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Lordenshaws Hillfort and Its Environs

A survey by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England

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A SURVEY OF Lordenshaws hillfort and its environs was undertaken by RCHME in December 1990 at the request of Northumberland National Park. The field drawings, plan and descriptive account have been deposited in the National Archaeological Record (reference number NZ 09 NE 2).

The hillfort is located at NZ 0545 9925 upon the Fell Sandstones of Garleigh Moor. The site lies at a height of 268 m above OD, and has been constructed upon a locally prominent spur of the Simonside Hills which has panoramic views along Coquetdale and eastwards to the coast.

The archaeological investigation of Lordenshaws and its immediate environs has been sporadic. Mackenzie (1825, 80) reproduced a sketch plan of the fort—misleadingly labelled a “plan of Burgh Hill Camp”—drawn by a Mr. E. Smith of Rothbury, which appears to be the earliest depiction of the earthworks. Later in the nineteenth century Greenwell excavated two cairns near the fort which were “still undisturbed” (Greenwell and Rolleston 1877, 430). Hedley (1889, 226–30) surveyed the fort and the hollow-way to its E in 1888, but omitted the other elements of its landscape context. He depicted the fort in simplified form: the evidence of the inner defences, the later overlying settlement in the SE, and the fort interior were all shown with little detail. However, this paper was one of the first to draw attention to the adjacent examples of prehistoric rock art (1889, 229–30). Dixon, who had collaborated with Hedley on the survey of Lordenshaws, reproduced the plan in

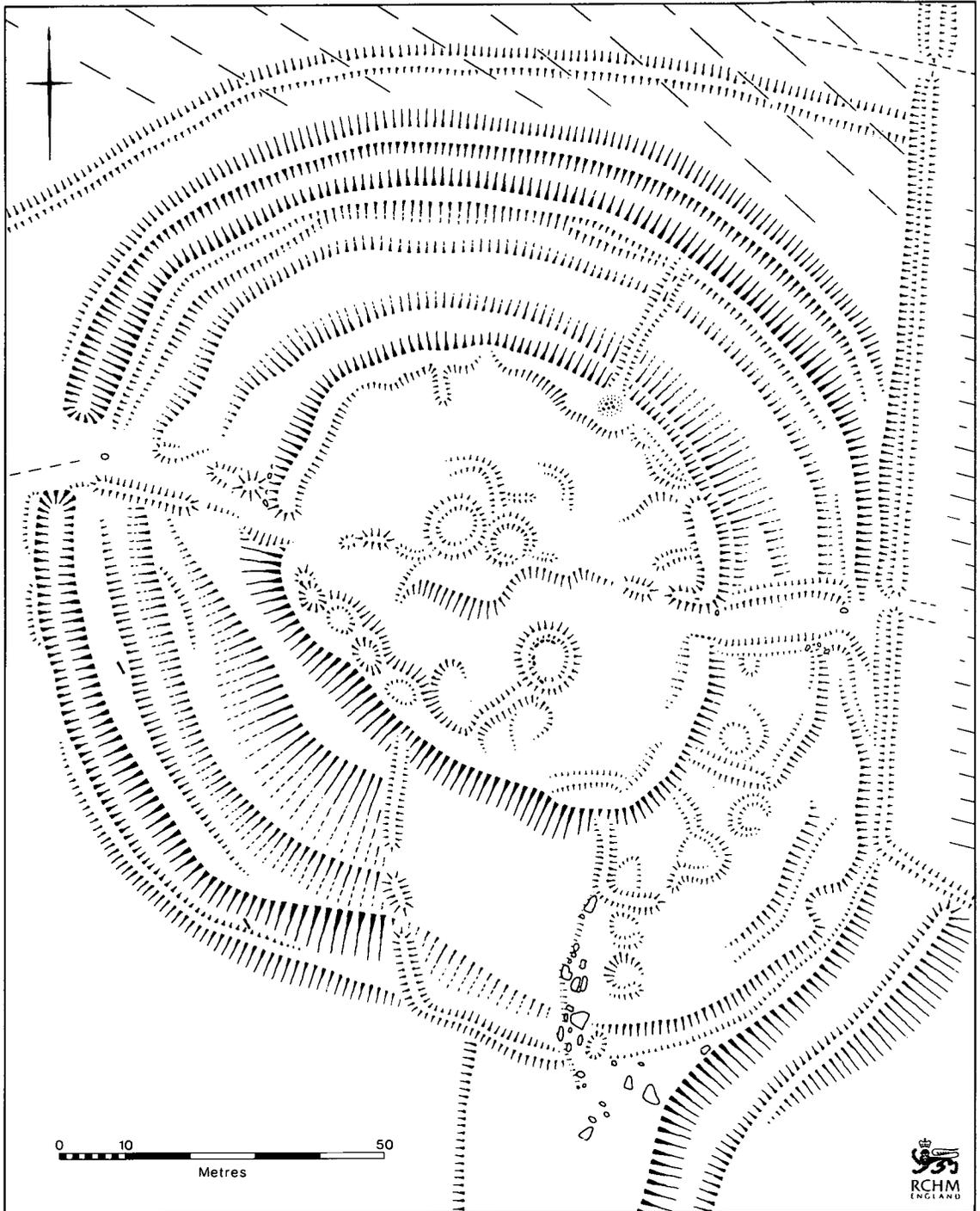
1903 in “Upper Coquetdale”, together with a sketch of the E entrance drawn by his brother (1903, 142).

A comprehensive record of the local rock art was prepared by Newbigin who drew attention to the newly discovered examples to the E of the fort (1932). It was not until the appearance of volume XV of the Northumberland County History in 1940 that a new survey of the fort was attempted (Hope Dodds 1940, 30–2). The depiction is relatively accurate and, unusually for its period, the fort is placed in its landscape setting with the principal boundaries and trackways shown, although certain relationships between these features are misleading. This work also summarized much of the documentary history of the surrounding area. Subsequent publications have concentrated on the rock art (Beckensall 1974; 1983; 1992).

The fort and its outworks

Lordenshaws is a sub-circular, multivallate work with two opposing entrances which has an overall diameter of some 140 m. The inner enclosure has a sub-oval, almost D-shaped plan, measuring internally roughly 70 m from NW to SE by 45 m transversely (figs 1 and 2).

The outermost defences, though partly disturbed by later features in the E and SE, are the best-preserved and most prominent. The outer ditch, which has a very sharp V-shaped profile, is up to 9.0 m wide in places, and ranges in depth from 1.4 m in the W to 2.5 m on the N perimeter. A counterscarp bank, although intermittent in the SW, is well preserved in the N, surviving up to 1.3 m in height.



*Fig. 1 Lordenshaws hillfort. Encroaching ridge-and-furrow cultivation is shown by dashed lines.
Scale 1:1000.*

A poorly preserved inner ditch, ranging from 6.0 m to 9.0 m in width, and from 0.6 m to 1.3 m deep, displays a curiously irregular appearance with a broad, shallow profile. In the SW the outer ditch can be seen to encroach upon and cross the alignment of the inner ditch, a relationship which may be repeated on the N side of the E entrance. These points suggest that the inner ditch is not associated with the later phases of the fort.

If a rampart once existed between the outer and inner ditches it has left no trace; all that survives is an irregular berm ranging from 1.5 m to 4.6 m in width. If a rampart had stood at this point it might be expected to have been associated with the outer ditch thus forming a part of the later fort defences; taking into account the narrowness of the intermediate berm any rampart here would almost certainly have had to overlie the line of the inner ditch, a sequence for which there is no evidence.

Traces survive of a short irregular bank, reduced to 0.5 m high, within the line of the inner ditch on the S side of the W entrance (1, fig. 2). This may be the disturbed remains of a former rampart.

The innermost defensive features of the fort consist of a prominent scarp ranging from 1.0 m to 2.4 m in height (2, fig. 2) lying within the inner ditch, which is not concentric to an inner rampart (3, fig. 2). Scarp 2 is not as steep as that of rampart 3; the inner rampart (3) is composed of earth and rubble and has an outer scarp standing to a height of 1.8 m. No wall faces are visible in either scarp 2 or rampart 3. The relationship of the inner rampart (3) to scarp 2 may imply that the inner rampart enclosed a later phase of settlement, possibly linked to the outer ditch by the radial bank on the N and the embanked entrances; it thus appears to be associated with a late phase of the defences. The radial bank is up to 4.5 m wide and 0.7 m high and overlies all but the outer ditch. This is a feature Lordenshaws shares with several other forts in the Cheviot Hills to the N, such as Middledean Burn (NU 01 SW 1; NU 0041 1463; Hogg 1943, 139), Ewe Hill (NU 01 NW 27; NU 0042 1682), Greaves Ash (NT 91 NE 1; NT 9652 1631; Tate 1862,

14), and Southdean Law (RCAHMS 1956, II, 425), all of which have one or more radial banks subdividing the areas between various defensive features.

The S perimeter of the defences may not have been continuous throughout for a natural outcrop in the SE appears never to have been cut by the ditches. The presence of an overlying enclosure which crosses the abraded line of the outer ditch to the W of the outcrop, a settlement lying to the E of the outcrop, and the possibility of an even earlier entrance to the fort which is now largely lost (A, 8 and 9, fig. 2; and see below), have combined to confuse the evidence in this area.

Two opposing entrances cut through the defences and are embanked on both sides. The better-preserved E entrance is 4.8 m wide, between walls 3.0 m wide and up to 1.5 m high. Some facing stones are visible, particularly where the entrance cuts through rampart 2; here a series of upright orthostats standing 0.8 m high still survives (cf. Dixon 1903, 142). The W entrance is up to 3.5 m wide between fragmentary banks now 0.9 m in height and spread to 5.0 m in width.

The fact that Lordenshaws has more than one entrance places it amongst the minority of Northumberland forts which feature multiple entrances. A comparable site is Colwell Hill, Otterburn (Jobey 1965, 25, fig. 2), where a sub-circular multivallate work is cut by two entranceways.

The interior of the fort lies on two levels, the N part rising up to 1.3 m above that on the S. This division is clearly defined by a prominent natural scarp running across the centre of the site roughly from E to W, which is extended towards both entrances by earthen banks reduced to 4.0 m wide and 0.6 m high. In the N part of the interior are at least two hut-circles. The smaller has an internal diameter of 4.0 m, within walls now 0.4 m high and spread to 2.5 m wide, and an entrance 1.0 m wide in the SE. The larger hut is sub-circular with an internal diameter of 5.6 m within walls which are 3.0 m wide and 0.3 m high; no entrance is visible. Several lengths of poorly-preserved curving banks, no more than 0.3 m high, pro-



Fig. 2 Lordenshaws hillfort and its immediate environs. Ridge-and-furrow cultivation is represented by dashed lines. Feature numbers and letters are referred to in the text.

trude from beneath the two hut-circles, perhaps representing the foundations of earlier huts or small enclosures. Two low radial banks no more than 7.0 m in length, 2.8 m wide and 0.3 m high, and a scarp some 0.4 m high, spring from the inner scarp of the rampart, possibly defining further internal subdivisions within the fort interior.

The S part of the interior contains a particularly prominent hut-circle (4, fig. 2), the interior of which has been cleared probably by antiquarian activity. This type of excavation, which leaves inner facing stones exposed, is typical of the mid 19th-century methods employed in Northumberland at Greaves Ash and Prendwick Chesters (Tate 1862). The hut has an internal diameter of 5.3 m within walls 3.2 m wide which survive up to 1.1 m high internally and 0.6 m externally; curiously, there is again no obvious entrance. This hut is linked to the inner rampart (3, fig. 2) by a bank up to 3.4 m wide and 0.5 m high. Several curving scarps no more than 0.4 m high are immediately adjacent to this bank. Ranged along the S rampart are a series of four cell-like structures, possibly further huts, which are built into the full depth of the rampart which here rises up to 1.3 m above the fort interior. The four "cells" are sub-oval and measure as much as 8.0 m by 4.5 m across; none of them has an obvious entrance. The westernmost cell has a narrow trench 0.5 m wide still visible along its long axis, and the adjacent cell to the E has some exposed masonry, indicating further unrecorded antiquarian activity.

Overlying the SE quadrant of the defences are the remains of a later settlement, suggesting population growth, settlement shift, or a new requirement for shelter rather than strength of fortification. The defences seem to have been almost levelled in this area, leaving an isolated scarp of the inner ditch (5, fig. 2) no more than 0.4 m high, and partly backfilling the outer ditch, the depth of which is reduced to 0.6 m. Two courtyards abut the outer face of the inner rampart (3, fig. 2), and are defined by banks and scarps up to 4.0 m wide and 0.6 m high. Each courtyard is associated with a hut-circle no more than 4.5 m in diameter

internally within walls which survive to a height of 0.4 m and are spread to a width of 2.3 m. Two further hut-circles lie to the S of the southernmost courtyard and back onto a natural outcrop; a third hut-circle is located between the two courtyards.

Similar secondary reuse of forts has been recorded throughout the Borders, although the number of sites is not large. Examples include West Hill, Kirknewton, Northumberland (NT 9097 2950; NAR NT 92 NW 31); Kirkton Hill, Cavers, Roxburgh (RCAHMS 1956, I, 105-7); Hownam Rings, Hownam, Roxburgh (RCAHMS 1956, I, 160-1); Easter Dawyk, Peeblesshire (RCAHMS 1967, I, 115); and The Whaum, Peeblesshire (RCAHMS 1967, I, 147-9). All of these sites have a separate and distinct secondary phase of occupation typified by the construction of less defensive or non-defensive settlements across parts of the pre-existing forts.

To the W of the later settlement at Lordenshaws a sub-rectangular enclosure overlies the full width of the levelled defences. It is enclosed by an earth and boulder wall up to 4.5 m wide and 0.9 m high. Two breaks in the W wall of the enclosure no more than 0.2 m wide may have been entrances into the enclosure. Both of these entrances are aligned upon the break of slope between the scarps of the defences, a point which may be significant in their location. This enclosure would appear to be relatively late in the chronology of the fort as it overlies the full width of the defences; by contrast, the radial bank in the N halts at the outer ditch suggesting that it was of an earlier phase than the enclosure under discussion and related to the reuse of the defences.

In summary the fort would appear to have had a complex development. The variously preserved and partly overlapping defences suggest reuse and possibly expansion before parts of the defensive circuit became obsolete and were overlain by a later settlement in the SE. The innermost enclosure of the fort (3, fig. 2) is slightly askew to the area defined by the inner scarps of the defences (2), which suggests that they are not contemporary.

Beyond the fort on its S and W sides, lies an

incomplete defensive outwork (6, fig. 2), and further to the S a substantial linear earthwork (7, fig. 2) runs from NW to SE through the survey area, and may have continued beyond in both directions. The outwork (6) lies between 28 m and 44 m to the W and SW of the fort, and is a substantial earthwork. Its earthen bank is up to 7.2 m wide, the outer scarp surviving up to 1.8 m in height and the inner up to 0.5 m, reflecting the angle of the natural slope; a poorly defined outer ditch is no more than 3.0 m wide and 0.4 m deep. An entrance in the W is up to 3.4 m wide and has been eroded to a depth of 2.3 m below the level of the top of the rampart. This earthwork ends at A, from which point an earth and boulder wall (21, fig. 2), no more than 1.0 m high, continues south-eastwards; it formed a part of a later field system lying to the S, and was first recorded as a township boundary in the 19th century (cf. NRO DT352M; DT287L) and continues in use as the modern parish boundary. If the apparent termination (A) was originally the S end of the outwork, its position suggests that it may be associated with a scarp 1.2 m high which runs S from the fort (8, fig. 2). The surface remains suggest that this scarp (8) must relate to an earlier phase than the most westerly of the enclosures overlying the defences of the fort. It may originally have been associated with a boundary, a trackway, or even with a lost entrance to the fort.

What may be the E side of this putative entrance is represented by a truncated bank (9, fig. 2) standing up to 1.8 m high on the E side of a hollow-way to which it is not related. If this bank originally formed a part of the outwork system (6, fig. 2) and joined with the truncated NW terminal of the outwork at a point on the N side of the fort, this would offer the possibility of a complete outer defensive circuit. This is lent some weight by aerial photographs held by NLAP (NZ 0599/39, NZ 0599/40, and NZ 0599/49), which suggest that the outwork may have extended to the NE beyond its present NW terminal, but is now lost beneath broad ridge-and-furrow on the N side of the fort. If such an outwork enclosure did encircle Lordenshaws, then it would have

had similarities to that at Prendwick Chesters overlooking the Breamish (NT 91 SE 3; NT 9848 1488), where a sub-circular outwork with two entrances encloses the fort.

Exactly where the putative E outwork might have met the N outwork at Lordenshaws is unclear. However a short, low bank (10, fig. 2), preserved beneath the ridge-and-furrow to the E of the fort, may be extending the E line further to the N towards the abraded terminal shown on the aerial photographs.

The picture is further complicated by the presence of an earthen bank which lies within the suggested circuit of the outwork on the N side of the fort, but which is of a markedly different character; never more than 4.7 m wide and 0.4 m high, it is noticeably smaller than the outwork. This bank, partly overlain by the field of ridge-and-furrow in the E, skirts round the N perimeter of the fort and terminates near the W outwork with which it forms no clear junction. It does, however, respect the W outwork, and is aligned upon a break through the bank of the outwork. The function and associations of this bank are unclear.

A prominent linear earthwork roughly 200 m to the S of the fort (7, fig. 2) follows the bottom of a slack in such a way as to form a boundary across the spur upon which the fort is located. This earthwork is aligned from NW to SE, and consists of an earth and stone bank up to 4.5 m wide with an outer, SW-facing scarp, surviving to a height of 1.1 m above the present ground level; the inner scarp is no more than 0.5 m high. An intermittent ditch on the S side of the bank appears to be heavily silted, and is no more than 3.5 m wide and 0.4 m deep. In the SE the earthwork has been covered by peat, from which it appears to emerge as a low rickle of stones; its NW terminal beyond the ridge is lost beneath ridge-and-furrow. This linear feature is demonstrably earlier than every earthwork with which it has a direct relationship. It seems to have been a cross-ridge dyke barring the approach to the fort; its location in a slack is not unlike that of the earthwork crossing the line of Clennel Street, near Alwinton (NT 90 NW 7; NT 9180 0804 to NT 9201 0802).

Trackways 11 and 12

Two of the trackways in the vicinity of Lordenshaws may be prehistoric in origin. Although strictly undated, both are the earliest features in their respective stratigraphic sequences. In addition, they are visually more substantial and more heavily eroded than the other more slightly formed trackways which cluster on the SE edge of the survey area or those skirting the E side of the deer park pale (17, fig. 2), both of which form part of a more widely dispersed series scattered throughout Coquetdale (see Newbigin 1932). Moreover both tracks are primarily focused upon the two entrances to the hillfort in such a way as to suggest access directly to the interior of the fort rather than as a route merely passing through the defences. If these tracks are perhistoric in origin, then they may well have remained in use at least until the construction of the deer park pale (17) which effectively blocked track 11 (fig. 2).

Track 11 skirts the W side of the survey area, following a northerly course flanking the ridge of the main decorated rock (16, fig. 2). To the N of the rock the track forks, one branch heading to the NW and downslope to the Whitton Burn, and the other ENE through an original break in the W outwork of the fort. These tracks are up to 8.5 m wide and 1.2 m deep, although where they pass through the W outwork of the fort their depth increases to 1.6 m. The W edge of the main trackway is formed by a drystone wall up to 1.3 m wide and 0.4 m high. This wall would appear to be contemporary with the trackway as they are both overlain by a later field boundary (18, fig. 2) aligned upon and approaching the main decorated rock (16, fig. 2) from the W. As it progresses northwards, this track appears to lead through a break in the cross-ridge dyke (7, fig. 2) to the SW of the main rock (16). Further to the N the track appears to be cut and overlain by the remains of the deer park wall (17, fig. 2; see below), and disturbed by the broad ridge-and-furrow on the W side of the deer park pale (17).

Immediately to the E of the fort lies hollow-way 12 (fig. 2), which survives up to 13.5 m wide and 1.7 m deep; it has an uncertain rela-

tionship with the E entrance of the fort. The hollow-way, possibly fortuitously, seems to respect wall 21 (fig. 2), but predates the field of narrow ridge-and-furrow cultivation to the E of the fort. A slight scarp, still traceable through the ridged cultivation in this E field, no more than 0.4 m high, appears to continue the alignment of bank 8 (fig. 2) in this area. It is possible that this hollow-way represents a contemporary route through the outwork system of the fort leading to its E entrance.

The pre-medieval fields

Within the area of the survey lie the fragmentary remains of a wall and several small fields which may be early features.

The short stone wall (13, fig. 2; NZ 09 NE 6) protrudes from beneath the N edge of a field of narrow ridged cultivation, and is no more than 0.8 m wide and 0.4 m high. It is aligned upon a small outcrop and a cairn (14, fig. 2), and may have been part of an early field boundary, perhaps relating to a former, possibly late prehistoric, field system springing from the outwork (6 and 9, fig. 2) on the NE side of the fort.

Two or three poorly-preserved rectilinear enclosures and cairns (NZ 09 NE 7) which lie between track 11 (fig. 2) and the deer park pale (17, fig. 2) some 300 m SW of the fort, may also be comparatively early in the landscape sequence. The enclosures, which could have been part of a field system, are defined by low banks of stone and earth no more than 0.8 m high, and by roughly coursed walls up to 0.4 m high. One distinct entrance is preserved in the W bank of the E enclosure, but overall these fields are poorly defined and incomplete with no direct stratigraphic relationship to other features. The adjacent cairns are up to 1.3 m high. The survival of these fields may be linked to the fact that they lie beyond the limits of the ridge-and-furrow cultivation. They could be earlier and, in addition, their form and size is unlike that of the attested medieval fields; this may point to a different chronological context.

Cairn 14

The earliest features in the survey area consist

of a robbed cairn and numerous examples of prehistoric rock art (see below). The cairn (14, fig. 2; NZ 09 NE 6), almost heel-shaped in plan, lies some 120 m to the NE of the fort on an outcrop just beyond the limits of ridge-and-furrow cultivation. It is 13.5 m in length from NE to SW, by 9.2 m transversely, and survives to a height of 1.4 m. A sub-circular robber trench, 2.5 m across and now no more than 0.4 m deep, is visible in the top of the cairn. A stone on the SE edge of the cairn is decorated with simple cup-marks. Although when viewed from the fort this cairn is not in a prominent location, when seen from the valley between the fort and Garleigh Hill to the E, it stands in a conspicuous position on the shoulder of the hill. A series of outcrops decorated with rock art lie immediately adjacent to it on the hill slope (NZ 09 NE 6; NZ 09 NE 13). This cairn may have been one of the two excavated by Greenwell in the mid-19th century, both of which were discovered to contain a cist without surviving skeletal remains; only one of the cairns produced artefacts, two small unidentified sherds of pottery (Greenwell and Rolleston 1877, 430–33).

The rock art

The rock art has been described elsewhere (Newbigin 1932; Beckensall 1974, 1983, 1992), and only a few general observations will be noted here. All of the rock art occurs on natural outcrops located no more than 130 m to the E of the fort and some 200 m to its W; two outlying sites are situated 230 m to the S of the fort (15, fig. 2). The motifs used generally comprise simple cup marks, grooves, or large and distinctive channels; only the main rock (16, fig. 2; NZ 09 NE 4), and the “Horseshoe Rock” (NZ 09 NE 5), which lies no more than 100 m beyond the W limits of the present survey displays the full range of motifs. The decorated outcrops, the distribution of which is determined by geology and erosion, tend to be located just below natural crests, but the fort itself and the later field of ridge-and-furrow to the E may well mask further examples. Only two small decorated rocks (15, fig. 2) occur in the slack some 5 m to the S of the cross-ridge

dyke (7, fig. 2), and to the NW of a small cairn. Other examples may remain to be found.

The main rock (16, fig. 2) is unusual in that it is not only comparatively elaborately decorated but, unlike the other decorated rocks here, it lies on the summit of a ridge in the most prominent location of all the rock art. A series of wedge-marks on the NW side of this rock indicates that it has been cut almost in half. Two quarries only 3 m and 10 m to the NE, similar in size to the main rock, may point to the earlier removal of two further outcrops that could conceivably have been decorated (the author is indebted to C. Burgess for this suggestion).

Both cairn 14 (fig. 2) and the rock art were relict landscape features at the time of the occupation of the hillfort; both have been encroached upon or partly destroyed by later developments such as the various systems of ridge-and-furrow cultivation.

The medieval and later landscapes

Most of the area encompassed by the present survey lay within the Forest of Rothbury during the medieval period. This forest together with the great Manor and Borough of Rothbury covered a large tract of land on either side of the River Coquet, centred on the town of Rothbury and comprising a series of dependent townships. Most of these townships included small hamlets with arable fields together with dispersed valley-bottom farmsteads, often described as “vaccaries”, and extensive areas of upland grazing.

The first recognizable medieval landscape feature is a deer park pale (NZ 09 NW 14), which runs roughly N to S (17, fig. 2) through the area of the RCHME survey (see also fig. 3). The remains consist of a well-constructed wall which in the N is no more than 1.2 m wide and 0.5 m high. To the S it becomes less well preserved and is much reduced and overgrown; it is spread up to 5.0 m wide in places and is never more than 0.4 m high. This change in condition would seem to be the result of disturbance from the adjacent trackways, and not from stone robbing. The deer park pale continues in this form to the modern

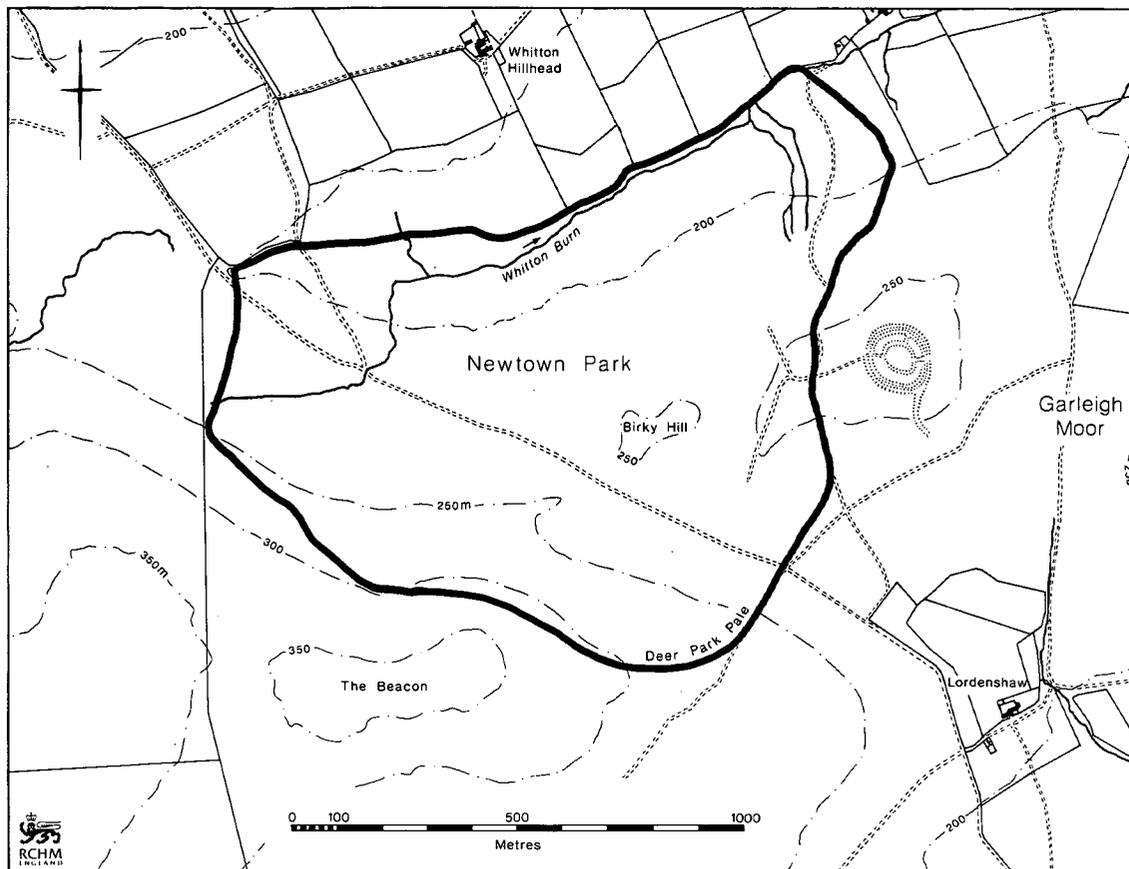


Fig. 3 The medieval deer park adjacent to Lordenshaw's hillfort, known latterly as Newtown Park.

road, some 40 m to the S of the fence line shown at the foot of the plan; once beyond the road it climbs to a prominent shoulder near the summit of the Simonside Hills, where it is best preserved. Around NZ 047 986 and beyond, the park pale is terraced into the hill slope; an earthen bank up to 4.8 m wide and 0.4 m high externally is faced in stone on its inner side, the masonry standing up to 1.5 m high. An inner ditch is up to 3.0 m wide and 0.8 m deep. The W perimeter of the deer park is now lost beneath a coniferous plantation, and its N perimeter, which largely follows the course of the Whitton Burn, is generally reduced to the intermittent foundations of a wall (see NZ 09 NW 14).

The history of the deer park is interwoven with that of the Manor and Forest of Rothbury. Possibly from as early as 1095 both the Manor and Forest were owned by the Crown, although rights over parts of the latter were granted to neighbouring lords and institutions. In 1204/5 King John granted the Manor and Forest to Robert, son of Roger the Sheriff. Probably in 1275 another Robert, son of Roger, created the deer park whose E end lies within the area of the RCHME survey (Hope Dodds 1940, 354). The park occupied a narrow easterly projection of Newtown township enclosing an area of 117 hectares. In 1310 it was described as having a perimeter of "a league" (roughly three miles) in length, within which its

herbage was valued at 6s 8d (Turner, 1844, 106).

The construction of this park clearly caused considerable difficulties to those with common grazing rights in the area as well as those users of the traditional ancient trackways. A major objector, the rector of Rothbury, was apparently bought off by grants of land and rights in Whitton township and within the Forest. The problem of access to and across the area, again for at least the rector, was solved by an agreement whereby Robert made gates in the deer park boundary through which the rector's cattle could pass. The site of two of these gates, neither more than 5.5 m wide, may be located at B and C (fig. 2) in the RCHME survey area. However lesser people, including the free men of Rothbury, were not given such opportunities and in 1279 they complained over the loss of grazing rights caused as a result of the enclosure of the park (Hope Dodds 1940, 354). Despite the problems created over the loss of grazing, the park remained, and in 1368 was described as "with deer" (PRO C135/202). By this time Rothbury and its lands had passed to the Percy family.

The later history of the park is poorly recorded. By 1586, a survey of the Earl of Northumberland's holdings described the park as "now as of long time before occupied by his lordship's tenants", indicating that it had been leased out for some time and was presumably no longer used as a deer park. It was still recorded as a park in surveys as late as 1702 when it was described as "barren ground" (Hope Dodds 1940, 357-8); and the place-name Newtown Park survives on modern maps.

The medieval field system

Following the abandonment of the deer park, at a date unknown but possibly before 1586 (see above), the area surrounding the fort was subdivided into fields; some of the existing boundaries were reused and thus many of the new fields were of irregular shape. Two of these field boundaries (18 and 19, fig. 2) overlie the deer park wall (17, fig. 2). From 19 two further boundaries spring off to the S. Most of

these boundaries are earthen dykes containing some stone, and measure up to 3.5 m wide and 0.6 m high. One of them (20, fig. 2) is a wall which survives as a single course no more than 1.0 m wide and 0.4 m high. Boundary 19, the deer park pale (17), and the S part of bank 21 (fig. 2), were reused as township boundaries and are depicted on the Tithe Maps of 1844, dividing the lands of Lee, Newtown and Holling Hill townships (NRO DT287L; DT352M); more recently they have become parish boundaries. The layout of the township boundaries suggests that the various fields of ridge-and-furrow could have been made by different communities farming adjacent lands.

Some of these fields contain broad, slightly curving ridge-and-furrow up to 13.5 m wide, which typologically would appear to predate c. 1800 in the Borders (Parry 1976). The ridge-and-furrow in the former deer park may date from the "long time before" 1586 when the park was leased to the tenants of the Percys (see above) and thus could be late medieval in origin. These large areas of cultivation probably fell into disuse before the 18th century; MacKenzie (1825, 51) records that by the 1820s this area of Rothbury Forest was still "inclined to the growing of heath"; even by 1844 only roughly 20% of Newtown township was under arable, an area one third smaller than that of the deer park itself (NRO DT 352 M).

Later agricultural activity

At Lordenshaws positive clues as to the relative and absolute dating of the various forms of ridge-and-furrow are provided by the fact that an enclosed field containing narrow straight ridge-and-furrow on the E side of the fort demonstrably overlies the broader curving ridge-and-furrow to the W. Much of Rothbury Forest and especially that part to the South of the Coquet was enclosed by agreement in the early 18th century. Between 1726 and 1733 the Duke of Northumberland's surveyor drew plans of "improvements" in Rothbury South Common, which included one on "Garleyside Moor" (Hope Dodds 1940, 358). The new field contains settings of straight ridge-and-furrow no more than 5.0 m wide enclosed within earth-

en dykes still surviving up to 0.8 m high. At the time of its abandonment, the "Improvement" enclosed three separate settings of narrow, straight ridge-and-furrow, which may only represent the final form of ploughing to have taken place in this field. This type of cultivation developed after the introduction of the swing-plough in 1767 (Parry 1976, 14), which could suggest that the straight ridges represent a relatively short-lived phase of cultivation possibly lasting less than a century.

Mackenzie (1825, 80) describes the "Improvement" as a "cornfield" in 1825, which may imply that cultivation was still taking place; however, the Tithe Map of 1844 (NRO DT 287 L) does not record whether it was under cultivation. What could be an important hint is provided by the fact that none of the adjacent fields are listed as arable on the Tithe Map, and the adjoining field which enclosed the hillfort is described as "The site of Roman Camp roads and waste ground". This may imply that the "Improvement" was also used as rough pasture by the middle of the 19th century, and lend weight to the suggestion that this field did not have a lengthy period of cultivation.

Trackways

Through the centre of the survey area following a northerly route, and along its southern perimeter leading eastwards, lie two groups of hollowed trackways never more than 1.3 m in depth and up to 5 m to 6 m wide. The N series skirt the deer park boundary (17, fig. 2) and cut across the later fields and the cross-ridge dyke (7, fig. 2). In form they are all less pronounced and smaller in size than those which appear to be early in the stratigraphic sequence (11 and 12, fig. 2; see above). They seem to follow the northerly alignment of the modern track up to the remains of the ruined building (24, fig. 2) where they fork, the easterly branch petering out to the N of the fort, and the westerly branch crossing the deer park boundary and descending to the Whitton Burn. In the S part of the survey area the tracks form part of a group which follow an easterly course within and beyond the fence line; this was evidently

one of the main through routes skirting the S edge of Coquetdale between Tosson and the valley of the Forest Burn (see Newbigin 1931).

Miscellaneous features

Within the "Improvement" is a long rectilinear excavation (22, fig. 2) 25.0 m long by 9.5 m wide overall, which is surrounded by upcast banks up to 3.5 m wide and 1.0 m high on all but the lower, E side. The excavated trench is up to 1.7 m deep below the top of the upcast banks, and appears to have been excavated into the hill slope from the downhill side cutting through the narrow ridge-and-furrow cultivation. This site may represent a lead prospecting adit. MacKenzie (1825, 79–80) records that in Whitton Dean, immediately to the North of the survey area, "it is presumed, runs a valuable vein of lead ore. Some partial attempts have been made to open the mine, which, for want of sufficient skill and capital, miscarried. However, there is little doubt but a spirited adventurer might here obtain a valuable source of wealth, as the ore which has been found is of a very rich quality". The remains of the Whitton Dean mine can be seen adjacent to the deer park boundary to the N of the fort at NZ 0545 9955, and it is possible that the small adit within the "Improvement" may have been opened with the same aim, presumably in the late 18th or early 19th centuries. No workings are depicted in this area on any edition of the OS maps.

To the SW of the fort an almost square open-sided enclosure (23, fig. 2) overlies the S part of the deer park boundary (17, fig. 2). This is constructed of stone walls 2.5 m wide and up to 0.7 m high; no internal features are visible. Its date and function are unclear. Some 350 m to the N are the tumbled ruins of a rectangular building (24, fig. 2) which has been constructed from stone robbed from the deer park boundary—thus creating a break through the wall. The building measures 7.5 m from N to S by 4.4 m transversely, within partly overgrown stone walls 0.5 m wide and up to 0.6 m high. An entrance in the N gable, 1.0 m wide, opens into a rectilinear enclosure bounded on the W by the park wall and elsewhere by an earthen

bank spread up to 5.2 m wide and 0.7 m high. This enclosure is entered through a gap in the N bank 2.9 m wide. The site is shown on the Tithe Map of 1844 (NRO DT 352M) where it is described as the "Remains of House".

Some 70 m to the N of the fort lies a low sub-circular mound with a flat top (NZ 09 NE 24). The mound, which has been constructed over a ridge in the former arable, stands 1.0 m high on its downhill side, but is only 0.3 m high on its opposite side. A prominent stone set upright immediately up the hill is aligned E to W, and is 0.4 m by 0.2 m wide and 0.55 m high. It is unmarked, and its function is unclear.

The most recent features surveyed at Lordenshaws are a series of small timber-built shooting butts which cut across the outer ditch of the fort on a north-westerly alignment.

METHOD

The environs of Lordenshaws fort were surveyed using a Wild T-1000 theodolite and DI-1000 total stations EDM, incorporating graphical techniques to record the detail. The fort was surveyed from a control survey supplied by EDM, followed by a plane table survey utilizing a Wild RK1 self-reducing alidade. All detail was recorded at a scale of 1:1000. The ridge-and-furrow cultivation was plotted manually from aerial photographs.

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