has been ploughed flat, the ditch can be seen as a faint dark ring occupying the top right hand quarter of this view. The excavation trench is across the henge's northern entrance. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



with now vanished stone cairns or earthworks. To try to interpret such sites without excavation is futile, and none has been excavated in modern times.

Several henge monuments (circular banks with internal ditches enclosing a central 'sacred' space) existed in the Milfield Basin, including one within the Park at Yeavinger (Harding 1981; 2000). These were all discovered by aerial photography: their banks and ditches have all been flattened by natural erosion and agricultural activity, but their ditches still show up as parch marks or cropmarks when seen from the air under certain conditions. They formed part of what we have already seen was a busy Neolithic landscape on the edge of the Cheviots. By far the largest of them is at Coupland. Excavations here (fig 2.6) have proved that this monument overlies an earlier site, perhaps a seasonally occupied settlement, dating from c3900BC. Its excavator (Waddington 1999, 134–143; 2001, 3–4) believes that the 'henge' itself may have early Neolithic origins. Confirmation of its date must, however, await further excavation, as some of the radiocarbon dates originally thought to date the enclosure may actually relate to the underlying settlement. Uniquely, a ditched 'droveway' at least two kilometers long passes through the Coupland enclosure, apparently linking it with upland pastures to north and south. Nothing quite like the Coupland complex is known anywhere else, and it illustrates perfectly the need to investigate and interpret local monuments, rather than simply to seek to understand prehistoric Northumberland by reference to better understood areas in southern England or Scotland.

Although they were a new development, these ceremonial monuments were intimately linked with the wider landscape. As discussed above, the stone circle at Threestoneburn is located due east of the summit of Cheviot, in a vast natural amphitheatre with a view out over the fell sandstones to the east. Also the southern entrance of the Milfield North henge (fig 2.7) frames a view of the northern Cheviots which includes the twin peaks of Yeavinger Bell, suggesting that this distinctive hill may have been of significance long before its massive hillfort (see Chapter 4) was constructed. Another henge nestles beneath the northern face of



FIGURE 2.7  
Reconstruction of the  
Milfield North henge at  
the Maelmin Heritage  
Trail, Milfield.

Yeavinger Bell, and this incorporates a clear alignment to the distinctive hill of Ross Castle several kilometres away to the east. The so-called ‘Battle Stone’ at Yeavinger, which is probably contemporary with the henge, sits astride this alignment as if to further demonstrate its significance (fig 2.8). The Milfield henges may have been linked by ceremonial processions which ended at Yeavinger Bell. If so then this provides further evidence for the early importance of Yeavinger as a ritual centre for the late Neolithic communities of the northern Cheviots and Milfield Basin.

Research elsewhere has demonstrated beyond doubt that many such monuments incorporated astronomical alignments, principally to the sun and the moon. In addition to the alignments on the Cheviot from the stone circles at Threestoneburn and Hethpool, similar relationships exist between many other Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments, natural features and possible astronomical events. Such alignments must have taken on special significance at certain times of the year, for example at the solstices and equinoxes. However, no substantial research into such phenomena has yet been carried out at Northumberland stone circles or henges. The exact purposes of these monuments will remain forever a mystery, but they probably fulfilled a variety of functions, perhaps not dissimilar to those of the medieval churches which would appear in the same landscape three to four thousand years later. We have suggested above that settlement may have retained a degree of mobility throughout the Neolithic, and the communal ceremonial monuments probably represented ‘an expression of relative permanence in an otherwise transient lifestyle – a place for seasonal meetings to reaffirm beliefs and a shared identity’ (Topping 1997, 121).

Further ritual sites worthy of mention at this point, although their dating remains very much unresolved, are the mysterious panels of rock art, or cup-and-ring marks, which are found at many places on the Fell Sandstones of central and north Northumberland. These were first recognised in the mid-nineteenth century and George Tate provides a fascinating overview of early work on them. In concluding his survey of Northumberland rock art (Tate 1865, 43) he observes that:

*Those who are not content unless every mystery is fully explained may feel dissatisfied, that after all the labour and research bestowed on the inscribed rocks, we cannot read them off as from a book. Before, however, more definite results can be arrived at, further investigations must be made in other parts of the world ... Something, however, has been achieved – materials for aiding in the fuller solution of the problem have been placed on record – an advanced starting point made for future enquiries – and a description and representation preserved of marvellous sculpture which time and the elements will eventually obliterate.*

Whether or not Tate would have been impressed with the progress we have made with rock art studies over the past century and a half must be open to doubt. The subject was largely ignored by archaeologists for most of the twentieth century, largely due to the fact it does not lend itself to study by conventional archaeological techniques. More recently, rock art sites have been subjected to a myriad of statistical analyses, and we certainly have more facts at our disposal relating to their age and context (Bradley 1997). Despite all this work, however, it is questionable whether we are now, or perhaps ever will be, any closer to actually understanding the rock art motifs than were Tate and his contemporaries.

Most nineteenth-century antiquarians assumed the rock art to be of the same general period as the hillforts, as the two often occurred in close proximity. Now we know that the reason for this proximity is that the rock art and the hillforts marked, albeit in very different ways, significant places in the landscape. Until very recently, the rock art was thought to be Bronze Age, because some decorated stones were found built into Bronze Age burial monuments. Recent research shows that many such examples reused stone that had actually been decorated much earlier, and some of the 'Bronze Age' cairns themselves may be older than previously thought. Currently, most of the rock art is thought to be Neolithic, although there is still controversy about when in the Neolithic it originated, for how long it was of significance, and how its use changed through time. Waddington (1999, 175) believes that

FIGURE 2.8 The Battle Stone, Yeavinger.





rock art on exposed panels of bedrock was originally produced during the early Neolithic, and builds a convincing model of early Neolithic landuse around the Milfield Basin in which the rock art sites exist at upland grazing areas. It may well be that open air rock art was produced throughout the Neolithic, with some old sites being regularly embellished and occasional new ones created. It is possible that information relating to the chronology of rock art in Northumberland will arise from a careful programme of excavation around a sample of sites, something that is now long overdue.

Several good local examples of cup-and-ring art can be seen at Lordenshaws, near Rothbury (fig 2.9) and a splendid decorated boulder from the Breamish Valley, recovered from the gravel quarry at Powburn, is on display at the Ingram Visitor Centre (fig 2.10). Today, thanks largely to the efforts of Stan Beckensall, who has meticulously catalogued and recorded hundreds of such sites throughout northern England (Beckensall 1999; 2000: fig 2.11), this rock art is increasingly recognised as an integral part of the prehistoric landscape which has the potential to tell us much about the ways in which Neolithic people used and understood their world. This is not the place to enter into detailed speculation regarding the meaning of the 'cup-and-ring' motifs (Frodsham 1996), but the symbolism is clearly complex and must relate fundamentally to the belief systems of the people who designed and



FIGURE 2.9 The 'horseshoe rock' at Lordenshaws.

employed it. Similar patterns are still made by some native American societies, where old motifs cut into the rock are regarded as 'messages from the ancestors', symbolising, amongst other things, life on earth as a journey to another place. Despite the temptation to search for simple explanations, such as maps of the stars or representations of settlements, the motifs are essentially abstract and were probably always intended to be so. They could 'mean' different things to different people at different times. To fully comprehend their meaning, and explain this using present day language, would probably be impossible, even if a Neolithic person were here to try and explain them to us.

Anyone intrigued about the mysterious rock carvings of Northumberland would do well to read some of the available literature on native North American rock art, as this certainly opens the mind to a number of possibilities relating to the thoughts of our ancestors who carved the cups and rings into the Northumbrian moors so many generations ago. Indeed, ethnographic studies have much to offer the student of the Neolithic. We have already made reference to the 'sacred' nature of the landscape when considering the Mesolithic, and have suggested that Simonside, and possibly Yeavinger Bell, may have taken on the status of 'sacred mountains'. Peter Topping, in a recent consideration of the Neolithic in the Cheviots, makes a similar claim for Cheviot. Having considered the relationship between Cheviot and the stone circles at Hethpool and Threestoneburn (discussed above) he observes that:

*... ethnography records the role prominent mountains can play across a range of differing levels of perception ... Mountains can be utilised as territorial markers, refuges in times of stress, sources of raw materials for ceremonies, sites for ritual offerings, locations for shrines, and as landmarks featuring in mythologies (homes of the gods, origin myths) and stories (historical, land tenure etc). These oral traditions strengthen social ties and bond the human world to that of the immortals/ancestors ...*  
(Topping 1997, 120)

FIGURE 2.10 Detail of a magnificent cup-and-ring marked boulder from Powburn Quarry; now at the Ingram Visitor Centre.

FIGURE 2.11 Stan Beckensall examines a cup-and-ring marked boulder in a ditch at Biddlestone. This stone, perhaps once a kerbstone of a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age burial cairn, was discovered by Judith Mountford at Biddlestone: many more such stones probably lie at the edge of fields awaiting discovery.



It seems that many places were probably regarded as sacred in Neolithic Northumberland, but Cheviot, as the highest place of all, may have been of extra special importance.

Before leaving the Neolithic, we should remind ourselves that an individual alive at the end of the period was as far removed in time from his or her early Neolithic predecessors as we are today from Roman Britain. An individual from the time of the Mesolithic/Neolithic transition would feel as out of place at the end of the Neolithic as a Roman-British farmer would feel on a present day farm. Some things would still be recognisable, but most would be very different. Perhaps the biggest change during the Neolithic was in the attitude people had towards their place in the world, with individuals increasingly regarding themselves as separate from, and to an extent in control of, nature. This can perhaps be seen in the contrasting pottery styles at the beginning and end of the period, from the 'naturalistic', curvilinear, undecorated early Neolithic traditions, to the blatantly artificial, linear decoration on flat-based later Neolithic and early Bronze Age vessels. The form of flint arrowheads, from the 'natural' leaf-shaped form of the early Neolithic to the angular later Neolithic/early Bronze Age 'barbed and tanged' tradition (fig 2.12) could be interpreted as telling a similar story (Waddington 1998, 47–49). This same process is demonstrated still further by the ability to turn natural lumps of ore into beautiful bronze objects in the early Bronze Age. Some see this process of increasing control over the environment as leading inexorably to present day problems such as factory farming and industrial pollution, but it also laid the foundations for spectacular technological developments enabling, for example, the placing of men on the moon. What, we may well wonder, would our moon-worshipping Neolithic ancestors have thought of that?



FIGURE 2.12 Some Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowheads (*above*) and late Neolithic/early Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged arrowheads (*below*). These examples, manufactured from various types of flint, were all collected from ploughed fields near Rothbury. (Scale in cm). (PART OF THE D D DIXON COLLECTION, NEWCASTLE MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES)

# Roundhouses for the living, round cairns for the dead

## The Bronze Age (c2000–800BC)

**T**he Bronze Age is the next of our conventional archaeological periods. Its major characteristic is usually thought to be the introduction of metalworking, which was an important development enabling the production of effective tools and weapons as well as beautiful jewellery, all of which must have been much sought after. The earliest metal objects are of copper, and bronze working was introduced from the continent by 2000BC. Gold was also used for ornaments in the early Bronze Age. The early metal smiths must have been regarded almost as magicians, capable of producing beautiful copper and bronze objects from dull lumps of rock. However, very little is known of early bronze working in Northumberland, and, from the point of view of the National Park's archaeological landscape, the period is perhaps most significant for the gradual change from the ancestral, monument dominated landscape of the Neolithic to the settlement and agriculture dominated landscape of the Iron Age and later periods.

Despite the introduction of bronze working, which some authorities herald as an 'industrial revolution', the boundary between the later Neolithic and the early Bronze Age is actually very blurred. This is reflected in the fact that certain types of monument and artefact are classified as 'Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age'. Examples include round burial cairns (of which hundreds exist throughout the Park), characteristically shaped 'barbed and tanged' flint arrowheads, and types of pottery vessels such as 'beakers' and 'food vessels'. Indeed, radiocarbon dates obtained from recent excavations at Ingram (see Chapters 11 & 12) have demonstrated that some conventionally 'Bronze Age' burial monuments (burials with beaker and food vessel pottery) actually appear to predate some of the 'Neolithic' henges on the Milfield Plain. Some archaeologists refer to a 'Copper Age' covering the period 2500–2000BC, spanning the transition from Neolithic to Bronze Age. Others refer to the same period as the 'Beaker period' after the characteristic pots often found in burials of the time (Tait 1965). This is a classic case where archaeologists can argue forever about the names and boundaries of our conventional chronological periods, which, although invented to help us understand the past, can actually complicate and confuse our studies. For the purposes of this account, the Bronze Age proper is assumed to have started in c2000BC, though it should be borne in mind that things in the real world were never quite so simple.

The archaeological record for the early Bronze Age is, as we will see shortly, still dominated by burial monuments. However, about a hundred settlements of one or more unenclosed roundhouses, of which many are probably of Bronze Age date, have now been recorded by aerial photography in Northumberland, the vast majority in the Cheviots (Gates

1983). Many more such sites must lie concealed beneath later settlements, while others will have been destroyed by subsequent ploughing. These unenclosed roundhouses, often constructed on circular platforms scooped out of the hillside, are frequently clustered in groups of half a dozen or more. Some of the more isolated examples, such as those on Long Crag, at a height in excess of 400 metres above Langleeford, may only ever have been occupied seasonally, although a pollen diagram from nearby Broad Moss does suggest that barley may have been grown here at some point in the Bronze Age. Many other unenclosed settlements occur with associated remains including fields, paddocks, field clearance cairns and burial cairns, and these must have been permanently occupied settlements.

In places, such as in the north-east Cheviots around Humbleton Hill and Fredden Hill, extensive Bronze Age field systems, littered with occasional settlement and ritual/burial sites, survive to be explored today. These are some of the most important Bronze Age landscapes in Britain. The visible remains are not spectacular, in the main consisting of low, turf covered stone walls or small cairns of stone resulting from clearance to improve the fields. However, when viewed from the air, or when freshly exposed following heather burning, their extent becomes clear. They represent the first large-scale agricultural exploitation of the uplands (fig 3.1). In general, this activity is thought to date from the centuries after about 1800BC, although there is very little hard dating evidence from Northumberland and some of the unenclosed settlements may yet prove to be earlier. Exactly why fully sedentary, self-sufficient settlements should have appeared in the uplands at this time remains unresolved, but may be related to rising population levels of the later Neolithic in the adjacent lowlands.

Two Cheviot Bronze Age settlements have been excavated in recent times, giving us an idea of what it would have been like to live in these hills in the middle of the second millennium BC. At Standrop Rigg, high up the Breamish Valley beyond the Linhope Spout waterfall, George Jobey excavated part of a settlement of half a dozen timber-built roundhouses arranged within a system of small, irregular fields surrounded by rubble walls



FIGURE 3.1 Probable Bronze Age settlement on Crane Sike, discovered in 1996 after some of the heather on the site was burnt off. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

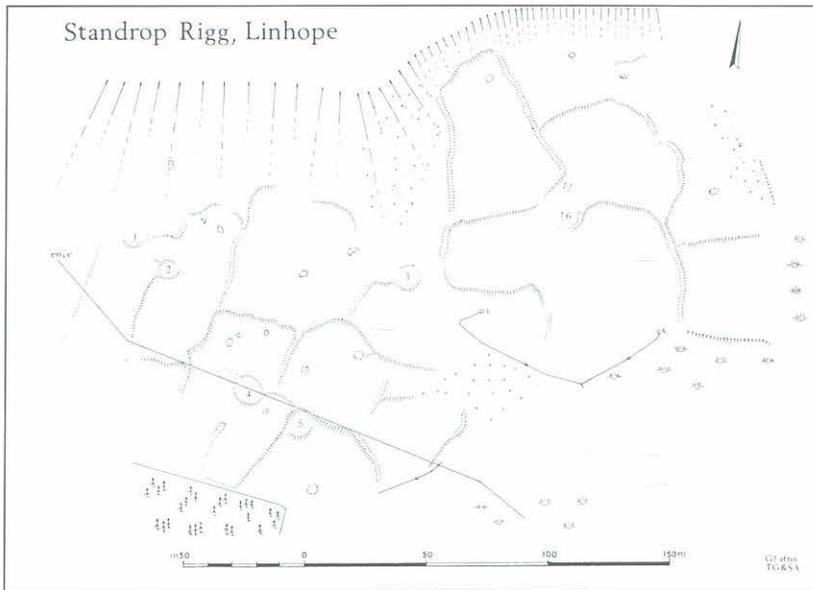


FIGURE 3.2 The Bronze Age village at Standrop Rigg. The plan (drawn by Tim Gates and Stewart Ainsworth) shows circular banks of field clearance stones piled up around the houses: the houses themselves were of timber.  
(FROM JOBEY 1983)

some kind was being cultivated. A single roundhouse of slightly later date was excavated by Tim Gates at Hallshill, Redesdale, and this produced evidence for the cultivation of wheat and barley, and possibly also oats and flax, in the early first millennium BC. Weeds indicative of waste or cultivated land, including fat hen, sheep's sorrel and hoary plantain provide further evidence for cultivation at Hallshill (Gates 1983, 116). Although located higher up in the hills, essentially similar agricultural regimes may have been in operation at the Cheviot unenclosed settlements. At one such settlement, Snear Hill, located at a height of 335 metres on the eastern flank of Cold Law above the Harthope Burn, faint cultivation marks have been recorded in association with field boundaries and unenclosed houses. This may be our earliest visible evidence for Bronze Age cultivation, but for now the site remains uninvestigated and undated (*ibid* 115). Further palaeoenvironmental evidence for Bronze Age agricultural practice is provided by Rob Young in Part II of this volume.

The second Bronze Age settlement excavated in the Cheviots is at Houseledge (Burgess 1984, 145–152; 1995), overlooking a natural ravine in the hills about 3km west of Wooler. This settlement, like that at Strandrop Rigg, was of about half a dozen roundhouses, although here evidence was uncovered of more than one phase. One house had its timbers set within a rubble bank which had apparently been formed of field clearance stone piled up around an earlier timber house, which had in turn replaced a still earlier timber house (fig 3.3). This sequence suggests that the village may have been occupied for quite a long time, perhaps several centuries. Although absolute dating evidence for the development of the Houseledge site was not obtained, the excavator suggests that occupation here may have begun very early in the second millennium BC. The settlement at Houseledge was surrounded by a complex, and apparently multi-phase, agricultural landscape of clearance cairns, small fields or paddocks, lynchets, and strange lengths of stone wall of no apparent purpose which may have been nothing other than linear dumps of stone cleared from the fields, though some may have functioned as stock shelters. Houses and fields associated with the latest phases of settlement overlay a system of agricultural terraces which had already been abandoned. The suggestion that such terraces could be in use during the earlier Bronze

(fig 3.2). The settlement appears to have been occupied in about 1300BC, although the results of the excavation did not permit the longevity of occupation here to be determined (Jobey 1983). The climate throughout much of the Bronze Age, up until at least 1200BC, was notably warmer than today, enabling crops to be grown at altitudes in excess of 300 metres. Although no evidence as to what was being grown in the fields surrounding the Standrop Rigg settlement was obtained from the excavations, the recovery of saddle querns (used for grinding grain to make flour) suggests that grain of



FIGURE 3.3 A Bronze Age house at Houseledge during excavation. (FROM BURGESS 1984)

Age is supported by recent evidence from Ingram (see Chapter 11) where sizeable excavation trenches have been cut through one system of substantial terraces, providing two radiocarbon dates suggesting cultivation here in the early Bronze Age (*c*1750BC).

It is not known when or why settlements such as Standrop Rigg and Houseledge were abandoned, but their demise may well be linked to the onset of generally cooler and wetter climatic conditions from about 1200BC. Some archaeologists have attempted to link the abandonment of such settlements to the massive eruption of the Icelandic volcano, Hekla, which palaeoenvironmental evidence has demonstrated occurred in 1159BC. The quantity of ash and dust thrown up into the atmosphere by Hekla may well have resulted in a few successive cool, dull summers, causing perhaps insurmountable problems for upland farming communities. Just two successive bad years, during which seed corn had to be consumed or breeding animals eaten, may have been sufficient to force the abandonment of a small village. However, there would presumably have been considerable reluctance amongst local populations to abandon their ancestral homelands, leaving the fields and villages which may have been meticulously maintained by their ancestors over many generations. Hence, alternative agricultural strategies, such as an increasing reliance on pastoralism, must have been experimented with before any sites were actually abandoned. There is also an issue of where people could actually move to: by this time it may not have been easy to simply 'up sticks' and relocate, as the best agricultural land would already have been claimed by others. Although a link between the abandonment of these settlements and the eruption of Hekla remains unproven, it does seem that many of the upland Bronze Age villages appear to have been abandoned by the turn of the first millennium BC. The succeeding settlement pattern of defensible palisades and hillforts is considered in Chapter 4.

Further evidence for Bronze Age activity exists in the so-called 'burnt-mounds', two examples of which have been excavated at Titlington (Topping 1998), about 5km outside the Park boundary on the southern edge of Beanley Moor. These were in use during the first half of the second millennium BC. They consist of large mounds of burnt stones, in

association with hearths and troughs. Clearly, the stones, after being heated on the hearths, were dropped into the water in the troughs to heat it up, before being dumped on the mounds. These sites were probably used as communal cooking places (experiments have shown large joints of meat could be boiled in the troughs). It is also possible that some functioned as saunas or even hot baths. The burnt mounds could also have had a ceremonial rather than a simple practical purpose, perhaps only being used on special occasions. Ceremonial monuments, especially those associated with the burial of the dead, were certainly of great importance to the people in the Bronze Age. At the same time as the Houseledge settlement was excavated, a burial cairn on top of the adjacent hill known as Gains Law was investigated. This consisted of a ring-bank of rubble surrounding a central area sixteen metres in diameter which contained one large cist (to which a secondary, smaller cist had been added) and fragments of cremated bone and food vessel pottery. A second nearby burial cairn, on Black Law, also contained early Bronze Age pottery. These cairns may relate to the first communities who cleared and began to farm these hills. They may have retained ritual importance throughout the lives of nearby settlements like Houseledge. At Todlaw in Redesdale, adjacent to Otterburn Camp on the Otterburn Training Area, a fascinating complex of visible roundhouses, fields, clearance cairns, and a cup-marked stone, probably spanning much of the Bronze Age and extending into the Iron Age, can still be seen. Associated with this are some substantial burial cairns, and a neat little cremation cemetery (a circular area within a low rubble bank) which by analogy with sites elsewhere must be of early Bronze Age date. Another good example of a cremation cemetery can be seen near Brough Law at Ingram, though neither this nor the Todlaw example have been excavated.

The round burial cairn is certainly the most common surviving monument from the Bronze Age, and examples exist, sometimes in isolation but often in clearly defined groups termed 'cairn cemeteries', throughout the National Park. Such monuments take a variety of forms, but most are circular in plan – hence the all-encompassing term 'round cairn'. Some are truly massive, while others are relatively insignificant, and some burials can occur in flat graves without any sort of covering mound. A recently recognised variation worthy of note is the so called 'tri-radial' cairn, consisting of three arms radiating from a central point (Ford *et al* 2002). Several tri-radial cairns have now been recorded in upland Northumberland, and although some archaeologists continue to regard them as sheep shelters of much later date, evidence is accumulating to suggest that they do represent a previously unrecognised form of Bronze Age ritual monument (see Chapter 11).

Some round cairns, for example those on top of Thirlmoor in Upper Coquetdale (fig 3.4), and the single example on Callerhues Crag above Bellingham, are dramatically located to be visible from afar. Others are located adjacent to dramatic landscape features. Those at Sewingshields, just north of Hadrian's Wall, lie beneath the spectacular outcrop of Queen's Crag in a relationship which is unlikely to be entirely coincidental. The location of many other cairns and cairn cemeteries is less easily explained. Often, no doubt, the locations of such ritual sites would be determined by cultural concerns relating to earlier activities: some are clearly located with regard to earlier ceremonial or 'sacred' sites. At least three round cairns were built close to the previously discussed Neolithic cairn at Dour Hill, and a cist of probable Bronze Age date was actually built into the structure of this already ancient Neolithic cairn, which must have been of great mythical significance to local Bronze Age people. Hints of a similar process can be seen at Lordenshaws, near Rothbury, where many



FIGURE 3.4 Three massive round cairns on Thirlmoor, Upper Coquetdale.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 3.5 The Goatstones, a 'four-poster' near Simonburn.

Bronze Age burial cairns are set out in an area well known for its concentration of Neolithic rock art. Some cairns here are clearly related to panels of rock art in a way which cannot be down to chance, and work elsewhere in Northumberland and further afield has suggested that the sacred power of the rock art was drawn on in different ways by Bronze Age societies (Beckensall and Frodsham 1998). Some burial cairns were built directly over panels of rock art, while others incorporated slabs of rock art quarried from nearby decorated panels. These practices may relate to the growing importance of certain individuals in the society of the time. The fact that rock art, previously present in the landscape for all to see, was now sealed within the burial monuments of individuals suggests a reworking of the previous understanding of these sacred symbols. Much research remains to be done with regard to the chronology of rock art, and it may well be that the quarrying and reuse of decorated bedrock within ritual monuments was common practice well before the end of the Neolithic. Nevertheless, the use of rock art in early Bronze Age burials is in itself an intriguing practice which would certainly repay particular study.

The Goatstones (fig 3.5), near Simonburn, form a so-called 'four poster' (four stones arranged to form a square). There is a link here with the rock art discussed above, as the SE stone displays thirteen cupmarks. The Three Kings (one has fallen) form another such four-poster in the Border Forest above Byrness (fig 3.6). The stones, of local sandstone, are taller and more impressive than the Goatstones, although the once impressive views from the monument are now concealed by the extensive conifer forest which envelops the site. This site was excavated in the 1970s and, although the centre had been previously much disturbed, sufficient evidence survived to demonstrate that it had once contained a burial cairn. Its excavator described it as 'not a mighty monument. It is a family-sized stone circle built long after the times when Neolithic people banded together in communal efforts to raise vast earthworks or to haul gigantic stones to Avebury and Stonehenge' (Burl 1972, 13). Four posters are common to eastern Scotland, around Perth and Aberdeen, but very rare



FIGURE 3.6 The Three Kings 'four-poster' in the forest above Byrness.

elsewhere. Excavations in Scotland suggest that they date from about 1800BC. Perhaps communities in North Tynedale and Redesdale enjoyed closer social links with communities to the north than to the south in these far distant times.

Although they could subsequently be used for secondary burials, most Bronze Age burial cairns appear to have been originally constructed for a single primary burial within a stone box or cist (fig 3.7). The little firm dating evidence that we have suggests that these primary burials appear to be rather earlier (about 2000BC) than the Bronze Age settlements described above. However, future excavations may well close this gap to some extent. Alternatively, it may be that occupation of the hills at the time that many cairns were initially constructed was still seasonal, with the first permanently occupied villages following slightly later. Or perhaps the building of a burial cairn was one of the first acts in the settling of new upland areas, thereby stating a community's rights to a particular area of land. In this case, the primary burials will always tend to be slightly earlier than dates obtained from associated settlements, even if the cairns remained in use for secondary burials over perhaps several centuries.

Primary burial in a round cairn (which could be either by inhumation or cremation) was a practice reserved for relatively few individuals, presumably those of particular importance. This apparent importance is reflected in the grave goods included with some such burials, which could include bronze daggers, jet necklaces, or even gold objects, in addition to the more usual pots (presumably containing sustenance for the afterlife) and flint tools such as knives or arrowheads. Canon William Greenwell of Durham, who dug hundreds of barrows during the latter half of the nineteenth century (Greenwell 1877; Kinnes and Longworth 1985), recovered some beautiful 'food vessels' from cairns in Coquetdale (fig 3.8). Food vessels were so named because it was thought, not unreasonably, that they contained food for the deceased individual's journey into the afterlife. Another form of early Bronze Age pot found with burials is the so-called 'beaker' (fig 3.9): these vessels were thought to contain drink, quite possibly of an alcoholic variety, to sustain the dead on their journey. The main difference between food vessels and beakers is that the former seem to have been developed by native communities, while the beakers seem to have been introduced from Europe at



FIGURE 3.7 Central cist exposed within a burial cairn, Lordenshaws.

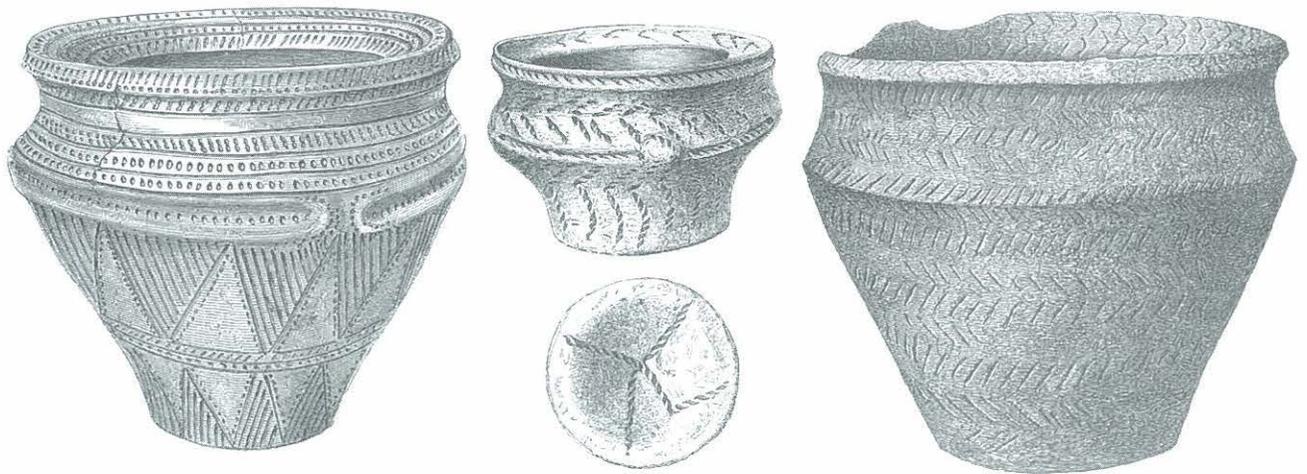


FIGURE 3.8 Three beautiful food vessels from nineteenth-century excavations in Coquetdale (two of which, most unusually, have decorated bases). Actual heights (from left to right): 13cm, 4.5cm, 14cm. (FROM GREENWELL, 1877)

about the same time as metalworking. At one time it was thought that the beakers represented large numbers of immigrants, who introduced metalworking to Britain and gained positions of prestige through their metalworking skill. Now, however, it is generally accepted that they represent the adoption of an exotic new style by the native population: something that happens with monotonous regularity in modern day Britain.

Clearly, some individuals were buried with considerable ceremony, suggesting that they were held in high regard by those that survived them. The focus on particular individuals has led many archaeologists to conclude that Bronze Age society was more hierarchical than that of the Neolithic, and that a system of local chiefdoms had evolved by this time. Such a system may have been based upon a complex web of kinship networks, with individual status being to a large extent hereditary. The power of the elite was probably maintained through the control of long-distance exchange networks linked to the supply of copper and tin for bronze-working. Bronze Age chiefs may have held power in their own right, in contrast to earlier periods when the most powerful figures were probably priests or shamans, who only wielded power through the perceived legitimacy of their links with the gods or the ancestors. If so, then it could have been those chiefs and their entourages (perhaps including warriors and metalworkers) for whom the burial cairns were originally constructed, and some cairn cemeteries could conceivably represent dynasties, with individual cairns provided for successive chiefs in the same way as pyramids were constructed for the Egyptian pharaohs. However, no

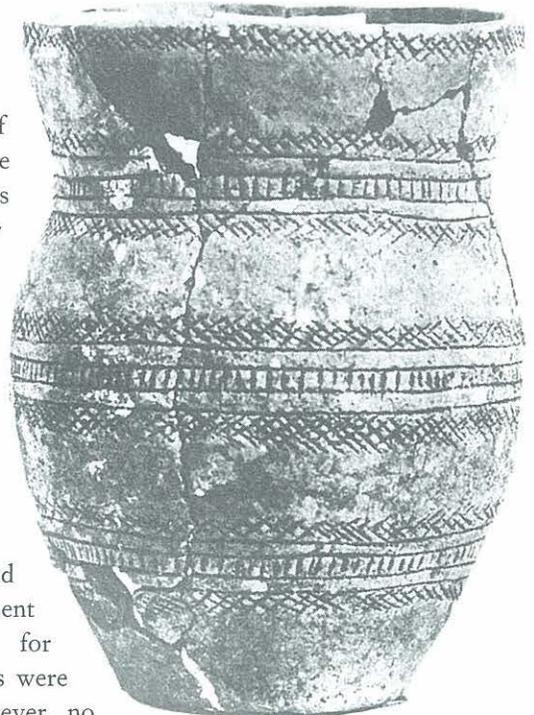


FIGURE 3.9 Beaker from the Sneep, North Tynesdale (height 18cm).

particularly grand houses have been recognised in any Northumberland Bronze Age villages, so these chiefs, if they existed, appear much more visible in death than in life. It is important to remember that funerals are about much more than simply burying the dead. Established funeral rituals, including the provision of exotic grave goods, may have been as much to do with legitimising the claims to authority of a new generation as with celebrating the life of the deceased.

What happened to the majority of the population in death remains something of a mystery, although the recent excavations at Turf Knowe, Ingram suggest that the ashes from many cremations may have been inserted into the sides of such cairns, or simply scattered over them. Such activity could continue for many centuries after the deposition of a primary burial. Without any accompanying grave goods such cremations would not have been recorded during antiquarian excavations which were aimed primarily at the recovery of pots and other objects, so more modern excavations, such as those at Turf Knowe will be necessary to resolve this one way or the other. An alternative is that cremations could have been scattered elsewhere, perhaps even on the fields, which may well have been regarded as ritual constructions as well as simply places to grow crops. Another possibility is that people were disposed of in 'wet places'.

There is much evidence for the ritual deposition of valuable bronze objects in bogs and pools throughout Britain after the climate turned wetter from about 1200BC. Some such deposits could have been made as 'gifts to the gods' at the same time as ashes from a funeral pyre were scattered. Whether or not the dead were disposed of in this way, there is much evidence for the deposition of bronze objects in wet places in the vicinity of the National Park (Burgess 1968). The best known example is the hoard of 28 objects including axes, spearheads and armlets found while draining an old swamp at Middleton Moss, Wallington, in 1879. In about 1847, two swords and three spearheads of Bronze Age date were found, apparently with their tips deliberately placed pointing downwards, while digging drains in 'what must have been a quagmire' near Thrunton Farm, Whittingham (fig 3.10: Dixon 1895, 7). Another hoard of at least thirteen objects was recovered while digging a railway cutting through mossy ground at Farnley, near Corbridge, in 1835. There are other cases of Bronze Age or Iron Age objects being recovered from wet places, sometimes quite high up in the hills such as the bronze cauldron from Alnhammoor in the Upper Breamish Valley. Clearly, whatever the motivation behind it, the deposition of valuable metal objects in wet places was by no means an unusual occurrence. Many more such hoards must still await discovery, and it will be interesting to subject one to modern techniques of investigation when the opportunity arises.

Although it is invariably impossible to prove relationships between recent customs and prehistoric traditions, there is one local custom which demands to be mentioned in the context of late Bronze Age metalwork deposits in wet places. This becomes especially relevant when it is pointed out that many, if not most, ritually deposited Bronze Age objects

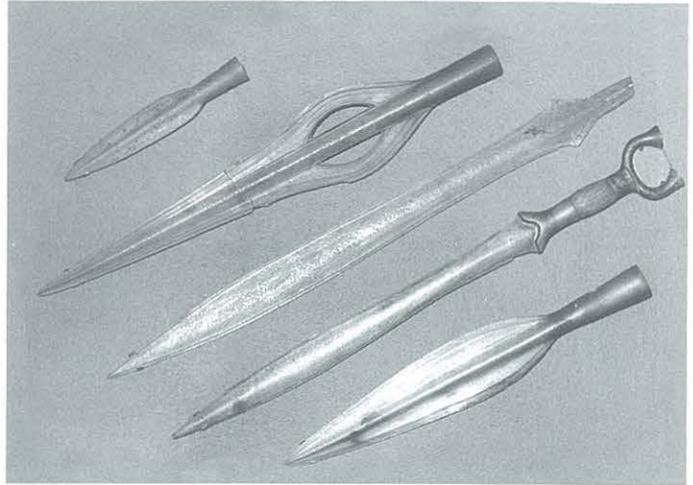


FIGURE 3.10 Late Bronze Age swords and spearheads from Thrunton Farm, Whittingham. (The central sword is c60cm in length).

were, for whatever reason, deliberately bent or broken prior to their deposition. The practice we are referring to occurred until recently at the Pin Well, in the Cheviot foothills between Earle and Wooler, and is related by Tomlinson (1888, 476): 'Formerly, on May-day a number of the inhabitants of Wooler, both young and old, marched in a formal procession to the well, dropping in the crooked pin and wishing their wish, quite unconscious of the fact that this custom was a relic of the well-worship of Pagan times.' At some distance from any village, in the wild landscape north of Darden Lough, is another 'wishing well' where a similar tradition is recorded (*ibid* 310). The deposition of 'crooked pins' is also documented well into the twentieth century at the Lady's Well, Holystone. One cannot help but wonder just how ancient these practices were.

Mention has already been made of the probable 'sacred' nature of Simonside in earlier prehistory, and in this context it comes as no surprise to find that many Bronze Age burial cairns are located on the summit, the flanks and around the base of this special hill. Two late Bronze Age bronze swords, very rare finds from Northumberland, have also been recovered from Simonside, where they had apparently been deliberately buried in about 1000BC. Were they some form of ritual offering to the gods of the sacred mountain? Further evidence for the special importance of Simonside at this time comes in the form of burial cairns several miles away which appear to have been carefully aligned upon it. Perhaps the best such example can be seen on Wether Hill, Ingram, where a recently excavated burial cairn (see Chapter 12) is located on a ridge with the apex of its 'egg-shaped' surrounding wall pointing almost due south in the direction of Simonside (fig 3.11). Had this cairn been built a few metres up or downslope then Simonside would not have been visible from it. Various interpretations of this are possible, but it surely cannot be entirely coincidental that the monument is so unambiguously aligned on Simonside. The impressive Hare Cairn, in a generally uninspiring landscape setting on the Otterburn Training Area, is sited with the brooding mass of Simonside just visible on the eastern horizon where it neatly frames the strangely conical profile of the natural hill known as Black Stichel. Interestingly, a recent survey (see Chapter 23) found no evidence of Bronze Age settlement or agricultural activity on Simonside. Clearly, this was a special place, set apart from the everyday agricultural landscape of the surrounding lowlands.



FIGURE 3.11 Wether Hill burial cairn, looking south, with Simonside clearly visible on the far horizon.



# Hillforts and homesteads

## The Iron Age

(c800BC–AD79)

**T**he introduction of iron technology in about 800BC brought about profound changes in society. Iron enabled the production of more efficient agricultural implements and weapons of war. It also resulted in the break up of the old Bronze Age exchange networks that seem to have underpinned the position of the Bronze Age elite. These networks had been necessary due to the need for regular supplies of copper and tin, but iron ores occur much more widely in the landscape, so the old networks soon became largely redundant. Thus, the Bronze Age gives way, in our conventional timeframe, to the Iron Age.

Greek and Roman scholars from the mid-first millennium BC suggest that most of western Europe was occupied by people known as ‘Celts’ (Cunliffe 1992). Thus, Iron Age Britain is, for some, virtually synonymous with ‘Celtic Britain’. It is certainly true that some Celtic traits, relating, for example, to language, religion and artistic tradition, were shared across vast areas of Iron Age Europe. However, the extent to which the multitude of different tribal groups throughout these areas should really be lumped together as ‘Celtic’, and exactly what ‘Celticness’ may have meant to these people, are unresolved issues. The definition of the term ‘Celtic’ remains controversial (James 1999) and its relevance to Iron Age Northumberland is certainly not beyond question. On the basis of current knowledge, it would not be unreasonable to consider the Iron Age people of Northumberland as Celtic, but in this account they are referred to simply as Iron Age.

We have seen that many upland settlements of undefended timber roundhouses were apparently abandoned during the late Bronze Age. The upland landscape itself, however, was not abandoned for long, if at all. Subsequent centuries were dominated by the construction of increasingly elaborate defended settlements culminating in the impressive ‘hillforts’ which crown so many hilltops throughout the Cheviots. Although some archaeologists have explained the decline of Bronze Age settlements in an entirely negative way, through theories of environmental catastrophe and associated plagues, it now seems as though the decline of such sites was bound up with the complex social developments which led eventually to the building of defended settlements and hillforts, along with linear boundaries which appear to reflect a growing need to mark out territorial divisions on the ground.

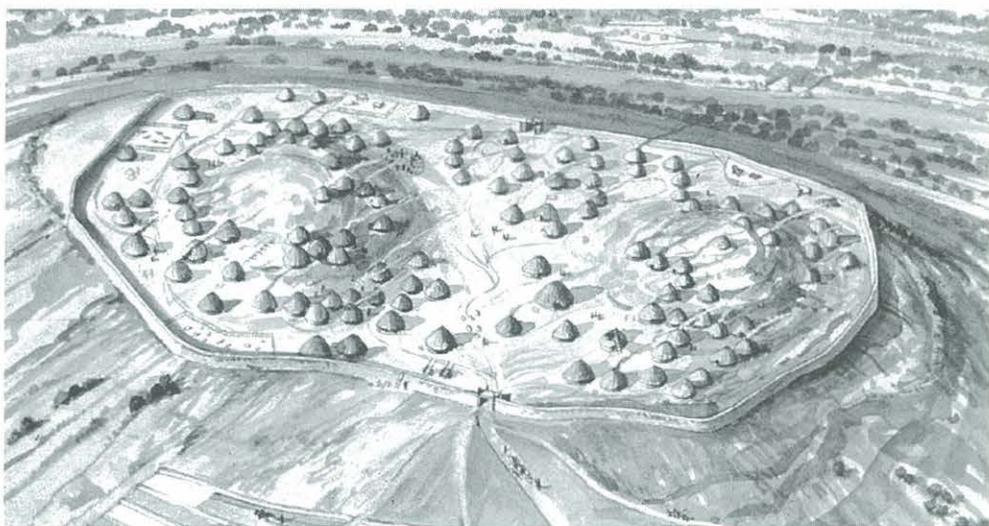
Iron Age archaeology has to an extent been dominated by the study of hillforts, which is understandable given the impressive nature of these sites. However, north-east England has seen very little archaeological investigation of hillforts, so we are still quite ignorant as to the origins and functions of these monuments. The desire to know more about them led the National Park Authority to set up its flagship *Discovering our Hillfort Heritage* project, some preliminary results of which are included within Chapters 11, 12 and 13. Hillforts may actually have served a number of different functions, which may well have changed through

FIGURE 4.1 The circular scoops for numerous roundhouses can be seen in this aerial view of Yeavinger Bell hillfort.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 4.2 A reconstruction of Yeavinger Bell hillfort in the last few centuries BC. (BY ERIC DALE)



time. While they have traditionally been seen as defensive refuges, where people and stock could find safe haven in times of conflict, it is just as likely that they were 'statements of prestige', perhaps built by heads of local clans or kinship groups. That is not to say that they may not also have served as defensive sites on occasions, and in some ways it is tempting to envisage Iron Age society in the uplands as essentially similar to that of the Border reivers some 2000 years later, with most wealth held in the form of cattle and more or less constant cattle rustling the order of the day. If this was the case then the majority of the hillforts can be seen as the equivalents of the medieval towers and bastle houses.

No two hillforts are the same. While they vary in size, by far the largest is that on Yeavinger Bell (Pearson 1998; Frodsham 1999). This magnificent monument (figs 4.1, 4.2) consists of a tumbled stone rampart, originally up to 2.5 metres high, which encloses an area of 5.6 hectares, within which are the platforms of about 130 timber-built roundhouses. The construction and maintenance of so many timber buildings demonstrates the abundance of local mature woodland, despite the clearances of earlier times. Presumably, such woodland

was carefully managed and used for a multitude of purposes including the provision of timber for building and fuel. Also within the fort, around the eastern summit of the Bell, is a large ditched enclosure of uncertain purpose which is demonstrably later than some of the house platforms. The slight remains of a much earlier burial cairn can also be seen within this ditched enclosure.

We have already suggested that Yeavinger Bell may have been a 'sacred mountain' in earlier times, but during the Iron Age one or more individuals had the power to order the construction of this massive hillfort, suggesting perhaps that power now lay firmly in the hands of living individuals, rather than by reference to the ancestors of the old sacred landscapes. The fort ramparts were built of stone quarried from the very fabric of the old 'sacred mountain', and several ancient quarry faces can still be recognised within the fort interior. It is interesting to note that the fort walls would have been bright pink when first constructed, as the local andesite is this colour when freshly quarried. After just a few years' exposure to the elements, it weathers to a dull grey. (This process can be seen in local drystone walls today, where repairs often show as pink patches in long lines of grey). The use of this pink stone was, of course, necessitated by the fact that it was the only stone available here, but the use of colour in local prehistoric monuments is a subject that might repay greater study as work elsewhere suggests that red and pink may have been significant colours way back in prehistory. There has been a tendency amongst scholars of the Iron Age to scoff at such suggestions, and to interpret hillforts as primarily functional, defensive settlements. However, symbolic elements of various types are often incorporated within hillfort architecture. For example, Yeavinger's main entrance (perhaps its only original entrance) appears to be aligned southwards towards the great domed profile of Hedgehope (the second highest of the Cheviot Hills). Everyday, a fraction before noon, the residents of the fort could look through the entrance and see the sun at just about its highest point of the day directly over Hedgehope. In addition, the various superb views that we enjoy from the Yeavinger Bell today would not have been without significance to Iron Age occupants of the fort, with the view north over the flat, 'tamed' Milfield Plain perhaps contrasting dramatically with the mountainous 'wild' landscape of the high Cheviot Hills to the south. However, we must be careful in imposing our modern values on prehistoric people. Some farmed land in the uplands may have been more 'tamed' than certain boggy lowland regions, which, prior to more recent drainage works, must have been susceptible to regular flooding.

Regardless of all this fascinating, but ultimately unprovable, conjecture, the Yeavinger Bell hillfort must have been of considerable political importance. Some people resident within it may have exercised control over the wider landscape, and possibly over the residents of other Cheviot hillforts. Indeed, Yeavinger is on an altogether different scale to all the other Northumberland hillforts, and perhaps belongs to a group of large forts in southern Scotland (including Traprain Law and Eildon Hill North) which may prove to be considerably older than most of the more 'standard' size hillforts (Rideout *et al* 1992, 139–43). We currently have no scientific dating evidence for the initial construction of the Yeavinger hillfort, and while most archaeologists would suggest a date of around 300BC, it is entirely possible that it could be much older, perhaps dating from not long after 1000BC. Only excavation can provide an answer to its origins and its chronological relationship with surrounding sites.

George Tate (1863b), in an admirable early attempt at what we would today term 'landscape archaeology', excavated within the Yeavinger hillfort and in a number of

to its local environment, these sites may all be regarded as part of the same general tradition. It has been suggested that they may have been occupied on a seasonal basis, but there is no reason why most, if not all, should not have been permanently occupied. They may also have acted on occasions as ceremonial sites, where members of the local area could gather for festivals as they did at the great communal monuments of the Neolithic.

Several hillforts were preceded by 'palisades'. These were, in effect, wooden hillforts, consisting of a number of timber roundhouses contained within a timber fence. They were probably built from about 800BC during the early Iron Age, and most had

become hillforts with earth or stone ramparts by about 300BC. In a few cases these palisades did not develop into hillforts and were abandoned. One of the best such examples can be seen above Harden Quarry at Biddlestone (see fig 9.2), where the construction trenches for the timber palisades and roundhouses can still be seen in the turf. Why such construction trenches should remain as visible surface features in the Cheviots is not understood, but the relative lack of earthworm activity in the acid soils here, in comparison to other regions where such slight remains do not survive as surface features, may well have something to do with the explanation. Other examples can be seen at High Knowes (fig 4.4), above Alnham, where a presumably later hillfort was built, conceivably to replace the palisades, at a lower altitude but in a more strategic position (Jobey and Tait 1966). At Ell's Knowe, in the College Valley, excavations (currently unpublished) by Colin Burgess in the 1970s recovered evidence of a double palisade underlying a promontory fort with substantial stone ramparts, though neither palisade nor hillfort was dated. Wether Hill, Ingram (Chapter 12) provides a classic case of a palisade replacing an unenclosed settlement before being replaced in turn by a hillfort. The original construction (not to mention the subsequent maintenance) of such a palisade would have necessitated the felling of two hectares or more of mature woodland, and it has been suggested that the idea of earth and stone ramparts arose out of a lack of available timber to build palisades. Whatever the reason, stone ramparts were being constructed by about 300BC.

The progress from palisade to hillfort with single rampart, to more complex hillfort, and often to a later non-defensive settlement on the same site, is known as the 'Hownam sequence' after the excavated site of Hownam Rings in the Scottish Cheviots (Pigott 1950). This general sequence can be difficult to prove at any one site without excavation, although it can sometimes be predicted on the basis of air photography or ground survey. It may have been followed at several Cheviot sites, including perhaps Wether Hill. At Murton High Craggs (5km south-west of Berwick upon Tweed, outside the National Park) excavations by George Jobey in the mid 1980s demonstrated that an Iron Age enclosure had developed in a fashion not dissimilar to the Hownam sequence, from unenclosed settlement, through palisaded and stone walled enclosures, to a later, undefended settlement of stone roundhouses (Jobey 1987). However, the sequence certainly does not apply everywhere, and a true assessment of its general relevance must await the results of as yet unplanned excavations at a variety of sites.



FIGURE 4.4 Late Bronze Age or early Iron Age palisaded enclosures at High Knowes, Alnham. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

FIGURE 4.5 Humbleton  
Hill hillfort.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 4.6 Gleadscleugh  
hillfort.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



Building stone was readily available in the hills, and some extremely impressive hillforts were constructed, most of them in what we regard today as wonderful landscape settings. Some of the most spectacular examples are sited on the very edge of the uplands, and it may well be that their occupants exercised control over both upland and lowland areas. Humbleton Hill (fig 4.5) in the north-east corner of the Park, is a particularly imposing fort which displays at least two main phases of rampart construction. Several circular stancions for roundhouses can be seen here, as can a large outer enclosure that may be even older than the fort. This site is famous as the location of the Battle of Homildon Hill in 1402, immortalised in Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part I*. Gleadscleugh (fig 4.6), only about 1km from Humbleton, is a promontory fort. Its ramparts cut off the only natural approach onto a steep sided, and

thus naturally protected, platform on which several house platforms can be seen. The upper Breamish Valley, above Ingram, contains the remains of ten sites which could be considered as hillforts, including the imposing and accessible Brough Law where areas of surviving wall-facing in the ramparts demonstrate the skill of the Iron Age stonemasons. A further ten hillforts are located in the College Valley, including the magnificently sited Great Hetha.

Further south in Coquetdale, the dramatic ramparts of Harehaugh Camp (fig 4.7) command what must always have been a strategic position above the confluence of the Grasslees Burn and the Coquet, controlling movement between the Coquet Valley and Redesdale. At the time of writing, a small scale excavation project is underway at Harehaugh, and while it will be some time before all the finds and samples have been analysed it is interesting to note that evidence of ironworking has been found. Not far from Harehaugh is Lordenshaws, where a fine hillfort was constructed a landscape already rich in older remains such as rock art and burial cairns. Back in the Cheviots, at Ilderton Dod, a substantial rectilinear enclosure, shown as a 'moat' on some maps, is probably of Iron Age date. Similar sites are known at Manside Cross (in Harwood Forest, near Elsdon) and beneath Bremenium Roman fort (discovered by geophysical survey: Chapter 14). Another is sited close to Harehaugh Camp, on the opposite side of the Grasslees Burn, where it may have functioned alongside the hillfort to regulate access along the valley. None of these sites have been excavated, and the nature of their relationship to the more conventional hillforts is unknown.

With the exception of Wether Hill, for which a comprehensive radiocarbon sequence is gradually emerging, Brough Law is the only true hillfort within the National Park to be scientifically dated. A single radiocarbon determination suggests that the stone ramparts here (which were apparently not preceded by any sort of palisade) were constructed in c200BC (Jobey 1971). Outside the National Park on the Fell Sandstones, 5km north-east of Wooler, the fort known as Dod Law West was partially excavated in the mid 1980s. A stone rampart



FIGURE 4.7 Harehaugh hillfort.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

here, which followed earlier earth and timber ramparts, has been dated to the third century BC (Smith 1990). What little evidence there is does suggest that most stone built ramparts were constructed at about this time, often, but not always, on the sites of earlier earth or timber enclosures. Recent detailed survey work, undertaken as part of the National Park Authority's *Discovering our Hillfort Heritage* project, has demonstrated that many hillforts are complex, multi-period monuments, occupied over several centuries and modified many times. Their eventual abandonment is not well understood. It used to be thought, not unreasonably, that the hillforts were abandoned in the face of Roman military threat in the late first century AD, but evidence from Broxmouth hillfort, East Lothian, suggests that this was replaced by a settlement of undefended stone roundhouses during the second century BC. Such undefended settlements can be clearly seen to overly the ramparts of many Northumberland hillforts, though no such examples have been scientifically dated. It may be, therefore, that hillforts had been abandoned long before any Roman ever set foot in Northumberland, but exactly why this should have occurred is not known. A popular book about Cheviot hillforts (Oswald forthcoming), based on the results of the *Discovering our Hillfort Heritage* project, contains much further information about these dramatic sites.

Excavations elsewhere in north-east England and southern Scotland suggest that society at this time was probably dominated by a 'warrior aristocracy', with much effort going into the production of prestige objects including swords and spears of bronze and iron, personal ornaments (rings, armlets, brooches and beads), horse trappings and chariot fittings. Although some evidence for local, small scale, iron working (in the form of small lumps of slag) has been recovered from a handful of Iron Age sites in the Park, the production and consumption of prestige objects was presumably under the ultimate control of a ruling elite, whose power was to some extent demonstrated and maintained through the use of such objects. It may be that each hillfort in the Park was occupied by a 'head man' and his entourage, perhaps numbering several dozen individuals, all of whom owed their allegiance to a regional or tribal chief. If this is so, then the relative size and grandeur of the forts may reflect the relative importance of their occupants, with the most important individual in the region perhaps residing at Yeavinger.

In discussing the hillforts, we must not lose sight of the fact that many regions, including the southern half of Northumberland, most of County Durham, Yorkshire, Cumbria and Lancashire are relatively devoid of them. Although many plough-flattened enclosures, quite probably lowland equivalents of the upland forts, have been recorded from the air in some regions, the distribution of these is not as dense as that of hillforts in the Cheviots. The relative lack of forts elsewhere cannot be explained simply by a lack of suitable hills, and a cultural explanation must be sought. The answer may well lie in the tribal groups of the time. Although the historical sources are far from clear, during Roman times the north of Northumberland seems to have been within the territory of the Votadini, while southern Northumberland and the other areas mentioned above were apparently held by the Brigantes. (Brigantian territory seems to have included all land between the Humber and south Northumberland, extending from coast to coast, and this suggests that the Brigantes may have been a confederation of many smaller tribes). The boundary between the Votadini and the Brigantes is thought by some archaeologists to have lain on the Tyne, but it may have been rather further to the north, perhaps on the Coquet. It should be pointed out that there is no conclusive proof that the Votadini extended south of the Tweed, and it may be that another tribe, the name of which is lost in time, occupied Northumberland, perhaps based at



FIGURE 4.8  
Reconstructed timber roundhouse at Castell Henllys hillfort, south Wales. The houses within Cheviot hillforts would have been similar, although perhaps with heather thatched roofs.

Bamburgh and Yeavinger. Such an arrangement would tie in neatly with the post-Roman kingdoms of Gododdin and Brynaich. However, most archaeologists refer to north Northumberland as Votadinian territory, and this general consensus will not be questioned further in this account. These Romano-British tribal groupings may already have coalesced out of smaller Bronze Age chiefdoms by the early Iron Age, and for some reason communities within Votadinian territory opted to build and maintain small hillforts, while this was not such common practice amongst the Brigantes. This is of course a very simplistic explanation, and there are occasional impressive hillforts elsewhere (such as Warden Hill at the junction of the North and South Tyne), but in general terms people outside the 'hillfort zone' of the Cheviots and Coquetdale seem to have lived in small, relatively unpretentious farmsteads rather than grand hillforts. Many such farmsteads, both within and outside the hillfort zone, may await discovery beneath the visible remains of our so-called 'Romano-British farmsteads' (see below), as was the case when the sites at Hetha Burn (College Valley) and Kennel Hall Knowe (North Tynedale) were investigated.

Many unenclosed roundhouses may also prove to date from the Iron Age, such as that at Linhope Burn (Topping 1991), and without recourse to excavation it will remain impossible to date such sites with any degree of accuracy. It is probable that most people throughout the Iron Age lived in such undefended homesteads, and that our understanding of everyday life at this time has been to an extent distorted by an over emphasis on hillfort studies. If recent work has taught us anything it is that hillforts must be considered as complex multi-phase monuments within complex multi-period landscapes, and that they should not be studied in isolation. Al Oswald's contribution to this volume demonstrates this point most forcibly.

Iron Age dwellings, whether within hillforts or elsewhere, could be of an impressive size and certainly should not be regarded as flimsy 'huts' (fig 4.8). One of the timber houses excavated at High Knowes was fifteen metres in diameter (Jobey and Tait 1966), while at least three houses at Yeavinger Bell have diameters in excess of ten metres (Pearson 1998). The basic design of Iron Age roundhouses consisted of an inner ring of substantial timbers supporting a conical, turf or heather thatched roof, with an outer wall of wattle and daub. In some cases the outer wall was of upright timbers set in a continuous bedding trench which still survives today as a slight 'ring groove' in the turf. Occasionally, structures had two

concentric bedding trenches for inner and outer walls, but the reason for this is not known. In other cases, the main feature visible on the ground today is a wide 'ring ditch', lying within the circumference of the house. These 'ring ditches' have been interpreted as evidence for the stalling of cattle within the houses, in the manner of a medieval bastle house or the Hebridean 'blackhouse' which housed both man and beast until quite recently (Armit 1997, 32). It is quite possible that some Iron Age houses would have contained an 'upstairs', which could have functioned as a sleeping or general living area, while cattle or horses were kept, at least during the winter months, on the ground floor. Indeed, such an arrangement would have been eminently sensible, with the beasts providing a primitive form of under-floor heating for the people living upstairs. It may be, of course, that some of the so-called round 'houses' were actually built as barns or stables, or for other non-domestic purposes, and that only a fraction were actually built for human habitation. As with so many other things, more fieldwork will be necessary before reliable generalisations can be made. Recent studies, using a combination of ethnographic research and archaeological survey and excavation, have suggested that a considerable amount of symbolic architecture was incorporated within Iron Age houses. The houses are all circular and generally open to the east, towards the sunrise, and each may have 'acted as a microcosm of the universe, with the passing of time measured around the walls of the house' (Parker Pearson 1996, 119). It will be fascinating, in due course, to seek to apply such ideas to the many hundreds of roundhouses surviving within the Northumberland National Park.

If Iron Age society was ruled by a warrior aristocracy, then the wealth of such a ruling class must have been based, ultimately, on agricultural production. Until recently it was thought that Iron Age society in the Northumberland uplands was based on extensive cattle ranching, overseen by a bunch of 'Celtic Cowboys'. Very early in the twentieth century, however, David Dippie Dixon had already observed the correlation between some agricultural terraces and hillforts. He notes that:

*Care must be taken not to confuse these traces of terrace cultivation with the rigs and balks of the Common field of the village, occasionally found near villages of ancient origin, but belonging to a much later period. In the case of those narrow terraces seen on the face of*

FIGURE 4.9 Cord rig cultivation at Carshope, Upper Coquetdale. Towards the centre of this image are the faint earthwork remains of two circular timber buildings, possibly houses, which are clearly overlain by the rig. These buildings must have been abandoned by the time the rig was being cultivated.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



*Lord's Seat, at Alwinton, their peculiar formation, their close proximity to Gallow Law camp, as well as the distance from the village ... seem to point to their connection with a primitive system of cultivation, coeval with the occupation of the camps and hill forts in the immediate neighbourhood.* (Dixon 1903, 111)

Dixon's observations have now been backed up by air photography, which has demonstrated that extensive tracts of land were under arable cultivation during the Iron Age (Topping 1989).

This evidence for Iron Age agriculture comes largely in the form of 'cord rig', narrow cultivation ridges, some of which might be the result of ploughing while some may have been hand dug using iron spades. The cord rig fields were presumably used to grow cereals and perhaps some vegetables. The rigs and intervening furrows would have helped with drainage, and must have worked in much the same way as the medieval ridge-and-furrow which is such a common feature of rural Northumberland. Although it is difficult to date cord rig, it has been found to underlie Roman forts and camps, for example at Greenlee Lough near Hadrian's Wall (see Chapter 16), so we know that at least some of it dates from pre-Roman times. In some places, for example in Upper Coquetdale (fig 4.9), vast tracts of cord rig survive, sometimes without any obvious associated settlements. These field systems were positioned to take advantage of the fertile Cheviot soils, and the introduction of iron tools must have helped with the efficient working of them. Elsewhere, agricultural terraces and lynchets probably date from the Iron Age (fig 4.10). Other evidence for cereal growing comes in the form of the ubiquitous 'rotary querns', examples of which have been

FIGURE 4.10 Mid Hill, College Valley. The hillsides around this small hillfort are covered with agricultural terraces, many of which could be contemporary with the fort.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



found on numerous Iron Age sites. These were used to grind grain for the production of bread, although some grain would almost certainly have been used for the brewing of beer and the production of other foods such as porridge. The excavations at Dod Law West (Smith 1990) demonstrated that the inhabitants of the fort grew their own crops (including barley and wheat), collected wild foods (such as hazelnuts and blackberries), and collected heather and bracken (presumably for roofing and bedding, amongst other uses). Analysis of Iron Age samples from Murton High Crag (Jobey 1987) suggests the use of a similar range of domestic and wild resources, with six-row barley by far the most common cereal.

In general, animal bones do not survive well in the local soils, but cattle must have been important. As in some African societies to this day, a community's wealth and power may, to a large extent, have been represented by the size of its herd. Sheep, goats and pigs were also kept. Dogs may have been used for stock management, hunting, and as guard dogs (warning of encroachment by other people or by wolves), but whether or not they were regarded as 'pets' by this time is unknown. It seems that the Iron Age population practised a mixed agricultural regime, and the relative importance attached to stock rearing and cultivation probably varied from place to place and over time.

Exactly when domestic horses were introduced into Britain remains something of a mystery. They may originally have been kept principally for meat, but were clearly being ridden during the Iron Age as horse fittings are known from many Iron Age sites. In addition, horses and chariots have been found in some Iron Age graves in Yorkshire. Although there would be many improvements in riding technology and technique, the horse was to remain the essential element in overland transport until the advent of the railways in the nineteenth century and the motor car in the twentieth. In the Iron Age, the widespread adoption of horse riding, and horse-drawn carts of various forms, revolutionised a transport network which had previously been based on cumbersome ox-drawn carts. People could now travel great distances at speed, and communications, commerce and conflict became increasingly dependent on the horse (Clutton-Brock 1992). Those in charge could now rule effectively over larger areas, and could travel throughout their territories to help impose their rule. In short, the introduction of horse riding had a profound effect on late prehistoric society, and is something that should perhaps be afforded greater consideration when seeking to understand life in the Iron Age.

During the Iron Age, just as in the later Bronze Age, the dead were generally disposed of in ways that have left no discernible trace in the archaeological record, and there is little obvious archaeological evidence of religion. However, various ancient sources refer to human and animal sacrifices, sacred animals, severed heads and numerous 'Celtic' gods. Although archaeological evidence is hard to find, Iron Age people clearly led complex spiritual lives, probably coming together at specific times of the year for festivals based on the agricultural calendar, the origins of which may be sought back amongst the first farmers of the Neolithic. Julius Caesar, writing in the mid first century BC, explained that religious life amongst the native Britons was under the control of the Druids, and that most religious festivals took place at sacred places in the natural landscape rather than at designated 'ceremonial' monuments. This brings us neatly back to where we were in the Mesolithic, and it may well be that some of the same places were of special significance in both the Mesolithic and the Iron Age, separated in time by 5000 or more years.

The tradition of ritual offerings in wet places, which as we have already seen probably owes its origins to the onset of wetter conditions from about 1200BC, remained in force



FIGURE 4.11 Broomlee Lough. Could the legend of the buried treasure here owe its origin to Iron Age religious practice? (PHOTOGRAPH: DEREK PROUDLOCK)

throughout the Iron Age. The ‘bog bodies’ (such as the now famous ‘Lindow Man’ from Cheshire), which are occasionally found in north-west England and elsewhere, may represent human sacrifices in such places, though none has been recorded in Northumberland. An echo of this Iron Age obsession with wet places is preserved in the Arthurian legend of Excalibur and the Lady of the Lake. The extraordinary collection of Roman finds from Coventina’s Well at Carrawbrough on Hadrian’s Wall may owe something to native Iron Age religious practice, and it is tempting to believe that the enduring myth of the ‘golden treasure’ at the bottom of Broomlee Lough (fig 4.11) may have its origins in Iron Age tradition. Many Holy Wells, such as Cuddy’s Well at Bellingham and the Lady’s Well at Holystone, probably represent the ‘Christianisation’ of what were already significant sites in the Iron Age. Writing of Elsdon in the late nineteenth century, W W Tomlinson (1888, 302) notes that:

*in consequence of the long isolation of the village amid moors and morasses, remote from the enlightening influences of civilisation, many pagan customs and superstitions were observed till within a very short time ago. The Midsummer bonfires, through which cattle were driven to protect them from disease were ... burning only a few years ago on Elsdon green ... Well-worship continues to this day, and votive gifts ... are still thrown into the clear spring waters.*

Perhaps there really was some continuity in such traditions from late prehistoric times, a continuity which is maintained to this day in our tradition of throwing coins into fountains or wishing-wells for good luck.



# On the Edge of the Empire

## The Romano-British period

(AD79–410)

**T**he Roman occupation of Britain began with the invasion by Claudius in AD43. In southern Britain, the Romans were apparently welcomed by several British tribes which may have had political agreements with Rome for some time prior to the invasion. Those who chose not to enter into such an alliance with Rome were soon defeated militarily. Following some three decades during which the Roman occupation of southern England and Wales was consolidated, the Brigantes, under Venutius, took on the Romans, only to be comprehensively defeated by the end of the AD70s. This brought the Roman army to the fringes of the territory of the Votadini, who occupied north Northumberland and south-east Scotland. There is no evidence of conflict between Rome and the Votadini, and it is generally assumed that Votadinian territory became a Roman client kingdom. Under such an arrangement, tribute was paid to Rome but the local aristocracy was free to rule pretty much as it had previously.

It was common Roman practice to seek such arrangements with territories on the fringes of the Empire. As well as being of clear benefit to Rome by reducing the need for military action, such deals were of considerable benefit to local leaders, whose power and prestige could be enhanced through a friendly relationship with Rome. Any locals who disagreed with the policy would have been well advised to maintain a diplomatic silence on the matter. Rome could negotiate effectively when her aims were best served by diplomacy, but that diplomacy was always backed up by the threat of inevitable annihilation at the hands of her army should 'negotiations' fail.

The Romans moved north into Scotland under the command of Agricola almost certainly in AD79 (but just possibly in AD80), and the road known to us as Dere Street (followed for much of its length by the present day A68) was constructed through the wilds of the Cheviot Hills to facilitate this advance (fig 5.1). A number of temporary camps, and some permanent forts such as Bremenium, High Rochester (Chapter 14) were built along the route of Dere Street. While the forts were permanently manned, and contained buildings of timber or stone, the camps were occupied only temporarily by troops in leather tents. Such troops might occupy a camp for some time while on manoeuvre or on campaign, or might stay briefly, perhaps just overnight, while en route to some other destination. The camps can be hard to see on the ground, but are instantly recognisable from the air (figs 5.2 & 16.13).

Today the stretch of Dere Street within the National Park contains one of the most extraordinary concentrations of Roman marching camps to be seen anywhere in the Empire (Welfare and Swann 1995). Of all the sites along Dere Street, 'the remote site at Chew Green comprises the most remarkable visible group of Roman earthworks in Britain' (Pevsner *et al* 1992, 225). Here, a large, square temporary camp is overlain by a complex series of later



FIGURE 5.3 A distant view over the hills of Upper Coquetdale, showing Chew Green in its lonely landscape setting. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 5.4 Vindolanda Roman fort and *vicus*. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

excavation programme by the Vindolanda Trust, under the direction of the Birley family, has demonstrated that several forts are superimposed on each other here. Only the remains of the latest of these, together with the extensive *vicus* (civilian settlement) that grew up outside the fort, are visible today. Many remarkable artefacts have been recovered from the earliest (cAD90–120) archaeological layers at Vindolanda, including leather and wooden objects which have only survived due to the waterlogged nature of the deposits. These finds include the famous Vindolanda writing tablets, of which more than 400 have been found, including official reports, lists of supplies and personal correspondence (including an invitation to a birthday party). These give us a unique insight into life on the edge of the Roman Empire in the decades prior to the construction of Hadrian's Wall (Birley 2002). Most of the Vindolanda letters are from military men, but some were written by women – reminding us that there was more to life on the frontier than 'male' military matters (see Allason-Jones 1989). A smaller Stanegate fort at Haltwhistle Burn was excavated early in the twentieth century and the remains of several buildings including barracks and an



FIGURE 5.6 (left) An aerial view looking west over Housesteads Roman fort towards Crag Lough. The Wall follows the edge of the crags to the west of the fort, and the *vallum* can be seen heading away from Housesteads Farmhouse towards the Military Road, which it joins south of Crag Lough. The line of the Roman military way is visible heading away from the fort's west gate, running parallel to the Wall. Many other earthworks, including clearly defined agricultural terraces, can be seen around the fort.

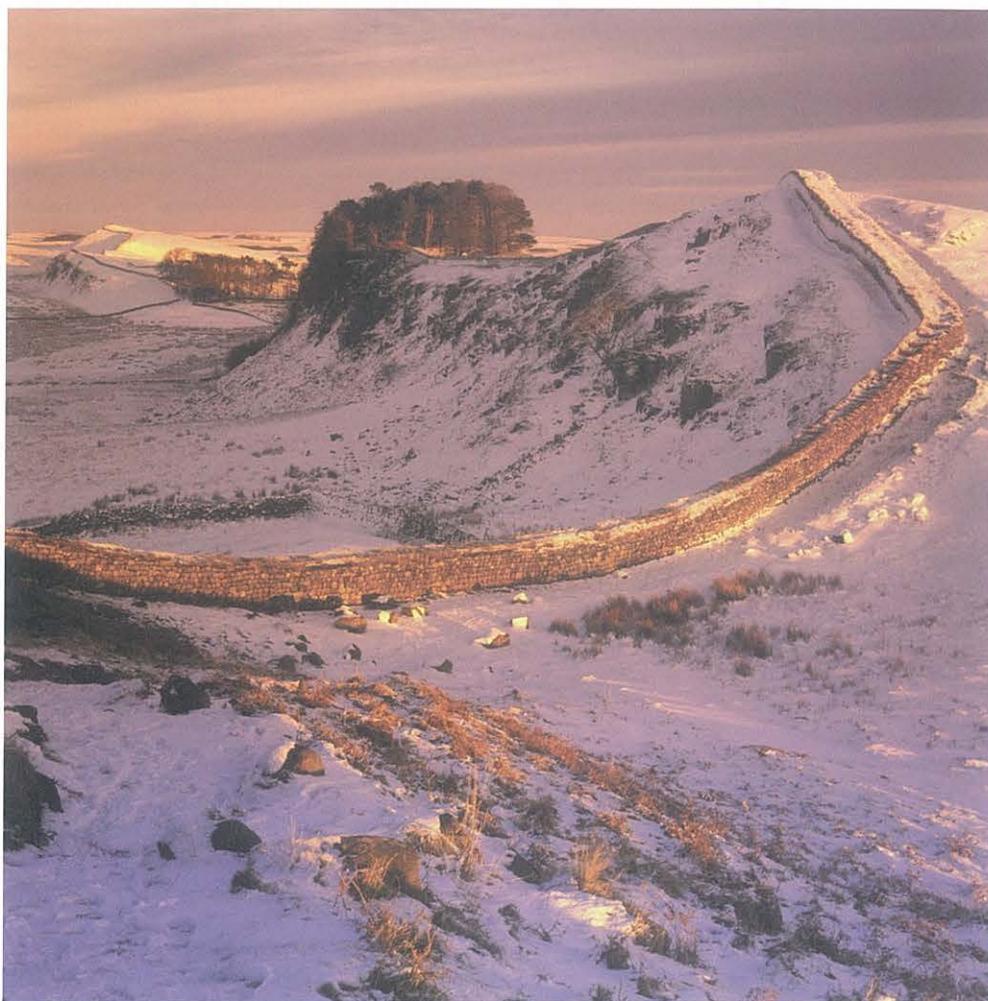
(PHOTOGRAPH:  
AIRFOTOS LTD)

FIGURE 5.5 The construction of Hadrian's Wall. (RECONSTRUCTION BY RONALD EMBLETON. FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)

administrative building were found within it. There was also a substantial fort at Carvoran, where the Stanegate was joined by the 'Maiden Way' road from the south. However, little is known about this, as it lies buried beneath the remains of a later fort on the same site.

The Stanegate frontier was consolidated over the period AD100–120, and although there are some suggestions of conflict during this time the records are hazy. By the time of Hadrian's accession in AD117 there were apparently problems on the frontier. The emperor decided to tackle these in a hitherto unheard of way. He built a wall (fig 5.5). Fifteen centuries later, John Horsley's remarkable *Britannia Romana* was published (Horsley 1732). This set the scene for all later work on Hadrian's Wall. Many famous archaeologists have followed in Horsley's footsteps, seeking to develop new interpretations of the Wall. Antiquarian accounts, such as those of Horsley, John Hodgson (1841) and John Collingwood Bruce (eg 1867, 1885) represent an enthralling history of the development of thinking about the Wall, as well as providing important surveys of the visible remains. Today, several excellent publications on Hadrian's Wall are available (eg Breeze and Dobson 2000; Johnson 1989. See also Chapter 15), so only a brief description, along with a few general observations on its purpose and effectiveness, will be offered here.

FIGURE 5.7 (right) Hadrian's Wall, looking east from Cuddy's Crag towards Housesteads Wood (PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN WILLIAMSON)



Hadrian did not seek to expand the frontiers of the Empire as his predecessors had done. Instead, he instituted a policy of consolidation, giving up some recently conquered lands and reinforcing the frontiers in the east and the south. At the northern extremity of the Empire, he may have considered giving up Britain completely, but after nearly a century of occupation the southern half of England was pretty much 'Romanised', so his solution was to divide the island in two. This division was to be achieved through the construction of a massive wall, begun in AD122, from coast to coast across the Tyne-Solway isthmus. This used the high ground of the whin sill in the spectacular central sector now within the National Park (figs 5.6 & 5.7). It is interesting to note that absolutely no contemporary references to the building of the Wall are known, and the earliest reference to the construction of a wall 'to separate Romans from barbarians' was written some 250 years later. The original plan seems to have been for a wall about five metres high, with a milecastle every Roman mile and two turrets equally spaced between the milecastles. A ditch, with counterscarp bank, ran in front of the wall. This plan was never completed, and after perhaps as little as a single year of construction work the radically different 'second plan' was implemented. This involved the addition of several massive forts to the line of the Wall as well as the retention of existing 'Stanegate' forts such as Carvoran and Vindolanda. Within the National Park, new Wall forts were constructed at Great Chesters, Housesteads, and Carrawburgh (apparently added at a slightly later date). In addition, the great forts of Birdoswald and Chesters are located just outside the Park boundary, to the west and east respectively. A massive ditch with banks to north and south, known as the *vallum*, was added at a distance behind the Wall, perhaps to help protect the complex from the south but also probably to demarcate a 'military zone' between it and the Wall itself. The *vallum* diverts to

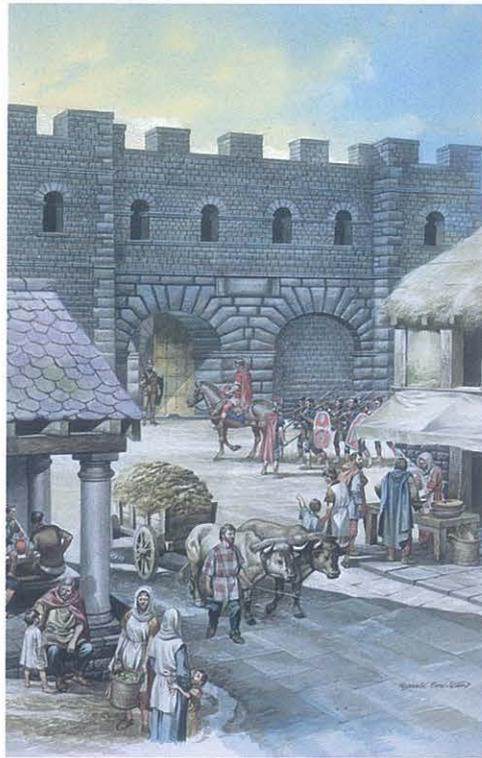
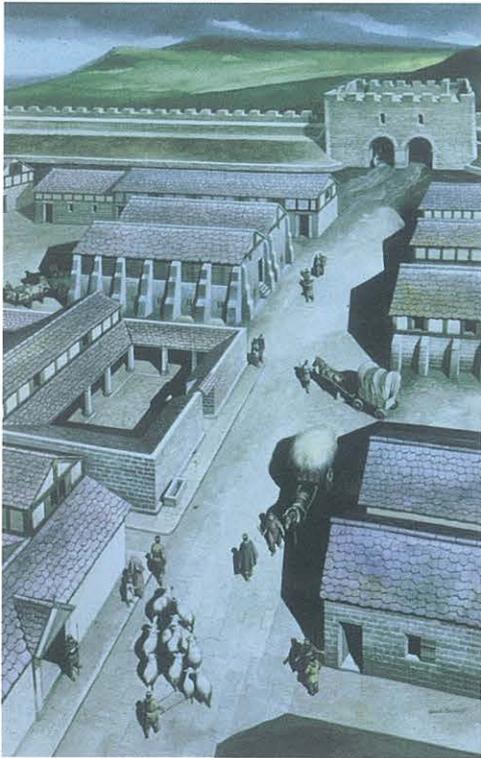


FIGURE 5.8 TWO reconstruction views of Housesteads Fort. a) A view over the main street (Via Principalis) through the fort. b) The south gate, seen from within the *vicus* (RECONSTRUCTIONS BY RONALD EMBLETON. FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)

avoid some Wall forts, so clearly must have been constructed after the decision to add the forts. However, its neat symmetry and relationship to the rigid original plan suggest very strongly that it may have been part of the original blueprint. Later still, probably in the AD170s, a road known as the 'military way' was added between the Wall and the *vallum* to link all the Wall forts together.

Perhaps the most impressive of all the Wall forts, due to a combination of its substantial visible remains and their rugged landscape setting, is Housesteads (Crow 1995). Eloquently described by William Hutton (who walked the length of the Wall at the age of 78, in 1801) as 'the greatest station on the whole line', Housesteads remains one of the most rewarding sites to visit and certainly gives a flavour of the dramatic impact of Roman military architecture in this open, wild landscape. Even the ruins, impressive as they are, surely cannot convey the awesome impact this fort (fig 5.8) must have had on the local population, more familiar with family sized agricultural homesteads of two or three roundhouses.

There are many issues relating to the origins and function of the Wall that remain unresolved. We know that Hadrian was a keen architect, and it is tempting to see the original grand plan for the Wall as having been imposed from afar: perhaps he designed it himself and ordered work to commence on it prior to his visit to the province in AD122. The inspiration behind the Wall may have been the city walls of ancient Greece, as Hadrian is known to have been a lover of all things Greek and the idea of constructing a great 'Greek' monument on the northern edge of the Empire may well have appealed to him. If this is the explanation of the original plan, then perhaps the second plan arose out of discussions with his generals during his visit to the province, when he must surely have visited the frontier. This second plan, with the garrisons based directly on the Wall in the newly constructed forts, rather than behind in the old Stanegate forts, was much more effective in enabling troops to move rapidly out beyond the Wall to tackle any problems that may have arisen. Such an arrangement was probably far more popular with an army trained in aggressive military expansion rather than 'hiding behind a wall'. Many theories have been developed to account for the design of the Wall, but it may be that the prime motivation for it was Hadrian's desire to seek personal glory through his various architectural projects, of which the Wall was by far the largest. We can safely assume that he would be pleased, and probably rather amused, to discover how his old Wall still dominates life in the region nearly two thousand years after it was built. Archaeologists who prefer a more functional explanation are divided between those who see the Wall primarily as a military frontier, and those who see it as more of a grand customs barrier. It probably combined both of these roles.

While the construction of the Wall complex was clearly an immense architectural achievement, its military and political effectiveness are debatable. It is doubtful in the extreme whether its construction made a great deal of difference to the defence of Britannia. The military buffer zone, dotted with great forts and marching camps and policed via the network of roads, extending over some fifty miles to the north and south of the old Stanegate, all backed up by the Roman fleet patrolling offshore to east and west, would surely have provided an adequate defensive shield (if that is what was required) without recourse to the Wall. As suggested above, it makes more sense to see Hadrian's Wall as a great statement of Roman rhetoric than to seek to interpret it as a strategically designed military installation.

The sheer grandeur of the structure we call Hadrian's Wall must have dominated the lives of local people who lived in its shadow, and it could be argued that this very grandeur still

dominates the thoughts of those who visit it today (Frodsham, in press). In the face of the mountain of available tourist merchandise celebrating the grandeur that was Rome, it is worth reminding ourselves that Hadrian's Wall should perhaps be seen primarily as a monument to failure. The most obvious reason for regarding it thus is that it was only thought necessary due to the failure of the Romans to absorb Scotland. It also stands as testament to the fact that Roman Britannia never felt truly safe in the face of the threat from the north, and that a garrison of between 14,000 and 40,000 men (the maintenance of which was an enormous and costly logistical exercise) was necessary to protect the northern frontier throughout the occupation (Breeze 1984).

This concentration of military personnel caused the Empire serious problems on occasions, and a number of military rebellions against Rome are thought to have originated amongst the British garrison. During at least two such rebellions, when the troops were away from the frontier, the Wall was apparently overrun by northern 'barbarians' who sacked the province and disappeared back up north with their booty before the troops returned.

With regard to the Romans, the historian John Wallis observed in 1769 that 'it was the custom of those sovereigns of the world to polish and instruct, as well as subdue, nations....To the naked and warlike natives they were patrons and protectors, taught them both to clothe their bodies, and adorn their minds; learned them husbandry, civil polity, architecture, and the polite and useful arts' (Wallis 1769). Wallis could never have imagined what we now know of the complex societies of pre-Roman Northumberland, but in many ways popular understanding of the Roman occupation is still rooted in his time. Such popular understanding owes much to Victorian attitudes, when the Roman Empire was largely understood by reference to that of Imperial Britain. Hadrian's Wall is a grand monument, but it is also a brutal monument erected by an occupying military force to control the movement of people and ideas amongst the local population (fig 5.9). We should remind ourselves that the Berlin Wall, erected in more recent times but for similar purposes, could not be demolished quickly enough when the opportunity arose.

One of Hadrian's main concerns in building the Wall (in addition to the glory associated with the construction of an architectural masterpiece) may have been to cement in the minds of those to the north and south of it that this was now the permanent edge of the Empire. We have already noted that Hadrian was a keen architect, and he would have been well aware of the psychological effect of great architecture on both individuals and societies. Once built, surely such an absurdly grand structure would be almost self-fulfilling in its purpose of setting the edge of the Empire for all time: no northern native would be able to pass it on account of its supreme military effectiveness, and surely no subsequent Emperor would abandon such a magnificent statement of power after so much work had been put into its construction.

However, in the short term the boundary proved rather more fluid. Hadrian died in AD138, after which a major Roman advance into Scotland occurred under the Emperor

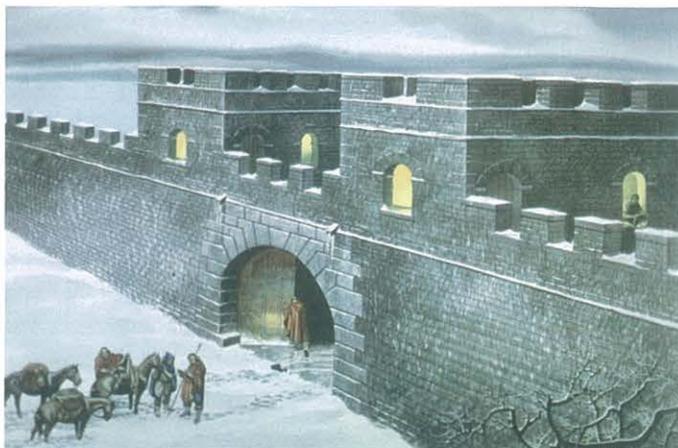


FIGURE 5.9 The impact of the Wall on native society is vividly depicted in this reconstruction of the gateway at Portgate (where Dere Street passed through the Wall) north of Corbridge.

(RECONSTRUCTIONS BY RONALD EMBLETON. FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)

Antoninus Pius. This led to the construction (in the early AD140s) and temporary occupation of the Antonine Wall across the Clyde-Forth isthmus. A little over half a century later, starting in AD208, Severus also led large-scale campaigns in Scotland. However, neither the Antonine nor the Severan invasions had any lasting impact on Scotland or north Northumberland. The Antonine Wall was abandoned within a couple of decades of its construction, and Severus' campaigns ended with his death in York in AD211. In both cases the garrisons were soon back in place on Hadrian's Wall. It is probably fair to assume that the Votadini continued to enjoy client kingdom status throughout the third and fourth centuries. The Romans considered such client kingdoms as part of the Empire, so it may be wrong to consider Hadrian's Wall as an actual boundary at any time during the occupation. Certainly Roman military bases were maintained at sites such as Bremenium (Chapter 14), a long way north of the Wall, and there is no archaeological evidence for any local opposition to this activity.

It has been suggested that the Severan campaigns in Scotland were intended as punitive rather than expansive, probably aimed at societies to the north of the Votadini. Severus may never have intended to conquer Scotland, as he undertook a great deal of construction work on the Wall which certainly does not suggest that he was about to give it up. Indeed, the extent of Severus' work on the Wall was so great that several late Roman scholars actually credited him with its original construction (Johnson 1989, 106). In the eighteenth century, John Horsley (1772, chapter 8) was convinced that Severus had built the Wall, while Hadrian's earlier frontier had consisted of the *vallum*. Only after Horsley's death were archaeological excavations able to demonstrate conclusively that the original stone wall was Hadrian's.

Although vast resources have been expended on the detailed study of Roman military archaeology in the region, it is the relationship between Roman and native that lends this period much of its interest to the archaeologist (fig 5.10). The Hadrian's Wall area has in the

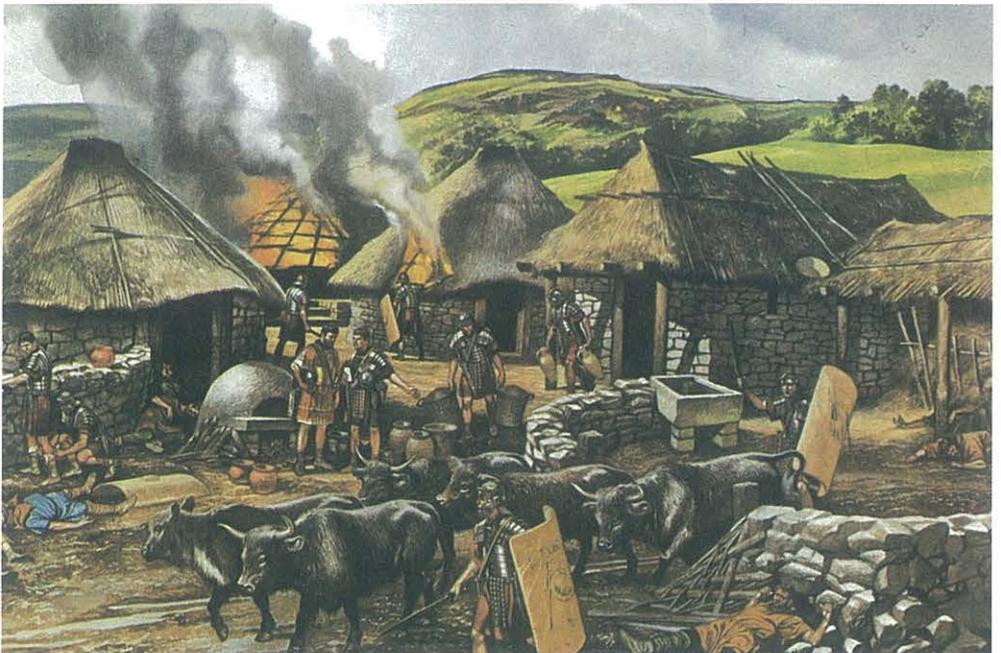


FIGURE 5.10 The Roman army could deal ruthlessly with native communities showing any resistance, but there is no evidence to suggest that situations like that shown here occurred often, if at all, within the area of the National Park.

(RECONSTRUCTIONS BY RONALD EMBLETON, FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)

past been described as a 'military zone', in which no native settlement would have been permitted by the Romans. However, recent aerial photographic survey by Tim Gates (Chapter 16) has resulted in the discovery of numerous little homesteads of stone-built roundhouses, paddocks for animals, and sometimes quite extensive patches of cord rig fields. These are located both north and south of the Wall. One such settlement, at Milking Gap, actually lies between the Wall and the *vallum*. The Milking Gap settlement, which includes five stone roundhouses, was excavated in 1937. On the basis of the artefacts recovered, its excavator (Kilbride-Jones 1938) suggested that it was founded at about the same time as the Wall was built (AD122) and remained occupied until about AD180. However, recent scholars have argued that the settlement may have been earlier, and that it was probably abandoned when the Wall was constructed. Regardless of the detailed chronology of this one site, many similar sites to north and south of the Wall may well have been occupied well into the third century.

In addition to these sites, patches of cord rig also survive in apparent isolation at dozens of other locations, and much more must have been destroyed by medieval ploughing. We know from surface observation that at least some of this cord rig is pre-Roman in date (the Roman aqueduct carrying the water supply to Great Chesters fort clearly cuts across cord rig fields and, as already noted in our discussion of Iron Age agriculture, cord rig clearly underlies the Roman camp at Greenlee), but we cannot tell to what extent, if at all, such fields remained under cultivation during Roman times. Without excavation we will never be able to say whether these fields and settlements date from the pre-Roman Iron Age, whether they were occupied throughout part of the Roman occupation, or indeed whether they were occupied (or perhaps reoccupied) in post-Roman times. The investigation of a sample of such sites must be a priority if we hope to understand how the Roman military interacted with local native society in the shadow of the Wall, and how the nature of this interaction may have changed over the 33 decades of the occupation.

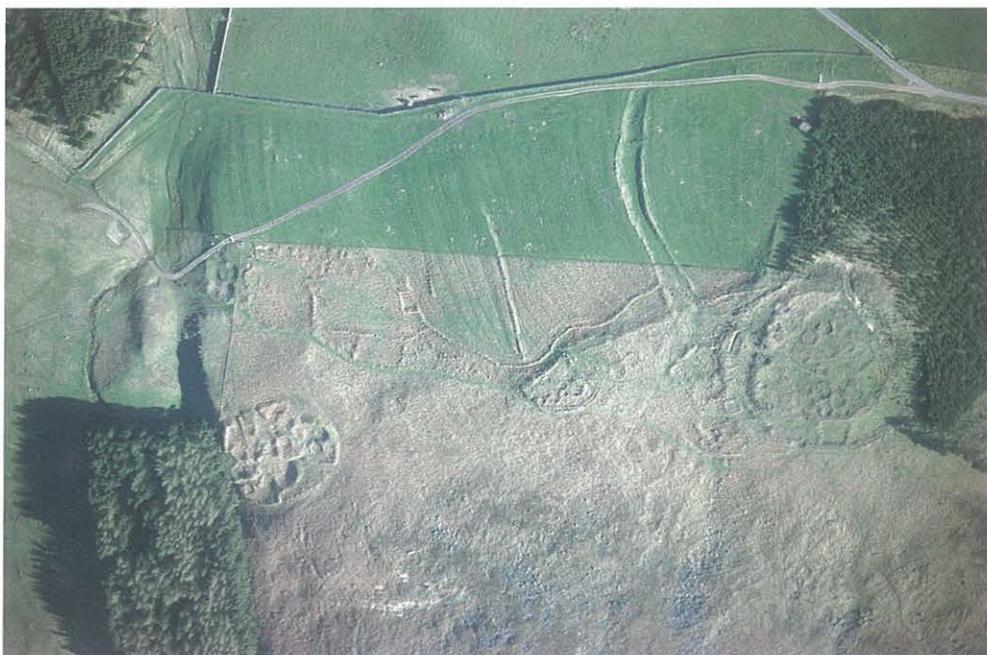


FIGURE 5.11 Greave's Ash, Linhope: a substantial Romano-British village overlying an Iron Age hillfort (right). Another settlement is visible towards the bottom left corner of the image, while further roundhouses can be seen at the centre. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 5.12 Brands Hill, near Wooler. Several settlements of Romano-British date can be seen here spread out over the hillside. The ground between them is covered with ridge-and-furrow, most of which is probably of medieval date. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

Hill (fig 5.12) near Wooler). Several were built on the sites of earlier hillforts (West Hill, Kirknewton see Chapter 13), suggesting perceived links with the past, although hillfort ramparts were not maintained. Perhaps the rebuilding of hillfort defences was expressly forbidden by the Romans, although it may simply be that such large scale defences were not considered necessary or desirable at this time. In spite of their visibility in the landscape, hardly any of these sites have been excavated in modern times. Perhaps the most informative example, excavated by Colin Burgess in the 1970s, is Hetha Burn in the College Valley. Here (on a site previously occupied by a timber roundhouse which may conceivably date from the Bronze Age) a small, enclosed settlement of two stone roundhouses grew into a village of at least ten houses during the Roman period (Burgess 1984, 168). Its excavator believes that the occupation of the site may span the first and second centuries AD, and that there is no evidence for later occupation until the site was reused in the medieval period. Why the site should have been abandoned by the early third century, if indeed it actually was, remains a mystery. There may be hundreds of settlement sites of this period in the National Park, in varying states of preservation, each of which will have its own story to tell. However, until a few more are subjected to excavation, and the application of modern scientific investigative techniques, it will not be possible to generalise about their foundation, occupation or abandonment.

Many Romano-British settlements are known in Redesdale, and these are often found in association with large tracts of cord rig fields. These fields may well have been used, at least in part, for the cultivation of grain for the Roman forces occupying the fort at Bremenium. It is easy to see how a symbiotic relationship could have developed here between the Roman army and native communities. Local people would have been allowed to continue their traditional ways of life on the understanding that they would provide the Romans with agreed quantities of grain or cattle. Indeed, the lifestyle of local people in this area may have become intimately linked to the Roman military, just as the livelihoods of many people living here today are dependent to some extent, either directly or indirectly, on the vast Ministry of Defence Otterburn Training Area (Chapter 22). A Romano-British farmstead at Woolaw, in

The Northumberland countryside was never 'Romanised' like that of southern England, and no villas are recorded here. However, north of the Wall corridor, the wild hills of the Northumberland National Park contain much highly visible evidence for native British settlement and agricultural practice during the Roman period. Much of this evidence has been recorded from the air, mostly by Tim Gates. The settlements generally consist of clusters of three or more stone-built roundhouses arranged around a central scooped yard or paddock, all surrounded by an enclosing bank or wall.

In the Cheviots, these 'Romano-British' settlements can exist in isolation, in agglomerations which may reasonably be termed 'villages' (eg Greave's Ash (fig 5.11) or Haystack Hill (fig 11.6) in the Breamish Valley), or in loose groups with several such settlements set a few hundred metres apart from each other over a particular area of hillside (eg Brands

the hills above Bremenium, was excavated in 1977 (Charlton and Day 1978). It was found to consist of four stone-built roundhouses enclosed within a rectangular area of 39 by 35 metres, surrounded by a substantial stone wall. The largest house had an internal diameter of 7.6 metres. The settlement appears to have undergone three separate construction phases and, although no clear dating evidence for any of these was recovered, a range of finds (including pottery, a glass bangle, a jet bead and a fragment of a quernstone) suggested to the excavators that the site was occupied during the second century AD. The Woolaw settlement has been partially reconstructed at the Brigantium Archaeological Centre in Rochester village, enabling visitors to experience a 'genuine' Romano-British roundhouse (fig 5.13) for themselves.



In contrast to the irregular enclosures in the Cheviots, most Romano-British settlements in North Tynedale (and many of those in Redesdale, such as Woolaw) are remarkably regular in plan. They consist of two or more roundhouses overlooking a central yard within a rectangular enclosure wall. Figure 5.14 shows a reconstruction of one such settlement, Riding Wood, which was excavated by George Jobey (1960). This site yielded Roman pottery of the second or third century along with native pottery and a variety of agricultural objects. Jobey excavated three other North Tynedale settlements in advance of the construction of Kielder Reservoir. These excavations were important for a number of reasons, but what is perhaps most interesting is that they proved that some such sites were preceded by timber-built settlements dating from the pre-Roman Iron Age. The distribution of so-called Romano-British settlements is therefore not simply a reflection of conditions during the Roman occupation, but also owes much to developments in pre-Roman times. Radiocarbon dates from Jobey's excavations suggest that occupation of these sites may have extended well into the third century, but archaeology has yet to prove any such occupation into the fourth century. Were these sites abandoned, or did people continue to reside in them but somehow fail to leave recognisable traces of their presence in the archaeological record?

While the extent to which native rural settlements were actually abandoned during Roman times remains to be confirmed, something of the mystery of the whereabouts of the native population during the third and fourth centuries may be accounted for by the growth of the *vici* (civilian settlements) outside many Roman forts, and possibly also by the expansion of larger Roman settlements such as Corbridge and Carlisle. While the initial years of the occupation may have seen little interaction (other than perhaps the occasional military skirmish) between the Roman military and native society, the relatively settled conditions of the third and fourth centuries led to the gradual growth of *vici* adjacent to most Roman forts. During this period, garrisons were relatively static, so an auxiliary soldier might be posted to a Wall fort for a period of 25 years, and many such soldiers must have been local lads who could have brought their families to reside in the *vicus*. The occupants of the *vici* (known as *vicani*) would have been dependent on the wealth associated with the troops, but were not themselves answerable to the military. The *vicani* would have included wives (both official

FIGURE 5.13 This substantial stone-built roundhouse, based on an example excavated at the Romano-British settlement at Woolaw, Redesdale, can be visited at the Brigantium archaeological reconstruction centre, Rochester.

and unofficial) and children of the troops, retired soldiers and their families, craftsmen (including metalworkers, carpenters, jewellers, leatherworkers, masons and potters), innkeepers and shopkeepers, entertainers and prostitutes, and farmers who would have worked the fields adjacent to the *vicus*. The population of the Housesteads *vicus* in the third century has been estimated at about 2000, in addition to the troops who resided in the fort but who would probably have spent as much time as possible 'at play' in the *vicus*. This population would have been very cosmopolitan, including people who could trace their origins to all corners of the Empire, but they must have included a large number of native British folk whose ancestors would have occupied the nearby farmsteads with their roundhouses and cord rig field systems. Whether these folk considered themselves as Brigantian, Votadinian, British or Roman is unknown, but perhaps there was some confusion of identity here not dissimilar to that faced by some people today when trying to decide whether they are primarily Northumbrian, English, British or European.

Some of the *vici* may have grown to the status of small towns by the later third century, but they were all entirely dependent on the wealth of the army, through the disposable income of the troops, for their economic survival. When the Wall garrison began to be neglected during the latter half of the fourth century, resulting in fewer men and lower rates of pay, many of the more enterprising residents of the *vici* would have left to find their fortunes further south in established towns such as York, Chester or London. After the area was ransacked by northern barbarians in AD367, the Wall was apparently reconstructed under the ruthless general Count Theodosius, but we simply do not know how this affected the *vicani*. Some may have moved into the forts and joined the military garrison. Others may have gone north to ally themselves with the growing kingdoms of Strathclyde (in the west, centred on Dumbarton Rock) and Gododdin (equivalent to the Votadini, though apparently now located exclusively to the north of the Tweed, with its main centre at Edinburgh). Both of these kingdoms may have been encouraged by Rome to develop their own military strength and thus form a defensive buffer zone against anti-Roman forces further north. Other *vicani* may have moved south, while others may have concentrated at the larger civilian establishments in the Wall zone such as Carlisle or Corbridge. Some probably stayed on at the various *vici* alongside the Wall forts, but these would have been sorry versions of the grand settlements of the previous 200 years. Others may have drifted back to the countryside to live out their lives on small farmsteads in an astonishing contrast to the hustle and bustle of life in a *vicus*. The eventual abandonment of the *vici* may have been hastened by outbreaks of plague at this time: perhaps very few *vicani* were still in residence by the time that Rome 'officially' abandoned her province of Britannia in AD410.

Today, people come from all over the world to visit Hadrian's Wall, yet it is no more cosmopolitan than it would have been in Roman times when people from all corners of the Roman world congregated here. The nature of the local population in Roman times meant that there was a greater variety of religious practice

FIGURE 5.14 The Romano-British settlement at Riding Wood, North Tynedale.

(RECONSTRUCTION BY RONALD EMBLETON. FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)

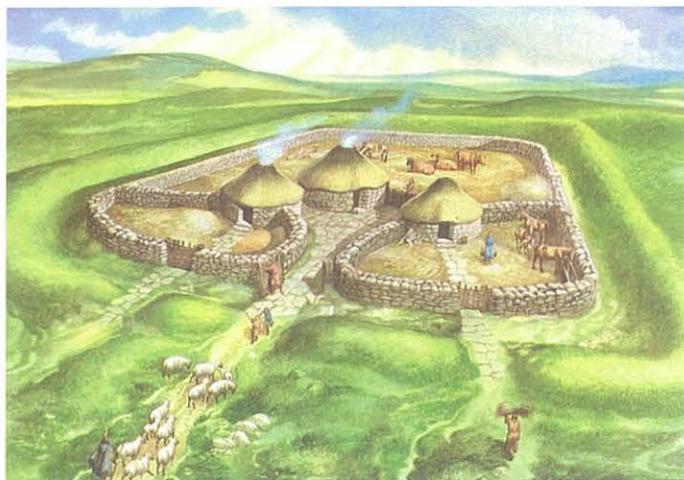




FIGURE 5.15 Stone altar lying within the ruins of Great Chesters Roman fort, on the line of Hadrian's Wall.

here than at any time before or since. We know little about the nature of religious beliefs and burial practices among the rural populations in the hills, which probably remained little changed from the preceding Iron Age. A great deal is known, however, about religion on the Wall, where exotic beliefs from all over the Empire mixed with what must have been pre-existing local traditions. Evidence comes in the form of carved stone altars (fig 5.15) and inscriptions, and a few temples have been recognised. The worship of official Roman gods such as Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Diana, Apollo and Hercules, and deified former emperors, took place alongside that of local gods such as Brigantia and Cocidius. Two of the most fascinating religious sites in Roman Britain were found adjacent to the Wall fort of Carrawburgh. The shrine and temple of Coventina, presumably a local deity, included a well within which some 15,000 Roman coins had been deposited along with votive offerings including altars and valuable items of jewellery (Allason-Jones and McKay 1985). Not far from this was the Carrowburgh mithraeum (fig 5.16), a temple to the cult of Mithras which was very popular amongst Roman officers in the third century. In spite of all these grand monuments from the line of the Wall, perhaps the most enigmatic of all Romano-British religious sites in the National Park is the little shrine to the warrior god Cocidius (fig 22.8), located in the wild landscape of Upper Coquetdale not far from the marching camp of Yardhope on the Roman Road leading east from Bremenium fort.

While only a handful of possible native cremation burials have been recorded in the hills (for example, at Yeavering; Hope-Taylor 1977), the Roman dead were buried in cemeteries along the roadside adjacent to the forts and *vici*. Although many inscribed gravestones are known from the Wall area, no cemeteries have been systematically excavated here. The most fascinating Roman cemetery yet investigated in the area of the National Park is undoubtedly

that at Petty Knowes, near Bremenium (fig 14.5; Charlton and Mitcheson 1984). This consists of more than fifty burial mounds, each of which contained a cremation, together with the remains of a substantial tomb, decorated with a carved animal head and a pine cone, which was presumably the final resting place of an important officer who may have died while on service at Bremenium. Towards the end of the Roman era a small number of gravestones and other artefacts betray the introduction of Christianity. This was adopted by the Emperor Constantine as the official religion of the Empire in the fourth century, thus providing the context for the possible late Roman churches identified at both Housesteads and Vindolanda.

At the time of writing there is concern about the growing divide between urban and rural communities in Northumberland and elsewhere. This divide is, however, not nearly so great as that which must have existed between those who lived in the Romano-British countryside and those who lived in the Roman towns, forts and *vici*. Those communities lived very different lives, spoke different languages and in many ways occupied different worlds. The demands of the Roman military for food and other supplies meant that there was some degree of interaction between these two worlds, but some farming families must surely have continued to live and farm in the hills much as generations of their ancestors had done before them. As time went by, more and more youngsters may have flocked to the *vici* in search of fame and fortune, while large numbers must have joined the Roman army before perhaps retiring to the *vici* at a later date. This process is perhaps mirrored today by the choice of so many farmers' children to leave the land and search for alternative careers. However, the stability of the *vici* depended entirely on the presence of the army, and while it must have seemed to many generations that the army would be present forever, we have already seen that this is not how things turned out. By the early fifth century the Roman army, and the way of life associated with it, had disappeared from Northumberland forever.

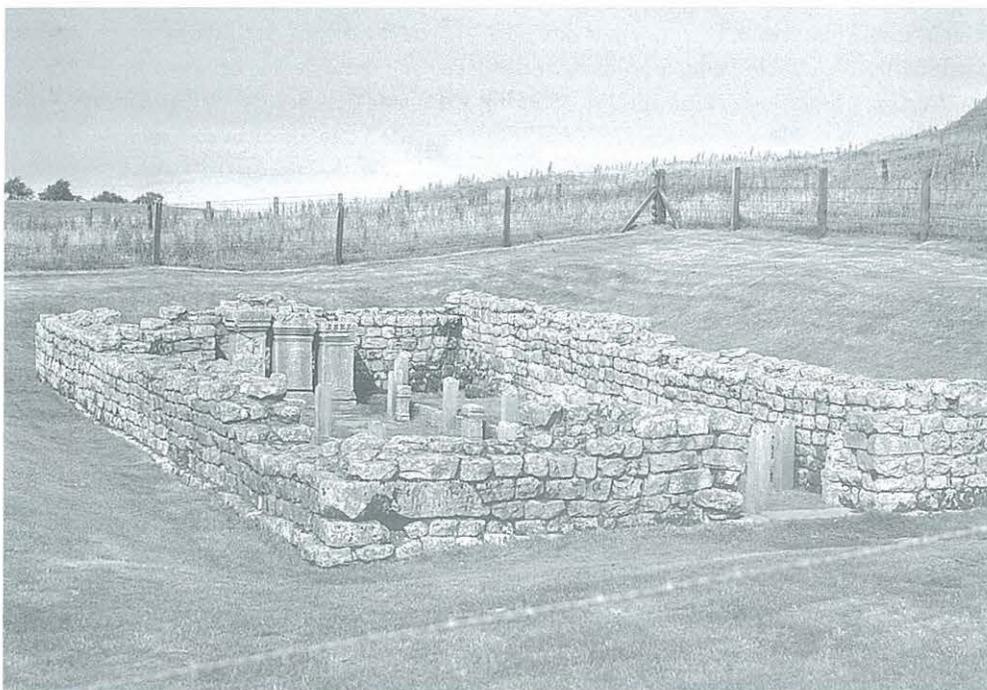


FIGURE 5.16 Remains of the Carrowbrough mithraeum.



# Bede, Beowulf and Bernicia

## The early medieval period

(cAD410–1066)

The centuries following the Roman era are often referred to as the Anglo-Saxon period. However, ‘early medieval’ is a better term for the six and a half centuries which include the post-Roman ‘Dark Age’, the Anglian period, and the Viking incursions from the later eighth century, culminating in the onset of the full medieval period following the Norman Conquest of 1066. Most of the recorded history of this period relates to changes in the nature of the ruling elite, and although there was a major shift in settlement pattern, most people probably continued to live lives not greatly differing from those of their Iron Age predecessors. The majority would have been engaged in agricultural work to provide the surplus necessary to support aristocratic leaders and warriors. This account provides a brief historical overview of the kingdom of Northumbria (and more specifically Bernicia), the rise of the Christian Church, and the ‘Viking’ period. It seeks to place what little archaeological evidence we have from within and around the National Park within this historical context.

In addition to archaeological evidence, we have historical sources (the interpretation of which, it must be stated, is sometimes difficult) such as the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles and the work of the Venerable Bede, who lived and worked at Jarrow and completed his *History of the English Church and People* in 731 (Sherley-Price and Farmer 1990). In addition, epic literature such as *Beowulf* and the *Gododdin* poem provide a flavour of heroic society in sixth- and seventh-century Northumbria. Placenames can also be useful in suggesting when villages were first founded. These sources provide a rough historical framework within which to try and place our known archaeological sites. The places, personalities and battles known to us through such early historical sources would not have differed greatly from those of earlier times, when similar conflicts between competing prehistoric (and therefore, to us, anonymous) tribal dynasties must have mirrored those between the aristocratic leaders of the known early medieval kingdoms. It is ironic, though, that just as these historical sources become available to us, archaeological evidence for human settlement in the Park, so abundant for later prehistoric and Roman periods, virtually dries up.

Post-Roman times are sometimes termed the ‘Dark Ages’, largely on account of our ignorance of them. This is the time of the legendary King Arthur, and the availability of some early historic sources, of variable reliability, lends this period an enigmatic quality not present in earlier times. This is largely down to the fact that we can refer to some kings and other important individuals by name. There are hardly any historical sources that refer specifically to the area of the National Park, however, and very few sites have been dated to this period.



FIGURE 6.1 Bamburgh Castle on the Northumberland Coast. Although well outside the National Park, Bamburgh is crucial to the history of early medieval Northumbria. It was here that Ida took control, in about AD547, and it was from here that the kingdom of Bernicia was governed through until medieval times. Today's Bamburgh Castle is of medieval and later date, but the site was almost certainly occupied by a substantial hillfort in later prehistoric times and may well have been occupied ever since.

The Roman abandonment of Hadrian's Wall may well have been of little immediate consequence to the people living further north. It is probable that the people known to the Romans as the *Votadini* continued life much as before, occupying roundhouses in small undefended hamlets throughout the uplands and on lower ground. Excavations at a Romano-British farmstead at Huckhoe in the Wansbeck Valley (Jobey 1959) suggest that rectangular buildings were occupied here in the fifth century and possibly into the sixth.

In the fifth century, small, local warbands may have reoccupied some of the old hillforts and set up local territories with wealth based on cattle and perhaps slave trading. Several hillforts in Scotland are known to have been occupied at this time. The fort at Humbleton near Wooler is a prime contender for such reuse, which may one day be proven through careful excavation. The recovery of an iron knife of apparent early medieval date from antiquarian excavations at Brough Law suggests that this fort may also have been reoccupied in the post-Roman period. Radiocarbon dating suggests that the hillfort on Wether Hill (Chapter 12) may have been occupied in some form into the sixth century AD, although the nature of activity on the site requires clarification through further excavation of the fort itself. Similar developments apparently occurred at Roman forts, where local warbands perhaps organised around remnants of the Roman army may have offered protection to the local population in exchange for food and other resources. Such a process is certainly suggested by the discovery of substantial Dark Age halls within the ruins of Birdoswald fort on Hadrian's Wall (Wilmott 2001).

Although the evidence is far from conclusive, the old territory of the *Votadini* seems to have become divided into the kingdom of the *Gododdin* to the north of the Tweed, perhaps

focussed on Traprain Law as well as Edinburgh, and the kingdom of Brynaich to the south, including Bamburgh (*Dingaroi*) and Yeavering (*Gefrin*) and most if not all of what is now the National Park. To the south of Brynaich, in lands previously occupied by the Brigantes, the Anglian kingdom of Deira was apparently already in existence by the late fifth century, while to the west lay the British kingdoms of Rheged (covering Cumbria and Solway) and Strathclyde (south-west Scotland). As we are about to discover, all of these regions were soon to find themselves under the ultimate control of the kings of Northumbria.

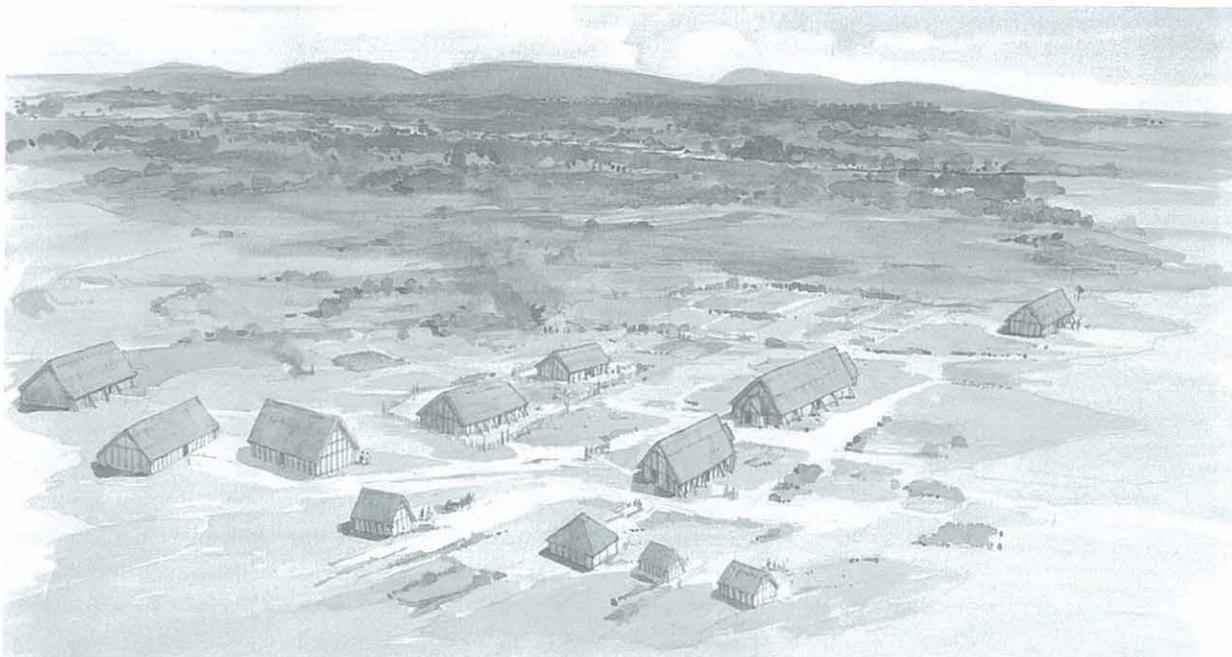
It is probable that some Anglian leaders and their warriors were invited into north-east England as mercenaries by British rulers in the decades following the collapse of Roman rule. Before long, however, these Anglian leaders were taking control of some of the old British kingdoms. In or around the year AD547, Ida became the first Anglian king of Brynaich, usually referred to today by its Latinised name 'Bernicia'. Ida may have come from overseas, or, perhaps more plausibly, from Deira to the south. It is difficult to understand how he could have so rapidly achieved such power through military force alone, and although there was inevitably a degree of conflict it is probable that he attracted considerable backing from the local British warrior aristocracy, presumably by convincing them of the power and wealth that would flow their way should they opt to back him. Ida apparently governed from Bamburgh (fig 6.1) although he and his successors would have regularly travelled around the kingdom visiting and holding council at a number of important places. The king's power was dependent on the loyalty of a number of thegns (noblemen), some of whom would have come with him from elsewhere while others were probably members of the pre-existing British aristocracy who pledged their loyalty to him. Some thegns resided with the king as part of his immediate entourage, while others were leaders of local village communities – the forerunners of the medieval 'lords of the manor'. The king had his own army of well trained warriors, equipped with horses, swords, spears and body armour. This army, which probably consisted of no more than a few hundred men, was supported using surplus production from the lands under the control of the king. Landholding thegns also had their own bands of warriors at a more local level, so the retention of the loyalty of his thegns was crucial to a king's success. Regular expansion of the kingdom, and the consequent ability to reward and retain ever larger armies, was the key to kingly success in early medieval Britain. Below the thegns and warriors were the ceorls (free men), most of whom were peasant farmers, each granted perhaps a few dozen hectares of land. In an emergency, every able-bodied ceorl would be expected to take up whatever arms he could find and fight alongside the thegns and warriors, but it is not clear how often such emergencies occurred. Just as in earlier and later times, the power of kings and nobles depended ultimately upon surplus food production by such peasant farmers. Other ceorls were tradesmen, although specialist craftsmen capable of producing the most magnificent jewellery and weapons of the period probably worked directly to the king. At the bottom of the hierarchy were the 'thralls' or slaves, many of whom would have been captured from adjacent kingdoms while others were perhaps descendants of native British communities that refused to accept the new Anglian rulers.

This was a heroic society in which kings and warriors fought for wealth and honour, many dying glorious (if gory) deaths on the battlefield. Many battles, about which very few facts are known to history, were fought between Anglian Bernicia and her neighbours. At the Battle of Catraeth (Catterick), in about AD590, an Anglian army under the command of Ida's grandson, Aethelfrith, defeated the Gododdin in a battle rendered immortal through

the magnificent 'y Gododdin' poem. After this, Aethelfrith's authority grew as more and more local warlords chose to support him. The great Battle of Degsastan, fought somewhere in the Borders (conceivably very close to the National Park) in AD603, saw Aethelfrith defeat a confederation of the northern kingdoms, thus extending his power far into what is now Scotland. The year AD603 is acknowledged as the first of Aethelfrith's twelve years as king of both Deira and Bernicia. It may thus be regarded as the date of the formal unification of the kingdom of Northumbria (Marsden 1992, 69). During the seventh century, this kingdom stretched from the Humber to Edinburgh in the east, and from the Mersey to the Solway in the west. In addition, areas to north and south were subject to Aethelfrith's 'overkingship', although still nominally under the control of their own kings (Marsden 1992; Higham 1993). The conditions of relative stability under Aethelfrith's successors during the later seventh and eighth centuries, coupled with the wealth and power of the Church at this time, gave rise to the so-called Northumbrian Golden Age, during which the region was at the forefront of cultural and intellectual developments (Hawkes and Mills 1999). Such masterpieces as the Lindisfarne Gospels were produced, along with exquisite jewellery and intricate stone carvings. These represent a fusion of artistic styles and techniques from regions as far apart as Ireland, Scandinavia and the Mediterranean. However, this wealth existed largely within the aristocracy and the Church, and in particular within monasteries such as Wearmouth-Jarrow, Lindisfarne and Hexham. Although some of the artistic finery of the time presumably filtered down to local churches, it is doubtful whether many residents of what is now the Northumberland National Park were particularly aware that they were living in a Golden Age.

With specific regard to the National Park, evidence for activity during the Anglian period is remarkably sparse. While we know the basic historical framework for the period, we can only make informed guesses as to the nature of local settlement. What is beyond doubt is that the early medieval period witnessed a change from a settlement pattern based on Roman forts, *vici* and Romano-British farmsteads with roundhouses, to a system of lowland hamlets and villages, many of which survived into the medieval period and still survive today. In fact, placename evidence suggests that most of the fifteen or so settlements within the Park that can be considered today as villages (as opposed to isolated steadings or hamlets of two or three houses) probably had their origins in the Anglian phase of the early medieval period. We do not know the extent to which this change in settlement pattern was due to an influx of Anglian settlers from the continent, or to a change in lifestyle amongst native Britons, but it must have been a combination of the two. It may also have been related to one or more outbreaks of plague, which it is known occurred during the sixth and seventh centuries and which may have decimated some traditional rural settlements as did the Black Death several centuries later. Whatever the mechanisms of this change, we can envisage many of our present day villages existing as clusters of timber houses, in some cases around a timber church, by the end of the seventh century. These villages would have been surrounded by fields in which cereals and vegetables familiar from earlier times would have been grown, and cattle, sheep and pigs kept. There must have been managed woodland adjacent to most villages, as timber would have been in constant demand for buildings, fuel and numerous other uses. Away from the village, the lower hills would have functioned as summer pastures, while the high hills would have been little used other than by the occasional hunting party.

Thus the general pattern of human settlement in the area of the National Park at this time was perhaps not very different from that still in existence today. While we cannot yet state



with any certainty when or why the old Romano-British settlements were finally abandoned, it is unlikely that many were still in use, other than perhaps as seasonal shepherds' huts in the high ground away from the villages, after the sixth century. Despite these changes in the settlement pattern, however, the vast majority of people in the Park would still have been peasant farmers with little reason to venture far from their homes throughout their lifetimes. Although coins were quite widespread in Anglo-Saxon England by the later eighth century, when Northumbrian silver coins were being minted at York, it would take several centuries for anything approaching a monetary economy to become operational within the Northumberland uplands. The introduction of a new religion, new settlement pattern, and even a new language, together with frequent changes in the ruling aristocracy, had little effect on the basic necessity of rural settlements to be self-sufficient in food production, and to produce a surplus to support the ruling elite of the day. In this, at least, little had changed since the Bronze Age, and things were certainly not about to change over the next few centuries.

A fascinating early medieval settlement has been excavated at Thirlings (fig 6.2), just to the north of the Park in the Milfield Basin. For unknown reasons, this settlement was abandoned and did not develop into a later village, hence the remains were available for excavation following their discovery by air photography in 1970. Excavations between 1973 and 1981 (O'Brien and Miket 1991) recovered evidence of a dozen substantial rectangular timber buildings (fig 6.3). Radiocarbon dates from the remains of construction timbers suggest that the settlement was founded in the mid to late sixth century. The duration of occupation at Thirlings is unknown, but may have extended through much of the seventh century. Whether its founders were early Anglian mercenaries or settlers, or native British folk whose ancestors had occupied the Romano-British settlements in the surrounding hills, remains unresolved, but as time went by there must have been a merging of such divisions between ethnic groups. Certainly, the occupants of Thirlings seem to have existed here

FIGURE 6.2  
Reconstruction of the  
village of Thirlings by  
Terry Ball.  
(© BEDE'S WORLD)



FIGURE 6.3  
Reconstructed Anglo-Saxon house at Bede's World, based on excavated evidence from Thirlings.  
(© BEDE'S WORLD)

without the need for any kind of defensive ramparts around their village, and there is no evidence for the site having been attacked at any time. Several traditional Anglian sunken-floored structures, known as *Grubenhäuser*, have been identified in the vicinity of Thirlings. These may have had several alternative uses, as dwellings, industrial buildings or perhaps granaries. Their presence here suggests that, once established, Thirlings may have attracted further Anglian incomers, although it is of course possible that local people adopted this form of architecture, and we certainly cannot assume that every *Grubenhäuser* represents an immigrant Anglian family. Other groups of *Grubenhäuser*, such as that identified at New Bewick in the Breamish

Valley (a few miles outside the National Park) may represent newly founded farmsteads or hamlets of the time. Such hamlets may, for a while, have co-existed alongside the more traditional Romano-British homesteads, the remains of which, as we have seen, still litter the hills of the National Park.

It is generally thought that land at this time was largely divided up into 'shires' or 'multiple estates', each of which was centred on a high status settlement, possibly the seat of a local lord. Given our lack of archaeological data, little can be said for sure about the nature of these shires in the vicinity of the National Park. However, recent work by Colm O'Brien (2002), using a combination of medieval records and early medieval archaeology, has led him to suggest that much of the northern half of the National Park was covered by two 'lost' shires (fig 6.4) which he terms 'Gefrinshire' (based on Yeavering, see below) and 'Bromic' (at one time a Lindisfarne estate which included the Breamish Valley and possibly also the settlements known in medieval times as 'the ten towns of Coquetdale'). The king of Bernicia and his retinue would have visited each of the shires on a regular



FIGURE 6.4 Colm O'Brien's suggested shires of Gefrinshire and Bromic.  
(FROM O'BRIEN 2002)

basis, probably staying for several days at each while being fed and entertained by the local aristocracy. It is tempting to suggest that such peripatetic leadership, perhaps based on similar land divisions, could extend back into prehistoric times, although it is difficult to see how this could ever be proven. O'Brien makes the intriguing suggestion that his shire of 'Bromic' may have been centred on Ingram, in the shadow of the hillfort on Brough Law. Although no early medieval finds have yet been made at Ingram, this is certainly possible, although another contender could be Greave's Ash, higher up the valley at Linhope.

O'Brien's 'Gefrinshire' is based on one of the most remarkable early medieval sites in Northumbria, a site which happens to sit astride the National Park's northern boundary. This site is *Ad Gefrin*, known today as Yeaveering (Hope-Taylor 1977; Frodsham 1999). Here,

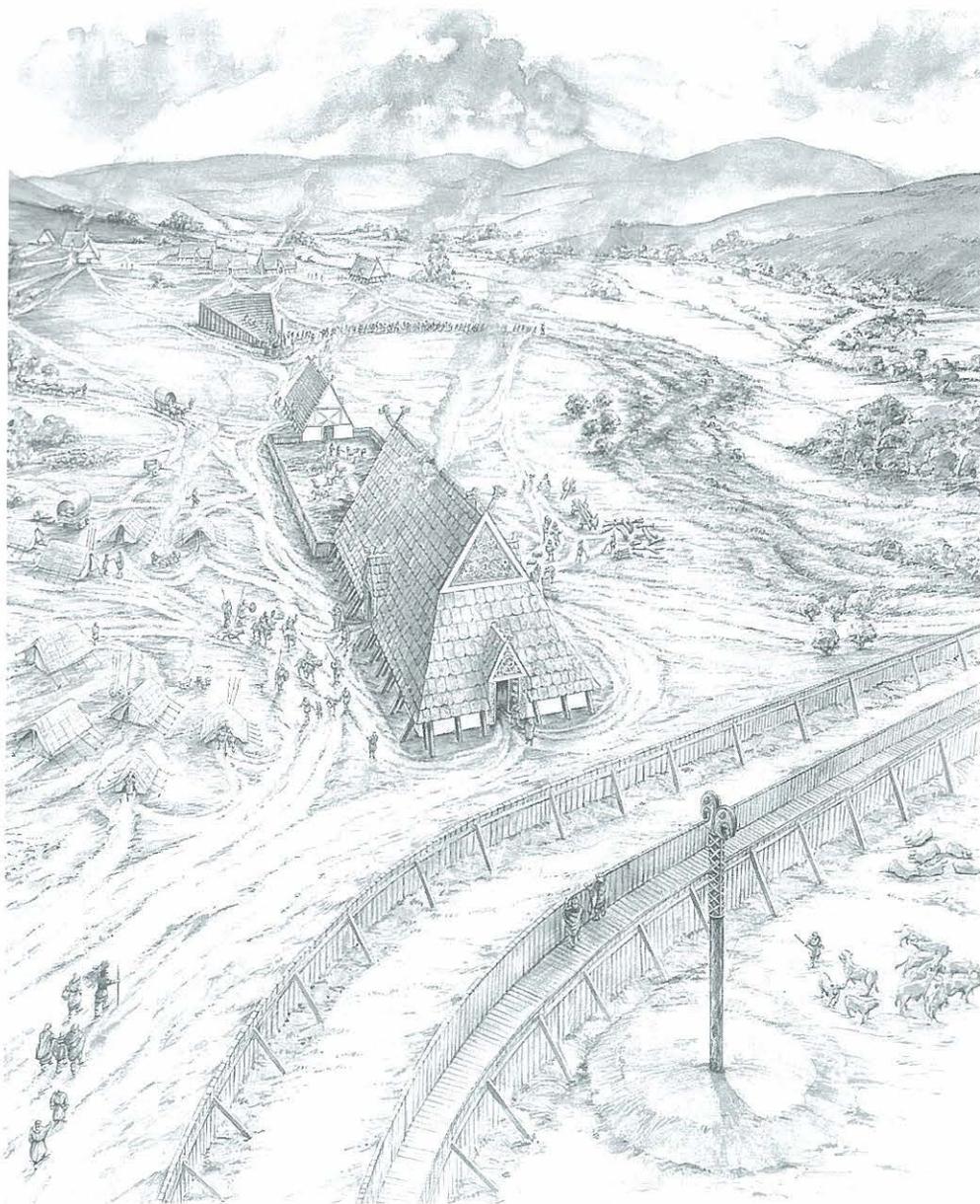


FIGURE 6.5  
Reconstruction of  
*Gefrin* (Yeaveering) by  
Richard Dunn.  
(© ENGLISH HERITAGE)



FIGURE 6.6 All that is visible at *Gefrin* today is this roadside monument, erected in the 1960s after the completion of Brian Hope-Taylor's excavations.

Northumbria as they moved around their kingdom, stopping for perhaps a few weeks at a time to hold court and enjoy the feasting provided at each venue.

It is reasonable to assume that *Gefrin* would have played a similar role to the earlier hillfort: providing a high status centre from which the surrounding lands would be ruled. The *Gefrin* Great Hall itself was constructed immediately adjacent to the so-called 'Great Enclosure' which was probably of late prehistoric origin but which was maintained throughout much of the life of the Anglian settlement. Perhaps, amongst other functions, this was used to collect taxes in the form of cattle from communities in the surrounding hills. The *Gefrin* site was discovered by aerial photography in 1949 and was subsequently excavated by Brian Hope-Taylor (1977). Hope-Taylor's magnificent 400 page report on his research at Yeavinger is one of the most important works on the archaeology of Northumberland ever published. It presents an enthralling fusion of literary sources and archaeological excavation in the attempt to make sense of these mysterious early historic times. In addition to the Great Hall and Great Enclosure, he uncovered evidence for several other buildings, a 'grandstand', extensive cemeteries, a pagan shrine (apparently transformed for Christian worship), and (in the site's later phases) an apparently purpose-built Christian church. During its relatively short life, the *Gefrin* complex was attacked and burned to the ground at least twice, reminding us that this was still a time of great instability, with a constant risk of conflict between different alliances of Anglian and British kingdoms. Eventually, in the late seventh century, *Gefrin* was abandoned. Bede tells us that its functions were transferred to a nearby settlement at *Maelmin* (which, like *Gefrin*, has been recorded from the air, adjacent to the village of Milfield). Why *Gefrin*, having been deliberately founded on such an ancient site imbued with a significance stretching way back into prehistory, should have been completely abandoned (fig 6.6) remains a mystery (Frodsham 1999). It may be that Christianity provided the opportunity to relocate religious centres away from long established places like *Gefrin*, where power had been vested in the place itself for thousands of years, but the exact mechanisms whereby such places were abandoned remain poorly understood. Some of Hope-Taylor's interpretations, as should be expected, have not stood the test of time, but nevertheless his contribution was immense, and archaeologists working in Northumberland will remain forever in his debt. Today, the Yeavinger landscape still holds the keys to many mysteries, and demands further archaeological investigation (Frodsham and O'Brien, forthcoming).

in about AD600, in the shadow of the great hillfort on Yeavinger Bell, and on the site of an already ancient late Neolithic/early Bronze Age ritual complex (including henge, burial mounds and cremation cemetery), the Anglian king of Bernicia built a great hall (fig 6.5). This hall takes us straight to the mysterious world of *Beowulf*, in which Hrothgar's great hall, *Heorot*, had a gilded roof and was used for large scale feasting by the king and his warrior aristocracy. The *Gefrin* hall must have been very similar, and no less important. It would have been occupied seasonally by the Kings of Bernicia and

The relationship between Christianity and paganism provides an important thread running throughout the early medieval period. There is some evidence for Christianity within the ranks of the late Roman military of the Hadrian's Wall garrison, although the extent to which this was reflected in the rural population of the Northumbrian uplands remains unknown. During the fifth century, Christianity spread throughout much of north Britain, partly due to the missionary activities of St Ninian who was based at Whithorn in south-west Scotland. Evidence from elsewhere suggests that Dark Age kingdoms like Brynaich were probably ruled by Christian kings, but there is little if any archaeological evidence to suggest a mass conversion of the local populace during the fifth century and Christianity's hold over most people may never have been more than tenuous. The earliest known post-Roman burials from the area of the National Park are pagan interments added to much earlier burial or ceremonial monuments (Miket 1979; Lucy 1999). Examples include sixth- or seventh-century cemeteries at the Milfield henges (which may have been cemeteries for the nearby settlement of Thirlings), burials apparently set into Bronze Age burial mounds at Barrasford and Capheaton, and interments from near Great Tosson and Hepple (Upper Coquetdale) in areas very rich in Bronze Age burials. Some burials, such as that of a sixth-century woman at Corbridge, were deposited within the remains of Roman forts. Unfortunately, most of these discoveries were made in the nineteenth century and only very sketchy accounts of them survive. Most can only be dated very generally to the sixth or seventh centuries and may represent Anglian incomers, people of native British stock, or a fusion of both. There are no known large Anglian cemeteries in Bernicia to compare with those in Deira to the south (such as Norton, Teesside, where 120 graves have been excavated in recent times) and this is usually interpreted as an indication of fewer Anglian incomers here in comparison to areas further south. One ongoing project which promises to give us more of an insight into life and death in Bernicia is the Bamburgh Research Project. This project's excavation of the Bowl Hole cemetery suggests that it may have originated in pre-Anglian times, and may have continued in use as a burial place, perhaps for Anglian aristocratic warriors associated with the royal centre at Bamburgh through into the eighth century. Further results from this project are eagerly awaited.

Following Ida's assumption of power in the mid-sixth century, Bernicia remained essentially pagan until the time of King Edwin. Edwin was a Deiran who spent his early years in exile, hiding from Aethelfrith who saw him (not without good reason, as things turned out) as a threat. Eventually, Edwin, with the backing of Raedwald of East Anglia (probably the subject of the most famous ship burial at Sutton Hoo) defeated Aethelfrith in AD616. The Deiran royal house was now in control of the whole of Northumbria. Edwin was instrumental in introducing Christianity to Northumbria following his marriage to Aethelberg, a Christian princess in the Roman tradition from Kent. He was baptised by Paulinus in York in AD627. Bede tells us that Paulinus subsequently visited Bernicia and baptised many local people in the River Glen at *Gefrin*. We can envisage Paulinus preaching to the local people at the 'theatre' or 'grandstand' excavated by Brian Hope-Taylor, which was large enough to sit three hundred people at a time (see fig 6.5). The new converts would presumably have included most of the local aristocracy, keen to follow their king for their own political advantage. The extent to which Christian beliefs actually took hold of the masses at this time remains, however, a matter for conjecture.

After Edwin's death in battle in AD633, Paulinus fled south and power in Northumbria eventually fell into the hands of Oswald, of the previously exiled Bernician royal house.

Oswald had been in exile in Scotland, and had joined the Celtic Church, which he now brought to Northumbria. Bishop Aidan arrived from Iona at Oswald's invitation, set up a monastery on Lindisfarne (Holy Island), and the kingdom of Northumbria was soon converted to the ways of the Celtic Church. There was confusion between Celtic and Roman tradition, most notably relating to the date of Easter. Eventually, in AD664 at the Synod of Whitby, King Oswy ended this confusion by aligning Northumbria firmly with Roman tradition. Shortly afterwards, in about AD670, Bishop Wilfrid began to build his magnificent monastery at Hexham, the crypt of which still survives beneath the present day abbey. Following the Synod of Whitby, Northumbria looked increasingly to the south for all sorts of economic and cultural links, and the Celtic Church lost influence in Northumbria as the Roman Church became increasingly wealthy. By the late eighth century the Lindisfarne monastery had become one of the richest landowning institutions in Northumbria, principally through grants of land by successive kings. Many churches, originally of timber but later in stone, were built throughout the land. Although archaeological evidence stretching back this far remains elusive, slight remnants of such structures may still remain sealed beneath the stone walls of many of our medieval churches. Priests, who would have been based at the monasteries, would presumably have travelled around from church to church, possibly also preaching at other places in the countryside.

We have suggested above that the Breamish Valley was Lindisfarne land. This might provide a context for one of the most unusual ancient settlements in the valley. The late prehistoric enclosure of Ingram Hill (the most low lying of the many enclosed settlements in the valley) is unique amongst all the native sites in the Cheviots in having been the focus of three separate excavation projects (Hogg 1942, 1956; Jobey 1971). It began life in the Iron Age as a palisaded settlement and was later given a substantial defensive bank. Later still, and at an unknown date, a number of small rectangular buildings were inserted into the bank with at least one built in the interior (fig 6.7). These have in the past been interpreted as medieval shielings, but it seems strange to have shielings so close to the village. Perhaps the



FIGURE 6.7 The apparently unique Ingram Hill settlement. Despite three campaigns of excavation, the rectangular cells set into the bank of this late prehistoric settlement remain undated. Could they be the remnants of an early medieval monastic cell? (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

site in its latest phase is best explained as a monastic cell, occupied by monks who may have spent part of the year preaching at settlements in the surrounding hills. Just possibly, the so-called 'Holy Well' in the adjacent field may offer some support to this suggestion. Unfortunately, none of the excavations was able to provide dates for the rectangular structures, although Hogg states that the closest parallels he could find (which may be wholly irrelevant) are from Norway and date from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Further progress in our understanding of the site is unlikely without a fourth campaign of excavations, enabling the remains to be subjected to modern scientific techniques.

Some of the most impressive evidence for early medieval Christianity comes in the form of large stone crosses, of which a few are known from the vicinity of the Park (Collingwood 1927; Cramp 1984). The remains of a splendid ninth-century cross were found high up the North Tyne Valley at Falstone (fig 6.8), and a slightly earlier very rare type of inscribed memorial stone has been recovered from nearby Hawkhope. The inscription on this stone can be translated as *'Eomaer set this up for his uncle Hroethbeht. Pray for his soul'*. It must once have formed part of a memorial monument, the original form of which is unknown. The remains of another fine cross, dating from about AD800, were found built into the structure of Simonburn church (fig 6.8). The base of what must have been one of the most magnificent such crosses in the whole of Bernicia can still be seen in Rothbury church, where it is now used as the base of the font (fig 6.9). This suggests that Rothbury may have been the primary regional settlement in Upper Coquetdale from as far back as the early ninth century, although nothing is known of a settlement here from such distant times. Acca's Cross in Hexham Abbey is another impressive, and possibly early (mid-eighth-century), local example. Some stone crosses, and probably many others of timber which do not survive, were set up as foci for open air services. In several cases, churches would have been built at such places, perhaps with the crosses retained within the churchyards, some of which have remained as places of worship and burial ever since. The remains of one of the most impressive early medieval crosses in northern England, probably dating from not long after AD700, can still be seen in the churchyard at Bewcastle, about 10km west of the Park's south-west corner.

Other local sites have tenuous links with early Christianity. On the line of Hadrian's Wall is the putative site of the Battle of Heavenfield (AD635), at which Bede tells us that Oswald erected a wooden cross as the standard for his army before defeating Cadwallon. This victory ensured the (albeit short-lived) success of Celtic Christianity in Northumbria. Today the site, still known as Heavenfield, is occupied by the atmospheric church of St Oswald (fig 6.10) which itself dates back to the early eighteenth century and may well occupy the site of a Saxon church. In Coquetdale, the serene St Ninian's Well (also known as the 'Lady's Well') occupies the site of a probable prehistoric sacred spring on the line of the Roman road which

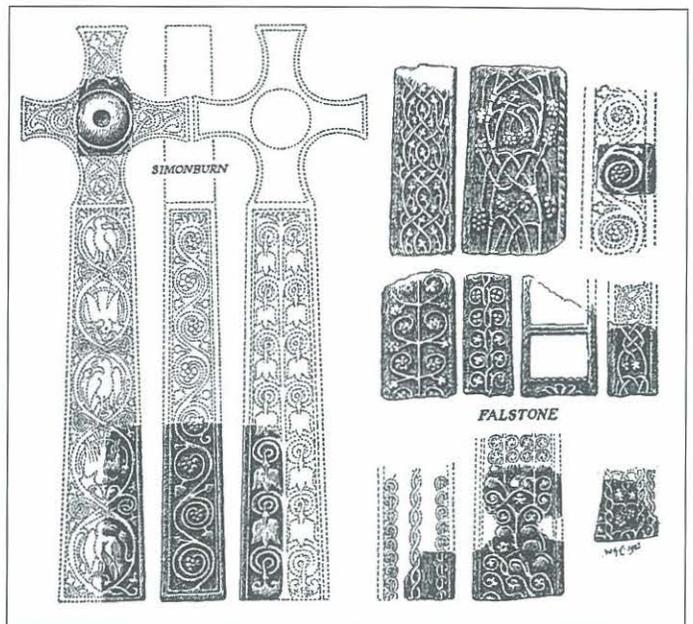


FIGURE 6.8 Simonburn cross (left) reconstructed from the surviving fragments, and (right) the surviving fragments of the Falstone cross. (FROM COLLINGWOOD 1927)

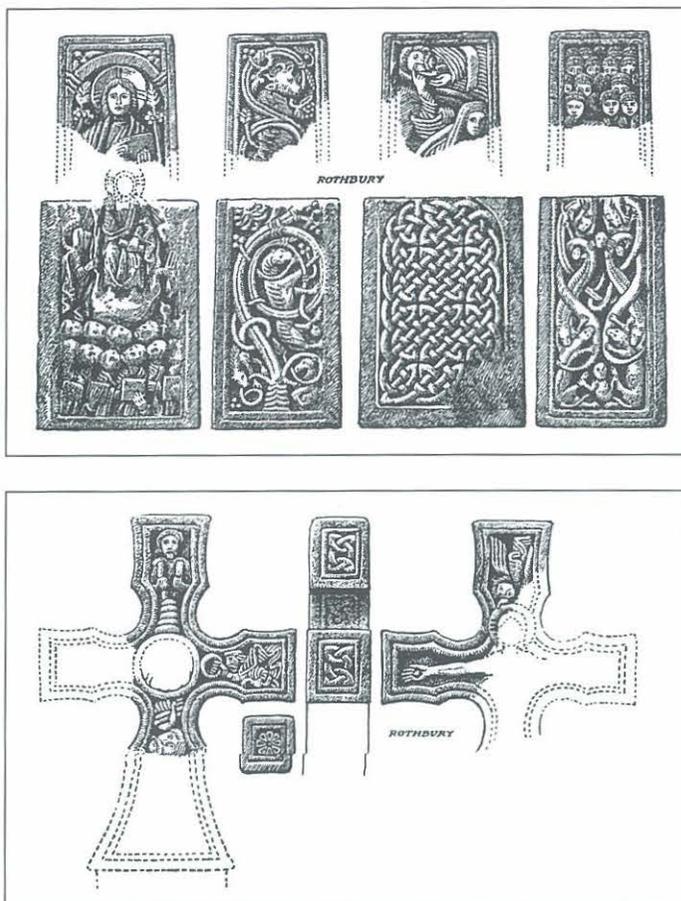


FIGURE 6.9 Rothbury cross: the top and base of the shaft, and the surviving fragment of the head. (FROM COLLINGWOOD 1927)

Scandinavian term that can be translated as 'sea-borne adventurer'. Historians use the term to describe bands of aristocratic warriors from Norway, Denmark and Sweden that terrorised the coasts of Britain at this time. These people were known to the inhabitants of early medieval Northumbria simply as 'northmen'. The initial raids were apparently for the acquisition of booty (the treasures of the Golden Age) rather than the occupation and settlement of new territory. There was some Norse settlement on the Scottish Northern Isles and in Ireland, but there is little suggestion of this in Northumberland and certainly no evidence from the National Park. In the mid-ninth century the Danes invaded Britain, apparently more interested in acquiring and settling new lands than the earlier Vikings had been, although they also did their share of plundering. This episode, on the back of the earlier raids, seriously reduced the wealth and power of the Church and effectively destroyed Northumbrian monasticism which did not fully recover until after the Norman Conquest. York, and with it much of the kingdom of Northumbria, fell to the Danes in AD867. In AD875 Halfdan campaigned in Bernicia and further north, apparently with the aim of taking the whole of Northumbria as his own. However, it seems that Bernicia was never actually occupied by large numbers of Danes, and the Danelaw, which covered most of eastern England by the late ninth century, incorporated Deira but not Bernicia. A Scandinavian presence in the vicinity of Rothbury has been suggested on the basis of a few possible Scandinavian placenames (eg Trew hitt, Snitter, Tosson, Blindburn), but alternative and

may have been deliberately aligned to pass close by it (fig 6.11). The site was probably of considerable local importance in early medieval times, but unfortunately there is no archaeological evidence to support the legends linking it with Paulinus and St Ninian. An intriguing reference to 'Baldwulf, Bishop of Whitherne, consecrated at Harehaugh on the Coquet, in 790' (Bates 1895, 86) suggests that Harehaugh may have been of some religious significance in the eighth century. Given the strategic importance of Harehaugh in the local landscape, this would not come as an enormous surprise, but no archaeological evidence for any early medieval activity here has been recognised. In the northern Cheviots, the 'adoration of the Magi' carving built into the wall of the church of St Gregory the Great at Kirknewton (fig 6.12) has been cited as evidence of an early medieval church here, but the date of this carving remains uncertain. While it is considered by some experts to be of post-Conquest date, it may yet prove to be early.

Norse Vikings raided Lindisfarne in AD793, and soon followed this initial strike with numerous raids on other religious sites. The word 'Viking' that we use today stems from a



FIGURE 6.10 The church of St Oswald, Heavenfield.



FIGURE 6.11 Lady's Well, Holystone.

more plausible interpretations of all these names are possible (Watson 1970, 34). Despite the romantic temptation to see bands of Viking warriors settling permanently in Upper Coquetdale, there is no real evidence for this ever having happened. It seems most likely that Bernicia continued to be ruled by an Anglian aristocracy, based at Bamburgh, that may have been hostile to the Danish presence to the south but powerless to do anything about it. The Church regained some land and power at this time in Bernicia, as the Community of St Cuthbert (based at this point at Chester-le-Street) was allowed to manage its vast estates with a degree of independence, seemingly with the blessing and support of the Danes. Perhaps Northumberland, just as in Roman times, was a conveniently independent 'buffer state' between those in power further south and potentially hostile groups to the north.

However, these were turbulent times, and many epic battles were fought between English and Scandinavian armies throughout northern England during the early tenth century. Having survived the Danish invasions, Bernicia was next invaded by a Norse army, drawn from the already existing Scandinavian settlements of Ireland and western Britain. This army, under Ragnald, defeated what was left of the Bernician aristocracy, combined with others fighting on behalf of the Community of St Cuthbert, at the Battles of Corbridge in AD914 and c.AD918. Ragnald assumed control of all Bernician territory, but, as with previous Scandinavian conquests, and despite the vast impact of the Vikings on other parts of Britain, there is little evidence in the area of the National Park for Scandinavian settlement. It would seem that the Bernician House at Bamburgh, though weak, continued to exercise power over Bernicia, presumably paying tribute of some kind to Ragnald. Most people probably continued to live in their villages as they had for the previous four or five centuries, and worries about which leader to support in battle remained essentially the concerns of the aristocracy.

The kingdom of Wessex under Alfred the Great and his successors was gradually expanding at this time to take over Mercia (in the Midlands) and all the lands of the Danelaw in eastern England. At the great battle of Brunanburh (at an unknown location somewhere in Northumbria) in AD937, King Athelstan of Wessex defeated a combined army of Scots, Britons and Scandinavians, then proclaimed himself 'King of all Britain'. Northumbria was now reduced in status from a kingdom to an earldom, and although the earls of Northumbria were still very powerful on the local stage they were now subject to kings based further south. The kingdom of Scotland, which had already expanded southwards to incorporate Lothian and Strathclyde, also assumed control of Berwickshire after victory at the Battle of Carham in 1018. The Anglo-Scottish Border now lay on the Tweed, where it remains to this day. The great, ancient kingdom of Northumbria was now divided between the new kingdoms of England and Scotland.

The eleventh-century political history of northern England is both complex and violent, involving mysterious characters with almost mythological sounding names such as Siward, Tostig, Uhtred and Morcar, but there is little hard archaeological evidence of anything from the area of the National Park. Placename evidence has been cited as proof of the existence of some kind of pre-Conquest fort at the strategic site of Harbottle Castle (Chapter 17), but

no evidence of activity earlier than the twelfth century has been recovered here and, in any case, the interpretation of the name is not beyond doubt. What is beyond question is that the area now covered by the Northumberland National Park, which just 25 generations earlier had lain on the northern fringes of the mighty Roman Empire, now found itself in the north-east corner of the kingdom of England. The presence of the Anglo-Scottish Border would now dominate life in the region for more than half a millennium, at times bringing abject poverty and misery to those communities unfortunate enough to find themselves living alongside it.

FIGURE 6.12 Adoration of the Magi carving in Kirknewton church. (PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW HAYWARD)





# From castles to bastles

## The medieval period (1066–1603)

**T**he medieval period begins with the success of William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, and for the purposes of this account it covers the period through until the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Much more historical detail is available than for earlier periods, with a variety of legal and other documents available to add flesh to the bones provided by the archaeological record.

While the detailed history of the relationship between England and Scotland in medieval times is beyond the remit of this volume, a basic grasp of the broad historical context is essential to an appreciation of medieval life within the area of the National Park. Therefore, a broad outline of the historical framework is included in this account, which is divided into four sections. The first covers the imposition and consolidation of Norman control after the Conquest, including the setting up of new Baronies and the Liberties of Redesdale and Tynedale. The second considers the subsequent relative peace and prosperity of the thirteenth century. The third covers the period from 1296, when Edward I declared himself King of Scotland, leading to some three centuries of intermittent Anglo-Scottish conflict that only came to an end following the Union of the Crowns in 1603. The impact of this conflict on the people who had previously lived relatively peacefully in what is now the National Park was horrendous, and was linked directly to the development of the violent way of life of the Border reivers. The fourth and final section outlines the key role played by the Church through the entire medieval period.

### *After 1066: Baronies and Liberties*

Following William's conquest of England and his 'harrying of the North' to suppress all lingering opposition amongst the northern English aristocracy, the Crown eventually assumed control of Northumberland. William realised that he would be unable to control the north without an Earl of Northumberland who would enjoy the support of the northern people while remaining loyal to him. This proved difficult, but he eventually settled upon Robert de Mowbray, who at least had the decency not to revolt until after William's death in 1087. Under William, a rigid feudal system was set in place which relied upon a pyramidal social structure. The king, who owned all the land, granted most of it to barons in exchange for up to 40 days of guaranteed military service each year. The barons sublet land to lesser lords or knights, again in exchange for military support, who in turn could sublet to yeomen or 'free' peasants. Some areas were apparently left under the control of existing English thegns who were considered sufficiently loyal to the new regime. Under the feudal system, all able-bodied men bore the obligation of up to 40 days' unpaid military service in support of their lord or the king. However, most English armies of the time consisted largely of mounted

important resource for nearby villages. Medieval hunting forests also existed in Coquetdale, North Tynedale, Redesdale and in the wastes north of Hadrian's Wall.

The Manor of Rothbury was retained by the Crown after the Conquest, and was eventually granted, along with the Forest of Rothbury, to Robert FitzRoger, Baron of Warkworth, in 1205. It became Percy land in 1332. The Barony of Hepple, originally granted to the 'de Hepple' family, included much fertile land to the west of Rothbury (including, eventually, Tosson, which had been part of the Greystoke Barony centred in Cumberland) and was much more important in medieval times than today's pleasant little village of Hepple might suggest.

South of Coquetdale, all of the land now within the National Park fell within the Liberties of Redesdale and Tynedale from the mid-twelfth century (fig 7.1). These liberties were nominally independent but were still subject to English Law and their existence was subject to the will of the English monarch. The origins of the Liberty of Redesdale are obscure, but it was granted to the Umphravilles probably towards the middle of the twelfth century. The Umphravilles built a splendid motte and bailey castle at Elsdon (fig 7.2) as the headquarters of the Liberty. The grass covered earthworks of this castle still stand impressively above the village today. This castle did not remain as the headquarters of the Liberty for long, however, as it was replaced in about 1157 by a new motte and bailey at the more strategic location of Harbottle (Chapter 17), apparently built on the direct orders of Henry II (fig 7.3). Another administrative centre for the Liberty was maintained in the form of a tower at Otterburn, but it seems that most effort went into the construction and maintenance of Harbottle, a fact which probably reflects the greater agricultural potential of

FIGURE 7.2 Aerial view of the village of Elsdon. Clearly visible are the motte and bailey, the church and the tower. Note the large village green, on which the medieval fair was held, and the surviving ridge-and-furrow in the surrounding fields. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

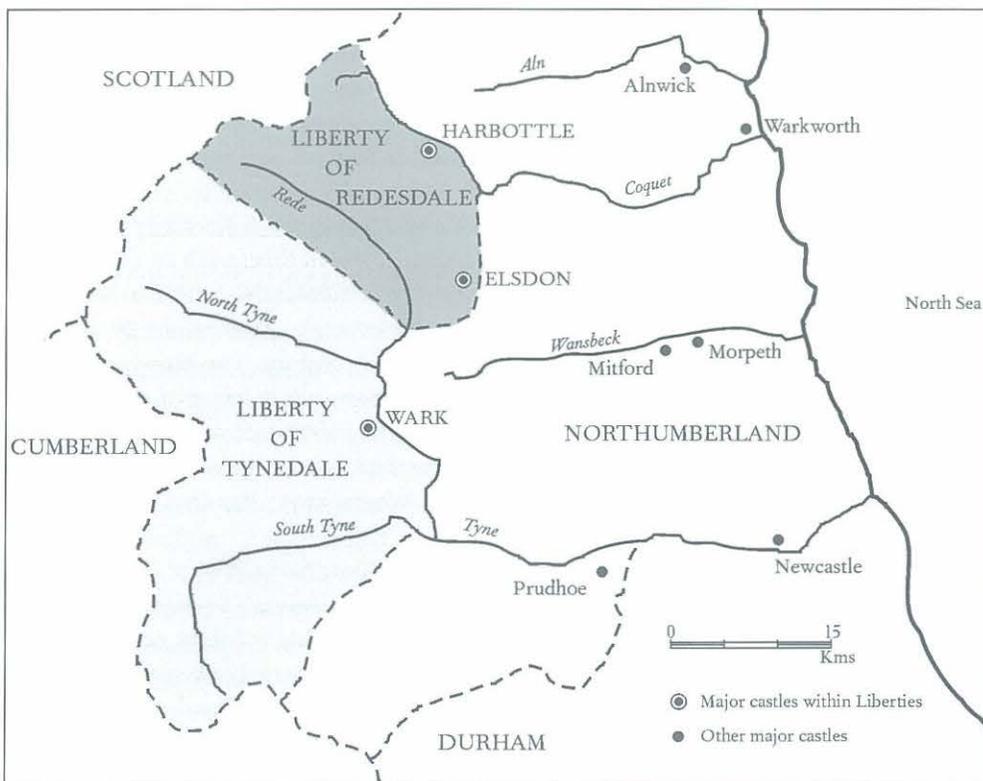


FIGURE 7.3 Harbottle Castle (see also fig 17.1).

FIGURE 7.1 Map showing the Liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale (BASED ON HEPPLE 1976)



this valley in comparison to the wild landscape of Redesdale. Another reason why Harbottle may have been favoured as the focal point of the Liberty might have been the as yet poorly understood status of the 'Ten Towns of Coquetdale'. These settlements (which extended as far north as the Breamish, including Ingram, Biddlestone, Alwinton and Clennel) formed part of the Barony of Alwick, held by the de Vesci family. However, for some unknown reason, they were apparently held by the Umphravilles from the reign of Henry I. If they were actually considered by the Umphravilles as part of their landholding then Harbottle makes more sense as a centrally located administrative centre. It is recorded in 1604 that the inhabitants of the Ten Towns 'have ancientlie don and nowe do their service to Harbotle', but it is not clear whether this was a truly ancient arrangement or whether it was a situation arising out of the presence of the Warden of the Middle March (see below) at Harbottle in the sixteenth century.

That part of the Park to the south of the Liberty of Redesdale was within the much larger Liberty of Tynedale (also known as the Regality of Tynedale). This was created by Henry II in 1157 and awarded to William II (brother and heir to Malcolm IV of Scotland) to compensate him for the loss of the earldom of Northumberland which had, by agreement, been held by Scottish earls for the previous two decades. With a brief exception (1174–1189, following William's failed attempt to win back the earldom by force) Tynedale was now to remain under the control of Scottish Kings (though subject to English Law) until the outbreak of hostilities between the two nations in the late thirteenth

century. The Liberty was governed from the Scottish royal castle at the local 'capital' of Wark-on-Tyne (just outside the Park) which had a prison, bakehouse, brewery, forge, fulling mill, corn mill and a deer park (Charlton 1987, 30). Control of the extensive royal hunting forest of North Tynedale was retained by the English Crown, although it was much used by the Scottish nobility. (The Liberty of Tynedale is considered further in Rushworth and Carlton's contribution on Thirlwall Castle in Part II of this volume).

Sites within the Liberty of Tynedale, and within the National Park, which date from this period include the 'castles' at Dally and Tarsset. Dally was built by David de Lindsay, from Lothian, and was controversial as its construction apparently commenced in 1237 without the prior approval of Henry III. After some negotiation, the 'castle' was apparently completed, but to a modified design, as a 'hall house'. Dally was robbed of much stone when the adjacent farmhouse and mill were built in the late eighteenth century, but the ruins (now conserved by the National Park Authority) display very high quality masonry. It must have been an impressive site when first built (fig 7.4). Permission to construct Tarsset Castle was granted in 1267 to John Comyn. His ancestors arrived in England with William the Conqueror, and his family was destined to play a major role in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Scottish politics. It is not easy, when looking at the unimpressive ruins of Tarsset Castle today, to appreciate how important this site once was.

The Northumberland baronies underwent complex and often fascinating histories throughout the medieval period, often changing hands, being subdivided or merged, but such details cannot concern us here. Detailed histories of the medieval baronies are provided in the relevant volumes of 'A History of Northumberland', while Lomas (1996) provides a useful summary.

### *Peace for the peasants: thirteenth-century village life*

Prior to 1219, the constant threat of conflict would have been nothing new to the residents of Northumberland villages, and the power games played out between assorted French speaking kings and nobles, whether 'English' or 'Scottish', must have seemed of little relevance to villagers who had been used to more or less continuous conflict going on around them for centuries. The fact that their taxes were now payable to a Norman lord rather than an Anglian thegn would have been of little consequence to most. Now, however, other than a brief period of Border conflict associated with the Magna Carta (1215) in which most Northumberland barons were opposed to King John, the Border was to remain relatively peaceful through until 1296. The peaceful conditions of the thirteenth century were to see many changes for the better.

It is unfortunate that the Domesday Book did not extend to Northumberland, as, in comparison with other English counties, there are relatively few surviving records relating to Northumberland prior to the twelfth century. Of the fifteen or so settlements of village status which survive today in the Park, most were in existence by this time. There were also

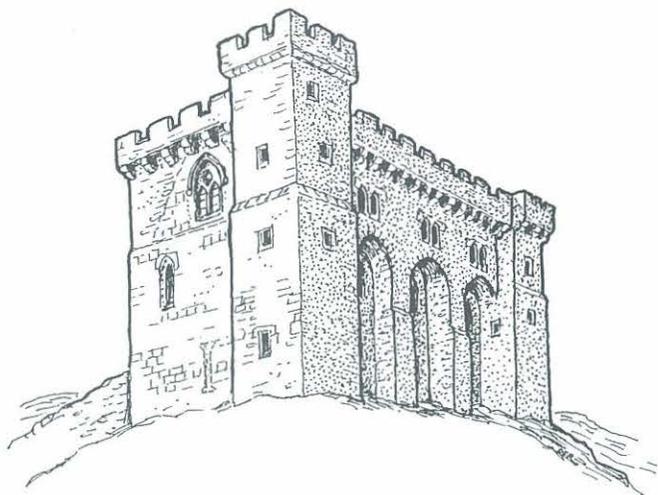


FIGURE 7.4 Dally Castle.  
(RECONSTRUCTION SKETCH  
BY PETER RYDER)

other medieval villages which have not survived, the ruins of which can be seen as grass covered earthworks in today's landscape. In Hadrian's Wall country, permanently occupied settlements were generally few and far between, even during the thirteenth century. Visible earthworks (fig 7.5) suggest that there was a hamlet of some kind associated with Bradley Hall (where Edward I is known to have stayed while en route to Carlisle in 1306), but the exact nature of this settlement is uncertain. About three hundred years later, a bastle was constructed on the site, but this does not necessarily imply continuity of settlement over the preceding three centuries. We will consider some possible explanations for the abandonment and shrinkage of medieval villages shortly.

Although most villages would have had their own specialist smiths, millers, brewers and bakers, the bulk of the medieval population of the Park consisted, just as in previous centuries, of the peasant farmers who worked the land. There were various classes of peasant, known by a confusing array of names such as cottars (or cottagers), bondmen, villains, neyfs and serfs. Some of these were free to work their own smallholdings in exchange for work done for the lord or payment of rent, or a combination of both. Others were effectively the personal property of the lord, with little or no freedom to work for themselves. Medieval feudal society was very rigid, and it was difficult, if not impossible, for individuals to move from one class to another.

FIGURE 7.5 Aerial view over Bradley Green. A medieval settlement of some kind clearly existed here, but excavation will be required if the surviving earthworks are ever to be understood. The line of Hadrian's Wall passes across the top-right hand corner, and the ditch and banks of the *vallum* can clearly be seen between the Wall and the modern road. The earthworks of the little Romano-British settlement of Milking Gap are just visible in the angle between the modern track and the *vallum* (top centre). (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



When viewed from the air, most historic villages are clearly surrounded by 'ridge-and-furrow' field systems. These are the remains of medieval cultivation, fossilised when the fields were abandoned and the land returned to pasture. Some such field systems are very complex, and include agricultural terraces on hillsides as well as conventional ridges on more gentle slopes. The development of such systems may have occurred over a very long time, and we have already noted that some terraces were in use in prehistoric times. However, much of the ridge-and-furrow visible in the Park landscape today was probably under cultivation during the thirteenth century. The recovery of hundreds of sherds of thirteenth-century pottery from the recent excavation of ridge-and-furrow adjacent to Ingram church suggests that domestic refuse was being thrown onto the fields as fertiliser at this time. The virtual absence of later pottery from these fields suggests that they had probably reverted to pasture by the mid-fourteenth century (see Chapter 11).

There are many variations of ridge-and-furrow, and much work remains to be done in defining and dating the various forms. However, the basic principle was that the ridge was ploughed with an ox- or horse-drawn plough and sown with crops, while the furrow provided drainage. Ridge-and-furrow thus worked in the same way, though on a larger scale, as the cord rig fields of Iron Age and Romano-British times. Forms of ridge-and-furrow remained in use until sub-surface drainage was introduced in the nineteenth century.

F W Dendy, (quoted in Dixon 1895, 241) in a paper entitled 'The Ancient Farms of Northumberland', describes the layout of fields around medieval villages:

*Beyond and around the village was the arable land, divided into great fields or flats, usually three in number. In that case they were worked on a three field rotation of crops, one being appropriated for autumn sown corn (ie wheat or rye), one for spring sown corn (ie barley or oats), or for peas and beans, and one was left fallow. These fields were again sub-divided into furlongs or squares or shots, placed very often at right angles to each other, with headlands or headriggs between them, on which the plough turned, and by which access was gained to these smaller areas. Each furlong was divided into acre or half-acre strips, separated from each other by balks of unploughed turf, and these acre or half acre strips were usually known as ... rigs. The strips were distributed in equal proportions amongst the cultivators in such a manner that each man's holding was made up of a number of acre or half acre strips lying apart from each other ... so that no man, while the system remained intact, held two contiguous strips. Each individual holder was bound to cultivate his strips in accordance with the rotation of crops observed by his neighbours, and had rights of pasture over the whole field for his cattle after the crops were gathered.*

While systems such as this were in operation around villages on the fringes of the park such as Glanton, the terrain dictated that the layout of fields could not be so regular around upland villages. Nevertheless, the basic system was similar, with arable land managed in individual strips within communal fields. These strips became asymmetric ridges on slight slopes, and terraces were constructed on steeper ground. Many settlements in North Tynedale and Redesdale only had small arable areas, as the local soils and climate dictated that the emphasis here was on stock rearing, as it still is today. In addition to the arable fields, meadows were managed to provide hay for winter fodder, and cattle, sheep, poultry and pigs provided a variety of important products for consumption and sale at local weekly markets and annual fairs. Markets and fairs were strictly controlled and required a royal licence:

FIGURE 7.6 Part of the thirteenth-century deer park wall on the north face of the Simonside hills.



regular markets were held on the fringes of the Park at the towns of Alnwick, Morpeth, Wooler, Rothbury, Hexham, Haltwhistle, Wark and Bellingham. Within the Park, in the Liberty of Redesdale, weekly markets and annual fairs were held at Harbottle and Elsdon. Harbottle's market day was Tuesday, and its fair was held on 8 September. In accordance with its market charter dated 1281, Elsdon had a weekly market on Thursdays, and a three day fair in August each year. This fair survived as a popular traditional event until the late nineteenth century.

Beyond the fields around each village were areas of common pasture, woodland, and waste. Hunting forests were located in many remote areas. There were also formalised hunting parks, and the substantial stone wall around Robert FitzRoger's late thirteenth-century deer park at Rothbury can still be seen on the northern flanks of the Simonside Hills near Lordenshaws (fig 7.6). It is recorded that the creation of this park caused outrage amongst local farmers who had previously enjoyed some access to the land for cattle grazing.

While the medieval population was concentrated in the villages and hamlets, the hills – which contained the remains of so many late prehistoric hillforts and settlements, as well as the occasional Roman fort – were occupied seasonally. This system, known as transhumance, probably represents a faint echo of the seasonal cycles of movement followed by Mesolithic and Neolithic people some 5000 or more years earlier. In August, the residents of the shielings returned with their stock to the comfort and security of the valleys to cut the hay and harvest the oats and bigg (a low grade of barley) planted the previous spring: this would provide food for man and beast over the coming winter. Wheat was considered unreliable in the poor soils and short growing seasons of Redesdale and North Tynedale, and was rarely grown. Some crops may also have been grown at the summer shieling grounds and brought back downhill with the cattle, along with supplies of peat for use as winter fuel. The cattle were over-wintered in the fields, thus ensuring the fertility of the land for the following spring sowing season, after which, in April or May, they would again be driven out to the shieling grounds. In 1599, the great Elizabethan antiquary, William Camden, described this

way of life, which had remained essentially unaltered for centuries:

*Here every way round about in the wasts as they tearme them, you may see as it were the ancient Nomades, a martiall kind of men, who from the moneth of Aprill unto August, lye out scattering and summering (as they tearme it) with their cattell in little cottages here and there which they call Sheales and Shealings.*

Shielings sometimes occur in isolation and sometimes in groups of half a dozen or more, and all are notoriously difficult to date with any degree of accuracy (Ramm *et al* 1970). Most were constructed of turf on crude stone footings, and were presumably rebuilt each spring. They were often built using stone robbed from prehistoric sites, and are thus frequently found against prehistoric boundary walls or adjacent to Iron Age hillforts. Evidence for the use of shieling grounds is recorded in many placenames, for example High Shield, Sewingshields and Shield-on-the-Wall (in Wall country), Aldensheels and Linshiels (Coquetdale), Davyshiel (Redesdale), and Shipley Shields and Gibshiel (North Tynedale). The suffix 'hope' (meaning a 'blind valley') is also usually indicative of seasonal grazing lands. Well-known examples in Redesdale include Birdhope, Cottonshope and Spithope.

There are documentary references to shielings in the Forest of Lowes, north of the central sector of Hadrian's Wall, dating back to 1171 (Woodside & Crow 1999, 57). Also in this general area, a row of three shielings built of Roman stone against the tumbled remains of the Wall at Mons Fabricus, east of Castle Nick, has been excavated. A fourteenth- to early sixteenth-century date was suggested for these, although earlier examples may exist nearby. At the Bogle Hole a dozen shielings have been recorded in association with a large stock enclosure built in a natural hollow against the south face of the Wall. One of these was excavated in 1998 (fig 7.7) and a single radiocarbon date suggests occupation in the sixteenth century, although the origins of the enclosure may be rather earlier. A similar sized enclosure, the King's Wicket at Busy Gap, near Housesteads, has recently been investigated by English Heritage, but no dates are yet available. When the Sewingshields milecastle was excavated, three substantial medieval buildings were discovered (fig 7.8). These seem rather grander than shielings, and the thirteenth-century date obtained for them suggests that this



FIGURE 7.7 Excavations in progress on a shieling at the Bogle Hole.

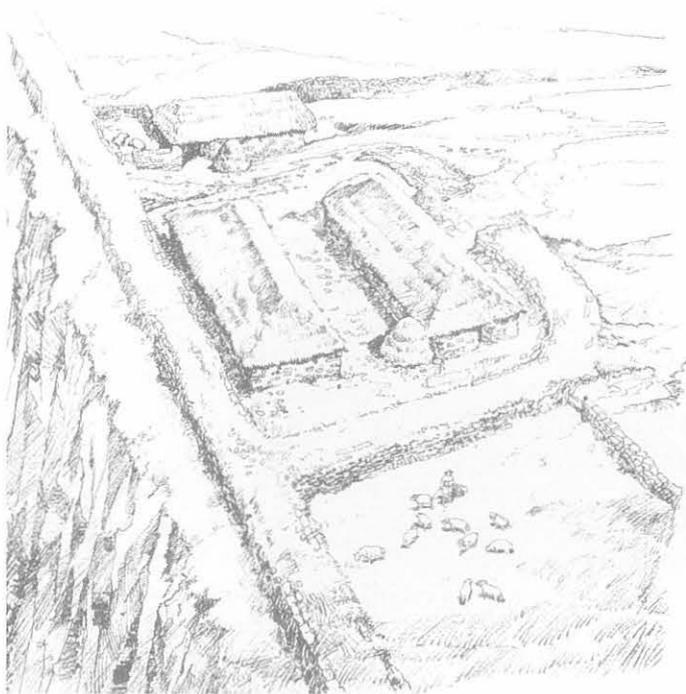


FIGURE 7.8 Medieval buildings within Sewingshields milecastle on Hadrian's Wall. (FROM CROW AND WOODSIDE 1999)

pleasant picture of peaceful agricultural communities. The thirteenth century was perhaps the longest period of sustained peace in these hills since the middle Bronze Age, when, as we have seen, people lived in small undefended villages of roundhouses and farmed extensive areas of the Cheviots. Unfortunately, things were about to take a rather dramatic and long-lasting turn for the worse.

### *Battles, ballads and Border reivers: 300 years of war and conflict, 1296–1603*

#### England versus Scotland

In 1296, after a century of relative peace, during which close links including much common landholding developed across the Border, Edward I assumed the Kingship of Scotland. Northumberland again found itself in a war zone. Scottish resistance to English sovereignty was strong, and many Northumberland nobles were understandably torn in their loyalties. Shortly after the Battle of Stirling (1297) the victorious Scots, under William Wallace, ravaged Northumberland from a temporary base in the wilds of Rothbury Forest (Dixon 1903, 476). After his defeat at Bannockburn (1314) Edward still continued to claim sovereignty over Scotland, leading to many Scottish raids into northern England by Robert the Bruce and others (McNamee 1997). Many contemporary accounts record the devastation of such raids: the township of Tarsset, for example, was 'worth nothing' because it was 'lay waste and destroyed by the Scots' in 1315. This was the beginning of what has been termed the '300 Years War', during which the residents of villages on both sides of the Border lived in constant fear of raids and reprisals. Ingram was one of several villages that petitioned for relief from taxation in 1344 because 'their crops and other goods were burned and otherwise

may have been a permanently occupied hamlet: the site seems to have been abandoned by the early fifteenth century. Such sites may, of course, have been permanently occupied at some stages of their history (most probably during the peaceful conditions of the thirteenth century), and could have reverted to use as shielings at other times. Several small villages or hamlets, some on the sites of earlier seasonally occupied shieling grounds, were occupied in North Tynedale by the late thirteenth century. These included Charlton, Tarsset, Thorneyburn, Donkleywood (on the site of a twelfth-century royal hunting lodge), Chirdon and Tarsethope.

Thus, the late thirteenth-century landscape of the Northumberland uplands was one of thriving villages with churches and fields, and shieling grounds scattered amongst the hills. The Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296 (Fraser 1968) gives details of all tax payers in most Northumberland villages, and paints a generally



FIGURE 7.9 Alnham Tower. The tower has walls nearly 3 metres thick and its tunnel vaulted ground floor still survives. The windows and battlements date from the mid-nineteenth century, when the tower was restored and the adjacent house built. (PHOTOGRAPH: ALBERT WEIR)

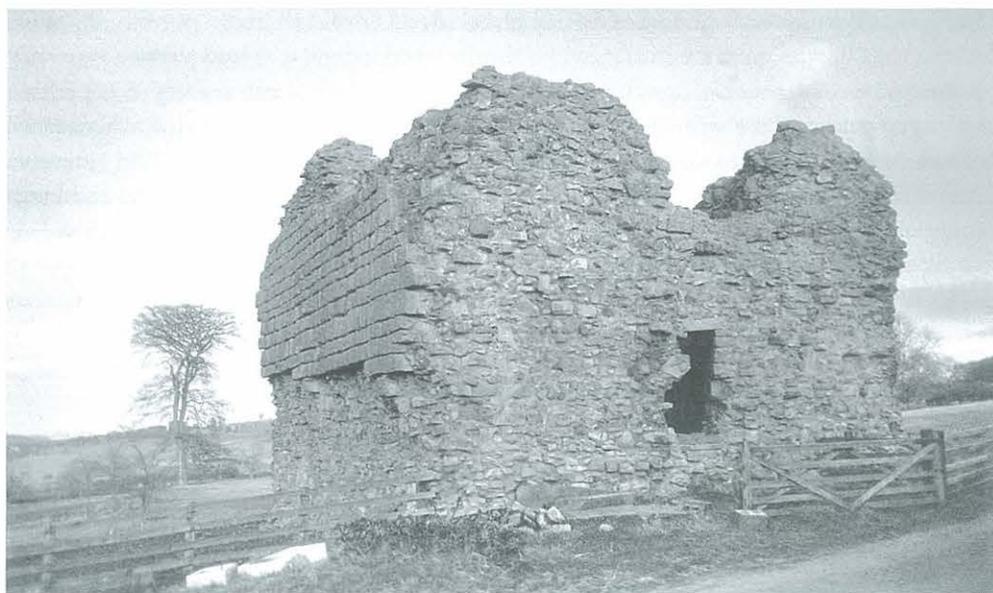


FIGURE 7.10 Tosson Tower, now conserved and open to the public.

destroyed and their animals plundered by the Scots ... in their invasion of the realm in 1341'. Between 1356 and 1360 the township asked for respite on another four occasions. A document of 1387 speaks of 'destruction and burning' by the Scots at Ingram. In 1436, the village was again 'wasted by the Scots'. Further Scottish raids are recorded in 1532, 1587 (twice) and 1588 and it is not unreasonable to assume that many others, of varying degrees of destructive intensity, must have gone unrecorded.

This renewed period of conflict from 1296 saw the construction of many new defensible towers. A survey undertaken for Henry V in 1415 lists well over a hundred 'castles and fortalices' in Northumberland. Of these, Harbottle is the only true castle in the area of the

National Park, but other structures are recorded at Thirlwall, Sewingshields, Otterburn, Elsdon, Hepple, Biddlestone, Alnham, Ilderton and Hethpool. In Chapter 18 of this volume, Peter Ryder summarises the evidence for these structures within the Park, and also sounds a warning about the continued use of the term 'pele' which, although in common usage, should probably not be used in this context. Thirlwall Castle (Chapter 19) appears to date from the mid-fourteenth century, and represents a 'hybrid' between the earlier hall houses and the new towers of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Some of these later towers were used as vicars' residences, including those at Elsdon (fig 18.1), Alnham (fig 7.9) and Corbridge which are still occupied today. Another once stood adjacent to the church at Ingram. This was in an appalling condition in the mid-eighteenth century and was probably dismantled to provide building stone for the current rectory. Such towers would have provided a defensible home for the local priest, while also offering a safe haven for villagers, and possibly also for stock, while raids were in progress. Some churches, for example Kirknewton, were also used as refuges. Other towers were built and occupied by private owners, such as that at Tosson (fig 7.10) which belonged to the Ogle family. Also owned by the Ogles was the poorly understood tower at Sewingshields, in the shadow of Hadrian's Wall. This was first recorded in 1415, but was abandoned by 1541. Virtually nothing survives of it today, although the earthworks of adjacent fishponds can still be seen.

From 1296, the threat of war was ever present, and several bloody battles were fought between English and Scottish armies. National conflict was mirrored by local feuding between the Percy dynasty, based at Alnwick, and the Douglases from north of the Border. Today, medieval struggles between Percy and Douglas are immortalised in numerous Border ballads (Marsden 1990) as well as in the plays of William Shakespeare. Alexander Rose, whose book about the Percys is appropriately entitled 'Kings in the North', observes that 'In Percy country, there was Percy law backed by a Percy army paid for by Percy money' (Rose 2002, 1). A Percy presence is recorded in England as early as 1067, and, largely as a reward for military service in Scotland in the 1290s, the Percys received substantial grants of land in Northumberland. They acquired Alnwick Castle in 1309, and expanded their landholdings through several carefully arranged marriages, including the takeover of the Umfraville baronies in the late fourteenth century. By 1400, the Percy family possessed five baronies and 71 manors in Northumberland, as well as much land elsewhere in England (Lomas 1992, 67). The Percys were, by virtue of their great wealth, able to maintain a substantial private army, consisting of professional fighting men and, when required, large numbers of part-time soldiers raised from their extensive estates through the feudal system. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Percys were amongst the most powerful families in England and played a major role in Border affairs. In 1377, Henry, 4<sup>th</sup> Lord Percy of Alnwick, was made Earl of Northumberland, after which Percys would retain the earldom for nearly three centuries. Percy power and influence waned after the Rising of the Northern Earls (1569), and the Earldom eventually passed by marriage to the Duke of Somerset after the death of the eleventh Percy earl in 1670. Since 1750, Percys have resided at Alnwick Castle as Dukes of Northumberland (Lomas 1999, 165–72). Today, the Northumberland Estates, managed from the castle, cover large areas of the county and substantial tracts of the National Park. These include the Breamish Valley and Lordenshaws, where the National Park Authority works closely with Estate staff to ensure appropriate management of very important archaeological landscapes.

From the time of Edward I, part-time soldiers in English national armies were paid cash

for the time they spent at war, in contrast to the old feudal system described earlier. These part-time soldiers would leave their everyday lives, mostly in the fields, to join their lord for the duration of a particular battle. Some peasant farmers became proficient in the use of various weapons, of which the longbow was to prove particularly effective. Today, it is difficult to understand how a farmer, if given the choice, would opt to go to war in support of a cause that would make little or no difference to his everyday life. Some may have chosen to fight simply in order to earn extra money, but it does appear that many peasants fought out of genuine loyalty to their aristocratic leaders as well as to one another (Barr 2001, 58). Despite codes of chivalry and opportunities for glory, battle was a savage and desperate business, especially for the common infantry. There are very few contemporary accounts, but evidence that does exist suggests that those who went to war encountered scenes of appalling horror. Men who survived the hail of death from opposing archers would enter a horrific *melée* of close, hand-to-hand fighting. Some might suffer mercifully quick deaths, but others would find themselves slowly suffocating beneath the bodies of dead and dying men and horses (Prestwich 1996). While the English armies that fought in the major Anglo-Scottish battles were built around professional and semi-professional soldiers from all over the country, and often included mercenaries from further afield, local communities provided the manpower for the small-scale raids and skirmishes that were more characteristic of the three centuries from 1296. Many skirmishes must have escaped the notice of the historian, but five locally fought battles are worthy of particular comment.

The Battle of Otterburn (Redesdale Society, 1988) was fought by moonlight in August 1388.

*It fell about the Lammas tide,  
When the muir-men win their hay,  
The doughty Douglas bound him to ride  
Into England, to drive a prey...  
... And he has burn'd the dales of Tyne,  
And part of Bamrough shire;  
And three good towers on Redeswire fells,  
He left them all on fire.*

The Scots, under James, Earl of Douglas, at the conclusion of a raid that extended over much of Northumberland as far as Newcastle, defeated a substantial English army led by Sir Henry Percy (Shakespeare's 'Hotspur') who was taken captive. However, the Scottish victory came at a price, as Douglas was killed amidst the fighting.

*This deed was done at Otterburn,  
About the breaking of the day;  
Earl Douglas was buried at the bracken bush,  
And the captive Percy led away.*

The dead were buried in Elsdon churchyard. It is recorded that more than a thousand of them were disturbed during restoration work on the church in 1877: all were soon reburied in pits in the churchyard. In the grand scheme of things the Battle of Otterburn was not a particularly important conflict, but owes its immortality largely to the ballads. The suggested site of the battle is marked today by 'Percy's Cross' a monument erected in the late

eighteenth century which itself replaced an earlier 'Battle Stone'.

The Battle of Homildon Hill (Humbleton Hill) took place in September 1402 at the north-eastern corner of the Cheviots, during a supposed truce between England and Scotland. A Scottish army under the Earl of Douglas had laid waste much of Northumberland as far as Newcastle and was returning north when intercepted at Humbleton Hill, a little north of Wooler, by the aforementioned Sir Henry Percy. The Scots were destroyed by the English longbows and many prisoners including the Earl of Douglas were taken. Astonishingly, a dispute between Percy and King Henry IV over the ransoming of three prisoners seems to have led directly to the uniting of Percy and Douglas against the English Crown. This says a great deal about the nature of the aristocratic society of the time, and about the uneasy relationship between Northumberland and London. The battle is referred to in ACT I SCENE I of Shakespeare's *Henry IV Part I*:

*On Holy-rood day, the gallant Hotspur there,  
Young Harry Percy, and brave Archibald,  
That ever valiant and approved Scot,  
At Holmedon met, where they did spend  
A sad and Bloody hour.*

The site of the battle, from which many bones and artefacts have been recovered over the years, lies on land overlooked by the ramparts of the ancient hillfort of Humbleton, and it is tempting to suggest that the Scots may have performed rather better had they sought to take up a defensive position behind the old prehistoric ramparts. Even here, though, they may have been no match for the English longbows.

Not far from Humbleton, the 'Battle of Geteryne' (Yeavering) was fought in 1415. In this 'Sir Robert Umfraville ... and the Earl of Westmoreland, Lord o the Marches, with a small force of 140 spearmen and 300 bowmen, defeated a party of 4000 Scots, killing 60, taking 160 prisoners, and chasing the rest for twelve miles over the Borders' (Tomlinson 1888, 504). Such figures may be exaggerated, but the strategic location of Glendale, and the undoubted importance of Yeavering in earlier times, suggest that many other skirmishes, of which no records survive, must have taken place here. The battle of 1415 is traditionally thought to be commemorated by the 'Battle Stone' at Yeavering, though, as we have already seen, this stone is of late Neolithic date: it had already been standing for some three and a half millennia before the battle took place. This provides a very interesting example of how the meaning and significance of a monument can change through time. One may wonder who first labelled it 'the Battle Stone', and what it may have been known as in earlier times?

The Battle of Hedgeley Moor was fought on 28 April 1464, on the line of the present day A697 some six miles south of Wooler. This was not fought between English and Scottish armies, but was part of a civil war known today as the Wars of the Roses. It was not an insubstantial skirmish, but owes most of its fame to the death of Sir Ralph Percy, who was fighting for an army of possibly as many as 4,000 Lancastrian troops against a victorious Yorkist force of similar size under Lord Montague. Today, the site of the battle is commemorated by the impressive 'Percy's Cross'. Two nearby large boulders, lying some ten metres apart, are known as 'Percy's Leap'. They are traditionally said to represent Sir Ralph's final step which he managed to complete (rather impressively, it has to be said) while mortally wounded. The County Council has provided a layby and interpretive panel for the benefit of visitors, but most of the battle site lies on private farmland.

The Battle of Flodden, the last great Border battle and perhaps the bloodiest battle ever to take place on English soil, was fought between an invading Scottish army under the direct control of James IV of Scotland and an English army under Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, on 9 September 1513 (Barr 2001; Phillips 1999). Under the terms of the recently renewed 'Auld Alliance' between Scotland and France, James IV had found himself compelled to invade northern England while Henry VIII was away campaigning in France. The Scottish army had some success in taking a few English Border strongholds, but such success was to be short-lived. The Scottish and English armies, each numbering in excess of 20,000 men, met at Branxton Hill, 5km beyond the National Park's northern boundary (fig 7.11). The battle was decisively won by the English in little more than a couple of hours of carnage, during which perhaps half of the Scottish men were killed. James himself was killed, along with his son and an astonishing number of Scottish bishops, earls, lords and knights. In short, the Scottish nation was routed at Flodden, and although there were further conflicts during the sixteenth century, the Scottish were never in a strong enough position to exact any meaningful revenge.

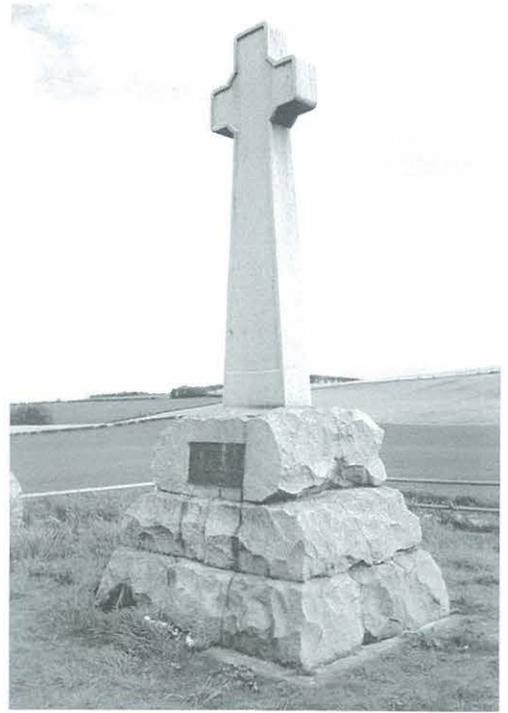


FIGURE 7.11 It is impossible to imagine the carnage of Flodden in today's peaceful landscape. This view shows the monument on Branxton Hill, with part of the battlefield behind.

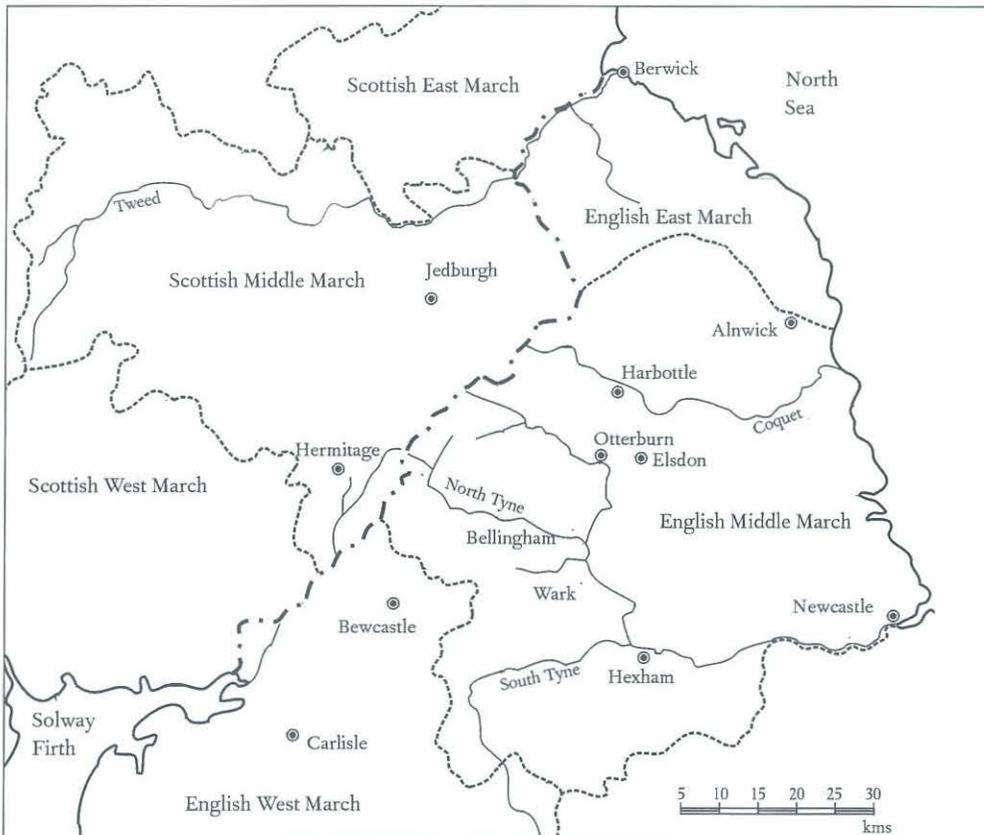


FIGURE 7.12 Map of the Border Marches. (BASED ON CHARLTON 1987)

Royal control over the Borderlands during these troubled times was achieved through the system of Marcher Law. Northern parts of Cumbria and Northumberland became Marches, effectively military zones governed by Wardens. A similar system operated on the Scottish side of the Border (fig 7.12). The Wardens of the Marches were charged with maintaining order during peacetime and, during times of conflict, with the defence of the Border, the line of which had been largely fixed by the Treaty of York in 1237. The Wardens could call on the services of their private bodyguards, Crown troops stationed at a few strategic locations, and local men who in theory had to support the Warden on request. In the interests of national security, the Wardens were expected to work closely with holders of the franchises of the Liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale (both liberties were returned to the Crown, in the late fifteenth and mid-sixteenth centuries respectively, and were then given away, without the special status of liberties, by James I in 1604).

Originally there were two English Marches: East and West, controlled from Berwick and Carlisle respectively. A Middle March, eventually to be governed from Harbottle Castle, was created in response to worsening conditions in 1381. This Middle March covered all of the National Park, except for that portion of the Cheviots to the north of the Hanging Stone, which lay within the East March. Each Warden had a number of assistants, principal amongst which for the Warden of the Middle March were the Keepers of Tynedale and Redesdale. Although the system often broke down in practice, the theory was that regular days of truce known as 'March Days' would be held on the Border at which English and Scottish Wardens would cooperate in the attempt to settle Border disputes to the mutual benefit of both. These gatherings were often held in very remote locations, such as at Kemydspeth Walls, on the site of the old Roman camps at Chew Green, but they could take on the atmosphere of a carnival as people came from far and wide to attend. Perhaps not surprisingly, they were not devoid of violence. Indeed, what is sometimes referred to as the 'last battle' prior to the Union of the Crowns (in reality it was little more than a skirmish) occurred at such a meeting (Marsden 1990, 46–55). This was held at The Redswire (Carter Bar) on 7 July 1575, between the Warden of the English Middle March, the infamous John Forster, and the Scottish Keeper of Liddesdale, John Carmichael (who was deputising for the Warden of the Scottish Middle March).

*The seventh of July, the suith to say,  
At the Reidswire the tryst was set;  
Our wardens they affixed the day,  
And, as promised, so they met.*

Discussion apparently turned to argument and thence to violence, resulting in several deaths including that of George Heron, the English Deputy Warden. The Scots were victorious and took several captives (of whom John Forster was one), although these were soon returned, apparently to avoid the prospect of heavy retaliation. This incident is commemorated in the ballad 'The Raid of the Reidswire', which, being a Scottish ballad, leaves little doubt as to which side bore the responsibility for the outbreak of violence:

*Who did invent that day of play,  
We need not fear to find him soon;  
For Sir John Forster, I dare well say,  
Made us this noisome afternoon.*

*Not that I speak preceislie out,  
That he supposed it would be perril;  
But pride, and breaking out of feuid,  
Garr'd Tindaill lads begin the quarrel.*

While this may have become known as the 'last battle', future March meetings were not without incident. In 1585 Lord Francis Russell was shot dead during a 'truce' meeting between the Wardens of the Middle Marches near Windy Gyle, high on the Border Ridge. The adjacent prehistoric burial cairn is now known as Russell's Cairn (fig 7.13).

### A horrible and uncultivated land

As previously noted, the Park's medieval villages were blighted by Scottish raids after 1296. The early fourteenth century also witnessed a declining climate, with cooler summers and more severe winters, which must have put pressure on the more marginal villages, especially when it is recalled that just two or three successive bad harvests could all but destroy such a village. Brian Fagan (2000) has recently observed that 'environmental determinism may be intellectually bankrupt, but climate change is the ignored player on the historical stage.'

Fagan paints a grim picture of deteriorating climate and related famine throughout much of western Europe from the early fourteenth century, at the beginning of what has become known as the 'Little Ice Age'. This lasted from about 1300 through until the mid-nineteenth century, and contained many fluctuations in climate. Its greatest impact, however, must have been at its outset, especially as communities had become accustomed to the warm, settled weather and bountiful harvests of the thirteenth century. To an extent, the early fourteenth century may have mirrored the late Bronze Age, with a period of cold, wet weather and growing concern with warfare following a period of peaceful agricultural expansion. To date, however, we have no clear archaeological evidence for the abandonment of medieval villages at this time. It would seem that communities turned increasingly to pastoralism in order to survive, rather than abandoning long established settlements and territories.

The deteriorating climate and onset of cross-Border hostilities were not the only blows suffered during the first half of the fourteenth century. The 'Black Death' arrived in Northumberland in 1349 with catastrophic consequences: it is estimated that the population may have fallen by 30–50% as a direct result of

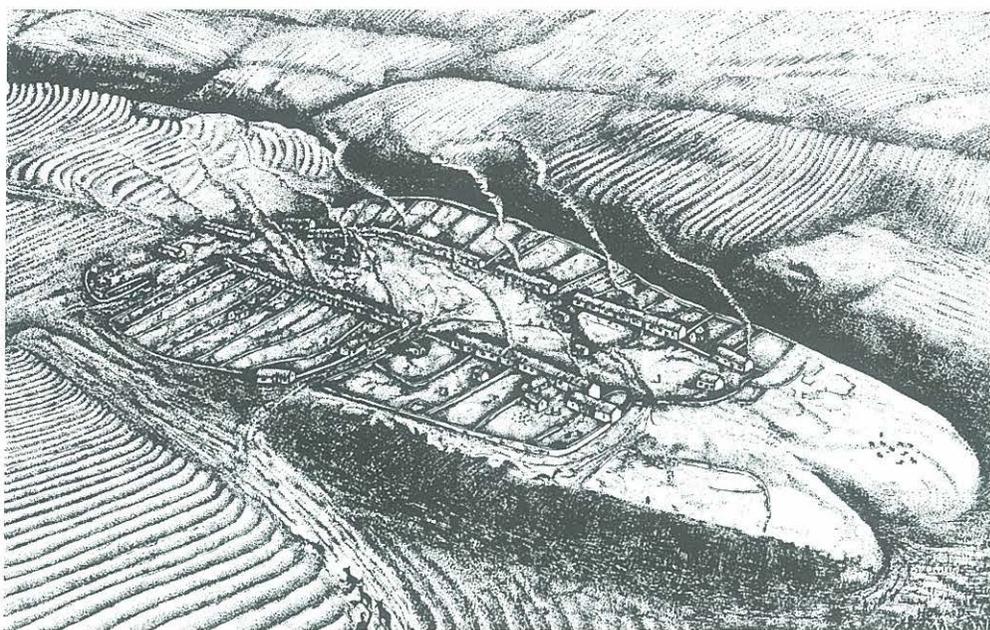
FIGURE 7.13 Russell's Cairn on the Border Ridge. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 7.14

Reconstruction sketch of West Whelpington medieval village in the early fifteenth century by Howard Mason.

Note the layout of houses around the large village green, and the surrounding ridge-and-furrow field system.



the Black Death and subsequent outbreaks of plague in the years between 1350 and 1500. However, the impact on isolated upland villages is currently impossible to calculate and it may well be that relatively isolated communities did not suffer as badly as more populous regions elsewhere. That said, it is reasonable to assume that some areas of the Park must have been badly affected by the combination of war, deteriorating climate and the Black Death. If such miserable conditions did not actually destroy villages, they must at least have resulted in the shrinking of some along with the abandonment of some long-established shieling grounds. The desperate conditions of the later fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries are reflected in the observations of the future Pope, Aeneas, who visited Northumberland in 1435 and pronounced it 'uninhabitable, horrible, uncultivated' (Hepple 1976, 47).

However, all was not continuous doom and gloom. The tendency to group all abandoned villages together as 'deserted medieval villages' (or DMVs) masks a great deal of variation between such sites. Every deserted village is unique, and while some may have been abandoned in medieval times, others continued into the post-medieval period. The best understood DMV in the region of the Park is West Whelpington, about 5 miles east of the Park boundary in the upper reaches of the Wansbeck Valley. Large scale excavations between 1958 and 1976 have given a unique insight into medieval life in upland Northumberland village. Although the date of its foundation has not been established, West Whelpington was a flourishing village of stone-walled, thatched longhouses by the late twelfth century. Like many other Northumberland villages it was devastated by the Scots after their victory at Bannockburn in 1314, but eventually recovered. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the village was rebuilt as a planned settlement of at least 28 terraced longhouses and eight cottages around a village green (fig 7.14). This village was further remodelled in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century when a bastle house was added. The site was finally abandoned in about 1720 as a consequence of the reorganisation of the landscape associated with enclosure. Much more detail is included in the fascinating excavation reports (Evans and Jarrett 1987; Evans *et al* 1988).

At Alnhamsheles, a now abandoned site high in the Breamish Valley, on the Rowhope Burn beyond the present day Alnhammoor farmhouse, excavations in the 1980s uncovered evidence of occupation dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (Dixon 1984). Perhaps not surprisingly, the settlement was seriously damaged by fire on at least two occasions. Documentary evidence suggests that occupation here may well extend back to the thirteenth century, if not even earlier, and the name 'Alnhamsheles' suggests that the settlement began life as a group of seasonally occupied shielings. Further down the Breamish Valley, but still high up in the hills, the DMV of Hartside (fig 7.15) consists of more than a dozen rectangular buildings with attached yards, and an extensive ridge-and-furrow field system extending southwards towards the Breamish. Armstrong's map of 1769 (see fig 8.4) shows the village of Hartside in approximately this location, but Fryer's map of 1820 shows 'Hartside' as a single building where the present farmhouse stands, with a 'Herds House' appearing to occupy the site of the DMV. The DMV site is occupied by 'White Well House' on Greenwood's map of 1828. We must assume, therefore, that settlement of some kind extended into the nineteenth century here, even though there is little to suggest this on the ground today. On still lower ground, just 4km south of Wooler, the site known today as



FIGURE 7.15 Hartside deserted medieval village. The remains of several rectangular houses are clearly visible, as is part of the ridge-and-furrow field system (between the houses and the bottom of the photograph). (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

FIGURE 7.16 Aerial view over Middleton Old Town, taken in 1977.

The earthworks of several medieval buildings, enclosures and ridge-and-furrow fields can be clearly seen, as can two more recent buildings which are still roofed in this view but are now ruined. The large, featureless modern field to the centre-right of this view shows how archaeological features can be destroyed by modern 'improvement'.

Through the haze towards the top of the view, a couple of Romano-British settlements on Brands Hill (see fig 5.11) can be made out.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 7.17 Linbriggs deserted medieval village, Upper Coquetdale.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



Needless to say, the traffic was not all one way. David Dippie Dixon, after noting dozens of Scottish raids into Coquetdale in the 1580s and 1590s, involving the theft of thousands of beasts (mostly cattle, horses, and sheep) together with much damage to property, notes one particularly devastating raid in the opposite direction. This occurred in 1544, when an army of English Borderers 'ruthlessly devastated the whole length of the Scottish Borders,' and 'destroyed 192 towns, towers, barmekins, parish churches and bastle houses, killed 403 Scots, took 816 prisoners, carried off 10,386 cattle, 12,492 sheep, 1296 horses, 200 goats, 850 bolls of corn, besides an enormous quantity of insight gear' (Dixon 1903, 165). 1,145 separate raids have been catalogued along the length of the Border between 1510 and 1603, at an average rate of a dozen a year, and the actual total of such raids may have some three times greater than this (Dixon 1976, 80).

Increasing degrees of poverty, especially in the unproductive agricultural lands of the central and southern parts of the Park, were virtually ensured by the continuing poor climate and cross-Border raiding. The situation was not helped by the ancient law of 'gravelkind'. This dictated that a man's land was divided between all his surviving sons on his death, thus ensuring that all sons were retained for military service when required. At times of low population density, such as in the decades following the Black Death, this was a sensible system. However, in later times, as the population grew, it led inevitably to smaller and increasingly uneconomic landholdings. Instability of leadership and law enforcement in the old Liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale further contributed to the miserable conditions under which increasing degrees of control were assumed by local clans known as 'kinships' (variously referred to as 'surnames', 'graynes' or 'families'). By the early sixteenth century these included the Halls, Reeds, Hedleys and Dunns of Redesdale, and the Charltons, Dodds, Robsons and Milburns of Tynedale. North of the Border, the Armstrongs, Elliotts and Nixons, amongst others, played an identical role. There must have been some 'decent folk' amongst the communities of North Tynedale and Redesdale, but history tells us little about them. Sir Robert Bowes, writing of the kinships in 1550, noted that 'There be some amongst them that have never stollen themselves, which they call true men; and yet such will have rascalles to steale either on horsebacke or foot, whom they doe resset and will receive parte of the stollen goodes.' These kinships included people from all walks of life, from nobility to farm hands, and even Wardens had blood ties with some of them. The kinships were extremely loyal to their headmen or 'lairds', some of whom became very powerful on the local scene: a few even took up official office, for example as Keepers of Tynedale or Redesdale.

The relationship between national conflict and local feuding is complex. Local men who represented the English Crown in national confrontations, on the Border and elsewhere, could also participate in local raids, with or without 'official' support. For many of the Border folk, local ties meant more than national loyalties. Indeed, it was noted during the sixteenth century that the lawless Border folk were 'Scottishe when they will, and English at their pleasure'. Although theoretically punishable as 'March Treason', cross-Border marriages were not uncommon, creating blood ties between kinships on either side of the Border. By no means all the violence was focussed on cross-Border raids, and relations between the Northumberland kinships and English authorities were far from stable. On occasions English and Scottish kinships would join forces, such as in the 1525 assault on Tarsset Castle, after which the castle fell into ruin (Charlton 1987, 44). The communities of Coquetdale, Redesdale and North Tynedale were not infrequently in conflict with each other. At Tosson

and many other places in the 1550s a watch had to be maintained not only against Scottish raids but also 'against the men of Tynedale and Redesdale, who were as little to be trusted as the wary Scot from over the Border' (Dixon 1903, 331). Treachery and betrayal even occurred between kinships within the same valley: the well known ballad 'The Death of Parcy Reed' tells of an alliance between the Halls of Redesdale and the Scottish Crosiers to betray and murder Parcival Reed, the laird of Troughend, at some point in the later sixteenth century:

*A farewell to my followers a',  
And my neighbours gude at need;  
Bid them think how the treacherous Ha's  
Betrayed the life o' Parcy Reed.*

It was the constant feuding and changing allegiances between certain of these kinships, rather than national conflict between Edinburgh and London, that provided the focus for most of the violence that afflicted upland Northumberland during the sixteenth century. Sometimes, local alliances became intimately bound up with national politics. This was certainly the case in the mid-1540s, during Henry VIII's doomed attempt to unite the English and Scottish Crowns, known as the 'Rough Wooing', during which he sought support amongst kinships on the Scottish side of the Border through a combination of bribery and violence (Phillips 1999, 161).

Local people were charged with the maintenance of 24 hour watches on the main routes across the Border, and this 'early warning system' was linked to a number of beacons in high places (eg on Simonside) that would be lit to 'give warning to all the hole country of the invasions of the Scottes in England' (Dixon 1895, 16). It was recommended in 1552 that all 'tillage, meadows or grassings' should be 'enclosed with ditches, five quarters in depth and to be double set with quickwood and hedged above three quarters high' in an attempt to provide obstacles to the marauding Scots (Butlin 1967, 154). However, little seems to have been done to this end. Although some late sixteenth-century enclosures are recorded within Rothbury Forest, where it was recorded in 1586 that a 'considerable number of intakes and enclosures had been made from this waste land, and converted to arable, meadow, and pasture' (*ibid* 159), such enclosures were clearly nothing to do with inconveniencing the Scots. It would be another two centuries before the fields around the Park's villages and hamlets began to be enclosed to any substantial degree, by which time the threat of Scottish raiding had long since passed.

International tension between London and Edinburgh eased during the later sixteenth century, with Elizabeth I on the English throne, but life on the Border remained anything but peaceful. In 1559, Elizabeth appointed Sir John Forster, a lowland Northumbrian supposedly without any vested interests, to the position of Warden of the Middle Marches. She believed that such an outsider would be best placed to exercise control over the kinships while also defending the Border against the incursions of the Scots. Forster was not a popular man amongst the established kinships, but he somehow survived as Warden for 36 years. Despite his reputation for dealing most severely with offenders, his overall lack of success is reflected in the numerous contemporary records telling tales of regular burning and pillaging by bands of cattle rustlers. In midsummer 1579, the infamous 'Kinmont Willie' led 400 Scottish raiders into North Tynedale, taking 140 head of cattle, 60 horses and 500 sheep, setting fire to 60 houses and killing ten men. In the 1580s the village of Rochester was described as 'permanently ruined' by Scottish raiders who, during the course of three terrible raids, had

FIGURE 7.19 'The Street', one of numerous tracks crossing the Border that were used by the reivers. (PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN STEELE)



taken 180 head of cattle, 60 sheep and goats, and household gear worth £60. Elsdon, in September 1584, was raided by 500 Liddesdale men who burnt down the village, murdered 14 men, took 400 prisoners (to hold for ransom), 400 head of cattle, 400 horses and £500 worth of household goods. The figures are almost certainly exaggerated, but the general picture is clear.

Most major raids were cross-Border affairs, using the numerous ancient routeways across the hills (fig 7.19) to and from the higher reaches of North Tynedale, Redesdale and Coquetdale. Whereas only one major road (the A68) crosses the Cheviots today, more than forty cross-Border drove routes and pathways were recorded in 1597 in the Middle March alone (Mack 1926, 242–46). There were, therefore, many options open to those planning cross-Border raids. However, as noted above, the crossing of the Border was not always a necessity for raiding parties. It was noted in 1570 that more damage was done to the villages around Alnwick by Tynedale men than by the Scots. North Tynedale and Redesdale were becoming increasingly detached from the rest of Northumberland, with local loyalties increasingly towards the local surnames which could offer some degree of protection, rather than to distant and ineffective regional or national authorities. In the early sixteenth century, 1500 men had been available 'with horse and harness' to be called upon by the Warden as and when necessary (Charlton 1987, 43), but a survey in 1584 failed to find even a single man throughout the whole of Redesdale and North Tynedale who was adequately equipped for Border service, even though many were presumably engaged in regular retaliatory raids across the Border. The fact that a major Scottish invasion was now considered unlikely meant that the Crown was not unduly concerned about problems on the Border, and financial support to the Wardens was drastically reduced in the face of competing priorities elsewhere.

Any local individuals who did manage to accrue any wealth were soon blackmailed into paying protection money to the local headmen. Such protection rackets were endemic in the later sixteenth century, with the consequences of failure to pay only too obvious for all to see. The degree of poverty here in the late sixteenth century is reflected in the fact that only

one regular market, at Bellingham, was held in the whole of Redesdale and North Tynedale. The men of these valleys could not gain employment elsewhere, as their violent reputation went before them. Indeed, many Newcastle-based businesses refused to take on apprentices from either valley until well into the seventeenth century. The famous antiquary, William Camden, visited Hadrian's Wall in 1599, but was prevented from reaching the central sector 'for fear of the rank robbers thereabouts'. Camden would no doubt be fascinated to discover that his 'rank robbers' are now considered as an important element of the archaeology of this region, alongside the remains of the Roman Wall that they so frustratingly prevented him from inspecting.

Life on the sixteenth-century Anglo-Scottish Border is now lent a particular mystique as the era of the Border reivers. This mystique arises largely from the Border ballads, many of which had been passed down by word of mouth through generations of Border folk before being collated, to some extent embellished, and finally written down and published, most notably by Sir Walter Scott, in the early nineteenth century. These ballads give an often haunting insight into what can appear as the romantic lives and times of the reivers, but there can be no doubt that real life on the sixteenth-century Border was far from romantic. Indeed, the very power of the ballads is rooted in the wild and violent nature of the society which gave rise to them. Men certainly had to be brave to prosper, or even on occasions simply to survive, and there is some truth in the belief that the only options available at the time were

to steal or to starve. The reivers knew when they set out on a raid that they were riding in the shadow of the gallows, and many were caught and executed by the authorities. Against the many stories of bravery and heroism, however, there are just as many horrendous tales of unwarranted murder and pillage, and it certainly appears unlikely that many of the reivers would be considered today as particularly pleasant characters. In the words of G M Trevelyan (1926, 24):

*Like the Homeric Greeks, they were cruel, coarse savages, slaying each other as the beasts of the forest; and yet they were also poets who could express in the grand style the inexorable fate of the individual man and woman, and infinite pity for all the cruel things which they none the less perpetually inflicted upon one another.*

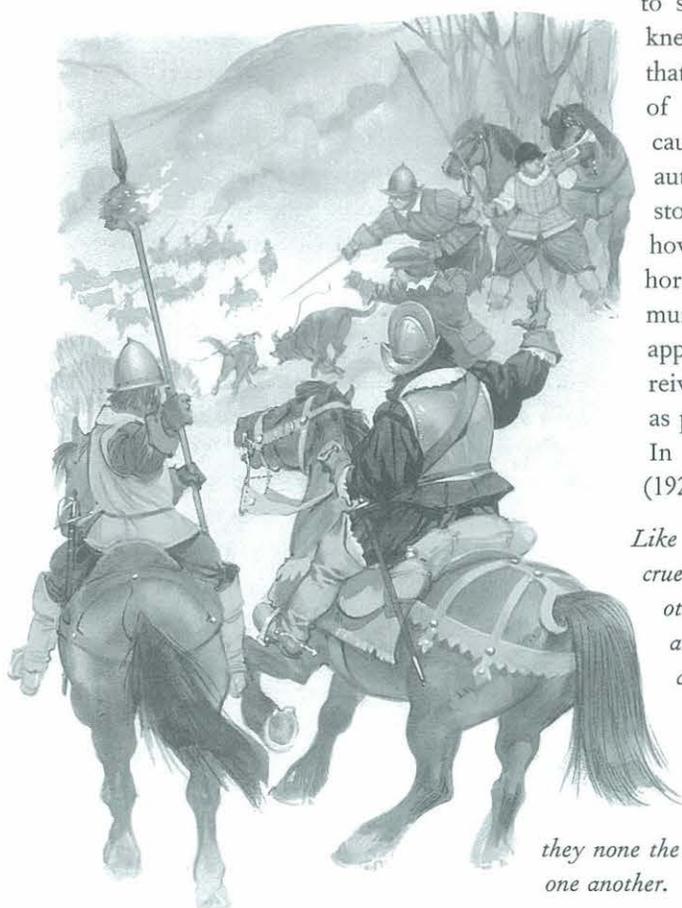


FIGURE 7.20 'The Hot Trod', by Angus McBride. The Warden's troops, in pursuit of reivers, spot them in the valley below. The hounds are unleashed and a trooper sounds the horn. Another carries, aloft on his lance, a blazing turf – the sign that this is the 'hot trod' and is legalised retribution. (FROM DURHAM & MCBRIDE 1998)

Dramatic tales of raids and rescues, blood feuds and blackmail, include colourful characters such as Kinmont Willie, Auld Wat of Harden and Geordie Burn (who left a confession of his violent life as a reiver the night before he was hanged for Border treason) but these cannot concern us here. Readers who wish to learn more should consult one of several books published about the reivers, of which 'The Steel Bonnets' by George McDonald Fraser (1971) probably provides the best general introduction.

In spite of the chaos that may appear to have existed on the Border during the sixteenth century, there were actually special laws that attempted to regulate the activities of the reivers. In theory, if not always in practice, when a man had his property stolen he had three options. He could complain to his Warden in the (often forlorn) hope of receiving compensation in due course; he could plan a future reprisal raid, perhaps along with colleagues, to recover his property along with considerable interest; or he could set off in immediate pursuit (known as 'hot trod') to recover his property by force. The trod (fig 7.20) was a legal pursuit, and was permitted across the Border as long as it commenced within six days of the initial offence. Trods could be accompanied by official officers of the Warden, and frequently ended in violence – offenders could be lynched on the spot if caught during a trod. Most raids were relatively small, but on occasions raids, and reprisal raids, could involve hundreds of reivers and were planned with military precision. Most raids took place in the autumn, when cattle were fit to drive, the harvest was in, and the lengthening nights provided the opportunity to travel long distances under cover of darkness. The reivers rode sturdy ponies known as 'hobblers'. The better equipped amongst them had swords, daggers and lances, and wore padded jackets and characteristic helmets known as 'steel bonnets'. However, the muster rolls suggest that most were not this well equipped. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, handguns, which were originally notoriously cumbersome and unreliable, were increasingly used by those reivers who could afford them.

A major survey of Border fortifications in 1541 recorded a profusion of castles and towers throughout most of Northumberland, including Harbottle Castle and several towers in Coquetdale. However, few stone buildings are recorded in the reiving heartlands of Redesdale or North Tynedale. Although some headmen on both sides of the Border resided in old towers surviving from earlier centuries, contemporary sources suggest that most appear to have lived in timber houses which were largely covered with earth and turf so as to be very hard to set alight. No such structures have been recognised by archaeology, so their exact form and their distribution remain something of a mystery. The so-called 'Old Palace' at Yeavinger (actually a late sixteenth-century structure, now much altered and sadly ruined, which is of no relevance to the Anglian palace discussed earlier) was recorded in the late nineteenth century as having had 'squared oak posts which pass perpendicularly through the middle of the walls, giving stability to them, and supporting the roof' (Tomlinson 1888, 504). Its 5ft thick walls of random, unmortared volcanic blocks suggest that this was originally a defensible dwelling of some substance, a view supported by its apparent inclusion on Christopher Dacre's 1584 map of 'castles and fortifications'. The antiquity of this structure is further confirmed by the recovery of seventeenth-century pottery from its interior during Brian Hope-Taylor's excavations at Yeavinger in the 1950s. Although much altered over subsequent centuries (fig 7.21), and located away from the reiving heartlands, this building may just be our only surviving example of a timber-framed defensible dwelling of the reiver era. It is also interesting as another example (following that of the 'Battle Stone', discussed above) of an ancient site taking on a new name: Brian Hope-Taylor (1977,

FIGURE 7.21 The 'Old Palace' at Yeavinger.



14) suggests that it was named the 'Old Palace' 'as the lingering result of a belated and fanciful christening, probably performed by a local eighteenth or nineteenth-century parson who knew his Bede. Doubtless the name was attached to this particular structure because it was the only building in the area whose origin was unknown to history and beyond memory'.

It may be that some of the many structures recorded simply as 'shielings' throughout Tynedale and Redesdale may prove to be permanently occupied settlements of this period, but a programme of careful excavation at a sample of sites will be needed to prove this one way or the other. It is recorded that the reivers' houses could be rebuilt within a day or two if they were burnt down: perhaps they were not dissimilar to the 'blackhouses' of north and west Scotland, some of the more isolated examples of which were still occupied into the twentieth century. One sixteenth-century source referred to a Scottish headman's house as 'a cottage not to be compared with any dog kennel in England': a description which doubtless applied equally to the equivalent dwellings of the English Middle March.

Public perception links the Border reivers with the stone bastle houses of which some two hundred survive in varying states of decay throughout Northumberland (see Chapters 18 & 20). However, these bastles appear to have been built late in the era of the reivers, towards the end of the sixteenth century, and many may not have been constructed until after the Union of the Crowns. Most occur in loose groups, scattered several hundred yards apart but intervisible, suggesting a close relationship between neighbouring households. Occasionally they occur in close clusters of two or three, although the extraordinary 'bastle village' of Evistones (fig 7.22), which contains half a dozen probable bastles, appears to be unique. Some archaeologists see the bastles as a response to less savage times, perhaps as the power of the reiving kinships was on the wain, but their architecture certainly reflects the view that such violent times could easily return, and that the need to protect family and beasts was still of paramount concern. The most remarkable aspects of the bastles are their relative uniformity and the fact that they seem to appear in the landscape all of a sudden with no evidence for gradual evolution over time. This suggests the simultaneous adoption of a standard 'blue-print' throughout the region, though no-one knows the origin of the design.

It is important to note that the bastles were substantial structures that must have involved the input of experienced stonemasons. Given that people of the Border region had generally been living in timber hovels over previous centuries, these masons must have been imported from somewhere.

It is possible that the construction of the first bastles was directly influenced by the Crown. Following its repossession of Tynedale and Redesdale, and its acquisition of the extensive monastic shieling grounds after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Crown was in direct control of much of upland Northumberland. Yet no attempt was made to exploit rents from this land: indeed, tenants at Bewcastle, just outside the National Park, were paying lower rents in 1604 than they had been in 1296 (Dixon 1972, 255). It is known that some new leases were granted on very favourable terms on the understanding that tenants would perform some service to the Crown, such as enclosing the land, maintaining fortifications, or constructing new fortified houses. This may provide the context for the first bastles. Iain Hedley (who has recently considered the origin of bastles in great detail) believes that the gradual change from customary tenure (based on hereditary rights) to fixed term, commercial leases may have been crucial to the widespread adoption of the bastle. Low land values offered great potential for commercial stock rearing, and there was money to be made by absent landowners who were able to rid themselves of long-established customary tenants in favour of reliable returns from new leaseholders. Many bastles may have been built by absentee landowners for such new leasehold tenants, especially after the Union of the Crowns in 1603 when military service in defence of the Border was no longer an issue. There is certainly enormous potential to learn more about bastles and their occupants through a combination of documentary research and careful fieldwork, as is demonstrated elsewhere in this volume in the contribution about Low Cleughs Bastle (Chapter 20). Each bastle will have its own unique tale to tell, but until some sites are subjected to scientific excavation and analysis we are unlikely to be able to say any more about their origin or about the nature of any structures that may have preceded them.



FIGURE 7.22 Evistones  
'bastle village'.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

It is tempting to speculate that the kinship-based society of the sixteenth-century Northumberland uplands may reflect a situation not greatly different from the days of the post-Roman tribal kingdoms, or even perhaps the late prehistoric hillfort-dominated landscapes. For much of the 2500 years from the early Iron Age until the Union of the Crowns in 1603, power in what is now the National Park may have been linked to the ability to obtain and protect wealth in the form of cattle. Cattle rustling was probably endemic during the Iron Age just as it was in the sixteenth century, and hillforts may have functioned in a similar way to bastles, as everyday homes with the ability to protect stock when required. No doubt there were Iron Age equivalents of the Border ballads, and they may well have told similar tales, perhaps even with local Iron Age dynasties playing roles equivalent to those of Percy and Douglas.

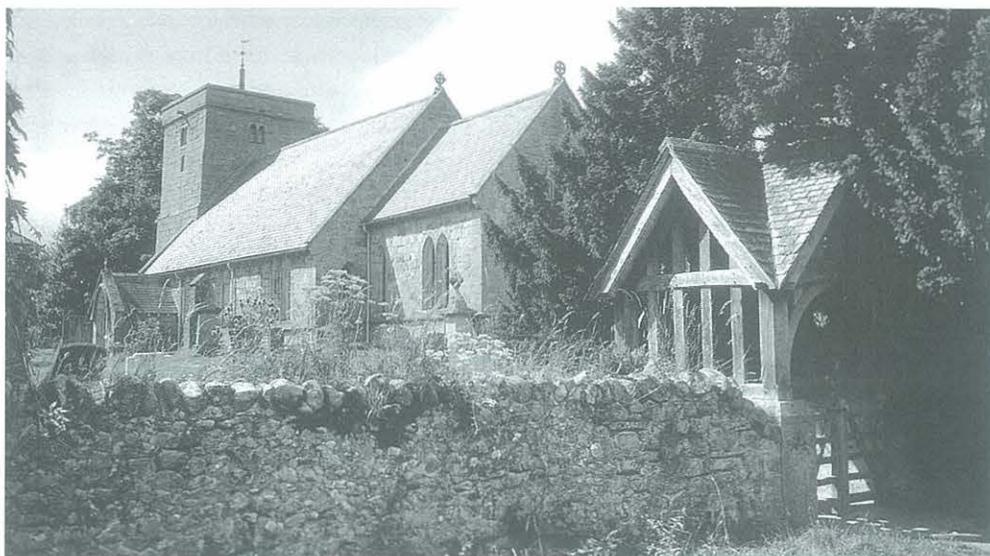
### *The medieval Church*

One of the most important influences on the medieval landscape of Northumberland was that of the monasteries, which became very wealthy through large grants of land and money from the Norman nobility. Newminster Abbey, near Morpeth, was founded in 1157 as the first daughter house of Fountains Abbey, and became a very large and important institution in its own right. It held the Lordship of Kidland, including nearly 7,000 hectares of quality grazing land high in Upper Coquetdale, granted to it by the Umphravilles. The records kept by the Abbey give us an insight into the medieval landscape of Kidland, with tenants occupying lonely shielings in the high hills over the summer and returning to lower land with their sheep for the winter months. Melrose Abbey and Brinkburn Priory (for Augustinian canons, founded at an enchanting spot by the Coquet, 7km south-east of Rothbury) also held land in the Park, but not on anything like the scale of Newminster. The Augustinian house of Kirkham Abbey, Yorkshire, owned Kirknewton and much adjacent land, granted to it by Walter Espec in the early twelfth century.

A Benedictine nunnery was founded at Holystone in the early twelfth century, the location of which must have been related to the presence here of the previously discussed Holy Well. The ancient settlement of Holystone has clearly been of local importance for a very long time and would certainly repay archaeological investigation. The nunnery had 27 nuns in 1313, but suffered from the miseries of the fourteenth century and records show that only eight nuns were still in residence by 1432 (Hepple 1976, 51). Indeed, the religious houses, although they retained considerable political power, were in general decline from the mid-fourteenth century. The Holystone nunnery has all but disappeared from today's landscape: the site is now partially occupied by the church of St Mary which incorporates a little of its masonry, while much of its fabric has been reused elsewhere in the village (most notably at Mill Cottage). Other stonework was probably removed soon after the Dissolution to be reused in the Tudor remodelling of Harbottle Castle.

Churches throughout the Park, although much altered over the years and occasionally completely rebuilt, have nevertheless tended to survive on the same sites since their original foundation which in many cases was probably in pre-Conquest times. Several of the Park's churches incorporate masonry dating back to the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries. Some, notably Elsdon and Alwinton, display high quality architectural features dating from the troubled times of the fourteenth century, proving that effort was still being occasionally expended on the elaboration of the churches despite the volatile political climate of the time. However, grim reality is reflected in the defensive nature of the tower at Ingram (fig 7.23),

FIGURE 7.23 St Michael's Church, Ingram.



and the tunnel vaulted form of both the porch at Alnham and the south transept at Kirknewton (Grundy 1987).

The influence of the parish church over everyday life in medieval times was immense (Lomas 1996, chapter 4). While we must remain forever uncertain as to the extent that medieval individuals actually believed in the conventional religious doctrine of the Catholic Church, most people appear to have accepted it as it provided ready answers to so many otherwise unanswerable questions, just as it does for many people today. In medieval times, when plagues, diseases, famines and wars ensured that death was never far away from people's thoughts, the Church enabled communities to make sense of their lives within the context of so much that was, and still is, unknowable. The Lord of the Manor would build and maintain a church in the attempt to save his own soul, but such churches also, if perhaps subconsciously, represented control of the masses by those in power. Peasants learned their place in the grand scheme of things, and were encouraged by the Lord God as well as the Lord of the Manor to be loyal and hard-working. Respite from the regular cycle of agricultural production would have been provided by seasonal festivals organised by the Church, and in this respect the parish church must to an extent have functioned in a similar way to the stone circles of the Neolithic, providing a regular focus for the community at specific times of year as well as at other special occasions such as funerals.

Peasants working in the fields would hear the church bells every day, and most would probably attend church on a Sunday. All villagers would be baptised, perhaps married and eventually buried at the church. Very few villagers would have understood church services, most of which were conducted in Latin, and the use of this strange language, coupled with the grandeur of the stone churches with their richly decorated interiors, would have provided a stark contrast to the everyday world of the peasant hovel. People must have regarded the Church with awe and wonder, and given the purpose and structure that it provided for everyone's lives it perhaps comes as no surprise that few questioned its teachings. The Church provided the only opportunity for families who wished their children to become literate, as those who could afford it could pay for private lessons in Latin from the priest. Once a child could read and write, there were opportunities to escape the drudgery

of peasant life, and a lucky few found their way into grammar schools, also run by the Church, from where a variety of careers were possible. However, such opportunities were few and far between in the villages of upland Northumberland, and most peasant families would have remained illiterate, spending their time tending the fields in much the same way from generation to generation.

In medieval times the whole of the National Park was covered by only a dozen parishes, each of which had, and still has, its own parish church. The origins of the medieval parish system are uncertain, but parishes may reflect earlier pre-Conquest 'shires', a suggestion supported by the probable pre-Conquest origin of some churches. Given the extraordinarily large size of some of the Park's parishes, many contained more than one township, and chapels were built in some of these townships (for example at Harbottle) to enable people to worship regularly without having to travel to the parish church. However, all major festivals would have been held at the parish church, with everyone in the township expected to travel and attend.

During the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries most churches and chapels were given to monasteries which then became responsible for appointing the parish priests. As well as providing spiritual guidance for the parish, parish churches provided a reliable source of income for their monastic 'landlords'. Income was generated through the glebe lands (agricultural land given to the churches by their founders or by later donation), from tithes (10% of every man's income, often paid as agricultural produce) and fees charged for weddings, christenings and funerals. Priests in privately owned churches were known as rectors. They were normally appointed by the Lord of the Manor for life, and were financed through income generated by the church. Monasteries which took over the running of parish churches effectively became 'corporate rectors', but cloistered monks were unable to serve as parish priests so 'vicars' (literally 'deputies') were appointed by the monasteries to act on their behalf in that role.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII, between 1536 and 1540, saw the lands owned by the religious houses confiscated by the Crown. Most of the priests and other religious personnel who remained in the area were either pensioned off or found places in the parish church system. After the passing of the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity in 1559, all English people were required to belong to the new Church of England, and loyalty to this Church was seen to reflect loyalty to the Crown. In Northumberland, despite considerable persecution, some gentry families remained faithful to the traditional Roman Catholic Church. The Charltons of Hesleyside, North Tynedale, were one such family. They must have had a chapel at Hesleyside, but the old house burnt down in the eighteenth century and there are no records by which to prove this one way or the other. Another local recusant family were the Selbys, who were established at Biddlestone in the southern Cheviots by the early fourteenth century. A substantial barrel-vaulted tower was built here, probably in the late fourteenth century. After 1600, Biddlestone Hall, an impressive manor house, was constructed adjacent to the tower. This must have contained a Catholic chapel somewhere within its substantial interior, as it is known that the Selbys maintained a catholic chaplaincy here at their own expense. According to 'The Northern Catholic Calendar' of 1884 (quoted in Dixon 1903, 251) Biddlestone is:

*as far as is known, the oldest mission in the Diocese (of Hexham and Newcastle) dating at least as far back as the XIII. century ... There has been no 'reformation' here – no apostacy*

*— no change of creed — no interruption of the perpetual sacrifice. The family has 'kept the faith', as well as its name and estates, through ages of persecution and penal law — in spite of allurements of court honours or state emoluments. It was Catholic in the XIIIth century — it is Catholic in the XIXth.*

The house was rebuilt in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, at which time a first floor Catholic chapel was constructed above the remnants of the old tower. This new Biddlestone Hall was demolished in the 1950s, leaving the unique and splendidly isolated monument that we see at Biddlestone today: a still functioning early nineteenth-century chapel of neat ashlar stone sitting incongruously upon its fourteenth-century rough stone basement (fig 7.24). In the south-west corner of the Park, the Thirlwalls remained resolutely Catholic, and Peter Ryder has suggested, from examination of the ruins, that a chapel may have existed on the third floor of Thirlwall Castle. This would presumably have been in use from the early fourteenth century, when the castle was built, through until its abandonment after the Civil War in the mid-seventeenth century.

Finally in this discussion of the medieval Church, we must consider the religious views and practices of the Border reivers. This will not take long. Collingwood (1884, 159) notes that 'Charms and superstitions of the grossest absurdity abounded in the Dales, and what religion they had was only a system very much in harmony with these tendencies, — to anything deeper they were quite indifferent.' Something of the reiving families' attitude towards conventional religion is revealed by the frequent plunder of churches, which appear to have been raided no less often than any other class of building. Lead from the church roof at Ingram, for example, was stolen by a marauding band of Scottish reivers in 1587. Clearly, the word 'sacrilege' held no terror for the reivers. Little respect was paid to the men of the Church, with parsons and chaplains occasionally kidnapped and held to ransom, or worse. Some sixteenth-century references suggest that priests in Tynedale were generally corrupt, and thus not deserving of any respect, but many areas seem to have been pretty much devoid



FIGURE 7.24 Biddlestone Roman Catholic chapel. (PHOTOGRAPH: ALBERT WEIR)



FIGURE 7.25 Father Bernard Gilpin preaching in Rothbury church in about 1570. Painted in 1859 by William Bell Scott: the original is displayed at Wallington Hall. (© NATIONAL TRUST)

of priests altogether. The whole of Redesdale, for example, was served solely by Elsdon parish church, with no churches or chapels higher up the valley. Bellingham church was burnt down at least twice, the legacy of which is its extraordinary 'fireproof' stone roof of heavy stone slabs, added in the early seventeenth century and still weatherproof today. Some brave priests who did venture into the reiving heartlands apparently only did so armed with swords and daggers. However, as with most rules there are exceptions, the most notable one in this case being Father Gilpin, who left his parish in Houghton-le-Spring, County Durham, each December to spend Christmas preaching throughout Tynedale, Redesdale and Coquetdale where he was much respected (fig 7.25). 'If there was a church he would use it, if not, a barn or any other sufficiently large building would serve his purpose; and the people always came in crowds to hear him, some for his teaching, others no doubt for his charity' (Collingwood 1884, 162). In contrast to Father Gilpin, most churchmen understandably opted to steer well clear, and if the reivers' attitude towards the Church was generally dismissive, then the same can certainly be said in reverse: the Archbishop of Glasgow's 'curse' of the reivers (which included such choice phrases as 'I condemn thaim perpetuale to the deip pit of hell') has now passed into Border legend. At the time it was doubtless the subject of much mirth amongst reivers of all allegiances.

# From trauma to tranquillity

## The post-medieval period (1603–1901)

For the purposes of this account, the post-medieval period begins with the Union of the Crowns in 1603, when local communities were still being traumatised by the Border reivers. It ends with the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, when the tranquillity so often cited today as one of the National Park's major defining characteristics was perhaps at its zenith, prior to the introduction of the mechanised transport and agricultural machinery of the modern age.

In 1603, James VI of Scotland became James I of England and decreed that:

*The late marches and borders of the two realms of England and Scotland are now the heart of the country. Proclamation is to be made against all rebels and disorderly persons, that no supply be given to them, their wives, or their bairnes and that they be prosecuted with fire and sword.*

This was the beginning of the end for the Border reivers. Some benefits of the Union were immediate: old shieling grounds in Upper Coquetdale, which had long lain abandoned,



FIGURE 8.1 Enclosures at  
Yearning Law.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

were reoccupied as early as spring 1604. The surviving enclosures at Yearning Law (fig 8.1), high in Upper Coquetdale, may date from this time, and may represent shieling settlement by Scottish villagers from just over the Border. Not all changes were quite so immediate, however, and it would be a few more years before all the 'rebels and disorderly persons' had been suitably dealt with (Watts 1975).

James abolished the Marches and the Wardens, and set up his Border Commission at Carlisle in 1605. He appointed members of the resident Northumberland gentry to positions of power, and his forces ruthlessly tracked down offenders. In stark contrast to the anarchy of previous centuries, the Border Marches, which James renamed the 'Middle Shires', came under the effective control of the Crown. Hundreds of reivers were executed or banished, many without trial. Indeed, some officers were granted the specific power to hang offenders on the spot without any kind of trial. Many reivers who managed to hang onto their lives were conscripted into the British army and forced to fight in the Low Countries. In 1609, after a mass hanging in Dumfries, the Middle Shires were declared to be as safe as anywhere in the Kingdom. This may have been something of an exaggeration as many more violent episodes are recorded from subsequent decades, but it was certainly true that the reiving way of life, developed over some three centuries and possibly with very ancient roots stretching back into prehistory, was largely extinguished in less than a decade of iron rule under King James. James is sometimes accused of excessive violence, but what is beyond doubt is that he left the Northumberland uplands a great deal more peaceful than he had found them.

*(The) poor wretched people (of Redesdale and North Tynedale) were the victims of circumstances for which by no means the whole responsibility was their own: when those circumstances were altered by the union of England and Scotland – a political measure – at once they began to emerge from their lost and degraded condition ... There was in them the material for a far better life than they were leading, and it gives us less reason to be surprised when we learn what a solid, sturdy, and high-principled community their descendents form now*

(Collingwood 1884, 168–169)

James' vision of the Middle Shires within a truly united kingdom was never fully achieved, due to a combination of factors including continued rivalry between English and Scottish factions, and simmering tensions within the aristocracy (on both national and Northumbrian stages) between Protestant and recusant Catholic families, especially in the years following the failed Gunpowder Plot of 1605.

Although violence was not as deeply entrenched as in earlier centuries, the seventeenth century was not without its share of violent conflict. In a throwback to earlier times, a Scottish army entered Northumberland once more in 1639, and returned to occupy Newcastle in 1640. These 'invasions' were in protest at Charles I's attempts to control the Scottish church, but they were not long-lived and all the Scottish troops returned home in 1641. Following this, however, Charles recognised the strategic importance of Newcastle. He stationed extra troops here, making it a Royalist stronghold. In January 1644, a sizeable Scottish army entered Northumberland in support of the Parliamentarians, leading to the Siege of Newcastle. Perhaps not surprisingly, the men of the old reiving heartlands had mixed loyalties. Writing of North Tynedale, Beryl Charlton (1987, 50) notes that 'the old ways died hard ... it mattered little to the broken kinships on which side they fought – as long as they were taking part. Some ... helped the invading Scots to cross the Tyne and mine the walls of Newcastle in the siege of 1644. Others remained in North Tynedale and joined

the Royalist cause – more from hatred of the Scots than of loyalty to Charles I’.

Little action is recorded within the bounds of the National Park during the Civil War, although David Dippie Dixon (1903, 331) notes that ‘the tide of war, with its train of evils, penetrated even to the remote vale of Coquet. Most of its leading families espoused the cause of Charles I, and when, in the summer of 1648, the army of that unfortunate monarch was defeated by Cromwell at Preston, Sir Marmaduke Langdale’s troops, many of whom were from the Coquet and the Aln, retreated northwards and obtained shelter amongst their friends in the neighbourhood’. Major Sanderson led Parliamentary troops in pursuit, and recorded that ‘the first towne we fell into was Tossons, where wee took a lieutenant and sixe of his dragoons, all in bed’. At Glanton, a further 180 Royalist troops were captured ‘in bed’. Most landowners in rural Northumberland had sided with the Royalist cause, and consequently lost lands or suffered crippling fines once the Civil War was over. The Charltons of Hesleyside, for example, had their estates confiscated, although they were later returned by Charles II. Cartington Castle, which had played an important role as a Royalist stronghold, was taken by the Parliamentarians after a two hour siege, after which it was largely dismantled. It was later partially rebuilt, but now lies in ruins.

The Jacobite uprising of 1715, in support of the James Stuart, the ‘Old Pretender’, enjoyed considerable support amongst the recusant Catholic families of Northumberland. These families had suffered after the Civil War and saw a Jacobite victory (and the consequent reinstatement of the Catholic Stuart dynasty to the throne) as the best route to the restoration of their fortunes. The Earl of Derwentwater, who had extensive landholdings in the area of the National Park, along with the Tory MP Thomas Forster, gathered a group of 50 or so local Jacobites together. They travelled through Redesdale, Coquetdale and other areas gathering more supporters until they numbered a couple of hundred (Dickinson 2001). They were then joined by a group of several hundred southern Scottish Jacobites, and, following a lack of expected support from Newcastle, they moved south in the hope of picking up much more support from amongst the Catholic families of Lancashire. Such support failed to materialise, and eventually, the group, as part of the large Jacobite army under the Earl of Mar, was defeated by government forces at Preston. Some of the Northumbrian Jacobites, amongst them ‘Mad Jack Hall of Otterburn’, were executed, while others were transported to America. The Earl of Derwentwater was beheaded, and his lands were eventually given to the Commissioners of the Greenwich Hospital who were responsible for the erection of many fine new buildings over the next 150 years.

The later Jacobite uprising of 1745, which ended in the horror of Culloden, enjoyed little support in Northumberland. However, the repercussions of the ‘45 on the remains of Hadrian’s Wall were catastrophic. It had proved difficult to move troops across country during the uprising (fig 8.2), so to avoid the possible recurrence of such problems ‘General Wade’s military road’ (the present day B6318; fig 8.3) was built from Newcastle to Carlisle. This used the remains of Hadrian’s Wall as its foundations for much of its route between Newcastle and Sewingshields (where the Wall heads off up onto the crags of its central sector) thus committing the worst ever single act of destruction to Northumberland’s archaeological heritage, but at the same time making access to the surviving remnants of the Wall so much easier for visitors (Lawson 1973). It should perhaps be added that the blame conventionally heaped upon General Wade for the destruction of so much of our beloved World Heritage Site may be unjustified, as many turnpikes were being built at this time and it is quite probable that the road would have been built regardless of the perceived need for faster



FIGURE 8.2 Ronald Embleton's reconstruction of General Wade's army struggling along the old road near Hexham. (FROM EMBLETON & GRAHAM 1984. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF FRANK GRAHAM)



FIGURE 8.3 View westwards along the B6318 ('General Wade's Military Road'). The wall ditch is clearly visible in the foreground (north of the road) while the *vallum* passes along the south side of the road (the *vallum* ditch and banks can be seen in profile in front of the farmhouse in the background). The Wall here was completely flattened to provide the foundations for the road.

cross-country troop movements (see Chapter 21). In contrast to the archaeological damage done by the construction of the Military Road, the maps produced during its planning are of great value to students of the eighteenth-century Northumberland landscape. These maps show the Wall corridor in astonishing detail, and demonstrate that in many ways the present day landscape does not differ all that greatly from that of the 1730s. The same is true for most of the Park. The extract from Armstrong's map of 1769 covering the Breamish Valley (fig 8.4) shows many things much as they are today, although there are some major differences such as the alignment of the road upstream from Ingram, which may surprise those familiar with the present day valley.

Despite the distraction of the Jacobite uprisings, the Act of Union in 1707 had confirmed the nature of the relationship between England and Scotland, guaranteeing stability in the Borderlands and thus encouraging further investment in the region. Outside the Park, several substantial houses had been built or enlarged during the seventeenth century, most of them based on earlier towers. Examples include Belsay Castle, Chipchase Castle, Chillingham Castle, Callaly Castle, Cartington Castle and Wallington Hall (a completely new mansion built in 1688 on the site of an older house). However, as we will see shortly, it would not be until the mid-eighteenth century that these peaceful conditions would become reflected in the domestic architecture of the upland regions. Throughout the seventeenth century, those families that could afford them continued to reside in their bastles, and, as previously discussed, it may be that most bastles were actually constructed after 1603. In the mid-seventeenth century, at the time of the Civil War, the uplands were infamous for the so-called 'moss-troopers', cattle raiders and horse thieves whose methods owed much to their predecessors, the reivers (Fraser 1971, 378). However, the moss-troopers (some of whom may have been disbanded Royalist soldiers with nowhere else to go after the Civil War) were not enmeshed within all levels of society as the reivers had been a century earlier. Although tales of livestock thieving and associated lawlessness continue well into the eighteenth century, it is fair to state that the seeds of subsequent improvements in living conditions and agricultural production had been firmly sown by King James in the first decade of the seventeenth century.

The end of Anglo-Scottish hostilities led to an acceleration in the abandonment of the traditional system of customary tenure, whereby individuals inherited the right to hold land for low rents in exchange for Border service. Such arrangements were now completely obsolete as the Border no longer existed. James I commissioned a survey of Crown land in Northumberland in 1604 with the intention of raising rents and maximising income (Sanderson 1891). The results of this survey provide much fascinating information about life in North Tynedale, Redesdale and Coquetdale at the turn of the seventeenth century. For

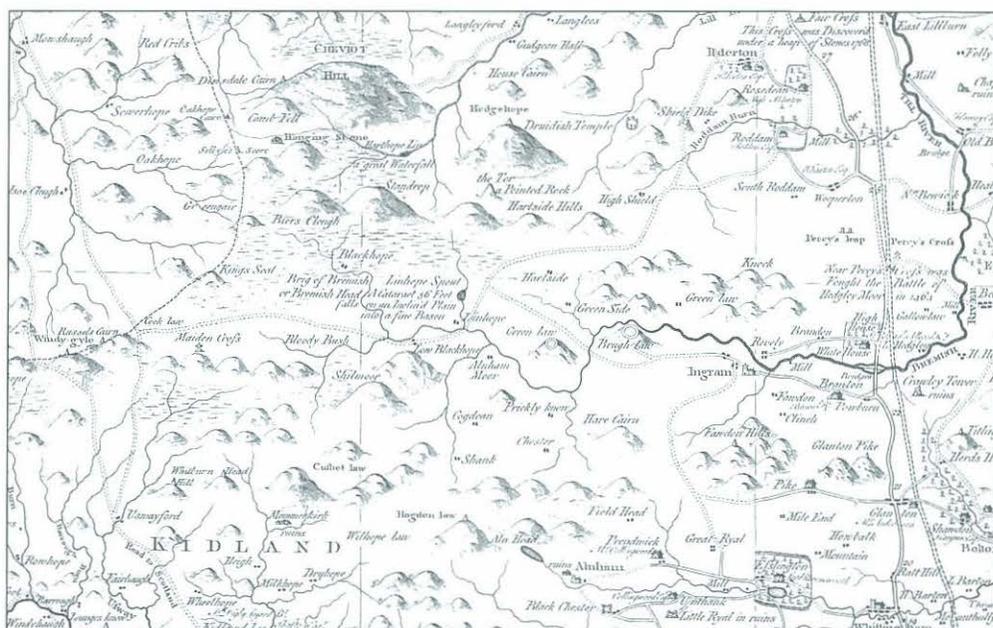


FIGURE 8.4 Extract from Armstrong's map of 1769, showing Breemish Valley and adjacent areas. Most places shown here will be familiar to those who know this landscape today.

example, in North Tynedale in 1604 there were 67 farmhouses with 80 outbuildings, 468 acres of meadow, 841 acres of arable, 1140 acres of pasture and 9750 acres of waste or common. The most notable characteristics of the communities recorded in the survey are the small size of settlements, the small quantity of arable land, the predominance of cattle rearing, the practice of transhumance and the tradition of partible inheritance or 'gravelkind'. In total, the 1604 survey covers 351,130 acres held by 1143 tenants who paid an aggregate annual rental of £302. The survey concluded that the yearly value under leasehold arrangements should be in excess of £5000. It is therefore easy to see why James was keen to abolish all customary tenure and introduce profitable, fixed term leases. Other landowners, such as the Earl of Northumberland, followed suit, with old tenants who refused to cooperate being forcibly evicted in what has been described as 'Northumberland's highland clearances'. These changes were not instant and took decades to institute. In 1608, only about 13% of tenants on royal land in Northumberland were leaseholders, with 68% still customary tenants. However, 30 years later it was observed that 'most of the 'poorer sort' in Northumberland now held leases' (Watts 1975, 160).

After the Union, landowners set about improving large areas which had previously been subject to regular raids by the reivers, and the rental value of land increased dramatically. For example, the Earl of Northumberland had let the township of Alnham for £17 per annum in 1596, but by 1613 it was described as a handsome manor worth £100 per annum (Watts 1975, 174). These improvements were further helped by consistently good harvests between 1603 and 1611. Most of the wealth generated by the improvement in conditions found its way to wealthy landowners based outside the area of the National Park. Very few large gentry homes in the Park benefited directly, those at Hesleyside (North Tynedale) and Biddlestone, along with the stunning Clennel Hall (a stone's throw outside the Park in Coquetdale) being of particular note. All of these underwent substantial degrees of rebuilding during the seventeenth century and again in subsequent times. The house of 1567 at Clennel is an unusually early example of an unfortified addition to an earlier tower, though many such towers would receive similar additions later.

Other than the bastles, there are very few surviving examples of seventeenth-century houses in the National Park. The fascinating but sadly ruined house overlooked by the ramparts of the Iron Age hillfort at Harehaugh, Coquetdale, (fig 8.5) was rebuilt in the nineteenth century, but sufficient seventeenth-century work survives (eg the front door and windows) to suggest that this represents the earliest recognisable form of non-defensible domestic architecture in the Park. Not far away, Priory Farmhouse, Holystone, probably dates originally from the later seventeenth century. To the south in Hadrian's Wall country, there is a later seventeenth-century house within the dramatic ruined farmstead of Grandy's Knowe (fig 8.6), along with an earlier bastle and nineteenth-century farm buildings. This important farmstead illustrates perhaps better than any other the stages in development which many upland farms went through during the second half of the second millennium AD, though in this case all now lies abandoned and collapsing. Interestingly, it lies close to the previously discussed Crindledykes Romano-British farmstead (fig 16.2): perhaps human occupation and agricultural activity here have been more or less continuous for 2000 years. Several other abandoned farmsteads and hamlets throughout the National Park can be seen to have bastles at their core (eg figs 18.8 & 22.5).

As the need for defence became less of a priority, many bastles were adapted for more peaceful conditions: several had stone staircases built to upper floor entrances (fig 8.7), while others had large windows inserted. Some bastles are still lived in today, while others are in

FIGURE 8.5 Harehaugh House: possibly the oldest non-defensible dwelling still standing in the National Park. Some visible features, including the door and ground floor windows, are of early seventeenth-century date. (PHOTO FROM GRUNDY 1987)



use as agricultural buildings, often with a comfortable late eighteenth- or nineteenth-century farmhouse built next door. By the latter half of the eighteenth century, with the threat of reivers and moss troopers now long gone, many bastles must have been relatively cosy and desirable residences, especially when compared to the squalid conditions in which most peasant families were apparently still living. Writing in the 1770s about his travels in the vicinity of Wooler, the eminent historian William Hutchinson (1779, 258) observed that ‘the cottages of the lower class of people are deplorable, composed of upright timbers fixed in the ground, the interstices wattled and plaistered with mud: the roofs, some thatched and others covered with turf; one little piece of glass to admit the beams of day; and a hearth stone on the ground, for the peat and turf fire’. A typical such dwelling contained a ‘wretched couch ... wooden utensils that scarce retain the name of convenience ... the domestic beast that stalls with its master’, and ‘disconsolate poultry that mourn on the rafters’. Such dwellings must have differed little, if at all, from the houses that were regularly burned to the ground by Scottish troops or Border reivers in previous centuries.

After discussing the nature of the houses in which they lived, William Hutchinson goes on to paint a rather less than complimentary picture of the people who lived in the shadow of the Cheviot Hills in the 1770s. They were ‘of abject countenance, and miserably clothed, seeming to confess the lowest degree of poverty’. Hutchinson further observes that most men were shepherds or herdsmen, and interestingly notes that cornfields were not fenced off but that the corn was protected by ‘many an indolent herdsman’ who ‘stands for hours

FIGURE 8.6 Grandy’s Knowe farm in the early twentieth century (a) and in 2000 (b).





FIGURE 8.7 Black Middens Bastle, North Tynedale.

wrapped up in his plaid, hanging over a staff, half animated; or otherwise lying prostrate upon the ground'. Hutchinson goes on to suggest that had someone thought to place shovels in the hands of these herdsmen they could have made use of their time to fence the fields, but that 'evil customs, when they correspond with habitual indolence, are as hard to be eradicated, as to move a mountain.' Clearly, Hutchinson did not enjoy the company of Cheviot farmers, though he was much fonder of those north of the Border who generally displayed a 'singular openness and benevolence of countenance' arising from 'a generous nature, and the liberality of a mind enlarged with education'. He notes that almost every Scottish village had a free school, which was apparently not the case in Northumberland. He ascribes much of the difference between English and Scottish Borderers to their attitude towards religion: the Scottish are 'strict in their religious principles' while many of the Northumberland lower classes 'have never even been informed of their Redeemer; thousands have never entered a place of worship' and 'the Sabbath is distinguished only as a day of idleness, in which gaming and drinking are pursued'.

While it is perhaps hard to accept that such a clear distinction in character existed between people north and south of the Border in the late eighteenth century, Hutchinson's observations on the drinking habits of Northumberland farmers are not without foundation. Despite the restrictions on production and high taxes on liquor imposed by the Tippling Act of 1751, whisky was apparently not in short supply. This was due in part to illicit whisky stills such as those which operated in the wilds of Upper Coquetdale (Philipson and Child 1960). Evidently, much of this liquor was consumed at a 'whiskey house called Slyme-foot', high in Upper Coquetdale, which was 'the winter rendezvous of all the neighbouring sheep-farmers: here they resigned themselves to gambling and hard drinking; and, lost in a whirl of dissipation to all care and recollection, the days passed by unheeded, while their servants travelled to and fro to receive orders and transmit intelligence' (Mackenzie 1825 vol II, 83). Mackenzie makes a further observation on the drinking habits of farmers from the Kidland region in the early nineteenth century: 'Like all other people devoted to a tame,

languid, and insipid occupation, they were fond of strong liquors, which exhilarate the spirits, and, by a temporary madness, vary the uniform circulation of thought' (*ibid.*, 83).

At the time that Hutchinson and Mackenzie were writing, dramatic changes were occurring in the National Park landscape. These changes were the result of the enclosure movement, whereby large areas of common land were enclosed by Act of Parliament, with the commoners awarded parcels of land in exchange for their previous grazing rights. Permanent settlements expanded into the traditional shieling grounds, and the shieling way of life disappeared for good. Enclosure Awards also clarified other issues such as quarries, roads and footpaths, but it was the enclosure of the fields and the subsequent improvement of the land that most concerns us here. John Bailey and George Culley, residents of Glendale, published their famous 'General View of the Agriculture of the County of Northumberland' in 1794. In this they noted (in stark contrast to William Hutchinson's observations of less than a generation earlier) that:

*The parts of the county capable of cultivation are in general well enclosed by live hedges; the only exception is a small part of the Vales of Breamish, Till and Glen, but even here the advantage of having well-fenced fields is so well understood, and so much desired by the tenants, that we hope, in eight or ten years, the whole of this valuable district will be enclosed by fences.*

(Bailey and Culley 1794, 60)

In the third edition of their book, in 1805, it was noted that the enclosure of the whole district referred to above was 'very nearly accomplished, there being now very few unenclosed farms'. Enclosure represented the single biggest change in the character of the landscape since the clearance of the ubiquitous wildwood in prehistoric times. The Enclosure Award for Elsdon Common is dated 1731, although the Rev Dodgson, vicar of Elsdon, observed in the 1760s that 'the inhabitants are fond of a pastoral life, but have no taste for agriculture. The enclosed lands are only separated by a dry ditch and a low bank of earth ... The people are enemies to hedges, because the sheep would be entangled in them' (Tomlinson 1888, 308). Gradually, however, vast areas of moorland in Hadrian's Wall country, North Tynedale, Redesdale and Coquetdale were effectively enclosed during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Some parts of the Cheviots (despite Bailey and Culley's optimistic forecast) were not enclosed until the 1860s, but virtually the whole of what is now the National Park was eventually enclosed. Today the Cheviots are unusual, in an English context, in being a range of high hills with no common land.

In some parts of the Park the new boundaries were stone walls, in others they were hedgebanks – earthen banks planted with what soon became impenetrable hedges of hawthorn. The nature of stone walls varies according to the nature of the available local stone, from the characteristic volcanic, pink and grey random rubble of the Cheviots to the pleasant and more easily worked buff sandstones further south. It is worth considering the back-breaking work that went into the building of the countless miles of stone walls that criss-cross the hills, work that was completed at a time when labour was cheap. It is also worth noting the degree of damage done to numerous ancient monuments at the time of enclosure, from Hadrian's Wall in the south to numerous burial cairns and ancient settlements in the Cheviots, all of which provided a ready source of stone for the wallers. The massive burial cairn known as Tom Tallon's Grave, 1km south of Yeavinger Bell, stood for 4000 or more years in its wild landscape setting before being dismantled to provide

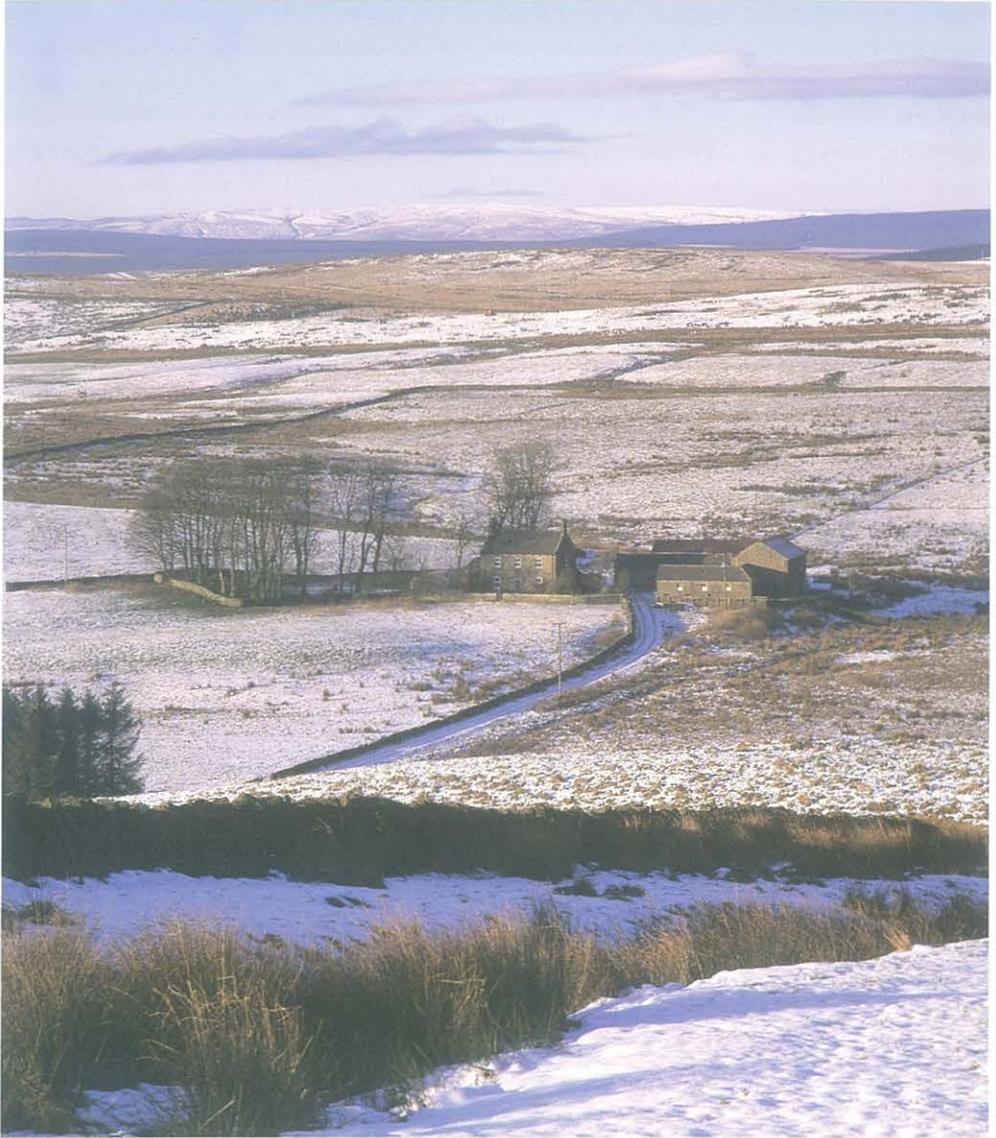
enough stone to build nearly a kilometre of the splendid wall which now surrounds the Yeavinger Estate. One wonders what the nineteenth-century wallers made of such ancient monuments as they systematically destroyed them. Ironically, the walls themselves are now regarded as essential elements of the historic landscape, and there is a constant need of funds to ensure their survival in the face of the modern alternative of cheap wire fences. Mackenzie would have been surprised. After praising the beauty of the hawthorn hedge, he observed in 1825 that 'in some situations stone walls are used for fences, but they give the country a cold, bare and uncomfortable appearance' (Mackenzie 1825, vol. I, 135). This provides a good illustration of how public perception can change over time. Perhaps one day people will regard some of our 'modern' structures with nostalgia and allocate resources to their conservation.

While most enclosed fields were for pasture just as the common land had been previously, the process of enclosure enabled the improvement of individual fields by draining, burning, ploughing, liming and reseeded. Drainage was very important in the wet uplands of the National Park, and both pasture and arable land benefited from the Drainage Act of 1846 which made low interest loans available for landowners to lay tile drains. The introduction of such sub-surface drainage in arable areas enabled fields to be ploughed and sown without the need for ridge-and-furrow, much of which was gradually flattened by subsequent ploughing. Perhaps the most dramatic monuments from this period in today's landscape are the limekilns, most of which operated on a local level but a few of which were built on a more industrial scale. The kilns burnt a mixture of coal and limestone to produce quicklime for spreading over the fields, thus improving the quality of both pasture and arable land in many areas. Some limekilns have been consolidated by the National Park Authority as atmospheric reminders of this period, most notably those at Crindledykes near Hadrian's Wall, and at Tosson and Low Alwinton in Coquetdale, all of which can now be visited by the public (see Chapter 21). Lime produced in these kilns was also used for the production of lime mortar, used in the construction of the numerous late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century farmhouses and associated buildings that we must now consider. (Further details of the most important buildings in the Park, and many others, may be found in Pevsner's *Northumberland* (1992) and in John Grundy's (1987) *Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park*, the latter being an unpublished document available for consultation at NNPA offices upon request).

At the same time as the fields were being enclosed, a great many new domestic and agricultural buildings were constructed in and around the Park. Writing of Holburn, near Lowick, in the early nineteenth century, Mackenzie notes that prior to this time cottages were built 'chiefly with oak trees, which, in many instances, rested upon the ground, and were joined at the tops so as to form a kind of sloping roof. These rude log-houses are now replaced by neat well-built cottages.' (Mackenzie 1825, vol I, 382). He also observes that Rothbury Forest 'has lately been much improved and beautified by the erection of many neat cottages, to each of which a plot of ground is annexed, varying in size from twelve acres to a rood' (*ibid*, vol. II, 52). However, change was far from uniform throughout Northumberland, as 'in many parts of the county the landlords still appear shamefully ignorant of the advantages which result from increasing the comfort of the labourer. It is shocking that a man, his wife, and half a dozen children should be obliged to live huddled together in one miserable hovel' (*ibid*, vol. I, 129). Gradually, though, throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these old 'hovels' were replaced with stone cottages.

FIGURE 8.8 Longsyke Farm. A fine example of a nineteenth-century farmhouse with outbuildings in the wild landscape north of Hadrian's Wall.

(PHOTOGRAPH:  
SIMON FRASER)



A discussion of the interesting aspects of all the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings in the Park, together with their social history, could easily fill a volume at least the size of this one. What follows is an attempt to provide an overview illustrated by brief references to specific examples. The sturdy, dignified farmhouses found throughout the Park exhibit considerable variety but are generally based on a standard two-storey, three-bay model with symmetrical façade and grey slate roof with two chimneys. Mackenzie (*ibid*, vol I, 129) records that 'Most of the farm-houses were formerly very shabby and ill contrived. The barn, stable, byer, dunghill, and the dwelling house, being huddled together, without any regard to convenience, cleanliness, or health. Those that have been erected of late years are substantial neat buildings, excellently adapted to the various purposes wanted for extensive farms and improved cultivation'. These new buildings are primarily functional rather than in any way ostentatious, but they now appear most pleasing within their often

magnificent landscape settings (fig 8.8). As with the fieldwalls discussed above, the stone employed in building these houses varies from north to south in accordance with the local geology. The mid-nineteenth-century house at Hotbank (fig 8.9) is built with stones taken from the adjacent Roman Wall. It has an earlier core and outbuildings of probable early eighteenth century date. Shillmoor (fig 8.10), built of random sandstone rubble in the early nineteenth century, represents the first permanent settlement in this part of Upper Coquetdale since medieval times. These farmhouses are usually associated with a number of contemporary agricultural buildings which can include threshing barn, gingang, stables, shelter shed, byre, cart shed, forge, harness room, and granaries or hay lofts. In some cases these farm complexes were planned and built from scratch as integrated 'farm villages'. Prendwick in the south-east Cheviots is a splendid example, with Elilaw, a few kilometres to the west, being another. Rows of single storey farmworkers' cottages were built in association with some of the new farmhouses. Picturesque mid-nineteenth-century examples can still be seen at Kilham (fig 8.11a), Kirknewton, Westnewton and Akeld (fig 8.11b) in the northern Cheviots.

In addition to all these farm buildings, the Park contains an interesting selection of larger houses, some completely new and others built around earlier structures. Some of the old towers underwent further considerable modification. For example, substantial ranges were added to Elsdon Tower in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when major changes were also made to the tower's interior. Alnham tower, described as 'uninhabitable' in 1821, was restored and extended in the 1840s (fig 7.9).

The remains of the medieval tower at Otterburn were incorporated into the picturesque castellated mansion now known as Otterburn Tower in about 1830. Otterburn Hall was largely built in 1870, although the elaborate porch which gives the building its unique and dramatic façade was not added until 1905. Its associated buildings, including a planned farm, stables and lodge, are all late nineteenth century. The Otterburn Hall buildings are most unusual in the context of the National Park in that they are all built in brick.

Hesleyside Hall (fig 8.12), North Tynedale, is by far the finest mansion in the Park. Although the ruins of a medieval tower are probably concealed somewhere within the present structure, most of what is visible today dates from 1719 to the mid-nineteenth century. Befitting the house, the gardens of Hesleyside are the finest landscaped gardens in the Park. It was once thought that Capability Brown had worked here in the late eighteenth century, but although this is no longer the case the gardens are still of great interest. Hackett (1960) suggests that the original garden may have been a formal garden in the seventeenth-century French tradition. The splendid radiating avenues, originally of sycamore and lime, date from the eighteenth century, and there are many other fascinating features which date from various times over the past three centuries. The eighteenth-century kitchen garden was once famed for its pineapples.

Cragside, near Rothbury, although just outside the Park, demands attention in any account of local post-medieval buildings. Originally built in 1864 for the first Lord Armstrong, 'this lovely mansion – one of the most beautiful and unique of country seats' (Dixon 1903, 432) is largely the work of the architect Norman Shaw who transformed it between 1870 and 1885 into 'the most dramatic Victorian mansion in the north of England' (Pevsner *et al* 1992, 244). Lord Armstrong was an accomplished inventor and innovator, and Cragside was the first house in the world to be lit by hydro-electric power. Today, Cragside is managed by the National Trust and is open to the public.

FIGURE 8.9 Hotbank Farm, on the line of Hadrian's Wall. A typical Northumberland farmhouse built, like many others in this area, with stone taken from the Wall.



FIGURE 8.10 Shillmoor Farm, Upper Coquetdale.  
(PHOTOGRAPH BY SIMON FRASER)





FIGURE 8.11 Rows of farm workers' cottages at (a) Kilham (*above*) and (b) Akeld (*below*).



The house known today as Harbottle Castle was originally built by the Widdringtons, probably not long after the medieval castle was abandoned following the Union of the Crowns, thus beginning the large scale plunder of stone from the medieval site. However, the building which survives today was almost completely rebuilt in 1829 by the famous Newcastle architect, John Dobson, for the Clennel family. Many other buildings in the village were probably built or rebuilt at about this time. Some of these probably used stone taken from the old castle, but sketches from about 1830 show the castle ruins pretty much as they are today, so any building after this date must have used either recycled stone previously plundered from the castle or freshly quarried stone.

Holystone Grange (fig 8.13) began life in the early nineteenth century as an unexceptional farmhouse, but was substantially enlarged in a Tudor style in 1897 by the Newcastle architect

Finally, in this brief review of post-medieval buildings in the Park, we must mention Causeway House, dating from 1770 (Emery *et al* 1990: fig 8.16). This, with its characteristically steep gables, stands in splendid isolation adjacent to the road to Vindolanda Roman fort. An otherwise unexceptional house, it is worthy of particular mention on account of its reconstructed heather-thatched roof. This gives an impression of what many roofs in upland Northumberland would have looked like before the almost universal adoption of Welsh slate following the coming of the railways. Prior to this, heavy stone slate roofs, a few of which still survive today, were common, and clay pantiles provide a distinctive local variation in parts of the Cheviots. Many low status buildings would have had straw thatched roofs, but these buildings, where they survive, now have slate roofs.

Life in the Northumberland uplands has generally been dominated by agriculture rather than industry, and industrial complexes never developed to the extent that they did in other upland areas of northern England (such as lead mining in the North Pennines or copper working and other industries in the Lake District). There are, however, some interesting remnants of post-medieval industry hidden away within the historic landscape of the Park. Substantial remnants of mid-nineteenth century iron works can still be seen at Hareshaw (North Tynedale) and Ridsdale (Redesdale). Commercial coalmining took place from the seventeenth century at several locations, with large scale collieries developing around Haltwhistle, Elsdon and in the North Tyne Valley in the nineteenth century. Stone quarrying was necessary throughout the Park, but generally only on a local scale. Other sites, such as millstone quarries (fig 8.17), limekilns (discussed above) and brick and tileworks (which produced field drains) were intimately linked to agricultural production and have also left their marks on the landscape. Further details of the Park's fascinating industrial heritage, together with the development of the post medieval transport network, are provided by Iain Hedley in Chapter 21 of this volume.

With regard to religion in post-medieval times, the medieval churches discussed

FIGURE 8.18 St Cuthbert's Church, Elsdon, and two gravestones from the churchyard. The gravestone on the left showing a skull and crossbones and that on the right depicts Adam and Eve and the Tree of Life. (PHOTOGRAPHS: ALBERT WEIR)



FIGURE 8.17 A view over Harbottle millstone quarry (see also fig 21.10).





FIGURE 8.19 Church of St Francis of Assisi, Byrness.

previously remained in regular use, and several fascinating eighteenth-century gravestones can be seen in some churchyards (notably Elsdon, Alwinton and Falstone; (fig 8.18). These churches underwent varying degrees of modification during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first 'new' church in the Park since medieval times, the tiny but beautiful Church of St. Francis of Assisi at Byrness (fig 8.19), was constructed 1796. A little further down Redesdale, the Church of the Holy Trinity at Horsley dates from 1844. In North Tynedale, three new churches (at Greystead, Thorneyburn and Falstone) were in use by 1824. Regardless of the 'official' religion, it is interesting to speculate about the real beliefs of the people in the rural uplands of post-medieval Northumberland. Certainly, the three horses skulls carefully concealed within the belfry of Elsdon church, probably in the seventeenth century, suggest that pagan traditions were not yet extinguished here. As late as 1828, Sir Benjamin Rudyard informed the House of Commons that in parts of the north 'the Prayers of the common people are more like spells and Charms than devotions' (Charlton 1986, 40). We will never know whether or not anyone in authority was aware of the presence of the horse skulls in the Elsdon belfry, which were only discovered during restoration work in 1837. Perhaps more such strange offerings lie concealed within the structure of other churches, or maybe such things only ever happened at Elsdon.

Of the non-conformist religions which flourished in parts of Britain from the late seventeenth century, Presbyterianism was the only one to gain much ground in the area of the National Park, becoming much more popular than conventional Protestantism in some areas. The Rev Dodgson, writing of people in and around Elsdon in the 1760s, observed that 'their religion descends from father to son, and is rather a part of the personal estate than the

result of reasoning, or the effect of enthusiasm'. He also notes a very good understanding between 'Churchmen and Presbyterians', with much intermarrying.

The so called 'chapel' of Memmerkirk is located in the inaccessible heart of Kidland. Edward Chandler, Bishop of Durham, recorded in 1736 that the 'remains of an old Chapel appear among the mountains called Mimer or Member Kirk.' In 1769, Armstrong marked 'Memmerkirk, ruins' on his map of Northumberland. Subsequent writers assumed the remains at Memmerkirk to be those of a medieval chapel, built for the seasonal use of the monks of Newminster while out in the hills of Kidland tending their flocks. The site was excavated in 1962, and the results suggested that the structure was nothing other than a rather ordinary fourteenth-century shieling of which many other examples survive in the vicinity (Harbottle and Cowper 1963). It may reasonably be conjectured that the persistent tradition of religious activity here results from its possible use in the seventeenth century as a meeting place for Presbyterians, prior to the Toleration Act of 1689 which rendered such meetings legal. Another early Presbyterian meeting place may have existed at the distinctive natural rock formation on Simonside known as Little Church Rock, while in Redesdale such meetings were held at places like Babswood Kirk, Deadwood Kirk and Huel Kirk (Charlton 1986, 40). Many other isolated locations throughout the Park may have witnessed illicit meetings of seventeenth-century Presbyterians, but such activity need leave no archaeological trace, so any such places are unlikely now to reveal their secrets.

At Harbottle, a Presbyterian congregation was established by 1713, and a meeting house built in about 1750. The surviving chapel, which replaced the meeting house, was built in 1855 in a very prominent position at the west end of the village. A meeting house at Elsdon was provided at about the same time. In North Tynedale, a real stronghold of Presbyterianism, a meeting house of 1735 at Falstone was replaced by the present church in 1807, with its distinctive tower added in 1876 (fig 8.20). Another Presbyterian church was built in Bellingham (1803), and the Duke of Northumberland built a meeting house for his

estate workers at Kielder in 1874. Perhaps the most unusual of the non-conformist establishments within the Park is the Presbyterian chapel at Birdhopecraig, Rochester. Built in 1826 to replace a nearby late eighteenth-century predecessor, this is designed entirely in the style of a domestic house. Further churches and meeting houses were built at various places just outside the Park, for example at Glanton, Wooler and Thropton. At both Wooler and Thropton, Catholic chapels were built to serve wide areas; the latter is thought to have replaced a chapel within Cartington Castle. Elsewhere, Catholics were served by Biddlestone Chapel, discussed earlier, and, further south in North Tynedale, by the Chapel of St Oswald, built in 1839 at The Shaw near Bellingham. It is interesting to note that no Catholic church existed in Redesdale until St Peter's at Otterburn was built in 1955. Residents of the scattered farms in Hadrian's Wall country looked to the churches and chapels of various denominations in the towns and villages of the Tyne Valley south of the Park boundary.

FIGURE 8.20 Falstone Presbyterian church.



# Tanks, trees and tourists

## The twentieth century

### (1901–2000)

Some readers may be surprised to find a discussion of the twentieth century in a book about archaeology, but this period has seen many developments which cannot be ignored in an analysis of the Park's historic environment. Sources such as photography, written records, and even first hand descriptions of many developments are available to students of this period, and only the briefest overview is possible here. However, this is an important part of our story, providing the final link in Part I which thus covers the entire period between the arrival of the first people to wander into the Northumberland uplands, at the end of the Ice Age, and those of us who choose to walk in their footsteps today.

Seen in the context of the 10,000 years covered in this book, the past century is but the blink of an eye (see fig 0.3). However, while some areas of the Park are little altered from a hundred years ago (fig 9.1), others have seen dramatic changes, and this potential for large-scale landscape change in short periods of time is certainly one of the things that characterises the twentieth century.

Throughout much of England, the landscape has changed dramatically through the development of transport infrastructure during the twentieth century. This has certainly not been the case in Northumberland National Park, which is penetrated by only one 'A' road, the A68, which effectively cuts the Park in two as it follows part of the line of the Roman Dere Street from Corbridge towards Scotland. To the north of this line, dead-end roads follow ancient routes into each of the main Cheviot valleys, linked in places by unsurfaced



FIGURE 9.1 A view over Ingram, taken in the early twentieth century. The building adjacent to the church is the old school, now a National Park Visitor Centre.

FIGURE 9.2 Aerial view of Biddlestone Quarry. Note the Iron Age palisade above the quarry. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



tracks. To the south-west of the A68, a network of narrow roads and tracks links the many isolated farms and few villages to 'General Wade's Military Road' or to the unclassified road through North Tynedale. Following the closure of the Border Counties Railway through North Tynedale in the 1950s, no railways survive in the Park. This lack of a modern transport infrastructure both reflects and contributes to the tranquillity of the Park, and is certainly something that sets it apart from most of twenty-first-century England.

The Park is also characterised by a general lack of large-scale twentieth-century industrial activity. Stone quarrying is the only industry to have taken place on any great scale. In the north, the distinctive 'red whinstone' is still quarried at Biddlestone (fig 9.2). This stone is in international demand for road surfacing, and was famously used to surface the Mall outside Buckingham Palace in London. In Hadrian's Wall country, the whinstone quarries at Walltown and Cawfields (fig 9.3), which between them destroyed considerable lengths of the Wall, were closed in 1943 and 1952 respectively and are now public open spaces. Although quarrying did much damage to some sections of the Wall, it also contributed indirectly to better protection of the archaeological remains as it was the threat to quarry 200,000 tons of Whinstone a year from the crags between Shield-on-the-Wall and Housesteads that led directly to the strengthening of the Ancient Monuments Act in 1931. It was also during the 1930s that the National Trust began to acquire land along Hadrian's Wall, enabling the conservation and public interpretation work that continues to this day (Woodside and Crow 1999).

Very little substantial building work was undertaken in the Park during the twentieth century. One exceptional new house which is worthy of special mention is Hethpool (fig 9.4), gloriously situated within the College Valley, built in 1919 for the Tyneside industrialist Sir Arthur Munro Sutherland. This incorporates a datestone of 1687 from an earlier structure on the same site, but is a complete new build in Arts and Crafts style. The 1919 house was built by George Reavell of Alnwick, and additions of 1928, including the attractive



FIGURE 9.3 Stone quarries on the line of Hadrian's Wall. a) Cawfields quarry, now a lake in a public open space. b) Work in progress in Walltown Quarry in the early twentieth century. (© NORTHUMBERLAND RECORD OFFICE)

FIGURE 9.4 Hethpool House, College Valley.



FIGURE 9.5 The estate workers' cottages at Hethpool are some of the most attractive houses in the Park.



conical-roofed tower, were by Robert Mauchlen: the house thus bears the imprint of two of the most accomplished north-east domestic architects of the early twentieth century. The associated farm cottages (1926) are among the finest cottages to be seen anywhere in Northumberland (fig 9.5). An altogether different early twentieth-century house, but in an equally magnificent landscape setting, is the unique shooting lodge at Linhope, high in the Breamish Valley. This was built in 1905 for Lord Joicey of Ford Castle, and is described by John Grundy (1987) as being of 'single-storey, bungalow style as if it was in the Himalayas in British India'. Another unique building, constructed for a Captain Leyland in 1905 and demolished in 1954, was the huge shooting lodge at Kidlandlee (fig 9.6). This was said to have had eighty rooms, and was reputed to be 'the highest mansion in England'. Associated with it were a croquet lawn and gardens with exotic trees. The site is now entombed within Kidland Forest, planted with rather less exotic trees in the 1960s and 1970s.



FIGURE 9.6 W P Colliers photograph of the shooting lodge at Kidlandlee in about 1915. (FROM OWEN 1996, BY PERMISSION OF BELLINGHAM HERITAGE CENTRE)



FIGURE 9.7 Kilham House is of at least three phases, but presents an apparent uniformity of design through the use and retention of very attractive 12-pane sash windows throughout. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM GRUNDY 1987)

In continuance of nineteenth-century practice, a few existing houses were given grand extensions. A fine example is Kilham House, where a substantial extension of 1926 effectively transformed a traditional farmhouse into a small country house, the attractive appearance of which owes much to the use of identical 12-pane windows throughout (fig 9.7).

As we have seen, most villages within the Park were in existence by medieval times. There are two notable exceptions, Byrness and Stonehaugh, both built by the Forestry Commission

FIGURE 9.8 Terraced houses in Stonehaugh Village.



in the mid-twentieth century. These were needed to house the many forestry workers required to manage the extensive plantations of Wark, Kielder and Redesdale Forests (now known collectively as Kielder Forest – see below). The original plans for Stonehaugh, near Wark in North Tynedale, were for a new village of more than 200 houses. In the event only 113 were built due to reductions in the numbers of forestry workers required. The brick-built, tile-roofed houses were built in terraces, and are of a standard 3 bay design (fig 9.8). In the 1980s, in an attempt to relieve their generally depressing appearance, the houses were painted bright colours, and they certainly provide something of a contrast to the Park's traditional villages. At Byrness, high in Redesdale, plans for the new village included 47 terraced houses, shops, a church and a village hall (Charlton 1986, 69). Further Forestry Commission housing was provided at Kielder and, on a much smaller scale, at Falstone.

Many small, traditional domestic buildings were added to the Park's villages during the twentieth century, most of which merge comfortably into their historic settings. In the latter half of the century, National Park planning policy ensured that most new buildings were of a traditional style. The Park Authority's Design Guide now provides clear guidelines for all new domestic, agricultural and other buildings, as well as advice on alterations and extensions. While recognising the need for development, the Design Guide stresses the historic value of the Park's built environment. It is intended to 'draw out the abiding qualities and character of buildings and settlements in the National Park and to help prevent inappropriate development intruding on the harmony achieved by the slow evolution of rural building in the past' (NNPA 1998, 7). With careful planning, even large, modern cattle sheds can usually be designed to merge into the surrounding historic landscape.

Within this discussion of twentieth-century architecture in the Park, we must consider the Otterburn Training Area (OTA). The 'Ad Fines' field artillery range, based on Redesdale Camp, was opened in 1912, followed by Otterburn camp in 1940. Further land purchases



FIGURE 9.9 An old tank, used for target practice, on the Otterburn Training Area.

between 1940 and 1987 enabled the range to expand to its current 23,000 hectares, covering nearly a quarter of the National Park (fig 9.9). In addition to the accommodation and administrative blocks, workshops and other buildings within the two camps, the OTA includes numerous structures charting the course of twentieth-century military training. It is interesting to note in passing that much of this training took place on the same turf as the Romans had trained on 1800 years earlier, and that twentieth-century tanks and multiple rocket launchers now drive along routes originally set out by the Roman legions for their proposed conquest of Scotland (see fig 5.1).

Military landuse has, in general terms, enabled the survival of extensive and very important archaeological landscapes on the OTA (see Chapter 22), while also contributing some novel 'monuments' of a type not to be seen elsewhere (figs 9.10 & 22.1). Clearly, there are occasions when National Park purposes and military objectives do not sit side by side in perfect harmony, but the Ministry of Defence, National Park Authority and other partners now work effectively together to enable the best possible management of the OTA's archaeological landscapes. The OTA does not provide the only space for military training within the Park: the skies above are in frequent use for training fighter pilots, and in the more remote corners of the Park the roar of military jets is often the only reminder of the modern world.

Sadly, the need for adequate military training was demonstrated all too often during the twentieth century. The First and Second World Wars affected every village in the National Park just as they affected villages the world over, with many young men losing their lives. War memorials in the Park take various forms, including plaques in churches, the lychgate at Ingram church, the Memorial Hall at Alnham (now a private house) and the distinctive Arts and Crafts style memorial at Rochester. Perhaps the most poignant of all such memorials is the recently erected 'Cheviot Memorial' (fig 9.11) in an exquisite landscape setting adjacent to Cuddystone Hall (also known as Sutherland Hall) in the College Valley.



FIGURE 9.10 The earthworks of the 'target runway' on the Otterburn Training Area. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

This was unveiled at a dedication ceremony on 19 May 1995, and commemorates the 35 allied airmen who lost their lives in eleven air crashes in the Cheviots between 1939 and 1945. At the dedication ceremony, tribute was paid to the 'courage and endeavours of the people of the Cheviot who distinguished themselves rescuing survivors, often in atrocious weather conditions'. One such rescue occurred in December 1944, when four injured members of a B17 bomber crew were discovered in a blizzard by Sheila, a collie dog belonging to local shepherd, John Dagg. Two other airmen were tragically killed in the crash, but three others walked down the hill to safety, and the four injured men were all saved. Sheila became the first ever civilian dog to be awarded the Dickin Medal for animal gallantry. One of her first puppies, Tibbie, was flown over the Atlantic by the RAF and became the adopted town pet of Columbia, South Carolina, the home town of Sgt Frank R Turner, one of the men killed in the crash.

Between the Wars, the Forestry Commission was set up to establish new forests and ensure that the nation was never short of timber. The vast open spaces of the Northumberland hills were soon targeted for extensive new conifer plantations. Kielder Forest, on the western fringe of the National Park, was begun in the 1920s and is now one of the



FIGURE 9.11 The Cheviot Memorial, College Valley.



FIGURE 9.12 A Bronze Age cairn being destroyed by forestry ploughing on Fredden Hill in the 1970s.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

largest man-made forests in Europe (an estimated 150 million trees over some 50,000 hectares), extending from the southern edge of Wark Forest just north of Hadrian's Wall to Redsdale Forest which straddles the A68 adjacent to the Scottish border. Elsewhere within the Park, several relatively small, but far from archaeologically insignificant areas (such as Threestoneburn, named after the impressive stone circle) and Fredden Hill (fig 9.12) were similarly planted with conifers. The damage done to archaeological sites by such planting remains unquantified. While many of the newly planted areas in Tynedale and Redesdale were on poor ground, where few such sites would ever have existed, forestry workers (most notably Fritz Berthele) have picked up many hundreds of prehistoric flint tools from ground in the Cheviots disturbed by ploughing for forestry, and regrettably many buried archaeological sites must have been damaged or destroyed by such plantations. However, the situation could have been much worse if areas such as Yeavinger Bell, once targeted for planting, had not been saved through the diligent campaigning of archaeologists in the 1970s. Today, National Park staff work closely with the forestry authorities, enabling projects such as that at Simonside (see Chapter 23), and ensuring that all known archaeological sites within forestry plantations are monitored and sympathetically managed.

Fortunately, many archaeologically sensitive areas that were previously threatened with extensive conifer planting are now managed as heather moorland for sheep and grouse, and several long-term management agreements have been signed between the National Park Authority and landowners to ensure the continuation of sympathetic patterns of land use in such areas. Today, many new 'native' deciduous woodlands, largely financed through government grants, are planted principally for long-term environmental improvement rather than commercial gain. Sites for such woodlands are always carefully scrutinised prior to planting to ensure that no damage is done to any archaeological sites which might have been constructed, used and abandoned since the original 'native' woodland was cleared, probably in prehistoric times.

The forest was not the only major development in the vicinity of Kielder during the twentieth century: of no lesser landscape impact was the construction of the Kielder Reservoir (fig 9.13). Upper Redesdale and Upper North Tynedale had long been recognised as potential reservoir sites, and Catcleugh Reservoir in Redesdale, itself a massive feat of

engineering, was in use by 1905 (see Chapter 21). Kielder Reservoir, however, is on an altogether different scale, and represented the largest scale engineering project in the region since the construction of Hadrian's Wall some nineteen centuries earlier. The Kielder Reservoir and its associated transfer works (which carry water as far as North Yorkshire for domestic and industrial use) opened in 1982 at a cost in excess of £160 million. The main dam, over 1100 metres in length and a little over 50 metres in height, holds back over 40 thousand million gallons of water within the seven mile long reservoir. In addition to the dam and transfer works, the project included the provision of new housing for families whose homes were to be flooded by the development, a new road to replace the valley road which now lies submerged, the conservation of the spectacular Kielder Railway Viaduct, and the provision of a visitor centre and recreational facilities. Many archaeological sites were investigated prior to the flooding of the reservoir, including the Romano-British settlements discussed earlier in this book, but these have all now been replaced by the extraordinary Kielder complex which must now feature in any assessment of North Tynedale's historic landscape. Kielder demonstrates better than anywhere else in rural Northumberland the ability of modern developments to alter radically long-established historic landscapes.

FIGURE 9.13a A view across the site of Kielder Reservoir during its construction. Kielder Forest stretches away into the distance.



FIGURE 9.13b Something of the vastness of Kielder Water in today's landscape is conveyed by this image.



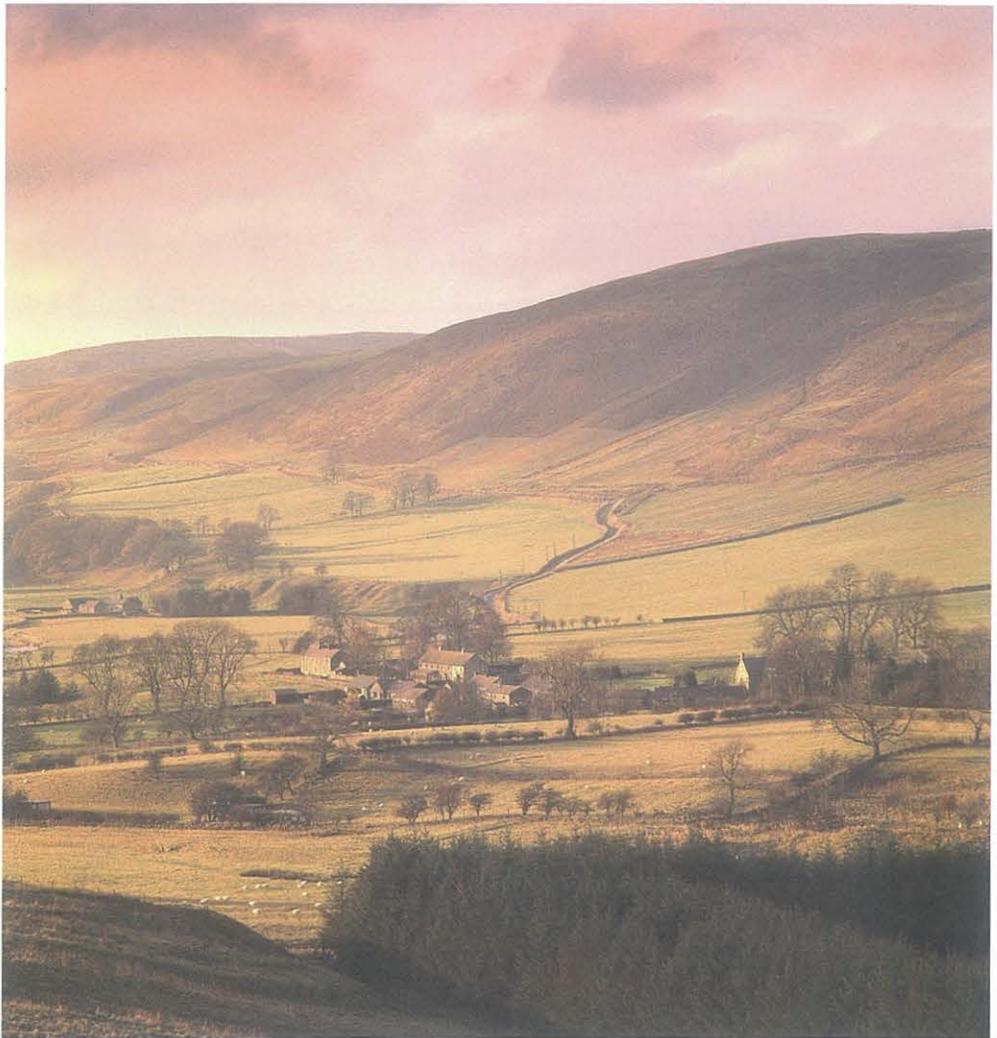


FIGURE 9.14 The isolated nature of some Cheviot farmsteads is well illustrated by this image of Makendon, Upper Coquetdale. (PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON FRASER)



FIGURE 9.15 Uswayford, on the Usway Burn, Upper Coquetdale. Photographed in about 1914 by W P Collier. (FROM OWEN 1996. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF BELLINGHAM HERITAGE CENTRE)

FIGURE 9.16 (right) View over Alwinton. The management of landscapes such as this requires the expertise of many specialist officers, brought together within the Northumberland National Park Authority, who work with landowners and local residents to help conserve the very special qualities of the Park. (PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON FRASER)



Despite the impact of forestry and military training, farming remained the main influence on the landscape throughout the twentieth century. Dixon (1903, chapters 4 and 5) paints a vivid picture of the farming communities of Upper Coquetdale at the turn of the twentieth century. The community was of isolated farming families, often at the mercy of the winter weather, whose lives were intimately bound up with the events of the agricultural calendar (figs 9.14 & 9.15). The annual sheep show at Alwinton was a 'great gala day' each September, with wrestling and other sports. Other social events were also important, and Dixon notes that 'even in this hurry-scurry age the shepherds of Coquet can still enjoy those social meetings of which their fore-elders were so fond and which tend to encourage friendly intercourse amongst neighbours (and) break the monotony of their solitary hill life.' If Dixon really thought of 1903 as a 'hurry-scurry age' then one dreads to think of what he would have made of today's lifestyles, as the twentieth century was to see many developments in farming life throughout the Park.

All upland farmers have seen dramatic changes. These include the construction of decent roads to even the most isolated holdings, the arrival of electricity and telecommunications

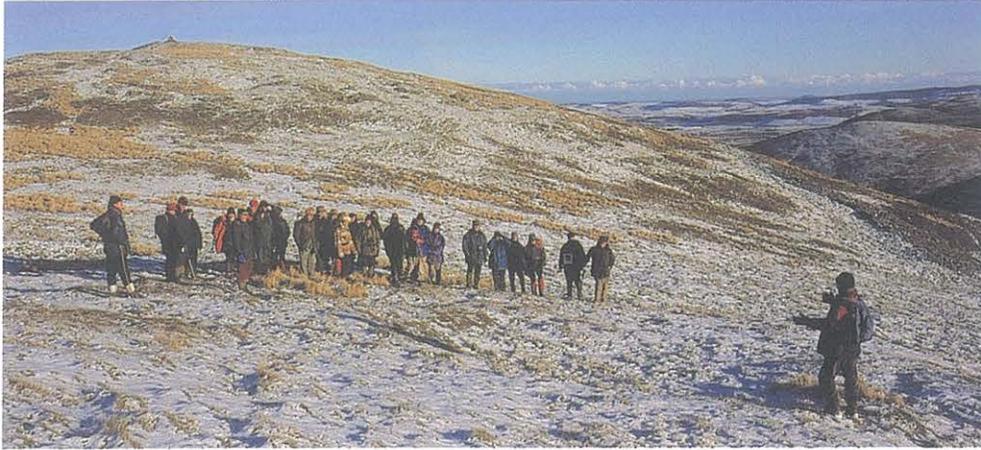


FIGURE 9.17 The National Park Authority organises many events each year with an archaeological theme, and these are consistently well attended. Here, on a stunningly beautiful December day, the Park Archaeologist leads a guided walk around Yeavinger Bell.

at remote farmsteads, and the provision of factory produced feeds for stock. Mechanical developments include the crucial introduction of the Landrover (enabling farmers to travel up into the hills with heavy equipment, do a good day's work, and return to the house for tea), and a host of other agricultural machines enabling the more efficient production of food. In general, these developments have resulted in little change to the overall appearance of the landscape, which remains one of enclosed in-by-land clustered around isolated farms and villages, beyond which stretch the vast swathes of open moorland which, as we have seen, contain much evidence for the activities of mankind over the past 10,000 years. The management of this moorland is now subject to international rules and regulations. In the 1970s grants were available to 'improve' agricultural land, and some areas were enclosed and ploughed for the first time since prehistory. More recently, grants have been available to help reinstate heather moorland, and landowners are paid to manage land for perceived environmental benefit.

The National Park Authority itself has a key role to play in the management of this upland landscape (fig 9.16). The National Park was initially set up in 1956 and was managed from within Northumberland County Council. As a result of the 1995 Environment Act it achieved the status of a fully independent local authority in 1996. Today, the Park Authority consists of 22 members appointed to reflect local and national interests. The National Park is the local planning authority, giving it a degree of control over controversial developments, but it is also a great deal more than this. Its purposes, as updated by the 1995 Environment Act, are:

1. to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park
2. to promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

In working towards these purposes, the Park Authority must also seek to foster the social and economic well being of local communities. This book explains much work undertaken with regard to the first purpose, and should in itself contribute to the achievement of the second purpose. A well managed and accessible historic environment is a major social and economic asset, and work such as that presented in these pages has much to offer local communities. Indeed, the Park's historic environment is undeniably one of its greatest assets, and is greatly



FIGURE 9.18 The Roman toilets at Housesteads Fort receive in excess of 120,000 visitors a year, and are particularly popular with children. The National Park Authority, in partnership with English Heritage, the National Trust and others, plays a major role in the management of such sites. Striking the right balance between demands of conservation and public access is not always easy.

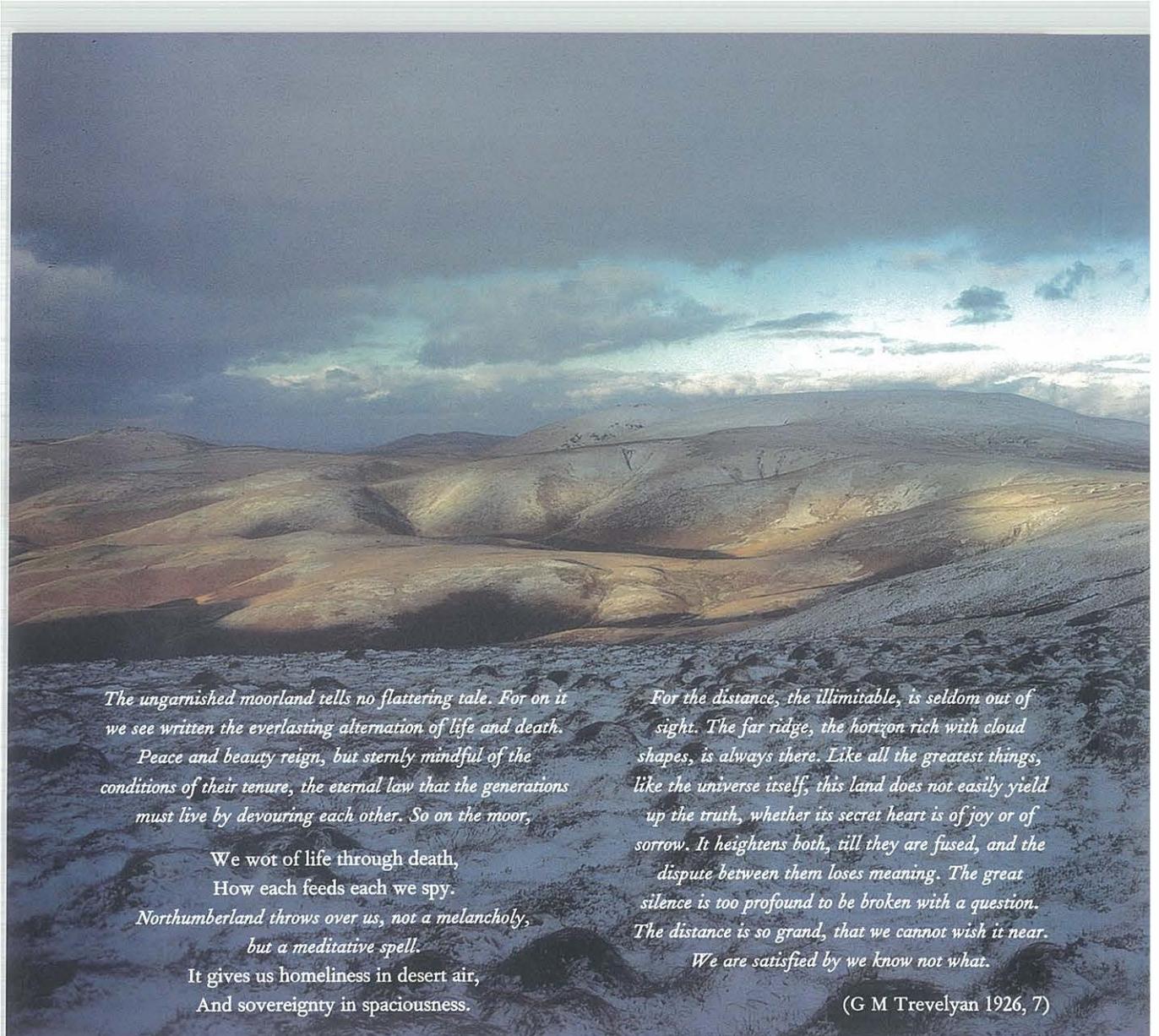
appreciated by visitors who provide much custom for local businesses (fig 9.17). The impact of tourism has, to date, been varied throughout the Park. Hadrian's Wall is now a World Heritage Site, and the economy of the Wall corridor is increasingly dependent on tourism (fig 9.18). The new Hadrian's Wall National Trail should result in still more visitors in future. This all has an impact on the landscape, as visitor facilities (car parks, visitor centres, information panels, toilet blocks) are required, and waymarkers are needed in even the wildest landscapes to

ensure that people, having been encouraged to explore the hills, do not get lost in them. One day, archaeologists may write about 'the archaeology of the tourist industry', debating the impact of tourism on the landscape and on society. For now, tourism should be encouraged, but carefully managed, as excessive numbers of visitors will be detrimental to the very tranquillity that people come to experience, as well as potentially causing damage to ancient monuments and other environmental assets.

The presence of the National Park results in some restrictions on activity where these are deemed to be in the wider public interest, but it also provides opportunities for local people and businesses through the provision of financial assistance and expert advice. In some cases, the twin objectives of conservation and interpretation can be in conflict, especially now that tranquil areas are so susceptible to mass tourism through the use of the private car. The Park Authority seeks to work with local communities and other partners to resolve such issues and to effectively conserve, enhance and interpret the special qualities of what is a very special place (fig 9.19). The current National Park Management Plan (Northumberland National Park Authority 2003) recognises that one of the Park's special qualities is without doubt its archaeological heritage. It states that:

*The area's remoteness and lack of attention from archaeologists, compared to the more populous south of England, means that its significance and richness have gone largely unrecognised amongst both professional archaeologists and the general public. (However) recent investigations have pushed back the limits of our knowledge of the early history of this land. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this legacy to us or to diminish the excitement and pleasure our new knowledge is beginning to give to resident and visitor alike ... While enthusing locals and visitors with regard to the magic of archaeology (our work) has also produced results that will in due course rewrite the text books about prehistoric societies in central Britain ... Such projects all add to the reasons for visitors to come to North Northumberland and help revive the tourist industry.*

The Park Plan states that the Authority will continue with its policy of encouraging archaeological research, survey, conservation and interpretation projects such as those covered in Part II of this book. Hopefully, in due course, the unpredictable results of many such projects will be incorporated into the enthralling and never ending story of life 'Long Ago, in the Land of the Far Horizons.'



*The ungarnished moorland tells no flattering tale. For on it we see written the everlasting alternation of life and death.*

*Peace and beauty reign, but sternly mindful of the conditions of their tenure, the eternal law that the generations must live by devouring each other. So on the moor,*

*We wot of life through death,  
How each feeds each we spy.*

*Northumberland throws over us, not a melancholy,  
but a meditative spell.*

*It gives us homeliness in desert air,  
And sovereignty in spaciousness.*

*For the distance, the illimitable, is seldom out of sight. The far ridge, the horizon rich with cloud shapes, is always there. Like all the greatest things, like the universe itself, this land does not easily yield up the truth, whether its secret heart is of joy or of sorrow. It heightens both, till they are fused, and the dispute between them loses meaning. The great silence is too profound to be broken with a question. The distance is so grand, that we cannot wish it near. We are satisfied by we know not what.*

(G M Trevelyan 1926, 7)

## Acknowledgements

This account has been written over a long period, in the limited time available between more onerous work chores and infinitely more pleasurable, though no less time-consuming, domestic duties. I would particularly like to thank Jonathan Mullard (at work) and Deborah, Katie, Claire, Buffy and Meg (at home) for allowing me time to complete it. I am also very grateful to my colleagues Rob Young and Iain Hedley for their comments on various drafts, as a result of which numerous improvements have been incorporated into the final version. Grateful thanks are also due to the following, all of whom provided useful comments on some or all of the text: Jane Thorniley-Walker, Clive Waddington, Stan Beckensall, Tony Hopkins, Colm O'Brien, Jim Crow and Deborah Anderson. Several questionable interpretations, and probably a few errors, remain in the published text. Responsibility for these, as ever, rests solely with the writer.

FIGURE 9.19  
Northumberland  
National Park: a very  
special place.

# Part I References

Readers wishing to discover more about the history of any part of the National Park should consult the relevant volume of *A History of Northumberland*. These fifteen volumes were published between 1893 and 1940, and cover most of the county. Most of the National Park is covered by volumes XI, XIV and XV. They do not, however, cover some areas which were deemed to have been covered in sufficient detail in earlier publications (for Elsdon and Redesdale, see J Hodgson's (1820) *History of Northumberland Part I vol I*, and for the Hadrian's Wall corridor see J Hodgson's (1841) *History of Northumberland Part II vol III*).

- Allason-Jones, L, 1989 *Women in Roman Britain*. London: British Museum. New edition, 2004. York: CBA
- Allason-Jones, L, & McKay, B, 1985 *Coventina's Well*. Gloucester: Alan Sutton
- Armit, I, 1997 *Celtic Scotland*. London: Batsford
- Bailey, J, & Culley, G, 1794 *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Northumberland*. (1972 facsimile: Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Frank Graham)
- Barr, N, 2001 *Flodden 1513*. Stroud: Tempus
- Bates, C, 1895 *The History of Northumberland*. London: Elliot Stock
- Beckensall, S, 1999 *British Prehistoric Rock Art*. Stroud: Tempus
- Beckensall, S, 2001 *Prehistoric Rock Art in Northumberland*. Stroud: Tempus
- Beckensall S, & Frodsham, P, 1998 Questions of Chronology: the Case for Bronze Age Rock Art in Northern England, *Northern Archaeology* 15/16, 51–69
- Birley, A, 2002 *Garrison Life at Vindolanda. A Band of Brothers*. Stroud: Tempus
- Bradley, R, 1997 *Rock Art and the Prehistory of Atlantic Europe: Signing the Land*. London: Routledge
- Breeze, D, 1984 Demand and Supply on the Northern Frontier, in C Burgess & R Miket (eds) *Between and Beyond The Walls: Essays on the Prehistory and History of North Britain in Honour of George Jobey*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 264–86
- Breeze, D, & Dobson, B, 2000 *Hadrian's Wall*. London: Penguin
- Bruce, J C, 1867 *The Roman Wall* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London: Longmans, Green & Co, Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Andrew Reid
- Bruce, J C, 1885 *Hand-Book to the Roman Wall* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London: Longmans, Green & Co
- Burgess, C, 1968 *Bronze Age Metalwork in Northern England c.1000 to 700BC*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Oriol Press
- Burgess, C, 1984 The Prehistoric Settlement of Northumberland: A Speculative Survey, in C Burgess & R Miket (eds) *Between and Beyond The Walls: Essays on the Prehistory and History of North Britain in Honour of George Jobey*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 126–75
- Burgess, C, 1995 Bronze Age Settlements and Domestic Pottery in Northern Britain: some suggestions, in I Kinnes & G Varndell *Unbaked Urns of Rudely Shape. Essays on British and Irish Pottery for Ian Longworth*, (Oxbow Monograph 55). Oxford: Oxbow Books, 145–58
- Burgess, C, & Miket, R, (eds) 1984 *Between and Beyond the Walls. Essays on the Prehistory and History of North Britain in Honour of George Jobey*. Edinburgh: John Donald
- Burl, A, 1972 The excavation of the Three Kings stone circle, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) L, 1–14
- Butlin, R A, 1967 Enclosure and improvement in Northumberland in the sixteenth century, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XLV, 149–60

- Charlton, D B, 1986 *The Story of Redesdale*. Hexham: Northumberland County Council
- Charlton, D B, 1987 *Upper North Tynedale. A Northumbrian Valley and its People*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Northumbrian Water
- Charlton D B, & Day, J C, 1978 Excavation and Survey in Upper Redesdale, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **VI**, 61–86
- Charlton, D B, & Mitcheson, M, 1984 The Roman cemetery at Petty Knowes, Rochester, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XII**, 1–31
- Clutton-Brock, J, 1992 *Horse Power. A History of the Horse and the Donkey in Human Societies*. USA: Harvard Univ Press
- Collingwood, C S, 1884 *Memoirs of Bernard Gilpin*. Sunderland: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., London: Hills & Co
- Collingwood, W G, 1927 *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age*. London: Faber & Gwyer
- Cramp, R, 1984 *Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture: Volume I, County Durham and Northumberland*. Oxford: British Academy/Oxford University Press
- Crow, J, 1995 *Housesteads*. London: Batsford
- Cully & Bailey, 1794 *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Northumberland*
- Cunliffe, B, 1992 *The Celtic World*. London: Constable
- Dickinson, F, 2001 *Tracking a Legend. A north country legacy of Jacobite times*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cresset Books
- Dixon, D D, 1895 *Whittingham Vale, Northumberland. Its History, Traditions and Folklore*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Redpath
- Dixon, D, 1903 *Upper Coquetdale, Northumberland: its history, traditions, folk-lore and scenery*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Redpath
- Dixon, P W, 1972 Shielings and Bastles: A Reconsideration of some Problems, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **L**; 249–58
- Dixon, P W, 1976 *Fortified Houses on the Anglo Scottish Border*. Unpublished D.Phil thesis, Oxford University (Volume 1)
- Dixon, P S, 1984 *The Deserted Medieval Villages of North Northumberland*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wales
- Durham, K, & McBride, A, 1998 *Reivers. Anglo-Scottish Border Raiders from their Origins to the End of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century*. Stockport: Moonlight Publications
- Emery, N, Warner, J, & Pearsaon, A, 1990 Northumberland: Causeway House, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XVIII**, 131–49
- Evans, D H, & Jarrett, M G, 1987 The deserted village of West Whelpington, Northumberland: third report, part one, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XV**, 199–308
- Evans D H, Jarrett, M G, & Wrathmell, S, 1988 The deserted village of West Whelpington, Northumberland: third report, part two, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XVI**, 139–92
- Fagan, B, 2000 *The Little Ice Age. How Climate made History, 1300–1850*. New York: Basic Books
- Ford, B, Deakin, P, & Walker, M, 2002 The Tri-radial Cairns of Northumberland, *Current Archaeology* **182**, 82–85
- Fraser, C M, 1968 *The Northumberland Lay Subsidy Roll of 1296*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Fraser, G M, 1971 *The Steel Bonnets. The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers*. London: Barrie & Jenkins
- Frodsham, P, 1996 Spirals in Time: Morwick Mill and the Spiral Motif in the British Neolithic, in P Frodsham (ed) *Neolithic Studies in No-Mans's Land. Papers on the Neolithic of Northern England from the Trent to the Tweed*, *Northern Archaeology* **13/14** (special edition), 101–38

- Frodsham, P, 1999 Forgetting Gefrin, in P Frodsham, P Topping & D Cowley (eds) 'We were always chasing time'. Papers presented to Keith Blood, *Northern Archaeology* 17/18 (special edition), 191–207
- Frodsham, P, 2000 Worlds without ends: towards a new prehistory for central Britain, in J Harding & R Johnstone (eds) *Northern Pasts: Interpretations of the Later Prehistory of Northern England and Southern Scotland*, BAR Brit Ser, 302. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports
- Frodsham, P, (in press) 'So much history in this landscape. So much confusion, so much doubt', in P Frodsham (ed) *Interpreting the Ambiguous: Archaeology and Interpretation in early 21<sup>st</sup> Century Britain*. BAR Brit Ser. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports
- Frodsham, P, & O'Brien, C, (eds) (forthcoming) *Yeaving; 25 years after Brian Hope-Taylor* (Proceedings of a conference held at Bede's World, Jarrow, in March 2003). Stroud: Tempus
- Gates, T, 1983 Unenclosed settlements in Northumberland. In J, Chapman & H, Mytum (eds) *Settlement in North Britain, 1000BC-AD1000*, BAR Brit Ser 118. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports
- Greenwell, W, 1877 *British Barrows. A Record of the Examination of Sepulchral Monuments in Various Parts of England*. Oxford: Clarendon
- Grundy, J, 1987 The Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park. Unpublished report to the Northumberland National Park Authority
- Hackett, B, 1960 A formal landscape at Helseyside in Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XXXVIII, 161–67
- Harbottle, B, & Cowper, R A S, 1963 An excavation at Memmerkirk, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XLI, 45–63.
- Harding, A F, 1981 Excavations in the Prehistoric Ritual Complex near Milfield, Northumberland, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 47, 87–135
- Harding, A F, 2000 Henge Monuments and Landscape Features in Northern England: Monumentality and Nature, in A Ritchie (ed) *Neolithic Orkney in its European Context*. Cambridge: McDonald Institute.
- Hawkes, J, & Mills, S, (eds), 1999 *Northumbria's Golden Age*. Stroud: Sutton
- Hepple, L W, 1976 *A History of Northumberland and Newcastle-upon-Tyne*. London: Phillimore
- Higham, N, 1993 *The Kingdom of Northumbria AD 350–1100*. Stroud: Alan Sutton
- Hill, P H, 1982 Broxmouth hillfort excavations, 1977–78, in D W Harding (ed) *Later Prehistoric Settlement in South-East Scotland*, University of Edinburgh Dept of Archaeology occasional paper no. 8. Edinburgh
- Hodgson, J, 1841 *A History of Northumberland, Part II, vol 3*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hogg, A H A, 1942 Excavations in a native settlement at Ingram Hill, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XX, 110–33
- Hogg, A H A, 1956 Further Excavations at Ingram Hill, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XXXIV, 150–60
- Hope-Taylor, B, 1977 *Yeaving: An Anglo-British centre of early Northumbria*. London: HMSO
- Horsley, J, 1732 *Britannia Romana* (1974 facsimile). Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Frank Graham
- Hutchinson, 1778 *A View of Northumberland* (2 vols). Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- James, S, 1999 *The Atlantic Celts: Ancient People or Modern Invention?* London: British Museum Press
- Jobey, 1959 Excavations at the native settlement at Huckhoe, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XXXVII, 217–78
- Jobey, G, 1960 Some rectilinear settlements of the Roman period in Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) XXXVIII, 1–38

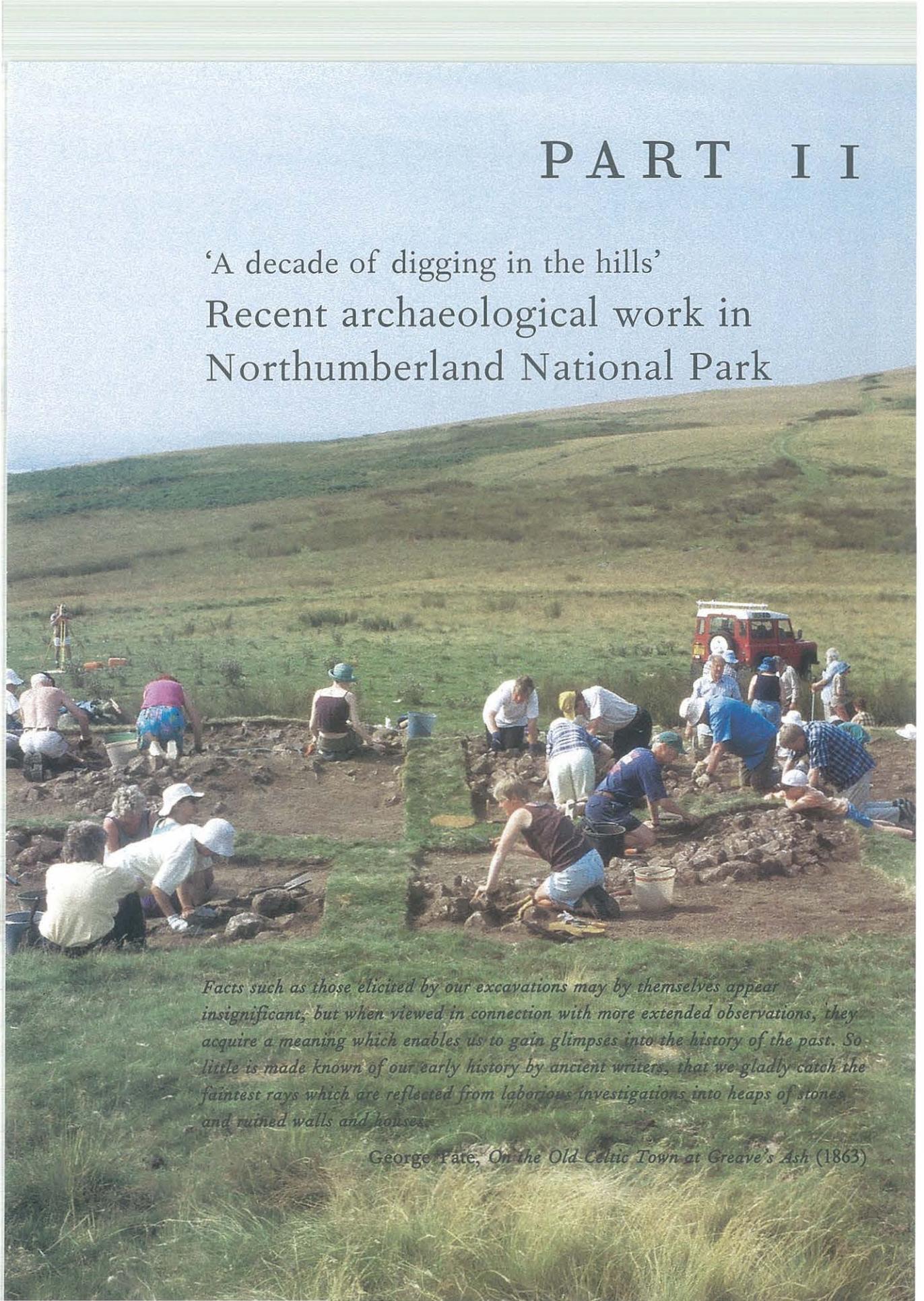
- Jobey, G, 1971 Excavations at Brough Law and Ingram Hill, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **II**, 71–93
- Jobey, G, 1978 Iron Age and Romano-British settlements on Kennel Hall Knowe, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **VI**, 1–28
- Jobey G, 1983 Excavation of an unenclosed settlement on Standrop Rigg, Northumberland, and some problems related to similar settlements between Tyne and Forth, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XI**, 1–21
- Jobey, G, 1987 Prehistoric, Romano-British and Later Remains on Murton High Craggs, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XV**, 151–98
- Jobey, G, & Tait, J, 1966 Excavations on palisaded settlements and cairnfields at Alnham, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XLI**, 5–48
- Johnson, S, 1989 *Hadrian's Wall*. London: Batsford/English Heritage
- Kilbride-Jones, H E, 1938 The excavation of a native settlement at Milking Gap, High Shlied, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XV**, 303–50
- Kinnes, I A, & Longworth, H, 1985 *Catalogue of the Excavated Prehistoric and Romano-British material in the Greenwell Collection*. London: British Museum Publications
- Lawson, W, 1973 The construction of the Military Road in Northumberland, 1751–1757, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **I**, 171–193
- Lomas, 1992 *North-East England in the Middle Ages*. Edinburgh: John Donald
- Lomas, R, 1996 *County of Conflict: Northumberland from Conquest to Civil War*. East Linton: Tuckwell Press
- Lomas, R, 1999 *A Power in the Land: The Percys*. East Linton: Tuckwell
- Lucy, S, 1999 Changing Burial Rites in Northumbria AD500–750, in J Hawkes & S Mills (eds) 1999 *Northumbria's Golden Age*. Stroud: Sutton
- Mack, J L, 1926 *The Border Line*. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd
- Mackenzie, E, 1825 *An Historical, Topographical, and Descriptive View of the County of Northumberland*. I & II (second edition). Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Mackenzie & Dent
- Marsden, J, 1990 *The Illustrated Border Ballads*. London: Macmillan
- Marsden, J, 1992 *Northanhymbre Saga. The History of the Anglo-Saxon Kings of Northumbria*. London: Kyle Cathie
- Masters, L, 1884 The Neolithic Long Cairns of Cumbria and Northumberland, in C Burgess & R Miket (eds) *Between and Beyond The Walls: Essays on the Prehistory and History of North Britain in Honour of George Jobey*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 52–73
- McCord, N, & Thompson, R, 1998 *The Northern Counties from AD 1000*. London: Longman
- McNamee, C, 1997 *The Wars of the Bruces*. East Linton: Tuckwell
- Miket, R, 1979 A restatement of evidence from Bernician Anglo-Saxon burials, in P Rahtz T Dickinson & L Watts (eds) *Anglo-Saxon Cemeteries 1979*, BAR Brit Ser **82**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 289–305
- NNPA, 1998 Northumberland National Park Design Guide (revised edition). Hexham: NNPA
- NNPA (Northumberland National Park Authority), 2003 *A secure future for the land of the far horizons*. National Park management plan, 3<sup>rd</sup> review, framework document. Hexham: NNPA
- O'Brien, C, 2002 The Early Medieval Shires of Yeaveering, Breamish and Bamburgh, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XXX**, 53–73
- O'Brien, C, & Miket, R, 1991 The early medieval settlement of Thirlings, Northumberland, *Durham Archaeological Journal* **7**, 57–91
- Oswald, A, (forthcoming) *Iron Age Hillforts in the Northumberland National Park*. English Heritage
- Owen, S F, 1996 *Northumbrian Heritage 1912–1937. The Photographs of W P Collier of Bellingham*. Bellingham Heritage Centre

- Parker Pearson, M, 1996 Food, Fertility and Front Doors in the First Millennium BC, in T C Champion & J R Collis (eds) *The Iron Age in Britain and Ireland: Recent Trends*. University of Sheffield: J R Collis Publications, 119–32
- Pearson, T, 1998 Yeavinger Bell Hillfort, Northumberland. (Unpublished survey report). Swindon: RCHME
- Pevsner, N, & Richmond, I, 1992 *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*. (Second edition revised by J, Grundy, G, McCombie, P, Ryder & H, Welfare). London: Penguin Books
- Philipson, J, & Child, F A, 1960 Remains of illicit distilleries in Upper Coquetdale, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XXXVIII**, 99–112
- Phillips G 1999 *The Anglo-Scottish Wars, 1513–50*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press
- Piggott, C M, 1950 The excavations at Hownam Rings, Roxburghshire, 1948, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* **82**, 193–225.
- Prestwich, M, 1996 *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: the English Experience*. Newhaven and London: Yale University Press
- Ramm, H G, McDowall, R W, & Mercer, E, 1970 *Sheilings and Bastles*. London: RCHME/HMSO
- Redesdale Society, 1988 *The Battle of Otterburn (600<sup>th</sup> Anniversary)*. Hexham: Northumberland County Council
- Richmond I A, 1940 The Romans in Redesdale, in Hope Dodds (ed) *A History of Northumberland* **15**. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Andrew Reid & Co
- Rideout, J S, Owen, O A, & Halpin, E, 1992 *Hillforts of southern Scotland*. Edinburgh: AoC Scotland Ltd
- Rose, A, 2002 *Kings in the North. The House of Percy in British History*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson
- Sanderson, R P, (ed) 1891 *Survey of the Debateable and Border Lands adjoining the Realm of Scotland and belonging to the Crown of England. Taken AD 1604*. Alnwick
- Shirley-Price, L, & Farmer, D H, 1990 *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. London: Penguin
- Smith, C, 1990 Excavations at Dod Law West Hillfort, Northumberland, *Northern Archaeology* **9**, 1–55
- Tait, J, 1965 *Beakers from Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Oriel Press Ltd
- Tate, G, 1863a On the old Celtic Town at Greaves Ash, near Linhope, Northumberland, with an account of diggings recently made into this and other ancient remains in the Valley of the Breamish. *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club* (1856–1862), 293–316
- Tate, G, 1863b The Antiquities of Yeavinger Bell and Three Stone Burn, among the Cheviots in Northumberland, with an account of Excavations made into Celtic Forts, Hut dwellings, Barrows and Stone Circle. *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club* (1856–1862), 431–453
- Tate, G, 1865 *The Ancient British Sculptured Rocks of Northumberland*. Alnwick: Henry Hunter Blair
- Tolan-Smith, C, 1996 The Mesolithic-Neolithic Transition in the Lower Tyne Valley: a Landscape Approach, in P Frodsham (ed) *Neolithic Studies in No-Mans's Land. Papers on the Neolithic of Northern England from the Trent to the Tweed*, *Northern Archaeology* **13/14** (special edition)
- Tomlinson, W W, 1888 *Comprehensive Guide to Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: William Robinson
- Topping, P, 1989 Early Cultivation in Northumberland and The Borders, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* **55**, 161–179
- Topping, P, 1991 The excavation of an unenclosed settlement, field system and cord rig cultivation at Linhope Burn, Northumberland, 1989, *Northern Archaeology* **11**, 1–42
- Topping, P, 1997 Different Realities: the Neolithic in the Northumberland Cheviots, in P Topping (ed) *Neolithic Landscapes*. Oxford: Oxbow, 113–123

- Topping, P, 1993 Lordenshaws Hillfort and Its Environs. A survey by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **MCMXCIII**, 15–27
- Topping, P, 1998 The Excavation of Burnt Mounds at Titlington Mount, North Northumberland, 1992–3, *Northern Archaeology* **15/16**, 3–25
- Trevelyan G M, 1926 *The Middle Marches*. Northumberland and Newcastle Society (Frank Graham reprint, 1976)
- Waddington, C, 1998 Cup and ring marks in context, *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* **8(1)**, 29–54
- Waddington, C, 1999 A Landscape Archaeological Study of the Mesolithic-Neolithic in the Milfield Basin, Northumberland, BAR Brit Ser, **291**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports/Archaeopress
- Waddington, C, 2000 Recent Research on the Mesolithic of the Milfield Basin, Northumberland, in R Young (ed) *Mesolithic Lifeways: Current Research from Britain and Ireland*. Leicester Archaeology Monographs No. 7, University of Leicester, 165–177
- Waddington, C, 2000a Neolithic Pottery from Woodbridge Farm, the Old Airfield, Milfield, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XXVIII**, 1–11
- Waddington, C, 2001 Breaking out of the morphological sraightjacket: early Neolithic enclosures in northern Britain, *Durham Archaeological Journal* **16**, 1–14
- Waddington, C, 2003 A Mesolithic settlement site at Howick, Northumberland. (Unpublished preliminary report)
- Waddington, C, & Davies, J, 2002 An Early Neolithic Settlement and Late Bronze Age Burial Cairn near Bolam Lake, Northumberland: fieldwalking, excavation and reconstruction, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XXX**, 1–47
- Waddington, C, Godfrey, J, & Bell, J, 1998 A Chambered Cairn on Dour Hill, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XXVI**, 1–15
- Waddington, C, Blood, K, & Crow, J, 1998 Survey and Excavation at Harehaugh Hillfort and Possible Neolithic Enclosure, *Northern Archaeology* **15/16**, 87–108
- Waddington, C, & Williams, A, (in press) A survey of the Threestoneburn stone circle, *Northern Archaeology* **19**
- Wallis, J, 1769 *The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland*. London: W & W Strahan
- Watson, G, 1970 *Northumberland Place Names*. Warkworth: Sandhill Press
- Watts S J, 1975 *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586–1625*. Leicester University Press
- Weyman, J, 1984 The Mesolithic in North-East England, in C Burgess & R Miket (eds) *Between and Beyond The Walls: Essays on the Prehistory and History of North Britain in Honour of George Jobey*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 38–51
- Welfare, H, & Swann, V, 1995 *Roman Camps in England: the Field Evidence*. London: RCHME/HMSO
- Wilmott, T, 2001 *Birdoswald Roman Fort. 1800 Years on Hadrian's Wall*. Stroud: Tempus
- Woodside R, & Crow, J, 1999 *Hadrian's Wall: An Historic Landscape*. The National Trust
- Young, R, 2000 Waiting for the great leap forwards: some current trends in Mesolithic research, in R Young (ed) *Mesolithic Lifeways: Current Research from Britain and Ireland*. Leicester Archaeology Monographs No. 7, University of Leicester, 1–12

# PART II

## 'A decade of digging in the hills' Recent archaeological work in Northumberland National Park

A photograph showing a group of people engaged in archaeological excavation in a grassy field. The scene is set on a hillside with a red vehicle parked in the background. Several individuals are kneeling or sitting on the ground, working on the earth. Some are using tools, while others are observing. The ground is uneven and appears to be a site of recent digging. The overall atmosphere is one of active research and discovery in a natural setting.

*Facts such as those elicited by our excavations may by themselves appear insignificant, but when viewed in connection with more extended observations, they acquire a meaning which enables us to gain glimpses into the history of the past. So little is made known of our early history by ancient writers, that we gladly catch the faintest rays which are reflected from laborious investigations into heaps of stones and ruined walls and houses.*

George Fife, *On the Old Celtic Town at Greave's Ash* (1863)

# Introduction

Part II of this volume consists of reports covering specific projects undertaken largely over the past ten years. Many include accounts of archaeological excavations and are thus literally about 'digging', while a few are concerned with survey projects which could reasonably be described as 'metaphorical digging'. These contributions complement the general picture painted in Part I, by providing more specific details relating to different places within the Park at various times in the past.

Most of the projects discussed are National Park initiatives, conceived by Park staff and enabled using financial assistance from a number of external sources. Although the work of the National Park Authority consists of much conservation and interpretation as well as research, this volume concentrates on the results of research projects as it is these that are of most interest to the general public. This is not to underestimate the importance of conservation. The need to strike an effective balance between conservation and research agendas can be difficult, but seeking to achieve such a balance should be an essential aim of all local authority archaeologists. In practice, conservation and research need not always be in conflict (Frodsham 1995). Indeed several of the following contributions concentrate on survey and excavation undertaken as essential elements of wider conservation projects. Some of the contributions are of a general nature, including discussion of several individual projects, while others are more detailed reports specific to single projects (see fig 0.1). Most rely on the application of modern scientific techniques, from large scale surveying by satellite technology to microscopic analyses of pollen grains and the magic of radiocarbon dating. Some include the results of documentary studies as well as the analysis of archaeological remains. Some are about completed projects, while others are interim statements about long-term initiatives which are still in progress. Some will generate new academic or popular publications in due course, while for others the report presented here represents the final publication. What binds them all together is the hope that they will be of interest to local people as statements of current knowledge about the archaeology of various places within the National Park. All contributions have been written to be accessible to the general reader, but references are included for anyone who may wish to explore particular subjects in more detail.

Many other projects could have been included here, but those that are included have been chosen to give a reasonable flavour of the type of archaeological work with which the Park Authority has been involved over the past decade or so. Readers will note some omissions. There are, for example, no papers dealing in any detail with the Mesolithic or Neolithic periods, the early medieval period, or medieval settlement patterns. It would be fair to criticise the Park Authority for these omissions, and indeed for the lack of a clear research agenda which should underlie and inform all research undertaken in the area. Steps are being

taken to rectify these problems. A comprehensive research agenda for the Park is currently in preparation. This should provide a framework for research over the next twenty years, while also helping to attract funds for such work. A project dealing specifically with the Mesolithic is being discussed with possible partners, and plans are well advanced for a 'Historic Village Atlas' project, the aim of which is to engage local communities in the synthesis of all information about the historic villages within the Park, including study of the origins of villages in the early medieval period. Plans are well advanced for a project looking specifically at Yeavinger, one of the most special of the many very special places within the Park. It is hoped that a large scale project provisionally entitled 'From slash and burn to foot and mouth: farming through the ages' will be set up to build on the success of the 'Discovering our Hillfort Heritage' initiative. This would involve local farmers and landowners, and would seek to further our understanding of farming from the Neolithic period through until the present day.

When considering the future of archaeology in this National Park, it is no exaggeration to state that the possibilities are endless. The contributions to this volume, while covering an immense amount of very important work, really do no more than scratch the surface (sometimes literally) of the Park's outrageously rich yet so poorly understood historic landscape. Taken collectively, the projects presented here have made a substantial contribution to our current state of knowledge, but many more 'decades of digging' will be necessary if we really wish to approach a genuine understanding of the people who have helped to shape this wonderful landscape over the past 10,000 years.



# Peat, pollen and people

## Palaeoenvironmental reconstruction in Northumberland National Park

*Rob Young*

**T**his contribution seeks to highlight progress, problems and potentials in the reconstruction of past human/environment interactions through the technique of pollen analysis in Northumberland National Park. It is set against the background of work done in Northumberland as a whole over the last 50 years or so, and incorporates the results of projects sponsored by the National Park Authority over the past decade.

Pollen analysis is a technique developed by botanists to help understand the nature of past vegetational sequences. It works on the principle that all plants produce pollen (fig 10.1) and that each plant's pollen is like its finger print – unique to that particular plant type. Most pollen is transported on the wind and when it is laid down on the surface of something like

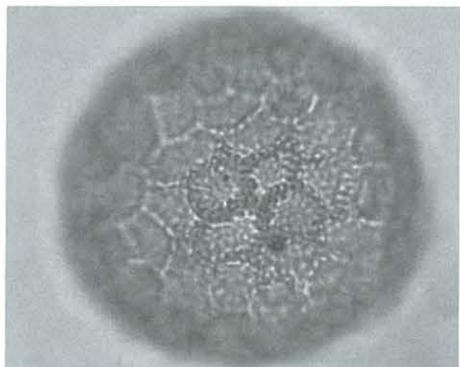


FIGURE 10.1 (*far left*) Examples of *Polygonum* (knotgrass) and *Tilia* (lime) pollen grains – many times magnified. These two illustrate the highly distinctive differences between pollen types.

FIGURE 10.2 (*left*) Pollen coring in progress on the Milfield Plain.

FIGURE 10.3 Extracted peat core, showing changes in peat colour and differential sediment layering. Analysis of pollen preserved in the different layers within the core will demonstrate the variety of plants growing in the area at the time that each layer was created.



a peat bog that is steadily accumulating peat as the years go by, the pollen becomes incorporated into the peat stratigraphy. By coring down into the peat and taking samples from the resulting column at set intervals (figs 10.2 & 10.3), it is possible to plot the fluctuations in the proportion of pollen of different species present at particular points in time. A sequence of these plots gives a proxy guide to the varying proportions of a particular plant in the forest/landscape make-up over time (fig 10.4). If the peat associated with the pollen can be radiocarbon dated then we have a powerful tool with which to understand the chronology of vegetational and landscape change.

Like any technique that deals with events in the past there are problems with it, but it is widely accepted as a useful methodology that has transformed our understanding of natural and human impacts on the landscape.

### *Previous palynological research in Northumberland*

Very little published palaeoenvironmental research has been carried out in the last 50 years in Northumberland and there is an imbalance in terms of the spread of this activity within both the County and the National Park. Most of it has taken place south of Redesdale and the northern half of the Park is largely unstudied. Table 10.1 below, lists all published pollen diagrams known to the author from Northumberland. The year of publication and an indication of the presence/absence of any associated radiocarbon dates is also given.

Since the 1970s pollen diagrams in Britain have primarily been constructed to document human impact on contemporary vegetation cover. Pre-1970s, diagrams were mainly produced to provide an understanding of 'natural' ecology and forest history. In Northumberland, Pearson's 1954 thesis on 'The Ecology and History of Some Peat Bogs in West Northumberland' is an excellent illustration of the tendency to regard 'nature', in the form of climate change and variation in local topographical conditions, as causal mechanisms for change. This point was further reinforced in the subsequent published discussion of the pollen diagram from Muckle Moss, south of Housesteads (Pearson 1960).

Bartley's 1960s research at Bradford Kaimes, Embleton's Bog and Longlee Moor, again charted localised vegetational changes without any reference to anthropogenic activity (Bartley 1965). It was, however, an excellent piece of work, being the first detailed study of the late Glacial vegetational history of the area. Chapman's research at Coomb Rigg (1964–65) and the pollen diagram from Wooler Water (Clapperton *et al* 1971), are two of the last examples of palynological work (pollen studies) that excluded consideration of human impact on the landscape.

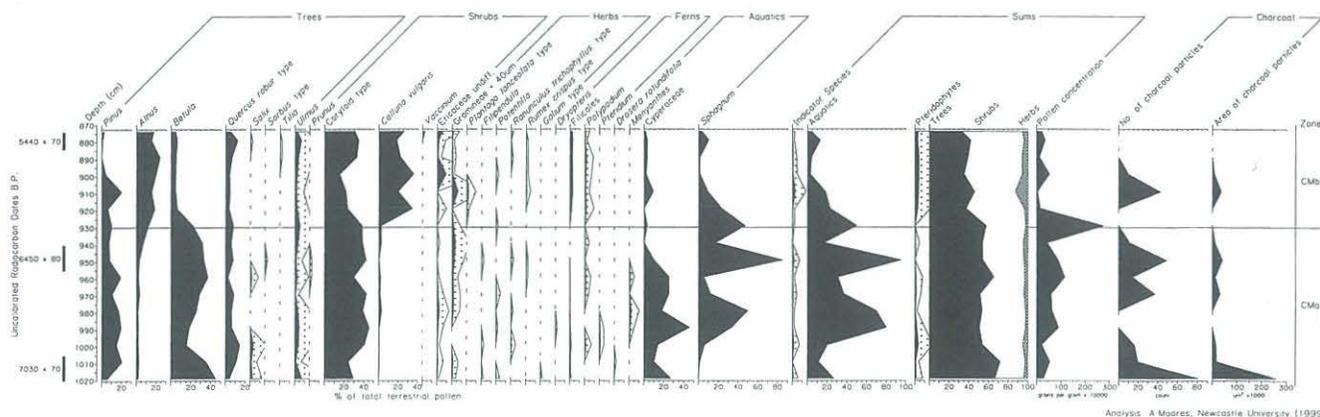
In 1979, Davies and Turner produced a seminal paper on pollen analysis in Northumberland, containing detailed, radiocarbon-dated, pollen diagrams. For the first time, inter-regional comparisons of land-use activities, were thus made possible. Dumayne's

Table 10.1 Pollen sites in Northumberland

Site name	Nat. Grid Ref.	References	C14 dates Y/N
Akeld Steads	NT 965 306	Borek 1975	N
Bloody Moss* 1	NT 910 024	Moores & Passmore 1999	Y
Bradford Kaims, Bamburgh	NU 1631	Bartley 1965	N
Broad Moss* 2	NT 963 215	Davies & Turner 1979	Y
Brownchesters Farm	NY 889 922	Moores 1998	Y
Callaly Moor	NU 055095	Macklin <i>et al</i> 1991	Y
Camp Hill Moss	NU 100 262	Davies & Turner 1979	Y
Caudhole Moss*3	NZ 057 985	Moores & Passmore 1999	Y
Coom Rigg Moss	NY 6974	Chapman 1964–1965	N
Drowning Flow*4	NY 760 975	Moores 1998	Y
Fellend Moss*5	NY 679 658	Davies & Turner 1979	N
Fozy Moss*6	NY 830 714	Dumayne 1994; Dumayne & Barber 1994	Y
Linhope Burn*7	NT 957 172	Topping 1991	N
Longlee Moor	NU 156 195	Bartley 1966	N
Muckle Moss	NY 799 668	Pearson 1960	N
Sells Burn*8	NY 812 733	Moores 1998	Y
Snabdaugh Farm*9	NY 787 846	Moores 1998	N
Steng Moss*10	NY 965 913	Davies & Turner 1979	Y
The Lough, Lindisfarne	NU 130 420	O'Sullivan & Young 1995; Brown <i>et al</i> 1995	Y
Vindolanda*11	NY 771 663	Manning <i>et al</i> 1997	N
Wooler Water	NT 995 273	Clapperton <i>et al</i> 1971; Tipping 1992; Harrison & Tipping 1994	Y

\*=inside Northumberland National Park. (Numbers refer to Fig 10.5)

FIGURE 10.4 Percentage pollen diagram from Caudhole Moss (Exaggeration x 5): (AFTER MOORES, 1999). This section of the diagram covers the period from about 5000BC – 2500BC. It is arranged to show a depth scale on the left hand side with associated levels dated by radiocarbon. Curves for tree and shrub pollen etc are shown as a percentage of total terrestrial pollen at the sample points in the diagram. Thus comparisons can be made in terms of species' presence and absence at all points of the diagram. If one looks along the horizontal line that divides the diagram into two localised phases, an increase in *Calluna* (Heather) pollen can be seen at the same time as *Coryloid* (Hazel), *Quercus* (Oak), *Betula* (Birch) and *Sphagnum* (Moss) pollen decreases. This would seem to indicate an opening of the forest cover and an increase in heath type plants.



Analysis: A Moores, Newcastle University (1999)

**Table 10.2 Relevant pollen sites outside Northumberland**

Site name	Nat. Grid Ref.	References	C14 dates Y/N
Bolton Fell Moss	NY 495 695	Barber 1981	Y
Din Moss	NT 760 320	Hibbert & Switsur 1976	Y
Glasson Moss	CU 238 603	Dumayne & Barber 1994	Y
Linton Loch	NT 791 254	Mannion 1978	
Sourhope	NT 858 199	Tipping 1996	Y
Swindon Hill	NT 760 320	Tipping 1996	Y
Walton Moss	CU 504 667	Dumayne & Barber 1994	Y
Yetholm Loch	NT 803 277	Tipping 1996	Y

unpublished thesis (1992) contributed substantially to the debates surrounding the influence of the Roman army on the landscape in the environs of Hadrian's Wall (Dumayne, 1992; 1993a; 1993b; 1994). In 1994 she published the results from the coring of three bogs along the line of the Wall, one of which (Fozy Moss) lies inside the National Park boundary (Dumayne 1994; Dumayne and Barber 1994). Substantial spatial variation in the intensity of human vegetational interference was documented and at two of the sites significant pre-Roman Iron Age land clearance was suggested. At Fozy Moss, however, it was suggested that the greatest human impact occurred immediately after the Roman invasion and that this was linked to the construction of the Wall itself.

McCarthy has argued that radiocarbon dating is too imprecise to allow Dumayne and Barber's conclusions to stand unchallenged (1995). Manning *et al* (1997) used pollen sequences from dated Roman fort ditches at Vindolanda to show that the area around the fort (and by extrapolation the Wall area and Fozy Moss itself) was devoid of trees as early as cAD85; that is before the Wall was built. The argument rumbles on (Dumayne and Barber 1997; McCarthy 1997) and Tipping (1997) has attempted a broader overview of the main issues in the debate.

Away from Hadrian's Wall, Macklin *et al* have documented humanly induced episodes of Holocene alluviation on Callaly Moor (1991) and they have also shown that the Tyne basin is important for understanding Holocene climatic and vegetational change (1992). Moores' 1998 thesis on 'Palaeoenvironmental Investigations of Holocene Landscapes in the North Tyne Basin, Northern England' has been another major recent contribution to the environmental history of Northumberland. This allowed for a diachronic discussion of human impacts on the region's environment on the basis of a series of radiocarbon-dated pollen diagrams from a variety of locations. Moores has continued palynological research on palaeochannels in the North Tyne and Redesdale areas (Moores *et al* 1999) documenting intensified patterns of land-use in the lowlands from the Neolithic onwards.

Other important studies have appeared in recent years. In 1995 O'Sullivan and Young published the results of work carried out at the Lough on Lindisfarne (O'Sullivan and Young 1995; Brown *et al* 1995). These suggested that the Lough had been artificially enhanced, if not newly created, in the seventh century AD at the time of the first monastic activity on Lindisfarne. Tipping's work in the north Cheviots, just outside the Park, has contributed significantly to our understanding of Mesolithic/Neolithic vegetational history and he has also reinforced the idea that human impact is regionally and temporally varied (Tipping, 1996). Most recently the Northumberland National Park Authority has commissioned

palynological work at Bloody Moss on the Otterburn Training Area (Moore 1996; Moore and Passmore 1999) and at Caudhole Moss in the Simonside Hills (Manning 1996; Moore and Passmore 1999). Broad Moss has also been re-cored to re-examine and radiocarbon date the sequences documented by Davies and Turner in the 1970s (Passmore and Stevenson, 2001).

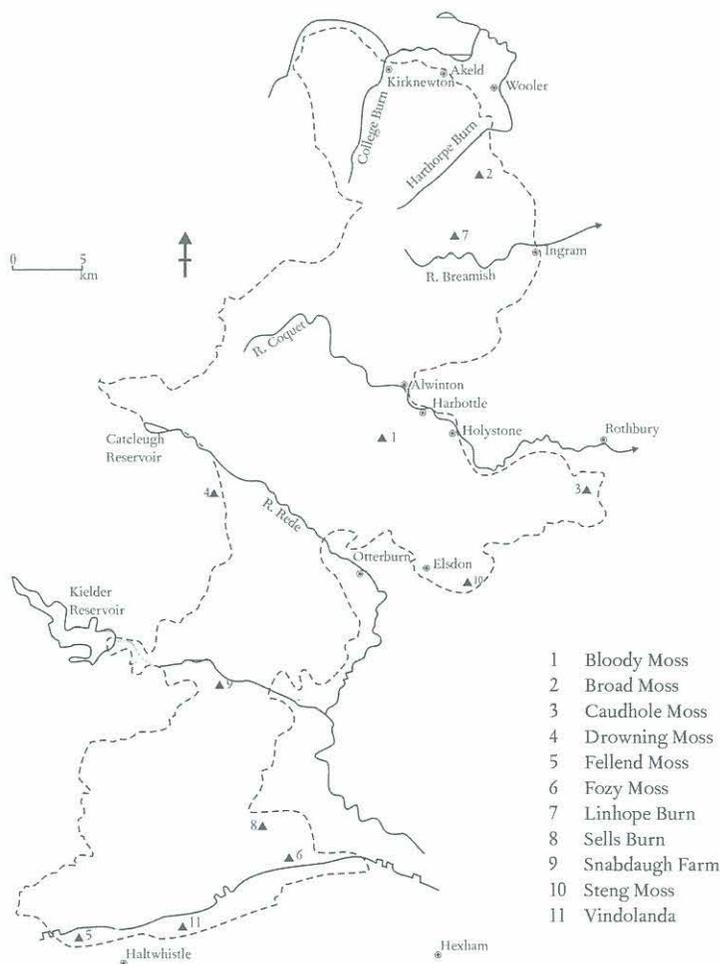
This brief historical review reinforces two key points:

- 1) that serious gaps exist in our knowledge.
- 2) that a fieldwork bias exists towards the southern and eastern parts of Northumberland, and the southern part of the National Park (south of Redesdale) in particular.

### *Palynology in the National Park in the wider context*

This section examines recent work within the Northumberland National Park against the backdrop of results from Northumberland in general. A series of themes is addressed to bring the work into sharper focus.

FIGURE 10.5 Location map of pollen sampling sites within Northumberland National Park.



- 1 Bloody Moss
- 2 Broad Moss
- 3 Caudhole Moss
- 4 Drowning Moss
- 5 Fellend Moss
- 6 Fozy Moss
- 7 Linhope Burn
- 8 Sells Burn
- 9 Snabdaugh Farm
- 10 Steng Moss
- 11 Vindolanda

## Early Holocene vegetation – the pattern of re-colonisation

By c5050BC all of the major forest forming tree *taxa* had colonised the Cheviot area (Tipping 1996). Here, as in other parts of the northern region (Davies and Turner 1979), there was considerable variation in forest composition. Just outside the Park we can contrast oak/elm/hazel woodlands around the Merse with those in the Bowmont Valley, dominated by hazel and birch. In the latter, oak was poorly represented and elm not present at all. Oak occurs at Sourhope some 800 years after its appearance in areas around Yetholm Loch and Din Moss. Alder was the last tree to reach the northern Cheviots, by c5150BC.

At Caudhole Moss, in Coquetdale, around 5080BC, a mixed-deciduous woodland predominated, comprised of pine, birch, oak and some hazel understorey. The diagram suggests a fairly closed forest with little open ground (see fig 10.6). Alder first appeared at a later date here than in the north Cheviots, at c4500BC (Moores and Passmore 1999).

## Onset of peat formation and the impact of Mesolithic communities on the vegetation cover

The fact that peat developed in many upland locations during the later Mesolithic has led researchers to speculate that deforestation was a catalyst for the initiation of peat growth (Simmons 1996). The creation of an anaerobic (oxygen-free) micro-environment through waterlogging is a pre-requisite for peat formation and this situation can arise due to:

- climatic change
- anthropogenic forest clearance
- use of fire
- over-grazing by both wild and/or domesticated animals.

All of these effectively remove tree cover and break the evapo-transpiration cycle. (Moore 1973, 1975, 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1989).

Peat development may also be related to 'local topographic and hydrologic conditions ... and prevailing climate' (Moores and Passmore 1999, 19). At Caudhole Moss peat growth was initiated in c5000BC while at Bloody Moss peat did not start to develop until c3000BC and this 2000 year difference may be due to localised variation in site topography. Indeed, the Caudhole Moss, diagram suggests that peat growth started due to climatic downturn, documented in ice core evidence and in the evidence for increased river meandering and down-cutting recently recognised in Redesdale and North Tynedale (Moores 1998; Passmore 1994).

Pine stumps have been found at the base of Caudhole Moss, but there is little evidence of anthropogenic activity associated with them. They date to c5000BC, precisely at the time of the documented, small-scale, climate fluctuations referred to above. However the complexity of the situation is shown when Moores and Passmore say:

*The possible influence of humans cannot be completely discounted, however, as clearance of the pine woodland may have led to the edaphic changes necessary to bring about peat formation.*  
(1999, 20)

By contrast the later peat formation at Bloody Moss may be linked more to human activity.

The presence of heather pollen here, prior to the first evidence for peat growth, attests to some anthropogenic clearance and an opening up of the forest (Moores and Passmore 1999, 21). This, in turn, ties in with pollen data from valley floor sites in Redesdale (Moores 1998; Moores *et al* 1999) and archaeological evidence from Milfield (Waddington 1996; 1998), suggesting that both pastoralism and cereal cultivation were occurring in the immediate area in this period.

At Sells Burn, around 260m OD, peat development began around 3975BC, and Mesolithic activity was probably instrumental in promoting peat formation (Moores 1998, 191). Substantial tree cover still remained here despite peat growth, and in the North Tyne basin at least, the development of peat was not synchronous and thus cannot be solely attributed to climatic conditions. In certain localities, it is argued that peat inception might represent the earliest discernible impact of human populations on the environment (Moores 1998, 193)

In the north Cheviots, much earlier woodland opening occurred at Sourhope and at Yetholm Loch after c4600BC. At Sourhope alder decreased and grass pollen increased. This was accompanied by previously unrecorded open country herbs, and evidence points to forest clearance with fire as the major clearance tool. This, in turn, probably promoted increased grazing by wild animals. Evidence for similar activities at Yetholm Loch is less clearcut but still present (Tipping 1996, 23).

The synchronicity of these anthropogenic episodes may indicate a human presence throughout the Bowmont Valley in the later Mesolithic period, but it is thought that the real impact of human intervention was only significantly felt in the upper reaches of the river. Tipping suggests that the oak/elm/hazel woodlands of the lower reaches might not have been as 'sensitive to change' as the hazel/birch/oak woods deep within the valley. The woodland in more upland locations may have been easier to manipulate (1996, 23 – 24).

By the same token, Moores and Passmore (1999, 21) have noted an increase in heathland plants and heather at both Bloody Moss and Caudhole Moss from the late Mesolithic and into the early Neolithic. They have suggested, that these plants indicate small scale clearances possibly linked with grazing by either wild or domesticated animals.

Moores' work on valley floor sites, both in and outside the National Park, in the North Tyne basin suggests forest manipulation to encourage the production of plant food, especially hazelnuts (1998, 193 – 198). This was clearly evidenced at Drowning Flow (Moores 1998, 202). At Brownchesters Farm, just outside the Park boundary, a series of cores indicates Mesolithic activity, including some supposed very early evidence for cereal pollen (ie pre c9450BC). The presence of cereals at such an early date is highly unlikely, and this suggestion is perhaps more likely to represent the difficulty in distinguishing between cereal pollen and that of some naturally occurring grasses.

## The Elm Decline

The Elm Decline is only documented in the National Park at the undated sites of Fellend Moss and Steng Moss (Davies and Turner 1979). Thus, we have to rely on Tipping's (1996) research in the Scottish Cheviots to gain an insight into potential regional variations in this phenomenon.

When it was first identified as a pan-European occurrence, the Elm Decline was seen as the key marker for the introduction of the Neolithic way of life (arable/pastoral farming), though it is now seen firmly as a phenomenon that occurs *within* the Neolithic (Tipping 1996, 25). The Elm Decline occurred contemporaneously over most of Britain suggesting

that it is not anthropogenic in origin, since it is unlikely that the population would have been large enough to bring about such a widespread change in forest composition. Disease (similar to Dutch Elm Disease) is one factor currently invoked to account for the seeming rapid spread and synchronous occurrence of the Elm Decline (Girling 1986). Recent research however, suggests that the Decline may not be as uniform, or synchronous as the received view implies (Tipping 1996; Simmons and Innes 1987).

At Yetholm Loch in the northern Cheviots the Elm Decline is dated to *c*3500BC. At Din Moss (Hibbert and Switsur 1976), three radiocarbon dates place it between *c*4300 and *c*4100BC, some half a millennium earlier than at Yetholm Loch. The two locations are only 4km apart and such a 'degree of diachroneity over such a short distance is perhaps hard to equate with the idea of a rapidly disseminating disease' (Tipping 1996, 25). Sediment in the Yetholm Loch profile, which occurs immediately post Elm Decline, may relate to soil erosion following general tree clearance (Tipping 1996, 25).

The decline at Fellend Moss occurred at *c*3900BC and that at Steng Moss occurred at *c*3350BC (Davies and Turner 1979). Both of these dates are based on estimated rates of peat growth and should only be taken as broad indicators of when the phenomenon occurred. That said, they are fairly late when compared with the general range of dates available for the Elm Decline (Smith 1981).

### Neolithic activity

If the Elm Decline is now seen as something that occurs within the Neolithic, this begs the question: what do we actually know about the impact of our earliest farming communities on the vegetational record of what is now the National Park?

As we have seen earlier there is evidence for a small scale hunter-gatherer impact on the tree cover. Large areas of the National Park, however, have produced no evidence at all for Neolithic activity. Around Fellend Moss and Steng Moss, for example, there was consolidated tree cover, dominated by birch, oak, alder and hazel, with no evidence for substantial Neolithic human interference (Davies and Turner 1979, 801) and in the northern Cheviots a similar situation occurred at Sourhope. At Din Moss, however, at exactly the same time, the countryside was being opened up and cereals were being grown (*c*3950BC) (Tipping 1996, 27), and all of this was happening before the first evidence for an Elm Decline at Yetholm Loch. Clear evidence for renewed human activity around Sourhope only occurs as late as *c*1950BC (Tipping 1996, 27). The picture merely reinforces the complex and localised nature of early prehistoric land-use in the region.

In contrast, we can point to a late onset of peat growth at Swindon Hill *c*3450BC, within the early Neolithic. Alder and birch were present at the base of the diagram, and grassland, along with docks and bracken, was present when peat began developing. Cereal type pollen was present at Swindon Hill *c*2850BC (barley/oats/wheat) but clear evidence for the opening up of the landscape does not occur until *c*1950BC. All of this suggests a marked Neolithic presence in the northern Cheviot area.

The notion of Mesolithic/Neolithic continuity in landscape use is reinforced, however, at Drowning Flow and Bloody Moss (Moore 1998, 210). At both sites a gradual expansion of heathland vegetation occurred between *c*4000 and *c*2500BC, with a corresponding reduction in tree pollen. At Drowning Flow around 3000BC, however, there was a period of slight regeneration of hazel woodland.

Neolithic activity in valley floor locations is documented at Brownchesters Farm, where

pollen from the palaeochannel (old river course) suggests a constant human presence from c4000BC, with sustained levels of cereal cultivation, greater than those visible in the upland cores (Moores 1998, 210–11). An increase in grass pollen has been noted at this site from c2300BC and this may mark the onset of large-scale clearance in this part of Redesdale. This contention is supported by data from another palaeochannel at Brownchesters, the infill of which seems to have accumulated at a very rapid rate from c1800BC. Overall, there would seem to be evidence for a concerted Neolithic presence in the valleys that corresponds well with Tipping's data from the upland Cheviot Massif.

In lowland areas immediately outside of the National Park, domestic Neolithic sites are known at Thirlings and the pollen diagram from Akeld Steads shows open country and an increase in grass pollen from c4050BC. Pollen from Ribwort Plantain, Mugwort and members of the cabbage family also suggest clearance for crop cultivation, though no cereal pollen was recorded (Borek 1975). Similarly we have evidence for Neolithic (post Elm Decline) activity in the diagram from the Wooler Water (Clapperton *et al* 1971; Tipping 1996, 28).

Thus, within the National Park area there is clear evidence for Neolithic activity in the pollen record, but this contrasts markedly with a lack of archaeological data. From this we might imply that Neolithic activity was very localised, that not all 'Neolithic' sites may have been farming sites and that much archaeological evidence for Neolithic communities in the region was probably just as ephemeral as that for the preceding Mesolithic.

### Earliest cereal cultivation

The table below indicates the earliest dated occurrence of cereals on pollen diagrams from both within and without the National Park. There may be an element of doubt about the supposed early data from Brownchesters, but there was clearly an early, Neolithic, occurrence of cereals in the northern Cheviots at Din Moss and Swindon Hill. What is significant on all of the diagrams from the area of the Park, however, is that the first occurrence of cereals in upland locations is nearly always in the Bronze Age.

**Table 10.3 First appearance of cereals on pollen diagrams**

Site name	Period/Date	Refs
<i>Outside NNP</i>		
Brownchesters	Mesolithic/early Neolithic	Moores 1998
Din Moss	Neolithic c3950BC	Tipping 1996
Swindon Hill	Neolithic: c2850BC	Tipping 1996
Brownchesters	Early Bronze Age	Moores 1998
<i>Within NNP</i>		
Bloody Moss	Bronze Age: c1500BC	Moores 1998
Drowning Flow	Bronze Age: c1000BC	Moores 1998
Broad Moss	Bronze Age	Davies and Turner 1979
Fozy Moss	Bronze Age/Iron Age: c1200BC	Dumayne 1992, 1994; Barber and Dumayne 1994
Fellend Moss	Iron Age: after cAD2	Davies and Turner 1979
Steng Moss	Late Bronze Age/Iron Age	Davies and Turner 1979

This temporal and spatial variation in the occurrence of the first cereals is interesting as is the fact that even when we do get evidence for cereal pollen it is never in large amounts and always in the context of small-scale, seemingly temporary, clearings, particularly in the uplands.

### The Bronze Age: a change in impetus (c2500–800BC)

The Bronze Age is most significant for the gradual change from the ancestral, monument dominated landscapes of the Neolithic to the settlement and agriculture dominated landscapes of the Iron Age and later periods.

At Bloody Moss a marked increase in heathland species was recorded at the start of the Bronze Age, in association with a charcoal peak indicative of a large scale fire (Moores and Passmore 1999, 24). This may be evidence for anthropogenic (human) forest clearance related to the promotion of heather as fodder for grazing animals. Similar, continued, heathland development occurred at Drowning Flow and Sells Burn. At the former site a marked increase in heather pollen, possibly indicating the drying out of the bog surface could be related to early Bronze Age climatic amelioration. This in turn may have promoted increased stock grazing on the bog surface (Moores 1998, 218). By the same token arable agriculture also increased in lowland locations in the early Bronze Age, especially in river valley environments eg Brownchesters Farm (see above) (Moores 1998, 245–7).

It is perhaps significant that increased clearance episodes are evident in the uplands from around the middle Bronze Age and this may relate to Bronze Age climatic amelioration which allowed a seemingly growing Bronze Age population to gradually extend its settlement and agricultural activity out of lowland areas (which continued to be cleared and farmed) and into what we would now perceive as 'marginal' habitats (Burgess 1984, 1985; Young and Simmonds 1995, 1999; Young 2000). These regions had been exploited in the Neolithic, but this exploitation certainly seems to have intensified in the Bronze Age.

Increased numbers of small-scale, temporary, clearance episodes can be seen at Fellend Moss, Steng Moss and Broad Moss in the Bronze Age. At Fellend and Bloody Moss, small clearances began in the early Bronze Age and at the former site, these were probably linked to pastoral activities as they were accompanied by increases in grass, ribwort plantain and dock pollen, without any evidence for cereal growth. The peak of this activity has been dated to c.1700BC, at Fellend Moss and the whole series of episodes documented here may have lasted for some 200 years (Davies and Turner 1979, 793).

At Steng Moss, repeated, small-scale, clearances occurred after the Elm Decline. A localised peak of this activity was dated to c1650BC when ribwort plantain and ash became continuously represented and grass pollen increased, probably indicating pastoral exploitation in the area around the bog (Davies and Turner 1979, 793). Further, almost rolling, episodes of small-scale clearance occurred, with two peaks of intensity at c1050BC, and c650BC. This activity might have lasted around 250 years (Davies and Turner 1979, 793) and it is in this context that we see the first cereals (barley and wheat) occurring around the site. After the second of these episodes, the rate of peat growth at Steng Moss increased dramatically from about 6.5mm per year to some 44.7mm. This may well be related to the climatic down turn documented from other sources, around 1100BC.

Broad Moss has recently been re-cored and radiocarbon dates are awaited (Passmore and Stevenson 2001). Davies and Turner's earlier work at this site was not radiocarbon dated, but they suggested that a pattern of clearances like that from Fellend and Steng Moss could be

observed. Moore's work at Drowning Flow, Sells Moss and Bloody Moss also indicates a continued human presence in the Northumberland uplands throughout the later Bronze Age and into the Iron Age (Moores 1998, 226).

Thus we have evidence for a recurrent and continuous human presence in the uplands of the Park area from the early Bronze Age onwards. There is no support for the argument that because of later Bronze Age climatic deterioration, people deserted large tracts of the uplands (Burgess 1984, 1985, 1989; see Young 2000; Young and Simmonds 1995; 1999, for a more detailed discussion of these arguments and an alternative to them).

### Iron Age and Roman forest clearance and land-use

Recent field survey (Topping 1989) suggests that the Iron Age saw a rise in regional population, a concomitant intensification of land-use, and an expansion of arable agriculture. Debate rages about the impact of Iron Age communities on the vegetation cover, relative to that of the incoming Roman army (see below) and while earlier theories suggested that the major impact came about because of the Roman presence in the Wall area, that hypothesis has now been challenged. It is currently suggested that by the late Iron Age much of the landscape was open and utilised for agriculture and that this trend continued and intensified in some areas throughout the Roman period. This was certainly the case to the north of the Park around Yetholm Loch where Tipping's research has documented intense late Iron Age activity. Most of the tree cover was removed, oats and rye appeared and a high percentage of pasture was maintained. Tipping believes that this period produced the first planned and maintained agricultural landscape in this region (Mercer and Tipping 1994, 15).

In the area of the Park, palynological evidence for pre-Roman Iron Age activity varies. At Fellend Moss, south of Hadrian's Wall, there is little evidence for intensive land-use in the Iron Age. Around AD2 however, the pollen curves for grasses, ribwort, dock plants and bracken start to rise. At 168cms in the diagram (dated by extrapolation to cAD150) these plant types show a massive increase, linked by Davies and Turner (1979, 789) to the construction of Hadrian's Wall.

At Steng Moss in contrast, between contexts dated from c578BC to c20BC, the levels of grass and other 'open country' pollen types remain the same as in the preceding Bronze Age. Here the process of forest clearance and small-scale agricultural activity seems to have continued at almost the same pace. At a depth of approximately 118cms, a level dated to c20BC, there was another massive rise in herbaceous pollen and this peak was maintained until 84cms at a level dated to cAD460. Again this was interpreted as the result of the impact of the Roman army on the local landscape.

At Broad Moss, in the Cheviots, Davies and Turner (1979, 796) have argued for a continued interest in pastoral farming right through the Iron Age with cereal pollen (mainly of barley) occurring only rarely, even into the Roman period. At Drowning Flow, as at Broad Moss, grazing intensified throughout the Iron Age and into the Roman period, and at Sells Burn and Bloody Moss a similar picture emerges, with massive increases in grass pollen along with the pollen of 'weeds' associated with pastoralism eg buttercup, docks, cinquefoil, goosefoot and ribwort (Moores 1998, 229).

In the valley floor areas of Redesdale there is a lack of pollen data covering the Iron Age/Roman periods as suitable palaeochannels have yet to be identified. It seems likely, however, that most of the lower lying valley land was cleared of trees by the Iron Age (Moores 1998, 230).

Dumayne's work (1992; 1994) and that of Dumayne and Barber (1994) have been central to debates over the nature and extent of the Roman impact on the vegetation cover around the Wall. Fozy Moss is important in this discussion, because Dumayne and Barber (1994, 167) have argued that evidence for human impact on the tree cover here during the Iron Age was slight. This is in marked contrast to Fozy Moss where a massive, and seemingly rapid, episode of forest clearance took place from cAD130. During this event, tree pollen dropped to about 7% of total pollen in the diagram, open country species showed a massive increase and cereal pollen occurred. Dumayne and Barber associated this phase of almost total deforestation with the building of the Roman forts at Vindolanda, Carrawburgh, Carvoran, Great Chesters, Chesters and Housesteads. They also documented a marked forest regeneration phase beginning around AD370 that, they argued, was tied into the Roman desertion of the frontier.

Dumayne and Barber contrast the picture from Fozy Moss with that built up from Glasson Moss and Walton Moss in Cumbria, further along the line of the Wall where a trend towards more continuous clearance episodes throughout the Iron Age can be observed. At both of these sites, however, the marked decrease in tree cover highlighted at Fozy Moss has been clearly recorded. Radiocarbon dates from all three sites could be taken to indicate that the clearance phases related to the construction of Hadrian's Wall. The pollen diagram from Muckle Moss also seems to show the same scale and type of forest clearance at this time (Dumayne and Barber 1994, 171).

Dumayne and Barber (1994, 171–2) go on to discuss other evidence for an increase in forest clearance and related arable activity in Roman contexts from a range of locations in County Durham and Northumberland. Much of this, they suggest, was brought about because of the increased demand for wood for fort building and other military activities. McCarthy (1995, 1997) and Manning *et al* (1997) have been critical of Dumayne and Barber's conclusions. All have highlighted the potential problems of trying to reconcile radiocarbon dates, pollen diagram stratigraphy and historically dated episodes of human activity. The work of Manning *et al* on pollen from clearly dated ditch sections at the Vindolanda fort suggests that there was a significant 'native' input into clearance activity before the arrival of the Romans.

In 1997 Richard Tipping reviewed the available pollen data and concluded that there was a clear expansion of agricultural activity in the late Iron Age in the region that owed nothing to Roman intervention (1997, 245). Moores (1998, 235–9) has subsequently developed a further scathing attack on the way in which the pollen diagram from Fozy Moss was constructed and interpreted. He highlights a contradiction between the archaeological data around Fozy Moss, which show evidence for a significant human presence from the Bronze Age onwards, and the limited insights provided by the pollen sequence. He also notes that the Roman period did not appear to bring about any increase in the quantities of cereal pollen recorded from upland pollen diagrams. Sells Burn, which is the closest upland bog site to the main area of Roman activity, does not show any significant increase in cereals until the Roman withdrawal from the Wall. 'This suggests that Roman arable agriculture was no more extensive than that of the preceding indigenous Iron Age people' (Moores 1998, 243). The situation is thus still not fully resolved.

## The immediate post-Roman vegetational record

Within the National Park there is clear evidence for forest regeneration at Fozy Moss after the Roman withdrawal, though this regenerated woodland was dominated to a large degree by hazel. Dumayne and Barber (1994) have suggested that this indicates a collapse in social and economic structure, and abandonment of settlements along the Wall. In contrast at Fellend Moss the landscape stayed open until the seventh century AD and there was stability after the Romans left (Davies and Turner 1979, 789).

At Steng Moss, tree cover regenerated from cAD500. Davies and Turner (1979, 794) argued that this regeneration went on for most of the Anglo-Saxon period and that it was not until around cAD865 that further short-lived agricultural activity was documented at the site. At Broad Moss, however, continuity of arable activity seems to occur and the presence of the Anglian 'palace' at Yeavinger (only 8.3km away from Broad Moss) may have been responsible for continued arable farming and the overall stability of the area (Davies and Turner 1979, 796).

There may have been much localised variation in land-use in the immediate post-Roman period and this is further highlighted by research at Drowning Flow and Bloody Moss, where there is no evidence for regeneration after the Roman period. The areas around both sites were covered with extensive heathland vegetation along with some hazel scrubland (Moores 1998, 244). Sells Burn, in contrast, does show a modest and short-lived regeneration of the tree cover, with hazel being the dominant species, though birch and alder do make an appearance (Moores 1998, 245).

In Redesdale, a significant phase of arable agricultural activity occurred up to cAD685. At Brownchesters there is a marked peak of *Avena-Triticum* pollen (oats/wheat) that Moores has interpreted as a move towards much more intensified crop production. Again this flies in the face of the accepted wisdom that supports the notion of economic collapse at the end of the Roman occupation and it highlights the importance of continued archaeological investigation into regional variations.

## Early medieval and later vegetational history

In the past palynologists have failed to give the early medieval period as much attention as earlier periods and detailed chronologies are difficult to establish because of the lack of radiocarbon dates. Thus it is hard to reconstruct patterns of vegetational change within the Park area in the medieval and later periods and this is unfortunate given the turbulent history and rich archaeological record of these times.

At Fellend Moss, a rare sequence of late radiocarbon dates showed that at cAD1050 there was a rapid rise in herbaceous pollen, linked to increased crop cultivation (including barley and rye) and the appearance of *cannabis* pollen. Grass pollen values are also exceptionally high in this phase, as are values for *Plantago lanceolata*. Both of these indicate considerable pastureland within the bog's catchment area (Davies and Turner 1979, 789). Increases in hazel pollen may indicate that it was being managed, probably through coppicing. Davies and Turner (1979, 790) suggested that the increase in farming activity was linked to the impact of Norse settlement on the east coast of Northumberland which, they argued, had driven much of the local population into the uplands. This remains a highly speculative interpretation.

FIGURE 10.6 This photograph is of some current woodland in North Tynedale. Pollen analysis has demonstrated that most of the National Park would have been clothed with such tree cover in the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods, before the full impact of human clearance activity. (PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON FRASER)



FIGURE 10.7 The present day Cheviot landscape. This is the culmination of centuries of human interference with the vegetation cover together with changes in climate. (PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON FRASER)



Throughout the Norman period and up until the sixteenth century it appears that the area around Fellend Moss was less densely settled. A final phase of forest clearance is dated to cAD1516, and this continued, without interruption, up until the present day and wheat, barley and rye pollen has all been recorded in later levels at the site (Davies and Turner 1979, 790).

Davies and Turner also suggested that population movement from the coast into the uplands, accounted for the agricultural peak dated to cAD865 at Steng Moss. Here again, after this phase, there was much medieval clearance up until the early fourteenth century. In the preceding period, the area around Steng Moss was administered by the de Umfraville family from their castle at Elsdon. After the fourteenth century the area became Crown land and with this changeover there was an episode of marked forest regeneration. Davies and Turner (1979, 794) suggest that this is linked to the Scottish raiding that precipitated the abandonment of many farmsteads. After this period tree pollen declined, the pollen of grasses and other herbaceous plants increased and the maximum extent of arable seems to have occurred at cAD1825 when cereal pollen was as high as 12% of the total tree pollen. At Bloody Moss grass and cereal pollen increased from cAD705, and after this period cereal pollen is documented throughout the rest of the core. A similar situation prevails at Sells Burn, though at Drowning Flow, cereal pollen was not recorded after the Roman period (Moores 1998, 248).

At Brownchesters, a period of constant human activity until about AD1250 was documented. There is much evidence for cereals, constant tree pollen levels and many anthropogenic indicator species. The Snabdaugh diagram shows that indicator species and cereals increased throughout the medieval period suggesting that agriculture continued in this part of the Tyne basin with no evidence for forest regeneration (Moores 1998, 249).

We have no data on later medieval activity, as no lowland palaeochannel fills have been dated to this period. Moores does, however, present some evidence from upland pollen diagrams that shows a marked decline in hazel pollen percentages, dating, on the basis of information from other northern pollen diagrams, to about AD1700. This phenomenon may be climatically induced but it could also be the result of intensified upland land-use (Moores 1998, 249–51).

### *General conclusions*

This review indicates that much is known about the vegetational history of the National Park area, but much also remains to be done. There is a clear need to redress the regional imbalance in sampled sites and resultant data and we need to have a more detailed understanding of human activity, at both the local and regional scale. This activity has transformed the once heavily wooded landscape represented in fig 10.6 to the present open landscape as seen in fig 10.7. Only when a more consistent coverage of the Park area has been achieved will the subtle and detailed variations in land-use patterns and human/landscape interactions over long periods of time really start to become clear.

### *Acknowledgements*

I would like to thank the following for their help in the writing of this chapter; Tony Brown, David Passmore, Kevin Walsh and Richard Tipping. Paul Frodsham and Iain Hedley both provided constructive criticism and a stimulating working environment, while Jane Webster kept the whole thing on the right lines throughout. Any errors are my sole responsibility!



# The Breamish Valley Archaeology Project 1994–2002

*Paul Frodsham and Clive Waddington*

## *Introduction*

**T**he Breamish Valley Archaeology Project (originally entitled ‘The Ingram and Upper Breamish Valley Landscape Project’) is a joint venture between the National Park Authority, the University of Durham Department of Archaeology, and the Northumberland Archaeological Group (NAG). This contribution will focus on the work undertaken by the University, as the NAG work forms the basis of Chapter 12 by Peter Topping. Excavations have taken place here every summer from 1994 until 2002, almost exclusively on Ingram Farm (fig 11.1). At the time of writing there is one excavation season remaining, but also a considerable amount of post-excavation work to be completed. Programmes of palaeoenvironmental work and documentary research have also been undertaken, but are not covered in this account. It is envisaged that a full academic report and a popular account of the project will be published in 2006. In the meantime the following account is offered as a brief interim statement concentrating on a few of the most interesting excavations.

## *Archaeological background to the project*

The earliest archaeological excavations to have taken place in the Upper Breamish Valley are those of George Tate, who excavated in the extensive multi-period settlement at Greave’s Ash near Linhope (Tate 1863). This was an important piece of work as it not only demonstrated a protracted history for this settlement but also revealed preservation of organic deposits including animal bones, together with a considerable quantity of artefacts including pottery, lithics, metal and glass. This prehistoric village, with over 30 hut stances, must have been a key settlement focus for the Upper Breamish during the Iron Age and the Romano-British period. Tate also excavated at the Brough Law and Chesters hillforts, recovering a variety of artefacts of broadly Iron Age date, and at burial cairns including a possible Neolithic long cairn the location of which is unfortunately not clear.

A H A Hogg carried out a series of excavations at the enclosed settlement of Ingram Hill which demonstrated multi-phase occupation (Hogg 1942; 1956). These important excavations, completed prior to the introduction of radiocarbon dating, were followed up by George Jobey who excavated at both Ingram Hill and Brough Law hillfort (Jobey 1971). These excavations helped to resolve the chronological and structural sequences of both sites, and included the acquisition of radiocarbon dates which suggested that the visible defences of both sites were erected in about 200BC, although Ingram Hill certainly had both earlier and later phases.

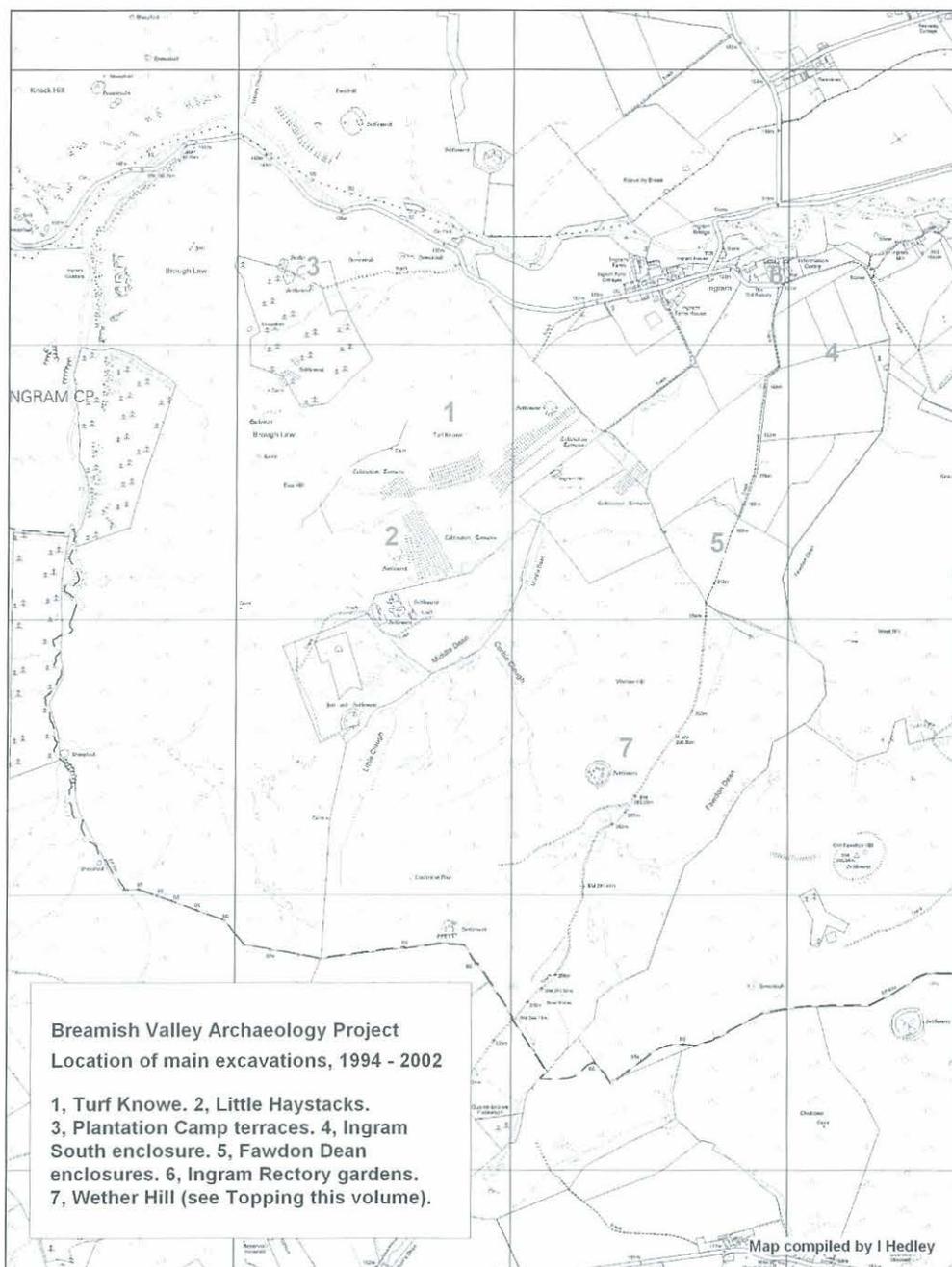


FIGURE 11.1 Ingram Farm: map showing the locations of the main excavations referred to in this account. Air photographs (eg figs 11.2, 11.6, 12.1) clearly demonstrate that the density of archaeological earthworks here is far greater than is suggested on this OS base map. Grid in kilometre squares. (REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF ORDNANCE SURVEY ON BEHALF OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE © CROWN COPYRIGHT: 100042153)

Higher up the valley, Jobey excavated at the unenclosed settlement site of Standrop Rigg above Linhope (Jobey 1983). A timber roundhouse was radiocarbon dated to *c*1200BC, suggesting a mid to late second millennium BC date for the settlement and adjacent field plots. Earlier activity on the site was demonstrated through the presence of a pit feature radiocarbon dated to *c*2600BC, during the late Neolithic, although the nature of this activity is not clear. Further radiocarbon dates suggest activity on the site in the early Iron Age, but whether people were still actually living here at this time is not known.

At a distance of only 0.5km from Standrop Rigg, Peter Topping excavated another Bronze Age settlement, at Linhope Burn (Topping 1991). Although no radiocarbon dates or dateable artefacts were obtained from this excavation, the site seems to consist of a Bronze Age settlement of at least one roundhouse, together with a field system, which was superseded after an interval of unknown duration by a stone roundhouse and cord rig field system of probable Iron Age date. In addition, a single microlith provided the first recorded evidence of a Mesolithic presence in the valley.

In the 1980s, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) undertook the intensive South-East Cheviot Survey which included coverage of the Upper Breamish Valley. This survey, based on a combination of air photography and ground survey, identified and characterised hundreds of sites, including many early field systems, land boundaries, settlements and cairns that had not previously been recorded. It was this survey that provided the original impetus for the current project, which seeks to develop a chronological framework for the multitude of archaeological features recorded by RCHME and others in this beautiful Cheviot valley.

### *Turf Knowe*

Turf Knowe is a natural ledge offering unrestricted views eastwards down the Breamish Valley, over the village of Ingram towards the Fell Sandstone escarpment. In addition to commanding extensive views, the past significance of this place may be linked to the fact that it occupies the first substantial upland block facing the visitor travelling up the valley past the area of the current village. The river and the modern road up the valley pass to the north, but the 'old road', as shown on eighteenth-century maps (fig 8.4), passes south of Turf Knowe and Brough Law. Regardless of the exact line of ancient routes, Turf Knowe would always have been a good vantage point from which to view any movement up or down the valley.

The excavations on Turf Knowe (fig 11.2) were directed specifically towards the better understanding of three structures: two stone cairns (known as Turf Knowe North and Turf Knowe South) and the stone boundary wall passing between them. The Turf Knowe South cairn was originally thought to be a field clearance cairn associated with the adjacent ridge-and-furrow, and its investigation was initially planned in order to provide information about this field system. It proved to be a complex monument dating back to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age. The main structure, which was largely concealed by tumbled stone and which could not possibly have been recognised from the irregular, turf-covered mound prior to excavation, proved to be a 'tri-radial' structure of substantial boulders (fig 11.3; see also fig 11.2, on which the excavated cairn can be seen). At the time of its discovery, no similar monuments were known and some archaeologists, grounded in the belief that all Bronze Age burial cairns should be circular in plan, dismissed it as a post-medieval sheep shelter. Since then, however, similar monuments have been recorded elsewhere in Northumberland (Ford *et al* 2002), and it does appear that the 'tri-radial cairn' must now be accepted as a previously unrecognised form of ritual monument.

In the angle formed by the northern and south-western arms of the tri-radial structure a number of features were excavated. At the intersection of the two arms, late Neolithic/early Bronze Age flints were recovered from the fill of a pit up to three metres in diameter. Interestingly, the boulders forming the tri-radial structure lay directly on upcast from this pit, with no intervening turf layer or other hiatus in the stratigraphy. This suggests that the



FIGURE 11.2 Turf Knowe. Excavation sites can be seen at the centre of this air photograph. Note also the extensive cultivation terraces and ridge-and-furrow in the surrounding landscape. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

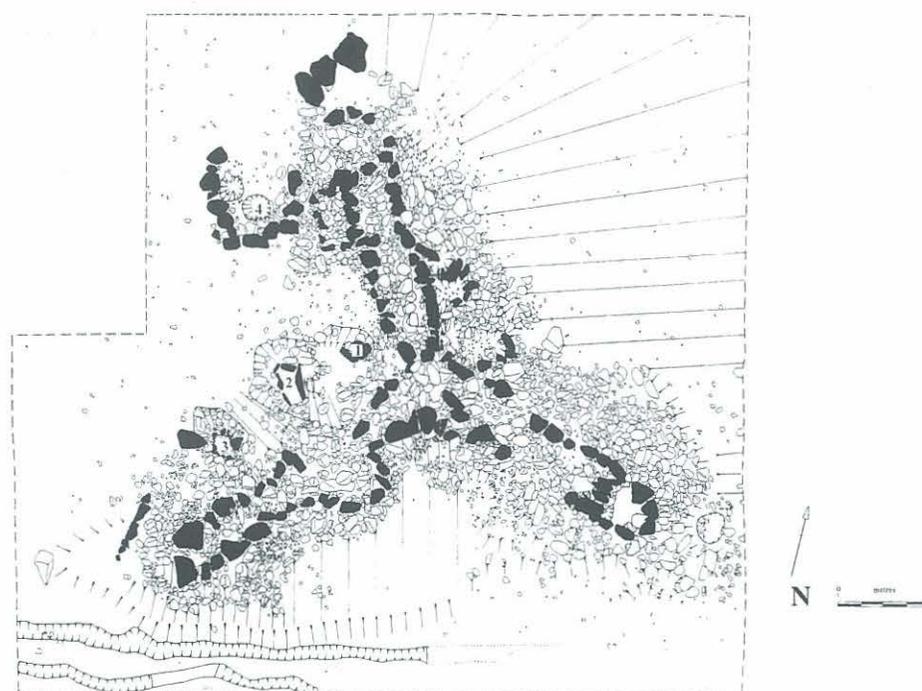


FIGURE 11.3 Plan of Turf Knowe South. The form of the tri-radial cairn is clear. 1= small cist with hazelnut shell; 2=large cist with cremations; 3=pit with crushed food vessel; 4=shallow pit with hearth debris dated to cAD500.

pit and tri-radial structure are contemporary, although no absolute dates are yet available for either. Two cists were set within the pit. The first to be discovered was small (approximately 0.5m in length), irregular in plan, and contained a fill of humic-rich dark brown soil within which was a single fragment of hazelnut shell. The second was twice as large and contained cremation burials of four or five adults. These cremations still await radiocarbon dating, but one of them was accompanied by an Iron spearhead, so cannot be earlier than Iron Age in date. A complete food vessel of late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date was found on its side

FIGURE 11.4 Turf Knowe  
North cairn:  
excavations in progress,  
1997. The large  
capstone of the central  
cist and beautifully  
built southern cist are  
both clearly visible, as  
are the remnants of the  
inner and outer kerbs.



outside the cist: it may well have been removed from the cist and laid here when the later cremations were inserted. The primary burial, which the food vessel originally accompanied, may have been an inhumation which would not have survived in the acid soil. A second pit, a metre west of the large cist, was found to contain a crushed food vessel and an unusual crescent-shaped flint tool of uncertain purpose. To complicate issues a little further, charcoal obtained from one of two shallow pits within a horseshoe-shaped stone setting, three metres north of the main pit, gave a radiocarbon date of *cAD500*. It is tempting to relate this date to the cremations with the iron spearhead, but the demonstration of any such relationship must await further scientific dating. Clearly, much thinking remains to be done with regard to the interpretation of this strange monument. What can be stated with certainty, however, is that activity took place here, albeit intermittently, over at least two and a half thousand years, between the deposition of the two food vessels, in about 2000BC, through until the use of the pit dated to *cAD500*.

The Turf Knowe North cairn, of which virtually nothing was visible prior to excavation, turned out to be a more conventional, though no less interesting, early Bronze Age burial monument. As with Turf Knowe South, more radiocarbon dates are awaited, and much interpretive work remains to be done. However, the general sequence here can be summarised as follows. Late Mesolithic flints are probably evidence of temporary hunting camps here at some point between 8500 and 4000BC. The location of such camps here is not surprising given the views from the site and its command of access up the valley. Flints of possible Neolithic date suggest this location continued to form a focus over a very long period, although no evidence of any contemporary structures was encountered. In the early Bronze Age a circular burial cairn was constructed that incorporated a central cist radiocarbon dated to *c2165BC*. A cremation burial with an exquisite food vessel, some flint flakes and several jet beads (which presumably formed part of a necklace) were placed within this cist. A later deposit of cremated bone was also inserted into the cist, which was sealed with a large capstone (visible in fig 11.4). The cairn at this stage probably consisted of a mound of large stones contained within a circular kerb of larger boulders. A second cist,



FIGURE 11.5 Excavation of a food vessel urn from Turf Knowe North cairn, 1996. This was placed upside down in a small hollow in the side of the cairn, presumably with a tied-on lid of skin or cloth that has not survived. It contained the cremated remains of an infant.

which could be contemporary with the central one, but which is probably rather later, was constructed on the southern edge of the cairn, just about in line with the kerb. In contrast to the rather crudely constructed central cist, this one was beautifully built, utilising a combination of two flat, grey side slabs with rounded, pink andesite end stones. At least three incomplete cremations, consisting of quantities of cremated bone (but not complete skeletons) mixed with charcoal from the funeral pyre, were placed within this cist, possibly over many decades. These included an adult aged over 30, another adult aged between 18 and 30, and an immature individual. A number of other cremations, including an infant within an enlarged food vessel (known as a 'food vessel urn'), another individual accompanied by a food vessel, and several incomplete, unaccompanied cremations mixed with pyre debris, were placed into the body of the cairn at various times. Analysis of the infant within the food vessel urn (fig 11.5) suggests that he or she died at about two years of age, apparently after having suffered from meningitis.

The ground immediately adjacent to the cairn seems to have been ploughed during the Bronze Age, before the cairn was enlarged and a new, substantial kerb added to its southern perimeter. The area was ploughed again at a later date, and many fragments of food vessel and flints of probable early Bronze Age date were recovered from the ploughsoil. Clearly, Turf Knowe was an important place in the early Bronze Age. The deceased were laid to rest here, and ploughing suggests that people were living nearby although their houses have not yet been recognised. It is likely that they lived in unenclosed roundhouses of the type excavated by Jobey at Standrop Rigg (Jobey 1983) and by Topping at Linhope Burn (Topping 1993). When post excavation work is complete, the results from the Turf Knowe cairns, together with the pit with 'timber coffin' from nearby Wether Hill (Topping this volume) will tell us a great deal about death and burial in the local early Bronze Age.

The results of the excavations over the boundary wall passing between the two cairns, and of adjacent areas, are very complex and only a very brief overview can be offered here. One of these areas is clearly visible from the air, between the two excavated cairns, in fig 11.2. Excavations here were originally designed to investigate the form of the boundary and seek

an explanation for the deviation in its course at this point. The stratigraphic sequence includes early ard marks, cord rig, a stone boundary wall, two substantial rectangular structures of unknown purpose (one of which was overlain by a timber built circular structure), and numerous pits, postholes and stakeholes of unknown date and purpose. Finds from the area include flints of Mesolithic and Neolithic date and Iron Age pottery fragments. Further analysis of these results is required to enable the interpretation of this completely unexpected sequence of archaeological deposits prior to full publication of the project.

### *Little Haystacks*

This excavation, undertaken in the summer of 1998, was intended to investigate the relationship between a Romano-British settlement, ridge-and-furrow fields, and a later boundary. The site name is linked to that of the nearby, and much larger, 'Haystacks Hill', where a Romano-British settlement complex is located (fig 11.6). Both sites were presumably reused at some point for the storage of hay. Conventionally the Romano-British settlement should date from no later than the third or fourth centuries AD, while the ridge-and-furrow should be of twelfth- or thirteenth-century date. However, the boundary, which is clearly later than the ridge-and-furrow, deviates around the settlement site, perhaps

suggesting that something was still going on here when the boundary was built. It was hoped that the excavation would provide clear dating evidence for all three elements. In the event such evidence was not forthcoming, although the results were still very interesting for a number of reasons.

The settlement to the south of the boundary wall, revealed from the air and through ground survey, appeared to consist of a nearly circular enclosure wall with possible internal structures and a number of scooped houses attached to its south side. Excavation demonstrated that the interior had been intensively scavenged of structural materials, leaving only a patch of flagstones to suggest the threshold of a large roundhouse, and much of the interior had been roughly cobbled using clearance stone and waste materials, such as quern rubbers and a sharpening stone. The internal surface was very rough and compact. Although dating evidence was lacking, it would appear that this part of the original settlement site may have still been in use as a stock enclosure when the (presumably late medieval or post-medieval) boundary was aligned to avoid it.

The boundary wall was constructed over ridged cultivation to the north, west and east of the settlement. Its construction involved two

FIGURE 11.6 Haystack Hill, with Middle Dean hillfort in the background. Note the extensive and complex field systems surrounding these sites. The 1998 excavation was at the bottom of this view, where a boundary can be seen to curve around the remains of the 'Little Haystacks' settlement. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



external facings of boulders, with a core of soil and turf. No ditch was evident on either side of the wall. There were variations in the number of courses to the wall, but its main function was to retain the internal turf bank. To the east, where a section of the wall was completely excavated, the remains of a tree root hole were identified, suggesting that the wall was constructed as a hedgebank or that a hedge had developed on it at some point. Although the boundary wall now stands to a maximum height of no more than about 0.5 metres, it could have functioned, with a hedge, as an effective stock control boundary. This wall forms part of an extensive boundary system, over which no ploughing later than the boundaries has been identified. It therefore appears to mark the point at which much of the land on Ingram Farm was converted from arable to pasture. Unfortunately it was not possible to date this event with any degree of precision: the only relevant radiocarbon date proves nothing other than that the excavated length of boundary was constructed *after* cAD900.

A number of shallow gullies, ditches and pits were excavated immediately north of this hedgebank, but it was not possible to provide any meaningful interpretations of these features. What little dating evidence there is suggests that some at least of them are of Romano-British date: some very small fragments of pottery of a native tradition were found towards the east end of the trench, and a blue glass bead of probable Romano-British date was recovered from a horseshoe-shaped gully of uncertain purpose.

As so often occurs in this project, earlier features were recorded beneath the intended target of the excavation. Two pits were excavated at the west end of the trench. One, clearly sealed beneath the ridge-and-furrow, was an ovoid pit from which a fragment of hazelnut shell gave a radiocarbon date of c1000BC, dating it to the later Bronze Age. A second pit, immediately to the north of the enclosure wall, showed very different characteristics. It was deep (more than 0.5m) and straight-sided with rounded ends. It had been re-cut very accurately (suggesting a short chronology for the two events) and contained fragments of pottery from different vessels and substantial fragments of an unusual ceramic object provisionally identified as part of a furnace lining. Charcoal from within the secondary fill produced a radiocarbon determination of c900BC which is remarkably consistent with the date of the first pit.

Perhaps of even greater significance is the discovery of a palisade trench underlying the Romano-British settlement. This was discovered very late in the excavation season and it was not possible to investigate it, although a sample was recovered from it for radiocarbon dating. It may represent a later Bronze Age settlement contemporary with the pits, or it could be of Iron Age date. Although the excavation at Little Haystacks did not succeed in all its intended aims, the discovery of this unexpected earlier settlement is a major development and demands further work. Perhaps many more of the 'Romano-British' settlements in the valley will eventually prove to have earlier origins.

The sequence observable on the ground has been confirmed by excavation, but with the addition of previously unsuspected late Bronze Age activity preserved beneath. The most likely explanation for the structural sequence of the visible remains is that a long-abandoned Romano-British settlement site was remodelled as a stock enclosure in late medieval or post-medieval times, possibly even at the same time that the linear boundary, which neatly bypasses it, was constructed. Further fieldwork might enable the recovery of exact dates for this event, but unfortunately such dates have so far remained elusive.

## *Plantation Camp Cultivation Terraces*



FIGURE 11.7 Excavation of agricultural terraces at Plantation Camp, 1999.

Cultivation terraces etched into the hillsides of northern upland Britain have long been recognised by archaeologists, landscape historians and earth scientists. Therefore, it is somewhat surprising that only scant attention has been paid to them in terms of formal archaeological investigation. Immediately north of a modern plantation on the eastern slopes of Brough Law hill, a prominent area of cultivation terraces survives. To the west, further upslope, the terracing terminates below a presumably Iron Age enclosure (Plantation Camp) with associated hut stances, structures and ancillary enclosures. A key relationship between the enclosure and the terracing is provided by a sloping trackway that has been constructed over the terracing, which it truncates in places, and which leads to the Plantation Camp enclosure. Therefore, the enclosure complex with its associated trackway appears to post-date the cultivation terraces.

Preliminary excavations were undertaken on the terraces during two brief Easter seasons in 1997 and 1998. One section, above the trackway, was excavated over three revetment banks and showed evidence of substantial primary boulder walls beneath large quantities of clearance stones. No dating evidence was recovered. Another trench, also extending over three revetments, was dug downhill from the trackway. From this, a surprisingly early radiocarbon date of *c*4000BC was produced from a piece of charred wood located in a thin soil layer immediately below one of the revetment walls. This probably dates a buried ancient land surface on which the terrace was constructed.

The main emphasis of the 1999 summer season was a larger scale investigation of these terraces. A trench measuring 51.8m long by 1.5m wide was laid out to produce a continuous section through four cultivation terraces (fig 11.7), enabling the terrace surfaces and their revetment banks to be recorded in both section and plan. This methodology, in association with a systematic soil, pollen and botanical macro-fossil sampling strategy, has shown that it is possible to elucidate the form of some Cheviot terraces, together with information regarding their date and possibly the type of crops grown on them. Excavation also took place on another set of cultivation terraces at Ritto Hill, 4km up the valley from Plantation Camp, to provide comparative data from a series of slighter cultivation terraces from a different hillside.

The Plantation Camp terraces were made by clearing the land and then scraping up the topsoil ('A' horizon) along the line of the intended revetments and dumping this material on the terraces to increase soil depth (fig 11.8). Large stones were positioned along the line of the revetments to create roughly made front and back faces. Smaller stones cleared off the terraces were then packed between the front and rear faces, as a rubble core, thus creating solid stone revetment walls (fig 11.9). Cultivation then took place on the terraces. Over time more clearance stones were removed from the terrace soils and piled on to the revetments, serving the double purpose of de-stoning the cultivation soil and building up the revetments to hold the increasing depth of soil formed by the addition of colluvial material transported downslope. The extra soil depth would bring benefits for cultivation, including enhanced water retention, higher nutrient content, greater depth for root growth as well as creating a loose easily tractable tilth. By manually constructing the terraces and allowing them to build

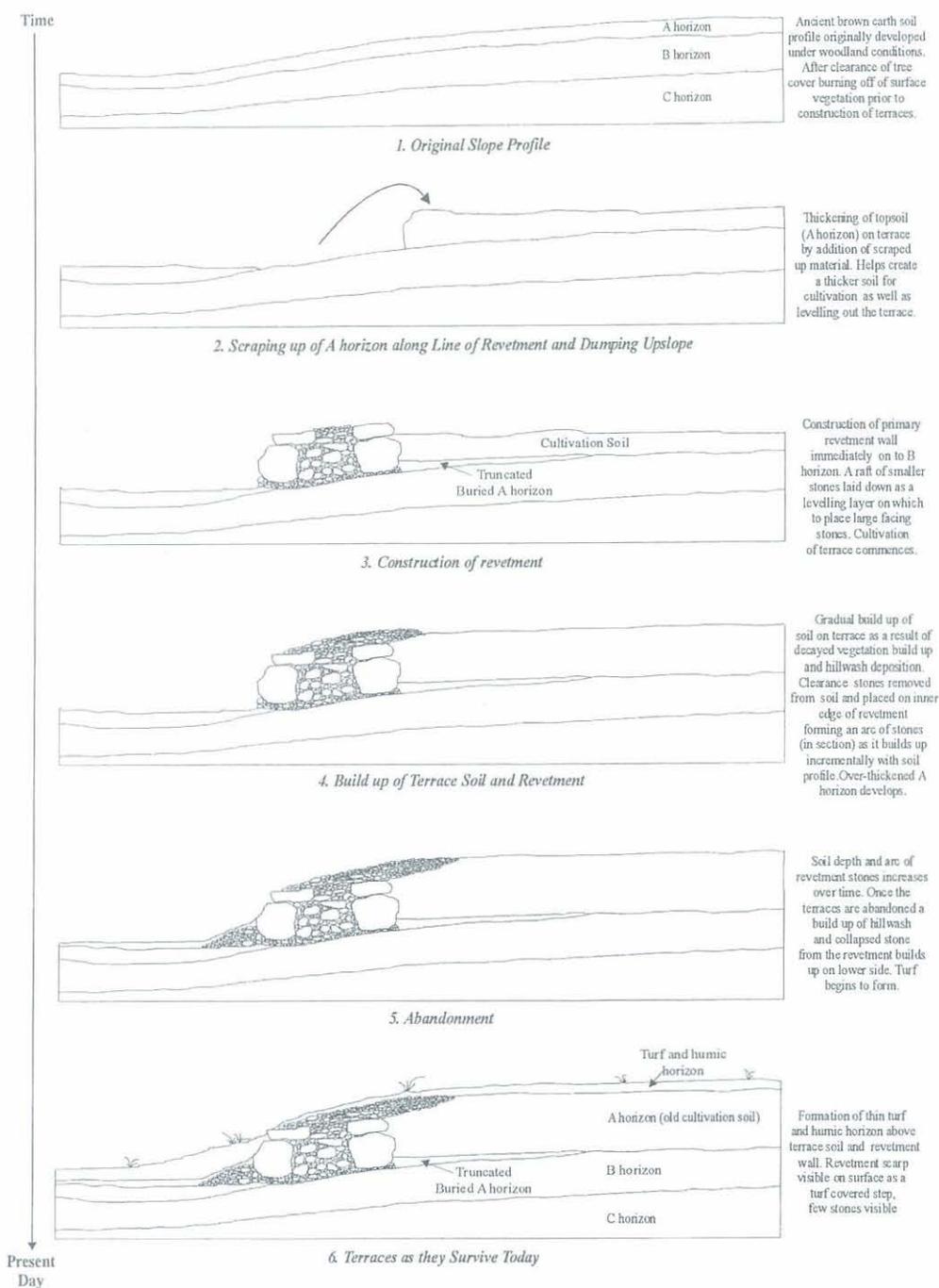


FIGURE 11.8 A model showing the development of the Plantation Camp terraces.

up progressively over time a conscious attempt was made by these farmers to limit soil loss, create level areas on which to farm and to create thicker soils than are normally encountered on these hillsides.

Traditionally, cultivation terrace sites have been assumed to be medieval, or in some cases Iron Age, in date, as they are frequently located near patches of medieval ridge-and-furrow or Iron Age enclosures (see Topping 1989, 171–5). More recent work has, however, called



FIGURE 11.9 The stone-faced revetment of one of the Plantation Camp terraces can be seen in the foreground of this view, with the excavated section through the terraces extending uphill in the background.

such dating into question on the basis of observable field evidence. Although occasional nineteenth-century references to terracing associated with prehistoric features have been noted (Topping 1989, 173) it was not until more recent decades that field evidence indicating prehistoric origins for these features was published (RCAHMS 1956; Topping 1981; 1983). The unenclosed settlement and multi-phase field system at Houseledge in the Northumberland Cheviots, which originated in the early Bronze Age, was seen to overlie cultivation terraces, in some cases after peat had formed, indicating an early, possibly Neolithic, date for these features (Topping 1989, 173). A Neolithic date for the origin of some terracing in the Breamish Valley would not necessarily be surprising when it is considered that Neolithic cultivation techniques produced lynchets at Scord of Brouster, Shetland (Whittle 1986) while extensive Neolithic field systems in County Mayo, Ireland (Caulfield 1978) are evidence that planned fields were not beyond the scope of early farmers elsewhere in the British Isles.

The terraces investigated at Plantation Camp appear to have been cultivated during the early Bronze Age, as two dates from a buried truncated soil have produced determinations which calibrate to c1600BC. During the Roman Iron Age a stone-lined pit was cut into one terrace surface, and this contained occasional grains of charred barley. One of these seeds returned a date of cAD150 demonstrating later activity on these terraces. Whether this later activity included cultivation on the terraces or simply reuse of the terrace surfaces for other purposes remains unknown. Bearing in mind that a probable Iron Age/Romano-British track cuts across the area to give access to Plantation Camp, cultivation of these terraces during this period is doubtful. The single date from a charred wood sample recovered from within the stone revetment of the Ritto Hill terraces further up the valley provided a Dark Age date of cAD600 suggesting that the accretion of field clearance on to this revetment continued into this period. The original date of this terrace, however, remains unknown. Bearing in mind that a worn saddle quern was found incorporated into the original build of one of the Plantation Camp revetments, it appears that the terraces were constructed by groups that were already practising agriculture. This suggests that the terracing may have been constructed in response to soil erosion and/or to bring more land into cultivation. After the early Bronze Age there appears to have been a hiatus in the cultivation of the terraces, perhaps with a change towards livestock farming. Then, during the Roman Iron Age, a secondary phase of cultivation occurs locally, although the actual cultivation of the terraces at this time has not yet been demonstrated. In the case of Ritto Hill the maintenance of the terraces continues into the post-Roman period. On none of the investigated terraces was there any sign of activity dating from medieval times.

Therefore, the terraces have a more complex history than has hitherto been thought and some may have been brought back into cultivation after perhaps lengthy periods of abandonment. This evidence is interesting as it provides a broad model for characterising agricultural activity in this part of the valley from the Bronze Age to post-Roman times. It will be significant to note whether the environmental data now being collected bears out this pattern, or suggests different sequences of land-use.

During the 1999 excavations, soil samples were taken from throughout the soil profile on the terrace within which the sediment sequence was best preserved. Although no seeds survived, the pollen record revealed a distinct lack of trees and heather. The landscape at the time the terraces were constructed seems to have been dominated by grasses and ferns, although it should be noted that the increased percentage of ferns with depth in the soil profile may be the result of differential preservation, since fern pollens are some of the most resistant pollen types to degradation. Nevertheless, the pollen evidence is consistent with grassland being invaded by bracken. This poses the question of whether bracken control on these hillsides was a problem even during prehistory when the farming of the cultivation terraces was taking place. The pollen record indicates that from at least the early Bronze Age onwards, the Cheviot hillslopes around Plantation Camp remained largely devoid of trees. However, the terraces were made on brown earth soils which form under forest conditions. This means that during prehistory, in either the Neolithic or early Bronze Age, these Cheviot slopes were largely cleared of trees, presumably to make way for agricultural expansion. This crucial change to the Cheviot landscape has also been documented by the work of Richard Tipping (1992; 1996; 1998) who associates the build up of alluvial sediments in the valleys of the Breamish and Till with early Bronze Age tree clearance. It is thought that the removal of the tree cover, and breaking up of the ground for agriculture, created the necessary conditions for soil erosion to take place and for sediments to be flushed downriver and redeposited as alluvium further down the valleys.

The soil from the Romano-British pit contained abundant charcoal together with wood and the charred remains of two hulled barley grains, a small legume and legume pod, a pea and a degraded unidentifiable grass grain. These indicate the cultivation of barley and legumes within the vicinity of the site at this time. Although the pollen from this pit was dominated by grass and bracken, together with a small amount of sedge and tree pollen, cereal pollen was also present which ties in with the evidence provided by the charred barley grains. Overall this evidence suggests that during the Romano-British period cereal production took place here on a grassy hillside in an area with only a light tree cover. It was not possible to demonstrate which crops were being grown here in earlier times, although the presence of barley grains in an early Bronze Age context from Wether Hill (Chapter 12) suggests that barley was being grown somewhere in the local landscape by c2000BC.

The work at Plantation Camp has demonstrated that the construction and use of cultivation terraces appears to have stretched over a considerable period beginning in prehistory. Clearly, more work is needed, and many more samples must be recovered for palaeoenvironmental analysis and radiocarbon dating if we are to approach a fuller understanding of these complex terrace systems. However, this project has made a start, and has demonstrated that careful fieldwork can hold the key to understanding these structures which, though key elements of the archaeological landscape, had not hitherto been subjected to such investigation.

### *Ingram South Enclosure*

A substantial square enclosure was discovered from the air by Tim Gates in 1989, to the south-east of Ingram village hall. Further photographs taken during the dry summer of 1995 revealed the survival of extensive remains here (fig 11.10), showing as parch marks. A small-scale investigation of this completely plough-flattened site was undertaken at Easter 1996. A single trench was excavated across the enclosure ditches on the south side of the site.

FIGURE 11.10 Air photograph of the Ingram South enclosure, taken in 1995. The buried ditches of the enclosure show up as lines of lush, green grass in an otherwise yellow-brown field. This is because moisture is retained in the ancient ditches, allowing the grass to grow better here while it has become parched elsewhere. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



Two steep-sided, flat-bottomed ditches had been constructed, with an intervening berm 5m wide on which were found stakeholes and residual flints. No trace of bank material was encountered. This may be because the banks had been deliberately flattened in antiquity, but as the field has been regularly ploughed over recent decades any surviving evidence of a bank will have been spread by the plough.

The inner ditch had been internally revetted with several carefully constructed courses of rounded river boulders. The revetment is thought to have survived to its original height as the uppermost course was level with the contemporary ground surface. As the revetment appeared to terminate close to the south section of the trench it is possible that it may have been confined to this area, close to what appears from the air photographs to be the enclosure's main entrance. However, further excavation is required to confirm whether or not this revetment continues around the entire perimeter of the site.

The inner ditch appeared to have been deliberately backfilled, and some natural silting followed before the ditch was partially recut. There was further silting and another recut before a palisade was inserted into the ditch. As with the stone revetment discussed above, this palisade may relate to the entrance, or it may have extended around the entire site. There was some evidence to suggest that this palisade may have been burned *in situ*. Further deposits which filled the ditch may have derived from a combination of natural silting and deliberate dumping, possibly of bank material.

The outer ditch revealed a sequence of silting and recutting (twice), before being backfilled level with the surface. Eight contexts were sampled for environmental evidence, all of them producing grain, of which the dominant variety was six-row barley. Chaff was also present indicating that processing of grain was taking place on or near the site. Other finds included a fragment of burnt bone, tiny abraded sherds of native pottery, and an iron nail. Significantly, a radiocarbon date in the mid-second century AD was obtained from one of the grain samples, confirming that the site was in use, and grain was being grown here, during the Romano-British period. This date corresponds with the evidence for barley

cultivation encountered at the Plantation Camp terraces located only 1.5km to the west. The tantalising possibility of being able to demonstrate relationships between this site, agricultural terraces in the valley, and the Roman army, demands further work. It is hoped that the project's tenth and final season, in summer 2003, will provide more information about this site.

### *Fawdon Dean Enclosures*

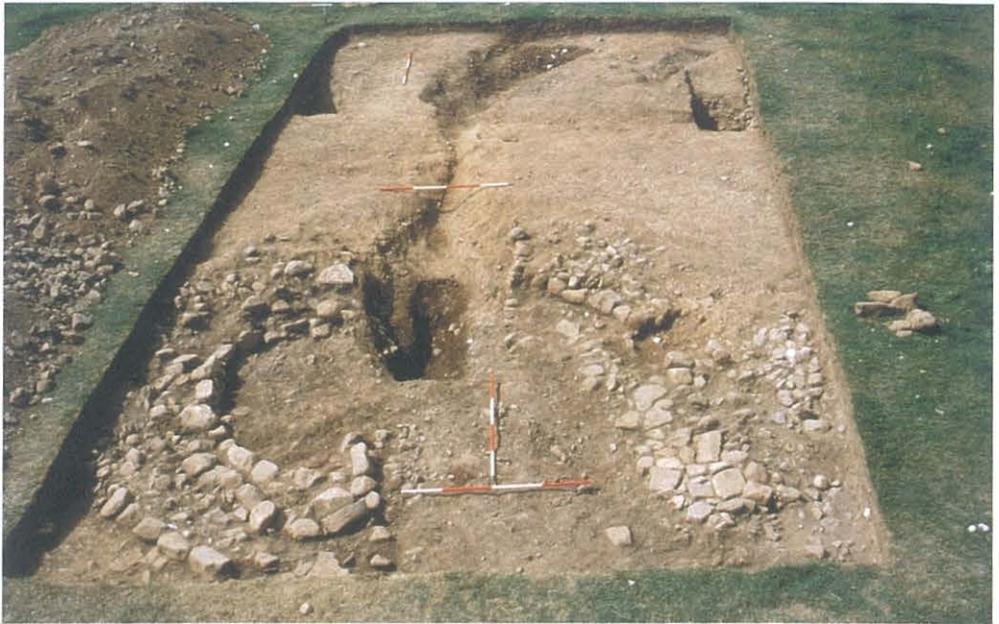
As with Ingram South, discussed above, this site was originally discovered as a parch mark complex by Tim Gates in 1989. The air photograph shown here (fig 11.11) was taken in 1995, and clearly shows two overlapping enclosures, one 'egg-shaped' and the other a more rectilinear form. The site is traversed by medieval ridge-and-furrow and has been ploughed in recent times to improve the pasture. The excavations were designed to evaluate the nature of archaeological deposits surviving within the enclosures and to recover information relating to their phasing, date and function. Prior to excavation a geophysical survey of the entire complex was undertaken, and the location of the various anomalies recorded through this survey were used to determine the position of excavation trenches. In summer 2000, two trenches were opened on the site; one positioned to examine the intersection of the two enclosures (fig 11.12) and the second positioned to examine the interior of the larger enclosure (fig 11.14). In summer 2002, the first of these was reopened and considerably extended (fig 11.13). Although post-excavation work is on-going, the following account summarises current understanding of the site.

The smaller 'egg-shaped' enclosure, referred to as Enclosure 1, is the earlier of the two enclosures as the ditch for Enclosure 2 clearly cut through that of Enclosure 1. The ditches for both enclosures are narrow and deep and produced intermittent evidence for having held substantial timber posts. Both enclosures also appear to have had internal banks around at least part of their perimeters, although subsequent plough damage precluded the certain



FIGURE 11.11 Air photograph of the Fawdon Dean enclosures, taken at the same time as fig 11.10. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

FIGURE 11.12 Exposure of House 1 scooped into the hillside within Enclosure 1 at Fawdon Dean (2000). Note the ditch for the second enclosure cutting through the middle of the house, heading towards the camera.



identification of bank structure. The defences in both cases may have changed through time as was suggested at Ingram South where a secondary palisade was apparently erected within an earlier ditch.

Within Enclosure 1, a fascinating sequence of Iron Age houses was discovered. The earliest was a circular timber-built house that survived as a short arc of construction trench for a timber wall. However, its remains had been mutilated when later stone-built houses were built on the site. At least three stone roundhouses stood within this enclosure. These were built in 'scoops' cut into the slope to provide flat, circular building platforms. One of these stone houses ('House 1') was particularly well-preserved (fig 11.12) while the other two had areas of wall and paving surviving. Prior to the construction of House 1, its scooped platform seems to have been occupied by another timber structure, of which only a few postholes, cut into the base of the platform, survived. The exact nature of this timber structure is far from clear, but it was probably a roundhouse of some form. This appears to have been destroyed by fire, as all its remains are sealed beneath a black charcoal-rich layer. On top of this charcoal layer the flagging for House 1 had been laid. The wall of the house had been built above the flagging and charcoal recovered from between the flagging and the wall produced a date of *c*180BC. If this sample does date the construction of the house, which seems likely, then this is the first dated example of a pre-Roman period stone-built roundhouse in Northumberland. The flagged area extended over the house interior and the area immediately outside the entrance. The flagging incorporated a curious holed stone of unknown purpose, adjacent to the door. Similar stones have been noted at other Iron Age roundhouses. They may have functioned as mortars for the de-husking of barley for use in broth, soup and other dishes. Recent possible parallels include the 'knocking stones' of the Western Isles and the 'creeing troughs' of Northumberland. The stone house was a substantial structure, with an internal diameter of about five metres. Its back wall consisted of an inner face with rubble infill between it and the rear wall of the scoop, while the wall towards the front of the house had inner and outer stone faces, with rubble infill (this can be



FIGURE 11.13 Excavation at Fawdon Dean (2002). The girl in the black T-shirt, in the middle distance, is standing within the house shown in figure 11.12.



FIGURE 11.14 The surviving arc of a stone roundhouse wall within Enclosure 2 at Fawdon Dean (2000). Areas of stone flagging are visible inside and outside the house, as are several excavated pits in the foreground.

seen in figure 11.12). Cut into the floor of the house was a pit of unknown function, the sides and base of which were lined with grey-white coloured clay. Surviving above the flagging were occupation deposits that contained pottery sherds from barrel and bucket-shaped vessels together with a well-preserved iron spearhead.

House 2 was similar in form and size, and like House 1 seems to have been preceded by a timber structure which was also destroyed by fire. It had a partially flagged floor, but very little of its wall survived *in situ*. House 3 was also very fragmentary, due to the fact that it also lay within the interior of the later enclosure (see below), and a later stone house had been built directly on top of it, presumably recycling much of its stone. It had a clay-lined pit in its floor, just like that in House 1. (As this book goes to press, a suit of radiocarbon

dates from the 2002 excavations has become available, suggesting that all three stone houses were occupied during the first century BC. These dates have yet to be considered in detail).

The ditch of the second enclosure cuts right through the centre of House 1 of the earlier enclosure, thus accounting for the gap seen in the rear and front walls of the house in fig 11.12. An entrance into Enclosure 2, measuring 4m wide, was identified opening out to the south west, to the rear of House 1. The ditch was investigated in some detail to the south of this entrance during 2002 (fig 11.13). It had a line of stones along its outer lip, and seems almost certainly to have had an internal bank, of unknown size, with a low stone wall forming an inner revetment. The inner bank partially buried Houses 2 and 3 of the earlier site, both of which seem to have been replaced with slightly smaller, later stone houses, perhaps during the lifetime of the second enclosure. These later houses, being closer to the present day surface, had been badly damaged by later ploughing and only fragmentary sections of their walls survived. The wall of the rebuilt House 3 incorporated a fragment of a beehive quern, presumably broken during earlier activity on the site. The interior of the house was filled with deposits relating to its abandonment, including rubble from the collapse of its walls.

The trench over the interior of Enclosure 2 contained the fragmentary remains of another stone-built roundhouse (fig 11.14), a metalled yard and a number of pits containing various deposits. Significantly, there were no earlier timber houses beneath this house, suggesting that building in stone was the norm by the time the second enclosure was occupied. Charcoal from below the primary wall of this roundhouse produced a radiocarbon date of *c*AD110, while charcoal from the final occupation debris within the house produced a date of *c*AD250. A quantity of burnt bone was recovered from the area around the doorway of the roundhouse. Identifiable bones included those of cattle, pig, horse and dog. Portions of rotary querns were found in various contexts in both enclosures and these would have been used to grind grain for making bread and porridge. In addition, some deposits produced quantities of cereals particularly hulled barley, but also wheat. This evidence points towards a mixed farming regime, supporting the evidence for barley production at the Plantation Camp cultivation terraces and the Ingram South enclosure. Some of the pits outside the roundhouse may have been associated with metalworking as they contained good quality unburnt charcoal, and fragments of copper alloy objects were discovered close by. A single copper alloy Roman coin (an 'as' of Domitian, who reigned from AD81–96) was recovered from Enclosure 2, but it is not known how this got here and in isolation it tells us precious little about the site. However, it serves to remind us that the Romans were not far away, and that exchange of goods for Roman money may have taken place. It also supports the radiocarbon dates that indicate this later enclosure to have been constructed and occupied during the Roman period.

The sequence at Fawdon Dene demonstrates a development from timber built houses through to stone built houses within Enclosure 1 in the Iron Age, followed by the construction of Enclosure 2 containing at least one stone roundhouse in the early Romano-British period which was apparently abandoned in the mid-third century AD. It is interesting to note that the single date from the nearby rectilinear enclosure of Ingram South also belongs to the Roman period, when this was clearly a busy landscape. As work progresses on the samples from these sites, and the biography of the hillfort on the top of Wether Hill is unravelled (Topping, this volume), a very detailed insight into life during Iron Age and Roman times in the Breamish Valley will emerge.

## *Ingram Rectory Gardens*

Access to Ingram Farm was curtailed in the summer of 2001 by restrictions resulting from the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease which made life almost unbearable for many farmers during the first half of that year. With access to the hills impossible, the opportunity was taken to mount a small scale volunteer project, under the direction of Iain Hedley, to investigate a site in the Ingram Rectory Gardens on which a number of holiday cottages were soon to be erected.

The site is immediately adjacent to the Church of St Michael, and it was thought possible that evidence of early medieval activity, possibly in the form of timber houses, might be preserved here. In the event, no such remains were found, but more than 600 sherds of medieval pottery, dating largely from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were recovered from what had demonstrably been ridge-and-furrow fields at the time. Clearly, people were disposing of waste on their fields, where it would have helped to maintain the fertility of the soil. Broken pottery was scattered along with this waste, and while all organic material has rotted away, the pot fragments still survive. The story told by this pottery is fascinating. Most of it was probably deposited during the thirteenth century, which (as described in Part I of this volume) was generally peaceful, with many villages thriving throughout Northumberland. By the early fourteenth century, however, these fields at Ingram seem to have reverted to pasture, and no pottery of later centuries was recovered other than a few Victorian sherds which may relate to early twentieth-century tea parties in the Rectory gardens. The lack of pottery from the early fourteenth century onwards must relate to the miserable conditions of that time, when declining climate, Border conflict and the Black Death conspired to reduce the population and the amount of land under cultivation. Many contemporary references, through until about 1600, record Scottish raids on Ingram, when any crops that were growing would probably have been burned. Local villagers had little option other than to turn their previously cultivated land over to pasture and concentrate on cattle breeding. If cattle were stolen during a raid then at least it was possible to go and steal them back, or steal someone else's. The same could not be done with a burned field of barley. Hard as it may be to appreciate in today's tranquil valley, Ingram may not have been a very pleasant place in which to live for much of the medieval period.

The contents of two pits and a drainage ditch were found cut into the old ridge-and-furrow, but sealed beneath the remains of activity associated with the Victorian garden. These features are strictly undated, but are thought to be of probable medieval date (c1300–1600). No finds were recovered other than further fragments of thirteenth-century pot, redeposited from within the earlier ploughsoil. Environmental samples from these features included charred grains of cereals (wheat, breadwheat, oats and barley) though there was no evidence to suggest that any of this was actually grown close to the site. Charred seeds recovered from the ditch and pits, including those of weeds, grasses and ruderals, suggest an open, disturbed landscape in the immediate vicinity of the site that would be in keeping with a largely pastoral agricultural regime. This provides further support for the suggestion that cereals were not being grown here in any great quantities, if at all, from the early fourteenth century.

The Rectory Gardens excavation also uncovered modern burials of a dog and, rather more surprisingly, a goat from the garden, along with the foundations of substantial Victorian greenhouses that had been demolished in the later twentieth century. All in all, although the results were not spectacular, these excavations have added a new dimension to

our understanding of the development of the village in medieval times, and they tie in nicely with the history of the village as recorded from various documentary sources. Finally, it is interesting to note that this excavation was necessitated by the imminent construction of new holiday homes, and that many future residents of these homes will undoubtedly be drawn to Ingram in order to explore the local archaeology. In this valley, plans for the future are firmly rooted in the distant past.

### *Summary*

The Breamish Valley is without doubt one of the most extraordinary archaeological landscapes to be experienced anywhere in Britain. This project (together with the NAG project on Wether Hill; see Chapter 12) is developing a fuller understanding of the valley's archaeological remains, something that it is hoped will be appreciated by future generations of residents and visitors. The project has already generated many more radiocarbon dates for Cheviot archaeology than all previous fieldwork put together, providing a sound chronological framework for numerous phases of human activity over thousands of years. In an exciting development, funds have now been secured to develop a permanent archaeological exhibition within the National Park Authority's Ingram Visitor Centre. This will include displays of artefacts from the excavations, along with innovative interpretation providing a seamless link between the displays and the surrounding landscape. This exhibition will add a new dimension to the historic environment of the Breamish Valley, providing something of which local people can feel justly proud while also helping visitors to appreciate the valley's special qualities. The historic environment is making a genuine contribution towards the development of the local economy, and it is hoped that archaeological investigation will continue to contribute effectively to the future of this very special place.

### *Acknowledgements*

An estimated total of some 300 people have been involved in some capacity in the University element of the BVA project and a further 100 or so have contributed to the NAG element outlined in the following chapter. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for the immense amount of work that has been carried out to date. Special thanks must go first and foremost to the Wilsons of Ingram Farm, and especially to Johnny and Sarah for their interest, support and generous hospitality. Thanks are also due to His Grace the Duke of Northumberland and to Lord James Percy for permission to proceed with the project on Northumberland Estate land. Funds have been gratefully received from the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Tweed Rivers Project (special thanks to Luke Comins for all his help) the European Union (thanks to Sinead Maloney and Richard Flood at GONE), the University of Durham and the Northumberland National Park Authority.

Peter Carne has been a co-director of the project from its inception, and kindly provided useful comments on a draft of this paper. Successive landlords at The Plough, Powburn, have been most appreciative of Peter's contribution to the local economy each summer. Other Ingram stalwarts who have likewise done their bit for the Powburn economy over the past decade include Jane Gosling, Matthew Taylor, James Whitford and Rachel Pope: grateful thanks to all. Finally, the writers are also grateful to Max Adams who directed the first five years' fieldwork, wrote some of the interim reports on which this account is based, and whose initial enthusiasm and commitment were, from the very beginning, instrumental in planning the project.

# Hillforts, farms and fields

## Excavations on Wether Hill, Ingram

1993–2002

*Peter Topping*

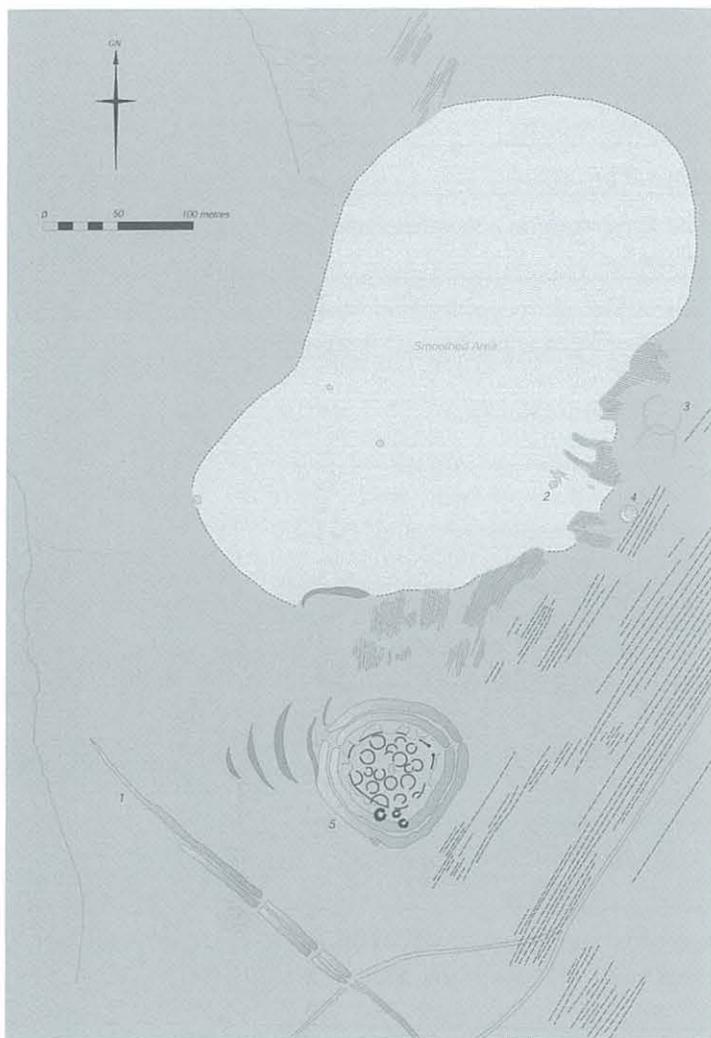
**W**ether Hill (fig 12.1) rises high above the Breamish Valley at 308m above OD; from it you can look out east to the North Sea and north-west to the Cheviot; the Simonside Hills can be seen to the east-south-east. A bridleway leads up towards Wether Hill from Ingram and then on to Prendwick, paralleling the Fawdon Dean, a traditional route undoubtedly ‘fossilising’ earlier tracks and passing over an ancient landscape layered in history.

The medieval broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation is perhaps the most obvious relic found in these hills, but careful observation can also begin to tease apart more subtle earthworks from other periods that have left behind their own faint imprints on the land (fig 12.2). Traces of much earlier – and much more narrow – prehistoric ridged cultivation known as ‘cord rig’ still survive alongside grooves left by the construction trenches of prehistoric timber-built houses and palisades, contrasting starkly with the more dramatic earthworks of stone-built hillforts and settlements. The Cheviots are ‘multi-period’ landscapes that still record the passing of many generations and the ebb and flow of settlement in these now marginal lands. This is where the visitor can come into direct contact with the remains of the homes and farms of our ancestors: this is an interface with the past.

FIGURE 12.2 The archaeological landscape of Wether Hill (Pete Topping, based upon an RCHME survey). [Key: 1 = the cross-ridge dyke; 2 = clearance cairns within the ‘smoothed area’; 3 = the timber-built palisaded sites and the location of the beaker/food vessel burials; 4 = the robbed burial cairn with its low encircling wall; 5 = the hillfort showing the timber houses in the interior and the three stone-built roundhouses on the southern perimeter; the ‘smoothed area’ shaded in lighter grey shows the extent of the later prehistoric field system; the fine continuous lines show the locations of the relict prehistoric cord rig cultivation; the broken lines depict the medieval/post-medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation]



FIGURE 12.1 An aerial view of the hillfort on Wether Hill. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



This project is being undertaken by the Northumberland Archaeological Group, which was founded in 1972 by a number of amateur and professional archaeologists, and is part of the wider Northumberland National Park Authority initiative (see also Frodsham and Waddington, this volume) to explore the archaeology of the ancient landscapes of the Breamish Valley.

### *The Mesolithic period*

The earliest evidence of human activity discovered upon Wether Hill dates back some 8,000 years to the Mesolithic hunters who roamed these hills. As they moved over Wether Hill they left behind some of their artefacts, tiny microliths (minute flint tools which formed the composite points of arrows and spears) accidentally lost during hunting expeditions. We know from environmental evidence that the Cheviots were heavily wooded at this time with birch and alder forest casting a deciduous cloak over the landscape, leaving the Mesolithic hunter-gatherers to move through a world of patterned, translucent green twilight. This was a land imbued with deep mystery and an atmosphere of penetrating intensity where the spirit world was very firmly and tangibly embedded in the present and constantly experienced in every action. It was a land ruled by supernatural

forces that had to be appeased and in return they fed and clothed the hunters.

Only a few gaps opened up the woodland canopy to light the world of the hunters, some created by storms, others deliberately by the hunters to entice wild animals to browse the new swathes of grass. These clearings were the killing grounds of the hunters, traps set to lure animals into the range of bows and spears, or to be trapped in the snares set along the woodland tracks. Not far away from these clearings lay the temporary camps of the hunters, safely beyond the range of hearing and smell of the prey animals. Here small shelters and huts inhabited by extended families clustered together around campfires and work areas, the few postholes and hearths being the only 'footprints' left behind when these people moved on.

The seasonal movements of migrating animals will have determined where the groups camped at different times of the year. In the winter months when the snows and increased cold would have hindered easy movement this probably led them out of the hills eastwards to the coast for the molluscs, crustaceans and fishing. Migrating geese and seabird colonies will have provided extra sources of fresh meat in these locations.

**Table 12.1: Wether Hill timeline**

Archaeological Periods	• Archaeological evidence and contexts
Mesolithic (c8000–4500BC)	• Microliths (flint artefacts)
Early Neolithic (c4,500–3,000BC)	• No evidence at present
Late Neolithic (c3,000–2,000BC)	• Pit with beaker pottery in a wooden coffin • Flint artefacts
Bronze Age (c2,000–700BC)	• The beaker pit was re-opened by food vessel users and a stone lined grave (or cist) inserted with 3 pots • ?Robbed burial cairn (Site 4) • Flint artefacts
Early Iron Age (c700–450BC)	• ?Early palisade on E side of field system (Site 3) • ?Unenclosed timber houses on summit of Wether Hill
Middle Iron Age (c450–100BC)	• Later palisaded enclosure with post-built structure (?house) on E side of field system (Site 3) • Pre-hillfort palisaded settlement on summit of Wether Hill • Hillfort defences built • Cross-ridge dyke built • Disturbance to beaker pit • Some cereal cultivation: ?cord rig and 'smoothed area' of field system
Late Iron Age (c.100BC–AD43)	• Late stone built roundhouses built in hillfort • Some cereal cultivation: ?cord rig and 'smoothed area'
Romano-British period (AD43–410)	• Hillfort still inhabited, later stone built roundhouses only abandoned c1st–2nd century AD • Cross-ridge dyke still in use
Early Saxon (cAD410–700)	• Abandonment of cross-ridge dyke and possibly the hillfort, cAD650 • Some cereal cultivation continues
Later Saxon (cAD700–1066)	• No evidence at present
Medieval (AD1066–1603)	• Broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation • Robbing of cairn on E side of field system • Shieling
Post-Medieval (AD1603 to present)	• Bridleway • Estate boundaries

Some of the clearings on the Cheviot ridges would have offered views to the glowering bulk of the Cheviot itself and to the prominent granite tors such as Great Standrop jutting clearly above the forested horizon. Such landmarks would have been used as waymarkers and enshrined in stories and mythologies, creating oral maps with invisible pathways memorised and passed from generation to generation, much like the Australian Aborigines still do today with their 'Songlines', helping the early hunters navigate their way through the hills.

### *The Neolithic period*

Environmental evidence suggests that man's impact on the Cheviot landscape was a slow and gradual process, even after the introduction of cultivation sometime after 4000BC. Farms and fields did not appear quickly. Traditional hunting and gathering remained the main source of food as the groups experimented with the domestication of grasses in small forest clearings. Some of these small fields were probably left to be nurtured by a few individuals while the majority of the group followed the traditional seasonal movements of animals through the hills and valleys. Once the autumn had arrived, however, the groups will have returned to gather in their modest crops and meet with relatives or clan members to celebrate special events such as the equinox and perhaps redistribute food. It was probably at these seasonal meetings that the inspiration came for the other major development of this period: the creation of monuments. Alongside the introduction of cultivation, the domestication of farm animals and the use of pottery, this period saw people build enclosures for the first time. Groups began living in settlements of timber longhouses, digging flint mines in southern England and commemorating their dead – the ancestors – by constructing barrows and cairns over their remains. The landscape and the availability of wild resources will still have influenced the location of these settlements. Some groups may even have spent the warmer months living in temporary shelters in the hills, retreating to more permanent settlements on the lowlands and coastal plain in the colder winter months, much like the well-documented transhumance movements which took place during the medieval period.

Few so-called Neolithic 'communal' monuments have been found in the Cheviot Hills, only on the edge of the massif were stone circles erected at Hethpool and Threestoneburn,

FIGURE 12.3 Some of the earliest pottery so far recovered from Wether Hill, discovered in the beaker/food vessel pit (Area 3). On the left sherds of a comb-decorated beaker; centre, a 'rusticated' beaker; and right, a possible tri-partite food vessel.

(© ENGLISH HERITAGE

PHOTOGRAPH: ALUN BULL)



marking significant locations. The recent discovery of a cup-and-ring decorated sandstone boulder at Powburn quarry may have been part of another circle – or a waymarker stone – set up at the mouth of the valley. Up on Wether Hill there is little evidence of permanent settlement (the evidence might have been hidden by later activity), although Neolithic groups did visit the hill. On the eastern side of the spur a small pit was dug for a grave and we presume a body was laid in it in a crouched position, but due to the effects of the acid soils the skeleton has been lost. Two beaker pots (fig 12.3) were put alongside the body, then a timber box-like coffin was positioned over the grave. The burial must then have been marked in some way, perhaps by a simple stone cairn: we know this because roughly 2–300 years later it was re-opened in the early Bronze Age, so the grave site must have been visible. Statistically, the fact that the earlier Neolithic burial included two beakers makes it a very important grave nationally. Consequently, Wether Hill may have had a more spiritual focus, reserved for the burial of significant ancestors and separated from the everyday farms and fields. It is still possible that Neolithic groups did indeed farm on Wether Hill, but the evidence of this is now hidden below the ridges of later ploughing.

### *The Bronze Age*

Around 2000BC bronze working was introduced and the first significant impacts upon the landscape occurred. As woodland continued to open up we see the appearance of groups of small cairns interspersed with short irregular walls and scattered hut-circles along certain of the higher ridges such as Brough Law. These are some of the earliest surviving traces of farming in the Cheviots but it is uncertain whether this represents cultivation or pasture improvement. On Wether Hill we have indirect clues that suggest that some cultivation might have occurred locally. This evidence comes from the Neolithic pit with beaker pottery described above, which was re-opened and reused in the early Bronze Age. This secondary use of the pit saw a stone ‘cist’ inserted over the earlier timber coffin (fig 12.4; diagram 12.1), then a group of three food vessels were placed within it (see fig 12.3), probably with an unburnt inhumation burial<sup>1</sup> (again lost to soil acidification). One of these pots was discovered to have a temper (an admixture to help fire the pot) consisting of barley seeds, a fairly common cereal at this time. It is possible that this barley was grown on Wether Hill, perhaps as part of a special crop for use in burial rituals.

FIGURE 12.4 The beaker/food vessel burial pit in Area 3, showing the remains of the later stone ‘cist’ associated with the early Bronze Age food vessel pottery. (PHOTOGRAPH: PETER TOPPING)

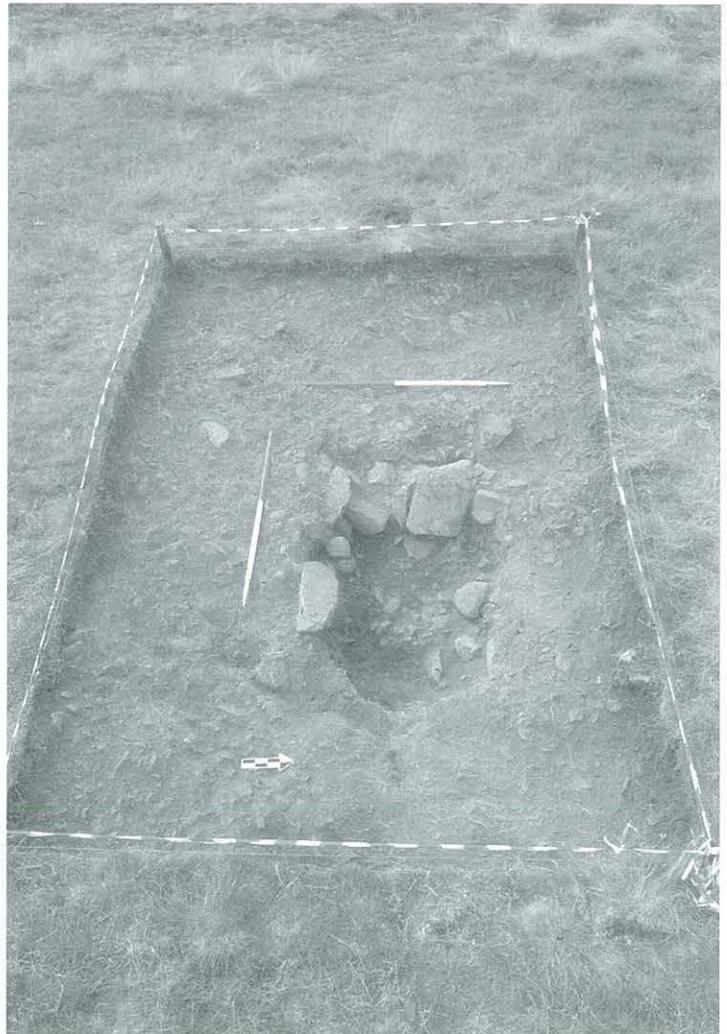


Diagram 12.1: sequence in the beaker pit

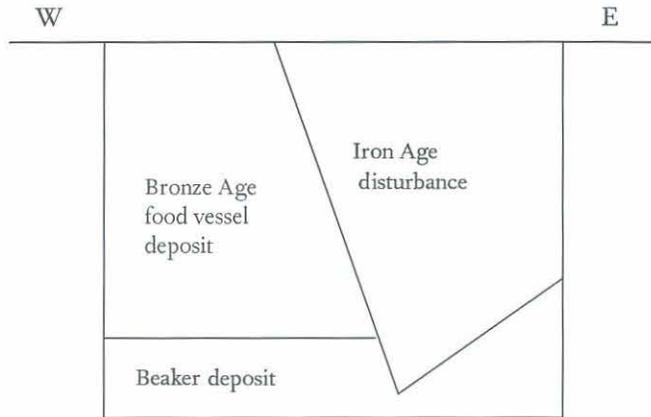


FIGURE 12.5 The burial cairn in Area 4 during excavation. The low surrounding wall can be seen clearly in the trenches and the slight indentation in the summit of the cairn was the first inkling that the site had been robbed. Although strictly undated, the cairn is likely to be of Bronze Age, or possibly even of Iron Age date. (PHOTOGRAPH: PETER TOPPING)



This burial may have been part of a cemetery. A cairn lay roughly 35m to the south on the eastern edge of the Iron Age field system, but on excavation was found to have been completely robbed of its contents (fig 12.5). A central robber trench had removed the original burial deposit, leaving behind numerous medieval/post-medieval glazed pottery sherds scattered amongst the disturbed layers, presumably indicating the date the cairn was plundered. Considering that broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation lies no more than 30m to the east of the cairn, it is possible that medieval farmers were responsible, perhaps treasure hunting between episodes of ploughing. A further cairn lying upon the summit of Wether Hill might also date to this period, but as in the previous example had been disturbed, although in this case by the construction of the Iron Age timber-built roundhouses.

No other direct evidence of Bronze Age activity has been discovered on Wether Hill, although typical flint artefacts of the period have been found scattered around various parts of the excavations. However, despite this apparent lack of settlement evidence here, the surrounding hills and ridges are littered with the tumbled remains of the characteristic site

type of the period, the unenclosed settlement. We know from the excavations at Standrop Rigg (Jobey 1983) further up the valley near Linhope Spout waterfall and at Black Law further north near Wooler (Burgess 1980), that such settlements do date from this period. In the Breamish catchment, in addition to those sites previously mentioned on the Brough Law ridge, others exist at the foot of Cunyan Crag and at Scaud Knowe, suggesting that these settlements (if contemporary) were spaced some 2–4kms apart, giving some idea of the distribution of sites throughout parts of these hills.

### *The Iron Age*

During the Iron Age the woodland canopy would have been further reduced by systematic deforestation to create further farmland. Many hilltops and ridges may now have been cleared and some valley floors opened up to intensify dramatically the levels of farming in the valley. However, this all came at a price. Ultimately this situation seems to have led to severe erosion that effectively buried some of the low-lying land surfaces at Powburn and presumably Ingram (see below).

The earlier Iron Age is poorly represented on Wether Hill. Some of the unenclosed timber-built houses on the summit of Wether Hill (see Table 12.2, Phase 2) might date from this period before they were replaced by the palisaded enclosure which clearly overlies some of them in Phase 3 (as yet undated). The palisaded enclosures on the eastern side of the field system (fig 12.6), dated to the middle Iron Age, may be contemporary with this Phase 3 palisaded enclosure, suggesting the beginnings of a more intensively settled landscape than in previous periods. In the Borders such timber-built settlements are often associated with the narrowly ridged cord rig cultivation (roughly 1.4m wide), some of which survives on the northern side of the hillfort, suggesting a mixed farming system based upon some cereal cultivation alongside animal husbandry.



FIGURE 12.6 The middle to late Iron Age palisaded sites in Area 3. The curving arc nearest the camera defines the perimeter of the earliest site, and the trench extension on the right has located part of the later, overlying palisade. (PHOTOGRAPH PETER TOPPING)

**Table 12.2: The structural phases of the hillfort**

Phase	Context
1	A summit cairn was constructed.
2	A group of unenclosed timber-built houses are built on the hilltop. One truncates part of the Phase 1 summit cairn, which also appears to have been robbed and reduced in height.
3	A palisaded settlement replaces the unenclosed group of houses. The surrounding timber barrier overlies some of the earlier houses.
4	The hillfort defences are built. Quarries encircle the hill creating a level platform and producing spoil for the stone-faced inner rampart. A shallow ditch is dug to provide earth and stone for the outer rampart, supplemented by clay from off-site sources. Finally, an outer ditch was excavated to complete the defences. Some timber houses may be contemporary with this phase, others were built in the quarry scoops.
5	The hillfort defences are abandoned; the outer ditch may have been backfilled at this time. Three stone-built roundhouses are built in the SE part of the fort, two partly overlying the inner rampart.
6	Maintenance of the cross-ridge dyke ends at roughly AD650, and perhaps 'native' settlement on the hilltop was finally abandoned.

FIGURE 12.7 The trench across the defences of the hillfort on Wether Hill at an early stage of excavation. The two stone ramparts can be clearly seen.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: PETER TOPPING)



As settlement intensified, so land division became important. The cross-ridge dyke lying to the south of the hillfort was constructed across the spur, creating a clear boundary between the fort and its farms and the adjacent uplands. The stone-built defences of the hillfort (fig 12.7) were also built at this time, not only replacing the earlier palisaded enclosure and improving the defensive qualities of the hilltop settlement but arguably creating a more dramatic visual demonstration of the wealth and importance of those who lived in the new fort (cf McOmish 1999). Recent excavations by Durham University (see Chapter 11) have identified further broadly contemporary settlements in the immediate area, highlighting the increasing pressure on land at this time. Such competition for farmland helps explain this relatively sudden appearance of formalised land boundaries sub-dividing the uplands into localised 'territories', generally focussed around the hillforts. This can be seen not only at Wether Hill but also at Brough Law, Middle Dean Burn and Prendwick Chesters. Although the new ramparts and ditches of these forts can be viewed

another pair of enclosed sites at Fawdon Dean, provides the possibility that the earliest enclosure may also have been abandoned during the second century AD (ASUD 2001, 32–5; Frodsham and Waddington, this volume). If so, these events would correspond with one of the most significant historical events in this timeframe which occurred in cAD180 when Hadrian's Wall was overrun by the northern tribes following the gradual withdrawal from the Antonine Wall after its fall in cAD155. It is tempting to envisage a combination of both a deteriorating climate and a volatile political scenario forcing a temporary abandonment of at least some of these settlements. That such a scenario was temporary is demonstrated by the second of the Fawdon Dean enclosures (*ibid*) which was constructed partly over the first sometime in the second century AD at the earliest, but probably in the third. The interval between these two Fawdon Dean settlements need not have been greater than one–two decades. The abandonment of the second Fawdon Dean enclosure occurred during the third to fourth centuries AD and could likewise have been stimulated by another significant political event, the 'Barbarian Conspiracy' of AD367, when the northern tribes and their European confederates once again successfully assaulted the Wall. We know from the better-documented medieval period in the Borders that it was political events rather than simply climatic conditions that affected upland colonisation, so it is certainly possible that the events discussed above could have contributed to the fluctuations in settlement during the Romano-British period.

### *The post-Roman period*

The end of the Romano-British phase on Wether Hill is glimpsed in the environmental data from the cross-ridge dyke partly discussed above. This suggests that farming and cultivation continued on Wether Hill well into the post-Roman period and did not come to an end until roughly AD650, broadly coinciding with the occupation of the Anglo-Saxon palaces at Yeavinger, some 15km north of the Breamish Valley. The fact that peat had developed when the dyke was abandoned implies poor climatic conditions against an increase in heather grassland and the decline in cereal cultivation (information from A Davies). This would seem to illustrate both a wetter climate and a change from mixed farming to animal husbandry.

As yet there is no Saxon settlement evidence from Wether Hill, but the abandonment of the cross-ridge dyke may be associated with boundary changes introduced by the Saxons. New land holdings and the creation of early estates could well have led to population movements, new allegiances or evictions as the newcomers established their own land divisions over the hills adjacent to their palaces on the Milfield Plain. Alternatively, Wether Hill may have been forcibly depopulated to create a 'buffer zone' between the incoming Saxons and the indigenous communities.

### *The medieval period*

Cultivation continues to be recorded by pollen evidence on Wether Hill, albeit episodically until it finally comes to an end. The earthwork evidence suggests that this abandonment coincided with the final use of broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation on the eastern side of the spur, possibly around the later thirteenth century when political events led to successive cross-border forays that must have seriously destabilised the local settlements. The level of political instability in this part of Northumberland can be seen from the burnings of Ingram church in 1296, for example. Such events must have forced farmers to refocus their activities

and convert much of their livelihood into 'moveable wealth' such as sheep or cattle that could be driven elsewhere when threats appeared – crops would simply have been too static and dangerous a gamble. This trend continued, even after the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and still dominates hill-farming today.

### *Summary*

The ongoing excavations by NAG<sup>2</sup> are the first to address the problem of unravelling the complexities of these well-preserved upland landscapes in their entirety, not simply focusing upon single settlements but looking to the 'big picture' of how sites of all periods used the land. By peeling back the separate layers of evidence for human activity, we now know that people have lived, farmed or been buried upon Wether Hill from at least the Mesolithic period onwards, an almost unbroken record of some 8000 years of history. This was rarely a silent landscape.

### *Acknowledgements*

The author would like to thank the Northumberland National Park Authority and its Archaeologists, Paul Frodsham and Iain Hedley for their support, encouragement and financial assistance with this project. The Northumberland Estates and their tenants, Johnny and Sarah Wilson, gave kind permission to excavate and showed great interest in the NAG fieldwork. Of course, little of this could have been achieved without the enthusiasm and skills of the NAG members, my co-director Dave McOmish, supervisors Margaret Cutts, John Davies, Barbara Esslemont, Gordon Moir, John Nolan, Jenny Vaughan and the NAG diggers, sadly too numerous to mention: to all go the sincere thanks of the writer.

### *Notes*

<sup>1</sup> If the body had been burnt the bones might have survived in these acid soils.

<sup>2</sup> NAG can be contacted at: NAG, c/o Centre for Continuing Education, University of Newcastle, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 7RU.

# An Iron Age hillfort in an evolving landscape

## Analytical field survey on West Hill, Kirknewton

*Alistair Oswald*

**T**his book contains reviews of research projects which make use of some of the most sophisticated scientific techniques known to modern archaeology, from ground-penetrating radar to radiocarbon dating. This contribution, however, covers a project which employs the oldest and most basic of all archaeological techniques, and one which has provided the starting point for most excavations and many more ‘hi-tech’ approaches: analytical field survey. Field surveyors try to reach an understanding of past human activities simply by looking carefully at whatever traces are still visible on the surface and analysing what they see. It is a technique that has been practised for literally millennia, although only considered ‘scientific’ since the nineteenth century. The study of the earthworks (often known colloquially as ‘humps and bumps’) and ruined buildings left by earlier societies is an aspect of archaeological investigation that it is easy to take for granted these days. In the Northumberland National Park, we cannot help but be aware that we are within a landscape crowded with visible remains, dating from the Stone Age to the twentieth century, and it is easy to imagine – quite wrongly – that all those remains have been discovered, recorded and understood.

Even today, more than 2000 years after they were first built, Iron Age hillforts throughout the British Isles are highly visible monuments, which impose themselves upon our consciousness. None are better preserved than those in the Cheviots (fig 13.1), so it should come as no surprise that in most cases, the earthworks visible on the surface have been subject to some degree of previous research through field survey. Yet there is still an enormous amount that can be learned from detailed re-examination. In 1999, the Northumberland National Park Authority initiated a partnership with English Heritage, under which field investigation teams from English Heritage have begun to carry out surveys of a selection of the most important hillforts in the Cheviots. These investigations are intended to improve the understanding of the monuments, both individually and as a class, and form a major element of the current *Discovering our Hillfort Heritage* project (a £1 million initiative aimed at the research, conservation and interpretation of Cheviot archaeological landscapes, largely funded by the European Union, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Park Authority and English Heritage). At the time of writing, only the first few hillforts on the target list have been examined; there is not sufficient space here to discuss all of them and it is too early to detect whether common patterns are emerging. Reports on the individual

FIGURE 13.1 View south-westwards along the College Valley, with the collapsed stone rampart of the hillfort on Great Hetha in the foreground. (© ENGLISH HERITAGE 2000; PHOTOGRAPH: S AINSWORTH)



hillforts are already available through the National Monuments Record and it is intended to produce a book presenting the results of the project as a whole in due course. In the interim, the investigation of the hillfort and its surrounding landscape on West Hill serves as a good example of the great advances in understanding that detailed field investigation can achieve (Oswald *et al* 2000).

The hillfort on the summit of West Hill, near the village of Kirknewton on the north-eastern edge of the National Park, commands excellent views eastwards towards the larger and better known hillfort on Yeavinger Bell. It also overlooks the eastern approaches to the College Valley, a narrow ribbon of low-lying ground which snakes its way between steep-sided hills to the foot of the Cheviot itself, the highest peak in the massif. The hills that flank this valley are crowned by no fewer than eight hillforts, all similar in size to the one on West Hill, most of which have now been investigated as part of the project. The hillfort on West Hill, like most in the Cheviots, has never been excavated. The first plan of the earthworks to show any detail was made in 1860 by Henry MacLauchlan, as one of 'the old Celtic camps in the fastness of the Cheviot Hills' (fig 13.2 and MacLauchlan 1919–22, 469). Then aged sixty-eight, the experienced former Ordnance Surveyor had been employed by the Duke of Northumberland, one of the keenest and wealthiest antiquarians of the day, to make an accurate record of various types of monument. In the same year, the Ordnance Survey themselves carried out a survey of the earthworks and again mapped the remains of the ramparts and several 'hut circles', as the footings of roundhouses are commonly known (fig 13.3 and Ordnance Survey 1861). It was not until nearly a century later that these early field surveys were improved upon. George Jobey was a local man with a passion that

matched the Duke's for archaeology in general and in particular the hillforts and other early settlements he encountered in the Cheviots. In the late 1950s, he carried out a more 'analytical' survey of the earthworks; that is to say that he sacrificed perfect metrical accuracy in favour of furthering the understanding of the remains (fig 13.4 and Jobey 1964). As a result 'GJ' (as he is affectionately known), was able to undertake dozens of surveys of hillforts, completing each one in a day or two at most, but leaving as his legacy an unsurpassed body of work.

George Jobey's main aim was to reach an understanding of how and why a given hillfort developed, rather than simply to make a plan of what survives, and this remains the principal concern of English Heritage's field investigators today. But modern survey equipment is so sophisticated that there is no need to sacrifice accuracy or detail in order to gain speed. Upland landscapes such as the Cheviots are ideally suited to the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite technology. This equipment calculates the position of a portable receiver in relation to as many as a dozen satellites which may be orbiting overhead at any moment, allowing all the remains on the surface to be mapped – assuming they can first be recognised and correctly

interpreted by the all-too-human and subjective field investigator! Tens of thousands of three-dimensional points can be taken, each accurate to within a few millimetres and relating directly to the Ordnance Survey National Grid, and each logged in fractionally longer than it takes to press a button. Surveyed in this way, the new plan (fig 13.5) portrays every last scrap of information that can be gleaned from studying the surface: the individual facing stones on the exterior of the tumbled rampart (fig 13.6); the shattered boulders split to provide rock for the construction of the rampart; the slight furrows, only visible in the best lighting conditions, that testify to some later episode of cultivation within the outer circuit. This may sound like merely dotting the 'is' and crossing the 'ts' left by previous fieldwork, but in fact it is often these minor details which shed light on the most important issues. For example, the accurate mapping of the facing stones allows the near-circular course of the entire circuit of the rampart to be plotted precisely for the first time, revealing the care and skill with which the prehistoric builders planned and executed their work. The traces of

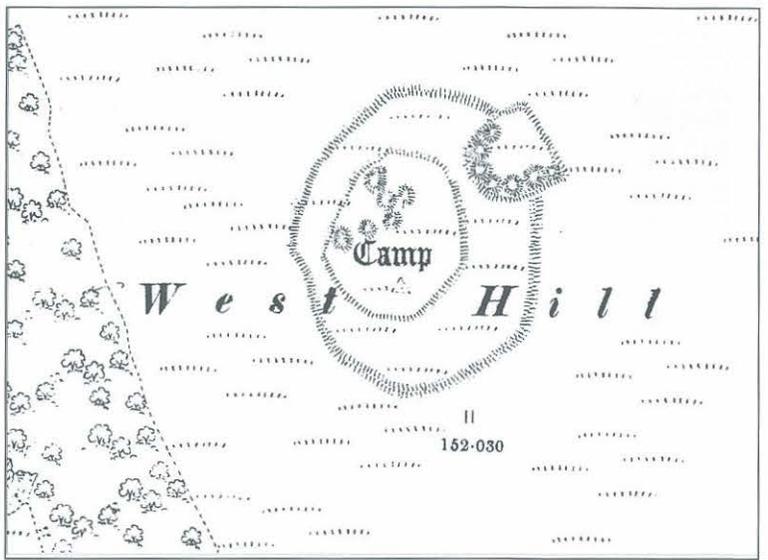
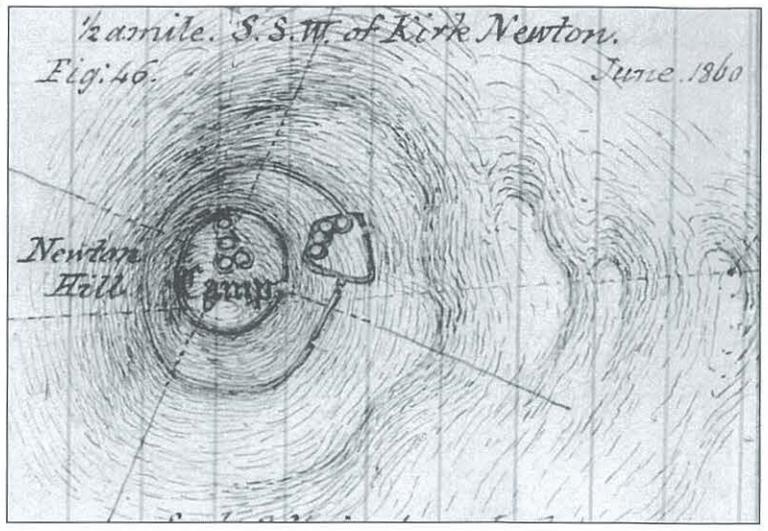


FIGURE 13.2 (Top) Henry MacLauchlan's plan of the hillfort on West Hill, surveyed in June 1860. (REPRODUCED FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, BY KIND PERMISSION OF HIS GRACE)

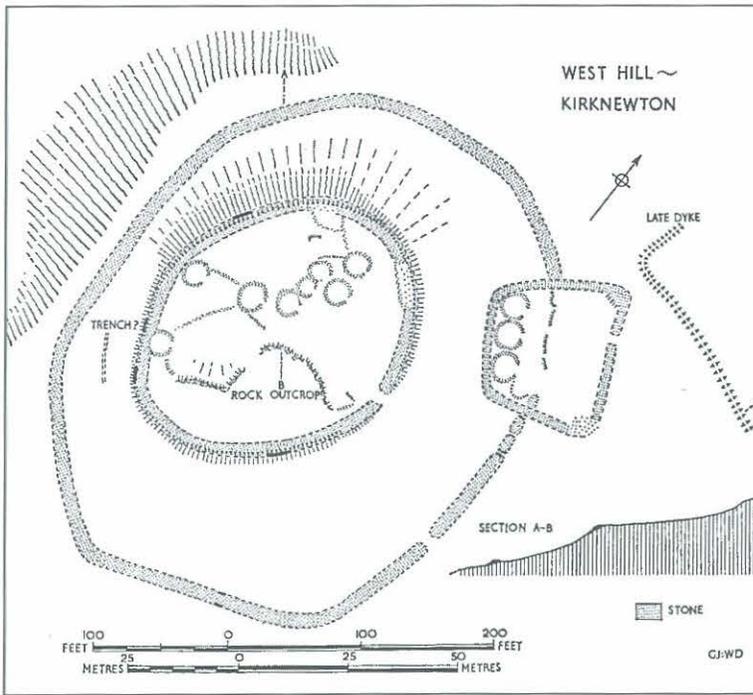


FIGURE 13.4 (Above) George Jobey's plan of the hillfort, published in 1964.

FIGURE 13.3 (Left) Ordnance Survey plan of the hillfort, surveyed in 1860, reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1861 25-inch scale map, sheet XIX.1. (© ORDNANCE SURVEY)

by George Jobey as a 'trench?', that is, the footing for a timber palisade, can actually be traced for a much greater distance than he realised, surviving as a slight slope even where the later cultivation has reduced its size. Its plan, as mapped by the English Heritage survey, hints that an earthen version of the hillfort may have existed before the stone rampart was constructed, formed by a substantial bank and ditch rather than just a narrow trench or palisade. Previous investigators have assumed that the circuits of the hillfort and the outer enclosure were contemporary with each other: the hillfort serving to defend the roundhouses where people lived and the outer enclosure acting as a corral for their livestock. However, closer examination shows that the two may not have been in contemporary use at all. The hillfort rampart totally collapsed and was rebuilt at some later date on a much smaller scale. All but one of the roundhouses in the interior were built in this second phase of construction; the plans of these small compounds, each comprising a cluster of two or three buildings, are closely comparable to excavated examples known to have been built in the Romano-British period. It also seems likely that the outer enclosure was built in this Romano-British phase, for it incorporates stones robbed from the collapsed Iron Age rampart.

In other words, the hillfort was already in ruins by the time the outer enclosure was built. Hillforts have been referred to as 'England's first towns', but the evidence from West Hill suggests that during the Iron Age the hillfort may only have been the residence of a single family, albeit an extended family of fifteen or twenty people. By contrast, in the Romano-British period, the hillfort did take on the appearance of at least a village, with a greater density and complexity of settlement evident in its plan. Later still, as George Jobey first recognised, the Romano-British enclosed settlement was built on top of the circuit of the outer enclosure. Its plan has points in common with certain Roman villas: the frontal facade with a central entrance, the internal courtyard and major structures arranged along the rear wall. We may speculate that this hybrid architectural design was built somewhat later

quarrying, never previously recorded, shed light on Iron Age technology and give clues to the dramatic effect that the construction of the monument must have had upon its immediate environs. The traces of cultivation, which probably took place many centuries after the abandonment of the hillfort, are no less important, for they demonstrate precisely where the surface traces of Iron Age activity may have been erased, as well as telling their own story about the later history of the landscape.

Perhaps most importantly, careful observation of the physical relationships between different earthworks allows the development of the monument over time to be unravelled (fig 13.7). There is evidence that the hilltop may have been occupied before the construction of the hillfort. A shallow depression identified

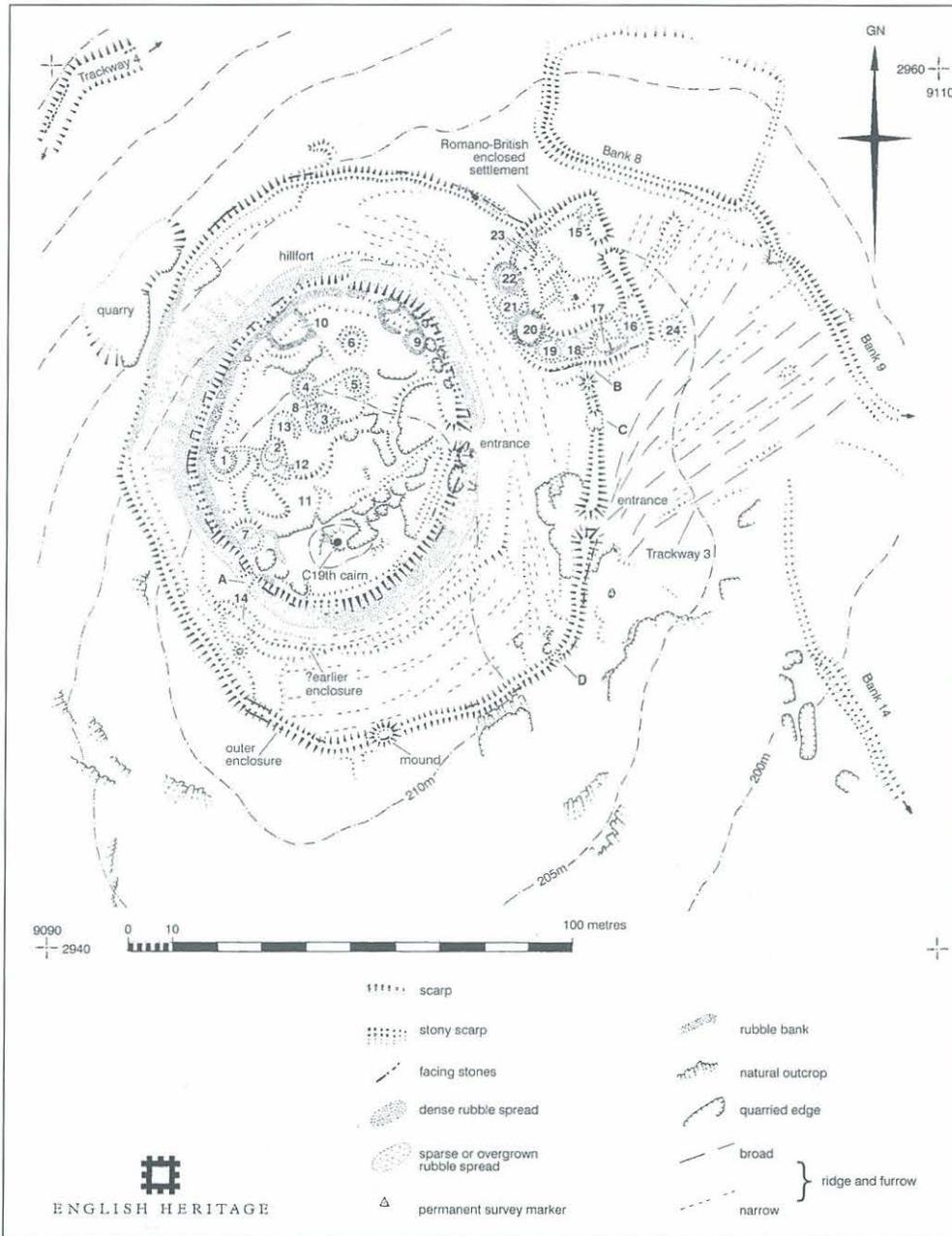


FIGURE 13.5 English Heritage's detailed plan of the hillfort, surveyed in February 2000. (© ENGLISH HERITAGE/NMR 2000)

in the Romano-British period by a local potentate who aspired to the trappings of the Romanised elite, but who was only familiar with villas at second or third hand. In short, many of the minor details that previous field surveyors have overlooked or deliberately ignored are those which now enable a quite detailed picture of the development of the monument and the lives of its inhabitants to be built up, without so much as disturbing the turf.

From the 1970s onwards, field survey was one of the prime movers in the development of 'landscape archaeology', a new approach which sought to place any given site or monument



FIGURE 13.6 (Left) View of a series of facing stones on the south-west side of the hillfort. (© ENGLISH HERITAGE/NMR 2000 PHOTOGRAPH: A OSWALD)

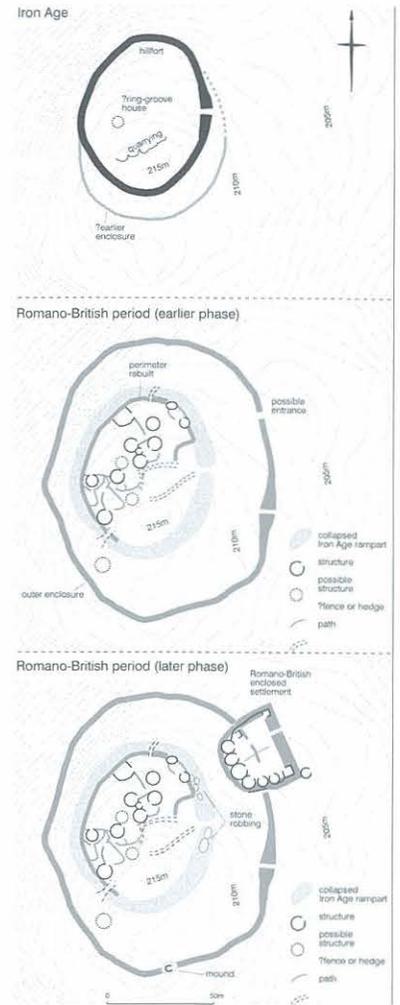


FIGURE 13.7 (Right) The development of the hillfort over time, based on the new information gained by the English Heritage investigation. (© ENGLISH HERITAGE/NMR 2000)

in a broader context, rather than studying it in isolation. How did it relate to its physical setting and the natural environment? How did the people who inhabited or used the site interact socially and economically with other people in the region? How was the monument influenced by what had existed there before its construction, and how was it affected by later events? From the discussion of the hillfort above, it can already be seen that such questions can be applied to the monument itself, even at the ‘micro’ scale. But through the study of the environs of the hillfort, at the ‘macro’ scale, we can begin to piece together the evolving story of a whole landscape.

Amongst the most important results of the field investigation are the insights into the appearance and use of the area long before the hillfort was built. At Hethpool, on the floor of the College Valley, lies a poorly preserved stone circle (Topping 1981). This was first identified in 1935 and is believed to be of late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date (3000–1700BC). By chance, a large round cairn – a type of burial mound which may belong to the same period – was discovered only a short distance from the stone circle during fieldwork in 2001 at Great Hetha hillfort, which directly overlooks both monuments. In addition, Peter Topping, in the course of a day-trip to ‘inspect the troops’ working at West

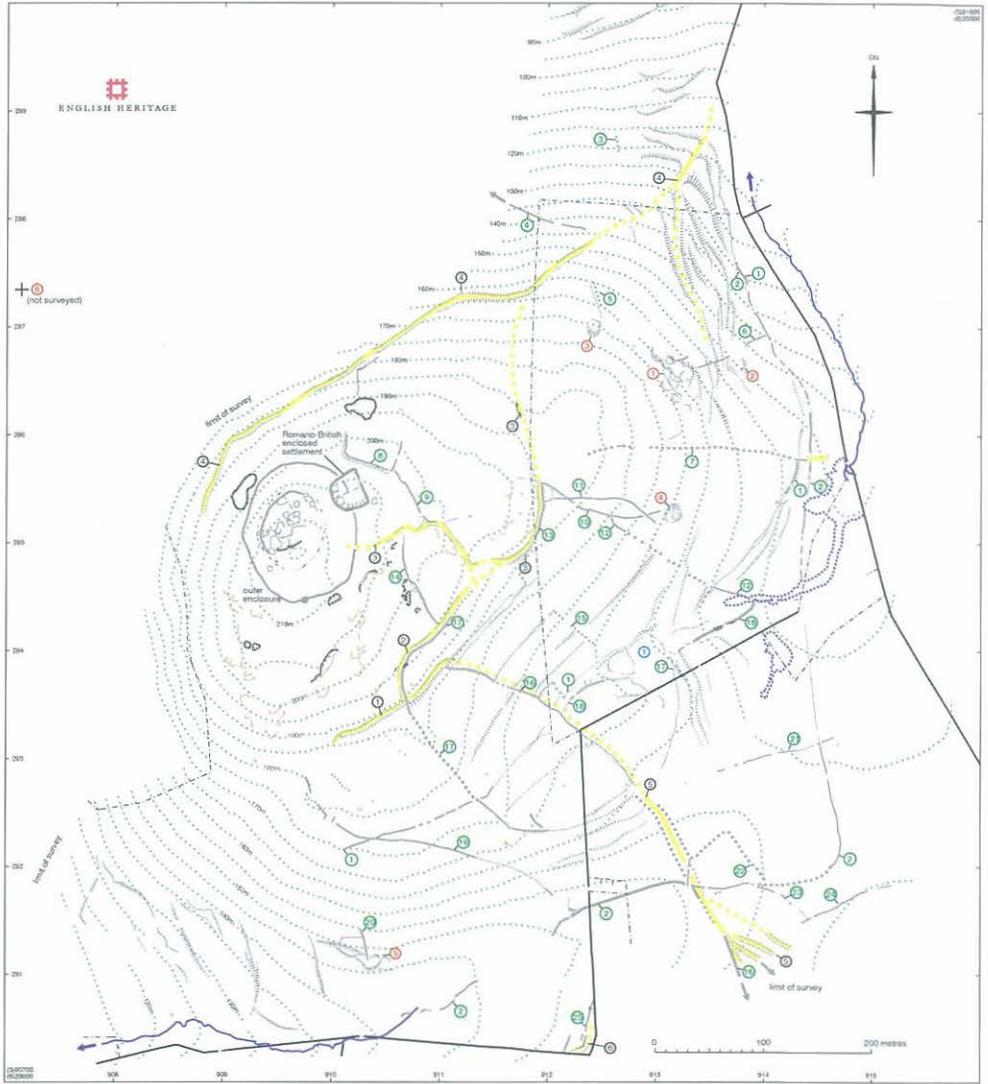
Hill, discovered unexpectedly (and, yes, slightly irritatingly!) a pink granite boulder decorated with 'cup-marks' – small circular depressions, which were probably pecked and ground into the surface using another stone. The simple style of this rare piece of 'rock art', by comparison with other examples incorporated into better dated monuments such as tombs, hints that it too may belong broadly to the late Neolithic period. The boulder lay on the southern slope of the hill, overlooking the saddle that gives the easiest access into the College Valley, and also within sight of the stone circle. Studies of rock art elsewhere have observed that decorated stones are usually sited on the fringes of blocks of landscape, often overlooking valleys and sometimes alongside the natural routes into the area, almost as though they marked the limits of territories. Peter Topping (1999) has suggested in the past that the College Valley may have been seen as a ceremonial pathway to the foot of the Cheviot and that the stone circle may have acted as a ritual portal into the route. But the new discoveries begin to suggest that the low-lying and fertile ground on the floor of the College Valley may have been a small territory in its own right, the ritual monument perhaps lying cheek by jowl with settled farmland. The discovery of the cup-marked boulder is also important because it is only the second example of rock art known in the Cheviots, and the first on granite, most being found on the much softer sandstone of the Fell Sandstone hills. This presents us with a new question: has similar rock art in the Cheviots been overlooked in the past because it has been assumed by archaeologists that sandstone was the only stone used?

The survival of the cup-marked boulder is an interesting issue in its own right, for most of the stone in the vicinity was evidently cleared from the ground surface in the nineteenth century to build the field walls which remain in use today. English Heritage's investigation provided some evidence that at some point after the Neolithic, the boulder may have been covered by a small cairn, most of which was eventually removed for the construction of the field walls. Since a number of the larger boulders in the vicinity show signs of having been burnt to break them into smaller fragments suitable for wall-building, it is possible that the rock art was recognised as something out of the ordinary by the labourers in the nineteenth century and deliberately conserved. But perhaps it is wrong to credit the workers with such modern motives – it may well have been a fear of vengeful pixies, who were widely held to be responsible for decorated rocks, that led them to leave the stone in place!

The dismantled cairn may have been one of about thirty lying on the southern slopes of West Hill, most of which now survive only as clusters of two or three large boulders. It is known from many upland landscapes that such scatters of small cairns represent the clearance of the ground to facilitate prehistoric agriculture (Jobey 1981; Leach 1983; Barnatt 1994). Only recently have attempts been made to date accurately similar field systems in the Cheviots (see Chapter 11) and it is as yet unclear when they first originated and how long they may have remained in use. It is often suggested that many may have been laid out in the Bronze Age (2000BC to 750BC), but some may have originated as early as the late Neolithic (about 3000BC) and many may have continued in use into the Iron Age and beyond. Some of the cairns are associated with low terraces formed by ploughing, and these are in turn linked by low banks, which may once have carried hedges or fences. Again, careful examination of the physical relationships between the humps and bumps reveals that some of the banks are earlier than others; indeed, those which are best preserved and therefore most obvious seem to have been constructed in the Romano-British period. The earliest field boundaries radiate out from the hilltop forming a web-like pattern, which hints that the fields

FIGURE 13.8 The landscape around the hillfort in the Romano-British period.

© ENGLISH HERITAGE/NMR 2000



KEY

NATURAL FEATURES		ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS		MODERN FEATURES	
	Contours (at 5m intervals)		stone-faced field banks		Field walls
	Boulders and outcropping rock		indistinct field banks		Fences
	Stream		Scooped settlements		
	Limit of boggy ground		Trackways		
			conjectural miscellaneous structures		
			Scarps		
			Quarrying		

may have continued to be farmed by the occupants of the hillfort. Interestingly, the perimeter of the pattern is defined by a bank that skirts the lower slope for 750m (nearly half a mile); this bank may therefore represent the limit of the territory farmed by the inhabitants of the hillfort, or by whatever unit of the tribe was linked to the hillfort. In the south of England,



FIGURE 13.9 Aerial photograph of the hillfort on West Hill in its local context. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES 1985)

where field boundaries have generally been ploughed away over the centuries until they can only be traced from the air as faint lines in the crops, attempts to gauge the extent of the territories associated with hillforts have seldom been successful. But the exceptional standard of preservation within the Northumberland National Park allows any visitor with a keen eye

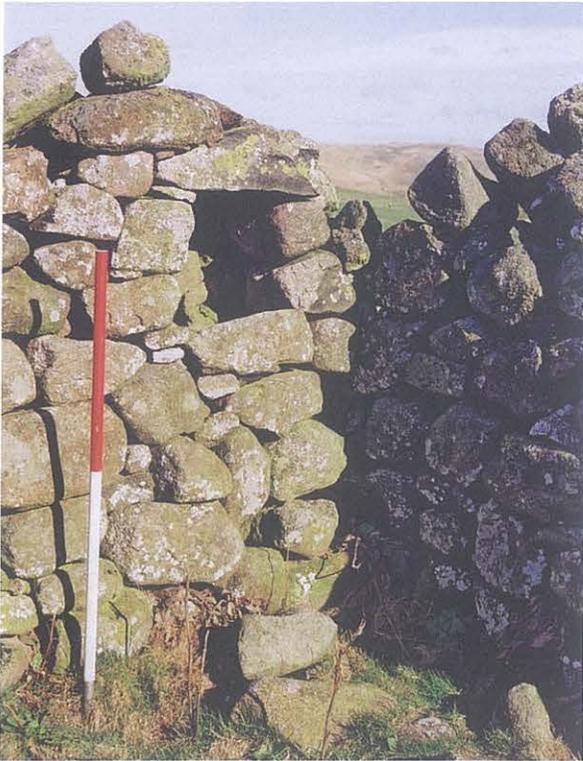


FIGURE 13.10 The medieval longhouse, turned cottage, turned sheepfold. (© ENGLISH HERITAGE/NMR 2000 PHOTOGRAPH: A OSWALD)

to discover the tribal boundaries which have eluded many an experienced academic.

Just as the hillfort itself clearly underwent a wholesale modification in the Romano-British period, it is clear that the surrounding landscape also entered a much busier chapter (fig 13.8). Some of the earlier field boundaries remained in use, but many others were laid out, along with trackways, which can still be traced as level terraces and shallow ‘hollow ways’ worn down by tramping feet. The fact that many of the tracks are embanked (and therefore perhaps originally walled or hedged) on both sides suggests that the routes were used to drive livestock between fields of crops to areas of open pasture. Scattered amongst the fields are six small settlements, each comprising two or three circular buildings in a small compound scooped into the natural slope. Only two of these have been identified before and only one of these has been accurately located, so the new fieldwork suddenly makes the settlement of this part of the landscape look much denser than was previously thought, matching the development of the hillfort into an enclosed village. The small compounds are widely separated from each other, but are closely integrated into the system of fields, many lying at intersections or terminals of the boundary banks. By contrast, the village within the hillfort appears to have been excluded from the pattern of the boundaries, set apart within its own enclosing circuit, as though the inhabitants were less intimately involved in the farming regime. The signs that the village lay within open pasture points to a new interpretation of the low bank which encircles the tumbled rampart of the hillfort – not a corral for keeping livestock *in*, but a town boundary for keeping them *out*.

No evidence for the use of the landscape in the early part of the medieval period was positively identified by the field investigation. But it is quite likely that life in rural areas continued in more or less the same way for some time after the departure of the Roman armies in AD410 and that, without excavation, the evidence for the early medieval period is indistinguishable from that of the Romano-British period. The settlement at nearby Gefrin, founded in the later sixth or early seventh century, was sited on lower-lying ground above the River Glen, overlooked by the hillfort on the summit that shares the name (Yeavinger). It is possible that the same period saw a similar move from the summit of West Hill to establish the present village of Kirknewton. The date of the final abandonment of the settlements on West Hill therefore remains uncertain, but it is clear from documentary evidence that Kirknewton was expanding by the early thirteenth century. The ridge-and-furrow arable fields associated with the growth of the medieval village contribute greatly to the appearance of the landscape today. Under an evening or winter sun the low light catches the broad cultivation ridges and casts the furrows into deep shadow (fig 13.9). The corrugated appearance of surface makes it very clear how much of the land we now consider to be unspoilt wilderness has been utterly tamed in the past by human activity. Many of the cultivation ridges exhibit the ‘reverse-S’ pattern characteristic of ploughing using oxen

as draft animals. Four of the open fields surrounded a 'longhouse' typical of the medieval period, which survives as exposed wall footings and sharply defined narrow banks, indicative of stonework buried just beneath the surface. Fortunately, from an archaeological point of view, the tracts of medieval ploughing generally fitted around and between the prehistoric and Romano-British field boundaries, allowing the traces of the earlier activity to be disentangled. Even where earlier field boundaries were ignored, the medieval ploughing does not seem to have been prolonged enough to erase the earlier earthworks entirely. This suggests that the area farmed by Kirknewton may have expanded and diminished rapidly, whether due to climatic change, plague or some other factor is uncertain.

A single small cottage, similar in size and design to a typical Scottish 'blackhouse' and probably of seventeenth- or eighteenth-century date, was built on the site of the medieval longhouse, evidently farming a slightly smaller area (fig 13.10). At first sight, this appears to suggest continuity of occupation, but closer examination reveals that none of the stonework of the earlier building was incorporated – indeed, the post-medieval building was on a slightly different alignment. The conclusion must be that the croft made use of the convenient supply of building material provided by the ruined longhouse. Like the resettlement of the dilapidated hillfort in the Romano-British period, the cottage overlying the longhouse does not represent direct continuity, but rather the sort of coincidental – in one sense, at least – reuse that contributes equally importantly to the formation of monuments and landscapes. By 1860, when the Ordnance Survey mapped the area, the cottage must have lost its roof and moved into a different chapter of its story, for it was annotated as a 'sheepfold'. In this role, arguably no less important or dignified than its previous incarnations, the building still survives, one element of the vast upland pastures that have characterised the Cheviots for the whole of living memory.

It also fell to the Ordnance Survey map-makers in 1860 to contribute one last 'historic' modification to the hillfort at the heart of the landscape. Once a survey station was established on a summit by painstaking triangulation, it was common practice to mark the sunken box which held the station by building a small cairn. This cairn still survives. Although it is clear that the Ordnance Surveyors were generally very careful not to seriously damage ancient monuments when they sited their stations, the cairn has since been enlarged by stones taken from the Iron Age rampart by walkers, and this practice still continues sporadically. It is in the hands of the present generation as to whether the nineteenth-century surveyors' unwitting contribution to gradual erosion of the hillfort should be reversed by the removal of the cairn. Thus, the choices in conservation and management which face us today are as vital to the evolving history of the monument and its surrounding landscape as were the decisions of the hillfort builders themselves.

# Survey and excavation at Bremenium Roman fort, High Rochester

1992–98

*James Crow*

*The hard road goes on from gardened villas to shut forts with watch-towers of grey stone. In the naked hills beyond the naked houses, where the shadows of the clouds play like cavalry charging, you see puffs of black smoke from mines. The hard road goes on – and the wind sings through your helmet plume – past altars to Legions and Generals forgotten, and broken statues of Gods and Heroes, and thousands of graves where the mountain hares and foxes peep at you. Red-hot in summer, freezing in winter, it is the big, purple heather country of broken stone*

(Rudyard Kipling, *Puck of Pook's Hill*, 1906).

**K**ipling's evocation of the Roman north, and the lands beyond, reminds us that Roman rule in northern Britain did not stop at Hadrian's Wall and for nearly two centuries the fort at High Rochester, or *Bremenium* as the Romans called it, was the most northerly outpost in the Roman Empire. It commands the Roman road known as Dere Street (followed in part by the modern A68), which led north from York through Corbridge and on into Roman Scotland. This was the most important military highway in Roman Britain, the campaign route of governors, emperors and their legions from the first to the fourth centuries AD. North of High Rochester the road can still be followed and the passing of Roman armies is still marked by the temporary camps seen in the vicinity (Welfare and Swann 1995). A Roman road atlas, the Antonine Itinerary, dating mostly to the third century AD records two roads crossing the line of Hadrian's Wall. To the west was the road through Carlisle, starting at the outpost fort of Birrens in southern Dumfriesshire; this passed another outpost fort at Netherby before crossing the Wall and continuing south. In the east, Dere Street began at Bremenium (fig 14.1), passed the fort at Risingham (*Habitancum*) and met the Wall at Stagshaw before reaching Corbridge, a distance of 25 Roman miles. These two roads and the outpost forts which lay beside them are a witness to the continuing Roman ambition to secure and control the lands beyond the Wall.

The fort at High Rochester overlooks the broad valley of Redesdale with the Cheviot Hills and Otterburn Ranges to the north-east and the man-made forests of Kielder to the west. The site of the fort occupies a distinct, rectangular platform (2 hectares in area), occupied today by a cluster of later houses, some dating back to the sixteenth century. Few

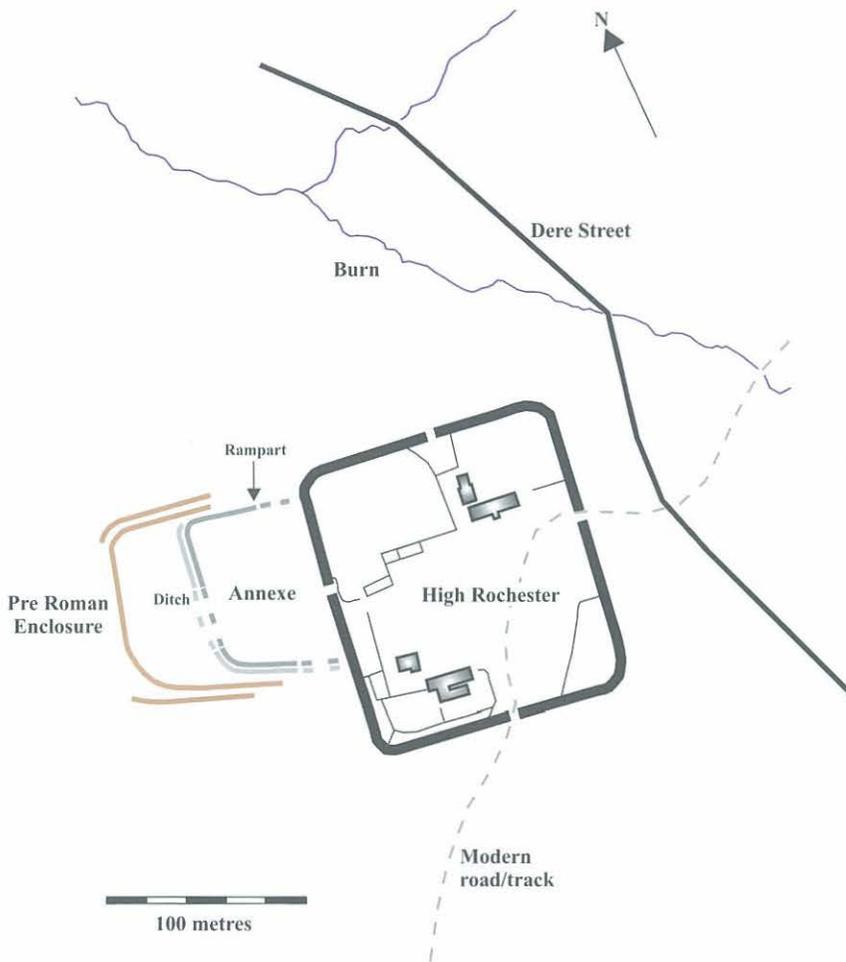


FIGURE 14.4 General plan of the fort and associated features.

are a common feature of Roman forts in the late first century AD and later, but what came as a surprise from the geophysics results was the presence of a larger D-shaped, double-banked enclosure seen to underlie the Roman annexe. This extends as far as the break in slope down to the valley of the Sills Burn (fig 14.4). It is almost identical in both shape and size with large Iron Age enclosures known in Northumberland, one of which, at Manside Cross lies only some 15km south-east of High Rochester. These are similar in area to many of the hillforts in the north of the county but tend to be rectilinear and not always situated on hilltops. They clearly represent significant centres of settlement and the evidence from High Rochester enables us to see for the first time in the north of England the direct association of a Roman fort with a type of Iron Age site which may be interpreted as a pre-existing 'prestige centre' (Welfare 2002, 74).

The existence of a pre-Roman settlement was entirely unexpected but might explain why *Bremenium* was one of the places to be included in Ptolemy's map of the ancient world. The map was compiled in Alexandria in the second century AD and often relied on earlier material (see Rivet and Smith 1981, 103–47; 276–77). The map for Britain survives as a text listing names of coastal topography, places and peoples with a system of coordinates: the earliest example of a digital map. No graphical representation of the map survived from

antiquity. For northern Britain Ptolemy appears to have used a geographical account written after the military campaigns conducted by Agricola, the governor of Britain in the late 70s and 80s AD. Significantly the geographical text not only omits Hadrian's Wall and its forts constructed 40 years later, but also most of the late first-century forts known from northern England including the important fort of Vindolanda on the Stanegate, the Roman road from Corbridge to Carlisle. The fact that Bremenium is included in Ptolemy's account, might then reflect the importance of the place as a pre-Roman centre, rather than just as a Roman fort. Although there are problems in identifying many of the places in northern Britain mentioned by Ptolemy, Trimontium is well known as the name of the Roman fort at Newstead, situated at the crossing of the Tweed near Melrose. The fort there is very large and remained important up to the later-second century AD, but on the northernmost of the three Eildon hills (the *tres montes* of the Latin name) which overlook the site there is a large Iron Age hillfort. Like the pre-Roman enclosure at Bremenium in the territory of the Votadini, we can see at Trimontium that Ptolemy's source was just as concerned with the existing pattern of tribes and regional centres at the time of the Roman conquest as providing a detailed record of the military dispositions of Roman rule. Significantly one of the commonest names recorded by Ptolemy in the north is *Coria* or *Curia* (Rivet and Smith 1981, 317ff). In British Celtic this meant an assembly or gathering place and is now known to be the correct Roman name for Corbridge. This may well have been the pre-Roman function of many of the places listed, such as Bremenium, even though many are described by Ptolemy as *poleis*, the standard Greek word for cities in the Mediterranean world.

### *The Flavian fort*

The Roman fort was located to the east of the earlier enclosure, possibly so that it was on higher ground and closer to the line of Dere Street. The geophysical survey had indicated that the annexe of the earlier Roman fort was constructed over part of the pre-Roman earthworks and the 1935 excavations beside the north-west angle of the fort had uncovered part of the annexe defences, although the significance of the find had not been recognised at the time (Richmond 1936). Re-excavation of this feature revealed the base of a turf rampart 6.30m wide with flat sandstone flags at the rampart kerb. Within our trench we were able to recognise the rampart and ditch of the first fort which was constructed not of stone, but with a turf-built rampart and timber gates and towers. Later in the first century the annexe rampart was built across the earlier ditches up to the corner of the fort and in another trench we were able to show that more than five layers of turf rampart survive with clear evidence for the later demolition of the annexe rampart into the outer ditch. A later ditch, probably from the first stone fort in the second century cut across the line of the earlier annexe defences.

Within the area of the annexe the geophysical survey had shown few traces of any buildings, although the absence of structures is by no means unusual. Many examples of annexes are known from forts especially in the later first and mid-second centuries. The purpose of these defended areas remains something of a puzzle. Many certainly contained buildings (some on the Antonine Wall forts include bathhouses), but all seem to have had large open areas, sometimes with metallised surfaces. High Rochester was one of the major staging posts on Dere Street and would have seen a huge amount of traffic leading to and from Roman Scotland until AD105 when the garrisons were withdrawn into the southern Lowlands and northern England. Throughout this period there was an obvious need for a holding area where supply columns could be given secure accommodation. The position of



FIGURE 14.5 Petty Knowes. A remarkably well-preserved Roman cremation cemetery adjacent to Dere Street SE of the fort. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

the annexe on the west side, away from the known line of the road to the east, suggests that the army was more concerned with security than convenient access to the main road.

Since no clear traces of extra-mural settlement were located west of the fort our attention turned to other areas outside the ramparts. The course of Dere Street is clearly visible south of the fort where it is flanked by the remains of two stone-built tombs and an exceptional barrow cemetery dating from the second and third centuries AD at Petty Knowes (fig 14.5), partly excavated in 1978–79 (Charlton and Mitcheson 1984). The geophysical survey identified the line of the road in the fields immediately east of the fort where it cannot be traced on the ground. We were able to identify the line of the road and its lateral ditches by limited excavations, as well as recognise the branch road leading off towards the north-east over the Otterburn Fells to Holystone in Coquetdale and the Roman fort at Low Learchild. One of the ditches was sampled and proved to have been dug in the second century AD, before it silted up with material including cereal pollen, clear evidence for arable cultivation in the vicinity of the fort. Closer to the fort, almost opposite the main east gate, we were able to open up a long trench to test the line of the road and a number of geophysical anomalies. The road surface showed up very clearly and was remarkably well preserved even though it was less than 30cm below the turf-line.

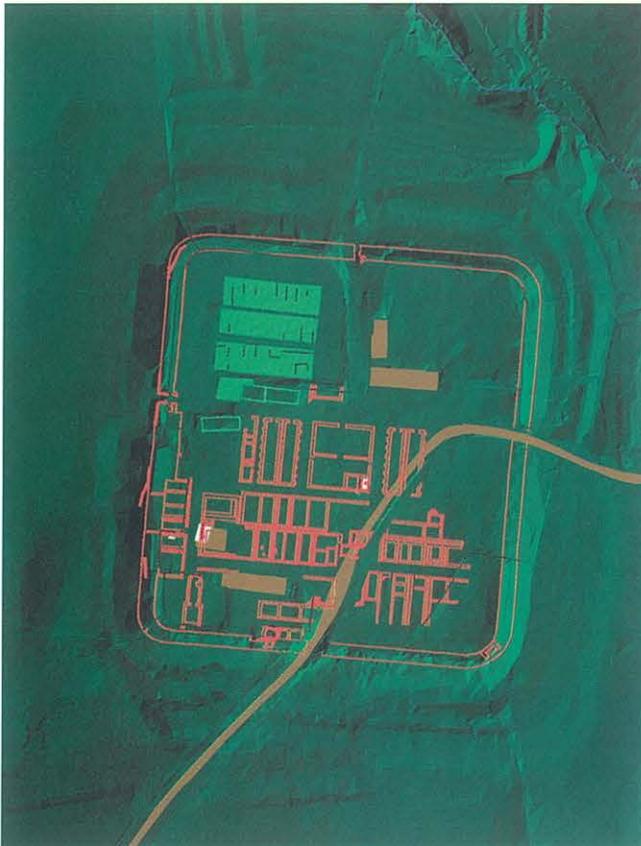
To the west side of the Roman road was a wide area of cobbles, but without any trace of structures of either timber or stone. We extended the search to the east, beyond the line of the road where the seemingly endless cobbles stopped and were replaced by a series of shallow pits filled with burnt debris and pottery dating to the third century. The geophysics plot had indicated that these might be structures, but this was not confirmed by our excavations and we were forced to conclude that there was no significant trace to justify any claim for a settlement along the Roman road passing east of the fort.

The dense cluster of buildings so typical of the civilian settlements found outside many of the Hadrian's Wall forts seems nowhere to be found at High Rochester. Instead of

FIGURE 14.6 Oblique air photograph of Bremenium from the south. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 14.7 A computer generated visualisation of the fort seen with north at the top. The plan shows the topography of the site, combined with some of the geophysical data for the barracks in the north-east quadrant (light green). The nineteenth-century plan is overlaid in red, with visible Roman stonework in yellow. It is interesting to compare the image with the photograph (fig 14.6).



revealing the remains of a conventional *vicus*, the survey had shown evidence of differing activities to the west and east of the fort. To the west this could be associated with the fort's role in the Flavian period as a road station on the route into Scotland intended to give a secure area for stores, wagons, stock and pack animals. On the east side no evidence could be seen for any defences or ordered buildings (such as the settlement outside the fort of Old Carlisle in north Cumbria, Jones and Wooliscroft 2001, 72–74). Beyond Dere Street the open area seems to have been used for temporary workshops and rubbish dumps. Closer to the fort was a wide area of hard standing, once again probably to be associated with the passage of armies on campaigns further to the north.

No physical traces of *vici* are known from the other outpost forts, although only Birrens and Bewcastle have been systematically surveyed. It has been suggested in the past that the tombstones of women and children from both High Rochester and Risingham suggest there were civilian settlements here, although the numbers of these are small enough to represent little more than the immediate families of the commanding officers and the

centurions living within the forts. It would seem that the isolated forward location of these forts in the late second and third centuries, when *vici* were flourishing further south, made them too dangerous for civilian traders and craftsmen.

### *The fort*

The earthwork defences of High Rochester are amongst the best preserved in Britain, especially to the north and south sides (figs 14.6 & 14.7). On the north are the remains of two sets of banks and ditches partly masked by a later system of ridge-and-furrow cultivation. The clear causeway to be seen leading out of the north gate is also a later feature and is not the course of a Roman road as it might first appear. On the south side two high banks and three ditches survive on either side of the modern approach road. Geophysical and topographical surveys here were able to show that the defences were continuous across the line of the Roman gate and the only feature to cross the defences was an aqueduct bringing water into the fort's bathhouse from springs at Petty Knowes to the south-east. The bathhouse can be recognised amongst the buildings excavated in the 1850s in the south-west corner of the fort. On the south-east side of the fort visible traces of the defences have been largely obscured by ploughing but a Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey by Brian Donnelly of Northumbria Surveys has revealed not just the line and profile of the four banks and ditches, but also a secondary recutting in the later ditch fill. We were able to confirm this important observation by excavation and, so far as we know, this is the first time that GPR has been able to recognise multi-phase cut features within earthworks.

Within the defences little visible trace survives of the internal buildings of the fort. The plan of much of the fort had been known since the excavations ordered by the Duke of Northumberland in 1852 and 1855. It is difficult to assess the reliability of the old excavation plans and to be sure how far they can be used as an accurate guide to the position of buildings and walls below the village green. Geophysical survey of the interior revealed little detail of the internal buildings except for three barrack-like structures located in the north-west quadrant. We resolved to carry out limited excavations to target particular elements from the nineteenth-century excavations which would allow us to merge the detailed topographical survey with the earlier plans. Once again we found that at High Rochester the past lies very close to the surface and quickly traced the south-east angle of the headquarters building, including a standing hypocaust pillar and the stokehole for the centrally-heated office in the rear range (fig 14.8). Palaeomagnetic dating of the flue indicates that the last date the furnace was fired was around AD190. By comparing our survey of these features it was clear they were located within half a metre of their estimated position confirming the general reliability of the early plans.

The overall pattern we see on these plans is familiar from later excavations of Roman forts, but some details are significant in determining the distinctive character of the outpost fort. Looking at the nineteenth-century plan several features distinguish the organisation of the interior buildings from other examples of Roman forts in the north. The headquarters is flanked by not one, but by two double granaries. This would have allowed for a much larger stock of grain to be held in troubled times or for additional units operating north of the Wall. The internal bathhouse fed by the aqueduct leading to the south gate is unusual before the fourth century, since most bathhouses are situated outside forts. The date of the High Rochester example is not known, but at Bewcastle, another outpost fort, the bathhouse within the fort is of Hadrianic date.

FIGURE 14.8 Cross wall at the rear of the headquarters building, excavated in 1997. The hypocaust pillar can be seen to the right of the wall.



South of the central range of the headquarters and granaries, the plan shows a number of barracks seen not as long single buildings but divided into smaller units or chalets, a type of building familiar from many of the forts on Hadrian's Wall in the fourth century AD. Limited excavations at the west end of the bastle house in the south-west quadrant of the fort showed traces of these walls and flagged floors (fig 14.9). Interestingly there appears to have been an added porch on one of the rooms very similar to those found from the chalet-barracks at Housesteads in the early fourth century. By contrast to this arrangement the four barracks in the north-east quadrant identified by geophysical survey are conventional long buildings, divided into a series of rooms. These presumably reveal the earlier arrangement from the second or third century as the traces of the later chalets were cleared when the field was improved in the eighteenth century. Another barrack-type building can be seen to have been constructed against the interior of the south-west rampart. One building is very distinctive. It is situated within the area occupied by the barracks just south of the central range of headquarters and granaries. On the early plan it has two rooms shown with hypocausts. Similar features were re-excavated in the south-east corner of the headquarters and it is therefore possible to interpret this as a partially excavated courtyard building, similar to the recently reconstructed late Roman *praetorium* (officers' house) from South Shields.

Further evidence for the status of the fort can be deduced from the extensive multiple ramparts which protect it on all four sides and the provision of artillery for the defence of the fort. Two inscriptions from the early third century record the construction of *ballistaria* at High Rochester. Past interpretations of these have imagined them to be wide stone platforms for massive stone throwing artillery; indeed the projectiles have been identified with the large stone balls which grace the Old School House in Rochester village (fig 14.10). More recent considerations of the evidence suggest that the *ballistaria* were either workshops or sheds for storing the artillery pieces, or more likely they were sheltered emplacements on

the walls or towers for the arrow shooters. Whichever, the range of this torsion artillery was more than 250m, far greater than any arrow or sling shot which could be fired against the fort.

### *The garrisons*

A number of units are known from inscriptions found at High Rochester including detachments from the sixth and twentieth legions, and auxiliary units raised in France, Spain and Belgium. It seems that in the third century the fort was held by the first cohort of Vardullians, a part-mounted cohort of milliary strength (ie 800 infantry and about 250 cavalry) originally raised in north Spain, as well a unit of *exploratores* or frontier scouts. In total, this would suggest 'a paper strength' at High Rochester of at least 1000 men and it is possible to estimate that the cohort alone required ten normal barracks and eight cavalry barracks, on the model of the recent discoveries from Wallsend and South Shields. By combining our recent findings from the geophysical survey with the known earlier plan we can now see that inside the fort there were sufficient buildings packed together in the interior and against the rampart to accommodate this large garrison.

Although the plan is partly obscured by later Roman structures, originally there could have been sixteen barracks running east-west, divided equally between the north and south parts of the fort, with additional space for two barracks constructed into the back of the rampart, plus additional accommodation for the unit of scouts, the *numerus exploratores*. Altogether the buildings are much more tightly packed than we normally encounter in the organisation of a Roman auxiliary fort, this is itself a reflection of the fort's importance in an insecure and potentially hostile landscape.

### *The end of Bremenium*

How did the Roman occupation of the fort end? Observations at the blocked doorway into the south interval tower revealed pottery dateable to the third century indicating it was walled-up then or in subsequent decades. Our study of the surviving structures indicated that the stone wall and gate on the west side had been rebuilt on at least three occasions. The works included the reuse of earlier material and an extensive re-facing of the rampart which had slumped forward. The west gate itself was blocked in Roman times and much of the blocking wall still survives (see fig 14.2). Based on an estimate of the coins found during the nineteenth century it has been argued that the fort was abandoned by the 320s (Casey and Savage 1980) and apart from a few pieces of possibly later fourth century pottery, none of



FIGURE 14.9 Excavation adjacent to the bastle in the SW of the fort, looking NE across the village green.



FIGURE 14.10 The fabric of the Old School House, Rochester village, incorporates much reused masonry from Bremenium.

## Acknowledgements

Over seven years of field work there are lots of people to thank. Firstly, the students and supervisors from the Department of Archaeology at Newcastle University and also from Bilkent University in Ankara who excavated, surveyed and recorded the Roman and later remains. In particular I would like to mention Richard Carlton, Clive Waddington, Richard Bayliss, Rob Witcher and Lorraine Kerr. Peter Ryder and Adam Welfare also assisted with structural and topographical surveys. Glyn Goodrick has been a great help with the computer graphics used in this article.

The project has been financially supported by English Heritage, the Northumberland National Park Authority, the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Newcastle University, and we are grateful to all these bodies for their help. I would particularly like to thank Paul Frodsham of NNPA who was project manager and Henry Owen John of EH for their encouragement throughout. Finally we would wish to acknowledge the kindness and the welcome we have received from the Corbetts and the Charltons who farm and live on the fort.

the finds from our limited excavations contradict this opinion. However we have observed a number of structural features from the defences and within the fort which may be paralleled in later fourth-century developments at forts on Hadrian's Wall, thus indicating that the garrison was not fully withdrawn until the middle of the century at the earliest. By the mid-fourth century a series of new alliances emerged amongst the British tribes north of Hadrian's Wall. These posed a much greater threat to Roman security and as the Wall garrisons adopted a more defensive role the regions to the north were patrolled by new units of frontier scouts called the *areani*. Ultimately they were to betray their masters in the great Barbarian Conspiracy of 367 when the final fate of the Roman north was sealed.

Only extensive modern excavation can resolve these and other problems, but our approach of detailed surveys, combined with limited excavation, has revealed much about the character of the fort and drawn attention to one of the best preserved and imposing monuments beside the 'hard road' on Rome's northernmost frontier in 'the big, purple heather country of broken stone'.

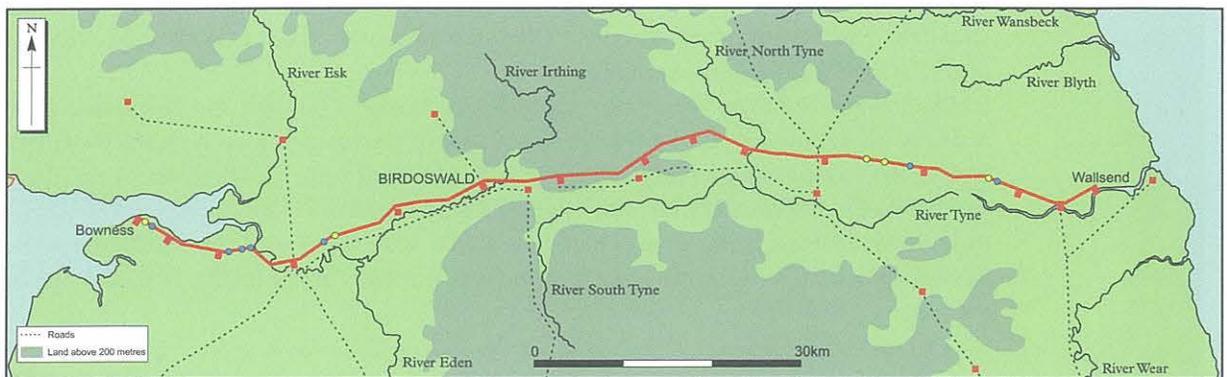
# Aspects of recent archaeology on Hadrian's Wall

Tony Wilmott

Hadrian's Wall (fig 15.1) has historically been one of the determining facts of the archaeology of Northumberland and Cumbria. Before the work of such pioneers as George Jobey, its existence and fascination tended to skew archaeological endeavour in the area towards the Roman and the military. The extent to which this balance has been redressed is shown by the diverse contents of this volume. No account of the archaeology of the area is, however, complete without some reference to Hadrian's Wall, hence this paper. In the following discussion, I would like to highlight the results of some recent work on the Wall, and briefly to discuss ideas on the function of its various elements, and the purpose of the Wall itself.

In 1961, Eric Birley published his *Research on Hadrian's Wall*, a comprehensive review of research and antiquarian comment spanning the period from 1599, when Camden's *Britannia* contained the first important account of the Wall. In this volume Birley also synthesised the results of what may be regarded as an 'heroic age' of research during the years 1925–35. This remarkable phase owed more to F G Simpson than to any other single worker. It finally answered many questions relating to the relationships between the various elements of the Wall, including the walls of stone and turf and the *vallum*. The important excavations at Birdoswald in 1929 are well known as establishing a four period system for the occupation of the Wall, broadly relating to the visits of the Emperors Hadrian, Severus, Constantius and Theodosius. This age marks a benchmark in research on the Wall, as it provided a robust framework for future work, but claims that all of the important questions on the Wall had been solved were premature. Almost all excavation work undertaken recently has produced new evidence, not only in terms of detail, but also in opening up new questions and areas of inquiry. Hadrian's Wall boasts two unique institutions, both of which originated in the visit

FIGURE 15.1 Map of Hadrian's Wall. Milecastles evaluated in 1999 and 2000 are shown in yellow and blue respectively. Forts are shown as red squares.



to the Wall made in 1848 by John Collingwood Bruce. One of these is the decennial Pilgrimage of the Wall, the most recent of which took place in 1999. The volume produced for the Pilgrimage by Paul Bidwell (1999) summarised all work on the frontier over the ten years 1989–99. The second institution is the *Handbook of Hadrian's Wall*. This has been out of print for some time, but David Breeze is actively engaged in updating and fully revising the thirteenth edition, which was edited by Charles Daniels in 1979. The standard modern text book on the Wall is *Hadrian's Wall* by David Breeze and Brian Dobson. This first appeared in 1972, and is now in its fourth, fully revised edition, which places work up to 2000 into the broader frameworks of Wall history. It will be seen from this that the archaeology of the Wall is well served by published work on a variety of levels, and that this brief paper owes much to these works.

The Management Plan for the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site (English Heritage 1996) expressed the need to undertake research in order further to understand the historic landscape of the Wall and the details of its structure, purpose, and history. This is seen as essential to inform the proper management of the Wall and its landscape. In the second phase of the Plan, now published (English Heritage 2002), Policy 13 requires the development of an academic research framework to identify areas for future archaeological research priorities. This process is now under way. Archaeology on the Wall within the last decade and a half has been carried out for a number of reasons, and not wholly as part of a coordinated effort. Some of the most valuable work has taken place on the forts, particularly at Birdoswald, Wallsend, South Shields and Vindolanda. Although all of these works have been undertaken within research programmes for the individual sites, and to a very high quality, the original impetus for the first three was related in large part to economic regeneration. Further knowledge was required to underpin development and interpretation. The aim was to increase visitor numbers to the less visited parts of the Wall, and also to draw the increasing numbers of visitors away from the honeypot sites of the central sector in order to relieve visitor pressures in this zone. The work of the Vindolanda Trust is somewhat different in emphasis, as the income from visitors is used to continue a programme of research. Within the last few years, the research work in geophysics undertaken by Timescape Surveys at sites like Birdoswald and Halton Chesters has totally revolutionised our view on the extents of the *vici* or civil settlements associated with the forts. Elsewhere, particularly in the Newcastle conurbation, work has been undertaken in advance of development, with the course of the Wall along Shields Road becoming apparent. A number of projects mounted by English Heritage have been directly related to the implementation of the Management Plan. In 1997 at Black Carts in Wall mile 29, an investigation of agricultural damage to the *vallum* was expanded to include a transection of the Wall and its earthworks, while in 1999 and 2000, a project was designed to examine the state of preservation of thirteen of the milecastles under regular or intermittent ploughing. This project also produced additional evidence on the location, plan, and history of some of the milecastles. In 1999 the traditional opening of the Turf Wall section at Appletree for the Pilgrimage was also expanded, again to provide a full transection of the works, and this too provided new information on the earthworks of the Wall. Although many of these interventions lie beyond the boundaries of the National Park, the Wall should always be regarded as a single monument rather than a series of individual sites, and findings on one part of the line are relevant to all.

In general the popular perception of the Wall is conditioned by the images of the central



FIGURE 15.2 Excavations at Appletree near Birdoswald in 1999 revealed the laminated turf-work of the turf Wall, from which environmental samples provided evidence for the pre-Roman vegetational history of the Wall.

sector along the Great Whin Sill, where the Wall (as consolidated by John Clayton in the nineteenth century, and subsequently by the National Trust) snakes along the crags. It can be startling for the visitor to realise that this is exceptional, and that by far the greatest proportion of the Wall complex visible today, consists of earthworks. In the stone Wall sector there are several earthwork elements. North of the Wall are the Wall ditch and its counterscarp, and the Wall itself survives only as an earthwork for much of its course. South of the Wall lies the Military Way, the road which served the Wall, and the mighty works of the *Vallum*, its great ditch flanked by two mounds with the additional so-called marginal mound upon the southern lip of the ditch. In the west, beyond the Irthing, another series of elements is added, particularly in the Birdoswald sector. These are the turf Wall (fig 15.2), with its own ditch and counterscarp bank. During the 1920s and 1930s, the earthworks were studied with a view to disentangling their relative sequence and the order and date of their construction. The accomplishment of this was a major triumph, but it is now clear that a great deal more can be derived from their study.

One of the most important aspects of the study of the earthworks relates not to the works themselves, but to what lies beneath them. The raising of the works sealed the land surface of the time. Pollen preserved within these buried land surfaces records the vegetation and environment of the region at the moment when the construction of the Wall began. As so often on the Wall, this potential was first recognised by F G Simpson, who reported upon palynological evidence from the turf Wall in 1935, and wrote that:

*samples from the Turf Wall throughout Cumberland would enable us to reconstruct a detailed picture of the local flora in Roman days, a novel possibility beyond the dreams of older generations*

(Simpson and Richmond 1935, 244–7)

Perhaps surprisingly, no specific broad-scale attempt to realise this primary research objective has yet been made. As primary elements in the Hadrian's Wall system, the Turf Wall and the counterscarp both have the potential to seal buried, undisturbed ground surfaces. The *vallum*, being slightly later, might provide information of a slightly different character, and samples would need to be compared with those from adjacent, primary earthworks. This kind of work has been undertaken at a number of sites. The recent English Heritage work alone has established the character of the immediate pre-Roman landscape at Birdoswald, where a dense, damp woodland was cleared for the building of the turf Wall, and at Appletree, 1.5km to the west, where there was a grazed moorland (Wiltshire 1997). Already the picture of a patchwork of landscape use begins to emerge. At Black Carts also, the landscape of Teppermoor Hill proves different to that from a few hundred metres east, in the Hen Gap, though full understanding of this awaits the analysis of the pollen by Dr David Robinson (forthcoming). During the Milecastles project, the survival of elements of the turf Wall beneath milecastle 71 (Wormanby; fig 15.3) has potential to give information concerning the landscape at the western end of the Wall (Wilmott 2001a). Also as part of this project, the *vallum* mounds were sampled near milecastle 10 (Walbottle Dene) where, despite being ploughed flat, streaks of lighter material could be seen marking their lines after ploughing. Though virtually obliterated, there was still some 5cm of intact mound material left, which preserved a buried land surface (Moore and Wilmott 2001). Samples from these two sites are being analysed by Dr Jacqui Huntley, and demonstrate that no part of the earthworks, however poor their condition, can be assumed to lack potential for this kind of work. Samples from beneath the earthworks supplement the evidence derived from cores in bogs in the area (Huntley 1999) in providing a local (as opposed to a regional) picture of the pre-Roman environment. The advantage which samples from beneath the counterscarp have over bog samples is that they are dated historically to the years immediately after the decision to build Hadrian's Wall in AD122. Bog samples dated by radiocarbon do not have this



FIGURE 15.3 The foundations of Hadrian's Wall at milecastle 71 near Burgh-by-Sands in Cumbria overlay a fragment of the turf Wall, which shows here as a black band from which environmental samples are being taken.

precision. This may not be a problem to a vegetational historian for whom broad trends in vegetational change are important. To the Roman archaeologist seeking to identify the impact of the building of the Wall on the local environment 'point in time' data like those from beneath the earthworks are far more significant.

Investigation beneath the installations of Hadrian's Wall have still more to say about pre-Roman landuse. Ard marks resulting from prehistoric ploughing have been found on almost every site investigated between Wallsend and Carrawburgh (Bidwell and Watson 1989; Breeze 1972), including Black Carts, and on sites to the west of the central sector as well. There has been some doubt as to whether these reflect agricultural ploughing or some form of ritual ground preparation for the construction of the Wall. At Black Carts (Wilmott 1997b) there is little doubt that the former explanation is correct, as the marks run at an oblique angle to the line of the *vallum* (fig 15.4), while one might expect ploughing in advance of construction to be linear and parallel. The problem with the ard marks is that it is seldom clear whether they represent immediate pre-Roman agriculture, as some of them could be as early as the Bronze Age. The answer to this can only come from the microscopic examination of associated soil profiles, which should certainly be a priority for future similar discoveries. At Black Carts, the ard marks were overlain by a series of pock-marks in the soil. These were preserved by the concretion of iron compounds which had leached through the overlying mound. It seems possible that they were the hoof marks of a large number of animals, though they were not clear impressions, as the ground was probably wet when they passed. The picture of an *ala* of Roman cavalry riding across a ploughed field is as irresistible as it is unprovable! The continuation of work on the Wall earthworks would be an extraordinarily valuable addition to the work on the whole Wall landscape, which is exemplified in this volume by the contribution of Tim Gates, and would supplement and amplify his aerial photographic results for the prehistoric periods.



FIGURE 15.4 At Black Carts, west of Chesters, Northumberland, ard marks were found beneath the south mound of the *vallum*.

FIGURE 15.5 At Black Carts, the counterscarp bank of the Wall appears as a narrow linear feature on the lip of the ditch with low mounds to the north.



The understanding of the pre-Wall landscape provides a new dimension to our appreciation of the effort required to build the Wall. At Birdoswald, a woodland had to be cleared for the turf Wall, and the absence of turf meant that all of the building material had to be cut from the surface of an adjacent bog and carried 200m uphill to the site. At Appletree, on the other hand, the ground was stripped of turf across areas to the north and south of the Wall line, and both the counterscarp bank and the *vallum* were built on the denuded ground surface. Here, the only potential for pollen evidence was thus beneath the turf Wall itself. The fact that the vegetation had no time to regenerate before the construction of the *vallum* suggests that the time lapse between the two operations at this point was not long.

The character of the earthworks naturally altered according to the landscape through which they passed. The contrast between the Birdoswald/Appletree area, with its underlying boulder clays and the Black Carts/Limestone Corner sector built upon the dolerite of the Whin Sill could not be greater. The usual interpretation of the counterscarp of the Wall ditch is that it comprises material excavated from the ditch itself. This is certainly true at Appletree where the mound is regular and even. Irregularities are often interpreted as the result of piecemeal clearing of silt from the ditch. At Black Carts the counterscarp shows as a narrow, high bank on the north edge of the ditch with many small mounds and hollows to the north of it (fig 15.5). In excavation, the Wall ditch was not the usual broad, V-shaped profile found elsewhere, but a shallow affair, only 2m wide and 800mm deep. Its stepped profile was achieved by splitting out naturally angular dolerite blocks along horizontal bedding planes and vertical fissures. The linear counterscarp bank was a carefully constructed mass of dolerite boulders and blocks deliberately designed to give the impression of a much deeper ditch. The bank would certainly have contained more material than that won from the ditch, and dolerite blocks were used at least in the foundations of Hadrian's Wall at this point also. The mounds to the north of the built counterscarp (fig 15.6) proved to consist of clean soil and fragments of dolerite. They are interpreted as quarrying debris. In order to quarry the

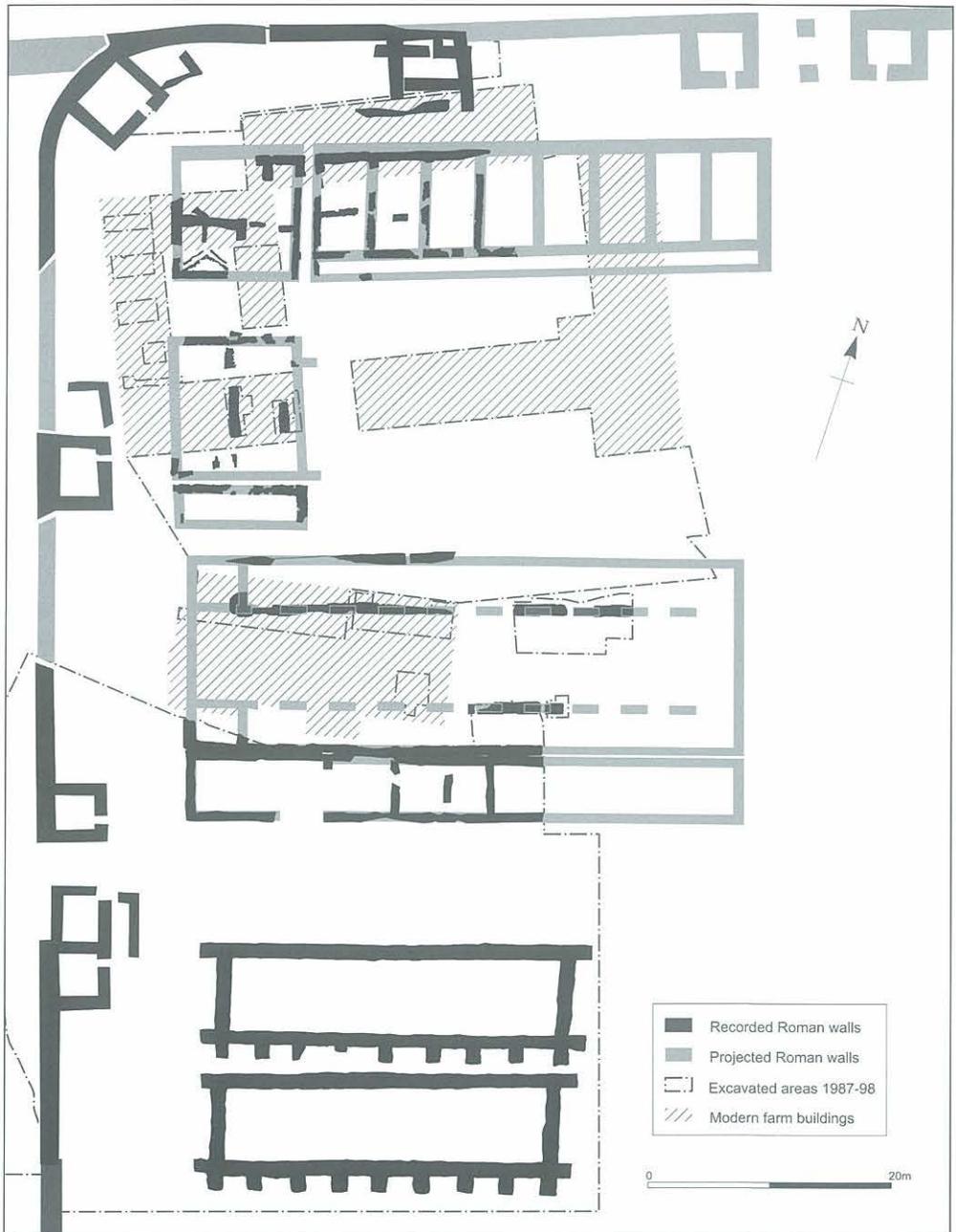


FIGURE 15.6 When excavated, the counterscarp is revealed as a feature built of blocks of dolerite to accentuate the shallow Wall ditch.

dolerite, it would have been adequate to strip topsoil over an area, and to then use a crow-bar to lever manageable sized building blocks from the fissured surface. Future work might seek evidence at least for the topsoil strip. The *vallum* too shows variations. At Black Carts the ditch is square-cut through the solid bedrock to a depth of 3m and a width of 4m. At Appletree a U-shaped ditch provides a stable profile in clay, and was 6m wide and 2m deep. One piece of evidence common to both sites was the nature of the marginal mound. This has usually been interpreted as a later feature, and the result of periodical cleaning out of the ditch. In both locations, however, it appeared to be made of clean, freshly excavated soil, and to be constructed from the same level as the south mound. The suggestion that the marginal mound was actually a primary feature requires more investigation.

The best known features on the Wall are the forts, and these have been the focus of large-scale campaigns of work in recent years. At Birdoswald the development of a new residential study centre and visitor centre necessitated excavation in the north-west quarter of the fort during 1997–99, which supplemented the major excavations of 1987–92 (Wilmott 1997a). This work completed the excavation of the western half of the *praetentura* (or northern third of the fort) and solved a major question on the fort plan. In 1988 a large basilica had been found in this area and was interpreted as a drill and exercise hall. This building is so far unique in any auxiliary fort in the Empire, and the impact of its existence on fort planning was not known. In fact, the area to the rear of the basilica was occupied by a pair of barrack blocks of standard plan (fig 15.7). These barracks showed a complete sequence of occupation and alteration from the second century to the fourth, including conversion into barracks of the type known as ‘chalets’. ‘Chalet’ barracks were first identified at Housesteads. They consist of rows of small self-contained buildings of similar size to the *contubernia*, or barrack rooms of earlier barrack buildings. These structures have been much discussed in recent years. Daniels (1980) originally interpreted them as married quarters, housing a single soldier and his family. This interpretation was widely used to suggest that garrisons in the late period were reduced to up to 10% of their former size. Bidwell (1991, 12–14) has argued that ‘chalets’ were simply a development of the standard barrack block, and served the same function, citing examples from Vindolanda and South

FIGURE 15.7 Plan of the recently excavated area of the north-west *praetentura* of the fort of Birdoswald, Cumbria, showing all excavated walls of the most complete (early third century) phase recorded.



Shields. Crow (1995, 85–93) has also questioned the married quarters interpretation while showing that the buildings were individually maintained, unlike Bidwell’s examples. The debate continues. New barrack types of Hadrianic date have been identified during excavations at Wallsend in recent years. These buildings were divided by a longitudinal partition. The front line of rooms were *contubernia* housing soldiers, the rear line were stables, each equipped with a large pit in the floor. It was estimated that the *contubernia* would each have housed three men of a cavalry troop, with their mounts stabled in the rooms of the rear range (fig 15.8; Bidwell and Griffiths 1999).

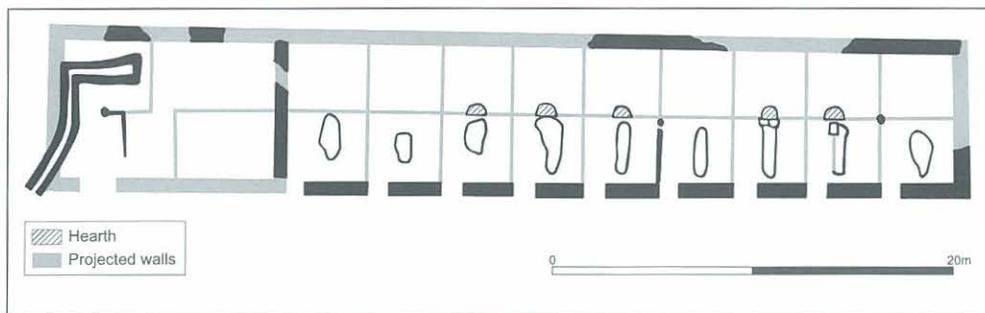


FIGURE 15.8 Plan of the cavalry barracks recently recognised at Wallsend. Note the characteristic pits in the rear range of rooms. (AFTER BIDWELL 1999)

The fort of Vindolanda is one of the best known sites in the Wall zone. The discovery of ink writing tablets in deep, waterlogged levels of the site has revealed a wealth of documents of all kinds including many letters, lists, and reports. Many of the texts have been published in two academic corpus volumes, and a third is awaited (Bowman and Thomas 1983; 1994). One of the most important aspects of the texts is their illumination of the minutiae of military routine, and also the movement of troops on duties within the province. One report shows that over half of the cohort were absent on duties elsewhere, many at Corbridge. A derogatory term for the locals, *Brittunculi*, probably refers to the inadequacy of conscripts in training (Birley 2002, 96). Other documents refer to travelling expenses and leave applications, legal cases and petitions, supply receipts and building work. One of the latter (Birley 2002, 90) refers to eighteen builders at the bathhouse. The bathhouse mentioned has recently been located and excavated on the site. Further discoveries at Vindolanda have included neat rows of round huts dated to the Severan period. These have been interpreted (Birley 2002, 161) as provision for native British hostages or refugees. For the very latest period of continuous occupation on the site, an apsidal building within the *praetorium* has been interpreted as a christian chapel. Several finds also hint at Christian observance, and this may be the context for the late fifth century tombstone commemorating Brigomaglos (Birley 2002, 15). This adds to the increasing evidence for the way in which the Wall forts were used in the fifth century, and possibly beyond. This clearly differed from site to site. At Birdoswald two major phases of timber buildings followed on from the deposition of the latest Roman pottery and coins, implying continued occupation throughout the fifth century. At South Shields, on the other hand, two burials of people who had died violently were found within the fort. These were dated by radiocarbon to the early fifth century. It seems likely that the coastal location of South Shields rendered it vulnerable to attack, while the secure inland location of Birdoswald allowed the settlement to experience relatively peaceful development (Wilmott 2000a).

A perennial question concerning Hadrian's Wall is possibly the most obvious of all: what was it for and how did it work. This question is addressed in only one sentence of classical literature. Hadrian's biographer states that he was 'the first to build a Wall, eighty miles long to separate the Romans from the barbarians'. All other discussion has to be based upon archaeological evidence. The issue, most recently summarised by Bidwell (1999, 31–4), revolves around whether the Wall was primarily to control movement into and out of the province, or alternatively whether it had a strategic and defensive role from its inception. Back in the 1920s, R G Collingwood (1921) showed that the Wall could not have functioned as a military fortification analogous to a city wall. The Roman army of the time did not fight behind barriers, but in the open field. Suggestions that an enemy could be trapped against the

Wall also ran counter to Roman tactical thought, which warned against pinning an enemy against a barrier, as this would cause them to fight more fiercely. The idea developed that the Wall as originally planned, with its milecastles and turrets, was a barrier to free communication, controlling but not preventing movement. The later decision to place forts on the Wall was seen as adding a military function which had not been part of the primary purpose of the line (Birley 1961, 270). The view of the Wall as a non-defensive control point has been controversial since the 1970s, and the alternative view that the Wall had a defensive function from the start has been championed by several scholars (eg Daniels 1979, 360; Donaldson 1989).

The Wall in its first conception had a gate every mile at a milecastle (fig 15.9). The non-defensive model sees troops stationed in the milecastles ensuring that civilians, perhaps traders, or pastoralists moving from one pasture ground to another, were disarmed, and paid customs dues, as attested in regulations known from the Rhine frontier (Breeze and Dobson 2000, 40). The military force on the frontier was at this time based upon the Stanegate; the earlier road which ran to the rear of the Wall, and upon which lay such forts as Corbridge, Vindolanda and Carvoran. Any deployment northwards would have been through the milecastle gateways. The turrets on the Wall would have operated as both watch-towers and signal turrets, and David Wooliscroft (1989) has demonstrated the way in which turrets might have been sited with signalling in mind. A major problem with the permeable frontier model has always been the apparent absence of causeways across the ditch to the north of the Wall at the milecastles, and Brian Dobson (1986, 9) has admitted that the precise function of the milecastles remains something of a mystery. Causeways are only known for certain at turf Wall milecastles 50 (High House) and 54 (Randylands), but their absence elsewhere might simply reflect the paucity of archaeological attention which has been paid to the Wall

FIGURE 15.9 The north gateway of milecastle 37 near Housesteads.



ditch at milecastle sites. This important issue was recently reviewed by Humphrey Welfare (2000), who examined the evidence from excavation and earthwork survey, and concluded that it 'support[s] the argument for the former presence of a causeway at a significant proportion of the milecastles'. This is not a surprising conclusion, as great care was clearly expended on the masonry of the north gates of the milecastles (Hill 1991, 33). It is logical to assume that this effort was only justified if the gates were more than mere posterns, provided for maintenance south of the ditch. The argument for the Wall as a defensible structure in its initial phase is strengthened by factors relating to the arrangements provided on the Cumbrian Coast and the Solway. Beyond the fort at Bowness-on-Solway, the final fort on the line, a coastal system of milefortlets and towers continued the frontier around the Cardurnock peninsula and south beyond Maryport. These installations were short-lived, and were not reoccupied after the withdrawal from the Antonine Wall. As Bidwell (1999, 34) has pointed out, if the Cumbrian Coast system existed to control and tax trans-Solway trade, then the need for the installation would have continued after the re-occupation of Hadrian's Wall. The fact that this did not take place suggests that a specific threat, guarded against by the coastal works, had been removed by diplomacy or by military action. I have recently suggested (Wilmott 2000b and forthcoming) that a threat from across the Solway conditioned the design of the frontier from Burgh by Sands down the Cumbrian coast. From Burgh, the Wall runs across marshes and along the littoral. At milecastle 79 (Richmond and Gillam 1952) the Wall and milecastle were built upon large embankments of earth and gravel. This route was far from simple and convenient, and a more suitable route ran inland across higher, drier land on Fingland Rigg, the route of the postulated western Stanegate (Jones 1991) to the Trajanic fort at Kirkbride. This route would have allowed for views across the Solway which were hardly inferior to those from the coast. The drawback in such a route would have been the exclusion of a large area of coastal marsh and mossland to the north of the frontier, which might have acted as a bridgehead for potentially hostile people from over the water. It may also be significant in terms of a perception of threat to the north-west that the earliest outpost forts were constructed in this area.

The change in plan known as the 'fort decision' brought the frontier garrison onto the Wall itself. New forts were built, often astride the Wall, with three of their four gates to the north of the barrier. The advantages of this would have been that the army could patrol far more effectively to the north, and that the reaction time in case of trouble would have been drastically shortened. This was especially true west of the Irthing bridge at Willowford, where the garrisons at Nether Denton and Brampton Old Church were separated from the Wall by the valley of the Irthing river. Even if the frontier began as a permeable barrier, control was certainly tightened later. The construction of the earthwork known as the *vallum* from coast-to-coast to the south of the Wall would have had the effect of closing the frontier down, from a possible 80 milecastle crossings to only 16, where causeways of undug earth were left at each fort. The increased control of the isthmus which followed the fort decision and the building of the *vallum* has the appearance of a military response to some unrest in the north. The same conclusion may also be drawn from an apparent hiatus in the construction of the Wall seen in changes in stonemasonry construction (pers comm P Hill and D Breeze), and in evidence from stonemasonry and soil science at Birdoswald (Wilmott 1997a).

The later functional history of the Wall is complex. The abandonment of the *vallum* and the construction of the Military Way to the south of the Wall in the mid-Antonine period

would have allowed general access to the rear of the Wall. In the later part of the second century, however, egress through the milecastles was limited by the narrowing of many gates. It is likely that the slighting of the *vallum*, the treatment of milecastle causeways and the blocking of milecastle gates was a long-drawn out and piecemeal process. Welfare (2000, 18–19) argues that these changes would have been the result of the treatment of individual or groups of milecastles, depending on localised geographical and tactical solutions.

The first difficulty in assessing the original purpose of the Wall lies in the fact that this may have combined elements of strategic planning and the control of movement through the frontier. One crucial area of research potential is clearly the question of the presence or absence of causeways (or bridges) at milecastles. A second problem is the fact that the emphases within the Wall's dual function seem to have changed during its construction, and kept changing thereafter. The permeable frontier of the original plan was closed by the placing of the forts and the construction of the *vallum*, and this occurred during the construction of the frontier. These decisions reveal an emphasis on the military role. Following the withdrawal from Antonine Scotland it is hard to read firm intentions, but these may have varied according to location.

This chapter has, by its nature, been selective. I hope, however, that it shows the study of Hadrian's Wall to be exciting and rewarding as it ever has been, and that there remain important questions to answer and approaches to attempt.

# Flying on the frontier

## Recent archaeological air photography in the Hadrian's Wall corridor

*Tim Gates*

From the viewpoint of the airborne archaeologist the Northumberland National Park is ideal territory in which to work. For this spacious landscape of more than 1000 square kilometres is rich in archaeological remains belonging to all periods of the past, from prehistory to the present day. Moreover, because 80% of the land is rough grazing or moorland, many sites survive in the form of upstanding earthworks that are readily visible even to the untrained eye. Nevertheless, despite a long and honourable tradition of fieldwork, there is still much primary recording to be done and new discoveries continue to be made almost on a daily basis.

Since the last War, aerial reconnaissance and photography have played an increasingly important part in recording and documenting this landscape, bringing to light previously unknown sites and monuments and monitoring the condition of others that are already familiar – both roles for which air photography is particularly well suited, especially over terrain which is often remote from any road and difficult of access on foot.

In recent years it has been the National Park Authority itself which has played the leading role in commissioning aerial survey within the Park. Since 1998, three wide-ranging survey projects have been completed here as well as a number of smaller thematic or site specific tasks. The three major surveys – of the Army Training Estate at Otterburn (Gates 1997), the Hadrian's Wall corridor (Gates 1999) and, most recently, the College Valley Estate on the northern flanks of the Cheviots (Gates 2000) – between them cover an area of 400 square kilometres or about 40% of the Park. During the course of these surveys no fewer than 1400 individual sites and monuments have been photographed, mapped and described ready for inclusion in the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). What is more remarkable is that two thirds of these sites (roughly 900 in number) are completely new discoveries. Yet even this startling figure fails to do justice to the scale of what has now come to light as it leaves out of account a wealth of other earthworks which, for purely practical reasons, have not been separately identified in the SMR. These include vast acreages of medieval and post-medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation which, together with their associated boundaries and enclosures, make up the bulk of what is portrayed on the 1:10,000 scale record maps generated by these projects. While much of this material is unspectacular, collectively it makes a substantial contribution to the archaeological record, and is indispensable for a proper understanding of how the landscape as a whole has developed over time.

A detailed account of all three surveys lies beyond the scope of this short contribution which instead will concentrate on certain aspects of recent work in the Hadrian's Wall corridor. In particular, by helping to place the Wall in the context of its contemporary landscape setting, some long-standing problems concerning the relationship between the Roman and native populations in the frontier zone are brought into sharp relief. For example, compared with that of the Wall itself, the chronology of native settlements in this area is poorly understood and this has led to a situation in which it is difficult, if not impossible, to relate the fluctuating and sometimes dramatic events of Roman frontier history to the unchronicled existence of generations of native farmers. Without a concerted campaign of fieldwork and excavation that is specifically directed to the investigation of native farmsteads, as well as Roman forts, the archaeology of the frontier zone in the Roman period will continue to be marked by a preoccupation with Roman military strategy coupled with an almost complete disregard for the activities of the contemporary native population.

The origin of the Hadrian's Wall survey goes back to 1992 when the writer made the first of a series of exploratory flights over the moorlands which straddle the Wall between Carrawbrough and Housesteads. In the course of these flights it rapidly became apparent that the landscape was littered with settlement sites and other earthworks representing a complex sequence of development from prehistory to the present day. Surprisingly, a high proportion of this evidence did not appear in existing archaeological records despite the fact that the Wall has been the object of intense scrutiny by every available means, including aerial photography, for many decades past. Why this should be so is not entirely clear, but searches through collections of specialist air photographs confirm that aerial survey since the War has concentrated on the Wall and its associated structures to the virtual exclusion of everything else. At the same time whole swathes of the landscape had no photographic cover at all including significant parts of what has been designated as the setting of the World Heritage Site. Accordingly the National Park Authority decided to commission further reconnaissance to be followed by basic scale mapping as a way of enhancing the SMR. This was considered essential to achieve a fuller understanding of the archaeology of this internationally important area and for the purposes of effective management.

The Hadrian's Wall survey covered an area of some 160 square kilometres of which 45 square kilometres are planted with trees. The territory, which extended from Limestone Corner westwards as far as Greenhead, was necessarily confined to the National Park, mainly because it proved impossible to raise additional funding from other sources which would have allowed the area of search to be enlarged. Reconnaissance was therefore limited to a comparatively narrow strip of land between Wark Forest and the southern boundary of the Park, which follows the Stanegate eastwards from Carvoran to Grindon Hill before shifting north to within a kilometre of the Wall.

The general character of native settlement in the uplands of Northumberland is already well understood and has been described in a number of surveys, most notably those carried out by the late Professor George Jobey in the 1960s and 70s (eg Jobey 1960; 1978). In the southern dales of Northumberland native farmsteads of the Roman period normally take the form of an outer enclosure, which is more often than not rectilinear in shape, with an internal area in the region of 1500 square metres. The perimeter may be formed either by a stone wall or else by a bank and ditch, and access to the interior is normally by means of a simple entrance in the east-facing side. From here a paved causeway leads between a pair of hollowed yards towards the rear where a raised platform may accommodate between one and

five round, stone-founded houses. The distribution of extant farmsteads of this kind extends well south of the Tyne and even before the recent survey a number of examples were known to exist in close proximity to the Wall, including such well-known sites as Tower Tye and Milking Gap. To these, aerial survey has now added around a dozen others though the final tally could be more depending on the results of site inspections which at the time of writing have yet to be completed.

Two of these newly discovered sites will serve as examples to illustrate what has come to light. The first, at Fold Hill, is located 2.5km north-east of Sewingshields (fig 16.1). Here a rectangular walled enclosure with an entrance in the east side occupies the crest of a north-facing escarpment. It measures roughly 45m by 35m, and although no roundhouses are visible in the interior their absence can readily be explained in terms of stone robbing associated with a nineteenth-century sheep fold which occupies the north-west corner of the enclosure. There are, however, two roundhouses which stand outside the enclosure to the west and these could be taken to indicate that the settlement had expanded over time. If so this might mean that the site was occupied over a relatively long period. As careful examination of the photograph will also show, the gentle slope to the east of the enclosure is corrugated by a series of faint parallel lines which run from north to south down the line



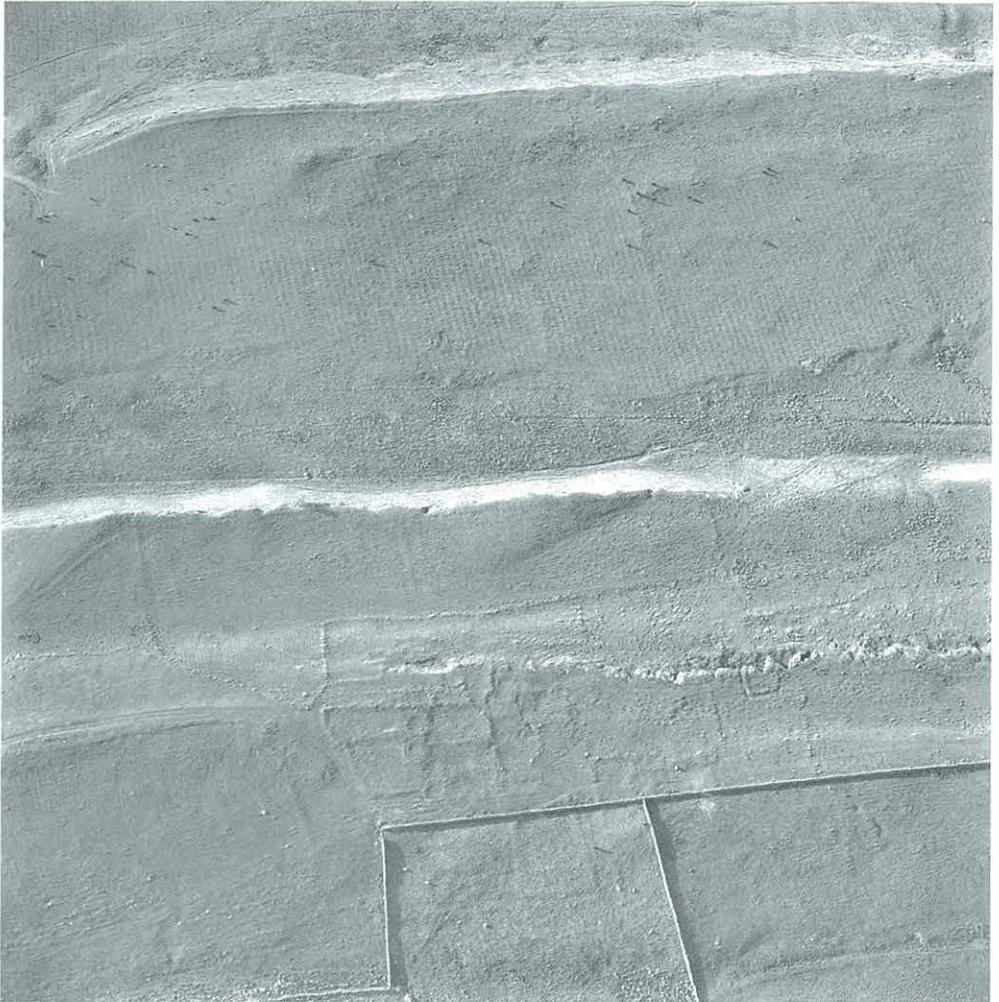
FIGURE 16.1 Fold Hill, near Sewingshields. A native settlement of late Iron Age or Romano-British type stands on top of a rocky outcrop. To the east (right) fields of cord rig cultivation are faintly visible. The circular structure inside the settlement enclosure is a nineteenth-century sheepfold. The site lies close to Hadrian's Wall, 2.5km north-east of Sewingshields. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TIM GATES, 18 MAY 1992. TMG 1389240. COPYRIGHT RESERVED)

FIGURE 16.2 Green Brae, Crindledykes.

A native farmstead of the late Iron Age or Roman period occupies the crest of a sandstone ridge within sight of Housesteads Roman fort. A contemporary field system is represented by a series of walled enclosures which extend north and east over the surrounding hillside.

Patches of cord rig indicate that some fields were cultivated though others are more likely to have been paddocks for stock.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY TIM GATES, 16 MAY 1992. TMG 13889/45. COPYRIGHT RESERVED)



of slope. These, as we now know, are the product of a form of prehistoric cultivation known as 'cord rig' in which the soil is thrown up into narrow ridges, 1.0 to 1.5m wide. Unlike the more familiar ridge-and-furrow cultivation of the medieval and later periods, these ridges were almost certainly produced by hand digging or hoeing rather than by ploughing. In this instance the cultivated area covers approximately 1.2ha and, in the absence of any other occupation site nearby, must surely be related to the stone-built settlement.

Five kilometres or so to the south-west another rectilinear settlement has been found at Green Brae on Crindledykes Farm (fig 16.2). This site is situated halfway between the *vallum* and the Stanegate, and stands on top of a prominent sandstone outcrop with sweeping views over the surrounding countryside. Moreover, the settlement is plainly visible from Housesteads fort just a kilometre away to the north and the fact that it went completely unrecognised until 1992 is itself a telling comment on our state of comparative ignorance with regard to the landscape context of the Wall. In this case the settlement consists of twin stone-walled enclosures which between them contain a minimum of four extant roundhouses. Once again a field system is present but this time it consists of a network of small fields, variously defined by rickles of stone and grass covered banks, which stretch for

some little distance to the north and east. Small patches of cord rig are once more in evidence though the original extent of cultivation cannot now be determined because of the masking effect of later ploughing. On the other hand, enough of the early field system survives to show that it extended at least as far as a third farmstead, of similar Romano-British type, at Little Shield, 400m away to the north-east and even closer to Housesteads fort than Green Brae itself.

Cord rig was first recognised on air photographs about 20 years ago and Northumberland is one of the very few places in England where this form of cultivation can be seen on the ground in the form of visible earthworks. Within the territory of the recent survey, air photography has identified no fewer than one hundred and forty separate plots of cord rig at ninety separate locations. The size of individual plots ranges from less than 0.05ha (500 square metres) up to a maximum of three or four hectares though the vast majority are under 0.5ha. However, this need not imply that individual land holdings were correspondingly small since several different plots could well have been cultivated at the same time.

Within the survey area the associations of cord rig are not limited to stone-built enclosed settlements of the type described above: it frequently occurs close to settlements of round, timber-built houses which are not surrounded by any kind of enclosing perimeter. The chronological implications of this observation are not yet fully understood, and while some of these unenclosed settlements will undoubtedly prove to be of Bronze Age date others could well belong to the later first millennium BC. In the immediate vicinity of the Wall there is already a small number of unenclosed settlements possessing timber-built roundhouses of 'ring-ditch' type which, by analogy with excavated examples elsewhere in the region, are most likely to be of Iron Age context. Pending investigation of one of the newly discovered unenclosed settlements it would perhaps be well to remain open minded on the question of the chronology of cord rig bearing in mind that it could turn out to be a form of cultivation with a long currency, spanning the pre-Roman Iron Age and the Roman period alike.

Milking Gap, 2km west of Housesteads, is still the only Romano-British settlement in the immediate vicinity of the frontier which has been excavated (Kilbride-Jones 1938). Here the presence of late first- to early second-century Roman pottery has been taken to indicate that occupation ended when the *vallum* was added to the Wall in cAD130 and indeed this seems not unlikely in view of the site's location in the narrow strip of land between the *vallum* and the Wall.

With this one exception there is presently a crucial lack of dating evidence from native Romano-British sites in the frontier zone and this constitutes a serious obstacle to our understanding of the possible impact of Hadrian's Wall on the resident native population hereabouts. Because there is no *visual* means of identifying settlements where occupation may have ended at around the time when the Wall was built (which is to say during the period AD122 – c130), and from which the inhabitants may have been forcibly ejected, or of distinguishing these from other settlements which continued into the later Roman period, we cannot say what scale of population movement may have been involved; nor can we say for certain – as has often been supposed – whether an 'empty zone' was created forward of the Wall or what other limitations on residence may have been imposed close to the frontier. Such problems become more acute as the number of settlements of Romano-British type identified in close proximity to the Wall continues to multiply.

Another question which may legitimately be asked is how far, in an area that is almost

FIGURE 16.3 Greenlee Lough, Bardon Mill. A Roman marching camp, most probably of the late first or early second century AD, has been constructed over pre-existing fields of cord rig. Excavations in the early 1980s conclusively demonstrated that the cord rig extends under the turf-built rampart of the camp. The circular structure in the middle distance is more likely to represent the badly robbed remains of a Bronze Age burial cairn than those of an Iron Age settlement as has previously been thought. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TIM GATES, 4 MAY 1993. TMG 1473876. COPYRIGHT RESERVED)

totally devoid of Iron Age hillforts, might the distribution of stone-built farmsteads reflect the pattern of pre-Roman settlement? The question is worth asking because it has been shown that some Romano-British settlements have complex structural histories with origins that may in some cases go back into the pre-Roman Iron Age.

To illustrate the possibilities we need look no further afield than neighbouring parts of North Tynedale where the late Professor George Jobey carried out excavations on several Romano-British settlements in the late 1970s (Jobey 1973; 1977; 1978). These showed that the visible stone houses and their associated enclosures might represent only the final manifestation in a long sequence of structural development that had in some cases involved





FIGURE 16.4 Yatesfield Hill, near Otterburn. An organised system of rectangular fields in the centre of the frame occupies what is now open moorland. A network of double-walled trackways runs between the fields providing access to unenclosed pasture beyond. Cord rig is visible in some fields but not in others perhaps indicating some differentiation in land use involving a mixture of meadow and pasture land. On the opposite side of the modern road (to the left of the frame) a group of rounded enclosures represents the site of a settlement of late Iron Age or Romano-British type. The site is located 3km south-east of the Roman fort at High Rochester.

(PHOTOGRAPH BY TIM GATES, 18 MAY 1993. TMG 1474/22. COPYRIGHT RESERVED)

one, two or even three preceding phases of timber construction marked by the successive replacement of wooden houses and palisades. Radiocarbon determinations obtained from two of these sites showed conclusively that the date of their original foundation went back at least as far as the first or second centuries BC, which is to say firmly into the late pre-Roman Iron Age. At the same time, it was clear that the latest of the timber-built settlements had not been re-built in stone before the middle of the second century AD.

Whether or not any of the Romano-British sites along the Wall had Iron Age precursors remains to be seen; certainly at Milking Gap there was no evidence of timber structures underneath the excavated stone roundhouses. Likewise the date at which stone-built farmsteads made their first appearance in the South Tyne Valley is of more than passing importance, for if this event took place at the same time as it did in North Tynedale – in or after the mid-second century AD, by which time Hadrian's Wall was already standing – then it would inevitably mean that small native farmsteads formed an integral part of the frontier landscape. Furthermore, at sites like Fold Hill or Green Brae, with developed field systems or other signs of longevity, it would be possible to envisage occupation continuing into the late Roman period, as was certainly the case, for example, at Huckhoe, near Belsay, where

the pottery record extends from the first to the fourth century AD (Jobey 1982).

As referred to above, the chronological range of cord rig has yet to be worked out, although it has already been established by excavation and aerial photography that this form of cultivation was current during the late Iron Age and early Roman periods. Indeed there is a growing catalogue of sites along the Wall where cord rig has been discovered in excavation beneath the Hadrianic levels of Roman forts and in these cases a generalised pre-Roman context is assured. Additionally there are several instances where aerial photographs show Roman structures of one kind or another overlying fields of cord rig. At Greenlee Lough, for example, it has been known for some time that a temporary camp stands on top of a large tract of cord rig (fig 16.3). In similar fashion air photography has now shown that the aqueduct supplying Great Chesters (Aesica) fort cuts through a field of cord rig near Cawburn Shield; and likewise that cord rig underlies the Roman barrow cemetery at 'Four Laws' on the Stanegate near Haltwhistle Burn (Gates 1999). More precise contexts for cord rig can also be inferred in the case of two recently excavated sites. Thus, at Wallsend it has been established that no more than a brief period of time separated the second of two phases of cord rig from the overlying Hadrianic fort (Hodgson 1999). Again, at Denton, west of Newcastle, where cord rig was discovered under the *vallum*, it was established that the soil had only just been tilled when the land was appropriated by the Roman army in or about 130AD (Bidwell and Watson 1996). Here then are two instances where cord rig was definitely in use when the Wall was built in the early second century AD.

While excavation and aerial photography have provided valuable insights into native farming practice at specific Roman sites we must of necessity turn to other techniques of investigation for a more wide ranging impression of the farming landscape in the late prehistoric and Roman periods.

Consider for example the results of pollen analysis which, at more than a dozen sites between Tyne and the Forth, has established that episodes of *extensive* woodland clearance were a common occurrence during the late Iron Age and early Roman periods (Huntley 1999). At one particular site, Fellend Moss, which lies adjacent to the Wall north of Haltwhistle, a protracted period of tree clearance took place beginning at least as early as the first century BC and lasted to the end of the first century AD (Davies and Turner 1979). The presence of cereal pollen in small amounts indicates that agriculture was being undertaken in the vicinity at this time though it does not necessarily follow that the main motive for felling trees was to create arable land since a comparatively open landscape would have been no less desirable from the point of view of stock rearing. Likewise a continuing demand for timber as fuel and for building purposes by Roman and native alike is likely to have contributed to a diminution in tree cover especially if the supply was already under pressure.

In the immediate vicinity of the Wall another pollen sample has recently been obtained from Fozy Moss, 2km north-east of Sewingshields (Dumayne 1994). Here woodland clearance reached a peak of intensity during the second and third centuries AD, and there has been a good deal of controversy as to the extent to which this may actually reflect the activities of the Roman army (Tipping 1997; Huntley 1999). While this debate is no doubt set to continue, a potentially sizeable native population in this area may readily be envisaged given the existence of not less than ten certain or probable farmsteads of Romano-British type which have been documented by air photography within a 4km radius of the Fozy Moss sample site (Gates 1999). This being the case, cereal pollen in the relevant parts of the pollen

diagram could just as easily be accounted for in terms of the part played by arable farming in the local native economy as by anything to do with the activities of the Roman army. The existence of organised field systems and cord rig which, as air photography has demonstrated, accompany the majority of these same native sites, including Fold Hill and Green Brae, lends further weight to this view.

In South Tynedale, as in other parts of Northumberland, there are clear indications that a settled farming landscape already existed when Hadrian's Wall was built and there is no reason to think that old established practices would not have continued into the later Roman period whatever local adjustments may have been required to accommodate the new frontier. The evidence now emerging suggests a dispersed pattern of small farms, each inhabited by a family-sized group engaged in a mixed regime of arable cultivation and stock rearing. In the absence of adequate samples of organic material from excavated sites it is not at present possible to say where the balance of the economy lay or whether crops or animals were more important at any particular time or place. On the other hand, even in areas where the extant distribution of cord rig is best documented, the small size of individual plots would seem to indicate that crop growing was on a strictly limited scale even on the unlikely assumption that all these fields were in simultaneous use.

While we would not be justified in pushing this argument too far it is nevertheless worth recalling that, in her study of carbonised seed and grain samples recovered in excavation from native settlements between the Tyne and the Forth, Dr Marijke van der Veen has concluded that the agricultural economy of the region during the late prehistoric and Roman period was characterised by 'small-scale, intensive, subsistence cultivation' (van der Veen 1992). So far as the Wall corridor is concerned, at least in areas which have not suffered destructive ploughing in the post-Roman period, the evidence obtained from air photography is consistent with this view. However, there are obvious dangers in attempting to extrapolate more widely on the basis of data obtained from an upland area which is subject to more or less severe constraints of soil and climate and which has probably always been of marginal economic importance. On this point it is worth mentioning that in some better favoured lowland areas, such as the Tweed Valley and that part of the coastal plain lying between the rivers Wansbeck and Tyne, the density of rectilinear ditched enclosures recorded as cropmarks has already reached levels as high as 60 sites per 100 square kilometres. On the likely assumption that a good proportion of these represent settlements of late Iron Age or Roman date, it would not be difficult to envisage a sizeable population here at this period even if only a proportion of the sites were occupied at any one time. While associated field systems have so far proved elusive in what is now an intensively cultivated landscape, querns and indeed grain samples have been recovered from a number of excavated lowland sites and one might cautiously anticipate crop production here on a larger scale than could have been achieved in the more challenging conditions of the upper reaches of South Tynedale. Unfortunately this brings us little closer to determining whether the local farming economy was capable of generating surplus produce sufficient either for trade or the payment of taxes, whether this be in the form of grain, meat, hides or dairy products. On the other hand, Marijke van der Veen's work on grain samples suggests that this is unlikely to have been the case.

Returning to the National Park, the Hadrian's Wall corridor is not the only area where native settlements with organised field systems and cord rig have been found in close

proximity to Roman forts. In upper Redesdale, for example, aerial photography has played an important role in the discovery of field systems attached to native settlements which in some cases include very extensive tracts of cord rig. Indeed some of the largest and best preserved late prehistoric field systems in Northumberland are to be found on the grassy moorlands that overlook the Roman Fort at High Rochester though none have yet been subject to detailed analytical survey. Yatesfield Hill (fig 16.4), for example, is one of fifteen stone-built settlements of Romano-British type that exist within a 5km radius of the fort. To date only one of these, at Woolaw, has been tested by excavation but it yielded no pottery or other dateable finds other than one fragment of a glass bangle broadly datable to the first or second centuries AD (Charlton and Day 1978). While recognising this lack of firm dating evidence it nevertheless seems very likely that at least a proportion of these settlements will have been occupied at the same time as the Roman fort. Be that as it may, the no less interesting question of whether the appearance of the fort, in the late first century AD, may actually have stimulated the expansion of native settlement and agriculture in the surrounding area is one which remains unanswered.

In the course of this very brief account of the contribution made by recent aerial photography to our understanding of native settlement and agriculture in the National Park during the late prehistoric and Roman periods many important issues have been neglected and problems glossed over. However, I hope that it will have served its main purpose which is simply to illustrate some of the ways in which aerial reconnaissance can be of benefit not only through accumulation of new sites and monuments but also as a means of exploring the landscape as a whole and of examining the relationships between different elements within it. From this point of view any number of different topics might have been chosen from a wide range of subject matter ranging from upstanding earthworks, parchmarks and cropmarks, to standing buildings or industrial remains. For those who may be interested in exploring this material for themselves the National Park has a large and expanding collection of air photographs while the Museum of Antiquities at Newcastle University maintains an important regional archive.

# Harbottle Castle

## Excavation and survey

### 1997–99

*James Crow*

**N**orthumberland has an apparent surfeit of castles, a memorial to the war-torn and feuding past of a frontier county. Earthwork castles were constructed from the late eleventh century onwards, including the earliest periods at Prudhoe and the remarkable motte and bailey castle at Elsdon. The vast majority may be associated with the Norman conquest of Northumbria in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, but in practice at the close of the thirteenth century there were probably no more castles in Northumberland than there were in other parts of England. Only with the outbreak of three centuries of almost continuous warfare between the Scots and English crowns after 1296 did the county take on the appearance of a fortified landscape of castles, towers, peels and finally bastles (Pounds 1990, 180–83; McIvor 2001). The Umfravilles's principal castle was at Prudhoe overlooking the Tyne Valley, and the motte at Elsdon possibly represents their first attempt to establish a stronghold in the Liberty of Redesdale. Harbottle Castle, in Upper Coquetdale, was first recorded as a stronghold and a centre for their more far-flung estates in 1157. It was described by Richard de Umfraville in the early thirteenth century as, 'usefully planted on the marches of Scotland towards the Great Waste' (Hunter Blair 1952, 23). A later medieval forgery claimed that the Umfravilles held Harbottle Castle from 1067. That date is clearly in error, only one year after William the Conqueror's defeat of Harold, but the statement that it was 'to hold, by service of defending that part of the country for ever from enemies and wolves' gives some idea of the motives for establishing the castle in a remote part of the county.

The castle is situated above the banks of the Coquet on a long isolated spur clearly set apart from the fells to the west (fig 17.1). It is located in the upper part of the valley where arable land gives way to upland pasture on the flanks of the Cheviots, lands which in the middle ages were only seasonally occupied as shieling grounds (Carlton and Rushworth 1998). A major medieval route across the Cheviots, Clennel Street, passes beside Harbottle and down Coquetdale, and the Roman road from Low Learchild to High Rochester crosses the valley at Holystone only a few miles to the south. The plan of Harbottle Castle is similar to other Anglo-Norman castles of this period in Northumberland, such as Mitford, Alnwick and Norham. It comprised a high earth mound or motte located on the middle of the south side of a kidney-shaped bailey which was later divided into two halves by a cross-wall, defining an inner and outer bailey (Blair 1935). The stone-built castle may not have been completed before the late twelfth or thirteenth century but it was able to withstand a Scottish siege in 1296 and was captured and partly dismantled by Robert Bruce in 1318 (Blair 1935,



FIGURE 17.1 Air photograph of Harbottle Castle and village from the south. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

219). Some Northumberland castles were not rebuilt after the devastation of these campaigns, but Harbottle underwent major restoration during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In 1437 the barony passed by marriage to the Tailboys, a Lincolnshire family who do not appear to have shown any great concern for such a remote holding, especially as rents and revenues in the Border parts of Northumberland were so drastically affected by the continuing feuding and Border raids (Colvin 1975, 252; Dixon 1976, 250). Whatever role the castle fulfilled before this time, either as a Border fortress or more likely as a feudal stronghold for the Umfravilles' estates, from the late fifteenth century onwards Harbottle was seen by the Crown as an essential element in the defence and control of the Borders and the *theves* of Redesdale (Colvin 1975, 253).

During the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII Harbottle was located in the Middle March and it underwent surveys and limited repairs and restorations throughout the sixteenth century (Colvin 1975, 233–34; 252–54). The general picture from these accounts and reports to the Tudor government is a dismal repetition of decay and inadequate funds, although it is worth recalling that the castle was in sufficiently good order in the early sixteenth century to serve as the base of Thomas Dacre (then Warden of the West and Middle Marches) at a time when the reivers of Redesdale were reported to be as troublesome as those of the Scottish side of the Border (Fraser 1971, 184–85). In October 1515 Margaret Tudor, who was both the widow of James IV of Scotland and sister of Henry VIII, gave birth to Margaret of Lennox at Harbottle. The child grew up to become the grandmother of James VI of Scotland, later James I of the two kingdoms (Hunter Blair 1935, 221). Margaret Tudor's stay at Harbottle gives some insight into the status of the castle as a

royal residence. From 1538 the Crown took an increasing interest in Harbottle and in 1545 the castle passed directly into the King's control and repairs were noted to the walls and a postern gate. By 1550 it still lacked a hall, kitchen and brewhouse but was otherwise 'partly repaired' (Colvin 1975, 253). Despite continuing complaints from the local wardens there is evidence for a garrison throughout Elizabeth's reign and in 1587 it was reported that 150 men were to be shared between Chipchase and Harbottle, the two key strongholds on the Middle March. Further surveys and some repairs are recorded until the end of the century when the accession of Scotland's James VI to the English throne brought an end to the rivalry between the two crowns and ultimately peace to the Borders. In 1604 it was described as 'an old castle, much decayed' and from this time the castle seems to have been largely abandoned and much of the stonework stolen for buildings in the village. A detailed assessment of the written sources concerning Harbottle was compiled by Alan Rushworth and Richard Carlton (1998) in conjunction with the programme of excavations and survey.

There have been a number of historical accounts of Harbottle Castle but the most important studies of the history and archaeology of the castle were by C H Hunter Blair and H L Honeyman, published in Hunter Blair (1935) and the Northumberland County History, Volume 15 (Hope-Dodds 1940). Unlike Sir Ian Richmond's work in Redesdale, and in particular at High Rochester, which was undertaken for the same volume, Honeyman, who was a Newcastle architect by profession (Hunter Blair 1958), did not leave a full archaeological record of what had been uncovered. No further excavations have been undertaken since the 1930s although the site was surveyed by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in 1990 and an assessment of the structural remains has been carried out by Peter Ryder (1992).

### *The 1997–99 project*

The programme of survey and limited excavation at Harbottle Castle began in June 1997 at the request of the Northumberland National Park Authority as part of the programme of works commenced by the National Park and partly funded by the European Union and English Heritage. Initially this work was concerned to safeguard the monument by consolidating the exposed walls and stonework to allow public access to the site. In a second stage it proved possible to commence a full archaeological survey and assessment of the remains together with limited excavation coordinated with the consolidation programme. The archaeological investigation of the site formed part of the training programme of the Department of Archaeology, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

### *Surveys and ground radar*

As part of the conservation project we carried out a detailed topographical survey of the site and the earthworks. This provides a detailed three dimensional record of the remains which can also be used in the future for computer visualisation and presentation as well as the management and conservation of the site. In addition, geophysical surveys using ground radar equipment were carried out by Brian Donnelly of Northumbria Surveys in 1997 and 1998, developing some of the techniques he had already applied at High Rochester Roman Fort. An objective of this geophysical survey was to investigate the possibility that there was an earlier earthwork fortification at Harbottle, predating the Anglo-Norman castle. The placename *Hirbottle* as it was first recorded in the thirteenth century (Hunter Blair 1935, 215) has been interpreted as *here-botl*, meaning the 'army building'. This could refer to an earlier

Anglian structure, similar perhaps to the pre-Norman defences known from Prudhoe (Higham and Barker 1992, 287–89) or, alternatively, a defended site dating from the Iron Age on the prominent spur beside the River Coquet. The GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) transects of the east bailey provided evidence for a single, substantial ditch, with stone features both inside and out. The scale of this work is likely however to have removed the traces of any earlier defences across the promontory, such as those to be seen at the nearby hill fort at Harehaugh, so we cannot yet rule out pre-Norman occupation of the site (see however the comments in Welfare 2002, 77).

Although this investigation did not reveal clear evidence of an earlier settlement, it provided important results for understanding the early phases of the stone castle. The profile of the east ditch of the outer bailey was clearly defined to a depth of 3m below the causeway which was the main access to the medieval borough of Harbottle (Daniels 2002). The ground radar survey was able to clearly show that the causeway was a later feature built perhaps after the outer bailey was no longer defended. The survey also revealed that in places the sides of the ditch were revetted in stone, as still survives in the inner bailey, and in two transects stone features appeared as part of the central fill of the ditch. The inner edge of the outer bailey was defined by stonework indicating the footings of the curtain wall and these stone features in the ditch fill were probably the remains of sections of this wall, fallen either through the deliberate slighting of the curtain or by natural decay. The presence of large blocks suggest the former activity and might even be associated with the recorded dismantling of part of the castle by Robert Bruce in 1318.

The GPR survey of Harbottle was continued on the top and west side of the motte where it is possible to see the outline of a polygonal-shaped wall around the top of the motte, closely matching the walls surviving at the north-east and south-east angles. These are the remains of a shell keep similar to that surviving at Mitford Castle. At Harbottle this was later rebuilt in the sixteenth century as part of the Tudor artillery defences. On the south side there is clear indication of slumping, demonstrated by the large fragment of detached masonry at the foot of the motte. The most striking feature from the GPR survey of the motte was a rectangular feature located at the centre of the mound. It is best defined at the south, east and west sides and may be interpreted as the remains of courtyard buildings situated on the top of the motte, one of which is still visible on the north side. Overall this geophysical survey in 1997 and 1998 showed how effective GPR can be in the fuller understanding of buried remains and earthworks when integrated with a structural and topographical survey.

### *The excavations*

The programme of excavations commenced in June 1997 with limited investigations on the top of the motte revealing traces of late medieval structures and details of the Tudor gun emplacements. In two following seasons we turned our attention to the re-excavation and recording of the middle gateway of the medieval castle. The following account will consider these features in chronological sequence commencing with the medieval cross wall and concluding with the Tudor gun battery.

#### The cross wall (1999 excavations)

This is the most prominent structural feature to survive from the medieval castle of Harbottle and divides the outer and inner baileys. It is constructed of large sandstone blocks



FIGURE 17.2 General view of the 1999 excavations at the middle gate and cross wall, taken from the motte. The south face of the gatehouse, with chamfered plinth (originally excavated in 1998) is clearly visible in the foreground.

bonded with a hard grey-brown gritty mortar. Reported to be 'nine yards high' (c8.75m) in 1536 at the north end it still stands up to 4m in height and probably ended in a rectangular tower (Hope-Dodds 1940, 484). Against the north wall of the gatehouse the junction with the cross wall was obscured before excavation by fallen stones and soil. When this material was removed it was clear, at the wall footings and offset, that the cross wall was constructed earlier than the north wall of the gatehouse, although the upper courses of both walls appeared to be bonded. It would appear that gate builders had removed some of the facings from the cross wall to tie the flanking wall of the gatehouse (which is of distinctly different stonework) to the curtain. We located the foundations of the cross wall at the north end of the excavation trench beyond the later building and there were no traces of the plinths or decorative chamfers which are apparent in the construction of the gatehouse. No remains of an earlier gate in the cross wall were apparent, although one must have existed on the same site as the later gatehouse. However, we can suggest that the original gateway between the inner and outer baileys was a simple arched gate without flanking towers, at a time when the main gate to the outer bailey was defended by a gateway overlooking the deep east ditch (see GPR survey above).

### The middle gate (1998)

One of the major surviving earthwork features at Harbottle is a high mound located at the south end of the cross wall dividing the inner and outer baileys of the castle. This is the site of a gatehouse, the middle gate, first investigated by Honeyman in 1934. The written account of this work is very brief and it was only accompanied by a simple line drawing. No photographs, either published or unpublished, are known to survive of this part of his work. In June 1998 we began a limited excavation of the gatehouse, with the aim of re-excavating the earlier trenches and recording in plan and elevation the sections of the gatehouse wall that he had originally revealed. Honeyman described the structure as a 'fortified gateway' with an estimated width of 25 feet (south to north) and a span within the gateway of 9½ feet. He described the archway with 'double chamfered jambs and grooves for a portcullis which

were five inches thick' (Hope-Dodds 1940, 483–4). From his plan it is possible to see that he revealed the south, outer face of the gatehouse and part of the narrow cross wall which ran across the ditch to the south of it. Of this, he wrote that it 'rises up the side of the motte to join the north face of the donjon. This latter wall, which is only five feet thick, abuts with a straight joint against the gate tower but is built on the same axis. Four feet eight inches from the tower it is pierced by a narrow postern' (Hope-Dodds 1940, 483). In front of the main gate he found traces of the walls of a barbican projecting twenty feet to the east which he considered to be 'an afterthought'. From his account it would appear that the stone gatehouse was the earliest feature and that the cross wall to the south was either contemporary or later than it, and the barbican was an additional defence to the gatehouse.

Our excavations in 1998 were able to identify all the main elements which Honeyman had described. The south side of the gatehouse and the cross wall and postern were revealed in a wide trench (fig 17.2). The fallen tumble from the structure was removed and it was seen to slope steeply southwards into the ditch although we were not able dig down to the lower levels and investigate earlier ground surfaces or construction deposits. The south face of the gatehouse was constructed with large squared blocks, 0.30m high and 0.50–0.65m long, standing up to four courses above a single chamfered plinth, standing a total of 1.64m above the excavated surface. The plinth was continuous along the south face but did not return around the east face of the gate, possibly indicating that the ground surface was significantly lower on that side. The narrow cross wall to the south of the gatehouse covered the plinth and this showed that the construction of this wall was not anticipated when the tower face was built. However, where this cross wall had covered the masonry of the gatehouse it was clear that the wall was largely unweathered and a pristine mason's mark survived in the sandstone face. On the basis of this evidence it could be argued that the building of this cross wall followed fairly soon after the construction of the gatehouse. It was only possible to excavate a limited area of the interior of the gatehouse but our work showed that the passage was extensively filled with a tightly packed layer of rubble up to the surviving level of the inner face of the south passage wall. In line with the partly demolished gate jambs with portcullis slots was found evidence of a double faced wall, 0.70m wide, which at its south end partly overlaid the demolished jamb and continued 3.20m north, across the blocked passageway of the gatehouse. We found no dating evidence to suggest when this action occurred.

### The middle gate (1999)

Further excavation in 1999 enabled us to describe the main elements of the gate, although the fill of debris within the gatehouse passage was left undisturbed. The total width of the gatehouse from north to south was 9.36m wide and the gate passage was 2.90m across. At the front was a portcullis and both slots were seen to survive, behind the rebates for the portcullis the passage was reduced by 0.10m and on the north side a doorway led into the ground-floor guard chamber. It was set back 5.80m from the portcullis. Beyond this doorway a slot on the south side indicated the location of an inner gate set approximately midway along the gate passage. This arrangement matches the barbican and main gate at Alnwick Castle (Knowles 1909) where there is a similar portcullis, opposed guard chambers with entrances (at Harbottle this is found only on the north side) and a gate set midway along the gate passage. Further evidence for the appearance of the first phase of the gatehouse was suggested by Peter Ryder who identified the crude rebuilding on the east face to the south of the portcullis as the removal of a buttress intended to support the south-east corner of the gatehouse. We

can associate the demolition of this feature and subsequent infilling with rough blockwork with the later construction of the barbican and drawbridge pit.

Excavation of the north half of the gatehouse revealed both the exterior appearance and the internal organisation of the gatehouse. Comparison with other surviving gates shows that they were flanked by towers up to two or three storeys in height. Evidence for this was preserved at Harbottle by a shaft on the north-east angle for the waste from toilets or garderobes in upper rooms emptying on to the north side of the gate. The lower chamber was fitted with stone cupboards and the fragment of a fallen window shows the upper rooms were lit by gothic windows.

### Barbican and drawbridge (1999)

From his excavations in the 1930s Honeyman suggested that there was a barbican or defended extension outside the middle gate and in 1999 we were able to investigate this by extending the excavation trench east of the gate. In front of the gate we found a rectangular pit, once crossed by a drawbridge, with part of the remains of the barbican beyond. The pit was 5.10m long (east-west) and 2.90m wide at the east end, broadening by 0.10m in front of the portcullis. On the south side it was defined by a partly robbed wall of large blocks, no higher than the surface of the drawbridge. Unlike a conventional drawbridge where the bridge was lifted by chains, winches and counterbalance beams, this bridge was pivoted about a third of its length and was counterbalanced by a weight at the short end which dropped into an inner pit set within the gatehouse. The long end then rose to block the entrance and an attacker was confronted by either a moat or, as at Harbottle, an outer drawbridge pit as part of the barbican with the additional obstacle of the inner pit if entry was forced. This arrangement appears to be identical with the pivoting bridge from Alnwick Knowles 1909 (figs 17.3 & 17.4) and also at the Black Gate in Newcastle and at Caerphilly (Toy 1954, 236, 238).

In later periods of the castle's life both drawbridge pits were filled in and at least two phases of heavy stone cobbling were laid on top. The fill of both the inner and outer pits was not fully consolidated so the road surfaces slumped and left a higher ridge above the dividing wall between the two pits. This slumping explains why we found no clearly defined road surface beneath the later blocking of the portcullis entrance. The socket in the south wall must have held a large beam into which the pivot of the turning bridge was set (similar features survive at Goodrich Castle in Herefordshire). There was no dating evidence for the road surfaces although a concentration of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century clay-pipe fragments represented a late phase of robbing for the south wall of the drawbridge pit and

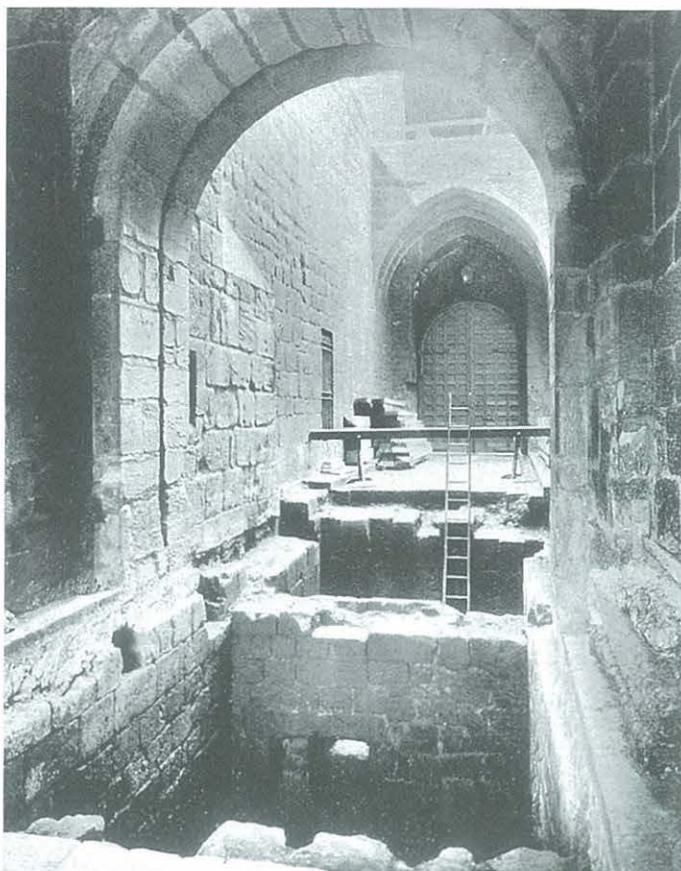


FIGURE 17.3 Excavations at Alnwick Castle gatehouse (W H Knowles, 1909). The drawbridge pits here are very similar to those found at Harbottle.

the south part of the later road surface. The walls of the pit and barbican are constructed of large blockwork with distinctive tooling and the south wall clearly abutts the earlier face of the gatehouse. Unlike the closed barbicans found at Alnwick and Tynemouth (Craster 1907, pl XIII, 150–52) at the middle gate at Harbottle there was an open space at least 5.10m long on the south side where it was flanked by the motte ditch, between the gate entrance and the barbican. Significantly this is similar to the arrangement of the barbican at the Umfraville's other castle at Prudhoe, where the drawbridge is set forward of the early stone gatehouse. Beyond, there is an open space and then the long barbican court extends to the outer gate. At Harbottle an expansion of the north wall from the gateway can be matched at Prudhoe by the provision of stairs leading onto the curtain wall of the barbican (Hope-Dodds 1926, 122). We were not able to explore the full extent of the barbican at Harbottle, although this could be ascertained by future geophysical work and limited excavations.

FIGURE 17.4 Excavation of drawbridge pits (1999), showing the two consecutive road surfaces leading across the infilled pits into the gatehouse.

### Later structures (1999)

Between the north side of the drawbridge pit and east face of the gatehouse was a distinctive layer of large river cobbles extending to the north edge of the excavation. The cobbles had been carefully selected and laid with a distinct medial kerb, creating the type of surface normally associated with the inner courtyards of castles such as Brougham and Edlingham. The cobbles appear to represent a causeway running parallel to the curtain wall leading up to the drawbridge. In date they are either contemporary or more likely later than the construction of the drawbridge pit. Given the wear on the north side wall of the pit it is likely that they are contemporary with either of the two phases of later road surfaces constructed over the pit, although the river cobbles are not matched by the later road surfaces. In certain respects the cobbled surface may represent a decorative feature perhaps associated with a garden although this may be incongruous with the fortified character of the residence within. At the north end of the excavated cobbled path the west side of the surface dips quite steeply possibly reflecting subsidence into an earlier ditch parallel with the cross wall.

The next significant phase of building followed the partial demolition of the gatehouse and cross wall. A small rectilinear room was constructed between the north wall of the gatehouse and the cross wall with an entrance and threshold on the east side. Projecting from this was a range of open-fronted buildings



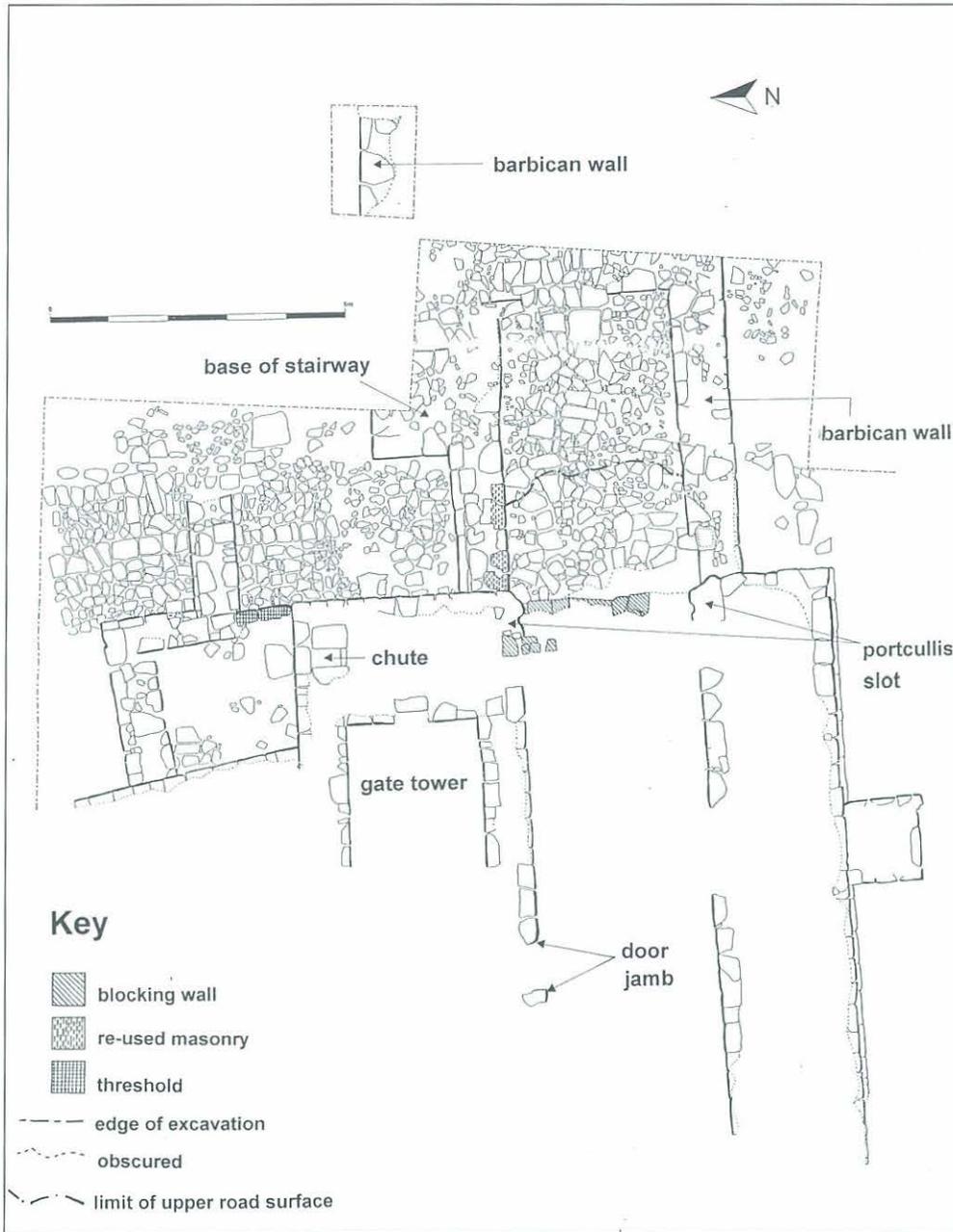


FIGURE 17.5 Plan of gatehouse and adjacent features.

constructed directly on top of the cobbles described above (figs 17.5 & 17.6). The south wall of the range reused the north side of the drawbridge pit and incorporated a number of reused building stones similar to the jambs surviving from the entrance into the guard chamber of the gatehouse. Significantly the construction of this small building and the open range does not seal any demolition debris, which a major slighting may be expected to cause. Instead it could indicate that the castle and gatehouse were somewhat decrepit (a frequent complaint from the sixteenth-century sources) but that the entrance through the middle gate was still functioning only to be later blocked by the more radical demolition in the seventeenth



FIGURE 17.6 Excavations in progress in 1999, showing the gatehouse, cross wall and later features. Note the cobbled area in the foreground.

century and later, after the castle had been abandoned. The walls of this range were constructed of large reused blocks with much smaller stones between soil bonding, a form of construction common in bastle houses of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century. There were no finds directly associated or sealed by any of these structural phases, although a tiny gold chain link was found wedged in the large cobble layer.

The structural sequence from the excavations of the cross wall and middle gate in 1998 and 1999 can be summarised as follows (see also the Discussion below):

1. Stone cross wall between the inner and outer baileys, with a simple gateway now buried beneath (or destroyed by) the later gatehouse.
2. Stone gatehouse 10.30m long (east-west), side wall 2.30m wide, with a portcullis and a gate passage 3.05m wide (note that the gate passage is set asymmetrically within the full width of the gatehouse to respect existing buildings within the inner bailey and also because of the deep ditch to the south)
3. Soon after this was completed a narrow cross wall with a postern was built against the gatehouse on the south side. This runs south across the ditch and up the north side of the motte.
4. Major alterations were made to the gateway including the removal of a buttress and the addition of a counterpoise drawbridge with two pits and a barbican.
5. The drawbridge was abandoned and the pits were filled in and crossed by two phases of road surfaces. A further cobbled surface was constructed on the north side of the drawbridge pit, parallel with the front of the gate.
6. A range of buildings were constructed against the outer faces of the gatehouse and cross wall. The reuse of masonry could indicate a period of structural decay. The

- gate passage continued in use, the garderobe shoot no longer functioned.
7. The gate was partly demolished and the interior of the gate passage was filled with rubble. A narrow blocking wall was constructed across and over the portcullis jambs.

### A Tudor gun battery: excavations on the motte in 1997

Evidence from the geophysical survey had showed clearly that the motte at Harbottle was crowned by a polygonal shell keep similar to that at Mitford Castle (MacIvor 2001). The surviving remains belong to later periods in the middle ages and include on the south side a high fragment of wall and below it a large section of fallen masonry which includes reused stonework from the earlier phase of the medieval castle. This shows that this part of the defences clearly belongs to the later medieval or Tudor period. Limited excavations close to the high-standing stonework revealed traces of flagged floors and produced evidence for aristocratic life including a spur and fragments of lead window kames, probably from a gothic tracery window facing south across the valley.

The main access from the inner bailey was on the west side and this approach was partly overlooked by a surviving section of the curtain wall. What is especially significant about this part of the curtain is the presence of two very distinctive 'letter box' gun-ports or 'shot-holes' of Tudor date covering the north and west parts of the inner bailey (fig 17.7). Limited excavations of the interior of these artillery emplacements were carried out as part of the programme of consolidation of the masonry walls of the castle.

The north embrasure and gun-port were investigated during the course of consolidation (fig 17.8) and it was possible to record a cross-section through the 'shot-hole' and associated structures. The curtain at this point was 1.60m thick and the embrasure had a maximum width of 1.30m, partly covered by fallen debris, including a significant number of discarded dry batteries, possibly evidence for the Second World War observation post reported to have occupied this part of the motte, narrowing at the throat of the shot-hole to 0.55m. The inner part of the gun-port is termed the 'throat' and this was a single stone block with a circular hole 0.14m in diameter. When viewed from the exterior the gun-port has the distinctive appearance of a wide horizontal aperture with rounded ends, 0.80m wide, but only 0.20m high and is constructed of two monolithic, splayed blocks with a maximum depth of 0.60m. During consolidation we were able to dismantle the north shot-hole so that it could be reset and the two stones were seen to be carefully dressed and to fit closely together. The overall depth of the gun-port from the inside of the throat to the external face can be estimated at 0.75m.

A more complex set of features was uncovered within and behind the west embrasure which was partly covered by fallen debris, including a significant number of discarded dry batteries, possibly evidence for the Second World War observation post reported to have occupied this part of the motte. Although we were only concerned to clear away recent debris and rubble, having cleaned the upper archaeological levels it was possible to recognise three distinct phases in the history of the artillery defences. Like the north embrasure there was evidence for the throat from the original shot-hole, but this was only partly visible as the opening was blocked up when a later, higher level gun-port was constructed. Associated with this event were the remains of a stone-flagged ramp sloping up to the gun-port within the embrasure. The largest surviving flagstone was a reused stone with a half-round moulding, probably brought from elsewhere in the castle. Level with this paving was a shallow curved

niche cut into the face of the north-east wall, possibly for storing equipment. It is clear that a new gun-port was constructed at a higher level, although no trace of this survived in the outside wall of the curtain. The ramp behind the embrasure enabled carriage-mounted artillery to be moved up on to the raised floor level for a new, larger gun-port set above the earlier shot-hole. In the course of this discussion the openings in the wall are termed embrasures, although it is more likely that they were casemates, vaulted chambers set in the thickness of the wall. No trace of a vault or springing survives in the high standing wall although examples are known from the earlier artillery works at Norham.

Traces of a final phase showed there was a mortared blocking wall closing off the west embrasure indicating that there were no further artillery defences within this part of the motte. We can assume that all the works described belong to the Tudor period. A feature of the north-east curtain is the number of stones reused from elsewhere in the castle, some of these are sections of decorated stones which came from earlier buildings ruined through time or demolished. As part of the conservation work at Harbottle many of the loose decorated stones from around the castle were collected. From a study of these Peter Ryder was able to identify one example of decorated work which could be matched with stonework still in place at Holystone nunnery a few miles south of Harbottle. After the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1538 it was reported that stones were transported to Harbottle for use in the rebuilding of the castle as part of the King's works: it is exciting to be able to confirm this from a study of the architectural remains.

## *Discussion*

### The medieval castle

The recent survey of the historical sources relating to Harbottle (Rushworth and Carlton 1998) has identified the main periods of construction, military activity, repair and decay. Harbottle was besieged and captured by William the Lion in 1174, during the same campaign



FIGURE 17.7 General view of the Tudor construction on the motte, with distinctive 'letter box' gun-ports.

in which he had failed to reduce Carlisle, Prudhoe and Alnwick. The castle before the siege is likely to have been built in timber and earth but many of the major Northumbrian castles were constructed in stone during the second half of the twelfth century and the first stone works at Harbottle are likely to date from before 1200. It is to this period that we can attribute the construction of the cross wall and early middle gate (Period 1). This gateway was rebuilt on a much grander scale during the thirteenth century, dating supported by architectural fragments from the guard chamber of the north tower (Periods 2 and 3). During the Anglo-Scottish Wars the castle was unsuccessfully besieged in 1296, but was taken by Robert the Bruce in 1318 when it was considered of sufficient importance for Bruce to insist that it was either demolished or ceded to him. The GPR survey of the outer bailey indicates that there are large segments of masonry filling part of the outer ditch and it was suggested above that these could date from the demolition following Robert the Bruce's capture of the castle. If this interpretation is accepted, it provides the context when the outer bailey was abandoned, and also the occasion for a very extensive remodelling of the structure and defences of the middle gate which now became the main gate of the castle. Survey has revealed traces of broad ridge-and-furrow within the outer bailey and this supports the idea that the outer bailey no longer formed part of the castle's defences. The historical sources up to the middle of the fourteenth century indicate that the castle remained in a poor state of repair, but by the end of the century it was habitable and defensible (Hope-Dodds 1940, 482) and during this period we can envisage the work at the drawbridge and barbican (Period 4). By 1438, when the castle had passed into the ownership of the

FIGURE 17.8 View from the interior of the motte showing the west embrasure (note raised floor) and north gunport.



Tailboys family it was reported that the keep ('dungeon') was fit to house the constable and his household (Rushworth and Carlton 1998, 42–43) (Period 5).

Perhaps the major revelation of the 1999 season was the discovery of the counterbalance drawbridge pit and the barbican at the middle gate. This is likely to date to the later fourteenth century and reflects not only the greater insecurity of the Anglo-Scottish borders but can also be seen to demonstrate the competition between feudal lords within the region. The principal surviving barbican gate from Northumberland is from Alnwick (Knowles 1909). To approach this gateway even today is to feel the power of Percy lordship. The long gloomy passage of the barbican intimidates in peace and dominates an attacker in war. These extended outworks secured entrances to ensure that the weakest element of any defence was set ahead of the main circuit and gatehouse. But their concern was not purely military since an entrance has always been the focus for the display of military and social power and prestige. Normally a main gate was decked with the lord's armorial; at Alnwick the Percy arms still dominate the main gate. The Alnwick gate can be dated to the 1320s (Knowles 1909) but at Harbottle the barbican and drawbridge are unlikely to have been built before the last quarter of the fourteenth century, only a few years earlier than the gatehouse and barbican at Tynemouth, dated to c1390 and which was also clearly modelled on the Alnwick gate (Craster 1907). The new gate at Alnwick served as a model to be followed at other large castles, such as Harbottle and Tynemouth Priory, and smaller *fortalices* such as Edlingham, where the recently excavated sequence of gates and barbicans represents an impressive demonstration of this phenomenon (Fairclough 1983). At Harbottle, and possibly also at Prudhoe, the new fourteenth-century barbicans and elaborate counterpoise drawbridges, although distinct in plan from Alnwick, may be interpreted as showing the continuing rivalry between the older Norman Umfravilles and the increasing dominance of Percy lordship in Northumberland. Today the briefest glance at the modern air photographs of Alnwick and Harbottle castles reveals which family was the victor.

## A Tudor fortress

In 1539 Henry VIII commenced his 'Device of the King', an ambitious programme of artillery fortifications around the southern shores of England (Colvin 1982, 369). Castles and fortifications had been adapting to the new technology of gunpowder since the late fourteenth century (O'Neil 1960, Kenyon 1981) and the Scottish king James IV had effectively used siege artillery to reduce the English garrisons at Wark, Etal, Chillingham and Ford before his own defeat at Flodden in 1513. Wark was refortified after 1517 and on each of the four storeys of the great keep there were 'five grete murdour holes ... So that grete bumbardes may be shot out' (*ibid* 1982, 688–9). The principal fortresses of the English border were Berwick and Carlisle and these underwent major restorations comparable to the southern coastal defences in the last years of Henry's reign (*ibid* 1982, 635–39, 667–72). The two castles on the Tweed, Norham and Wark, were also refortified during this time although the royal castle of Wark was more extensively remodelled according to these new principles (*ibid* 1982, 688–9). It is in this context that we need to set the new artillery works at Harbottle.

Earlier accounts of the structural history of Harbottle by Colvin and others drew attention to the significance of the hand-gun-loops or shot-holes which are of a type paralleled only in Scottish castles (Colvin *et al* 1975, 254, n2). Only at Norham on the English side of the Border is there evidence for artillery casemates comparable in plan to those from

Harbottle. These are thought to date to 1509 and have rectangular openings at floor level for pieces mounted on stock or timber baulks (Hunter Blair and Honeyman 1961, 5–6, plan; the rectangular apertures are also shown on an engraving of Norham dated to 1738, see MacIvor 1981, 104, fig 45). These gun ports are of a type current in England during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but are quite different from the two distinctive shot-holes found at Harbottle. Across the Scottish Border, however, parallels abound and comparable handgun loops are found at a large number of castles and towers throughout the lowlands and east of Scotland (Maxwell-Irthing 1970; MacGibbon and Ross 1887). The earliest known example of this type of gun-port is from the Blockhouse at Dunbar, dated by MacIvor to c1521 (1981, 119). He suggested that it was built by a French master-mason and further observed that this form is known to have existed in France at this time (1981, 115). The throats at Dunbar are however quite large, with a diameter between 0.30–0.38m, twice the width of the examples from Harbottle.

Closer parallels can be found in a number of Scottish defences notably at Craignethan Castle dated between 1530–40, where over 50 examples survive, including the remarkable *caponier* which covers the broad ditch (MacIvor 1977, 250–51, fig 6). All the surviving throats measure between 0.18–0.22m and were suitable for handguns not for carriage-mounted artillery. These could either be breech loaders with chambers (*cutthrottis* or *heidsteikis*) or muzzleloaders (hackbuts or arquebus) (MacIvor 1977, 257). One problem in employing such weapons was that the hackbut had a hook on the underside of the barrel for mounting in the field, rather than trunnions (MacIvor 1981, 98). A solution to this problem is seen at the upper gun-ports from the White Tower at Berwick considered by MacIvor (1981, 13) to date to between 1539 and 1542; he records these as being 0.19m wide and 0.50m wide. A better documented example comes from the excavations at the Lord's Mount, also at Berwick, a design devised by Henry VIII himself and completed by 1542. In the throats of the gun-ports at the lowest level of the tower there was evidence for iron fittings as rests for swivel guns (MacIvor 1981, 138, fig 59). These swivelled casemate guns were replaced soon afterwards by carriage-mounted pieces and the fittings were removed although the gun-ports remained unaltered in size. It appears that the floors in the casemates were raised by two steps so that the lower cannon could be fired through the ports, although full details have not been published (MacIvor 1981, 142, fig 61, 62). The depth of the casemate from the sill to the step can be measured at 3.70m (at Harbottle 1.50m). In general the sequence from a handgun to a carriage-mounted piece at Berwick is comparable with the evidence we recovered from the west embrasure at Harbottle and there is no reason to doubt that the change may have occurred as rapidly as at Berwick.

In certain aspects our limited observations from Harbottle were able to confirm strong similarities with the construction sequence from the contemporary English defences at Berwick but there remains the problem of why at Harbottle the design of the shot-holes follows a form otherwise only found in Scotland. On this matter the written sources are silent and it is reassuring that the archaeology not only contributes valuable evidence for the detailed structural changes to the buildings, but can also raise unique and wider questions concerning cultural relations across frontiers. The presence of gun ports at Harbottle also draws attention to a radical difference in elite and domestic architecture across the Anglo-Scottish Border. Harbottle is unique in the Tudor North as a fortified residence with gun-ports which is not situated on the Border line. Documents compare it to Chipchase on the north Tyne as a key stronghold of the Middle March. But, in common with other castles

and fortified houses in Northumberland and Cumberland, at Chipchase there was no special provision of any gun-port for either small arms or artillery. Despite the apparent lawlessness of the English Borderers, their houses did not flaunt shot-holes in the manner apparent throughout Scotland in the sixteenth century. How far this reflects the reality of political control between the two countries is not clear. It might be no more than an expression of aggressive individualism amongst the Scottish elite (secular and religious) or alternatively it reflects the greater levels of insecurity in Scotland throughout the sixteenth century. What is interesting is that these questions can be raised from a study of the stones and mortar of the Borderholds, topics which it is hoped can be developed in further surveys and excavations.

### *Acknowledgements*

The excavations and surveys were directed by the author in collaboration with Brian Donnelly of Northumbria Surveys. The archaeological project manager was Paul Frodsham of Northumberland National Park Authority and we are most grateful for his continuing support and advice. The excavations were carried out by first and second year students at Newcastle University supervised by Ben Johnson, Adrian Nash, Clive Waddington and Carolyn Ware. Post-excavations drawings were prepared by Gemma Bloxham and Lorraine Kerr. The topographical survey was supervised by Richard Bayliss. We benefited from the advice of Robin Power (architect for the Harbottle Castle conservation project), Peter Ryder and Barbara Harbottle and we would finally wish to acknowledge the interest and welcome shown by the villagers of Harbottle and especially the Common family.

# Towers and bastles in Northumberland National Park

*Peter Ryder*

**N**orthumberland has often been described as ‘England’s Castle County’, but what really distinguishes its stock of medieval and sub-medieval fortified buildings from other areas is that the smaller buildings, usually loosely collected together as ‘towers and bastles’, greatly outnumber the castles proper. This grouping, although a convenient title, is in fact an uneasy one. Towers and bastles are really two very separate groups of buildings, united in their common aim of defensibility but divergent in date, form, and in the social class of their builders. This paper discusses a number of sites in and around the National Park, including a number at which the Northumberland National Park Authority has undertaken survey and conservation projects.

Within the National Park, towers are by far the smaller of the two groups. ‘Tower’<sup>1</sup> is a fairly loose classification, and any usable definition must be fairly broad. The title implies a discreet block of building, of at least three full storeys, provided with some features that demonstrate defensive intent. Towers may or may not be parts of larger groups of buildings. They are, in whole or in part, the borderland equivalent of the small manor house, built by landowners elsewhere in the medieval period. The need for such buildings was triggered by the outbreak of the ‘Three Hundred Years War’ with Scotland in the last years of the thirteenth century, but most surviving defensible buildings from the first half of this period are best classed as ‘hall houses’ – like Aydon near Corbridge – rather than towers. Thirlwall (Chapter 19) and Dally Castles are good examples, along with the more fragmentary Tasset Castle.

The earliest towers appear in the later fourteenth century. In Northumberland most of the earlier ones are fairly grand examples which always formed parts of larger houses, built either as a solar block attached to the ‘high’ end of the hall (as at Belsay), or perhaps as a detached ‘keep’ containing a suite of rooms to which the family could resort if danger threatened, but were not in general everyday use (as seems to have been the case at Chipchase and Halton). Relatively few towers can be shown to have been self-contained residences in their own right. The few true ‘tower houses’ in Northumberland, outliers of a group so common in Scotland, are usually of sixteenth-century date.

In general, the wild terrain and extensive wastelands within the present Park boundary were not the sort of country conducive to the settlement of the rank of medieval landowners who built hall houses and towers. They preferred to administer their estates from further afield.

Of the four towers to survive within the area, Elsdon, for long the village rectory, is both the best known and the best preserved (fig 18.1). It dominates the village green and medieval church, standing on a hill balanced by the massive earthworks of the Mote Hills, the twelfth

FIGURE 18.1 Elsdon Tower, the most impressive tower surviving in today's National Park landscape.



century earthwork castle of the Umfravilles.. The present building has generally been assumed to have been the ‘Turris de Ellysdon’ mentioned in the 1415 list, but in fact its general character is that of a late tower house, perhaps of the mid or late sixteenth century; it is not mentioned at all in the 1541 list. However, during recent renovations, a doorway of fourteenth-century character was uncovered, at first-floor level and apparently leading out of the building; is this a relic of some earlier structure, perhaps a hall house or a hall with a solar tower, that might have lain as a ruin (and have thus been deemed unworthy of mention in the 1541 survey) but later have been remodelled?

Elsdon in its late medieval or Tudor form remains a strongly defensible tower with a number of unusual and interesting features, including basement windows set so high in the end walls, presumably for security, that they actually come above the basement vault, and could only provide it with (a little) light via steep tunnels in the wall. There are also some remarkable vertical shafts or vents above the tiny loops in the side walls, perhaps intended to facilitate the dispersal of smoke from the guns of defenders. A machicolated projection defended the doorway at basement level, showing that by this time the tower stood clear of any associated structures. There may, however, have been a courtyard or ‘barmkin’ wall enclosing an area around and to the west of the tower, which would explain why the end-wall basement window on the west did not need to be set quite so high as its eastern counterpart.

The tower has had a complicated post-medieval history, with an upper floor being inserted and later removed and, as often, most of its windows being enlarged. It also received nineteenth-century antiquarian embellishments in the form of heraldic panels without and heraldic plasterwork within; even the newel stair seems to have been reconstructed within its old well.

Biddlestone is another tower with ecclesiastical connections. The ‘Turris de Bidilston’ was being held by John Selby in 1415, and the same family remained in residence for another 500 years, until the eve of the First World War. By then the tower was only a rear wing to a largely Georgian mansion. The medieval basement survives, with its barrel vault, but its

upper parts were completely re-cast in the early nineteenth century when converted into a Roman Catholic chapel. It may never have stood alone; the 1541 survey refers to a 'barmekyn', so there must have been some sort of walled enclosure. The entrance into the basement has been through a lobby in the east end, with a narrow mural stair, now sealed off, opening from it. Going through a second doorway one is met by what is probably the most unusually sited Anderson shelter in Northumberland, testimony perhaps to some shadowy military use during World War II. The mansion, abandoned and derelict, was pulled down in the 1950s but the tower-cum-chapel survives amidst forestry plantations, and has recently been acquired and restored by the Historic Chapels Trust.

This brings us to Tosson (fig 18.2), a ragged ruin in the Coquet Valley which has lost virtually all its facing stones at basement level. It may be of late fourteenth- or fifteenth-century date. The basement vault has gone, and just enough evidence remains to show that the doorway was at the east end of the south wall; presumably the newel stair lay in the vanished south-east corner. At first-floor level would have been the hall, retaining traces of a fireplace. The best-preserved features at this level is an L-plan mural passage at the north-east corner, leading to a garderobe that was corbelled out from the wall. Not enough remains to show whether the tower stood alone, or had an adjacent hall block or walled enclosure. Nearby Hepple (just outside the Park) is a similar structure.

The only other tower in the Park is further north, at Hethpool in the shadow of the northern flanks of the Cheviots. It was described in 1541 as a 'lytle stone hosue or pyle' which was 'a greate releyffe to the tenants'. The ruins are of a little tower only c7m square externally with walls 1.6m thick, featureless and so overgrown that it is difficult to distinguish masonry within its vegetative shroud. The 1541 reference and small size suggest that this was a tower intended more as a communal refuge than the usual tower-house; in 1584 the Border Commissioners advised the repair of the ruined tower at Howtel to fulfil a similar function.

There is another tower just outside the Park boundary at Alnham, which seems to have been a 'vicar's pele' of the type found at Corbridge and

FIGURE 18.2 A medieval tower, loosely based on Tosson. A vaulted basement for storage, a hall on the first floor and a solar (bed chamber) on the second seems to have been the common pattern, with a newel stair adjoining the entrance often carried up as a turret. At Tosson no evidence survives of the second floor or roof; the truncated principal trusses shown are a common fifteenth/sixteenth-century type in the North East.

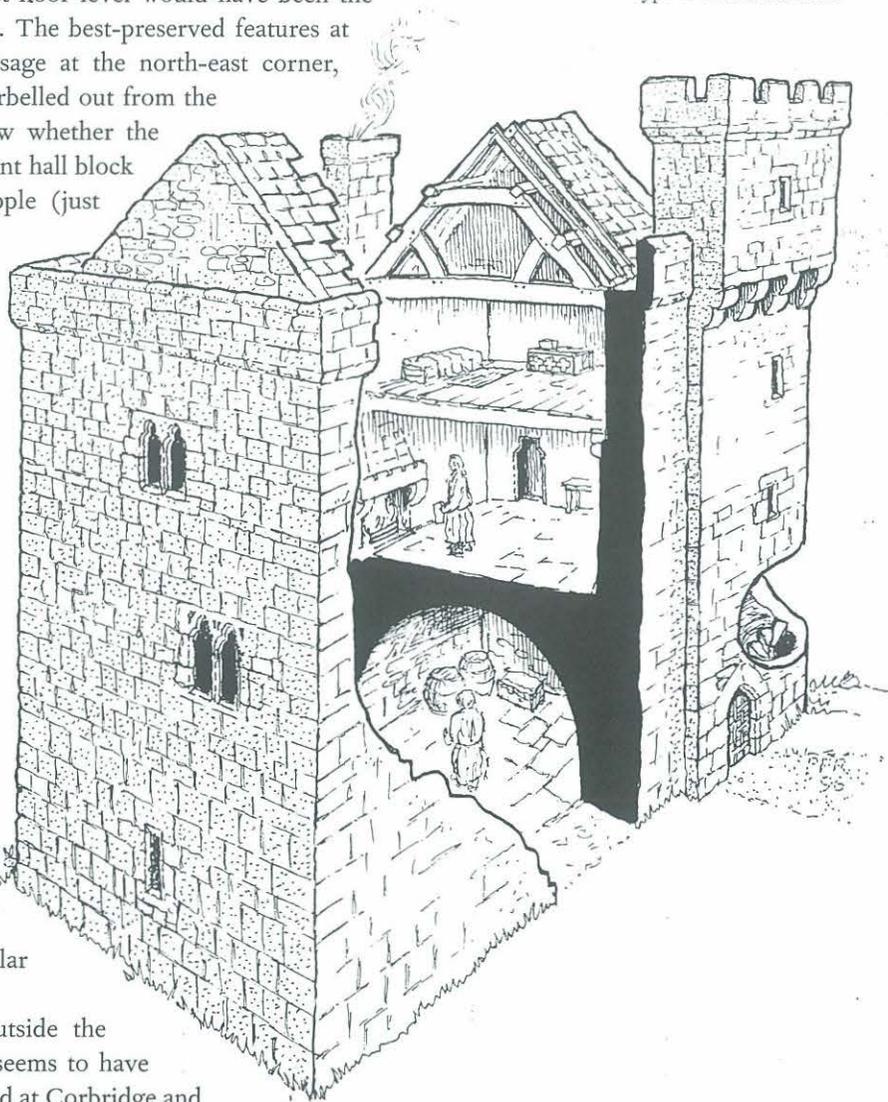




FIGURE 18.3 Hole Bastle, Bellingham. The height of the basement indicates that this is one of the comparatively small group of bastles, almost all within the Park, with basement vaults. The massive external stair and large first-floor windows are evidence of an eighteenth-century remodelling, when an attic floor was added, and the original bastle first floor windows reused at a higher level.

Embleton. It was recorded as an uninhabitable ruin in 1828, but around 1840 it was restored (being largely rebuilt above first-floor level) and incorporated in a larger house; little survives apart from the vaulted basement and the entrance lobby at its north-east corner.

There were also a handful of other towers within the perimeter of the National Park at Ingram, Kilham and elsewhere, some known from early surveys and others from antiquarian sources. Some of these may in due course be rediscovered through archaeological fieldwork, but no sign of them remains above ground today.

This brings us to bastles; whereas towers are few within the Park, there are around ten times as many bastles, including some of the best-preserved examples of the genre (fig 18.3). Towers can loosely – very loosely – be classed as ‘polite architecture’; certainly the Belsays and Chipchases have their frames of reference at a national rather than a local level. Bastles, by contrast, are vernacular. These were built by tenants, not landowners. They are post-medieval; they seem to replace wooden buildings, the ‘real peles’ (such as the 1541 survey described in Tynedale) and explode across upland Northumberland around and shortly after 1600. The handful of dated examples come close together in the first decade of the seventeenth century.

When the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments produced their slim volume ‘Shielings and Bastles’ (Ramm *et al* 1970), around 70 examples were known in Northumberland, but over two hundred are now catalogued, including ‘new’ concentrations in Allendale and the South Tyne Valley. Many of these came to light during fieldwork for the National Resurvey of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest, carried out on behalf of English Heritage in the mid-1980s.

Black Middens Bastle (see fig 8.7), the sole example in the guardianship of English Heritage, is one of the best known (thanks to a rash of tourist signs) and is worth considering as a type example. A simple rectangle in plan, 10.4 by 7.2m externally, it has walls of massive rubble 1.2 to 1.5m thick. The original entrance to the basement, now walled up, is in the centre of one end, a plain square-headed opening with a chamfered surround, rebated for two doorways, one inside the other. These would be harr-hung, ie turned on an attached post set in sockets in both sill and lintel, and secured by heavy draw bars. The basement, where animals could be kept, was only lit (if one can use such a term) by narrow loops, one surviving in the end wall opposite the entrance, and others doubtless removed when a window and two more doorways were punched through the side walls in the nineteenth century. The ceiling

of the basement would have been heavy, close-set oak beams, probably carrying a floor of sandstone flags. Somewhere in this floor would have been a small trapdoor allowing whoever had secured the animals in the basement to clamber up to join the family above; their access would have been by a removable ladder to an upper doorway in the long wall (here facing south-west). The living room was lit by a small window on either side of the doorway (the larger one with sockets for a grille of iron bars) and a tiny loop in the rear wall. Stone lockers or wall cupboards provided some storage space, and the hearth would have been against one end wall, beneath a timber and plaster firehood. There may have been an attic or sleeping loft at eaves level; the original roof would probably have had a substantial principal rafter truss, set centrally, carrying purlins and ridge of sufficient scantling to support a roof of stone flags. The stubs of upper crucks which remain today are almost certainly secondary<sup>2</sup>. The last roof which the building possessed, before English Heritage reduced it to a more-easily-managed roofless shell, was a low-pitched one of nineteenth-century date.

Black Middens is very much a standard bastle, and one of a group in the headwaters of the Taret Burn. There is a second bastle (Black Middens II), much more ruinous, only 70m to the east. Further up the valley is Boghead, alias Corbie Castle, alias Barty's Pele (fig 18.4); such confusion in naming is not unique. A flavour of the life and times of bastle-dwellers is given by the tale of Corbit Jack (one-time resident of Boghead) and his neighbour Barty (of the Combe, another nearby bastle, now much-altered). On their return from a visit to Scotland, accompanied (as it happened) by some sheep they had acquired to make up for some of their own which Scottish visitors had recently decamped with, they were overtaken by two Scotsmen, anxious as to the whereabouts of their livestock. In the course of the resultant discussion, Corbit Jack was slain, but Barty dispatched both their assailants, one with a ferocious back-handed blow which 'garred his heid spang along the heather like an onion' as he later recalled it. He then returned home, driving the sheep and carrying the body of his companion over his shoulder.

Boghead belonged to a slightly more sophisticated class of bastle (about twenty in all, many of them within the Park) in that it had a stone vault to its basement, now mostly fallen. The partly-collapsed walling above the basement door exposes in section a very interesting feature, a steep stone chute or channel dropping through the thickness of the wall to debouch directly over the door. One account termed this a 'murder hole' but it is much too small to drop weighty objects on visitors' heads; its function must have been to allow water to be poured down, from some recess at first-floor level, to extinguish any fires that the said

### BOGHEAD BASTLE THE BASEMENT DOORWAY

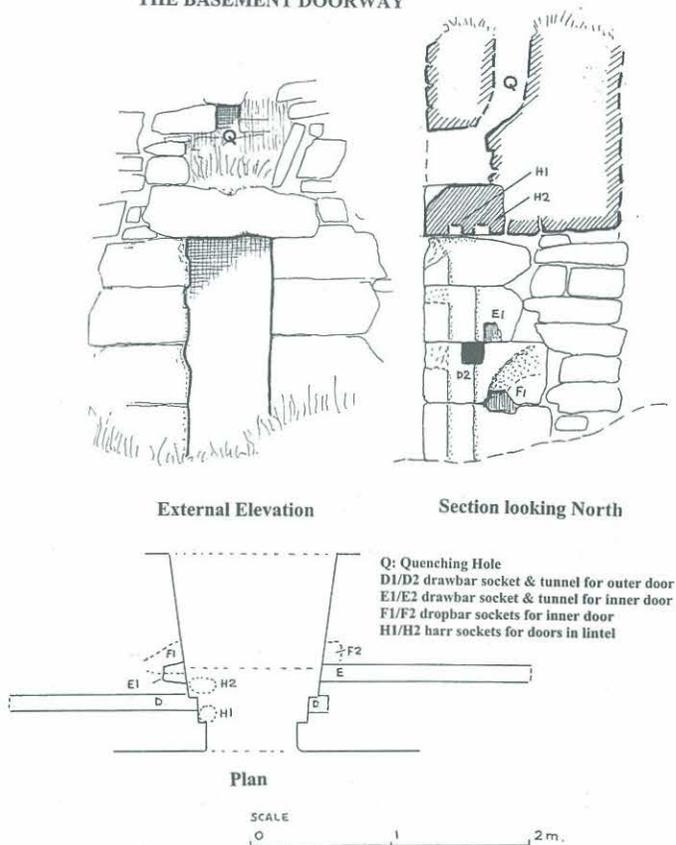


FIGURE 18.4 Boghead Bastle. The basement doorway and its quenching hole. An obvious defence against visitors who might kindle a fire against your basement door, but only as yet recognised in a handful of bastles.

visitors might kindle against the basement door – the only accessible woodwork on a bastle at ground level. This feature was described to a northern meeting of the Vernacular Architecture Group in the early 1990s, and various titles suggested. A show of hands made ‘Quenching hole’ a clear winner. Several other examples have now been recognised.

Another rather superior bastle within the park, and one that has recently been re-roofed, is Woodhouses (fig 18.5), in the Coquet Valley. This building, dated 1602 is unusual in that it had a doorway at ground-floor level only; one at first-floor level is a later insertion, now blocked up. The current first floor door, at the opposite end from the original, is still later. The only original access to the upper floor was by a narrow stair opening immediately inside the basement doorway, which, like Black Middens and Boghead, was fitted with inner and outer doors, each with their own drawbar tunnels. The basement has a lofty vault, with sockets for timbers indicating some form of loft within it. The upper floor has a splendid slop stone – the bastle equivalent of a kitchen sink – beneath one window, and evidence of a further loft or attic within the roof. The original windows were small and stoutly barred; the two big mullioned windows on the north side are the result of a previous restoration, in 1904.

Three more decidedly upmarket bastles in the area deserve mention. Low Cleughs (Corsenside) has recently been conserved by the NNPA and is now open to the public (Chapter 20). It never had a vault, but is larger and longer than the average bastle, and both lower and upper doorways are close together in the front wall; the windows show sockets for bars and evidence of harr-hung shutters. Snabdaugh in the North Tyne Valley is still a house; it may have lost a basement vault but retains what is probably the most surprising attic in Northumberland, roofed by a high-quality barrel vault – the ultimate fire-proof roof. The attic chamber has a window looking down the valley that is equipped with stone window seats, the sort of refinement one might expect in the solar of a medieval castle. Not far away is another inhabited and much-altered bastle, Falstone Farmhouse. This is very like Woodhouses in its lofty vault and evidences of a similar corner staircase. The basement

FIGURE 18.5 Woodhouses Bastle. Built by the local Potts family and dated ‘1602’. One of a small group of relatively sophisticated bastles with the unusual refinement of an internal stair, and a slopstone below the internal sill of the window at its head. One could rinse the blood from one’s hands after a hard night’s reiving before settling down to a dinner of stolen mutton. This view shows conservation work in progress in 1992.



doorway, now inside a later extension, has a moulded surround and the rather bewildering lintel inscription 'ABCDEFGH – 1604 – HK.' perhaps the owner realised the status of a doorhead inscription but was a little lacking in literacy skills. Also nearby is Ridge End, where recent (2002) works have revealed many interesting features including clear evidence of a removed basement vault, and possibly also of a top vault like that at Snabdaugh.

Even this sort of refinement was rare in bastles; during the 1980s resurvey of Buildings of Historic and Architectural Interest one member of officialdom argued against the listing of too many bastles on the grounds that they 'were not architecture'. Certainly architectural detailing is limited – little more than the odd chamfered or roll-moulded surround to a doorway or window. At High Shaw, one of a group of bastles on the Military Ranges above Redesdale, the upper floor of another 'refined' bastle has gone, but what is surely the head of its door is incorporated in the nearby nineteenth-century farmhouse (fig 18.6). It is an impressive piece, with painstakingly-cut simple geometrical designs of a timeless character, with echoes of the Neolithic rock art of New Grange and the similar almost abstract mason's patterning in village churches of the early years of the Norman Conquest, but remote from any architectural textbooks.

Before passing to the humbler and more vernacular examples of this building type, one more building traditionally termed a bastle merits a mention; this is at Akeld, far away from other bastles on the north-east edge of the Cheviots. It is much larger than normal bastles (19 by 7.3m externally) with a fine barrel-vaulted basement, lit by narrow loops, and with one original doorway and a tiny ladder-hole in the vault. Unfortunately the upper floor was completely rebuilt in the nineteenth century. Its affinities seem to lie more with a rather superior class of building of a North Northumberland and Scottish type, best termed 'strong houses'; there are similar elongate vaulted basements at Castle Heaton and Pressen outside the Park.

Returning to the bastle heartland around the headwaters of the North Tyne, Rede and Coquet, the hamlet of Gatehouse in the Tarsset Valley has a whole cluster of bastles. The Gatehouse North bastle is one of the best-preserved of all, although its upper floor was



FIGURE 18.6 Door head reused in the nineteenth-century High Shaw farmhouse, almost certainly from the upper floor of the ruined bastle some 500m to the west. The geometric patterning falls outside any 'textbook' architectural styling, but has echoes of earlier archaeological periods – and also of geological prehistory, in the fossilised tree bark common in local gritstones.

occupied until the nineteenth century and has been subject to some alteration. The Gatehouse South bastle, recently re-roofed, was more extensively altered, by the common expedient of taking down and rebuilding its front (south) wall; it retains a good basement doorway with a roll-moulded surround (very Scottish in style) and a relieving arch above. Gatehouse Farm nearby has been more extensively rebuilt, but retains its typical boulder plinth, and just across the yard to the south are fragmentary remains of two further bastles.

The remains of another cluster of bastles, this time wholly abandoned, can be seen at the old village of Evistones, crowning a gentle hill on the west side of the Rede Valley. Only one is an upstanding ruin; now a sheep shelter, it has kept half its basement vault. All else is grassy humps and footings, but enough survives to show that the bastle, together with a second one 50m away to the west, along with two elongated buildings, probably long houses, together with walls linking them, enclosed an irregular 'village green'. Further away to the north-east was a third bastle. There have been other clusters of bastles of this type at Monksridge near Otterburn, Chesterwood near Haydon Bridge and in the village of Wall.

Whilst the majority of bastles do conform to a relatively uniform type, there are a number of interesting variants, and buildings which fall towards the edge of the classification; a fact perhaps not realised by English Heritage who a few years ago, in their guidelines for the Monuments Protection Programme, cited bastles as a remarkably uniform and thus low-scoring building type.<sup>3</sup> 'Borderline' bastles include a small group of bastle-like buildings, which share most bastle features (and were certainly built by the same social group at around the same time) but were single-storey houses, much as if the upper half of a bastle had been sawn off and placed on the ground. Whitlees near Elsdon is the best example. Its gable-end doorway is very like that of a bastle, but an original window, still with its iron grille, is at ground level, with a small original slit (lighting a sleeping loft) above that.

Smalesworth, a lonely little ruin in the North Tyne Valley, may have been a similar building. Its metre-thick walls are of typical bastle fabric, but the doorway, retaining its drawbar tunnel (and a harr socket in its fallen lintel) is at the west end of the north side wall; the south wall has remains of a ground-level window with sockets for a grille of bars. There is a similar ruin at Stokoe Craggs about 1km to the east but here, perhaps tellingly, there seems to be evidence that what may have been a conventional bastle was reconstructed as a ground-floor house, with sockets in its side walls for cruck trusses. Yet the bastle doorway in the original east end wall and the window in the south wall, with its sockets for three vertical iron bars, both have identical dressed stone surrounds with a rounded arris to lintel and jambs.

Stokoe Craggs (fig 18.7) introduces us to another interesting subject, the development of farmsteads in the post-bastle period, to produce an elongate range of buildings, the classic linear farm so characteristic of most of the county before the Agrarian Revolution of c1800. At Stokoe Craggs the first addition, built onto the entrance end of the original bastle/house, was a rather longer building provided with a cross-passage set against the end wall of the earlier structure. This is a common plan for the first post-bastle addition in such a linear range, seen in several Allendale examples, such as Sinderhope Shield (Ryder 1992, 375). At Sinderhope Shield the first floor of the extension provided commodious (by bastle standards!) new living accommodation, whilst the ground floor remained non-domestic, although defence was no longer such a priority. Later still the range was extended by another block, almost certainly a barn or byre; beyond this comes the final ruinous section of the line of building, but here the walls are thicker again, hinting that there may have been a second

**STOKOE CRAGS**  
**RUINED FARMSTEAD**

Sketch plan 21 6 90 PFR

0 5 10 metres

C Sockets for cruck trusses

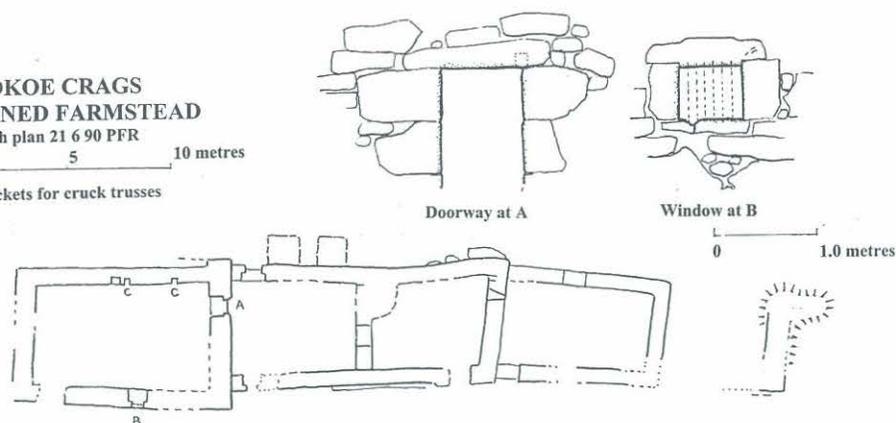


FIGURE 18.7 Stokoe Crag. Only the wall with doorway 'A' may survive from the original bastle, and the remainder of the range must be of various seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dates.

bastle here. The farm seems to have been abandoned around the beginning of the nineteenth century and, lying remote from any road, has seen little interference since. All in all Stokoe Crag is a remarkable site, set in a very beautiful location; it deserves a detailed investigation and conservation work.

An even more remote site that has its beginnings in a bastle (as far as the tangible evidence goes) is Branshaw (fig 18.8), high on the fells on the east side of Redesdale. This too has the air of having been abandoned long ago, yet its four hundred, or more, years of occupation came to an abrupt end around 1940 when the farm was purchased by the military authorities to be incorporated in their training area. Here the bastle, which had a basement vault, always stood alone, but was joined by a scatter of detached buildings set along the edge of the little dry limestone ravine. Some are clearly of eighteenth- or nineteenth-century date, but others, now simply grassy rectangles, could be older, and might even pre-date the bastle.

In most of the upland areas of Northumberland, bastles remained very much the standard dwelling type, at least for anyone who could afford a permanent house, for around a century. A story from Grandy's Knowe, a farm perched on a narrow ridge a little to the south of the Roman Wall, looking down on the Roman site of Vindolanda, illustrates how long the old lawless conditions prevailed. The Northumberland historian Hodgson (1840, 334) relates that 'of the adventures and exploits of the Armstrongs, of Grandy's-know, many marvellous tales are told' but that only one was recorded, in the manuscript defence of William Lowes of Crow Hall (3.5km to the south-east), who was charged with employing William and Thomas Armstrong to cut off the tongue and ears of their neighbour, William Turner of Crindledykes (the next farm to the south of Grandy's Knowe) on 17 July 1700. Hodgson drily comments that sufficient of Turner's tongue remained for him to bear witness in court that the two Armstrongs had threatened to shoot him 'but contented themselves, by way of satisfaction for what he had done in apprehending some of their comrades in iniquity, with cutting out his tongue, and dismembering him of his right ear and part of his cheek'. Mr Lowes' defence was that the Armstrongs had blamed him because he had assisted in the capture of an Armstrong for horse stealing. Unfortunately the result of the case is not mentioned. Another branch of the notorious Armstrongs lived nearby in a bastle, the lower walls of which survive, attached to the south gate of the Housesteads fort, utilising the adjacent Roman tower as a corn-drying kiln.

The buildings which survive at Grandy's Knowe today illustrate the end of the bastle era. The lower walls of the Armstrongs' bastle remain, encumbered by fallen debris, but attached

FIGURE 18.8 Branshaw Bastle, a ruin on the Otterburn Training Area. Like Ridley Stokoe, the bastle only forms one component of a range, indicating occupation spanning several centuries. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



to its east end is a house perhaps built 30 or 40 years after the misdemeanours of William and Thomas. Its walls are comparatively thin, its windows large, and its roof was of heather thatch, carried on two upper-cruck trusses. Elsewhere echoes of the bastle period are rather clearer; further north the farmhouses of Stobbs (Tarsset) dated 1724, and Redheugh (Rochester) of 1732 still have boulder plinths and quite thick walls of rubble masonry, although in other respects they are conventional upland farmhouses<sup>4</sup>.

All this demonstrates a spreading change in the way in which the inhabitants perceived the likely behaviour of their neighbours, eventually feeling sufficiently confident to 'come downstairs' and live in a conventional house again.

### *Notes*

1. The common suffix 'Pele' needs to be dispensed with at this point. The earliest usage of the term (derived from the latin 'pilum', a stake) relates to timber buildings and enclosures. For stone buildings the term has been far too widely used, and should really been laid aside until remains of defensible timber structures are recognised.
2. Upper crucks, usually carrying a more steeply-pitched roof, are generally associated with 'black' or heather thatch, which would not have been the first choice of roofing material by bastle-dwellers in whose experience unscheduled visitors might well have incendiary tendencies.
3. Perhaps on the basis of the descriptions in 'Shielings and Bastles' which tended to dismiss any out-of-the-ordinary features, such as the stair at Woodhouses, as 'secondary'. One might argue that one of the very reasons for the construction of bastles, the distance of the region from central government, has also been influential in the inadequacy of their treatment by archaeologists and building historians.
4. In the Pennine headwaters of the South Tyne, around Alston Moor, for some reason the tradition of living upstairs continued with 'bastle-derivative' houses being built throughout the eighteenth century.

# Thirlwall Castle

## A gentry residence in medieval Tynedale

*Alan Rushworth and Richard Carlton*

### *Introduction*

**T**hirlwall Castle (grid ref 6594 6615; fig 19.1) lies some five kilometres from the small market town of Haltwhistle in the parish of the same name in south-west Northumberland, some 37km south of the present Scottish Border and 25km east of Carlisle. It occupies a good defensive position on a small spur, or promontory, between the steep-sided valley of the Tipalt and the flatter, marshy valley of a secondary stream flowing in from the west, below the castle. Its location in the lower part of the valley of the Tipalt Burn, some 5km north-west of its confluence with the upper South Tyne, is transitional between highland and lowland zones and provides access to the Tyne-Solway corridor. The present hamlet of Thirlwall straddles the Tipalt Burn at a fording point south of the castle, while Castle Farm borders the west side of the castle.

The castle (fig 19.2) sits within land owned for over half a millenium by the Thirlwall family of Thirlwall, but sold in the mid-eighteenth century to the Earl of Carlisle. One of

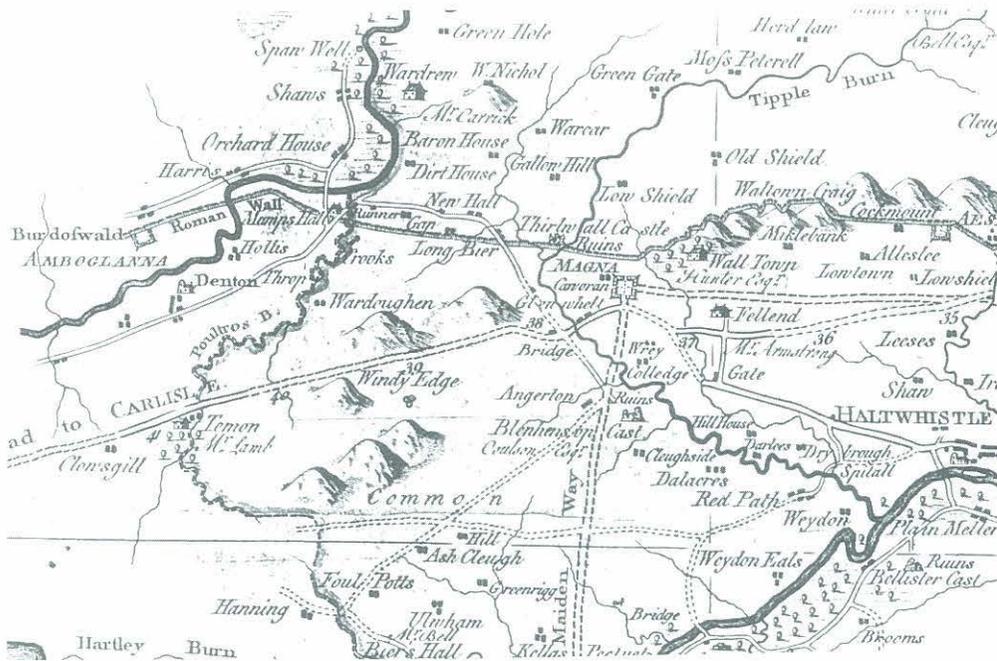
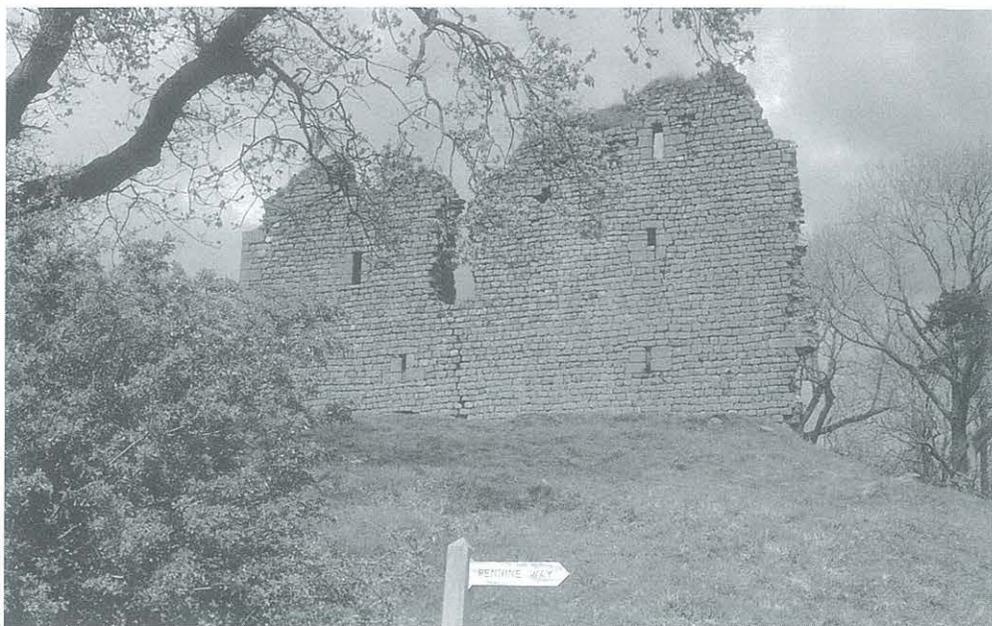


FIGURE 19.1  
Armstrong's map of  
Northumberland (Sheet  
7), 1769. The castle is  
depicted in a ruinous  
condition on the north  
side of the Roman  
Wall.

FIGURE 19.2 General view of Thirlwall Castle.



the present owners, Michael Scott, who jointly owns the castle and its grounds with his brother, Robert Scott, presently resides at Thirlwall Castle Farm. The castle has recently been consolidated and opened to the public by the Northumberland National Park Authority, thanks to a £0.5 million project largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the European Union. A documentary study of the castle by the current writer, on which this chapter is largely based, was undertaken as part of that project. This contribution goes into more historical detail than others in this volume, and does so for two reasons. First, the historical detail will in itself be of considerable interest to many readers, especially those living in Tynedale. Second, it demonstrates the crucial role of detailed documentary research to the study of medieval monuments, showing how our understanding of such sites can benefit from a combination of archaeological and historical research.

### *Site definition*

The surviving remains of Thirlwall Castle are most fully described by Ryder (1997, 6–10; see also Emery 1996, 141; Cathcart King 1983, 342, 372), whose report collates the evidence provided by, and largely supersedes, earlier descriptions (Hodgson 1840, 147–8; Bates 1891, 323–8; Long 1967, 161; Graham 1976, 323–5; Pevsner *et al*, 1992, 582–3). The building, consisting of a ‘compact, defensible block based on a hall and its subordinate apartments’ (Ryder 1997, 10) is classified by Ryder as a Borders hall house, the earliest class of defensible buildings, other than castles, found in the Borders. Thirlwall is a particularly well-defended example of its type, its massive walls indicating a practical rather than symbolic function (fig 19.3).

The castle, L-shaped in plan and measuring 14.2 by 5.8m internally, is built largely from reused Roman stones and is aligned north-east to south-west. The main structure appears to have been built to four storeys throughout, with the turrets and tower carried higher. The floors were all wooden, as attested by internal set-backs on the wall faces, with the exception of probable stone vaulting in the north-west turret and basement of the tower.

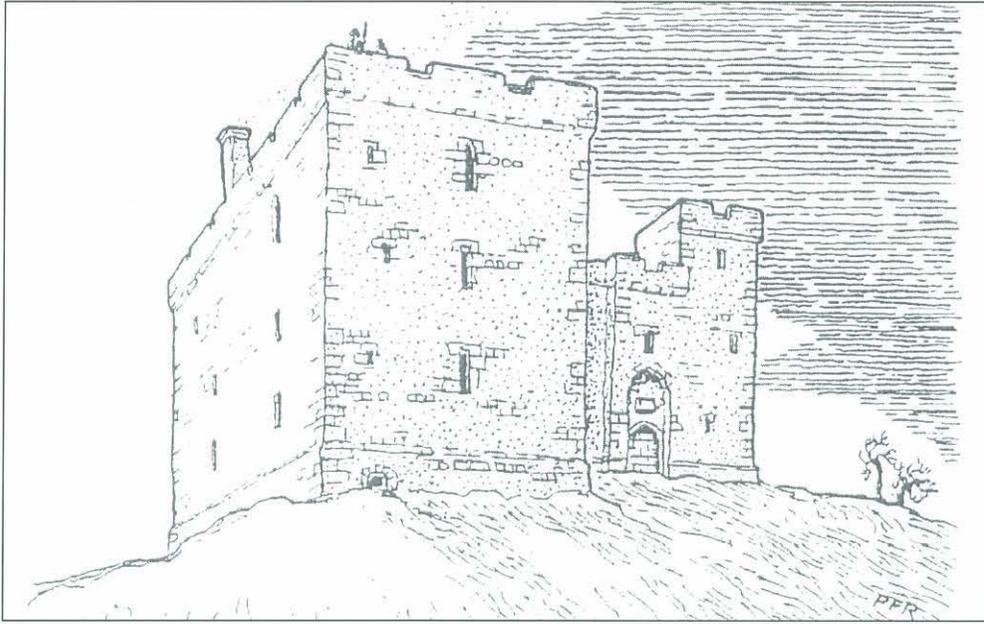
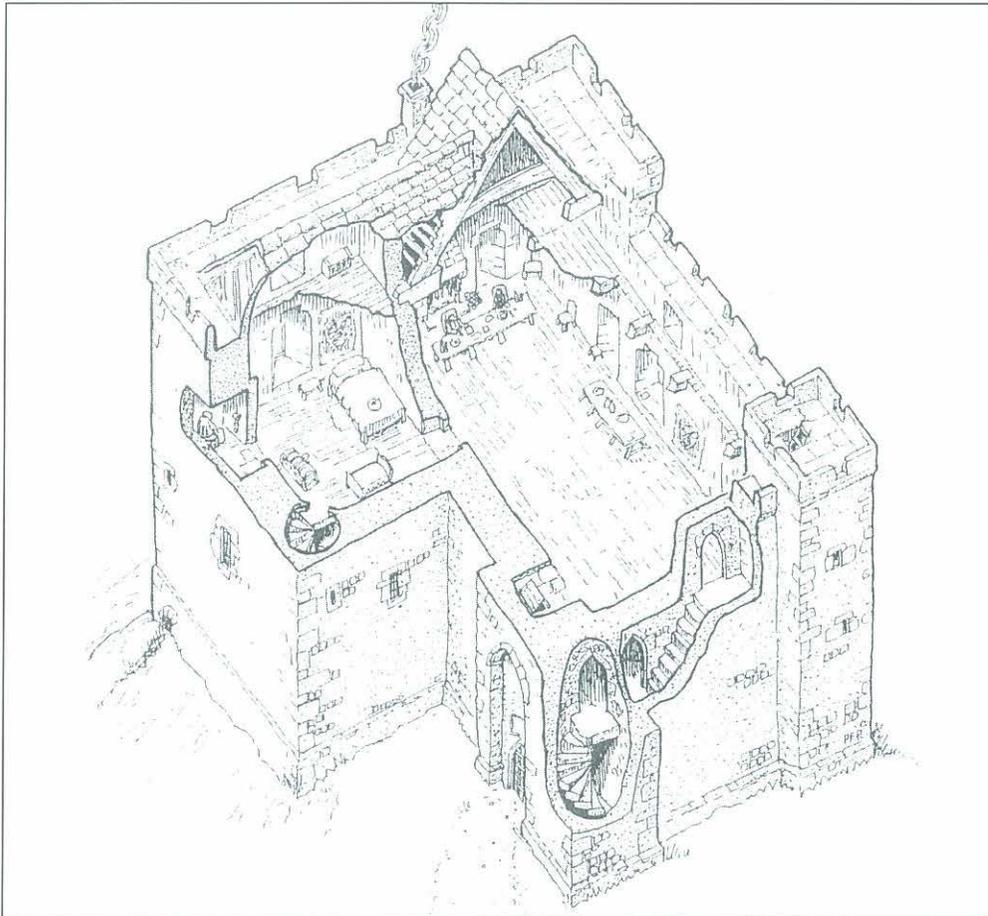


FIGURE 19.3  
Reconstruction  
drawings of Thirlwall  
Castle. (DRAWN BY PETER  
RYDER)



Unusually, the building in its present state appears substantially unaltered by later additions or modifications. Also notable is the apparent absence of associated medieval structures and features, whether of a domestic nature, such as attached dwellings, or defensive, such as a barmkin, around the main structure. In this context Ryder (*op cit*10) notes the common occurrence of attached or enclosing courtyards in association with hall houses elsewhere in Northumberland, but no trace of such a structure has been recorded at Thirlwall. The only associated feature previously recorded is an enclosure bordering the south side of the castle which appears post-medieval or modern in origin. Other features discovered during the course of recent work upon the castle include a possible enclosure to the west of the castle, identified from aerial photographic sources, a length of masonry which survives on the steep valley side of the Tipalt east of the castle, and the foundation courses of a wall running close to and parallel with the east side of the castle. There is no evidence, however, to associate any of these with the medieval castle.

### *Documentary study*

In order to use documentary evidence to contribute towards a history of the site, a number of related historical themes are tackled here by means of specific questions. These include the origins of the Thirlwall manorial holdings; the date of construction of the castle; the possibility that the site experienced earlier use as a military stronghold; the role of the castle in Border defence and as a manorial holding; and the abandonment of the castle and its subsequent decay. Not all of these issues can be tackled directly, however, since the quality of documentary sources does not allow it, but in all cases deductions are based on the best available sources. For example, although records of its construction and early occupation are scarce or absent, something of the social and military context of the castle's foundation and subsequent occupation can be deduced from numerous and diverse source materials relating to the gentry lineage which owned and inhabited the building: the Thirlwalls of Thirlwall. This material includes historical references, official correspondence, surveys and watch schedules, as well as private deeds and wills.

In addition to interpreting documentary sources, the present work presents a synthesis of the overall chronology of the defined area revealed by the remains of discrete and more extensive historical landscape components within and around the castle. Based on this, areas of specific interest or uncertainty within the surviving record are pointed out.

Although Thirlwall does not appear in the contemporary historical accounts of the period, documentary evidence for the locality commences in the mid-thirteenth century with references in various classes of official documents, notably:

- Inquisitions post mortem
- Writs and correspondence associated with legal disputes
- Royal surveys
- Wills and inventures

The following narrative covering the history of Thirlwall Castle from these diverse sources benefits considerably from broad advances in our understanding of the social and military context of the region. Notably, the documentary evidence for the medieval and early modern settlement pattern, summarised by Wrathmell (1975, 507–08), reveals a dispersed pattern of farmsteads and small hamlets typical of the upland zone, rather than a single nucleated village more characteristic of lowland manors.

## The placename

Two different etymologies have been proposed to explain the origin of the 'Thirlwall' placename. Beckensall (1992, 44) derives the name from Old English *thyrel* = 'perforated', which he interprets as signifying a gap in the Wall. Ryder, however, suggests that the gap refers not to a gap in the Wall, but to the gap between escarpments which at this point provides a routeway between the Tyne and Irthing Valleys. Alternatively, Hodgson suggests that it takes its name from the thralling, or barrier wall running through it – to thirl meaning 'to bind or enthrall' (Hodgson 1840, 143). Indeed, Hodgson (1840, 149) and, following him, Bates (1891, 324) consider the name 'Thirlwall' to have applied to the entire length of Hadrian's Wall during the medieval period, based on a passage in Fordun's chronicle (Fordun II, vii; III, x) and another Scottish source, Wyntoun (Wyntoun V, 3250–1). Rather fancifully, the two interpretations have been conflated by antiquarians ('a whole tribe of copyists' as Bates scornfully put it – *opcit*) to identify Thirlwall as the place where the Scots first pierced the Roman Wall. Whatever the validity of the suggestion that the Wall was earlier known as the Thirlwall or Thralwall, at least in Scotland, the fact that the current placename applies to only one spot suggests the former derivation is correct and doubtless refers to the gap in the remains of the Wall where the Tipalt Burn passed through it. Over time, whatever arrangements the Romans had originally made to carry the Wall curtain over the burn would have been destroyed and a significant gap torn in the Wall by periodic floods.

## Evidence for earlier settlement

As yet there is no firm archaeological, toponymic or documentary evidence for prehistoric, Romano-British or early medieval occupation within the bounds of the present castle site, although the Roman Wall passes within 100m across the lower ground to the south and prehistoric activity is attested in the wider vicinity.

The most significant piece of possible evidence for earlier settlement, identified in the course of this survey is represented by an aerial photograph (fig 19.4) revealing a cropmark and scarp line which appear to form an extensive, oval or roughly circular enclosure in the fields north and west of the castle. The south-east side of the enclosure is obscured by the castle and present farm buildings, but the most plausible restoration of its course would enclose the castle which would lie right at the south-east end. The interpretation of this enclosure is uncertain. It may represent a barmkin, a defensive walled enclosure associated with the castle. This identification is strengthened by the discovery of a wall, clearly of two phases, in the trench cut to the east of the castle during 2000 (fig 19.5). This wall lay in the restricted space between the castle and the edge of the drop to the burn and might represent a barmkin curtain later reduced to a simple field wall after the castle had ceased to be occupied.

However, such a prime, defensible location, on a slight promontory overlooking a flat, marshy, river valley, would have been equally attractive in earlier periods and the possibility that the enclosure represents an Iron Age settlement or a Norman ringwork, for example, cannot be excluded. No trace of earlier settlement upon the promontory was recognised during recent excavations, but, given the very limited areas exposed and the likelihood that the ground level at the south-east end of the promontory was substantially made up when the castle was constructed, this is far from conclusive. Further investigation, beyond the present castle precinct, would be required to determine the nature and function of the enclosure and the existence of any structures within it.

FIGURE 19.4 Aerial view of the castle from the south-west showing cropmark of a possible circular enclosure (arrowed).



FIGURE 19.5 The remains of a wall discovered during excavations on the east side of the castle.



### Tynedale in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries

It is not often appreciated just how late the Norman Conquest came to upper Tynedale. Indeed it would perhaps be more accurate to label it the Angevin Conquest since there is no evidence that North and South Tynedale were incorporated into the feudal structures of the Anglo-Norman kingdom before the reign of Henry II (1153–89).

This was long after much of south Wales had witnessed Norman settlement and many areas of lowland Scotland had experienced the installation of Norman, Breton or Flemish lords by the modernising King David (Ritchie 1954). Indeed, both Barrow (RRS I, 111) and Kapelle (1979, 130, 268) have argued that these valleys did not even lie within the nominal boundaries of the English kingdom during the first half of the twelfth century, but fell under the authority of the king of the Scots instead, although the evidence appears inconclusive. Certainly, the local lord of north-east Cumbria, Gille, son of Boet, acknowledged Scottish overlordship and blocked Anglo-Norman expansion into the western end of the Tyne-Irthing Gap, until the 1150s.

Thus it was not until 1157, that upper Tynedale acquired a feudal overlord, when both North and South Tynedale were granted by Henry II as a large fief to William, brother of the Scottish king, Malcolm IV, in partial recompense for William's peremptory dispossession of the earldom of Northumberland by Henry (Hartshorne 1858, 254; Moore 1915, 3). At the same time the Barony of Gilsland (Gille's land) was established in north-east Cumbria and the small Barony of Langley in South Tynedale was formed and granted to Adam de Tindale.<sup>1</sup> This last measure usefully ensured that the Scottish kings did not have uninterrupted control over the Tyne-Irthing Gap and with it communications between Newcastle and Carlisle. As a result the two neighbouring townships of Thirlwall and Blenkinsop lay within different lordships, the former within the Liberty of Tynedale, the latter in the Langley Barony. During the remainder of the twelfth century, under Malcolm IV and William I, feudal subinfeudation progressed with the confirmation of land grants to individuals and religious institutions (RRS I and ii; Moore 1915, 40–7, 84).

## The Liberty of Tynedale

Tynedale was not an ordinary barony like that of Langley. Instead it belonged to a class of lordship variously termed regalities, franchises or liberties, where the baron was responsible for performing the administrative and judicial tasks undertaken elsewhere by the sheriff and other royal officials. There were several of these in Northumberland, covering much of the county, including the Palatinate of Durham with its northern districts of Northamptonshire, Islandshire and Bedlingtonshire, the Umfraville Liberty of Redesdale, and the ecclesiastical Liberties of Hexhamshire and Tynemouthshire (cf Lomas 1996, 150–61). This viceregal authority did not confer any right to alter or make laws, and its continuance was always conditional on the goodwill of the Crown, symbolised on the death of each baronial incumbent when the liberty automatically reverted to the state until a successor had been acknowledged.

For the Crown this clearly represented a pragmatic and economical means of administering and policing the remote uplands of Northumberland. Tynedale was the largest of these liberties, covering more than 200,000 acres in total, and was retained by William's successors until the beginning of the Anglo-Scottish wars in 1296. (Moore 1915, 21–6; Lomas 1996, 155–8). It is important to note, however, that, despite being held by the king of Scotland, the Tynedale Liberty remained English territory. The Scottish kings' powers there, particularly in the judicial field, were certainly greater than they possessed in their other English fiefs, such as the Honour of Huntingdon, but the royal justices dispatched annually from Scotland to hold the eyre at Wark-on-Tyne, the capital of the liberty, conducted those proceedings in accordance with English not Scottish law (Iter of Wark; cf Lomas 1996, 155–7; RRS II, 54; Hartshorne 1858, 253–65; Moore 1915, 57–8).

In Redesdale and North Tynedale the pattern of landholding and lordship prior to the Norman Conquest may be glimpsed through the parochial framework and placename evidence, in names such as Elsdon (Aelf or Elli's valley), Corsenside (Crossan's sæte) and Simonburn (Sigmund's burn) (cf Rushworth 1996, 9; Rushworth and Carlton 1998, 29–30). In South Tynedale possible examples of this kind of personal name plus topographic description can be identified in relation to a few of the township names (cf Beckensall 1992, 20, 23, 33), eg Blenkinsop (*Blencheneshopa*, perhaps 'Blenkin's valley'), Coanwood (*Collanwode* = 'Collan's wood') and Henshaw (*Hedeneschalch* = 'Hethin's haugh'), but more striking is the apparent incorporation of Old French elements in placenames of two other townships in upper South Tynedale.

The clearest example is the parochial centre of Haltwhistle (*Hautwysel*), a hybrid compound of Old French *haut* = 'high' and Middle English *twisel* (Old English = *twisla*) = 'fork' (in a river or road), referring to Haltwhistle's position on rising ground at the confluence of the South Tyne and Haltwhistle Burn (Mawer 1920, 99–100). Another possible case is Bellister (*Belester*), perhaps deriving from Old French *bel-estre* = 'a fine place'. The precise significance of this cluster of Old French placenames is unclear, but it may have implications for our understanding of the nature of feudal settlement in this part of South Tynedale. Both sites contain the remains of early earthwork castles (Cathcart King 1983, 327, 334; Hodgson 1840, 117–9, 344; Hunter Blair 1944, 164), and lay within the subsidiary lordship granted by William the Lion (Malcolm's successor as king of Scotland) to Robert de Roos of Hamlake in 1191, probably comprising Haltwhistle, Bellister, Plenmeller and Coanwood (cf Hodgson 1840, 115–6, 343–4).<sup>2</sup>

### The Thirlwalls of Thirlwall

Although a Thirlwall is first documented in the region in 1239, the early pedigree of the lords of Thirlwall remains to a large extent conjectural (see NRO Hedley papers).<sup>3</sup>

Moreover the pattern of manorial tenure remains far less clear in Thirlwall than is the case in comparable Tynedale townships further east. The most detailed information regarding the latter part of the thirteenth century is provided by the 1279 and 1293 assize rolls for the Lordship of Tynedale (Iter of Wark). The township of Thirlwall itself seems to have conformed to the broader upland pattern in comprising a series of dispersed farmsteads or hamlets, each with their own plots of enclosed land, rather than forming a single nucleated village (Wrathmell 1975). The farmsteads and hamlets appear to have been held by a number of different owners. These included Hexham Priory (cf Hodgson 1828, 169) and the Swinburne lineage represented by Adam de Swinburne (see below). However most of the land seems to have been held by various individuals with the epithet 'de Thirlwall'.

Thus, one William le Barun de Thirlewalle brought an action against the prioress of Lambley Nunnery in 1279 for unlawfully pasturing stock on his lands (Iter of Wark, xxii–xxiii). On the basis of this label, *'le barun'*, which is also attached to one Bricius of Thirlwall in a late thirteenth century deed preserved in the Swinburne papers, Hodgson suggested that the Thirlwalls were barons of the kings of Scotland during this period. However, it is clear that the Thirlwalls never attained such lofty status.

The precise significance of this epithet is unclear, but it was clearly some kind of nickname to distinguish this Bricius from another Bricius, labelled 'le Cokeman' of Thirlwall, mentioned in the same Swinburne document. Although it does not signify baronial status it might indicate some kind of primacy amongst the numerous Thirlwall

family lines apparently documented. It also is possible that there is some link with the present farm steading of Barronhouse, which is first attested in 1723 (Register, 119).

On the basis of his analysis of the references to individuals named 'de Thirlwall' in the Iter of Wark and other contemporary medieval documentation, including the early title deeds preserved by the Thirlwall family itself as evidence of its pedigree, Percy Hedley (NRO 3635/30) suggests that there were two closely related families holding lands in Thirlwall at the end of the thirteenth century, one of which was represented by William le barun. Both lines were probably descended from a certain Brice ('Bricius') living in the time of Henry III of England and Alexander II of Scotland (ie pre-1249). Indeed all the Thirlwalls living at the end of the thirteenth century may have been sons and grandsons of the elder Bricius. The apparent wide distribution of landholding amongst these Thirlwalls further implies that all Brice's sons had received part of the original estate.

Although Percy Hedley's outline is the most plausible reconstruction attempted, even this may underestimate the complexity of the genealogical relationships and pattern of landholding in Thirlwall. Given this complexity and the evident difficulty of identifying obvious manorial lords for Thirlwall, and indeed the very remoteness of the township, even within a marginal upland lordship like Tynedale, it is possible that the evidence does not reflect a conventional medieval manorial structure based on the exploitation of a dependent peasantry by landowning gentry. Instead, it may reveal the persistence of an older socio-economic structure based around a notional extended kinship group and partible inheritance.

The deeds held by Richard Thirlwall in 1615, when they were abstracted by the royal herald St George as a record of the Thirlwall family pedigree, included early fourteenth-century deeds some of which had probably belonged to the cadet members of the family. This might in turn imply some of these smaller estates were subsequently absorbed by the senior line. The upheaval caused by the Anglo-Scottish wars from 1296 onwards could have contributed to this process. Some individuals may have had to relinquish or mortgage some or all of their property to pay off debts incurred as a result of losses of stock or crop failure during this turbulent period.

Several pieces of evidence may chart the progress of this accumulation of lordship. On 20–21 September 1306 Edward I stayed at Thirlwall (Rymer, *Foedera* ii, 1025; *CalDocScot* ii, 491, no1832) during his slow progress west towards Carlisle probably along the Stanegate (then known as the Karelgate – Carlisle Street). This suggests there was a residence substantial enough to offer accommodation to Edward and his retinue, though it does not prove that the present castle was then extant (*contra* Leslie 1924, 68). Instead, at most we should probably envisage a smaller hall-house – one of the standard, two-storey, gentry residences typical of the northern counties, plus associated ancillary buildings. Indeed any such pre-castle residence may have been built of timber rather than stone. Second, an undated indenture made between Richard son of John, son of Robert de Thirlwall on the one part and John de Thirlwall, lord of Thirlwall, on the other part may represent the acquisition of one of the smaller estates in the township, and probably represents the earliest reference to a member of the Thirlwall lineage as lord of Thirlwall. Finally, in 1369, we have the first dated reference to John de Thirlwall (probably the same John named above) as the lord of the castle and manor of Thirlwall.

## Evidence for the construction date of Thirlwall Castle

Compared to some other Northumbrian castles there is a disappointingly small amount of documentation relating to Thirlwall. The reasons for this are clear enough. The castle was held by a gentry lineage, rather than a baronial magnate, and was of limited strategic importance. Consequently it does not figure in medieval chronicles, nor was it ever acquired by the State (though a Scottish parliamentary army was billeted there in 1645–47). Hence, it never attracted the copious official state correspondence and condition surveys such as those associated with Harbottle Castle (a baronial stronghold taken over by the Crown in the sixteenth century; Crow, this volume).

However, there is more evidence relating to the gentry family which occupied the castle, the Thirlwalls, as noted in the previous section. This material has been assembled and summarised, first by Hodgson and, more recently and in greater detail, by Percy Hedley, whose notes compiled in the course of genealogical research into Northumbrian family lineages can be consulted at Northumberland Record Office (NRO 542; 3635). These records can be used to shed light indirectly on the history of the castle. They cannot, of course, answer direct questions regarding the structural history of the monument in the way that a licence to crenellate, or royal condition survey could. But such questions can be approached tangentially by phrasing the question in a slightly different way, such as: on the basis of the history of the family's fortunes what is the most likely period for the castle's construction? The field of enquiry may be narrowed by considering these questions in conjunction with the evidence of the standing remains and the few explicit references to the castle. Reassuringly, these different classes of evidence point towards a similar conclusion.

The evidence for the date of the castle may be summarised as follows. No licence to crenellate relating to the construction of a castle at Thirlwall seems to have been given. The castle is first mentioned in 1369, when John Thirlwall senior was 'lord of the castle and the manor of Thirlwall'.<sup>4</sup> On the basis of his analysis of the extant structure, Ryder (1997, 10–1) suggests it was built in the mid-fourteenth century and represents something of a hybrid structure between hall-house and towerhouse (cf also Emery 1996, 141).

This is the very period in which the Thirlwalls became engaged in military service in England's many fourteenth-century wars, both in Scotland and in France. Successful participation in military campaigns could be very lucrative and was one means whereby individuals and lineages could climb the social ladder. The most obvious means were the acquisition of booty or the capture of an important prisoner who could be ransomed, but more reliable, perhaps, were the salaries paid out by the Crown to garrison commanders and March Wardens. These processes were to effect a complete transformation of the northern nobility, with the eclipse of the older northern baronial families, most prominent of whom were the Umfravilles, and the emergence of new magnates, the Nevilles, Dacres and, most famous of all, the Percys. The same processes, on a lesser scale, probably affected the gentry, with new patronage circles forming with the rise to prominence of the new magnates and new opportunities for social advancement based on military service.

The Thirlwalls' fortunes appear a little mixed in this respect. A certain John Thirlwall is known to have fought at the Battle of Falkirk in 1298 (Bates 1891, 326; Hodgson 1840, 145). Another source refers to a John Thirlwall, probably the same individual, who was captured in Scotland and had to mortgage his estates to obtain ransom.<sup>5</sup> In compensation for his losses,

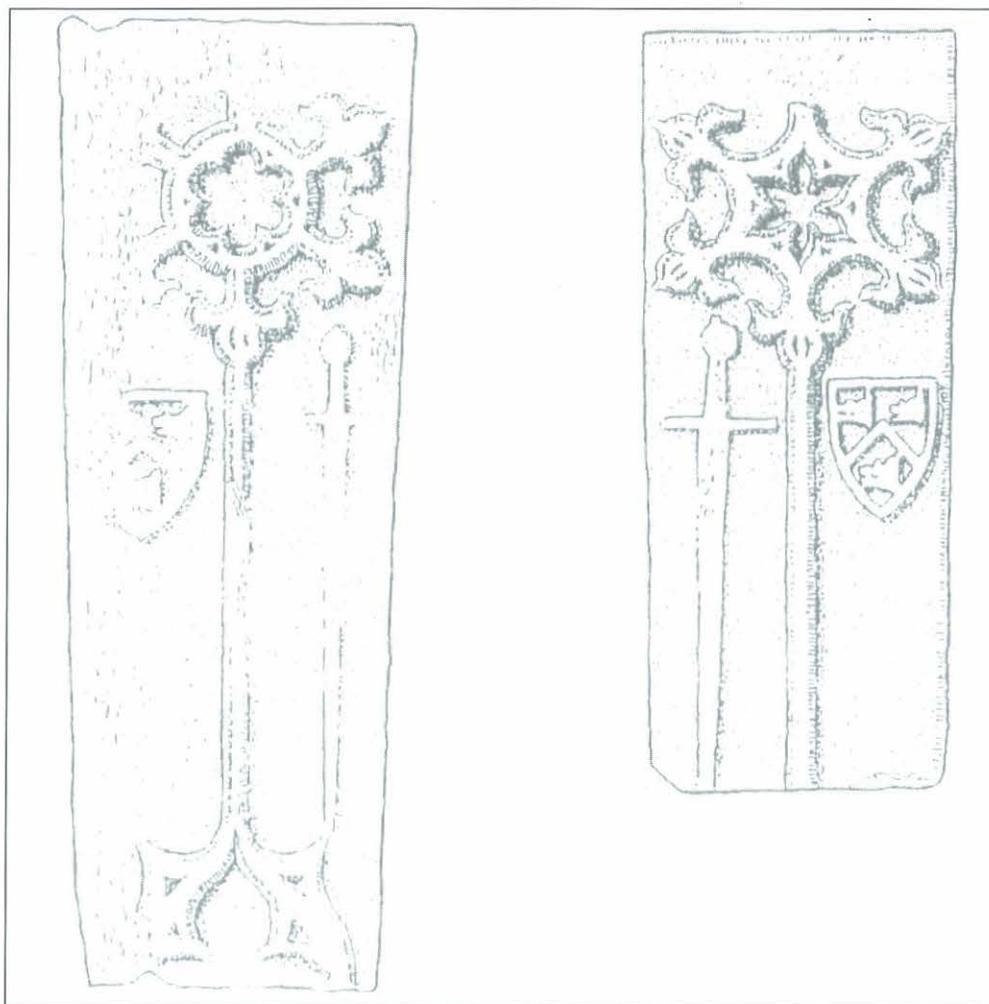


FIGURE 19.6 Fourteenth-century grave covers in Haltwhistle Church bearing the arms of Thirlwall. (DRAWN BY PETER RYDER)

John petitioned Edward I, while the ailing king was resting at Newbrough on his journey westward along the Stanegate, in 1306, for the lands of Eustace de Retteref, an enemy in Scotland (cited in Bates 1891, 325, n.8). Such lands would have been lost after Robert the Bruce expelled the English from Scotland in the following decades. However, in 1365 Edward III granted letters of protection to John Thirlwalle, senior, and his tenants at Greenhowe and Rydale in Liddelsdale (Rot Scot, i, 896b).

This second John was probably the eldest son of the homonymous individual who had earlier campaigned in Scotland, suggesting that the elder John or his son may have reclaimed lands in Scotland early in the reign of Edward III, when the English regained control of much of southern Scotland. Ironically a 'John of Thirlwall' was himself named as one of a group of 'marchers of England' who raided Annandale in December 1366 in violation of the truce with Scotland (CalDocScot iv, 29, no128). According to the terms of the truce the valley had been partitioned and the marchers had clearly done as much damage to the Earl of Hereford's holdings as to those of the King of Scotland. Despite the request that these 'marauders' who 'pay no attention to protections or the King's letters' should be 'speedily chastised' his participation in this raid does not seem to have damaged John senior's career

or regional standing (assuming these were one and the same person as seems likely). He apparently served on border commissions for the West Marches and the Middle Marches in 1369 and 1379 respectively (Hodgson 1840, 145, citing Rot Scot i, 935; ii, 20). By December 1384 he was lieutenant of the Earl of Northumberland and warden of Carlisle castle, where he received three brass cannon, 120 stone balls and 20 pounds of salpêtre and 'sulphur vive' (CalDocScot iv, 76, no331). He seems to have been preceded in the latter post by his neighbour Thomas Blenkinsop (*ibid* 76, no331). In December 1385 he is described as 'late sheriff' of Cumberland (CalDocScot iv, 78, no346). The construction of a powerful stronghold at Thirlwall, to serve as the seat of his lineage, would befit the status and aspirations of John senior, evidently one of the leading members of the northern marcher gentry in the second half of the fourteenth century.

The intensity of military campaigning undertaken by some members of the gentry, and the Thirlwall family in particular, during this period is indicated by the testimony of John Thirlwall, when called to give evidence in the great heraldic trial of Scrope versus Grosvenor in 1386. This John was the youngest son of the veteran of Falkirk. He was probably the John Thirlwall junior named in the 1369 deed and perhaps a younger brother of John senior, lord of Thirlwall. He explicitly states that he had been present in the expedition of Edward III to the gates of Paris in 1360, at Ballingham Hill outside Calais and in the Pays de Caux in 1369, in Gascony with the Black Prince, in Brittany with the Duke of Lancaster in 1378 and with Richard II in Scotland in 1385 (Bates 1891, 326; Hodgson 1840, 145). John must have been a respected figure, whose participation in numerous French and Scottish campaigns between 1360–85 was well-known and whose standing amongst his peers was sufficient for his word to be considered reliable.

Thus the profits that military service could generate, perhaps coupled with the opportunity to acquire land from the lesser branches of the family (see above), may have ensured that the senior Thirlwall lineage prospered sufficiently in this turbulent period to be able to construct a new fortified residence, thereby consolidating their social standing within the gentry community of South Tynedale.

The construction of the castle may have been necessitated by the prolonged insecurity on the border during the fourteenth century, but should also be seen in terms of competition between local elites, in particular possible rivalry with the Thirlwalls' neighbours at Blenkinsopp, who themselves erected a tower house of their own. It may be of significance, therefore, that Thomas de Blenkinsopp received licence to crenellate the neighbouring Blenkinsopp Castle in 1340 (CalPatRolls 1338–40, 417, 524; cf Bates 1891, 9). Such competition between the two lineages can be seen in another arena, at Haltwhistle church, which both families furnished with ornately carved grave covers (fig 19.6) and, in the case of the Blenkinsopps, a fine effigy of Thomas Blenkinsopp.

The builder of the castle cannot be known with certainty, but is most probably the very John de Thirlwall senior, who is first named as lord of the castle and manor in 1369, or just possibly his father, the John de Thirlwall who served at Falkirk in 1298 and was 85 years old on his death in 1342. At any rate, references to the castle thereafter point to the continuous residence of the Thirlwall family and their efficient upkeep of the castle until the seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup>

One further piece of evidence may be significant in providing a possible *terminus post quem* for the work. A late thirteenth-century document preserved in the Swinburne Papers records the grant by Bricius Cokeman de Thirlwall to Lord Adam de Swineburn of all of the



land he has on the south side of the Wall in the township of Thirlwall (NRO 67/1/31/no11). This stretch of the Wall can be identified with reasonable certainty as it must fall within Thirlwall township, which is relatively narrow from east to west at the point where the Wall crosses it. It has long been recognised that the castle is largely built with stones robbed from Hadrian's Wall, and it is inherently likely that these would have been taken from as close a source as possible. The document preserved in the Swinburne Papers implies that the stretch of Wall closest to the castle was still a sufficiently prominent landscape feature towards the end of the thirteenth century to form a useful boundary marker, and might therefore suggest that it had not yet suffered the scale of robbing which would have been necessary to provide the castle with sufficient facing stones.

### The roles of the castle in Border defence and local security

It is ironic that the clearest statement of Thirlwall's strategic value is contained within a statement produced by the Scottish parliament in 1646, when defending its need to continue garrisoning Thirlwall and other Northumbrian castles during the English Civil War:

*these garrisons are so absolutely necessary for magazines of victual, arms and ammunition, and to be places of retreat to the Scottish army, as they cannot be secured and enabled for promoting the service and advancing south without them.*<sup>7</sup>

FIGURE 19.7 *A Tract of ye Bounders of ye Weste Marches of Englande towards Scotlande*, 1590 (PRO-MPF 1/285).

This plan gives stylized representations of a great number of castles, towers, peles, etc within the Border areas, but the distances and relationships between the various named places lack accuracy and definition. However, it gives a good impression of the way in which the Borders were viewed. The plan usefully represents Thirlwall as one of a group of medium-sized structures – others being Bellister, Featherstone and Naworth. Blenkinsopp Castle, closest to Thirlwall, is portrayed as a less substantial structure, perhaps indicating its perceived lesser importance.

Thirlwall was probably useful to the Scottish forces because it provided a conveniently situated depot, straddling the east-west communication routes, midway between the major garrisons at Newcastle and Carlisle.

To some degree all fortifications in the border counties fulfilled a role in defending the area against Scottish depredations and hence were a matter of general concern to the English State, even if, like Thirlwall, they were never actually taken into the Crown's possession. This was effectively acknowledged by the royal surveys which repeatedly assessed the state of the Borders and their defences during the fifteenth and especially the sixteenth centuries (fig 19.7). The royal commissioners in the sixteenth century evidently envisaged an arc of castles, towerhouses and bastles set back from the border, fringing and closing off the uplands: what Christopher Dacre in 1584 termed the 'plenished ring of the border' (cf Watts 1975, 22 & map 1).<sup>8</sup>

The location of Thirlwall Castle, close to the two major east-west communication routes through the Tyne-Irthing Gap, the Stanegate and the Military Way, at the point where the hills close in on either side, is of considerable strategic significance in this chain. Yet, apart from its brief inclusion in the 1415 and 1541 surveys, the castle never attracted significant royal attention. The first of these surveys comprises a list of castles and fortalices drawn up in 1415 to inform Henry V of the state of his northern frontier before he embarked for France.<sup>9</sup> Thirlwall is said to belong to Roland de Thirlwall and was numbered amongst the 37 castles (*castra*) in the list rather than the far more numerous towers, nor is it qualified in the margin with the lesser label, *fortalice* (*fortalicium*), like neighbouring Blenkinsopp Castle (cf Bates 1891, 15; Hodgson 1828, 27). Like the initial reference to the castle in 1369, this provides an indication the site's status as perceived by contemporaries. In 1541, by contrast, Bowes and Ellerker's survey described Thirlwall as 'a toure ... in measurable good reparacions' (cf Bates 1891, 48; Hodgson 1828, 217).<sup>10</sup>

### The manor house of Thirlwall

This last reference might indicate that the perceived status of the castle had declined somewhat over the previous century, although documents such as the 1552 watch schedule still name the site Thirlwall Castle. However, when first constructed in the fourteenth century, and well into the fifteenth, the castle represented a powerful architectural expression of the lord's power, providing not only a secure stronghold against external marauders, but also, as noted above, a symbol of his prestige in the face of neighbouring gentry lineages vying for local status and position.

Thus, although the castle clearly had a defensive function, it performed other roles, notably those of a manorial seat and administrative centre, which were every bit as important. The building lay at the heart of a upland manorial landscape, consisting of elements such as dispersed farmsteads, a mill (Wills & Inventories II, 75) and extensive common grazing areas on the high moors to the north and south. Indeed, documents drawn up by the Thirlwall family themselves, notably Lancelot Thirlwall's will of 1582, refer to the castle simply as 'the house of Thirlwall' or 'the manor house of Thirlwall' (Wills & Inventories II, 75) and it is clear that it was this role of constituting secure domestic accommodation which was of paramount importance for the family itself.

The domestic aspect of the castle is emphasised by a partial description of the interior of the castle provided in the will made by Lancelot Thirlwall, eldest son and heir to Robert Thirlwall, on 27 December 1582, shortly before his death (Wills & Inventories II, 75):

*There is certain instruments that I will and bequeath, as heirlooms, to the house of Thirlwall and to the lord thereof, that is to say, a stand bed in the low parlour, a great ark standing in the high loft over the hall, a long spit, a pair of racks and a great pott.*

Ryder (1997, 10) has argued that the reference to the 'low parlour' suggests there were two or more private retiring rooms, one above the other, probably located in the south-east tower, whilst mention of the 'high loft above the hall' indicates there was some sort of attic at third-floor level above the main second-floor domestic accommodation in the main block.

### Thirlwall in the sixteenth century

During the sixteenth century, security in the Border counties, and particularly in districts of South Tynedale like Thirlwall, deteriorated markedly, as was specifically commented on in the 1550 Border Survey (cited by Hodgson 1828, 242; 1840, 147–8): 'And surely the inhabitants thereof be much prone and inclined to theft, especially a lordship next to the west border, at Powltrousse, called Thirlwall.'

The perilous state of the frontier zone is starkly underlined by the watch schedules devised to give warning of Scottish raiders, which were recorded for the year 1552. Around Thirlwall the following dispositions were stipulated:

*From Blenkinsopp castle to Therlway castle to be watched nightly with two men of the inhabitants, dwelling between the said two castles. The watch of Thirlwall was to be kept nightly with three men, one on the inside of the Myre and one on the outside; one man daily upon Gatewsyderigg. These watches to be kept by the inhabitants of Thirlwall; Robert Thirlwall and Robert Carrock, setters, searchers and observers of this watch.*

(Hodgson 1840, 118; Nicholson *Leges Marchiarum*, 237)

The 1542 survey had stipulated that two men nightly were to be stationed at Gallyside Rig, in Thirlwall and at the Wall Cragg near the Tupal (cited by Hodgson 1828, 239; 1840, 118). Gallyside Rig is probably the same location as Gatewsyderigg mentioned in the 1552 schedule, and should be identified with 'Gallose Side' on the 1749 Military Road Survey and Gallow Hill on Armstrong's map of 1769, located roughly where Wood House, 700m north of the castle, now stands. The Wall Cragg near the Tupal is presumably the slopes overlooking the Tupal to the east of the castle. The 'Myre' may well be the marshy course of the Pow Charney Burn west of the castle.

The reasons for this worsening security are complex. The prolonged warfare between England and Scotland over the previous centuries and the pattern of much of that warfare – raid and counter-raid – coupled with the weakness of lordship in Tynedale for much of the period (cf Tuck 1971, 26–7) had led to the emergence during the fifteenth century of mutual security kinship groups, the riding 'surnames'. These reiving clans, the Halls, Reades, Potts, Dunns and Hedleys of Redesdale, the Charltons, Dodds, Milburns and Robsons of North Tynedale and their equivalents on the Scottish side, the Armstrongs, Nixons, Scotts and Elliots of Liddlesdale and Teviotdale, gained considerable notoriety.

Their formation tended to institutionalise violence on the frontier even more firmly than before, with much of that violence being internal, in the form of feuding between members of the different clans supported by their kinsmen, or directed towards the surnames' notional fellow countrymen in the adjacent valleys of South Tynedale, Coquetdale and Glendale and the Northumbrian lowlands. The surnames are first mentioned explicitly in 1498, but early

fifteenth-century legislation demonstrates that the patterns of lawlessness and violence characteristic of 'reiver society' were already prevalent in Tynedale by that stage.

A statute of 1414 outlawed the 'murders, treasons, manslaughters, robberies and diverse other offences to many of the faithful liege people of the same county (Northumberland) by people dwelling within the franchises of Tyndale and Exhamshire where the king's writ runneth not' (Statutes, 2 Hen V, 5; cf Hodgson 1827: 60). These measures were extended to Redesdale, in 1421, by a further statute (Statutes, 9 Hen V, 7; cf Hodgson 1827: 60), the terms of which suggest the problems were being caused by individuals ('intakers and outparters') recolonising the upland valleys after the settlement contraction of the previous century. It is very likely that the formation of the surnames was closely associated with this process of resettlement.

However, these problems were greatly exacerbated during the sixteenth century by the English Crown's attempt, from the reign of Henry VIII onwards, to break the power of the Border magnates and impose more centralised control by placing local government in the hands of the local county gentry and establishing a service nobility dependent on the Crown for fees and offices as in the rest of Tudor England. The great magnate families, such as the Percys, the Nevilles and the Dacres, had traditionally had responsibility for defending the Border, holding the key positions of wardens of the marches. Only they had the local influence and resources through their powerful strongholds, their feudal retinues and their patron-client relationships with the northern gentry, to maintain some degree of control of the volatile, reiving clans and protect the Borders effectively with relatively minimal outlay of state resources. Yet the Tudor government was unwilling and perhaps unable to expend the substantial sums required to maintain large royal garrisons necessary for Border defence if this traditional aristocratic leadership was to be replaced (cf Ellis 1995a & b). The result of this clash between state ideology and frontier realities was a power vacuum in the English Border districts and increasing pressure from Scottish reiving. The consequences for the security of upland communities like Thirlwall and the prosperity of their leading families is vividly documented by the official correspondence and records collected in the Calendar of Border Papers.

At the Middle March bills, presented on 13–19 April 1589/90, Richard Thirlwall lodged complaint against Wille's Arche Elliot of Stychill Hill, Robine Elliot of Bohomes, his son Dande, and others who had stolen from Thirlwall six oxen, six kye, and six young, two-year-old nowte (cattle) on 18 March 1589/90 (CBP I, 347, 349). On 14 January 1596/7, 50 wethers belonging to Albany Fetherstonehaugh of Fetherstonehaugh were driven off by Scottish raiders. The reivers were hotly pursued by Fetherstone's men, both horse and foot, plus 'divers of the country', but, when finally caught up with, the Scots counterattacked and many of the pursuers were wounded, including 'a gentleman being postmaster of Thirlwall' – ie Richard Thirlwall (CBP II, 240). Richard's grandmother, Elinor, was a Fetherstone and, over 20 years earlier, his father, Lancelot, had witnessed the will of Albany's homonymous grandfather (dated 5 November 1573 – Wills & Inventories I, 395, Albany Fetherstonhaugh), hinting at the kind of longstanding friendships and family ties which the border gentry could call upon when attempting to defend their property.

The persistence of such unsettled conditions in South Tynedale may partly explain the current dour, homogenous external appearance of the castle, which betrays no evidence of sixteenth-century modifications or additions. Evidently, the continuing need to protect property and person ruled out any move at this time to modernise the building and

bring its accommodation up to the standard increasingly expected by the Northumbrian gentry.

### The decline and abandonment of the castle

Previous accounts of the castle's history have suggested the castle was abandoned as a residence by the Thirlwall family in favour of their estates at Newbiggin near Hexham, after the English Civil War (Hodgson 1840, 148; Bates 1891, 327; Ryder 1997, 3). This is partly true but truncates and oversimplifies what was a longer drawn-out and more complex process.

In the early sixteenth century, Lancelot Thirlwall made 'a good marriage', taking as his bride Janet, one of the three Errington coheiresses. This brought into the family's possession a valuable estate centred on Newbiggin, just south of Hexham. Thereafter, Newbiggin rapidly seems to have become the Thirlwall's principal residence.<sup>11</sup>

The will of Lancelot Thirlwall, grandson of the earlier Lancelot, provides many clues as to how and when this occurred (Wills & Inventories II, 75–7). At this stage the ancestral ties with the South Tyne Valley were still sufficiently strong for Lancelot to insist that he be buried at Haltwhistle church, 'where my annsitors dothe lye', but he goes on to make specific bequests affecting the castle which illuminate its status:

*My title of the tithe corne of Thirlwall to my son Robert and my wife and to such as hath maintenance of the house of Thirlwall according to ancient custom thereof ... To my wife and my son Robert the postship of Thirlwall towards the maintenance of the house with the mill and Farlam Walls, and my wife to remain chief in the manor house of Thirlwall until Newbiggin fall or some other thing that she can be content withall.*

The text seems to imply that Newbiggin was considered the most desirable residence, but was not available at that stage because someone else was residing there, most probably Lancelot's father, Robert, who outlived his son and supervised the will. In other words Newbiggin had already become the principal residence, inhabited by the head of the lineage, whilst the eldest son dwelt at Thirlwall. Moreover it is evident that Lancelot himself already had many interests in the Newbiggin lands and the Hexham region. It is clear from the inventory taken on 4 January 1583 that his principal assets were the farming stock at Lamb Shield, the farm 0.5km north-east of Newbiggin.<sup>12</sup> He also held the Receivership of Hexham, which title he bequeathed to his eldest son, Robert.

The latter, despite being given responsibility for maintenance of 'the house of Thirlwall' and the postship of the district, is not mentioned in any other documents relating to the area. Robert was doubtless more concerned with the family's estates in Hexhamshire, initially his father's farm at Lamb Shield, and then the Newbiggin house and estate following the (unrecorded) death of his grandfather, the elder Robert, perhaps not long after. Instead, it is the second of Lancelot's sons, Richard, who is active in the area during the 1590s, as documented in the Calendar of Border Papers (see above), the implication being that Robert was already mainly resident at Newbiggin, whilst Richard had taken up residence in Thirlwall Castle.<sup>13</sup> Thus, by the last decades of the sixteenth century it is clear that the castle was already the less-favoured residence of the Thirlwall lineage, generally occupied by the heir apparent – the oldest son or senior brother – rather than the head of the family.

Robert died childless before 1606 at the latest, perhaps before 1604 when 'Richard Thurlewall' was listed among the freeholders of Tynedale in the Border Survey and 'houldeth certen lands in Thurlewall and payeth chief rent' (1604 Survey, 56). On his

brother's death, Richard succeeded to the full Thirlwall inheritance and it was probably his tenure which marked the decisive shift from Thirlwall.

In 1606, when he was convicted of recusancy for failing to attend Anglican church services (he was a Catholic), he was still entitled Richard Thirlwall of Thirlwall Castle. In 1625 he was convicted again, with his wife Frances, his property being valued for seizure of two-thirds in the following year as follows:<sup>14</sup> 'Newbiggin: capital messuage, 10 acres of land, 10 of meadow, 10 of pasture; Thirlwall: manor of Thirlwall and water mill; total value £16 per annum.'

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Richard by this stage must have been dividing his time between his 'capital messuage' at Newbiggin and his Thirlwall manor, and indeed may well have been largely resident at Newbiggin. Moreover there is no evidence that Richard and Frances produced any sons who might have resided at Thirlwall in their stead. Richard's successor, also called Richard (perhaps the elder's nephew), was buried on 19 February 1653/4, significantly at Hexham not Haltwhistle. Moreover the younger Richard, like his successors as owners of Thirlwall, John Thirlwall (1653/4–1699/1700) and William Thirlwall (1699/1700–1710), is denoted as 'of Newbiggin'.

The reasons why Newbiggin was preferred to Thirlwall are not hard to deduce. Newbiggin was located in a more accessible part of the Tyne Valley, closer to the centre of the county's social and political life. By contrast Thirlwall was essentially a remote upland manor, long plagued by chronic insecurity. The extant fabric of the castle bears no trace of sixteenth-century modernisation, presumably in large measure because of the continuing need to retain the defensible qualities of the residence. Although apparently maintained in reasonably good order, by the standards sixteenth-century gentry were coming to expect the castle must have seemed a rather grim place, with small windows letting in little light. Thus, by the early seventeenth century, either modernisation of the castle itself or the construction a new residence alongside would have been required to maintain an acceptable level of gentry accommodation on the Thirlwall manor. A second house of this standard, in addition to Newbiggin, was perhaps considered either unnecessary or beyond the family's means.

A further point should be noted which may have had some bearing on the fate of the castle. The Thirlwalls were staunch Catholics and apparently never wavered in their conviction. Throughout the course of the seventeenth century repeated fines for recusancy were imposed on virtually every branch of the family, including Richard Thirlwall himself in 1606 and again in 1626 as noted above.<sup>15</sup> Although it may be questionable as to how effectively some of these penalties were enforced, they would probably have drained the resources of the family over time, perhaps depriving it of the wherewithal to maintain two manor houses.

However, a possible replacement for Thirlwall Castle is recorded in the form of a large residence named 'Longbuyer Castle' depicted on Ogilby's map of the 'Tinmouth-Carlisle' road in 1675 and subsequently on Moll's map of 1724 and Kitchen's map of 1749. On the basis of the map evidence it probably stood on the north side of what is now the B6318 road at the present settlement of Longbyre.<sup>16</sup> Nothing is known of the history or ownership of this building. There is no mention of it in the Thirlwall family records assembled by Percy Hedley, and Thirlwall Castle itself is depicted in the same form as Longbuyer and Blenkinsopp castles on Ogilby's map, as though it was still a habitable gentry residence. The site is not shown on the detailed Military Road Survey of 1749, nor Armstrong's map of 1769, which distinctively marks the mansions of gentlemen in the form of a house pictograph

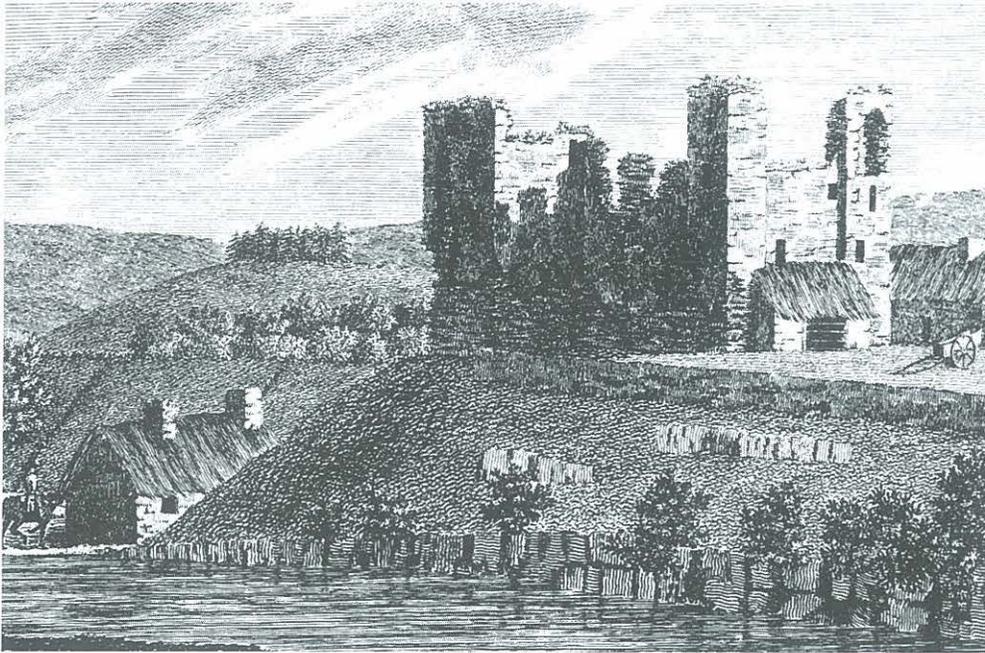


FIGURE 19.8 Sketch of Thirlwall Castle by Hutchinson, c1776. The castle is substantially intact, with the two corner turrets on the north side and the large south-east tower surviving particularly well. A lean-to structure is attached to the north wall and another, apparently thatched, structure abuts the west side of the castle. The depiction of a cart on flat ground to the north of the castle suggests the use of this space as a farmyard.



FIGURE 19.9 Watercolour by T Allom, 1832. The castle is depicted in a distinctly ruinous state, with its south-east tower prominent.

with the proprietor's name attached. This would suggest that, whatever its origin, the Longbuyer 'castle' had been demolished before 1769 at the latest and probably by 1749.

At any rate, for Thirlwall Castle the upheaval of the English Civil War, which saw the castle occupied by Scottish forces on behalf of Parliament between 1645–47 (see above), may well have been the final blow and there is no evidence that it served as a principal residence of any branch of the family thereafter. With the death of William Thirlwall, in 1710, the

male line was extinguished and the castle passed to William's daughter, Eleanor. When a register was taken of the estate held by Eleanor, as a catholic, in 1723, Thirlwall Castle was listed simply as a 'tenement' let to a 'Ridley' (the first name is lost) for £23. Newbiggin was described as a 'capital messuage', but Eleanor resided at neither, living instead with her stepmother's family at Warwick Hall in Cumberland. Thirlwall Castle occupied first place in the list of Eleanor's properties in Haltwhistle parish and was the most valuable of them, but it compares poorly with Newbiggin leased at £50/annum or Lambshiel at £64. Eleanor was married on 22 February 1738 to Matthew Swinburne, a younger son of the Capheaton house (Hodgson 1840, 146; Leslie 1924, 68), and in November 1748 she and her husband sold the castle, manor and properties in Haltwhistle to Henry, Earl of Carlisle, for £4000.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently it remained with the descendents of the Earl of Carlisle until 1979, when it was purchased by the Scott family, its present owners.

Following its abandonment by the Thirlwall family, it seems likely that the castle continued to function as a dwelling or farm building, or very likely as both, for farmworkers and stock attached to the Thirlwall (later the Earl of Carlisle's) estate. In this regard it may be significant that the interior of the castle was being cleared of debris in 1759, during which work 'on removing the rubbish, the flooring of a room was discovered' (Wallis 1769, 3–4).

Later eighteenth- and nineteenth-century representations of the castle show buildings, mainly lean-to structures, attached to the east and west walls of the castle, with the larger castle farm complex closely associated to the north (figs 19.8 & 19.9). Such sketches and paintings of the castle, which begin to appear after the opening up of the highland, former borderland zone after the construction of the Military Road turnpike, in the 1750s, and increased with the opening of the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway in 1838, provide the best clue to its state of preservation in the modern period. One of the earliest is Hutchinson's depiction of the castle in 1776 which shows it to be substantially intact, though clearly in a ruinous condition (see above). Still standing at the time was the north-east turret which had collapsed and been totally removed by the time of Hodgson's visit 34 years later.

The existence of farm buildings around the castle and at the Tipalt crossing, the present Holmhead, suggests that the increased accessibility of Thirlwall had led by the later eighteenth century to increased building activity. The consequences of this seem to be apparent in the degraded state of the castle at the time of Hodgson's visit (probably in 1810). This phase of activity also extended to nearby Greenhead and Gilsland (Alexander and Walker 1995), although the use of the castle ruins as a quarry appears to have all but ceased by the time of Hodgson's visit, since its condition does not subsequently appear to have worsened other than by processes of natural erosion – such as in 1831, when the east wall fell into the Tipalt (Hodgson 1840, 148). One of the last falls of masonry resulting from tree growth in the exposed core of the walls occurred in the mid-1980s and contributed to a growing awareness of the structure's increasingly fragile state, which in turn led to the implementation of measures to conserve and consolidate it.

In addition to the abandonment of strong houses such as Thirlwall Castle, the pacification of the Borders in the seventeenth century had a number of tangible consequences, including improved communications, the establishment or expansion of village settlements such as Gilsland and Greenhead, and a change of economic focus from pastoral to industrial. Indeed, within a century of the castle's abandonment there is evidence that the mineral resources of the estate were increasingly being regarded from a commercial perspective. A summary of mineral resources on the Thirlwall estate, undertaken in 1744 by Thos Westgarth,<sup>18</sup> and a

Valuation of Thirlwall Estate<sup>18</sup> from the same year, summarised these natural resources and estimated their potential commercial value. There is also an indication that some resources already had a history of exploitation, notably in the comment: 'the colliery now thought but of little or no value' (*ibid*).<sup>19</sup> The majority of industrial workings lie south-east of Thirlwall, in an arc extending from Blenkinsopp to Gilsland on, or bordering, Thirlwall Common (south side). Most are the remains of old coal pits and mines, but some contain features associated with industries that use coal as fuel. Placenames such as 'Old Limekilns' and 'Old Kilns', along with the remains of tile sheds and clay pits amongst coal workings south-west of Greenhead are all representative of the changing economic focus during this period. Fewer traces of workings are recorded north of the castle, but there are sporadic, small coal workings on the north part of Thirlwall Common, and remains of quarrying (whether for stone or coal is not specified) in several places along the valley of the Tipalt. This phase of industrial activity in the history of Thirlwall township lasted well into the second half of the twentieth century.

## *Conclusions*

Little is known about the history of the area of Thirlwall following the abandonment of the Roman Wall in the early fifth century until the establishment of feudal lordship in the medieval period, when documentary sources reveal clear evidence of a castle at Thirlwall, built in the mid-fourteenth century to defend and protect the landholdings and interests of the Thirlwall family who we know to have been resident in the manor of the same name from at least the later thirteenth century. There is no firm evidence for a suspected twelfth or thirteenth-century-residential structure upon the present castle site, although an oval enclosure, which incorporates the standing remains of the castle at one end, is visible on an aerial photograph of the site and might represent an earlier fortification. Excavation may yet resolve questions regarding the existence and date of earlier activity.

The role of the castle up to at least the mid-sixteenth century was primarily as a manorial stronghold for a local gentry lineage; and secondly as a local stronghold in the defence of the Border until the decline in Anglo-Scottish hostilities rendered it obsolete. It seems to have been abandoned as a place of residence after the Civil War, and eventually came into the hands of the Swinburne family through marriage to the surviving Thirlwall heiress. It was subsequently sold to the Earl of Carlisle, as part of the Thirlwall estate, in 1748.

Whether viewed purely as an historic entity revealed through documentary sources or as the archaeological remains of a feudal and military installation, the study of Thirlwall Castle cannot be divorced from that of its wider locality. Further enquiry could be directed towards the organisation of the medieval township of Thirlwall and comparison of the site with equivalent, privately-owned gentry residences in South Tynedale.

## *Acknowledgements*

The research on which this paper is based was undertaken as part of the Northumberland National Park Authority's project to conserve and interpret the remains of Thirlwall Castle. We would like to thank Albert Weir (project officer), Robin Kent (project architect), Nick Graham, Gary Knox and Raymond Craig of Historic Building Services, Paul Frodsham (National Park Archaeologist) and Peter Ryder for useful discussions regarding various aspects of the project while work was in progress.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Liber Feodorum I, 202; cf Kapelle 1979, 130, 268 (n39). The extent of the barony is discussed by Hodgson 1840, 342, 363. It comprised the vills (townships) of Langley, Warden, Fourstones, Allerwash and Haydon in Warden parish and Featherstonhaugh, Wyden, Redpath and Blenkinsopp in Haltwhistle parish.
- <sup>2</sup> The placenames of South Tynedale and their implications for understanding early-medieval settlement in the valley are currently being studied by Phillip Wood. The authors of this report are grateful to Mr Wood for discussing these questions in advance of publication of his work.
- <sup>3</sup> An agreement made in 1239 between the prioress and convent of Lambley Nunnery and the prior and convent of Hexham Abbey, regarding pasture rights in the lands of Byres, was witnessed by one Adam de Thirlwall (cited by Hodgson 1840, 93). It is difficult to relate this Adam to any Thirlwalls documented later, however.
- <sup>4</sup> Harleian MS 1448, fo54. The document represents the abstract made of one of the early title deeds which Richard Thirlwall produced when registering his pedigree with the herald Richard St George during the latter's visitation in 1615 (Visitations, 1615, 119 no8). It is cited by Hodgson 1840, 147 and Bates 1891, 11, 325 (both quoting Latin text) and Cathcart King 1983, 372 n265, where the manuscript reference is corrected.

*Noverint universi per presentes me Johannem Thirlwall juniorem constituisse et in loco meo possuisse Philippum Thirlwall ad liberandum nomine meo Johanni Thirlwall seniori domino castri et manerii de Thirlwall, 1369.*

*John Thirlwall junior appoints Philip Thirlwall to act in his stead to deliver to John Thirlwall senior, lord of the castle and manor, perhaps because John junior himself would be absent on campaign that year near Calais and the Pays de Caux (see below re the Scrope v. Grosvenor heraldic trial).*

- <sup>5</sup> This John may be the Thirlwall who was struck down by Wallace when captaining the pele at Gargunock on the Forth, probably in 1297 (Thomas the Rhymer Wallace, IV, v, 213). He is probably the same 'John de Thirlewal, vallet of Sir Adam de Swyneburne,' who is recorded on the royal payroll receiving £4 6s for ten days service in April 1307 on an expedition trying to track down Robert the Bruce (CalDocScot ii, 512, no1923).
- <sup>6</sup> Hodgson (1840, 147), followed by Ryder (1997, 2) states that the castle was the residence of Rowland Blenkinsop in 1429. This should read Rowland Thirlwall, the error resulting from a simple misreading of the 1415 list of castles and fortalices in Northumberland (the source cited by Hodgson), which actually gives Roland de Thirlwall at Thirlwall Castle and is followed by John de Blekensope at Blenkinsopp Castle (Hodgson 1820, 27; but cf Bates 1891, 15 and note 9 below). No Blenkinsopp named Rowland is known at this or any other time, whilst Rowland Thirlwall figures in several fifteenth-century documents. Hodgson's copy of the manuscript may have been damaged at this point.
- <sup>7</sup> Acts of Scotland vi, 224, dated 3 February 1646; cf Journal of House of Commons iv, 305 (13 October 1645), Hodgson 1840, 148. The other garrisons were Newcastle, Carlisle and Hartlepool and Warkworth, Tynemouth and Stockton castles.
- <sup>8</sup> Dacre's 'plenished ring' is most vividly depicted by the plat drawn up in conjunction with his report in 1584, showing the fortifications as far south as Chollerton (PRO – MPF 284; reproduced in Bates 1891, between pages 78 and 79).

- <sup>9</sup> The original is preserved amongst the Harleian manuscripts (Harl MS 309, fo 202b.–203b). It was reprinted by Hodgson (1820, 26–30) and, from a more reliable copy, by Bates (1891, 12–20).
- <sup>10</sup> The original is preserved in the Cotton manuscripts, British Library (Cotton MS. Calig., B. vii fo 636) and reproduced by Hodgson 1828, 171–242 and, in a better version, by Bates 1891, 29–49)
- <sup>11</sup> Subsequently, at some point between between 1547–1608, the family apparently acquired the share of another of the Errington heiresses. In the 1547 Survey of the Manor of Hexham, Isabella Witforthe (Mitford), Robert Thirlwall and Antony Errington held ‘divers lands’ as copyholders – ie each of these three inheritors of the Errington estate presumably held a third part of these lands (Hinds 1896, 81), whereas, in the 1608 Survey of the manor, Richard Thirlwall was said to hold two thirds of Easter Grindredge (Greenridge), of East and West Newbiggin and Newbiggin mill (Hodgson 1897, 35, cf Hedley Papers NRO 3635/30).
- <sup>12</sup> However he is labelled Lancelot Thirlwall of Thirlwall in other documents, eg the will of John Fenwick of Walker dated 10 October 1580, where he is listed amongst the witnesses (Wills & Inventories II, 35).
- <sup>13</sup> Their mother, Thomasyne, had presumably vacated the castle on remarriage. The date of this second marriage is uncertain but was definitely prior to June 1602 (Hedley Papers – NRO 542/66).
- <sup>14</sup> Cited in the Hedley Papers (NRO 3635/30) and see note 13 below.
- <sup>15</sup> Full details assembled in the Hedley Papers (NRO 3635/30). Northumbrian recusancy in the early seventeenth century is discussed by Watts 1975, 81–6, with full references. See also Martin M, ‘Index of Northumberland Forfeitures in the Public Record Office’ (typescript, Newcastle Central Library, Local Studies Section).
- <sup>16</sup> Ogilby’s route seems to be following the present B6318 through Longbyre past Crook to the Poltross Burn. It is more difficult to judge the castle’s location on Moll and Kitchen’s maps. They might suggest a more southerly location for the ‘castle’ and the road, but their accuracy is questionable.
- <sup>17</sup> Although the Thirlwall family connection with the castle ended at this point, branches of the family have continued to reside locally ever since. W J Thirlwall, proprietor of a Farmers’ and General Ironmongery business in Haltwhistle, advertises in Leslie (1924), for example.
- <sup>18</sup> DUL–SC–N 49/38 & 39. Unpublished manuscript (Durham University Library).
- <sup>19</sup> Evidence from other sources suggest that coal has been worked in the area since at least the fifteenth century.

# Low Cleughs

## A bastle in its landscape

*Richard Carlton and Alan Rushworth*

### *Introduction*

**L**ow Cleughs Bastle (NGR NY 877867) lies midway between Low and High Leam farms on the north-west side of Redesdale, over which it commands excellent views to the south and south-east (fig 20.1). It is the most prominent surviving component of the former farmstead of Low Cleughs which stands a kilometre or so from the River Rede on the eastern edge of the deeply incised, wooded valley of its tributary, the Jointure Cleugh.<sup>1</sup> The sloping north side of Redesdale at this point is generally steep and exposed, suited only to the rough pasture which presently covers all but the lower slopes and valley bottom. Some measure of protection is afforded to the bastle site, however, by its close proximity to the wooded valley of Jointure Cleugh and by its location within a small platform-like area which Ryder contends may be in part artificial (Ryder 1991, 7). This is bounded to the south and east by a break in slope, the sharpness of which is enhanced by probable quarrying activity 20m south of the bastle. Sandstone bedrock lies close to the surface of this area, but soil cover in the small enclosed areas to the north, and in larger fields to the north and south, though not as rich as in the flat valley bottom, is deep enough to have supported arable farming, as evidenced by the extensive occurrence of ridge-and-furrow cultivation features. Settlements closely associated with Low Cleughs include High Cleughs, 0.3km to the north-west, Low Leam, 0.5km to the south-west, High Leam, 0.5km to the north, with the nearest village, West Woodburn, 1.5km to the east.

The Low Cleughs bastle site comprises several components, the principal of which is the stone bastle structure itself, described briefly below and more fully in an Appendix at the end of this chapter (see also McDowall 1970, 85; Ryder 1991, 3–6). Related monuments and features include two small rectangular enclosures. These, together with larger enclosed areas to the north, east and south similarly defined by the remains of walls and banks, contain ridge-and-furrow cultivation features. A smaller enclosure, of similar area to the bastle building, has been tentatively identified as a ‘paddock’ or second ruined building (Ryder *opcit.*, 7). The remains of quarrying, particularly to the south of the site, and signs of probable levelling, may also be regarded as distinct components within the complex of monuments and features comprising the site.

Low Cleughs Bastle itself (fig 20.2) is a rectangular building 13.3m by 7.2m, with walls 1.2–1.5m thick incorporating many features including, unusually, doorways at both ground and first-floor levels, beam sockets and slots, windows, and hearth corbelling. Although presently a roofless shell with upper parts of gables and the whole of the south corner fallen, its importance lies in its perceived status as a ‘superior’ class of bastle, suggested by its

relatively large size (c2.0m longer than the average bastle), the presence of three first-floor windows in the front elevation rather than the usual two (fig 20.3), and the positioning of both doorways in the long front wall (Ryder 1991). In Ryder's view its importance is further enhanced by the absence of any significant post-bastle modifications, the structure conforming well to the typical form of this class of building in having a non-domestic basement, possibly to house stock, below domestic accommodation (*ibid*).

Recent aerial photographs specifically commissioned by the Northumberland National Park Authority from Tim Gates provide excellent and revealing views of the farmstead complex as a whole (fig 20.4). Two such photographs were rectified to produce an image including both Low and High Cleughs (fig 20.5). This reveals a highly complex landscape and adds considerably to the detail of buildings and paddocks at Low Cleughs itself, previously best depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey plan. Elements of particular interest include a low enclosure bank around the bastle and hints of a previously documented building to the south. The land immediately around the bastle, bordered to the east by a hollow-way, itself possibly following the line of a former water course, and to the west by the present burn, appears heavily disturbed. Broad ridge-and-furrow is prominent to the east and west, while an extensive area of more recent, narrow ridge-and-furrow appears to the east and south-east, with another, more ambiguous fragment – possibly 'lazy-beds' – north-west of the bastle. Some of these features are also

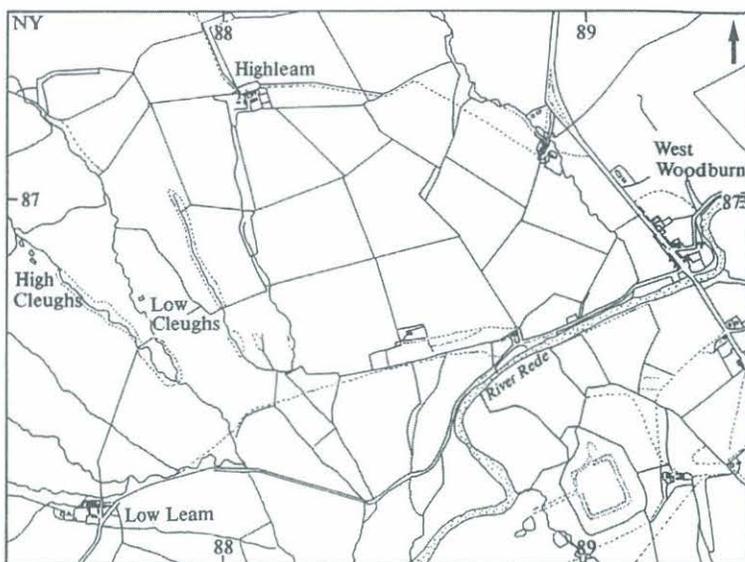
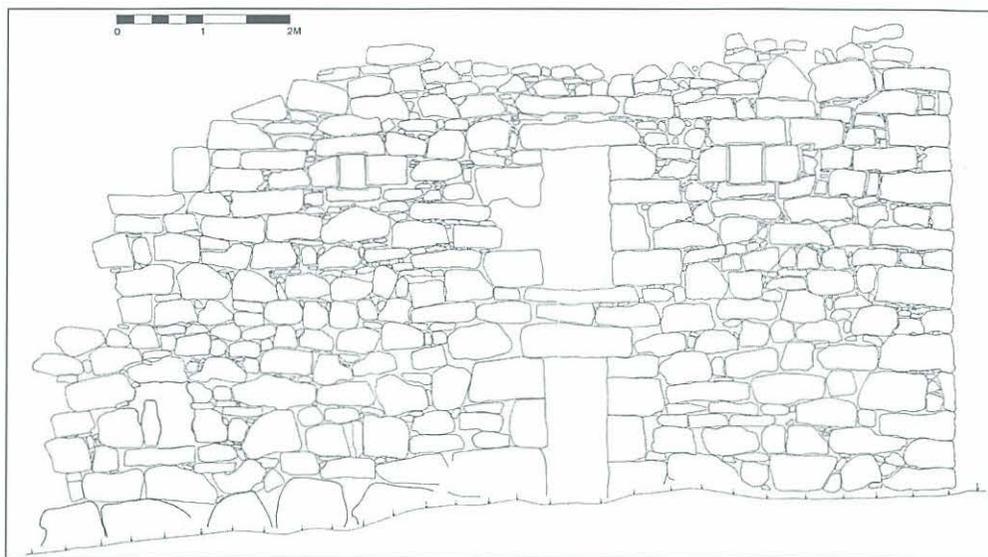


FIGURE 20.1 Location map: Low Cleughs Bastle. The eathwork shown in the SE corner is Habitancum Roman fort. MAP BASED ON OS DATA



FIGURE 20.2 General view of Low Cleughs Bastle, from the south-west, prior to consolidation work.

FIGURE 20.3 An elevation drawing of the south-facing main frontage of Low Cleughs Bastle, produced to inform the conservation work.



visible from the ground, but with the exception of pre-Enclosure Act banks and later hedge-lines and walls outside the immediate vicinity of the farmstead, only a few, fragmentary remains of associated structures and enclosure boundaries stand out. Notable amongst these is part of the paddock enclosure known to have existed to the north of the bastle. An area of disturbance to the south probably marks the site of the second structure known from early map sources, while low banks across hollow ground to the east of the bastle may suggest the presence of a previously undetected enclosure.

Low Cleughs Bastle, which now falls within Low Leam farm, owned by Mr John Scott, was subject to a programme of archaeological recording between 1991 and 1997 (Ryder 1991 & 1992; ASUD 1994; Archaeological Practice 1998b), culminating in work to consolidate the surviving masonry. The bastle is now open to the public and is managed by the Northumberland National Park Authority. Prior to the completion of structural works in 1997, the Park Authority commissioned a documentary study of the bastle (Archaeological Practice 1998a) which provides the basis of this paper.

### *Historical development*

Detailed documentary evidence for the area commences with a view of the landscape in the late twelfth century given in the grant from Robert de Umfraville to William Bertram and Aelysia, sister of the former, c1185 AD. Thereafter there are a number of thirteenth-century references to settlement at 'Leme', summarised by Hodgson (1827, 165). Both High and Low Leam are first mentioned in 1240,<sup>2</sup> when Nicholas de Aketon held the Greater Leam of the lady Sybilla de Morwick by the 20th part of a knight's fee, and Walter de Swethope held Little Leme of Gilbert de Umfreville by the annual payment of sixpence (*opcit* 164).<sup>3</sup> In 1291 the 'Leme with its members' (*ibid*) was one of the manors of Redesdale.<sup>4</sup> Although enigmatically suggestive, such references provide no provenance for the property known as Low Cleughs, merely observing that several holdings were included within the area known as the Leam. However, since this is itself a term probably derived from the proximity of a major road, in this case the Roman and later drove-way of Dere Street – which probably formed the eastern boundary of the manor of 'Leme' – it is not unlikely that a holding at

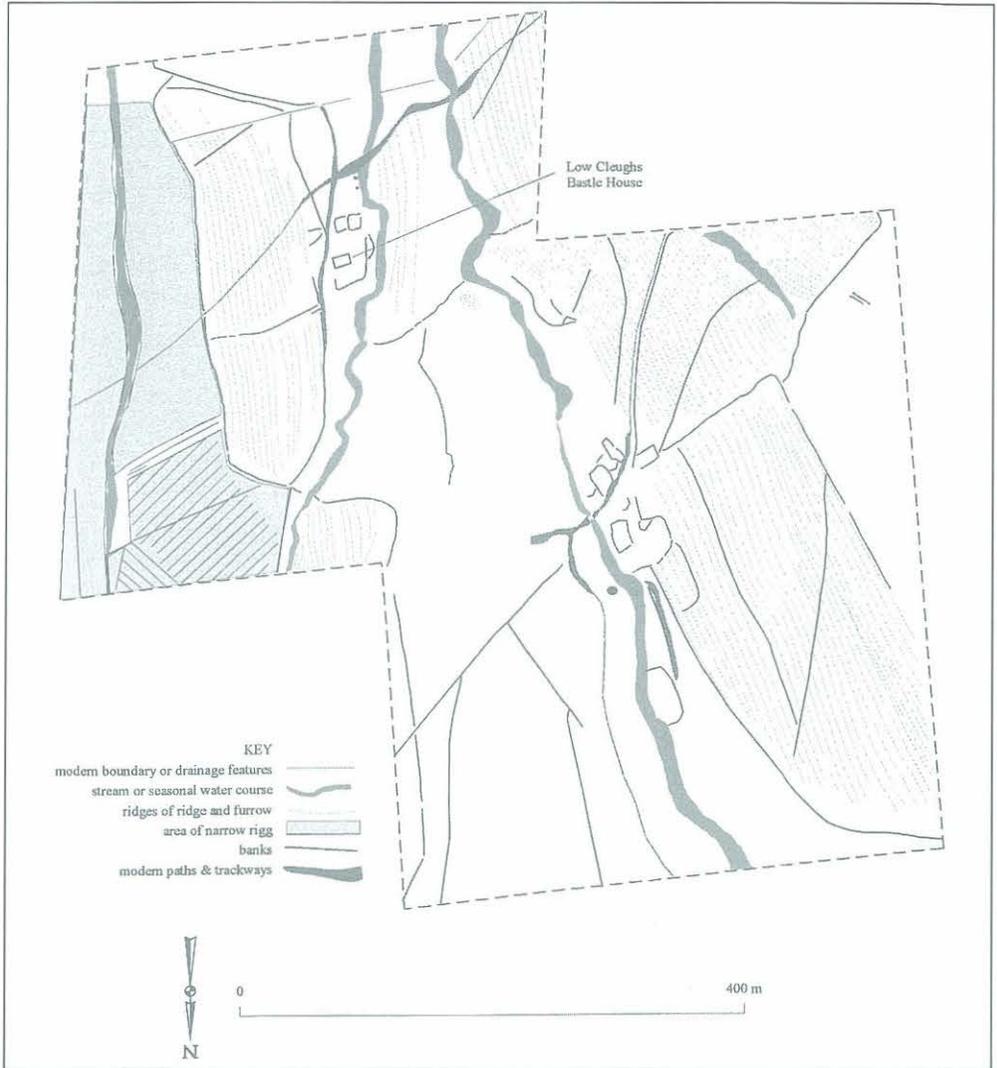
Low Cleughs, lying close to the west edge of that road, was one of those included as a 'member' of the Leam. While earlier settlement is not specifically documented, nor presently evidenced by surviving remains, the possibility that a medieval settlement at Low Cleughs is masked in the documents by phrases such as 'Leme with its members' (Hodgson 1827, 164) should not be discounted.

Documentary sources reveal clear evidence for settlement at Low Cleughs from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Low Cleughs farmstead itself is first documented in 1604 by The Border Survey which lists *Clues Feylde*, between *Nether* and *Upper Line*, as one of 27 holdings in the parish of *Cossenside Wintersteeds* (Sanderson 1891, 83). The property, elsewhere named *Clues Feilde* (*opcit* 89), is in the freehold of Barth and John Foster and consists of two dwellings each with an outhouse and nine acres of arable and meadow land. The rent payable on each property is one shilling, considerably more relative to land area than the rents payable at High and Low Leam. An earlier reference to their landholdings at Leam, a manuscript of 1598 enumerating crown possessions in Redesdale, includes amongst the names of the other principal proprietors a certain John Forster, proprietor of 'Over-Leam, Kinghouse, *Netherleam*, etc.' This shows that the same John Fo(r)ster mentioned in



FIGURE 20.4 Aerial view of Low Cleughs Bastle and High Cleughs farmstead complexes in their local landscape setting. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

FIGURE 20.5 Low Cleughs and High Cleughs and associated features derived from a tracing of rectified aerial photographs.



documents relating to Low Cleughs in 1604 and 1618 (Hodgson and Hodgson 1832), was locally resident before the end of the 16th century. That Cleughs Field is not mentioned in 1598 may suggest that bastle construction on that site had not yet commenced.

Whether the dwellings of 1604 occupied the same or different locations at Cleughs field, and whether either or both were located at Low Cleughs in particular, remain open questions. However, it may be presumed that at least one of the dwellings was the present Low Cleughs Bastle, since it is mentioned by name as a tenement of John Foster in 1618, with the property known as Cleughs Field, presumably High Cleughs, in the hands of Bartholmewe Foster. Therefore, it may be suggested that in 1604 Cleughs Field was a newly divided property consisting of two bastles with holdings of equal size, in turn suggesting that the first bastle – whether both were built simultaneously, or the divided inheritance of one caused the other to be built – was probably constructed in the twenty years or so before 1604. This places the construction of Low Cleughs Bastle in the last quarter of the sixteenth or very early seventeenth century. It may be significant that an inscribed stone appears to date the nearby

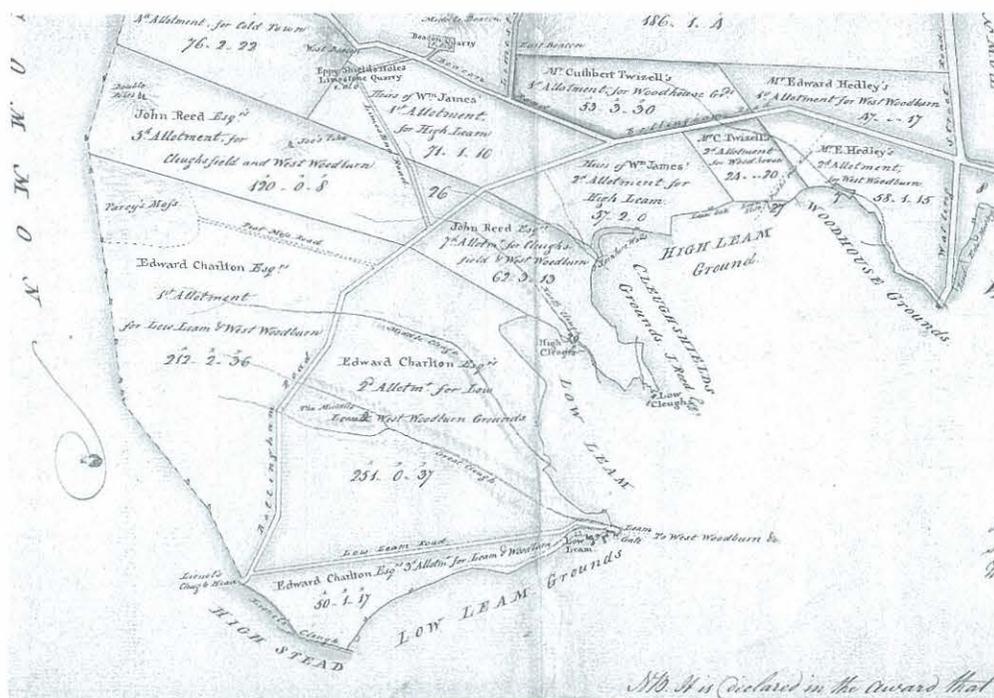


FIGURE 20.6 Extract from the Corseside tithe plan of 1839 (ref NRO 691/1/6/6. (REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY RECORDS OFFICE)

Low Leam bastle to 1602, with the initials ‘MC’ probably linking the bastle with the freeholder, Mathew Charlton, recorded at Low Leam by the 1604 border survey. In view of local contextual evidence for bastle building at this time, notably at Low Leam in 1602, it is considered highly likely that the earliest documented settlement at Low Cleughs included the present bastle structure. The tendency for bastles to be built in clusters, partly for defensive purposes, circumstantially adds to the likelihood of an early seventeenth-century date for Low Cleughs.

Bastle construction in the Border valleys, including Redesdale, occurred towards the end of a period in which the social framework displayed a character quite unlike that of any other part of Britain, though similar in many respects to contemporary frontier systems elsewhere in Europe (Rushworth and Carlton 1999). The development of defensible stone bastles such as Low Cleughs in a band within 30km of the border throughout Cumbria and Northumberland (Field and Jones 1956; McDowell 1970; Ryder 1992 & Chapter 18; Salter 1997) seems to have been a rapid phenomena related principally to the defensive needs and relatively high status of certain small farmers, rather than springing from any preceding building tradition. Earlier defensible buildings in stone, including royal castles such as Harbottle (Archaeological Practice 1998c; Chapter 17) towers such as Elsdon (Chapter 18) and hall houses such as Thirlwall (Chapter 19), were rather grander, built for feudal landowners rather than small tenant farmers; ‘polite’ as opposed to ‘vernacular’ (Chapter 18). The relationship between bastle construction and the prevailing socio-economic climate has been summarised by McDowell, who argues that where a clan system existed the demands upon the members may have been less onerous than those made of most peasants by feudal lords, allowing clan members to accumulate sufficient wealth and providing them with the necessary labour-time to build a stone house (McDowell 1970, 70–1). Although the social and military conditions of the period allowed such farmers certain

freedoms not enjoyed by small farmers elsewhere, it did not enable them to escape from the realities of subsistence farming in a marginal environment. Farming in Redesdale was sustainable only through transhumance, – the use of summer grazing grounds far from the farmstead – and a pastoralist transhumant link between Low Cleughs and Ramshope is revealed in the 1618 rental, with the latter serving as upland summer shieling grounds for the former.

It is clear from later documentary sources that the farmstead at Low Cleughs subsequently consisted of two principal structures, one being the present bastle, the other a building of similar proportions. Cartographic representations of the site from Armstrong in 1769 to the Corsenside tithe map of 1839 (fig 20.6) visually differentiate these two buildings, perhaps suggesting different uses or states of repair. Following the purchase around 1807, and subsequent annexation to Low Leam of Low Cleughs Field by Mr Charlton of Sandhoe, Hodgson seems to imply that the bastle was in some disrepair in 1827, describing it as intact, ‘*all but the quoins*’ (Hodgson 1827, 165). However, we know that occupation continued at Low Cleughs farmstead until after 1841, thereby suggesting that the building then occupied was a second, newer structure visibly distinct from the ‘*ancient pele*’ (Hodgson 1827, 165). Although both dwellings listed at Cleughs Field in 1604 were associated with outhouses, a farm building of the form and size of the second structure at Low Cleughs would have been unusual for the period up to the mid-eighteenth century. It is not impossible, therefore, that the second building was built upon the foundations of a former bastle. By the time of the first Ordnance Survey in 1860, the second building had fallen or been removed, appearing on the map as the small, rectilinear enclosure subsequently noted in several accounts, which remains partially visible on the ground and clearly so on recent aerial photographs.

With regard to the other components of the farmstead complex it is clear that the enclosure still visible up-slope of the bastle is physically most closely related to it, while a second enclosure of similar size, known from the first OS map, is related most directly to the second building, of which ambiguous traces remain visible, although all may be regarded as mutually integral to the farmstead complex. The outfields of the farmstead, named in the tithe document of 1839, along with their associated cultivation features, are also clearly related, their boundary banks exhibiting similar features of construction and patterns of erosion and decay to those bordering the farmstead. The banks probably post-date the bastle since they appear to respect the farmstead and do not seem to have been cut by it. However, they remain imprecisely dated and it may be that boundaries around the periphery of the original Cleughs Field are more ancient than those lying directly between Low Cleughs and High Cleughs or Low Leam.

High Cleughs, though clearly a discrete settlement complex, displays certain similarities to Low Cleughs in the presence of a (probable) bastle structure with other, later structures, each associated with small enclosures and outfields. The two farmsteads are divided physically by the Low Cleughs burn but united in their historic and recent associations with Low Leam. Together, the three bastles may have formed a mutually supportive loose aggregation, although they are not sufficiently clustered to be regarded as a discrete settlement or hamlet.

The population of Redesdale which had remained relatively high since the high medieval period, did not begin to fall until large-scale industrialisation in the nineteenth century lured poor farmers, their tenants and servants to the cities. We note, for example, a fall in the number of occupied dwellings at Low/High Cleughs and Low Leam from five to one in a

Table 20.1 Census data relating to Low Cleughs held at Northumberland County Records Office

	Low Cleughs	High Cleughs	Low Leam
1841 census	George Hislop 35 (agricultural labourer) Sarah Hislop 30 Elenor Hislop 7 Elizabeth Hislop 9	1. Edward Riddle 55 Agricultural labourer Ann Riddle 35 Fanny(?) Riddle 15 Alexander Riddle 13 Sarah Riddle 7 2. John Young 35 (agricultural labourer) Isabella Young 30 Margaret Young 6 Joseph Young 4 Isabella Young 2	1. Ann Riddle 70 Walter Riddle 30 + 8 family members and 2 servants 2. Walter Smith 35 Mary Smith 30 + 4 family members
1851 census		<i>'Cleughsfield':</i> Edward Riddle 63 (agricultural labourer) b. N. Elsdon Ann Riddle 46 born Bellingham Robert Riddle (son) 9 (scholar) b. Corsenside	1. Edward Riddle 57, (farmer) 2. Riddle family 3. one other family (total 17 people)
1861 census		Edward Riddle 75 (agricultural labourer) b. N. Elsdon Ann Riddle 58 b. Bellingham Thomas Thompson (grandson) b. Corsenside	1. Edward Riddle 67 born N. Elsdon Ann Riddle 65 born Bellingham + 3 children and 3 servants 2. family of 7 persons 3. family (absent)
1871 census	(See <i>Low Leam cottage</i> )	<i>'Clews field':</i> Unoccupied	1. Edward Riddle 77 Ann Riddle 75 + 4 other relatives and 3 servants 2. Ann Riddle 62 born Chollerton Elizabeth Charlton (sisters) <i>Low Leam cottage:</i> Unoccupied (may refer to Low Cleughs)
1881 census			1. William Riddle with family and 3 servants 2. Unoccupied cottage

matter of 30 to 40 years between 1841–81 (Table 20.1).

The census records appear to show that Low Cleughs was abandoned as a dwelling place between 1841, when the agricultural labourer George Hislop was resident with his wife and two young children,<sup>5</sup> and 1851 when no record either of the family or property is given. Their evacuation from the farmstead – noted some 20 years previously as ‘primitive’ even in the context of notoriously backward Redesdale (Hodgson 1827, 165) – may have been prompted by the subsequent birth of twin daughters, baptised at Corsenside in October 1843. At the same time, in 1841, two dwellings were occupied at High Cleughs, both by agricultural labourers and their nuclear families, and two at Low Leam, one employing two servants.

In 1851 there is a single occupied household at High Cleughs, now named *Cleughsfield*, and three at Low Leam, although the total number of occupants there dropped by one to 17. Three of the four families represented were of the Riddle surname, including the family of Edward Riddle surviving from 1841 at High Cleughs. In 1861 the same family persisted at *High Cleughs field*, along with three occupied dwellings at Low Leam. By the time of the 1871 census *Clews field* had been finally abandoned, being recorded as unoccupied, along with a cottage at Low Leam, but Edward Riddle lived on with his family and three servants in the main farmhouse at Low Leam. In 1881 only the main farmhouse, occupied by a Riddle family with three servants, survived as a dwelling at Low Leam, with another building noted as an unoccupied cottage. It may be that this building, possibly the bastle, remained in occasional use as a seasonal or occasional dwelling for hired or seasonal labourers.<sup>6</sup> It is of interest to note the proliferation of surnames in the Corsenside parish records around this period, suggesting the breakdown of traditional clan, or surname bonds, which had played such a crucial part in frontier society during the bastle-building period. A similar point has been made with regard to contemporary settlement at High Rochester, with note also made of the opportunity for confusion presented by the appearance of several homonymous individuals at the same place (Rushworth 1996, 22).

In the modern period the former Low Cleughs farmstead, incorporated in farmland belonging to Low Leam farm, has served little social or economic purpose, although tracks leading to and from the bastle have continued to be used as routes within the farm. The land upon which the bastle sits is suited only to rough grazing for sheep and hardy cattle, whose presence may have contributed to the rate of its decline into ruin.<sup>7</sup>

## *Conclusions*

A complete catalogue of components and features comprising the site of Low Cleughs Bastle lies outside the scope of this paper. However, the results of documentary study make it possible to identify and historically authenticate certain visible features, as well as suggesting the presence of others which may be lost or presently obscured. Furthermore, we can begin to conceptualise the complex in its landscape context, establishing associations – visible, familial, tenurial and functional – with other remains at various periods, notably at Low Leam and High Cleughs, as well as with nearby Dere Street, the ancient *leam* itself. Thus, whether regarded purely as an historic entity revealed through documentary sources or as a landscape feature and former working farmstead, Low Cleughs cannot be divorced from neighbouring settlements, particularly Low Leam and High Cleughs.

Evidence for pre-bastle settlement at Low Cleughs may yet be preserved in the remains of field systems and building remains revealed by aerial photography. There is an opportunity for selective small-scale trenching to establish key stratigraphic relationships

between such remains, allowing surviving structural remains to be keyed in with what is known of the social history of the site. In particular, the nature and date of the second building on the site, now barely visible at foundation level, merit further enquiry.

### *Acknowledgements*

The writers wish to thank Albert Weir (Project Manager), Robin Dower (Project Architect), Paul Frodsham (Park Archaeologist), Peter Sheehan (of the Archaeological Practice) and Peter Ryder for information provided and work completed during the Low Cleughs Project. The landowner, Mr John Scott of Low Leam Farm, is thanked for granting access to the site and for his enthusiastic support throughout.

### *Appendix. Peter Ryder's description of Low Cleughs Bastle (1991)*

The bastle is a rough parallelogram in plan, measuring c13.3 x 7.45m externally; the walls are 1.3–1.4m thick, diminishing by internal set-backs to c 1.05m at first-floor level. The building is constructed of large and irregular-shaped blocks of local sandstone, roughly coursed in parts, with 'galleting' or packing pieces between them. The only cut dressings are those forming the surrounds of the two doorways and the three first-floor windows on the south, and, less smoothly tooled, the angle quoins. The walls generally stand to eaves level, although the actual gables have fallen along with the south corner. The inner faces of the central section of the south-east wall, and of parts of the north-west wall, have collapsed.

The basement is entered by a single doorway set to the right of centre in the long south-east wall. This has a plain square head, and jambs made up of massive blocks roughly alternating long and short; the arris of both jambs and lintel is rounded; there is a rebate for a single door, with an upper drawbar tunnel in the north-east jamb and a lower one in the south-west; the check for the end of the lower drawbar has been crudely enlarged at some time. The inner lintel has fallen, taking with it any evidence for a harr-hung door. The only other opening at basement level appears to have been a single splayed vent towards the south-west end of the south-east wall; its external surround, formed by rough unworked stones, has been partly removed. A ragged hole in the south-west wall does not appear to be an original feature.

The first floor has been carried by a series of transverse beams; sockets for most of these survive in the internal face of the north-west wall, immediately below the first-floor setback. At the south-west end three oversailing courses running the full width of the building clearly carried the original first-floor hearth.

The upper doorway of the bastle is set in the south-east wall, directly above that to the basement; it is similar in character to the door below, except that there only appears to have been a single drawbar (its tunnel in the south-east jamb, which has partly fallen), although cuts in the internal face of the internal north-east jamb indicate that a second bar could be dropped into position beneath the drawbar. Harr sockets survive both in the lintel and the sill of the doorway.

There are three windows in the south-east wall, one to the right of the doorway and two to the left; the head and south-east jamb of the furthest left window have fallen ('recently' according to the RCHME in 1970) and lie amongst collapsed masonry at the foot of the wall. Each window has been square-headed, with a chamfered surround; those at each end of the wall have had grilles of iron bars, two horizontal and two vertical in each case, whilst the

smaller central window has had a single vertical bar. The head and sill of the two outermost windows also show sockets for harr-hung shutters; the internal north-east jamb of the window furthest from the door, the largest opening of the three, also has an inclined groove and socket (rather like that on the internal jamb of the upper doorway) by which a bar could be dropped in place to secure the shutters.

The only other window at first-floor level is a splayed loop in the centre of the north-west wall, without any cut dressings. There are a number of square-headed wall cupboards or lockers at first-floor level; two in the north-east end wall, one at each end of the north-west wall, and one at the north-east end of the south-west end wall. This last cupboard, along with that in the adjacent part of the north-west wall, must have been beneath the firehood which probably spanned the full width of this end of the building; two sockets at the south-west end of the long north-west wall, set at a lower level than the former attic floor, presumably carried the hood timbers.

A second internal set-back at the north-east end of the building, coupled with sockets for a series of transverse beams in the adjacent part of the north-west wall, indicate the existence of an attic floor. This may not have extended the full length of the house, as the south-west end of the roof space was occupied by the fire hood. A rough cavity in the internal face of the north-west wall 1.65m from the south-west end may indicate the position of a roof truss.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Clough is interpreted by Beckensall as dialect for Old English *cloh*, meaning ravine (Beckensall 1992, 8), deep valley or ravine/dell (Beckensall 1977, 54 and 59). This is commonly incorporated in place names locally.
- <sup>2</sup> Elsewhere Hodgson gives this date as 1244, stating that the 'Barony of Humframvill' (of Gilbert de Umfreville, Earl of Angus) then contained a great many properties in Redesdale, amongst which were included: '*Walter de Sweethope holds the Lower Leam by sixpence. – Nicholas de Acton holds Upper Leam of Lady Sybilla de Morwick by a twentieth part of a Knight's fee*' (Hodgson 1827, 20).
- <sup>3</sup> Original references contained in the *Liber Feodorum* (1923, 1122): '*Walterus de Swethop' tenet Parvam Lem per vj.d. – Nicholaus de Aketon' tenet Maiorem Lem de domina Sibilla de Morwyc per XX<sup>am</sup> partem unius militis.*
- <sup>4</sup> Although a slightly different date again is given, this is probably the same reference as that given elsewhere by Hodgson to a case at the Newcastle assizes in 1293 when Umfreville insisted that certain privileges he claimed extended over Harbottle and its several members, including *Leme* (Hodgson 1827, 28).
- <sup>5</sup> One of the children, Elisabeth, appears in the baptism records of the previous year, 1840, at which time she would have been eight or nine years old.
- <sup>6</sup> The nearby Hole bastle served in this way until the mid-20th century.
- <sup>7</sup> The present farmer at Low Leam, Mr John Scott, retains the horns of a goat which ran wild upon Low Leam land for many years during the early part of the century, doubtless contributing its own erosive impact to the abandoned bastle structure.

# Metal hills and kelties

## Signposts to an industrial past

*Iain Hedley*

### *Introduction*

The Northumberland National Park is a sparsely populated, largely marginal upland landscape dominated by hill farms and grouse moors. Until the arrival of turnpikes in the eighteenth century and the railways in the nineteenth century, much of this landscape was relatively inaccessible and local resources were exploited, wherever practical, for local need. Many of these small-scale ventures left their indelible mark upon the landscape, whilst others require reconstruction from oddments of the historical record and often fragmentary archaeological remains. This contribution will briefly assess the archaeology of a small number of primary extractive industries in the National Park, namely coal, iron, stone, lead, and vein minerals, and will illustrate these where possible by reference to sites at which the Park Authority has undertaken work over the past decade. It will also examine the development of transportation and briefly outline the impact of the water supply industry. It will not consider, largely due to lack of space, manufacturing industries such as textiles, food processing, distilleries and smithing, though these were no less important to the social and economic well-being of local communities. The definition of the National Park boundary is here taken very liberally and a number of adjacent sites will be included where these demonstrate a significant impact on local communities.

### *Coal*

Within the Park there are numerous deposits of coal throughout the Carboniferous succession. Rarely exceeding a metre in thickness, and usually considerably less than this, the coals invariably contain shaly bands, resulting in high ash content. Faulting is frequent and groundwater saturation is commonplace (Frost and Holliday 1980, 84). The principal coals are the Thirlwall Coal in the south-west, the Plashetts Coal in the Upper North Tyne, and the Foulwals Coal in the Rede and Grasslees Valley areas.

Coal fragments are not uncommon finds from Roman excavations along Hadrian's Wall, such as Sewingshields (J Bayley in Haigh and Savage 1984, 107) where, not untypically, coal was found in association with metal working. Coal has also been found on native sites such as the Romano-British stone-built rectilinear settlement at Tower Knowe (Jobey 1973, 75). It is likely that local sources were exploited on a small scale probably from shallow workings on the outcrop. Such shallow intermittent scratchings on the outcrops are likely to have persisted up to and including the medieval period, though peat and timber are likely to have been the main sources of fuel, with perhaps some charcoal production for metallurgical processes.

The surveyors of the Borderlands in 1604, wrote of the '*store of Cole*' within the manor

of Harbottle and although unworked at that time they valued it at 13s 4d annually (Sanderson 1891, 108,110). In North Tynedale, despite 'great stores' of coal there were no mines in use at that time as it was noted the inhabitants 'have such store of Turfe and Peate as they will not bestowe labor to get coales' (Sanderson 1891, 77). Further they noted that 'if the Country weare inhabited by industrious men of Trade, the mynes would bee of great value farr exceeding the rate set downe' which was then 11 6s 8d (*ibid* 75). Perhaps, as Winchester (2000, 139) suggests coal would have cost the local inhabitants money whereas peat digging cost only labour. Indeed, peat where it is sufficiently dry has been 'cast' (dug up) in most areas of the Park, a practice that was carried out commercially at Crag Flow, west of Nunwick, until 1991.

The surveyors of 1604 produced an over-optimistic assessment and one that was not borne out by the true quality of the coal itself, nor its distance from commercial markets. However, for the relatively small-scale rural industries and domestic hearth, remote from alternative supply, this poor quality, shaly coal was sufficient. The 1604 survey was essentially a land valuation conducted on behalf of the Crown which would soon after disperse the estates amongst a new class of commercially minded landowners eager to maximise the potential of rents and mineral resources. Certainly, there was sufficient knowledge of the nature and extent of the reserves to allow the surveyors to record their value, suggesting that at least some commercial extraction may have occurred, within living memory of the survey, or perhaps was then being exploited on a non-commercial minor scale.

By the early 1620s, coal was being mined on a commercial basis in the Grasslees Valley as attested by an Agreement of 1621 between the Lord of the Manor, Theophilus Lord Howard of Waldon (mineral owner) and Roger Widdrington of Cartington, granting the latter 'full power, liberty and authority' over the Paunchford and Loaning Burn coalfield (NRO 1356). The Agreement imposed a number of restrictions upon the scale of Widdrington's operations, setting out that he 'shall not have more than one wrought pitt going at any one tyme, nor shall not have more than two workmen, laborers or hewers in the same pitt at any one tyme'. The nature of these restrictions, common to most mineral leases in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century uplands, and the technology employed, may have represented the most cost-effective and safe means of working shallow deposits in remote areas where demand was generally low (Linsley 2002, 209). However, they may also represent an attempt by the mineral owner to deliberately limit output. If the latter is correct it may suggest that at this date there were other leased pits in operation in the area or other leases available to let, thus requiring mineral owners to introduce some form of regulation in their leases to protect what passed at that time for a local market. Alternatively it may have been a means of ensuring that the lessee did not produce too little to settle the price of the lease, nor too much to make a profit at the mineral owner's expense. Extensive areas of outcrop workings and shallow bell pits can still be traced on the Fourlaws Coal in Redesdale, particularly around and across the Otterburn Ranges, and on the Plashetts Coal in the Upper North Tyne Valley where they were locally known as 'fairy holes' or 'kelties' (Miller 1887, 124).

From the later eighteenth century there was a gradual shift in many of the early coalfields away from the exhausted outcrops, to deeper shafts producing larger shaft mounds located away from the outcrop (fig 21.1), where horse gin or cog and run methods of winding may have been employed. From about 1800 some of the more enterprising landowners employed the services of professional colliery viewers to assess the potential of their coal reserves. The



FIGURE 21.1 An aerial view showing the large nineteenth-century shaft mounds of the Penchford colliery and a cluster of shallower bell pits surviving as parch marks against the boundary with neighbouring High Shaw, which was worked as a separate lease. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

encouraging reports of these viewers, together with improved transportation, led to the investment of often substantial sums in various mining ventures (Day and Charlton 1981, 273).

At Carter Fell at the head of Redesdale, the turnpiking of the coach road across the Border during the early years of the nineteenth century provided the opportunity for the construction of a spur from the Scottish side across the desolate moor to coals high up the Batinghope Burn. It is said that as many as 90 carts were sometimes there in the morning, waiting to be filled and transported to Jedburgh for use as house coal (Clough 1889, 54).

From the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a considerable increase in demand for coal from the growing lime burning industry. Following the Drainage Act of 1846, the availability of local coal combined with the presence of fireclays and shales led to the construction of numerous rural brick and tile works serving local need (Day and Charlton 1981, 288), such as Brieredge (near Hesleyside), Redshaw and Garretshiels (near Elsdon), and Ovenstones in the Grasslees Valley (Frost and Halliday 1980, 87; Miller 1887, 124).

A larger scale of colliery operation was undertaken at Plashetts Colliery, now beneath Kielder Reservoir (fig 21.2). Although beyond the Park boundary, it had a major effect on the whole community of the Upper North Tyne through employment and supplies of coal for local domestic fuel. The Plashetts Coal had been worked extensively from at least the eighteenth century, when bell pits were worked on Plashetts Moor for the benefit of the Duke of Northumberland's tenants (Clough 1889, 53). In the later nineteenth century, the

availability of low cost transport offered by the Border Counties Railway allowed a substantial increase in the development of coal working. The 'round' coal (big lumps) was considered a fair house and gas coal, and the smaller coal was converted into coke in ovens close to Plashetts Station, though the greater proportion was transported by rail to limekilns in Liddesdale. The 'brasses' (nodules of iron pyrite) were collected and sent by rail to Kirkcaldy where they were used in the production of sulphuric acid, and the 'catheads' (ironstones) were sold for smelting. The fireclay was also extracted and used for brick and tile making (Clough 1889, 53). In 1914, Plashetts Colliery employed 254 men, but it went into

FIGURE 21.2 Plashetts Colliery in the early twentieth century. This view is down Slater's Incline towards the coal drops and the junction with the Border Counties railway. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WP COLLIER. FROM OWEN 1998. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE BELLINGHAM HERITAGE CENTRE)



FIGURE 21.3 The Thirlwall Colliery coal drops situated between Greenhead and Gilsland on the north side of the Newcastle to Carlisle railway.



decline after the First World War and from the 1930s until its eventual closure in the early 1960s employed less than a dozen men below ground.

Large-scale mining ventures also sprang up around Haltwhistle in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At Thirlwall Colliery some coal working had taken place from a drift mine as early as 1834 but it was not until the early twentieth century that substantial investment was made. By 1910 the Thirlwall Coal Company Limited had opened up a new drift and constructed coal drops (structures facilitating the transfer of coal from narrow gauge colliery wagons to broad gauge mainline wagons) close to the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway (fig.21.3). Although the colliery was relatively short-lived and much of the site cleared soon after, the coal drops remain an impressive structure. Constructed using buff-coloured bricks, it appears from a distance to be sandstone leaving many on a passing train to wonder what a strange looking castle they have passed.

Coal continued to be worked below ground at one or two isolated sites within the Park in the later twentieth century, the last at Robin Rock in Wark Forest closing as recently as 1989. An opencast mine was operated at Brieredge near Bellingham between 1984 and 1988 but an application for an extension was refused (NNPA 2000, 18), and thus an extensive area of earlier shallow workings has survived almost certain destruction. These early mining landscapes, together with the fragments of the more developed later ventures, serve to remind us of the smaller-scale coal working landscapes of the Great Northern Coalfield which have largely been destroyed through land reclamation. This rarity significantly enhances the importance of the remains within the National Park.

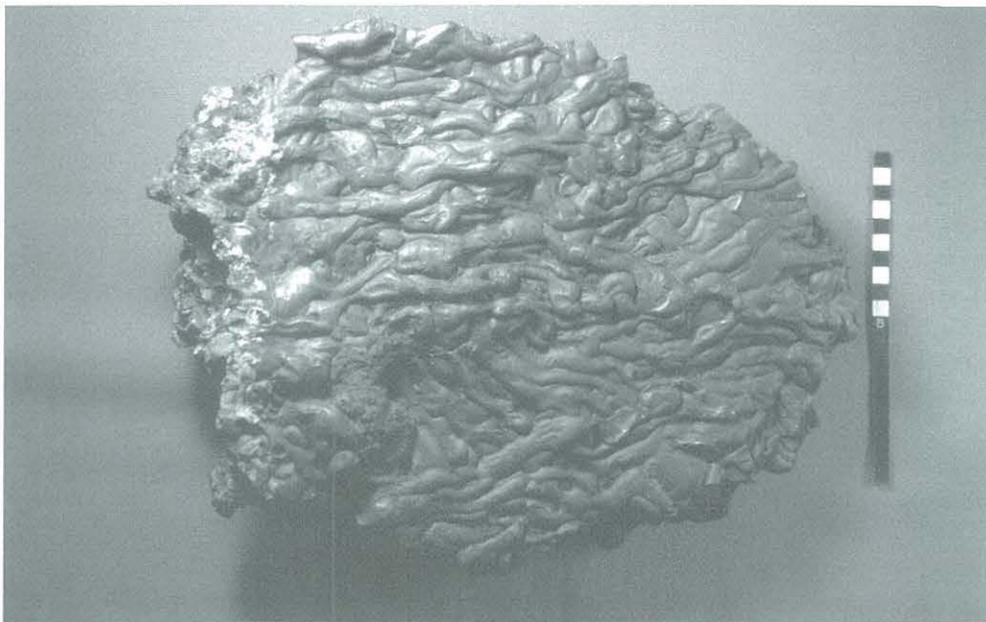
## *Iron*

So important was the introduction of iron as the primary material for artefact manufacture, from domestic utensils to the instruments of war, that antiquaries in the late eighteenth century made it the third tier of the Three Age System (Stone, Bronze and Iron), an overly simplistic system but one that continues in general use. Unlike bronze, whose principal ore copper is found in a small number of locations, workable iron ore can be found in many areas of the country. Residues from the smithing of iron (the working of bar iron into useable products, their maintenance and recycling) are common finds on excavated settlement sites from the later Iron Age onwards. In contrast, evidence for iron smelting (the production of bar iron from iron ore in a furnace) is very rare in the archaeological record until medieval times. Even the few earlier examples, eg the Romano-British settlement at Tower Knowe (Jobey 1978, 22), should be treated with caution since smithing and smelting slags can appear very similar. Although there is a clear need for further research, it may be that prior to the Middle Ages, the region was largely an importer of iron, rather than a producer.

The main field evidence for this medieval iron industry is the numerous mounds of slag, known locally as 'metal hills' or 'cinder hills' (Miller 1887, 123), produced during the bloomery iron smelting process. The process basically consisted of the reduction of iron ore to metallic iron in a charcoal-fired clay and stone furnace with air introduced by bellows. Impurities liquate out from the ore leaving a spongy mass of iron called a 'bloom', which could be hammered into a bar of iron. The slag often shows smooth dribbles or runs on the uppermost surface (like runs of candle wax), resulting from periodic tapping of the slag (fig 21.4).

Limited recent fieldwork in the Grasslees Valley has uncovered a large number of bloomery iron smelting sites and undoubtedly many more await discovery (Hedley 1998,

FIGURE 21.4 Slag cake from a bloomery iron smelting furnace at Hogger's Cleugh in the Grasslees Valley. Scale in cm. (PHOTOGRAPH: PETE CREW)



20–25). The Rev John Hodgson visited the area with a local guide in the early nineteenth century and noted in his *History of Northumberland* having seen heaps of *scoria* (slag) ‘all bladdery and glowry as if it had been boiled’ (Hodgson 1827, 85). He also noted an *inquisition post mortem* of Gilbert de Umfraville, baron of Redesdale, in 1245 which noted furnaces and forges in the Manor of Otterburn giving an annual rental of four pounds and two shillings (Hodgson 1827, 85). A rental of about one-seventh of output, which was common to the area, suggests a considerable industry here in the mid-thirteenth century. The reasons why this industry developed at this time can be found in the rise in population caused by relatively good harvests and relative peace between England and Scotland, which led to an expansion in cultivated land and an increasing demand for agricultural and other tools made from iron. Thus there was an increase in demand for low priced iron of adequate quality at a local level; a demand that was eagerly met by enterprising landowners and monastic estates keen to maximize their incomes through the sale of leases. The effects on iron production caused by the conflict with Scotland from 1296, or the famines of the second decade of the fourteenth century, are a matter for speculation. It is unlikely, however, that the industry survived much into the second half of the fourteenth century, following outbreaks of pestilence (Black Death), which not only reduced demand, witnessed by the wide-scale reversion of arable to pasture at this time, but also added high labour costs to a labour intensive industry. These factors led in due course to the emergence of a water-powered bloomery industry and eventually to the introduction of the blast furnace into Britain at the end of the fifteenth century.

The 1398 *inquisition post mortem* for Maud Lucy, widow of a later Gilbert de Umfraville, lists a place in her possession called the *Hernehousefeld*, which translates as ‘the area of cleared land where the iron houses are situated’: *herne* being the medieval form of the word ‘iron’ and the houses perhaps relating to the timber buildings or shelters within which the furnace and the smelters were protected from the elements. However, the document records only waste places and shiels, with no mention of an iron industry at all. It is tempting,

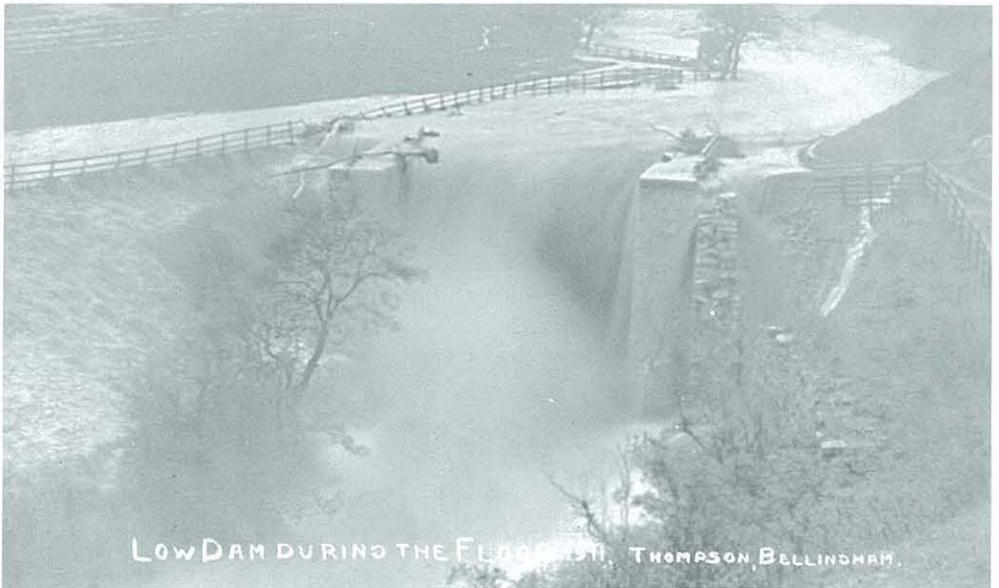
therefore, to see the fossilisation of the former industry in the place name which subsequently became associated with the later settlement of Ironhouse, situated above the west side of Grasslees Valley in an area particularly rich in bloomery slag heaps. It is interesting to note that a local legend records the occupation of Ironhouse by a community of metal workers (Hedley 1998, 20).

In addition to the clay required for the furnace, the process requires sources of iron ore and charcoal for fuel. Charcoal is required at a roughly 1:1 weight ratio to the iron ore, which equates to an approximate bulk ratio of 20:1. For this reason, and the relative fragility of charcoal, the furnaces were always located at the site of the fuel rather than the ore. Most of the sites in the Grasslees Valley lie within the former township of Woodside, which from its name implies a ready fuel source. Also within this area are numerous outcrops of the Redesdale Ironstone Shale, and it is likely that many of the small pits and shaft mounds in the area, which do not appear to relate to coal outcrops, are in fact related to ironstone extraction. Thus, the medieval iron smelting industry provides the earliest physical evidence in the National Park for both iron mining and charcoal burning.

Following the demise of the bloomery iron industry, it was a further five centuries before iron production returned to the Park. An attempt was made in the 1760s to establish a furnace at Lee Hall, but this was short-lived due to shortages of fuel (Riden 1993, 125). In 1839, Messrs Batson, Campion and Co established an ironworks by the Hareshaw Burn, Bellingham. A furnace was built on the site of Foundry Yard; a two dam system was constructed on the Hareshaw Burn to supply water for a waterwheel-powered cold blast; coke ovens were built, and ironstone, coal and limestone were extracted locally. However, the company made a loss of £1 on every ton of iron produced and was taken over in 1845 by the principal mortgagee, the Union Banking Company of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Sewell 1992, 11). The company expanded production with the construction of two new furnaces with steam-powered blast in order to improve profitability but production declined whilst labour costs increased significantly. At its peak, the venture employed some 1,000 men and boys (Roberts 2000, 290). It was mothballed in 1849 and never reopened. A railway link was established in 1855 but there was no attempt to restart the works. When the rail link was established with Hexham and the Newcastle to Carlisle line, one of the first passenger services brought bidders from Newcastle to an auction of the plant (Sewell 1992, 28), and the site was cleared in the following year.

The main reasons for the failure of the Bellingham ironworks have been explored by Roberts (2000, 283–298). Despite the obvious advantages of having coal, ironstone and limestone in close proximity, an advantage not available in the north-east coalfield, the venture was a victim of the incompetence of its founders. As Roberts notes, the original company employed technology that was already behind the times. The design of coke ovens was primitive by contemporary standards, and cheap water power was used to avoid the greater investment required for a more efficient steam-powered blast. This was to a degree corrected by the Union Banking Company when it installed two new furnaces with steam-power blast. However, by this time the Bank was itself in financial difficulties and, by increasing both capital investment and running costs when output was actually falling, merely increased the losses. Secondly, the company exported pig iron by cart to its foundry in Hexham rather than manufacture at Bellingham, thus incurring extra transport cost and the cost of reheating in Hexham. Thirdly, the company was forced to build workers' housing as there was no ready pool of workers in the local area, and the quality of employee it

FIGURE 21.5 a & b The remains of the lower dam of the Hareshaw Ironworks, Bellingham, seen today (a) and during the flash flood of 1911 (b). (B: PHOTOGRAPH BY ROD THOMPSON. FROM OWEN 2001. REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE BELLINGHAM HERITAGE CENTRE)



managed to recruit was low as the company could not compete with the wages available in the north-east coalfield. Lastly, the original company did not factor in high running costs and interest payments on the mortgages it chose to use when setting up the ironworks instead of raising capital from share issues. Thus the inability of the company to curb losses and to compete with its more efficient rivals meant that it was almost bound to fail. The arrival of the railway link made no difference to its fortunes.

Subsequent demolition and redevelopment has removed much of the site, including four terraces of workers' housing, though a few of the buildings survive as dwellings (Roberts and West 1998, 13). For a decade the ironworks was a major employer, and it has left a significant mark on the character of the town. The lower dam on the Hareshaw Burn (fig 21.5 a & b) survives remarkably well despite having been damaged by flooding in 1968

(Roberts and West 1998, 62). A well-known local landmark, it provides a dramatic reminder of this once extensive industrial landscape.

The Ridsdale Ironworks, Redesdale, fared little better. This complex was opened in 1839 by The Chesterhope Iron Company formed by Messrs Hedley and Reed. It was necessary to construct an entire village for the workforce which was largely imported from outside the parish. In consequence, the venture lost money, and was taken over by the well-established Derwent Iron Company in 1840 (Roberts 2000, 293). However, the expense of opening a new pit in 1848, coupled with the fact that the company had a further 18 furnaces more conveniently located elsewhere, ultimately led to its closure. Lord Armstrong subsequently purchased it in 1862, in order to supply unsmelted iron ore for the production of high calibre shells at his Elswick works (Roberts 2000, 295). It finally ceased production in 1879 (Redesdale Society 1999, 21). The impressive ruins of the blowing house by the side of the A68, the village itself, and the dramatic pattern of the finger-like spoil tips across the surrounding landscape remain as vivid reminders of this once important local industry.

### *Non-ferrous metals and vein minerals*

Within the Park galena (lead ore) is restricted to a few minor veins and only a small number of trials have been made. The most significant of these within the Park were undertaken at various times during the nineteenth century on the Tarret Burn on a vein beside the High Green basalt dyke, nearby at Hollinhead, and in a small vein at the head of Smithy Cleugh, including exploratory work between 1882–88 by the Tarsset Mining Co (Burt *et al* 1983, 76; Smith 1923, 15). However, none of these ventures produced more than a few cabinet specimens of galena and sphalerite (zinc ore) (Miller 1887, 124). Just outside the park, more significant activity took place at Redpath Mine to the east of Jock's Knowe near Fallowlees. Although worked periodically in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Wallis, writing in the eighteenth century, relates that the miners called it 'the old man' (1769, 121), a term commonly used by miners to indicate earlier workings. A further lead mine was worked directly by Sir Edward Blackett above Whitton Dene in the eighteenth century but appears to have produced little ore (Smith 1923, 16). A trial at Lordenshaws was similarly unsuccessful.

A more substantial lead mining operation was conducted intermittently, from the early seventeenth century, at Settlingstones close to the southern boundary of the Park (Smith 1923, 29). Between 1849 and 1873 it produced almost 12,000 tons of lead and almost a ton of silver (Dunham 1990, 268). In 1870, however, the mineralisation changed dramatically with the extremely rare mineral, witherite, forming the bulk of the composition and only small amounts of other minerals present. A barium carbonate with between 90 and 95% purity, witherite's uses were many and varied including the paint, paper and chemical industries (Young and Nichol 1997, 43). From 1873, witherite was the sole mineral produced at the Settlingstones mine, which was for long periods the world's leading producer of the mineral with a total output of around 630,000 tons (Dunham 1990, 268). Between 1909 and 1911, 185 people were employed at the mine (Burt *et al* 1983, 67). With commercially viable quantities of witherite finally exhausted, the mine closed in 1969, ending world production of the mineral. The site was almost completely cleared, leaving a fine terrace of worker's housing (Settlingstones Cottages) and the former mine office still occupied, surrounded by fragments of concrete foundations, the overgrown course of a tramway, and partially landscaped spoil tips (Young 1997, 10).

## *Building Stone*

It perhaps goes without saying that man has utilised stone for tools since the Stone Age. It has been suggested (Schofield and Waddington 1999, 175–176) that a Neolithic axe factory may have existed in the crags between the Breamish and Harthope Valleys based on a recently discovered axe from Ewart which was found to be a close geological match to outcrops of andesite in the vicinity. However, until further research is undertaken at possible quarry sites such as Cunyan Crags, this must remain conjecture.

Although stone was used for the construction of ritual and funerary monuments, field walls and other structures during the Neolithic and Bronze Age, the earliest clear evidence that we have for the quarrying and shaping of stone for building comes in the form of the massive drystone walls of the Iron Age hillforts. Although this activity cannot be described as industrial in a traditional sense, the ‘craft’ of the stonemasons and their knowledge of the character of the Cheviot andesite can be readily appreciated at sites such as Sinkside Hill and Brough Law (fig 21.6).

Not until the arrival of the Roman army did the extraction of stone reach ‘industrial’ proportions. The construction of Hadrian’s Wall alone was a massive undertaking requiring extensive quarries throughout its length, and including the wall ditch which in certain places would have provided an additional source of building stone. At Queen’s Crags near Housesteads, a quarry face bares a crude inscription recording the names of Saturninus and Rufinus, believed to be centurions and that of an ‘optio’ (a military officer just below the rank of centurion) named Henoenus. At the opposite end of the crag lies a large block of stone which has been prepared for splitting using the feather and plug technique (fig 21.7). This technique was in use until the eighteenth century, so a Roman date cannot be assumed here with any degree of certainty. However, it is interesting to note that the forts, milecastles,



FIGURE 21.6 An exceptionally well-preserved section of the rampart on Sinkside Hill, showing the skill of the Iron Age stonemasons.

(PHOTOGRAPH: ALISTAIR OSWALD)

turrets and the wall itself became a convenient quarry for medieval and later builders; with so much dressed stone available, would anyone go to the expense of quarrying fresh stone from such an isolated site?

Throughout the medieval period, building in stone was largely restricted to high status buildings and for bridge building on some of the more important routes. The building of a structure such as Harbottle Castle in the twelfth century, tower houses such as Dally and Tasset Castle in the thirteenth century, not to mention some of our early churches, such as St Michaels at Ingram and St Cuthberts at Elsdon, would have been considerable undertakings requiring the quarrying of suitable stone, stone dressing, transportation, and construction. Thus quarrymen, labourers, carters, stonemasons, lime burners, architects, and carpenters would all be required to undertake highly specialist work, even by the standards of today. And this would be costly. It is not surprising, therefore that in the more remote and marginal land of the National Park, few large building projects were undertaken during medieval times.

In the post-medieval period, the revolution in land tenure and the growth of inward investment, particularly following the Union of the Crowns in 1603, brought relative economic prosperity to a small band of local head men and a number of incomers attracted by low land prices and rents (Watts 1975, 164–5). Prior to this time the people of these wild and remote districts were said to inhabit dwellings built of little more than turf and timber. However, these new developments heralded the arrival of a new form of building known today as the *bastle house*, representing a huge increase in capital investment, of permanence and of protection. The *bastles* were commissioned by men of means and built by men with all the skills displayed in the construction of high status building projects in the preceding age. That many hundreds of these buildings were constructed (from Weardale to Clydesdale) in a matter of decades suggests a countryside almost alive with the sounds of hammer upon chisel, of the clatter of waggons laden with blocks, and of the noxious smell of burning limestone emanating from crude lime burning clamps. During the seventeenth century, freestones were required in considerable quantities for the improvement of many of the old border holds to provide more favourable living conditions, such as Hesleyside, and many new country homes were constructed often obliterating more humble settlements, such as the original Hethpool House in the College Valley.

Another significant revolution in stone use occurred during the eighteenth century with the drive towards the permanent division of common land represented by the Enclosure Acts. The hedges on sod cast dykes that typified earlier irregular enclosures on the moors were replaced by a geometric pattern of fields enclosed with drystone walls. Large areas of surface stones were quarried, convenient crags were utilised wherever possible, and the



FIGURE 21.7 Evidence of feather and plug stone splitting at Queen's Crag, north east of Housesteads.

burial cairns that had survived millennia found a ready use. This was an age of agricultural improvement, where farms were designed using principles of efficiency.

A new programme of farm building was also undertaken throughout the second half of the eighteenth and more particularly in the first half of the nineteenth century, and most of the farm buildings in the Park relate to this period. Again, local stone was exploited, though in the Cheviot area the andesites were suitable only as random rubble for walls, and freestones were brought from considerable distances for sills, lintels, etc (Carruthers *et al* 1932, 147). One exception is the pitchstone-andesite from Thompson's Walls, which dresses almost like a freestone and was used in squared coursing in the construction of Yetholm Church. Throughout this period many of the principal settlements expanded, requiring stone from large local quarries. The growth of Bellingham, for example, was facilitated by the supply of stone principally from the nearby Longheughshields Quarry (Frost and Holliday 1980, 86). The development of the major urban centres also required large quantities of stone and extensive quarries were worked just outside the Park boundary at Prudhamstone and Blaxter, supplying building stone for Newcastle and Edinburgh respectively.

We are left then with many 'holes' in our landscape, holes which are all too easily dismissed as ugly, are infilled or become refuse tips for agricultural and domestic waste. Yet the very fabric of the Park, its patchwork of dispersed farmsteads and drystone walls, are all reminders of our reliance upon stone. Local stone is an essential element of the local built environment and it would be a shame if future generations were condemned to build or conserve with inappropriate stone from elsewhere. Each stone is unique to its location; no two stones will weather together.

## *Lime*

From Roman times, lime has been required for mortar for building but from the later eighteenth century agricultural improvements led to the widespread use of lime to 'sweaten' acidic soils (reduce acidity), improve the soil structure and availability of plant nutrients, and



FIGURE 21.8 TOSSON limekiln has been conserved by the Park Authority and the adjacent quarry is maintained as a picnic area.

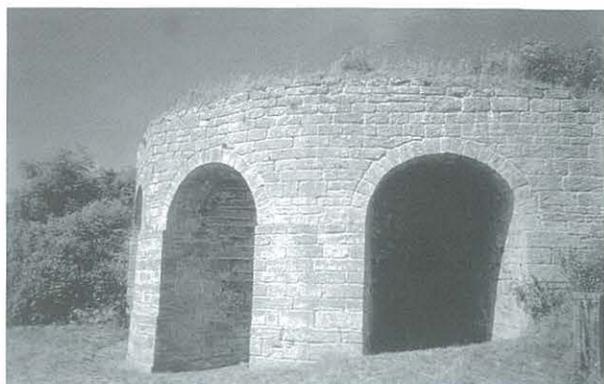


FIGURE 21.9 Limekilns at Crindledykes (left) and Low Alwinton (right), both conserved and maintained with on site display panels.

allow soil organisms to be more active (Younger and Almond 1989, 47). The application of lime could significantly increase the value of the land. The heyday of the upland limekiln perhaps came during the Napoleonic period, with the increased price of corn and in consequence an increase in the amount of land under cultivation (Younger and Almond 1989, 42). During this time, most of the slopes of the main valleys, such as the North Tyne and Rede were under cultivation, and corn was grown as high as it could be made to ripen. In the 1830s wheat was grown in Tasset at an elevation of more than 700 feet (213m), and rye at Highfield at 800 feet (244m). In the 1820s corn crops were said to occupy most of the ground between Otterburn and Elsdon (Miller 1887, 125). Many small, seasonally operated kilns sprang up on farms, whilst some of the larger landowners established estate kilns, compelling their tenants to lime their land but preventing them from burning their own (Younger and Almond 1989, 41). A small number of commercial limekilns such as Greatchesters, Rookan, and the Buzzard Crag and Whitelee limeworks at Batinghope were established, primarily to supply lime to the neighbouring districts of Scotland (Miller 1887, 122). The Whitelee limekilns were established by a consortium of Scottish landowners led by Major Rutherford of Edgerston and were locally known as the ‘Concern’ (Clough 1889, 54). Cultivation declined steadily throughout the remainder of the century, in tandem with the decline of local lime burning and milling, chiefly caused by increasing labour costs and declining cereal prices due to cheap imported cereals from the continent (Miller 1887, 126).

Many fine limekilns survive and a number have been conserved and interpreted for the public by the Park Authority. A fine example can be seen at Tosson (fig 21.8) near Rothbury, where the Alnwick architect George Reavell in 1888 designed a kiln of uncommon architectural sophistication, perhaps telling us more about how the venture viewed itself and wished to be viewed than about the process of lime burning. Other examples can be seen at Low Alwinton, Coquetdale and Crindledykes, south of Housesteads (fig 21.9).

### *Road metal*

The construction of turnpike roads and the later modernisation of the road network all required large quantities of stone for road metal. In Redesdale and Coquetdale the road metal has been quarried from the limestones and the basalt dykes (Miller 1887, 122), whilst the Cheviot andesite was quarried south of Wooler in the north (Carruthers *et al* 1932, 147). The dolerite of the Whin Sill is however the most important road metal to have been quarried within the Park, principally at Walltown, which worked from 1876 until 1976, and at Cawfields, both destroying part of Hadrian’s Wall in the process. Following the closure of

these quarries, both sites are now managed by the Park Authority as car parks and recreational areas. The only permanently active quarry within the Park today is Harden Quarry at Biddlestone. This produces the distinctive red stone known as Harden Red, used in the resurfacing of The Mall and the grounds of Buckingham Palace in London.

### *Millstones and milling*

The Fell Sandstone is occasionally gritty enough to produce stone suitable for grinding corn, and at Harbottle Crags (fig 21.10) this stone has been worked for millstones since at least the sixteenth century. It may have supplied a mill which existed in 1539 at nearby Holystone (LUAU 2000, 15), but was never-the-less well-established by 1604, when it was held by *Persivall Potte* by custom and was valued at £10 annually (Sanderson 1891,105). The documentary evidence suggests that the quarry was out of use by the early nineteenth century. A recent survey commissioned by the Park Authority (LUAU 2000) recorded some 137 discarded or unfinished millstones and 476 voids or quarry pits in an area of the quarry stripped of heather by a moorland fire. These remnants serve to remind us of this once important local industry but more perhaps of the numerous corn mills that once existed throughout the area. One such mill was Grasslees, established between 1604 and 1618 (Cranstone 1994, 1–2) by Alan and William Wanlass. The mill was part of a dramatic expansion of milling, and, by association, with cereal cultivation during the seventeenth century. In 1662 it passed by marriage to William Hedley of Landshot after which it was tenanted until its abandonment as a mill sometime in the 1870s, a further casualty of the influx of cheap cereals from the continent. Four millstones remain on the now fragmentary site, one course gritted resembling the Fell Sandstone on Harbottle Crags, one very fine grained probable ‘blue stone’ from the Eifel region of Germany, with the remaining stones of intermediate grain, reflecting the range from coarse shelling through to fine milling (Cranstone 1994, 11).



FIGURE 21.10 A millstone abandoned during dressing at Harbottle millstone quarry (see also fig 8.17). The quarry features in a self-guided trail being developed by the Park Authority and Defence Estates.

## *Transportation*

The Romans were the first to introduce a system of carefully engineered roads and bridges superimposed upon a landscape of primitive trackways and fording points. Until comparatively recently these remained the only engineered roads and they provided the framework for Northumberland's transport network. Indeed when the monks of Lindisfarne conveyed Cuthbert's remains they did so using the Roman road network (O'Sullivan and Young 1995, 39). However these roads were few and following the withdrawal of the Roman administration the major part of this remote landscape continued, as before, to be held together by a network of unmaintained, barely passable trackways. It would be a further twelve centuries before the trunk road would re-emerge under the inspiration of Macadam and Telford (Wilkinson 1934, xii).

As Bird (1969, 12) notes, the original word 'road' meant a right of passage rather than the surface upon which that right could be exercised. In theory maintenance could not be enforced, and evasion of obligations towards maintenance was the rule rather than the exception. During medieval times, responsibility for maintaining the means of passage for the King, his officers and subjects, fell upon the parish and was classed as a charge on land so was adhered to sparingly and irregularly. In 1555 a new system was introduced requiring everybody to do their share, by labour in person or money payment (Wilkinson 1934, xiii). The inequalities of this system were obvious, as the better maintained the road the more use it encouraged, and considerable damage could be caused by livestock, sled and drag carriage of bulk items, a situation made more acute when wheeled vehicles became more widespread (*ibid* 1934, xiii). Thus many parishes were reluctant to maintain the surfaces at their own expense, and this often led to little improvement and frequent indictments of parishes and landowners at the Quarter Sessions. Indeed, sixteenth century county officials in Northumberland were forced by the poor condition of the roads and bridges to conduct their business on horseback (Watts 1975, 38). Thus the early state of the transport system impeded both the social and economic condition of the rural landscape, and this was magnified in remote areas such as Redesdale and the North Tyne Valley.

In the mid-eighteenth century, a virtual transport revolution occurred with the introduction of the first turnpike roads on the principal routes, inspired by local landowners and commercial farming concerns. They provided more efficient year-round traffic, considerably reducing overland transport costs. Established by Act of Parliament and supported by subscription, fees for usage were collected at strategic points and in theory the revenue would provide enough funds to maintain the roads in good order.

The first turnpike to be built in Northumberland was the so-called Military Road from Newcastle to Carlisle constructed between 1751 and 1757, crossing the southern edge of the Park. Legend records this venture as one of General Wade's Roads, built in response to his difficulty during the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion in conveying his forces from their encampment on Newcastle Town Moor to the relief of Carlisle. Wade however died in 1748 and as Lawson observes (1966, 193) 'while it is unlikely that he [Wade] had any part in the petition, it is certain he had nothing to do with its construction'. The petition included the names of several hundred commissioners from leading landowning families, largely from Northumberland. When the Act came before Parliament, three of Wade's former officers did give evidence as to the difficulties encountered on their abortive march to Carlisle. Major-General Chalmondeley gave the reason as 'the Badness of the Road, which was almost

impassable for the Carriages, and quite so for Artillery'. Unlike most other turnpikes it was considered impossible to improve the existing route by means of subscription and the costs were met by the Parliamentary Committee of Supply. Given that the Trustees were spending government money, the construction of the road and its infrastructure of toll houses, bridges and milestones were to a higher standard than was the norm.

The Jedburgh to Newcastle Turnpike, which was constructed in stages from the late eighteenth century, forms part of the modern A68, marking the boundary of the Park from Carter Bar to Low Byrness, before dissecting the Park to Elishaw where the A68 leaves the turnpike and follows the course of Dere Street southwards. Funded by subscription, the turnpike was established in response to increased traffic, particularly the coal trade across the border via the Redeswire and the consequential deterioration of the road. A number of contemporary bridges, culverts and milestones survive, but no systematic archaeological survey of the route has yet been undertaken. A private toll road was constructed in the early nineteenth century above Kielder by Sir John Swinburne of Capheaton to facilitate coal transport from the Upper North Tyne across the Borders to Hawick. The monument at Bloody Bush on the border marks the location of the Toll Bar (Mack 1926, 183–5).

By the time Bailey and Culley undertook their survey of the state of agriculture in Northumberland at the end of the eighteenth century, the turnpike roads in the county were deemed 'mostly in good order'. However the local township roads were largely in a deplorable state, which they attributed to neglect and the manner of performing statute work (Bailey and Culley 1805, 169). In their report they record the contemporary interest in the construction of a grand canal from Newcastle to Maryport through the Tyne Gap (*ibid.*, 171). However, this was ultimately to come to nothing due to fierce objections from landowners and the growing interest in waggonways and inclines that led to the development of railways in the early nineteenth century. In 1830 work began on the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway which was completed in stages, with the crossing of the Tyne completed in 1839. The line had a profound effect on the communities of the Tyne Valley, cutting the transport time for goods from three days by cart from Newcastle to Carlisle to just three and a half hours (Wells 1999, 25–28). This inevitably stimulated industrial activity at various locations along the line, such as Haltwistle, providing employment in a variety of industries, not least in the coal industry.

The Border Counties Railway Company formed in 1845. In 1860 it amalgamated with the North British Railway which had intended to create an independent line connecting Scotland to the Newcastle to Carlisle line. Although the railway had arrived at Bellingham as early as 1855, the line did not become fully functional between Hexham and Riccarton Junction until 1862. A coal depot was built at Bellingham station and a coal and lime depot at Falstone. This line closed to passengers in 1956, and in 1958 the freight link from Bellingham to Riccarton Junction also closed. The final section from Bellingham to Reedsmouth closed to freight in 1963. Following closure, the track and signalling equipment was scrapped and parts of the line returned to agriculture. Some elements remain however, such as the station and signal box at Falstone, the magnificent Kielder Viaduct, a fine viaduct with two scewed arches at Tarsset, and an array of cattle arches, sheep creeps, culverts, occupation crossings and under line bridges.

In 1845, the Newcastle and Berwick Railway Company received authorisation to construct a railway line between Gateshead and Berwick, including powers to construct branch lines. In September 1887 a branch from Alnwick to Coldstream was opened by the then North

Eastern Railway. The Coldstream Station was actually located across the Tweed at Cornhill, at which point it connected to the Tweedmouth to Kelso line. The service was never profitable and during the 1920s competition from road transport for both passengers and goods caused serious reductions in usage. The main problem with the line was that most of the stations were situated in remote locations, a long way from the communities they were meant to serve. All passenger services on the Branch were withdrawn at the end of the summer timetable in September 1930. In 1948, a flood washed out the line between Wooler and Ilderton and it was not rebuilt due to the high cost. The route (goods only) continued in two parts – Alnwick to Ilderton (finally closed 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1953), and Wooler to Coldstream (closed 29 March 1965) (Hoole 1973, 178). The final journey on the line was a special steam locomotive service for railway enthusiasts in 1968 (Chris Donald pers comm). Though the recyclable fixtures of the line were removed, many of the fine buildings have survived and are now in residential use.

### *Water supply*

The National Park itself is particularly well-supplied with springs and wells of varying quality, and, as in most remote areas, these have been tapped for local water supply. However, forecasts of critical water shortages on Tyneside, caused by the steady growth of its industrial population, led to the construction of the Catcleugh Reservoir in Upper Redesdale. Built between 1889 and 1905 by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company, it was to have a major impact on the local landscape and for a short time upon the local community. It even required the construction of a narrow gauge railway from West Woodburn Station on the Border Counties Line to Catcleugh for both freight and workers, with a branch line to a clay pit at Yatesfield (Rennison 1979, 173). At its peak up to a thousand men were employed and most of them and their families were accommodated in two temporary villages (fig 21.11). Situated on either side of the river, they became known as Newcastle and Gateshead. In 1899 504 persons were living in 47 huts (Rennison 1979, 218). Only one hut remains (fig 21.12), and this has been authentically restored both internally and externally by the Park Authority in partnership with Northumbrian Water. The more recent reservoir at Kielder is on a much greater scale, and is discussed by Frodsham in Part I of this volume.



FIGURE 21.11 Workers' village during the construction of the Catcleugh Reservoir.

FIGURE 21.12 The sole surviving workers' hut from the construction of the Catcleugh Reservoir. The hut was restored by the Park Authority in partnership with Northumbrian Water.



### *Concluding remarks*

As Day and Charlton (1981, 290–1) note, the development of extractive rural industries owed much to contemporary agrarian advances, advances which also provided transport improvements. Therefore, these industries were both restricted in size and duration. Once they had satisfied domestic needs of the immediate locality, they began to decline. When the expansion in agriculture during the thirteenth century required iron tools, these were produced locally until the plague and Border conflict conspired to reduce demand. When the building booms of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries required building stone, local quarries were worked. While cereals were widely grown there were mills, requiring millstones. When the depression in agriculture set in, during the later nineteenth century, arable was once again turned back to pasture thus reducing local demand for lime, drains and coal. Only a small number of the more developed mines continued to satisfy local demand into the twentieth century. Demand for the transportation of commodities led to first the turnpikes, then the railway, and today modern roads, which continue to facilitate today's main rural industry – tourism. Only the water industry saw lasting developments, but this was led by purely external factors relating to urban industrial demand.

This briefest of outlines cannot do justice to such a vast subject area, with each and every element deserving of a paper in its own right. It is clear that the scope for further documentary research and fieldwork is considerable. It is hoped that this brief account will act as a stimulus to historians and archaeologists to investigate more fully this often overlooked, but none-the-less important aspect of the Northumberland National Park's cultural heritage.

### *Acknowledgements*

The writer would like to thank Paul Frodsham for his help in the writing of this chapter, and Albert Weir (project manager for numerous NNPA building conservation projects) for stimulating discussion about various featured sites.

# The Archaeology of Otterburn Training Area

*Beryl Charlton*

## *Introduction*

Otterburn Training Area (OTA) is the core of the Ministry of Defence Estate in Northumberland. It occupies 23,085 hectares situated between the A696 road to the south and the Scottish border to the north and consists mainly of high moorland cut through by the valleys of the Rivers Rede and Coquet (see fig 0.1). Modern day military activity began at Otterburn in 1911, when land in Upper Redesdale was bought by the then War Office for artillery practice ranges. Most of the remainder of the Training Area was requisitioned soon after the outbreak of the Second World War and compulsorily purchased in 1942–43. Additional land on the southern periphery was acquired in the early 1950s.

Although owned by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), OTA lies almost entirely within the boundary of Northumberland National Park, designated as such in 1956 for its landscape value and its wealth of other features including archaeology and the historic environment.

## *Archaeology on the Otterburn Training Area*

OTA boasts one of the greatest concentrations of multi-period archaeological and historical landscapes in the north of England. Some are arguably of international importance; others are of national, regional and local significance. Burial cairns, native British settlements and field systems, Roman roads and temporary camps, shielings and bastles, farmsteads and corn-drying kilns, limekilns and coal workings and a network of First World War practice trenches, all testify to the presence of people living and working on the land. Such complex and extensive remains, dating from prehistoric times to the twentieth century, have the potential to make a major contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the way of life of earlier communities and their role in creating the landscape we know today in this remote part of Northumberland.

The wild and marginal nature of its countryside combined with its isolation until relatively recent times meant that the OTA attracted little attention from past antiquarians. Only obvious sites – three prehistoric cairnfields, eight temporary Roman camps, five bastles (defensible farmhouses) and two medieval settlements – had been recognised as such and scheduled as ancient monuments earlier in the twentieth century. It was not until 1975, declared National Conservation Year, when a Conservation Group was set up on OTA, that the opportunity was provided for unrestricted access to identify and record the archaeology. At the time, there was neither a County Archaeologist nor a National Park Archaeologist for Northumberland, so the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was approached for help. Initially the Society was simply asked to examine and report on the state of the few Scheduled Monuments on OTA with a view to protecting them from accidental destruction

FIGURE 22.1 World War I practice trenches. These earthworks with their diamond and dog-leg pattern, where troops trained before being sent to the front line in France, are the first twentieth-century military structures to be scheduled on OTA. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



in the future, but with the consent of the Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel A G F Yarnold, and the assistance of the Range Officer, Major W W Petty, it was decided that a detailed inventory should be made of all archaeological sites and historic buildings on the estate. The intensive programme of fieldwalking was undertaken by the Society's Field Research Group in the spring of 1975 and was completed in December 1976. The final report appeared in the summer of 1977 (Charlton and Day 1977).

Far from being the social and economic wilderness hitherto supposed, the area had supported a thriving population throughout most of its history. Over 630 sites of all periods were located, identified, listed and, where possible, verified by documentary records, which together with maps and site plans were included in the report. Several prehistoric cairnfields, nine Romano-British settlements (eg Barracker Rigg), a Roman temporary camp (North Yardhope), a medieval village (Whiteside) and First World War practice trenches (fig 22.1) were just some of the sites recorded for the first time.

The whole exercise in 1975, including preliminary archive research, fieldwork regularly carried out at weekends in all weathers, production of the report and the drawings, was undertaken on an entirely voluntary basis by the survey team and with no financial assistance. There was no funding either for a complete photographic record or for a formal publication. In fact the report was typed up by a Range Office secretary on an electric typewriter – no computers then!

A further review of the condition of the archaeology on OTA was undertaken in 1991–92, to identify suitable projects for a rolling programme of conservation work proposed in the Conservation Management Plan (1990). The resulting publication, *Fifty Centuries of Peace and War* (Charlton 1996), updated the 1977 version and included discoveries since that date. Although every effort had been made in the mid 70s to cover the ground carefully, it was acknowledged that inevitably some sites would have escaped detection. One such was the Romano-Celtic shrine near Yardhope hidden among huge rock outcrops and concealed by bracken for much of the year. Other features, in particular areas of ridge-and-furrow denoting cultivation plots associated with early farming settlements, were beginning to be

revealed by aerial photography. Aerial photography of the OTA had not been possible in 1975, partly for lack of funding and partly because the MOD was reluctant to allow overflying of its Training Areas. Fortunately times have changed.

The appointment in 1992 of Paul Frodsham as Northumberland National Park Archaeologist saw the eventual release of funds for an aerial photographic survey of the archaeology on OTA. Two programmes sponsored jointly by the MOD, English Heritage, The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) and Northumberland National Park Authority were carried out by Tim Gates in 1995 and 1996. His aerial survey added considerably to our understanding of OTA's archaeological landscapes. Of particular importance were the large areas of prehistoric cultivation in the Upper Coquet Valley and the extensive networks of sod-cast dykes and enclosures dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods. As a result of all this survey work over a quarter of a century, the recorded sites on OTA have risen to around 1000 and the list of Scheduled Monuments has increased from 18 to 62. Since research and survey work is an ongoing process on OTA, new sites and new information undoubtedly will be discovered and the number of Scheduled Monuments will continue to grow.

The 1996 Review indicated that while the majority of archaeological sites and historic buildings remained undisturbed largely because of the marginal nature of the land, the potential for damage was still present, the chief threats being military activities (eg digging, vehicle damage), agricultural practices (eg livestock feeding areas, drainage) and erosion (trampling by humans and stock, weather, burrowing rabbits).

At about the same time, the military decided there was a need for long term strategic planning for the UK's fourteen major Training Areas. An Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) was to be produced for each area, the aim being to maximise military training potential 'in a way that is consistent, economically and environmentally acceptable and reflects MOD policy in pursuit of active conservation'. The ILMP for OTA (published September 2002) consists of a number of component plans each representing a different interest such as archaeology, recreation and access, nature conservation and woodland. The role of the ILMP is to balance and integrate these interests and to address any potential conflicts between them. For instance where proposals for a new woodland scheme might impinge on an archaeological site, the integration process between the various component plans will help identify the problem and provide a method for its resolution.

The component Archaeological Management Plan identifies the objectives for archaeology and the historic environment and the measures needed to prevent damage, carry out mitigation work and monitor and manage the resource. The main aim of the Plan is 'to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable within a working landscape in regular use for military training and agricultural production, that elements of the historic environment are afforded appropriate levels of protection'.

This component plan is a distilled version of its more detailed sister document, the Archaeology and Historic Environment Plan. Work on this had already been set in motion by the Cultural Working Group instituted in 1997 under the umbrella Conservation Group to produce and implement an Archaeological Management Plan for OTA. Its members are from organisations with an interest or expertise in local archaeology and include representatives from English Heritage, Northumberland National Park Authority, The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne as well as OTA and Defence Estates.

As a preliminary, the Working Group, subsequently re-titled the Archaeology and

Historic Environment Management Group (AHEMG), had to address a number of issues including identifying and evaluating the archaeological resource, the potential threats and necessary risk reduction measures. A baseline condition survey of the archaeology would have to be carried out in order to implement a regular programme of monitoring to protect the resource, policies would have to be decided, management objectives set and possible constraints identified together with methods for achieving the objectives. Another consideration was the dissemination of information about the resource to troops in training, to farm tenants and to shepherds. Finally public enjoyment of OTA's archaeology and historic buildings would have to be enhanced through an appropriate interpretation policy linked to improved access.

The Archaeological Practice at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne was awarded the contract to describe and evaluate OTA's archaeology and provide recommendations for incorporation in the Archaeological Management Plan. Bearing in mind that Tim Gates' aerial survey was undertaken to inform the progress of the Management Plan, the team decided to base their report on the landscape areas revealed from the air, rather than on specific sites.

### *Archaeological landscape areas on the Otterburn Training Area*

Six Archaeological Landscape Areas (ALAs) were identified ie parcels of land sometimes of

FIGURE 22.2 Map showing the location of those areas designated as being of high archaeological value (ALAs and HSAs) in the Otterburn Training Area Archaeological Management Plan.

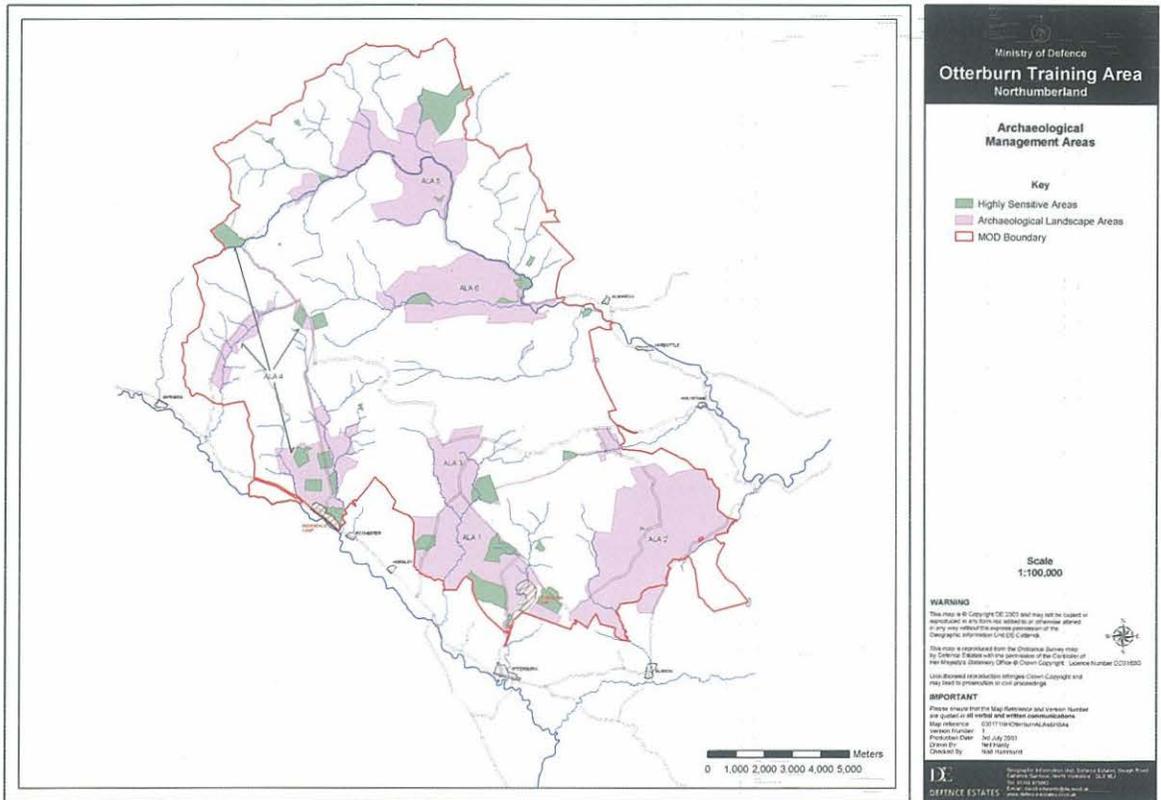




FIGURE 22.3 Barracker Rigg Romano-British settlement. The remains of round, stone houses face onto sunken yards. Enclosed fields and areas of cord rig cultivation indicate a mixed farming economy of cereal crops and livestock. Later earthworks are also visible, as is part of a late twentieth-century ammunition compound.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 22.4 Section of Roman road excavated near Yatesfield in 1995.  
(PHOTOGRAPH: ROBERT MANNERS)

considerable extent, which contain a concentration or concentrations of significant archaeological remains. Within the ALAs are fifty Highly Sensitive Areas (HSAs) where the remains, many of which are Scheduled Monuments, are extremely important (fig 22.2).

ALA 1 lies immediately north-west of Otterburn Camp and consists of mainly rough pasture and heather moorland; there are a number of low-lying hills, the highest rising to 313m. Of the 70 recorded archaeological features, the most significant can be assigned to the prehistoric/Romano-British and post-medieval periods. The earlier settlements are located

on the higher land where the ground has been relatively undisturbed by later medieval activity. An extensive Bronze Age landscape with settlements, field systems and burials survives on Todlaw, while well-preserved Romano-British farmsteads with round stone houses facing onto stock yards, for example at Yatesfield and Barracker Rigg. Barracker Rigg (fig 22.3) and Fairney Cleugh are also associated with field systems with evidence of cord rig cultivation. All are of national importance and have been scheduled.

Near Yatesfield, a stretch of the un-named Roman military branch road which runs eastwards from the outpost fort of High Rochester was excavated in 1995 (fig 22.4). This previously uninvestigated section of Roman road clearly survives in good condition just below the present day turf. The post-medieval landscape of ALA 1, found on slightly lower ground, includes a great variety of features linked to settlement, farming and milling. Apart from houses, shielings, stack stands, mill buildings and quarries, there are numerous field systems with sod-cast dykes and large areas of ridge-and-furrow cultivation much of which is in an excellent state of preservation.

ALA 2 is located at the south-east edge of the OTA in predominantly moorland pasture bisected by several large burns. Here, the continuity of agricultural and industrial practices, the diversity of remains and the quality of preservation are remarkable.

The archaeology is characterised by extensive medieval and post-medieval remains, with dense concentrations along the Penchford and Grasslees Burns. Of particular note is the cluster of late sixteenth- early seventeenth-century bastles, at Ironhouse (fig 22.5), High Shaw, the Raw, Craig and Headshope. These barn-like buildings with stout walls five feet thick, provided a temporary safe refuge for tenant farmers, their families and possessions against attack by robber bands and feuding families, popularly known as the border reivers, who did 'a little shifting for their living'.

Despite the uncertainty of life at this time, large tracts of sod-cast dykes, ridge-and-furrow, stack stands, sheep stells and a corn-drying kiln indicate the determination to wrest



FIGURE 22.5 Ironhouse Bastle, with the remains of buildings, possibly cottages, contemporary with or more probably later than the bastle. Ironhouse was still occupied in 1753 but is marked 'in ruins' on the 1866 OS map. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 22.6 Loaning Burn corn-drying kiln. Excavation revealed the architecture and structure of this early type of drying kiln. Hot air from the fire in the stoke hole was drawn up the stone-lined flue (foreground) to circulate under a horse hair mat placed across the top of the kiln and on which the sheaves of grain were laid to dry. (PHOTOGRAPH: BERYL CHARLTON)

a living from the land. Documentary evidence dating to 1604, for the little farming settlement at Loaning Burn, revealed that four members of the Anderson family Gabriell, George, John and Jenkin farmed a mere 34 acres between them. More than half was rough grazing, five acres were laid down to meadow and nine to arable land. They also had the right to graze cattle on the adjacent common. Carbonised oats and barley recovered from the flagged floor of the corn-drying kiln (fig 22.6), excavated in 1980–1981 (Charlton and Day 1982 161), give an insight into the diet of these subsistence farmers. In those days, oats and barley were essentially light land crops grown on thin soils, the oats mainly to feed cattle and the barley for human consumption.

Of particular interest in ALA 2 is evidence for continuity of earlier land divisions into the present day. Most of the modern fence lines and field boundaries directly follow the course of earlier sod-cast dykes and linear banks. At Headshope the introduction of leasehold in 1787 resulted in the division of medieval inbye fields into strips between three individuals. The ownership of each strip was marked by boundary stones. Of the 29 original stones inscribed with the leaseholders' initials, sixteen are still *in situ* (fig 22.7). These boundary



FIGURE 22.8 The shrine to Cocidius, whose Roman name means 'The Red One', overlooks the branch road running through the valley of the Holystone Burn. At least eight uninscribed figures in a similar pose are known, mainly from the western sector of the Hadrian's Wall corridor. Like Cocidius, all but two of these are naked. (PHOTOGRAPH: BERYL CHARLTON)



FIGURE 22.7 (left) Headshope Boundary Stone. Inscribed RR (Robert Redhead) one of the three leaseholders in 1787. The survival of such stones is rare in Northumberland. They provide significant evidence to support the continued use of the infield system of agriculture long after its disappearance elsewhere. (PHOTOGRAPH: BERYL CHARLTON)

stones provide an important piece of evidence for agricultural change in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Attempts to improve the quality of pasture at this time are attested by the presence of limekilns and tileries which produced clay land drains. Quarries, ironworkings, bell pits (shallow coal workings), and the late seventeenth-century water-powered cornmill at Grasslees indicate the nature and extent of industrial exploitation in the area from the medieval period up to the late nineteenth century. Grasslees is the best preserved mill on the OTA. The complex includes the remains of a mill race fed by a large feeder pond with a stone barrage and two smaller ponds, a free-standing drying kiln and, in the ruins of the mill itself, four dressed millstones. In an area which can be cold and wet even in summer, Grasslees provided an important service for local farmers who would bring their grain to the mill to be ripened, dried and threshed. Grasslees continued to operate until at least 1871, but by the end of the nineteenth century had ceased to work.

ALA 3, a largely open landscape of high moorland pasture, is located in the middle of the OTA. It consists of two discrete areas linked by a Roman military branch road. This road, the temporary camp at Yardhope (located in the early 1970s from RAF aerial photographs), and the Romano-British shrine to Cocidius (fig 22.8) are part of the wider Roman military landscape which survives on the OTA. The figure of Cocidius carved into the rock face at the entrance to the shrine is a remarkable survival. With his jutting brows, lentoid eyes, close-fitting cap, round shield and spear he is clearly a warrior god and probably represents the 'genius loci,' the god of the place. The very nakedness of the figure argues an indigenous origin as does the existence of comparable figures from elsewhere in the Hadrian's Wall corridor. Also natural features such as rocks and springs were often chosen as places of worship. It may well be that the local population regarded the 'chamber' in the rocks as a sacred place long before Roman invaders moved into the area. What is certain however, is that soldiers serving in the Roman army did not neglect to pay homage to any deity, indigenous or classical, whose power might be called upon to their advantage.

Much of ALA 3 is dominated by medieval and post-medieval shielings, sod-cast dykes, stack stands and sheep stells. Branshaw Bastle with its associated enclosures and field systems, was occupied until the early 1940s when the family were obliged to leave because their lives were frequently interrupted by artillery practice. Although it is now in ruins, Branshaw is scheduled. Interestingly it is surrounded by the remains of settlements of other periods.

The two areas that comprise ALA 4 are connected by Dere Street, the great Roman highway built by Julius Agricola, Governor of Britain AD76–84, as he pushed the conquest north from York to the eastern highlands of Scotland. The southern sector between Redesdale camp and Silloans is a mainly level plateau of moorland with some small plantations and enclosed improved pasture. As Dere Street reaches the foothills of Cheviot in the northern sector the ground gradually rises to 450m, there the open moorland is gouged by steep, narrow valleys.

There are many interesting archaeological remains in this area, including Bellshiel Law long cairn, probably dating to the early Neolithic period c4000–3000BC. Apart from being one of only six similar cairns to have been positively identified in Northumberland, it provides the earliest visible evidence in the OTA landscape for human activity. Significantly it became the focus for a later Bronze Age cairnfield nearby.

Roman military remains in ALA 4 are numerous. Dere Street is lined with temporary camps. Six are in the Sils Burn Valley, discovered by RAF aerial photography between 1934 and 1937 and interpreted by the late Professor Sir Ian Richmond (Richmond 1940, 116–129). The construction is virtually uniform – an earth rampart created by upcast from a single ditch; gateway opening defended by a traverse (short mound and ditch) or by an internal clavicle (an extension of a rampart on one side of the gateway to form an oblique entrance). Size and proportion varied according to the number of men they were to accommodate. Although the camps were probably built at different times their very existence gives some idea of the number of soldiers using Dere Street. The exact purpose of the camps can only be surmised but they surely housed troops working on the construction and maintenance of the road. One of the most interesting is Silloans where Dere Street runs straight through the middle of the camp, passing neatly through both the south and north gates. The fact that the road doesn't take evasive action to avoid this camp, as it does with others, suggests that Silloans was one of the earliest camps in the north, and may already have been abandoned by the time that Agricola's Dere Street was originally constructed. A little further north, pits and hollows in the ground north of Featherwood probably indicate quarrying for road making material.

At Chew Green (fig 22.9), the most northerly and perhaps the most well-known of the Roman earthworks, there is visible evidence of five phases of occupation dating to the Agricolan and Antonine campaigns in Scotland. Later Chew Green became the site of the medieval village of Kemylpeth, which included an inn for travellers on the road. From 1249 it was also the meeting place for cross border disputes to be settled by Scottish and English Wardens responsible for keeping peace in the area. In the eighteenth century five stone sockets supporting medieval wayside crosses, possibly market crosses, were recorded along the road. Only two survive today, the Outer and Middle Golden Pot.

Dere Street continued to be the major route into Scotland until the early nineteenth century when it was replaced by the New Line, the A696/A68. Until then it functioned as a drove road for men bringing cattle and sheep from Scotland to markets in England.



FIGURE 22.9 Chew Green. A complex of pre-Antonine Roman military earthworks adjacent to Dere Street, including three temporary camps, a staging post and a small fort with wagon parks. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

Changes in the traditional pattern of farming in this part of Northumberland are also apparent in ALA 4. In 1604 nine members of the Hedley family tenanted the farm of Silloans but by 1850 an estate map shows the inbye field divided into strips between three owners, their individual parcels of land clearly marked by lines of boundary stones which can still be seen today. A variety of other remains of an agricultural nature in ALA 4, such as sod-cast dykes, stack stands, a corn-drying kiln, enclosures and ruined buildings attest to a well-established economy based on animal husbandry and crop cultivation which persisted over a long period of time.

ALA 5 is remotely situated at the northern end of the OTA, where the landscape of high hills, steep valleys and open moorland is exposed and seemingly inhospitable. It is however an area which was settled from prehistoric to post medieval times. Remains include unenclosed round houses and several defended settlements, notably the palisaded site on Trows Law (fig 22.10). Even more remarkable are the extensive tracts of cord rig cultivation at a height of almost 500m above sea level, suggesting that the climate in those days was more conducive to growing crops than it was in later centuries when cattle and sheep were, and indeed still are, the mainstay of the local economy.

In times past in upland marginal areas like ALA5, it was customary to drive animals to higher ground (outbye) between April and August when warmer weather encouraged the grass to grow, and at the same time, crops in the few fields near the farm steading (inbye) made it necessary for stock to be moved elsewhere. These summer pastures were known as shieling grounds and the temporary shelters where the herds and their families lived were called shielings. Since these shelters built of turf, or drystone if readily available, were only seasonally occupied, evidence for their existence on OTA is slight. However the



FIGURE 22.10 Trows Law palisaded settlement, with clear evidence for internal timber houses. The site is overlain by cord rig, showing that it was cultivated in Iron Age or Romano-British times after the settlement had been abandoned.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)



FIGURE 22.11 Remains of medieval settlement and agriculture at a site known as Windy Hause West. Nothing is known of the history of this site: it has not been archaeologically investigated and no reference to it has been found in ancient documents. The site is surrounded by craters resulting from twentieth-century artillery practice.

(PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

grass-covered foundations of shielings have been located in the more remote areas of ALA 5 at for instance, Buckham's Walls, Barrow Burn and Blindburn. It was not until the eighteenth century when land enclosure brought agricultural improvements that shieling gradually died out.

The higher ground on ALA5 is criss-crossed by trackways such as Gamel Path and The Street. Many are probably of prehistoric origin and continued in use by cattle drovers until well into the 18th century. Along the valley bottoms are later farmsteads, enclosures, stack stands and sod-cast dykes, all of which indicate that the predominant agricultural activity in more recent times was pastoral.

ALA 6 is roughly bounded by the River Coquet to the north and the catchment of the Ridlees Burn to the south. Unenclosed round houses, together with evidence of field clearance and of cord rig cultivation on the higher open moorland, indicate considerable prehistoric activity in the area. Burials dating to the Bronze Age include large, prominent cairns on Crigdon Hill and Green Gairs and ring cairns on Turf Hill and at Old Quickening Cote. They are an important part of the historic landscape, while their excavation may provide evidence relating to funerary practices, illness and mortality during that period. There are many, unusually large burial cairns on the OTA and almost all have been scheduled.

Medieval and post-medieval settlements together with their farmed landscapes, occur mainly on the lower ground near watercourses. Some have been quite substantial such as Aldensheels and Windy Hause East and West (fig 22.11), and were probably hamlets or villages. At Linbriggs for instance, there are the grass covered foundations of a number of buildings including a corn-drying kiln built into the banks of the River Coquet. Excavation of one of the buildings in the 1960s produced evidence of sixteenth-century occupation although there appeared to have been an earlier structure on the site (Harbottle 1968 8). Documents in the Public Records Office relating to Linbriggs indicate a decline in settlement where expansion in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was curtailed by Scottish incursions for many decades. Long deserted, these places are representative of the pattern of settlement in upland Northumberland which did not recover until well after the union of England and Scotland under James VI and I in 1603.

### *The future of archaeology on the Otterburn Training Area*

Since the importance of these landscapes is now recognised, their future protection has been assured by a number of measures enshrined in the Archaeological Management Plan. These measures identify potentially damaging activities by the main land users – soldiers and estate staff, tenant farmers and shepherds. Impact by munitions, 're-arranging' sites (especially cairns), digging, driving across sites, feeding livestock, ditching and draining, tree planting and fencing are recognised as threats to archaeological remains and will not be permitted in HSAs unless sanctioned by the AHEMG. In addition, natural causes of erosion such as persistent damage by rabbits and bracken will be subject to specific measures of control.

Since Scheduled Monuments are conserved within their immediate landscape contexts, there is already a presumption against any material ground disturbance. Any proposed work will be discussed in consultation with English Heritage and formal consent will have to be given by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Plans concerning historic buildings

such as bastles and early twentieth century military installations will be brought before the AHEMG for approval and recording carried out to ensure that their fabric is sensitively conserved. Sites which are not scheduled or classed as highly sensitive will be subject to standard OTA notification and consultation procedures for their protection.

The effectiveness of the Management Plan will be dependent on the right people being aware of the management recommendations which apply to them. For officers planning exercises and troops training, the key tool for dissemination is to be detailed briefings beforehand and, where necessary, appropriate directives will be included in military standing orders. Constraint maps and signage will underpin this information. Farm managers, tenants and shepherds will be briefed by Defence Estates staff and provided with simplified extracts from the Management Plan relating to their individual farm holdings. Decisions on estate management and development will also be informed by the Plan, which will be consulted when land use assessments are being made.

A database of all known archaeological sites and historic buildings on OTA will be available on GIS (Geographic Information Systems) as a further management tool. It will include the results and recommendations of the baseline condition survey undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in 2001 at the request of the AHEMG. This computer-based information should make it relatively easy for sites to be monitored and regularly reviewed on a five-yearly cycle with a built-in provision for flexibility to take into account any rapid deterioration or unforeseen threat. If the Management Plan is successful it will ensure that the directives remain appropriate, that control measures will be implemented and that positive works are delivering the required results.

Much of the work for the Management Plan took place against the background of the public inquiry into *Options for Change*, proposals by the MOD regarding future development and intensification of use of the OTA. The inquiry eventually found in favour of the MOD and the go ahead was given for the infrastructure to be put in place for the deployment of the AS90, a heavy artillery gun and for the Multi Launch Rocket System. One of the conditions imposed on the MOD is that there must be archaeological excavation of those areas where development is proposed, including Bellshiel Roman Camp and Todlaw Pike prehistoric settlement and cairnfield. This work is underway at the time of writing and the results are eagerly awaited.

Excavation is not a new phenomenon on the OTA, but in the past it has always been carried out to solve a particular problem or to answer a specific research question, rather than in response to development pressure. The Romano-British shrine to Cocidius near Yardhope was excavated to discover whether it could be specifically linked to the Roman troops in the area or whether it was purely native (Charlton and Mitcheson 1983 143–155), while it was hoped that the corn-drying kiln at Loaning Burn would reveal the architecture and operation of this early bowl-shaped structure (Charlton and Day 1982 149–170). In more recent years, as already noted above, excavation of the short stretch of the Roman branch road was undertaken as part of an extensive ongoing programme of archaeological evaluation in association with the *Options for Change* proposals. Following a report of damage by wheeled vehicles, an evaluation of Dere Street, the main Roman highway in the north, was undertaken in 2001 to determine its course, nature and condition and to recommend strategies for its management. This work, coupled with excavations associated with forestry work at Featherwood in 1997, has demonstrated that the old Roman road survives in a variable degree of preservation throughout its journey across the OTA.

Published research projects on Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park (Grundy 1987; Ryder 1990) include work carried out on OTA. A survey of non-listed buildings important for their architectural, social, landscape or historical value, including military structures is planned.

Much of the OTA's archaeology and its historic environment is worthy of access and interpretation. Perhaps the most well known are sites of the Roman period, such as the temporary camps and fortlet at Chew Green. Since the MOD has to provide more opportunities for public access it may be possible for these to be included in more regional interpretive enterprises like the Dere Street Trail which highlights and interprets the archaeology along the Roman road from Aldborough to the Scottish Border. There will also be provision for future interpretive initiatives such as site specific schemes and walks publications in partnership with other organisations.

Partnership between the major land users both military and farming, and the antiquarian and conservation interests has played a key role in ensuring the survival and protection of OTA's archaeology and its historic environment. Measures are in place to make sure that this partnership will continue, as the AHEMG is committed to achieving a stable condition for 75% of the resource by 2006. Whatever measures are employed, however, it is desirable to avoid too rigid an adherence to the rules of conservation so that present and future generations can leave their own mark on the landscape.

### *Acknowledgements*

The work discussed in this chapter has benefited from the input of many individuals. Particular thanks are due to Lt Col Richard Cross, Robert Manners and Mike McKendry at OTA, and Tim Gates for his excellent air photographs.

# Simonside

## From prehistory to present

*Iain Hedley and Jamie Quartermaine*

### *Introduction*

Whilst the presence of a group of prominent hills in Northumberland can hardly be described as unusual, the form and location of the Simonside Hills make them stand out, enhancing the perception of their uniqueness and distinctive character (figs 23.1 & 23.2). The Simonsides form part of the southern end of the Fell Sandstone ridge which has been forced upwards against the immovable mass of the Cheviots; faulting, glaciation and the erosive force of the Coquet have combined to separated this range from the Fell Sandstone of the high moors north of Rothbury, leaving it proud and resolute. It is by Simonside that the wide gravel plains of Upper Coquetdale narrow to a pinch point, making this particular place a key node along the ancient salt and drove roads that wind their way across the Border along Clennel Street, whilst the wide panorama of its distinctive upper ridge can be seen from far away to north and south, making it an important landmark for the region and perhaps lending it a strategic significance. Whilst the north side of the hills are steep and dark, almost sinister when backlit by a low winter sun, in sharp contrast the land to the south falls away gently, merging into the wide coastal plain. Indeed, from Simonside the horizon is wide and from the horizon Simonside stands proud: from these two perspectives the story of Simonside can be told.



FIGURE 23.1 A view from the north-west, showing the distinctive profile of Simonside Hill.

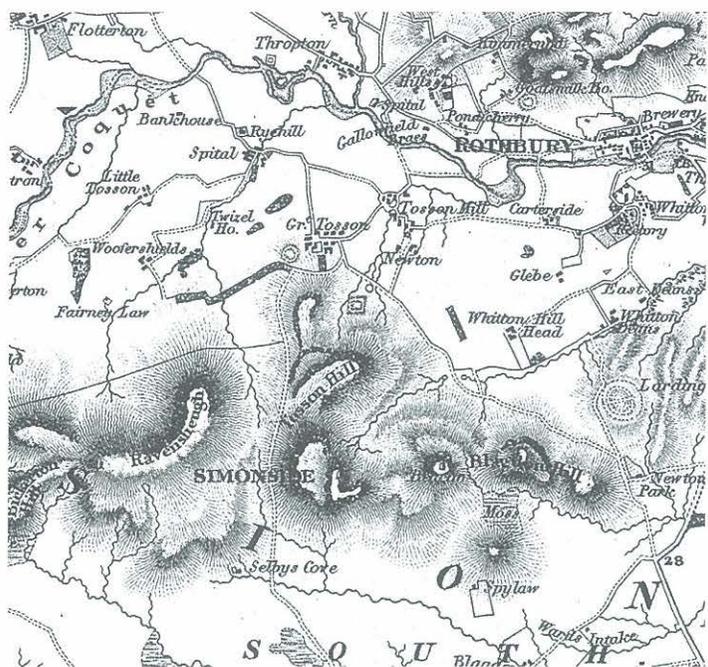


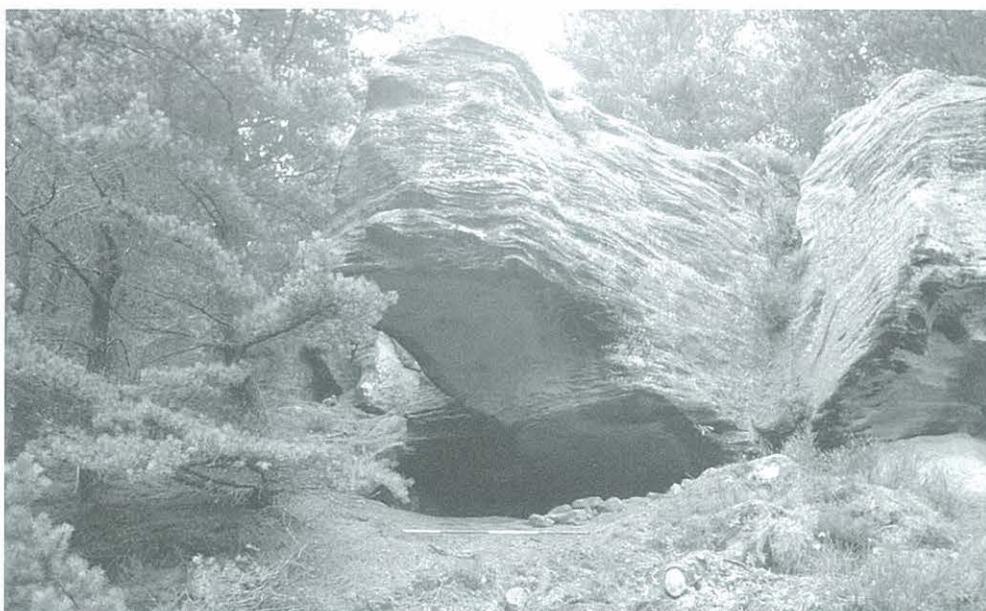
FIGURE 23.2 The Simonside Hills as depicted on Greenwood's map of 1828. (© NORTHUMBERLAND RECORDS OFFICE)

### *The Mesolithic*

One can only speculate as to how Simonside was perceived and used by Mesolithic hunter-gatherers who perhaps used its crowning outcrops to track the seasonal movements of game in the valleys below. Paul Frodsham, in part I of this volume, suggests that Simonside, by virtue of its striking form, may have been a very special place during the Mesolithic, but such suggestions cannot be proven. Regardless of this, recent finds of

This report is based on the results of a project commissioned by the National Park Authority (NNPA) and undertaken by a project team from the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (now Oxford Archaeology North) and Archaeological Services, University of Durham. The original impetus for the project came from the desire of the NNPA and Forest Enterprise to ensure that archaeological remains here were sympathetically managed and that a sample of sites was interpreted for the public. The project brief was for the accurate recording of all sites in the Project Area (which consisted only of that part of the Simonside range in Forestry Commission ownership), together with the provision of a comprehensive account of the history of the area from the earliest times through until the present day.

FIGURE 23.3 A distinctive rock overhang situated above the Cambo Bridle Road. Mesolithic hunters may have used sites such as this as shelters. (© LUAU)



Mesolithic flints (John Davies, pers comm) demonstrate Mesolithic activity on Simonside, although the nature of this activity awaits further research. One very prominent rock overhang situated along the Cambo Bridle Road (fig 23.3) and the curiously configured 'Ousen House' on the southern slope of the Hill, have been used as shelters by drovers in historic times and it requires little imagination to conjure up a picture of such natural shelters being used for similar purposes in the far distant past.

### *The Neolithic and Bronze Age*

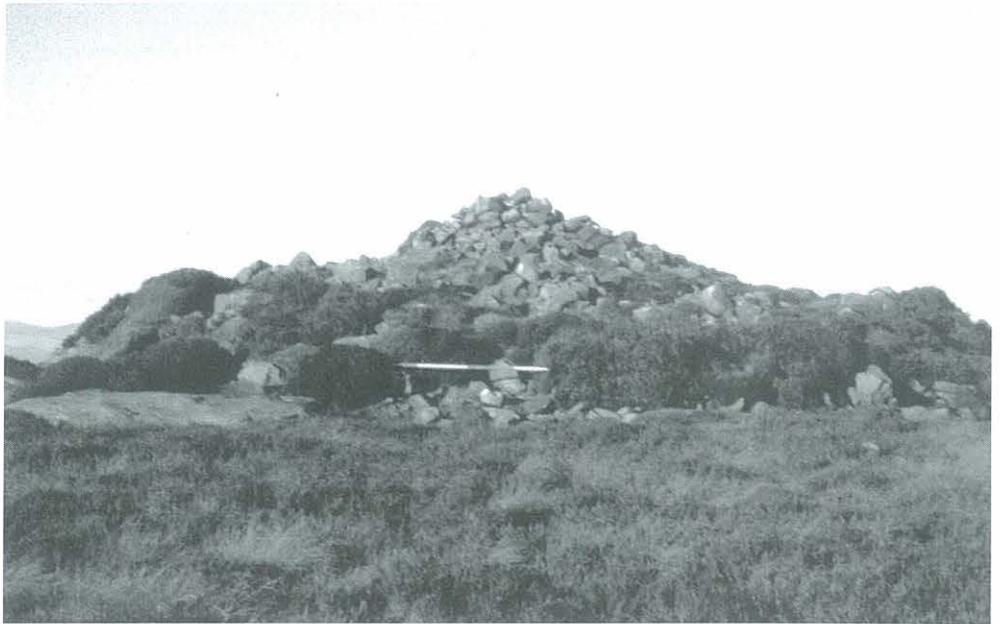
The region around Simonside is well known for the extent and variety of its prehistoric antiquities, including standing stones, burial cairns and rock art, which suggest that these hills had a particular importance for the people of the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age. Rock art in particular seems to have acted as a marker of important places in the landscape by 'signing the land'. There is no rock art inside the project area, but major panels occur in the Lordenshaws complex just to the north-east. One of the most significant features of the Simonsides are the cairns or piles of stones that both crown its peaks and pepper the north facing slopes of Spital Hill, a prominent stepped hill below Simonside Hill itself. These suggest that Simonside was a focal area in the Bronze Age. They aroused much interest in the nineteenth century from antiquaries curious as to what treasure lay beneath them. On Spital Hill, David Dippie Dixon (Dixon 1892; 1903) with the aid of Lord Armstrong's workmen, dug into a dozen or more and recovered Bronze Age pottery and evidence of burial (fig 23.4).

Dixon's excavations revealed both inhumations and cremations and generally the inhumations were the central burials, while the cremations were usually satellite burials inserted at a later date into the body of the cairn. In the instances where there were central cremations, there were invariably no satellites, suggesting that the practice of cremation, although running alongside inhumation, was generally the later practice.



FIGURE 23.4 Bronze Age cairn with central cist and capstone in the foreground. A number of cairns on Spital Hill were left exposed following Dixon's excavations. (© LUAU)

FIGURE 23.5 Large summit cairn on Simonside Hill. (© LUAU)



Bronze Age landscapes as exemplified by studies in the Lake District and elsewhere often typically display some distinctive characteristics. In general they incorporate a combination of areas of agricultural clearance, characterised by groups of clearance cairns called cairnfields. Occasionally there are cultivated plots, and some sites have unenclosed circular huts. Funerary monuments are most typically round cairns upwards of 10m across, and these are invariably scattered across the higher parts of the uplands, although they can also be associated with the areas of clearance. The key aspect is that in terms of numbers they are relatively rare features of the landscape, in comparison with clearance cairns, and are rarely grouped: two or three scattered over a survey area of say five square kilometres is a large number. Simonside demonstrates a notable exception as almost no evidence of Bronze Age agriculture has been found here, yet within the project survey area of only four square kilometres 23 funerary round cairns are now recorded (LUAU and ASUD 2000). In effect the area was marked by an emphasis on funerary remains rather than agricultural or domestic activity. This may in part be due to the availability of good agricultural land in the lowlands around Simonside.

In the Bronze Age the location of the burial cairns was typically characterised by prominent positions on hills, places with good outward looking vistas. The most exposed locations were not always chosen, and many cairns were located at the cusp of hills, near the summit, which enjoyed extensive outward looking vistas. Such a position is well illustrated by one cairn on the edge of the flat topped Simonside Hill (fig 23.5). The more prominent locations are invariably occupied by the more majestic and substantial cairns, hence the largest cairns are those on each of the summits of Simonside which are particularly large, measuring up to 25m in diameter.

While the analysis of the views from of the funerary cairns were an important part of the Simonside project, these views were severely hindered in many cases by the dense conifer forest on the northern slopes. Inevitably this led to considerable complications and in the end the vista analysis was more of a desk-based exercise examining computer generated models

of the hill rather than the hill itself. The results interestingly show that while there were certainly some cairns which predominated on prominent topographic cusps there were other factors affecting the positions. Ignoring the occasional oddity they were either located on the mountain ridge or within a relatively tight cluster on the lower slopes of Spital Hill, where there are sixteen round cairns within an area of about eight hectares. In one sense this may not seem an enormous density, but, considering the sort of density we have normally come to expect on marginal uplands, it is a significant concentration. It is located just down hill from one of the most prominent natural landmarks, known today as Little Church Rock. This is an unusual and spectacular outcrop, containing a small 'cave'. Yet there is no evidence that the Little Church Rock itself was ever used for burial. This suggests that there were other factors involved. The cairns around Spital Hill were for the most part set along alignments, each comprising upwards of six cairns, where possible exploiting a local landmark. Because of this emphasis on alignments, some cairns are on relatively non-prominent sections of sloping hillside. This distribution clearly demonstrates a sense of order governing the setting out of the cairns, though the explanation of such patterning remains a matter for conjecture.

Today a number of these cairns can be seen just as Dixon left them, their rude stone cists or coffins exposed to view. A further series of cairns occupying another prominent ridge to the north west of Spital Hill were destroyed in the nineteenth century by the Tosson limestone quarry. From the recovery of diagnostic iron artefacts it was found that these cairns had been reused for burial by Anglian warriors some 2500 years after their construction (Scott 1885, 42).

As already noted, many stone cairns result from the clearance of stone from the soil to facilitate cultivation. These are known as 'field clearance cairns', and are commonly found in areas farmed during the Bronze Age. However on the northern slopes of Simonside cultivation is impossible, as for most of the year the land lies in the shadow cast by the hill itself. All the cairns here seem to have been built as burial monuments. The significance of the burials may perhaps lie in their location. Spital Hill commands an extensive vista, within which must have stood the settlements of the descendants of those buried in the cairns. The cairns were in constant view from these settlements, providing tangible reassurance to the living of their place in this landscape: 'if this is the land of my ancestors, then it is my right to be here'. This significance may have persisted for centuries after the last of the ancestors was laid to rest.

In 1868, two bronze swords (fig 23.6), two lead objects thought to be sword pommels, three bronze rings, two other pieces of bronze (perhaps the handle and blade of a knife) and a bone object, were discovered under two rocks at the base of the moor between the Cockpit Well and Cowet Well (Dixon 1903, 131–2; Scott 1885, 42). The latter three are lost, but the swords, pommels and rings are in the Duke of Northumberland's collection in Alnwick Castle (Bruce 1880, 53). It is impossible to pinpoint the exact spot where they were found, but it seems clear from the near-contemporary account (Arkle 1876) that the finds came from a small, closely delimited area and not from a wider range of locations. It thus qualifies as a collective find or 'hoard'.

The most intact of the swords, although broken near the tip, measures about half a metre in length and includes three of its four handle rivets (Burgess and Colquhoun 1988). It belongs to a very common late Bronze Age sword type in Britain known as 'Ewart' after a famous find at Ewart Park near Milfield, Northumberland, and dating to around 1000 to 800

FIGURE 23.6 Late Bronze Age sword recovered from the lower slopes of Spital Hill, now in Alnwick Castle Museum. (© ASUD)

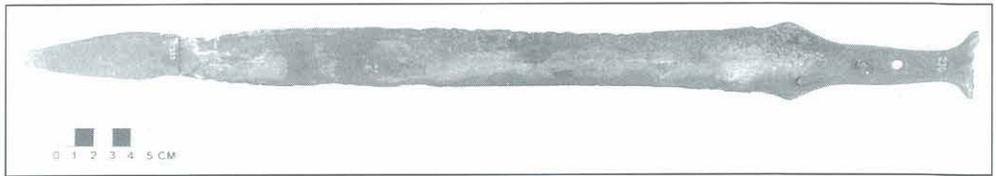


FIGURE 23.7 Boundary stone on Simonside Hill. Dated 15th September 1790, it records the boundary between the estates of the Dukes of Portland and Northumberland (Note that the N of Northumberland has been carved upside down). (© LUAU)



BC (Needham *et al* 1997, 55). In common with many such deposits of bronze weaponry in this period, it had been deliberately broken in antiquity, prior to deposition. We are dealing, therefore, with a typical example of a hoard or deposit that shows no ‘useful’ purpose, and may be categorised as a ritual deposit. Many such ritual hoards are known throughout late Bronze Age and Iron Age Britain, including several from Northumberland (Frodsham, this volume).

The summit cairns are thought to have been ‘investigated’ by unknown local antiquarians prior to Dixon in the nineteenth century, and found to contain no evidence of artefacts or burial (Anon. 1885). Whilst this may be dismissed as a consequence of unskilled excavation as opposed to any real evidence of absence, there remains no firm evidence that they belonged to the Bronze Age at all. Such a date is usually assumed by analogy with other sites

in the region, not least those on nearby Spital Hill. However, the large summit cairns may actually be earlier, and may originally have contained inhumation burials which would subsequently have dissolved away in the acid soils. Regardless of whether or not they ever contained burials, they were perhaps erected to demarcate the margins of territory, as they were certainly used as such in historical times. Could the use of such markers, still used for parish and property boundaries today, have continued for over 4000 years? Perhaps Simonside Hill, as the highest point in the local landscape, served such a function. During the medieval period, it formed the boundary between the Barony of Hepple and the Manor of Rothbury, and in the eighteenth century the estate boundary between the Dukes of Portland and Northumberland (fig 23.7), both of which represented continuity of earlier feudal estates. Many boundaries in this landscape may prove to have ancient origins: Dixon (1903, 366) speculates that the boundaries to the townships were potentially pre-Norman in origin. Further investigation is clearly needed in order to establish the true date and function of these summit cairns if we hope to understand the extent to which they may have functioned as early territorial markers.

## *The Iron Age and Roman periods*

During the Iron Age a univallate (single rampart) hillfort, Tosson Burgh, was established on a prominent knoll to the north-west of Spital Hill (fig 23.8). It is not known whether this was a virgin site or whether it overlies the remains of an earlier settlement, but its position is significant for it commands the south side of the pinch point of the River Coquet above Rothbury and is matched by the hillforts of Old Rothbury and West Hills on the north side. The term 'hillfort' is increasingly being viewed as unhelpful in classifying these settlements, mainly for two reasons. First, not all are situated on hills. Second, recent work in the Cheviots by English Heritage (Chapter 13) is finding that display rather than defence is important in rampart development, perhaps emphasising the territorial ownership of a community: the monuments may never have functioned principally as 'forts'. However, they were certainly considered to be fortifications by the early English settlers who applied the place-name element *Burgh*, usually attributed to a fortified place, to the site. In addition, the 'Chester' element of the nearby Chesterhope Burn derives from the Latin *castra* or fort.

Lordenshaws hillfort, just outside the Simonside project area, is a good example of a multi-vallate hillfort that probably underwent several phases of construction (Topping 1993). A Romano-British homestead of stone roundhouses with paddocks is located on top of the hillfort, demonstrating that the fort defences were no longer in use during the Roman period. People living in the hillfort and the later Roman-British settlement at Lordenshaws would presumably have used Simonside for hunting, although no evidence for this survives. Another probable Iron Age or Romano-British farmstead survives as a rectilinear earthwork on the north east slope of Spital Hill, again just beyond the survey area, though no internal features are apparent and its date and function must await further investigation. This earthwork, largely overlooked in today's landscape, is shown on Greenwood's 1828 map of the County of Northumberland (see fig 14.2).

## *The early medieval period*

As with most of Northumberland, there is very little archaeological evidence for human presence in the vicinity of Simonside between the Roman and medieval periods. The only certain evidence dating from this period is the previously mentioned burial inserted into a Bronze Age cairn at Tosson Quarry. Other evidence for an early medieval presence in the local landscape is perhaps contained in place names.

It is likely that the very place name 'Simonside' originated during the early medieval period, though there have been a number of interpretations of its meaning. It has been taken by some to mean Simon's (or Sigmund's) Shieling (Old English: *Saetre*) or Settlement, which led Tomlinson (1916, 336) to speculate that this was the 'Simon of mythology [who] was, it seems a domestic brewer to King Arthur, identical with the German Sigmund, and very fond of killing dragons.'

When interpreting place names it is important to understand the nature of the place in question. At Simonside the topography is the most important characteristic of the place and it is no surprise that this is expressed in the meaning of the name. The earliest written form is recorded in the 1279 Assize Rolls for Northumberland as *Simundessete*. This can be broken into three distinct elements: *si*, *mundes*, and *sete*. The first element *si* derives from *sid* (Old English) or *sig* (Old Norse) meaning broad or spacious. The middle element is clearly 'mount' deriving from *munt* (Old English) or *mund* (Old Norse), literally 'mountain'

(Watson 1970, 58). Thus the name is an accurate description of Simonside – a broad mountain. The last element *sete* may derive from *saetre* (Old English) meaning a shieling (Sweet 1896, 153). Simonside may thus translate as the ‘broad mountain shieling’ or rather ‘the shieling on the broad mountain’. A further plausible interpretation of the last element is *sith* or *seth* (Old English), meaning ‘road’ (Sweet 1896, 155), thus giving ‘broad mountain road’ or ‘the road by the broad mountain’, possibly referring to the ancient route around Simonside via Lordenshaws.

Languages from other settlers have also left their mark on Simonside. In Ousen Burn we have the survival of the British or Old Welsh word *iesin*, meaning beautiful, sparkling or shimmering (Breeze 1998, 57). Whilst the interpretation of the place name element *Trew* in Trewitt and Jabel Trew, and early occurrences of the distinctly Scandinavian form *Sigmund*, as opposed to *Sidmunt*, have been claimed by some to demonstrate a Norse presence in the area, there is no archaeological evidence in the area for such settlement, and precious little from the county as a whole.

### *The medieval period*

During medieval times, documentary sources become more numerous and give us more of an insight in to how the Simonside range fitted in to the contemporary landscape. As we have seen, in the thirteenth century Simonside marked the boundary between the Barony of Hepple to the west and of the Manor of Rothbury to the east. It also formed part of the boundary of Rothbury Forest. In 1275 a large area of the Forest bordering the east end of the range was enclosed by Robert FitzRoger within the Newtown Deer Park. Much of the deer park wall survives and on the eastern slopes of the Simonside range a particularly fine stretch of revetment wall has survived modern forestry. The loss of common grazing land as a result of this enclosure was a concern, as is recorded in 1275, when the Rector of Rothbury managed to get two gates established in the boundary so that he could still drive his cattle across the area. Such movement of cattle has resulted in the many drove or hollow ways that can be traced from Tosson Burgh up to Spital Hill, on to Little Church Rock, and on to the intriguingly named Bob Pyle’s Studdie (a natural boulder thought to resemble an anvil), converging with the Bridle Path on the west side of Simonside Hill. In an area which Dippie Dixon (1892, 26) refers to as the ‘Ad Stells’, where the remains of two sod cast stells can still be seen, a series of large earth and stone dykes were constructed, each with a gate. These may have been to regulate the movement of cattle and control access onto areas used for local common pasture.

The *spital* place name element, which occurs in Spital Hill, is usually attributed to the site of a medieval hospital or, as in this case, to the land granted for the support of such an institution. The hospital in question was the Hospital of St Leonard situated at Ryehill, also referred to as Allerdene or Ryehill Spittle, which is first mentioned in 1281. It was set up for the benefit of travellers and, with the hospital for travellers established at Wreighburn House near Thropton by the Knights Hospitallers (Dixon 1903, 457), it underlines the importance of the road network in Upper Coquetdale. Indeed it highlights the importance of routeways across and around the whole of Simonside.

In 1354 Robertus de Maners owned land at Tosson in addition to his estate at Etal in the north of the county (Dixon 1903, 134). It is perhaps significant that the parish of Ancroft, which lies a few miles to the east of Etal, is recorded in the Tosson Common enclosure award of 1806 (NRO(M)QRD7) and in the later tithe apportionment. Although the origin of the



FIGURE 23.8 The Iron Age hillfort of Tosson Burgh. (PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GATES)

Ancroft interest in Tosson is not known, it is tempting to see this as a continuity of a land grant made to the earlier hospital. Thus, Tosson continued to contribute to the financial well-being of Ancroft parish several hundred years after the abandonment of the hospital itself. Although the date of the abandonment is not known, it seems likely that the hospital would not have survived the repeated outbreaks of plague in the second half of the fourteenth century; a time when travellers were no longer welcome. Today, the connection between Ancroft and Simonside is fossilised in the name of the eastern farm at Great Tosson, which continues to be called The Glebe ('glebe land' being land farmed for the benefit of the incumbent of a church, in this case the church at Ancroft).

During the medieval period, social and economic uncertainty, caused by the conflict between the two crowns, and competition between local barons, severely held back the development of the Borders. Characteristic of this period are the blood feuds, thieving and general lawlessness which, together with border warfare, particularly following Edward I's incursion of 1296, created the conditions that led to the emergence of individual fortified houses, such as the tower house at Great Tosson. The date of its foundation is not known, but perhaps significantly it was not mentioned when the Ogles purchased the land in 1330. Similarly it is omitted from the list of castles compiled for Henry V in 1415. By 1541, however, it appears to have been in poor condition when it was described as 'not in good reparacions'. Cordons of beacons and watches along the hills and at strategic points within the valley were maintained in order to provide early warning of any invasion or raid by the Scots. It is recorded that the Beacon of Simonside was specifically erected for this purpose and that a nightly watch was being kept in 1549 (Dixon 1903, 483). This presumably relates to Beacon Hill, which lies on the mid-point of the range where two large prehistoric cairns may have been used as Beacon sites.

## *Post-medieval*

The use of the droveways across Simonside increased after the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland in 1603, as cattle were driven over the Border from Scotland as far as Norfolk to be fattened up for the London market. It is said that the drovers were men of ill repute who avoided the payment of taxes by driving their cattle over higher moorland areas. They are known to have used some rock shelters, such as Ousen House, for temporary accommodation when passing through the region. Cambo appears to have been a major stop over on this route, where the village smith would shoe the drovers' cattle. A party of Roundheads rode over Simonside, along the Cambo road, known then as the Clattering Way (AC 1624), at great speed in 1644, taking by surprise the tower house at Great Tosson, occupied by Royalist Dragoons (Dixon 1903, 487). In the eighteenth century, responsibility for the maintenance of the Cambo road lay with the Township of Great Tosson, which was responsible for its upkeep to a breadth of six feet. It may have been at this time that criss-cross marked stones along the path were carved in order to assist the passage of laden ponies (fig 23.9). The route deteriorated in importance during the twentieth century, and the construction of the forestry plantations have resulted in the rerouting of many tracks in the area.

## *Sacred places?*

Throughout the world, high places and prominent upstanding landmarks continue to have significance in contemporary cultural life (Bernbaum 1997). Certainly, Simonside stands out in terms of its distinctive topographic character, in marked contrast to the adjacent lowlands. It is an area of marginal upland which in other circumstances would be covered with Bronze Age settlement, but is instead home to a significant number of funerary monuments (fig 23.10), some in potentially significant alignments. While the absence of cairnfields or



FIGURE 23.9 Unusual carved surface of a boulder on the course of the Cambo Bridle Road, thought to have helped the safe passage of ponies. (© LUAU)

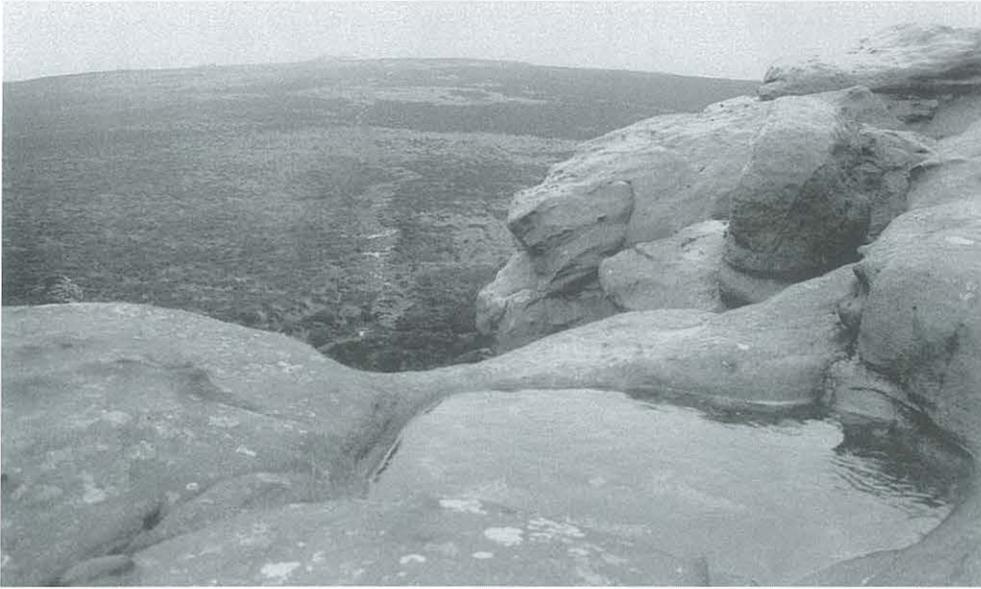


FIGURE 23.10 General view over the summit of Simonside. Note the cairn on the horizon which sits on the very edge of the plateau overlooking Coquetdale. (© ASUD)

settlement remains may reflect a lack of pressure to exploit the marginal uplands, the resultant exclusive use of Simonside for funerary sites may have conferred, in time, a special significance perceived within the population occupying the surrounding lowlands.

From more recent cultural tradition, Simonside has been a focus for folk beliefs, relating to the 'Duergar', dwarf-like inhabitants of the darker recesses of the hills. These stories were recorded in the nineteenth century, but may have had much earlier origins. The term 'Duergar' appears to be confined to Simonside, whilst elsewhere in Northumberland fairies, dwarves and brownies are more widely encountered. It is possible, therefore, that the term may represent a late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century addition to existing stories in keeping with the gothic literary style of the time which emphasised the grotesque, mysterious, and desolate. On Simonside, the Duergar trick weary travellers, lost in the frequent mists, into falling over the precipitous crags (Grice 1944, 130–3). They are the personification of the dangers of the hills which are apparent into the modern day; thick mists appear very quickly and can restrict visibility to less than a metre. It is in recognition of these dangers that such stories began to be told as cautionary tales by mothers to their children.

### *Summary*

The Simonside project has demonstrated that numerous important archaeological sites survive here. Some of these are now interpreted for visitors, and can be visited via a series of waymarked trails established by Forest Enterprise and the National Park Authority. People are still drawn to the summit of Simonside to enjoy the extensive views and speculate about the distant past, just as they probably were in distant prehistoric times.

The unique form of Simonside, and the presence of so many Bronze Age burial cairns on it, has led Paul Frodsham (this volume) to speculate that it may have had a greater significance to earlier populations than simply another hill in a landscape of hills. Frodsham believes that it may have been a sacred mountain in prehistoric times. A problem, however, is that it is easier to speculate in the absence of hard evidence than it is to prove.

## *Acknowledgements*

The authors are grateful to Paul Frodsham for the original inspiration behind the Simonside project, and for much useful discussion during the writing of this paper. Grateful thanks are also due to Jonathan Farries and Bill Burlton of Forest Enterprise for providing access to the survey area, and to His Grace The Duke of Northumberland for allowing access to the archive material held at Alnwick Castle, and also for permission to examine the Simonside swords. The authors would also like to express their thanks to the following for their contributions, assistance and support: James Jackson, Colin Shrimpton, Chris Scurfield, Andrea Scott, Dr Richard Newman, Stuart Davies, James Whitford, Ben Anderson, Mathew Bosworth, Peter Carne, Phil Clogg, Kate Delevaux, Elliot Freeman, Simon Priestman, Amy Rushton, David Watkins, Julian Winiker, David Webster, Rachel Pope, Dr John Daniel, Dr John Chapman, and Professor Anthony Harding.

# Part II References

## Introduction

Frodsham, P, 1995 Monuments in the Landscape: Some thoughts on the Practical Management of the Historic Environment. *Northern Archaeology* 12, 78–89

## Chapter 10

- Barber, K E, 1981 *Peat Stratigraphy and Climatic Change: A Palaeoecological Test of the Theory of Cyclic Peat Bog Regeneration*. Rotterdam: Balkema
- Barber K E, Chambers, F M, Maddy, D, Stoneman, R, and Brew, S, 1994 A sensitive high-resolution record of late Holocene climatic change from a raised bog in northern England, *The Holocene*, 4, 198–205
- Barber, K E, Dumayne, L, and Stoneman, R, 1993 Climatic change and human impact during the late Holocene in Northern Britain, in F M Chambers (ed) *Climate Change and Human Impact on the Landscape*. London: Chapman Hall, 225–36
- Bartley, D D, 1965 Pollen analysis of some lakes near Bamburgh in Northumberland, *New Phytologist*, 69, 141–15
- Blackburn, K B, 1953 A long pollen diagram from Northumberland, *Transactions of the Northern Naturalists Union*, 2, 40
- Borek, M J E, 1975 Pollen Analysis and Vegetational History of the Akeld Basin, Unpublished MSc Thesis, University of Durham
- Brown, A G, Crane, S, O’Sullivan, D M, Walsh, K, and Young, R, 1995 Marginality, multiple estates and environmental change: the case of Lindisfarne, in C M Mills & G Coles (eds) *Life on the Edge: Human Settlement and Marginality*, Symposia of the Association of Environmental Archaeology, 13, 139–48. Oxford: Oxbow monograph 100
- Burgess, C B, 1984 The prehistoric settlement of Northumberland a speculative survey, in R Miket and C Burgess (eds) *Between and Beyond the Walls*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 126–175
- Burgess, C B, 1985 Population, climate and upland settlement, in D Spratt and C Burgess (eds) *Upland Settlement in Britain: The Second Millennium BC and After*, BAR Brit Ser, 143. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 195–230
- Chapman, S B, 1964–1965 The ecology of Coom Rigg Moss, Northumberland. I Stratigraphy and Present Vegetation II Chemistry of peat profiles, III Some water rels of bog systems, *Journal of Ecology*, 52, 299 – 384
- Clapperton, C M, Durno, S E, and Squires, R H, 1971 Evidence for the Flandrian history of the Wooler Water, Northumberland, provided by pollen analysis, *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 57, 14–20
- Davies, G, & Turner, J, 1979 Pollen diagrams from Northumberland, *New Phytologist*, 82, 783–804
- Dumayne, L, 1992 Late Holocene Palaeoecology and Human Impact on the Environment of Northern Britain. Unpublished PhD Thesis, Southampton University
- Dumayne, L, 1993a Invader or native – Vegetation clearance in northern Britain during Romano-British Times, *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany*, 2, 29–36
- Dumayne, L, 1993b Iron Age and Roman vegetation clearance in northern Britain – further evidence, *Botanical Journal of Scotland*, 46:3, 382–92

- Dumayne, L, 1994 The effect of the Roman occupation on the environment of Hadrian's Wall: a pollen diagram from Fozy Moss, Northumbria, *Britannia*, **25**, 217–24
- Dumayne, L, and Barber, K, 1994 The impact of the Romans on the environment of northern England. Pollen data from three sites close to Hadrian's Wall, *The Holocene*, **4**, 165–73
- Dumayne, L, & Barber, K, 1997 Archaeological and environmental evidence for Roman impact on vegetation near Carlisle, Cumbria: a comment on McCarthy, *The Holocene*, **7.2**, 243–5
- Dumayne, L, Stoneman, R, Barber, K, and Harkness, R, 1995 Problems associated with correlating calibrated radiocarbon dated pollen events with historical events, *The Holocene*, **5**, 118–23
- Girling, M A, 1986 The bark beetle *Scolytus scolytus* (Fabricius) and the possible role of elm disease in the early Neolithic, in M Jones (ed) *Archaeology of the British Flora. Human Influences on the Evolution of Plant Communities*, 34 – 38 Oxford: University Committee for Archaeology
- Godwin, H, 1940 Pollen analysis and forest history in England and Wales, *New Phytologist*, **39**, 370–480
- Harding, A F, 1981 Excavations in the prehistoric ritual complex near Milfield, Northumberland, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, **47**, 87–135
- Harrison, S, & Tipping, R, 1994 *The Geomorphology and Late Quaternary Evolution of the Cheviot Hills*. British Geomorphological Research Group – Field Guide 106pp
- Hibbert, F A & Switsur, V R, 1976 Radiocarbon dating of Flandrian pollen zones in northern England, *New Phytologist*, **77**, 793–807
- Innes, J B, & Shennan, I, 1991 Palynology of archaeological and mire sediments from Dod, Borders region, Scotland, *Archaeological Journal*, **148**, 1–45
- McCarthy, M, 1995 Archaeological and environmental evidence for the Roman impact on vegetation near Carlisle, Cumbria, *The Holocene*, **5**, 491–6
- McCarthy, M, 1997 Archaeological and environmental evidence for roman impact on vegetation near Carlisle, Cumbria: a reply to Dumayne-Peaty and Barber, *The Holocene*, **7**, 245–6
- Macklin, M G, Passmore, D G, Stevenson, A C, Cowley D C, Edwards, D N, and O'Brien, C F, 1991 Holocene alluviation and land-use change on Callaly Moor, Northumberland, England, *Journal of Quaternary Science*, **6**, 225–32
- Macklin, M G, Passmore, D G, Cowley D C, Stevenson, A C, and O'Brien, C F, 1992 Climatic and cultural signals in Holocen alluvial sequences: The Tyne Basin, northern England, in M Macklin and S Needham (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain*. Oxford: Oxbow Monograph, **27**, 123–40
- Manning, A, 1996 *Palaeo-environmental investigations at Caudhole Moss, near Lordenshaw in the Simonside Hills*. Report to the Northumberland National Park
- Manning, A, Birley, R, and Tipping R, 1997 Roman impact on the environment of Hadrian's Wall: precisely dated pollen analysis from Vindolanda, northern England, *The Holocene*, **7**, 175–86
- Mannion, A M, 1978 Late Quaternary deposits from Linton Loch, southeast Scotland. 1. Absolute and relative pollen analyses of limnic sediments, *Journal of Biogeography*, **5**, 193–206
- McCarthy, M R, 1995 Archaeological and environmental evidence for the Roman impact on vegetation near Carlisle, Cumbria, *The Holocene*, **5**, 491–5
- McCarthy, M P, 1997 Archaeological and environmental evidence for Roman impact on vegetation near Carlisle, Cumbria: a reply to Dumayne-Peaty and Barber, *The Holocene*, **7**, 245–6
- Mercer, R, and Tipping, R, 1994 The prehistory of soil erosion in the Northern and Eastern Cheviot Hills, Anglo-Scottish Borders, in S Foster and T C Smout (eds) *The History of Soils and Field Systems*. Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1–24
- Moore, P D, 1973 The influence of prehistoric cultures upon the spread of blanket bog in upland Wales, *Nature*, **241**, 350–3

- Moore, P D, 1975 Origin of blanket mires, *Nature*, **256**, 67–9
- Moore, P D, 1983 Palynological evidence of human involvement in certain palaeohydrological events, *Quaternary Studies in Poland*, **4**, 99–105
- Moore P D, 1987a Man and mire: A long and wet relationship, *Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh*, **45**, 77–95
- Moore, P D, 1987b Ecological and hydrological aspects of peat formation, in A C Scott, *Coal and Coal Bearing Strata: Recent Advances*. Geological Society Special Publication, **32**, 7–15
- Moore, P D, 1988 The development of moorlands and upland mires, in M Jones (ed) *Archaeology and the Flora of the British Isles: Human Influence on the Evolution of Plant Communities*. Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monographs, **14**, 116–122
- Moore, P D, 1989 The ecology of peat forming processes: A review, *International Journal of Coal Geology*, **12**, 89–103
- Moores, A J, 1996 *Palaeo-environmental reconstructions at Bloody Moss*. Report to Northumberland National Park and MOD, March, 1996
- Moores, A J, 1998 Palaeoenvironmental investigations of Holocene landscapes in the North Tyne Basin, northern England. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Moores, A J, and Passmore, D, 1999 Holocene Vegetation Histories and Human Activity in Upland Coquetdale; Pollen Records from Bloody Moss, Otterburn Training Area and Caudhole Moss, Simonside Hills. Unpublished report to Northumberland National Park
- Moores, A J, Passmore, D, & Stevenson, A C, 1999 High resolution palaeo-channel records of Holocene valley floor environments in the North Tyne Basin, northern England, in A G Brown and T A Quine (eds) *Fluvial Processes And Environmental Change*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 283–310
- Moyle, D W, 1980 Pollen Analysis of Peat Deposits Near Edlingham, Northumberland. Unpublished MSc Thesis, University of Durham
- O'Sullivan, D M, and Young, R, 1995 *Lindisfarne: Holy Island*. London: Batsford/English Heritage
- Passmore, D, 1994 River Response To Holocene Environmental Change: The Tyne Basin, Northern England. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Passmore, D, and Stevenson, A, 2001 *A palaeo-environmental evaluation of the impact of prehistoric communities on the environment of the Breamish Valley, Northumberland Phase 1: Pollen Analysis of Broad Moss*. Interim Report for the Northumberland National Park Authority, March 2001
- Pearson, M C, 1954 The Ecology and History of Some Peat Bogs in Western Northumberland, With Special Reference to Muckle Moss. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Pearson, M C, 1960 Muckle Moss, Northumberland. I: Historical, *Journal of Ecology*, **48**, 647
- Rowell, T K, & Turner, J, 1985 Litho-, humic- and pollen stratigraphy at Quick Moss, Northumberland, *Journal of Ecology*, **73**, 11–25
- Simmons, I G, 1996 *The Environmental Impact of Later Mesolithic Cultures: The creation of Moorland Landscapes in England and Wales*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Simmons I G, & Innes, J, 1987 Mid-holocene adaptations and Later Mesolithic forest disturbance in northern England, *Journal of Archaeological Science*, **14**, 385–403
- Smith, A G, 1981 The Neolithic, in I G Simmons and M J Tooley (eds) *The Environment in British Prehistory*, 125 – 209. London: Duckworth
- Tipping, R, 1992 The determination of cause in the generation of major prehistoric valley fills in the Cheviot hills, Anglo-Scottish border, in S Needham and M G Macklin (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain*. Oxford: Oxbow, 111–21

- Tipping, R, 1996 The Neolithic landscapes of the Cheviot Hills and hinterland: Palaeo-environmental evidence, *Northern Archaeology*, **13/14**, 17–34
- Tipping, R, 1997 Pollen analysis and the impact of Rome on native agriculture around Hadrian's Wall in A Gwilt and C Haselgrove (eds) *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies*. Oxford: Oxbow Monographs, **71**, 239–247.
- Topping, P, 1989. Early cultivation in Northumberland and the Borders, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, **55**, 161–179
- Topping, P, 1990–1991 The excavation of an unenclosed settlement, field system and cord-rig cultivation at Linhope Burn, Northumberland, 1989, *Northern Archaeology*, **11**, 1–42
- Turner, C H, 1968 Studies On Small Post-Glacial Peat Deposits in Northumberland Unpublished MSc Thesis, University of Durham
- Waddington, C, 1996 Putting rock art to use: A model for early Neolithic transhumance in North Northumberland, *Northern Archaeology*, **13/14**, 147–177
- Waddington, C, 1997 Earliest henge and other updates, *Archaeology North*, **13**, summer 1997, 8–13
- Waddington, C, 1998 A Landscape Archaeological Study of the Mesolithic-Neolithic in the Milfield Basin, Northumberland. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Durham
- Waddington, C, 2000 The Neolithic that never happened? In J Harding & R Johnston (eds), *Northern Pasts*, BAR Brit Ser, **302**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 33–44
- Young, R, 2000 Continuity and change: marginality and later prehistoric settlement in the northern uplands, in J Harding and R Johnston (eds) *Northern Pasts: Interpretations of the Later Prehistory of Northern England and Southern Scotland*, BAR Brit Ser, **302**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 71–80
- Young, R, & Simmonds, T, 1995 Marginality and the nature of later prehistoric upland settlement in the north of England, *Landscape History*, **17**, 5–16
- Young, R, & Simmonds, T, 1999 Debating marginality: Archaeologists on the edge, in J Bruck and M Goodman (eds) *Making Places in the Prehistoric World: Themes in Settlement Archaeology*, 198–212. London: UCL Press

## Chapter 11

- ASUD, 1994–1998 Annual Interim Reports on the Ingram and Upper Breamish Valley Landscape Project (Unpublished report by Archaeological Services University of Durham for the Northumberland National Park Authority)
- ASUD, 1999–2002: Annual Reports on the Beamish Valley Archaeology Project. (Unpublished reports by Archaeological Services University of Durham for the Northumberland National Park Authority)
- Caulfield, S, 1978 Neolithic fields – the Irish evidence in H C Bowen and P J Fowler (eds) *Early Land Allotment*. BAR Brit Ser **48**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports 137–43
- Ford, B, Deakin, P., & Walker, M, 2002, The tri-radial cairns of Northumberland, *Current Archaeology* No. 182, 82–85.
- Hogg, A H A, 1942 Excavations in a Native Settlement at Ingram Hill, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XX**, 110–33
- Hogg, A H A, 1956 Further Excavations at Ingram Hill, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XXXIV**, 150–60
- Jobey, G, 1971 Excavations at Brough Law and Ingram Hill, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XLIX**, 71–93

- Jobey, G, 1983 Excavation of an unenclosed settlement on Standropp Rigg, Northumberland, and some problems related to similar settlements between Tyne and Forth, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XI**, 1–21
- Tate, G, 1863 On the old Celtic Town at Greaves Ash, near Linhope, Northumberland, with an account of Diggings recently made into this and other ancient remains in the Valley of the Breamish, *History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club* (1856–1862) **4**, 293–316
- Tipping, R, 1992 The Determination of Cause in the Creation of Major Prehistoric Valley Fills in the Cheviot Hills, Anglo-Scottish Border, in S Needham and M C Macklin (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain*. Oxford: Oxbow, 111–121
- Tipping, R, 1996 The Neolithic Landscapes of the Cheviot Hills and Hinterland: Palaeoenvironmental Research, in P Frodsham (ed) *Neolithic Studies in No-Man's Land, Northern Archaeology* **13/14**, 17–33.
- Tipping, R, 1998 The chronology of late Quaternary fluvial activity in part of the Milfield Basin, northeast England, *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* **23**, 845–856
- Topping, P, 1981 The prehistoric field systems of College Valley: north Northumberland, *Northern Archaeology* **2(1)**, 14–33
- Topping, P, 1983 Observations on the stratigraphy of early agricultural remains in the Kirknewton area of the Northumberland Cheviots, *Northern Archaeology* **4(1)**, 21–31
- Topping, P 1989 Early cultivation in Northumberland and The Borders, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* **55**, 161–179
- Topping, P, 1993 The excavation of an unenclosed settlement, field system and cord rig cultivation at Linhope Burn, Northumberland, 1989, *Northern Archaeology* **11**, 1990–91, 1–42
- RCAHMS 1956 *Roxburghshire*. Edinburgh: HMSO
- Whittle, A W R, Keith-Lucas, M *et al* 1986 *Scord of Brouster: An Early Agricultural Settlement on Shetland*. Oxford: Oxford University Committee for Archaeology

## Chapter 12

- ASUD, 2001 The Breamish Valley Archaeology Project: Annual Report 2000. Archaeological Services, University of Durham, Report 756 (January 2001).
- Burgess, C, 1970 Excavations at the scooped settlement Hetha Burn 1, Hethpool, Northumberland, 1969, *Transactions of the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland*, New Series **II**, 1–26
- Burgess, C, 1980 Excavations at Houseledge, Black Law, Northumberland, 1979, and their implications for earlier Bronze Age Settlement in the Cheviots, *Northern Archaeology*, **1(1)**, 5–12.
- Gibson, A, 1986 *Neolithic and early Bronze Age Pottery*. Princes Risborough: Shire Publications
- Jobey, G, 1983 Excavation of an unenclosed settlement on Standrop Rigg, Northumberland, and some problems related to similar settlements between Tyne and Forth, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XI**, 1–21
- McOmish, D, 1999 Wether Hill and Cheviots Hillforts, *Northern Archaeology*, **17/18** (Special Edition), 113–121.
- Tipping, R, 1992 The determination of cause in the generation of major prehistoric valley fills in the Cheviot Hills, Anglo-Scottish border, in S Needham & M G Macklin (eds) *Alluvial Archaeology in Britain*. Oxford: Oxbow Monograph **27**, 111–121
- Topping, P, 1998 Excavation and survey at Wether Hill, 1997, *NAGNews* (March 1998), 1–5

## Chapter 13

- Barnatt, J, 1994 Excavation of a Bronze Age unenclosed cemetery Cairns, and Field Boundaries at Eaglestone Flat, Curbar, Derbyshire, 1984, 1989–90, *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* **60**, 287–370
- Jobey, G, 1964 Enclosed stone built settlements in north Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> Series) **XLII**, 41–64
- Jobey, G, 1981 Groups of small cairns and the excavation of a cairnfield on Millstone Hill, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> Series) **IX**, 23–44
- Leach, R, 1983 Settlements and Groups of Small Cairns on Birkby and Birker Fells, Eskdale, Cumbria. Survey undertaken in 1982, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* **83**, 15–23
- MacLauchlan, HH, 1919–22 Notes on camps in the parishes of Branxton, Carham, Ford, Kirknewton, and Wooler, in Northumberland, *History of the Berwick Naturalists Club* **24**, 451–70
- Ordnance Survey 1861 First Edition 25-inch map sheet Northumberland XIX.1 (surveyed 1860)
- Oswald, AWP, Jecock, HM & Ainsworth, S, 2000 An Iron Age hillfort and its environs on West Hill, Northumberland, *English Heritage Archaeological Investigation Report Series AI/12/2000* (ISSN: 1478–7008). English Heritage: National Monuments Record
- Topping, P, 1981 Hethpool stone circle, *Northern Archaeology* **2**, 3–10
- Topping, P, 1999 Later prehistoric landscapes in the Northumberland Cheviots, in P Pattison, D Field and S Ainsworth (eds) *Patterns of the Past: Essays in Landscape Archaeology for Christopher Taylor*, 11–22. Oxford and Oakville: Oxbow Books

## Chapter 14

- Birley, 2002 *Garrison Life at Vindolanda, a Band of Brothers*. Stroud: Tempus
- Casey, P J & Savage M, 1980 ‘The coins from the excavations at High Rochester in 1852 and 1855, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **VIII**, 75–87
- Charlton, B & Mitcheson M, 1984 The Roman cemetery at Petty Knowes, Rochester, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series) **XII**, 1–31
- Crow, J, 1999 High Rochester-*Bremenium*, in P Bidwell (ed) *Hadrian’s Wall 1989–99*, 188–195
- Jones, G D B & Wooliscroft, D J, 2001 *Hadrian’s Wall from the air*. Stroud: Tempus
- Richmond, I A, 1935 Excavations at High Rochester and Risingham 1935, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series) **XIII**, 170–98
- Richmond, I A, 1940 The Romans in Redesdale, *Northumberland County History* **15**, 63–154
- Welfare, H, 2002 ‘The Uplands of the Northern counties in the first millennium BC, in C Brooks, R Daniels and A Harding (eds) *Past, Present and Future: the Archaeology of Northern England, Architectural and Archaeology Society of Durham and Northumberland*, Research Report 5
- Welfare, H & Swann, V 1995 *Roman camps in England: the Field Archaeology*. London: RCHME
- RIB Collingwood R G, & Wright R P, (eds) 1965 *Roman Inscriptions of Britain*. Oxford

## Chapter 15

- Bidwell, P, 1991 Late Roman barracks in Britain, D Maxfield & M Dobson (eds), 1991 *Roman Frontier Studies 1989. Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 9–15
- Bidwell, P (ed), 1999 *Hadrian’s Wall 1989–99*. Kendal: Titus Wilson
- Bidwell, P and Griffiths, W, 1999 Wallsend, in P Bidwell 1999, 83–97
- Bidwell, P T & Watson, M, 1989 A Trial Excavation on Hadrian’s Wall at Buddle Street, Wallsend,

- Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XVII**, 21–28
- Birley, A, 2002 *Garrison Life at Vindolanda, a band of Brothers*. Tempus: Stroud
- Bowman A K & Thomas J D, 1983 Vindolanda: the Latin writing tablets, *Britannia* Monogr. Ser. 4
- Bowman A K & Thomas, J D, 1994 *The Vindolanda Writing Tablets*, London: Penguin
- Breeze, D J, 1972 Excavations at the Roman Fort at Carrawburgh, 1967–1969, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **L**, 81–144
- Breeze, D & Dobson, B, 2000 *Hadrian's Wall*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn. London: Penguin
- Collingwood, R G, 1921 The purpose of Hadrian's Wall, *Vasculum*, **8**, 4–9
- Crow, J, 1995 *Housesteads*. London: Batsford/English Heritage
- Daniels, C M, 1979 Fact and Theory on Hadrian's Wall, *Britannia*, **10**, 357–64
- Daniels, C M, 1980 Excavation at Wallsend and the fourth century barracks on Hadrian's Wall, in, W S Hanson and L J F Keppie (eds) *Roman Frontier Studies 1979*, BAR Int Ser, **71**. Oxford, 173–93
- Donaldson G H, 1989 Thoughts on a military appreciation of the design of Hadrian's Wall, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XVI**, 125–37
- Friell, G, Wilmott, T, & Young, C, 1999, The management, conservation and better understanding of Hadrian's Wall, in N Gudea *et al* (eds) *Roman Frontier Studies 1997, Proceedings of the XVIIth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies*. Zalau, Romania
- Huntley, J P, 1999 Environmental evidence for Hadrian's Wall, in Bidwell 1999, 48–64
- Moore, H & Wilmott, T, 2001 *Interim Report on the Evaluation of the Vallum near Milecastle 10 (Walbottle Dene)*. English Heritage: Centre for Archaeology Report, 101/2001
- Richmond, I A and Gillam, J P, 1952, 3. Milecastle 79 (Solway), in Report of the Cumberland Excavation Committee for 1947–49, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, Ser 2, **52**, 17–40
- Robinson, D, forthcoming, The pollen evidence, in T Wilmott, A transection of Hadrian's frontier in Wall-mile 29 (Black Carts, Northumberland): 1997, in T Wilmott (ed), *Hadrian's Wall: recent archaeological research by English Heritage*
- Welfare, H, 2000 Causeways at milecastles across the ditch of Hadrian's Wall, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XXVIII**, 13–27
- Wilmott, T, 1997a *Birdoswald: Excavations on a Roman Fort on Hadrian's Wall and its successor settlements, 1987–92*, English Heritage Archaeological Report, 14
- Wilmott, T, 1997b Black Carts: Research and Management on Hadrian's Wall, *ARA*, **4**, 6–7
- Wilmott, T, 1999 'Black Carts', in Bidwell 1999, 120–22
- Wilmott, T 2000a The Late Roman Transition at Birdoswald and on Hadrian's Wall, in T Wilmott & P Wilson (eds) *The late Roman Transition in the North*, BAR Brit Ser, **299**. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 13–24
- Wilmott, T, 2000b The Roman frontier and the mosslands, contributions in D Hodgkinson *et al*, *The Lowland Wetlands of Cumbria*, North West Wetlands Survey Report, **6**, Lancaster Imprints, **8**, 113, 118–20
- Wilmott, T, 2001 *Interim Report on the Evaluation of Milecastle 71 (Wormanby)*. English Heritage: Centre for Archaeology Report, 105/2001
- Wilmott, T, forthcoming The Roman frontier from Burgh-by-Sands to Moricambe: a view, *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*
- Wiltshire, P, 1997, The pre-Roman environment, in Wilmott 1997
- Wooliscroft, D J, 1989 Signalling and the design of Hadrian's Wall, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XVII**, 5–19

## Chapter 16

- Bidwell, P T, and Watson, M *et al*, 1996 Excavations on Hadrian's Wall at Denton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1986–89, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XXIV**, 1–56
- Charlton, D B, & J C Day, 1978 Excavation and field survey in Upper Redesdale, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **VI**, 61–86
- Davies, G, & Turner, J, 1979 Pollen diagrams from Northumberland, *New Phytologist*, **82**, 783–804
- Dumayne, L, 1994 The effect of the Roman occupation on the environment of Hadrian's Wall: a pollen diagram from Fozy Moss, Northumberland, *Britannia*, **25**, 217–224
- Gates, T, 1997 Air Photography and the Archaeology of the Otterburn Training Area. Unpublished report for the Northumberland National Park
- Gates, T, 1999 The Hadrian's Wall Landscape from Chesters to Greenhead: an air Photographic Survey. Unpublished report for the Northumberland National Park
- Gates, T, 2000 The Archaeology of the College Valley Estate: An Air Photographic Survey. Unpublished report for the Northumberland National Park
- Hodgson, N, 1999 Wallsend, in P Bidwell (ed) *Hadrian's Wall 1989–1999: a summary of recent excavations and research*
- Huntley, J, 1999 Environmental evidence from Hadrian's Wall, in P Bidwell (ed) *Hadrian's Wall 1989–1999: a summary of recent excavations and research*
- Jobey, G J, 1960 Some rectilinear settlements of the Roman Period in Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **XXXVIII**, 1–38
- Jobey, G J, 1973 Romano-British settlement at Tower Knowe, Wellhaugh, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **I**, 55–79
- Jobey, G J, 1977 Iron Age and later farmsteads on Belling Law, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **V**, 1–38
- Jobey, G J, 1978 Iron Age and Romano-British settlements on Kennel Hall Knowe, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **VI**, 1–28
- Jobey, G J, 1982 Between Tyne and Forth: some problems in P Clack and S Haselgrove (eds), *Rural Settlement in the Roman North*, Durham: CBA
- Kilbride-Jones, H E, 1938 The Excavation of a native settlement at Milking Gap, High Shield, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **XV**, 303–350
- Tipping, R, 1997 Pollen analysis and the impact of Rome on native agriculture around Hadrian's Wall, in A Gwilt, and C L Haselgrove (eds) *Reconstructing Iron Age Societies*. Oxford: Oxbow Monograph, 71, 239–247
- van der Veen, M., 1992. *Crop Husbandry Regimes – an archaeobotanical study of farming in northern England, 1000 BC–AD 500*. Sheffield: Sheffield Archaeological Monographs, **3**.

## Chapter 17

- Bates, C J, The Border Holds of Northumberland vol I, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (2<sup>nd</sup> series) **XIV**, 1–465
- Brooks, C, Daniels, R, & Harding, A, 2002 *Past, present and future, the archaeology of northern England* (Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland Research Report 5)
- Caldwell, D H, 1981 *Scottish weapons and fortifications 1100–1800*. Edinburgh
- Caldwell, D, 1991 Tantallon Castle, East Lothian, a catalogue of the finds, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* **121**, 335–57
- Colvin H M, 1982 *The History of the King's Works IV*. London
- Colvin H M, Ransome D R, & Summerson J, 1975 *The History of the Kings Works III (1484–1660)*.

London

- Craster, H H H, (ed) 1907 *A History of Northumberland, (Tynemouth)* 8. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Cruden, S, 1960 *The Scottish Castle*. Edinburgh
- Daniels, R, 2002 Medieval Boroughs of northern England, in Brooks *et al* 2002, 185–200
- Dixon, P, 1979 Towerhouses, pelehouses and Border society, *Archaeological Journal* 136, 240–52
- Fairclough, G, 1983 Edlingham Castle, in S Youngs J Clark and T B Barry (eds) *Medieval Britain in 1982, Medieval Archaeology* 27, 199–200
- Fraser G M, 1971 *The Steel Bonnets. The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers*. London: Barrie & Jenkins
- Higham, R, and Barker, P, 1992 *Timber Castles*. London
- Hope-Dodds, M (ed), 1926 *A history of Northumberland, (Ovingham, Stamfordham and Ponteland)* 12, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hope-Dodds, M (ed), 1940 *A history of Northumberland, (Simonburn, Rothbury, Alwinton)* 15. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1937 Mitford Castle, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), XIV, 74–94
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1935 Harbottle Castle, *Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalist's Club*, 28, 215–31
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1952 Baronys and Knights of Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), XXX, 1–54
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1957 Herbert Lewis Honeyman, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), XXXV, 252–59
- Hunter Blair, C H, and Honeyman H L, 1966 *Norham Castle*. London
- Kenyon, J, 1977 Wark Castle and its artillery defences in the reign of Henry VIII, *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 11, 50–52
- Kenyon, J R, 1981 Early artillery fortifications in England and Wales: a preliminary survey, *Archaeological Journal*, 138, 205–40
- Knowles, W H, 1909 The gatehouse and barbican at Alnwick Castle with an account of the recent discoveries, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (3<sup>rd</sup> series), V, 286–303
- MacGibbon, D, and Ross, T, 1887 *The Castellated and Domestic Architecture of Scotland*, Edinburgh
- MacIvor, I, 1981 Artillery and major places of strength in the Lothians and the East Border, in Caldwell, 1981, 94–152
- MacIvor, I, 1977 Craignethan Castle, in M R Apted, R Gilyard-Beer and A D Saunders *Ancient monuments and their interpretation*. London, 239–262
- MacIvor, I, 2001 *A Fortified Frontier: Defences of the Anglo-Scottish Border*. Stroud: Tempus
- Maxwell-Irthing, A M T, 1971 Early firearms and their influence on the military and domestic architecture of the Borders, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 103, 192–224
- Maxwell-Irthing, A M T, 1987 Hoddum Castle, a reappraisal of its architecture and place in history, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 117, 183–215
- O'Neil, B H, St J, 1960 *Castles and Cannon*. Oxford
- Pevsner, N, Grundy, J, *et al*, 1992 *Northumberland, The Buildings of England*. Harmondsworth
- Pounds, N J C, 1990 *The medieval castle in England and Wales: a social and political history*. Cambridge
- Ralegh Radford, C A, 1958 *Goodrich Castle, Herefordshire*. London: HMSO, 7
- Rushworth, A, and Carlton, R, 1998 Harbottle Castle, a documentary survey, The Archaeological Practice. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, unpublished report
- Ryder, P, 1990 Harbottle Castle. A short historical and descriptive account. Unpublished report for NNPA

- Toy, S, 1954 *The Castles of Great Britain*. London
- Welfare, H, The uplands of the northern counties in the first millennium BC, in C Brooks *et al*, 2002, 71–77

## Chapter 18

- Graham, F, 1976 *The Castles of Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Frank Graham
- Hodgson, J, 1840 *History of Northumberland Part II Vol III*, 324
- Long, B, 1967 *Castles of Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Harold Hill
- Ramm, H G, McDowall, R W & Mercer, E, 1970 *Shieling and Bastles*. London: RCHME/HMSO
- Ryder, P F, 1992 Bastles and bastle-like buildings in Allendale, Northumberland, *Archaeological Journal* 149, 351–379
- Ryder, P F, 1996 Puzzling Evidence at Elsdon, *Archaeology in Northumberland 1995–6*. Morpeth: Northumberland County Council

## Chapter 19

### Published Documentary Sources – medieval

- Black Book of Hexham *The Priory of Hexham, its title deeds, Black book, etc.* vol 11. Surtees Society 46, 1864
- CalDocScot *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London*. 5 vols: i–iv, J A Bain (ed), (Edinburgh, 1881–88); v, (Supplementary), G G Simpson and J D Galbraith (eds) (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, 1987)
- Cal IPM *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and other analogous Documents preserved in the Public Record Office*. Multiple vols, covering the reigns of Henry III–Henry VII (London, 1898–)
- CalPatRolls *Calendar of Patent Rolls, preserved in the Public Record Office, covering the period 1232–1578* (London, 1891–)
- DocScot *Documents Illustrative of the History of Scotland, from death of Alexander the Third to the accession of Robert Bruce, mclxxxvi–mcccv*, J Stevenson (ed); 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1870)
- ESC *Early Scottish Charters prior to 1153*. A C Lawrie (ed) (Glasgow, 1905)
- Fordun Joannis de Fordun *Scotichronicon cum Supplementis et Continuacione Walteri Boweri*, (ed) W Goodall (Edinburgh, 1759)
- Hodgson, J, 1820, 1828, 1835, *History of Northumberland*, Part 3, vols I, II & III: Containing Ancient Records and Historical Papers. (Newcastle-upon-Tyne)
- Iter of Wark *Iter of Wark*, C H Hartshorne (ed), *Memoirs illustrative of the history and antiquities of Northumberland – Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute at Newcastle, 1852. vol II, Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland and the Scottish Borders* (London, 1858), Appendix III, ix–lxviii
- Leges Marchiarum *Leges Marchiarum*, W Nicolson (ed) (London, 1747)
- Liber Feodorum *Liber Feodorum. The Book of Fees commonly called the Testa de Nevill*. 2 vols – Part I: AD 1198–1242; Part II: AD 1242–1293 and Appendix, H C Maxwell Lyte (ed), 2 vols, Public Record Office (London, 1920, 1923)
- Northumb. & Durham Deeds *Northumberland and Durham Deeds from the Dodsworth MSS. in Bodley's Library, Oxford*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne Records Series 7, 1927 (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1929)
- Rot Scot *Rotuli Scotiae in Turri Londinensi et in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservati, 1291–1516*, D Macpherson *et al* (ed), Record Commission (London, 1814–19)

- RRS i *Regesta Regum Scottorum I: The Acts of Malcolm IV King of Scots 1153–65, together with Scottish Royal Acts prior to 1153 not included in Sir Archibald Lawrie's 'Early Scottish Charters'*, G W S Barrow (ed) (Edinburgh, 1960)
- RRS ii *Regesta Regum Scottorum II: The Acts of William I King of Scots 1165–1214*, G W S Barrow (ed) (Edinburgh, 1971)
- Rymer, Foedera Thomas Rymer, *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae et cujuscunque generis Acta Publica, inter Reges Angliae etc.*, A Clarke et al (ed), 4 vols in 7 parts (Record Commission, London, 1800–69)
- Statutes *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of His Majesty King George III, from original Records and authentic Manuscripts*. Vol II. (London, 1816; repr 1963)
- Visitations 1615, 1666 *Pedigrees Recorded at the Heralds' Visitations of the County of Northumberland made by Richard St George ... in AD 1615 and William Dugdale ... in 1666*, J Foster (ed) (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1891)
- Wyntoun Andrew of Wyntoun, *The Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, D Laing (ed), 2 vols (The Historians of Scotland, vols 2 and 3, Edinburgh, 1872–79)

## Early-modern

- Acts of Scotland *The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland*. 12 vols, Record Commission (London, 1819)
- CBP *Calendar of Letters and Papers relating to the affairs of the Borders of England and Scotland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London*; J Bain (ed), 2 vols (HM General Register House, Edinburgh, 1894, & 1896)
- Cal SP *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, preserved in the Public Record Office, multiple volumes, with addenda, covering the reigns of Edward VI–George III* (London, 1856–)
- Journal of House of Commons *The Journals of the House of Commons* (London, 1803)
- LP Hen VIII *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII, preserved in the Public Record Office*, 21 vols (London, 1862–1932)
- Register *Northumbrian Documents of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries comprising the Register of the Estates of Roman Catholics in Northumberland and the Correspondance of Myles Stapylton*, Surtees Society 131 (Durham and London, 1918)
- 1604 Survey *The Survey of the Debateable and Border Lands Adjoining the Realm of Scotland and Belonging to the Crown of England Taken AD 1604*, R P Sanderson (ed) (Alnwick, 1891)
- Talbot *Recusant Records*, (ed) C Talbot, Catholic Record Society, 53 (London, 1960)
- Wills & Inventories *Wills and Inventories from the Registry at Durham, Part II*, W Greenwell (ed), Surtees Society 38 (Durham, London & Edinburgh, 1860)

## Secondary Bibliography

- Adamson, C E, 1894a The Manor of Haltwhistle, *Archaeological Aeliana* (2<sup>nd</sup> series), XVI, 162–76
- Adamson, C E, 1894b The Church of Haltwhistle, *Archaeological Aeliana* (2<sup>nd</sup> series), XVI, 177–88
- Alexander, M, and Walker, G, 1995 *Gilsland & Greenhead past & present: a short history and guide of the two villages and surrounding area*. Gilsland: Middle March Books
- Archaeological Practice, 1998 Thirlwall Castle: Archaeological Evaluation. Unpublished report prepared for the Northumberland National Park Authority
- Archaeological Practice, forthcoming Thirlwall Castle: Archaeological Evaluation. Report in preparation for the Northumberland National Park Authority
- Barrow, G W S, 1966 The Anglo-Scottish Border, *Northern History* 1, 21–42
- Bates, C J, 1886 *Thirlwall Castle*, Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland 2, 210–3

- Bates, C J, 1889 The dedications of the ancient churches and chapels in the Diocese of Newcastle, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (2<sup>nd</sup> Series) **XIII**, 317–45
- Bates, C J, 1891 The Border Holds of Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (2<sup>nd</sup> series) **XIV**
- Bates, C J, 1895 *The History of Northumberland*. London
- Beckensall, S, 1992 *Northumberland Place Names*. Rothbury
- Cathcart King, D J, 1983 *Castellarium Anglicanum*; 2 Vols. New York
- Crone, G R, 1961 *Early Maps of the British Isles AD 1000–1579*. 2 parts. London
- Ellis, S G, 1995a *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power: the Making of the British State*. Oxford
- Ellis, S G, 1995b Frontiers and Power in the early Tudor State, *History Today* **45**, 35–42
- Emery A, 1996 *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales, 1300–1500. I: Northern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Fairclough G, 1983 Fortified Houses and Castles, in P A G Clack and J Ivy (eds) *The Borders*. Durham, 81–99
- Grose F, 1783 *The Antiquities of England and Wales*. London
- Graham F, 1976 *The Castles of Northumberland*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Frank Graham
- Grundy, J, 1988 *Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park: A Report to the National Park Authorities*. Napper Collerton Partnership
- Hartshorne, C H, 1858 Memoirs illustrative of the history and antiquities of Northumberland – Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute at Newcastle, 1852. *Feudal and Military Antiquities of Northumberland and the Scottish Borders* Vol II. London
- Harvey, P D A, 1993 *Maps in Tudor England*. The Public Records Office/The British Library: London
- Hedley, W P, 1968/1970 *Northumberland Families*. 2 vols. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Higham, N, 1986 *The Northern Counties to AD 1000*. London
- Hinds, A B, 1896 *A History of Northumberland. III: Hexhamshire I*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne & London
- Hodgson, J, 1840 *A History of Northumberland, Part II*, Vol 3, (143–8). Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hodgson, J C, 1897 *A History of Northumberland, IV: Hexhamshire II, Collerton, Kirkheaton, Throckington*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne & London
- Horsley, J, 1732 *Britannia Romana or the Roman Antiquities of Britain*. London
- Hugill, R, 1939 *Borderland Castles and Peles*. London
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1927 *A Haltwhistle effigy and grave slabs*. Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Fourth Series, **3**, 133–5
- Hunter Blair, C H, 1944 The early castles of Northumberland. *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **XXII**, 116–70
- Hutchinson, W, 1776 *A View of Northumberland, Vol 1*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- IAAS (University of York), 1982, Photogrammetric Survey. Unpublished
- Kapelle, W E, 1979 *The Norman Conquest of the North: The Region and its Transformation, 1000–1135*. London
- Leslie, J W, 1924 *A History of the Towns along the Roman Wall*. Hexham: Herald Co Ltd
- LUAU (Lancaster University Archaeological Unit), 2000a, Gap Farm, Archaeological Watching Brief. Unpublished report prepared for C&D Property Service
- LUAU (Lancaster University Archaeological Unit), 2000b, Station Hotel, Archaeological Evaluation. Unpublished report prepared for the Countryside Agency
- Lomas, R, 1996 *County of conflict: Northumberland from Conquest to Civil War*. East Linton
- Long, B, 1967 *Castles of Northumberland: The Mediaeval Fortifications of the County*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne

- Maclauchlan, H, 1857 *The Roman Wall and Illustrations of the Principal Vestiges of Roman Occupation in the North of England*. London
- Maclauchlan, H, 1858 *Memoir written during a Survey of the Roman Wall, through the counties of Northumberland and Cumberland in the Years 1852–1854*. London
- Mawer, A, 1920 *The Place Names of Northumberland and Durham*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Moore, M F, 1915 *The Lands of the Scottish Kings in England: The Honour of Huntingdon, the Liberty of Tyndale and the Honour of Penrith*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd
- Pevsner, N, Grundy, J, McCombie G, Ryder, P, Welfare, H, and Linsley S, 1992 *The Buildings of England: Northumberland*, 2nd edition. New Haven & London: Yale University Press
- Platt, C, 1982 *The Castle in Medieval England and Wales*. London: Secker & Warburg
- Ramm, H G, McDowell R W, and Mercer E, 1970 *Shielings and Bastles*. London: Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England)
- Ridpath, G, 1848 *The Border History of England and Scotland* (1979 facsimile reprint of the 1848 edition). Edinburgh: The Mercat Press
- Ritchie, R L G, 1954 *The Normans in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Rushworth, A, 1996 *High Rochester Fort: A Documentary Assessment of post-Roman Occupation*. Prepared for the Northumberland National Park Authority
- Rushworth, A and Carlton, R J, 1998 *Harbottle Castle: A Documentary Survey*. Prepared for the Northumberland National Park Authority.
- Ryder, P F, 1994–5 *Towers and Bastles in Northumberland, 4: Tynedale District, vol 2*. Unpublished
- Ryder, P F, 1993/1997 *Thirlwall Castle. An Historical and Architectural Account*. Prepared for Northumberland National Park Authority
- Scott, Sir W, 1814 *The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland*. London: Longman
- Steele, W, 1836 *Beauties of Gilsland*. London: George Routledge
- Tomlinson, W W, 1968 *Comprehensive Guide to the County of Northumberland* (reprint of the 11th edition). Newton Abbott: David & Charles
- Tuck, J A, 1971 Northumbrian Society in the fourteenth century, *Northern History* 6: 22–39
- Tuck, J A, 1985 War and society in the medieval North, *Northern History* 21, 33–52
- Tuck, J A, 1986 The emergence of a Northern nobility 1250–1400, *Northern History* 22, 1–17
- Wallis, J, 1769 *The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland*. London
- Watts, S J, 1975 *From Border to Middle Shire, Northumberland 1586–1625*. Leicester: Leicester University Press
- Whittaker, H, 1949 *A Descriptive List of the Maps of Northumberland 1576–1900*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Society of Antiquaries and Public Libraries Committee
- Williams, G N, 1989 *The Northumbrian Uplands*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles
- Winchester, A J L, 1987 *Landscape and Society in Medieval Cumbria*. Edinburgh: John Donald
- Wrathmell, S, 1975 *Deserted and Shrunken Villages in Southern Northumberland from the Twelfth to the Twentieth Centuries*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Cardiff

## Chapter 20

- Adams, M, 1994 Low Cleughs Burn archaeological survey: April 1994. Unpublished report for Northumberland National Park by Archaeological Services, Durham University
- Archaeological Practice 1998a Low Cleughs Bastle: a documentary assessment. Unpublished report for Northumberland National Park Authority

- Archaeological Practice 1998b Low Cleughs Bastle Conservation Project. Unpublished report for Northumberland National Park Authority
- Archaeological Practice 1998c Harbottle Castle: a documentary survey. Unpublished report for Northumberland National Park Authority
- Beckensall, S, 1992 *Northumberland Place Names*. Rothbury: Butler Publishing
- Field, C W, and Jones, T L, 1956 The Melkridge bastle, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **XXXIV**, 138–41
- Hodgson, J, 1827 *History of Northumberland, part 2, vol I*: Containing the History of the franchise of Redesdale, and the Umfraville Family; Also, of the Parishes of Elsdon. Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hodgson, R W and Hodgson, J (eds), 1832, A rental of the ancient principality of Redesdale 1618, copied from an original roll in the possession of William John Charlton, of Hesleyside, esq., *Archaeologia Aeliana* (1<sup>st</sup> series) **II** 326–338
- Maxwell Lyte, H C, (ed), 1923 *Liber Feodorum. The Book of Fees commonly called the Testa de Nevill. Part II: AD 1242–1293 and Appendix*. London: HMSO
- McDowell, R W, 1970 Bastles of Cumberland and Northumberland, in Ramm H G, R W McDowell and E Mercer, *Shielings and Bastles*, part II, 61–95. London: HMSO
- Rushworth, A, 1996 *High Rochester Fort: A Documentary Assessment of Post-Roman Occupation*. The Archaeological Practice, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Rushworth, A and Carlton R J, 1999 The Croatian and Bosnian *Vojna Krajina* (Military Frontier)', Universities of Durham and Newcastle archaeological reports (*UDNAP*) vol **22** (for 1998). Durham
- Ryder, P F, 1991 *Low Cleughs Bastle*. Unpublished report for Northumberland National Park
- Ryder, P F, 1992 Low Cleughs Bastle, *Archaeology in Northumberland 1991–1992*: **5**. Northumberland County Council
- Salter, M, 1997 *The Castles and Tower Houses of Northumberland*. Wolverhampton: Folly Publications
- Sanderson, R P (ed), 1891 *Survey of the Debateable and Border Lands adjoining the Realm of Scotland and belonging to the Crown of England taken AD 1604*. Alnwick: private subscription

## Chapter 21

- Bailey, J & Culley, G, 1805 *General View of the Agriculture of Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland* (Third Edition), 1972 Facsimile. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Frank Graham
- Bird, A, 1969 *Roads & Vehicles*. London: Arrow Books
- Brooks, C, Daniels R, & Harding A, (eds) 2002 *Past Present and Future: The Archaeology of Northern England*, Archit. & Archaeol. Soc. Dur. & Northumb. Research Rep. **5**, Durham
- Burt, R, Waite P and Burnley R, 1983 *The Durham and Northumberland Mineral Statistics: Metalliferous and Associated Minerals 1845–1913*. University of Exeter
- Carruthers, R G, Burnett, G A & Anderson, W, 1932 The Geology of the Cheviot Hills (Sheets 3 and 5), *Mem Geol Surv GB*. London: HMSO
- Clough, C T, 1889 The Geology of Plashetts and Kielder (Explanation of quarter-sheet 108 SW, New Series, Sheet 7), *Mem Geol Surv GB*. London: HMSO
- Cranstone, D, 1994 Grasslees Corn Mill, Hepple: Archaeological Survey, Unpublished Report for NNPA
- Day, J & Charlton, D B, Excavation and Field Survey in Upper Redesdale: Part III, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **IX**
- Dunham, K C, 1990 Geology of the Northern Pennine Orefield, Volume I Tyne to Stainmore, *Mem Geol Surv GB*. London: HMSO

- Frost, D V & Holliday D W, 1980 *The Geology of Bellingham* (Sheet 13), *Mem Geol Surv GB*.  
London: HMSO
- Haigh, D & Savage, M J D, 1984 Sewingshields, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XII**
- Hedley, I, 1998 Iron Smelting in the Hirnhousefeld, *CBA North*, Newsletter 14
- Hodgson, J, 1827, *History of Northumberland, part 2, vol. I: Containing the History of the franchise of Redesdale, and the Umfraville Family; Also, of the Parishes of Elsdon*. Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- Hoole, K, 1973 *Forgotten Railways: North-East England*. Newton Abbot: David & Charles
- Jobey, G, 1973 A Romano-British Settlement at Tower Knowe, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **I**
- Jobey, G, 1978 Iron Age and Romano-British settlements on Kennell Hall Knowe, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **VI**
- Lawson, W, 1966 The origin of the Military Road from Newcastle to Carlisle, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (4<sup>th</sup> series), **XLIV**
- Linsley, S, 2002 Overview of the Industrial Period, in Brooks, Daniels & Harding, (eds) 2002 LUUAU (Lancaster University Archaeological Unit) 2000 Harbottle Millstone Quarries, Unpublished Report for NNPA
- Mack, J L, 1926 *The Border Line from the Solway Firth to the North Sea, along the Marches of Scotland and England*. Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd
- Miller, H, 1887 The Geology of the Country around Otterburn and Elsdon, *Mem Geol Surv GB*.  
London: HMSO
- NNPA (Northumberland National Park Authority) 2000 Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan
- NRO (Northumberland Record Office) 1356 Orde of Nunnykirk re Elsdon (Box 11/1)
- O'Sullivan, D & Young, R, 1995 *Lindisfarne: Holy Island*. London: Batsford
- Owen, S F, 1998 *North Tyne Traveller, 1912–1937. The Photographs of W P, Collier of Bellingham*. Bellingham Heritage Centre
- Owen, S F, 2001 *Road to Bellingham, 1912–1937. The Photographs of W P, Collier of Bellingham*. Bellingham Heritage Centre
- Redesdale Society 1999 *A Visitor's Guide to Redesdale: The Valley of the River Rede*. Otley (W Yorks)
- Rennison, R W, 1979 *Water to Tyneside: A History of the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company
- Riden, P, 1993 *A Gazetteer of Charcoal-fired Blast Furnaces in Great Britain in use since 1660*, (Second Edition). Cardiff: Merton Priory Press
- Roberts, I and West, M, 1998 Bellingham, North Tynedale and Redesdale, *Archive Photographs Series*. Stroud: Chalford
- Roberts, I D 2000 Iron Making in Redesdale and North Tynedale in the Nineteenth Century: the Problems of Rural Exploitation and Diversification, *Northern History*, **36**, No.2
- Sanderson, R P, 1891 *A Survey of the Debateable and Borderlands adjoining the Realm of Scotland and belonging to the Crown of England 1604*. Alnwick
- Schofield, D & Waddington C, 1999 A New Stone Axe Source in the Northumberland Cheviots, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XXVII**
- Sewell, G W M, 1992 *The North British Railway in Northumberland*. Braunton (Devon)
- Smith, DB, 1923 Lead and Zinc Ores of Northumberland and Alston Moor, *Mem Geol Surv GB*.  
London: HMSO
- Wallis, J, 1769 *The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland: And so much of the County of*

- Durham As lies between the Rivers Tyne and Tweed*, Volume 1. London
- Watts, S J, 1975 *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland 1586–1625*. Leicester: Leicester University Press
- Wells, A, 1999 A Country on the Right Tracks, *The Northumbrian*, Dec 1998/Jan 1999, No.47
- Wilkinson, T W, 1934 *From Track to By-pass: A History of the English Road*. London: Methuen & Co
- Winchester, A J L, 2000 *The Harvest of the Hills: Rural Life in Northern England and the Scottish Borders, 1400–1700*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Young, B, 1997 Witherite And Barytocalcite Mining In England, *Mem Geol Surv GB*, Technical Report wa/97/57c
- Young, B & Nichol W, 1997 A Very Rare Mineral Indeed, *The Northumbrian*, Autumn, 40
- Younger, G D & Almond, J M, 1989 Some investigations into the lime-burning industry of Northumberland, *Tyne & Tweed*, 44

## Chapter 22

- Charlton, D B, & Day, J C, 1977 An Archaeological Survey of the Otterburn Training Area. Privately printed for OTA
- Charlton, B, 1996 *Fifty Centuries of Peace and War*. Otterburn: Ministry of Defence
- Charlton, D B, & Day, J C, 1982 Excavation and Field Survey in Upper Redesdale Part IV. *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **X**, 149–170
- Richmond, I A, 1940 *Northumberland County History Vol XV*, 63–154
- Harbottle, B, 1968 Linbrigs, Northumberland, *News Bulletin*, CBA Region 3, 8
- Charlton, D B & Mitcheson, M M, 1983 Yardhope: A Shrine to Cocidius?, *Britannia*, 14 143–155
- Grundy, J, 1987 Historic Buildings of the Northumberland National Park. Unpublished report for NNPA
- Ryder, P, 1990 Bastles and Towers in the Northumberland National Park. Unpublished report for NNPA

## Chapter 23

- AC (= Alnwick Castle) 1624 Mayson's Survey of the Duke of Northumberland's Land. Surveyed by Francis and William Mayson, Drawn by Robert Norton
- Anon., 1885 *The Illustrated Royal Guide to Rothbury, Upper Coquetdale and the villages around*, New and Revised 3rd Edition. Alnwick
- Arkle, T, 1876 The Simonside find, *History of Berwickshire Naturalists' Club*, 8, 176–7
- Bernbaum, E, 1997 *Sacred mountains of the world*. Berkeley: University of California Press
- Bruce, J C, 1880 *A Descriptive Catalogue of Antiquities, chiefly British, at Alnwick Castle*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Albert Reid
- Burgess, C B & Colquhoun, I, 1988 The Swords of Britain, *Prähistorische Bronzefunde*, Abteilung IV, 5. Munich
- Breeze, A, 1998 A Celtic etymology for Ouse Burn, Newcastle, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> series), **XXVI**, 57–8
- Dixon, D D, 1892 Notes on the discovery of British Burials on the Simonside Hills, Parish of Rothbury in Upper Coquetdale, Northumberland, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (New Series), **XV**, 23–32
- Dixon, D D, 1903 *Upper Coquetdale*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Robert Redpath
- Grice, F, 1944 *Folk tales of the North Country*. London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd
- Lancaster University Archaeological Unit (LUAU) and Archaeological Services, University of Durham 2000 Simonside Landscape Survey, Unpublished Report for NNPA

- Needham, S, Ramsay, C B, Coombs, D, Cartwright, C, & Pettitt, P, 1997 An independent chronology for British Bronze Age metalwork: the results of the Oxford radiocarbon accelerator programme, *The Archaeological Journal*, **154**, 55–107
- Northumberland Record Office (NRO) (M)QRD7 1806 Titled Award on the Division of Tosson  
Common Dec 8 1806
- Scott, A, 1885 Historical Guide to Rothbury and surrounding district. Rothbury
- Sweet, H, 1896 *The Students Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press
- Tomlinson, W W, 1916 *Comprehensive Guide to Northumberland*. London: The Walter Scott  
Publishing Company
- Topping, P, 1993 Lordenshaws Hillfort and its Environs: a survey by the Royal Commission on the  
Historical Monuments of England, *Archaeologia Aeliana* (5<sup>th</sup> Series), **XXI**, 12–28
- Watson, G, 1970 *Goodwife Hot and others. Northumberland's Past as shown in its Placenames*.  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Oriel Press

# Appendix: Getting involved

## *1. The Future of the Past.*

Many views expressed in this book will develop and change as new fieldwork is undertaken in the future. There are many ways of keeping up to date with such changes, and many opportunities, for those who aspire to be more than armchair archaeologists, to get involved with future fieldwork projects. The following organisations will welcome enquiries from anyone seeking to find out more about archaeology in the National Park and surrounding region.

### Northumberland National Park Authority (NNPA)

The NNPA organises many events with an archaeological theme, including public lectures and guided walks. It is hoped that several fieldwork projects with local groups will be set up in the Park within the next few years. Three visitor centres (see section 2 below) include displays about archaeology. Leaflets including details of many self-guided walks to places featured in this book are available from the visitor centres, or from National Park HQ in Hexham. For further information about archaeology in the Park, including details of forthcoming events, please contact the NNPA at Eastburn, Hexham, Northumberland, NE46 1BS (tel. 01434 605555), or visit the NNPA website at [www.northumberland-national-park.org.uk](http://www.northumberland-national-park.org.uk)

### Council for British Archaeology

The CBA is the principal UK-wide non-governmental organisation that promotes knowledge, appreciation and care of the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations. The CBA has an active publications programme including numerous Research Reports (including volumes such as this) and Occasional Papers on a variety of topics relating to British Archaeology. It also publishes the popular magazine, *British Archaeology*, which is free to members. Further information is available from the CBA, Bowes Morrell House, 111 Walmgate, York, YO1 9WA (Tel. 01904 671417). Information about archaeological courses, events and resources is also available on the CBA website: [www.britarch.ac.uk](http://www.britarch.ac.uk)

The CBA actively works to encourage greater public participation in archaeology and can provide details of opportunities for members of the public to get direct hands-on experience. The CBA runs a Young Archaeologists' Club for the age group 8–16.

There is also a local branch of the CBA covering northern England, known as CBA North. This group arranges two conferences a year on archaeological themes and publishes its newsletter, *Archaeology north*, twice a year. *Archaeology north* includes reports on many local archaeological projects, along with book reviews and a local events programme. CBA North also arranges fieldwork training sessions for members. Information about how to join CBA North is available from the Archaeology & Historic Environment Team at Northumberland National Park HQ (01434 611509 or 01434 605555).

## Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a charitable organisation founded in 1813, is proud of its claim to be the oldest provincial antiquarian society in the country. It has an annual programme of lectures, held in Newcastle, and organises guided walks throughout Northumberland and elsewhere. The famous journal *Archaeologia Aeliana*, published annually, contains stimulating papers about the archaeology of NE England. The society has an excellent library and a number of collections housed in several museums around the region. For membership enquiries please contact The Membership Secretary, The Black Gate, Castle Garth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE1 1RQ. Further information is available online at <http://museums.ncl.ac.uk/Socantiqs/>

## Northumberland Archaeological Group (NAG)

The Northumberland Archaeological Group (NAG), a registered charity, provides opportunities for members of the public to take part in activities relating to the archaeology of Northumberland and surrounding areas. NAG undertakes its own fieldwork projects and occasionally supports other projects undertaken by members. A lecture programme (based in Newcastle), social events and a series of excursions are organised each year, and members receive the journal *Northern Archaeology* which is published annually. For further information, and membership enquiries, please contact: NAG c/o The Centre for Lifelong Learning, The University of Newcastle, NE1 7RU.

## Border Archaeological Society (BAS)

BAS runs an annual programme of evening lectures in Berwick upon Tweed, publishes a regular newsletter (The BAS Bulletin), and runs fieldwork projects. For membership enquiries please contact The Chairman, Border Archaeological Society, Grove House, 6 Howick Street, Alnwick, NE66 1UY.

## Local History Societies

There are many local history societies throughout Northumberland, all of which welcome new members with an interest in the past. In the environs of the National Park these include: The Glendale LHS, The Aln and Breamish LHS, The Rothbury and Coquetdale LHS, The Redesdale Society, and the Bellingham Heritage Society. These groups hold evening lecture programmes and other events. Details of them should be available from local libraries. Many local societies are affiliated to the Association of Northumberland Local History Societies, which at the time of writing is in the process of setting up a website.

## *2. Sites to visit*

The many fascinating sites described in this book, within the majestic settings offered by the Northumberland National Park landscape, can never be fully appreciated from the printed page. When possible, these sites should be visited and experienced at first hand. Many archaeological sites in the Park are open to the public. These include sites managed by English Heritage and the National Trust on Hadrian's Wall, and many sites throughout the Park which are managed under the terms of legal agreements between the NNPA and local landowners. Some of these are managed as 'sites' with adjacent car parks and on site information panels, while others can be reached along the routes of waymarked self guided

heritage trails for which illustrated leaflets are available. Details of all sites open to public are available from National Park Visitor Centres:

National Park Centre, Ingram, Powburn, Northumberland, NE66 4LT.

01665 578248.

(Covering the north of the Park, including the Breamish Valley and the Cheviots).

National Park Centre, Church House, Church Street, Rothbury, Northumberland, NE65 7UP.

01669 620887.

(Covering the central area of the Park, including Upper Coquetdale).

National Park Centre, Once Brewed, Military Road, Bardon Mill, Northumberland, NE47 7AN.

01434 344396.

(Covering the south of the Park, including Hadrian's Wall).

The archaeological heritage of the Northumberland National Park is yours to enjoy, and the Park Authority is here to help you enjoy it. The Authority welcomes suggestions as to how its Archaeology & Historic Environment service might be improved. If you have any such suggestions then please do not hesitate to contact the Authority at the address given above.

# Index

Figures in italics refer to figures or their captions. Unless specified differently, all monarchs are monarchs of England.

- Acca's cross 74  
aerial photography 25, 40, 46, 58,  
236–45  
Aethelburg, Queen 72  
Aethelfrith, King 66, 67, 72  
agate 9  
Agricola, Gnaeus Julius 49, 217, 332  
Aidan, Bishop 73  
Ainsworth, Stewart 27  
Akeld 79  
Akeld Bastle 268  
Akeld cottages 124  
Akeld Steads 164  
Aketon, Nicholas 297  
alder 160, 162, 163, 191, 198  
Alfred the Great, King of Wessex 77  
Allendale 265, 269  
Allerdene 345  
Allom, T 290  
Alnham 40, 40, 98, 107, 116, 138  
Alnham Tower 88, 122, 264–65  
Alnhammoor 34  
Alnhamsheles 96  
Alnwick 85  
Alnwick, Barony of 81  
Alnwick Castle 89, 251, 252, 253, 259,  
342  
Alston Moor 271 n. 4  
Alwinton 81, 142, 143:  
church 106  
Americans *see* Native Americans  
Ancient Monuments Act, 1931 133  
Ancroft 345, 346  
Anderson family 330  
andesites 38, 317, 318  
Anglo-Saxon period *see* early medieval  
period  
Anglo-Scottish Border 2, 3, 77, 93, 115  
Annandale 282  
Antonine Itinerary 213  
Antonine Wall 57, 214, 217, 234  
Antoninus Pius, Emperor 57, 332  
Appletree 225, 226, 229  
ard marks 228, 228  
Armstrong, Lord 122, 314, 340  
Armstrong family 270  
Armstrong's map, 1769 96, 114, 115,  
131, 272, 286, 289–90, 301  
arrowheads:  
Bronze Age 24, 24, 25  
Neolithic 12, 24, 24  
Arthur, King 64  
ash 165  
Athelstan, King of Wessex 77  
Australian Aborigines 10, 11, 15, 193  
axes:  
distribution of 12, 17  
necessity of 12  
Neolithic factory 315  
ritual and 12  
symbolic importance 12  
Bailey, John 119  
Bailey and Culley 321  
Balbridie, Scotland 14  
Baldwulf, Bishop of Whitherne 75  
Bamburgh 44, 66, 72, 76  
Bamburgh Castle 65  
Bamburgh Research Project 72  
Bannockburn, Battle of 87, 95  
barley 13, 26, 27, 47, 85, 163, 165, 168,  
172, 183–84, 187, 188, 194, 330  
Barracker Rigg 328, 329  
Barrasford burial mound 72  
Barronhouse 280  
Barrow, G W S 278  
Bartley, D D 157  
Barty's Pele 266  
bastle houses 104–5, 115, 117, 265–69,  
270, 300, 316 *see also* under names of  
*bastles*  
Bates, C J 276  
Batinghope Burn 308  
Batson, Champion and Co 312  
Beacon Hill 346  
'beakers' 25, 32–33, 33, 193, 194, 194  
Beanley Moor 28  
Beckensall, S 22, 23, 276, 305 n. 1  
Bede, Venerable 64  
Bede's World 68  
Bellingham 48, 85, 102:  
church 110, 131  
growth 317  
ironworks 312–14, 313  
stone and 317  
Bellister 279  
Bellshiel Law long cairn 15–16  
Bellshiel Roman camp 336  
Belsay Tower 262  
*Beowulf* 64, 71  
Bernicia 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 72, 75, 76, 77  
Berthele, Fritz 140  
Bertram, William 297  
Berwick Castle 259, 260  
Bewcastle 74, 105, 219, 220  
Biddlestone 23, 81, 108–9, 116, 319  
chapel 109, 131  
hall 108–9, 126–27  
manor 126, 126  
quarry 133, 133  
tower 263–64  
Bidwell, Paul 225, 230, 231, 232, 234  
bigg 85  
birch 160, 163, 191, 198  
Bird, A 320  
Birdhope Roman camp 50  
Birdhopecraig 131  
Birdoswald Roman fort 54, 65, 224, 225,  
227, 229, 230, 231, 232, 234  
Birley family 6, 52  
Birley, Eric 224  
Birrens Roman fort 213, 219  
Black Carts 225, 227, 228, 228, 229, 229  
Black Death 67, 94–95, 311  
Black Law 29, 196  
Black Middens Bastle 118, 265–66, 267  
Black Middens Bastle II 266  
Black Stichel 35

- Blackett, Sir Edward 314  
 'blackhouses' 212  
 Blair, C H Hunter 248  
 Blaxter 317  
 Blenkinsop 278, 279  
 Blenkinsop, Rowland 293  
 Blenkinsop, Thomas 283  
 Blenkinsop Castle 283, 285  
 Bloody Moss 160, 161–62, 163, 165, 166, 168, 170  
 Bob Pyle's Studdie 345  
 'bog bodies' 48  
 Boghead Bastle 266–67, 266  
 Bogle Hole 86, 86  
 bogs: ritual deposits in 34–35  
 Bolam Lake 14  
 Bonny Rigg Hall 127  
 Border ballads 89  
 Border Commission 112, 264  
 Border Counties Railway Company 321  
 Border Surveys 286, 288, 298, 306–7  
 Bowes, Sir Robert 99  
 Bowes and Ellerker 285  
 Bowl Hole Cemetery 72  
 Bowmont Valley 161, 162  
 Bowness-on-Solway 234  
 Bradford Kaimes 157  
 Bradley Green 83  
 Bradley Hall 83  
 Brampton Old Church 234  
 Brandon 98  
 Brands Hill 59, 59, 97  
 Branshaw Bastle 270, 271, 332  
 Branxton Hill 92, 92  
 Breamish Valley 34, 42, 73, 89, 114, 189:  
   Archaeological Project 171–89  
   climate 198, 199  
   palaeoenvironmental research 198  
 Breeze and Dobson 225  
 Bremenium Roman fort, High  
   Rochester 42, 59, 60:  
   agriculture 218  
   annexe 216, 217, 218  
   aqueduct 220  
   artillery 221, 222  
   banks and ditches 219, 220  
   barracks 221  
   bath-house 220  
   cobble 218  
   Dere Street and 49, 213, 214, 217, 218, 219  
   earthwork defences 220  
   enclosure 216  
   end of 222–23  
   excavation 214–23  
   field systems 245  
   garrisons 214, 222  
   granaries 220  
   headquarters 220  
   photographs 275, 279  
   place name 214  
   plan 276  
   pre-Roman 215–17  
   purpose 214  
   ramparts 217  
   units garrisoned 214, 222  
   *vicus* 215  
 brickworks 128, 308  
 bridges 127, 320  
 Brieredge 308, 310  
 Brigantes 43, 44, 49, 65  
 Brigantium Archaeological Centre,  
   Rochester 60  
 Brinkburn Priory 106  
*Brittunculi* 232  
 Broad Moss 26, 160, 165, 166, 168  
 Bromic 69, 69, 70  
 Bronze Age:  
   bronze working 25, 33  
   burials 29–34, 35, 335, 340  
   burnt mounds 28–29  
   cairns 29–35, 140:  
     Neolithic cairns and 29  
   cemeteries 29, 33  
   ceremony 33  
   chiefs 33, 34  
   climate 27, 28, 165, 166  
   cremations 34  
   cultivation terraces 179–82  
   environmental change 165–66  
   field systems 26  
   hierarchical society 33  
   landscape change 165–6, 165–66  
   monuments 29  
   Neolithic period, transition from 25  
   ritual deposits 34–35  
   rituals 33, 34, 35  
   roundhouses, unenclosed 25–26, 36  
   settlements 25–28, 32, 329  
   settlements abandoned 28, 36  
   shamans 33  
   social developments 36  
   spearhead 34  
   standing stones 31–32  
   stock grazing 165  
   swords 34, 35, 342–43, 343  
   territorial divisions 36  
   vegetarian history 165–66  
   woodland clearance 14, 165, 182  
 Broomlee Lough 48, 48  
 Brough Law 42, 65, 70, 171, 179, 194, 196, 197, 315  
 Brown, 'Capability' 122  
 Brownchesters Farm 162, 163–64, 168, 170  
 Broxmouth hillfort, East Lothian 43  
 Bruce, John Collingwood 6, 53, 225  
 Bruce, Robert 246, 249, 258, 282  
 Brunanburg, Battle of 77  
 Brynaich 66 *see also* Bernicia  
 building stone 315–17  
 Burgess, Colin 6, 40, 59  
 Burgh 234  
 burnt-mounds 28  
 Busy Gap 86  
 Byrness:  
   church 130  
   village 136–37  
 Caesar, Julius 47  
 cairns:  
   clearance 208, 341, 342  
   Neolithic/early Bronze Age 173–77, 341  
 Callaly Moor 159  
 Callanish, Lewis 17  
 Callerhues Crags 29  
 Cambo 347  
 Cambo Bridle Road 339, 340, 347, 347  
 Camden, William 85–86, 102, 224  
 canals 321  
*cannabis* pollen 168  
 Capheaton burial mound 72  
 Carham, Battle of 77  
 Carlisle 60  
 Carlisle, Earl of 272, 291  
 Carlisle Castle 259, 283

- Carlton, Richard 248
- Carrawburgh Roman fort 48, 54, 62:  
mithraeum 62, 63
- Carshope 45
- Carter Fell 308
- Cartington Castle 113, 131
- Carvoran 233
- Carvoran Roman fort 53, 54, 233
- Castell Henllys hillfort 44
- Castle Farm 272, 273
- Castle Heaton 268
- Catcleugh Reservoir 140–41, 322, 322,  
323
- Catraeth, Battle of 66
- Caudhole Moss 158, 160, 162
- Causeway House 127, 128
- causewayed enclosures 16
- Cawfield Shield 243
- Cawfields 133, 134, 318
- ‘Celtic’: meaning of 36
- cereals 13, 27, 163–68 *passim*, 170, 182,  
183, 187, 188, 243–44, 318
- Chalmondeley, Major-General 320–21
- Chandler, Edward, Bishop of Durham  
131
- chapels, Catholic 131
- Chapman, S B 157
- Charles I, King 112, 113
- Charles II, King 113
- Charlton family 108, 113
- Charlton, Beryl 112
- Charlton, Mathew 300, 301
- Chesterhope Iron Company 314
- Chesters hillfort 171
- Chesters Roman fort 54
- Chesterwood 269
- Cheviot, Forest of 79
- Cheviot, The 18, 24, 203
- Cheviot Hills:  
farming, earliest traces 194  
farmsteads 142  
field systems 208  
hillforts 36, 39–40, 202, 204  
photograph 5, 169  
Romano-British settlements 59  
settlements 25–26, 59  
stone axe sources 17  
woodland 191  
woodland clearance 182
- Cheviot Memorial 138–39, 149
- Chew Green Roman camps 49–50, 51,  
93, 332, 333, 337
- Chipchase Tower 260–61, 262
- Chirmundeses 98
- Christian Church: rise of 64
- churches:  
influence of 107  
plunder of 108  
survival of 106  
*see also under names of villages*
- cists 174, 175–76, 194
- Civil War 112–13, 284–85, 290
- Claudius, Emperor 49
- clay 312
- Clayton, John 226
- Clennel 81
- Clennel family 124
- Clennel Hall 116
- Clennel Street 246, 338
- Cleughs Field 298, 299, 303
- coal 128, 306–10, 321
- Coanwood 279
- Cocidius, shrine to 331, 337, 336
- coins: Roman 187
- College Valley 18, 42, 133, 135, 203, 203,  
208
- College Valley Estate 236
- Collier, W P 136, 142
- collieries 127
- Collingwood, C S 108, 112
- Collingwood, R G 232
- Colvin, H M 259
- Comyn, John 82
- ‘Concern’, the 318
- Constantius, Emperor 224
- Coomb Rigg 157
- copper 25, 33, 36
- Copper Age 25
- Coquet River 42, 43, 246, 249, 324, 338
- Coquetdale:  
agriculture 46, 143–44  
Bronze Age cairns 32  
forest 80  
hillforts 42  
Mesolithic activity 9  
photograph 57  
Scottish raids 99  
shielings 111, 112
- ‘Ten Towns of’ 81  
well 74–75  
whisky stills 117
- Corbie Castle 266
- Corbridge 60, 72, 89, 213, 217, 232, 233,  
264
- Corbridge, Battle of 77
- cord rig fields:  
Iron Age 45, 46, 58, 61, 84, 173, 196,  
243, 334  
Romano-British 59, 84, 238–39, 240,  
240–41, 242, 243, 244–45, 334
- Corsenside tithe plan 300, 301
- coria 217
- corn mills 319
- cottages 120, 124, 127, 135, 135
- County Mayo 181
- Coupland henge 19, 19
- Coventina’s Well 48
- Cragside 122
- Craig 329
- Crane Sike settlement 26
- ‘creeing troughs’ 185
- Crigdon Hill 335:  
cairn 16
- Crindledykes farmstead 116, 120, 239,  
270
- Crindledykes lime kilns 318
- crosses 74, 74, 332
- Crow, J 231
- Crowns *see* Union of the Crowns
- Cuddy’s Well 48
- Cuddystone Hall 138
- Culley, George 119
- Culloden 113
- Cumbria 79
- Cunyan Crag 196, 315
- cup-and-ring marks 20–21, 22, 22, 23,  
194
- curia 217
- Cuthbert, Community of St 76, 77
- Cuthbert, Saint 320
- Dacre, Christopher 103, 285
- Dacre, Thomas 247
- Dagg, John 139
- Dally Castle 82, 82, 262
- Danelaw 75, 77
- Danes 75–76

- Daniels, Charles 225, 230  
 'Dark Ages' 64, 65, 72, 168 *see also* early medieval period  
 dates xv:  
   radiocarbon 159, 167  
 David I, King of Scotland 79, 278  
 Davies and Turner 157, 160, 165, 166, 168, 170  
 Day and Charlton 323  
 de Vesci family 81  
 'Death of Parcy Reed' 100  
 Defence Ministry *see* Ministry of Defence  
 Degsastan, Battle of 67  
 Deira 66, 67, 72, 75  
 Dendy, F W 84  
 Dere Street 297, 321, 332, 336:  
   construction of 49  
   photograph 50, 214  
   Trail 337  
   *see also under* Bremenium Roman fort  
 Derwent Iron Company 314  
 Derwentwater, Earl of 113  
 Devil's Lapful long cairn 15, 15  
 Din Moss 160, 162, 163, 164  
*Discovering our Hillfort Heritage* project 36, 43, 155, 202–3  
 Dixon, David Dippie 6, 45, 99, 113, 126, 143, 243, 340, 340, 343, 345  
 Dobson, Brian 233  
 Dobson, John 124  
 Dod Law West hillfort 42–43, 47  
 Dodgson, Rev 119  
 dolerite 318  
 Domesday Book 82  
 Donnelly, Brian 220, 248  
 Douglas family 89, 90, 91  
 Dour Hill long cairn 15–16, 29  
 Drainage Act, 1846 120, 308  
 drinking habits 118–19  
 Drowning Flow 163, 165, 166, 168, 170  
 Druids 18, 47  
 'Duergar' 348  
 Dumayne, L 157–58, 167  
 Dumayne and Barber 159, 167, 168  
 Dunbar Blockhouse 260  
 Durham, Treaty of 79  
 Durham University 171, 191  
 Durham University Archaeological Services 339  
 early medieval period:  
   archaeological evidence 64  
   burials 72, 344  
   Christianity 71–73  
   coins 68  
   *Grubenhäuser* 68  
   hillforts 65  
   historical survey 64–77  
   paganism 72  
   placenames 64  
   settlement pattern 67  
   vegetational history 168–70  
   warbands 65  
 East March 93  
 Edinburgh 65  
 Edlingham 259  
 Edward I, King 79, 83, 87, 280, 282  
 Edward III, King 282  
 Edwin, King of Northumbria 72  
 Egypt: Pharaohs 33  
 Eildon Hill North 38  
 Elilaw 122  
 Elizabeth I, Queen 100  
 Ell's Knowe 40  
 elm 160, 162:  
   decline 162–63, 165  
 Elsdon 48, 85, 89, 90, 101, 170:  
   Castle 246  
   church 106, 110, 128–29, 316  
   Common 119  
   meeting house 131  
   Tower 122, 262–63, 263  
 Elswick 314  
 Embleton 265  
 Embleton, Ronald 114  
 Embleton's Bog 157  
 enclosure 95, 119–20, 316–17  
 Enclosure Acts 316–17  
 English Heritage 145, 202, 205, 206, 208, 225, 227, 248, 265, 269, 326, 335–36, 344  
 Environment Act, 1995 144  
 Etal 345  
 European Union 248, 273  
 Evistones 104, 127, 269  
 Ewart 315  
 exchange networks 9, 12, 36  
 Fagan, Brian 94  
 Fairney Cleugh 329  
 fairy holes 307  
 Falaise, Treaty of 79  
 Falkirk, Battle of 281  
 Falstone cross 74, 74  
 Falstone Farmhouse 267–68  
 Falstone meeting house 131  
 farmhouses 121–22, 269–70, 271  
 Farnley 34  
 Fawdon 98  
 Fawdon Dean enclosures 184–87, 184, 185, 186, 200  
 Fell Sandstones 20, 42, 208, 319, 338  
 Fellend Moss 162, 163, 165, 166, 168, 169  
 Fenwick, John 294  
 fern 182  
 Fetherstonehaugh, Albany 287  
 field survey 206  
 field systems:  
   Bronze Age 26  
   Iron Age 39  
*Fifty Years of Peace and War* 325  
 Fingland Rigg 234  
 fireclay 309  
 FitzRoger, Robert 80, 85, 345  
 Five Kings stone row 16, 17, 18  
 flax 27  
 flints:  
   exchange networks 9, 12  
   Mesolithic 7, 8, 9, 175, 177  
   Neolithic 177  
 Flodden, Battle of 92, 92, 259  
 Fold Hill 238–39, 238, 242, 244  
 'food vessels' 25, 32, 33, 174, 175, 176, 176, 193, 194, 194  
 Fordun's chronicle 276  
 Forest Enterprise 348  
 Forestry Commission 136, 137, 138, 140–41, 140  
 forests 79, 85  
 Forster, John 93, 100, 298–99  
 Forster, Thomas 113  
 Foster, Bartholmewe 299  
 Fountains Abbey 106  
 'Four Laws' 243  
 'four-posters' 31–32

- Fourlaws Coal 306, 307  
 Fozy Moss 159, 168, 243  
 France 260  
 Fraser, George McDonald 103  
 Fredden Hill 26, 140  
 Frodsham, Paul 326  
 frontier scouts 222, 223  
 Fryer's map, 1820 96
- Gains Law 29  
 galena 314  
 Garretshiels 308  
 Gatehouse Farm 269  
 Gatehouse North Bastle 268–69  
 Gatehouse South Bastle 269  
 Gates, Tim xvii, 27, 27, 58, 59, 182, 184, 228, 296, 326, 327  
*Gefrin* see Yeavinger  
 Gefrinshire 68, 69, 69  
 Gibbs Hill 18  
 Gilpin, Bernard 110  
 Gilsland 291  
 Glanton 113  
 Glasgow, Archbishop of 110  
 Glasson Moss 167  
 Gleadscleugh hillfort 41–42, 41  
 Global Positioning System 204  
 Goatstones 31  
 Gododdin 61, 65, 66–67  
*Gododdin* poem 64, 67  
 Goodrich Castle 252  
 grammar schools 108  
 Grandy's Knowe 116, 117, 270–71  
 grass 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 170, 188  
 Grasslees burn 17, 32, 42  
 Grasslees mill 319, 331  
 Grasslees Valley 307, 310, 312  
 gravelkind 99, 116  
 Great Chesters Roman fort 54, 58, 62, 243  
 Great Hetha hillfort 42, 203, 207  
 Great Northern Coalfield 310  
 Great Tosson 72:  
   tower house 346, 347 see also *Tosson Tower*  
 Great Whin Sill 226, 318  
 Greave's Ash, Linhope 58, 70, 153, 171  
 Green Brae 239, 239, 242, 244
- Green Gairs 335  
 Greenhead 291  
 Greenlee Lough 46, 58, 240–41, 243  
 Greenlee stone circle 18  
 Greenwell, Canon William 32  
 Greenwood's map, 1828 96, 339, 344  
 Greysoke Barony 80  
 Grimstone ware 13  
 Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) 220, 248, 249, 258  
 Grundy, John 135  
 gunpowder 259
- Hackett, B 122  
 Hadrian, Emperor 54, 55, 56, 224  
 Hadrian's Wall:  
   aerial survey 224, 236, 237–45  
   archaeology on 224–35  
   army's effect on landscape 159, 166, 167  
   bank 226  
   barracks 230, 231  
   Christianity 72  
   coal finds 306  
   commission period 2  
   construction of 52, 52, 53, 54, 166, 167, 228, 229, 243, 315–16  
   contemporary landscape 237  
   counterscarp 226, 227, 229, 229, 230  
   design of 55  
   ditch 226, 229, 233–34  
   dolerite 229–30  
   earthwork elements 226, 227, 228, 229–30, 233–34 see also *vallum*  
   environment 226–28  
   excavation 224  
   farmsteads 237–41, 238, 239, 244  
   field systems 244  
   forts 230–31, 233, 234, 235  
   foundations 229  
   function 232–35  
   landscape and 166  
   literature on 224, 225  
   Management Plan 225  
   map of 224  
   meaning of 55–56  
   milecastles 225, 227, 233, 234, 235  
   Military Way 55, 226, 234–35  
   National Trail 145
- overrun, AD180 200  
 photographs 52–53, 83  
 Pilgrimage 225  
 pollen analysis 226, 229  
 pre-Roman landscape 227–28, 229, 237, 240, 241, 242, 244  
 Ptolemy's map and 216  
 purpose 232–35  
 quarries for 315  
   as quarry 316  
 relationship between Romans and natives 237–45  
 religion 62, 63  
 research framework 225  
 roads crossing 213  
 Roman abandonment 65, 167  
 scholars of 6  
 stone reused 113, 122  
 turf wall 225, 226, 227, 229, 233  
 turrets 233  
*vallum* 54–55, 226, 227, 228, 228, 229, 230, 234, 235  
*vici* 52, 60–61, 225  
 woodland clearance and 167, 243  
 woodland regeneration 167  
 World Heritage Site 145, 225, 237  
 see also under names of forts
- Halfdan, Danish leader 75  
 hall houses 262, 273, 275, 281  
 Hall, Mad Jack 113  
 Hallshill, Redesdale 27  
 Halton Chesters 225  
 Halton Tower 262  
 Haltwhistle 85, 279, 310, 321:  
   church 282, 283, 288  
 Haltwhistle Burn Roman fort 52–53, 243  
*Handbook of Hadrian's Wall* 225  
 Harbottle 80–81, 85, 97, 107, 124, 128, 131:  
   millstone quarry 319  
 Harbottle Castle 77, 88, 93, 103, 106, 124, 316:  
   description 246  
   earlier earthwork 248  
   excavations 249–57, 250, 253, 255  
   location 246  
   medieval castle 249–56, 257–59  
   photographs 247, 250, 253  
   surveys 248–49, 258

- Tudor battery 256–57, 257, 258, 259–61
- Harbottle Crags 319
- Harden Quarry, Biddlestone 40, 319
- Hare Cairn 35
- Harehaugh 75, 116, 117
- Harehaugh Camp hillfort 18, 42, 42, 249:  
    long cairn 16, 17
- Hareshaw ironworks, Bellingham 128, 312–14, 313
- Harthope Burn 27
- Hartside 96, 96
- Hawkhope cross 74
- Haystack Hill 59
- hazel 160, 162, 163, 168, 170
- hazelnut shells 14, 178
- Headshope 329, 337
- heather 162
- Heavenfield, Battle of 74
- Heavenfield, church of St Oswald 76
- Hedgehope Hill 38
- Hedgeley Moor, Battle of 91
- Hedley family 333
- Hedley, Iain 105
- Hedley, Percy 280, 289
- Hedley, William 319
- Hedley and Reed 314
- hengés 17, 19, 25
- Henry I, King 79
- Henry II, King 80, 81, 277
- Henry III, King 82
- Henry IV, King 91
- Henry V, King 285
- Henry VIII, King 92, 98, 100, 247, 259, 260
- Henshaw 279
- Hepple 72
- Hepple, Barony of 80
- Hepple Tower 264
- Hereford, Earl of 282
- Heritage Lottery Fund 273
- Hesleyside 108, 113, 116, 316
- Hesleyside Hall 122, 125
- Hetha Burn 44, 59
- Hethpool 79, 133–35, 135, 264
- Hethpool circle 17, 18, 20, 23, 193, 207
- Hethpool House 135, 316
- Hexham 85
- Hexham monastery 67, 73, 74, 279
- High Cleughs 295, 296, 298, 299, 299, 301, 302, 303
- High Green Manor 126, 127
- High House milecastle 233
- High Knowes, Alnham 40, 40, 44
- High Leam 295, 297, 298
- High Rochester *see* Bremenium Roman fort, High Rochester
- High Shaw Bastle 268, 268, 329
- High Shaw colliery 308
- hillforts:  
    abandonment 39, 43  
    absence of 43, 44  
    cattle rustling 106  
    as ceremonial sites 40  
    complexity of 44  
    Dark Ages 6, 65  
    dating 42–43  
    earlier enclosures and 16  
    early medieval period 65  
    excavations 40, 43, 44  
    functions 36–37, 39  
    historical setting 36  
    individuals and 38  
    NNPA project 36, 43  
    non-defensive settlements and 40, 44  
    palisades preceding 40  
    Romans and 43  
    roundhouses in 37, 39, 40, 42  
    size 37, 38, 39–40, 44  
    stone and 315  
    study of 44  
    surveys 17  
    symbolic aspects 38  
    variety of 37  
    visibility of 202  
    woodland and 37–38  
    *see also under names of*
- Hodgson, Rev John 6, 53, 270, 276, 279, 281, 291, 297, 301, 305 n. 2, n. 4, 311
- Hogg, A H A 74, 171
- Holburn 120
- Hole Bastle, Bellingham 265
- Hollinhead 314
- Holmhead 291
- Holystone 35, 48, 319:  
    Lady's Well 35, 48, 76, 106  
    nunnery 106
- Holystone Grange 124–26, 125
- Honeyman, H L 248, 250–51, 252
- 'hope' 86
- Hope-Taylor, Brian 6, 39, 71, 71, 103–4
- Horsley, John 6, 53, 57
- Hospital of St Leonard 345
- Hotbank 122, 123
- Houghton-le-Spring, County Durham 110
- Houseledge 27–28, 28, 181
- Housesteads Roman fort 52–53, 54, 54, 55, 145, 215, 221, 230, 270:  
    church 63  
    Green Brae and 239  
    *vicus* 61
- Howick 9–10, 10
- Hownam Rings 40
- 'Hownam sequence' 40
- Huckhoe 65, 242
- Humbleton 79
- Humbleton Hill 26:  
    Battle of 91  
    hillfort 41, 41, 65
- Huntley, Dr Jacqui 227
- 'hut circles' 203
- Hutchinson, William 6, 117, 119, 290, 291
- Hutton, William 55
- Ida, King of Bernicia 65, 66, 72
- Ilderton Dod 42
- industries 306–23
- Ingram 25, 28, 34, 35, 40, 42, 70, 73–74, 74, 81, 87, 88, 98, 173:  
    church 84, 107, 138, 200, 316  
    Farm 171, 172, 178  
    photograph 132  
    Rectory Gardens 188–89  
    Scottish raids 188  
    Tower 89, 106
- Ingram Hill 171
- Ingram South Enclosure 182–84, 183, 187
- Ingram and Upper Breamish Valley Landscape Project *see* Breamish Valley Archaeology Project
- Iona 73
- Iron Age:  
    agriculture 45–47

- burials 47
- cattle 47
- cereal growing 45–47
- chariot burials 47
- climate 198, 199
- dogs 47
- dwellings 44
- enclosures 179, 216
- farmsteads 44
- goats 47
- historical survey 36–48
- horses 47
- iron ores 36
- ironworking, evidence of 42, 43
- land clearance 159, 166
- lynchets 46
- Neolithic remains, reaction to 3–5
- non-defensive settlements and 40, 44
- pigs 47
- ritual deposits 34–35, 47–48
- roundhouses 44–45 *see also under* hill-forts
- sheep 47
- symbolic aspects 45 *see also under* hill-forts
- terraces 46, 46
- tribal groups 43–44
- vegetational history 166–68
- warrior aristocracy 43, 45
- wells 48
- wet places 47–48
- woodland clearance 166–67
- see also* hillforts
- iron ores 36, 310, 312
- iron works 128, 310–14
- Ironhouse 312:
  - Bastle 329, 329
- Irthing, River 226, 234
  
- Jacobite uprising 113, 320
- James, Earl of Douglas 90
- James IV, King of Scotland 92, 247, 259
- James VI and I, King 93, 111, 112, 115, 116, 248
- Jarrow monastery 64
- Jedburgh to Newcastle turnpike 321
- jewellery 67
- Jobey, George 6, 26, 60, 171–72, 176, 203–4, 224, 237, 241
  
- John, King 79, 82
- Joicey, Lord 135
  
- Kapelle, W E 278
- kelties 307
- Kemylpeth 332
- Kennel Hall Knowe 7, 44
- Kidland 117, 131
- Kidland, Lordship of 106
- Kidland Forest 135
- Kidlandlee shooting lodge 135, 136
- Kielder 131, 137, 140, 322
  - Castle 127
  - forest 15, 15, 137, 138–39, 139–40, 141
  - reservoir 60, 140, 141, 141, 308
  - viaduct 321
- Kilham cottages 124
- Kilham House 136, 136
- 'Kilmont Willie' 100
- King's Wicket 86
- kinships 99, 100
- Kipling, Rudyard 213
- Kirkbride 234
- Kirkcaldie 309
- Kirkham Abbey, Yorkshire 106
- Kirknewton:
  - church of St Gregory 75, 89, 107
  - field systems 208–10, 211
  - hillfort 202–12, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 211:
    - previous occupation 205
  - Kirkham Abbey owns 106
  - rock art 208
  - village established 211
- Knights Hospitallers 345
- 'Knocking stones' 185
- knotgrass 156
  
- Lady's Well, Holystone 35, 48, 76, 106
- Lake District 12
- Lambley Nunnery 279
- Lancaster University Archaeological Unit 339
- land drains 331
- landscape:
  - archaeology 38–39, 206
  - enclosure and 95, 119–20
  - past and 2
- symbolic 10–11, 23
- transport and 132
- Langdale, Sir Marmaduke 113
- Langdale flint axes 12, 17:
  - distribution of 12, 17
- Langleeford 26
- Langley 278
- Lawson, W 320
- lead mining 314
- Lee Hall 312
- Leyland, Captain 135
- Libby, Professor Willard F xv
- Liddesdale 101, 309
- lime 156, 317, 318
- lime production 128, 308, 317–18, 317
- limekilns 120, 317, 318, 331
- Limestone Corner 229
- Linbriggs 97, 98, 335
- Lindisfarne 159
- Lindisfarne Gospels 67
- Lindisfarne monastery 67, 73, 75, 159, 320
- Lindow Man 48
- Lindsay, David de 82
- Linhope 70:
  - shooting lodge 135
- Linhope Burn 44, 173
- Linhope Spout 196
- Little Church Rock 131, 342, 345
- Little Haystacks 177–78, 177
- Little Shield 240
- Loaning Burn kiln 330, 330, 336
- Lomas, R 82
- Long Ago in the Land of the Far Horizons* xvi
- Long Crags 26
- longbows 90, 91
- Longbuyer Castle 289–90
- Longheughshields Quarry 317
- Longlee Moor 157
- Longsyke Farm 121
- Lordenshaws 22, 23, 29–31, 32, 42, 85, 89, 314, 340, 345
- Lothian 77
- Low Alwinton 120
- Low Cleughs Bastle:
  - conservation 267
  - construction 299
  - description 295–96, 304–5

- historical development 297–303  
location 295, 296  
photographs 296, 296, 298, 299, 303  
population 302, 303  
pre-bastle settlement 303
- Low Cleughs Field 301  
Low Leam 295, 297, 298, 302, 303  
Low Leam Bastle 299–300  
Low Learchild Roman fort 218  
Lowes, Forest of 86  
Lowes, William 270  
lynchets 181
- McBride, Angus 98, 102  
McCarthy, M 159, 167  
McDowell, R W 300  
MacIvor, I 260  
Mackenzie, Eneas 6, 120  
MacLauchlan, Henry 6, 203, 204  
*Maelmin* 71  
Maelmin Heritage Trail 10, 20  
Makendon, Upper Coquetdale 142  
Malcolm IV, King of Scotland 81  
Maners, Robertus de 345  
Manning, A 159  
Manning *et al* 159, 167  
Manside Cross 42, 216  
Mar, Earl of 113  
Marches:  
abolition 112  
map of 92  
Marcher Law 93  
Middle 247, 248  
nature of 93  
renamed Middle Shires 112
- Mare and Foal standing stones 18, 18
- Mason, Howard 95  
Mauchlen, Robert 135  
medieval period:  
Border fortifications 103  
cattle 85  
Church 106–10  
climate decline 94, 95  
historical survey 78–110  
hunting parks 85  
March Days 93–94  
refuse as fertiliser 84  
ridge-and-furrow field system 84, 95, 97  
Scottish raids 99, 101, 103  
Scottish wars 87–94, 95, 98, 99  
transhumance 85  
village life 82–87  
villages, abandoned 83, 94, 95, 98  
*see also* early medieval period; post-medieval period
- meeting houses 131  
Melrose Abbey 106  
Memmerkirk 131  
Mesolithic period:  
ancestors 10  
base camps 8, 9  
beliefs 10, 11, 23  
burials 10–11  
Continent cut off 7  
earliest evidence 7  
environment 7  
flints 7, 8, 9, 175, 177  
forests 10  
gatherings, ritual/ceremonial 8  
historical survey 7–11  
hunting camps 8  
ice retreat 7  
landscape and 10–11, 23  
microliths 7  
mobility 8  
Neolithic, transition from 13, 14  
peat 10, 161–62  
research project 155  
settlements 7  
structures 9–10, 10  
symbolic landscapes 10–11, 23  
vegetational history 161–62  
woodland, photograph of 169  
woodland clearings 10
- metal working 306, 310–14  
Mid Hill, College Valley 46  
Middle Dean Burn 197  
Middle March, Warden of the 81, 93  
Middle Shires 112  
Middleton Moss 34  
Middleton Old Town 97, 98  
Milfield 12, 71  
Milfield Basin 8, 9, 19, 22, 68  
Milfield North henge 19, 20, 20, 72  
Milfield Plain 14, 25, 38, 156  
Military Road Survey, 1749 289  
Military Road turnpike 291, 320–21
- Milking Gap 58, 238, 240, 242  
milling 319  
millstone quarrying 128, 128, 319  
millstones 319  
Ministry of Defence (MOD) 138, 324, 325, 326, 336  
Mitford Castle 249, 255  
MOD *see* Ministry of Defence  
monasteries 106, 108:  
Dissolution 105, 108, 257  
Monksridge 269  
Mons Fabricus 86  
Mons Graupius 50  
monuments:  
astronomy and 20  
enclosure and 119  
landscape and 19–20  
past understanding of 3–5  
purposes 20  
stone and 315  
*see also under* Neolithic period
- Monuments Protection Programme 269  
Moore, A 159, 162, 167, 168, 170  
Moore and Passmore 161, 162  
Morpeth 85  
Morwick, Sybilla de 297  
‘moss-troopers’ 115  
Mountford, Judith 23  
Mowbray, Robert de 78  
Muckle Moss 157, 167  
Mullard, Jonathan xvii  
Murton High Crag 47  
Muschamp family 79
- National Conservation Year 324  
National Resurvey of Buildings of Architectural and Historical Interest 265, 268  
National Trust 133, 145, 226  
Native Americans 10, 15, 23  
Neolithic period:  
ancestors 14, 16, 193  
axes, polished stone 12  
beginnings of 12  
beliefs 14, 24  
Bronze Age, transition to 25  
cairns, long 15  
cairns, round 25  
cattle 13

- Risingham 213, 214, 219  
 Ritto Hill 179, 181  
 ritual deposition 34  
 roads 320–21:  
   metal 318–19  
 Robert the Bruce 87  
 Roberts, I D 312  
 Robin Rock 310  
 Robinson, Dr David 227  
 Rochester 100–1, 138:  
   Old School House 221, 223  
 rock carvings 5, 20–21, 31, 340  
 rock shelters 8, 339, 347  
 Romano-British period:  
   arable agriculture 159, 166, 167, 243, 244  
   burials 62–63  
   camps, temporary 49  
   Christianity 63, 72  
   Dere Street 49, 132  
   field systems 244–45  
   forts 215–16 *see also under names of individual forts*  
   grain for army 59  
   gravestones 63  
   historical survey 49–63  
   northern barbarian rising, 367 61, 200, 223  
   rebellions against Rome 56  
   relationship between Romans and natives 57–58, 59, 63 *see also under Hadrian's Wall*  
   religious practice 61–62  
   Roman impact on landscape 159, 166, 167  
   Roman withdrawal 61, 168  
   settlements 58, 59, 60, 65, 68, 177–78  
   stock rearing 243  
   transport 320  
   woodland clearance 166–67  
   *see also Hadrian's Wall and under names of forts*  
 Roos, Barony of 79  
 Roos, Robert de 279  
 Rose, Alexander 89  
 Rothbury 12, 14, 75, 85:  
   church 74, 110  
 Rothbury, Manor of 80  
 Rothbury Forest 87, 100, 120  
 Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) 173, 199, 248, 265, 325  
 Rushworth, Alan 248  
 Russell, Lord Francis 94  
 Russell's Cairn 94  
 Rutherford, Major 318  
 Ryder, Peter 108, 248, 251, 273, 275, 276, 281, 286, 296, 304–5  
 rye 166, 168  
 Ryehill 345  
 Ryehill Spittle 345  
 St Ninian's Well 74–75  
 Sanderson, Major 113  
 Scaud Knowe 196  
 Scheduled Monuments 326, 328, 335  
 schools 108, 118  
 Scord of Brouster 181  
 Scotland:  
   conflict with 79, 246, 247, 258, 262, 278, 280, 286, 311, 346  
   early medieval period 77  
   hillforts in 38, 65  
   medieval period 78, 80, 246  
   Romans and 49, 50, 56, 57, 214, 217, 235, 332  
   *see also Union of the Crowns*  
 Scott, John 297, 305  
 Scott, Michael 273  
 Scott, Robert 273  
 Scott, Sir Walter 102, 127  
 Scott, William Bell 110  
 Selby family 108  
 Selby, John 263  
 Sells Burn 162, 165, 166, 168, 170  
 Settlingstones mine 314  
 Severus, Emperor 57, 224  
 Sewingshields 306:  
   cairn 29  
   milecastle 86, 87  
   Tower 89  
 Shakespeare, William: *Henry VI Part I* 41  
 Shaw, Norman 122  
 Shield-on-the-Wall 133  
 shielings 85–86, 86, 106, 119, 332, 333–35:  
   abandonment 95  
   construction of 85  
   placenames and 86  
 Shillmoor Farm 122, 123  
 Silloans 332, 333  
 Sill's Burn 216, 332  
 Simonburn 30, 31, 74  
 Simonburn cross 74, 74  
 Simonside Hills:  
   boundary stones 343  
   Bronze swords 342–43, 343  
   cairns 16  
   deer park 85, 85  
   flints 11  
   funerary sites 347–48  
   history 339–47:  
     Neolithic 340  
     Mesolithic 339–43  
     Bronze Age 340–43  
     Iron Age 344  
     Romano-British 344  
     early medieval 344–46  
     medieval 345–46  
     post-medieval 347  
   map 339  
   name 344–45  
   palynological research 160  
   photograph 11, 338, 348  
   ?sacred places 347–48  
   summit cairns 340, 341, 343  
   symbolic meaning 11, 23, 35  
 Simpson, F G 224  
 Sinderhope Shield 269–70  
 Sinkside Hill 315, 315  
 Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) 236, 237  
 slag 310, 310  
 Smalesworth 269  
 Smithy Cleugh 314  
 Snabdaugh 267, 268  
 Snear Hill 27  
 Sourhope 160, 162, 163  
 South Shields 222, 225, 230–31, 232  
 South Tynedale 242, 244, 265  
 South-East Cheviot Survey 173  
 sphalerite 314  
 Spital Hill 245, 340, 340, 341, 344  
 Stagshaw 213  
 standing stones 17, 18–19, 31  
 Standingstones Rigg 18

- Sandrop Rigg 26–27, 27, 172, 176, 196  
 Stanegate:  
   forts 54, 217  
   frontier 50, 233  
   western 234  
 Steng Moss 162, 163, 165, 166, 168, 170  
 Stephen, King 79  
 Stirling, Battle of 87  
 Stobbs farmhouse 271  
 Stokoe Crags 269, 270  
 stone carvings 67  
 stone circles 17, 18  
 stone crosses 74, 74  
 stone quarrying 128, 133, 134, 315–17  
 Stonehaugh 135–37, 137  
 stones, burnt 28–29  
 Stones of Stenness, Orkney 17  
 Strathclyde 61, 66, 77  
 ‘Street, The’ 101  
 ‘strong houses’ 268  
 surnames 286–87  
 Sutherland, Sir Arthur Munro 133  
 Sutherland Hall 138  
 Sutton Hoo 72  
 Swethope, Walter de 297  
 Swinburne, Adam de 279, 283  
 Swinburne, Sir John 321  
 Swinburne, Matthew 291  
 Swindon Hill 164
- Tailboys family 247, 259  
 Tarret Burn 314  
 Tarsset 87, 318  
 Tarsset Castle 82, 99, 262  
 Tarsset Mining Co 314  
 Tate, George 6, 17–18, 20–21, 38–39, 153, 171  
 Taylor, Graham xvii  
 Teppermoor Hill 227  
 terminology 5  
 terrace sites 180–81  
 Theodosius, Count 61  
 Theodosius, Emperor 224  
 Theophilus Lord Howard of Walden 307  
 Thirlings 164  
 Thirlings settlement 13–14, 68–69, 68  
 Thirlmoor 29, 30  
 Thirlwall 272, 278, 279–80, 292  
 Thirlwall family 109, 272, 275, 279–80, 281  
 Thirlwall, Eleanor 291  
 Thirlwall, Elinor 287  
 Thirlwall, Johns 280, 281–83, 289, 293  
 Thirlwall, Lancelot 285–86, 287, 288, 294  
 Thirlwall, Richard 280, 287, 288–89, 294  
 Thirlwall, Robert 285, 288  
 Thirlwall, Rowland 293  
 Thirlwall, W J 294  
 Thirlwall, William 289, 290  
 Thirlwall Castle:  
   ?chapel 108  
   construction 281–84  
   decline 288–92  
   description 273–75  
   documentary study 275–92  
   drawings 274  
   earlier settlement 276  
   excavation 277  
   location 272, 272  
   as manor house 285–86  
   nature of 89  
   photographs 273, 277  
   placename 276  
   roles of 284–85  
   site definition 273–75  
   sketch of 290  
 Thirlwall Coal 306, 309, 310  
 Thirlwall Coal Company Limited 310  
 Thompson’s Walls 317  
 Three Kings four-poster 31, 37  
 Threestoneburn circle 17–18, 19, 20, 23, 140, 193  
 Thropton 345  
 Thrunton Farm, Whittingham 34, 34  
 tileworks 128, 308, 331  
 Till, River 13  
 time periods:  
   chart of 6  
   inadequacy of terminology 5  
 tin 33, 36  
 Tindale, Adam de 278  
 Tipping, R 159, 162, 164, 166, 167, 182  
 Tippling Act, 1751 117  
 Titlington 28  
 Todlaw 29, 329, 336  
 Tolan-Smith, Chris 9  
 Tom Tallon’s Grave 119–20  
 Tomlinson, W W 35, 48, 344  
 Topping, Peter 18, 23, 173, 176, 207–8  
 Tosson 80, 99, 113, 120, 345  
   lime kilns 317, 342  
   Quarry 344  
   Tower 88, 264, 264  
   *See also Great Tosson*  
 Tosson Burgh hillfort 344, 345, 346  
 tower houses 262  
 Tower Knowe 306, 310  
 Tower Tye 238  
 towers 88–89, 262–65, 281  
 transport 127, 132, 318–19, 320–22  
 Traprain Law 1, 38, 66  
 Trevelyan, G M 102, 145  
 Trewitt 345  
 tri-radial cairn 173, 174  
 Trimontium 217  
 Troughend 100  
 Trows Law 332, 333  
 Tudor, Margaret 247  
 Turf Hill 335  
 Turf Knowe, Ingram 34, 173–77, 174, 175, 176  
 Turner, Sgt Frank R 139  
 Turner, William 270  
 turnpike roads 318, 320–21  
 Tweed Valley 244  
 twentieth century:  
   buildings 133–38  
   enclosure 144  
   farming 143–44  
   historical survey 132–46  
   industry  
   landscape 132  
   moorland 144  
   roads 143  
 Tyne Basin 159  
 Tyne River 43  
 Tyne Valley 9  
 Tynedale:  
   Keeper of 93  
   medieval 80, 93, 99, 100, 103, 104, 105  
   Mesolithic settlement 9  
   Neolithic settlement 14  
   priests in 109–10  
   *see also North Tynedale*  
 Tynedale, Liberty (Regality) of 79, 80,

- 80, 81, 93, 99–100, 278–79  
 Scottish control of 81  
 Tynemouth gatehouse 253, 259  
 Tynemouth Priory 259
- Umfraville family 80, 81, 89, 91, 106,  
 170, 246, 247, 253, 259, 263, 281  
 Umfraville, Gilbert de 297, 305, 311  
 Umfraville, Maud Lucy de 311  
 Umfraville, Richard de 246  
 Umfraville, Sir Robert 91  
 Umfraville, Robert de 297  
 Union of the Crowns 93, 97, 105, 106,  
 111, 124, 316, 347  
 United Banking Company of  
 Newcastle-upon-Tyne 312–13  
 United States of America *see* Native  
 Americans  
 Uswayford 142
- Vardulli 214, 222  
 Veen, Dr Marijke van der 244  
 Venutius 49  
 Vernacular Architecture Group 267  
 ‘Viking’ period 64  
 Vikings 75–77  
 villages: foundation of 64, 67, 136–37  
 Vindolanda Roman fort 50–52, 57, 54,  
 159, 167, 214, 215, 217, 230, 270:  
 bathhouse 232  
 Brigomaglos 232  
 chapel 63, 232  
 Christianity at 232  
 research on 225  
 writing tablets 52, 232  
 Vindolanda Trust 225  
 Votadini 43, 44, 49, 57, 61, 65, 217
- Waddington, Clive 8–9, 14, 21–22  
 Wade, General George: roads 113–14,  
 114, 133, 320  
 Walbottle Dene 227  
 Wall 269  
 Wallace, William 87  
 Wallis, J 6, 56, 314  
 Wallsend 222, 225, 231  
 Walltown 133, 134, 318  
 Walton Moss 167  
 Wanlass, Alan and William 319  
 war memorials 138–39
- Warden Hill 44  
 Wark 85, 278  
 Wark, Iter of 279, 280  
 Wark Castle 259  
 Wark Forest 137, 140  
 Wark-on-Tyne 82  
 water supply industry 306, 322–23  
 wayside crosses 74, 74, 332  
 Wearmouth–Jarrow monasteries 67  
 ‘weeds’ 166  
 Welfare, H 234, 235  
 wells 35  
 Wessex Archaeology 336  
 Wessex, Kingdom of 77  
 West Hills hillfort 344  
 West March 93  
 West Whelpington 95, 95  
 West Woodburn 295  
 West Woodburn Station 322  
 Westgarth, Thos 291  
 Wether Hill, Ingram 35, 40, 42, 65, 176,  
 182, 187:  
 abandonment 200  
 climate 199, 200  
 excavations on 190–201  
 hillfort 190, 191, 194, 195:  
 history:  
 Mesolithic 191–93  
 Neolithic 193–94  
 Bronze Age 194–96  
 Iron Age 196–200, 196  
 early-medieval 200  
 medieval 200–1  
 timeline 192  
 woodland clearance 199  
 wheat 13, 27, 47, 85, 163, 165, 168, 187,  
 188, 318  
 Whin Sill 226, 318  
 whinstone quarries 133  
 Whitby, Synod of 73  
 Whitelee lime kilns 318  
 Whitelees 269  
 Whitton Dene 314  
 Widdrington family 124  
 Widdrington, Roger 307  
 Wilfred, Bishop 73  
 William I, King 82  
 William I the Lion, King of Scotland  
 257, 279  
 Willowford 234
- Wilson, Andy xvii  
 Winchester, A J L 307  
 Windy Gyle 94  
 Windy Hause East 335  
 Windy Hause West 334, 335  
 witherite 314  
 women 2  
 Woodhouses Bastle 125, 267, 267, 271 n.  
 3  
 Woodside 312  
 Woolaw 59–60, 60, 245  
 Wooler 85, 117  
 Wooler, Barony of 79  
 Wooler Water 157, 164  
 Wooliscroft, David 233  
 Wrathmell, S 275  
 Wreighburn House 345  
 Wyntoun Andrew of Wyntoun 276
- Yardhope Roman camp 62, 325, 331, 336  
 Yarnold, Lieutenant Colonel A G F 325  
 Yatesfield 322, 328, 329  
 Yatesfield Hill 242, 245  
 Yearning Law 111, 112  
 Yeavinger 6, 44, 66, 79, 211:  
 Anglian palace 39, 70–71, 71, 168, 200  
 archaeological project 155  
 baptisms 72  
 Battle of 91  
 Battle Stone 20, 21, 91  
 Estate 120  
 excavations 6, 71, 103  
*Gefrin* 39  
 henge 19  
 Mesolithic artefacts 7  
 Old Palace 103, 104  
 pottery 13  
 ritual and 20  
 Yeavinger Bell 9, 9, 140:  
 field system 39  
 henges 19–20  
 hillfort 19, 37–39, 37, 71, 203  
 roundhouses 44–45  
 spiritual significance 19, 23, 38  
 Yetholm:  
 church 317  
 Loch 160, 162, 163, 166  
 York 68, 72  
 York, Treaty of 79, 93  
 Young, Rob 8

Northumberland National Park contains some of the finest archaeological landscapes in England, ranging from the grandeur of Hadrian's Wall in the south to the extraordinary but little known prehistoric landscapes of the Cheviot Hills in the north. The chapters of this volume reflect the variety and quality of these landscapes, and provide a broad picture of their evolution and past inhabitants.

Part I offers a comprehensive chronological overview of the Park's history and archaeology, whilst the case studies in Part II contain original new research by acknowledged experts: Richard Carlton, Beryl Charlton, James Crow, Tim Gates, Iain Hedley, Alistair Oswald, Jamie Quartermaine, Alan Rushworth, Peter Ryder, Peter Topping, Clive Waddington, Tony Wilmott and Rob Young.

