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EXCAVATION AND FIELD SURVEY IN UPPER REDESDALE: PART II

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INTRODUCTION

IN 1975 as their contribution to National Conservation Year, the Ministry of Defence asked the Field Research Group of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne to report on the antiquities of the Otterburn Training Area, the largest military training ground in the country (fig. 1). The field walking was carried out between April 1975 and December 1976 by Ronald and Beryl Charlton, Margaret Mitcheson and John Day. In addition to the scheduled sites the survey team were able to locate over 600 hitherto unrecorded monuments dating from the Prehistoric period up to the present day.

This paper is a sequel to the Prehistoric section which appeared under the title "Excavation and Field Survey in Upper Redesdale" in the 1978 volume of *Archaeologia Aeliana*. More detailed references to sites mentioned in the following account can be found in the main typescript copies of the report—*An archaeological survey of the Ministry of Defence Training Area, Otterburn, Northumberland*—which may be consulted in the Newcastle Central Library and in the Northumberland County Record Office. This section is devoted to the discussion and description of the large number of post-Conquest field monuments in the Training Area associated with agrarian practices.

Discussion

Those occurring most frequently are the small rectangular remains of both temporary and permanent habitation sites. Less obvious on the ground are stack stands, corn-drying kilns (to be dealt with in a later article) and small cultivation plots. Additional evidence is provided by turf and stone walled fields together with stock enclosures and folds of diverse forms; droving activities have created their own distinctive field monuments—drove roads, cross dykes, taverns and whisky stills.

Unfortunately little research has been undertaken into the agricultural practices and methods in the remote north-west of the County. Not surprisingly, most recent publications concentrate on the more fertile lowland areas of Northumberland for which there is better documentation.¹ Paucity of contemporary sources and lack of excavation data therefore make it impossible to suggest anything more than tentative dates for the majority of agricultural field monuments recorded by this survey of

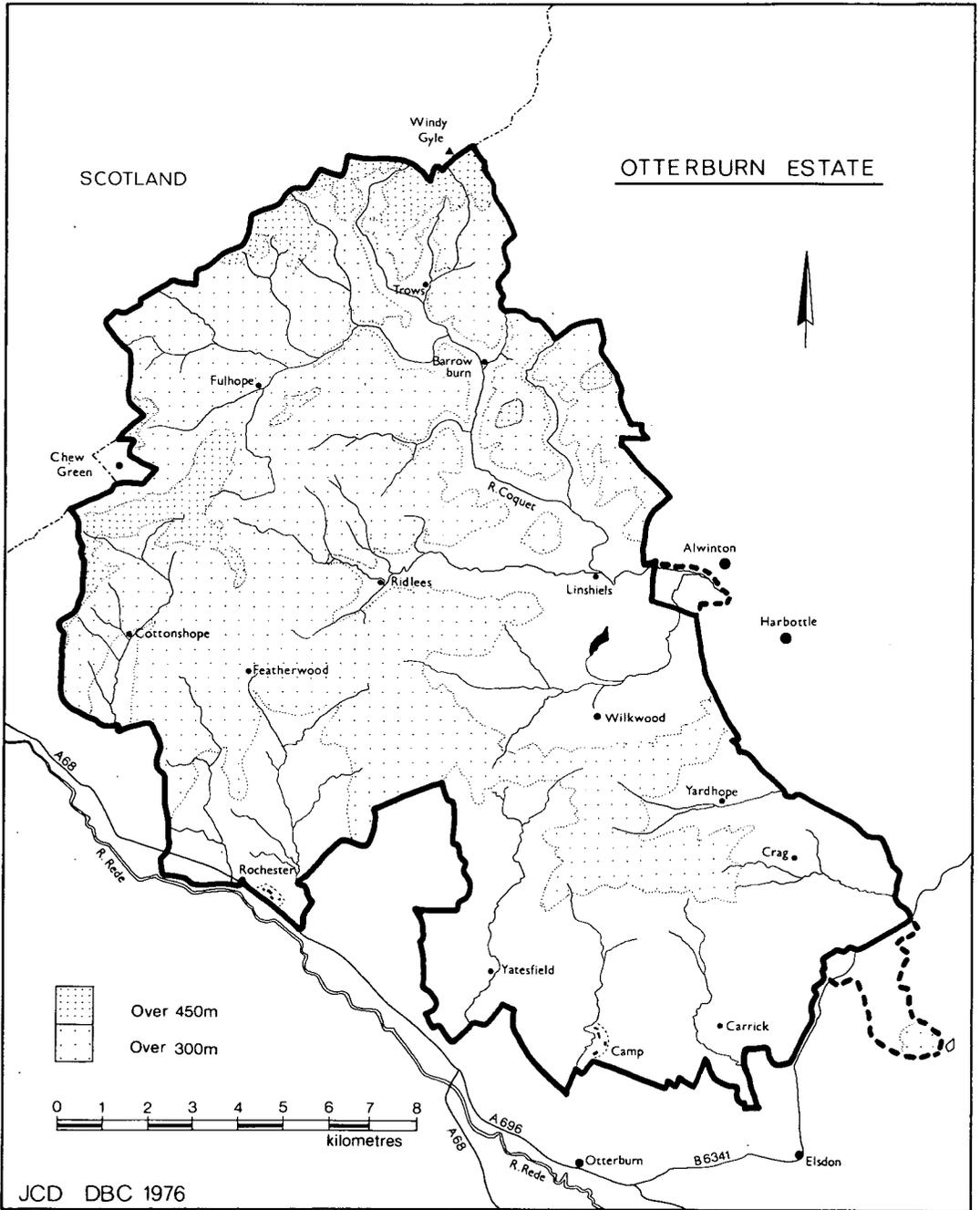


Fig. 1.

the Otterburn Estate. What has emerged, however, is that from the Romano-British period up to the present day, both physiography and social and economic factors have influenced decisively the development of agrarian systems and their associated settlements.

As yet, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not the Roman militarization of this upland area had any impact on the type of settlement and mixed economy practised by the native inhabitants, although recent field work in other parts of the County seems to indicate that tree felling on a large scale did take place during the late first century A.D.² when the conquest of North Britain was completed. It would not be unreasonable to assume that the purpose behind this field clearance was agricultural—possibly to provide the tribute which undoubtedly would be exacted by Imperial Rome.

How much land within the present boundaries of the estate was involved and whether it proved productive throughout the whole period of Roman occupation is problematical, but it is feasible that the uplands were not really suitable for intensive cultivation. In all probability the more arable traditions of the early English settlers were unable to establish themselves in the area, for the only evidence of their field systems are the surviving lynchets near Alwinton³ (NT 916070) and there is no visible trace of their settlements. After the Norman Conquest, North Northumberland reverted to its role as a frontier zone until the more peaceful times of the seventeenth century. Throughout this long period, the upland regions changed little in their agricultural character, serving primarily as the grazing grounds for scattered rural communities and for a number of religious foundations. The outfields, as these grazing grounds were called, supported all stock from April to August,⁴ when the warmer weather produced a seasonal improvement in the value of the pasture and when growing crops in the infields made it essential to remove stock elsewhere. These summer pastures were called shieling or shielding grounds and the temporary shelters in which the herdsmen lived were shielings (also sheals, sheils, sheels or shieldings).

Early references to outfields in the hopes and valleys of North Tynedale during the thirteenth century have been noted by Harbottle and Newman.⁵ There the practice would appear to have diminished after the Scottish incursions of the early fourteenth century and not to have recovered until the sixteenth century. Certainly the early documentary evidence in the Newminster Cartulary⁶ and that in the Public Records relating to settlements on the Otterburn Estate at Cottonshope (NT 790048), Aldenshiels (NT 887063), Davyshiel (NY 894967) and Linshiels (NT 893063) would suggest similar use and decline to that in North Tynedale (fig. 2). In the upland marginal areas of Northumberland the custom of summer grazing survived into the late seventeenth century, but with the agrarian changes arising mainly out of land enclosure in the eighteenth century, transhumance gave way to continuous occupation in these more remote valleys. It is interesting that in Northern Scotland, summer grazing only died out as recently as the beginning of the Second World War,⁷ when the custom ceased to be a necessity.

Since shielings were only seasonally occupied, documentary evidence for their

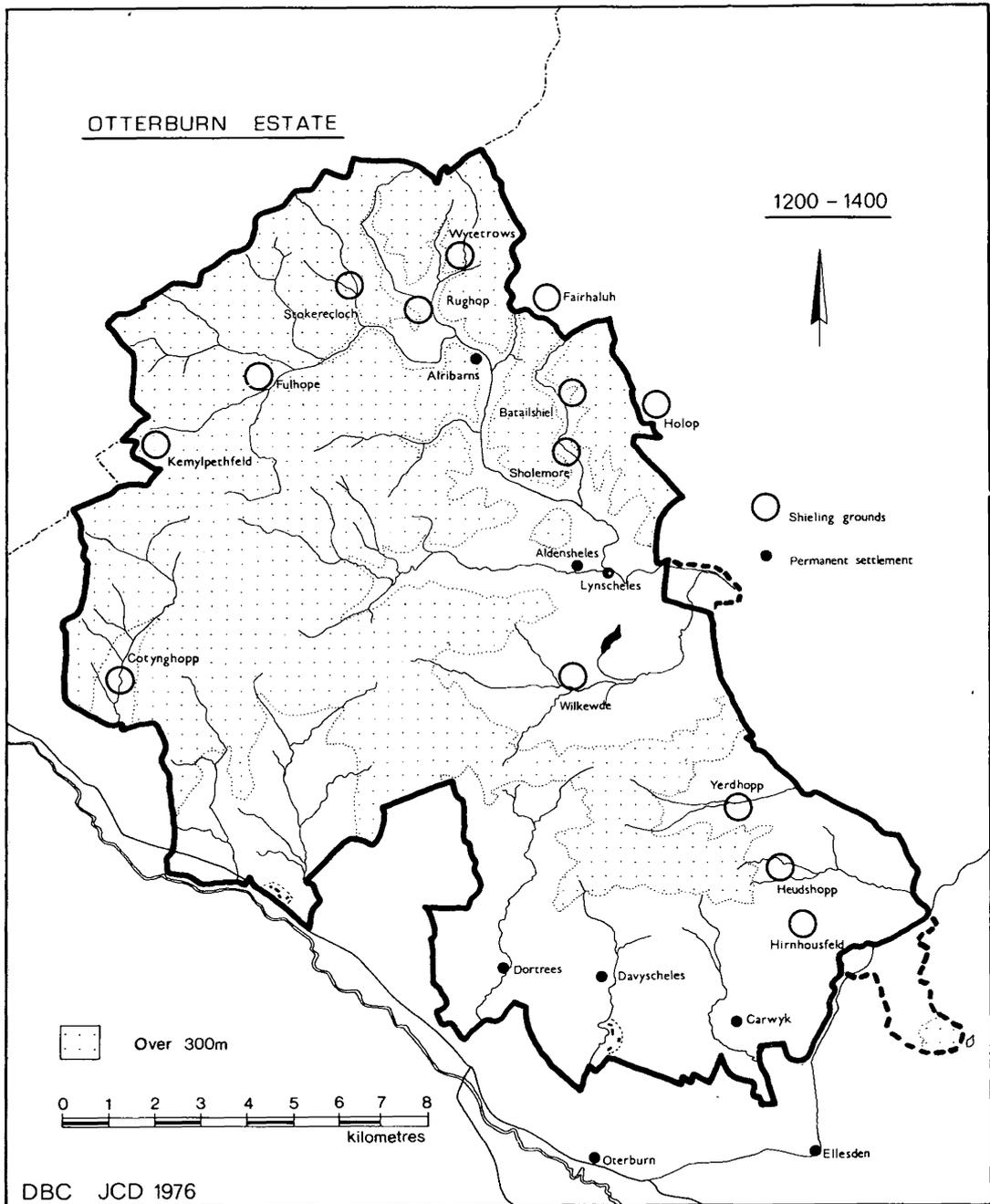


Fig. 2.

existence is slight. Consequently it has proved difficult to ascertain whether the stone remains of small rectangular structures in the known shieling grounds on the Estate are the foundations for stone or turf walled shielings. Miller in his study of shielings in Northern Scotland referred to both turf and stone buildings, whilst Ramm in his examination of shielings immediately adjacent to the Otterburn Estate, quoted only one turf example the rest being of dry-stone wall construction. This survey would seem to confirm Ramm's conclusions, for apart from turf structures on Saugh Rigg (NT 889087-890088), Whiteside (NT 895075) and The Knocks (NT 894078) the remainder of all the small buildings recorded have stone foundations visible. Although it can be argued that stone was more readily available and durable than timber as a building material, it is possible that the use of stone may be indicative of more settled times on the Border after the Union of the two crowns in 1603. In the previous century when there was so much disturbance in the area, Henry VIII's Commissioners Bowes and Ellerker, whose survey in 1541 makes numerous references to the practice of shieling in Redesdale, Coquetdale and Tynedale, stated that the husbandmen's huts were built of "allers (alders) and other ramell wood".⁸ Both the 1541 survey and the Border Papers⁹ mention the pasturing of stock on the English side of the Border by Scots. It is possible that the clusters of small rectangular buildings near the Border at Yearning Law (NT 813125) and Rennie's Burn (NT 804121-803119) in Coquetdale, and the enclosed group of twelve buildings on the White Kielder Burn in North Tynedale (NT 675985) are evidence of this Scottish occupation. Scottish flocks in fact were being pastured within two miles of Alwinton as late as the last decade of the sixteenth century.¹⁰

The period also sees the advent of the fortified farmhouse or bastle. Detailed discussion of them has been excluded at this juncture but it is of relevance to note that they become the nucleus for agricultural settlements which do not fall into either the shieling or isolated farmstead category. Assuming that associated rectangular buildings in the immediate vicinity of many of these bastles are contemporary they must represent a number of agricultural communities which have long since disappeared. Examples of such associations are well documented outside the Estate at Evistones (NY 830967) and less well documented on the Estate at Branshaw (NY 880997), Ironhouse (NY 933983) (fig. 3) and High Shaw (NY 936982).

There are numerous references in the seventeenth century to the continued use, and indeed expansion, of summer grazing at for example Cottonshope Middle and Nether Quarters and Cottonshopehead, Dumbhope and Partridgeside and Fulhope¹¹ (figs. 4 and 5). In these examples cited groups of small, rectangular, stone remains are to be found along the banks of the burns and on the nearby hill slopes. Ten structures in Cottonshope Middle Quarter represent single-roomed buildings, each approximately 3 × 9 metres. Similarly at Partridgeside, where there are the foundations of at least eight small rectangular buildings, the single-roomed structure predominates and the average dimensions are 3 × 10 metres.

According to Ramm's definition a shieling was an isolated structure although it may be associated with other shielings. This conflicts with Miller's view that shielings may often have direct associations in the form of additional structures such as pens

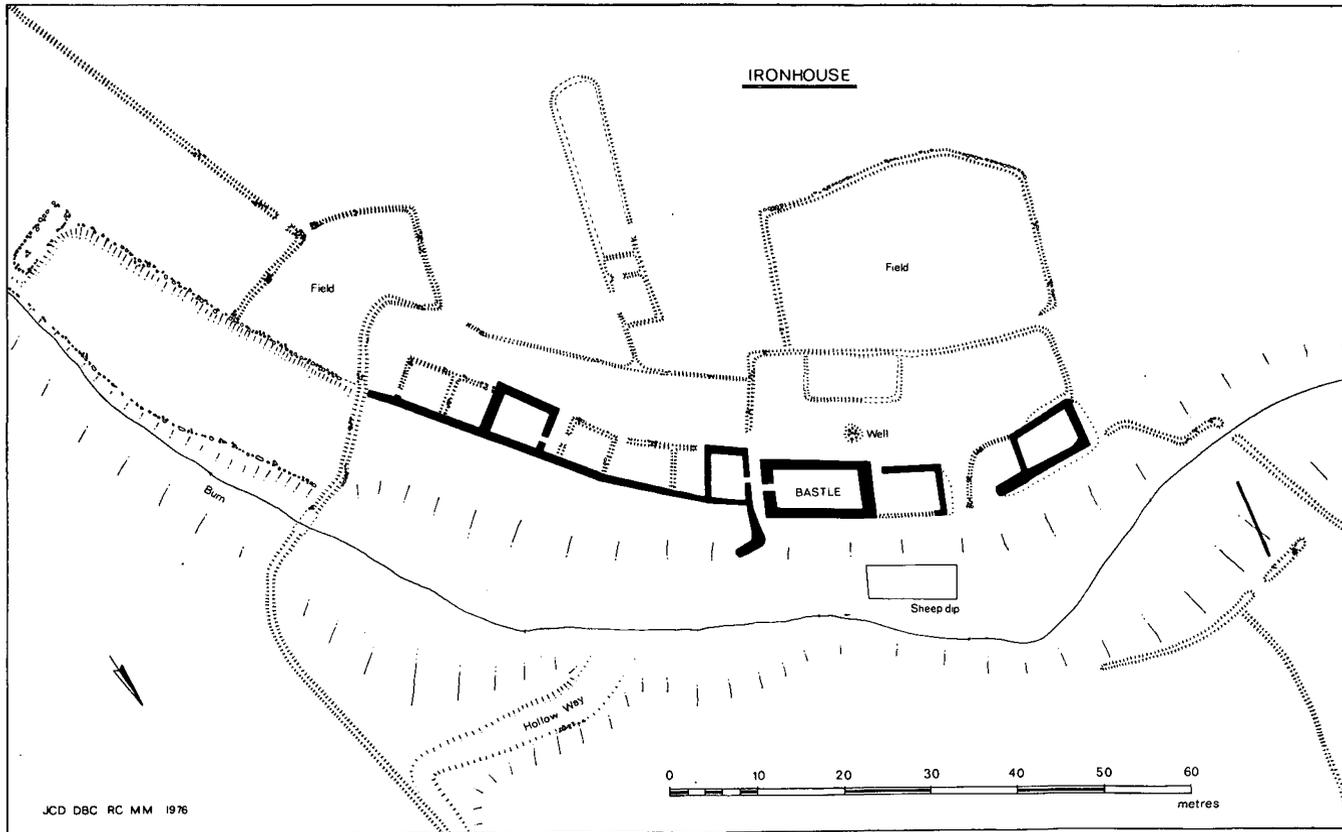


Fig. 3.

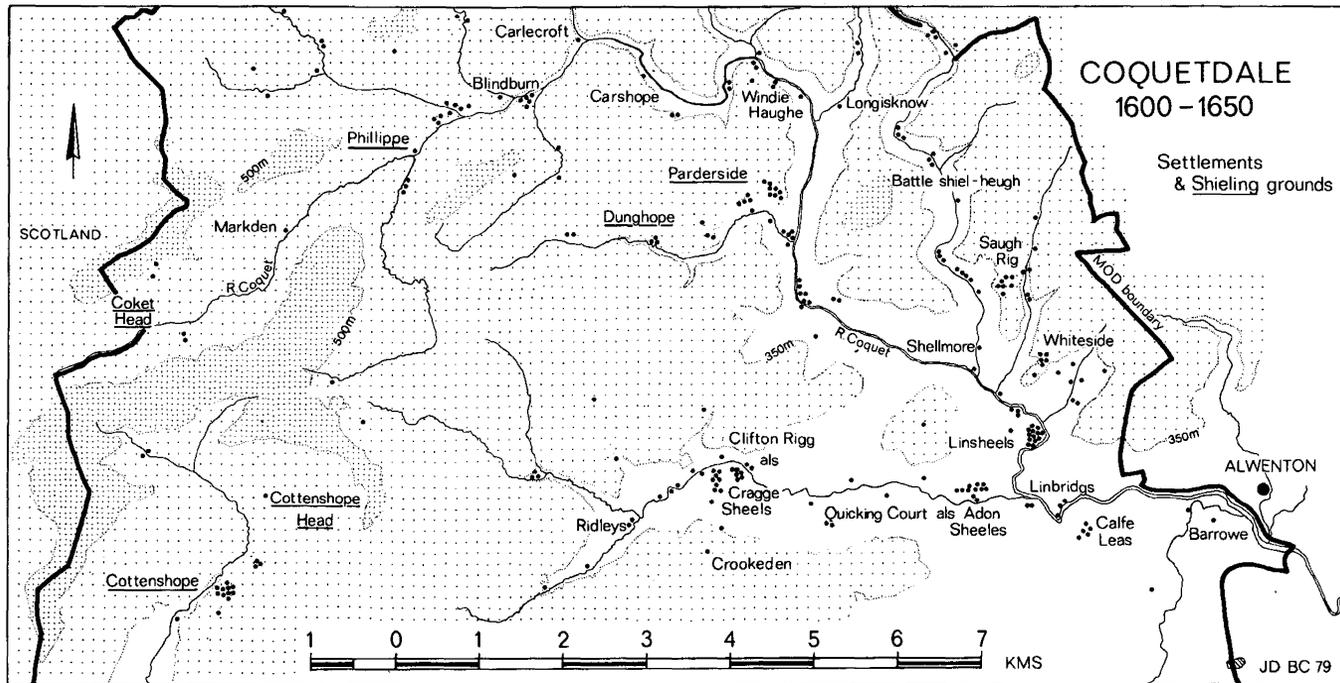


Fig. 4.

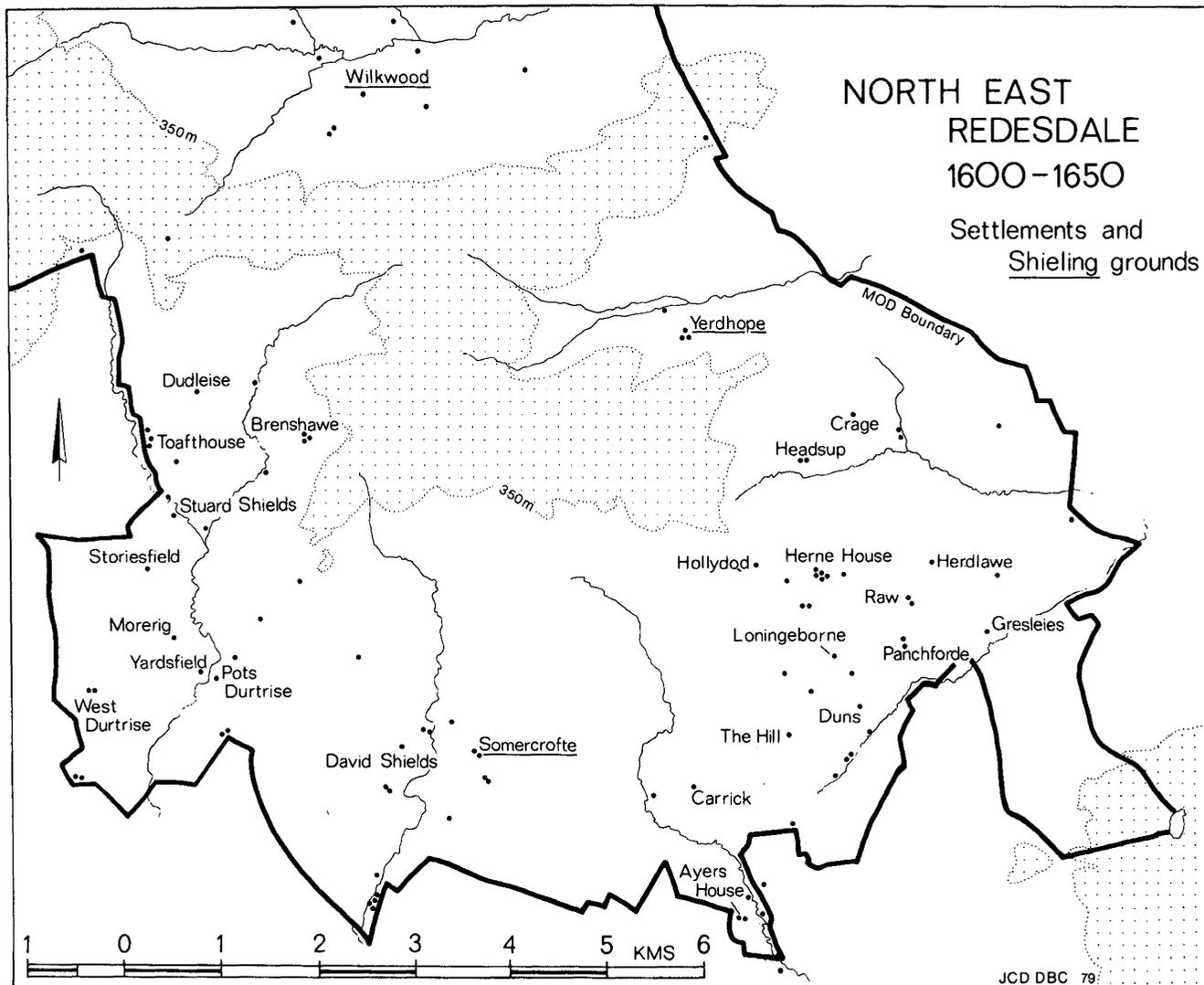


Fig. 5.

or folds and small cultivation plots known as lazybeds. There is further confusion in that Ramm identifies habitation sites with associations such as pens, lazybeds and stack stands as being permanent farmsteads and implies that in the shieling areas they are later developments in agricultural practice. Perhaps the problem can best be indicated by citing an example found on the Estate on the Rowhope Burn (NT 848150) at a height of 442 metres (1450 feet) above sea level where there are the remains of a small, rectangular, two-roomed building with an adjacent plot of lazybeds and a stack stand. In this exposed position and at so high an altitude the building could not have been habitable permanently, even in the mildest of winters when the climate was perhaps somewhat less severe than it is now. The characteristics of these stone buildings found on the Otterburn Estate, whether they are by Ramm's definition shielings or farmsteads, are almost identical in plan and dimensions with those described in *Shielings and Bastles*.¹² The isolated structures are predominantly of the one-roomed type, although a few have two or three rooms, with a single doorway in the most sheltered long wall. The majority are rectangular, but there is the occasional square building. External length varies from six to fourteen metres and the width from three to eight metres. The thickness of the walls varies from half a metre to one metre. Whilst the average measurements for single-roomed structures were four by nine metres, those with two and three rooms tended to be much greater in length, sometimes up to twenty-five metres. Moreover like Ramm's farmsteads, they were often associated with enclosure walls, as for example at Rookling Burn (NT 853072), Heir's House (NY 925947) and Wanlass (West) Durtrees (NY 858973), and also with smaller rectangular buildings which may have been used as outhouses and with stack stands and kilns—presumably corn-drying kilns.

Whilst shieling continued into the late seventeenth century, the improved political situation arising out of the union of the English and Scottish crowns in 1603, encouraged permanent settlement for the first time in some of the more remote upland valleys. An examination of the 1604 Survey and the Rentals of 1618 and 1663 revealed a return to profitable farming although the main obstacle to any real land improvement resulted from the fact that the upland pastures were still shared in common by tenants and owners. Indeed in some areas the continuing tradition of customary tenure meant that many small farms now had to support a larger population than was practicable. From the early seventeenth century however attempts were made to replace customary tenure by leasehold tenure,¹³ whilst the more enterprising land-owners entered into private agreements to divide up among themselves lands they used in common.¹⁴ By the eighteenth century this type of arrangement was superseded by a series of local Inclosure Acts. The earliest Inclosure of land that was later to become part of the Estate was the Elsdon Inclosure Award of 1729. No further Inclosure Acts involving the Estate occur until the following century when Harbottle Common, 1816 and Alwinton Common 1856 were enclosed.¹⁵ The introduction of leasehold tenancy created larger agricultural units which stimulated basic land improvements such as surface draining and liming, and some land, hitherto devoted to rough pasture or simply lying waste, now came under the plough. In all probability, most of the stone walls and sod-cast dykes on the south side of the Otterburn

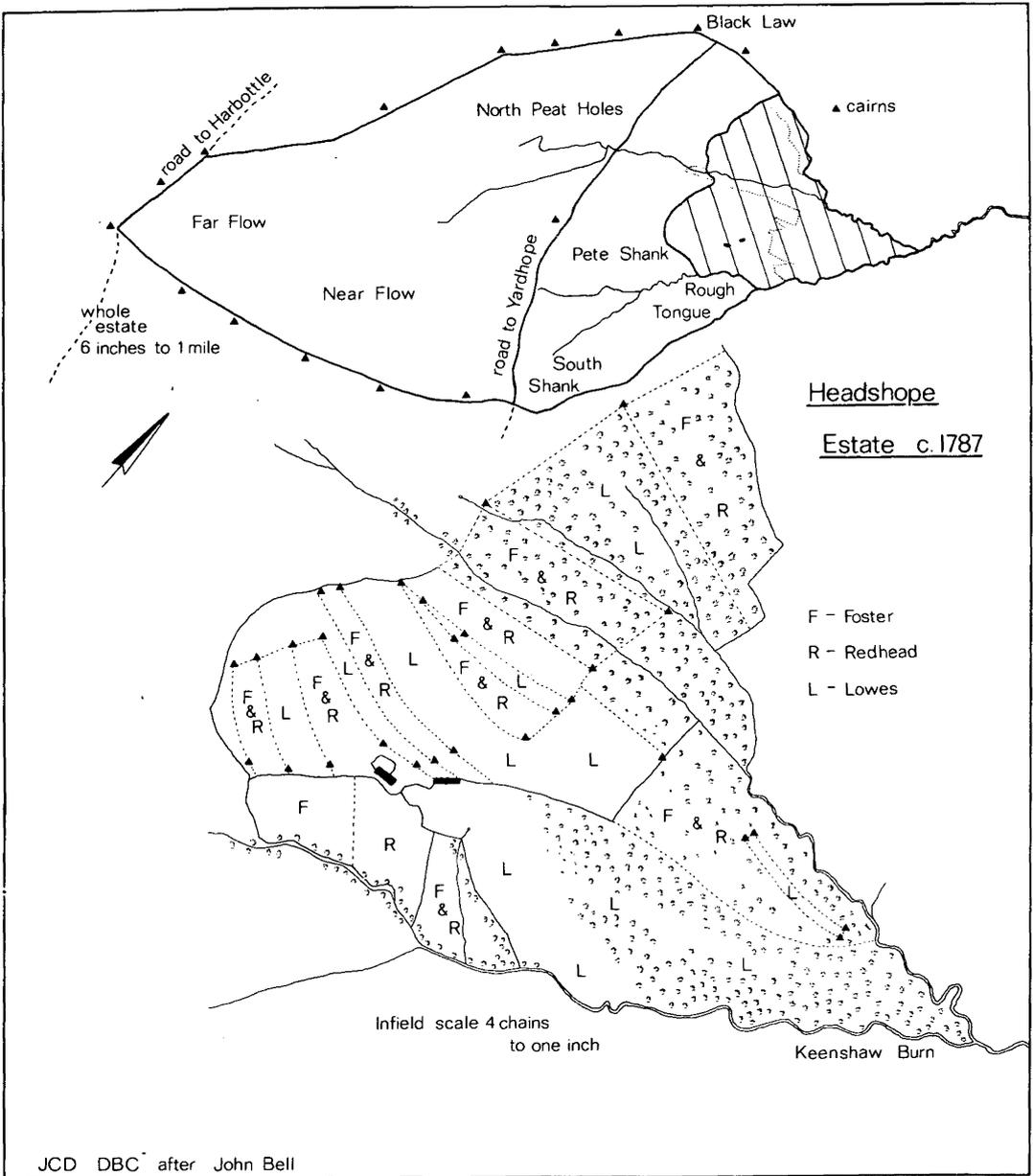


Fig. 6.

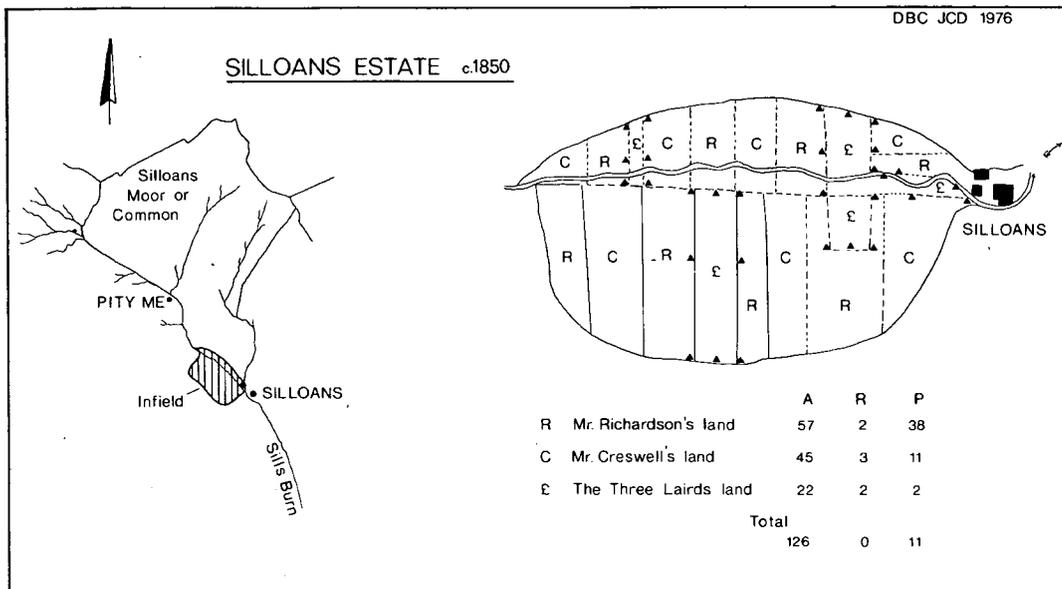


Fig. 7.

Estate, together with the broad ridge and furrow which can be found at heights of 274 metres (900 feet) above sea level—as for instance near Hare Cairn (NY 881985)—date from the mid-eighteenth century. Two farms, Headshope and Silloans represent typical examples of the changes in the traditional pattern of farming in this part of the County. The 1604 Survey¹⁶ records that five members of the Potts family were customary tenants of Headshope with nine members of the Hedley family as customary tenants of Silloans, but Estate maps of 1787 for Headshope¹⁷ and 1850 for Silloans¹⁸ show that both farms now had three separate landowners each. The maps also show the infields divided into strips, the ownership of every one being clearly marked by a line of boundary stones (figs. 6 and 7). That most of these original boundary stones are still *in situ* even though they no longer serve any functional purpose is remarkable, especially when modern agricultural improvements can so often destroy our cultural heritage. The formation of larger estates however was not matched by an increase in settlement in the upland valleys (fig. 8). Admittedly new dwellings were built at Harbottle Crag (NT 923027), Killbuck (NY 947994) and Back o' the Dour (NT 807018) but the last two properties had a very brief existence. Elsewhere, the general improvement in the value of the land was not reflected in the living conditions of many tenant farmers whose homes remained rather primitive.

By the late nineteenth century, the pace of agrarian change had slowed down. The breeding of sheep and the rearing of gamebirds became the main concern of many landowners. As a result the surplus population began to leave the valleys in search



Fig. 8.

of other employment and land, only recently brought under cultivation, again reverted to rough pasture and moorland heath. Perhaps the stone shooting butts at Long Syke (NY 884971) could be regarded as a monument to those who were deprived of their traditional way of life by the self interest of their more affluent contemporaries.

Dating

The paucity of documentary evidence for most of the small, rectangular stone structures discussed in the foregoing section has already been referred to. Only one such structure on the Estate has been excavated and this was in the settlement of Linshiels.* The excavation produced evidence of a sixteenth-century occupation although there appeared to have been an earlier building on the site.¹⁹ Immediately outside the Estate boundary a more thorough examination of the supposed chapel at Memmerkirk (NT 922123) by Harbottle and Cowper, placed this building within a fourteenth to seventeenth century context.²⁰ Recent excavations in North Tynedale by Miss Harbottle²¹ and Mr. G. Jobey,²² have between them disclosed a considerable number of objects dating from the late thirteenth to the early nineteenth centuries.

All of the structures excavated were of the one or two roomed type, with similar

*The exact location of Linshiels village, Aldenshiels village and Linbrigs settlement is difficult to determine. The Linshiels/Quickening Cote Estate is on the right side, looking downstream, of the River Coquet in the Chapelry of Holystone. There is considerable documentation from 1242–1430 for both Linshiels and Aldenshiels villages although none gives the precise location. The Linbrigs Estate is in the Parish of Alwinton and with the exception of Calfe Lee is entirely situated to the left of the River Coquet. The earliest documentary sources for Linbrigs are Leland's Itinerary (1535–43) and the 1541/2 Border Survey both of which note that the fortified tower and settlement have been destroyed by the Scots (fig. 4).

Throughout the seventeenth century there are many references in the Carnaby, Widdrington, Haggerston and Selby papers to all three sites—those referring to Linbrigs being most numerous. But the intermarriages and land transactions between these families do little to solve the identification problem. Complications arise from references to Adon Sheels als [alias] Quickening Court: Whiteside, Linshiels als Linbriggs and Lint Bridge alias Barrow Calf-Lee.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries cartographical errors complicate the issue further. Armstrong (1769) and Greenwood (1828) name the farm to the right of the Coquet Linbridge, marking

no buildings to the left of the river, whilst Fryer (1820) has buildings correctly named Linn Bridge on the left bank of the river and those on the right correctly named Linn Shields. Finally in volume XV of the NCH the site of the Church of St. Nicholas, Linshiels (1317) (p. 487) is later identified (p. 488) as the site of Aldenshiels village.

The site of Whiteside village (earliest documentary reference 1658) is authenticated by early maps which show Whiteside Sike north of the Coquet on the Linbrigs Estate. If Adon Sheels als Quickening Court is accepted as correct then all the foundations of buildings from Old Quickening Cote, Heathery Hill and those at New Quickening Cote must be included as part of the site of Aldenshiels. The cluster of buildings on the right bank of the Coquet, beside the waterfall, must then be Linshiels NOT Linbrigs.

The location of Linbrigs settlement is thus undetermined unless one accepts D. D. Dixon's suggestion that a new fortified tower was erected near Ducket Knowe—where there are the foundations of three small rectangular buildings on the scarp—and the documentary source referring to Lint Bridge alias Barrow Calf-Lee where there are also foundations of rectangular buildings, then the site of Linbrigs must lie between the present farm of that name and the Ministry of Defence boundary.

overall dimensions. In view of the wide range of dates obtained from these excavations it would be most unwise solely on the evidence of field survey, to place a firm date on the majority of the small rectangular stone structures on the Estate. The danger can be further illustrated by the example of Killbuck. This building does not appear on any of the detailed estate or county maps before 1828 and is known to have been destroyed by fire in 1835.²³ In this instance, the structure is that of a typical two-roomed building 11 metres by 4 metres, which compares favourably with three similar structures at Linshiels—14 metres by 4 metres, 11 metres by 4 metres and 16 metres by 4 metres.

Even with the increase in literary evidence from the seventeenth century onwards, it is impossible to distinguish between buildings in the known medieval shieling grounds, those in the larger settlements—such as Aldenshiels, Windyhaue (Crag Shiel NT 854065–858064), (fig. 9), Whiteside—and those of more recent construction at Killbuck and Back o' the Dour because of their similarity in ground plan. The only agricultural field monuments on the Estate which can be more confidently assigned to a particular historical period are the linear farmhouses of dressed stone construction which were built by the large landowners in the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. Perhaps the best examples of this type of dwelling, although sadly now in ruins, are at East and West Wilkwood (NT 893039 and 879038) and Harbottle Crag.

STACK STANDS AND TURF SHEEP STELLS

Generally stack stands are small circular earthworks enclosed by a low, uninterrupted earth bank and external ditch, although there are variants. The purpose of the stack stand is to provide a fairly level, dry area on which to stack winter fodder and to protect the fodder from animals by means of a bank, which was probably reinforced by stakes. The ditch served a double function in providing upcast for the bank and in draining water away from the interior.

Of the 50 (+ 14?) stack stands found on the Otterburn Estate 43 (+ 8?) are circular. Overall diameters range from four to fifteen metres. The average spread of the bank is one metre, while in height it may vary from 0.3 of a metre above the interior to 0.5 of a metre above the exterior ground level depending upon whether the interior had been deliberately raised to provide a platform. The ditch in most instances is silted up and grass-grown almost to the level of the surrounding area so that the average depth and width are difficult to determine accurately.

Of the 13 variants located 2 (+ 1?) are oval, 2 (+ 2?) are square and 3 (+ 3?) are rectangular. Other than shape all display the same characteristics as the circular stack stands.

Most of the stack stands occur in isolation, for example Durtrees Burn (NY871976) and Rennie's Burn (NT 808126), unlike those in the North Tyne area many of which appear in large concentrations.²⁴ Some have been found in close proximity to lazybeds and dwellings, for example Rowhope (NT 846150) and Linshiels (NT 391055). Many

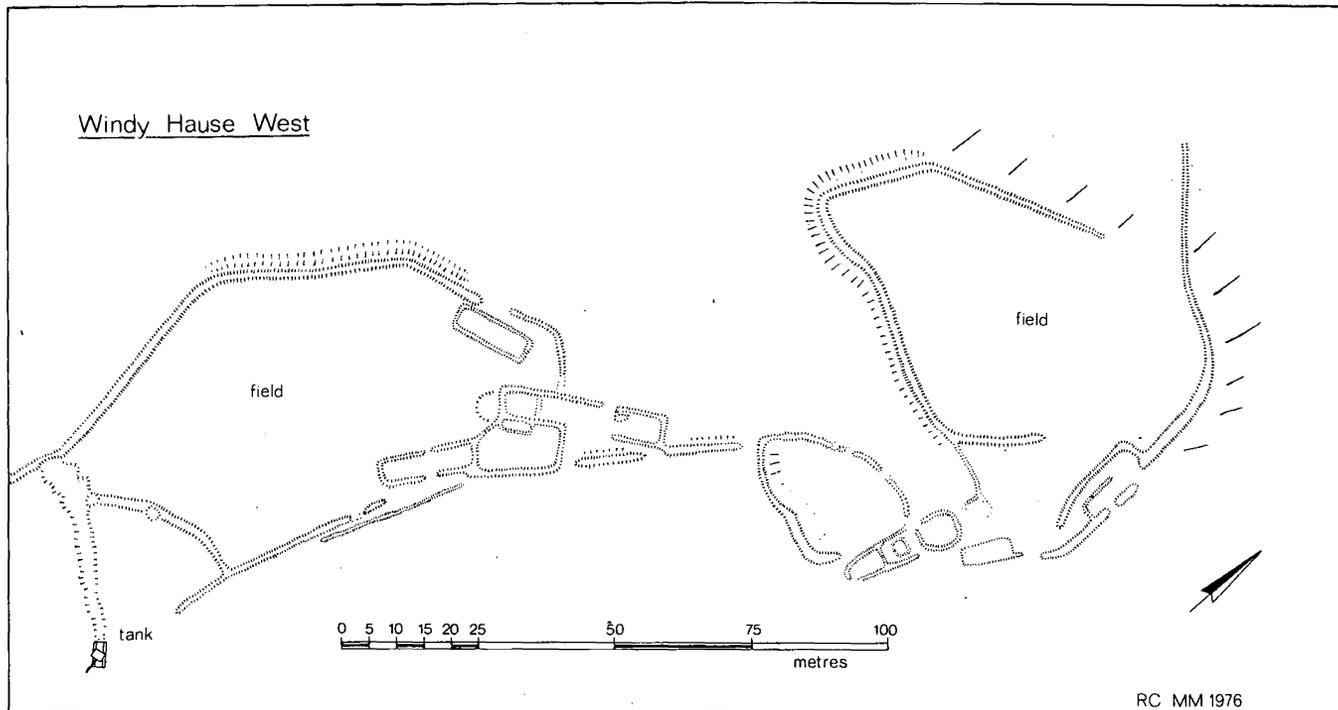


Fig. 9.

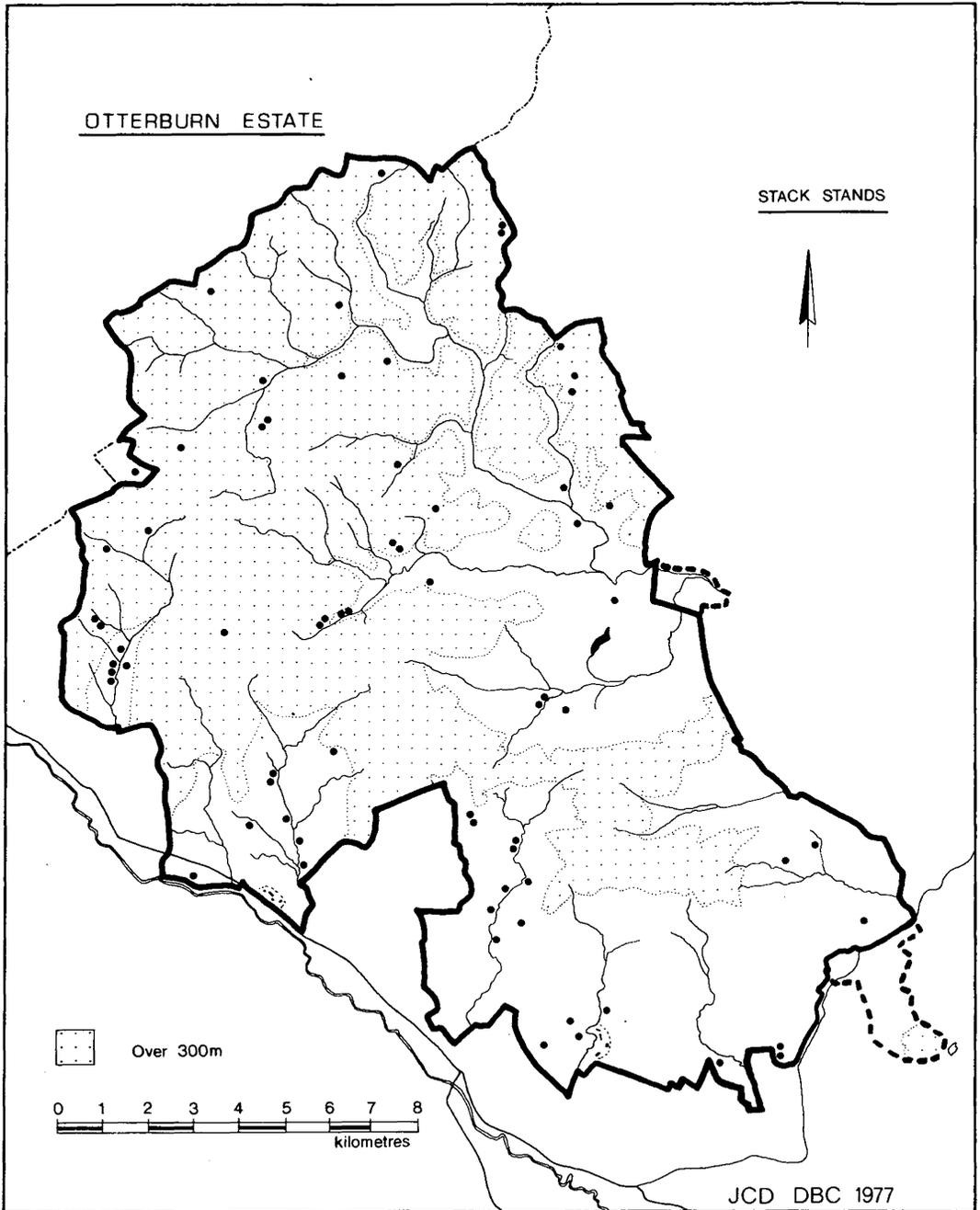


Fig. 10.

are sited at over 275 metres above sea level beside streams as at Canker Cleugh (NT 786035) and Ramsey Burn (NT 881032), while others such as Saughy Hill (NT 887110–887101) and Yard Shank (NT 786066) are found over 400 metres above sea level on extremely exposed promontories (fig. 10).

The fact that stack stands tend to occur singly in this area could be indicative of the relatively small numbers of livestock, particularly cattle, and a less intensive system of pasture farming than is found for example near the Warks Burn.²⁵ On the other hand the climate may have been sufficiently favourable to allow for adequate grazing throughout the winter months with the result that there was little need for the provision of extra fodder for livestock at this time of year.

Only one stack stand in Northumberland has been excavated to date. It was one of two circular stands overlying an earlier Romano-British settlement on Kennel Hall Knowe (NY 667897) in North Tynedale, which Mr. George Jobey kindly allowed the authors to examine during the course of his excavation of the site in August 1976. A cross section of the stand (fig. 11) did little more than indicate the method of construction, although a fragment of clay pipe stem, probably eighteenth century in date, came from the bottom of the silted-up ditch. It is in fact doubtful whether further excavation or even pollen analysis would help to determine the exact period of use of this type of field monument. Whilst there is no early literary or Ordnance Survey documentation for stack stands in Upper Coquetdale and Upper Redesdale, nevertheless it is probable that they were constructed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when a warmer climate allowed the practice of both arable and all-the-year-round pasture farming at much higher altitudes than had been possible hitherto. Mr. Ronald Charlton of Bellingham can recall the use of stack stands at the beginning of this century, when as a child he helped collect branches on which the hay crop was placed within the stand. In this respect Mr. Charlton would appear to be unique, as no other member of the present farming community in the area seems aware of their original purpose.

No examples of the nineteenth-century patented metal²⁶ stack stands were located on the Estate, although one is preserved at the Wauchope Field Centre (NT 583084) a few miles over the Scottish border.²⁷

In addition to the stack stands on the Otterburn Training Estate there are a number of similar circular enclosures which appear to be turf or turf and stone sheep stells 23 (+ 3?). Whilst they are found in the same topographical situations as stack stands, they are often in close proximity to existing ruined or used stone stells, and like them, are distinguished from stack stands by having a distinct gap in the mound to serve as an entrance. The overall diameters of stack stands and those of turf sheep stells overlap—stells vary from 9 to 24 metres, and the spread of the mound may be as much as 2 metres—it is therefore possible that some of the large circular “stands” may conceivably be “stells” in which the entrance has become blocked by the fall of the turf mound.

Further categories of monument associated with agriculture on the Estate are sod cast boundaries and fields which in many instances pre-date the stone-walled fields and have therefore been largely omitted from the Ordnance Survey series of maps.

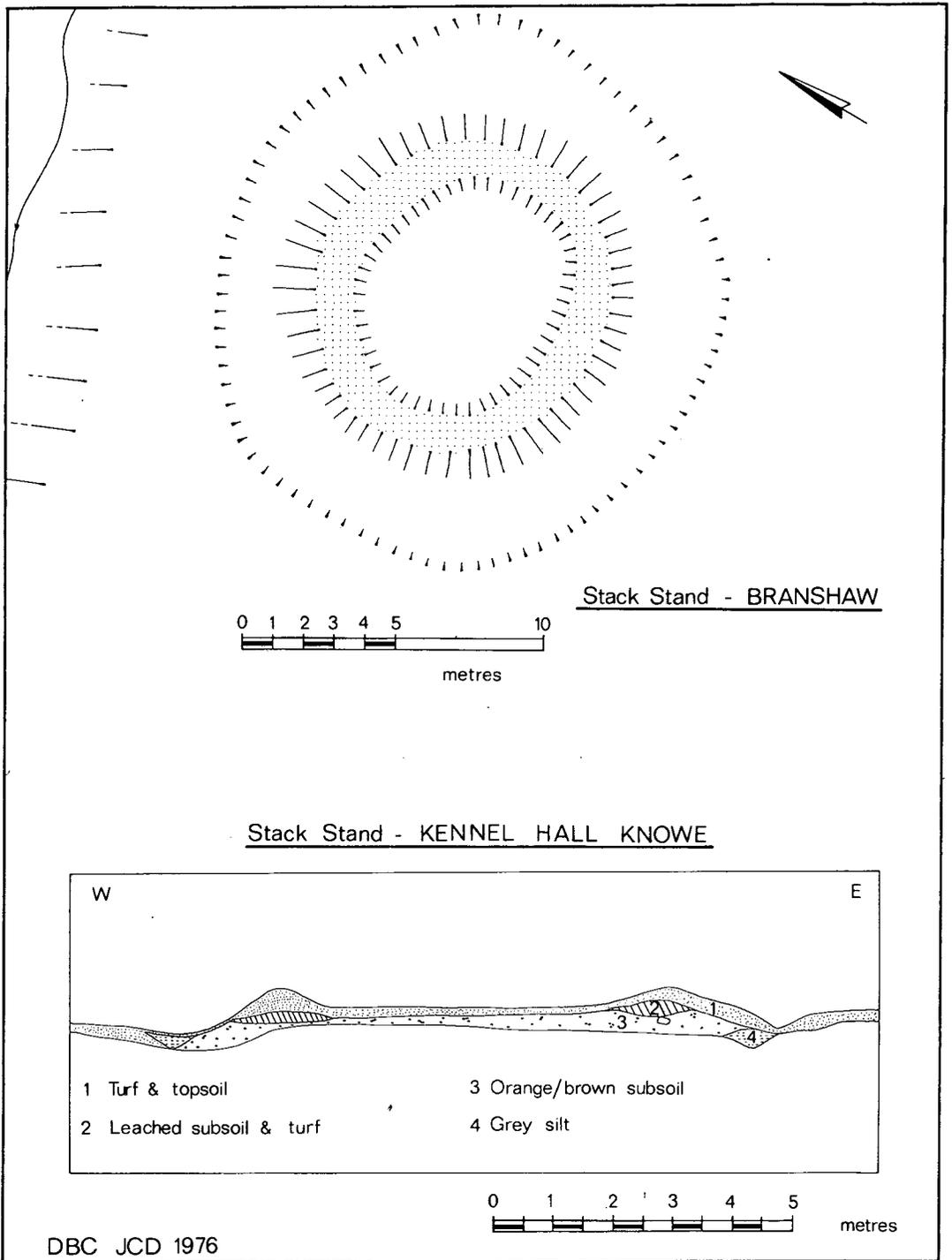


Fig. 11.

These monuments include:

plots of lazybeds, i.e. small enclosed areas of spade-dug cultivation ridges, usually near habitation sites, and early fields bounded by sod cast (turf) walls.

A general note was also made of upland areas where there is an intricate network of turf boundary walls. In many instances these areas correspond closely with the earlier documented habitation sites.

The later stone agricultural monuments, primarily sheep stells,²⁸ lambing pens, sheep dips and field walls which appear on the 1866-9 1st edition six-inch Ordnance Survey maps were excluded from the field survey.

DROVE ROADS

Many early roads and tracks traverse the Border between England and Scotland in the area of the Ministry Estate from Cottonshope in the west to Windy Gyle in the north. Most, if not all, were used by cattle drovers and itinerant pedlars from a very early period. What work has been published on droving in Northumberland²⁹ records vast herds of sheep and cattle moving from Scotland along the still well-defined routes of Gammels Path, The Street and Clennell Street as well as along the main Carter Bar route (A68). Whilst these are the best known droving roads virtually all of the hills north of the Coquet which abut on to the Border Fence have well-used tracks along their ridges. In a number of instances they are in fact branches or extensions of the more popular routes, e.g. Yard Shank (NT 780065), Copper Snout (NT 890090).

Many of the tracks undoubtedly date back to prehistoric times but did not become drove roads as we know them until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Trading between England and Scotland in livestock is substantiated by the evidence from 1204 onwards³⁰ of a sizable market at Stagshaw Bank, near Corbridge. During the next three centuries, whilst England and Scotland were at war, no doubt much illicit droving took place through the Cheviot Hills, but droving activities on a large scale did not recommence until peace was restored in the seventeenth century. Between then and the first few decades of the nineteenth century flocks and herds were very much in evidence until the effects of turnpikes, enclosures, development of grouse moors, and eventually the coming of the railway all combined to make droving uneconomic over long distances.³¹

A feature of many of the drove roads and trackways in Northumberland and the neighbouring County of Roxburghshire are turf dykes, usually running at right angles to the track, the purpose of which would seem to be to prevent stock from wandering away from the main route at both wide and particularly dangerous places on the ridges. Some doubt as to their age and purpose however has been expressed by a number of archaeologists. The following account and list of dykes has been compiled from information kindly supplied by A. M. Bankier and from an unpublished thesis by J. Dryden (fig. 12).

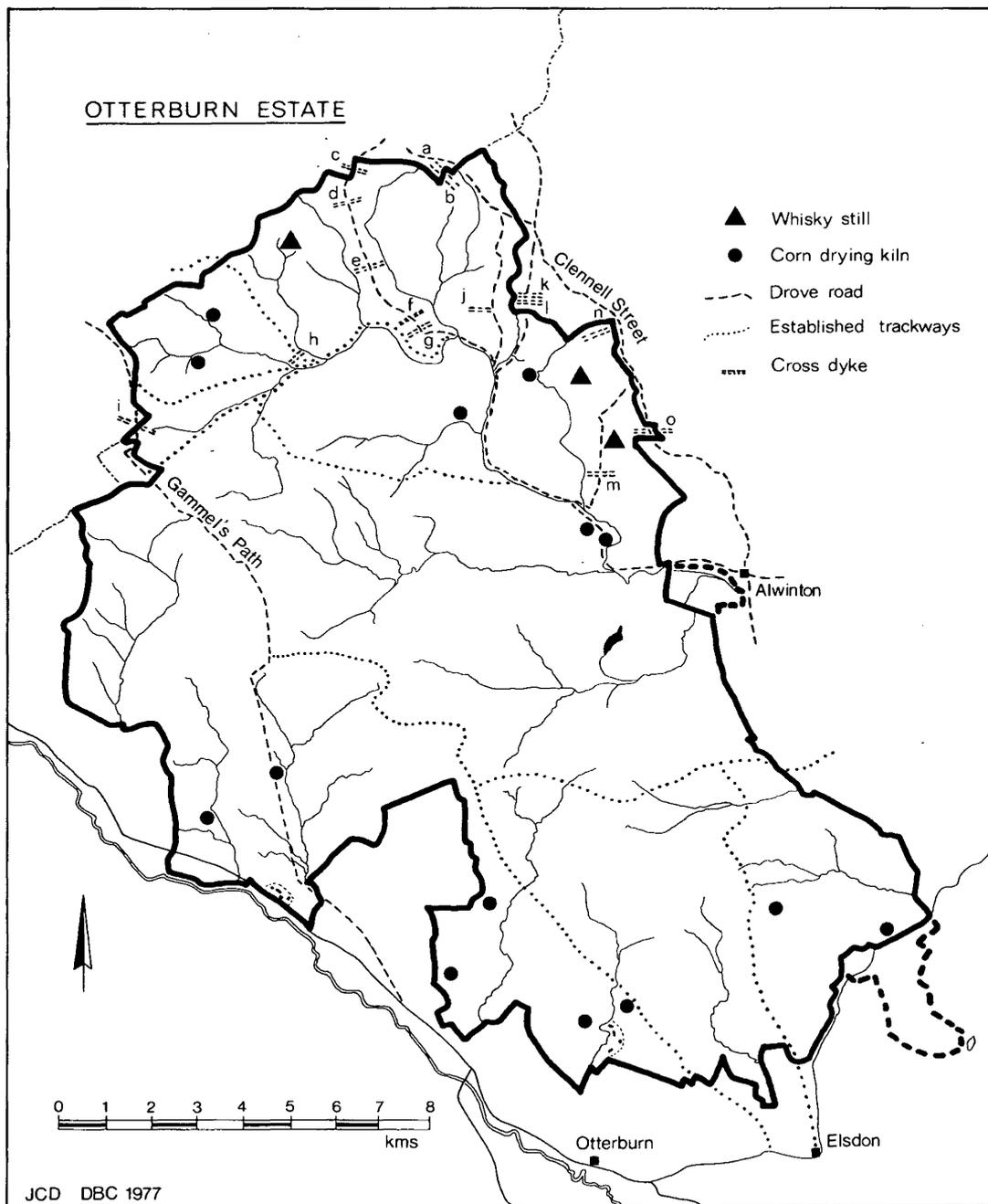


Fig. 12.

Cross-Dykes (lower case letters refer to Table I)

The cross-dykes on the Estate usually consist of either a single earth bank and ditch or of two banks of earth and a single, central ditch. Examples of cross-dykes with a double ditch and central mound or a combination of two banks and two ditches also occur, but they are the exception to the rule. The dimensions vary but usually the ditch measures 1.75–3 metres in width, and 0.5–0.75 in depth. The mounds range from 2.5–4 metres in width, up to 1.5 metres in height and like the ditches have a rounded profile. The length of the dykes varies according to the terrain, but the majority are between 75 and 300 metres long, Middle Hill A (k) being the notable exception at 370 metres.

Cross-dykes are usually located across ridges where the land narrows to “a waist”. This may be on a flat ridge as at Black Braes (d) or Copper Snout (m), or on descending ground as at Buckham’s Walls Burn (h). All the cross-dykes on the Estate are cut by trackways and the most likely function seems to be either to prevent or alternatively to assist the passage of cattle. There is a reference in 1552 to the use of ditches and stakes to hinder raiding parties returning with stolen livestock³² and the close proximity of the two dykes on Windy Gyle (a–b) certainly suggest the intention of hindrance.

Some cross-dykes, e.g. Barrow Law (N) (j) extend beyond the ridge and indicate that the top of the ridge was not the sole concern of the earthwork. Rather these dykes served as boundaries. An instance of this with a contemporary literary source³³ would seem to be Wholehope A (o) where a large earthwork runs between “Kidland burn and the great road that leads to Ernespath” (Clennell Street). This formed part of the thirteenth-century boundary of the grazing lands belonging to the monks of Newminster.

The only cross-dyke directly associated with any other structure is that on Copper Snout (m). Here the central gap in the dyke is flanked on either side by a rectangular turf enclosure each of which uses the dyke as their north wall. Perhaps these were toll bars or more likely a hut and pen for the herd and his flock. A comparable instance occurs of similar structures abutting the cross-dyke on Wondrum Hill in Roxburghshire.³⁴

At Buckham’s Walls Burn (h) the dyke encloses a triangle of land by linking the River Coquet to the Buckham’s Walls Burn above their confluence. It may have served both as a boundary and as a droving structure for to the north lies a steading, Eald Rigg (NT 820106), lazybeds, and a number of small pens and to the south the stells and dwellings of a larger settlement Blindburn (NT 829108).

CROSSES AND CROSS-SOCKET STONES

An examination of the Ordnance Survey maps which cover the Estate indicates a number of place names with the descriptive term cross. Three such sites are James’ Cross (NY 905979), Cross Cleugh (NT 793072) and another of the same name (NT

TABLE I CROSS-DYKES IN UPPER COQUETDALE

<i>Site no.</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>OS ref (centred)</i>	<i>Length (metres)</i>	<i>B = Bank D = Ditch</i>	<i>Drove road on which situated</i>	<i>Notes</i>
a	WINDY GYLE A	NT 850153	79	B/D	Windy Rigg	Roxburghshire Inventory No. 781.
b	WINDY GYLE B	851152	44	B/D	Windy Rigg	Roxburghshire Inventory No. 781.
c	PLEA KNOWE	835150	130	B/D	The Street	
d	BLACK BRAES	835148	155	B/D/B	The Street	
e	SWINESIDE LAW	837135	Vestigial	B/D	The Street	Information from A. M. Bankier.
f	HINDSIDE KNOWE (NORTH)	845120	Vestigial	B/D	The Street	Information from A. M. Bankier.
g	HINDSIDE KNOWE (SOUTH)	849119	67 m visible	B/D	The Street	
h	BUCKHAM'S WALLS BURN	822108	206	B/D	Branch from Gammel's Path	
i	BROWNHART LAW	790095	305	B/D	Gammel's Path	Roxburghshire Inventory No. 839.
j	BARROW LAW (NORTH)	866119	300+	B/D	Scotchman's Ford to Lounges Knowe	Probably a boundary dyke.
k	MIDDLE HILL A	874121	370	D/B/D	Branch of Clennell Street	} Probably a boundary dyke. Not on MOD
l	MIDDLE HILL B	874129	146	B/D		
m	COPPER SNOUT	890088	228	B/D	Branch of Clennell Street	
n	DRUMMER'S WELL	893118	Ploughed out by forestry	B/D	Clennell Street	Information from A. M. Bankier.
o	WHOLEHOPE A	903094	99	B/D	Clennell Street	Possibly a boundary dyke.

844142). In addition there are the well-documented Golden Pots beside Dere Street and depicted on both Warburton's map (1716) and Fryer's map (1820) the place name Maiden Cross near Windy Gyle. The two Cross Cleughs would seem to refer to the topographical position rather than their association with drove roads or suitable locations for crosses. James' Cross has disappeared without trace—if ever there was a cross³⁵ and so too has any monument which would be in the approximate position given for the Maiden Cross. Dippie Dixon gives some information on the remains of two other crosses in Upper Coquetdale however, firstly the discovery in 1898/9 of the cross shaft of the Chew Green/Makendon Cross³⁶ and secondly a note about a cross-socket stone from Ridlees Farm³⁷ later used as a stepping stone in the Ridlees Burn at Linshiels. The cross shaft (head?) is now in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, but the Ridlees cross-socket has disappeared.

Two further cross-sockets which have been located during the survey do not feature on the Ordnance Survey maps. They are the large socket stone near Headshope (NY 927998) and a smaller socket stone on Heathery Hill (NT 875061). Both are free-standing, i.e. not inset in the ground and would therefore appear to have been removed from their original locations. (Hodgson in his *History of Northumberland*, Pt. 2, Vol. 1, p. 100 records a cross near Headshope.)

The date of erection of these crosses and their socket stones is as indeterminate as their purpose. The most logical explanation of their function would seem to be one of two possibilities. Those on drove roads and tracks were guides for the traveller or perhaps pre-Reformation shrines, whilst some such as James' Cross and Phillips's Cross (NT 745067—not on MOD) served as boundary markers.³⁸ The date suggested by Honeyman in his article on the Golden Pots³⁹ is late fourteenth century. The article gives a detailed history of the Pots together with a brief mention of a number of other crosses in the Otterburn area, although none of them are on the Estate. It is interesting to note that when writing in 1927 Honeyman stated that the Golden Pots (NT 808072–812063) should be fenced in to prevent their being damaged or removed—as a result of this survey the Ministry of Defence has just undertaken the task of erecting fences around them.

BOUNDARY STONES

The historical evidence furnished by boundary stones in Northumberland has received little attention from historians.⁴⁰ Whilst parish or ward boundary stones and private estate boundary stones are perhaps the most common, other types have survived. The nature of the upland terrain on the Otterburn Estate and the restriction of agricultural practices necessitated by military functions has meant that many boundary stones still remain. In addition to parish boundary stones and those of the large eighteenth- and nineteenth-century estates (Selby, Clennell, Redesdale, etc.), there are examples of boundary stones for individual farms (Storage, Dudlees, etc.) and perhaps of more significance internal farm boundary stones (Headshope and Silloans).

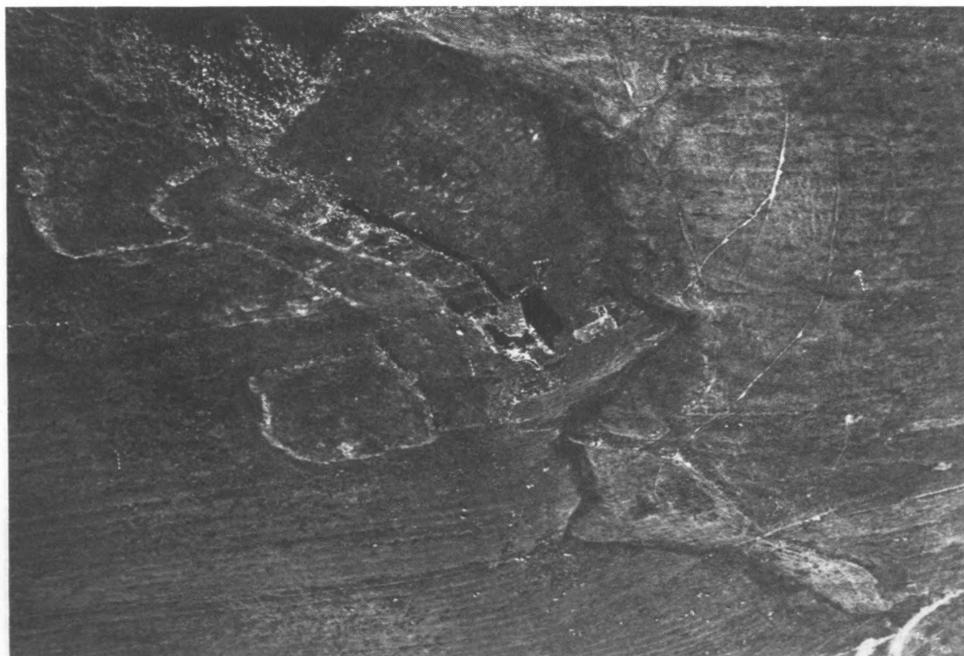
Many of the boundary stones listed are shown on the first edition of the six-inch Ordnance Survey map, and surprisingly few of them have disappeared in the intervening years. Most of the stones are about 0.65 of a metre high and of the four categories all except the individual farm boundary stones are well dressed. Most have either the initial letters of the estate owner or the initial letter of the farm or parish inscribed on them. None found on the Range were engraved with a date but many of the stones can be very accurately dated from documentary sources. As a generalization the individual farm boundary stones and those of the large estates were erected between about 1770 and 1850. In addition to the erected boundary stones a number of natural, often prominent, rocks have been incorporated along boundaries—particularly ward boundaries. Examples of such natural features are the Blue Sow (NT 889994), the Cooper Stones (NY 883985) and the Pedlar Stone (NT 934005).

The earliest boundary stones on the Range appear to be those on the Carnaby Haggerston Estate of Linbrig, where on Calf Lee (NT 896057–899059) many stones inscribed CH on one side and on the opposite side TS (Thomas Selby) are still *in situ*. The first Sir Carnaby Haggerston inherited the Estate in 1721 and died in 1756, the second Sir Carnaby Haggerston succeeded to the estate in 1777 and it remained in the family under him until 1831.⁴¹ During the same period there were three Selbys with the Christian name Thomas.⁴² The most likely Thomas Selby is the one who built the hall at Biddlestone and was buried at Alwinton in 1816. The boundary stones would therefore seem to date from the late eighteenth century and confirmation of this date is provided by other stones on Clifton Rigg (NT 858065–864067) and Long Hill (NT 854075–863075) with the initial letters CH and MB. MB would appear to be Mathew Bell who sold the neighbouring Bygate Estate in 1795.⁴³ Much more precise dating evidence can be found for the stones erected after the enclosure of Harbottle Common in 1817 (Act 1816). Correspondence⁴⁴ is preserved in the Northumberland Record Office between the agents of Thomas Clennell and the Duke of Northumberland dated June and July 1827. One letter states that the stones should be inscribed N (for Northumberland) on one side, a second letter notes that there should be no problem erecting the stones in the correct place as the original oak stakes are still standing, and a third letter notes the erection of the stones on 20th July 1827. The size and workmanship of the stones in question (Barrow Cleugh) together with the initial letters TC is similar to those on the other boundaries of the Clennell Estate (The Chambers—NT 913053, Harbottle Crag—NT 923027 to 910022, Pedlar Stone to Cuddy Moss—NT 934005 to NY 904995). It would therefore seem reasonable to assume that all Clennells' stones were erected at approximately the same time, viz. c. 1825–30.

Further documentation in the Record Office enables an approximate date to be placed on the boundary stones around Davyshiell Common.⁴⁵ A detailed account of the perambulation of the boundaries mentions the existence of the boundary stones at Blakeman's Law (NY 874964–877954), those near Cuddy Moss and those at Black Stichel (NY 906993–905979) and Todlaw Pike (NY 902968–900961). They must all have been erected prior to the perambulation which took place in 1852.



a. Headshope Farmhouse.



b. Ironhouse Bastle showing later expansion.

The boundary stones which delineate the extent of individual farmholdings are generally inferior in workmanship to estate boundary stones. Many are not well dressed as at Storage (NY 853982–858981), some have become very worn and are illegible and in a number of instances uninscribed stones appear to have been used at, for example, Back o' the Dour (NT 811023–807037).

Undoubtedly the most interesting stones on the Range are the internal farm boundary stones found at both Headshope and Silloans. These stones are located at the junction of the divisions of land within the infield area of the farms. No stones were found within, or around the perimeter of the outfield which was held in common. A map of Headshope Farm⁴⁶ in 1787. (fig. 6) shows the complicated divisions between the three owners and marks twenty-nine boundary stones. Sixteen of these are still *in situ*. Similarly for Silloans Farm⁴⁷ a map (fig. 7) made about 1850 has survived. Twenty-six of the original thirty stones were located. These stones differ from the other types of boundary stones in that they may be inscribed on three or even all four sides with initial letters of owners or symbols denoting the owners. The internal farm boundary stones appear to be unique in Northumberland. They provide significant evidence to support the continued use of the infield and outfield system of agriculture after the general disappearance of the old Border tradition of farming by customary tenure.

NOTES

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² Information from Davies, G., Dept of Botany, Durham University—Current research based on pollen analysis in Northumberland.

³ *NCH.*, Vol. XV, 1940, p. 58.

⁴ Ramm, H. G. *et al.*, *Shielings and Bastles*, 1970, p. 1.

⁵ Harbottle, B. and Newman, T. G., "Excavation and survey on the Starsley Burn, North Tynedale", *AA*⁵, Vol. 1, 1973, pp. 140–42.

⁶ Fowler, J. T. editor, *The Newminster Cartulary*, Surtees Society, Vol. 66, 1876, pp. 73–82.

⁷ Miller, R., "Land use by summer shielings", *Scottish Studies*, Vol. 11, 1967, p. 143.

⁸ Hodgson, J., *History of Northumberland*, Part 3, Vol. 2, 1820, p. 204.

⁹ Bain, J., editor, *Border papers, 1560–1603*, 2 vols. 1894–6.

¹⁰ Tough, D. L. W., *The last years of a frontier*, OUP, 1928, pp. 114–15.

¹¹ Sanderson, R. P., *Survey of the debateable and border lands 1604*, 1891. "A rental of the principality of Redesdale 1618", *AA*¹, Vol. 2, 1832, pp. 326–38. *Records of the committees for compounding 1643–1666*, Surtees Society, Vol. 221, 1905. "Rentals and rates for Northumberland 1663", Hodgson, J., *History of Northumberland*, Part 3, Vol. 1, 182, pp. 243–73.

¹² Ramm, H. G. *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 37:49.

¹³ Watts, S. J., "Tenant right in early 17th century Northumberland", *Northern History*, Vol. 6, 1971, pp. 64–87.

¹⁴ An example of this is perhaps indicated by the boundary stones on Calf Lee marked C H / T S, i.e. Sir Carnaby Haggerston (inherited estate in 1744)/Thomas Selby (inherited estate 1755. Died 1787).

¹⁵ Northumberland County Record Office. QRA 32 1816 (Map 1817). Northumberland County Record Office. QRA 4 1856 (Map 1862).

¹⁶ Sanderson, R. P., *op. cit.*, pp. 94 and 102.

¹⁷ Northumberland County Record Office. ZHE 48/2.

¹⁸ Northumberland County Record Office. ZHE 14.1.

¹⁹ Harbottle, B., "Linbrigs, Northumberland",

News bulletin, CBA Region 3, May 1968, p. 8.

²⁰ Harbottle, B. and Cowper, R. A. S., "An excavation at Memmerkirk, Northumberland", *AA*⁴, Vol. 41, 1963, pp. 45-63.

²¹ Harbottle, B. and Newman, T. G., "Excavation and survey on the Starsley Burn, North Tynedale, 1972", *AA*⁵, Vol. 1, 1973, pp. 137-75. "Excavation and survey in North Tynedale, 1973-1975", *AA*⁵, Vol. 5, 1977, pp. 121-54.

²² Jobey, G., "Iron Age and later farmsteads on Belling Law, Northumberland", *AA*⁵, Vol. 5, 1977, pp. 1-38.

²³ Dixon, D. D., *Upper Coquetdale*, 1903, p. 293.

²⁴ Ramm, H. G. *et al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁵ Heyes, T., "A survey of Wark Forest", *Archaeology in the North*, 1976, p. 252.

²⁶ *Abridgements of specifications relating to agriculture*, Div. 11, 1636-1866. Patent Office, 1879. Pat. No. 6395:1833.

²⁷ Information from T. Newman who noted the metal stand in 1973.

²⁸ Stephens, H., *The book of the farm*. Vol. 2, 1844. Sections 1318-34. A detailed account of the construction of stone sheep stells with illustrations of both mid-eighteenth-century types and the earlier forms. As well as circular stells examples of diamond shaped, semi-circular, cross, "T", "L", back-to-back semi-circular and the later forms incorporating plantations all feature on the Estate.

²⁹ Cowper, R. A. S., "Northumbrian drove roads", *Jnl. of the Univ. of Newcastle upon Tyne Agricultural Society*, Vol. 24, 1970-71, pp. 30-33.

³⁰ Bonser, K. J., *The drovers*, 1970, p. 134.

³¹ Haldane, A. R. B., *The drove roads of Scotland*, 1952, Ch. 12.

³² Nicolson, W., *Leges Marchiarum*, 1705, p. 325.

³³ Fowler, J. T., *op. cit.*, p. 74: 76.

³⁴ RCAM., *Roxburghshire*, Vol. 2, 1956, no. 769.

³⁵ A cross is shown on the Elsdon Inclosure Award map 1731. NRO. QRD. 3.

³⁶ Dixon, D. D., *op. cit.*, p. 7. *PSAN*. 2. Vol. 4, 1889-90, p. 277. After examining the cross in the Black Gate with Mr. A. Bankier it was apparent that it is the head not the shaft of a cross. Mr. Bankier also felt that as it only measures 12 in × 16 in and its foot has been deliberately shaped that the cross would have been more appropriate as a finial on a building—perhaps from the supposed chapel at Chew Green.

³⁷ Dixon, D. D., *op. cit.*, p. 30.

³⁸ Pease, H., "Northumbrian moorland crosses", *Berwickshire Naturalists Club Transactions*, Vol. XXIV, 1921, pp. 319-23.

³⁹ Honeyman, H. L., "The Golden Pots", *AA*⁴, Vol. 4, 1927, pp. 90-108.

⁴⁰ Philipson, J., "Inscribed stones on the Harbottle Hills, Northumberland", *AA*⁵, Vol. 6, 1978, pp. 151-7.

⁴¹ *Register of the estates of Sir Carnaby Haggerston*, Surtees Society, Vol. 131, pp. 75-7:119.

⁴² Pedigree of Selby family. *NCH*. Vol. XV. 1940, opp. p. 424. (Thomas Selby pre 1717-d. 1755: his son Thomas b. 1711—took over estate 1755, d. 1787: his son Thomas b. 1753, built Biddlestone Hall, d. 1816.)

⁴³ *NCH* Vol. XV, 1940, p. 438.

⁴⁴ NRO. Bell Collection, ZAN 59/17.1.

⁴⁵ NRO. ZHE 14.10.

⁴⁶ NRO. ZHE 48.2.

⁴⁷ NRO. ZHE 14.1.

