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EARLY SETTLEMENT IN STANHOPE PARK, WEARDALE, c. 1406–79

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It is the purpose of this paper to set into the context of other contemporary settlement, two fifteenth-century sites in Weardale, Co. Durham. Two reports of the excavations (of the more important of these two) were published in this journal twenty years ago. Some conclusions in these useful reports need modification in the light of further research. To see these sites in perspective, the progress of the early settlers and graziers in Stanhope Park will be traced through the estate and other records of the landlord, the Bishop of Durham. Before turning to documentary evidence, the archaeological reports of these sites will be summarised.

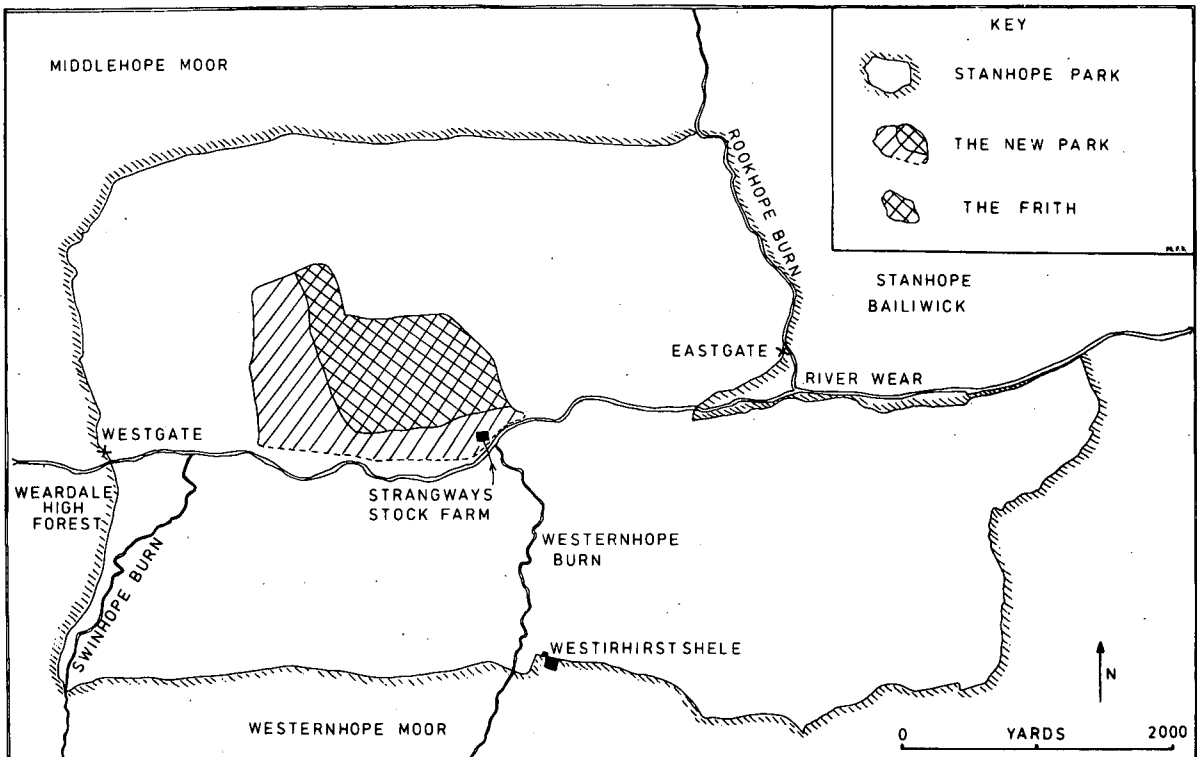
In *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th series, volumes 25 and 27, reports were published by Mr. E. J. W. Hildyard, F.S.A., and Mr. John Charlton, F.S.A., of excavations undertaken in 1946–7 near Cambokeels mine, in Park House Pasture in Weardale, within the boundary of Stanhope Park. Later Mr. Hildyard investigated another, more scattered site, on the opposite side of the Wear Valley, overlooking the east bank of Westernhope Burn and lying both within and without the Park wall. This he published privately in his "Archaeology of Weardale Summaries of Research 1945–7 and 1953–4".¹ Finds at the former site were plentiful and sophisticated. Besides flints, bones and stone discs, there were numerous bronze objects, including cauldron rims, the foot of a statue, a thimble, purse frame and bridle boss. The iron articles included pieces of twenty horse shoes and fifteen spurs, buckles and bits. There were keys, chain, nails, knives, large forks, an unusual iron tripod or brandreth, a sickle, candle holder and shears. There was much pottery, with many single and three handled pitchers including some Siegburg, imported pottery. Most important, there were three coins, all 1420–7. The material from the other site, less than a mile away on the opposite side of the Wear, corresponded strongly with the Cambokeels finds, pottery, including the unwieldy three handled pitchers, iron and bronze. There was also some dross from lead smelting of a more recent date.

John Charlton, in his section on the pottery, in the second published report, found "nothing to suggest, so far, that the main occupation (of Cambokeels) extended beyond the second half of the fifteenth century", though the quality of some of the pottery suggested a brief re-occupation sometime in the sixteenth century.

¹ In Hildyard's *Summaries of Research* p. 36 there is a significant misprint. For field 2926, read 2928. The field is clearly identifiable from Hildyard's description of the earthwork running north across it. Also the hut he mentions, as backing onto the Park Wall 300 ft. west of the gate into field 2927, can only be in field 2928. Field 2926

is too far away. In the tithe plan 1843, these fields are named High Billing (2928) and Pinfold Green (2927).

The Cambokeels site is so named after the Cambokeels mine, the offices of which are a few yards from the site. The mine is named after the field immediately to the east of Park House Pasture, on the Wear banks.



Plan of the main places mentioned in the text.

From "the character of the masonry, the dry walls and post-holes, the rough flooring and the scattered nature of the plan, in contrast to the compact mediaeval house" and from the good quality of the finds, Hildyard concluded that Cambokeels was the site of one of the hunting lodges of a semi-permanent character used by the Bishops of Durham, during their great hunts in Weardale, as described earlier in the Boldon Book of about 1183. The similarity of the finds (and the structure) in the Westernhope site to those at Cambokeels caused him to conclude that the two sites were strongly connected and perhaps used for the same purpose and that the Westernhope site had been used also for industrial purposes later.

By using documentary evidence, mainly contemporary, these sites can be seen as part of the early settlement of Stanhope Park and grounds can be put forward to show that neither Cambokeels nor the other site was a hunting lodge.

First the situation in the upper part of Weardale (that is Stanhope Park and the Forest of Weardale), in the early fifteenth century, must be outlined. Stanhope Park was enclosed from the Bishop of Durham's Forest of Weardale some time before 1327. The purpose of a deer park was deer rearing, fallow deer in this instance—and for ornament: It indicated that a fondness for venison had already, then, outlasted the popularity of hunting. Contrary to what Hildyard and Charlton thought, Weardale

was not disafforested in 1479 or even 1511. Forest Counts were held in Weardale until about 1635 and a Master Forester was appointed until 1683 at least.

Contemporary and near contemporary chroniclers described how in 1327, the Scottish army camped in the Park when confronting the army of Edward III.² Settlement was allowed in the Forest of Weardale long before it came to the Park. The letting of the tenements and grazing of the Forest and after 1436, of the Park also, was in the hand of the Bishop of Durham's Master Forester. By 1438, his first surviving account, there were over twenty holdings well established in the Forest, with grazing for at least 944 cattle, 472 sheep and 30 horses,³ excluding the vaccary belonging to Greatham Hospital at Swinhopeburn, the Bishop's own Instaurer's (Stockman's) base near Burnhope and various lead miners. Most of these holdings were there thirty years before (when Bishop Langley arrived), and probably long before that. Stanhope Park lay tempting and empty, but for deer, between this activity at the top of the dale and in the bailiwick of Stanhope in the Wear Valley below the Park.

By the early fifteenth century the Bishops of Durham no longer hunted in Weardale Forest or Stanhope Park. Surviving Master Foresters' accounts never mention the hunting services as having been demanded, but often, where they mention them at all, say there was no hunting the year in question. No charters or grants issued in the fifteenth century have yet been found mentioning hunting services, except when repeating previous terms. No contemporary evidence for hunting by the Bishops of Durham in Weardale either in the Forest or in the Park in the fifteenth century has yet been found despite exhaustive work among the Bishopric estate material. Arguments from silence, particularly in the fifteenth century (since which time so much evidence must have perished), are sadly unsatisfactory, yet the fact remains that quite a number of contexts survive in which one would expect hunting to be mentioned if it had occurred, yet there is no mention. Perhaps it is safer to argue the absence of hunting from the presence of competitive institutions such as stock farms. One can imagine that the Bishop might not be inhibited from hunting over land well stocked with animals belonging to his tenants in Weardale Forest, but to chase through his own stock-raising area at Burnhope and that of the Master of Greatham Hospital, might not seem so good an idea. Besides, there can have been less game and consequently poorer sport in an area so much more populated than it had been under the Norman bishops. The practice of sending to the Forester or Park Keepers to kill and send deer to the Bishop's table, rather than of hunting it, is not documented earlier than Queen Elizabeth's day, but one can well imagine it occurring under earlier non-sporting and elderly Bishops. Stanhope Park, having a circumference of about 12 miles, was about 3 miles across from the Eastgate to the Westgate and took only a few minutes to ride through. It was too cramped for the scene of the full panoply of a mediaeval episcopal hunt. Most significant, the Master Foresters in the fifteenth

² The following chronicles, all in the Rolls series, describe the campaign of 1327:

Adam of Murimuth, died 1347, p. 53.

Thomas Walsingham, died c. 1422, vol. I, p. 191.

Henry Knighton, died c. 1366, p. 445.

Also the Melsa Chronicle vol. II, p. 356.

³ Durham University, Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic. C(hurch) C(ommission) 190030. 1438–39. (Master Forester's account.)

century account for the hunt lodges as the "Stationes infra *Forestam* tempore venationis", not in Stanhope Park, which was treated in another part of the account.

If the building at Cambokeels and the other so closely connected with it near Westernhope, belong to a period and place when and where there was no hunting, what then can they be? The users of a building of such a size as that at Cambokeels, so well equipped, prominently placed and occupied for so long, are unlikely to have escaped contemporary mention. The problem is to identify them among those known to have been concerned in the Park at the time. The evidence for the first land grants in Stanhope Park must now be considered. The Chancery Rolls of the Bishops of Durham survive from 1333 and are almost complete. The very first grant of all the land in Stanhope Park as a whole occurs in 1419, on 20th April, 13 Pont. Langley, the year before the earliest possible date of the Cambokeels coins. This year Robert Strangways, who had been appointed Master Forester during pleasure in 1410, was granted the grazing of Stanhope Park plus the grazing of Middlehope, Swinhope and Westernhope Moors, (all in Weardale High Forest), plus the houses "super les sheles", for fourteen years, with certain reservations, at an annual rent of 100 marks (£66.13.4d).⁴ This high rent, which was about ten times Strangways' annual salary as Master Forester, in fact increased over the years. When Strangways paid his 100 marks for 1438-9, it was noted in the account that he had used to pay £80 for the Park and the three moors, but that the rent had been brought down again to the original amount. That year the combined rent of all the holdings of the High Forest amounted to only £35.4.8d and in 1484 the rent of the Park alone, without the moors, was 100 marks.

Strangways, who is known not to have held any other permanent office apart from the office of gate keeper at Carlisle Castle⁵ and who held the Master Forestership only during pleasure, must have expected to profit greatly from these rich grazing grounds and to use them to the full to pay so much rent. A few years after his initial grant he ran into debt to the Bishop to the tune of £97.19.5d,⁶ but still managed to have his grant of Stanhope Park renewed. He still held it in 1439, which was after he had been succeeded in the office of Master Forester by Thomas Lumley. A stock-raising enterprise sustained on this scale, centred on Stanhope Park and being his only known permanent means of support, must have had a sizeable headquarters. The obvious place was Westgate Castle. It cannot, however, have been so, as the Castle was in the Bishop's hand until 6th November, 1442, when it was granted for life by Bishop Neville to Thomas Lumley, the Master Forester.⁷ He used it, as did other agents of the Bishop in the dale, as an administrative headquarters, for the Forest Court meetings, rent collecting, a prison, etc. When Strangways was granted the Park grazing he

⁴ Public Record Office, London. Durh. 3/34 §23—Patent as Master Forester.

Durh. 3/35 m. 17 §42—Grant of Stanhope Park.

⁵ Calendar of Patent Rolls 1413-16 p. 50. Confirmation on 13th June, 1413, of a grant to Robert Strangways made 14th February, 1408, of the office of Keeper of Carlisle Castle Gate for life. The grant was confirmed again 18th April, 1423, and on 20th October, 1437, after

when he must have sold it. Otwell Worsley obtained the office by patent of 15th January, 1438.

⁶ P.R.O. Durh. 3/38 m. 2—Recognizance for debt.

⁷ P.R.O. Durh. 3/42 m. 18 §122—Grant to Sir Thomas Lumley, Master Forester of Weardale of an annuity of £20 for life from the proceeds of his Office, together with the Westgate Tower, also for life.

would need to find another base for his animal raising activities, apart from his working headquarters as the Master Forester. Cambokeels seems so obvious. It is placed centrally in Strangways' grazing grounds, on raised ground near the ford across the Wear to the main track up the dale and only a few minutes ride from Westgate Castle.

How then does the contemporary site excavated above Westernhope fit into the picture and what were the houses on the shiels mentioned in Strangways' lease of 1419? The houses listed in 1419 were Westyatflodyatshele, Swynhopshеле, Horshoushele, Brotherleshele, Westirhirstshele, Whitwelhouseshele, Estyatshele, Westanburnshele, Sunderlandshele and Westyatshele. All of these but two are recognisable from farm and village names existing today, as being in or on the edge of Stanhope Park. The two exceptions to be accounted for are Westirhirstshele and Whitwelhouseshele. The latter survived as a farm until Henry VIII's time, when it was demised to John Emerson and today Whitwells is the name of an area in the lower reaches of the Westerhope Burn.

What then of Westirhirstshele, first mentioned in 1419 and lastly in 1458, in another grant to be mentioned later? Hildyard's finds of pottery, metal, etc. at the site above Westernhope are of secure fifteenth-century date only and so correspond with the known term of existence of Westirhirstshele. As the pottery, etc. is so very like the Cambokeels sorts, including the imported Siegburg ware, it seems likely that the same people could have used both sites. We know that Strangways must have used all his shiels, as he had a large rent to pay and his lease particularly forbade him to demise the shiels to anyone else. There seems little doubt that what Hildyard excavated were the buildings of Westirhirstshele, part inside the Park wall and the larger part, perhaps for shelter, on the other side, the south side of the wall, on Westernhope Moor, one of the three moors leased to Strangways with the Park. It would be used by Strangways and his stockmen as they used the other houses on shiels—for storing walling tools and other gear, for resting when it was necessary to stay up all night with animals, etc.

People have wondered about the earthworks at Old Park Farm in the area known today as "the Old Park". These are not the remains of a medieval shiel (which was a human settlement on summer grazing grounds, perhaps with associated animal pens). No pottery was found when the pipeline from the Burnhope reservoir was dug across the site. The earthworks are probably much older. Although further work needs to be done, these remains are probably the outlines of an iron age homestead and field boundaries. It was among these useful mounds that the Keepers of Stanhope Park erected their wooden deer shelters, for this area was the frith or inner reserve area of the medieval park. In this place the deer were fed and sheltered in winter and it is not to be confused with Stanhope New Park. Deerhouses were known to be there until the seventeenth century, but they were not like the elegant stone structure in the Park adjoining the Bishop's Palace at Bishop Auckland. In the 1490s when it was decided to reduce the mediaeval park in size, the New Park was carved out of the old. The New Park consisted of the frith of the older park plus the land to the east (known as Cuthbert's Siders) and to the south of it, but reaching not quite to the river bank. The two parks continued to exist thereafter, one within the other, due to the modern problem of reducing numbers of employees. "Bishop Niele [1617-28] or some of his

sayd predecessors did erect several shedds or hovells commonly called Derehouses in that parte of the sayd Parke called the Frith wherein the Keepers of the sayd deere in the Summer tyme did usually lay [in] hay for the provision and preservation of the sayd deere in the Winter tyme which sayd hay soe layd in for the provision of the sayd deere was allsoe mowen and gotten within that parte of the sayd Parke called the Frith". These earthworks can then be left out of the consideration of the whereabouts of Westirhirstshele.⁸

How then did Strangways find the Park in 1419 when he received the grazing? These houses on the shiels mentioned in the 1419 lease were the first settlements to be allowed in Stanhope Park. There had been some lead smelting at a bail hill in the Park in time past. In 1426–7 Robert Whorlton and John del Graunge were paid 5s.10d to sort out anything worth re-smelting among the "antiquum Slagwerk remanentem ex antiquo in parco de Stanhope".⁹ In 1479, when Richard Duke of Gloucester was granted the Park and Forest and their rents in lieu of a cash grant, among the conditions was the maintenance "muri lapidei circa eundem Parcum et domorum habitabilium vocat sheles tempore Thome Longley nuper predecessoris nostri constructae".¹⁰ (Thomas Langley was Bishop of Durham from 1406 to 1437.) The first mention of a dweller in Stanhope Park, found so far, occurs in 1416 when John Westwood of Stanhope Park, but who was not a Park Keeper, guaranteed in Durham Chancery, the good behaviour of John de Wotton of Weardale Forest, a poacher.¹¹ Westwood may have been the paliser. Bishop Langley's responsibility for the building of the first shiels in Stanhope Park was repeated by a lawyer in a case in Durham Chancery in 1620–1. It was said also then that the shiels, "were first erected for the better maintenance of the Wall of the said Parke and the safe-guard of the said deer".¹² Until Langley's time—and probably later, the two Keepers of Stanhope Park must have been housed, one in the Eastgate and one in the Westgate.

Although the first shiels were erected by Langley, a little grazing had been allowed there before Strangways received the grant of the whole of Stanhope Park. His grant mentioned that the animals previously allowed in the park by forest custom were to be continued and it particularly reserved the Park Keepers' privileges. When John Emerson was granted the office of one of the two Keeperships of Stanhope Park in succession to his father Adam in 1442, the fee was 2d per day plus the right to graze ten cattle and two horses in the Park and cut five loads of hay there.¹³ Besides the perquisites of the keepers, two other areas of grazing had been let out separately

⁸ The quotation about the deer houses is from Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, Weardale Chest, 143/5 ff. 9–10.

Mr. Jack Newrick of the National Agricultural Advisory Service (now A.D.A.S.), Hildyard's friend and fellow antiquarian, watched the pipeline being put through the frith and when questioned by Dr. B. K. Roberts of Durham University, Department of Geography, was specific about the absence of pottery. I am grateful to Dr. Roberts, who has studied in Weardale for many years, for his dating of the iron age settlement in the frith and for his other helpful comments.

⁹ Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic C(hurch) C(ommission) 190013. (Lead mining account.)

¹⁰ P.R.O. Durh. 3/54 m. 9.

¹¹ P.R.O. Durh. 3/36 m. 6d. Some ten years later one John Westwood was employed as a lead miner in the Bishop's mine at Blackdean in the Watergate. Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic c.c. 190012–13.

¹² Durham University Library. Mickleton and Spearman MSS. II ff. 182–182v.

¹³ P.R.O. Durh. 3/42 m. 17 §117.

before inclusion in Strangways' full grant. These were the Bond meadow and another meadow called "Dahousmedow", (= ? doe house meadow), both within Stanhope Park, the rent of the latter being 6s.8d per year. When Stanhope Park had once been let as one entirety, the separate references to these two grazing grounds faded away.

Robert Strangways died about 1445, having run a stock farm in Stanhope Park for over 20 years. The exact date of his death is not known. He was alive in 1439 and holding Stanhope Park. In 1443 Robert Strangways *junior* was granted the wardship of Jane Dolfanby,¹⁴ so Robert senior must have been alive then, or so recently dead that a distinction was necessary. Certainly he must have been dead by 1449 when Bishop Neville directed his tenants in Stanhope Park (and at Beaumont field) to pay from their rents £61.6.8d to his brother Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury (father of Warwick "the King-maker").¹⁵ Under Bishop Langley, Robert Strangways had served in many capacities besides being Master Forester for about twenty-five years, such as one of the Commissioners of Array in Darlington Ward on at least four occasions. He was once appointed Conservator of the Peace in a group which included Sir Richard Neville whilst both James and Robert Strangways were made J.P.s with Sir Richard Neville and Thomas Lumley in about 1433. James Strangways held many important legal positions nationally, such as Chief Justice, as well as serving under Langley and Neville. He was one of Langley's executors. The family came from Manchester where they were associated with Langley before he came to Durham and there was another branch at Harlsey Castle, Allertonshire where James was a J.P.¹⁶ Robert on the other hand filled more rural positions, although, on the legal side he held the Forest Courts. Whenever there were feuds in Weardale, rivers were obstructed by weirs or fish traps, or the fence mouth for salmon was not observed or there was poaching in the river Tees or in the Earl of Westmorland's Parks of Brancepeth and Raby, Robert was sent to protect the Bishop's interests or was lent to Westmorland. All these positions would still enable him to spend much time in Weardale.

Robert Strangways held no public office after the advent of Bishop Neville in April 1438, probably due to age, as it had been in 1403 that he did homage to Bishop Skirlaw for the lands of his wife Matilda, at Cheswick in Northumberland. His exodus was not due to disgrace, far from it, as Bishop Neville's grants to Robert Strangways junior and to James Strangways senior and junior show.

After Strangways' death the letting out of grazing in Stanhope Park reverted to Sir Thomas Lumley, Strangways' successor as Master Forester, as provided in Lumley's patent for life, which followed a two year period of probation.¹⁷ He did lease it in pieces, as the order for paying Richard Neville's pension in 1449 shows. Having handled the leasing of Stanhope Park, Lumley obviously became aware of its value, which perhaps he had not before appreciated, for in 1456, he obtained for himself from Bishop Neville, the full grant of all the Park grazing and the three moors, as

¹⁴ *Ibid.* m. 17.

¹⁵ P.R.O. Durh. 3/44 m. 4.

¹⁶ Raine's *North Durham* pp. 228-30 and P.R.O. Durh. 3/44 m. 4.

¹⁷ P.R.O. Durh. 3/36 m. 11 §54 and m. 14 §68. Sir Thomas Lumley's patents.

Strangways had held it.¹⁸ Perhaps he used Strangways' headquarters briefly, but, as a member of one of the most important local aristocratic families, he was much more involved in public affairs than Strangways ever had been. Lumley was involved in negotiations with Scotland in 1449, 1453, 1459 and 1466. He too had had financial difficulties, as in the early 1440s his accounts as Master Forester were so far in arrears that the Bishop issued a writ for the seizure of his goods.¹⁹ In 1455 he was made Governor of Scarborough Castle for life and became Lord Lieutenant of the County in 1461 with all the attendant responsibilities. At all events, within two years Lumley had surrendered his twenty-year grant of the Park to the new Bishop Booth, who granted it afresh to a group of six local men.²⁰

This grant of 8th May, 1458, granted Stanhope Park herbage, the same ten shields and the three moors, not as one entity to an episcopal servant, but to six local men without political distractions, which greatly increased the chances of the area being settled upon permanently and split up. That the grant was not made without some trepidation is shown in the term, for only one year (at the same rent of 100 marks), and in those to whom it was granted and that only on certain security. The grantees were Thomas Strangways esquire, Robert and John Emerson, John Harper, Thomas Younge and Christopher Bee. Thomas Strangways must have been a relation of the recent Master Forester. Robert and John Emerson had been appointed Keeper of Stanhope Park and a Weardale Forester respectively, by Bishop Neville. Robert Harper was probably related to the Weardale Foresters John and Christopher Harper. Thomas Younge was soon to become a Weardale Forester and the Bee Family had more grazing in the Forest in the Kilhope area in the 1480s, for which they were answerable to the Master Forester. All these men were therefore known to Sir Thomas Lumley who may well have recommended them.

The uncertainty with which this grant was made continued. The following day, 9th May, 1458, Sir Thomas Lumley, Master Forester, the Sheriff, the Chancellor and a clerk were hurriedly commissioned to go and count the deer in the newly-leased Stanhope Park and all the other parks and chases of the Bishop.²¹ This they did in less than a week and reported on 15th May that there were 200 in Stanhope Park, 140 in Wolsingham, and 100 each in Evenwood and Auckland Parks.²²

The grant of 1458 had been for one year and a formal renewal of it does not appear in any later Chancery Roll of Bishop Booth—yet the grantees were allowed to remain. For the year 1460–1 there survives the first list of cash payments (made into the Durham Exchequer) which were the responsibility of the Master Forester.²³ The payments were made for other matters in the charge of the Master Forester besides Weardale, but payments made on his account, either specifically for Stanhope Park or not,

¹⁸ P.R.O. Durh. 3/45 m. 7 19. Lumley's grant of Stanhope Park. Neville was apparently more interested in Evenwood than in Stanhope Park. Coultpark, once held by the Earl of Westmorland, was added by Neville to Evenwood Park, to enlarge it for the sustenance of the deer therein. c.c. 188866. (Evenwood Reeve's account, 1459–60.) There were 200 deer in Stanhope and 100 in Evenwood in 1458.

¹⁹ P.R.O. Durh. 3/46 m. 7.

²⁰ P.R.O. Durh. 3/48 §7. m. 3–4. 8th May, 1458.

²¹ *Ibid.* §8 m. 4. 9th May, 1458.

²² P.R.O. Durh. 3/4 f. 3 (using old foliation) 15th May, 1458.

²³ Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, c.c. 220242.

were made by John Harper for himself and also for Roland Harper, by Robert Emerson senior, Thomas Younge, Christopher Bee, John Emerson, Robert Strangways and Thomas Strangways, all surnames occurring in the 1458 grant to the six. The account shows that between 12th August and 16th December, 1460, £39.13.4d was paid as part of the year's rent of Stanhope Park by almost the same men to whom it had been granted for one year, three years before. These payments, entered as part of the Master Forester's responsibility, together with the non-renewal of the short grant, show that, like the holdings in Weardale Forest, these rents for the Park and its shiels were now back in the charge of the Master Forester. Sir Richard Neville whose pension comprised some of these rents, had been executed in late December 1460, following the battle of Wakefield. Six men were mentioned in the 1458 grant. The 1460 payments added the name of Roland Harper, paying specifically for grazing in Stanhope Park and also Robert Strangways and John Grene, whose payments almost certainly were for the Park. As the payments covered a short span of time, it is probable that not all those who had become tenants in the Park were mentioned. It looks as if within a short time from the making of the grant of a collection of ten shiels to a group of men jointly, the grantees had each made themselves responsible for a particular shiel. These occupants of Stanhope Park were paying their rents not directly to the Master Forester, whose responsibility they were (but who had so many other commitments elsewhere), but directly into Durham Exchequer. This lack of contact between Master Forester and tenants must have encouraged an independence in the latter. Certainly it led to an administrative organisation which assumed that Stanhope Park was now divided and no longer just one entity.

It is impossible to tell how much stock Strangways and his successors had in the Park and we can only guess at the effect on the deer. The rent was £66.13.4d per annum for the Park and the three moors which represents the price of many animals. In 1458 Thomas Younge (one of those in the 1458 grant) sold to the Bishop's Instaurer 45 three-year-old heifers at 8s.0d each. It was common for the Instaurer to buy beasts from tenants in Weardale to increase the Bishop's stock, at his stock-farms at Burnhope, Bishop Middleham or Stockton and to take custody of them from the Master Forester when they were accepted or distrained as part of rent. In the year 1460–1 Thomas Strangways (another in the 1458 grant) paid £17.6.8d to the Instaurer in stock as part of his share of the rent of Stanhope Park. This included 20 heifers worth £8 and one gentle mare. Lest it be suspected that Weardale men lost by paying in kind, evidence to the contrary can be found. In 1492–3 the Instaurer applied for (and was given) an extra allowance for having bought 15 animals from the farmers and tenants of Weardale High Forest and Stanhope and Wolsingham Parks at 4d more than the 8d previously allowed, as the local farmers "*animalia sua predicta vendiderunt ad maiorem valorem quam valebant*"²⁴ and the Receiver General was unable to obtain their rents from them in any other manner! So long as Border unrest drew armies there, there would always be a ready market for Weardale beef and mutton.

Developments in Stanhope Park in Bishop Booth's time, 1458–76, are little docu-

²⁴ Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, c.c. 190263.

mented. The Bishop had owed his appointment to Henry VI and had been Chancellor to his Queen Margaret of Anjou. Naturally he supported the Lancastrian cause of the Queen and her son against the Yorkist Edward IV. Consequently the victorious Edward IV took into his own hands the temporalities of the See of Durham from 7th December, 1462—17th April, 1464. After Booth made his peace, the Lumleys, Thomas and George, father and son, were confirmed as Master Foresters in turn. The uncertainty of the position in Weardale during these unsettled times is reflected in a survey of the state of the rents there, drawn up in 1479 (just before the grant of the rents to Richard Earl of Gloucester), reviewing the position since September 1476.²⁵ It is the first detailed account of Stanhope Park since 1461.

It shows that, left much to themselves since 1461, the numbers of graziers in Stanhope Park had increased and that the Master Forester was now treating the Park as four separate Quarters. North of the river there was the East Quarter and the West Quarter. South, there was Billingside Quarter and Faunles Quarter. By 1476 the tenants of the West Quarter were Hugh Sheles and his son, John Harryson and Robert, Thomas and Hugh Emerson. In the East Quarter were Roland, John, Thomas and Robert Emerson. The last named was the same who held in the West Quarter, as probably was Thomas Emerson. In Billingside Quarter were Helen Emerson and her two sons, who may have been the same as, or additional to, Richard and George Emerson. There also, were Roger Maynerd, Thomas Younge and Thomas Grest. In Faunles were Roland Harryson, William Emerson, John Watson, Hugh Fauside and George Nevell. The six in the 1458 grant of Bishop Booth, had swollen to twenty at least, when he left Durham in September, 1476. These graziers were raising animals and paying their rents partly in kind (as were the tenants of the Forest), to the Bishop's Instaurer, Thomas Hall. Fluctuations in the occupation of some of the high shielings in the Forest may have been influenced by the new opportunities in the Park. Certainly in the 1450s, the Bishop of Durham was finding his Weardale lead mines unprofitable. Lead was piling up and not being sold. Booth tried to spend less on mining and therefore some ex-miners must have been looking for an alternative livelihood, adding to the pressure on the Park.

This survey of settlers of Stanhope Park will end with the lease of the Park and Forest to the Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III, in May 1479. In the last 80 years the Park had seen the beginnings of occupation (by others than the fallow deer and their keepers) with the two meadows let for grazing. Next came the ten houses on the shiels, built after 1406, first to maintain the walls and tend the deer, then used by Strangways as Master Forester and for his own pastoral purposes, while he ran a stockfarm for over twenty years. From the 1440s the shiels began to fall to individual tenants. Despite efforts to keep the Park as one, by the grants to Lumley and then to the six jointly, it continued to fragment in a period when both Bishop Booth and Master Forester Lumley were more pre-occupied with national issues. At the beginning of Booth's episcopate in 1457, Sir Thomas Lumley held a grant of the whole Park. At Booth's translation to York in 1476 the Park was in the hands of about

²⁵ Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, c.c. 189722.

twenty graziers, some of whom had doubtless begun to till the soil. Granting the exploitation of the grazing to men, who, in their office as Master Forester, were the only people who could have restrained encroachment, led to the diminution of the Park area and to constant pressure on the deer, which needed tranquillity to flourish.

Suggestions for the identities of the Cambokeels and Westernhope sites have been put forward. The latter, most probably Westirhirshele, could be perhaps one of the other nine contemporary shiels, the names of which survive near there, such as Whitwelhouseshele or Westanburnshele, but Westirhirstshele is the only shiel known both to have been built, used and abandoned in the fifteenth century as this site was. Proximity to other shiels and its exposed position, could well be the reasons for its abandonment.

The Cambokeels site was occupied by people of above average sophistication only during the period and shortly after, when the whole Park was granted to Robert Strangways, esquire, Master Forester to Bishop (Cardinal) Langley of Durham and kinsman and associate of the Chief Justice of England. No one else could have been using such a site in that place at that time. Charlton suggested that the main occupation of Cambokeels ended about 1460. This agrees well with the 1458 grant, the first to a group of people, the six, whom we know soon increased in numbers and settled in different quarters of the Park. When Stanhope Park ceased to be run by one man, then Cambokeels, as headquarters of a large enterprise, lost its purpose and would soon be used for its building materials or for temporary purposes by the local graziers. The establishment soon faded from memory. In 1619 one of the field names on New Park Farm was Castle side close, which by a process of elimination of the other names, probably refers to this site.²⁶ Nowadays the field is known simply as Parkhouse Pasture. A visitor to the two sites²⁷ today, will see little to suggest the activity there five hundred years ago.

²⁶ Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, c.c. 184959.

²⁷ The evidence about the two sites is mainly archaeological and documentary. Little is to be seen on the ground or from the air. Aerial photograph no. 650667 in the Library of the Geography Department, University of Durham, shows the sites of the presumed Westirhirstshele

and Cambokeels. No. 650601 shows Cambokeels and the area of the deer houses. I am grateful to M. P. Drury of the said Geography Department for help in drawing the map. For work on the line of the wall of Stanhope Park I am grateful to Mr. William Morley late of Eastgate and Mr. Hildyard (published in the latter's *Summaries of Research*) and to Mr. William Peart of Wearhead.

