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# LANDSCAPE CHANGE:

# THE CASE OF TWO PENNINE PARISHES

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## Abstract

The parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick in the valley of the River Derwent on the borders of Northumberland and Durham have been relatively neglected archaeologically until recently. Historically they are linked because they formed a mediæval estate which belonged to Durham Cathedral Priory before the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

This thesis investigates certain of the changes that have taken place in the landscape of the parishes and the factors that have contributed to them, making comparisons with other parts of Britain to set the conclusions in context. Landscape archaeology theory is outlined, as well as topographical details and an account of the local history. The latter includes an examination of local placenames which support the evidence of the development of the parishes.

Three important influences on the landscape are discussed and assessed. Firstly climate and climate change, with the influences of famine and disease, are investigated. The effects of these factors on the landscape and, especially, the possible desertion of farms are also examined.

Enclosure and improvement, particularly local but with comparisons to the country as a whole, are discussed. Fields and agricultural systems are particularly studies and provide evidence of landscape changes in the study parishes. The discovery of older boundaries within some of the fields is of especial interest.

Communication systems, such as roads, can be the route by which the necessary knowledge for improvement is spread. The analysis of the development of communications in the study area demonstrates this. Some significant ancient routes and alterations to routes have been discovered.

This research has contributed a great deal of information to the understanding of the development of the landscape in the Upper Derwent Valley. It has also shown that even a limited area such as this has potential for further investigation.

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## Acknowledgements

My first thanks must go to my supervisor, Dr Sam Turner, for his help throughout the years of my research for this thesis.

Heartfelt thanks also go to Dr Kevin Greene, who saw me through my MLitt studies and most of this research. Despite retiring before I completed this thesis, Kevin continued to provide advice and support.

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*Educated parents make educated children*
*and educated grandparents make educated grandchildren.*

May our efforts inspire the next generations.

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*Frontispiece: Estate Map of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick dated 1800*



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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

This research is concerned with the landscape archaeology of the North Pennine parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick in the Upper Derwent Valley (UDV) on the border of Durham and Northumberland.

## 1.1 Why study landscape archaeology?

Since Hoskin's *The Making of the English Landscape* his contemporaries and successors have continued to investigate the landscape from various perspectives. Some have worked on tangible evidence while others have endeavoured to understand people's perceptions of the landscape both in the past and in the present. The landscape has been described as a 'palimpsest', likening it to a manuscript that has been overwritten, often several times. It could be argued that this suggests a series of discrete events whereas, in fact, the landscape may have evolved through continuous processes at some periods and remained unchanged for long periods in between, as well as being altered by major occurrences. Thus, while a palimpsest may be hard to read due to erasures and additions, the development of the landscape is the result of much more complex processes. The 'overwritten' appearance, though, remains a valid simile as the physical evidence in the landscape frequently has this character.

> The word 'palimpsest' has often been used to describe the English landscape, implying that it is the result of the superimposition of one set of features on another throughout time; but the reality is somewhat different. The history of settlement in England is not just the story of man's adaptation to dull geographical determinants, grinding social pressures, inevitable economic change or anything else that geographers, historians and archaeologists tell us. It is all these but it is much more. Most of all it is a wonderful, richly coloured, whirling kaleidoscope of movement and change. If we appreciate this then we may understand our past, present and perhaps even our future that much better.
>
> (Taylor, 1983: 242)

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### 1.2 Choice of study area

The parishes of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers have been chosen for several reasons. They have been closely linked by ownership and ecclesiastical factors since at least the twelfth century and, when the topic was chosen, they had not been the subject of close archaeological investigation. In fact, very little research had been undertaken in the area, and that was spasmodic, so that the available data often date from several years - or even longer - ago. For example, the historical climatic, environmental and palynological research by Lamb, Manley and Turner and Hodgson, especially for the North Pennines, has not been superseded and is still used by current authors. This lack of systematic research was a significant contributory factor in choosing this area to study as there is scope for increasing and updating knowledge. Despite the area frequently being referred to as 'remote' (DLC: 46, passim) there is, potentially, a wealth of data regarding human activity which have either not been investigated or which have not been drawn together into a comprehensive account of the landscape history of the area. This is a major omission in the story of the North Pennines which will be, in a large part, rectified by this research. Possibly the lack of research is due to the perceived remoteness of the parishes: such work as has been done has often been undertaken in a piecemeal fashion by people residing locally. Having lived in the area for more than twenty years myself, I have been able to observe the landscape and absorb information in ways that outsiders usually cannot. Nonetheless, as will be revealed, there is still much which requires research and consolidation and this renders the area suitable for close investigation.

Since research for this thesis commenced, various agencies, including English Heritage and the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, have instigated investigations into the area. This study is linked informally with their research and will form the foundation for a full historic landscape investigation for these parishes.

### 1.3 Location of the study area

The parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick are located on the north-east corner of the North Pennines, within the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (figs.1.1, 1.1a). The River Derwent and the Derwent Reservoir form the northern boundary of the parishes, with Castleside parish to the east, Blanchland and

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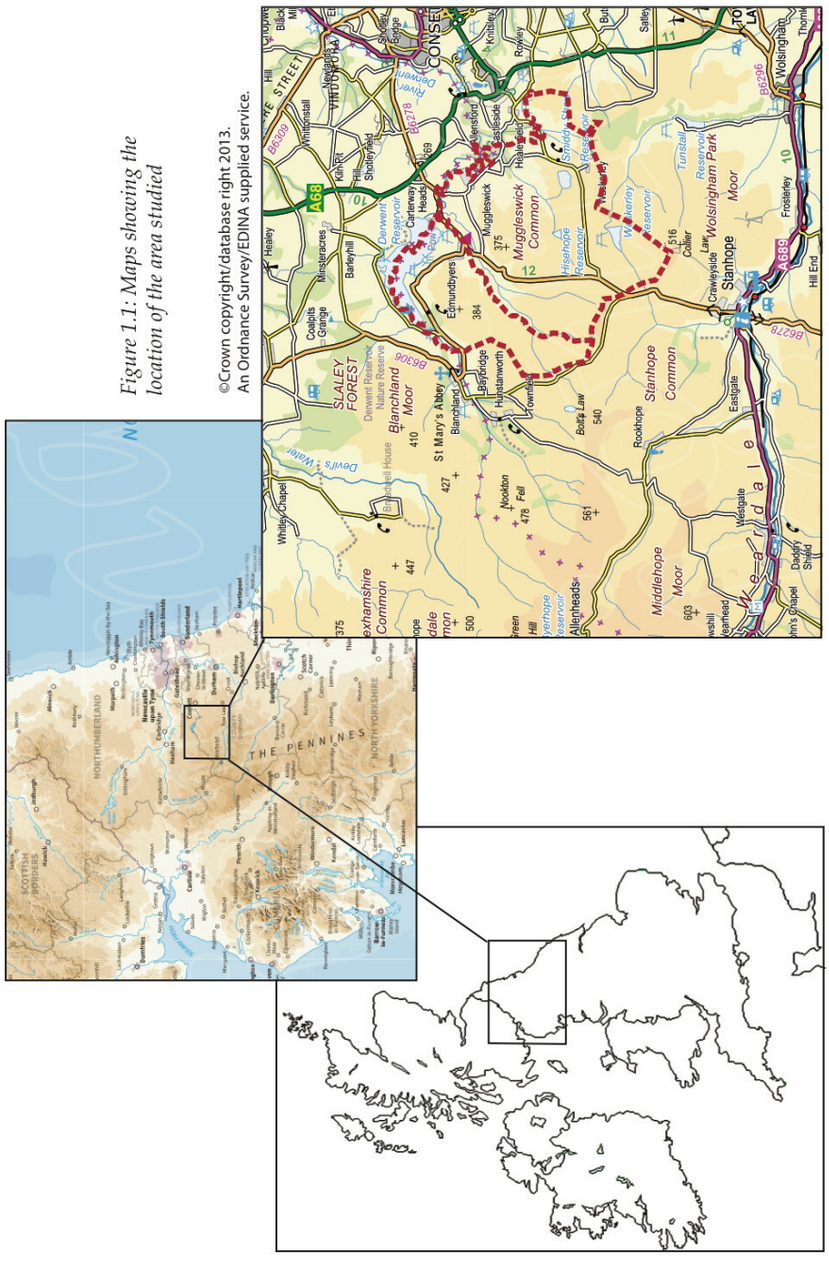
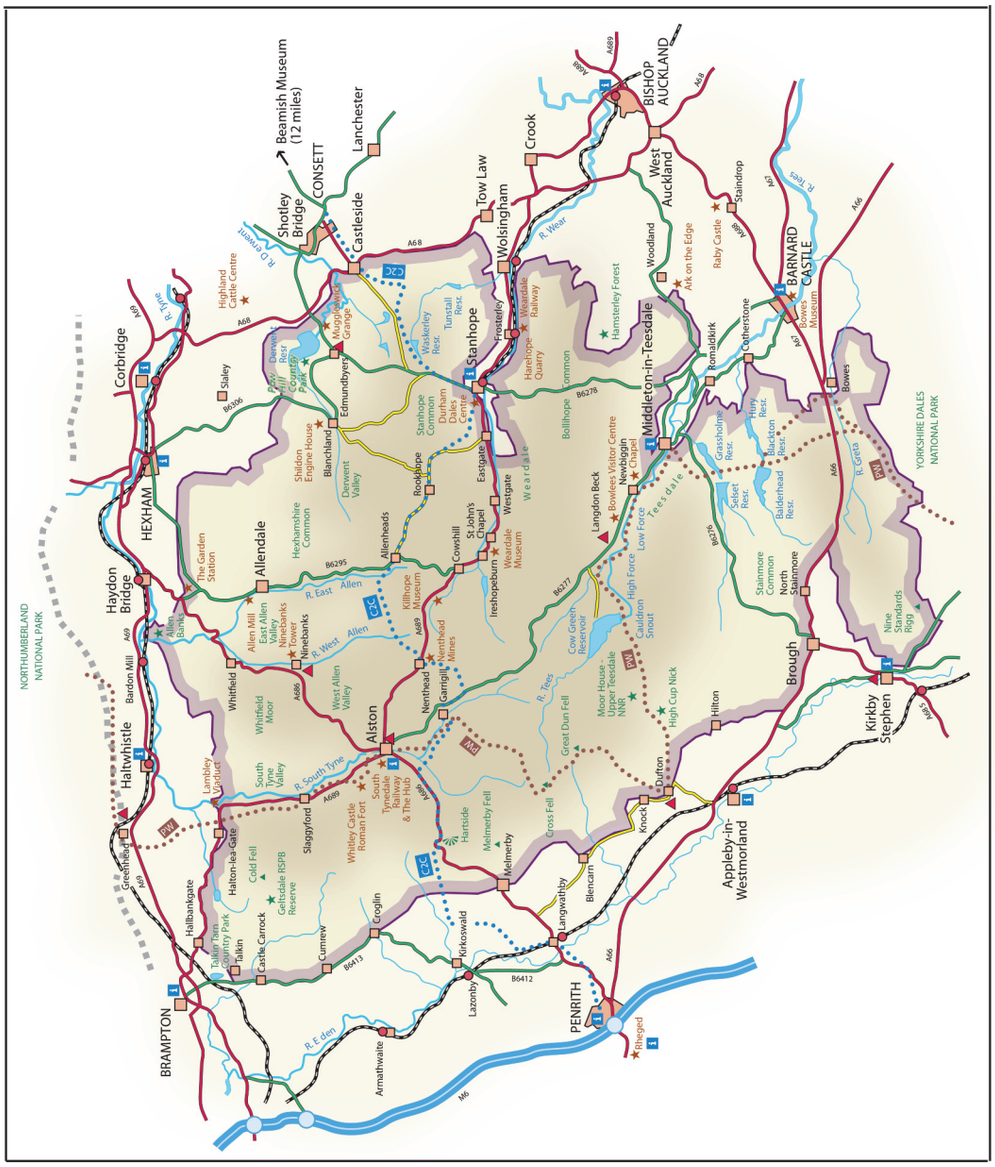



*Figure 1.1: Maps showing the location of the area studied*

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0 2 4 6 8 10 km
0 2 4 6 8 10 miles
N

- AONB boundary
- A road
- B road
- Minor road
- railway & station
- Tourist Information Centre
- Pennine Way
- Coast to Coast Cycle Route (C2C)
- YHA Youth Hostel
- Hadrian's Wall

Please note that not all roads and settlements are included on this map

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*Figure 1.1a: Location and extent of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*




LEGEND

Parish boundary

0 1 2 3 4 5

kilometres

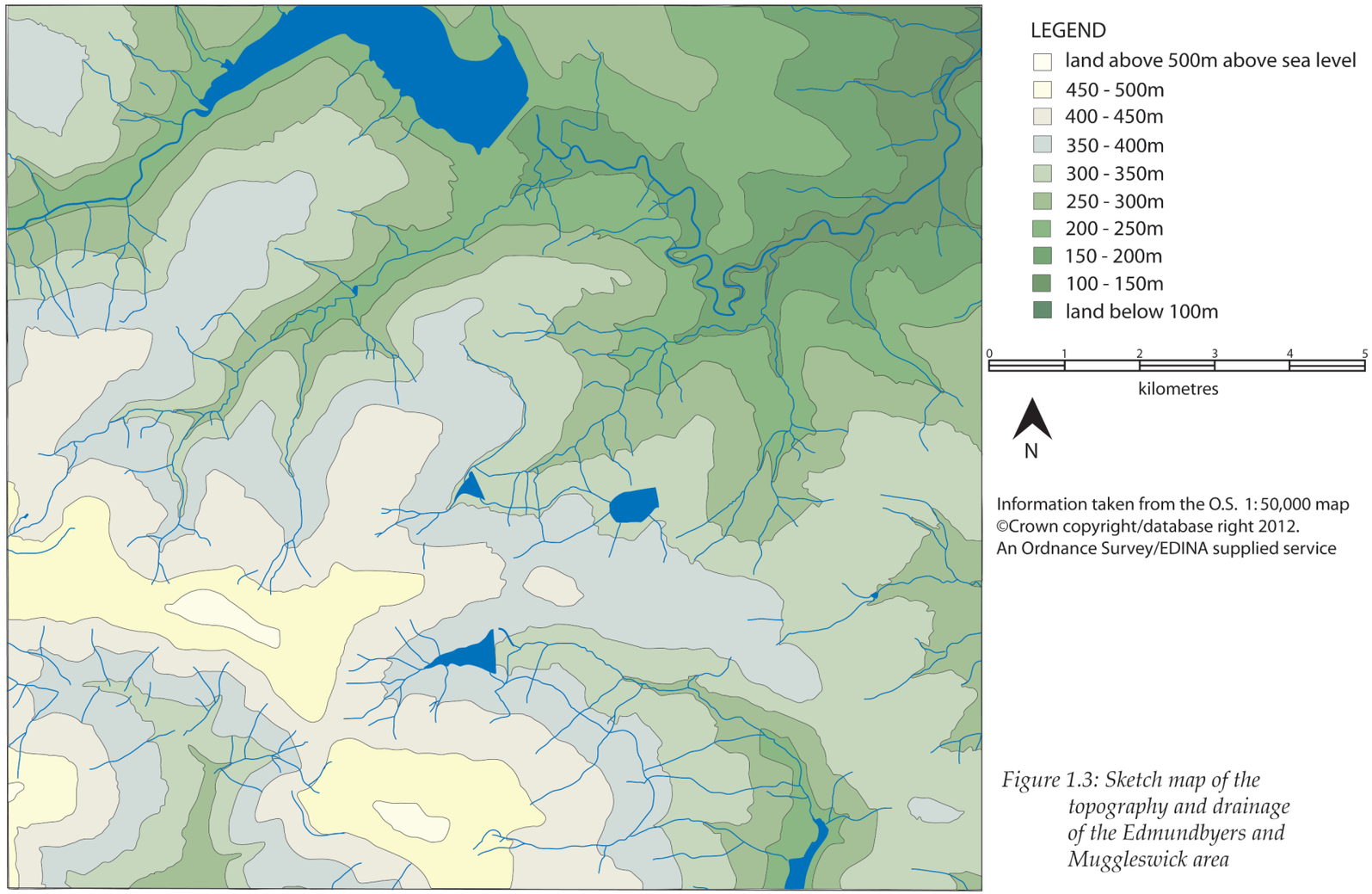
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*Figure 1.2: Map showing the boundaries of the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick*



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Information taken from the O.S. 1:50,000 map
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*Figure 1.3: Sketch map of the topography and drainage of the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick area*



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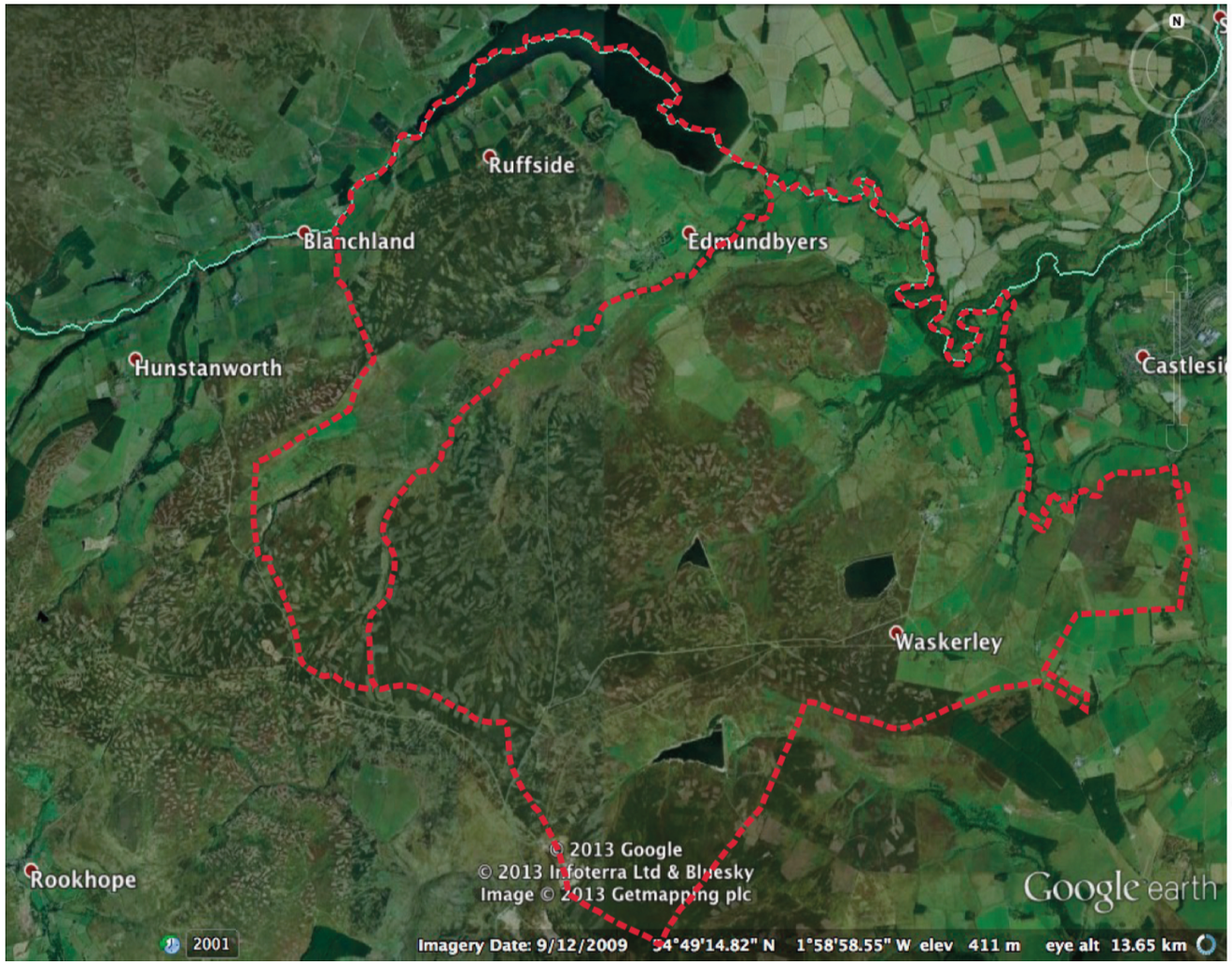
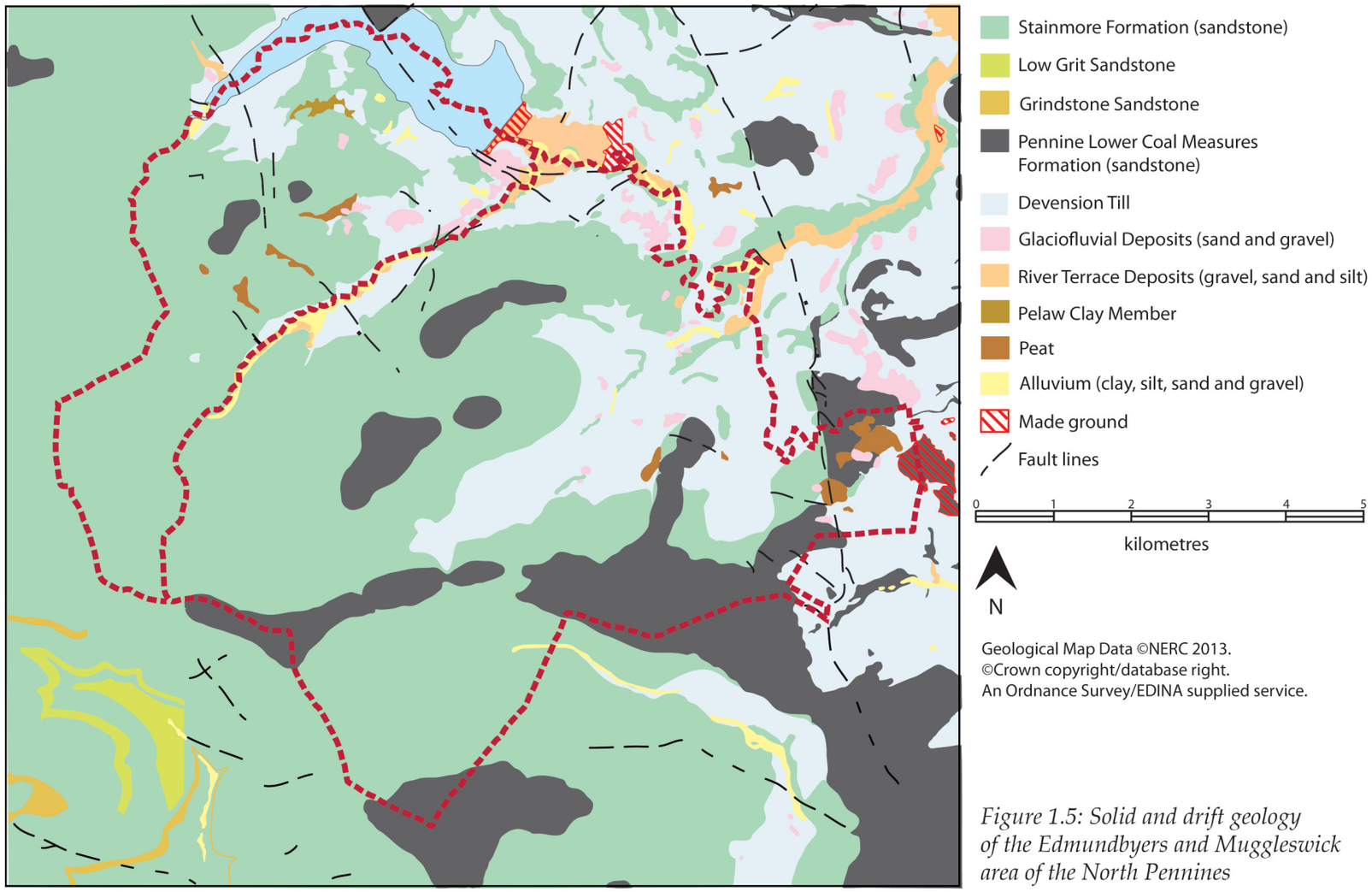



*Figure 1.3: Topography of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick based on Google Earth aerial photograph*



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*Figure 1.5: Solid and drift geology of the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick area of the North Pennines*



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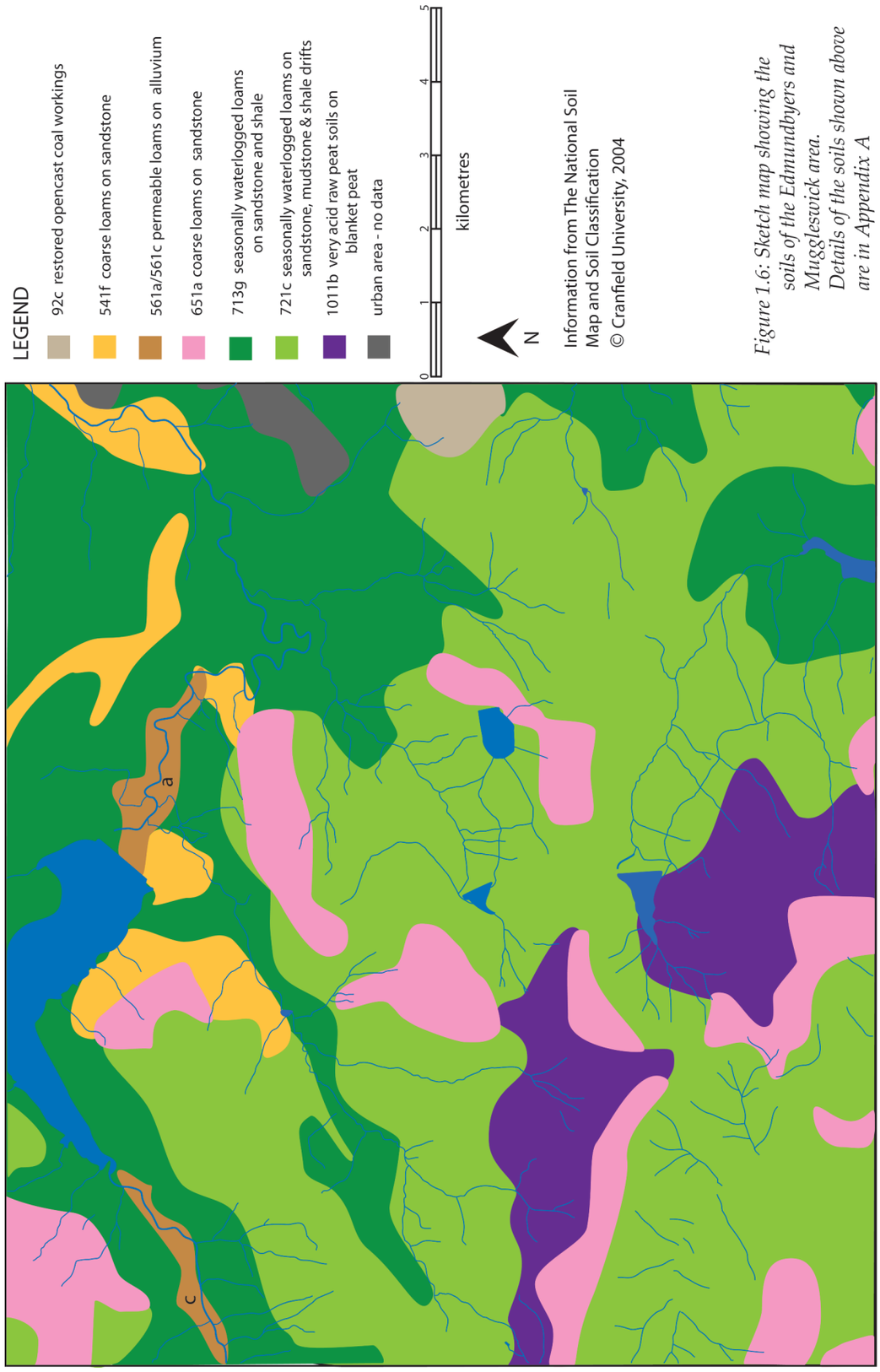



*Figure 1.6: Sketch map showing the soils of the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick area. Details of the soils shown above are in Appendix A*

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Hunstanworth to the west and Stanhope to the south. Parts, at least, of the boundaries other than the northern one follow watercourses, including that between the parishes; the boundary with Stanhope is approximately the watershed between the Derwent catchment and Weardale (fig 1.2). The routes of parts of the boundaries away from watercourses are frequently marked by piles of rocks known as curricks.

The parishes, therefore, lie in an upland area generally between 200 and 300m in elevation, with the highest points being Horseshoe Hill (39855449) at 519m and Collier Law, on the boundary with Stanhope (40165418) at 516m, both in the south of the area. The general topography, therefore, tends to rise towards the south but undulates over most of the area, as shown in figures 1.3 and 1.4. It is cut by numerous streams, often in steep-sided valleys, draining roughly northwards to the Derwent. The largest of these is the Burnhope Burn which, along with its tributary the Eudon Burn, forms most of the border between the two parishes. In Muggleswick, the most important streams are the Hisehope and Horsleyhope Burns.

The geology of the North Pennines consists of Carboniferous limestones, sandstones and shales which have been deposited in narrow, horizontally-grained strata (fig. 1.5). While the topography is generally gently rounded, these alternating strata often form steps in the valley sides due to their differing susceptibilities to erosion. The higher peaks are capped by Millstone Grits and are often distinctively flat-topped. In places the hard igneous dolerites of the Great Whin Sill outcrop dramatically, mostly in parts of the North Pennines to the south of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. On the higher fells deep layers of peat cover the underlying rocks, often with boulder clay in the valleys. Consequently the soils vary from the deep peat to peaty gleys and podsols on the higher fells to heavy gley soils and lighter brown earths in the valleys; the soils on the boulder clay and morainic material tend to be heavy and waterlogged (DLC) (fig. 1.6).

### 1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aims of this research are:

1. To identify and assess changes and developments that have occurred in the landscape of the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick since prehistory.
2. To identify and explain the factors that have precipitated or contributed to these changes.

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3. To set these changes in the context of what was taking place in the wider landscape at those periods.

This will be achieved via the following objectives:

For Aim 1 -

1a. to critically evaluate the theoretical background to landscape archaeology in order to understand the context of this research

1b. to evaluate the documentary and cartographic evidence for landscape change and development in the parishes

1c. to determine the evidence visible on the ground and assess its contribution to understanding the changes

For Aim 2 -

2a. to determine whether there are explanatory factors which led to the changes and what form they take

2b. to critically assess the influence of these factors on landscape change

For Aim 3 -

3a. to understand the developments and changes that occurred and their historical contexts drawing on academic accounts

3b. to assess the extent to which social, economic and political events influenced the changes, or lack of them, in the parishes

**1.5 Types of landscape change to be studied**

The landscape has been changing since the earth was formed. For the larger part of that time the processes working upon it have been natural and have resulted in the major topographical formations. The effects of human activities have been recent and superficial in comparison. Nonetheless, they are often as visible, if not more so, than geomorphological processes because they are generally on the surface. Moreover, they have often been influenced by the natural circumstances in which they have taken place.

There are numerous types of change which have affected the landscape generally. In Muggleswick and Edmundbyers some of the changes are similar to those elsewhere and others may be more localised. In addition, there are changes that have progressed over a long period of time, some which are historic and others which are more recent.

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It was noted above that this research will substantially rectify the lack of consolidated data on the parishes. However, as with most areas, there have been far too many changes for it to be possible to consider them all in detail here, so it is necessary to choose those which merit attention first. Those which have been decided upon are ones which will provide a basis for future research.

Lead mining has been a feature of the North Pennines for centuries. A brief account of lead mining in the study parishes will be given as a background to other changes and as part of the overall landscape development, but it will not be described in depth. This is largely because it is a subject that has been researched by a number of people who have expertise in the subject and experience of lead mining. They are far better qualified to write about the industry and, indeed, have done so. Nonetheless, the relevance of lead mining to the landscape will be included where pertinent to this thesis.

Another visible effect on the landscape is the proliferation of reservoirs, both large and small. The deep valleys and plentiful rainfall make this area suitable for water collection. Some of the earliest reservoirs supplied water for the lead mines, to provide power. In the nineteenth century larger areas were dammed and flooded to provide drinking water to local towns. These include Waskerley, Hisehope and Smiddy Shaw Reservoirs. However, it was the damming of the River Derwent to form the Derwent Reservoir in the 1960s that really had an effect on the landscape since such a large area was flooded. The results of this will be discussed where relevant but, again, this subject will not be considered in detail in this particular research.

Moreover, both of the above subjects deserve individual attention and the wealth of material is such that there is more than can be adequately covered in this thesis. Consequently three main themes have been chosen for investigation. These are topics that, as well as being a foundation for future work, have not been studied in detail before and/or have not been drawn together in one analysis. In the sections below the three themes are described and the reasons for the choice of each of them are explained.

### 1.5.1 *Climate, Vegetation, Landuse and Population*

This thesis is not about the fashionable topic of 'climate change' *per se*. Climate affects land use, vegetation and even geomorphology. Like geology and topography it is a

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natural influence on the landscape. Unlike them, however, it tends to change over a shorter timescale so that its effects upon how the land is used are often more easy to evaluate. Humans can only react to the limitations or opportunities presented by the climate. How they react is of interest to this research.

Climate is, consequently, an influencing factor in landscape change and is studied from this point of view in chapter 4. It provides a basis for the developments considered in chapters 5 and 6 (see below) because climate and vegetation affect landuse and landuse, in turn, influences enclosure. Population depends heavily on the ability of the land to support people, more so in the past than now that many are employed outside the area.

The climate of this north-east corner of the North Pennines is well-known to be eccentric in relation to the surrounding areas and has influenced the character of the local landscape. Palynological work has shown that the climate was unusual in prehistory and work by Manley in the 1940s and Pigott, for example, has established that this remains the case. From personal experience I know that, depending on weather patterns and wind direction, there are some days when the weather is similar to that on the North East coast while on other days weather from the west sneaks across the Pennines from Cumbria. The region's climate has, thus, influenced the viability of crops, the dominant type of farming, the physical extent of agriculture, the vegetation and the settlement, all compounded by the altitude.

This chapter should facilitate the chronological description of the landscape because it helps to link other landscape data.

**1.5.2** ***Land Ownership and Enclosure: Changes in the way the land was used***

The way in which the landscape has been divided up by enclosures has had a significant influence on its character. These enclosures are clearly visible and mean that the modern landscape is quite different from that which existed before the sixteenth century. Consequently enclosure and landuse make a worthwhile topic for investigation.

The enclosure of land has had several purposes. Often it has been a way to indicate ownership or to divide the land used by one person from that of another. However, this could be achieved without the construction of the walls, embankments, fences

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and hedges that are so often in evidence. It was certainly unnecessary to enclose the common fields: the various strips were known to all the tenants. Consequently physical boundaries, ones which impede the passage of humans or animals, must have been devised for other reasons. There are few examples of sites in the study area or its region where there are boundaries intended for defensive purpose. The establishment of boundaries for the keeping in - or out - of livestock is more relevant.

Thus the development of the field boundaries in Muggleswick and Edmundbyers should indicate the process of land division and ownership. By studying the field pattern and the types of wall or other boundary it should be possible to see something of the chronology of this process.

The background to enclosure will be discussed and the structure of the fields and their boundaries in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick will be looked at in detail. The existence of several useful documents (see chapter 3) will assist with this and this topic forms a major part of this research.

**1.5.3** ***Communications***

This is the other main topic of the research. It concentrates on the road network, although railways will be mentioned. Fitting into the landscape of enclosures, roads are another integral feature of the landscape, not only because they are regularly used by the general public, but because they, also, are very visible.

Communications are important in the development of an area for the distribution of goods and ideas, and for the movement of people. The road system of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick has not been studied in detail before and has not previously been related to the other factors in the landscape history of this area.

The roads of the area are interesting because there is evidence that some routes have an early origin while others are relatively recent. Like the enclosures, there is documentary as well as physical evidence for them.

The development of the Stanhope and Tyne Railway which crossed the southern part of the parishes will be considered also. Its existence was merely transitory but it had importance while it lasted. However, study of this form of communication will be secondary to that of roads.

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## 1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly described the area and topics for this research, and set out the aims and objectives for it. The various topics will be returned to, and discussed in detail, in the relevant chapters. In the next chapter landscape archaeology theory, and its development, will be evaluated and the methodology by which the research will be achieved will be established.

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# CHAPTER 2

# LANDSCAPE THEORY and METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 Introduction

In order to study the landscape of the selected area it is useful to establish the appropriate interpretation of the term 'landscape', to understand the development of landscape archaeology and its associated theoretical basis, and to set a methodology for the research. Turner suggests that the nomenclature 'landscape archaeology' has only been in existence for about twenty years (2013: 29), but there is evidence that this is an underestimate (see below). Interest in the landscape and its development has a much longer history, however. This chapter is intended to provide the background to landscape research.

## 2.2 What is Landscape?

In recent years, as landscape research has developed, it has become necessary for agencies and nations to agree on a suitable definition of the word 'landscape'. The resulting terminology states that landscape is:

> an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors
>
> (Council of Europe, 2000, Article 1).

Such agreement was not achieved in the past when numerous attempts were made but reaching a consensus was found to be difficult (Roberts, 1987: 77; Johnston, 1998: 55; Olwig, 1995: 307). In fact, landscape was considered by some to be 'a singularly complex and difficult concept' (Thomas, 2001: 166). The Council of Europe's definition not only successfully and succinctly manages to include all aspects that might be required, but provides a good basis for the way that landscape is treated in this thesis.

An early definition of landscape was employed by artists who used the components of the view in front of them to compose a picture; in time the word came to mean the

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view itself (Jackson, 1884: 3). This connection to art does pose problems of theory (Green, 1995: 32). For this thesis, however, the main problem is that the idea of a simple view is too superficial. Although what can be viewed by an observer is part of my research, this understanding of the word fails to take account of all the factors involved in the Council of Europe's definition. Another drawback to the 'view' definition is that it has been employed to describe a particular, passive, way of looking at the landscape. This is because the distance created by perspective separates the observer from that which they observe. Such a desire to observe an attractive view led, eventually, to the physical landscaping of parts of the countryside (Bender, 2002: 105). This is an application of the term 'landscape' which is not relevant to Edmundbyers and Muggleswick; it does not deal with the subject in sufficient depth.

The element 'land' was once associated with the ridge and furrow pattern of mediæval ploughing in England, referring to part of an arable field (Jackson, 1984: 5). Certainly the area that is the subject of my research has areas of ridge and furrow, as will be shown in later chapters. The 'scape' element may refer to a group of similar objects or an organisation or system, perhaps of 'rural farm spaces' (*ibid*: 7-8). This still seems an inadequate way to define the term 'landscape' although it does involve more than just passive observation. The idea that the term was linked with 'region' and 'territory' in Germanic languages in the early Middle Ages (Tress and Tress, 2001: 144) is also too restrictive. However, something closer to the Council of Europe definition is described by Olwig who not only pointed out that landschaft (German) has two meanings - a restricted area of land or the appearance of an area as seen by an onlooker - but that 'personal, political and place identity' are also implied (1996: 630 - 631). Nonetheless, the 'natural' aspect of the Council of Europe definition is still omitted.

In fact, it is the influence of nature that is often overlooked by archaeologists, especially those without a solid background in geography. To a geographer the landscape is topography, underlain by geology and overlain by human activity. It is thus impossible to consider the archaeology of any landscape without bearing in mind the influences that natural forces may have been having on it at the time in question. For example, the choices that people made when deciding the location of their settlement and the types of agriculture that they undertook greatly depended on the physical factors of the landscape. Moreover, areas under cultivation may have been able to expand due to periods of more favourable climate, meaning that remains

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of settlements and fields can be found in places no longer suitable for cultivation. At the same time, such expansion may have been constrained by other influences, such as geology and soils, or by historical technological, political and social circumstances. Since at least the 1950s geographers have considered landscape to be comprised of a number of aspects: 'no landscape can be defined as the result of only one set of factors' since landforms, oceans, climate, soil and vegetation are inter-related (Monkhouse, 1970: preface; 1963: viii). Moreover, geographers work with both the physical and cultural landscape, with human actions affecting the latter (*ibid*, 1963: 482). This multidisciplinary approach to the term landscape continues to be used by geographers to discuss such matters as landscape history (Huggett, 2011: 9, 187-246, *passim*; Anderson and Anderson, 2010: *passim*).

Those archaeologists who have a background in geography, such as Aston and Muir, often better appreciate that natural factors like geology, climate, topography and vegetation are the foundations on which archaeological features are built. Even archaeologists who favour a phenomenological approach (see section 2.7) acknowledge the effects of natural influences on the archaeological landscape. For example, Tilley recognises the relevance of the physical landscape and that people perceive it in different ways (2006: 29). Bender says that 'landscape is time materializing', going on to explain by referring to landscape as geology, topography, mantled [i.e.covered in vegetation] and landuse (2002: 103). The inclusion of natural as well as human influences in the Council of Europe definition makes room for such interpretations of the landscape. A definition which allows for the inclusion of a geographical foundation is the most suitable for this thesis since, as will be demonstrated, natural factors have strongly affected the development of the landscape in the study parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick.

The application of a number of disciplines to landscape research is supported by Wilkinson who describes it as a combination of 'natural environment and cultural factors' (2004: 334) and by Muir, who states that landscape researchers practise an interdisciplinary approach (2004a: 4). The use of multiple disciplines, including both natural and cultural processes, is also advocated by Widgren, and Tress and Tress (2004: 459; 2001: 149). Antrop points out that, by varying one's focus, 'different perspectives of research and actions are possible' (2013: 12).

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This discussion shows that the Council of Europe definition of landscape has not only summarised the factors involved but, increasingly, has been accepted by landscape researchers, as demonstrated in the literature. Moreover, this definition permits the research for this thesis to combine a mixture of disciplines, as appropriate, in order to produce a comprehensive narrative.

### 2.3 The early development of Landscape Archaeology

It was in the fifteenth century that the first pictorial representations - landscape paintings - using perspective were produced, emphasising the visual character of the landscape (Antrop, 2013: 13). Cosgrove argued in 1984 that it contributed to a 'new politics of vision' (Thomas, 1993: 22). Perspective painting placed the viewer on the outside of history and meant that land could be viewed as a commodity rather than part of hereditary patterns of tenure. Landscape painting, together with the idea of landscape, developed alongside capitalism (*ibid*).

In the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century the Romantic poets began to take an interest in landscape. In his Guide through the District of the Lakes, Wordsworth emphasises the pre-eminence of the view, especially all the details of the landscape as seen from above (Johnson, 2007: 20). This idea of a privileged view from above is frequently returned to by critics of the Romantic approach. Wordsworth, like many others, saw a class distinction in the ability to appreciate the landscape. The development of the railways brought 'common folk' who not only could not appreciate what they saw but also spoiled his 'solitude and appreciation' of the countryside (*ibid*: 24). For Wordsworth, understanding the landscape included walking long distances and having an aesthetic appreciation of it as well as viewing it from above. Landscape was 'embedded in the particular (genius loci) and the national' and should be a 'solitary experience' (Johnson, 2007: 25). These were the things that helped to make it socially restricted. Moreover, Romanticists detested the modern and embraced 'an ethic of preservation', which has been considered nationalistic (*ibid*: 23). It will be seen in section 2.4 that Hoskins' approach to landscape shared some of these characteristics and led to criticism of his writing.

In the late nineteenth/early twentieth century the aim for archaeologists was more towards description than exploration or explanation. This could be achieved once it was possible to establish dating or chronologies for cultures and artefacts (Greene and Moore, 2010: 263). Those who took an ethnic approach considered the

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relationships between cultures and used terms borrowed from historical archaeology like invasion, colonisation and trade. Researchers who favoured the evolutionary viewpoint looked at how cultures developed over time; they used biological, ecological, social, political and economic methodologies (Greene and Moore, 2010: 263). Influence from the scientific research of people like Alexander van Humboldt and Charles Darwin meant that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also saw the development of landscape science, particularly in Central Europe and Scandinavia (Antrop, 2013: 14). A holistic approach to landscape came from the French geographer Paul Vidal de la Blanche (1845 - 1918) who introduced the idea of *pays* (*ibid*).

In Britain, the traditions of field archaeology can be traced back to Aubrey and Stukeley (although such Antiquarians were, perhaps, biased by the ideology of their era), and in the twentieth century these were enhanced by the growing interest in local history (Greene and Moore, 2010: 83, 250). The publication in 1942 of Trevelyan's unashamedly Romantic and nostalgic *English Social History; a Survey of Six Centuries*, fitted with wartime and post-war patriotism and, no doubt, influenced the approach to research for some time. However, local history research went further, recognising social and economic factors and used documents like parish registers, charters, place-name analysis together with field observations to fill gaps in the written evidence (Greene and Moore, 2010: 83). From these various attempts to move on from the purely Romantic idea of landscape it can be seen that efforts were being made to find not only an appropriate way of studying landscape but to establish archaeology as a serious academic discipline. Even so, Turner observes that there was little or no training in archaeology in the early twentieth century; archaeologists, particularly those with an interest in the landscape, had backgrounds in other disciplines (Turner, 2013: 132). In fact, this has continued to be the case, albeit with training available in archaeology, since Hoskins and Aston had a grounding in geography.

However, the recognised genesis of landscape archaeology came when O.G.S. Crawford - another geographer - produced Archaeology in the Field in 1953. This book contained summaries of the field research methods that he developed. His experience as a First World War airman had shown him that many sites could be identified from the air (Fleming, 2006: 267; Turner, 2013: 132). Others who were broadly contemporary with Crawford and accepted at least some of his ideas included Hoskins, who recognised that field archaeology is critically important in the

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production of landscape history, and Beresford, who published The Lost Villages of England in 1954 and History on the Ground in 1957 (*ibid*).

The publication of W.G. Hoskins' The Making of the English Landscape, the first edition in 1955 and a subsequent one in the early 1970s, caused those who read it - myself included - to 'look anew at an unnoticed world immediately around us' (Phythian-Adams, 1992: 170). Hoskins' work provided inspiration for historians, geographers and archaeologists (Taylor, 2006: 100) while he was acknowledged as the 'father', a 'giant' and a 'pioneer' of landscape study (Johnson, 2005: 119; Aston, 2006: 92; Meinig, 1979b: 198). Speight suggests that Hoskins was influential in the acceptance of local and landscape history by the academic world although, later, popular and academic/amateur and professional local history began to grow apart as it became formalised and accepted as intra-mural (2003: 57-58).

Hoskins and his followers have sometimes been considered to be twentieth-century Romantics, following in the steps of Wordsworth and the growth of Romanticism in the later eighteenth century (Johnson, 2007: 43, passim).

**2.4 W.G. Hoskins: discussion of his influence and some criticisms of his approach**

Hoskins aimed to spread interest in the landscape beyond academia (Meinig 1979b: 196), encouraging both the general public and academics to appreciate better the historic landscape of England. Using documents, maps and fieldwork he asked new but 'deceptively simple' questions about local history (Phythian-Adams 1992: 170); he showed that the landscape may be older than it seems and told a story that may be discovered by attentive observation (Johnson 2005: 113). Hoskins' approach to the landscape was greatly influenced by George Bourne's Change in the Village (1912) which caused him to prefer a '... 'qualitative' as opposed to a 'quantitative' civilisation'; he was inspired by the countryside that Bourne evoked (Phythian-Adams 1992: 176). However, some critics considered The Making of the English Landscape to be too popularist (Meinig 1979b: 199) and it still gives rise to controversy. Bender (2002: 737) observes that it is 'evocative, observant and meticulously-researched' while, almost in the same breath, she criticises it for being 'angst-ridden, conservative, anti-modernist, post-Imperial, and Little Englander'.

Hoskins concentrated on England rather than Britain, with very little reference to the rest of the U.K (Johnson 2005: 116) including Northern England. He thus not only

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missed an opportunity for comparison but omitted questions of 'conflict, power and inequality' (*ibid*), avoiding the complex archaeology of the border regions which is partly the result of border disputes. Hoskins disliked twentieth century activities, 'the destructive potential of its technology', and how they affected the landscape (Meinig, 1979d: 207). By not really addressing them Hoskins left out one of the major influential periods on the English landscape producing a 'selective retrospective history' (*ibid*: 206). Hoskins did subsequently acknowledge that he had to revise his opinions on landscape continuities as a result of archaeological discoveries (*ibid*).

Another criticism of Hoskins' work is its particularity; he had a low opinion of the value of generalization (Phythian-Adams 1992: 171). This preference for the particular is a link with the Romantics, as noted in 2.3.2. Johnson suggests that it is not possible to separate the particular and the general in archaeological thought because accepting one acknowledges the existence of the other (2005: 114). If a region, for example, is considered 'unique', then there must be 'some kind of generality' with which to compare it. Hoskins, however, preferred to concentrate on the particular and his landscape analysis was thus 'always a study of localities' (Meinig 1979b: 203; Johnson, 2007: 45); he did not even make comparisons with other peasant or pre-modern societies (Johnson 2005: 114). Phythian-Adams thinks that this concentration on the particular was what made Hoskins successful and that his genius was his ability to link his discovered particularities to generalizations previously unperceived by others (1992: 171).

Hoskins also emphasised the importance of an aesthetic understanding of the landscape. The appreciation of beauty and/or a heightened sense of place are Romantic viewpoints that Hoskins espoused and which some researchers still consider to be valid (Johnson, 2007: 43 - 44). Bender considers that Hoskins' approach tries to freeze the past and is too nostalgic for her (2002: 736). She comments about The Making of the English Landscape, stating that Hoskins 'lovingly describes the way in which the countryside has been reworked' (*ibid*). She also dislikes the way he 'neutralises the politics involved in the creation' of patterns of land-use (*ibid*). Johnson, too, acknowledges that Hoskins has a sentimental and nostalgic view of the English landscape and that he was anti-modern (2005: 114).

However, Hoskins' method of landscape analysis and appreciation came from understanding its history, not from scenery. He considered landscape analysis to be

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a specialism of history (Meinig 1979b: 203); thus his work is organised chronologically, in the style of historians, dealing with a sequence of landscape changes. Moreover, he relied heavily on documents for dating purposes, so that his research was not primarily archaeological (Greene and Moore, 2010: 53). Hoskins saw society as horizontal strata with separate characters which were related to groupings of people by community - the 'village, town or country house'. People were drawn together by these and Hoskins saw this as an ancient way of life that varied with region and social circumstances (Phythian-Adams 1992: 177). Hoskins, therefore, was not oblivious to the socio-political influences on the landscape. To him the study of the landscape was just one way of investigating the past but he explored others, including demography, sociology and archaeology (1992: 180). However, like many historical and classical archaeologists, he did not really take account of the scientific approach promoted by the New Archaeology.

Johnson criticises Hoskins' lack of theoretical foundations, suggesting that his experience with the theoretical aspects of geography, such as Theissen polygons, was the cause of this (2007: 56). Hoskins may have felt that his data told a strong enough story without requiring theory (*ibid*).

Despite these criticisms of Hoskins - and there will be further mention of his methods in the methodology section (2.4) - Johnson suggests that Hoskins has become important to landscape studies, 'a central reference-point among students of the landscape for certain ideas and patterns of though that are habitual and emotional as well as strictly intellectual' (2007: 64-5). Making reference to Hoskins' early connections with local history, Fleming comments:

> Although it is always possible, from the evidence of his own writings, to charge Hoskins with various thought-crimes, those who find his work inspirational have been influenced not so much by his attitudes to history and to modernism, as by an approach which at least offered to get local history out of a rut and at best advocated a more nuanced and comprehensive landscape history.
>
> Fleming, 2006: 272

There are other dilemmas associated with Romanticism. It apparently has no need for theory as its view of landscape 'involves an unrestrained empiricism'. If you look

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deeply at a landscape scene for long enough you will understand what you are seeing - provided that you have the relevant education and an open mind. Moreover, this viewpoint of landscape is masculine; the feminine, as described by Plumwood, is passive and is what is being viewed (Johnson, 2007: 27, 31; Plumwood, 1993: 41 - 68). Thus appreciating the landscape not only has élitist connotations, but gender issues as well.

Romanticism, however, influenced left-wing politics in England through the populist and democratic character of its poetry; it influenced not only Marx himself but also post-war British historians like Eric Hobsbawm and Christopher Hill (Johnson, 2007: 25). It forms a 'political, cultural, social and aesthetic backdrop' to the way we think about landscape. Nonetheless, Romanticism has had a successful influence on landscape archaeology, in Johnson's opinion, because it was indirect and owes much to the work of Hoskins (2007: 33).

**2.5 The 1960s and 1970s: the development of Processualism**

As the twentieth century progressed, debates in North America influenced thinking in Britain and Scandinavia, and the concepts of evolution and ecology affected approaches to practical archaeology (Greene and Moore, 2010: 263 - 4). The functionalist approach to the past, particularly as pioneered by Grahame Clark meant paying careful attention to recording sites and artefacts during excavations. From this, data was obtained about such matters as agriculture, trade, crafts and social systems as well as the relative wealth and status of people. It was also possible to ascertain something of the relationship between people and their environment, while the use of statistics helped in discovering settlement patterns and classifying artefacts (Trigger, 2006: 353 - 361). All this was leading towards the emergence of the New Archaeology or Processualism.

The key words of the New Archaeology are: process, laws, systems and hypothesis-testing. There are seven predominant themes connected with this approach: cultural evolution, systems thinking, adaptation to external environment, scientific approach, culture process, explicit aims and interests and investigation of variability (Johnson, 2006: 23 - 27; Greene and Moore, 2010: 265). Certainly some of these themes - like adaptation to the external environment - are appropriate to this study of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick.

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From the 1940s systems theory was employed to study how a society interacted with its environment and interpretations of this were drawn in the style of electrical circuits. Hypothesis-testing followed in the 1950s and 1960s, as in most social sciences, and used statistics. This can be considered as 'positivist scientific methodology' (Greene and Moore, 2010: 265). Intuitive interpretations were drawn by traditional archaeologists using evidence collected from fieldwork which they studied in the laboratory. However, the New Archaeologists preferred the hypothetico-deductive-nomological approach. They set out with a hypothesis to find an archaeological situation which would supply the evidence to test it on. Their investigations would decide if the hypothesis was correct and the testing process would establish laws which were generally applicable (Johnson, 2006: 38 - 42).

An essential part of this approach was to find a way to provide long-term information about the past. A major process takes so long to develop, often several lifetimes, that a single person cannot live long enough to study it (Greene and Moore, 2010: 265). Processualists intended the laws produced to be a way of dealing with this problem. While people like Binford took an extreme positivist view of this, others, preferring the 'old' archaeology, were not convinced that such laws even existed nor that they could be detected archaeologically. Thus there was a faction that did not adopt the New Archaeology (*ibid*: 266). Nevertheless, Processualism led to better data recovery and better understanding of the formation of sites, providing 'high quality recording and description of archaeological information' (*ibid*: 267 - 9).

There are several ways in which the Processual approach caused improvements. The use of quantitative spatial methods to help interpret the results of field surveys provided new methods of analysing ancient settlement patterns, and this was later aided by developments in Geographical Information Systems. In addition to this, more scientific methods like geo-archaeological and palaeo-environmental surveys made it easier to produce models of past landscapes and environments. A third development was the change in excavation techniques. It became more usual to investigate large areas using extended continuous excavations or numerous test-pits; this method provides data about the extent and chronology of activity in the past which can then be analysed (Turner, 2013: 134).

Thus the 'New Archaeology' of the 1960s sought a more scientific approach in which ideas could be tested using hypotheses and deduction. It also noted that examples

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may not be typical so that an understanding of variability is necessary and a small sample of examples may be inadequate. The New Archaeologists also aimed to be more anthropological in their research, acknowledging that earlier assumptions that earlier societies were the same as we are could well be wrong (Johnson, 2007: 61). As a result there was a paradigm shift from the 'culture history' approach that had been used previously.

**2.6 The 1960s and 1970s: other developments**

Of course, the growth of Processualist theories did not occur in isolation and other ideas were still in use alongside them. Despite the criticism of Romanticism there were many 'productive developments' in the Crawford/Hoskins tradition of landscape archaeology during the 1960s and 1970s. Then Aston and Rowley published Landscape Archaeology in 1974. This was possibly the first time the term was used - longer ago than Turner's suggested twenty years - and they perhaps coined it because field archaeology had moved beyond just recognising and recording sites to dealing with 'extensive, chronologically complex cultural landscapes' (Fleming, 2006: 267). The subtitle to the book - an introduction to fieldwork techniques on Post-Roman landscapes - emphasised the change in approach from the more historical one taken by Hoskins (Greene and Moore, 2010: 53).

The landscape archaeology that developed, particularly in Britain, was highly empirical and was employed, for example, by Aston and Rowley (1974). It involved the survey and mapping of visible cultural features like boundaries, field systems and deserted villages to complement excavation and provided information about rural life in the Middle Ages which could not be obtained from documents (Thomas 1995: 19). Bowen and Fowler (1978) used similar methods for the prehistoric period (*ibid*). This empirical approach fits quite well with the requirements of this research, although the documentary evidence available for some periods is very informative (see chapter 3).

Also during this period, Braudel (1972) was developing his ideas about events and processes within the French *Annaliste* school. He acknowledged three main interacting forces that created the past which occurred 'in parallel but on different wavelengths of time' (Bintliff, 2006: 176). The first of these were short-term *événements* which involved, for example, politics or the actions of individuals. His *conjonctures*, or the *moyenne durée*, were events that lasted for perhaps one or several centuries and

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which might produce a variety of unplanned historical outcomes or events. The *longue durée*, however, covered events that lasted several hundred to thousands of years and were thus too long for any individual to recognise in their own lifetime, such as geological history or long-term population changes (Greene and Moore, 2010: 293; Bintliff, 2006: 176). The events of the *longue* and *moyenne durées* are only noticeable with hindsight. Bintliff notes that, in his example of the province of Boeotia in Greece, the long timescale demonstrates 'the cyclical rise and fall of urban and rural populations' (2006: 176). The conjonctures also show cycles of growth and decay of 'sophisticated urban, political, and cultural structures' (*ibid*). These cycles are the wavelengths which - like sound or light waves - have peaks and troughs; in ocean waves it is significant that the molecules of water move around in a circular motion as the wave passes through them. It is to this type of action that the theory refers.

The research in this thesis is concerned with a mixture of long- and shorter-term events that have influenced the landscape of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. For example, the physical development of the geology and topography may be classified as *longue durée*; the Dissolution of the Monasteries was, in itself, a short-term event but the repercussions for the landuse of the parishes have lasted much longer, into the *moyenne durée*, and are continuing. Barrett, however, disliked the *Annales* model because he thought it did not make it clear how the processes in the three levels interact (1994: 7). Perhaps the example above answers that. Nevertheless, Barrett preferred the rôle of memory in longer-term historical processes. Bintliff notes that memory tends not to be foolproof as things are often forgotten, may be reinterpreted or are selectively remembered (2006: 177). In anything but the short-term, however, the duration of the process as described above is too long for memory to play a part and, even where it does, it is likely to be inaccurate. Thus memory is inappropriate as an approach for this research while Braudel's ideas might be applicable.

The New Archaeology brought numerous advances and broadened interpretation. Through the revised methods the problems of requiring more detailed data about patterns of settlement, site layouts and the environment of the relevant period were dealt with; there was a distinct improvement in the recovery of archaeological evidence and in the study of that evidence (Greene and Moore, 2010: 250). Even so, from the 1950s until the 1970s there was a tendency for many archaeologists and historians to produce Romantic narratives about landscape, with little theoretical self-criticism. Alternatively, they employed scientific analytical methods that failed to

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acknowledge the relationships between people but concentrated on environmental and economic factors (Turner, 2013: 132).

### 2.7 From Processualism to Post-Processualism

Processual archaeology was, in due course, criticised for taking a determinist attitude to humans and treating them as 'passive participants who, at best, influence their environment through major social change and innovations in the exploitation of natural resources' (Greene and Moore, 2010: 84). From the 1970s there began to be new criticisms of what were 'regarded as positivist, data-driven interpretations that were trying to create single "truths" about what happened in past landscapes' (Turner, 2013: 134). Theorists criticised the fashion for 'explaining culture change in terms of totalising or reductionist frameworks such as systems theory or social evolution as well as "scientific" approaches to prehistory and history' (Fleming, 2006: 268).

Processualists were criticised, by researchers who were developing new approaches, for paying too little attention to social processes and social theory (ibid) or, in particular, to why societies changed (Turner, 2013: 135). Researchers like Tilley and Olwig, for example, felt that archaeologists did not understand that landscapes are contested spaces (1994: 9; 2004).

Consequently, in the 1980s and 1990s, archaeological theory followed the move taken by many geographers away from a detailed empirical approach towards a more general, theoretical approach. Much archaeological theory concerned 'interpreting representation, textual metaphor and cultural perceptions' (Turner, 2013: 132, 135). The influence of cultural geography contributed to this, with its chief paradigm tending to focus on analysing representations rather than on studying physical landscapes. Many archaeologists found these new ideas of interest but often had difficulty moving away from their roots in working with material things. Nonetheless, there was an acknowledgement by some that the new theoretical approaches provided a better way of understanding past social life (Turner, 2013: 132).

Post-processual thinking put emphasis on interpretative approaches to social life in the past and made use of such theoretical perspectives as post-structuralism, post-colonialism, hermenuetics and phenomenology. The theories of Bourdieu (1977) and

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Giddens (1984) influenced the development of archaeologies that interpreted agency, structure and practice and these were supported by Hodder (1986), Barrett (1994) and

Thomas (1996). In order to try to comprehend how people 'experienced the past', phenomenology was adapted to archaeological landscapes (Turner, 2013: 135). As post-processualists' interest turned to landscape the way was open for 'a new and very different kind of fieldwork' (Fleming, 2006: 268). For example, when early agricultural people cleared woodland, laid out field systems and physically divided the landscape these activities were more than just practical. They had a cognitive aspect and, for the people concerned, 'were in part about understanding and symbolically appropriating the land around them' (Johnson, 2007: 4).

Julian Thomas criticised traditional landscape archaeology because it tended to ignore people (1995: 26). Later, he suggested that the more scientific approach to archaeology 'will never succeed in producing the understandings of the past which we require' (1996: 88 - 9). Bender's opinion was that 'we have to go beyond the evidence' and that evidence 'does not of itself deliver and understanding.... it is open to any number of interpretations' (1998: 7). Thus both Bender and Thomas favoured an approach that put people at the forefront (Fleming, 2006: 268). Another post-modern criticism of Processualism was that it was based on power and ideology. Archaeologists were suspected of writing the past to fit with current political ideologies (Greene and Moore, 2010: 250).

New publications, like Tilley's *The Materiality of Stone* (2004) and Chadwick's *Stories from the Landscape* (2004), signalled a different approach to the landscape. They included 'poetry, extended literary evocations of the remote past, uncaptioned photographs and drawings, photo-collages, unsourced vox pops and personal musings, and a good deal of rhetoric' (Fleming, 2006: 267 - 8).

Post-processualism, notably, favours a variety of approaches rather than a single school of thought (Greene and Moore, 2010: 84) and the use of a 'wide range of theoretical perspectives' in interpreting past societies is encouraged (Turner 2006: 387). As well as putting individual humans at the centre of interest because they simultaneously shape and respond to their environment, post-processualists are concerned with the landscape as a place where experiences occur (Greene and Moore, 2010: 84). Archaeologies of agency and practice were developed to explain social

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change and the influence people had on social life. However it was also clear that, while people create material things and spaces, these in turn influence people's perceptions because they provide the contexts in which actions take place (Turner 2006: 387). Following on from this, archaeology has realised that different people give different meanings to material culture (*ibid*: 393).

A summary, produced by Fleming, gives the chief concerns and objectives of post processualist landscape archaeologists. Firstly, because prehistory is written in the present it is not balanced; this is redressed by giving performance precedence over investigation. Post-processualists are suspicious of any sort of framework. This is because frameworks are 'essentially Cartesian and de-humanizing and do not reflect the mindsets of pre-Enlightenment people'; consequently they are to be avoided if possible. Fleming notes that landscape provides 'an ideal field' for demonstrating the ways in which post-processual theory produces 'new ways of thinking and working' (2006: 277).

Fleming has suggested that the proponents of post-processual landscape archaeology are of the opinion that their early writings have succeeded, so that their 'approaches are becoming new modes of "research" and writing, part of a "normal science" paradigm' (2006: 268). However, little criticism was made of this from landscape archaeologists belonging to the traditional or mainstream school of thought (Fleming, 2006: 268). The origin of post-processual landscape archaeology comes from the 'surely uncontentious idea that history (including prehistory) is written in the present' and thus can only exist in the present (ibid). However, this makes all objectivity and scientific verification obsolete because there is a temptation to 'treat the archaeological project as more about performance or "cultural production" than investigation' (*ibid*). It is clear that Fleming is generally critical of post-processual approaches and he picks out Tilley's ideas of phenomenology and Edmond's style of hyper-interpretation for particular attention.

Tilley's thoughts on phenomenology are that it uses all the body's senses and 'a richly textured carnal phenomenological "thick" description' (2004a: 28). Tilley's style of fieldwork is intensive with much attention to detail and involves the use of complex methods to collect many types of data. Tilley is critical of academics who produce work on landscapes without leaving their desks and getting their boots dirty (Fleming, 2006: 270). This, at least, is one point on which he and Hoskins might agree.

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However, Tilley also thought these academics produced early attempts at fieldwork which were superficial and start from 'inadequate or inappropriate intellectual premises' (Fleming, 2006: 270). The rhetoric that Tilley writes paints an attractive picture of the remote past. He claims that the materials, locations and appearance of monuments are related to the landscape so that nature and culture are combined 'within the rich sets of metaphors which would have permeated the mythological and cosmological understandings of prehistoric people' (Fleming, 2006: 270).

Fleming criticises phenomenology fairly comprehensively, seeing problems with these new approaches, both theoretically and operationally, although he is not completely disparaging. Archaeologists produce a 'present past, a narrative which is neither the way the past really was, nor a simple reflection of present-day values and interests' (Tilley, 2004a: 225). There are many who are in favour of using historical imagination and 'peopling' landscapes, especially for those periods with no documentary evidence, and Fleming acknowledges that previous work failed to find a convincing treatment for prehistory (2006: 271). This thesis, however, is more concerned with historical periods, so that the phenomenological approach is somewhat less relevant. It does have some aspects which are attractive, though, and these will be considered later in this chapter and in chapter 7.

Cosgrove considered that 'perspective locates the subject outside the landscape and stresses the unchanging objectivity of what is observed therein' (1984: 27). Likewise, scientific geography has formal rules that separate the observer from the observed. The geographer hides 'consciously behind his battery of surveys, maps and aerial photographs' (Cosgrove, 1984: 33). Post-processualists like Thomas and Tilley consider that traditional archaeologists are equivalent to scientific geographers. Thus landscape and landscape archaeology are placed at the forefront of the fight against processualism and post-processualists have encouraged the view that traditional archaeologists are only observers and not participants (Fleming, 2006: 271). Fleming questions this: can landscape archaeologists or traditional geographers really be portrayed simply as outsiders, detached and non-participating, like the owners of landscape paintings, for example? To practice landscape archaeology one has to work in several dimensions, not just two, in the open air and be involved in a distinctive craft (*ibid*). This cannot be achieved without moving from outsider to insider, becoming increasingly engaged in the landscape, as one gains knowledge over time. The use of two-dimensional aids like maps and aerial photographs in no way

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compromises this (Fleming, 2006: 271 - 2). The asserted 'detachment of the observer' has not been proven to be a problem in field archaeology, and Fleming thinks that it is not. He does question whether phenomenological methods are capable of solving such a problem. After all, any discussions taking place in the field inevitably involve thinking about the intentions and attitudes of people in the past. While prehistorians may find it difficult to include people in their writings, 'it is not a fieldcraft problem' (*ibid*: 272). Fleming's arguments are interesting. What archaeologist, discovering a site or uncovering an artefact, fails to wonder about the people who made or used it? Certainly the research for this thesis involves engagement with the landscape and has the advantage of knowledge gained over 25 years of local residence as well as documentary data about some of the people who inhabited the area in the past.

It is usual for archaeologists to 'use a range of measures around truth claims', qualifying their research with terms such as certain, probable and possible and leading on to speculations which may be "useful" or "wild". Agreement tends to be reached through strength of argument (aided by the current disciplinary fashion and academic politics) rather than by hypothesis testing or the rejection of a scientific approach. Robust arguments are needed to cope with scepticism and questions about possible alternative interpretations. Phenomenology frequently ignores such questions because it is a metaphorical work of art (Fleming, 2006: 272 - 3). Thus post-processual archaeology has become a 'cultural production' but this, and experimental types of presentation, have 'opened up our horizons' and have beneficial aspects (*ibid*: 273). Nonetheless, while telling the story in a different way might be acceptable, Fleming observes that 'ultimately archaeologists are not primarily artists (artistes)' (*ibid*: 273). It is possible to produce many explanations by 'going beyond the evidence' but intensive fieldwork can be wasted by trying to produce an 'unfettered artistic performance' because it merely confirms what is already known - that there are different interpretations (*ibid*).

'Phenomenological fieldwork has become largely a quest for landscape metaphors and cosmological allusions in the Neolithic and Bronze Age' (Fleming, 2006: 275). There is as yet little evidence for prehistoric activity in the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick; most of the research involves historic periods in which the landscape is already peopled and for which there is some documentary data. This is why a phenomenological approach is not suitable for this research; it is necessary to establish such facts as are available before trying to interpret them. While some

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interpretation will certainly take place, more imaginative explanations are reserved for future studies (and will be discussed further in chapter 7).

In the same article Fleming also critiques Edmond's hyper-interpretive approach. In this, there is more interpretation in relation to the amount of archaeological data and analysis, making it different from traditional archaeology texts. Maps and sites are sidelined or omitted and there are no references in this style of work. Instead it is poetic, photographic and has a political subtheme (Fleming, 2006: 270). It also tries to avoid anything that comes close to being environmental determinism 'or explanations which invoke population pressure, to express scepticism about the existence of any institutionalized form of hierarchy or political control in British prehistory' (*ibid*). The next step for Edmonds is to use imagination deliberately in order to 'go beyond the evidence'; after that comes the insertion of short narratives or vignettes of prehistoric life. In this way he asserts that archaeology has a need for new forms of cultural production. Like Tilley's phenomenology, hyper-interpretation tries to 'evoke past mindsets, to get closer to the people of the remote past than has previously been attempted by archaeologists, and to assert the primacy of interpretive archaeology' (*ibid*: 271).

Hyper-interpretation, therefore, would only be appropriate for this thesis if there was a prehistoric landscape to work upon. There was a prehistoric landscape, of course, but data are currently so limited that there is virtually nothing to hyper-interpret. Nonetheless, as Fleming says, it is an attractive method of presentation (2006: 275). It does, though, present practical and operational difficulties, including whether it could or should be applied to all places and periods. Moreover, should it be applied to such things as excavation reports? Would the poetic approach be of any use to researchers needing to acquire data or to understand the 'relationship between evidence and basic interpretation'? (*ibid*). In Ancestral Geographies of the Neolithic, Edmonds indicates his dislike of references in the text because they 'make a text too exclusive' (1999: x). In fact, they make it very difficult to use a text for research. Consequently Fleming points out that the reverse is true because only those readers with some knowledge are included and those who need to look things up are excluded (2006: 275).

There are other problems with hyper-interpretation also. They do not make it clear how much of the account of a site is the author's own re-interpretation and how much has come from the excavator's report. The more imaginative the text, the more

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tenuous the links to the data. Then, if one takes a positivist or empirico-scientific view and criticises the work one is liable to be accused of misunderstanding or rejecting 'the basic post-processual philosophical position' (Fleming, 2006: 275). Hyper-interpretation is also possibly inadequate at dealing with 'cultural differences between people of different regions, the sharpness and sense of liminality of cultural change, and the "strangeness" or Otherness of people of the past' (*ibid*: 276). Inevitably, the attitudes of our own age influence interpretations.

Phenomenology and hyper-interpretation try to deal with the lack of people in the landscapes of archaeologists but, Fleming says, 'People of the past are not notably more "absent" in the field of landscape archaeology than they are in other sub-disciplines of archaeology" (2006: 276-7). It is the nature of the evidence which makes the prehistory of landscapes somewhat inadequate (*ibid*: 277), as observed above. Once documented periods are reached there are named people to write about (*ibid*). This is the case with this research: not only are there real people to deal with but there are factual accounts of the history of the area which contribute to the richness of the data. Sometimes, though, individual characters can get in the way. This was the case with Williamson's Shaping Medieval Landscapes. Fleming notes that narratives about particular characters did not assist in the investigation of soil types, weather and labour bottlenecks and their possible effects on types of open field in eastern England. Fleming favours an overview instead (2006: 277). However, there are circumstances where the histories of actual people can provide supporting evidence for other types of research; this is possible for the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick.

There are a number of other important aspects to post-processualism apart from hyper-interpretation and phenomenology and which Fleming did not touch upon in the above arguments. Some of the more interesting and relevant ones will be mentioned here.

There are two elements to the way that landscape is treated in the Western tradition. The first is the land itself, the natural and humanly-produced features; it is objective. The second is the way the land is viewed, how we and past people 'apprehend and understand' the landscape and is comprised of systems of apprehension, understanding, cognitive systems and the process of perception (Johnson, 2007: 3 - 4). In re-examining the concept of landscape, Johnson (*ibid*: 2 - 4) and Tilley (1994) have suggested that 'it concerns perceptions of the world as a location where lives

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were acted out'. People in non-Western societies commonly have very different ideas about the space that landscape provides and their place within it (Greene and Moore, 2010: 53). Perceptions of the landscape have changed over time and are an interesting aspect of landscape study. Bender notes that, in the modern western world, we have an egocentric perception of landscapes, concentrating on 'views and vistas'. This may not be true of other places nor of other times; in different circumstances people's ideas of the land may be entirely different (Bender, 1995: 1).

People's attitudes to the countryside have changed because of modern farming methods and the threat to nature; the benign and amateur character of farming has perhaps been lost in postmodern times and rural areas are no longer Arcadian (Claval, 2005: 17). On the other hand rural villages continue to fascinate, based on their traditional community ties, the space and low population density (*ibid*: 18). Local communities have changed, however, since they are no longer devoted to agriculture. Claval comments that local people may be less concerned about 'the visual perception of a special combination of fields, hedges, walls, farms, villages...' than the 'basic social, cultural and political systems' embodied in that landscape (2005: 13). In the past, people's beliefs about the world, their reaction to authority and so forth, would have developed through everyday activities such as collecting water, tending animals, planting and harvesting, stories, rather than intermittent ceremonies (Bender et al, 1997: 149). By the twentieth century rural areas were subject to urban influences and so awareness of other communities grew (Claval, 2005: 13). Rural communities tended to react by 'asserting their identities' and showing how they differed from other areas: 'Rural landscapes were transformed into sceneries by the people who inhabited them in order to display to the travellers and tourists who they were and how they wished to be seen' (*ibid*: 12).

Another facet is the relevance of politics. Bender prefers 'ways of conceptualising past landscapes which are not about neutral patterning, nor about legitimating and homogenising myths of origin, but are about tensioned and contradictory processes' (2002: 736). Williams uses a more political framework of theory which does not permit the research to avoid the effect of politics upon the landscape. He suggests that a 'darker meaning' may be seen in the English landscape especially if one observes the differences between workers cottages and country houses (Williams 1973: 106).

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The political aspects of landscape studies have been much influenced by Marxist thinking. Marx adopted Lewis Henry Morgan's 1877 developmental stages of society:

Savagery - humans mainly used products in their natural state

Barbarism - the breeding of domestic animals; agriculture developed, supplementing natural products via human agency (i.e. intentional action)

Civilisation - natural products further developed by human action; industry and art

However, Marx considered that these social stages were the result of revolution not evolution (Greene and Moore, 2010: 258). These ideas had little influence outside Russia until the mid-twentieth century and then, using them, people like Bender and Tilley adopted a neo-Marxist viewpoint (*ibid*). For such researchers there is a close relationship between archaeology and politics. Their interpretation of archaeology is based on materialism and conflict (Johnson, 2005: 80, 92-4). For example, ancient production methods were based on slave labour; feudalism used serfs; there was antagonism between slave and master, peasant and feudal landlord. In capitalism there is conflict between the proletariat and the bourgeois (*ibid*: 93). Thus, in the Marxist model, the process of historical change is dialectical, depending on contradictions and conflicts in society (*ibid*: 94).

Such conflicts were demonstrated in Georgian England by the rich and powerful who used their influence in two opposing ways (Tuan, 1979: 92). The positive aspect was that they improved the fertility of the land, and its beauty, while simultaneously exploiting the labour force and tenant farmers (*ibid*). The present appearance of much of the English countryside is the result of these eighteenth century activities; it reflects the aesthetic tastes of the time as well as the power of the landowners. We have become accustomed to this appearance of the landscape through the literature and art of the last two centuries and react to it without reflection, despite the 'arrogant disproportion' between the houses of the gentry and the cottages of the farmers (*ibid*).

New activities - associated with industry, water, leisure, housing needs - have put new pressures on the countryside. Conflicts of interest have often been instrumental in shaping postmodern landscapes, although this is not to say that there were no conflicts of interest in the past (Claval 2005: 18). These new pressures also have implications for archaeological research and affect the survival of archaeological material. Realisation of the complex cultural landscapes hidden below the surface is

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encouraging archaeologists to excavate larger areas in order to understand the ways in which the landscape has been used (*ibid*). There are important questions 'about remembering the past in any landscape' (Holtorf and Williams, 2006: 253). They include identifying who benefits and who is disadvantaged and whether people, other than those directly involved, are affected. The power relations need to be considered and whether everyone entitled to an opinion has been properly consulted (*ibid*).

People who lived in rural areas shaped their landscapes and had many ways of reading them. The landscape was the basis of local society, culture and politics, as well as the visible result of farming activities (Claval 2005: 14), and it is useful to consider such factors when attempting to understand the development of a landscape.

There are thus two schools of landscape studies, which do not necessarily communicate well with each other. The first concentrates on the theoretical debate and includes researchers such as Ashmore and Knapp, Bender, Ucko and Layton and Cosgrove. Some of the ideas of the first school of thought have been discussed. There are those, however, who concentrate on techniques and practical approaches, like Muir, Aston and Williamson, and who prefer 'unreflecting empiricism' to theory (Johnson, 2007: 2); they will be considered further in 2.8.

**2.8 Other developments from the 1980s on**

Of course, because not all archaeologists have embraced post-processual theory, other developments were taking place among the more traditional researchers. Sometimes post-processual theories have been taken into account but, on the whole, the two do not mix. Those who prefer one method frequently criticise the other approach. For example, Bender et al felt that the conventional third person narrative method of writing up research is unsatisfactory (1997: 150). However, an alternative has failed to be forthcoming; attempts to produce one have tended to lead to the omission of valuable information for the understanding of sites and the resulting conclusions and interpretations may be biased (*ibid*). Making a distinction between the two types of landscape ideas can be problematic. Some consider that they should be kept separate while others think one to be more important than the other; a third group think that the two cannot exist separately (Johnson, 2007: 4). To compound matters there is a third possible concept - that of 'landscape as engagement with the world' or a way

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of doing things (*ibid*). Understanding the landscape, according to Johnson, not only needs to involve its physical features, human or natural, but should include the way that it has been studied by scholars and the influences on that of 'popular perceptions and culture' (*ibid*).

While vision, as promoted by post-processualists, may be essential, today's landscape archaeologists use their own methods of searching for process in looking for narratives of landscape history (Fleming, 2006: 272). Moreover Hoskins and followers of his approach have shown that the boundary between the aesthetic and the historical appreciation of landscape is permeable. 'No school of archaeological thinking holds a monopoly on the use of the imagination' (*ibid*). It is not possible to look at a landscape which shows evidence of past use without wondering about the people who used it - but it is possible to take that wonder too far and invent histories which did not take place or for which there is no confirmatory data.

> Conventional landscape historians are mostly interested in gathering historical and archaeological data from the landscape and understanding how it reflects the modifications and adaptations made by past societies.
>
> Turner, 2006: 386

By the mid-1980s, archaeologists had access to improved excavation techniques and recording, technologies like improved aerial photography, vegetation and soils data, and climatic information, all of which greatly assisted with the development of landscape archaeology. Consideration was also given to how people's social relationships resulting in the linking of different areas. Together with new questions, these have permitted better understanding of the material substance of sites (Roberts 1987: 86). Another productive technique has been the increased use of environmental archaeology. These more practical approaches are much more suitable for this research.

On the other hand, Wilkinson suggests that part of the attraction of landscape studies is that it can include 'the extremes of both positivist processualist archaeologies and that of postprocessualist thought' (2006: 335). Landscape studies range from the standpoint of people like Aston and Taylor who concentrate on local or landscape history to that of Tilley whose approach, as has been shown above, is more towards the symbolic and abstract (*ibid*). Essentially, individual researchers seem to find their

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own place within the parameters although Wilkinson favours a holistic approach in which 'ecological, economic, cultural, political, and symbolic features of landscapes' are all considered. It necessary, though, to ensure that this inclusiveness does not become so broad as to render the subject vague (*ibid*).

A number of researchers have managed to study and publish their research without undue recourse to post-processual ideology. They have made full use of a variety of methods, in much the way that Wilkinson has advocated, to produce valuable and informative accounts of the landscape. Fleming, Winchester and Williamson have written about landscapes in styles that this research might aspire to emulate.

In looking at Swaledale, Fleming realised that 'Landscape archaeology is an approach which cannot be contained within narrow boundaries' (1998: vii). In his preface he observed that there were other aspects to be investigated, different from those which he had initially intended. Woodland management has a story that might be told, footpaths have a history and are not just there for ramblers to use, there may be relationships between farms, the large areas of common land of the past and current common rights that could be investigated. Consequently Fleming worked with documents, old and modern maps and used fieldwork. He found that place-names have an importance in the study of the last c. 1500 years and that these names can indicate past attitudes to the land (*ibid*: vii - viii). Importantly, he noted that there is satisfaction to be gained from finding that different pieces of evidence 'all point in the same direction' and that it is dissatisfying to use the archaeology of landscape just to demonstrate what is learnable from documents (*ibid*: viii). Fleming chose certain aspects of the Swaledale landscape to follow in detail and left others for future study. Those he followed included township patterns, local dialect words and place-names, old wood pastures, common land, and relationships between 'People, Places and Pathways'. He noted that he tried not to become obsessed with only one aspect - which in itself might provide material for several books - but to follow more general themes (*ibid*). In this respect the research in this thesis is in concordance with Fleming's approach.

Winchester decided to look at marginal land because he felt it had been neglected in the research. A good deal of work has been published about mediæval and early modern farming history, but upland areas of fell and moor have been considered to be agriculturally marginal. The lack of crop production or its weak development have

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led to such areas being seen as poor rather than resilient and innovative (2000: 3). Consequently Winchester examined 'most of the major surviving series of manor court records from before 1700' for the upland areas he had chosen to investigate. These records mainly begin around 1400 (*ibid*: 1 - 2). To produce his account, Winchester studied aspects such as the legal framework of property rights, the pattern of use of the fells and moors, the seasonal use of the hills and strategies for making a living (*ibid*: 4). Thus he limited the extent of his research by his choice of aspects to study but these were different from those chosen by Fleming.

Even the subtitle of Williamson's Shaping Medieval Landscapes - Settlement, Society, Environment - indicates that he has taken a wide-ranging approach to the subject. His research into open fields and champion landscapes has drawn material from both historians and geographers because 'variations in human landscape mirrored the patterns of soils, the urgings of topography' (2003: 21 - 23). Earlier geographers understood that there are 'complex and intricate relationships between society and environment' (*ibid*). However, most modern research into the mediæval landscape brushes subjects like geology and soils aside. Some modern landscape historians eschew the previous 'geographical determinism' in order to avoid the 'perceived excesses of an earlier generation of historical geographers' (*ibid*). As a result, the researched effects on open-field agriculture put emphasis on manorial lords and the reorganisation of the landscape, or on the possible effect of the emerging market economy on peasant farmers. The practice of agriculture - the equipment, problems of soil types or drainage and so forth - is thus avoided (*ibid*). In this thesis the research is strongly influenced by the availability of the manorial and economic records and the less easily obtained agricultural information.

Williamson emphasises the close relationship between human and natural landscapes: 'Farming in a pre-industrial age was influenced by innumerable, subtle and complex ways by environmental factors' (2003: 24). Human action, soils, topography and other factors have caused landscape types to be mixed rather than completely discrete. Open fields, Champion landscape, the various forms of agricultural patterns overlap and are often blurred along the edges where they meet, making study difficult (*ibid*: 24 - 25). Williamson's technique for dealing with this problem is to study an area large enough to cover a variety of landscape types, not the whole country nor a local area. In this way it is possible to gain an understanding of how the various landscapes relate to their environment.

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The other important aspect of Williamson's approach which he has used in other publications also, like *The Transformation of Rural England* (2010) and 'Understanding Enclosure' (in *Landscapes*, 2000), is that he does not necessarily undertake primary data collection on a large scale. Rather, he concentrates on collating data which have been collected by 'several generations of historians and archaeologists, amateur and professional'. He notes that there is no lack of data, but that it has not always been drawn together and interpreted fully (2003: 27). To achieve his aims he covers a variety of topics including different topographies and different types of landscape, society, maps, technology, agriculture types and methods (*ibid: passim*). Thus he, too, tends towards a holistic approach to the subject.

### 2.9 Conclusion to the discussion of the theoretical background

This investigation of the theories behind landscape archaeology has attempted to give an approximately chronological account of how relevant thinking has developed. There are many interesting strands to the theory, some of which are more practical than others and some which are more appropriate for this research. It should be clear from the material covered that certain ideas and approaches are not only more suitable but also more attractive for use in this work. Partly this is because, having a background as a geographer, I find the holistic narrative methodology more interesting. Nonetheless, as should be clear from the discussions above, consideration of the people of the landscape, their activities and ideas, merits inclusion.

In the next part of this chapter I will discuss how the theories have influenced the methodology used and go on to explain that methodology.

> ... it now seems admitted by most participants in historical and archaeological debates about interpretation of the past, that explanations have to be created using many different voices, methods, kinds of information. It would be a mistake to believe that any one discourse can offer, in advance, the dominant factor that drives a particular past event or trend - if any one factor is ever likely to do anyway.
>
> Bintliff, 2000: 164

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## 2.10 Methodology

### 2.10.1 *Introduction*

The discussions in the above sections have covered only some of the various theories and standpoints of landscape archaeologists. This is because attention has been paid to identifying ideas that may be useful and relevant to this research; these will assist in deciding the appropriate methodology.

The chief influences on this work are those of writers who have taken an interdisciplinary approach. Hoskins' work stimulated my initial interest in investigating the landscape of the North Pennines. His ability to produce an academic but readable account was inspirational to many. However, as noted in 2.4, there were drawbacks to his style. Winchester, Fleming and Williamson have undertaken landscape research that has built on Hoskins' work but which has been influenced also by the changing attitudes and theory of recent years.

There is a paucity of guidance in the literature to help with methodology. Moreover, as noted towards the end of section 2.8, many authors of landscape studies, including those who have influenced my research, do not make their methodology explicit. Nonetheless they manage to produce coherent accounts. One of the best explanations of research rationale, albeit for only one aspect of landscape, is found in Sarah Tarlow's *The Archaeology of Improvement in Britain* (2007) in which she takes the first 33 pages to introduce her research. It is necessary for this research into the landscape of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick to produce an approach which is clear and structured.

Some advice can be found in Brian Roberts' work. He has spent around 40 years researching and writing about landscape and rural settlement, especially in North-east England, so his suggestions are relevant to the region studied in this research. Roberts divided landscape study into three categories, which range from landscape archaeology to landscape history:

1. Uses documentary evidence like maps and involves the last 300 years or so.
2. Uses some documentary evidence, but this is usually not linked to landscape features, so information relies on survivals and excavations. This period, with knowledge tempered by historical information, lasts from around the Mid-Saxon to the seventeenth century.

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3. The period before this. There are some documents for the Roman and Iron Age, but the period relies heavily on excavations and some few survivals

(Roberts 1987: 85).

This provides some clues as to how to approach the research: the most recent periods can be studied using maps and documents (landscape history); the mediæval period has some documentary evidence but before that there is very little and excavation provides most information (landscape archaeology). Claval's approach is different and might appear less practical, although this is probably not the case in practice. Paul Claval, now retired, was a professor at the Sorbonne. Although he is a prolific writer on a variety of subjects, his interests are based on human and economic geography and these clearly influence his advice.

'Traditional rural landscapes may be studied according to three perspectives:

1. as sets of fields, meadows, pastures, woods, organised for agricultural production;
2. as expressions of the societies which inhabit them;
3. as a surface where to read nature and discover the existence of 'other worlds'.

(Claval, 2005: 11)

The first two of Claval's ideas are relevant to studying the landscape of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick but need to be studied mainly using the maps and documents advocated by Roberts. However, it can be seen that neither of these examples satisfactorily provides the interdisciplinary/holistic methodology required. Consequently a combination of these, together with the approaches taken by Williamson, Fleming and Winchester described at the end of 2.8, and the attention to geographical influences found in Muir's work, will be used as a basis for a suitable methodology for this research.

### 2.10.2 *Research Methodology*

It would be tidy to work systematically through a series of procedures and to emerge with beautifully linked research. Such a chronological progression to the methodology might be the ideal; however, in practice, research is not so orderly or obliging. Moreover, in this research, it was found that there were various starting points depending on the topic under scrutiny. To follow, for example, a thematic methodology throughout was therefore deemed inappropriate.

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This is because in this research the tasks, as already suggested, are very much interconnected. The discovery, for example, of a potential area of rig and furrow on Google Earth might require a field visit to confirm its identification - it could just be a drainage system. The HER needs to be checked to see if there is anything already recorded, as do other documentary sources and maps, both historic and modern. Yet this process could begin at any of those points and progress through the others in any order. This, in fact, is the most likely method of working and the different aspects of the research will start at different points depending upon their nature. Consequently, each topic and chapter will be approached differently. Despite this, the main sources of data are original documents, maps and fieldwork, with the other approaches taking a slightly more subordinate rôle. Further explanations of the methods used will be given in the appropriate places in the text. The chief points of the methodology employed are detailed below.

***The Historic Environment Record***

This is a useful starting point for much research as it provides data regarding what is already known about the area archaeologically. It gives little information about history or change but data for different periods add to or confirm other knowledge. The HER for Edmundbyers and Muggleswick will be used throughout the subsequent chapters but will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

The HER was obtained early in the research process on a CD directly from the Durham County Archaeologist's department. This meant that there was a possibility of data added subsequently being missed. Checking with the Keys to the Past website allowed any new records to be included. There is less information on Keys to the Past than in the full HER, but it proved to be adequate for the purpose.

***Maps***

There are maps of the region dating from at least the 1600s although not all of them are very informative. The early ones are useful for communications research (Chapter 6) but the detail is inadequate for anything else. The first really detailed map of the parishes is the hand-drawn estate map drawn in 1800. This shows the locations of all the buildings, the layout of the fields in relation to physical features like watercourses, and has links to the estate book which details the tenants and the land they held at the time. There is a subsequent estate map dated 1850. However, by this date the

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Ordnance Survey was producing high quality large-scale maps which are better for purposes of comparison.

The estate maps and the subsequent editions of the Ordnance Survey maps will be used throughout the research to guide fieldwork, to help interpret aerial photographs and for retrogressive analysis of fields and settlements (especially in chapters 3 and 5). Details of how the maps have been employed will be given in the appropriate chapters.

Other maps which are of use are the Geological Survey, the soils map and L. Dudley Stamp's 1930s Land Use map. The first two help to establish the nature of the land in the parishes; the Land Use map will be used to help establish changes that have occurred in modern times.

While Roberts (see above), Hoskins, and even Johnson, have advocated the use of maps to at least some degree, they have been considered controversial documents. 'Mentally "peeling off" ' layers from maps, including the six-inch to the mile first edition O.S. map, removes 'the accretions of the last century and a half' (Johnson, 2007: 86 - 87). This can usefully remove evidence of industry, railway lines and other such 'modern' additions to the landscape. When Williamson examined the first edition six-inch map of East Anglia he discovered coaxial field systems dating from the Roman period or earlier and associated tracks (1998: 23 - 25). Arguments made by post-colonial theorists about the use of maps have included the idea that maps form part of the colonial apparatus to help administration (Johnson, 2007:87). However, most map users find the symbols on O.S. maps enabling, not colonialist; for example the maps 'encode and enshrine' property rights while recording rights of way (*ibid*: 88). Estate maps may well be biased in their content but this is not surprising; whether or not they intended to be élitist, they naturally featured information of importance in running the estate rather than that of general interest. Nonetheless, in the absence of anything more egalitarian, they provide valuable data and the Muggleswick Estate maps take knowledge of the area to a period pre-dating the Ordnance Survey. The Ordnance Survey maps, especially the more recent editions, should demonstrate no relevant partiality despite their original military associations.

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***Documents and previous research***

Edmundbyers and Muggleswick are both mentioned in the Boldon Book, but little information is provided. The northern parts of England were too dangerous for the men tasked with gathering data for the Domesday Book, so no survey was undertaken until 1180. This resulted in the Boldon Book which provides information about landholdings and associated matters, in a similar manner to Domesday. Other than this, the earliest documents available are those dating from the period when the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick estate belonged to Durham Cathedral Priory. These documents were written between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries and give useful information about the formation and running of the estate. Generally, the originals are in the archives at Durham University. However, reading them can be challenging. Johnson acknowledges the usefulness of documents like tax, parish and estate records, but notes that 'The transcription and interpretation of these records is a specialized skill and subdiscipline in its own right. The scholar wishing to use them in any detail requires skills of palaeography, and in many cases knowledge of medieval Latin' (2007: xix).

Consequently I chose to use the transcripts produced by the Surtees Society. Sometimes these also have translations but many are still in Latin and even translating the printed text is a challenge. Knowledge of Classical Latin, a mediæval Latin dictionary and common sense assisted in extracting useful information. Few of these documents contain a significant amount of data, so it was a case of teasing out useful facts and joining them together to help describe the estate. The use of such manorial records reflects the methods of Fleming and Williamson described above (2.8).

The Survey undertaken in 1649 under Cromwell's Commonwealth was transcribed by Muriel Sobo. This is a useful document, in the English of the time, providing details of farmers and their holdings. The associated map would have been an asset in understanding the area in that period, but is missing.

There are also later documents, such as agreements and leases. These may also prove to have valuable information, so that an attempt will be made to tie some of them to the farmsteads that will be looked at in detail. This should help to indicate the continuity of tenure, or lack of it. However, there will remain a substantial amount of data for future research. This is because so many of the farms were rented and

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leases are often listed for several generations. Undertaking this at a future date will increase understanding of the agricultural practices of the UDV.

Previous research into the area is limited. It includes that produced by the Revd. Walker Featherstonhaugh in the Victorian period and some undergraduate studies. Featherstonhaugh's extended incumbency at St Edmund's allowed him to indulge his academic interest in antiquities and he was able to compile both an account of the church and a history of Edmundbyers. Apart from Sobo's contributions, the main student works of use are those of Carole Ross concerning Pedam's Oak and Paul Brassley's study of the agricultural economy of Northumberland and Durham. Where this data is unique and relevant it will be used, otherwise the original data will be sought in preference. Other research is applicable to the North Pennines more generally and includes works concerning such specialist fields as climate and lead mining. Manley's climate research in the North Pennines and Pigott's account of the climate of Teesdale in Clapham's *Upper Teesdale* both provide useful material with which to compare the situation in the UDV, while Turner and Hodgson produced interesting palynological research for the area. The geology of the North Pennines, especially in relation to lead mining, is well described by Dunham, Raistrick and by Johnson and Pigott, the latter two in Clapham. Sopwith, Pirt and Dodds, Thompson, Turnbull, and Crossley and Patrick have all provided expert information about lead mining and other extractive industries. Similarly, Mawer, Egglestone and Beckensall furnished valuable data regarding local place-names.

Documentary source material is therefore useful for several aspects of the research for this thesis. It provides background information about the history, environment and occupations of the parishes as well as indicating some starting points for research, such as using the 1649 Survey to assess the field and village layouts.

***Photographs and aerial photographs***

Historic photographs hold valuable information about how the area looked in the past and permit comparisons with the current situation regarding buildings, vegetation, land use and roads. Fortunately a number of photographs of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick exist, many dating from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century and they will be used in comparisons with the current situation where appropriate, including in looking at the architecture of buildings in chapters 3, 4 and 5.

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Historic aerial photographs can be used similarly. The photographs taken immediately post-World War II are available via Google Earth, although there are limitations of scale and resolution; the current Google Earth views can be used to make comparisons between the two periods. Google Earth can be used to check the locations and characters of field boundaries, the extent of woodland, current land use and the footprints of buildings. Its most exciting use is in searching for areas of previous cultivation or other human activity that are not recorded on maps or in documents, or whose documented location is uncertain. In this way it will be particularly beneficial in the research in Chapter 4 regarding the waxing and waning of cultivated land. The chief drawback to the aerial photographs of the North Pennines is that much of the unenclosed land is covered by heather which masks the details of the land beneath. The use of LIDAR would solve this problem but, unfortunately, it is not yet available for the parishes of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers at a price which is affordable. Google Earth images are not completely up to date, some having been taken up to ten years ago. Generally this does not pose a problem for this research as the data is sufficient for the task and other criticisms, for example regarding its stability, are not relevant.

Following the Second World War aerial photographs, as noted above (and in section 2.3), became a common tool for identifying and interpreting mediæval sites. They may also have had a æsthetic appeal (Johnson, 2007: 89). However, a criticism is that they echo the elevated view of the land advocated by Wordsworth. The pattern of the landscape, though, dominates aerial photographs 'in a manner that subtly suggests that it is independent of human agency' (*ibid*: 90). Aerial photographs are complex and multi-layered, so that skill is needed in decoding them well (ibid). These possible drawbacks do not reduce the usefulness of such material since any effort to deduce information from aerial photographs can be beneficial.

***Fieldwork***

Although Johnson suggests that 'getting your boots dirty' and the empiricism of observation without theory (2007: 82) are undesirable, I believe that there is no substitute for field survey. Moreover, with time and experience, careful looking can mean that features are discovered which might otherwise be missed, or their relationships to each other go unrecognised. However, this needs to be undertaken in association with other methods of research. Features observed in the field need, when possible, to be linked with map and documentary evidence. Fieldwork,

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therefore, has various benefits. Often, details that are not visible on aerial photographs and are not recorded on maps can be seen on the ground. Thus new knowledge can be added to the data. Sometimes this is the character of a field boundary, sometimes an entirely unrecorded earthwork. As Johnson notes, the features observed might prove to be due to more than one process, as with a ditch that was not dug all in one go or which was re-dug several times (2007: 72). This level of detail is unlikely to be observable on a map or aerial photograph.

Fieldwork will be used for three main purposes in this research. Firstly it will enable me to evaluate the landscape changes indicated by the retrogressive analysis of maps, including the routes of roads. Secondly, it makes feasible a more detailed analysis of the field boundaries because it will be possible to categorise the types of boundary; from this, something of their chronology can be established. Finally, fieldwork will be used to find new landscape data and to study the development of buildings in the parishes, thus adding to current knowledge.

***Environment***

It was stated in 2.10.1 that acknowledgement would be made in this research to the relevance of geography to the development of the landscape, following the example of Muir. There is a wealth of such data, all of which a geographer might deem important. However, in the case of this research, it is necessary to select the data that are directly pertinent. The importance of geographical information should not be underestimated, however, and so details of geology, soils, topography, vegetation and climate will be described where they are relevant to an understanding of the landscape of the North Pennines and, particularly, to the parishes of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers. As noted above, maps are of assistance in this and sketch maps to show these data will be used to complement the text.

Research by Manley and Parry into climate and by Dunham, Raistrick and others into the geology of the region will be referred to. However, the comparisons required by the investigation of climatic influences meant that I needed to design a formula to make use of meteorological data acquired from the Meteorological Office website. The climate, geology, soils and topography have all influenced agricultural practices and the landuse of the UDV, so will be referred to in chapters 4 (Climate) and 5 (Enclosure). The geology is relevant to mining and thus links to chapter 3 (History) and 6 (Communications), while topography is also connected to chapter 6.

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### 2.10.3 *Methodology Conclusion*

Fleming observes that there is satisfaction to be gained from gathering information and, on putting the different pieces together, finding that they 'all point in the same direction'. However, he also notes that using the archaeology of a landscape just to demonstrate what is recorded in the documents is dissatisfying (1998: viii). The task, then, is not only to use different data to support each other in establishing a narrative of landscape development but to be able to add new information which increases our understanding. In this research there will be a good deal of 'putting together' of data in order to produce a more complete account of the parishes. This is similar to the drawing together and better interpretation of data advocated by Williamson (see section 2.8). However, there will also be new information as a result of fieldwork or new interpretations of historic documents.

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# CHAPTER 3

# A BACKGROUND HISTORY OF THE PARISHES

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a general background history to the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick in order to provide a context for the subsequent chapters. It looks at information from documents and maps, from the Historic Environment Record, place-names, architecture and other sources; these will be drawn upon in other parts of this and later chapters.

As noted in the introductory chapter (1.2), the parishes have been closely linked for much of their history and their stories from at least Norman times have been related, although not identical. For some periods little is known, but for others there is useful documentary evidence. The methodology section (2.10) explained that is not always possible to look at the various types of data in a completely chronological manner without making them difficult to follow, so here they will be introduced as topics and references will be made to link them. The useful documentary sources will be described first, followed by a general history of the two parishes, as background to the subsequent research.Then research into place-name evidence for the history of the area, using documents and maps, is described. The Historic Environment Record supplements the foregoing and contributes to knowledge of the development of the parishes. An important section provides an investigation into the architectural history, including field observations, concentrating on several of the older buildings. Finally, in order to complete the picture of the way in which the landscape and settlements evolved and to set subsequent chapters in context, there is a description of the mining and quarrying which occurred.

## 3.2 Source documents

A number of documentary sources have informed this chapter on the history of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers. Other documents and books have provided data for subsequent chapters and will be introduced in the appropriate places. A brief

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discussion of the sources for this chapter will assist in an understanding of their relevance.

Most useful have been the works of Robert Surtees of Mainforth and the Surtees Society. The former provides an overview of the history of the parishes. The latter publications comprise numerous books which contain translations or, more often, transcriptions of mediæval documents. The originals of these documents are mainly to be found in the archives of Durham Cathedral. It is possible to work directly from the originals but the transcriptions save a good deal of time. In the cases where the documents are transcribed but not translated the language is Mediæval Latin; sometimes there have been errors in transcription and several of these have caused confusion in past studies of the parishes. New explanations have been provided for these which have clarified aspects of the research.

The starting point for documentary data is the *Boldon Book*, compiled in 1183. This appears in the *Victoria County History* for Durham and provides information about who held the parishes at the time. Greenwell's work on the *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis* (1871) for the Surtees Society gives much helpful data regarding the growth of the Manor of Muggleswick as land was donated to Durham Cathedral Priory, mainly by the Bishop of Durham. The development of the mediæval estate is explained in this volume. In the course of these descriptions the *Feodarium* also supplies small hints to the road system at the time and to the settlement at Pedam's Oak. Much of the data is spread among other volumes and it is necessary to extract information in small amounts - perhaps a single comment - and combine these clues to form a coherent account.

Other helpful Surtees Society publications include Fraser (1991) *Durham Quarter Sessions Rolls 1471 - 1625*,which has comments useful for considering resistance to enclosure, and Longstaffe and Booth (1889) *Halmota Prioratus Dunelmensis*, the rolls of the halmote court, which has information about the ways in which people may have resisted estate regulations and enclosure, and links with local repercussions to the Peasants' Revolt.

Meade Falkner (1929) *The Statutes of The Cathedral Church of Durham* contains the details of the document of Endowment of the estate by Henry VIII to the Dean and Chapter and information about how the land was divided between the prebendaries,

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as well as a brief note about the curate at Muggleswick. Information about John Dury, incumbent of Edmundbyers and later of Muggleswick is found in Ornsby (1869-72) *The correspondence of John Cosin, D.D., Lord Bishop of Durham*. In Raine (1844) *The Durham household book, or, The accounts of the Bursar of the monastery of Durham from Pentecost 1530 to Pentecost 1534* there are clues to the management of the estate, transactions with outside organisations, agricultural details and links to the road network information. Hind (1952) *Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham 1530 - 59 and James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham 1561 - 76* has information about the appointment of a priest to Edmundbyers in the sixteenth century.

These books all provide transcripts and/or translations of the documents in the archives. They give insights to the daily working of the estate, the activities of the inhabitants and clues which can be linked together to gain an understanding of the area. Together they form the foundation for the history of the two parishes in the period between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries.

Added to these are a number of works which have analysed and studied the above volumes, and others, such as Morimoto's assessment of the sheep farming and Dodds (2007) *Peasants and Production in the Medieval North-East*. Learned accounts of the area by antiquarians such as Featherstonhaugh (*Notes on St Edmund's Church and Edmundbyers*) and Greenwell and Knowles (*Muggleswick*) have added much to the research despite being written more than a century ago.

Then there are numerous popular narratives, often with a great deal of useful factual information as well as local folklore and more fanciful accounts. These include Bellam's *A Guide to places of Interest and Beauty in the Derwent Valley* (1938), Fawcett's *Historic Places in the Derwent Valley* (1901) and Wade's *The Upper Derwent Valley from Bolts Law to Howens Gill* (1967) as well as *The Derwent Valley and other poems* by Alexander Barrass (1887). Used with care, such literature can add to the history. Perhaps one of the most useful is *The Edmundbyers Book*, produced by the village to commemorate the millennium. While it reiterates much of the material covered elsewhere, it includes personal accounts and details of houses not otherwise available. Muggleswick parish has also produced a small book, but with less material.

Particularly helpful are previous studies of aspects of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers. Among them is Ross' account of Pedam's Oak (1987), although

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Pedam's was not part of the estate; nonetheless, the study has provided useful information for this and subsequent chapters, especially about farm development. Muriel Sobo's (1995) transcription of the *Parliamentary Survey* undertaken in 1649, during the Commonwealth, has made access to details about the people, farms, buildings and fields of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick much easier. These details, in turn, have proved to be valuable in solving a number of 'mysteries'.

Finally there are academic books and papers about the area or wider region which can be used to explain or understand what was going on in the parishes. These include Atkinson, Frank (2001) *Life and Tradition in Northumberland and Durham* and Lomas and Muir (2006) *The North East in the Medieval Period*. The excavations at Muggleswick in 2010 and 2011 have added to knowledge of the estate centre and are recorded in the Report by Addyman Archaeology and the North Pennines AONB.

### 3.3 A general history of the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick

The Boldon Book states that 'The Prior [of Durham] holds Muglyngwyc, as is expressed in his charter, as well of the Bishop's favour, as in exchange for Herdewic' (Greenwell, 1871: 182). This exchange of the manor of Muggleswick for Hardwick must have occurred before the compilation of the Boldon Book in 1183 and during the time that Hugh Pudsey (Hugh le Puiset) was Bishop of Durham. Hugh was Bishop of Durham from 1153 until 1195 (Greenway, 1971: 30). Thomas, and then Germanus, were the Priors during this period. Muggleswick thus became the property of the Prior and Convent of Durham. While the Bishop kept his hunting rights, the Prior and Convent were given the right to assart *octies viginti acras* - eight times twenty acres - from the west part of the vill and north and east, with pasture at Horsleyhope, Hisehope and Baldinghope while the Bishop kept his hunting rights in the area (Greenwell, 1871: 182; appendix A.1). Further grants continued to add land into the fourteenth century, some of which were for vaccaries, some woodland, meadow and waste. These additions may be seen in figure 3.1 and details are in appendix A.2.

The further grants of land came from private individuals, but the largest areas were given by the Bishops of Durham and permitted enclosure (figure 3.1). In 1259 Bishop Walter Kirkham (1249-1260) granted Prior Hugh de Derlington and the Convent of Durham the right to enclose woodland in the vill of Muggleswick. The area described includes the site of the Grange which was subject to recent excavation. It runs from

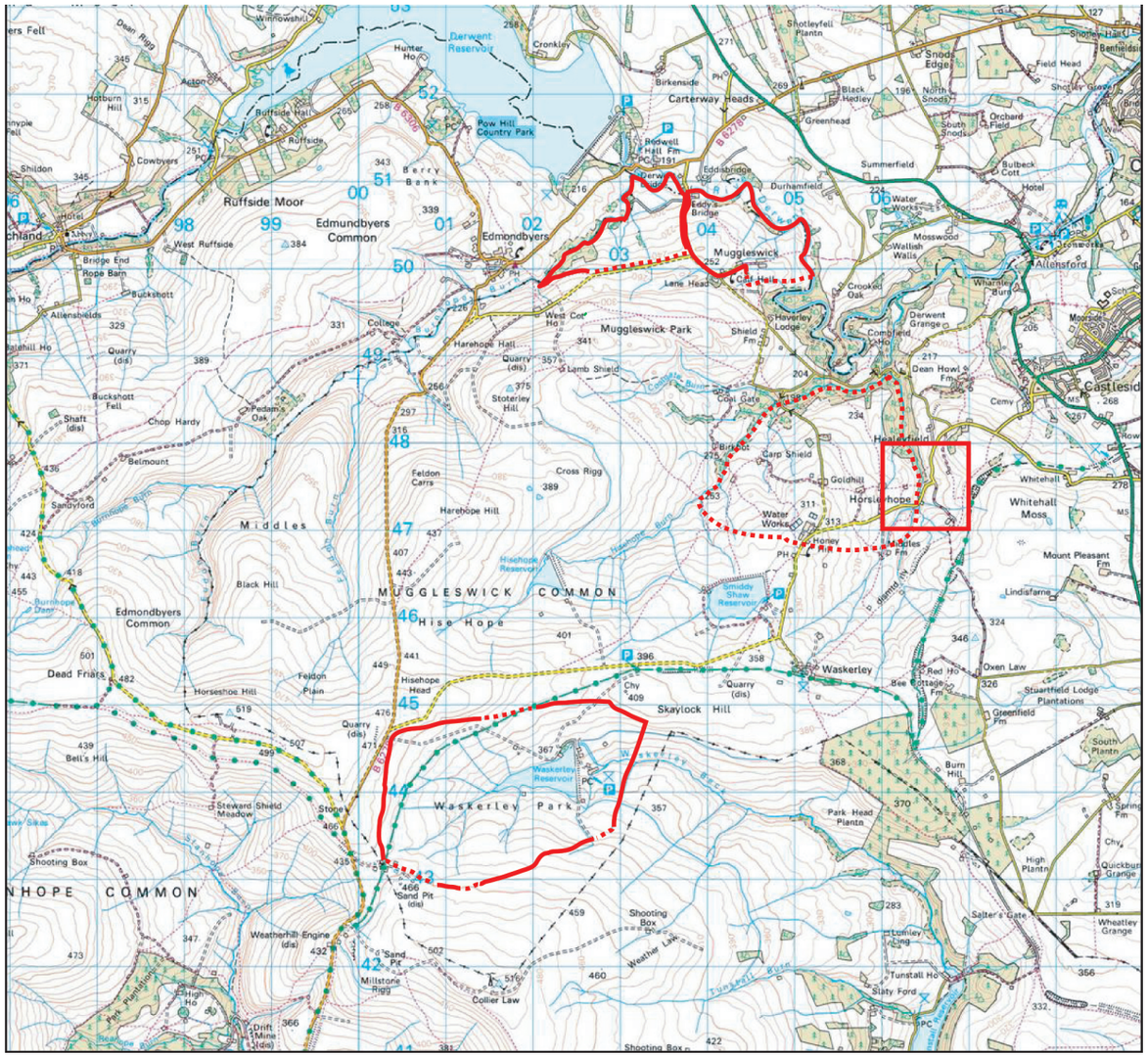



*Figure 3.1: Map showing the land grants in Muggleswick and Edmundbyers made to Durham Cathedral Priory*



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a point on the River Derwent called 'Flaynardisburg' (I believe this is a mis-transcription of 'Reynardisburg' and refers to an area shown on recent maps as 'Fox Hills' or 'Fox Holes') westwards to a location opposite the church (a good indication of the antiquity of the church site), north to the 'manor' (the Grange buildings) given earlier to Durham Cathedral Priory, then west to the great road called 'Balyolfgate' (see chapter 6). The boundary then follows the road north to 'Thoraldebrigge' and returns to the start along the Derwent (Greenwell, 1871: 182). The grant allowed them 'all rights appertaining to a free park' except that they could not make an enclosure to capture wild animals (Greenwell and Knowles, 1896: 5).

In 1260, Bishop Walter gave the Priory another 216 acres of wood and waste in Horsleyhope where the Hisehopeburn flows into the Horsleyhopeburn and extending southwards to the south corner of the Prior's vaccary (cattle farm), following the vaccary wall back to the Hisehopeburn and from there to the confluence of the two streams. The Prior and Convent were allowed to enclose this land provided they allowed the wildlife free ingress and egress (Greenwell, 1871: 184). This document is interesting in that it mentions a vaccary not detailed in earlier documents, and an existing wall.

Robert de Stichill (Bishop of Durham 1260-74) added to the Prior and Convent's holdings by giving them land in Horsleyhope for a vaccary, and forty acres adjacent to it which they were allowed to enclose to make a meadow (Greenwell, 1871: 182 - 3). This grant would appear to conflict with the previous one as it suggests that the vaccary was established after the 1260 gift from Bishop Walter. However, it makes reference to an earlier Bishop - Richard Marsh (1217-26) - and Prior - Ralph Kerneth (c.1218-34) - who apparently made a verbal agreement for a vaccary, with this document of Bishop Robert seemingly ratifying it. As usual, the Bishop wanted the animals of the forest to be able to come and go freely so that his hunting could be maintained. Following on from this, Bishop Robert gave the estate another 860 acres of woodland called Denshelm and another 140 acres of waste. This latter area is described as being in the west part of Muggleswick, on the right side of the road that ran from Muggleswick towards Edmundbyers "just where the stream from Edmundbyers flows into the Derwent". Bishop Robert also included another 60 acres on the south side of Denshelm (Greenwell, 1871: 183). Antony Beck (Bishop of Durham 1284 - 1310), in 1291, confirmed the land grants by Robert Stichil, emphasising the animal-proof boundary and penalties for illegal entry (*ibid*). It can

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thus be seen that, in the space of about a century, the Muggleswick estate had grown considerably, with large parts of it enclosed.

In the Boldon Book Edmundbyers is described as being held by Alan Bruncoste for his service in the forest. It passed through several owners until in 1325 part of it was passed by Walter de Insula to Sir John de Cotum, who also had the advowson of the church. He gave his lands in Edmundbyers to the Prior and Convent, who already owned about a third of the vill, the mill and the advowson of the church. Edmundbyers seems, subsequently, to have become the township for the estate and the location for the Halmote Courts (Greenwell, 1871: 179-80).

Wascrophead was added to the lands belonging to Muggleswick in 1311. Bishop Richard de Kellawe gave the Prior and Convent of Durham a large area of land adjacent to his park at Wascrop. It was an area of wood and waste which straddled the ridge between the Bishop's park to the east and the road from Stanhope to Corbridge on the west. This document refers to the boundaries of the Bishop's park and of this new grant of land. The land given to the Priory abutted the palisade of the Bishop's park and the Wascrophead enclosure was to be marked by a wall or boundary comprising a ditch or wooden palisade, or some other suitable system (Greenwell, 1871: 184). The 'park pale' continues to be shown on Ordnance Survey maps and is still visible on the ground (fig. 3.2).

At the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Prior was appointed Dean of Durham and the estate came into the ownership of the Dean and Chapter. The land was then divided between the fifth, sixth and eighth prebends of the cathedral. Over the years, the prebends seem to have been loathe to pay their dues for the land, or to take care of the buildings thereon. Possibly it was during this time that the grange buildings fell into disrepair. While part of these still stands, excavation of other parts by volunteers from the Upper Derwent History and Archaeology Society, Altogether Archaeology (North Pennines AONB) and by Addyman Archaeology has revealed additional well-constructed buildings and has updated information recorded by Greenwell and Knowles (fig. 3.3).

The adjacent parishes of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers have several obvious differences. Muggleswick is an ecclesiastical and civil parish, has a church, a village hall in the former school building and a parish council, but no nucleated settlement.

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*Figure 3.2: The remains of the park pale - the ditch and embankment - enclosing the land at Wascropheued given to Durham Cathedral Priory. The photograph shows where it is crossed by the later Stanhope-Tyne Railway, now the Waskerley Way footpath.*



*Figure 3.3: The remaining upstanding structure at Durham Cathedral Priory's grange at Muggleswick and some of the walls revealed during excavations*

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From the 1649 Parliamentary Survey (Sobo, 1995) it is clear that for several hundred years, at least, the parish has consisted of farms and houses scattered singly or in twos and threes. The Survey describes each farm in a similar way:

> All that messuage or farme howse with the appurtenances the walls built of stone and clay and thatched with linge with a close called Upper feilde pasture whereon the said howse is scituate boundered with Lysey feild on the north Conteyning by estimacion six acres with A Close of meadowe called Grinsehaugh boundered with the wilkes to the north Conteyning by estimacion sixteene acres the Calfe close hill meadowe boundered with Edward Wardes springe on the East Conteyning by estimacion ten acres....
>
> (p.9 of the original 1649 Survey)

Not only does this suggest that each farm lay within its own fields, separated from its neighbours and not in a nucleated settlement, but also that the land was already at least partially enclosed and allocated to each farmstead. The locations of many of these farms can still be identified, either still called by the same name or named after the fields they were situated in.

It is possible that there was a village in the early mediæval period which was destroyed, although evidence is exceedingly scarce. The only reference I have been able to find to a township is 'the demolished (*prostrata*) township of Muggleswick' in a discussion of the emoluments for the priest at Muggleswick. He was entitled to an income 'of old' from the prior and the township but this clearly had not happened for some time and evidence was obtained from two local men, one of whom was 'older and more informed concerning the estate of the chaplain of Muggleswick' (PR. III: 4). The enquiry took place around 1431, but the use of an older witness suggests that the township may have been demolished well before that date. There is no information regarding the reason for its demolition; it is possible that there was a decline in population following the Black Death so that the village was underpopulated or abandoned like many others around the country. Alternatively, reorganisation of the estate at some stage may have started the process of establishing scattered farms instead. Another interesting statement in the same document is that he should have a horse 'for riding to his infirm parishioners' (PR III: 4). This suggests that a good number of people in the parish lived at a distance from the church and not within easy walking range - unless the priest was too posh to walk - which

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supports the notion that much of the population, if not all, resided in dispersed houses and not in a nucleated settlement.

It is also thought that there may have been a church before the priory, possibly on the site of the present one. Certainly a predecessor of the present Victorian church is mentioned in various documents of the later Middle Ages - maybe this was the one described in 1820 as consisting 'of a narrow nave and chancel, without tower or ailes'. The church is mentioned in the land grant of 1259 (see appendix A.1) and the list of incumbents starts in 1323 with Richard Staykiston (Surtees: 1820, 1972: 361). Thus, it seems, Muggleswick has had a community identity throughout, and continues to have some social cohesion, despite the disseminated nature of its residences. This is supported by the fact that it had a school and that the present village hall runs events that are organised and attended by people living within the parish as well attracting outsiders, as well as the parish council.

A Terrier (a document listing the property of a church and its parish which is delivered to the diocese) delivered in 1788 describes the ecclesiastical living of Muggleswick as consisting of 'a cottage-house, with an enclosure of two acres and three quarters, abutting every way on the Moor' and with income from tithes from Cold Rowley (to the east) and from two small farms in Allendale (to the west). In the same year, the Terrier for Edmundbyers indicates that the living was superior to that of Muggleswick, since 'the glebe, &c' consisted 'of a parsonage-house, stable, barn and byer, all under one roof; a small garth betwixt the Rectory and the Church-yard, one end abutting the street [Church Lane], and the other adjoining the glebe, which contains three inclosed pieces of pasture or meadow, the whole about 12 acres, abutting on the Church-yard on three sides, and on the common to the West'. The incumbent had income from rent for these fields, tithes (in some periods from the local lead industry) of £65 per annum. In 1820 the Parsonage-house was said to have been 'extremely improved by the present incumbent' (Surtees: 1820, 1972).

Edmundbyers, unlike Muggleswick, seems to have been a nucleated settlement since the Middle Ages and may even have existed in the Anglo-Saxon period, although no firm evidence for the latter has yet been established.

The stone church of St Edmund was built around 1150, possibly on the site of an earlier, less solid, structure. In 1820 it was 'a mean structure, consisting of a nave and

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chancel, the latter supported on short buttresses' (Surtees: 1820, 1972: 363). During Victorian renovations, Featherstonhaugh (1859) identified several features which he attributed to the Saxon period and there are features which St Edmund's shares with other nearby early churches, like St Ebba's at Ebchester. Whether the village is named for the farms around the church, or the church was dedicated to match the existing name of the village is likely to remain unknown. However, Edmundbyers, in one of its various spelling incarnations, is mentioned in a fourteenth century document in a reference quoted from a document of c.1068, as well as in the Boldon Book. This parish, also, currently has a number of scattered farmsteads and the hamlets of Ruffside (still in existence, albeit probably not in the same form) and Pedom's Oak (reduced to a single farm and now unoccupied) both of which feature in records from the mediæval period.

While the 1649 Parliamentary Survey of the Manor of Muggleswick indicates a similar pattern of settlement to that still found today for Muggleswick itself, the situation for Edmundbyers is different. The Survey, as noted in section 3.5), suggests that the village stretched along the main road from Blanchland in a simple pattern. However it is known that houses other than those mentioned were built during the seventeenth century, or earlier, further from the Blanchland road, which did not belong to the estate and were thus not included in the Survey. The Survey does, however state that the occupants of the listed houses held dales or moieties in the Town Fields, which strongly suggests that much of the land was still being farmed in common.

One major supposition made about the village by Hardie was that Edmundbyers had been built around a green on the instructions of the Bishop, as occurred in other parts of the county (NAA, 2005: 14, passim). The current village green, she suggests, may have earlier buildings beneath it, so her contender for the Bishop's green is the triangle formed by the Blanchland and Stanhope roads and Church Lane (fig. 3.4). Discussion about the road layout will take place in chapter 7, but it seems likely that the Stanhope road as it exists now post-dates the Bishop's decree. Moreover, John Durie, vicar before and after the Parliamentary period, complained on his return that the parishioners had not maintained 'a road which late belonged to the parsonage-house for use of the sheep grazing the church-yard and a close adjoining' (Surtees 1820/1972: 364) - which implies that he meant Church Lane and possibly The Closes. If the Stanhope road had been in use, access to the churchyard would have been relatively easy from that direction as an alternative, giving less cause for his

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*Figure 3.4: The putative village green, delineated by the yellow lines*

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complaint. The lane called The Closes, which cuts through the aforementioned triangle of land, may be indicative of this area of the village being subject to early enclosure. This also makes it less likely that the 'triangle' was a village green. Perhaps the most compelling evidence is the existence of ridge and furrow within the 'triangle', visible on photographs taken before the area was built on, still visible in the village hall field, and possibly a continuation of cultivation in the area to the south on the other side of the B6278. The long-term study of Durham villages by Brian Roberts also suggests that Edmundbyers was not one of the Bishop's green villages. Although not mentioned by name (an indicator in itself) it does appear on his maps in quite another guise.

Edmundbyers had a school well into the twentieth century; both the earlier and the later school buildings still exist as private residences. An earlier village hall was requisitioned during World War II and the villagers held whist drives in their homes to raise the money to build a new one. About this time the Methodist chapel became available and with the help of Sir Andrew Common, the shipowner, who lived at Ruffside, the building was acquired for the village. The community continues to make good use of it with various activity groups, concerts, dances and plays. Edmundbyers also has a thriving Women's Institute, drawing members from Muggleswick, Blanchland and Castleside. There is no parish council, however. What Edmundbyers has, instead, is an older democratic system - a Parish Meeting - which represents the community in local government matters but does not have the power to levy a rate.

In addition to the main settlements, there is evidence for nuclei of dwellings at Pedom's Oak and at Ruffside. Both appear in documents such as the Halmote Court Rolls, the records of Durham Priory and Diocese and of Sherburn Hospital. The mediæval village of Ruffside has long since vanished and the site is uncertain, but there is still an estate hamlet belonging to Ruffside Hall. Pedom's Oak belonged for some time to Sherburn Hospital and it appears with similar - and sometimes greater - importance to Edmundbyers and Blanchland on maps from the sixteenth century. This significance may be due to the road system of the time (see chapter 6).

Further information from which it is possible to gain a general impression of the settlement of the area may be found in the records of the Halmote Court, of the Priors of Durham who owned the manor from the 1100s, and of the Diocese of Durham

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which regained ownership after the Dissolution of the monasteries. Some examples of such information are used in subsequent chapters.

There is also the railway village of Waskerley, formed in the area of Wascrop/Wascropheuad which is mentioned in mediæval documents. Waskerley was built because of the Stanhope-Tyne railway and has a detailed history of its own associated with that; the story of the railway and the village will be told in chapter 6.

### 3.4 Place-name study

The names discussed below have been collected from the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map of the parishes. The names of the settlements are all considered in detail, but those of watercourses and other physical features are discussed in general terms with the more interesting examples looked at more closely.

#### 3.4.1 *Settlement names*

The place-names Muggleswick and Edmundbyers are both comprised of elements of Old English together with personal names. Mawer gives Muggleswick as the 'dwelling of Mucel's son' (1920: 146). It is generally assumed that Mucel was Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian. Mawer records several references to the name in which the spelling varies quite widely (*ibid*), as is common with place-names throughout history. The earliest he gives is 1190, with others from thirteenth century documents. The Boldon Book dates from c. 1183 and notes that 'The prior of Durham has Muglyngwic', stating that the prior acquired it from the bishop, partly in exchange for Hardwick. Muggleswick was clearly in existence, therefore, well before 1183. Although places named later in history often include elements with earlier origins as a deliberate policy nod towards traditionalism, it can be concluded that this is unlikely to have been the case with Muggleswick. Consequently it must have originated at the latest as an Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian settlement.

Edmundbyers also occurs in the Boldon Book: 'Alan Bruntoft holds Edmundbires for his service in the forest'. Mawer, however, gives his earliest reference to it as being from *Feodarium Priorensis Dunelmensis* in 1228 (1920: 72). Nonetheless, he interprets it as 'Edmund's byres'. *Bȳre* is Old English for a byre, shed or hovel (*ibid*: 225). Various spellings have been used over the years, with much more controversy than has been the case with the spelling of Muggleswick. Apart from the mis-spelling of 'byers' as 'byres', the most usual contentious spelling is of Edmund as Edmond. In fact, this

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was a spelling much used in the nineteenth century and taught to village schoolchildren in the early twentieth (Elsie and Ernie Walton, pers. comm.), although the Revd. Walker Featherstonhaugh (vicar of Edmundbyers 1856 - 1904) used the 'u' spelling. Part of the controversy has been fuelled by a thirteenth century document which contains the spelling Edmondbyers in a reference to another document of *circa* 1064. Investigations have produced an explanation for the 'u' and 'o' spellings. Edmund is the Anglo-Saxon spelling of the name, Edmond the Norman-French.

Many of the documents of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries would have been written by monks whose education, if not birth, was Norman. Thus they would have naturally used the spelling to which they were accustomed. However, the village church is dedicated to St. Edmund, a Saxon saint, and the name has the Saxon spelling. The dedication of the church cannot be a coincidence. It was either named for the village, or vice-versa. Egglestone, despite favouring the Norman spelling, notes that 'Edmondbyres [is] the byres or buildings of Saint Edmond to whom the church there is dedicated' and explains a 'byre' as a 'cowhouse' (1886: 118). This makes a Saxon spelling of the village name more likely, especially with the Old English element 'byre' appended.

It would appear, therefore, that the two major settlements of the parishes have their origins in the period before the Norman Conquest and would generally be considered Anglo-Saxon, although precise dates are impossible to establish and parts of the region were more subject to Scandinavian influence.

The names of the smaller settlements may be later. Ruffside, not part of the Muggleswick estate but now within Edmundbyers parish, is often given as 'Roughside'. According to local knowledge it was the landowner who claimed that the area was named after the bird - the ruff - and the spelling has followed that since. However, older versions of the name indicate that the first element is 'rough' (Rughside in the 1382 *Hatfield Survey*) from the Middle English *rūh*. The second element (M.E. *sīde*) means the slope of a hill or bank, which is an apt description for a settlement on the side of a valley (Mawer, 1920: 169, 238). The Middle English origins of the name indicate that the establishment of the settlement was probably later than Edmundbyers and Muggleswick.

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Eddy's Bridge, a settlement on either side of a bridging point on the Derwent, has a more romantic, but unsubstantiated, tale attached. King Edward III was supposed to have crossed the river at this point while travelling between battles. Mawer (1920: 71) suggests that the first element may come from the personal name Edith or from Aeddi. However, some maps, such as Dix (1818), Smith (1804) and Smith and Jones (1801), call it Earl's Bridge. This is a likely name because of the route's associations with the Baliol family (see chapter 6). However, it was Edisbrig as early as 1446 (*Hist. Dunelmensis Scriptores Tres*) and was referred to as Thoraldebrigge in 1259 (*Inventarium Prioratus Dunelmensis* - Greenwell, 1871: 182). This might be Thorald's bridge or even a mis-transcription of 'the old bridge'. The spelling of the name still varies from one side of the river to the other.

Waskerley perhaps poses the biggest conundrum regarding the origin and meaning of its name. *Wascroþ* occurs in several mediæval documents, including one in which the Bishop gave additional land to the Prior. Egglestone considers that it comes from Wascrow which should properly be Westcrau (1886: 13). In this case it means the west crag or rock, unless the first element comes from *wæs* meaning water. Mawer attributes the origins of Waskerley to the Old Norse *vatnskjarr*, a marsh of water, or O.N. *váskjarr*, a wet marsh (1920: 208-9). He thinks that the *þ* and the b of *Wascroþ* and burn may have been merged and the name of the stream Wascrow developed. This was transferred to the park and the burn. The addition of *heued* to the name indicates the head of the 'hope' where the stream rises.

Pedam's Oak (sometimes Pedom's Oak) appears as Pethuneshake in around 1200 (*Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*) and Pethomsake in 1364 (*Halmote Court Rolls*). Mawer translates the name as *petemos-ake* (M.E.) meaning the oak by the peat-moss or bog (1920:156). The settlement was much bigger in the Middle Ages than the uninhabited farmstead that stands there today. A more romantic origin for the name comes from a poem: 'Old Pedom was a reiver / And lived upon the fell'. In this, Pedom hid in a hollow oak tree when the authorities, or his enemies, came looking for him. Since the settlement existed before reiving became commonplace, it is very unlikely that this is anything more than local folklore.

### 3.4.2 *River and stream names*

The names of watercourses and physical features are also of interest. Streams and rivers frequently have names which are early in origin. Most of the stream names in

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the parishes have the suffix *-burn*, but the prefixes vary. A number of these prefixes are the names of physical features which are discussed below.

Burn comes from the O.E. *burna* (m) or *burne* (f), used for a stream or river, but originally meaning 'fountain spring'. Mawer notes that it is the usual word for a small stream in Durham and Northumberland (1920: 224). The Old Norse *beck* also occurs in places, but is much less usual in the Muggleswick/Edmundbyers area although it tends to take over from burn in Teesdale, which Egglestone says was a Norse dale while Weardale was Anglo-Saxon (1886: 12).

Some of the burns acquired their names in antiquity. The Troutburn, east of Edmundbyers and a tributary of the Burnhope Burn, appears in the Bursar's Rentals for 1340-1 in which adjacent waste is leased to Adam Barbour (Lomas and Piper, 1986: 60). The Burnhope Burn itself is interesting. Although the name 'Burnhope' is not uncommon (see below for explanation), on several older maps the burn is actually called the 'Burdenhope'. Mawer notes another Burdon (in Bishopwearmouth) and gives the translation as 'byre-valley' - the valley with a cowshed in it (1920: 34). If the stream running past Edmundbyers was indeed originally the Burdonhope Burn, the name would mean something like the 'stream in the hope in the valley with byres in' (see below for the explanation of hope). This would be a close link with the name of the village, suggesting an association between the burn's name and the village name. Burn being Old English like byre, it strengthens the argument that the name of the village is Anglo-Saxon.

Some of the other streams with interesting names are the Feldon, Eudon, Skinny, Allery and Swandale Burns. The swan element of the latter may be a corruption of the Anglo-Saxon *swin, swyn*, a swine (Egglestone, 1886: 54) which may be a reasonable explanation as the small dale is not really a likely place for swans. Feldon and Eudon both have the suffix *den* or *dene* (Anglo-Saxon or Celto-Saxon) meaning a wooded valley. The first part of Eudon is a corruption of 'yew' (Egglestone, 1886: 58). 'Skinny' may be a corruption of 'shiny', suggesting a clear stream but neither Mawer nor Egglestone mentions it directly. The Allery Burn is named after the alder trees that grew there - O.E. *alra burna* - and Mawer mentions a burn of the same name in Northumberland (1920: 4).

Seven watercourses have 'sike' as their description. These are College, Pedamsoak, Crow Cleugh, Waskerley, Redhouse and Pike Sikes. Egglestone notes that 'sike' is common in Weardale and comes from the Anglo-Saxon *sic, sich* or Norse *siki*. It is usually used for a stream that drains from a marsh (Egglestone, 1886: 68). However frequently 'sike' may occur in Weardale where at least 70 are found, it is clearly less common in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick where there are fifteen 'burns'. 'Cleugh' is also used as the descriptor of a watercourse and one example is found in the parishes: Black Cleugh. Anglo-Saxon *clough* is a cleft down the side of a hill (Egglestone, 1886: 65).

The main river, the Derwent, forms much of the northern border of both Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. Egglestone's discussion of the river name suggests that it comes from the Celtic root *dwr* (water) and the commonly found *gwent* (an open region). He also mentions that the name is often locally pronounced 'Darwen' which suggests *dwr* and *gwen*, the clear water (1886: 48). Mawer simply lists early references to the river but makes no attempt to explain the name (1920: 62). Ekwall, on the other hand, mentions the various Derwent rivers in England and states that *Derventiō* is a British river name from the British *dervā* 'oak', meaning the 'river where oaks were common' (1974: 142-3). This seems the most likely explanation, especially as parts of the valley are still wooded with very old oak trees.

### 3.4.3 *Names of other physical features or landmarks*

These mainly consist of the names of hills and valleys, with a few other conspicuous features.

There are numerous hills, generally with a descriptor or personal name as the prefix. There are also a number of 'hopes'. The O.E. *hop* is a small enclosed valley. Usually it is a side valley linking to a more important one and the word, while common in Durham and Northumberland as well as being found in Scotland, is rare in the rest of England (Mawer, 1920: 234).

Bainbridge Hill and Roger Hill are examples of personal names. Among the various descriptive names are Black Hill (probably referring to the colour of the soil), Horseshoe Hill (either from the shape of the hill or possibly because it is near where the silver horseshoe was found - see table 3.5 and figure 3.7), Stony Hill and Juniper Hill (from the nature of the ground and the prevalent trees), and Turfhole Hill

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(presumably describing a significant depression in the ground). Some hills have names that are less easy to explain.

Pow Hill may be the place referred to in some mediæval documents as 'Pollowhill' (Fowler, 1898: 313-4). Neither Mawer nor Egglestone makes any attempt to explain it. However, Mawer gives O.E. *pōl* as a pool or deep place in a river (1920: 237). Pow Hill lies close to the Derwent, north of Edmundbyers, so this might be the origin of the name; however, it could also be derived from a personal name. Hepple Hill is also something of a mystery. Mawer explains Hepple near Rothbury as coming from the O.E. *hēope-hēale* meaning 'dog-rose haugh' (1920: 111). However, there is a geological formation called 'hipple', a spelling that has also been used for the hill; this is a plausible meaning of the name. Stoterley Hill is another unusual name. Stott is, according to Mawer, Northern English for 'steer' or 'heifer' (1920: 191). A likely origin for the hill's name is, therefore, the *lēah* (clearing, meadow) where young cattle were grazed. Similarly, Calfclose Hill is likely to have been where there was an enclosure for calves. Strawberry Hill (self evident), Whinney Hill (from whin = gorse), Gold Hill (probably a gold-coloured flower like gorse or ragwort) and Foxhills are all named after plants or animals. Even Bashaw Bank is similarly named as Bashaw is probably derived from badger-shaw or badger-wood (Egglestone, 1886: 85).

The terms bank, rig, law, pike, plain, flat and head are found frequently in the area. Bank is generally used for the slope of a hill and is Middle English in origin (Beckensall, n.d.: 54). Beckensall and Egglestone agree about the origins of rig - O.E. *hrycg*. However, Beckensall links it to the strips of land in the common fields, which is not appropriate in this use of the term (n.d.: 55). Egglestone, on the other hand, translates it as 'a ridge, a back' which accurately describes hilltop features like Cross Rig (1886: 95). Law, as in Collier Law the highest point on the boundary of the study parishes with Weardale, comes from *hlāw* or *hlæw* (Anglo-Saxon/O.E) meaning rising ground or a hill (Egglestone, 1886: 93; Mawer, 1920: 232). A pike is a peak or pointed eminence (Egglestone, 1886: 96), as in Hunterley Pike; Beckensall suggests the origin of the word is O.E. *pic*, a pointed piece of land (n.d.: 55). Harehope Plain and Feldon Plain are broad level areas of land, as are Haygarth's Flat and Graham's Flat (M.E. *flat* - a piece of level ground) (Egglestone, 1886: 96; Beckensall, n.d.: 54). The area contains numerous valleys, both large and small, and the top end of such valleys, especially where streams rise, is often referred to as the head. This term comes from

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Anglo-Saxon/O.E *hēafod*, a head (Egglestone, 1886: 95; Mawer, 1920: 232). Examples are Park Head, Harehope Head, Hawkburn Head and, historically, Wascropheued.

### 3.4.4 *Discussion*

It is quite common for Old English or Old Scandinavian elements to be used in modern names. The name of my own house, Westgarth, includes the Scandinavian garth yet there is no evidence that there was an enclosure on the site before the eighteenth or nineteenth century. Moreover, some names, such as Limerick, involve a whimsical exotic flavour which has no link to the locality. Fashion, a desire for conformity - or unconventionality - and personal preference may all have influenced the names which have been applied to places in the landscape and survived to the present day. Consequently, it is necessary to employ some care and common sense in the use of place names to understand the settlement history of an area.

It is clear from the analyses in the sections above that many of the names found in the study parishes involve elements dating from the Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian period; it would thus be reasonable to conclude that this forms a terminus ante quem for permanent settlement in the area. Physical features of the landscape, like hills and especially watercourses, may have been named even before there was settled agriculture. Certainly, at least, the river name 'Derwent' seems to pre-date the Anglo-Saxon era and its derivation suggests that it is pre-Roman. Thus it indicates that there was probably human activity in the study area before the Roman period. However, a river is a long stretch of water. The lower reaches could have been settled and the river named long before the uplands near its source. In fact, the upper course of the river might even have carried a different name locally before the lowland name stretched to include the whole river.

It can be seen from this brief discussion that there are many pitfalls in the use of place names. The safest conclusion from the evidence assessed is that the parishes of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers had agricultural settlements at least as early as the Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian period since the names of places within the parishes are derived from Old English and Old Norse. Archaeological evidence shows that there was human activity in the area long before this, however.

The names of farms and fields do not necessarily fit the same pattern. Some discussion of them and their derivations will be undertaken in chapter 5.

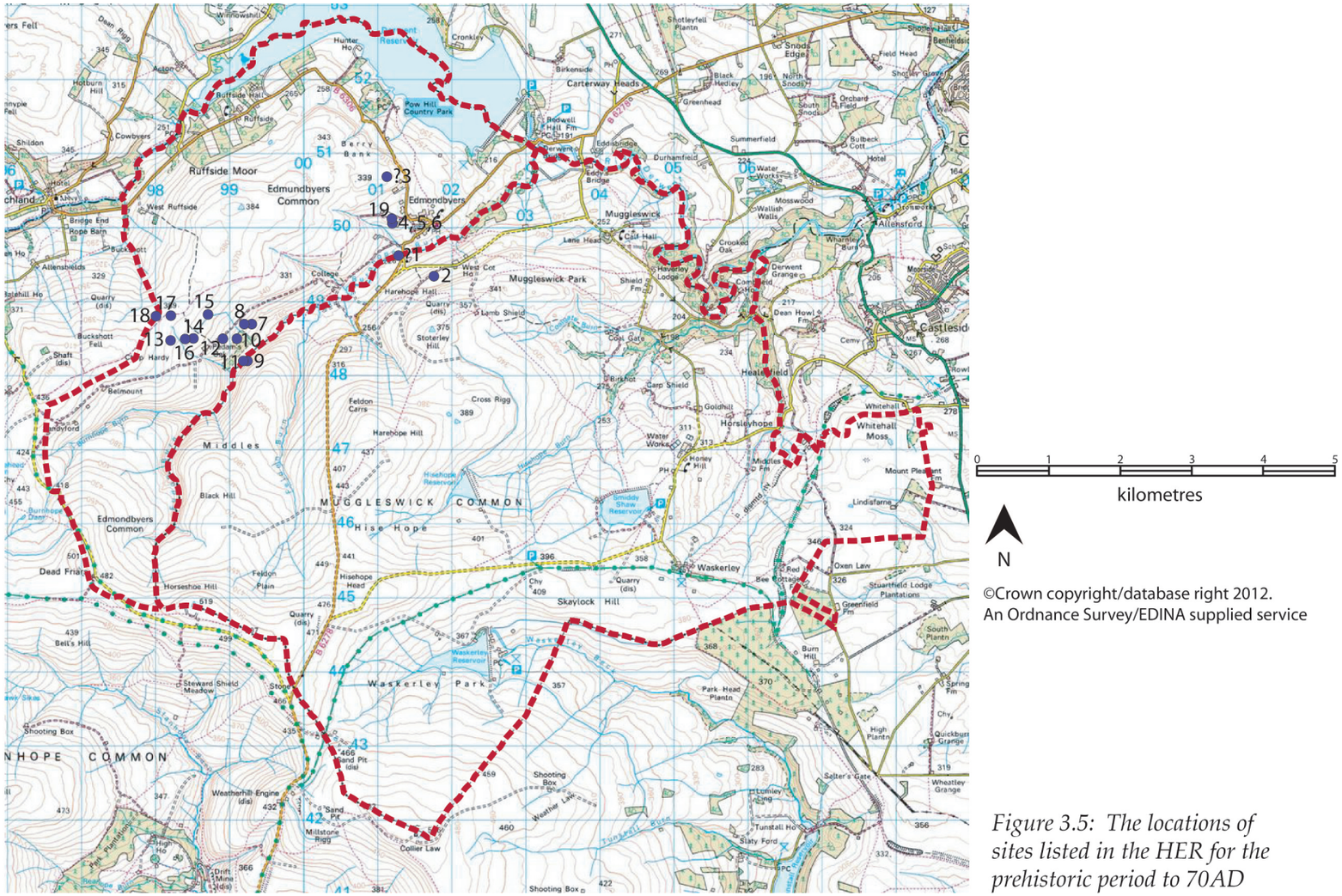
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### 3.5 The Historic Environment Record

The Historic Environment Record for Edmundbyers and Muggleswick provides some information relevant to the history of the parishes. It cannot be relied upon for all information, however, because it can only reflect those sites and finds that have been reported or recorded. As this chapter will show, the history of the area is much richer than the HER alone would suggest. Both listings, with details, and maps have been produced for the various periods for which there are records. It should be noted that recent research has added sites to the HER, some of which repeat earlier records. These have been added from the Keys to the Past website. However, this lacks detail, so either the full HER acquired earlier in this research or the English Heritage listings are used to provide further information. On the tables of HER listings the column on the extreme left gives the sites' numbers as shown on the maps and that on the extreme right provides data from the HER as well as comments and information of my own.

This section gives an overview of the recorded sites for the parishes. It does not discuss any in detail as those which are pertinent will feature later in this and other chapters.

The Historic Environment Record for the prehistoric period and up to 70AD is shown in table 3.1 and figure 3.5 where the locations of sites and finds are mapped on the O.S. map of the area. It shows that there were possibly platform settlements at Pedam's Oak, discovered during field-walking but not further investigated. Otherwise the evidence for prehistoric settlement relies largely on flints; the sites of the cist burial and barrow listed in the HER are not known. The map also shows that all of the locations are situated either in the vicinity of Pedam's/Pedom's Oak or close to Edmundbyers village. This demonstrates the partiality of the data. It is possible that the Three Curricks sit on a prehistoric site and that Stoney Hill is a burial mound; both are on Muggleswick Common and visible on the skyline from many parts of the valley. However, in the Cheviots, Bronze Age upland settlement comprised of mainly unenclosed platform settlements has been found, predominantly on south or east facing slopes in England and up to 400m asl (Topping, 2010: 174-6). Consequently it is possible that there were such settlements in the area of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers but that factors such as the topography and, particularly, the vegetation (thick heather cover on much of the open fell) mean that they have not yet been identified. Figure 3.6 shows the same prehistoric sites and finds in relation to


Ruffside Moor
Edmundbyers Common
Edmondbyers
Muggleswick Park
MUGGLESWICK COMMON
Waskerley Park
Middles
Hisehope Head
Feldon Carrs
Harehope Hill
Edmondbyers Common
Black Hill
Horsleyhope
Waskerley
Carterway Heads
Whitehall Moss
Healeyfield
Castleside
Allensford
Skaylock Hill
Dead Friar
Horseshoe Hill
Collier Law
Millstone Rigg
Weatherhill Engine (dis)
Pow Hill Country Park
Hisehope Reservoir
Smiddy Shaw Reservoir
Waskerley Reservoir
Muggleswick
Derwentwater
Durhamfield
Summerfield
Greenhead
Shotleyfell Plantn
Snods Edge
Mosswood
Wallish Walls
Crooked Oak
Derwent Grange
Dean Howl Fm
Goldhill
Carp Shield
Whitehall
Lindisfarne
Oxen Law
Stuartfield Lodge Plantations
Greenfield Fm
Park Head Plantn
Burn Hill
High Plantn
Quickburn Grange
Selter's Gate
Wheatley Grange
Tunstall Ho
Slaty Ford
Shooting Box
Steward Shield Meadow
Sand Pit (dis)
Sand Pit
Drift Mine (dis)
Quarry (dis)
Stotterley Hill
Lamb Shield
Cross Rigg
Feldon Plain
Bell's Hill
Belmount
Buckshott Fell
Shaft (dis)
Allensfield
Bridge End
Rope Barn
West Ruffside
Cowbyers
Shildon
Hotburn Hill
Dean Rigg
Winnowshill
Hunter Ho
Cronkley
Birkenside
Bradwell Hall Fm
Eddy Bridge
Lane Head
Calf Hall
Haverley Lodge
Shield Fm
Coal Gate
Water Works
Honey Hill
Middles Fm
Mount Pleasant Fm
Red Cottage
Bee Cottage
Chy
Quarry (dis)
Burnhope Burn
Westerley Beck
Tunstall Burn
Hisehope Burn
Heathery Burn
Deerness Burn
Park Plantation
Park Head
Hagg Ho
Bridge End
Ruffside Hall
Ruffside
Berry Bank
Hotbank Hill
Quarry (dis)
Allensfield
Lane Head
Crooked Oak
Derwent Grange
Dean Howl Fm
Cemy
Castleside
Whitehall Moss
Mount Pleasant Fm
Lindisfarne
Oxen Law
Stuartfield Lodge Plantations
Greenfield Fm
South Plantn
Burn Hill
Spring Fm
Chy
High Plantn
Quickburn Grange
Selter's Gate
Wheatley Grange
Tunstall Ho
Slaty Ford
Shooting Box
Weather Law
Park Head Plantn
Lonley Ling
Shooting Box
Sand Pit (dis)
Sand Pit
Drift Mine (dis)
Millstone Rigg
Collier Law
Weatherhill Engine (dis)
Steward Shield Meadow
Shooting Box
Horseshoe Hill
Dead Friar
Bell's Hill
Skaylock Hill
Quarry (dis)
Hisehope Head
Feldon Plain
Waskerley
Red Cottage
Bee Cottage
Chy
Quarry (dis)
Honey Hill
Middles Fm
Mount Pleasant Fm
Lindisfarne
Oxen Law
Stuartfield Lodge Plantations
Greenfield Fm
Park Head Plantn
Burn Hill
High Plantn
Quickburn Grange
Selter's Gate
Wheatley Grange
Tunstall Ho
Slaty Ford
Shooting Box
Weather Law

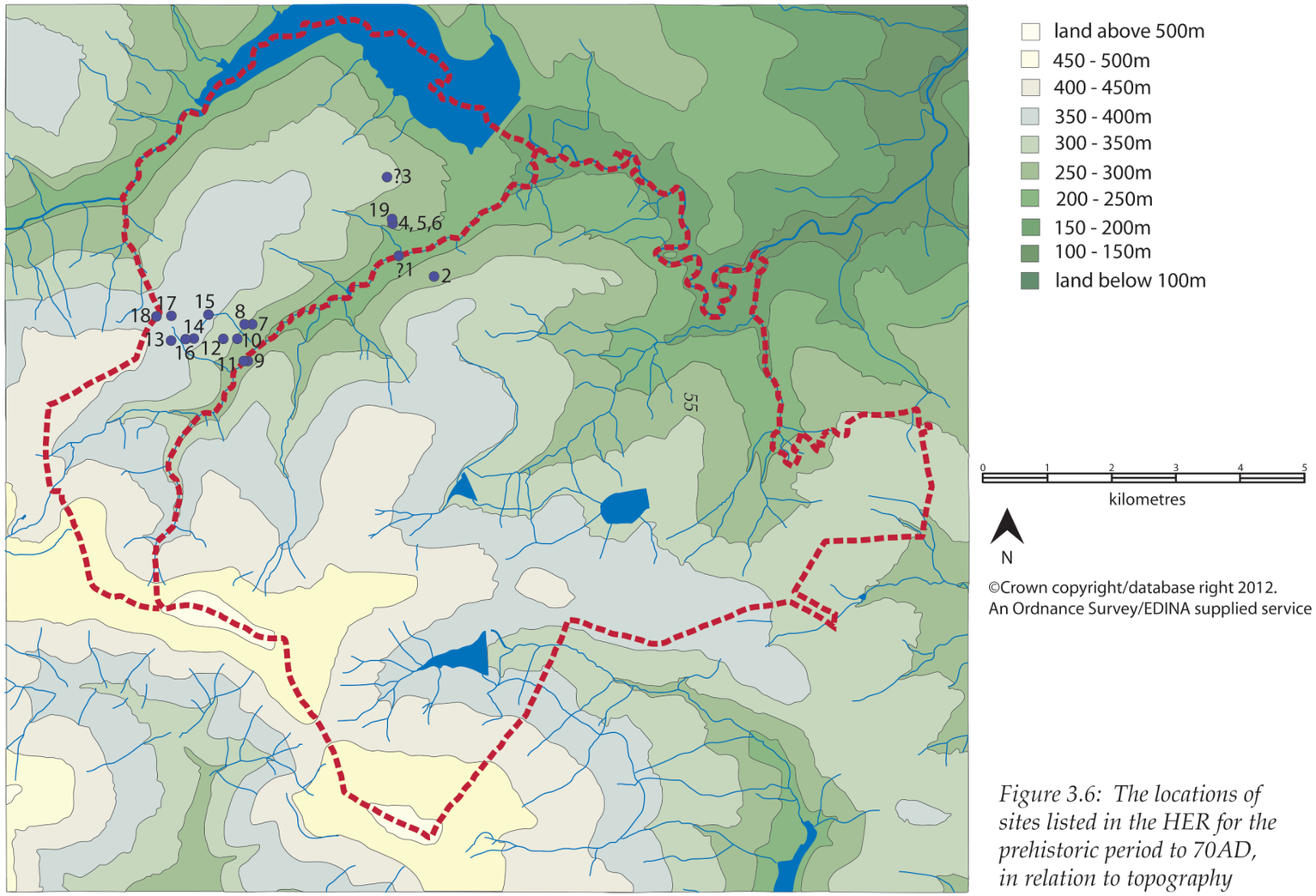



*Figure 3.6: The locations of sites listed in the HER for the prehistoric period to 70AD, in relation to topography*



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| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2223 | site of barrow | 401300 | 549600 | NZ0149 | Burnhope Bridge | | barrow and cist | | Square burial cist of flat stones set on edge with stone slab cover in earth mound. Found c. 1840. Mound cut down to provide earth for bridge embankment. Ref: Featherstonhaugh Arch Ael 2 ser. Vol.22 p. 83 |
| 2 | 2224 | flint | 401770 | 549350 | NZ01774935 | Muggleswick | | flint | | Worked flint flake found & retained by J. Newrick 1957. Immediately below West Cote field wall? |
| 3 | 2341 | stone cist | 401000 | 550000 | NZ0150 | Edmundbyers Fell | | cist burial | | Square cist found 'many years ago' at elevated place on Edmundbyers Fell. Ref: Featherstonhaugh Arch Ael 2 ser. Vol.22 p. 83 |
| 4 | 2344 | flint | 401000 | 550000 | NZ01245005 | Edmundbyers | | flint | | Large flint flake found in farmyard |
| 5 | 2345 | flints | 401000 | 550000 | NZ0150 | Edmundbyers | | flints | | Small group of flints and 2 stone rubbers found |
| 6 | 2348 | flint 'cleaver' | 401300 | 550100 | NZ0150 | Hole House | | flint | | Black flint 'cleaver' found 1958 |
| 7 | 3139 | platform settlement | 499300 | 548700 | 993487 | Pedom's Oak | 310m | | | 2/3 poss platform settlement sites 50m S of gate in E wall of Pedom's Oak fields with College Sike on E. Therefore downhill from track. Inside fields? |
| 8 | 3140 | platform settlement | 499210 | 548710 | 99214871 | Pedom's Oak | 310m | | | Unenclosed platform settlement in top of SE field. 2-3 platforms with walls and poss hut circles. Adjacent to above? |
| 9 | 3141 | platform settlement | 499250 | 548200 | 99254820 | Pedom's Oak | 310m | | | Good platform in NE corner of field, 7 x 4m E-W, scarp on S edge, poss remains of cairns to SW. ? Grid ref |
| 10 | 3145 | platform settlement | 499100 | 548500 | 991485 | Pedom's Oak | 280m | | | Isolated terrace platform, poss settlement, stones along front scarp, with 5 x 3m mound 10m downhill. Further S. - in wood? |
| 11 | 3149 | cairn | 499200 | 548200 | 992482 | Pedom's Oak | 280m | | | Possible cairn. ? Grid ref |
| 12 | 3151 | platform settlement | 498940 | 548480 | 98944848 | Pedom's Oak | 315m | | | Unenclosed platform settlement on SE slope on a natural shelf between 2 modern drains. 2 platforms, 60m SW from NE corner of field and 20m SE from fence. R&F uses S platform as headland. Below track in small field |
| 13 | 3156 | earthwork | 498200 | 548800 | 982488 | Pedom's Oak | 380m | | poss Bronze Age | 5m wide bank and traces of ditch on W side. Degraded and cut by hollow ways, improves to N. S. of bridleway in or above top fields |
| 14 | 3157 | enclosed settlement | 498500 | 548500 | 985485 | Pedom's Oak | 360m | | | Rectangular enclosure with stone walls. 1 hut circle, internal diam 5m and 2m thick walls. Trackway running NE overlain by wall. 3m ridge & furrow over whole field. 1st field above house |
| 15 | 3158 | possible oval cairn | 498700 | 548400 | 987484 | Pedom's Oak | 350m | | | *In farm ?* |
| 16 | 3162 | cairnfield | 498400 | 548000 | 984480 | Pedom's Oak | 350m | | | On 4° SE slope, 120m x 70m, 27 round cairns 2m - 4m diameter and 0.2-0.3m high, 4 oval cairns 4m x 2-3m. In rough pasture below track W. of farm |
| 17 | 3163 | platform settlement | 498250 | 548030 | 98254803 | Pedom's Oak | 355m | | | Enclosed platform settlement on 8° slope, wet - on springline - 5 platforms. Below but close to track W. of farm |
| 18 | 3164 | cairnfield | 498000 | 548120 | 98004812 | Pedom's Oak | 390m | | | N. corner Edmundbyers Common immediately N of gas pipeline, on slope. Above track W. of farm. Towards W. field boundary |
| 19 | 3936 | rotary quern, top stone | 401250 | 550110 | NZ01255011 | Black Hill | | stone | Iron Age | Damaged top stone with 2 sockets for handles found March 1998 c.50m NNW of Victorian tip |

Table 3.1: The Historic Environment Record for the Prehistoric period and up to 70AD



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*Figure 3.7: The excavation of a Bronze Age Cairn on Birkside Fell*

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the topography. From this it can be seen that the topography does not seem to have had much effect on prehistoric use of the area; locations are scattered across hillsides and valleys, some close to watercourses and some not. The majority, however, are on south or south-easterly facing slopes, showing some similarity with Cheviot settlements.

Clearly there was activity in the area in the prehistoric period but the lack of finds may be explained by one or more possibilities. It is possible that little evidence was left behind by any occupants, settled or transient, during that period. It is also likely that evidence has not yet been discovered or identified and has thus not been recorded on the HER. A third possibility is that few people actually used the area until much later. This seems unlikely given the length of the prehistoric, despite limitations to settlement at some times due to climatic conditions. Moreover, a Mesolithic flint scatter and Bronze Age cairn (figure 3.7) found on Birkside Fell near Blanchland show that people were regularly using the landscape nearby (Tolan-Smith, 1997: 12-13; 1998: 30.). Although there is sparse evidence for activity during the prehistoric, the time period will be visited again in discussions about climate in chapter 4.

There are no records in the HER for the later Roman or Anglo-Saxon periods, although there may have been a Roman period farm at Pedam's Oak (Ross, 1987: 55-7, 86). Also Raymond Selkirk thought he had found the course of a Roman road (discussed in chapter 6) and a crossing on the Derwent which is recorded in the 'undetermined' table (3.5). Although these are putative, it cannot be assumed that there was no human activity in the parishes for several hundred years. As the place-name discussion (section 3.4) showed, it is probable that settlement was established during this time, if not earlier, based on the names of the villages. Moreover, the discussion of Roman routes in chapter 6 suggests that the area was not completely isolated.

The HER for the mediæval period (table 3.2) is heavily dominated by 'possible bales' (numbers 18 and 20 to 47, shown in yellow on figures 3.8 and 3.9). These are early leadmining remains which were recorded by a local man with a particular interest in such matters. The churches/church sites feature, as well as the sites of several houses, long since demolished. Again, there are several possible settlement sites at Pedam's Oak recorded by the Durham Parklands Survey (and see below). There are numerous




*Figure 3.8: The locations of sites listed in the HER for the Mediæval period (details in table 3.2)*



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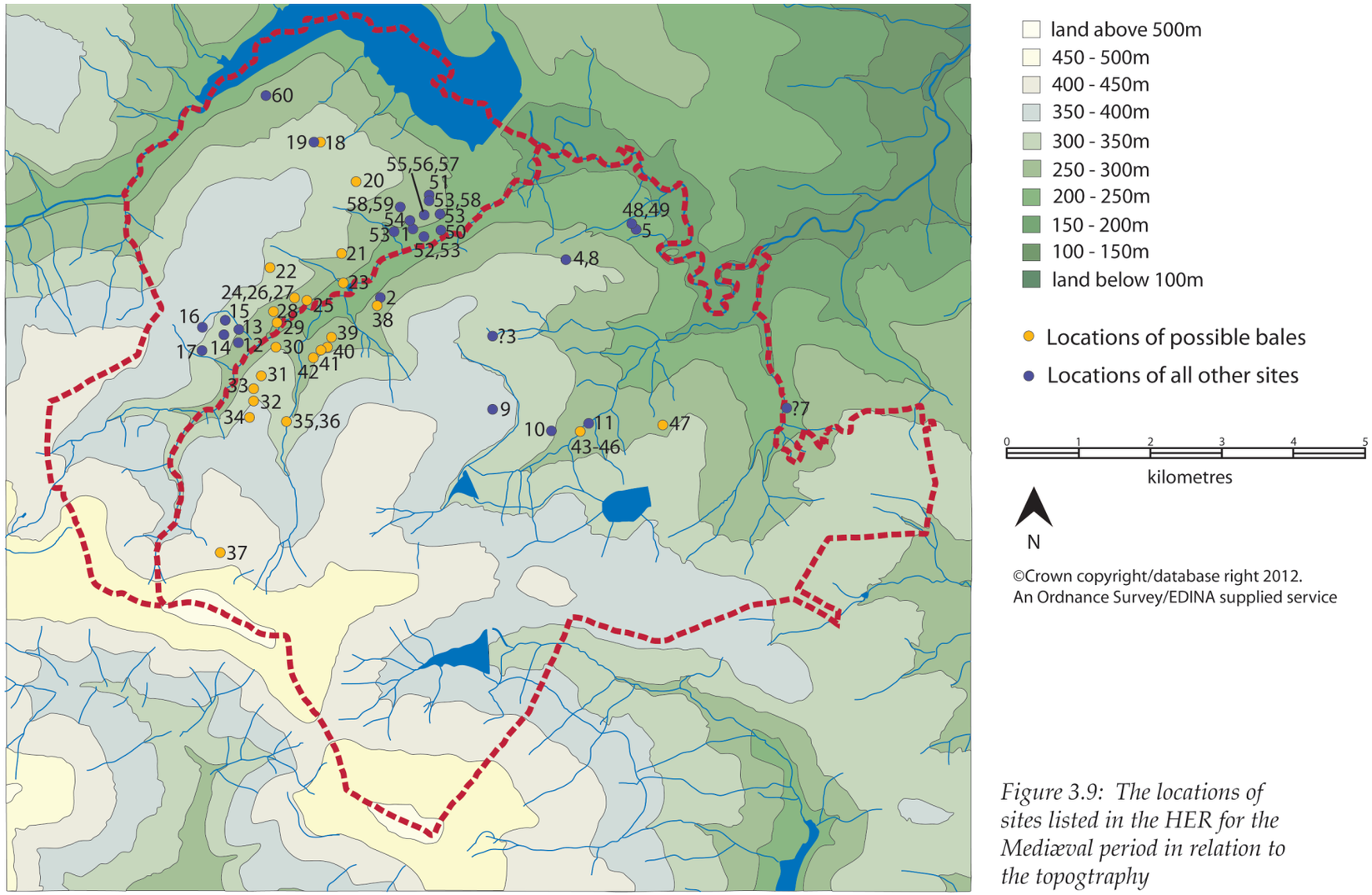



*Figure 3.9: The locations of sites listed in the HER for the Mediæval period in relation to the topogtraphy*



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| | PRN | Site/Find | Grid Ref | Location | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2221 | Church | 401440549910 | St Edmund's | 12th C. | Norman with probable Saxon origins. See Featherstonhaugh for details (Arch. Ael., 2 ser., vol. 3 pp263-8 & vol. 22 pp83-109 |
| 2 | 2222 | Site of cruck house | 401000549000 | | | Cruck house of typical 14th C. type, known locally as fire-houses. Surviving in 1900 and mentioned by Featherstonhaugh as being 27ft x 21ft with stone-built gables and 1 pair of crucks |
| 3 | 2226 | dagger | NZ0246 | Hise Hope | 14th C | Grid ref may be incorrect. Part of hilt of misericorde dagger found at S.E. side of moorland (see Arch. Ael. notice of meeting N.S. vol5 p.170) |
| 4 | 2227 | park | NZ0349 | Muggleswick | 13th C. | Hugh, Prior of Durham enclosed a park. Originally c.3miles x 2miles. Hutchinson says much of it was in tillage and divided into farms in late 18th C. Where marked on OS map |
| 5 | 2229 | site of church | NZ04434995 | Muggleswick | 13th C. | No visible remains in church or churchyard. Present church dates from 1869. Documentary evidence of church by 1229. |
| 6 | 2235 | vaccary | NZ0647 | Muggleswick | late 13th C. | No visible trace. Given to Prior & Convent by Bishop Robert de Stichill. Enclosed by wall. In Horsleyhope Valley? |
| 7 | 2245 | remains of cross | NZ00394475 | Edmundbyers Cross | | Mediaeval wayside cross by roadside. Socket stone roughly square, sides 0.7m and 0.3m high. Socket 0.2m square and 0.15m deep. Where dot on map! |
| 8 | 3049 | field systems | NZ0349 | Muggleswick Park | | Most of level terrace N. of west-east watershed in park has been extensively enclosed and cultivated. Some turf-covered field walls - probably of late date. Probable earlier and extensive linear field system disclosed by heather burning. ? Below Bashaw Bank |
| 9 | 3055 | field walls | NZ025475 | Cross Rigg | | Several field walls revealed by burning of heather. Some are foundations of double faced stone walls, some single lines of angular bouders. Those at S.E. end of hill closely spaced, c. 12m. Hillside W. of catchwater |
| 10 | 3058 | rig and furrow | NZ033472 | Hisehope Burn | | Broad rig (3 - 4m) on slopes above and to N. of Hisehope Burn beneath heather cover. On fell N. of burn and E. of pasture |
| 11 | 3059 | rig and furrow | NZ038473 | Hisehope | | Broad rig (c. 5m) within turf-covered fieldwall on terrace above Hise Hope. Other side of burn |
| 12 | 3146 | Ancient wood | 399300548400 | Pedam's Oak | | Silver birch, and hazel which was formerly coppiced. Pedam's Oak Wood |
| 13 | 3147 | Pre-enclosure building | 399100548590 | Pedam's Oak | | Site of pre-enclosure building, possibly Mediaeval or later. Overlain by S. wall of SE field of Pedam's Oak enclosures. At top of wood? |
| 14 | 3152 | Possible Mediaeval settlement | 398980548510 | Pedam's Oak | | 2 rectangular platforms, Mediaeval or later, SW from field wall & 20m. S. of track. Near/above/within fields? |
| 15 | 3153 | House platform | 398900548700 | Pedam's Oak | | Mediaeval house platform S. of N. edge of roadway. Which roadway? Presume old one |
| 16 | 3154 | Field boundaries | 398600548600 | Pedam's Oak | | Complex of earthwork & stone wall boundaries |
| 17 | 3159 | Possible DMV | 398600548300 | Pedam's Oak | | Parchmark confirming faint earthworks of DMV with at least 1 long building W. of present farm. Also roadway and field boundaries. Within fields above farm buildings |

Table 3.2: The Historic Environment Record for the Mediæval period

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 3159 | Possible DMV | 398600548300 | Pedam's Oak | | Parchmark confirming faint earthworks of DMV with at least 1 long building W. of present farm. Also roadway and field boundaries. Within fields above farm buildings |
| 18 | 3576 | Probable bale | 400286551140 | Matt's Sheepfold | | Hilltop site. Stone cairn probably hides bale hearth. |
| 19 | 3577 | Sheepfold | 400170551100 | Matt's Sheepfold | | Possibly earlier buildings on site |
| 20 | 3578 | Possible bale | 400682550640 | NE of Govan Gill | | On top of small knoll. Lead coated & reddened sandstone in slight depression |
| 21 | 3579 | Possible bale | 400447549600 | Harry's Allotment | | Near bridle path, not v. convincing site - scattered lead and galena fragments. |
| 22 | 3580 | Possible bale | 9994949411 | Swandale | | Adjacent to SE boundary of abandoned R&F enclosure at crest of valley slope. |
| 23 | 3581 | Possible bale | 400521549210 | Swandale | | Above Limerick Lane just to N. of ford in the Swandale Burn. May have been stockpiling area due to position |
| 24 | 3582 | Possible bale | 9984049002 | College Edge 1 | | Lowest of College Edge sites to SW of ancient College enclosure boundary, green slag with lead. |
| 25 | 3582 | Possible dam & buddle | 400024548980 | College Edge 1 | | On seepage to NE of above |
| 26 | 3583 | Possible bale | 9984049002 | College Edge 2 | | Large site with several hollows and green slag. V. draughty despite position. |
| 27 | 3583 | Pottery | 9984049002 | College Edge 2 | 14th C | Associated with above site. Mediaeval lead-glazed pottery fragments |
| 28 | 3608 | Possible bale | 9957548813 | E. of College Sike | | Green slag spreads & some flourite, some evidence of old walls, just below bottom of escarpment. |
| 29 | 3609 | Possible bales | 9962648724, 9963748676, 9964448717 | E. of College Sike | | Present & abandoned courses of sike within abandoned enclosure, green slag, charcoal, flourite exposed |
| 30 | 3610 | Possible bale | NY9969248358 | The Middles | | Lead smelting site |
| 31 | 3611 | Possible bale | NY9941747971 | The Middles 2 | | Lead smelting site. Two 6 x 6m stone bale structure foundations. |
| 32 | 3612 | Possible bale | NY9930647591 | The Middles 3 | | Lead smelting site. 5 x 5m stone bale structure open to W. |
| 33 | 3613 | Possible bale | NY9927447540 | The Middles 4 | | Lead smelting site - 2 bale structure foundations on escarpment feature. Adam's Cow (NY9916647389), a small stone structure, is c. 190m further along feature. |
| 34 | 3614 | Possible bale | NY9925947995 | The Middles 5 | | Lead smelting site on first crest above Burnhope Burn. |
| 35 | 3615 | Possible bale | NY9976747390 | Feldon Burn | | Lead smelting site. W. side of Feldon Burn gorge above trees and approx. opposite middle lime kiln. |
| 36 | 3616 | Possible bale | NY9976347375 | Feldon Burn | | Lead smelting site. |
| 37 | 3622 | Possible bale | NY9860645836 | Eudon Burn | | Lead smelting site (topographical and geological description given in SMR). |
| 38 | 3623 | Possible bale | NZ0099848980 NZ0098548988 | Harehope | | Lead smelting site (2 patches of black slag) |
| 39 | 3624 | Possible bale | NZ0036948488 | Feldon | | Lead smelting site/possible buddle |
| 40 | 3625 | Possible bale | NZ0031848438 | Feldon 2 | | Lead smelting site. |
| 41 | 3631 | Possible bale | NZ0023448334 | Feldon 3 | | Lead smelting site. |
| 42 | 3632 | Possible bale | NZ0019648276 | Feldon 4 | | Lead smelting site. |
| 43 | 3633 | Possible bale | NZ0370247221 | Hisehope Burn | | Lead smelting site. |



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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 44 | 3639 | Possible bale | NZ0370947273 | Hisehope Burn 2 | | Lead smelting site. |
| 45 | 3640 | Possible bale | NZ0373647282 | Hisehope Burn 3 | | Lead smelting site. Boulders in boulder field with lead globules on surfaces |
| 46 | 3641 | Possible bale | NZ0371047313 | Hisehope Burn 4 | | Lead smelting site |
| 47 | 3642 | Possible bale | NZ0481447320 | Gold Hill | | Area of lead slag, position suggests possibly washing site. Close to fenced junipers. |
| 48 | 4578 | Village | NZ04445004 | Muggleswick | | First recorded 1170 |
| 49 | 6420 | Muggleswick Monastic Grange | NZ04435003 | Muggleswick | 13th C | Remains of Prior's camerabuilt c. 1258-72 on probable site of earlier grange. E. end stands to 15.5m |
| 50 | 8787 | Strip fields | 401549 | | | S. of village running towards Burnhope Burn. Poss remains of Med field system. Walls topped with fences (poss previously hedges) Not all boundaries reach to burn |
| 51 | 8788 | Strip fields | 401550 | | | N. of village, poss remains of Med field system. Stone boundary walls now topped with fences, poss previously hedges. Respect R&F with reversed S shape |
| 52 | 8789 | Ridge & furrow | 401549 | Thack Field | | R&F. Thack field shown on 1841 tithe map? |
| 53 | 8790 | Ridge & Furrow | 401270549904, 401297549825, 401333549948, 401626549845, 401679550334, 401721550376, 401750550342, 401824550134, 401798550091, | | | various locations of R&F |
| 54 | 8791 | Ridge & Furrow + building platform | 401550 | Esme's field | | R&F in fields (site visit or aerial photo) running in 2 directions + poss building platforms near Church Lane |
| 55 | 8792 | Village green | 401550 | village green | | *C.Hardie's questionable assumption that original green lay between B 6306, B6278 and Church Lane (no B6278 until later)* |
| 56 | 8793 | Med building plots | 401550 | village green | | poss foundations beneath green |
| 57 | 8794 | Poss. Med building plots | 401549 | | | land fronting green and B6278 (questionable assumption) |
| 58 | 8825 | Buildings | 401550 | Hepple Hill | 19th C ? | shown on first ed. OS map 1856 |
| 59 | 8833 | Ridge & furrow | 401550 | | | R&F in fields (site visit or aerial photo) |
| 60 | 7811 | Deserted mediaeval village | 99455175 | | | “A Manor House and Farm buildings mark the site" 1994 RCHME Medieval Village Research Group/P. Clack (1980) Archaeology of the Durham Dales |
| 61 | 35310 | Manor House remains | 445450032 | Muggleswick | | see 6420 above and English Heritage listing data |
| 62 | 36981 | St Edmund’s | | | | see 2221 above and English Heritage listing data |



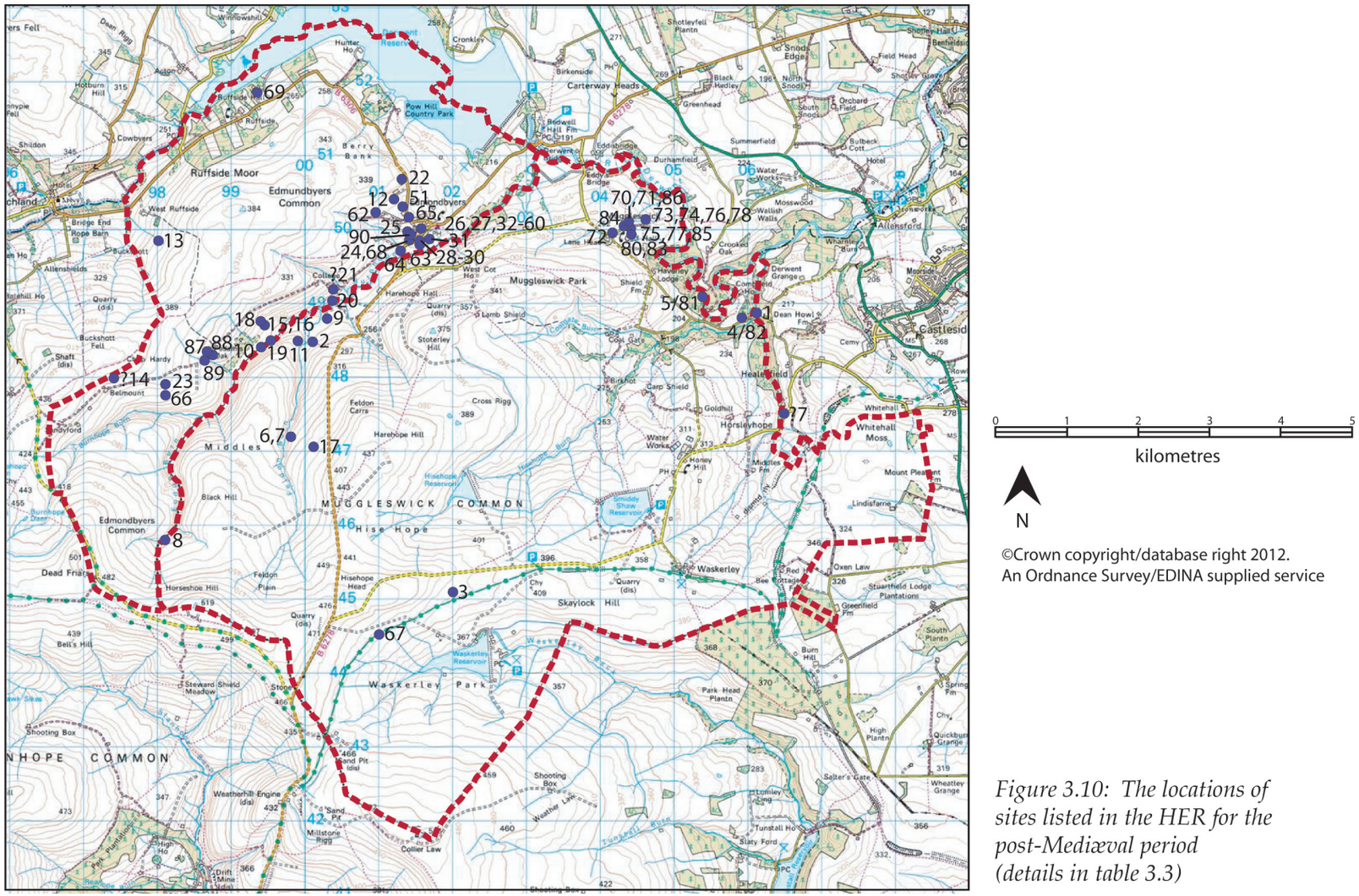
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references to field boundaries and ridge and furrow which will be referred to and discussed further in chapter 6. The monastic grange and the, rather vague, site of a vaccary are also recorded. The locations of the mediæval references in the HER are shown on the O.S. map in figure 3.8. It can be seen that most of the sites are along the sides of the valley of the Burnhope Burn and its tributaries, which is consistent with the locations likely to have been chosen for bales as they require windy positions. There is also a cluster of sites in and around Edmundbyers recorded due to a survey carried out by Archaeoenvironment for the Weardale Society. These will be referred to further at relevant points later in this chapter. Similarly, the ridge and furrow and enclosures mentioned in the HER for the mediæval period will be subject to investigation in chapters 4 and 5. It is noticeable in figure 3.9 that, although the possible bales are situated higher along the valley sides, the majority of sites or finds have locations along the valleys, although not necessarily in the valley bottoms. Only a few locations are on the higher ground. There are few locations in Muggleswick parish, which may be partly due to the use of the area for sheep and cattle farming in the Middle Ages rather than mixed farming like Edmundbyers. This will be explained further later in this chapter.

The post-mediæval HER is dominated, as might be expected, by leadmining remains. These will be discussed later in this chapter. Also in this record is a list of boundary stones. They are not shown on the map of post-mediæval sites (figures 3.10 and 3.11) or on the list of post-mediæval records (table 3.3). This is because, when they were plotted on a map, it was found that they lie directly on a very short section of the eastern boundary of Muggleswick. A number of the records listed refer to buildings within the village of Edmundbyers and around the Grange at Muggleswick. Not all of these have been located on the map (figure 3.10) because they will be looked at in more detail during discussions about the architecture and settlement development of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick (section 3.6)

The remaining maps and listings refer to modern and undetermined sites. The latter include a number of earthworks, many of which will be discussed in the climate and enclosure chapters (chapters 4 and 5). Those allocated to the modern period are features around the village of Edmundbyers. These sites are listed in tables 3.4 and 3.5 and shown on the maps in figures 3.12 and 3.13


Ruffside Moor
Edmundbyers Common
Muggleswick Park
MUGGLESWICK COMMON
Waskerley Park
Edmundbyers Common
Carterway Heads
Castleside
Waskerley
Skaylock Hill
Horsley Hill
Whitehall Moss
Dead Friars
Black Hill
Harehope Hill
Cross Rigg
Stoterley Hill
Lamb Shield
Carp Shield
Goldhill
Horsleyhope
Healeyfield
Derwent Grange
Dean Howl Fm
Allensford
Mosswood
Wallish Walls
Crooked Oak
Havelay Lodge
Shield Fm
Harehope Hall
Feldon Carrs
Feldon Plain
Hisehope Head
Hisehope Reservoir
Waskerley Reservoir
Smiddy Shaw Reservoir
Pow Hill Country Park
Redwell Hall Fm
Eddy Bridge
Durhamfield
Summerfield
Snods Edge
Shotleyfell Plantn
Field Head
Shotley Grove
Black Hedley
North Snods
South Snods
Orchard Field
Bulbeck Cott
Water Works
Greenhead
Birkenside
Cronkley
Hunter Ho
Ruffside
West Ruffside
Bridge End
Rope Barn
Buckshott
Allenshields
Quarry (dis)
Buckshott Fell
Shaft (dis)
Belmount
Sunnyford
Middles
Edmundbyers
Dead Friars
Horseshoe Hill
Steward Shield Meadow
Shooting Box
Weatherhill Engine (dis)
Sand Pit
Millstone Rigg
Collier Law
Drift Mine (dis)
Bell's Hill
Quarry (dis)
Stone
Waskerley Park
Shooting Box
Weather Law
Tunstall Ho
Slaty Ford
Park Head Plantn
Burn Hill
Spring Fm
High Plantn
Quickburn Grange
Salter's Gate
Wheatley Grange
Lonsley Crag
Oxen Law
Stuartfield Lodge Plantations
Greenfield
South Plantn
Lindisfarne
Mount Pleasant
Whitehall
Mickley Fm
Honey Hill
Water Works
Smiddy Shaw Reservoir
Quarry (dis)
Bee Cottages
Red
Chy
Pow Hill
Redwell Hill

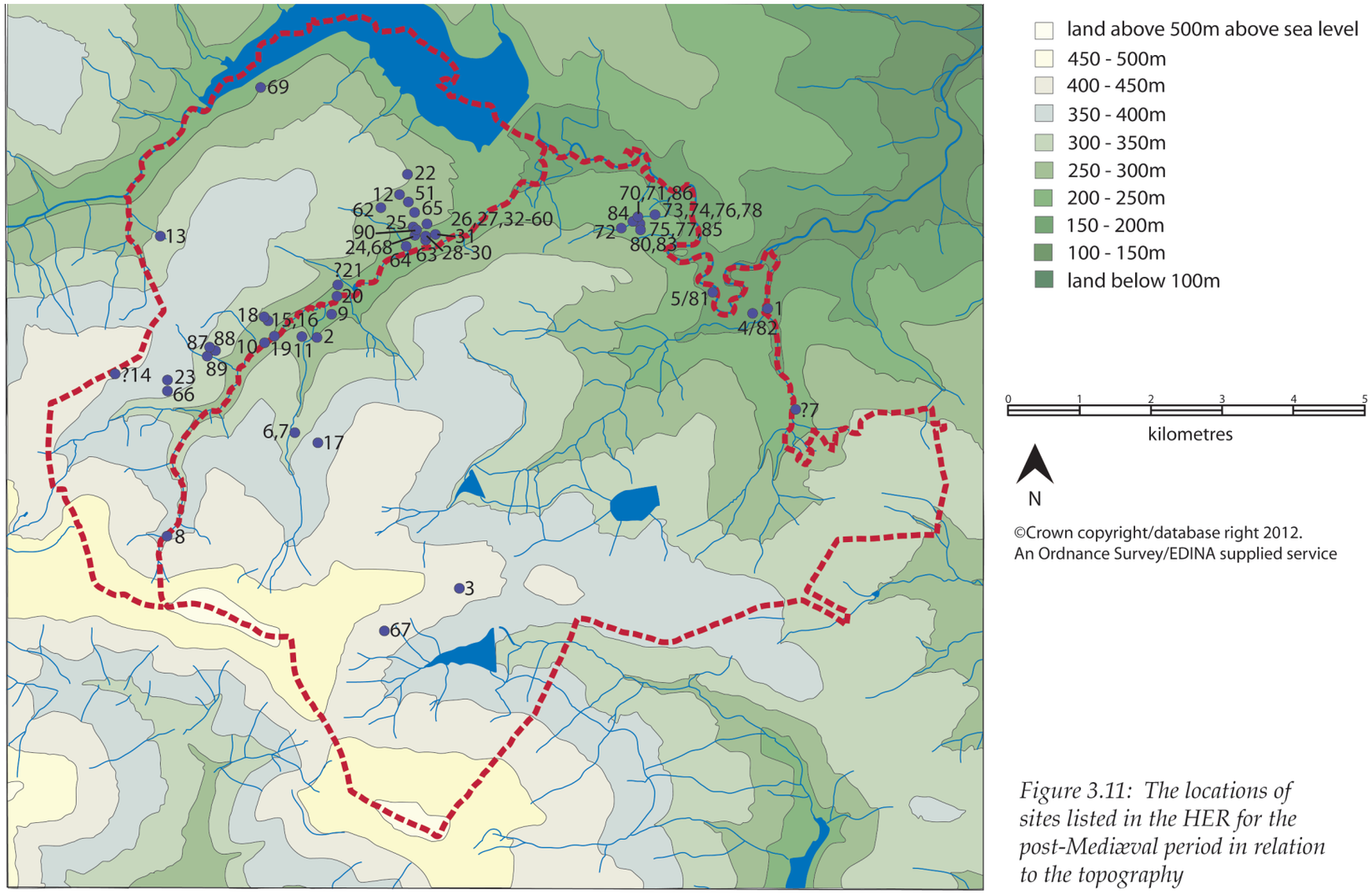



*Figure 3.11: The locations of sites listed in the HER for the post-Mediæval period in relation to the topography*



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| | PRN | Site/Find | Grid Ref | Location | Material | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 851 | lime kiln | 406200548900 | Comb Bridges | stone | | Series of lime kilns. In woodland N. of road |
| 2 | 2220 | smelt mill | 4000154857 | Feldon Smelt Mill | | C 17 | Remains of smelt mill licensed by Charles II (O.S./Surtees- History of Durham Vol. 2 p. 363) |
| 3 | 2225 | railway snow fence | 402000545100 | Hise Hope | | C 19 | Remaining 100m of snow fence protecting part of Stanhope & Tyne Railway (opened 1834) made of single depth of staggered stone sleeper blocks |
| 4 | 2231 | lime kiln | 405900548800 | Comb Bridges | stone | | Sandstone lime kiln on bend in road. 5m diameter & 5m high, 3 draw arches, corbelled roof. |
| 5 | 2232 | lime kiln | 405400549100 | Graham's Flat | stone | | 6m diameter, 7m high, 3 draw arches. Sandstone. On slope with quarry at rear. In woodland area, river to E and N, road to S. |
| 6 | 3033 | lime kiln | 3998054720 | Feldon Burn | | | Old lime kiln (OS. Map). Between 2 lower waterfalls. Not on 1: 50,000/1:25,000 |
| 7 | 3034 | lime kiln | 3998054740 | Feldon | | | Disused lime kiln (O.S. map). N of above. Not on 1:50,000/1:25,000 |
| 8 | 3035 | lead mine shop | 3981054580 | Eudon Groove Shop | | | Disused mine shop (O.S.map) |
| 9 | 3036 | lead mine | 4003054880 | Burnhope Mine | | | Disused lead mine (O.S. map) |
| 10 | 3148 | industrial remains | 3994054840 | Pedam's Oak | | | Collapsed stone wall & earthwork, probably industrial (C.Ross). Pedam's Oak Wood? |
| 11 | 3870 | lead mill | 399940548510 | Feldon Smelt Mill | | | Rights to all silver mined within 10mls of Muggleswick granted to Duke of Buckingham by Charles I. Feldon built in reign of Charles II to smelt ore. 1725 rights to ore bought by London Lead Company. Operated into C. 19. Ore hearth and water system of dams |
| 12 | 4372 | village | 4012055050 | Edmundbyers | | | First documentation Boldon Book 1183. DFWI - Durham Villages Book/Ekwall - Concise Oxford Dictionary of Place-Names |
| 13 | 8488 | quarry | 3980054985 | S. of West Ruffside | | .? | Disused quarry noted on maps (student survey). On 1:25,000 |
| 14 | 8489 | lead mine | 3954554800 | Belmont | | C 19 | Probable disused lead mine/ industrial site (student survey) Grid ref places this in wrong position. |
| 15 | 8490 | lead mine | 3994554870 | Pedam's Oak wood | | C 19 | Disused quarry or lead mine (student survey) |
| 16 | 8491 | lead mine | 3994554870 | College Sike wood | | C 19 | Probable disused lead mine (student survey) |
| 17 | 8492 | lead mine | 3981954708 | Edmundbyers Common | | C 19 | Probable disused lead mine (student survey) |
| 18 | 8493 | lead mine | 3994554875 | near Pedam's Oak | | C 19 | Disused lead mine (student survey) |
| 19 | 8494 | lead mine | 3995054850 | Burnhope/Eudon Valley | | C 19 | Possible lead mine (student survey) |
| 20 | 8495 | lead mine | 4003954905 | Swandale | | C 19 | Swandale lead mine (student survey) |
| 21 | 8496 | building | 4002954395 | Swandale | | .? | Student survey queries mediaeval origin later used for miners' accommodation ? Tally house for Swandale mine? Grid ref probably inaccurate. |

Table 3.3: The Historic Environment Record for the Post-Mediæval period

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | 8497 | quarry | 4012955067 | Berrybank End | | C 19? | Student survey - quarry, probably limestone |
| 23 | 8501 | quarry | 3981054789 | .? | | C 19 | Industrial quarry site identified by student survey - possibly lead mining. In fields SW of Pedam's Oak |
| 24 | 8777 | field name | 4014154985 | glebe land | | C 19 | As designated on maps from 1840s (C.Hardie) |
| 25 | 8778 | field name | 4013954998 | glebe land | | C 19 | As designated on maps from 1840s (C.Hardie) |
| 26 | 8781 | house | 4014654995 | The Old Rectory | stone | c.1738 | 1738 building during Francis Hunter's incumbency, with bricks made on site, later extensions. Cellar suggests earlier building - possibly a black thack cottage (Edmundbyers Book) |
| 27 | 8782 | house | 4014754998 | Oldstead | stone | C 19 ? | C. Hardie assesses as poss C16 except that changes may have been made in C 19. Local knowledge states that it was stables and coach house for Rectory with servants quarters, later reading room upstairs, converted to holiday cottage and then home. |
| 28 | 8783 | site of building | 4015154984 | site of The Thack | | | Site of The Thack - last black thack cottage. On maps until 1919. (C. Hardie) Well in field below |
| 29 | 8784 | road | 401549 | Thack Bank | | | Named after last black thack cottage (C. Hardie) |
| 30 | 8785 | small building & enclosure | 4015254986 | by B6278 | stone | C 19 | On maps from 1856; ? Remains of The Thack? (C. Hardie) |
| 31 | 8786 | well | 4016654979 | Barker's Well | stone | C 19 | On maps from 1856; reputedly only well with water in 1856 drought (C. Hardie) |
| 32 | 8795 | house | 4016254991 | Edmundbyers House | | C. 18 ? | Possible long house with additions dated by C.Hardie to C18. Owners state it has been in family (originally the Wards) since 1640. Victorian and later additions |
| 33 | 8796 | house | 401630549960 | Edmundbyers Cottage | stone | C 18 | Former byre. C. Hardie thinks it might have been part of the farm at Edmundbyers!!! Which farm does she mean? |
| 34 | 8797 | house | 401752549970 | The Shooting Box | stone | C 19 | C. Hardie thinks 1840s, but owners have maintained 16th century date. Photo c. 1900 shows black thack roof. |
| 35 | 8799 | farm | 4017555004 | Struthers Farm | stone | C 18 | C. Hardie puts date at late C 18, owner's assessment is probable early 1800s. Extended & raised at back in 1950 & 1980. Said to have been the curate's house when Edmundbyers was wealthy parish living. Further renovations 2009. |
| 36 | 8800 | public house | 4016855007 | the Punch Bowl | stone | C 18 | Current buildings probably built C 18 as house & byre. Early C 19 photographs show 3 buildings, E. one black-thatched. This probably demolished pre 1919. |
| 37 | 8801 | buildings | 4017255007 | Holmlea & adjacent houses | stone | C 19 | C. Hardie notes date as 1858 for Holmlea, used as beaters' accommodation. Traditionally this was a farmhouse. Part of farmbuildings (reputedly built c. 1790) became the village shop around 1900 |
| 38 | 8802 | building | 4017755009 | Stonecroft | stone | C 19 | On 1856 map. Former smithy (Jackie Hudspith) and home to various notable village residents. No foundations, only traditional earthfast cornerstones for support |
| 39 | 8803 | chapel | 4016054999 | village hall | stone | C 19 | Methodist chapel built 1835 & rebuilt 1893 on land given by Thomas Ward. Cost £90 to build. Retreat for ministers at end of WWII. Bought by village after war 7 converted to hall |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40 | 8804 | building | 4017355013 | Briarwood/East View | stone | C 19 | Built between 1856-96 as 2 agricultural buildings parallel to path, with adjacent building to N added pre 1919 according to C. Hardie. Was barn, byre & stable rebuilt using stone from North Mason Farm, Dinnington in 1995, according to owners. East View was built in c.1890 as a house and byre and made into one dwelling in 1970. |
| 41 | 8805 | house | 4017155010 | Ivy Cottage | stone | C 19 | Built 1830, woodcutter's cottage prior to 1900 |
| 42 | 8806 | house | 4016755014 | Branson House | stone | C 18 | On 1856 map. Formerly 'Old Farm'. Was a dairy at one time - milk bottles marked with name have been found |
| 43 | 8807 | house | 4016555020 | Village Farm | stone | C 16 | C 16 house with alterations C 18 on, eaves raised C 20. Stress quoins at house/ byre division, massive boulders in house foundations, originally heather-thatched. Interesting internal features. |
| 44 | 8808 | barn | 4016355022 | Village Farm barn | stone | C 19 | Blocked door on both W & E elevations, ornate lintel over W. door. On 1856 map |
| 45 | 8809 | barn | 4016555018 | barn | stone | C 19 | S. of existing barn poss. on 1856 map, poss small extension on N. side by 1896 |
| 46 | 8811 | derelict barns | 4017055018 | barns | stone | C 18 | On 1856 map. Barns have chamfered vertical door jambs like YH & 'Old Barn' |
| 47 | 8812 | horse troughs | 4016655011 | troughs on village green | stone | C 19 | On 1856 map and probably in present form on 1896 map, current 5 troughs, 3 stone & 2 pottery in stone surround. Water flowed in on W. side across all troughs with outflow on E. (C.Hardie) Nowhere to tether horses, C. Hardie comments - this is probably because they were cattle troughs. |
| 48 | 8813 | house | 401645501 | Barker House | stone | C 17 | C 18 locally believed C 17 possibly associated with enclosure of village green (C.Hardie). However, what C. Hardie believes was village green was not - it has ridge and furrow, still visible in village hall field. House with attached byre/stable and separate byre/hayloft adapted to garage |
| 49 | 8814 | house | 401686550000 | North View House | stone | C 19 | C.Hardie suggests date between 1896 & 1919 according to maps. Owners put date at 1886/1888 when it was a farm with 31 acres |
| 50 | 8815 | building | 4015655016 | The Old Barn | stone | C 18 | Date plate 1786, byre with hayloft and threshing floor above on 1856 appears as 2 properties with rear extension to E. side and possible separate plots of land (C. Hardie) |
| 51 | 8816 | building | 4015855018 | Home Farm Lodge | stone | C 19 | Linear range of buildings on 1856 O.S. map, elements possibly included in modern building (C.Hardie). Modern house built 1990s on site of byre which was previously Home Farm house |
| 52 | 8817 | site of building | 4015455015 | | | C 19 | Building shown here facing village green on 1856 O.S map (C.Hardie) |
| 53 | 8818 | agricultural implements | 4017555006 | garden of Rostrevor | | C 19 | Ernie Walton's collection of anvils, tractor seats, stone troughs, horse harnesses and millstones (C.Hardie) - now removed |
| 54 | 8819 | buildings | 4015155017 | houses behind Ivy Cottage | stone | C 19 | Shown on 1856 O.S. map. (C.Hardie) Used as farm buildings |
| 55 | 8820 | quarry? | 4016955021 | | | uncertain | raised area N. of Branson House & E. of Village Farm with E. sides revetted (C.Hardie) |
| 56 | 8823 | house | 4014555011 | Heatherlea | stone | C 19 | Date plate 1846, on 1856 O.S map (C.Hardie) |



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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 58 | 8827 | well | 4014155011 | Hepple Hill well | stone | C 19 | On 1856 O.S map (C. Hardie) |
| 59 | 8828 | house & farm buildings | 4012955005 | The Hole Farm | stone | C 19 | House built by Dodds brothers in 1800s: wives collected stone on fell with horse and cart during week and brothers built at weekends. Second house narrower and lower due to money running out |
| 60 | 8829 | house | 4012755006 | Hill Cottage | stone | C 18 | Built before 1856 O.S. map. Locally reputed to be built mid 1700s (C.Hardie). She may mean the original cottage at The Hole, built by the Dodds family of stone with heather thatch - called Blackhill Cottage |
| 61 | 8830 | village wells | 4013255006/4013655001/4014655050/4016955018554994 | wells - including troughs? | stone | C 19 | Various wells around village as assessed by C. Hardie |
| 62 | 8831 | enclosure fields | 4012955022 | Rollyways fields | | C 19 | Rectangular enclosed fields on 1856 O.S. map (C. Hardie) |
| 63 | 8832 | well | 4015454979 | Thack Field well | | C 19 | Well & path in 1856 (C. Hardie) |
| 64 | 8834 | road | 4013454976 | Limerick Lonnen? | | | Drove road to summer pastures (C. Hardie). Or was it lead mine track? |
| 65 | 8835 | school | 4013255033 | School House | | C 19 | Parochial School built 1825, funded by Dean & Chapter & Lord Crewe Trustees (C. Hardie). Replaced earlier school now the gamekeeper's cottage |
| 66 | 8943 | lead mine | 3981054789 | Edmundbyers Common | | C 19 | Probable disused lead mine (student survey) |
| 67 | 3029/30/ 31 | railway | 401000544600/402000544900/400400544000 | Muggleswick | earthwork | | Waskerley branch of Stockton & Darlington railway: dressed sandstone markers along embankment marked S & D |
| 68 | 8779/80 | field name | 4014155028/4014255027 | glebe land | | C 19 | As designated on maps from 1840s (C.Hardie) At Hepple Hill? |
| 69 | 36987 | listed building | 9933351860 | Ruffside Hall | | C17 | see English Heritage listing data |
| 70 | 34542 | barn west of Priory Farmhouse | 404328550043 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 71 | 39710 | building east of Priory Farm | 4044555010 | Muggleswick | | | |
| 72 | 34808 | cottage and enclosure | 404160549946 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data - which does not seem to realise that this is generally believed to have been a smithy |
| 73 | 39717 | farm buildings east of Grange Farm | 4046055010 | Muggleswick | | | |
| 74 | 39714 | farm buildings east of Grange Farm | 4046555010 | Muggleswick | | | |
| 75 | 39712 | farm buildings east of Priory Cottage | 4044555005 | Muggleswick | | | |
| 76 | 39716 | farm buildings south-east of Grange Farmhouse | 4046055005 | Muggleswick | | | |



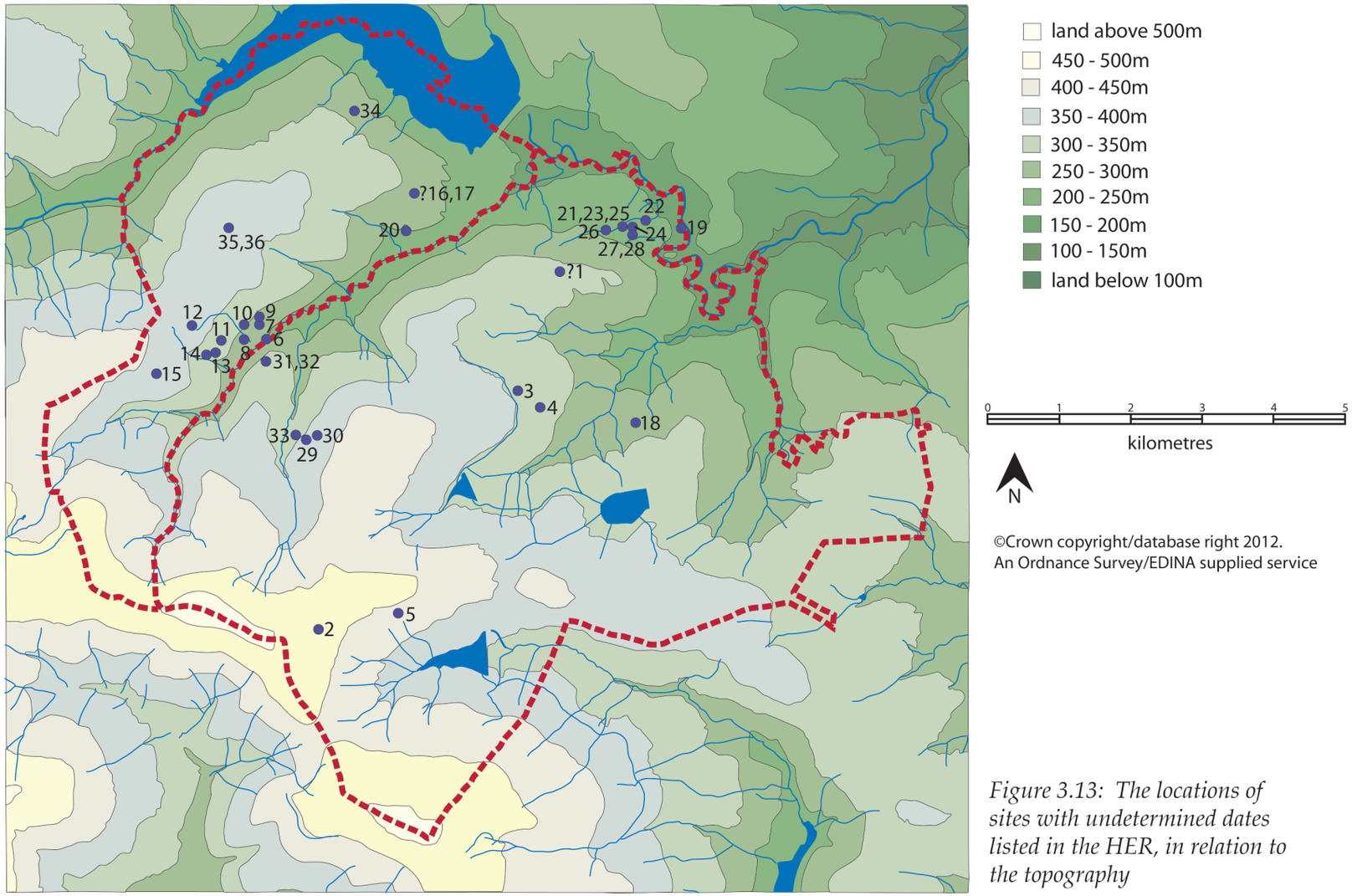
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| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 79 | 34543 | Grange Farmhouse and Gin Gang | 404590550072 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 80 | 34809 | group of tombs, All Saints' church | 404439549941 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 81 | 34807 | limekiln, Grahams' Flat | 40535449016 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 82 | 35904 | limekiln, Hisehope Burn | 405988548751 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 83 | 34810 | Mayer tomb, All Saints' churchyard | 404418549915 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 84 | 34544 | pigsty and henhouse | 404347550049 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 85 | 39711 | Priory Cottage | 4044555005 | Muggleswick | | | |
| 86 | 34811 | Priory Farmhouse | 404385550051 | Muggleswick | | | see English Heritage listing data NB: preliminary investigation during excavations at site of grange suugest that some beams in th ehouse may have come from the grange building |
| 87 | 36988 | byre east of Pedam'sOak | 398697548374 | Edmundbyers | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 88 | 37001 | cottage and byre east of Pedam's Oak farmhouse | 398736548392 | Edmundbyers | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 89 | 37435 | Pedam's Oak farmhouse | 398666548358 | Edmundbyers | | | see English Heritage listing data |
| 90 | 37434 | Summerson tomb, St Edmund's churchyard | 401435549911 | Edmundbyers | | | see English Heritage listing data |



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Ruffside Moor
Edmundbyers Common
Muggleswick Park
Carterway Heads
Pow Hill Country Park
Edmondbyers
Allensford
Castleside
Healeyfield
Horsleyhope
Whitehall Moss
Waskerley
Waskerley Park
Skaylock Hill
Dead Friar
Bell's Hill
Edmondbyers Common
Black Hill
Horseshoe Hill
Middles
Hisehope
Harehope Hill
Feldon Carrs
Feldon Plain
Cross Rigg
Lamb Shield
Stoterley Hill
Millstone Rigg
Collier Law
Steward Shield Meadow
Weatherhill Engine (dis)
Sand Pit
Shooting Box
Oxen Law
Lindisfarne
Mount Pleasant Fm
Stuartfield Lodge Plantations
Greenfield Fm
Park Head Plantn
Quickburn Grange
Wheatley Grange
Tunstall Ho
Slaty Ford
Selter's Gate
Lumley Cnr
Burn Hill
Whitehall Moss
Middles Fm
Spring Fm
High Plantn
South Plantn
Shotleyfell Plantn
Snods Edge
Summerfield
Bulbeck Cott
Derwent Grange
Dean Howl Fm
Coal Gate
Carp Shield
Goldhill
Harley Hill
Water Works
Redwell Hall Fm
Eddysbridge
Durhamfield
Haverley Lodge
Shield Fm
Crooked Oak
Wallish Walls
Mosswood
Whamley Burn
Lane Head
Coalfield
Cemy
Meadows
Sch
Hotel
Ruffside Hall
Hunter Ho
Cronkley
Birkenside
Greenhead
Black Hedley
North Snods
South Snods
Orchard Field
Field Head
Shotley Grave
Shotley Hart
Benfieldside
Bridge End
Rope Barn
Buckshott
Allensfields
Quarry (dis)
College
West Cot Ho
Harehope Hall
Shaft (dis)
Belmount
Burnhope Burn
Burnhope Dam
Hisehope Burn
Hisehope Reservoir
Smiddy Shaw Reservoir
Waskerley Reservoir
Waskerley Beck
Quarry (dis)
Chy
Stone
Sand Pit
Weatherhill Engine (dis)
Drift Mine (dis)
Shooting Box
Park Plantation
Tunstall Burn
Berry Banks
Ruffside
Cowbyers
Shildon
Hotburn Hill
Acton
Winnowshill
Dean Rigg
Pow Hill




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*Figure 3.13: The locations of sites with undetermined dates listed in the HER, in relation to the topography*



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| PRN | Site/Find | Grid Ref | Location | Material | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8821 | Milkstand | 401605550150 | village green | stone | uncertain | C.Hardie. Rectangular stone platform, possible milk churn stand |
| 8810 | derelict barns | 401712550190 | | stone | C 20 | Not on map before 1919 according to C.Hardie |
| 8824 | house | 401311550330 | School House | stone | C 20 | Replacement for earlier parochial school |
| 8798 | youth hostel | 401782550070 | Low House | stone | C 18 | Converted into hostel 1936. C.Hardie & P.Ryder think C 18 from external features, but did not see inside. Reputedly - according to hostel history - built 1600 as an inn |
| 8826 | drove road | 401339550120 | | | uncertain | Drove road to summer pastures. C. Hardie. Actually old road to Blanchland |

Table 3.4: The Historic Environment Record for modern period sites



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| | PRN | Site/Find | Grid Ref | Location | Material | Date | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2228 | mound of stones | 403000549000 | Muggleswick Park | stone | undetermined | Grid Ref possibly wrong as no barrow-like feature there. SMR refers to Three Curricks, but not to Stony Hill further along ridge at 4034054920. Rob Young (pers comm) thinks this is a barrow. Personal investigation agrees |
| 2 | 2244 | silver horseshoe | 400230544580 | Edmundbyers Cross | silver | undetermined | Made of laminated plates of silver found 'in a piece of shale' 2'6" down in ganister quarry in about 1915. Could be attached by clips, possibly ceremonial |
| 3 | 3056 | field system | 402900547800 | Muggleswick | earthwork | undetermined | E. of catchwater in area of burnt heather immediately to SW of present enclosed land. Number of wall remnants with double-faced stone foundations. Area covered with 2-3m R&F. M.Nieke, Durham Parklands Project |
| 4 | 3057 | field system | 403200547600 | Muggleswick | earthwork | undetermined | Foundations of 2 well-built stone field walls and associated clearance cairns to W. of modern field walls. Walls have double-faced foundations with stone core. Cairns are irregular. M.Nieke, Durham Parklands Project |
| 5 | 3060 | possible building foundations | 402300544800 | Muggleswick | earthwork | undetermined | Small turf-covered features visible in moorland. 4m - 8m in size. Turf covers stone - may be remains of shielings. M.Nieke, Durham Parklands Project. ? between Park Pale and Waskerley Reservoir |
| 6 | 3137 | probable house platform | 39950054850 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Isolated platform with scarp on S, aligned E-W, 7m x 5m. C.Ross |
| 7 | 3138 | field system | 399400548700 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Field boundaries to S. of an enclosure boundary - not associated. Ploughing downslope overlies S boundary wall but seems to stop at N. one. C.Ross |
| 8 | 3142 | possible settlement | 399200548500 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Platform and wall 100m SE from field corner: a) 7m E-W with scarps at both ends; b) 5m uphill of a line of stones of poss. E-W revetment (?edge of track); c) 30m NW of B, platform 6m x 5m, 40m NE of new barn. C.Ross |
| 9 | 3143 | field system | 399400548800 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Old field boundary S of enclosure wall and roadway, but not associated with them. C.Ross. On edge of fields and moor - which side of boundary? |
| 10 | 3144 | field system | 399100548700 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Ploughed-out remains of old field boundaries poss. associated with roadway and SMR 3143. C.Ross |
| 11 | 3150 | field system | 398900548500 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Pre-enclosure field boundary parallel to modern road but S of it. Possible platforms to N. C.Ross |
| 12 | 3155 | bank and ditch | 398500548700 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Bank and ditch on N running SW-NE across northernmost of Pedam's Oak fields. Bank 3m wide, ditch 3m wide x 0.5m deep. Shown as trackway by O.S. |
| 13 | 3160 | possible grave | 398810548320 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Shallow, grave-like feature enclosed by bank and ditch. May be modern. Conforms to 'U' grave recorded by O.S. C.Ross. In small fields below buildings |
| 14 | 3161 | possible cairn | 398700548300 | Pedam's Oak | | | Circular feature overlain by R & F. Whole area disturbed. Between farm and Pedam's Oak Sike |
| 15 | 3165 | enclosure | 398010548050 | Pedam's Oak | earthwork | undetermined | Sub-rectangular enclosure on marshy ground N. of Pedam's Oak - Belmont track. C. 16m x 25m. May be natural feature. C.Ross |
| 16 | 7930 | building | 301000505000 | uncertain | | undetermined | Roof ridge with 'wrestlers' or 'jack necks' recorded by Emery and Featherstonhaugh |

Table 3.5: The Historic Environment Record for sites with undetermined dates

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 7931 | cruck building | 401000550000 | uncertain | ?timber | undetermined | *Possibly the old Post Office shown in postcards. Recorded by Emery and Featherstonhaugh. Or building opposite Harehope Hall, now gone* |
| 18 | 7989 | field wall | 404508547390 | Round Hill, Waskerley | stone | undetermined | Low field wall around natural spur of Round Hill |
| 19 | 8217 | possible remains | 405130550080 | Muggleswick | other | undetermined | Remains in R.Derwent suggested to be Roman and connected with lead mining by Ray Selkirk and Northern Arch. Group. No supporting evidence. May be remains of bridge linking Wallish Walls etc with church (Susan Robson, pers comm.) |
| 20 | 8822 | millstone | 401409549910 | Oldstead | stone | undetermined | In front garden of Oldstead |
| 21 | 3054 | possible cist | 400080547180 | Feldon Burn, near group of cairns in 3053 | | unknown | Stone slabs set in ground, 3 in situ, cover slab in place, c. 12ins x 20ins., open & empty. No trace of cairn. Destroyed after recording to build brick access to underground water course. M. Nieke, Durham Parklands Project. |
| 22 | 3053 | cairns | 400200547200 | Feldon Burn, | earthwork | unknown | Extensive group of cairns on terrace above burn. Concentrated on NZ00104700 - cluster of 12 small well-preserved cairns,, irregular, 1.5 - 2m diameter, c. 12 boulders in each. More widespread on rest of terrace. M. Nieke, Durham Parklands Project. |
| 23 | 3051 | cairns | 399500548200 | Eudon Burn | earthwork | unknown | Remnants of small irregular cairns. M. Nieke, Durham Parklands Project. |
| 24 | 3050 | field wall | 399500548200 | Eudon Burn | earthwork | unknown | 15m stretch of field wall SW-NE, single line of large angular boulders. M. Nieke, Durham Parklands Project. |
| 25 | 3032 | possible cairn | 399900547200 | Feldon Burn | earthwork | unknown | "Stoney mound" marked on M. Nieke's map 1987 |
| 26 | 2343 | probable sod walls | 400730551480 | Edmundbyers | earthwork | unknown | Sod walls and riggs. On hillside past Skinnyburn |
| 27 | 2291 | iron sickle | 990500 | Ruffside | artefact | unknown | O.S. archaeology card NY95SE2/ Hildyard & Snowdon 1947 Archaeology of Weardale 3rd annual summary pp. 20, 24 |
| 28 | 2290 | iron axe | | Ruffside | artefact | unknown | O.S. archaeology card NY95SE1/ Hildyard & Snowdon 1947 Archaeology of Weardale 3rd annual summary p. 9-10 |
| 29 | 38939 | possible cairn | 40325491 | | | | |



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## 3.6 Village architecture

### 3.6.1 *An investigation of the architecture*

It is debatable how much a study of the architecture of the houses of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick can contribute to an understanding of the development of the landscape. This, as will be shown, is largely due to the modifications which have been made to the older houses, confusing their diagnostic features; other data may be more informative. Moreover, while the buildings at Muggleswick are scattered through the landscape and may contribute to the knowledge of the settlement of the area, those in Edmundbyers are in a nucleated settlement and have, in themselves, contributed little to the wider landscape of the parishes. It is possible, however, that changes in architectural style reflect changes in the agricultural economy or other social factors; this will only become apparent through investigation:

> As most vernacular buildings were on farmsteads the relationship between developments in agriculture and developments in vernacular architecture is obviously close but requires much more investigation.
>
> Brunskill, 1976: 115

Some general background to local architecture will help to put all this into context and a sample of buildings will be assessed in more detail. The buildings of Muggleswick will be discussed here, but will feature more extensively in chapter 5 regarding enclosure since the majority of them originated as dispersed farms. Although many of the older houses in Edmundbyers were also farms, because they were situated within the village it is appropriate to investigate them with regard to the development of the village itself. Further information about the growth of Edmundbyers village comes from the retrogressive analysis of maps and will be discussed later in this section.

Pevsner, despite his reputation, is singularly unhelpful with regard to the buildings of either Edmundbyers or Muggleswick. Although Pevsner does mention both places, the information provided is not particularly useful. Even the newer sections in the introduction to the County Durham edition shed little light on the vernacular building styles of the area. Fortunately, other researchers, like Brunskill, have investigated the buildings of the North Pennines in more detail, while the information on listed buildings provides further data. Some general history of the houses will be given first, followed by a more in-depth investigation of some examples.

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Although there were clearly dwellings in the area from at least the eleventh or twelfth century, the earliest direct details of houses are in the 1649 Parliamentary Survey. This lists ten 'tenement farmeholds', all 'within the Towneship Territories and Feilds' of Edmundbyers - i.e. within the village. Six of them are described as 'Messuage or Farme House with the appurtenances...'; three are listed as 'Tenement House with the appurtenances...'; just one is a 'Farmehouse with appurtenances' (pp. 51-6 of original Survey). Only five of these were in full tenancy; the others were in two-thirds or half tenancy. Rents were usually paid at Pentecost and Martinmas. All the houses were described as being built of clay and stone with thatched roofs of ling or heather ('black thack'). Only one house is mentioned which was not owned by the estate; this was the house of Dorothy Iley at Hepple Hill. This may be taken as an indication that there were, indeed, other houses in the village at the time which did not belong to the estate and were thus not included in the Survey. In fact, the Rectory must have been in existence at the time but is probably not mentioned as it was not part of the same system; also, the first section of Edmundbyers House was built in the seventeenth century (W. Stephenson, pers. comm.) and the property has been owned by the same family ever since. Twenty-two of the houses in Muggleswick are likewise described in the survey as being of stone and clay and 'thacht with Lynge', although at Swinburne's Farm the house is of 'Rough Stone' (Sobo). Perhaps this indicates that the others are of dressed stone, some of it possibly acquired from the ruins of the Priory. There are also two buildings listed as 'cottages', but there is insufficient information in the Survey to make it clear how they might differ from the other houses in order to merit this classification. Possibly they were occupied by people who were classified as cottagers.

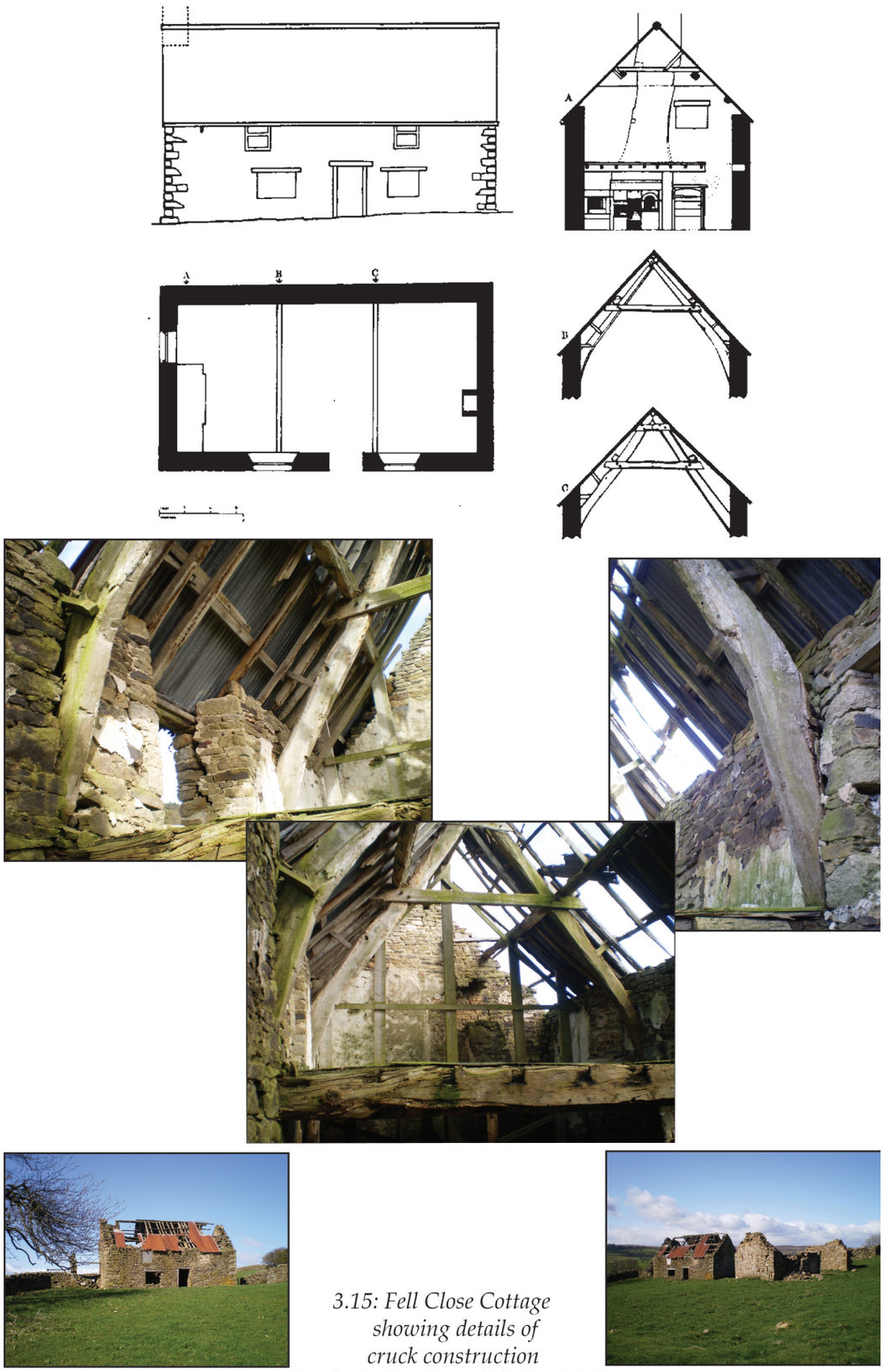
The description of the houses strongly suggests that they were of cruck construction and, indeed, a cruck cottage is recorded in the HER for Edmundbyers as having survived into the twentieth century. Alcock lists one, presumably the same one, with stone walls and two crucks in Edmundbyers (1981: 117). Moreover, the old photograph of Edmundbyers Post Office (fig. 3.14) shows a building which appears to be of cruck type. Fell Close Cottage, which is now in Healeyfield but was originally in Muggleswick parish, is also recorded as being of cruck construction. Alcock notes that this also has two crucks of which one pair cross and the others barely meet, being held together with a collar (1981: 117; see figure 3.15). Featherstonhaugh describes a house still standing during the time that he was vicar of Edmundbyers and which he considers to have been very similar to those of the fourteenth century:

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*Figure 3.14: Edmundbyers Post Office circa 1850*

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*3.15: Fell Close Cottage showing details of cruck construction*
*(drawing by Peter Brears DipAD, AMA)*

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> It is a rectangle of twenty-seven feet by twenty-one outside measurement, the frame supporting the roof consisting of a stone gable at each end, of rough stones mortared with clay, and in the interval two 'forcs' of solid oak. These, set up together at a more or less acute angle, had their feet either resting on the ground or sunk a few inches below the surface, being kept in their places by an oaken ridge-timber, the ends of which rested on the gables. These main timbers thus resembled pairs of gigantic compasses set upright with their points in the earth, Then broad walls were built up, front and back, of rough stone with clay for mortar, so as to enclose the feet of some portion of the timbers, and to form a small rectangular room. A ceiling, if at all, was formed by placing across from front to back rude planks of riven oak: first ribs and then rafters of the same laid on the principal timbers above formed a support for two or three feet of heather thatching, and the house was complete. A wide and rough chimney was run up inside, or sometimes outside, against one of the gables; and a small door and a tiny window back and front were left to give entrance and light. This, the chief house of the holding, was sometimes called the 'firehouse', as distinguished from other buildings where no fire was used.
>
> Featherstonhaugh, 1900: 95-6

This is an interesting first-hand description for many reasons. Not only does Featherstonhaugh think that this style of building corresponds with that of the fourteenth century but it matches very well with the data from the 1649 Survey. It appears to refer to a cruck style of construction which also employs local stone and heather; it indicates, too, that there must have been a good supply of oak. Featherstonhaugh uses 'forc' which is an older name for cruck, but before that a common northern name for this feature was 'sile'. (Alcock and Hall, 1981: 31 - 34). Basing his ideas on the village of Cassop as it was in 1414, Featherstonhaugh suggests that County Durham villages at that time consisted of groups of buildings or tenements each of which contained a firehouse and additional structures such as byres, stables, pigsties and a grange all situated in a garth (1900: 96). Again, this fits well with the description of Edmundbyers in 1649. Even in 1856, when Featherstonhaugh was appointed to the living of Edmundbyers, the 'houses attached to the livings in the district were only humble affairs; thatched cottages, little better

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than the dwellings of the cottagers around' (1900: 109). Part of the Rectory was like this until Featherstonhaugh's predecessor replaced it.

Cruck buildings are found throughout England and Wales, although the distribution map of known cruck buildings shows few in the North-East (Alcock, 2002: 67). The possible reasons for this will be discussed below. There are various types of cruck building, some of the different styles dependent on the region. Alcock differentiated between what he called true crucks and base crucks, but Mercer disputed whether this was actually necessary (Mercer, 1998: 57). The lack of pre-1400 dates for crucks in Northern England might be because the design reached here later than other parts of the country, or because fewer such buildings have survived. This latter seems the more likely possibility since there are references to such buildings in early documents and there is also a shortage of early tree-ring dates for other types of vernacular building in the region (Alcock, 2002: 67). However, there are only a very few crucks in the country which have pre-1300 dates and these are getting very close to the 'survival range' of timber buildings (Mercer, 1996: 1). Alcock considers that cruck buildings might be the earliest 'permanent' replacements for post-hole buildings in those places where they are found. In order for them to have survived to the present they need to have been suitable for modernisation (Alcock, 2002: 70). Most smaller ones were built for ground floor living only and had limited roof space; adapting them to add upper floors was extremely problematic (Johnson, 2010: 62). There has been discussion as to whether the building of cruck halls had a class element as minor gentry and wealthy peasants seem to have been responsible for their construction (Mercer, 1996: 1). Also debated are the origins of cruck buildings - the where? when? why? and how? have not been fully resolved (*ibid*).

However, the purpose of this style of building is clearer. Alcock explains that, over the years, various attempts have been made to define a cruck. These include Peate in 1946, Raglan in 1956 and his own early efforts in the 1970s (Alcock, 1981: 2 - 3). Mercer produced a description which was 'inclined timbers rising from ground level to an apex, and serving as the trusses for a roof; the blades may be curved or straight, and may rise from a timber sill or from a low stone base' (1975: 97). Alcock finds this too simplistic because it does not take into account the fact that some trusses start part way up the wall (1981: 4). Mercer goes on to explain that some crucks are in fact 'raised' (1975: 97) while Alcock observes that raised crucks are more usually found in buildings with solid walls (1981: 4). Johnson describes several types of cruck. Full

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crucks are symmetrical and made from a single piece of timber; they stretch the full height of the building. Raised, middle and upper crucks start from different points above the ground; in some cases they are made of two pieces jointed and pegged together in the middle. Base crucks stand on the base of the building but, rather than reaching to the apex, they stop at the collar of the roof (Johnson, 2010: 35). Featherstonhaugh's description must have been of a full cruck, while the construction of Fell Close House employed three upper crucks with varied apices. Crucks are important structural timbers; they are almost always curved and used in pairs. In full crucks these timbers transmit the weight of the roof to the ground and the external walls are separate from them, although attached (Johnson, 2010: 32 - 33). This transfer of weight was ideal for buildings which carried thick - and heavy - heather thatch and, later, substantial sandstone tiled roofs. Figure 3.16 shows some cruck types.

The older surviving architecture in Edmundbyers, and in Muggleswick, is that of the farmhouses, albeit that they have been 'modernised' a number of times. Many of the farmhouses in the area are what Brunskill refers to as attached buildings and he notes that these are more common in upland areas (1982: 163). As with cruck buildings, there may be social implications regarding the existence of attached buildings. The larger farmhouses, where the people may have had more pretentious aspirations tended not to have the buildings attached. However, in highland areas where the farmers were less affluent the farmhouses were smaller and attached buildings more common (*ibid*: 163). The climate of upland areas may also have had an influence on the architecture in that attached buildings were easier to access in bad weather. In England and Wales there are four types of the attached building style (Brunskill, 1982: 159 - 161):

1. The longhouse and its derivatives, where the family and possibly the harvested crops were under the same roof. A cross-passage ran from front to back between the two parts of the building and allowed access to both parts. Both parts of the building have usually been modified over time.

2. The laithe-house, where the family and farm building formed a single range under one roof. The plan was a simple rectangle although the two parts could vary from each other. There was no cross-passage or intercommunication. Cattle and horses were accommodated in the farm building and there was often storage and threshing space for grain.

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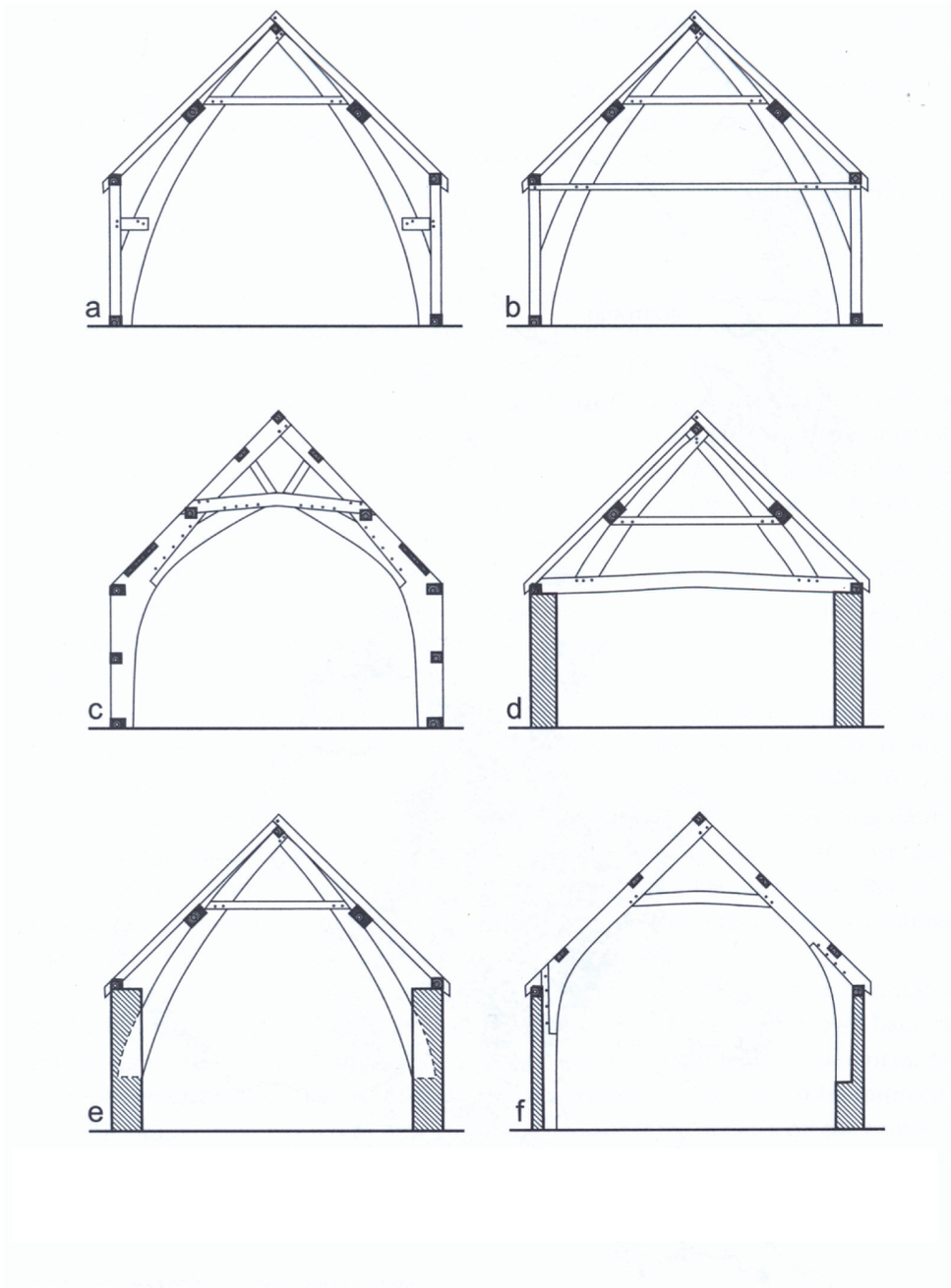



*Figure 3.16: Different forms of cruck: (a) and (b) types of full cruck; (c) base cruck; (d) upper cruck; (e) raised cruck; (f) jointed cruck.* (From Johnson, 2012: 33, based on Grenville, J. (1999) *Medieval Housing*; Leicester University Press pp.28-9)

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3. The bastle house, which was originally defensive, with thick walls and the family accommodation above the animals. Later versions were similar but smaller, without the same defensive characteristics.

4. Buildings with a simple connection. These have a contemporary or later physical link between the farmhouse and the farm building but there is usually no intercommunication. However, attached granaries sometimes open onto upper floor bedrooms.

The cross-passage longhouse may have existed in the Edmundbyers/Muggleswick area. Martin Roberts (pers. comm.) has queried whether the farmhouse at Grange Farm may have been of this type originally, although it is not recorded as such. The bastle house is certainly a feature of the region and may have existed in the parishes. However, it is something which seems to be more akin to the laithe-house which seems to dominate, although the laithe-house proper is usually found further south. Individual examples will be considered below.

Johnson considers that the longhouse type was popular in the highland zone - a cattle byre and human dwelling in line and under the same roof. He suggests that it may have been a useful security device in areas troubled by reivers (2010: 144), although the bastle form was probably better but perhaps more expensive. However, as evidenced below, longhouses can be 'difficult to detect in their original form' because one end or other of the building had almost always been rebuilt (Johnson, 2010: 144).

Brunskill's research showed that the common plan for small houses in the North Pennines was an elongated building which was one room deep and two storeys high, with a chimney at each end and a door near the centre of the front wall. One of the downstairs rooms was a living kitchen, the room off it a parlour often used as a bedroom. The main door opened into the kitchen which had the main fireplace, also (Brunskill, 1976: 118). There might also be a dairy, buttery or pantry. From the rear of the house a staircase led to the loft or bedroom floor situated partly in the roof space. Grain or fleeces were often stored in this loft. The area was lit by conventional windows set near floor level (*ibid*). 'Outshuts' added on to the building provided more space for a dairy or scullery. Later the eaves were often raised to give more headroom on the upper floor which made this area more suitable for sleeping and

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the parlour was no longer needed as a bedroom (*ibid*: 119). Such modifications varied from house to house as well as in character, making them difficult to date. When the heather thatch of the roof was replaced by gritstone flags it facilitated the raising of the eaves because, while the roof line remained the same, the pitch of the roof did not need to be so steep; there was more headroom and full-sized windows could be fitted (*ibid*: 140).

There were also, in the North Pennines, the one-roomed cottages of miner-farmers, labourers, industrial workers and quarrymen. These continued well into the eighteenth century. They, too, were enlarged by adding outshuts. The loft was originally reached via a ladder. Later examples had a taller loft with a properly boarded floor and windows and in the nineteenth century they were built with a full-height upper floor. Later they developed into two-up/two-down cottages (Brunskill, 1976: 123). Such dwellings are much less common in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick where the miner-farmer landscape did not develop in the same way as in other parts of the North Pennines and where there was less industrial activity.

From observation, the farms of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick are frequently of a type which consists of a house, often of two rooms either side of a front door and only one room deep, just as Brunskill described. In these, though, a staircase ascends from the front door to a small landing with a bedroom to either side. Adjacent, under the same roof but sometimes with a break in the pattern of the stonework of the walls, is a byre with a hayloft over. The change in the stonework may be due to different construction dates for the house and byre but, since the roof is usually continuous, it may be that the quality of the construction varies between the two parts, with the byre less well built. Sometimes there is an outshut at the back of the house forming a scullery. There are usually four windows in the front of the house. The whole building is aligned along the valley, with the house often on the westerly end. There are never any original windows in the west end because that is the direction from which the dominant weather comes. Johnson suggests that the buildings often ran up and down the slope of the hill, perhaps to aid drainage from the byre (2010: 144) but this does not seem to have been the common design in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. However, West Cote Farm was different, being built into the hillside with a byre on the lower floor on the downhill side and a hayloft opening into the bedrooms. Subsequent renovations have all but eradicated any traces of this design. Larger farms were sometimes two rooms deep. However, there are variations from this design. In

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her photographic record of Weardale farms Christine Ruskin shows that many of the farms in the Dale were of a similar type to that described (2013). This style of building seems to have been used between the late seventeenth and the early nineteenth century, probably because it was the most practical design.

Village Farm in Edmundbyers is shown on the 1800 estate map but, unfortunately, the map-maker seems to have been more concerned with showing the details of the fields than accurate footprints of buildings. The buildings are shown, but generally as simple rectangles. Thus the map confirms the presence of Village Farm at this time but, possibly, is not helpful about the precise shape of the ground plan. The 1850 estate map and subsequent O.S. maps are more detailed and the shape of the building can be seen. The 1920s O.S. map also differentiates between the house and the attached byre so that it can be seen that the house itself is roughly square in plan, suggesting that it was two rooms deep, while the byre is L-shaped, perhaps because it has an outshut. The maps also indicate the development and loss of some of the other farm buildings, some of which belonged to another farm at one time. All these details can be seen in figure 3.17 The series of annotated photographs (figs. 3.18a - 3.18e) show how the features of the farmhouse have been modified over the years. The most significant change, which had occurred by the 1930s, was the raising of the roof of the house. This gave more headroom in the upstairs rooms. It is feasible that the cartographer of the 1800 map did actually draw the buildings correctly and that they all had, at that time, simple rectangular plans. The rear elevation of the building suggests that there was more modification than just the raising of the roof because the depth of the building seems to be anomalous in relation to the byre. Village Farm has not been as heavily modified as some other village buildings and an approximate chronology of the building can be attempted. In 1649 any building on the site must have been a stone with heather thatch structure as described in the Survey. Some time in the 150 years between then and 1800 the building was upgraded to the form that is common in the area, with an attached byre. By 1850 the current footprint was essentially established, perhaps because of improvements in the agricultural economy which took place during the nineteenth century. By the 1930s the roof had been raised and further modernisation has occurred since. The modification between 1649 and 1800 tallies with the belated 'Great Rebuilding' which may have occurred in the region.

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Hoskins suggested the idea that a 'Great Rebuilding' occurred, applying it to small houses and the time period 1570 to 1640. However, he acknowledged that it might have happened later in more northerly or remote areas (Brunskill, 1976: 116-7). A delay of some 50 to 100 years is likely and the process left 'very little evidence of the plan, construction and detailing of any earlier vernacular buildings' (*ibid*: 117). This fits well with the evidence from the buildings in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick, although some of the building/rebuilding clearly took place later than this.

Hepple Hill Farm had a design very similar to that described above as being the commonest form. The photograph (fig. 3.19), dating from the early twentieth century, shows the house with the main door in the south wall and the attached byre to the right, or east, of the house. The windows show that the upper floor had already been expanded into the area above the byre. This remained the essential layout of the house until the late twentieth century when it was developed almost beyond recognition through the addition of a huge extension on the north side forming a wing bigger than the whole of the original building. Barker House, on the other hand, was a much squarer structure. Despite having an integral area with animal stalls, later adapted as a utility room, it also had a free-standing byre, with hayloft over, a few yards away. These can be seen in figure 3.20.

Edmundbyers House, as stated above, is known to have been built in the 1600s and was a farm for a large part of its history. The original building is now almost completely enclosed by later extensions, a number of them Victorian. Evidence for this original building comes from the existence of some very thick interior walls which must once have been external ones. Figure 3.21 shows the shape of the house as indicated on maps of various periods and demonstrates that the footprint has undergone only relatively minor changes since 1850 although it is shown as a simple rectangle in 1800, like the other village houses.

The Old Rectory also assists in indicating the changes in the economy of the village since the incumbents of the past would have benefitted financially from the agriculture and mining in the parish. The Revd. Walker Featherstonhaugh noted that the 'houses attached to the livings in the district were only very humble affairs' (1900: 109). The black thack cottage that had been the vicar's residence was still in existence when the Revd. Francis Hunter was appointed and he soon built a substantial south wing facing the churchyard, although the cottage was not demolished until the time

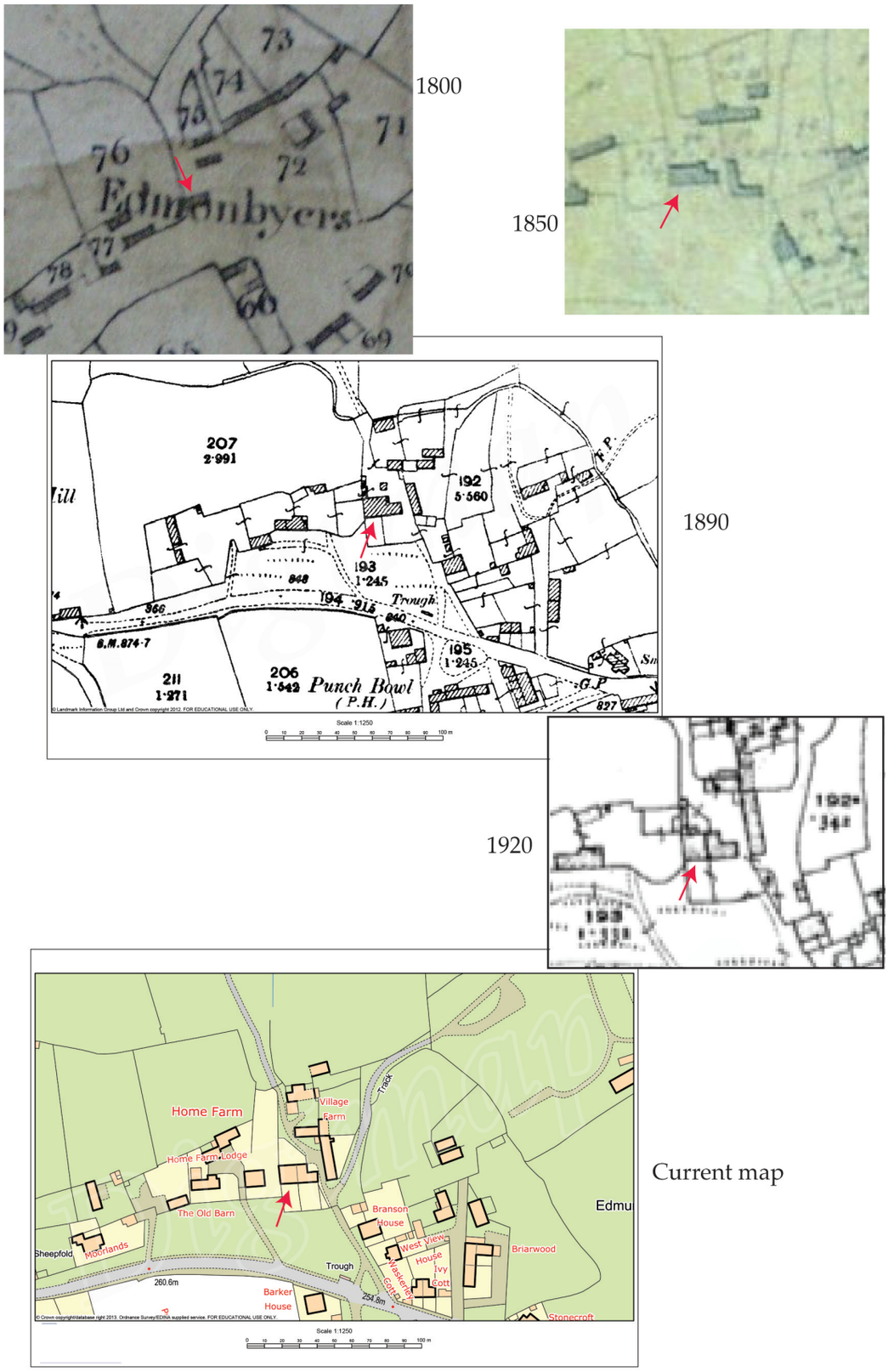



*Figure 3.17: Maps showing the development of Village Farm house (shown by red arrow)*

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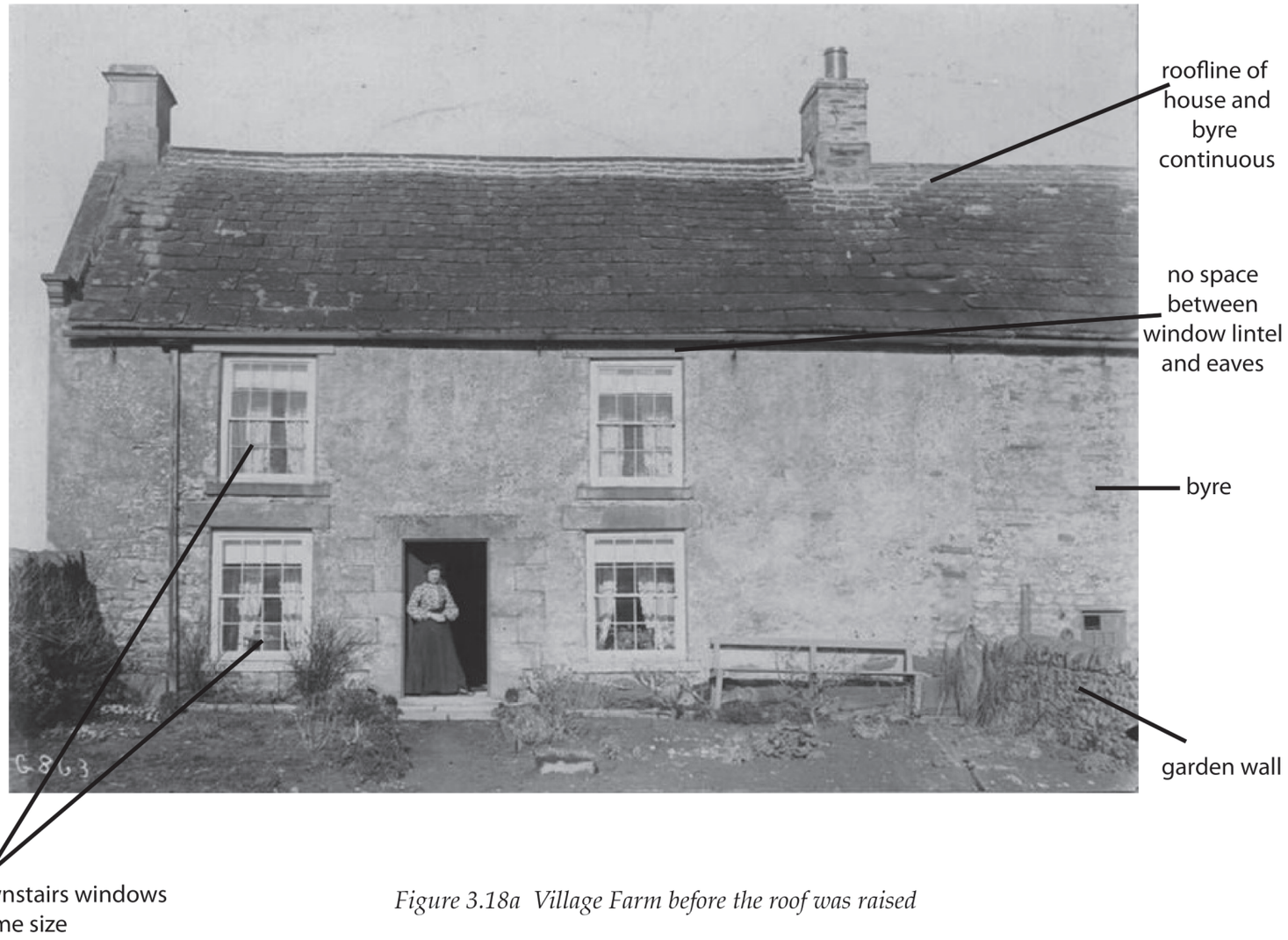



*Figure 3.18a Village Farm before the roof was raised*



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*Figure 3.18b Edmundbyers Village Green in the 1930s.*
*Village Farm has had the roof raised on the house but not the byre*



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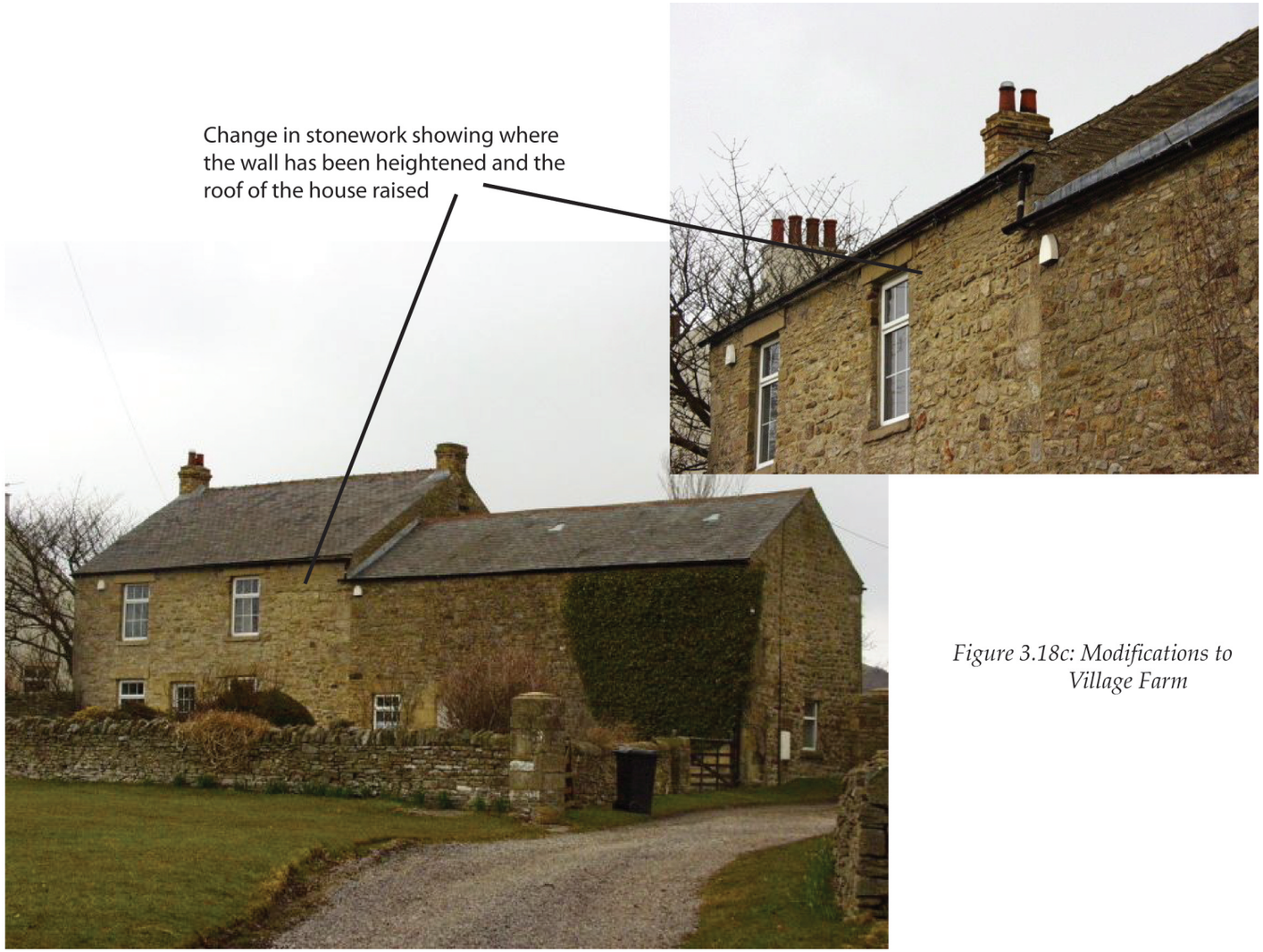



*Figure 3.18c: Modifications to Village Farm*



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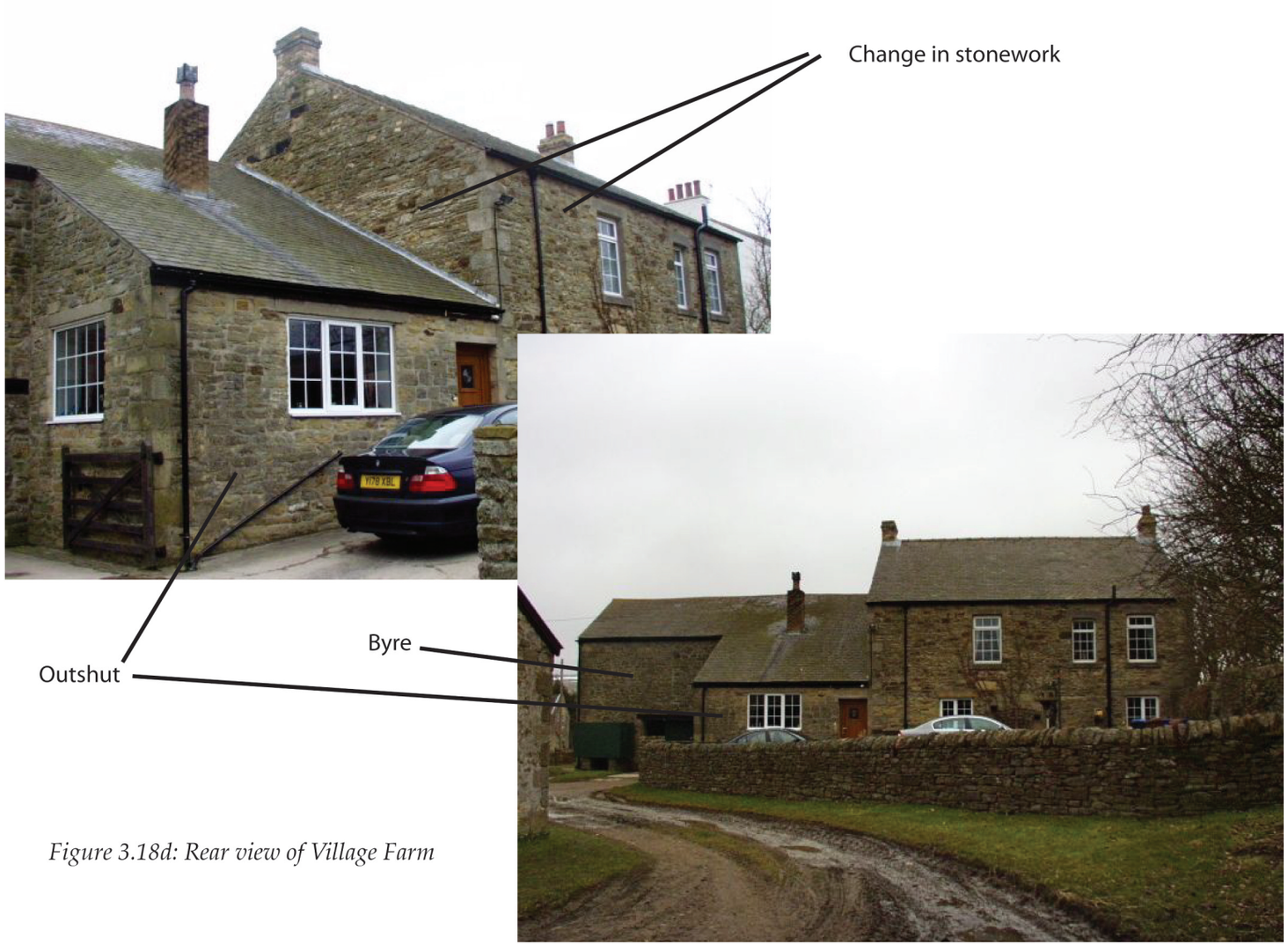



*Figure 3.18d: Rear view of Village Farm*



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*Figure 3.18e: Village Farm showing the change in window size as a result of raising the roof*




*Figure 3.19: Hepple Hill Farm house c. 1900. Already the hay loft has been incorporated into the house*



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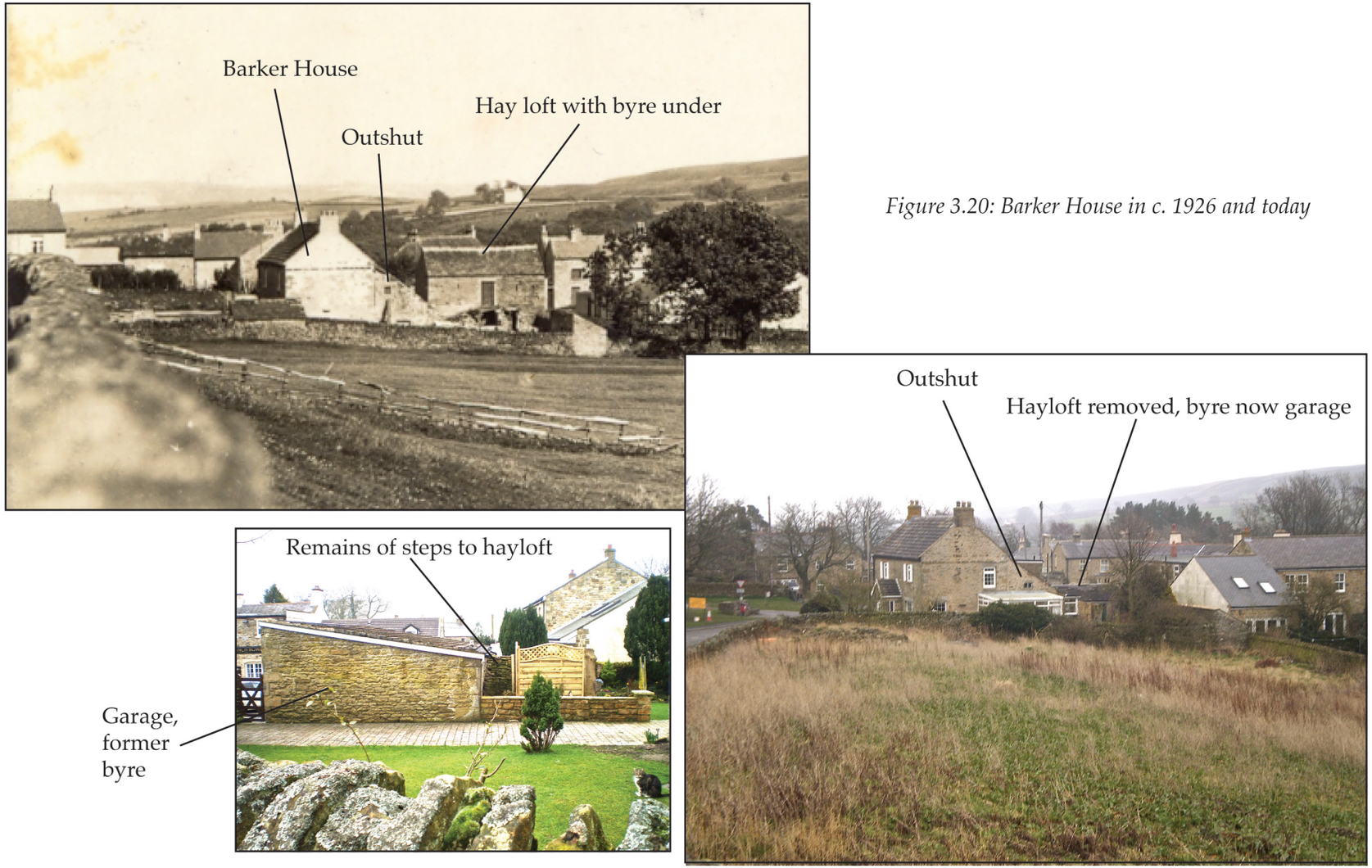



*Figure 3.20: Barker House in c. 1926 and today*



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*Figure 3.21: Plans of Edmundbyers House for different periods*
*Quality of reproductions reflects quality of enlargement from original maps*

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*Figure 3.22 Plans for Victorian alterations to the Rectory and photographs of 'The Old Rectory' as it is today*



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of Joseph Forster. When Featherstonhaugh replaced Forster in 1856 he found the house to be very dilapidated and he was obliged to undertake extensive repairs (*ibid*). The north wing, facing the road, originally had servants' quarters on the first floor at the north end (fig. 3.22). Stairs led up to them from what is now the pantry; the present garage was the back kitchen, diary, shoe room and coal shed. The netty, or outside lavatory, and other useful buildings lay north of these. Beneath where the cottage must have stood is a cellar, which may be the oldest remaining part of the house. The adjacent house was originally the stable, coach house and hayloft for the Rectory and to the north of these were pigsties and chicken houses.

The door surround of the porch in the angle between the two wings, when closely scrutinised, can be seen to have been moved. It was probably moved from the main wall of the house when the porch was added, but the 1857 plans of the house show it on the north side of the porch, not the east as it is now.

Brunskill suggests a settlement pattern in the North Pennines comprised not only of scattered farmsteads but also of many nucleated villages and hamlets along the dalesides (1976: 112 - 3). The description of Edmundbyers in 1649 and the 1800 map (fig. 3.24) do not closely resemble a nucleated settlement; however, subsequent maps show a different pattern of development. Brunskill also notes that the settlements are usually associated with field patterns of mediæval strips and lynchets suggesting that there was communal agriculture involving grain crops and stock rearing using meadows, pasture and rights on the waste of long standing. In some places this is based on an infield-outfield system (*ibid*). This description does fit with the circumstances in Edmundbyers; more discussion of the development of the fields and agriculture in general in chapters 4 and 5.

The maps of the village of Edmundbyers shown in figures 3.24 - 3.28 help to illustrate how the settlement has grown between 1800 and the present day. The 1649 Parliamentary Survey describes nearly all the houses as being along the village street (the Blanchland road) on the north side of the village. Unfortunately the map belonging to the Survey has not survived and it is virtually impossible to reconstruct it using data from the Survey. An attempt has been made to do this, but the plan produced is only a simple diagrammatic reconstruction (fig. 3.23). The predecessor of Village Farm would have been one of the houses lying along the village street. One house lay to the south of the group and may have been the precursor to Barker House.

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In 1800 the majority of the buildings still lay along the Blanchland road on the north side of the village. These include Barker House and Village Farm, the Punch Bowl and, significantly due to the debate about its age, Low House (which was previously known as the Miners' Arms and later became the Youth Hostel) at the east end of the village. There were others, slightly more scattered at the east end and a few along the Stanhope road on the south side. The only buildings at the western end of the village were the church and rectory. There were no buildings at Hepple Hill. However, the main features of the present road pattern were already established with the two main routes to Blanchland and Stanhope linked by Church Lane and thus forming a triangle of fields between them. This was bisected by what is now called The Closes.

Some of the buildings mentioned above have been identified on the 1800 map (fig. 3.24) and numbered, with additional buildings identified on the later maps. This is so that comparisons can be made to help with understanding how the village developed. Investigation of every building would be interesting but is not possible due to time and space constraints, so a representative selection of houses has been used. The reproduction of some of the maps has been compromised by the need to enlarge them; however to have re-drawn them all would have resulted in the loss of their individual characteristics.

The key to the building numbers is:

1. The Church
2. The Rectory
3. Village Farm
4. Hepple Hill Farm
5. Barker House
6. Edmundbyers House
7. The Punch Bowl
8. Low House
9. The Thack
10. The Village Hall
11. Stonecroft
12. Holmlea
13. Struthers Farm
14. The Shooting Box

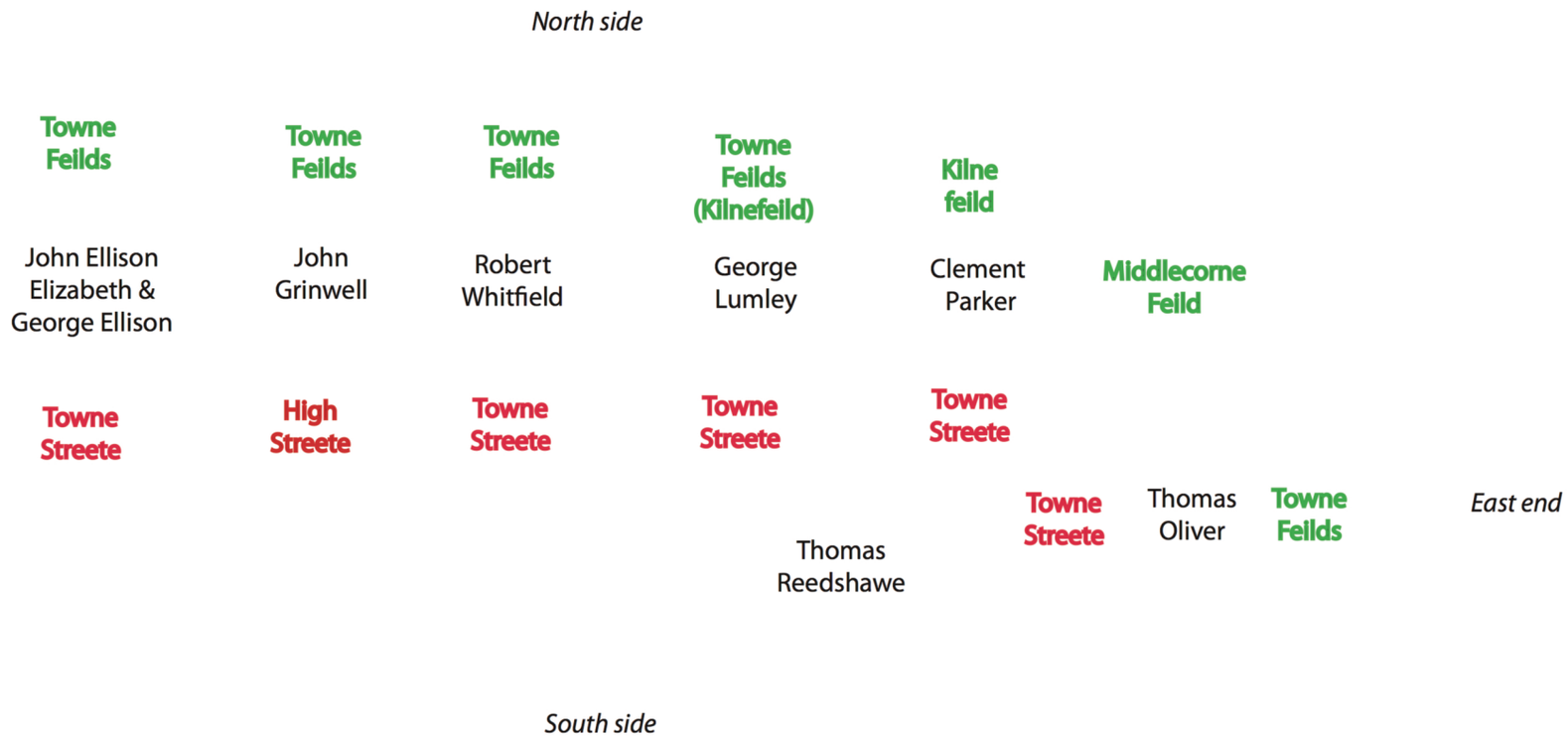



Figure 3.23: Layout of Edmundbyers in 1649



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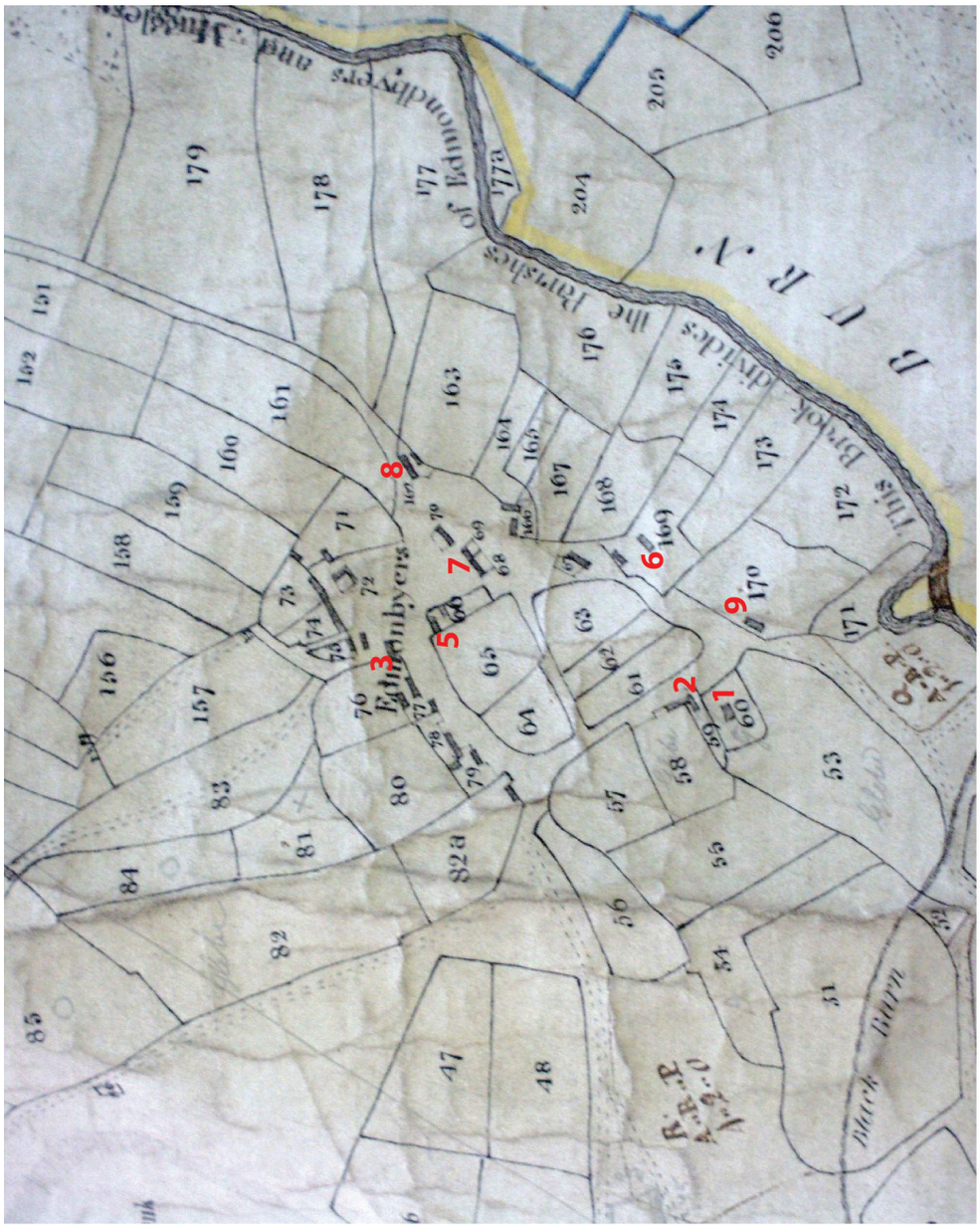



Figure 3.24: Edmundbyers in 1800 (from the 1800 estate map)

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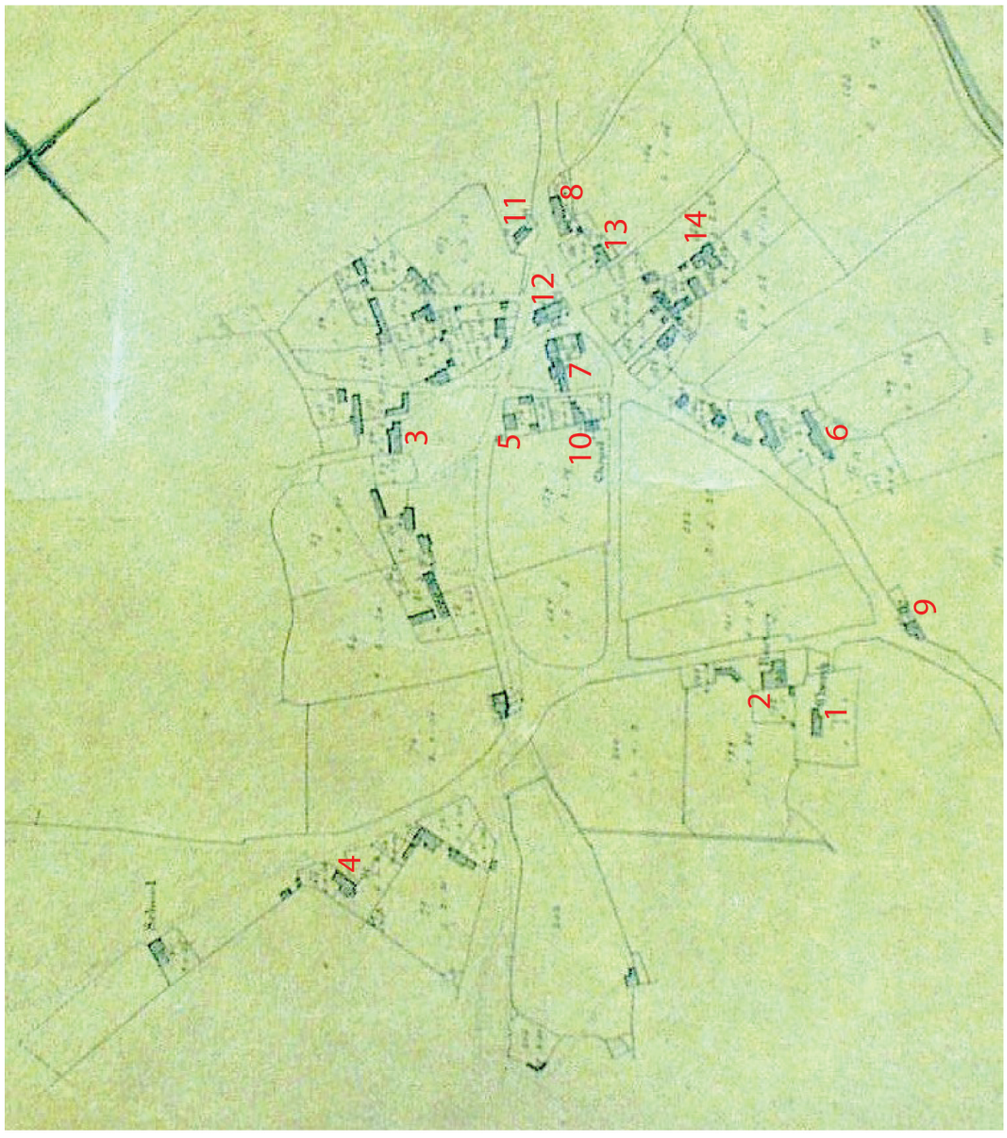
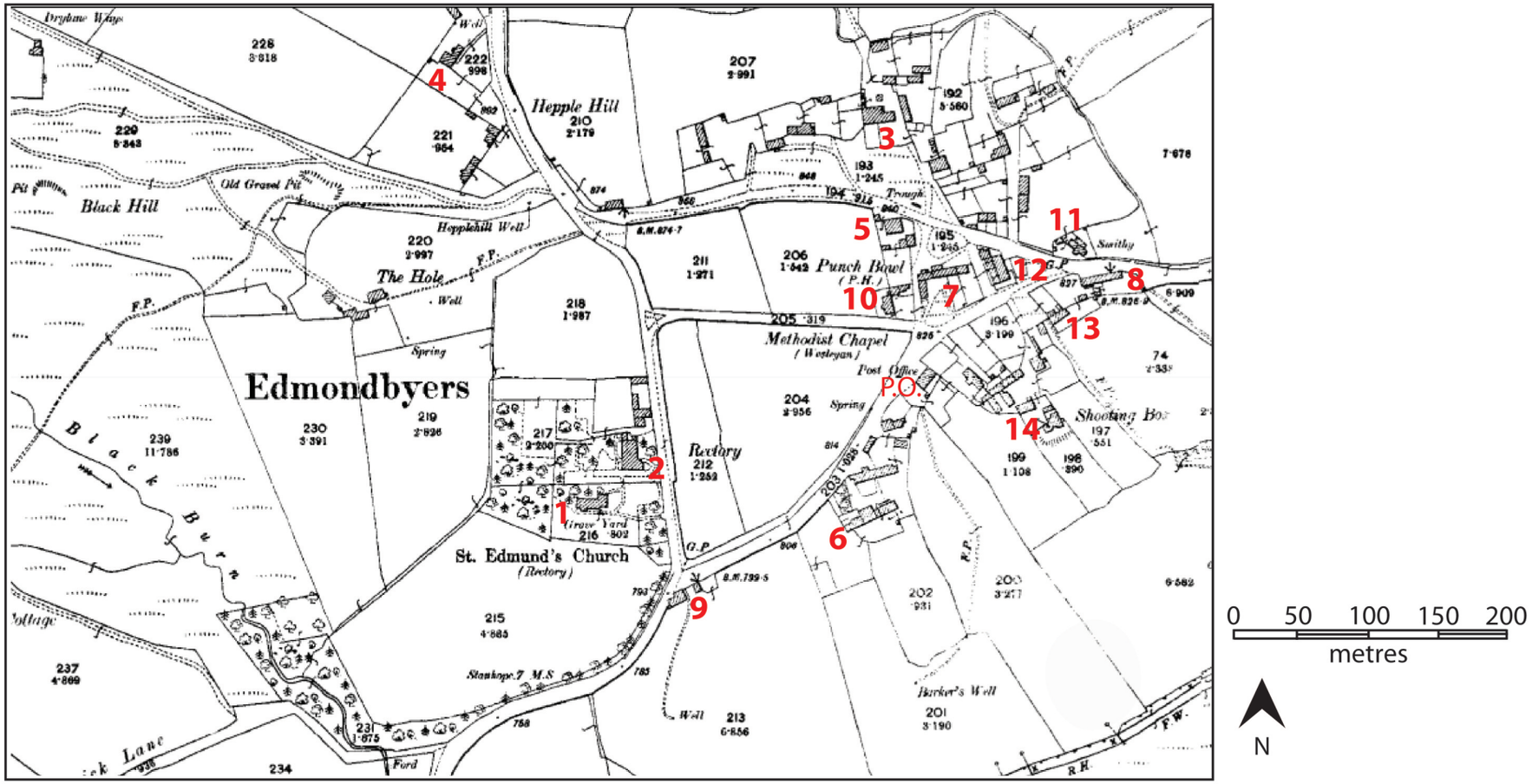



Figure 3.25: Edmundbyers in 1850 (from the 1850 estate map)



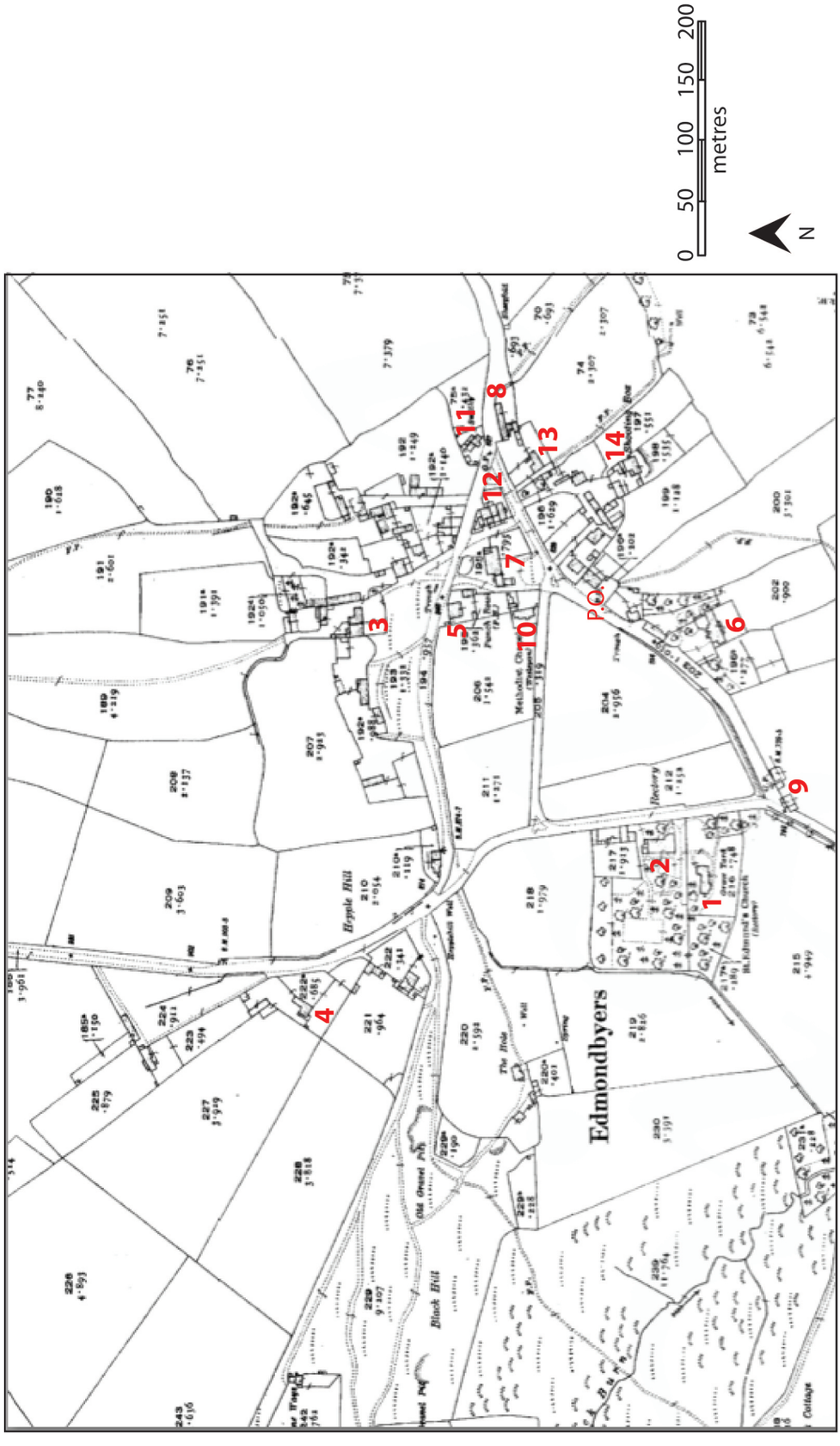

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*Figure 3.26: Edmundbyers in 1890*



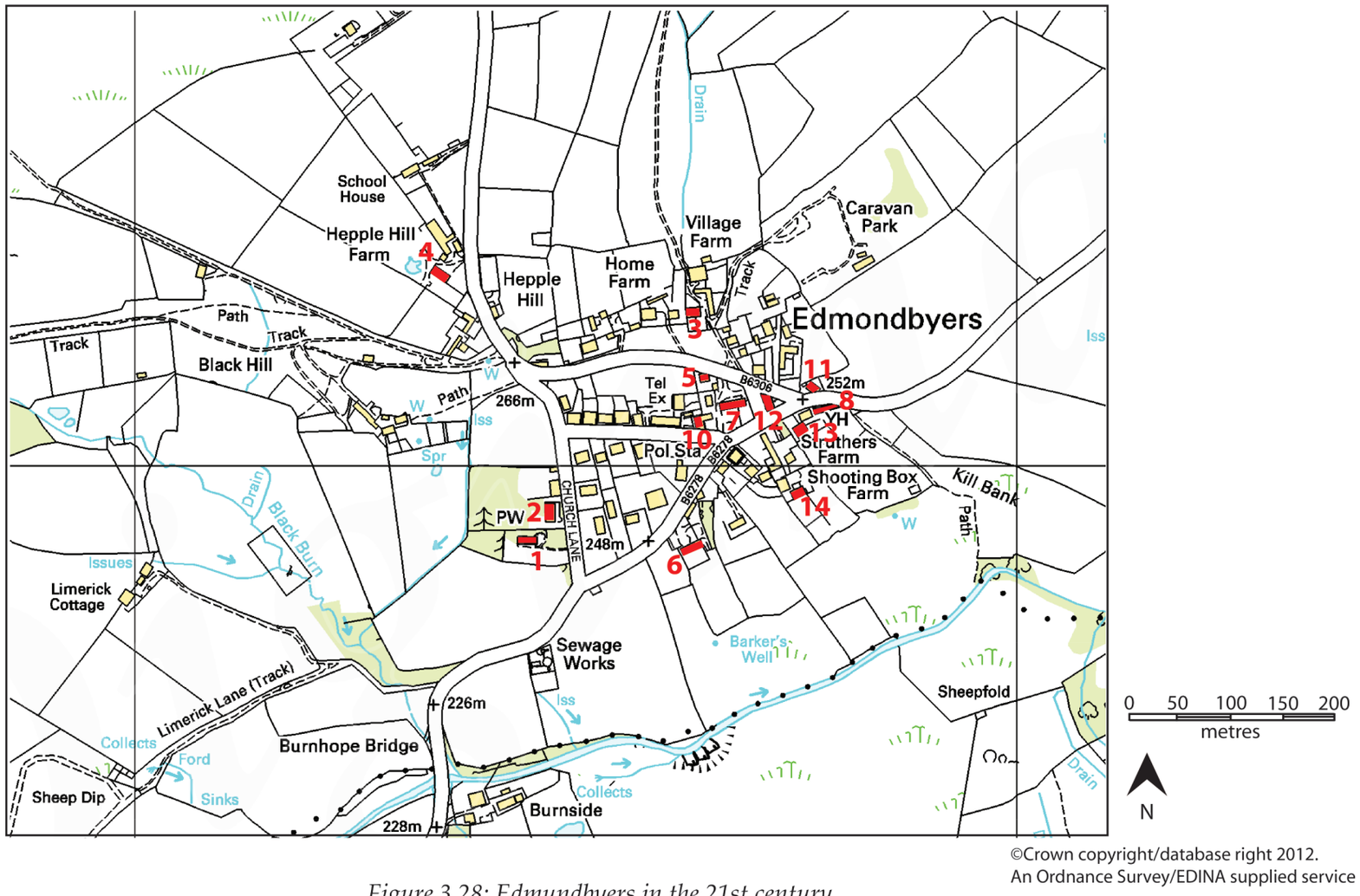
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*Figure 3.27: Edmundbyers in the 1920s*




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*Figure 3.28: Edmundbyers in the 21st century*



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By 1850 a good deal of construction had taken place and this map gives more detailed plans of the buildings (fig. 3.25). Some of the houses, like Edmundbyers House had clearly been extended, but new dwellings had also appeared. The buildings numbered 1 to 9 were still extant, but had been joined by several others. The most interesting of these, perhaps, was the Methodist Chapel which later became the village hall (10 on the map). Clearly there was sufficient demand for a second place of worship in the village, rather than holding meetings in people's houses. Stonecroft (11) had also been built; this was the village smithy for many years. In addition to this, the range of buildings that include Holmlea (12; fig. 3.29) had been constructed, as had Struthers Farm (13; fig. 3.30; once the home of the curate of the parish) and The Shooting Box (14). The original purpose of the latter may have been for shooting parties; it had a heather thatched roof (fig. 3.31). The gamekeepers and beaters were apparently accommodated in the Holmlea buildings. At Hepple Hill several houses had been built as well as the farmhouse (4). The old photograph of the village post office may show a building located in the complex of structures to the north of the Shooting Box. It can be seen by comparing the 1800 and 1850 maps that the village had developed appreciably during this half-century.

The 1890 map (fig. 3.26) shows that many of the pre-existing buildings had been modified as well as a number of new ones added or others demolished. For example, a building had been added to the north west of Stonecroft (11) while another on the north west side of the village green had disappeared. The Punch Bowl (7) had gained a wing on its western end and the building north of the Rectory (2) had changed shape (the stable - probably modified by Featherstonhaugh). Another notable difference is that Swinburn Cottage had been built and is labelled as the Post Office on the 1890 map. The changes during this period are fewer than in the 1800 to 1850 period but demonstrate a continuing process of house modifications and infilling of the east end of the village with buildings.

Between 1890 and the 1920s there were few changes to the village map (fig. 3.27). There continued to be, as far as can be seen, modifications to existing buildings but no significant development. The triangular area in the centre of the village, and the two fields to the north of it, remained undeveloped, as they had been since at least 1800 and may have been throughout the history of the village.

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*Figure 3.29: Holmlea c. 1900*

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*Figure 3.30: Struthers Farm house c. 1900*

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*Figure 3.31: The Shooting Box c. 1900*

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*Figure 3.32: The Thack c. 1925*

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However, after the 1920s a number of houses were built and this continued spasmodically into the twenty-first century. The 1930s saw some new houses on the south side, adjacent to Swinburn Cottage, and the first houses built in the central triangle. By this time The Thack was in ruins (see figure 3.32) and was subsequently demolished. The latter half of the twentieth century was the time when most development occurred. By 2000 the triangle had been filled with houses, many built in the 1970s, and the buildings north west of Struthers Farm had been replaced by new Scandinavian-style houses. On the north side of the village green an old barn was converted to a dwelling and a new house built on the site of a byre which had once been a farm house. Along the way the village gained two static holiday caravan sites and a village shop located in the Holmlea range of buildings. Around the millennium the fields to the north of The Closes were sold for development. Several of the houses that resulted were self-builds while the group at the east end close to the village hall were constructed by a developer (see map fig. 3.28). The other main changes have been modifications whereby houses have been extended, sometimes considerably, and the conversion of two barns. The barn conversion at Village Farm is the most recent and is not quite finished.

### 3.6.2 *Discussion*

What can be concluded from this examination of the architecture and village maps? There is no information about the layout of the village or the houses before 1649 even though there are records such as the Boldon Book, Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis and the Halmote Court Rolls from earlier periods. Probably the situation in 1649 reflects the earlier circumstances to some extent. However, there was a growth in population generally in the sixteenth century when more land was taken into cultivation, there was more improvement of the waste and stinting and field enclosure developed further (Brunskill, 1976: 115). The relatively solid cruck cottages may be a result of the improvements that occurred during that period. Thus, by the time of the Parliamentary Survey most of the houses were stone, probably cruck-built, and thatched with heather. There were fewer houses than at later dates, according to the evidence available, but they were probably home to extended families so that the population may actually have been higher than today. Between 1649 and the estate map of 1800 many of the houses seem to have been replaced with farms of the type described above but the number of houses had not increased greatly; most farms would have been home to a number of people, both family and farm servants.

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It is significant that some buildings whose date has been disputed are shown on the 1800 map. They include Low House, reputedly built in 1600 as an inn. Although this was not specifically mentioned in 1649 it may have been in existence. What is clear is that it was certainly built before 1800. The same may be said of Edmundbyers House: the family state that the first part was built in the seventeenth century; the 1800 map provides a terminus ante quem. The biggest change before the modern era came in the period between 1800 and 1850 when a number of houses were added to the village. Population growth in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries followed more enclosure of land, the establishment of new farmsteads, and a spread outwards from the nucleated settlements (Brunskill, 1976: 115). Most development after this period began in the 1920s; several houses were built in the 1930s and again in the 1970s, with a final burst of building in the early part of the twenty-first century. These latter developments reflect the improving transport situation. Although Edmundbyers had long been popular as a destination for holidays and days out, it had not previously been suitable for commuters as the journey to towns and cities for work had been too long.

Further discussion of farm architecture, particularly of the dispersed farmsteads, and the development of agriculture follows in chapters 4 and 5.

### 3.7 Extractive Industries

Although mining and quarrying do not directly follow the research described above, they have long been part of the history of the North Pennines and have affected the way the landscape has developed. Consequently an outline of such industries is given here so that their influence on factors studied in subsequent chapters may be better understood.

#### 3.7.1 *Lead Mining in the North Pennines*

The North Pennines are renowned for the lead mining industry which made parts of the area rich, particularly in the nineteenth century, although the lead was won from the rocks of the region from at least Roman times (see below). The extent of the industry means that the subject is far too large and complex to study in any detail here; it merits - and has received - specialist attention. However, it has had an obvious effect upon the landscape with the remains of mining and lead processing visible to the observant eye in many parts of the area. The aspect of the industry which is most

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pertinent to this research is its influence on communications. Consequently, an outline of lead mining in the Derwent Valley and its tributary valleys will be given in order to place this in context.

The geology of the North Pennines, in which the 'Lead Dales' of the upper Tees, Wear, Derwent, Allen and South Tyne are located, is largely sedimentary. Carboniferous limestones form the surface rocks with, beneath them, a succession of shales, limestones, sandstones and thin seams of coal (Turnbull, 2006: 1). There are outcrops of Great and Little Limestone which form scars on the valley sides and, especially in the south and east of the region, Millstone Grit caps the hills. Especially in Teesdale, the geology is also affected by the Great Whin Sill, a volcanic intrusion which has led to the formation of Cauldron Snout and High Force, two impressive waterfalls on the Tees (*ibid*).

The coal seams of the North Pennines are too thin to be commercially viable. The rock strata dip eastwards so that the good coal seams were eroded away eons before people settled here. They start to outcrop for surface mining to the east of the A68 and subsequently are found deeper and deeper so that there were more pits the further eastward one went, with those at Sunderland, for example, extending far out beneath the North Sea.

However, the rocks of the North Pennines are cut by veins of minerals, mostly aligned north-north-east or north-west. These minerals include quartz, fluorspar, witherite, barites, spathose iron ore and zinc blende. Lead miners considered all these to be 'gangue' or waste (Turnbull, 2006: 1 - 2). It was only the lead ore from the limestone - especially the Great Limestone - that was worth mining. This lead ore was mostly argentiferous, producing up to ten ounces of silver per ton. Argentiferous galena was usually found in vertical oreshoots varying between a few inches and more than 20 feet in width. The occasional horizontal oreshoots, or 'flats' contained the richest ore (*ibid*: 2 - 3). It was the presence of the silver that made lead mining in the region such a profitable business.

The colonisation of the dales of the North Pennines was largely due to the lead industry and it became the main leadmining area of Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Britain was the largest lead producer in the world at the time (Turnbull, 2006: 7). However, it is likely that the origins of lead mining in the dales

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are much earlier, although unclear. Thomas Sopwith, a principal engineer for Blackett Beaumont and Company, identified places that he thought were connected to Roman mining in the area (Turnbull, 2006: 8; Sopwith, 1833: 19). Droplets of lead were found beneath the stone floor of an Iron Age roundhouse on Bollihope Common suggesting that lead was mined and worked in the area at that time. Roman lead smelting sites have been found in small numbers in the region and it is known that mining and smelting were undertaken throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods. In some parts of Weardale lead extraction and processing may have been carried out in all periods since Roman times (Bollihope Common Archaeology Project). In the twelfth century there was a significant demand for lead for the pipes and roofs of castles and churches so it is not surprising that the Prince Bishops encouraged the mining of lead in Weardale. Lead from the Alston Moor mines was even sent to Windsor for Henry II's palace and to Clairvaux for the Cistercian Abbey (Turnbull, 2006: 9). Turnbull does not state whether mining was taking place in the Derwent Valley but does notes that they are mentioned in fifteenth century documents (*ibid*: 10).

The chief companies operating in the North Pennines were the Blackett Beaumonts (BBCo.), the London Lead Company (LLCo.) and, after the lands of the Earl of Derwentwater were confiscated due to his part in the Jacobite Rebellion, the Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital for Seamen acquired an interest.

The Blacketts were mining in Allendale from at least 1684 and leased mines in Weardale from the Bishop in 1698. They had several mines and smelt mills throughout the area, together with a refinery and warehouses at Blaydon on the Tyne (Turnbull, 2006: 13). Thomas Sopwith was one of BBCo.'s engineers in the nineteenth century responsible for designing drainage levels and the use of water power for machinery, exploration and mine management (*ibid*: 14). He also made a detailed study of the lead mining areas of the North Pennines published in 1833.

The London Lead Company received its royal charter in 1692 and in 1696 leased mines on Alston Moor. It leased more in the eighteenth century and added mines in Teesdale and the Derwent Valley, although the latter were abandoned by the company at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Turnbull, 2006: 14). LLCo. revolutionised mining in the Teesdale and Alston Moor Mines by constructing long levels for exploration and drainage, and using hydraulic power. Like BBCo. they, as a Quaker-

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owned company, also promoted various welfare schemes, including education (*ibid*: 14 - 15). LLCo. abandoned the Alston Moor mines in 1883 when lead prices fell significantly, although they continued mining in Teesdale until 1905 when they ceased trading (*ibid*: 15).

The Commissioners of Greenwich Hospital, having gained much of the sequestered Derwentwater land, leased their Alston Moor mineral rights to LLCo. However, in 1768 they opened their own smelt mill at Langley in Hexhamshire and operated it until 1833. The mill was then run by Shield and Dinning until 1887 (Turnbull, 2006: 15).

### 3.7.2 *Lead Mining in the Derwent Valley*

It can be seen from the map (fig. 3.33) that the main mining areas were not in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. More important mines were situated in Weardale and Allendale, with the profits for the benefice of Stanhope making it the richest ecclesiastical living in the country when the industry was at its height. The main Derwent mines were above Blanchland and at Healeyfield. Although Healeyfield was part of Muggleswick before the formation of the Parish of Castleside, it is now outwith the study area. The mines around Blanchland, at Shildon, Townfield, Whiteheaps, were always outside the area. However, they will be mentioned briefly as they provided employment and influenced other aspects of life in the Derwent Valley. The chief mines in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick lay along the valley of the Burnhope Burn and its tributaries and these will be discussed in more detail.

Adits were not generally practical in the Derwent area as the valleys tend not to be deep enough or sufficiently steep-sided; likewise there were few horse levels for drainage and access and haulage were inhibited (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 8). Thus most of the mines were shafts. Hushing was another technique not much used (*ibid*: 7), although in places where it was, like Burntshieldhaugh, it had a spectacular effect on the landscape. Hushing involved damming a stream so that the water that accumulated could be released to rush down the valley. The purpose of this is much debated. Crossley and Patrick suggest that it could have been to uncover mineral veins and then to wash away waste rock (*ibid*: 7). Pirt and Dodds suggest that it was 'to discover new veins and aid their working' (2002: 16). Landowners often banned it because of the damage it did to their land (*ibid*). Swandale is the most likely candidate for a hush close to Edmundbyers.

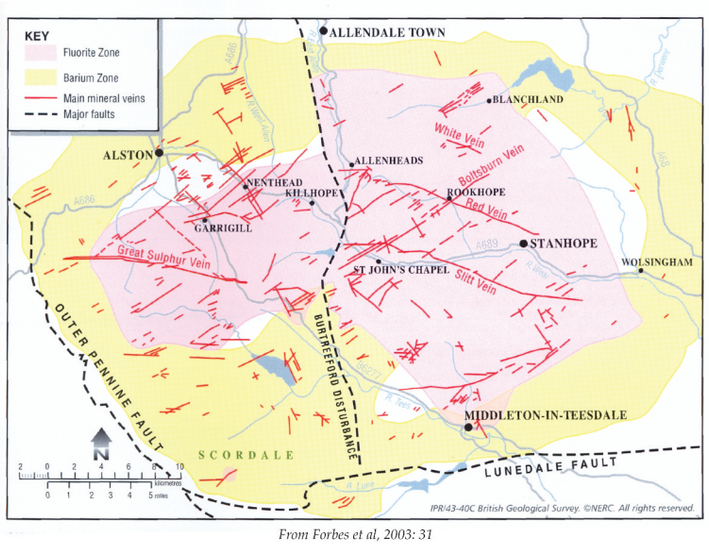
Processing areas existed in several places around Blanchland and at Feldon and near Healeyfield (see below). The earliest form of processor was the 'bale', small open furnaces on hilltop sites which used the wind instead of bellows to help raise the temperature of the fire to the necessary level (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 11). A number have been recorded on the mediæval HER for Edmundbyers and Muggleswick (see map and table). The process became more mechanised from the early eighteenth century. The London Lead Company built a smelting mill at Acton to process the ore from Shildon and then one at Ramshaw. The bellows were worked by waterwheels (*ibid*). The short chimneys of the first smelters removed the toxic fumes of sulphur dioxide, but did nothing to safeguard the local environment. The long flues that replaced them have become a feature of the North Pennines (*ibid*: 14). They were much more efficient at condensing out the lead in the fumes and the reclamation of this lead more than paid for the building of the flues (A. Newton, pers. comm.).

***Healeyfield Mine***

This was located at Dene Howl, in the area that was transferred to Castleside Parish. When it closed in 1891 it had possibly been in use for some 800 years; it had belonged to the Dean and Chapter (Thompson, 1999: 1). It also had associations with the Jacobite Rebellion because the farmhouse at Dene Howl was built by one of the members of the group who brought the Earl of Derwentwater's body home to Dilston for burial and the party rested at Dene Howl overnight (*ibid*).

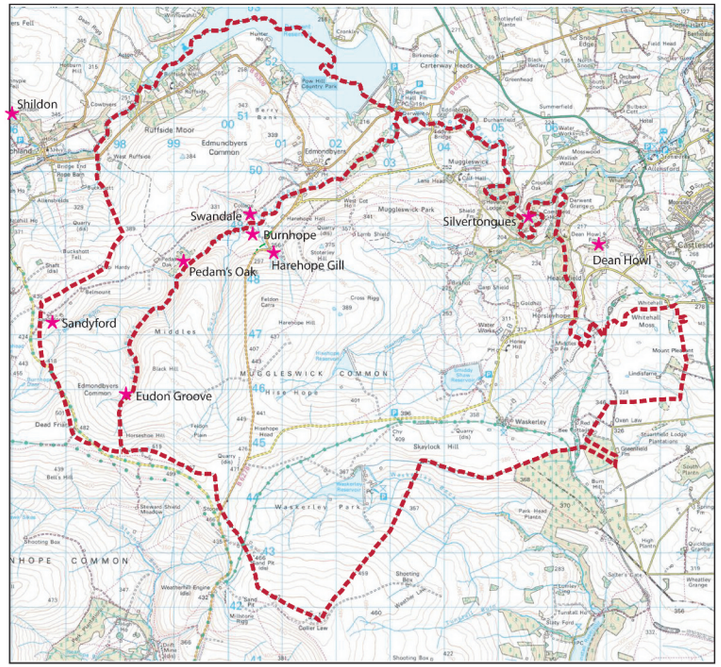
The original mine was probably the 'Horse Level' which followed a vein southwards for some 4500 feet, from opposite the farmhouse to the valley of Charlton Howl. Here there was a shaft which reached the surface west of the old Healeyfield Bridge. Another level went north for 800 feet (Thompson, 1999: 1). The 60-fathom-deep Whitwell shaft led to a level that went north until it came out beneath a crag overlooking the Derwent and there were several other levels (*ibid*: 2).

Only the engine house remains because the other buildings were removed for use elsewhere. Other infrastructure included two tramlines. One crossed the road on a wooden bridge and carried waste to the spoil heap (Thompson, 1999: 3). The other tramline went from the washing plant to the low level on the river. It was a double line along the hillside with an empty set of tubs going down while full ones came up, although the lines merge through the fields. A spectacular platform built into the cliffs carried the tramway along by the river (*ibid*: 4).




*From Forbes et al, 2003: 31*

*Figure 3.33: Maps showing (left) the mineral veins of the North Pennines and (below) the main lead mines in and around Muggleswick and Edmundbyers*






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The washing and dressing plant was a quarter mile down the valley, while the ore was smelted at Castleside. Two large waterwheels - unusual because they were enclosed - provided power at the washing plant with the water coming via a leat from the dam at Horseleyhope Mill and various ponds (Thompson, 1999: 3). In 1805 the Watergate smelt mill opened and produced some 2000 bings of lead a year together with some silver. When the Stanhope and Tyne railway opened in 1834 lead ore was brought from other mines to be smelted here (*ibid*: 4). Another water wheel drove the bellows at the smelter and there was a large and complex system of flues to facilitate the recovery of lead and silver residues. The high brick chimney was demolished shortly after the Second World War (*ibid*: 5).

On the north side of the river, the Silvertongues mine was also in production, sending argentiferous ore to Healeyfield for smelting and providing employment in the area. The ore from here reputedly had a high silver content (Pirt and Dodds, 2002: 21, 15). However, it was situated in Northumberland and was therefore outwith the research parishes.

It can be seen from this that the workings and associated processing plants were extensive and spread over a large area. While most of the buildings have gone, it is possible to see the remains of where they stood, the spoil heaps and other 'lumps and bumps' which have been left behind.

***Blanchland area mines***

While the mines at the downstream end of the Upper Derwent Valley clearly affected a large area, those near to the source of the Derwent were even more extensive and provided employment to many people in this part of the North Pennines.

The galena from the Blanchland area is even richer in silver - 10 to 18 ounces per ton (278 to 502g per metric tonne). Flourite (called fluorspar by the miners) and quartz are commonly found in association with the galena. Fluorspar is used as a flux in iron smelting and the chemical industry; from the late nineteenth century it was an important product of the mines and old mines and spoilheaps were re-worked to extract it until the late twentieth century (Crossley and Patrick, n.d.: 2 - 3, 6).

The Shildon mines seem to have been the earliest in the area to be exploited and even by 1152 the effect on the landscape caused a complaint in Carlisle court about the hunting forest being damaged (Crossley and Patrick, n.d.: 3). The earliest mines were

probably bell-pits (*ibid*: 7). Edward I claimed the rights to the silver from the mine for the Royal Mint in 1280 and in 1475 Edward IV gave the mines to his brother the Duke of Gloucester, and others, although he kept a proportion of the silver produced (*ibid*: 3).

However, it was in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that mining development reached its zenith. After the mines were leased to the London Lead Company in 1708 the focus moved to Ramshaw where large mines were developed, and to Whiteheaps and Sikehead (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 4). There were horse levels where practical in the valley sides, which aided both underground transport and drainage, but there were also deeper mines sunk. These often had drainage problems. In 1806 Easterby Hall took over the lease and built steam engines to drain the mines. However, the cost of carrying coal to the area was prohibitive (*ibid*). Among the engine houses built was the one at Shildon which was recently excavated. There were three waterwheels to drain the mineshaft and a Boulton and Watt engine provided the power. It reached Shildon after a journey by canal, sea, river and, finally, hauled by horses. A bigger engine replaced it in 1808 so that the shaft could be sunk to 600 feet (183m) (*ibid*). Following Derwent Mining Company's acquisition of the lease, steam engines were abandoned in favour of water power and large reservoirs were built on the moors, joined to each other by races up to seven miles long. The pumps in the mines and the processing machinery were then all powered by water (*ibid*: 5).

The middle of the nineteenth century brought a prosperous period and the arrival of the railway as far as Rookhope (see chapter 6) meant that coal could be imported more economically for the remaining steam engines. Between 1845 and 1883 production of lead ore reached 40,642 metric tonnes with more than 250,000 ounces of silver extracted. However, the Derwent Valley mines became uneconomic for lead when it could be obtained more cheaply from abroad. The price fell from around £20 an imperial ton in 1850 - 60 to less than £10 per ton in the early 1890s.

***Edmundbyers mines***

The several mines in Edmundbyers parish lay along the valley of the Burnhope Burn, exploiting the Swandale vein which ran north-east to south-west. Apart from the galena, the gangue mineral were siderite, calcite and a little zinc blende. The main mines were Swandale, Harehope Gill and Burnhope, with smaller mines at Pedam's Oak, Sandyford and Eudon  Groove (Pirt and Dodds, 2002: 126). Pirt and Dodds'

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account of the mining in the Derwent Valley is detailed and authoritative but it contains some inaccuracies which consequently mean that care is needed with its use. Apparently the earliest mention of mining in the parish is in a lease of 1612 - 13 when the Dean and Chapter agreed a way-leave rent of £12 per annum with Thomas Surtees (*ibid*: 127).

The shaft at Burnhope was 198 feet deep (60.35m). It had deeper and more extensive workings than nearby Swandale, which was started earlier. However, once Swandale closed the inflow of water from there meant that Burnhope closed soon afterwards (Pirt and Dodds, 2002: 128). In 1884 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England gave permission to the Hexham and Edmundbyers Lead Mining Company Limited (Rector of Edmundbyers and others) to make trials for a vein at Harehope Gill. The only prospection technique they prohibited was hushing (*ibid*: 127). There is some confusion here, because in 1886 the Commissioners gave the Burnhope Lead Mine permission to seek a vein of ore at Harehope Gill (*ibid*: 129). Perhaps the first company found nothing or did not use their permission.

The Swandale Mine was sunk to 210 feet (64m) in 1875 and there was a rumour that 'ancient workings' were found in the process (Pirt and Dodds, 2002: 129). The existence of earlier lead workings is quite possible, not just because of the date of the smelt mill (see below), but because of the number of possible 'bales' found in the area and mentioned above. The earliest known leases for the mines at Sandyford and Eudon Groove (the mine shop is still marked on maps) date from 1787 and, during that period they belonged to Errington, Muschamp and Company. In 1842, Muschamp & Co. leased them and also had the mines at Dene Howl and Feldon Smelt Mill (*ibid*: 130 - 1).

***Feldon Smelt Mill***

The smelt mill at Feldon was built about 1680 (Pirt and Dodds, 2002: 156) and received its charter from Charles II. It was leased to various companies during its functioning life including Erringtons, Blacketts and the London Lead Company but was always small compared with other smelt mills in the region (*ibid*: 156 - 7). The British Lead Company held the lease in 1826 when it built the condenser and horizontal flue (*ibid*: 158), parts of which are still visible. However, the company put the smelt mill up for auction in 1830. When John Dolphin of Hunter House in Edmundbyers and Joseph Roddam (from Stanhope) acquired the lease in 1842, it seems that the smelter had not

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been used for some years because the lease included all the former smelt mill buildings and a farmhouse with outbuildings and 20 acres of land (*ibid*: 159).

***Effects of the lead-mining industry***

Turnbull observes that the climate of the North Pennines is adverse, so the main reason for settlements being established at elevations between 1000 and 2000 feet (300 - 600m) was the minerals (2006: 71). In contrast, there are no settlements and even farmsteads are rare above 700 feet (200m) in the Cheviots where there are no similar exploitable minerals (Turnbull, 2006: 71). The earliest nucleated settlements of the North Pennines, which include Stanhope, Allendale Town and Alston, actually developed for a variety of reasons. New villages, though, like Allenheads and Carshields were established for workers for BBCo. and LLCo. was responsible for Nenthead and Garrigill. These villages had better housing than other working-class areas with schools, libraries and reading rooms. The existing Church of England churches in the older settlements also allowed the development of non-conformism and the building of chapels in the new villages (*ibid*: 78 - 9). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as the lead mining industry developed, regular field walls divided up the moorland into five-acre holdings with a farmstead. The farmsteads usually consisted of one building, with living accommodation, byre and hayloft all under the one roof (*ibid*: 3). This was the basis of the miner-farmer landscape. They grew crops as well as keeping sheep and cattle. Some of the lead-mining valleys were so isolated that miner-farmers had to try to grow corn 'at exceptional altitudes', although not very successfully (Manley, 1936: 103-4). Farming provided a supplementary income and gave employment to those women not working at lead processing plants (Turnbull, 2006: 3). Land became more scarce later and then cottages were built just with gardens instead of fields (*ibid*: 78).

Perhaps the miner-farmer economy helped families to survive since Crossley and Patrick note that pay was generally poor; wages were usually dependent on production and were thus not consistent. Trade unionism made little progress among lead miners, though, possibly because the miners considered that they had some control over their work and pay due to the bargain system whereby they worked in small partnerships (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 15 - 16).

Although there was not the danger of explosions in the lead mines that there was in coal mines as there was no gas hazard, poor health was common among the miners

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and life expectancy was around 45 years. It was mainly breathing problems that affected their health and, since many lodged in crowded 'mine shops' during the working week, their living conditions were fairly primitive (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 17 - 18).

In 1861, during the peak of mining activity in the area, Shildon had a population of 158. To accommodate everyone even the disused engine house was converted to flats (Crossley and Patrick, n.d: 18). At the same time, Blanchland's population was 265, occupied in 45 trades. Only 20 people appear to have been directly employed in lead mining, but there were many in associated or services industries including shopkeepers, servants and landowners (*ibid*: 20). The population fell rapidly with the decline of the lead industry in the 1870s and 1880s; Shildon lost 75% of its population between 1861 and 1881 (*ibid*: 21). Most of the village has now disappeared and only a few houses remain.

Crossley and Patrick suggest that it was the poor conditions that made the mining communities receptive to Methodism. They embraced teetotalism and education - by the mid-nineteenth century 90% of the people in lead mining areas could read (n.d: 19) - and they formed a distinctive society somewhat different from that found in the coalfields. There were no strikes, trade unionism, nor any major disasters and the people were more content and independent (Turnbull, 2006: 8).

### 3.7.3 *Other extractive industries*

#### *Quarrying*

Close scrutiny of the Ordnance Survey map shows that there are numerous quarries scattered throughout the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. However, these are all far too small to ever have been of commercial importance. They would have been used to provide stone for field walls and houses, and limestone for burning to use as fertiliser, especially during the agricultural improvements of the early nineteenth century. There are several lime kilns in the parishes, most notably at Combe Bridges. These quarries have made only a minor impact upon the landscape. Only Cothouse Quarry (O.S. 40185491) was of any size to leave clear evidence and the spoil heaps can be seen from Edmundbyers village. However, it was mainly used to provide stone for the local mines.

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Turnbull notes that the quarries were mainly developed to provide stone for buildings and field walls. However, they also produced limestone for fertiliser, as mentioned, and for cement (2006: 3 - 4). Such large industries as the former cement works in Weardale did not exist in either Muggleswick or Edmundbyers. Weardale, though, provided limestone for the growing iron and steel industries in the middle of the nineteenth century and the Great and Little Limestones were exploited on a large scale. Stanhope became a centre of lime burning and iron smelting (*ibid*: 4). From the Millstone Grit, which had a high silica content, ganister was quarried for the iron and steel industries. Whinstone was won for road building and the beauty of Frosterley Marble had been observed early enough for it too have been used in the building of Durham Cathedral (*ibid*).

The only commercial quarries in the study area straddle the border with Stanhope parish. Dursand Quarry produced sand and the other originally was a source of millstones. Neither is currently in use and, although they are of substantial size, they have little impact on the landscape of Muggleswick because of being so close to the parish boundary.

***Iron mining***

Spathose iron - iron carbonate with a 40% metal content - was found in the mineral veins of the lead mines. It was, consequently, mined in Weardale as early as the twelfth century, and at Alston and Nenthead (Turnbull, 2006: 5). Iron was also being mined in the mid-fifteenth century in Muggleswick (Dodds, 2007: 111). The Bursar's Accounts note payments for iron made to Johannis Greynsweyrd at Muggleswick and several payments for iron from Weardale at various dates, including 1532-4 (Raine, 1844: 53, 147, 239). However, these records do not indicate exactly where the iron was mined. Using the Bursar's Accounts, Threlfall-Holmes suggested that, of the Weardale iron merchants' locations recorded, the majority were concentrated around Muggleswick (1997: 53). Closer examination, however, shows that only four of them were certainly within or very close to the Priory's Muggleswick estate: Muggleswick itself, Whitehall, Edmundbyers and Espshelle (Espershields). Durham, Knytherley (Knitsley), Langchestre (Lanchester) and Weardale lie several miles outside the estate and Unethank or Unthank is a fairly common name and could refer to any of several so-named places. Thus, no more than half of the named places indicate any iron mining activity within the study parishes.

It has also been suggested that the Priory had an iron mine and a bloomery at Muggleswick (Lomas, 1982: 38 *footnote*; Threlfall-Holmes, 1997: 43). The HER, as described in section 3..3, contains no references to iron mines or bloomeries in either Muggleswick or Edmundbyers. Mediæval bloomeries were generally small affairs, located close to water, and where a level piece of ground permitted the building of a charcoal furnace. Smelting was effected using hand-held bellows and then the 'bloom' was hammered off the outside of the smelted ore. This was the case at the bloomery at High Bishopley near Frosterley which was in use in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Keys to the Past ref: D840). It was probably used to smelt bog iron (*ibid*) which would have been found in boggy ground but not mined for. However, some of the fields on the south side of the Burnhope Burn, in Muggleswick, have numerous hollows which may well be the remains of diggings for iron ore.

Referring to the ore as 'Weardale iron' suggests that was its origin, although 'Weardale' might be a generic term for ore from this area of the North Pennines (Lomas, 1982: 38 *footnote*; Threlfall-Holmes, 1997: 43). The question remains as to why ore from Weardale would be sold at Muggleswick. It is possible that the iron industry in Weardale itself did not require this ore or perhaps the Priory paid better prices than the bishop. Possibly the choice of Muggleswick was because it was the nearest of the Prior's estates to where the 'Weardale' ore was being won. Certainly iron ore was used by the Priory at Elvethall where one or two smiths produced horseshoes and parts for carts and ploughs (Lomas, 1982: 38 *footnote*).

The Weardale Iron Company was founded by Charles Attwood in 1842 and employed 1700 men. At first the ore was smelted at Stanhope then, in 1845, furnaces were built at Tudhoe and Tow Law with steelmaking commencing at Wolsingham in 1862. This booming industry was effectively over by the 1880s. It would have affected Edmundbyers and Muggleswick relatively little and most of the population of the parishes would have lived too far away to be employed in it.

***Zinc***

Although zinc was found in the lead veins in some parts of the North Pennines orefield, it was not mined in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. In fact, most of the time it was cheaper to import zinc. Thomas Shaw and Company smelted zinc blende at Langley Mill in 1817, but it was not a viable venture. The smelter opened near

Nenthead in 1845 did better, but it was processing ore from Cumbria. It reached its peak production in 1895 when zinc prices rose and lead prices were falling (Turnbull, 2006: 5 - 6).

*Fluorspar*

There was no commercial mining for fluorspar in Muggleswick or Edmundbyers although witherite, barites and fluorspar are all waste products of lead mining. As mentioned above, they increased in value in the nineteenth century when they became useful for industrial processes. It was the Weardale Iron Company and the Weardale Lead Company that began large scale mining for fluorspar, although it was already being reclaimed from spoil heaps before the Second World War. As well as fluorspar being used as flux in the steel industry, flourine compounds were used in plastics, heat-resistant enamels and anaesthetics. The only Derwent Valley mine where flourspar was extracted was Whiteheaps (Hunstanworth parish) and it ceased production in 1980 (Turnbull, 2006: 7).

### 3.7.4 *Conclusion*

It is clear from the extent of the lead mining industry that it had a profound effect upon the character of the North Pennines. The evidence of the industry can be seen in the spoil heaps, dressing floors, smelt mills and other remains that are frequently found throughout the area. In some places the mines have left clear scars upon the landscape - Whiteheaps, mentioned above, is still relatively 'raw'. However, in most cases nature has taken over and, while chimneys and other buildings can still be seen, much of the disturbance has been cloaked in vegetation.

The industry also had an influence on the character of the people. Life was not easy, but the people were resourceful and independent. Even now, it is people with that kind of character who settle long-term in the North Pennines. Although the mining industry in Muggleswick and Edmundbyers ended many years ago, a few people still travelled from the parishes to work in the other mines until they closed.

One landscape characteristic that did not take hold in either Muggleswick or Edmundbyers was the typical 'miner-farmer' landscape found in Teesdale and Weardale. There you can see farmsteads at fairly regular intervals on the hillsides, separated by just one or two fields - the result of the allocation of 5 acres of land. The division of land had already occurred in Muggleswick when lead mining 'took off'

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and in Edmundbyers the farms were all within the village because of the system of common fields. It is therefore likely that the existing circumstances precluded the development of a miner-farmer landscape. Moreover, the size of the mines and the number of people employed possibly did not require it.

The influence of lead-mining on the communications of the area will be discussed in chapter 6.

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# CHAPTER 4

# CLIMATE, VEGETATION AND LANDUSE

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the effects of climate, and other factors not generally controllable by humans, on the North Pennines, relating these to the circumstances in Britain and Europe where appropriate. The effects of climate change are very much a current topic, but climate has always had an influence on vegetation and agriculture.

Britain's landscape and landuse have been subject to succeeding events involving climate change, famine and disease. The general climate - including altitude, aspect, temperature, rainfall and soils - is important because any change can affect the cultivated area and may account for the waxing and waning of the area under cultivation. This is because a difference of ± 1ºC in yearly average temperatures can be key to whether certain crops are viable and thus to whether areas are suitable for cultivation. An increase in temperature of as little as 2ºC can make upland areas suitable for arable farming and increase the cultivable area but make little difference to the lowlands (Fowler, 1983: 23; Jones, 1998: 187). Humans may consequently change the crops they cultivate, change the extent of the area that is cultivated or the locations of their settlements.

In Britain, the climate is susceptible to even slight changes in altitude, aspect and soil which can have marked effects on the suitability of areas for habitation (Manley, 1944: 241). British lapse rates are very steep: 6ºC/kilometre from 171m ASL in the North Pennines so that the growing season decreases by c. 13 days per 100m elevation gained, although there are local variations (Simmons, 2003: 13).

Thus the influences of changes in the climate may have resulted in the waxing and waning of the cultivated area in the UDV. The drawing together of climate data from previous researchers forms the first part of this chapter, which is a general background to the subsequent research. Then the climate of the UDV is examined more closely. Meteorological Office records provide climatic information which has

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been used for comparative purposes and the details of how this was achieved are explained in section 4.12 and appendix B. Finally, a combination of map and fieldwork allows a closer examination of the effects of climate on agriculture in the UDV, including case studies. Further investigation of some of the factors discussed in this chapter will take place in chapter 5 when they are related to agricultural change and improvement.

## 4.2: The Prehistoric Period

### 4.2.1 *Palaeolithic to Neolithic*

At least seven warm Quaternary interglacials, when vegetation like Pinus-Betula woodland developed, alternated with cold climates (Natural England, 2012; Wymer, 1981: 50-51; Simmons, 2003: 13). Ice sheets sometimes reached far enough south to divert the Thames; outside the ice sheet was tundra (Wymer, 1981: 52; Pryor, 2011: 24). Deciduous forests became firmly established as the climate warmed, but from 7000BP it was cooler and rainfall was 110% of present (Simmons, 2003: 14).

In the Mesolithic period (c. 8500 - 5200BC) the climate varied from Sub-Arctic to a postglacial optimum with temperatures around 2°C higher than now. Summers were shorter and winters longer before 6000BC but once Britain was separated from the continent the sea ameliorated the winter temperatures so that spring and autumn became longer (Simmons et al, 1981: 89; Simmons, 2003: 16). The uplands were probably windier and cooler than the lowlands, while around 5000BC the annual upland rainfall may have increased (Simmons et al: 1981: 90-93).

Palynological studies relevant to the UDV were undertaken by Turner and Hodgson (1979, 1981, 1983) when they investigated the Flandrian vegetation of the North Pennines between the South Tyne and the Stainmore Gap (figure 4.1). Their results have connotations for the understanding of local vegetation, both in prehistory and in recent times, showing that the area was, and is, atypical.

Details for the first study, 8800 - 7000BP are in table 4.1 (Turner and Hodgson, 1979: 629, 632, 634-5). *Pinus* dominated in the UDV. Pine stumps can still be seen where the blanket peat has been eroded in the upper valleys of the Derwent catchment area (*ibid*: 632-3). There was relatively little *Betula, Ulmus, Corylus and Quercus*, although the UDV has a group of high values for *Salix* (*ibid*: 637-9). The palynography indicates varied Boreal woodland 'over the whole altitude range' of the sites studied (*ibid*: 645).

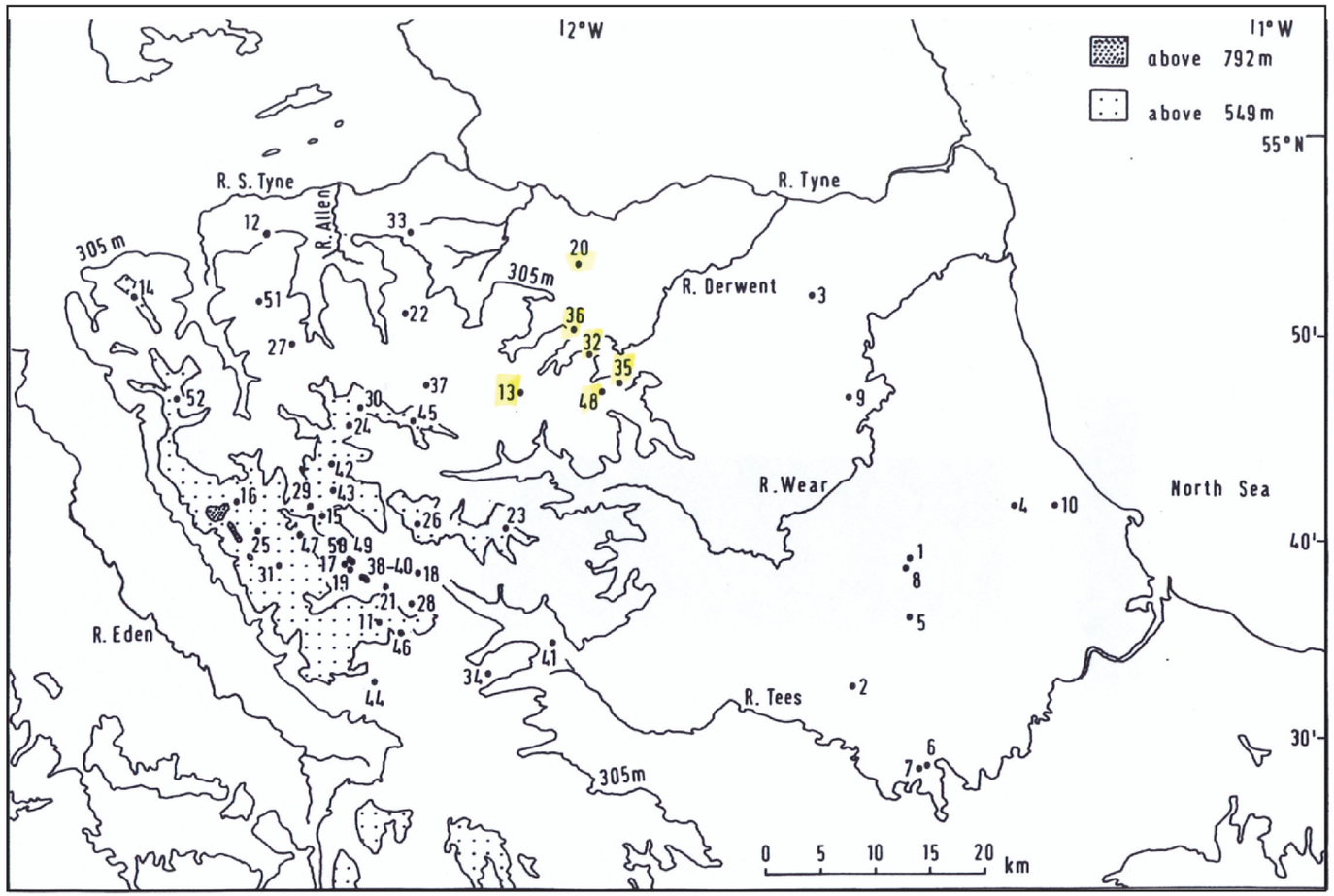



*Figure 4.1: Locations of sites mentioned in the text from which pollen data were obtained (Turner & Hodgson, 1979: 630)*

*13 Burnhope Burn*
*20 Fotherley Moss*
*32 Lamb Shield*
*35 Mown Meadows*
*36 Pow Hill*
*48 Waskerley*



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| SITE | GRID REF. | ELEVATION: metres O.D. | GEOLOGY: surrounded by | *Betula* | *Pinus* | *Ulmus* | *Quercus* | *Alnus* | *Corylus* | *Salix* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burnhope Dam | NY964457 | 435 | Millstone Grit | 50 | 23 | 5 | 17 | 4 | 37 | 4 |
| Fotherley Moss | NZ017575 | 204 | Millstone Grit | 55 | 18 | 1 | 14 | 12 | 23 | 14 |
| Lamb Shield | NZ024489 | 334 | Millstone Grit | 31 | 55 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 54 | 25 |
| Mown Meadows | NZ053466 | 297 | Millstone Grit | 22 | 63 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 72 | 14 |
| Pow Hill | NZ012316 | 222 | Millstone Grit | 16 | 65 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 44 | 9 |
| Waskerley | NZ042460 | 326 | Millstone Grit | 16 | 67 | 2 | | 11 | 36 | - |

*Table 4.1: The pollen sample sites from the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick area with their location details and mean tree pollen results*



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Anomalous results for Pow Hill led to a second study nearby - NZ012516 at 228m AOD - in a steep-sided glacial drainage channel on the south side of the Derwent Reservoir (Turner and Hodgson, 1981: 171). The results (table 4.2) reveal 'several unusual features of vegetational history' (*ibid*: 179). These include a long pioneer phase, little Flandrian *Ulmus*, very late expansion of *Quercus* and *Alnus*, and *Pinus* dominant from 7000 BP until destroyed by human activity in late prehistory. It was thus different from other parts of England, Wales and southern Scotland, but compares better with the Eastern Highlands of Scotland (*ibid*). Table 4.2 also shows how the vegetation has changed up to recent times.

Comparisons were made with Lamb Shield bog, Burnhope Burn and Fortherley [sic] Moss nearby (Turner and Hodgson, 1981: 179). Data from these sites all differ from each other and from the standard Flandrian pattern. Pow Hill is very unusual as Pinus seems to have grown undisturbed here until late prehistory, as in parts of northern Scotland (ibid: 186). Slow development of local soils, and the climate, in the early Flandrian might have allowed pioneer woodlands to last longer while shallow soils maintained the dominance of birch and pine and delayed the spread of *Quercus* and *Alnus* (*ibid*: 186-7).

The later Flandrian (7000 - 5000 B.P.) vegetation for 38 North Pennine sites was also studied using variations in pollen frequencies over time (Turner and Hodgson, 1983: 95). Most of this variation is spatial and may be ascribed to different climatic or edaphic (soil) conditions. Details for the sites local to Muggleswick and Edmundbyers are shown in table 4.3. Percentages of pollen data indicate the importance of the different taxa, including the dominance of Pinus at Lamb Shield but Betula at Burnhope Burn. The table also shows that the Burnhope Burn site has a considerably larger proportion of *Gramineae* (grasses) than the other sites and was, thus, probably more open.

The atypical nature of the North Pennines vegetation around Edmundbyers and Muggleswick during the Flandrian period may be due to the slow-weathering of the bedrock, with low nutrient soils and a locally cloudy climate (Turner and Hodgson, 1983: 116). The different character of the area seems to have been established at a very early stage.

| ZONE | RADIOCARBON DATE | DETAILS |
|---|---|---|
| **PH-1** | c.10,000 - 8670 B.P. | Zone starts shortly after start of Flandrian period. Pollen assemblage indicates pioneer open birch wood, with juniper, willow and some aspen. |
| **PH-2** | 8670 - 7210 B.P. | Increase in tree and shrub pollen frequencies. Betula still important, Pinus increases followed by Coryloid pollen. Coryloid expansion later than other sites and pollen frequency lower. |
| **PH-3** | 7210 - 6550 B.P. | Expansion of Pinus (to end of Zone 4), mainly at expense of Betula and Salix. Coryloid simiar to Zone 2. Very small increases in Ulmus and Quercus just before this zone, but neither important locally. |
| **PH-4** | 6550 - 5300 B.P. | Pinus important - more than 60% of total tree pollen. Decline in Corylus and Betula, steady increase in Quercus - 18% by end of zone. Alnus only becomes important towards the end of the zone. |
| **PH-5** | 5300 - c.2050 B.P. | Upper boundary of zone shows notable decrease in tree pollen along with increases in the frequency of heath and grassland taxa. If it is assumed that this pattern took place throughout North-east England, it can be dated to c. 300BC to 200AD - Late Iron Age or Roman. At this time Pinus continued to be a major species in Pow Hill area, but Alnus, Quercus and, later, Betula increase. |
| **PH-6** | c.2050 B.P. - present | Large-scale deforestation and resulting grass and heathland. |
| | | |
| | | Turner & Hodgson 1981 pp178-179 |

*Table 4.2: The six time zones and associated pollen results for Pow Hill*

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| SITE | Elevation (metres O.D.) | Bedrock | Topography | *Betula* | *Pinus* | *Ulmus* | *Quercus* | *Tilia* | *Alnus* | *Fraxinus* | *Corylus* | *Salix* | *Gramineae* | *Melampyrum* | *Potentilla* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burnhope Burn | 435 | sandstone | sloping depression | 40.07 | 8.16 | 4.14 | 16.55 | 0.0 | 4.14 | 0.0 | 24.35 | 2.6 | 14.42 | 0.0 | 0.24 |
| Fotherley Wood | 204 | drift | channel | 22.94 | 13.29 | 3.25 | 20.46 | 0.0 | 15.01 | 0.0 | 24.76 | 0.29 | 0.76 | 0.29 | 0.19 |
| Lamb Shield | 334 | sandstone | basin | 18.70 | 38.49 | 3.30 | 9.27 | 0.08 | 2.75 | 0.24 | 9.58 | 17.60 | 2.20 | 0.63 | 0.08 |



*Table 4.3: Later Flandrian data for the Edmundbyers and Muggleswick area.*
*Data were obtained for several levels at each site and are expressed as a percentage of the total tree pollen.*

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Peat growth in the Pennines during the warmer and wetter Atlantic period around 7500 - 5000 radiocarbon BP was ascribed to more intensive human activity in the early Neolithic; woodland was destroyed by clearance, there was more livestock grazing and Sphagnum peat developed (Smith, 1981: 140; Charman, 2002: 80). However, in some places forests were still growing after peat development began. Peat development can take thousands of years and probably followed land clearance by humans circa 8000 radiocarbon years ago (*ibid*: 81). A wetter climate from c. 7500 - 7000 radiocarbon BP may have been important in early peat initiation in susceptible parts of the Pennines (*ibid*: 82). Thus it is likely that the peat of the UDV was developing from this time, so that aspects of the character of the current landscape might have already been established.

Localised peat initiation began at some Cheviot sites around 3800 - 3550 cal. BC, with the peat spreading only very slowly. The appearance of the landscape is unlikely to have been changed very much, including the distribution of woodland and moorland, but the soil probably changed slowly, gradually affecting plant communities (Tipping, 2010: 168). The implication here is that the appearance of the landscape of the North Pennines also changed slowly.

#### 4.2.2 *Bronze Age to Iron Age*

In Britain the Sub-Boreal and Atlantic periods may have formed a single postglacial warm episode in which the degree of wetness varied alternating with some dry seasons, although the Sub-Atlantic began wet and cool (Tinsley, 1981: 210-211). The warmer periods allowed the treeline to be 200 - 300m higher than at present (Tinsley, 1981: 211).

Summers in the second millennium BC were warmer and sunnier and cereals could be grown above 400m altitude in the northern hills (Burgess, 1985: 200; Simmons, 2003: 52). Around 1200BC the cultivable land may have supported a population similar in size to that at Domesday (Burgess, 1985: 200). Palynology indicates that Bronze Age clearances and cultivation, including cereals, were extensive in northern and western Britain (Tinsley, 1981: 233-4). In the Bowmont Valley in the Cheviots, Hordeum (barley) may have been cultivated from c. 1800 - 1350 cal. BC (Tipping, 2010: 169). A saddle quern found at Crawley Edge in Weardale (323mAOD) supports the suggestion of Bronze Age cereal growing at that altitude (Young and Welfare, 1992: 41; Coggins, 1985: 170; Simmons, 2003: 52).

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Later Bronze Age settlement and land-use change is often blamed on the worsening climate, especially in marginal upland areas like Northumberland (Dark, 2006: 1381). Crop ripening altitudes were lowered; settlements and agricultural systems may have been abandoned, with population collapse, between c. 1300 and 1000BC (Burgess, 1985: 195). However it is not clear if it was mainly the marginal settlements - those prone to flooding or at the altitudinal limits of cultivation - that suffered, or if changes in methods of subsistence had to be made on a wider scale (Dark, 2006: 1382).

Upland farming reached its peak around 1250BC with a retreat from about 1000BC and more use of the valleys and wetlands (Fowler, 1983: 19). An eruption of Hekla in Iceland may also have had an effect on settlement and agriculture; the narrowing of Irish tree rings between 1159 and 1141BC may have been due to acidic gases from this and the deposition of such gases may have affected the soil in sensitive ecosystems in Britain (Dark, 2006: 1382).

The mild climate ended around 1250 - 1000 BC so that at the Bronze Age/Iron Age transition the weather was stormy and unsettled, and some 2ºC colder. In the Iron Age (c.500BC onwards) the climate of Britain seems to have been much wetter than in the mid-Bronze Age, with much less forest (Burgess, 1985: 200; Simmons, 2003: 15; Dark, 2006: 1381). The growing season became five weeks shorter and crop-ripening altitudes dropped by 150m (Tolan-Smith, 2006: 42; Burgess, 1985: 200).

Upland peat bogs provide evidence of a wetter climate c. 1200 - 500BC and they may have grown faster (Pryor, 2011: 106). By around 900BC traditional routes across some of these areas were clearly becoming too wet to follow because wooden trackways were laid down (Turner, 1981: 256-7). There is evidence from Bracken Rigg in the North Pennines, and surrounding areas, for the development of peat during this period (Burgess, 1985: 200-1).

Land in Britain was probably not widely abandoned between 850 and 350 cal. BC; in fact, 40% of sites show increased agricultural activity and clearance of woodland while only 19% show a decrease. Increased altitude had little effect on clearance and agriculture at this time: the proportion of sites where cultivation and clearance increases actually rises with altitude and there may have been a change to pastoralism instead (Dark, 2006: 1389-1390). The poorer climate had serious connotations for prehistoric communities in North-east England, especially in the uplands. It is now

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thought that adaptations in economy and social organisation meant that only the highest of the hut circle settlements were deserted for more sheltered locations (Tolan-Smith, 2006: 42). Settlements became more nucleated and set within walls which, in turn, became increasingly defensive until typical hillforts developed, suggesting social unrest (*ibid*). Smaller farmsteads in the form of causewayed enclosures containing 2 - 6 huts appeared from the mid-first millennium BC, associated with field systems that indicate a return to crop-growing (*ibid*: 43).

Pollen data can provide evidence suggesting climatic and environmental circumstances. Most woodland clearance in Northern England took place in the later Iron Age (Tipping, 2010: 183). The nearest pollen sites to Edmundbyers and Muggleswick with data for this period are Fellend Moss, Fozy Moss, Quick Moss and Hallowell Moss (fig. 4.1). Fellend Moss and Quick Moss show results of 1 to 25% tree pollen and Fozy Moss and Hallowell Moss results have 26 to 50% of tree pollen. There is evidence for various cereal pollens at all of them, with rye and hemp/hop at Fozy Moss (Dark, 2000: 90-92).

In the North Pennines the time when forests were extensively cleared varied. In the Cow Green Reservoir area *Quercus* and *Alnus* woods had been replaced by heather moor and open grassland by 1200BC. However, on Widdybank Fell, above the reservoir, this happened around 620BC and higher up the valley it continued into the Pre-Roman Iron Age (Turner, 1981: 270). Many other places in the region have evidence indicating that forest existed during the PRIA. Results for North Pennines sites for 850 - 350 cal. BC show either an increase in woodland clearance and agricultural activity, or continuity (Dark, 2006: 1383). North Pennine sites also show expansion of grassland and some moorland, but no cereal pollen (Dark, 2006: 1384-9). Roberts et al (1973: 217) demonstrated that land at about 350m in mid-Weardale was cleared during Romano-British times. A date of 110BC was obtained from Stewart Shield Meadow (a few miles from Edmundbyers and Muggleswick and just across the parish/estate boundary) and 220AD from Bollihope Bog, not far from the Romano-British settlement on Bollihope Common (Turner, 1981: 271).

Thus the landscape of the UDV was probably already developing its present character by this time. Much of the woodland had been cleared, except perhaps in the valleys, and the peat was established.

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### 4.3 The Roman Period

> The climate is objectionable, with its frequent rains and mists, but there is no extreme cold.
>
> (Tacitus, On Britain and Germany, Chapter 12)

By the time the first millennium AD started the climate was becoming warmer and possibly drier; during the latter half of the Roman period the temperatures may have been a little higher than present (Dark, 2000: 27). The situation later deteriorated with very cold weather from about 540, possibly due to a volcanic dust veil. An improvement towards the end of the millennium lasted into the mediæval period (Dark, 2000: 27).

Palynology results suggest a mainly open environment in North-east England during Roman times. It cannot be certain from this how much land in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick had been cleared by this time, but adjacent parts of the region had been cleared and were cultivated. The palynology sites within 20 kilometres of Hadrian's Wall, include the four Mosses mentioned, Stewart Shield Meadow and Bollihope Bog. The latter two are close to the UDV and have aspects of elevation and location in common. Pollen results for Stewart Shield Meadow (at 380m OD) indicate that there were very low tree values around 180 - 190 BC and pastoral use of the cleared land. Bollihope Bog results show that woodland was replaced by pasture and heath between AD 190 - 240 (Turner, 1976: 287-8). There is, consequently, good data for the Roman period and for a largely cleared environment stretching from the North Pennines across the Tyne Valley to Hadrian's Wall and possibly beyond (Dark, 2000: 100-101).

The significant improvement in climate between 200BC and 500AD allowed farming up to c.300m in the Pennines and 400m in the Cheviots. Often it is seen as cord-rig, sometimes spreading over tens or hundreds hectares around one or more farmsteads (Tolan-Smith, 2006: 43-4). The climate was probably a little warmer than now so that cereals might have been grown in upland areas that are now marginal for them (Dark, 2000: 129). There was also a favourable political situation so that the population was able to increase to more than ever before - possibly to four million (Burgess, 1985: 197; Jones, 1998: 13). Evidence for this comes from the amount of rural settlement now being discovered which is denser than previously thought with a fully exploited countryside (Jones, 1998: 13-15).

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### 4.4 From Roman to Norman times

A drier period after 540AD lasted until the ninth or tenth century (Simmons, 2003: 15). About half of the radio-carbon dated pollen series for 400 to 800AD indicated a reduction in agriculture and, of them, about half were in Northern England (Dark, 2000: 133). Many tree-ring sequences for the Anglo-Saxon period start in the fifth century AD, so there may have been regeneration at this time (*ibid*).

In North-east England Fellend Moss, Quick Moss and Hallowell Moss palynology results for periods between 410 and 780 AD all show 26 to 50% of tree pollen (Dark, 2000: 143-5). No samples contained evidence of cereals, suggesting that agricultural land was abandoned (*ibid*: 145).

The parts of Britain where poorer climate caused a reduction in agriculture were mostly above 150m and some, mainly lower, sites saw an increase in agriculture. Possibly only land that was already marginal for cultivation and upland soils made more acidic by volcanic eruptions were abandoned (Dark, 2000: 152). In the 580s the weather was persistently wet throughout Europe, with storms, heavy snows and late frosts, livestock and human epidemics, failed harvests and famine (Pope Gregory of Tours in Behringer, 2010: 68), so the situation in Britain and Europe was similar.

The colder and wetter climate of the sixth and seventh centuries resulted in a rapid fall in the population, possibly by half to around 1.5 to 1.75 million by the time of the Domesday survey (Burgess, 1985: 198-199), despite the immigration of some 500,000 Anglo-Saxon men (Thomas et al, 2006: 2651). A plague pandemic caused the greatest losses (Burgess, 1985: 198-199). Bede mentions famines and plagues, especially between the 660s and 680s (e.g. Bk IV Ch XIII; Bk III Ch XIII).

In late Anglo-Saxon and Viking times the landscape changed significantly with the nucleation of settlement and a reorganisation of agriculture (Dark, 2000: 157). The climate was increasingly warm and dry well into the Middle Ages (*ibid*: 171). Upland settlement in the Borders is increasingly difficult to find for the third century onwards. Together with the pollen evidence, this suggests that settlement at least partially withdrew from the northern uplands until the Middle Ages (Burgess, 1985: 199). However, at Gauber High Pasture (North Pennines, c. 335m ASL) in the ninth century a few acres of oats were cultivated alongside sheep and cattle farming (Dyer, 2009: 16). Thus it is likely that the UDV, extrapolating from evidence from adjacent areas,

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became more marginal from the middle of the first millennium AD and the land was possibly abandoned for a time.

### 4.5 1000 - 1300 AD - The High Mediæval Warm Period

The Middle Ages included a warm period with a series of mild winters and dry, warm summers and temperatures some 2ºC above twentieth century averages; there was less Arctic ice and glaciers retreated throughout the world (Lamb, 1965: 15-16; Behringer, 2010: 74-75). In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries Britain enjoyed its mildest climate for 2000 years and the population trebled to more than 5 million. In 1300 the population was as dense as in the 1700s, due partly to fewer epidemics and fewer really bad harvests. Land and corn prices rose, but wages fell (Kershaw, 1973: 3; Burgess, 1985: 197-8; Dyer, 2009: 156). Consequently, land throughout Europe was again at a premium and agriculture settlement needed to spread; it did so into marginal areas and uplands that had previously been too high, and some were cultivated for the first time in at least 1000 years (Burgess, 1985: 197; Behringer, 2010: 80). Cultivation spread to around 400m on Dartmoor and c. 320m in Redesdale, Northumberland (Lamb, 1997: 179). Moors were taken into cultivation and dykes were built to both reclaim and protect land from the North Sea (Behringer, 2010: 80). Numerous agricultural developments took place and these will be discussed further in chapter 5.

It is possible that much of the development of the UDV occurred at this time. Durham Cathedral Priory was established and began to accumulate estates, and the church at Edmundbyers dates from this period (c.1150). The increased affluence of the church and nobility, together with the growing population, may well have been responsible for the development of settlement and agriculture in the area.

### 4.6 The Fourteenth Century: a period of disaster?

Plague and the poorer climate in the mid-first millennium AD contributed to one of the population disasters of history, followed by a recovery when the climate improved, although confirming data is scarce. The next disaster occurred in the fourteenth century and was much better recorded. The basic causes of both were natural factors, including 'the agricultural marginality of much of Britain' (Burgess, 1985: 195). Britain's large amount of marginal land (definition in 2.11) made it subject

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to the pressures, especially a deterioration in climate, that can lead to population decreases (Burgess, 1985: 197).

The burgeoning population of the high mediæval period was about to meet a problem. In around 1300AD the climate began to deteriorate again, leading to the 'Little Ice Age' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Burgess, 1985: 198; Pryor, 2011: 339). The weather varied widely from year to year so that harvests failed. The population was so large that feeding everyone was dependent on good harvests; poor harvests meant malnutrition at least (Burgess, 1985: 198). Using a variety of mainly documentary sources Lamb estimated that, between 1300 and 1600, the average July/August and average mean annual temperatures may have fallen 1ºC with associated changes in summer rainfall (Lamb, 1965: 23; Parry, 1978: 97). The climate was unstable 1290 - 1375, wet summers meaning that crops did not ripen, and a run of wet summers, often with wet springs and autumns, occurred in 1315 - 1317 so that cereal yields were sometimes only 19% of previous harvests (Lamb, 1997: 195; Dyer, 2009: 254; Burgess, 1985: 198). Substantial price inflation meant that food prices were high, although grain was not affected by the same factors. Grain prices depended heavily on the quality of the harvest (Kershaw, 1973: 6). However, there may have been less pressure and less hardship in places like the UDV because, despite population growth and new settlements, most vills in 1300 were probably still surrounded by waste (Dunsford and Harris, 2003: 35).

Dodds' data on estimated grain output based on Durham Priory cash tithe receipts show a distinct downward trend after 1300, with a continuing decline thereafter, albeit with occasional good harvests (2007: 28, fig 2). Chronicles and manorial records attribute the problems, and especially the disastrous harvest of 1315, to torrential rain and widespread summer floods (Kershaw, 1973: 7). However, a comparison of the harvests of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries provides an argument that these famine years were not the start of the climatic downturn and economic depression that occurred throughout Europe (Kershaw, 1973: 7), although they demonstrated the weaknesses in the economy (Dyer, 2009: 254). Grain became unprecedentedly expensive and scarce throughout England by summer 1316, although importing grain from abroad or better-off areas could be profitable, and the price of salt quadrupled (Dyer, 2009: 229; Kershaw, 1973: 8 - 10). To buy grain, peasants had to sell draught animals; prices for them dropped because few could afford them (Dyer, 2009: 229). 'The plentiful harvest of 1318 marked the real end of the scarcity and hardship, apart

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from those counties of northern England which were subjected to the terrors of Scottish raids' (Kershaw, 1973: 13). Durham Priory estates also suffered raids, especially in Northumberland, shown by fluctuations in tithes as agriculture was affected (Dyer, 2009: 256). There are cases of raids in the Muggleswick/Edmundbyers area, too, but the best documented are later. Better harvests and lower grain prices followed from 1322 and the worst was over for most of the country (Kershaw, 1973: 15).

Stock died, too, from disease often referred to as 'murrain' (possibly rinderpest) (Burgess, 1985: 198). At Bolton Abbey 480 of 500 cattle were lost and only 53 of 250 plough oxen survived. Sheep were equally devastated by disease (Burgess, 1985: 198) and wool exports were seriously depleted (Kershaw, 1973: 22-3). Sheep murrain was mainly over by 1319 but cattle and oxen began to suffer as the disease spread, reaching northern England and Scotland. Manorial records indicate unprecedented widespread destruction of herds between 1319 and 1321 (Dyer, 2009: 229; Kershaw, 1973: 14). The main problem with cattle murrain was that it affected draught animals and was recorded throughout the country. Sheep numbers tended to recover fairly quickly, but cattle were slower (Kershaw, 1973: 24, 27) and the lack of oxen made cultivation difficult. The Lanercost Chronicler recorded that so many oxen died that 'men had to plough that year with horses' (tr. Maclehose, 1913: 228). Adaptation of harnesses and ploughs may have been necessary, and the problem with using horses would have been that they were unaccustomed to such work and less strong than oxen; they generally also require better feed.

Agricultural production was thus reduced by some 50% between 1315 and 1325, accompanied by a 400% increase in prices and much more lawlessness, often involving the theft of food or livestock (Burgess, 1985: 198; Kershaw, 1973: 10, 12). In the 1316 enteric epidemic, possibly typhoid, up to 10% of the population died and between 1300 and 1325 the total population was probably reduced by around 15%. The various estates and religious houses in England tightened their belts and reduced 'seigneurial expenditure'; for many, this worsened the social effects of the famine and disease (Kershaw, 1973: 10 - 12; Dyer, 2009: 229). A more or less stable period followed until the plague of 1348 when a third of the national population died (Burgess, 1985: 198). After that, plague was endemic, with further outbreaks, most notably in 1361. By the end of the fourteenth century the population was reduced to about two million. Throughout the fourteenth century the population was kept at this level by disease,

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malnutrition and warfare; in some areas the population did not reach 1300 levels again until the nineteenth century (Burgess, 1985: 198). It is possible that it was for factors connected with this population decline that Muggleswick's nucleated settlement disappeared (section 3.3).

As a result of these events many estates saw a significant change in demesne production and exploitation. Some reduced their acreage, at least temporarily. Bolton Priory's home farm and two adjacent granges had 600 acres lying idle after 1320 and suffered from Scots raids (Kershaw, 1973: 31-2). In the early fourteenth century some estates had problems finding enough tenants, especially in thinly-populated areas where making a living from the land was harder and the population more vulnerable to the difficult conditions (*ibid*: 36). Court rolls for the famine period describe how many holdings changed hands; those who could sold up to families who were in a position to add a little land to their holdings (*ibid*: 37).

The weather, poor harvests, famine and disease would have affected the UDV similarly. Many of Durham Cathedral Priory's records were damaged by rain, rats and mice, even by the 1430s, so that, while the records are some of the best in the country, there are gaps. Nonetheless, the bursar's collated accounts for all the officials and obedientaries, and his receipts and expenses of the house, show that income was often less than anticipated, sometimes significantly so (table 4.4) (Dobie, 2008: 182-4). Income and expenditure dropped markedly for 1318-9, despite the improvement in the weather at that time, probably reflecting the poor harvests and famine of the previous few years. This is true again for 1349-50, perhaps indicating the effects of the 1348 plague.

Sheep-farming records also indicate some of the difficulties experienced. In 1338-9 Muggleswick had three shepherds, reduced to two from 1345-6. The smallest loss of sheep from murrain was 27 or 3.1% of the Priory flocks in 1323 (Morimoto, 1974: 366). The highest losses were in 1340 (1147 of 5713 sheep/20.1%), 1351-2 (1252 of 7727 sheep/16.2%) and 1382-3 (1342 of 6457 sheep/20.8%). However, Muggleswick may not have suffered as much as other estates since in 1341 only 7 of 395 (0.7%) wethers, in which the estate specialised, died of murrain (*ibid*: 367). Rises and falls in the price of wool also indicate fluctuations in the agricultural situation: at the end of 1313-14 it was £5/6/8d a sack, in 1314-15 it rose 1.5% to £5/8/4d, in 1328-9 it fell 4.6% to £5/3/4d, and in 1328-9 it fell another 22.6% to £4/0/0 a sack (*ibid*: 412).

| Bursar's Accounts | 1278-9 | 1292-3 | 1297-8 | 1310-11 | 1318-19 | 1329-30 | 1338-9 | 1349-50 | 1359-60 | 1368-9 | 1379-80 | 1389-90 | 1397-8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total receipts due | 1086 | 3741 | 3626 | 6160 | 1340 | 3209 | 1777 | 1475 | 2039 | 2682 | 3506 | 3135 | 3647 |
| Total actual receipts | 1086 | 2154 | 1267 | 2614 | 1124 | 1834 | 1562 | 1002 | 1629 | 1745 | 1720 | 1520 | 1540 |
| Total expenditure | 1048 | 2145 | 1263 | 2610 | 1124 | 1833 | 1561 | 927 | 1487 | 1701 | 1719 | 1566 | 1517 |
| Surplus | 38 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 75 | 142 | 44 | 1 | -46 | 23 |

*Table 4.4: Income, expenditure and profit/loss on the bursar of Durham Cathedral Priory's accounts for selected years (Dobie, 2008: 186, 189, 196)*



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**4.7: Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries**

During the Little Ice Age in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there was a run of especially cool summers from 1591 to 1598, resulting in food riots in England in 1596. Scotland had food problems from the 1550s, together with severe winters. There was no improvement at the beginning of the 1600s: the weather was often extreme with poor harvests throughout Europe. Periods of very harsh, dry winters with wet stormy summers alternated with runs of warmish summers and moist, mild winters. An indication of the extreme weather is that the Thames froze in 1607-8, 1649 and 1662-3 (Parry, 1978: 162-3).

The years from 1643 to 1647 were a little better, but the summer of 1648 was very wet. Autumn sowing was delayed by a mild, wet winter, then there was cattle murrain and the harvest of 1649 was extremely late (Parry, 1978: 163). In Scotland, matters were compounded by bubonic plague, brought back by the Covenanting army after their attack on Newcastle in 1644. (*ibid*: 163-4).

A further series of cool summers and severe winters followed 1680, with the Thames freezing again several times. While the harvests were not too bad, there were serious losses of livestock (Parry, 1978: 164-5). More very poor summers followed from 1692 and the growing seasons were reduced because of damp, cool springs and high rainfall. Manley (1974) calculated the mean temperature for May 1698 at only 8.6º, the lowest on a 300 year record. Further poor harvests occurred in both England and Scotland, causing famine (Parry, 1978: 165). There was a particularly cold period called the Maunder Minimum between 1675 and 1715 and, during the Little Ice Age, parts of northern Europe and Britain became unsuitable for cattle-rearing and farmers changed to sheep (Behringer, 2010: 87, 96).

The area of arable in the North-eastern lowlands grew in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries. Crop Returns in 1801 show only about 17% of Durham and Northumberland cultivated, but c. 46% and 54%, respectively, by about 1836. This primarily uses the figures for the lowlands; little expansion seems to have happened in the uplands of the Cheviots and Pennines (Williamson, 2002: 112).

The wheat yield estimates for Durham and Northumberland show variations, with the lowest yields around 1836 but a great improvement by the 1870s, supporting the agricultural developments (Williamson, 2002: 156). However, Williamson's map (*ibid*:

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fig 33 p. 161) shows that the UDV is in an area assessed from the Tithe Files as having less than 30% arable land. Interestingly there is no gradual increase in arable eastwards; the adjacent area on the map has 40% or more arable, rather than 30 to 40%. This, I believe, is due to the rapid eastward change in topography, soils and climate.

A run of poor harvests in the 1870s and 1880s, together with cheap grain imports, had an adverse effect for farmers. Temperatures were much lower than usual in western Europe in the last quarter of the century and summer warmth was particularly limited 1877 - 81, 1885 - 8 and 1891 - 2. In the early 1870s rainfall was above average, but was often below average in the 1880s (Parry, 1978: 171-2). Yields were consequently very much reduced and the weather encouraged the spread of livestock disease. In marginal areas the weather and low prices for produce led to longer leys and reversion of land to rough pasture, another change in practice due to climate. The general effect was one of 'nationwide retreat of improved farmland at the moorland edge - and an advance of rough pasture that in some places was not checked until the plough-up campaign of 1917' (Parry, 1978: 173).

It has generally been assumed that long-term climate changes have long-term effects, but that year-to-year variations in weather have a more transitory impact. Although short-term fluctuations in climate may seem relatively insignificant, if they are part of a longer-term trend they can contribute to the effect on agriculture and can cause socio-economic changes in circumstances where places have become very marginal because of long-term trends in social and economic conditions. Moreover, short-term, year-to-year changes in climate are often symptomatic of longer-term events (Parry, 1978: 158). A series of poor summers, although not especially common, could have serious effects because consecutive harvest failures meant that seed-corn had to be eaten so there was less to plant. The cumulative effect was famine (*ibid*: 159).

**4.8 Marginality**

There is one other factor related to landuse which needs to be addressed in order to make sense of the following sections: the concept of marginality. Many authors refer to landscapes as being marginal but few make any attempt to define what they mean by it. Turner and Young discuss the term at some length, noting that there are different types of marginality: ecological, environmental, economic, social and cultural (2007: 297-302). The latter two have relevance to the study area, but not in the context of

this thesis; the first three are more useful. Usually, archaeologists concentrate on whether land has agricultural potential (*ibid*: 298-9). However, ecological margins are borders beyond which particular plants cannot grow - as with Parry's work in the Lammermuirs - and economic marginality is often linked with it (*ibid*: 299-300). A good deal of interesting discussion may be held upon the matter but the fact is that most of the authors referred to in this thesis take a simple, agricultural, view of marginality, while Parry (section 4.9) concentrates on climatic factors. Consequently, for the purposes of this research, I have decided upon an appropriate definition. On the one hand there is good cultivable or high quality meadow land, where crops may be grown with reasonably reliable and high yields and animals farmed fairly intensively. At the other extreme is land which is unsuitable, for reasons of poor soils, altitude or climate, for any kind of cultivation although some grazing of hardy livestock at low concentrations may be possible. Between the two is the marginal land. Here the soils may lack nutrients, the latitude reduce sunlight (see chapter 4) and temperatures or the climate generally be too cold and/or wet for crops to grow reliably with harvests worth selling or which render the growers self-sufficient. This land, however, may provide suitable pasture for the economic production of sheep and cattle.

**4.9: Parry's research in the Lammermuirs**

Agriculture in upland Britain is mainly affected by summer warmth, summer wetness and exposure (Parry, 1978: 95). Parry studied these effects in southern Scotland, an area comparable with the UDV. This section describes his findings; however, their scope is limited and they have been subject to criticism (see section 4.10). Despite this, they provide an introduction to the consideration of land and settlement desertion which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Parry, and Parry and Carter, concentrated their work between 1973 and 1985 on deteriorating climate and marginal settlement on the Lammermuir Hills in south-east Scotland. The area is now mostly rough grazing and heather rising to over 500m AOD but has extensive traces of mediæval ridge and furrow (Tipping, 1998: 1). The aims of the research were:

a) to understand how the changing climate from mediæval to modern times might have influenced the cultivation of oats (a staple crop) and whether the risk of crops failing at critical altitudes affected the maintenance of the agricultural system; and

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b) to discover whether possible stress from climatic conditions and times of land and settlement desertion coincided (Tipping, 1998: 1).

Lamb extrapolated from climate trends for central England between AD 800 and 1950, based on his and Manley's studies (1953), that similar changes were common to Scotland also (Parry, 1978: 96). Lamb's calculations regarding the fall in average temperatures 1300-1600 (see section 4.5) have implications for upland farming. Parry investigated this using accumulated temperature for the growing months (day-degrees) and potential water surplus (PWS). Graphs for sites at the 1050 day-degree C isopleth (about 320m AOD) in south-east Scotland (figure 4.2) indicate the periods when he thought that land at that altitude became marginal and sub-marginal for agriculture, and the frequency of failed harvests. The minimum calculated warmth for oats to ripen in southern Scotland is 1050 day-degrees C, not including other factors like wetness or exposure (Parry, 1978: 81). Figure 4.3a is Parry's map of the lower and upper limits of climatically marginal land, while 4.3b indicates his assessment of areas likely to suffer failed harvests (*ibid*: 82). The climate was favourable 1150 - 1250, then very difficult for cultivation, with colder conditions following until c.1950 (Parry, 1978: 97-8).

In the thirteenth century sheltered aspect, average wetness and warmth put the upper limit for cultivation at over 450m AOD in the Lammermuirs (Parry, 1978: 98). Between 1250 and 1450 the average warmth in summer fell about 175 day-degrees C and the end of summer PWS rose some 70mm, equivalent to going uphill a further 140m (*ibid*). Similar conditions may have prevailed in the UDV as it lies in a comparable situation on the eastern edge of the Pennines.

However, cyclonic north-easterly winds especially affected coastal moors and the wetter summers were followed by very damp autumns. The cloudy weather and waterlogged soils delayed the upland cereal harvest (Parry, 1978: 98-9; Simmons, 2003: 15). This increasing wetness reached its peak in the series of wet and cold summers of 1313 to 1317, noted above, but there was a trend towards damp and cool summers from the early fifteenth to seventeenth centuries also (Parry, 1978: 99).

Cold polar water moving south from the northern North Atlantic caused exceptional cooling in northern Europe during this time Not surprisingly, it was the marginal areas that were most affected (Parry, 1978: 99). In the course of fifty years in the

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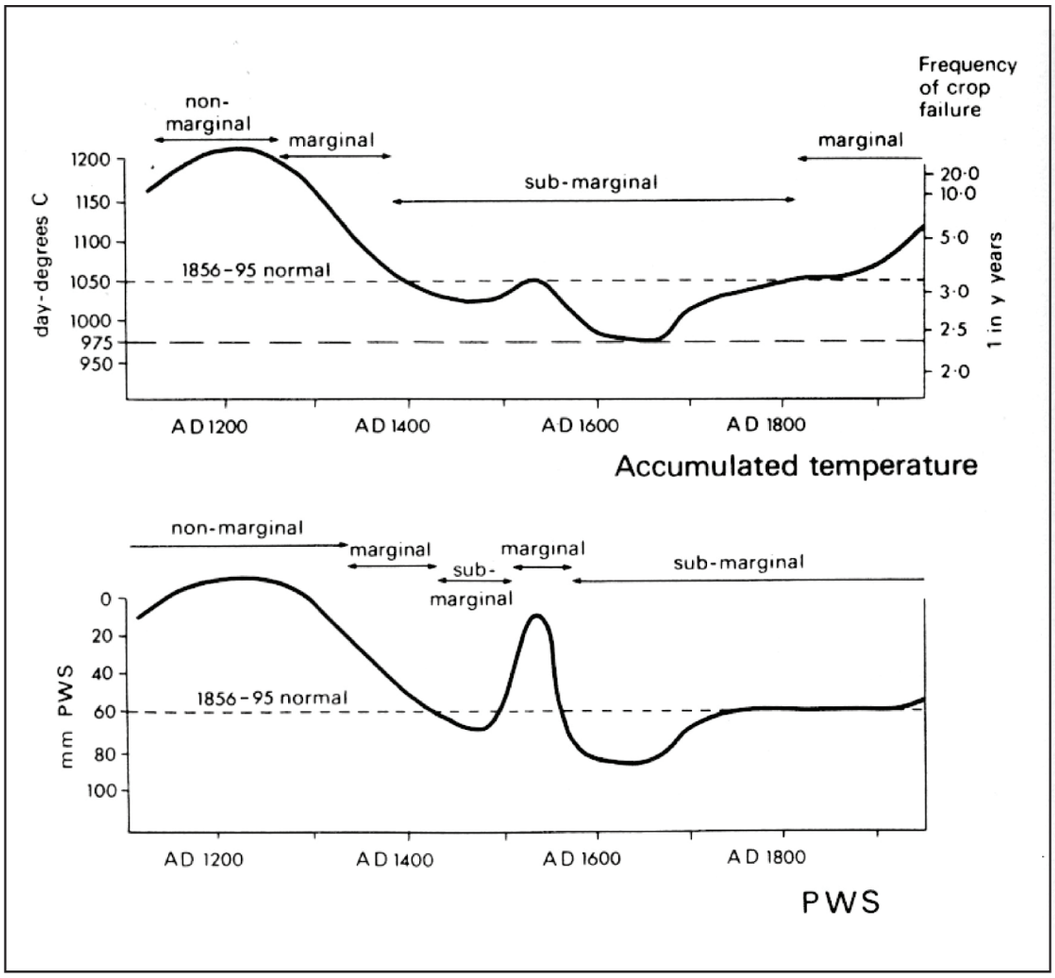



*Figure 4.2: 'Estimated trends of accumulated temperature and potential water surplus, AD 1000 - 1950, at sites on the climatic limit to cereal cultivation in 1856-95, based on 50-year averages of temperature and rainfall data' (Parry, 1978: 98)*

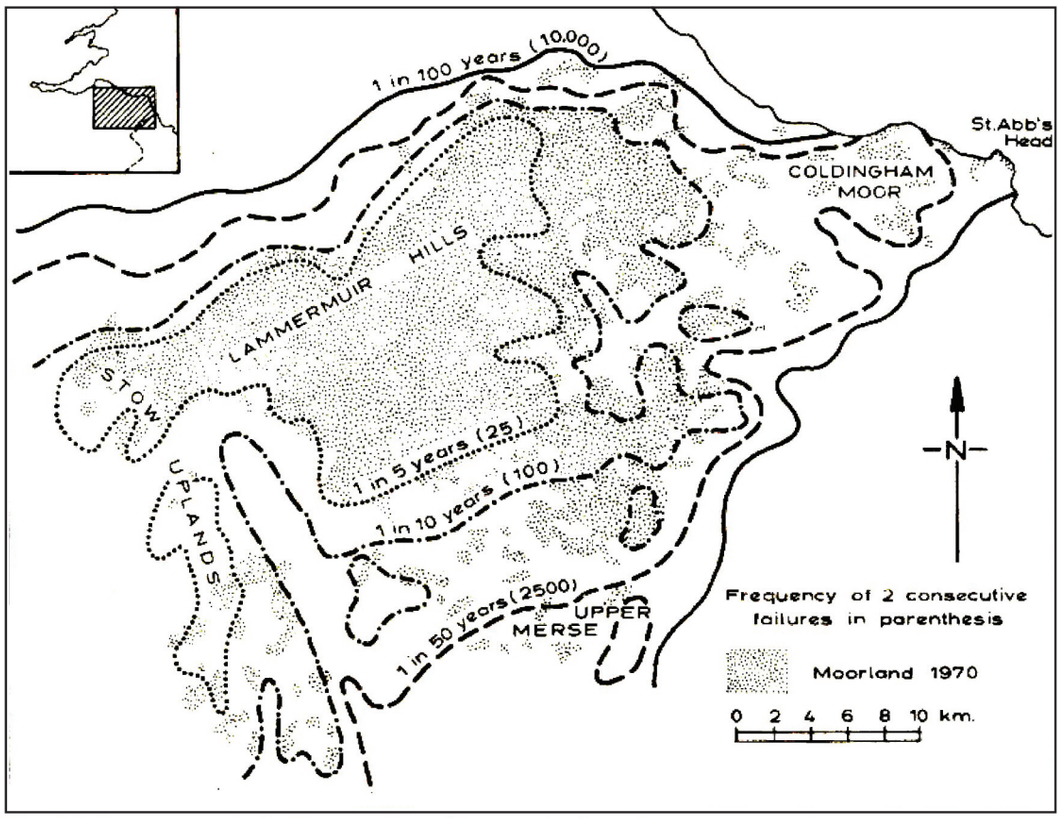



*Figure 4.3a: Parry's assessment of climatically marginal land in S.E. Scotland. The lower limit is also affected by economic and social factors, but the upper one may be absolute, making the cultivation of oats impractical (1978: 82)*

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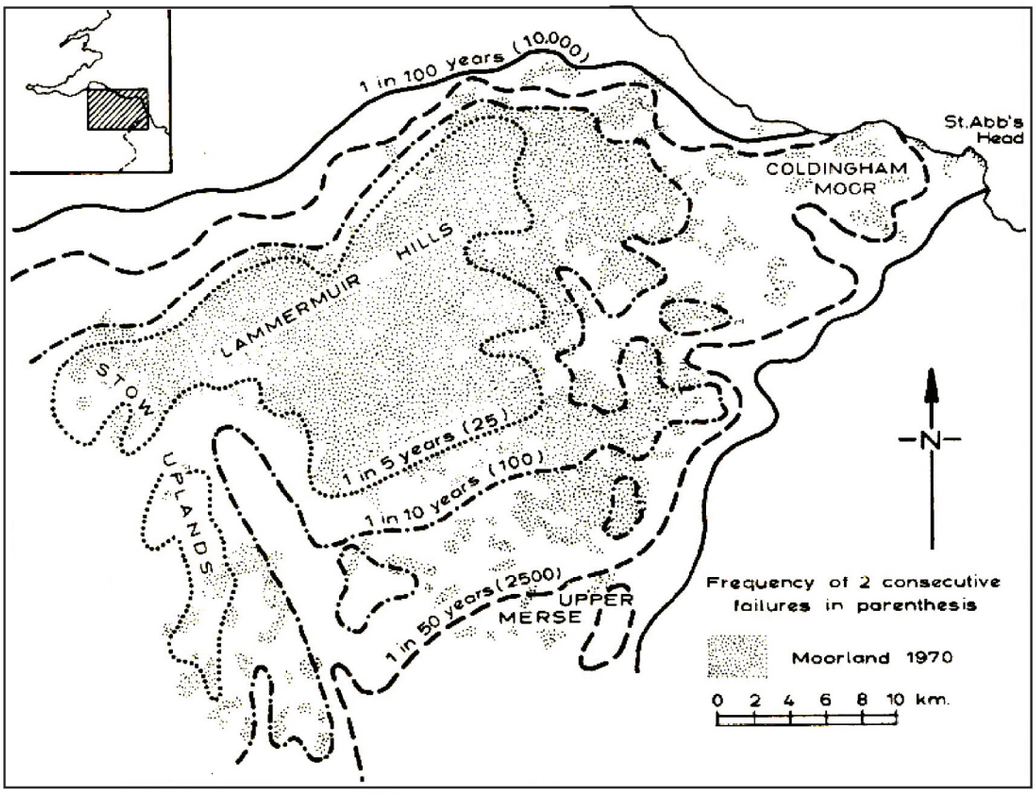



*Figure 4.3b: Isopleths showing the frequency at which Parry expected harvests to fail. Economic and social factors affect the lower limit, but the upper one may be absolute to that, in most circumstances, growing oats would not have been practical (1978: 92, 82)*

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sixteenth century summer warmth at 320m in southern Scotland fell by 6% and the growing season became eight days shorter (*ibid*). After 1700 summers became warmer and a little drier so that, by around 1950, the growing conditions were similar to the late thirteenth century, although not as good as in the twelfth (Parry, 1978: 100).

Any land that lies near the present limit of cultivation would, at different times, have been sub-marginal (ripening occurred late or not at all) and supra-marginal (more than sufficient day-degrees for cereal crops to ripen) (Parry, 1978: 100). Parry calculated that, in the early Middle Ages, the upper cultivation limit was at about 300m OD and harvests failed only one year in twenty (*ibid*). However, changing conditions meant that by the mid-fourteenth century harvests were failing one year in five, and one year in three by the mid-fifteenth century. The higher land in south-east Scotland was probably sub-marginal before this and during the coldest period the mean summer warmth may only have reached 975 day-degrees C, so that there was only a 50% chance of oats - the hardiest cereal - ripening (*ibid*). Anywhere near the absolute upper limit of cultivation would have had a very much delayed and reduced cereal harvest. Late harvests are usually poorer because the size and amount of grain is affected by, for example, wind-shaking (Parry, 1978: 87, 88).

Climatically marginal land can be mapped for large areas; using accumulated temperatures without exposure and summer wetness produces less accurate results (Parry, 1978: 82-3). Figures 4.4a and b, showing marginal land in Britain, demonstrate that the North Pennines, including the UDV, are, at best, climatically marginal. Marginal upland areas have 'precarious agricultural economies', making them susceptible to long- and short-term climate change (*ibid*: 83-4). Thus around 12% of Britain is marginal for cereals because there is not enough summer warmth and a further 15% is sub-marginal because it is too high and cold for crops to ripen at all (*ibid*: 84).

At a 1050 day-degree C average, Parry calculated the frequency of a single failed harvest at 1 in 3 and of two consecutive failures 1 in 11. At 1100 day-degrees, the situation improves to 1 in 5 and 1 in 25 respectively. At 1200 day-degrees C it is 1 in 14 and 1 in 210 and, at 1350 day-degrees, 1 in 141 and 1 in 19783. Cultivation of land at higher elevations is more constrained by the climate as the accumulated temperature (number of day-degrees) will reduce with increasing altitude (Parry, 1978: 89).

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*Figure 4.4a: Climatically marginal land in Britain (Parry, 1978: 83)*

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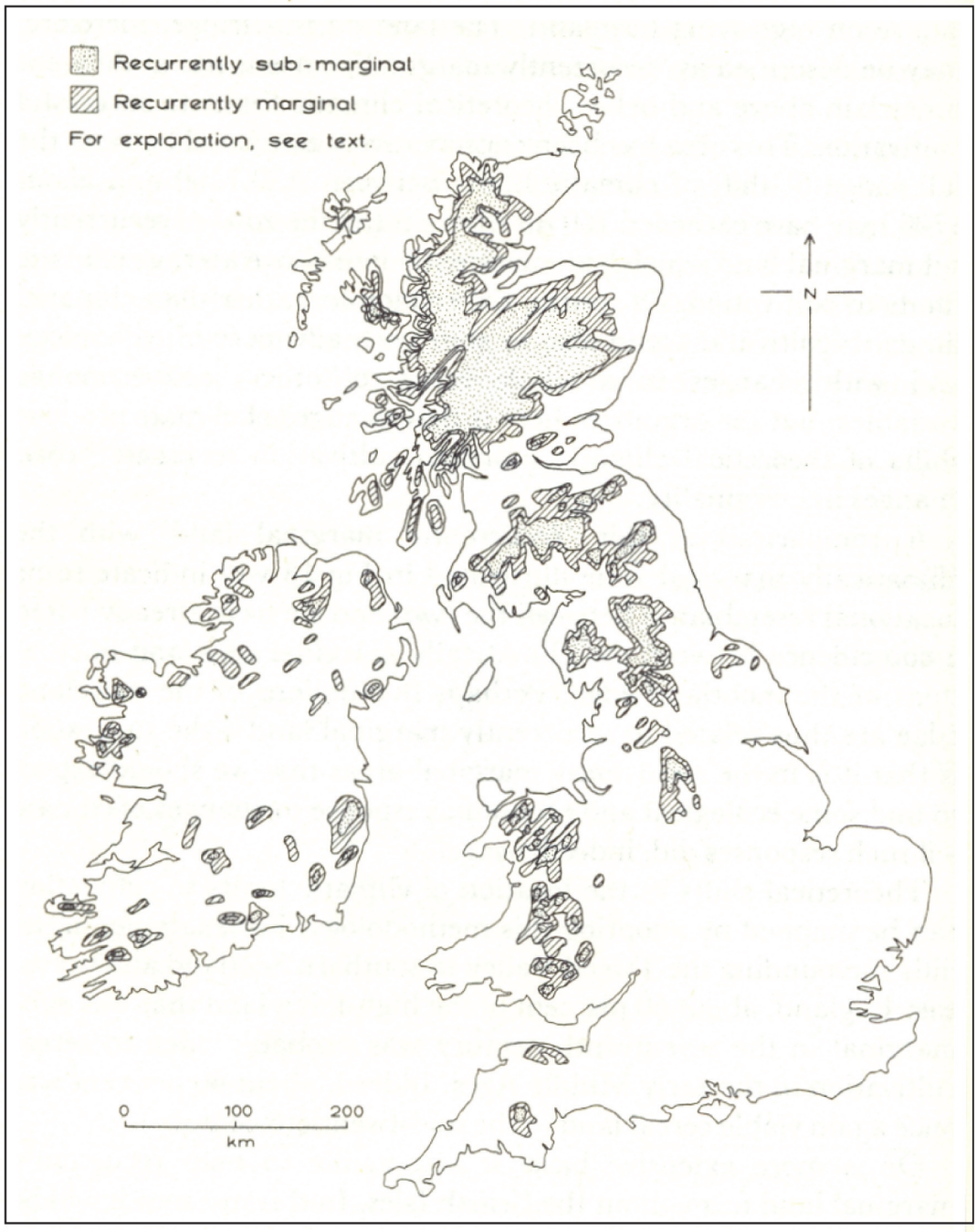



*Figure 4.4b: Recurrently marginal land in Britain (Parry, 1978: 104)*

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In maritime uplands, such as south-east Scotland an increase in elevation of only 25m at the upper cultivation limit might cause only a 5% reduction in summer warmth but a 50% increase in the frequency of harvest failure. It also doubles the incidence of two consecutive harvests failing - the 'hypothetical frequency of consecutive crop failure increases one hundred times with a 150m increase in altitude'. A group of poor years may increase the effect of altitude (Parry, 1978: 93), ultimately causing land to be abandoned. A series of cold, wet summers in Scotland between 1694 and 1698 caused 'widespread dearth and abandonment of farms' exacerbated by plague (*ibid*: 92). Around 60 farms (7% of the total) disappeared from the Lammermuirs between 1600 and 1750, with another 200 or so (22%) abandoned 1750 - 1800. Sometimes abandonment was due to amalgamation of land when the tenants became bankrupt. This mostly took place 1770 - 1850 when the average size of farms increased by 21%. During the same period 4500ha (c. 8.6% of the whole moorland area) reverted to rough pasture (ibid: 166-7).

Parry employed the 1050 day-degrees C and 60mm PWS to produce isopleth maps of the Lammermuirs showing how marginal land was lost to cultivation at different periods. The upper limit was 450m OD between 1150 and 1250 but then receded downhill; modern warming has raised the limit again. The land between the upper and lower limits recorded is 'recurrently marginal' (sometimes been suitable for cultivation and sometimes unsuitable) (Parry, 1978: 101-3). Around 21% of the Lammermuir moorland has evidence of former cultivation and Parry calculated that 4890ha of this reverted to moorland before the middle of the nineteenth century. At times the average summer warmth would not have reached more than 915 day-degrees C and two out of three harvests would have failed (Parry, 1978: 113-4). Parry went on to investigate the distribution of abandoned land and settlement in the Lammermuirs as a result of these effects.

The Lammermuir evidence is mostly of regular cultivation at settlements at high elevations in the early Middle Ages. The late mediæval abandonment of upland which became sub-marginal coincides with the downturn in climate from the early 1300s to 1530. More than 235ha above the 1530 climatic cultivation limit was abandoned, along with more land which was climatically marginal (Parry, 1978: 116-7). Fifteen settlements had been abandoned by 1600 and eighteen were deserted between 1600 and 1750. The earliest land abandoned seems to have been that first reclaimed in the early mediæval period in association with land grants to abbeys (*ibid*:

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114). This would suggest that abbeys were not necessarily being given the best land. Kelso Abbey, for example, owned a grange in 1300 at an altitude of 300m OD, the limit of modern cultivation. It had only 108ha of tillage but 1400 sheep. Upland granges thus concentrated on livestock but cultivation remained part of their agricultural system (Lamb, 1997: 179; Parry, 1978: 116). Durham Cathedral Priory's land at Muggleswick was mainly used for sheep and cattle ranching, presumably due to its elevated location. There would appear to be similarities between both areas, therefore, in both the type of land which was given to monastic houses and the use to which it was put. In the Lammermuirs much of the land deserted pre-1600 was reclaimed later, but aerial photography shows that there are at least twelve deserted settlements located on unreclaimed moor (Parry, 1978: 116). The reduction in cultivable land continued into the sixteenth century and Parry identified 62 more settlements becoming sub-marginal between 1530 and 1600 and some 120 becoming marginal for cultivation. While no non-marginal steadings were abandoned, some which were sub-marginal in 1530 were deserted by 1750 (Parry, 1978: 120). Figures 4.5a and 4.5b show the assumed progress of abandonment in the Lammermuirs. Another 2290ha returned to moorland between 1600 and 1800 (*ibid*: 120-1).

Thus Parry saw a link between the increase in climatic sub-marginality and the retreat of cultivation. However, there is a lack of documentary evidence to confirm a 'direct causal relationship', although the frequency of harvest failure and fluctuations in productivity might be indirect indicators. Short-term changes in climate may have often precipitated abandonment and can be considered the mechanism by which long-term climate shifts affected land-use. Permanent reversion from cultivation may only have occurred due to short-term climate change in those areas which were already sub-marginal for cereals because of long-term trends (Parry, 1978: 121). There may have been similar effects in the UDV so this will be investigated, beginning with a summary of the climate and vegetation of the North Pennines and then focussing on the marginality of the area and the effects on agriculture.

### 4.10 Criticisms of Parry's research

Parry's work was 'widely adopted as the paradigm for upland historic landscape change' (Tipping, 2002: 11). His deduction was that the deteriorating climate in the 'Little Ice Age' contributed to the abandonment of upland arable land in the early modern period (Tipping, 1998: ). However, Parry's research has been criticised in recent years, not least for relying on the effects of climate on cereal production. While

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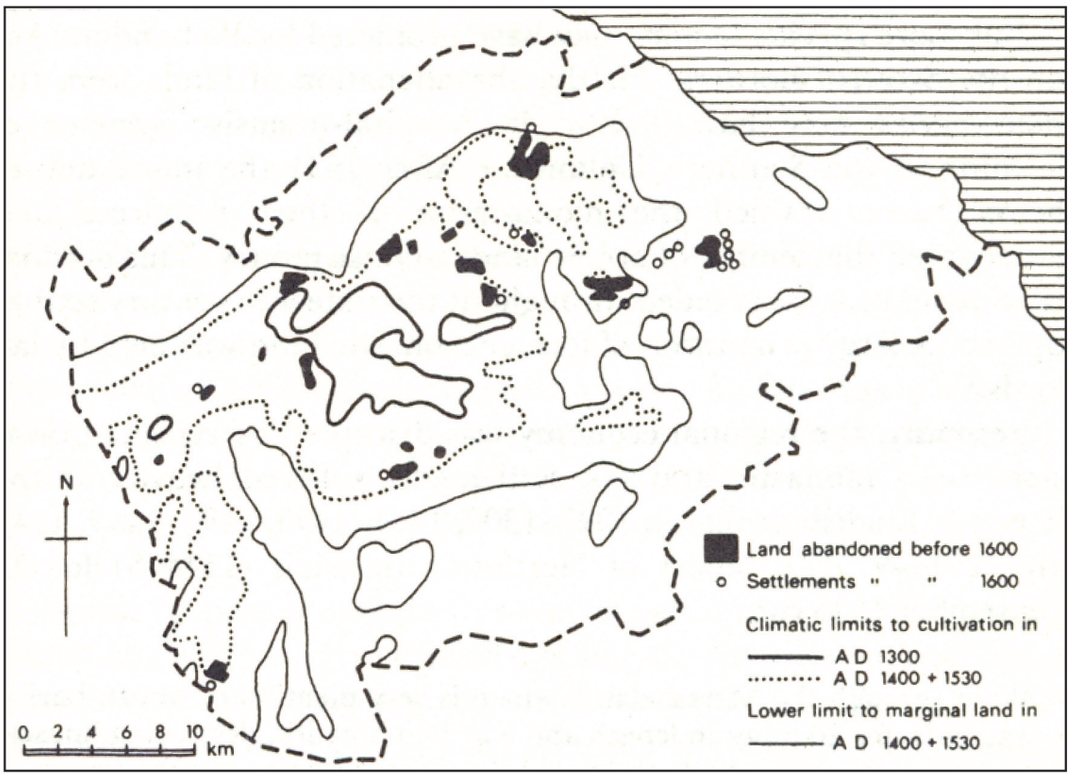



*Figure 4.5a: Parry's assessment of farmland abandoned and lowering of limits to cultivation in S.E. Scotland, 1300 to 1600 (1978: 117)*

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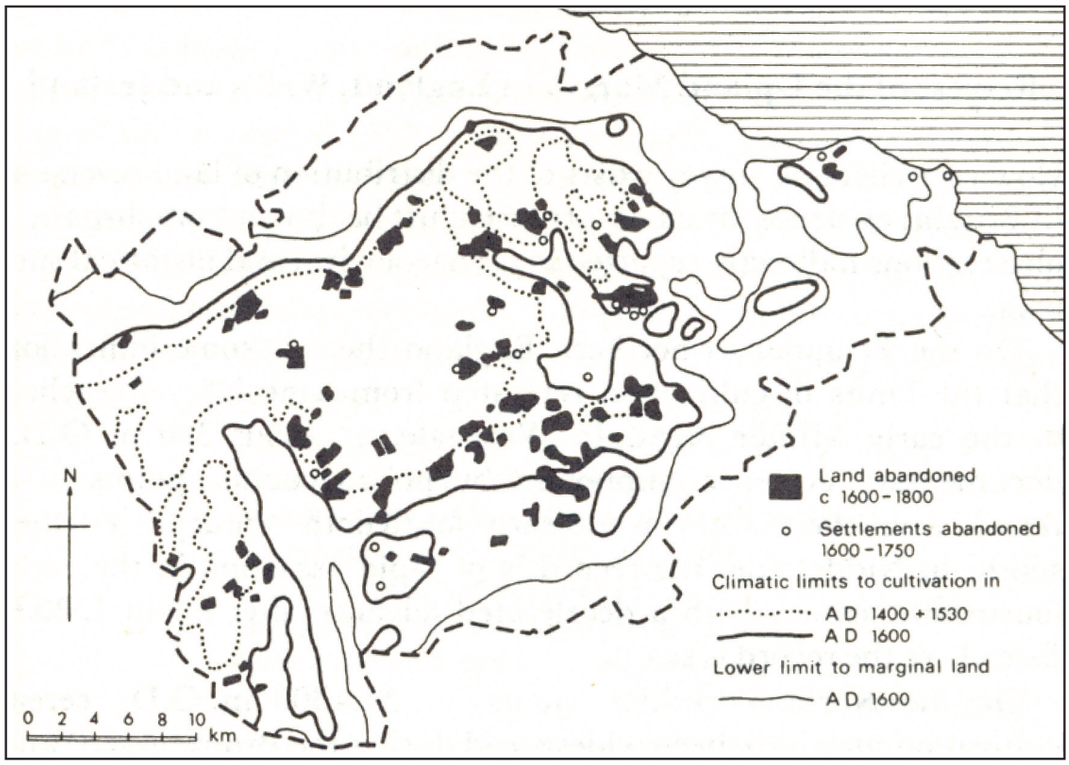



*Figure 4.5a: Parry's assessment of farmland abandoned and lowering of limits to cultivation in S.E. Scotland, 1600 to 1750 (1978: 117)*

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it may have been ground-breaking at the time, it only looked at one aspect of agriculture and did not allow for diversification, although to have included all possible parameters might not have been practical. Parry's restricted approach might have satisfied researchers specialising in the relationship between climate and landuse but is inadequate for the type of holistic research aimed at by landscape archaeologists and this thesis in particular. It is likely, in fact, that a variety of causes produced a variety of solutions.

Parry assumed that gradual abandonment of the uplands was due to the climate affecting crop production through the reduction in the number of day-degrees required for a subsistence crop to ripen. Fear of repeated or future crop failures would have driven people to abandon the land (Tipping, 2002: 11). Tipping observes that dating land abandonment can be very difficult as, even if there are documentary records, they are frequently not precise. Archaeological research is often no better (*ibid*: 12).

It is not easy to tell whether climate factors were greater or less than socio-economic pressures and the use of only one aspect of the agricultural economy created problems. Moreover the 'weak and imprecise dating of farm and land abandonment' reduces the argument for climate stress being the cause because the correlation between the two cannot be established (Tipping, 1998: 1). Tipping acknowledges that Parry was hampered by the data available, but thought that his chronological controls were not as precise as the Central England temperature record. Parry made assumptions about both the economic reliance on crops and the social system. Recent palynology shows that crops were grown at high altitudes until the nineteenth century. While blanket peat may have limited cultivable land, intermittent cropping would have been part of the shieling economy which linked the lowlands and uplands in one system (Tipping, 2010: 198-9).

Believing that there are better ways to test the continuation of cereal cultivation in the Lammermuirs, Tipping set out to compare sites in south-east Scotland (this time the Cheviots) with those in Parry's research, but using radiometrically-dated (14C and 210Pb) high-resolution pollen analyses (1998: 4). Tipping took Parry's calculations about the risk of crop failure with increasing altitude into account and chose three sites that were sufficiently close to each for altitude and spatial factors not to influence the results (*ibid*). A chronology for the results was essential and Tipping employed a

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different method from Parry. Radiocarbon dating is not accurate for the late-historic period, especially for anything 150 to 200 years old. However, it is possible to extrapolate from the chronology for the last 10,000 years provided by data from peat bogs. Another method Tipping employed was using exotic arboreal pollen as a marker in the pollen stratigraphy; this pollen came from trees planted in the Agricultural Improvements that came after the 1720s (*ibid*: 6).

Tipping's results differed from Parry's findings. At the Sourhope site (297m AOD) Tipping found that there was evidence of both cereal and oat pollen from c. 1100AD, but no oat pollen after c. 1500 and neither type of pollen after c. 1650. At Swindon Hill (375m AOD) the results were different. Cereal pollen, including oat, was present for the period c. 1150 to c. 1300 but there was no evidence for either c. 1300 to c. 1475. After that there was erratic representation with oat possibly absent c. 1650 - 1700. Cereal and oat pollen were found for the period after that up to c. 1900. The results for Mow Law (420m AOD) showed both cereal and oat pollen from around 1150 but a possible decline in cereals c.1400 - 1450. There was a sustained presence until c. 1800 and limited representation until around 1900, after which no evidence for cereal or oat pollen is found (Tipping, 1998: 7).

Thus pollen records demonstrate that cereal production did not cease during periods identified as being in climatic crisis (Tipping, 2002: 13) Tipping's conclusion is that 'late historic upland agricultural change was not climatically determined' (*ibid*). Moreover, following the opinions of Dodgshon (1972, 1976), he considered that, while cereals could have been grown, the specialisations of agriculture that came with agricultural improvement meant that they were not required (*ibid*).

Tipping followed up the pollen results by looking at previous research and documentary evidence. He established that the main areas of cultivation in the early modern period, and since, have been on the valley bottoms and lower slopes. The sites at Swindon Hill and Mow Law are clearly not in these areas. However, Tipping also found indications of ploughing at 'considerable altitudes' (1998: 8). Populations on the Bowmont Valley farms decreased during the half century up to c. 1750. Infield-outfield agriculture was in use and large areas of upland may have been cultivated. After this the uplands were linked to the lowland farms; the uplands bred the sheep, the lowlands fattened them on turnips and sown grasses (*ibid*).

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Tipping established that two agricultural methods were suitable for the area. One was tathing, where animals were folded on part of the pasture during one year and moved to another part the next. The manure-enriched land was cultivated and produced better crop yields (Tipping, 1998: 8). The other method was the system of shielings which existed in the Bowmont Valley, especially on plateaux around 400m AOD, as at Swindon Hill and Mow Law. These were similar to the shielings known in the North Pennines. Sometimes quick-ripening crops were grown at the shielings, or a crop was planted there before the move to summer pastures in the spring (*ibid*). Many of the shielings were replaced by sheep-breeding units as mentioned above. Some of the shielings, especially those at around 220 to 300m AOD, kept some arable for subsistence and possibly grew cereals on the manure-enriched soils of the former shielings which they replaced (*ibid*: 8 - 9). The presence of evidence of cultivation is relevant to the cultivation history of the UDV and will be discussed further in subsequent sections.

A drawback to Tipping's research is that there are differences between the Cheviots and the Lammermuirs. If Tipping wanted to assess the accuracy of Parry's work, why then did he not carry out his research in the Lammermuirs? For example, there are expanses of mediæval ridge and furrow in the Lammermuir Hills which might have been core agricultural areas but which have no match in the Cheviots. Nonetheless, the fact that the Cheviot uplands could be cultivated strongly suggests that the Lammermuirs could have supported crops during the Little Ice Age (Tipping, 1998: 9). So why has Parry's research been so criticised?

The cause of criticism lies in the idea that the influence of climatic stress on cultivation during the Little Ice Age needs to be revised. Tipping draws together research by, for example, Duncan (1992), Whyte (1979) and Parry and Carter (1985), to produce three main reasons for this:

1. Parry's calculations may have put the altitudinal limits to agriculture too low, thus skewing his results.
2. Parry based his research on nineteenth century varieties of oats. Hardier varieties were grown in earlier periods and may not have been affected by the climate to the same extent.
3. The Little Ice Age was not one extended cold period but a series of shorter periods of risk lasting between three and five years. During these, several consecutive years of crop failures could have caused farmers to give up.

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> Although 1688 - 1698 was perhaps the longest cold period, there were no sustained periods of cold that lasted longer than a decade (Tipping, 1998: 9).

Unfortunately, these short-term variations in climate are not evident in the pollen record for the northern Cheviots. What the pollen does show is that any short-lived setbacks did not change the 'prospects for crop-growing on the plateaux of the Cheviot Hills'. There was no permanent abandonment of land due to crop failure and, thus, the changes that occurred are likely to have had socio-economic causes (Tipping, 1998: 10).

Parry himself was probably aware of the weaknesses in his research because he tried several times to emphasise that there were many complex and interacting forces involved (Tipping, 1998: 1). Many factors - social, political and economic - can influence changes in cultivation. Nonetheless, since the mid-thirteenth century a long-term change in climate may have made successful cereal cultivation problematic in the Lammermuirs (Parry, 1978: 117). The fertility of marginal land may have declined, too, and farming may have become less capital-intensive because of the problems monasteries were experiencing, such as heavy taxes. Repeated invasions by English armies did not help much, either, as they burned down settlements, laid waste the land and destroyed crops. Such events probably had a more devastating effect in marginal areas (*ibid*: 118). Similar problems may have been experienced in the UDV and other parts of Durham Priory's land, but with Scottish armies causing the damage.

Turner and Young also criticised Parry's approach because it takes no account of people being able to adopt strategies to deal with the situation. Parry's assumption was that agriculture relied on particular crops, the growth requirements of which limited farmers' options to retreating downhill (2007: 299). People's ecological and environmental thresholds may differ from those of crops, however, and their behaviour is also constrained by social factors (*ibid*). Moreover, alternative strategies - as changing from arable to pastoralism - often require finances not available after sustained crop failures. This, also, may be a too simplistic approach. There are many reasons for farms in the uplands being deserted, including reductions in population due to disease, marriage and inheritance (a generation dying out and no-one to take over) and the remoteness of the locations. In the Burnhope Valley, tributary of the

Derwent, there is a line of farmhouses along the valley side - College, Pedam's Oak, Belmont, Sandyford - which were abandoned in living memory. The desertion of such farms will be assessed in section 4.14.

**4.11: The North Pennines: climate and vegetation**

The climate of the region is influenced by its latitude, its proximity to the sea and its relief. These will be investigated in this section.

Bailey's 1810 eyewitness account of the land and climate of County Durham is as accurate a picture as can be obtained of the situation at that time. The land, Bailey noted, stretches from the east coast to its highest point, Cross Fell, rising regularly but with a significant variation in climate. The weather in 1810 was generally mild and fine in the lowlands but snow on the mountains in November could last until mid or late June (Bailey, 1810: 7). In winter and spring the prevailing winds came from the north and east, but from the south and west, with frequent rain, in summer and autumn. The cold north-east wind often brought drought - "sea pine" - from March through to June. Most of the rain and snow came from the south-east. This climate, of course, affected the agricultural potential of the area:

> As the cultivated grounds approach the mountains, the corn becomes later in ripening, until its ripening at all becomes very uncertain: and here its cultivation is of course not attempted.
>
> (Bailey, 1810: 7)

While harvest could begin as early as the second week of August, it usually took place from the beginning of September to mid-October. However, in the west of the county - the North Pennines - it could last until mid-November (Bailey, 1810: 7-8). Since few crops are now grown in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick it is difficult to compare this with the current situation.

The climate on the higher moors of the North Pennines is currently described as severe, with short summers and cold winters. The rainfall is high, especially on the western escarpment, frequently falling as snow in winter and strong winds are common (DLC: 44; Pigott, 1978: 105; Aalen, 2006: 29). Cold westerly weather often brings snow to these uplands in late winter and early spring while the lowlands remain snow-free. The effects of such snowfall can vary depending on the amount of drifting. For example, in 1933 there was heavy snow in the lowlands, but at Moor

House the drifting caused by the wind left the moor virtually uncovered (Manley, 1936: 106). This is because, although up to about 1500ft (460m) snow-cover and temperature are closely linked, the effects of wind on the uplands makes it difficult to assess snow-cover (*ibid*: 246). At other times, as in late winter 1931, the snow can be deep and continuous (*ibid*: 106). In the North Pennines 'snow or sleet can be expected to fall on upwards of fifty days yearly'(*ibid*: 244). Temperature, aspect and the quantity and frequency of snowfall all affect the amount of snow cover, so there is usually more on all east-facing uplands for orographic reasons (*ibid*: 244-5). Upper Teesdale and Upper Weardale are among the snowiest places in England (Aalen, 2006: 29).

In Teesdale the altitude affects the climate by reducing the temperature by about 1ºC for every 200m of height so that the mean annual temperature at Moor House (O.S. 913297) is only 5º. While the general influence of the Atlantic on the British climate is to make winters mild for the latitude and summers cool, the altitude of Upper Teesdale offsets this in winter but exaggerates it in summer (Pigott, 1978: 102-3). As well as more rain there is less direct sunlight due to the latitude, and the climate has been described as sub-arctic despite being wetter, cooler and more cloudy than most sub-arctic tundra areas (Pigott, 1978: 102; Coulson, 1978: 165; Aalen, 2006: 29). Manley noted that the moorlands of the North Pennines 'comprise the most consistently elevated and chilly part of England' (1936: 103).

Similar conditions prevail in the UDV. Peter Fowler (1986), commenting on the weather conditions met in April when fieldwalking between Blanchland and Pedam's Oak, complained that 'the temperature was normally 3º ± 2º, aided by a keen east wind, fog, snow, sleet and rain', that 'threequarters of an inch of rain fell in less than 24 hours', that the local farmers thought them mad and 'the Ford Transit van was hopelessly inadequate'! The deeply dissected uplands experience local conditions where aspect and shelter are important and east-west aligned dales have warmer and drier south-facing slopes; they also funnel the westerly air-streams (Aalen, 2006: 29).

Since 1989 some changes have occurred in the weather experienced in the UDV. Personal experience suggests that many summers have been less sunny and warm than those of the early 1990s, but there are no local data. An easier comparison comes with snowfall. In the early part of the period heavy snow was common, with drifting to several feet in depth. However, roads were usually only blocked for a day or so

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before being cleared by the snowplough. Snow often lay for days or weeks on the fields and fells, but there were seldom repeated heavy snowfalls. For several years there was little snow interspersed with years of more significant falls. However the worst snows for some time fell at the latter end of 2009 and the beginning of 2011. In both cases there was heavy snow in repeated falls over several days. Modern events are nothing compared with the anecdotal snow of 1947 and even 1910, when carts set off for Stanhope in November but had to be abandoned and were only retrieved at Easter! (Joe 'Boxer' Dodds, pers. comm. 1992).

The growing season for pastures is that part of the year when mean temperatures are above 5.5ºC. In the North Pennine uplands the pastures start to turn brown in October and growth does not begin until April, or even May at higher levels (Pigott, 1978: 106,108). While temperatures rise and fall gradually during the year, the decrease in temperature with altitude in the North Pennines causes a rapid decrease in the length of the growing season. For every 100m rise in altitude the growing season is shortened by two weeks. At 450m in Teesdale the growing season is April 18th to October 23rd, but at 670m it is May 4th - October 16th. Consequently, in the days when farms in remote parts of the Pennines needed to be largely self-sufficient, cereals were 'grown almost to the altitude at which a crop of ripe grain might be expected in most years'. Harvest was not usually until September or October and the yields for oats and barley above 300m were half those of the lowlands (Pigott, 1978: 109-110).

There are large areas of blanket bog on the highest ground with heather, cotton grass and sphagnum mosses. The drier areas support moorland of heather and bilberry or acid grassland. All this land is used for sheep-grazing - mostly Swaledales and some Scottish Blackface, both hardy breeds, in Durham. Much of the moorland is managed for grouse shooting; the burning of patches of heather to produce young plant shoots to feed the birds results in a patchwork effect (DLC: 47).

There is virtually no woodland on the felltops, although there is some fairly extensive woodland in the lower parts of the valleys; Alnus sometimes grows along watercourses, with other woodland trees also common along streams. Upland Fraxinus and Quercus-Betula woods are frequently found in the deep daleside gills and river gorges. Scattered coniferous plantations are found throughout the dales, with larger areas of forestry in the moorland fringe. The moorland margins also support pockets of Juniperis (DLC: 44). It is noticeable from late nineteenth century

photographs taken around Edmundbyers village that there were significantly fewer trees in the immediate area, even in the valleys, than there are now (figure 4.6). Britain has a very low tree-line compared with other temperate countries due to temperature and wind speed, and in the North Pennines trees on west-exposed slopes tend to be stunted due to wind-shear. These factors help to account for the lack of woodland on the North Pennines except in sheltered parts as described above. Parts of the North Pennines actually resemble the tundra and at Nenthead (457m with enclosed pastures up to 550m) the growing season is reduced to 18th April to 23rd October while at the limit of settlement (c.580m) it is 4th May to 16th October (Manley, 1955: 180-1). Climate, as well as human influence, has kept much of the region clear of woodland. There is further consideration of the tree cover below (section 4.15)

In the Derwent Valley there is parkland around Ruffside Hall, and estate land, with some parts heavily covered by conifer plantations divided by enclosures of improved pasture (DLC: 60).

Ancient Fraxinus and Quercus woodlands occupy the gills and gorges, and the watersides, particularly in the Derwent drainage basin. The Derwent's deep gorge downstream from Eddy's Bridge is heavily wooded, as is that of its tributary, the Burnhope Burn. There are some plantations, and hedgerow and field trees make the landscape seem well wooded (DLC: 63-64).

**4.12: The Marginality of the UDV**

The possible effect of climate on cultivation in the Lammermuirs prompted me to investigate whether the factor of day-degrees was an issue for the agriculture of the Upper Derwent Valley. Certainly the climate, as described above, is not favourable for agriculture. Cultivation limits in the North Pennines retreated during the early mediæval period from the highest point reached. In Weardale there is documentary and pollen evidence for 380m OD to suggest a retreat from the margin in the early fourteenth century (Parry, 1978: 122). Stewart Shield Meadow and Bollihope Shield had both been occupied permanently due to population pressure in the thirteenth century but were abandoned in the fourteenth, the former at some time between 1310 and 1350 (Roberts et al, 1973: 216, 218).

The use of day-degrees to assess the viability of cereal-growing was a feature of Parry's Lammermuirs research but, as indicated above, this work has been heavily

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*Figure 4.6: above: Church Lane in Victorian times (Jack Robson on the Reverend Walker Featherstonhaugh's horse, - Featherstonhaugh was Rector of Edmundbyers 1856 - 1904)*
*below: Church Lane today, showing the increase in tree growth*

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criticised. Similar calculations carried out for the UDV are used here as an indicator of its marginal character. Data from the Meteorological Office website are only available for the period since 1880 for the nearest recording station, Durham (a more recently-established one closer to the study area, at Boltshope Park, does not provide sufficient data). This is at a lower altitude than the UDV, so calculations had to take this into account. Data for a large area covering the Midlands have been kept since 1659 and make a useful comparison. All calculations are explained in appendix B.1.

It can be seen from figure 4.7 that the average day-degrees remained well above the critical 1050 level throughout the period. However, despite having no consistent data for the UDV, it can be assumed that the situation there was less suitable for the cultivation of cereals. Calculated day-degrees for the North Pennines (UDV) at 300m are also shown (see appendix B.1 for details) on figure 4.7 and suggest a considerable difference in suitability for cultivation. The day-degrees for the UDV are consistently close to the 1050 day-degree C line and fall below it on several occasions. The beginning of the late nineteenth century 'Great Depression' can be seen towards the end of the period.

As figure 4.8 shows (calculations: appendix B.2), for the period from 1880 to the present, the day-degrees are considerably lower for the UDV at 200, 300 and 400m than for the Midlands. It is clear that, while the warmer and cooler years are reflected similarly for all situations, the day-degrees for the UDV are much closer to critical. In fact, at 400m the area is frequently sub-marginal, is sometimes so at 300m and is close to, or is actually, marginal for most of the period. Extended warmer interludes are divided by much colder ones until a gradual increase from the 1990s.

This marginality suggests that a change to pastoralism might have been a logical step for local farmers. Unreliable harvests of cereals would have meant that income also was unreliable and farms possibly unsustainable. While growing crops for animal fodder may not be a problem, growing food for the local population or for sale is another matter. Once communications became good enough for food to be bought in, for humans or animals, a change was viable. Given the fossilised ridge and furrow in the fields around Edmundbyers, this may have occurred to some extent in the late mediæval period. However, subsequent periods of international warfare did encourage re-cultivation of some fields, such as during the Napoleonic Wars and the Second World War. The extent of cultivation is discussed in the next section.

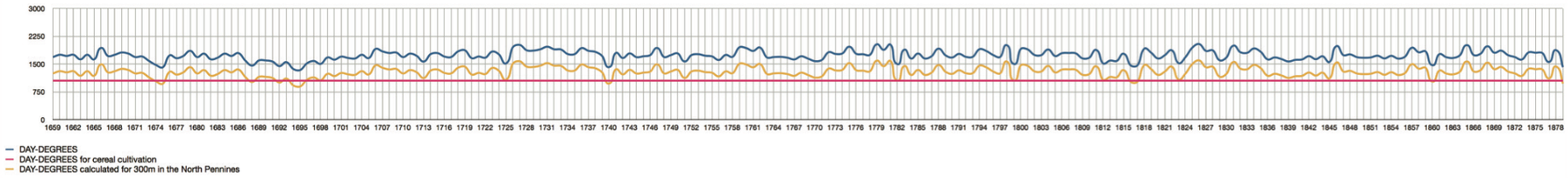



***Figure 4.7:*** *Day-degrees for the North Pennines and the Midlands from 1659 to 1879*



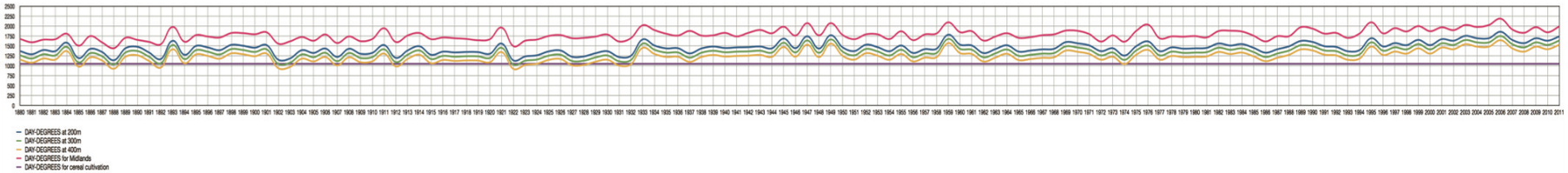



***Figure 4.8:*** *Comparison of day-degrees for the Upper Derwent Valley at 200, 300 and 400m OD with those for the Midlands from 1880 to 2011*

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## 4.13: Former cultivation

### 4.13.1 *Introduction*

Following from the assessment of possible climatic influences on the cultivable land in the UDV, it is appropriate to investigate whether there is any documentary or physical evidence for the expansion and contraction of arable land. This part of the chapter will examine the landscape, both the moorland and the present fields, to see if there are traces of cultivation in places now uncultivated. It will also investigate specific examples of farms and earlier cultivation before drawing some conclusions about farm and land desertion in the UDV.

The Revd. Walker Featherstonhaugh noted that 'In the immediate neighbourhood of the village [Edmundbyers], a considerable portion of what is now moor and covered with heather, has at one time grown corn, and is laid in rig and furrow' (1900: 110). He ascribes this to the growth in cultivation at the time of the Napoleonic Wars in the early nineteenth century when it was profitable to plough the moorland and grow oats. Such cultivation ended, he states, with peace since then the prices fell; that, and the 'exhaustion of the soil' made it 'unprofitable to continue the culture' (*ibid*).

Close scrutiny of the moorland in both parishes does, indeed, reveal that areas have been cultivated, sometimes quite extensively. Although, as previously stated, the growth of heather can make it difficult to see the ground clearly, there are places where evidence of ridge and furrow are visible. Moreover, a few of these areas have been recorded in the HER (see tables 3.2 and 3.5). However, there are other locations which have not been recorded and dating any of them is problematic without direct evidence. Some of the areas of apparent cultivation are rather small and it is possible that these in particular date from periods well before the early nineteenth century. There is further examination of these phenomena below.

Google Earth has been useful in identifying ridge and furrow but has one major drawback: the images were taken shortly after haymaking and this makes it difficult to differentiate ridge and furrow from the lines made by mowing. Obviously field observation solves this problem, but many fields are difficult to see due to their locations away from public access or because there is no clear view of them. The undulations of ridge and furrow are often more easily recognised when seen from a distance; when standing amongst them their true character is often obscured.

The regressive mapping described in the methodology (see 2.10.2) is mostly of assistance in the next chapter but did make a useful contribution to this part of the research. It was particularly helpful in the case studies and in looking at the woodland and plantations of the UDV.

### 4.13.2 *Cultivation of enclosed land*

Examination of the fields of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick, both through fieldwork and by using aerial photographs, shows that many of the fields have evidence of ridge and furrow. Apart from the ones that records show were the town fields of Edmundbyers and which have ridge and furrow of mediæval type, many fields have straighter, narrower ridge and furrow. This is likely to be later, possibly dating from the period of the Napoleonic Wars or 'plough-up' campaigns of later wars. While the mediæval ridge and furrow is cut in places by later field boundaries, the narrower form is usually confined within the existing field boundaries which, in Edmundbyers at least, date from between 1649 and 1800. More detailed discussion of the field boundaries can be found in chapter 5. Figures 4.9 and 4.12 show the locations of the areas of previous cultivation within the fields of the parishes. It can be seen that large parts of the parishes have been cultivated at some point in history but that the ploughing 'events' are not necessarily contemporaneous. The next two sections explain this evidence.

### 4.13.3 *Edmundbyers*

Figure 4.9 (supplemented by photographs in figure 4.10) shows the enclosed fields in the vicinity of Edmundbyers village which bear evidence of cultivation. The map itself has been rendered in greyscale and in a lighter shade so that the locations of the ridge and furrow are more easily seen. The arrows show the direction of the ploughing. Red arrows indicate ridge and furrow believed, from its character and documentary evidence, to be mediæval in origin. It is probable, from the documents, that land adjacent to these fields was also cultivated in the Middle Ages. The purple arrows indicate areas with visible ridge and furrow which is not clearly recognisable as being of mediæval type. It is narrower and straighter and therefore almost certainly much later. Some may date from the Napoleonic Wars and some from plough-up campaigns resulting from later conflicts, such as the Second World War. Periods of warfare meant that importing supplies was difficult so that home production had to be stepped up to meet the demands of the nation for food. Unless there are accurate records, or datable associated features, it is not usually possible to date ridge and

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furrow accurately. However, there is some documentary evidence indicating the nature of past agriculture around the village.

In the Middle Ages, as described in chapter 3, Edmundbyers was a township which was organised with open fields. It would have been largely self-sufficient although, as part of the Prior's estate of Muggleswick, some goods are likely to have been imported and exported. Thus the cultivation of the land for food crops would have been essential. The fields to the north of the village are described in the 1649 survey (Sobo, 1995) as the Town Fields so were almost certainly all ploughed for crops even though, in some places, the ridge and furrow is no longer clearly visible. The same document describes the land at the east end of the village as the Middle Corn Field. This suggests that the organisation of the township, with some common fields for pasture and arable, continued in a similar fashion to that used in earlier periods. This is confirmed by the following two examples:

> Clement Parker's tenement was '...scituate on the Northside of the sayd Towneshippe and boundering on a Messuage of George Lumleyes on the West and the Middlecorne Feilde on the East, the Towne street on the South and the Kilne Feild on the North And all those parts or parcells of Arable Land with the appurtenances lying dispersed in the Common Arable Feilds....'
>
> Thomas Oliver held, amongst other areas of land, '...one Meadowe Close called the Gate Close about half an acre And all those Riggs or Flatts of Arable Land with the appurtenances lying dispersed in the Common arable Feilds...'
>
> (Sobo, 1995: pp. 65 and 68 of original)

By the time of the estate survey in 1800, the enclosure of the fields was more or less complete (see chapter 5). The list of fields and their tenants provides some indication of the landuse, but is not clear about arable land. It might be reasonable to assume that anything not specifically labelled as pasture, wood, meadow or similar, was potentially suitable for cultivation. However, in places the topography would preclude this because the slope of the valley sides would be too steep.

Featherstonhaugh's history of Edmundbyers, though published in 1900, includes the knowledge gained throughout his incumbency from 1856. At the time of his account the parish covered some 7,000 acres (c. 2800 ha) of which, he said, 2000 (c. 800 ha)

were in cultivation. However, he noted that the acres in cultivation were mainly of grass (1900: 80). It would therefore seem that he was talking about improved and enclosed land rather than arable. As mentioned above, oats were grown and probably barley, both of which would have been hardier than wheat varieties of the time and more likely to ripen successfully. Featherstonhaugh also observed that a few people still alive at the end of the nineteenth century remembered ploughing with oxen (1900: 110), so that some apparently mediæval-type ridge and furrow could be quite late in date, including that produced during the Napoleonic wars.

The Historic Environment Record for the area records a number of instances of field systems of ridge and furrow. These lie within the current fields although, in some cases, do not fill the whole field. These HER sites are shown on the maps in figures 3.2 and 3.12. There is only one place where a possible early field boundary, marked by and embankment, can be clearly observed; that is in the fields lying between Black Hill and Limerick, to the west of the village (figure 4.10c)

The landuse map produced in the 1930s by L. Dudley Stamp shows that most of the land in Edmundbyers parish was, by that time, either heath, moorland and rough pasture or permanent grass (figure 4.11). Small areas of arable are shown to the north of Edmundbyers village but, as Stamp's legend indicated, these include fallow and rotation grass. Thus, by this time, the agricultural economy of the parish was mainly dependent on livestock. The exception came during the Second World War plough-up campaign when, once again, it was both profitable and beneficial to grow whatever crops could be cultivated. That land was ploughed during this time has been recorded in the diaries of Heine Ruhe, a German prisoner of war, who lived in the village until about 1948. 'We plough the fields always up and down, never crossways' (H. Ruhe, pers. comm. 24.4.2006). Land currently cultivated is shown on the map in figure 4.9.

#### 4.13.4 *Muggleswick*

The map of Muggleswick (fig. 4.12) has been undertaken slightly differently. The area is too large, and many of the fields too remote to access, for field study alone to be appropriate. Thus aerial photographs from Google Earth were consulted. In doing this, the problems noted above were encountered as many of the fields had recently been mown and the patterns formed by this masked any ridge and furrow. However, there were numerous places where the tell-tale undulations were quite clear and these

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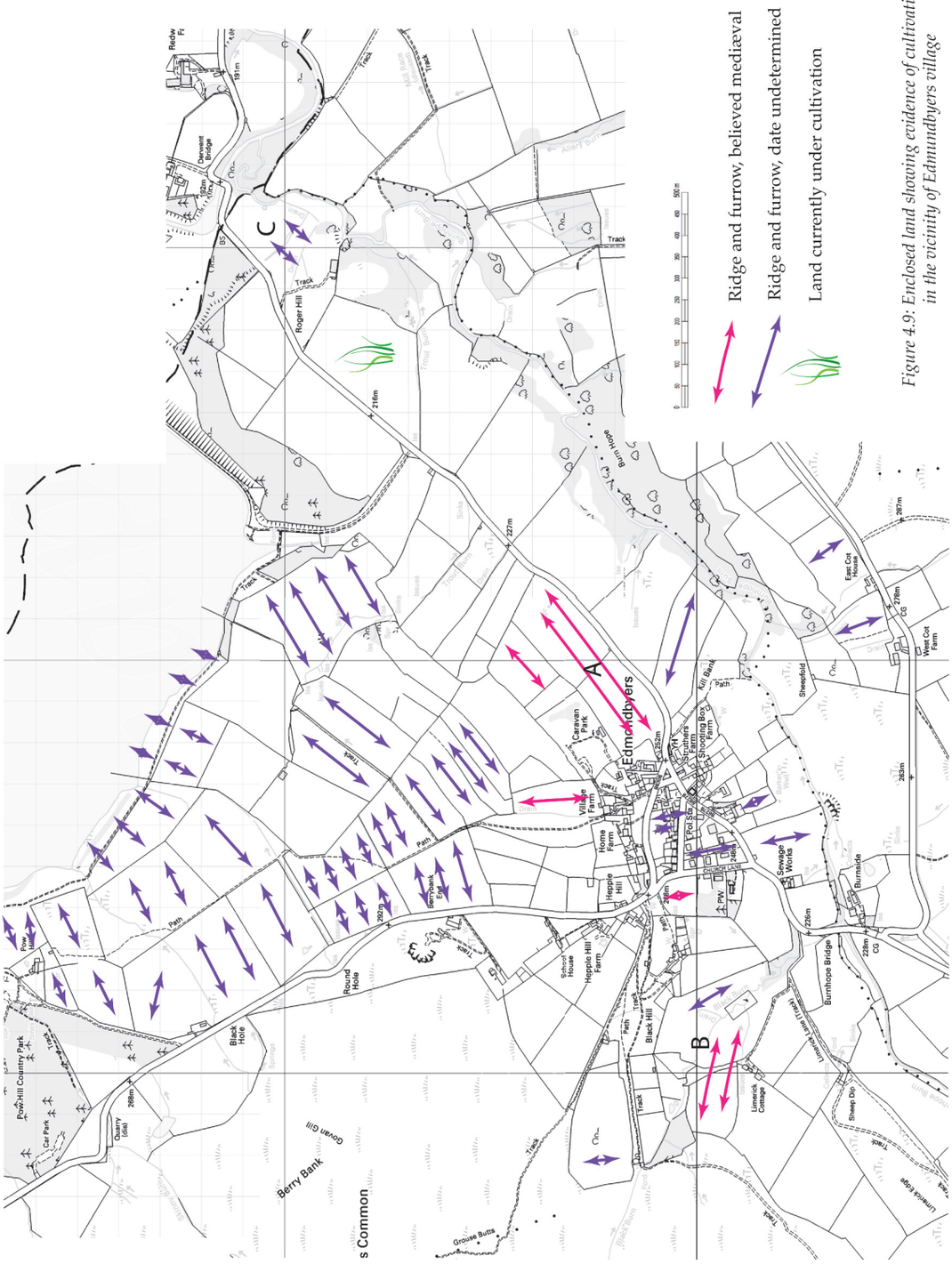



*Figure 4.9: Enclosed land showing evidence of cultivation in the vicinity of Edmundbyers village*



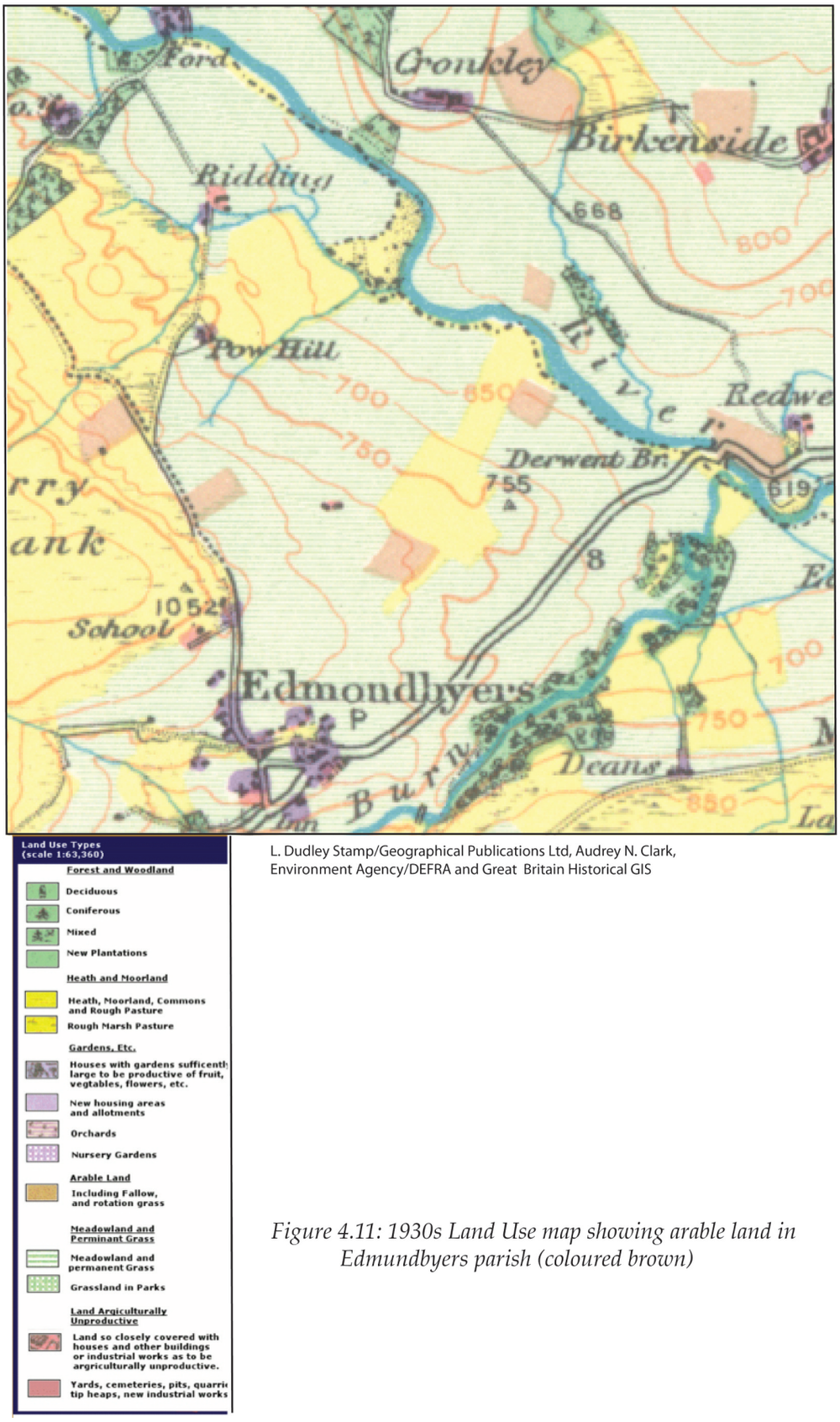
*Figure 4.10a: Ridge and Furrow in the fields to the east of Edmundbyers (A on map)*



*Figure 4.10b: Ridge and Furrow in fields to the west of Edmundbyers (B on map)*



*Figure 4.10c Ridge and Furrow in the fields to the west of Edmundbyers and (below) ditch and embankment of possible older enclosure boundary (B on map)*




L. Dudley Stamp/Geographical Publications Ltd, Audrey N. Clark, Environment Agency/DEFRA and Great Britain Historical GIS

*Figure 4.11: 1930s Land Use map showing arable land in Edmundbyers parish (coloured brown)*

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have been plotted on the map as red asterisks. As with the map of Edmundbyers, the background map is in greyscale so that the locations can be clearly identified. Two of the areas of ridge and furrow identified are shown in figure 4.13.

Some of the fields have ridge and furrow which is confined within their boundaries. This is generally narrowish and straight in character and may be attributed to ploughing from one of the periods of war. There is another type of ridge and furrow visible in Muggleswick which is unlike that found in Edmundbyers. This evidence of cultivation lies within the present field systems but frequently either does not fill the field or is overlain by the present boundaries. It also tends to be wider, less straight in its character and is often associated with embankments; for these reasons it can be assumed that it is earlier in origin, possibly mediæval. This type of ridge and furrow is found in various locations in Muggleswick but a more detailed investigation of examples of it will be undertaken in the study of the farm of Cushett Leazes and, to some extent, in that of Pedam's Oak.

The Parliamentary Survey of Muggleswick (Sobo, 1995) is a complex document insofar as identifying fields is concerned. Like that of Edmundbyers, it frequently refers to closes, meadows and pastures but fails to clearly distinguish arable land. Again, it might be reasonable to assume that any land called 'field' or not labelled as, for example, meadow or pasture was potentially suitable for cultivation. Ideally, the identification of all the fields mentioned in the survey would be useful. However, for reasons that will be explained in the description of Cushett Leazes, and because it would be necessary to pick out the fields by their acreage, this is not practical at this stage.

The estate map and associated list of fields and tenants for 1800 is similarly unhelpful. However, there are some fields with names which do suggest that they were cultivated at some stage in their history. Among them are Long Riggs (field no. 338, O.S. 042480), rented by William Leybourn, Pasture Riggs (fields 406/7/8, O.S. 058487) rented by John Leybourn, Rye Hill (field 468, O.S. 055476) rented by Joseph Hopper, and two Fallow Fields (fields 498, O.S. 059474 and 515, O.S. 059483) rented by Robert Turnbull and John Surtees respectively. These fields are marked with blue asterisks on the map (fig. 4.12) and do not directly coincide with the ridge and furrow observed during fieldwork or using Google Earth. The Historic Environment Record for Muggleswick lists several sites of field systems, but none within the existing enclosed

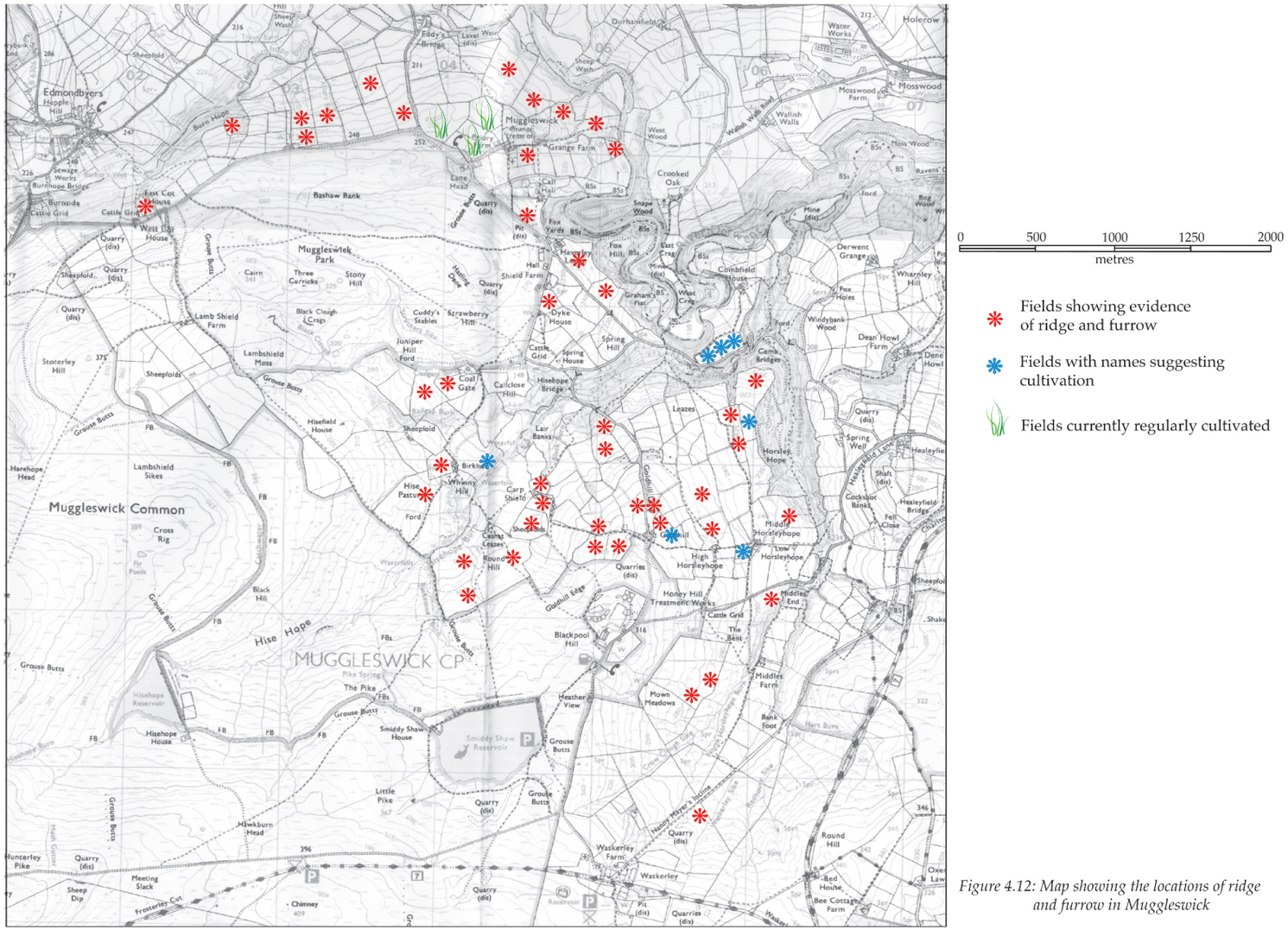



*Figure 4.12: Map showing the locations of ridge and furrow in Muggleswick*



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*Figure 4.13: Ridge and Furrow between Shield Farm and Dyke House and (below) at Muggleswick Grange*

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L. Dudley Stamp/Geographical Publications Ltd, Audrey N. Clark, Environment Agency/DEFRA and Great Britain Historical GIS

*Figure 4.14: 1930s Land Use map of part of Muggleswick parish*
*For key, see figure 4.11*

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land; those outside will be discussed in section 4.13.5

There is one area of land in Muggleswick which is regularly cultivated, although mainly for fodder; this is shown on the map in figure 4.12. Stamp's 1930s landuse map shows cultivation in approximately the same area. There is also cultivated land to the west of that, in the bend of the Derwent to the east, in the angle between the roads near Shield Farm and north of East Goldhill. However, as with Edmundbyers, most of the land is moorland with rough grazing or meadow and permanent grass.

**4.13.5** ***Cultivation of fellsides***

As Walker Featherstonhaugh observed, there are a number of places now on the open fells where ploughing has been attempted in the past (1900: 110) (see figure 4.15). It is possible to identify some of them on the ground or, at least, by viewing the fellsides from a distance. The first area of which I became aware was pointed out by a local farmer and lies amongst the heather above College Farm (in the region of grid reference 999494); this can be seen on the ground but is less easy to identify from aerial photographs. Another area of ridge and furrow lies to the south of Lane Head (041497). This is visible from the north when descending the road from Carterway Heads. These two sites are quite extensive and were probably produced by horse or ox ploughs. The College Farm site has not been recorded previously. The HER for mediæval sites records that much of the level area at Bashaw Bank on the north side of Muggleswick Park (site 8; see chapter 3) has evidence of enclosures and cultivation. Certainly the embankments of the enclosures are visible in places on the ground. From the air it can be seen that these enclosures contain ridge and furrow; they extend from a point south of the Lane Head cultivation, mentioned above, westwards along the hillside. The Lane Head area may have been included, by implication, in the record for site 8. Another area lies to the west of Cushat Leazes, with sites numbered 10 and 11 on the mediæval HER map (fig. 3.8) and listed as ridge and furrow, while site 9 on the hill called Cross Rig has field walls.

As well as the earlier enclosures at Pedam's Oak and Cushat Leazes, which will be discussed in the case studies (section 4.14), there are other places where an apparent enclosure lies partly or wholly within the present field system. These include an irregular enclosure in the field to the west of Westcote Farm and one, roughly rectangular in shape, uphill from that and crossed by the present road. Both enclosures are bounded by embankments. These will be looked at again in chapter 5 but they, too, show some evidence of cultivation. There are also several areas within

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the fields in the angle between the current confluence of the Burnhope Burn and the Derwent which show cultivation ridges (C in figure 4.9). Because these areas are inside or are cut by field boundaries which, as will be shown in chapter 5, date from at least as long ago as 1800, they must pre-date this and are likely to have been in use in mediæval to late-mediæval times. All these cultivation areas within the current fields are well away from the fields which would have been part of the town fields of Edmundbyers. They are different from the sites mentioned in the previous paragraph which, due to Featherstonhaugh's account, their size and their location outside the 1800 field boundaries, are probably later in origin; possibly cultivation occurred, as suggested (see 4.13.1), in the early 1800s. There is no evidence that fellsides were ploughed at later periods. The aerial photograph taken in 1945 (fig. 4.15) was, according to the caption, taken in January but the leafiness of the trees would indicate that it was actually taken in summer. The photograph shows that many of the fields are white, perhaps having been limed, and that therefore more land was in cultivation at that time. It is also possible that the white fields have crops or wild flowers growing in them if the photograph was actually taken in summer. However, there is no indication of cultivation in the limited area that is visible outside the fields, so that ploughing of the fellsides at this date is unlikely.

Making comparisons with the soils map (fig. 1.6), it is clear that attempts at cultivation occurred wherever there was space and the soils deep enough for ploughing. No evidence has been identified where there are acid peats, but anywhere with loamy soil, even if seasonally waterlogged, seems to have been considered worth trying. Some of the sites are on slopes, as along Bashaw Bank, which would have aided drainage. However, some sites, including part of Bashaw Bank and the area above College Farm, were on more level ground, usually one of the 'steps' in the landscape resulting from the geology.

### 4.14 Case Studies

In the UDV there are several farmhouses which are no longer lived in. Most notable are those along the Burnhope Valley: College, Pedam's Oak, Sandyford and Belmont (or Belmount); and Gibraltar upstream from Hunstanworth. The land, however is still farmed or, at least, used as pasture. Evidence for cultivation is sparse and dating it even more difficult. Beneath the heather above College Farm it is just possible to discern ridge and furrow on the ground, but whether this dates from the mediæval settlement at nearby Pedam's Oak or is more recent, it is difficult to tell. Moreover,

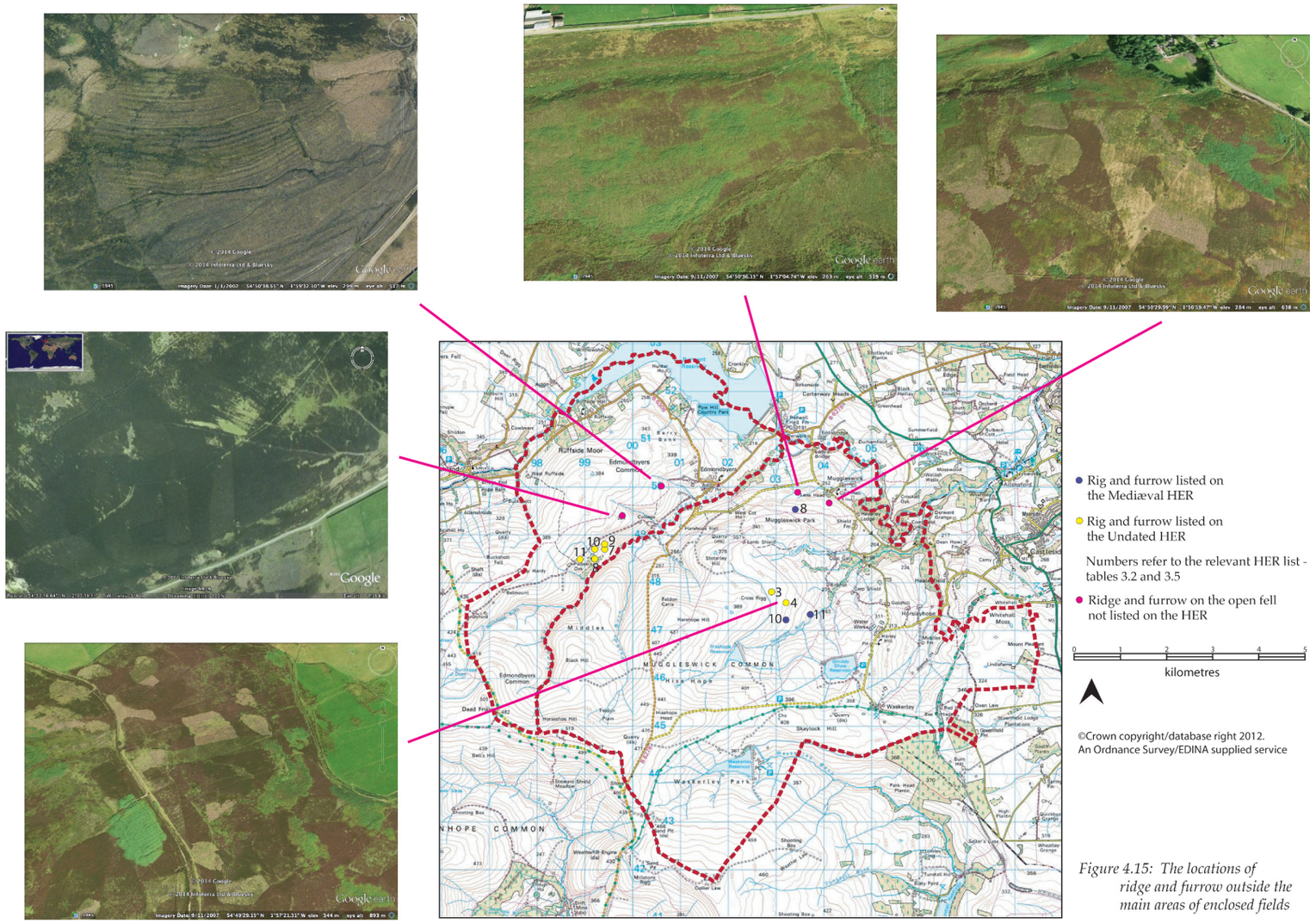



*Figure 4.15: The locations of ridge and furrow outside the main areas of enclosed fields*



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*Figure 4.16:*
*Aerial photograph*
*of Edmundbyers in 1945*



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*Figure 4.17a: Locations of historic farms mentioned in the text*



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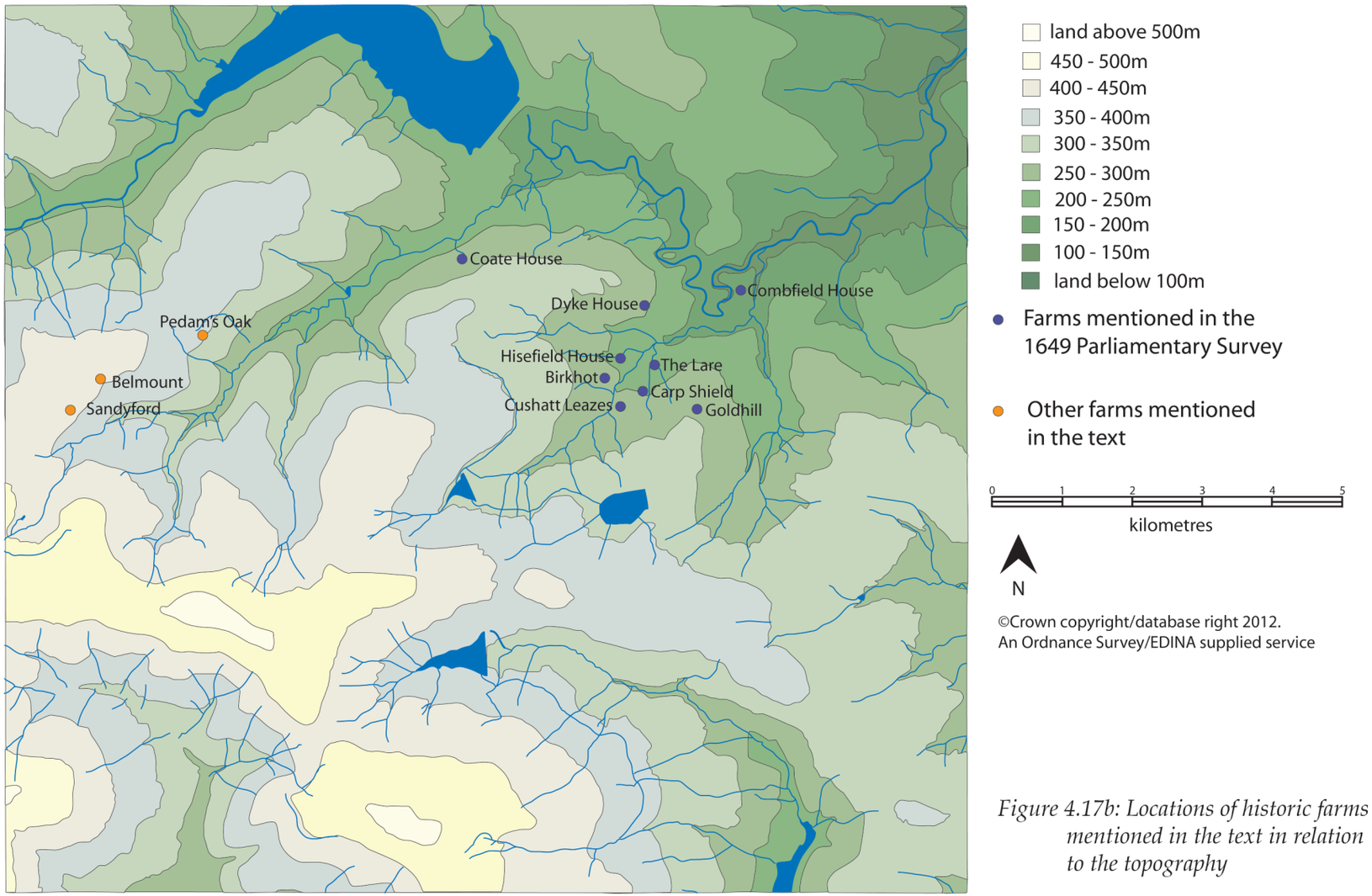



*Figure 4.17b: Locations of historic farms mentioned in the text in relation to the topography*



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any land which has reverted to moor is overgrown with heather for the grouse moor so that identifying cultivation remains from the ground on aerial photographs is sometimes extremely difficult.

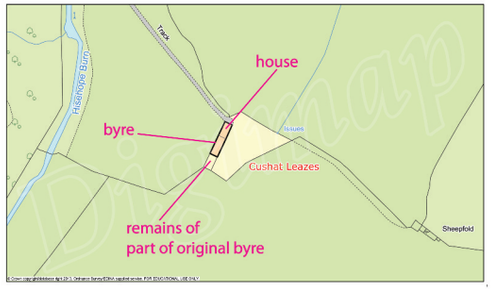
The historic farms from the 1649 survey, and Pedam's Oak, Sandyford and Belmount are shown on the maps in figures 4.17a and 4.17b where they can be seen in relation to each other and the topography.

### 4.14.1 *Case Study 1: Cushat Leazes*

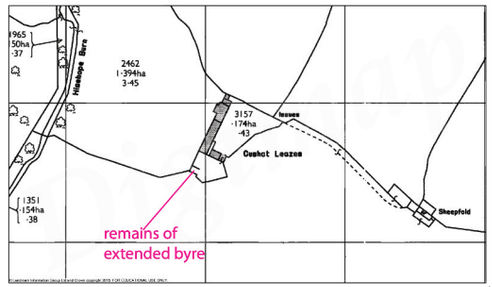
Cushat Leazes has been chosen as one of the case studies because it has particular features which make it of interest. It lies in Muggleswick parish at O.S. grid reference 044475 and just south east of the Hisehope Burn. One of the reasons it was chosen is because it has been unoccupied for some years; the buildings are dilapidated meaning that it is easier to identify the process of development as the changes are not masked by current fashionable decor. The second major reason for the choice of this farm is that it lies on a confluence of public footpaths, so that it is relatively easy to access despite some of the routes being rather boggy. The third reason for the choice will become apparent in the course of this case study.

Cushat, or Cushett, Leazes is mentioned in the 1649 Parliamentary Survey as being leased by Rowland Harrison. At that time it had, like the other houses described in the Survey, 'walls built with stone and Clay and thatched with Linge' (1995: p. 10 of original document). None of the house descriptions indicate how sophisticated - or otherwise - the buildings might have been. It is likely that most would have been cruck built, as described in chapter 3, and many would have been simple cottages. However, it is possible that some were of better quality. The lack of a map for the Survey means that a direct comparison with the present remains by comparison of the house plans is not possible. It is possible, however to make such comparisons for the period between 1800 and the present using maps and to add to that information with photographs and direct observation.

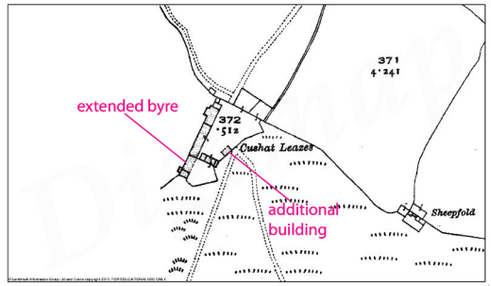
The current O.S. map, at a scale of 1:1250, shows a simple rectangular building with some associated walls and field boundaries (figure 4.18). Despite the scale, the representation of the buildings does not show the details of the structures. A retrogressive process using Ordnance Survey maps indicates the ways in which the



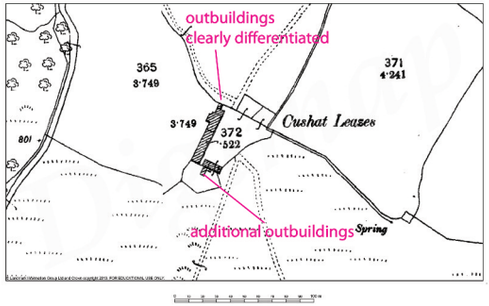

Current O.S. map



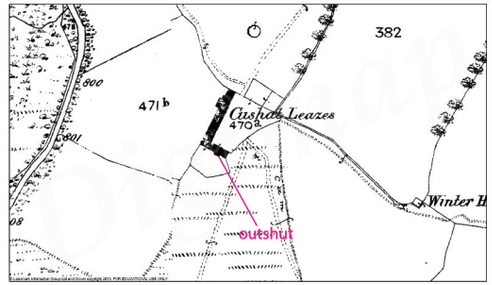

1970s O.S. map



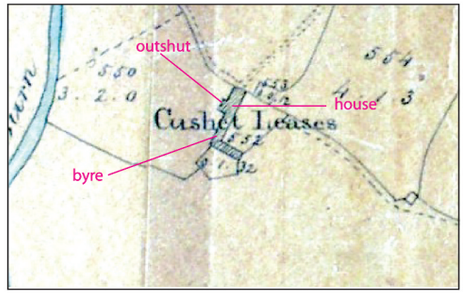

1920s O.S. map



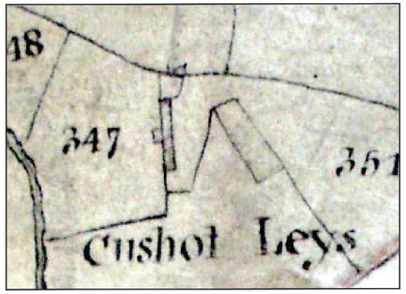

1890s O.S. map




1850s O.S. map




1850 estate map




1800 estate map

*Figure 4.18: Regression maps of Cushat Leazes for comparison of the house, buildings and immediate enclosures*



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buildings have changed, finally arriving at the situation in 1800 according to the estate map.

It is clear from the 1970s O.S. map that the layout of the buildings was more complex than the current 1:1250 map suggests. The buildings in 1970 formed an 'L' shape with the front facing ESE. The long rectangular building running approximately NNE to SSW on the map was, from field observation, the byre. At the northern end of the byre was the house, with an outshut on the north western side (the back of the house). Beyond the house further, smaller buildings can be seen and these may have been outbuildings. The foot of the 'L' is formed by another set of buildings. The analysis of the photographs, which will follow this map analysis, provides further details of the structure of the buildings and of their uses. To the front of the house is a small enclosure, still marked in the same shape on the current map. However, the smaller enclosure to the south of the range of buildings is not shown on the current map.

In the 1920s, the layout of the buildings was similar to the 1970s, but with some additions and variations. The main range of byre, house and outbuildings on the northern end was the same, and there was a building in the same position as the foot of the 'L' seen in 1920. However, it can be seen that there was a further range of buildings attached to the southern end of the byre, within the smaller irregular enclosure and an additional building in the larger enclosure. Since these two buildings were no longer in existence in the 1970s or, at least, were so ruinous as to be left out of the survey, it can be deduced that there was a decrease in the size of the farm in the 50 years between. However, these buildings are not shown on the 1890s map, either; thus they must have been built after that date and only lasted for some 50 to 70 years. The other buildings of the farm are shown on the 1890 map, with the addition of an outshut or outbuilding in the smaller enclosure which was attached to the building forming the foot of the 'L'. The two enclosures were the same general shape. Little change took place between 1850 and 1890 as the layout of the buildings did not change except, perhaps, for some minor alterations to the outbuildings. The estate map drawn in 1850 shows exactly the same situation. However, the 1800 estate map has the buildings as a simple rectangular range with a small outshut on the rear. This may be because, as noted in 3.6, most of the buildings are so represented on this map. However, it may be that it indicates that significant additions were made to the farm between 1800 and 1850. The appearance of the buildings when all were standing can be seen in figure 4.19a; both the house and the main building forming the base of

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the 'L' shape had two storeys at that time. The current appearance of the farm is shown in figure 4.19b. The main features of the house and its association with the byre are shown in figures 4.19c and 4.19d.

From this information it can be inferred that some significant changes in the economy of the farm at Cushat Leazes, or in the circumstances of the family/families living there, occurred between 1800 and 1850, and, in particular between 1890 and 1920 so that more byre space was required. There might have been a change in farming methods, perhaps with more livestock being kept and requiring additional shelter or an increase in a herd of dairy cows necessitating an extended milking parlour.

Further attention will be paid later in this section to the organisation of the land, using maps and aerial photographs. However, a study of the remaining buildings, from observation and photographs, helps to clarify the information discussed above.

The house at Cushat Leazes does not conform exactly to the design described in 3.6, although many features are lost due to the poor condition of the building. This makes it more difficult to make comparisons. It has a central front door, as described in chapter 3, and, apparently, a room to either side judging by the positioning of the fireplaces on the ground floor. It is no longer possible to tell if there was a central staircase. The room to the right of the door was probably the kitchen as the fireplace there is of the cooking range type. Moreover, this room had a doorway through to the outbuilding, which may have been a dairy or scullery. There was also a door to the byre at the other end of the house and upstairs there were at least two rooms because the locations of their fireplaces remain. These features can be seen in figures 4.19e (the outside of the end wall of the house) and 4.19f (photographs of the house interior). These two photographs also provide clues to the development of the house. Inside, the house walls have a ledge running all the way round; the wall above this is thinner. Where the outbuilding was, at the end of the range of buildings, a line of rooftiles remains embedded within the house wall. These two features suggest that the upper part of the wall, and hence the upper floor, was added later, simply built onto the walls of a single-storey cottage and upwards from the roof of the outbuilding. The upstairs fireplace shown in figure 4.19f may be of nineteenth century type. That, and the dating evidence from the maps, above, would seem to indicate that expansion occurred in the late nineteenth century. This fits with the dating of agricultural improvements described in chapter 5.



*Figure 4.19a: Cushat Leazes when all the buildings were intact. The outbuilding on the end of the house is visible, also the full length of the original byre and the building forming the base of the 'L'.*

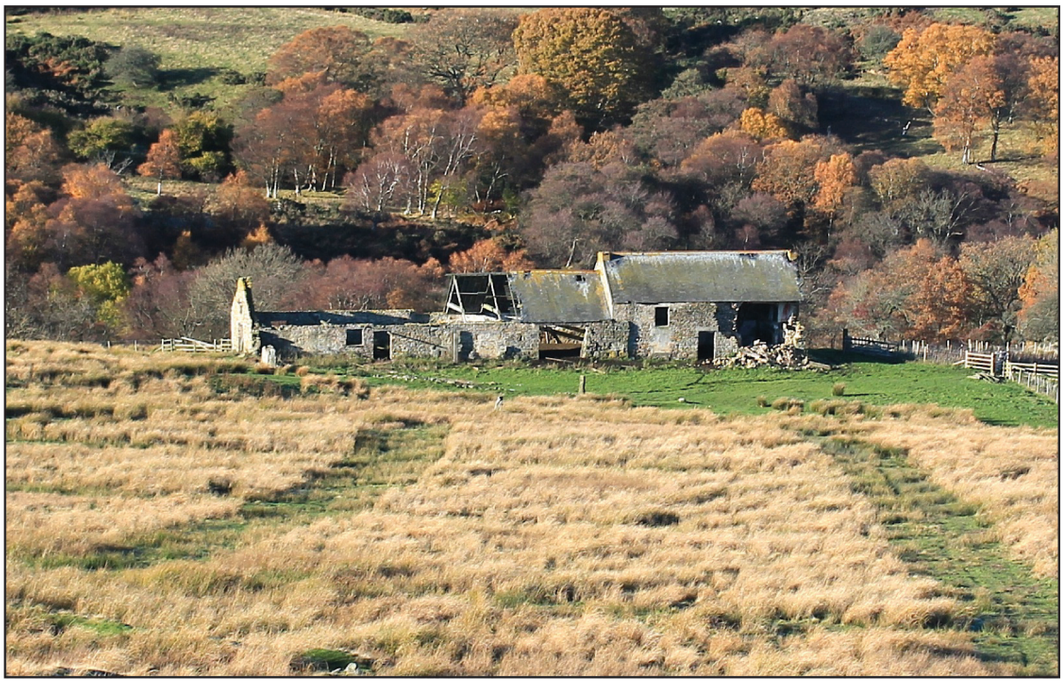


*Figure 4.19b: Cushat Leazes today; just the dilapidated house and byre remain*

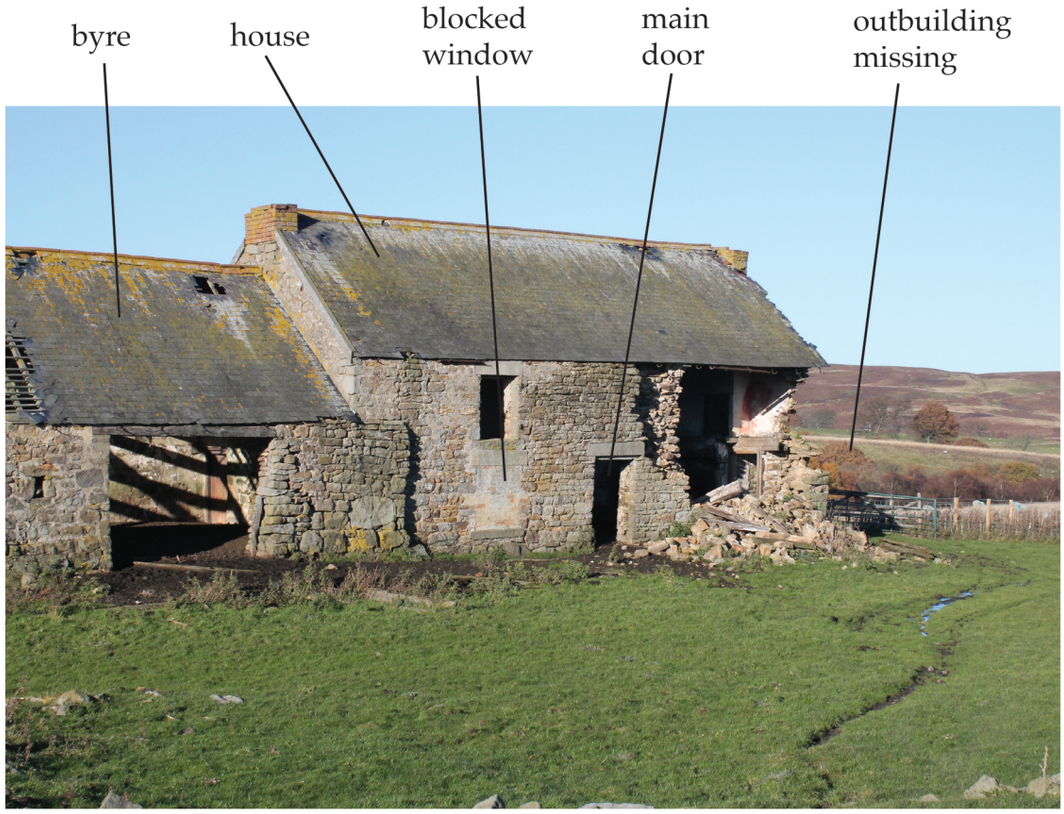






*Figure 4.19c: Details of structure of house and byre*




*Figure 4.19d: Rear wall of Cushat Leazes*



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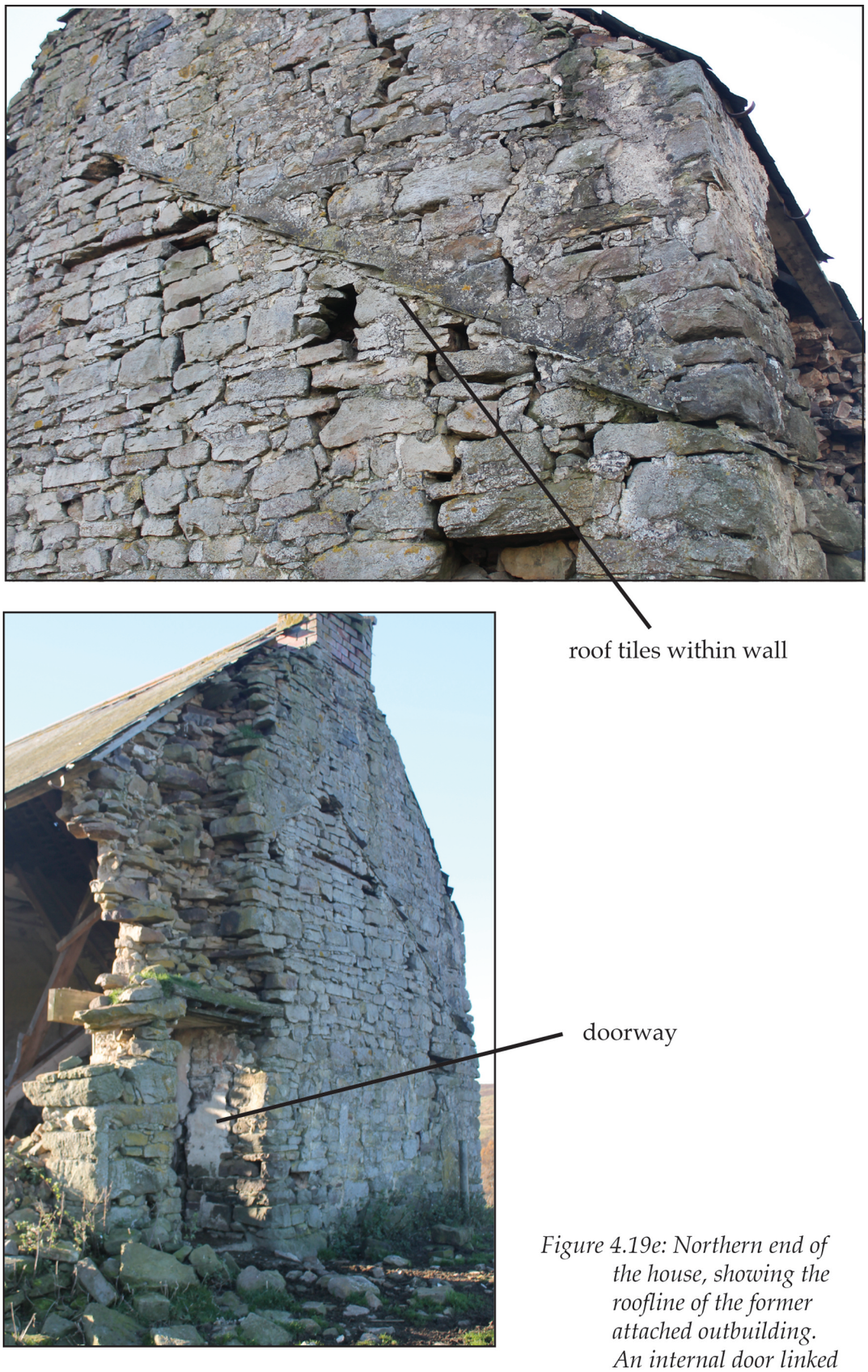



*Figure 4.19e: Northern end of the house, showing the roofline of the former attached outbuilding. An internal door linked the outbuilding and the main house*




*Figure 4.19f: Interior of house, showing ledge where wall narrows, ground floor and first floor fireplaces, and doors through to byre and outbuilding*



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*Figure 4.19g: Details of the byre*

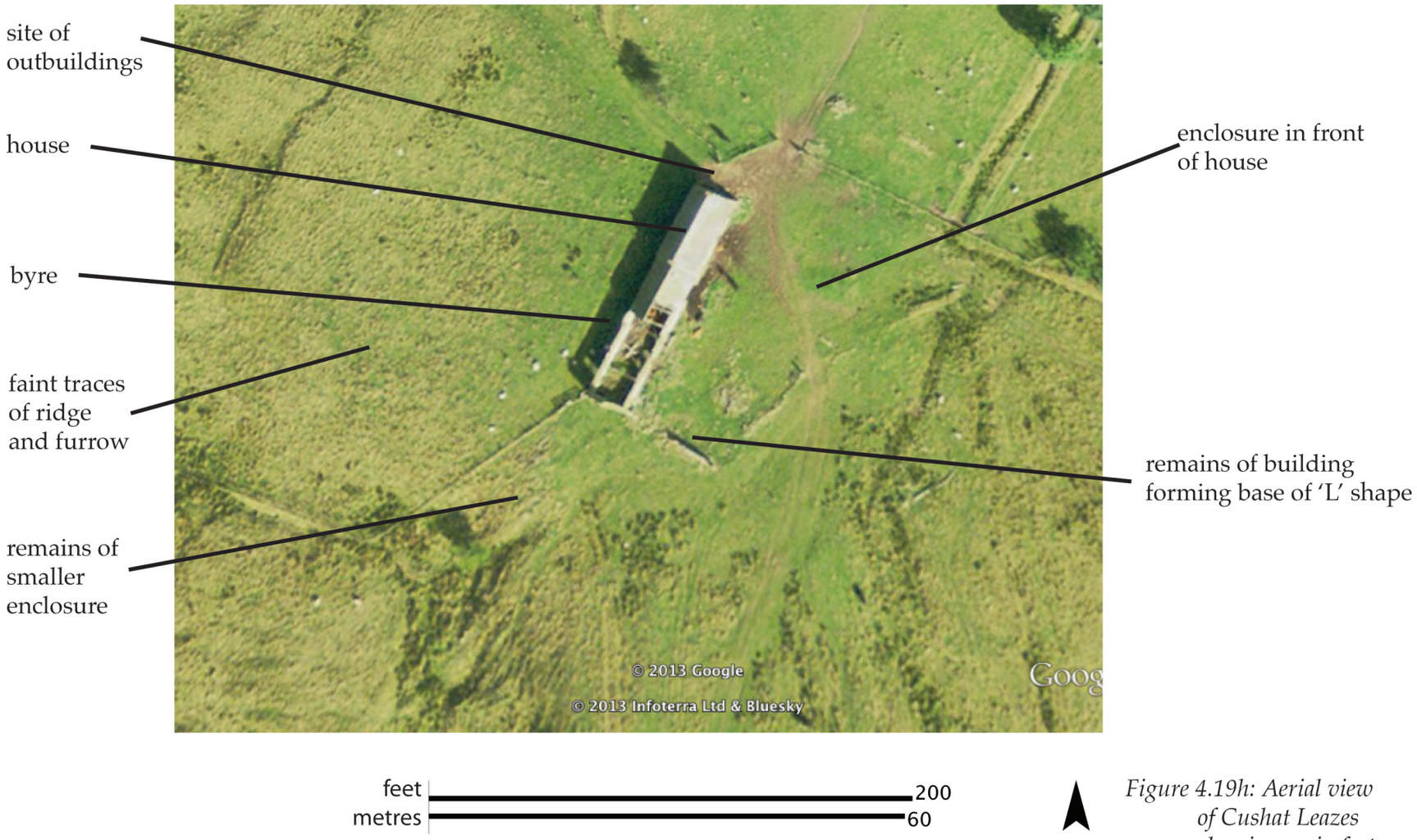



*Figure 4.19h: Aerial view of Cushat Leazes showing main features*



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Figure 4.19g gives further details of the byre itself, both internal and external. The aerial photograph in figure 4.19h provides an overview of the property. In this it can be seen, also, that there are faint traces of ridge and furrow in the field behind the house. These contribute to the next part of the investigation of Cushat Leazes.

In the 1649 Survey, Rowland Harrison held, with the messuage at Cushat Leazes, several areas of land. The first was 'Cushett Leazes meadowe', about eight acres in area, bordered by the Hisehope Burn and containing the house. There was also Spring Pasture, 20 acres in area, part of 'Hysefeilde' and the 'Parrock meadowe' of about four acres to the north of the house. An intake of one acre lay on the south side of the house while the 'Helme feild', 'Sike feilde' and 'Lowe meadowe' comprised another 12 acres. Harrison also rented the 'Upper Tedfast meadowe', 4 acres, and shared 'Lowe Tedfast' with John Hopper. Identifying these enclosures, even from the 1800 map which is the nearest in date to the Survey, is extremely difficult. It can only be done using fieldnames, landmarks and acreages. Since the latter are only approximate in the Survey they do not necessarily tally well with later assessments of area. However, it has been possible to find some fields by these methods. In 1800, the fields called 'Helme' and 'Sike' still existed by name and had an area of a little over 10 acres; 'Lowe meadowe' which was associated with them may have been Rye Close which had an area of 2 acres 2 roods and 35 poles. 'Spring Pasture' may have been the predecessor of 1800's West Pasture, which is nearest in size at around 20 acres. Winterhouse Close and Winterhouse Field, at a little over three acres and approximately four acres respectively, may have been the 1649 'Upper Tedfast' and 'Lower Tedfast'. Other than this, the relationship between the fields is not clear.

However, and importantly, the whole area to the south and southeast of the buildings at Cushat Leazes is divided by substantial earth and stone embankments (fig. 4.20). Some of these appear on the current 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map but a number do not. They can, however, be seen on both the Google Earth view and on the ground. At first, I surmised that they might be the remains of the field boundaries from the seventeenth century, overlain by the present boundaries. However, from the information just discussed, it would seem that the explanation is not so simple. Figure 4.21 shows the present fields with their boundaries as solid black lines. The dashed black lines are boundaries shown on the current O.S. map and the red dashed lines are those discovered during fieldwork and from Google Earth. Three of the lines can be identified as belonging to boundaries shown on the 1800 map (fig. 4.22). Line A is

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the south eastern boundary of the West Pasture, line B divides the southern part of the West Pasture and line C is the southern boundary of Round Hill (fig. 4.20). The other lines do not appear on the maps. Thus some of the stone and earth embankments correspond with the land divisions of 1800 but others do not; many of them subdivide the fields, especially the West Pasture. Moreover, there is evidence of cultivation within them. This is of ridge and furrow type but the style varies; there are places where the ridge and furrow is narrow, more like cord rig, especially across the steep slopes of Round Hill, and other places where it is wider (fig. 4.23). Some areas seem too small to have been ploughed either with ox/horse plough or with tractors. Perhaps some of the smaller sections were cultivated using hand-dug 'lazy beds'. Dating the embankments and ploughing is consequently complicated by these factors. However, it seems probable that they pre-date the 1800 estate map. Because the fields on the 1800 map only partly coincide with the description of those in the 1649 Survey, the best explanation is that they date from the period after the Dissolution of the Monasteries when the land was divided between the prebends and the individual farms were established. Their presence is extremely interesting and would merit further investigation.

Not far from Cushat Leazes is Carp Shield (fig. 4.24). This farm, too, is mentioned in the 1649 Survey. It is mentioned here because it is still occupied and, in fact, renovations to some of the buildings have recently been undertaken. The possible older house, of traditional type with an attached byre and external stone staircase to the hayloft, stands beside a house clearly built much later. Since this house does not appear on the 1920 O.S. map it may be assumed that it was built after that date. So this farm was updated in the twentieth century and continued to be occupied while Cushat Leazes was not replaced by a more modern farmhouse.

**4.14.2** ***Case Study 2: Pedam's Oak, and the farms at Belmount and Sandyford***

Pedam's Oak overlooks the Burnhope Burn in Edmundbyers parish. The present house lies to the south west of the village at an altitude of 340m. According to the Boldon Book, in 1183 Alan Bruntoft held Pedam's Oak as well as Edmundbyers. For a significant part of its history Pedam's Oak belonged to Sherburn Hospital, having been granted to the Master by Alan Bruntoft in the early thirteenth century (Greenwell, 1871: 72); it was transferred to the Dean and Chapter of Durham after the Reformation. The 1649 Parliamentary Survey merely notes that the Master of Sherburn Hospital pays two shillings at Pentecost and Martinmas because



a



b

c



*Figure 4.20: Earthworks in the area around Cushat Leazes*

ridge and furrow on slopes of Round Hill



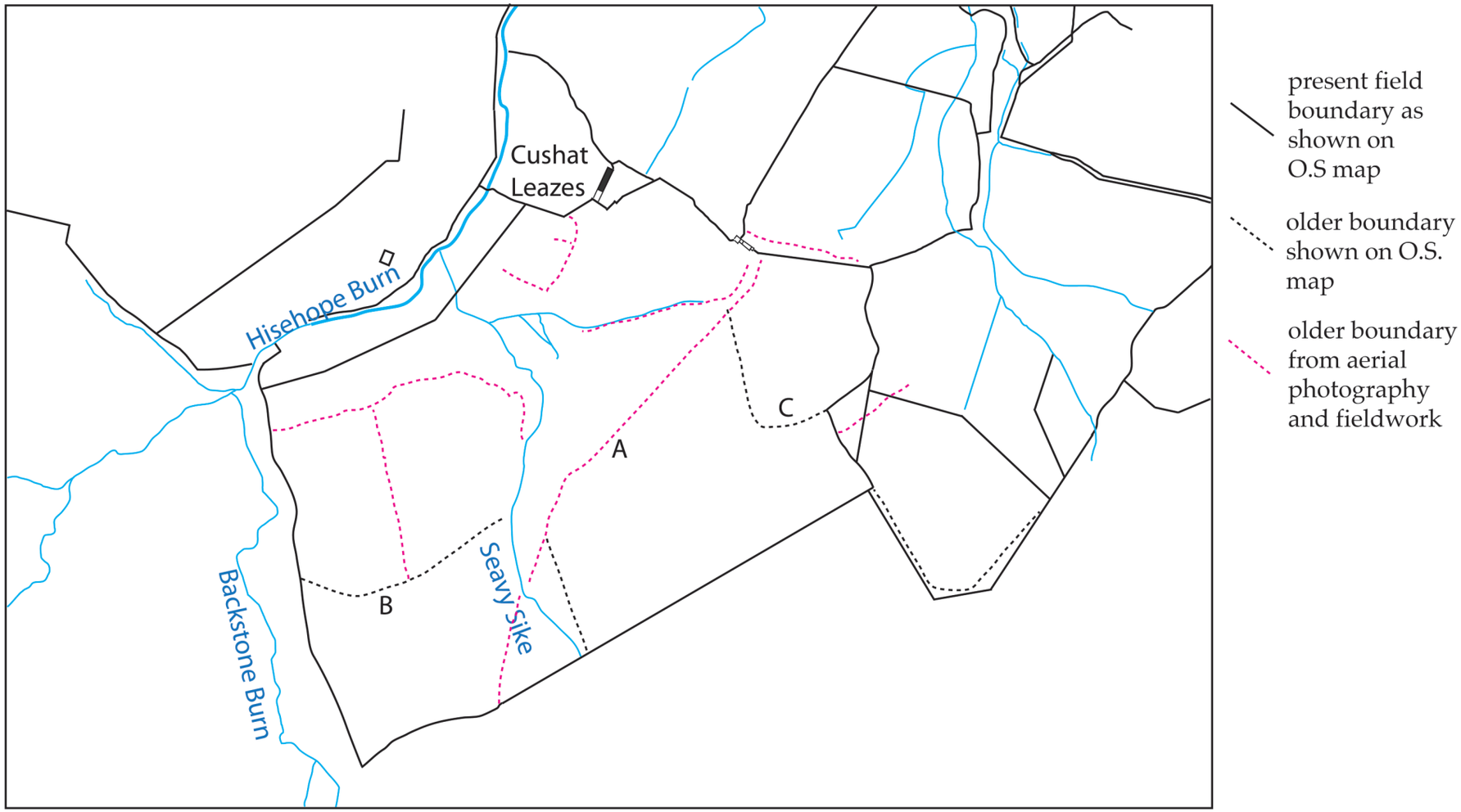



*Figure 4.21: Field boundaries at Cushat Leazes*



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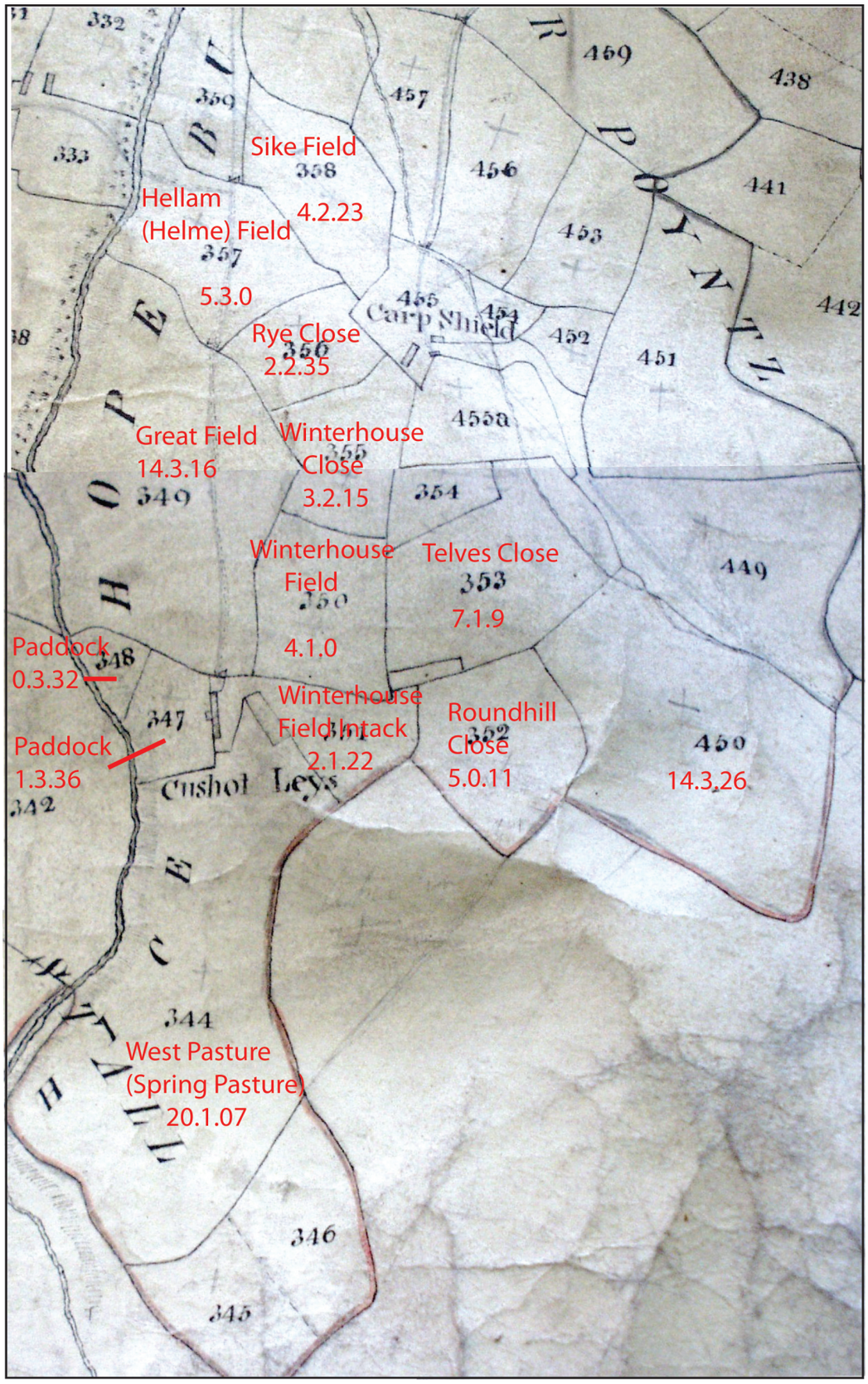



*Figure 4.22: Correlation of 1649 and 1800 fields at Cushat Leazes*

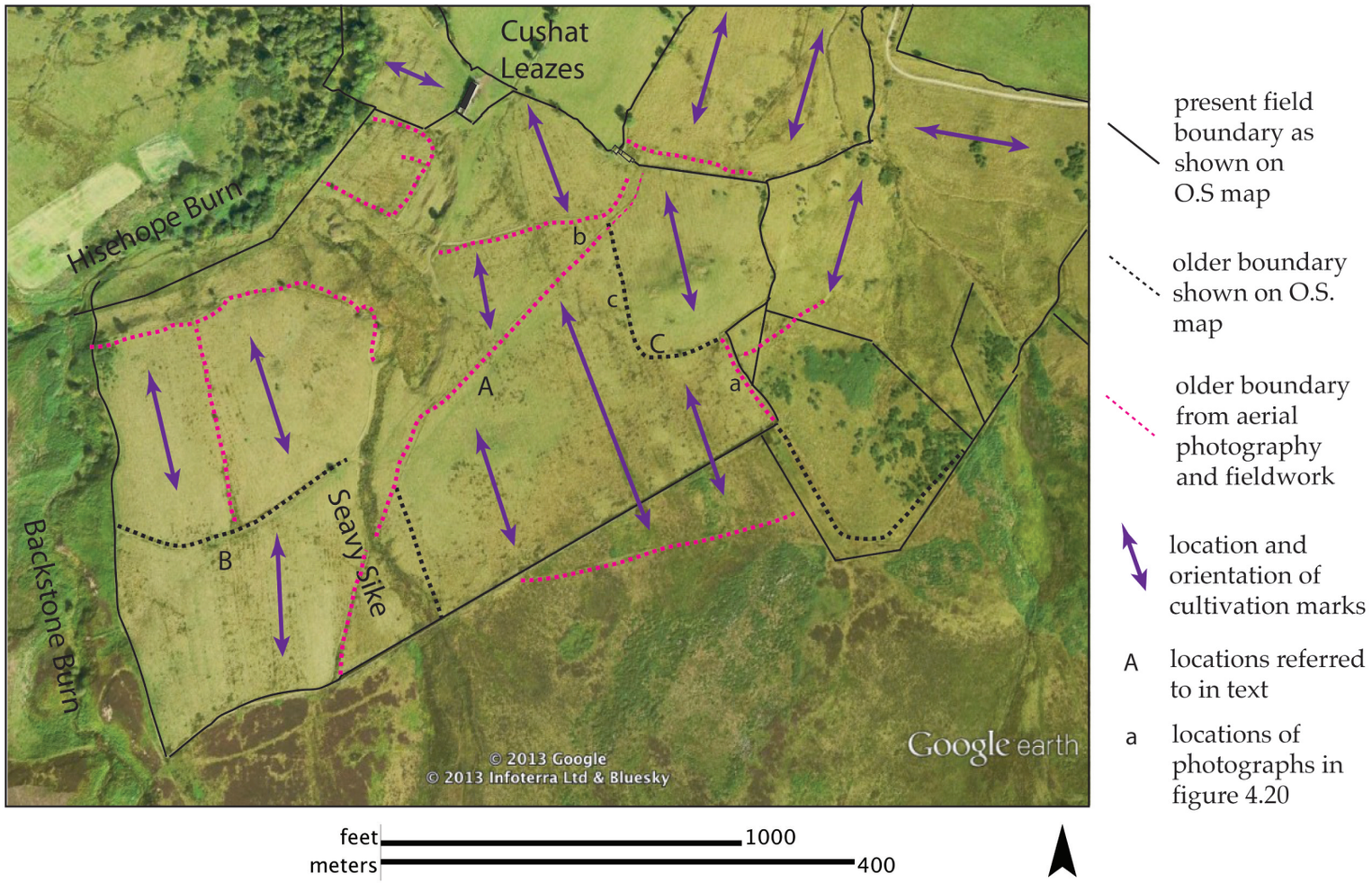



*Figure 4.23: Aerial photograph of Cushat Leazes overlaid with field boundaries from fig. 4.21 to show their locations*



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*Figure 4.24: Carp Shield. The 1649 map (top), the house/byre/hayshed combination with stone steps (centre) and the later house (bottom)*

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'Peddomsack' is one of the free rental or quit rent properties of the Muggleswick estate. Thus its different ownership history means that detailed information about Pedam's Oak cannot be obtained from the same sources as that for Cushat Leazes.

Pedam's Oak was a settlement of some importance in that it appears on early maps, even when Edmundbyers does not. The possible reasons for this are discussed in chapter 6. However, it does mean that there was more than one farm at Pedam's Oak. The development of settlement there probably dates from prehistory, the Iron Age at least. Fieldwalking from Blanchland to Pedam's Oak revealed cairnfields, possibly of Bronze Age date, and platform settlements comprised of several platforms c. 6m x 4m in size (Fowler, 1986: 2-3). There is a cluster of recorded sites around Pedam's shown on figure 3.1. From this is can be seen that the area was settled from early times; it cannot be certain how many of the sites were occupied contemporaneously, but it is likely that several were while others represent moves to new sites over time. Also discovered during fieldwalking was a site that was dowsed and probed and discovered to contain at least one, and possibly two, stone hut circles. These were considered to be similar to Romano-British settlements found in Northumberland (Ross, 1987: 56-7). For the period from around 1000BC to 1000AD, Fowler considered, there was no data found (1986: 2).

Thus it seems that Pedam's Oak was occupied by more than one household for most of its settled history. Apart from some gaps, which may only be due to lack of evidence, it is only in relatively recent times that the situation has altered.

Following the documents mentioned above, Pedam's Oak is again mentioned in 1570, when 'Wedow car of peddomisshack' is recorded in the inventory by the executors of the will of John Foster, parson of Edmundbyers from 1557, because she owed him six shillings and eightpence (Raine, 1835: 313). One of the witnesses was Peter Readshaw. Readshaws were resident at Pedam's Oak for a long period in the seventeenth century: for example, on 1st August 1614 Robert Readshaw broke into the close of his neighbour at Pedom's Oak "and mowed and carried away grass worth 12d" (Fraser, 1991: 242-3). Readshaws were also implicated in the so-called Muggleswick Conspiracy in the 1660s (Surtees, 1820: 389). These events suggest that Pedam's Oak was home to more than one family during this period. Moreover, in 1665 a letter was written to Bishop Cosin by John Machon, Master of Sherburn Hospital, in which he details the rents due to 'Sherburne Hospital' - 'Peddemse oak

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three farms for rent 1l. 2s. 0d payable at Penthecost and Martinmas' (Ornsby, 1870: 127). Clearly there was a hamlet, at least, there in the seventeenth century.

In the second half of the eighteenth century there were at least two families living at Pedam's Oak. The parish records show that Jane Readshaw, the last of that name living there, was buried in 1741. The families of March and Colpitts then appear in the records of baptisms, burials and marriages, continuing into the 1800s (Ross, 1987: 90-91). Thus there continued to be more than one household at Pedam's. The 1841 census has three families there. John Brown was an agricultural labourer (with his mother), John Moffatt was a lead miner (with a wife and three children), Robert Bainbridge was a farmer with a wife and eight children. There were two other Bainbridge men, both farmers and probably brothers. By the 1851 census there were no Browns or Moffatts, but four members of the Chambers family and eight Bainbridges. There were still 12 inhabitants in 1861, Whites and Chambers but only seven of the two families in 1871. This compares with the population in the parish which reached a nineteenth century peak in 1851 of 485 but had reduced to 343 in 1871 and 252 by 1891 (Ross, 1987: 94-97). Reasons for this change in population will be discussed after the fields and buildings have been investigated.

The house still standing at Pedam's Oak is part of a range of buildings consisting of a byre and a byre with hayloft over either side of the dwellinghouse. The English Heritage Listing (NGR NY9866648358) gives a date of early eighteenth and nineteenth century. It is stone built with stone flags on the roof. The conformation of the house is of the common local type: a central front door with a room to either side, central stairs to the first floor and a bedroom to either side of a small landing. An outshut on the back housed the scullery and probably the dairy. The room to the right of the door was the main living room/kitchen and the other would have been a bedroom or parlour, as required. The details of the exterior of the buildings can be seen in figures 4.25, 4.26 and 4.27, with an aerial view in 4.28. There is also a cottage and byre a little to the east of the farmhouse with the date 1716 on the door jamb. Like the main house, the cottage has two bays and is Listed Grade II (NGR NY9873648392). The plans in figure 4.29 demonstrate the development of the buildings in the group from 1810. The first thing to note from these plans is that the estate and parish maps show the buildings in less detail than the Ordnance Survey ones. However, there are buildings in positions that could well be the same as those shown on the O.S. maps. The 1st Edition O.S shows a long building with an outshut with another long rectangular

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*Figure 4.25: Pedam's Oak.*
*Top - as it was when still occupied in 1955. Byre to the left of the house and steps up to hay loft on the right*
*Below - as it is now. The porch is a later addition, is Victorian in origin, and was brought from Consett Hall. A modern metal farm building lies in front and to the right*




*Figure 4.26: Details of the buildings at Pedam's Oak*



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*Figure 4.27: Details of rear of buildings at Pedam's Oak*




*Figure 4.28: Aerial view of the buildings at Pedam's Oak. The farmhouse, cottage and byres are in the long range at the top of the group. The other structures are modern agricultural buildings*



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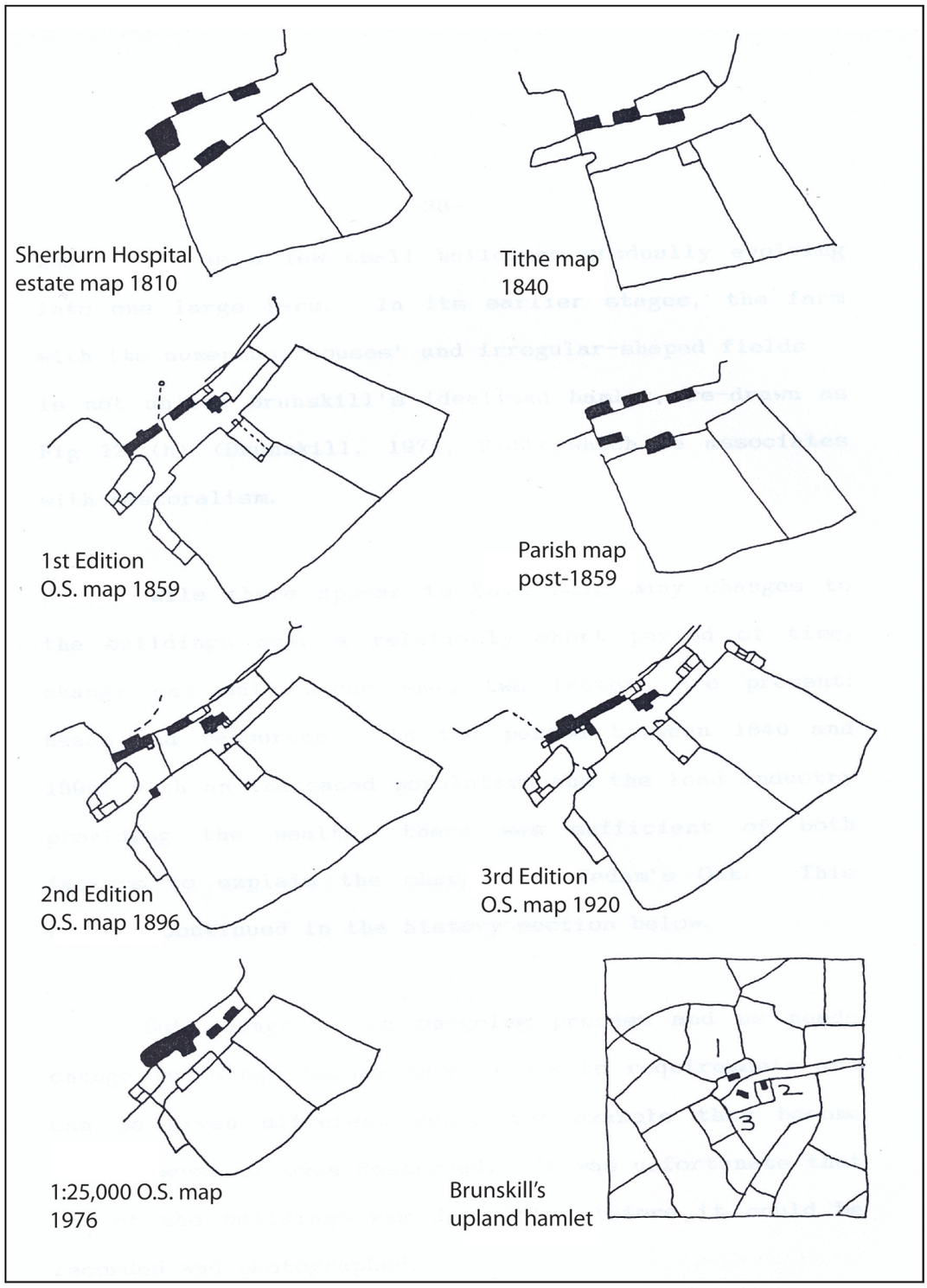



*Figure 4.29: The development of the buildings at Pedam's Oak (Ross, 1987: 37)*
*Brunskill's design is his suggested typical layout for a hamlet in fields of ancient enclosure - there are similarities with the situation at Pedam's Oak (2000: 153)*

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building to the east and, close to that another that approximates with the cottage. The enclosures around the buildings remain essentially the same throughout except for some subdivisions and small additions which were either gardens or for animal handling.

The development of the fields is shown in figures 4.30 and 4.31. It can be seen from these that the core of the field system, shown in purple, dates from at least 1810. Most of the additions took place before 1840 and are shown in orange. The green lines are boundaries shown on the parish map which has no date. The current pattern of fields has changed little since 1840, as can be seen by comparing the two figures. The growth of the enclosed area is important in the development of Pedam's Oak and, with the population will be referred to again below. Figure 4.31, showing the current field boundaries, also has a number of embankments, visible in aerial photographs and similar to those at Cushat Leazes, which have been mapped with dashed lines. Within these apparently much older boundaries there is some evidence of cultivation ridges. Again, this phenomenon is similar to Cushat Leazes and the origin of these enclosures may also date from before the seventeenth century. These features can be seen in figure 4.32. Similar features exist further upstream along the north side of the Burnhope Burn showing that such cultivation was quite widespread. There is also an area of previous cultivation in the fields marked in green (from the undated parish map) on figure 4.30.

Changes in the use of the fields at Pedam's Oak between 1810 and 1859 can be seen in figure 4.33 Ross used the handbooks to the Sherburn Estate map of 1810, the 1840 Tithe map and the 1st Edition O.S map to produce this information (1987: 42 - 45). She notes the change to rough pasture, especially in the outer fields which were not part of the Pedam's Oak land in 1810 (*ibid*: 42). However, this may not actually have been change; the different surveyors may have assessed the land differently and the terms 'pasture' and 'rough pasture' may have been interchangeable. Thus there may not have been a deterioration in land quality. All arable agriculture seems to have ceased by 1859 and part of what is shown on other maps as woodland is actually recorded as wood (fields 9, 10 and 24 on fig. 4.33). However, oak wood is also recorded in 1810 in fields 23, 24 and 25. How they then became arable by 1840, with field 24 later returning to woodland is not clear. Possibly a good deal of hard work was involved. Ross suggests that climate may have played a part in these changes, or the industrial activity nearby (*ibid*). Certainly these factors may have contributed

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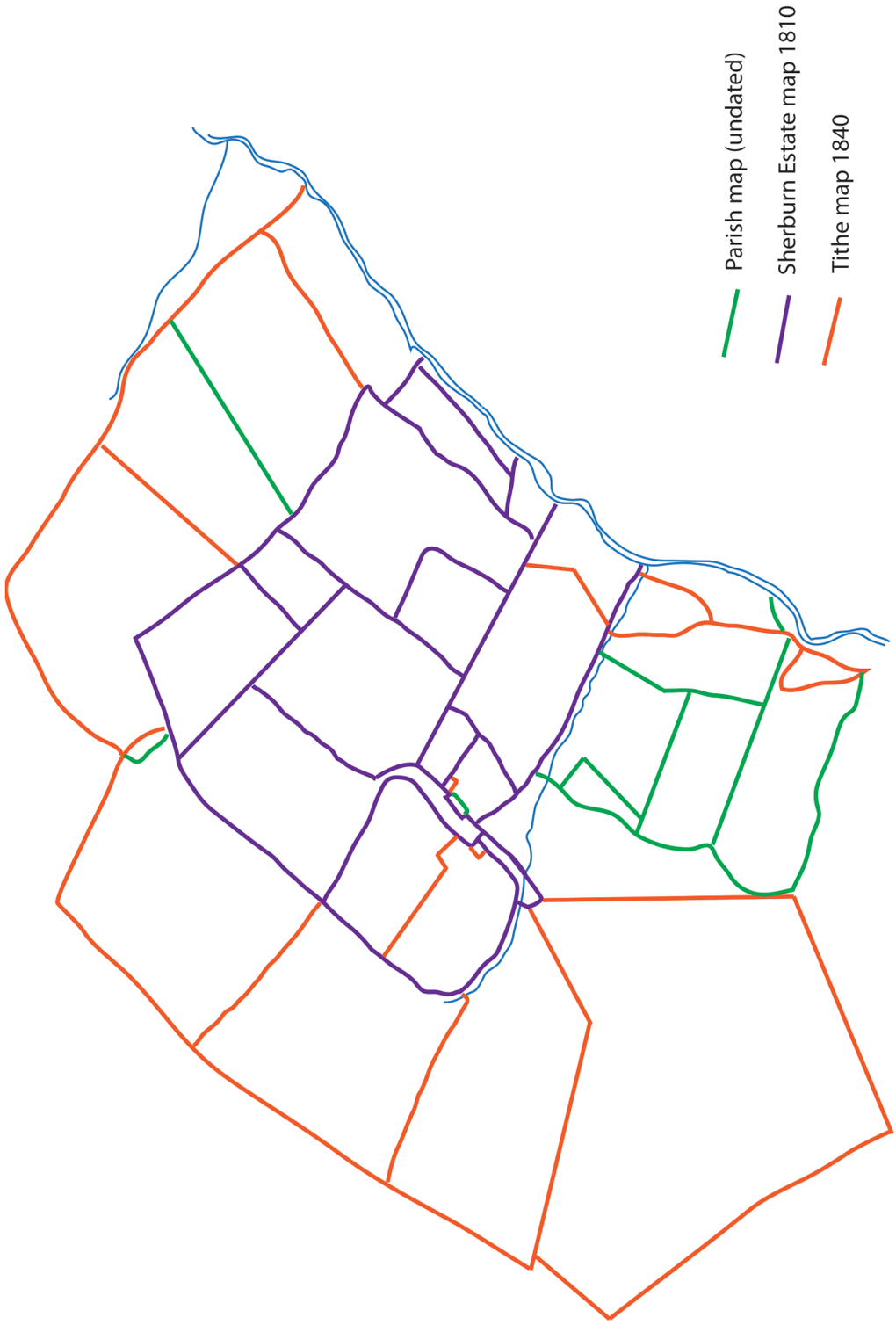



*Figure 4.30: Development of the fields at Pedam's Oak (after Ross, 1987)*

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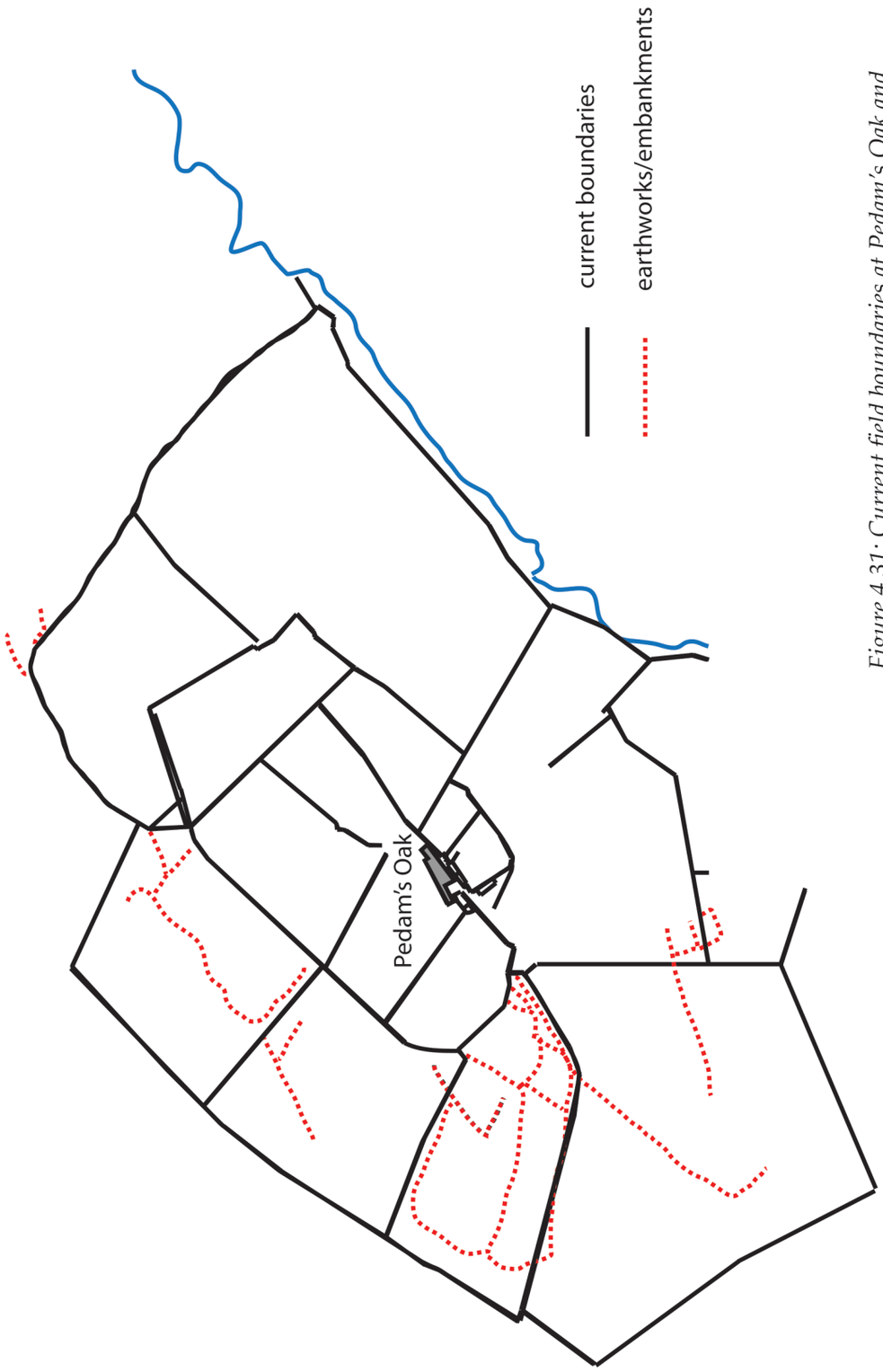



*Figure 4.31: Current field boundaries at Pedam's Oak and positions of earthworks/embankments*

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*Figure 4.32: Aerial view of part of Pedam's Oak showing embankments/earthworks*

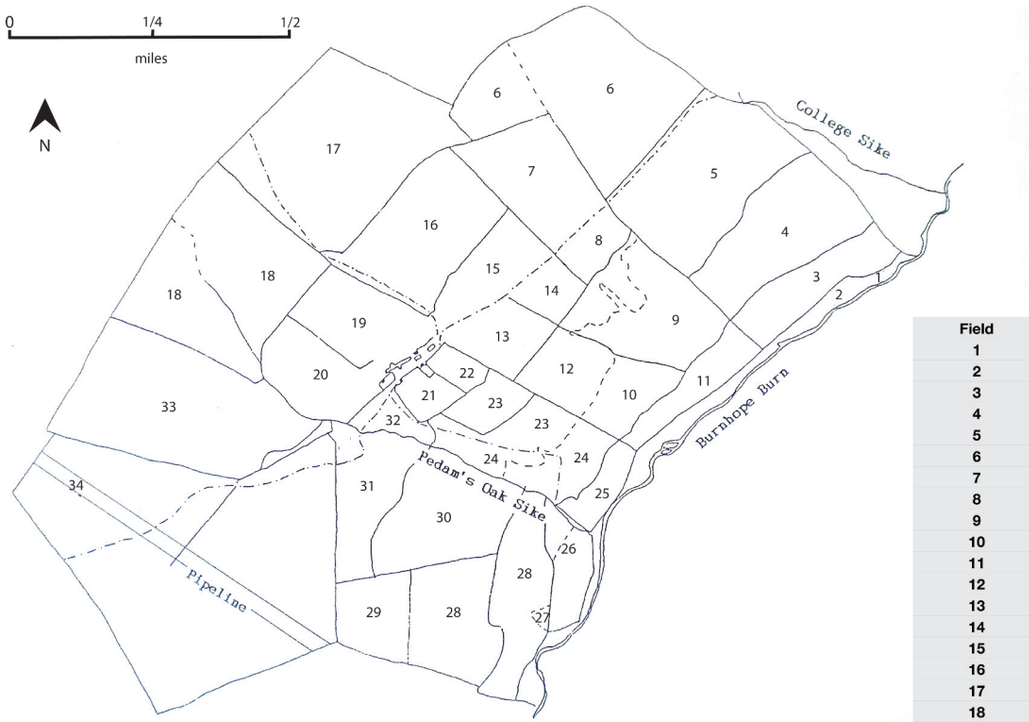



*Figure 4.33 Changes in land use in the fields at Pedam's Oak (from Ross, 1987: 44, 45)*

| Field | 1810 | 1840 | 1859 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | | Arable | Pasture/Rough Pasture |
| **2** | | Arable | Pasture/Rough Pasture |
| **3** | | Arable | Pasture/Rough Pasture |
| **4** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **5** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **6** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **7** | Pasture | Meadow | Pasture |
| **8** | Oats | Arable | Pasture |
| **9** | Pasture | Pasture | Wood/Pasture |
| **10** | Pasture | Pasture | Wood/Pasture |
| **11** | | Arable | Pasture |
| **12** | Potatoes | Meadow | Pasture |
| **13** | Pasture | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **14** | Pasture | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **15** | Pasture | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **16** | | Meadow | Pasture |
| **17** | Pasture | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **18** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **19** | Pasture | Arable/Meadow | Pasture |
| **20** | | Meadow | Pasture |
| **21** | Grass | Meadow | Pasture |
| **22** | Grass | Meadow | Pasture |
| **23** | Oak wood | Arable | Pasture |
| **24** | Oak wood | Arable | Wood |
| **25** | Oak wood | Arable | Pasture |
| **26** | | Pasture | Pasture |
| **27** | | Meadow | Pasture |
| **28** | | Pasture | Pasture |
| **29** | | Pasture | Pasture |
| **30** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **31** | Waste | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **32** | Waste | Lane | Rough Pasture |
| **33** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |
| **34** | | Pasture | Rough Pasture |



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*Figure 4.34a: The farmhouse at Belmount.*
*Top: front view - the right-hand end was a byre and hayloft but, from the chimneys there were two attached houses.*
*Below: rear view showing outshut. The centre of the building must have been the main house because the first floor doors indicate haylofts on both ends of the building.*





*Figure 4.34b: Interior features of Belmount.*
*Above: the kitchen range in the room to the right of the front door.*
*Below: the stairs,centrally situated between the two main rooms.*

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to the changes but, as will be indicated in the conclusion to this chapter (section 4.16), I believe that the situation was more complex.

Further along the valley from Pedam's Oak are two other farms, Belmount (or Belmont) and Sandyford. Like Pedam's, they are no longer lived in and are in a ruinous condition, forming shelter for animals more than anything. There is some evidence for earlier occupation in the fields of these farms, also. However, the main reason for looking at them is that the houses are easily accessible and thus it is possible to make a study of their design and construction. The annotated photographs in figures 4.34a and 4.34b show the details of Belmount. In both cases the houses have close similarities to the layout common in the area, with two bays - a room either side of the front door and a central staircase leading to two bedrooms. Both have attached byres. However, it can be seen in the case of Belmount that, while there is a small byre under the same roof as the house, there is an attached building on the other which seems to have had a hayloft on the first floor but possible human habitation on the ground floor. Both Sandyford and Belmount have additional later buildings and seem to have been modified.

All three farms are now unoccupied, but were lived in up to the second half of the twentieth century. The Carr family lived at Pedam's Oak and Bob Flynn, a shepherd, occupied Sandyford through the bitter winter of 1947. Even then, the land was rented by farmers living in Edmundbyers. Now the land is still farmed as sheep pasture, so that there is continuity of land use if not of residence. The reasons for the abandonment of the houses will be further considered in the conclusion (section 4.16).

**4.15 Woodland and plantations**

The first part of this chapter explains how the Flandrian forests developed in the North Pennines and that *Pinus* was the dominant species, with *Quercus*, *Alnus* and other species present until clearance began in late prehistory (see 4.2). During the Pre-Roman Iron Age grassland and agriculture may have expanded and results for Stewart Shield Meadow give very low tree pollen values before the first millennium AD began. It is clear, therefore, that much of the land had been cleared at an early date.

In section 4.11 it was explained that there is still little woodland on the fells although a variety of trees are found in the valleys and river gorges. These include *Fraxinus*,

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*Alnus*, *Quercus* and *Betula*. How is it that there are trees in these places yet they have been cleared elsewhere? The fact is that many of the valleys, even when not actually gorges, are extremely steep-sided. Not only are they unsuitable for any type of cultivation - too steep and narrow even for terracing - but they are equally unsuited to the grazing of livestock. In places sheep can cope with the inclines, but generally the slopes are too precipitous for animals. Consequently trees have been left alone to grow where they can. Some of the woodland is considered ancient.

There is also information in the mediæval documents regarding woodland - as opposed to hunting forest - being granted to Durham Cathedral Priory (section 3.3). The first area was granted in 1259 and is to the north of the grange along the Derwent. In 1260, woodland in Horsleyhope was added and, subsequently, the woodland called 'Densholm' along the valley of the Burnhope Burn. These areas are shown in figure 3.1. What is particularly interesting about these grants is that they coincide with woodland that still exists along valley sides which are too steep for cultivation. The exception is the first grant because some of that land has been cultivated, although there is still woodland beside the river.

The 1649 Parliamentary Survey (Sobo, 1995) is unhelpful regarding the woodland in the parishes. The map that went with it might have been useful but, as it has been lost, only the remaining text can be used. For all the tenanted farms in Muggleswick the Survey notes that the land is held with 'the woodes mynes and quarries excepted' (*ibid*: passim). This gives no indication of the extent of the woodland at the time. The surveyor, however, did assess the value of the timber growing on sixteen holdings at a total of £470.

Featherstonhaugh notes that 'The oaks which now clothe the sides of the valley below Edmundbyers are only feeble and stunted representatives of the noble trees which once existed there'. He goes on to say that the best of the trees were felled for building and ships (1900: 85). Having had another 100 to 150 years to grow since Featherstonhaugh's observations, the trees are not so feeble and stunted now. However, they do grow, as already stated, on the steepest and less favourable ground so are unlikely to be the best examples of their species. Featherstonhaugh also records that the remains of oaks and birch are often found in the peat on the fells (*ibid*: 113). At Ruffside the 'township of that name....., has been greatly improved of late years, by planting extensive belts of larch trees on the moor'. These act as shelter for the

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land between them which has become good meadow and pasture land (*ibid*). Apparently, the Dean and Chapter planned to do something similar on Edmundbyers moor, but changed their minds - 'a circumstance much to be regretted' (*ibid*).

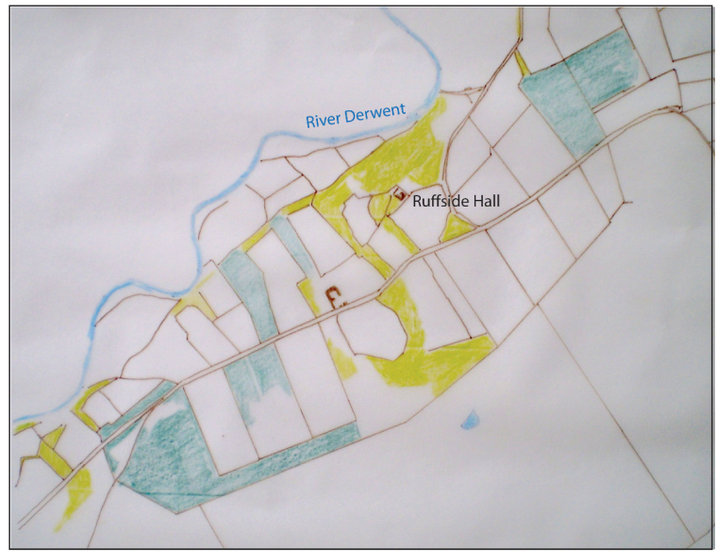
Some larches have been planted amongst the broadleaf woodland in the valleys at Muggleswick and there is a plantation, partly of larch, adjacent to the reservoir; this was planted following the construction of the dam. There is, therefore, very little of the area which has been subject to the plantation of trees for forestry. Those plantations that do exist are worked, and some of the other woodland is also maintained and cut for commercial purposes. None of this is on a large scale.

A series of maps was produced so that a retrogressive analysis could be made. The earliest map that shows the area in detail, as already established, is the 1800 estate map. Then several Ordnance Survey maps of different dates were used so that comparisons could be made between them. Apart from the 1800 map, which was drawn at a different angle from the O.S. maps and at varying scales, making it difficult to produce accurate overlays, all the maps were traced by hand at large scale so that the subtleties of the details would be seen in the process. The most recent map was drawn first, then I worked backwards through the selected maps. Where it was possible to distinguish coniferous woodland from deciduous, a darker shade of green was used. However, there are places where this was not possible or where the maps show the woodland as mixed. Consequently there is no distinction between the types of woodland on these drawn maps; if there is a single shade of light green is can be assumed that the trees are predominantly deciduous and a single shade of dark green indicates a predominance of conifers. Where an original map, such as the 1800 estate map or the 1860 1st Edition O.S. map, has been used in the figures the pertinent area of woodland has been given a light shading to help to make it more easily visible. The main purpose of the regression maps was to be able to study the enclosure of fields, which will be investigated in chapter 5. However, the maps are also useful for comparing the extent of the woodland. It was soon apparent that the main areas of woodland are broadly as described: along the valleys of the Burnhope Burn, Horsleyhope and Hisehope Burns, and along the Derwent, together with the plantations at Ruffside.

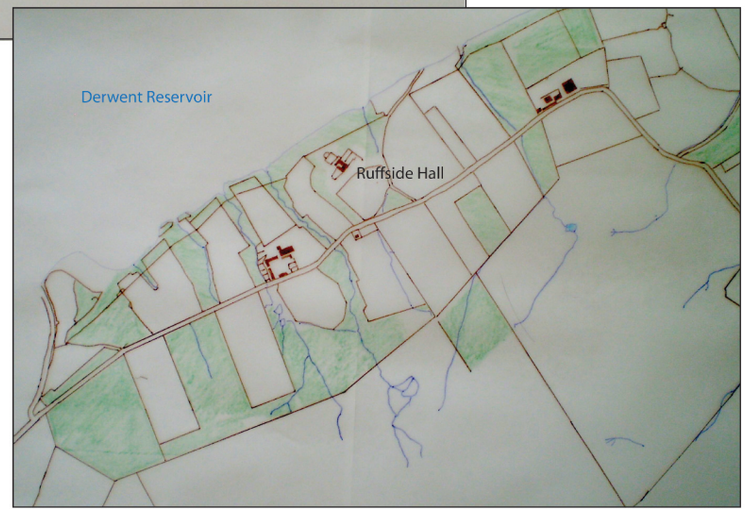
The Ruffside plantations do not feature on the estate map since it does not extend that far. They are, however, on the 1st edition O.S. map dating from the 1860s.




1860 1st Edition




1920




Current

N

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*Figure 4.35: Sketch maps of Ruffside showing the plantations (based on the O.S. maps; not to scale)*



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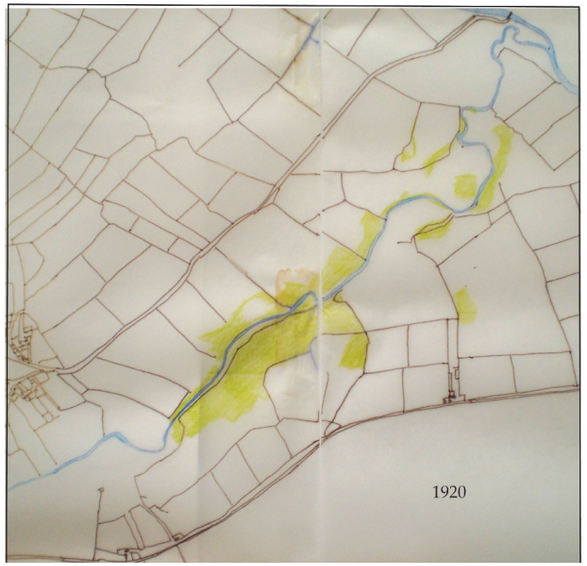


1800 Estate map

1860 1st Edition O.S.




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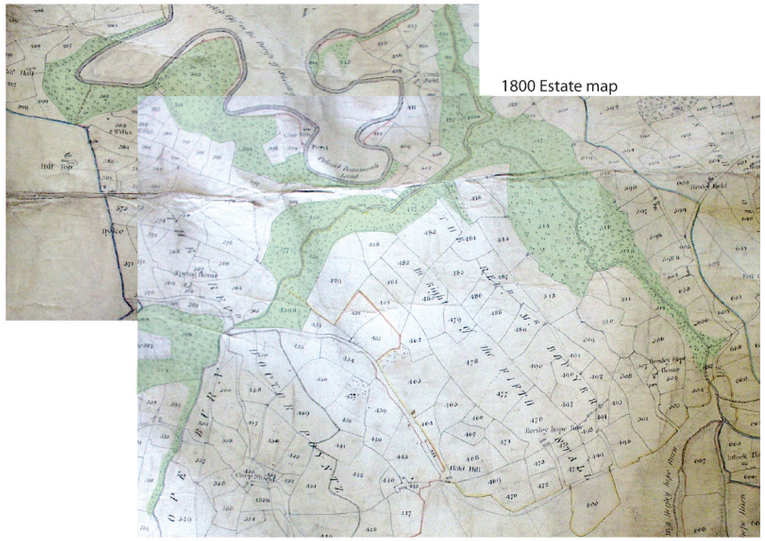
*Figure 4.36:*
*Maps of the valley of the Burnhope Burn, showing the woodland*
*(sketch maps based on the O.S. maps; not to scale)*

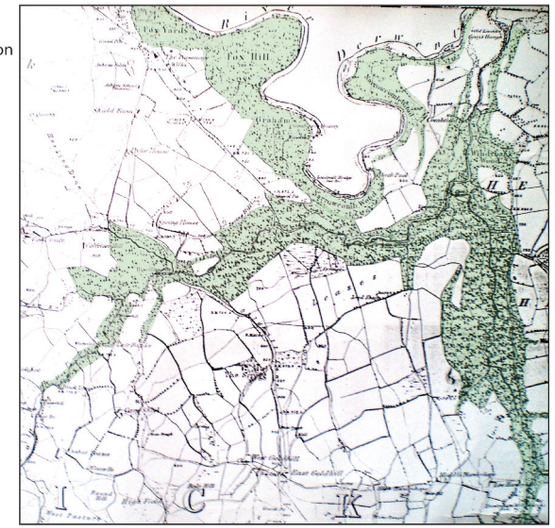
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Comparison with the 1920s map and the current one (fig. 4.35) shows that there has been no significant change in the general extent of the plantations except where the reservoir has affected them and one additional area on the south east edge of the group shown on the current map. However, it can be seen that the extent of planting has varied within the plantation enclosures. Clearly there has been harvesting and replanting at different periods but no expansion of the plantations to the wider area.

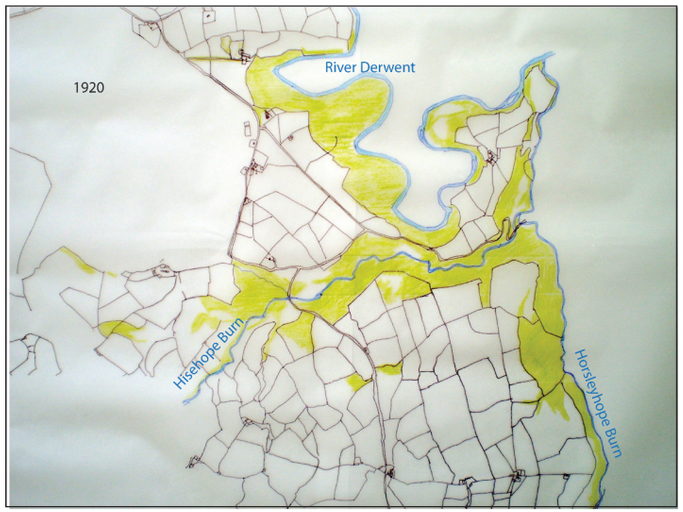
Along the Burnhope Burn the woodland is shown as it is on the 1800 estate map, the 1860, 1920 and current O.S. maps (fig. 4.36). While essentially similar to each other, the maps show that the wooded area has extended westwards along the Burnhope Burn and that there has been, over the years, some variation in the outline of the wooded area as parts have been cleared or allowed to spread. However, the comments made previously are supported: the trees are mainly growing along the steep slopes of the valley where agriculture is too difficult. Lack of maintenance and the fact that wood is no longer required for fuel or building have contributed to the spread of the wooded area in recent years. However, the description of the woodland given to the Priory (see above) suggests that the whole of the area - called 'Densholm' - within the bounds of the Derwent, Burnhope Burn and road to Edmundbyers was wooded. This would indicate that the extent of the woodland was much greater in the Middle Ages and that the land more suitable for cultivation or pasture on the south east side of the burn was cleared in later periods. At the top of the current map the area of conifer plantation associated with the construction of the reservoir can be seen.

There is a significant amount of woodland along the valleys of the watercourses in Muggleswick (fig. 4.37). The Derwent flows in a steep gorge for this part of its course and the sides of this are heavily wooded. It can be seen from the maps that, as with the other wooded areas, the pattern of woodland has not changed greatly since 1800. Where there have been changes it is generally around the edges of the woodland. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Firstly, there may actually have been tree felling and planting; secondly, defining the edge of an area of woodland can be difficult. If the trees end abruptly or are enclosed by a fence or wall, the edge is clearly marked. However, if the woodland thins gradually the decision as to where it actually ends depends on the opinion of the surveyor, thus causing variations in the maps. Like the other valleys, the Horsleyhope and Hisehope valleys are steep-sided in places so that tree-growth here has been left to develop just as along the Burnhope




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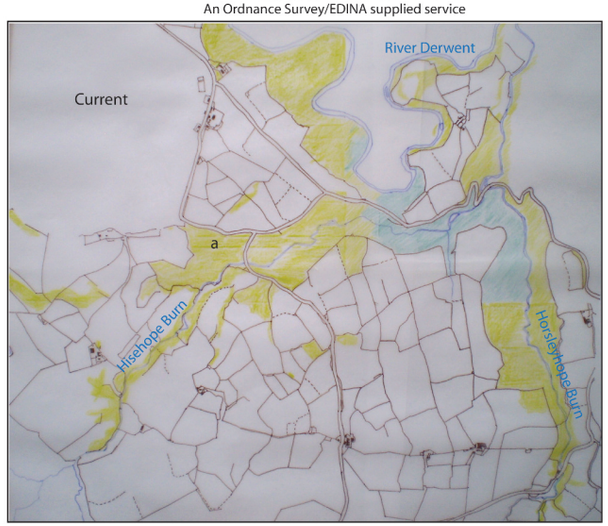
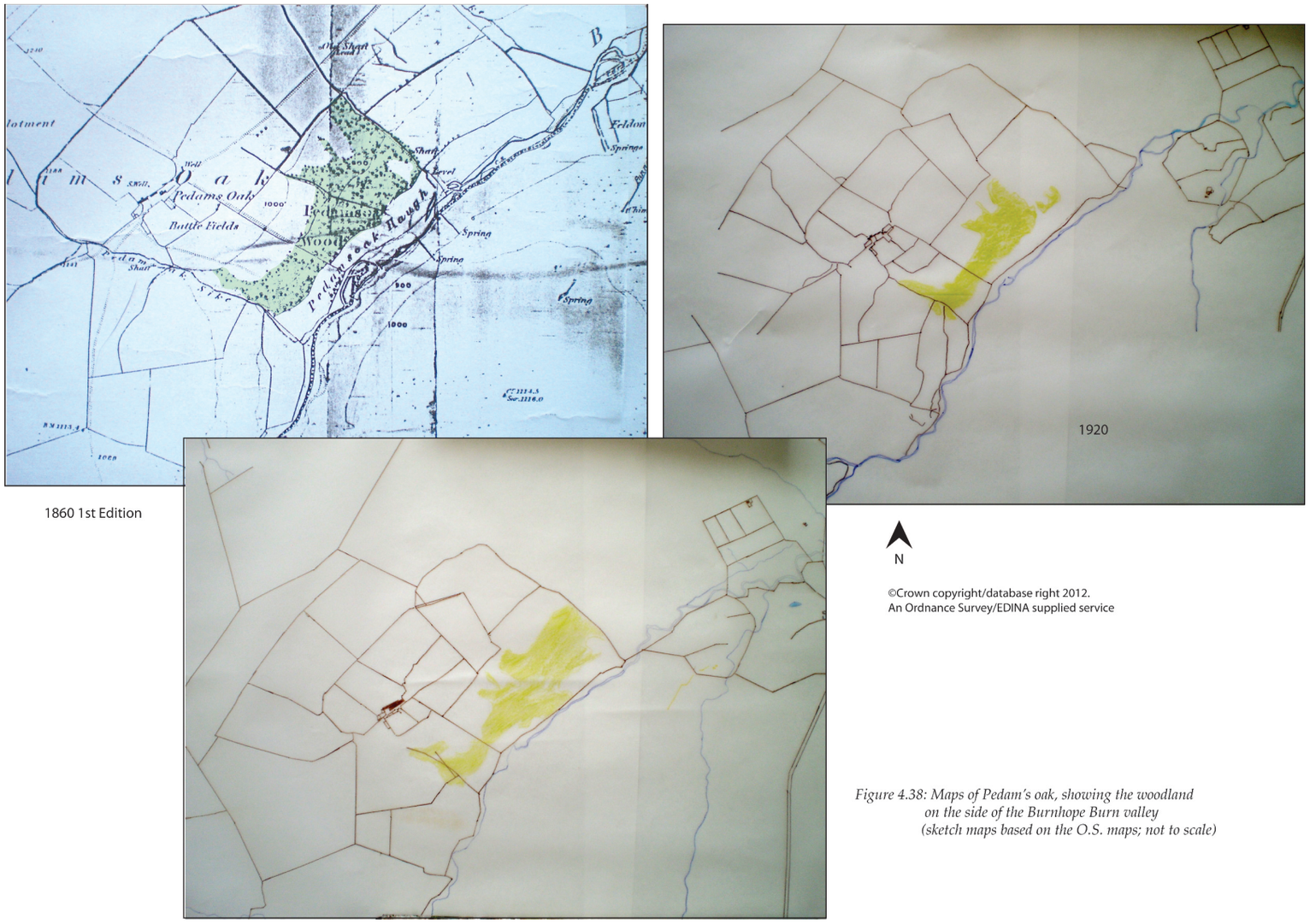




*Figure 4.37: Maps of Muggleswick showing the woodland along the Derwent, Hisehope and Horsleyhope valleys (sketch maps based on the O.S. maps; not to scale)*



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*Figure 4.38: Maps of Pedam's oak, showing the woodland on the side of the Burnhope Burn valley (sketch maps based on the O.S. maps; not to scale)*



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Burn. In places the woodland is mixed (for example in the area marked 'a' on the current map) with many larches as well as broadleaf trees.

Below Pedam's Oak, on the north side of the valley of the Burnhope Burn, is another area of woodland which may be ancient in origin as are the woods of the other valleys. It can be seen from the maps in figure 4.38 that there was little change in its extent between 1860 and 1920, but that it has spread eastwards since then.

It should be noted that major parts of the Derwent Gorge, Horsleyhope Ravine, the Hisehopeburn valley and the valley of the Burnhope Burn, involving much of the woodland, have all been designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest in their own right. Most of the moorland in the parishes is also designated as SSSI.

Some other changes have occurred in the years since Featherstonhaugh was vicar of Edmundbyers. These can be seen in the photograph comparing the tree growth in Church Lane (fig. 4.6). Featherstonhaugh himself made a difference by planting a variety of interesting trees in the garden of the Rectory and in the churchyard; since then, inhabitants of the village have planted and encouraged trees in their gardens and along boundaries. Some new areas of woodland have been planted on the fringes of the village by the owners of fields which are unsuitable for horses or other grazing animals. These plantings were, at first, for aesthetic purposes but more recently environmental and ecological factors have had an influence.

Although the Derwent Valley, as seen in the photographs in figure 4.39, had a good number of trees along the boundaries of fields now beneath the reservoir, today there are even more. Trees have been left to grow where they would previously have been plashed into hedgerows and others have developed which might once have been cut for wood. Consequently the whole area is probably much more wooded than it has been for several hundred years. These changes reflect alterations in farming habits, and in the attitude of people, which are not directly related to the climate.

One major change which has altered the landscape is the planting of trees at Pow Hill picnic area alongside the reservoir. It is interesting that this should have occurred in the vicinity of the origins of the pollen samples mentioned in section 4.2. This is now amenity land and the trees are intended rather to make the area attractive than for any commercial purpose.



*Figure 4.39: The Derwent Valley, looking south west from Espershields, before the construction of the reservoir (photograph by permission of Ross Adamson)*



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All the areas of woodland mentioned can also be seen on the map in figure 1.2. From this map it is clear that woodland makes up only a small part of the area of the parishes of Edmundbyers and Muggleswick. The only plantations of significance are at Ruffside and forestry is, consequently, only a minor industry in this area although there are larger and more important plantations in adjacent parishes. The woodland can also be seen on the aerial photograph in figure 1.4 and, more clearly, in the 1945 air photo (fig. 4.15). The most extensive wooded areas of Muggleswick and Edmundbyers, as far as it is possible to tell, have remained as woodland since before the twelfth century and may be remnants of much older forests.

**4.16 Conclusions**

What conclusions may be drawn from the foregoing discussions? The first part of the chapter, having investigated the historic climate of the North Pennines, shows that the area had, and still has, a climate more akin to that of the Highlands of Scotland. This makes it different from other parts of North-east England. It has also been demonstrated that the UDV is climatically marginal, or very close to marginal, for arable farming. Despite this, most of the area has, at some time, been under cultivation. Many of the areas of cultivation are actually cut by the boundaries shown on the 1800 Estate map and must therefore predate those boundaries. This would suggest that such cultivated areas could be mediæval in date. Cultivation of the fellsides also took place in the nineteenth century but was short-lived. This, and later ploughing, was due to the country being at war and the production of grain temporarily being profitable.

The case studies show that there was development during the nineteenth century 'agricultural revolution', with the buildings being extended and the populations of the farmsteads growing. These developments were aided by the availability of work in the mines which provided additional income. However, apart from the withdrawal of cultivation from the fellsides, there was no contraction of agriculture. What did happen was a change from arable and mixed farming to pastoral, especially in the later twentieth century.

Importantly, there is no evidence of withdrawal from the uplands in Edmundbyers and Muggleswick at the times Parry suggested for the Lammermuirs. Instead, for much of that time, the Muggleswick Estate was experiencing a post-Reformation reorganisation and development of agriculture.

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The altitude and climatic marginality of the land in the UDV have contributed to the farming methods and the changes that have occurred. The productivity of the land is clearly compromised by such factors and thus the poor living to be made, especially when there was a lack of alternative and/or supplementary income, has to have resulted in farmers leaving their holdings. Other factors have compounded the problems. While modern technology would now partly solve these difficulties, the lack of electricity, telephones, mains water and drainage would discourage families from occupying many of the more remote farms. At the time when many of them were abandoned, the experience of heavy snowfalls, as in 1947 (fig. 4.40), would have influenced the decision to leave. Instead, the remaining farmers enlarged their holdings by absorbing the farms that had been left so that they had sufficient land to make a reasonable living.

Therefore, the abandonment of farms, and the changes that occurred to the cultivated areas, were due to a complex combination of factors and events and not simply to a decline in climatic conditions.

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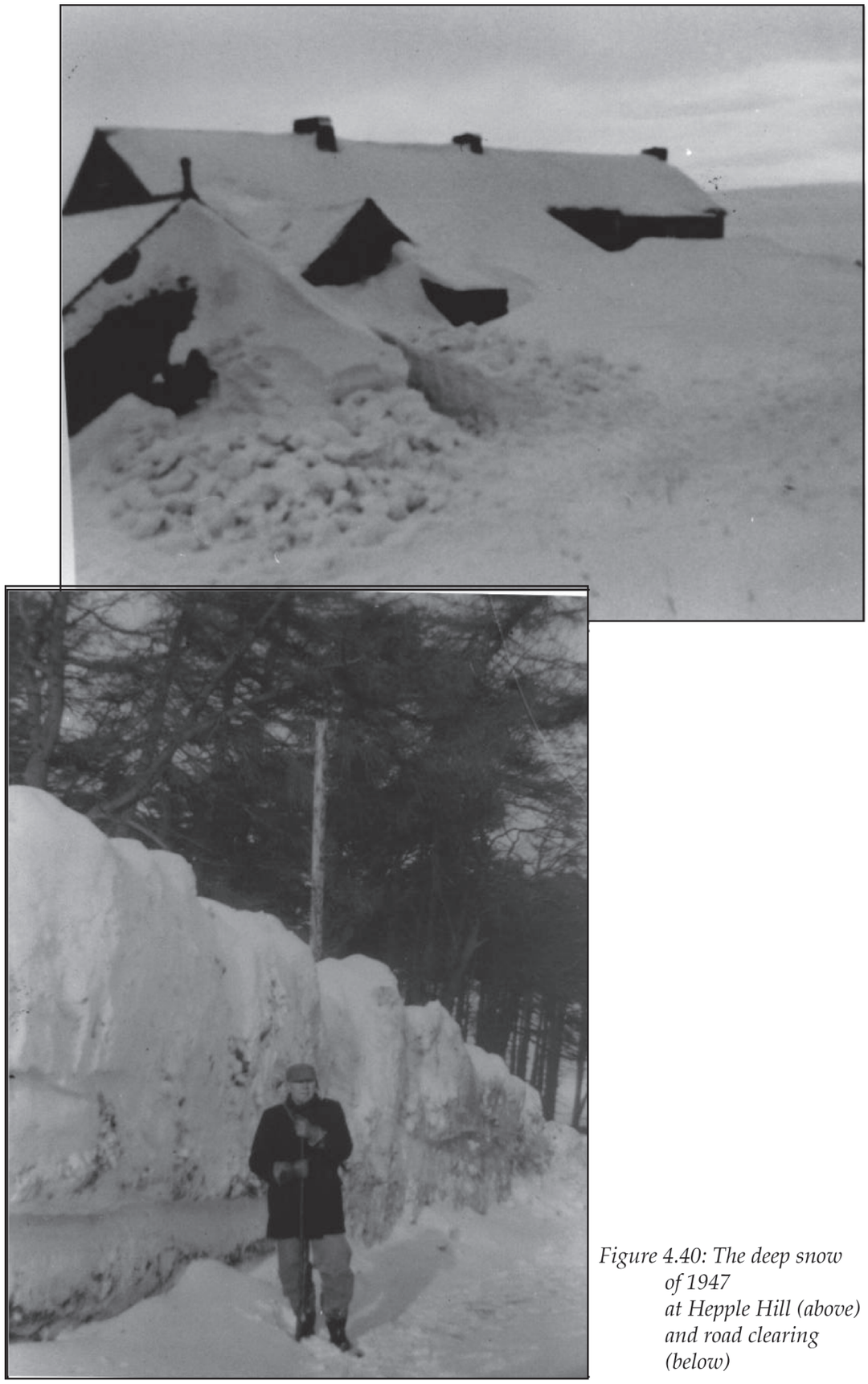


*Figure 4.40: The deep snow of 1947 at Hepple Hill (above) and road clearing (below)*