Settlement and field systems in Middleham Manor 1600 - 1850

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CONTENTS

Volume 1

Volume 2

Settlement and Field Systems in Middleham Manor between 1600 and 1850.

Abstract.

This work is concerned with the changes in settlement and field systems of the Bishop of Durham's Middleham Manor during the decline of the old methods of farming and the emergence of the new between 1600 and 1850.

By 1600 the nucleated rural settlement pattern of surviving villages and deserted sites had been established and formed the basis of the 1850 pattern including the surviving Middleham Manor villages of Bishop Middleham, Sedgefield and Cornforth. In neighbouring, non-ecclesiastical townships, which by 1850 were part of the parishes of Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham, there were extant villages and deserted sites occupied by individual farms or farm clusters.

In 1600, the townships of Middleham Manor presented a champion landscape of large open fields, meadows and pastures. But enclosure in the form of severalties and Lammas closes had already made inroads into lands held in common. The dispersion of farmstalls from the village tofts had not yet taken place, and there were ownership links between the village holdings and those in the township fields and pastures.

Freed from the constraints of communal agriculture, the 17th century enclosure allotments proved enduring as alienable blocks in the land market. They also affected the 1850 pattern of enclosed farms with close correlation between farm and allotment boundaries. New agricultural practices were slow to develop with medieval tenures persisting into the 19th century and new crops and rotations not introduced until a relatively late date.

In 1850 plot patterns in the villages remained the same with minor sub-divisions. In most cases the farmstalls then occupied sites in the fields while village tofts were used for other purposes.

The localised and internal contrasts in landscape, farming and territorial organisation derive from the fact that the lands of Middleham Manor were held 'in demesne' with tenants answering directly to the Halmote Court (until 1926).

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Introduction

In 1850 the three townships of Bishop Middleham, Cornforth and Sedgefield, lying in South East Durham, were collectively known as Middleham Manor. They formed part of the Bishop of Durham's estate, and came under the jurisdiction of the Halmote Court. Historic documents, books, maps and plans belonging to the Halmote Court and the Church Commissioners, relating to this manor, are deposited in the Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic in the University of Durham. Among them are Enclosure Awards for Bishop Middleham (1693) and Sedgefield (1636), as well as Tithe Awards of 1839 for the three townships. The construction of maps from these key sources would give an indication, in the first place, of the organisation of the township lands under a system of open-field cultivation and, in the second place, the reorganisation that resulted from the changes that took place in agricultural practices that have been termed The Agricultural Revolution. Supplementing these documents are a number of other useful sources, important among which are the Parliamentary Survey of 1647, Bishop Cosin's Survey of 1661, and a series of Twenty-five-inch and Six-inch First Editions of the Ordnance Survey (c1857), which contain useful annotations made by the Halmote Court clerks concerning ownership of the land and tenure. The general purpose of this work, then, is to use the primary sources found in the Halmote Court Collection along with the general body of knowledge available, in describing and accounting for changes in settlement and field systems of Middleham Manor that occurred between 1600 and 1850.

The following, however, are more specific aims which fit into the broad purpose defined above:

the extent to which the distribution and the forms and patterns of

settlement found on the mid-19th century maps can be accounted for by processes active between 1600 and 1850;

to examine land-ownership and tenure as factors in the development of the large estates and the tenanted farms which had appeared by 1850;

to look at field systems at the beginning and end of the period and suggest a chronology for the change from one to the other. To compare patterns of land-use in the 1839 Tithe Awards with those before enclosure;

to make an examination of the freehold township of Layton in comparison with the Bishop's townships;

to investigate the establishment and development of a number of farms in the manorial lands and to look at the use of the land through an examination of rotation schedules.

Clearly, changes in the rural landscape and agricultural organisation of Middleham Manor did take place between 1600 and 1850 but of their nature two questions will be asked. First, were they revolutionary as the term 'Agricultural Revolution' suggests? Second, what difference did it make to the Manor of Middleham having the Bishop as a landlord during a period of agricultural innovation?

CHAPTER ONE

THE CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL BACKGROUND

The Cultural and Physical Background

The History of the development of Durham County is influenced very largely by its unusual legal and strategical position. From Roman times and earlier the county has been in a border position. It lay between the Brigantes and the Votadini and later between the Danes of Yorkshire and the Angles of Northumberland. It was the region that lay to the south of the eastern part of Hadrians Wall in Roman times and was crossed by the main Roman road (Dere Street) on its way from York to Corbridge and the Wall. A Roman villa, excavated at Old Durham, has the reputation of being the northernmost farming estate of the Roman world. But apart from this and the settlements associated with the military occupation of the county (Binchester, Lanchester, Ebchester, etc.) little evidence is available of any Roman settlement pattern. Little also is known of the settlement in the Dark Ages although medieval chroniclers describe Durham then as thick in woods and sparse in population.

In 634 A.D., after recovering his kingdom of Northumbria, Oswald sent to Iona for Aiden to found a monastery on Lindisfarne where Aiden became bishop. In 685 A.D. Cuthbert had become bishop and by 875 A.D. the monks of Lindisfarne were fleeing from Holy Island in the face of Danish invasions carrying his sanctified and incorruptible body with them. After seven years of wandering they settled in Chester-le-Street where the Bishop of Chester-le-Street was granted land and jurisdiction between Tyne and Wear. Further Danish invasions in 995 A.D. forced the community to flee to Ripon but after only a short stay they returned north and settled at the present site of Durham where the construction of the cathedral was eventually undertaken. King Guthred, a converted Danish ruler of Yorkshire, granted to St. Cuthbert the lands between Tyne and Tees with 'sac soc and infangthief'.[1] It would

seem from the Historia de Sancto Cuthberto that there was constant struggle to retain certain lands in the south east of the county from Easington through Eden to Billingham. Lands lying to the north of the Tees in the south and east of the county formed the Wapentake of Sadberge and these were purchased by Bishop Pudsey from Richard I. The whole area of the old county then came under his control and that of his successors.

These processes established the regality of the Bishop but at the same time the see was acquiring ownership of land through purchase, grant and colonisation and so the proprietry rights of the bishop were also being extended.

By the time of the Norman Conquest the bishop was holding a single court in which he dealt with his judicial business whether it was connected with his role as a landlord or as a princely ruler. Until the palatine judiciary began to develop along the same lines as the royal judiciary there was no distinction. This large area of Durham County, known as the Palatinate, which came under the rule of the Prince Bishops has been referred to as 'The Great Franchise' while those lands over which he exercised the rights of Landlordship have been termed 'The Great Estate' from which the Bishop obtained his personal wealth. Initially, the two areas of ownership were administered as a single whole but with the passing of time and the development of other administrative institutions within the Palatinate, the role of the Halmote Court became the administration of 'The Great Estate'.

Episcopal Halmote Rolls in Durham begin in 1345 and these are the records of the doings of the local tribunals regulating the workings of the bishops' estates. The Halmote courts were presided over by the bishops' stewards or deputies in circuits of the bishops'

lands three times a year. It was customary to meet in a vill around which other vills were grouped. Arrangements for the venue of the court do not appear to have been rigid for it did not necessarily meet at the same place on each circuit. For example, in Bishop Skirlaw's time (1388-1405) the court of the Middleham Group was sometimes held at Middleham and sometimes at Sedgefield.

On the second of July, 1647, thirteen jurors of Bishop Middleham delivered to the Bishop of Durham, 'An exact and perfect survey of the ..... Manor of Bishop Middleham and the several townships thereunto belonging (viz) Corneforth and Sedgefield had made and taken in the months of June and July in the year of our Lord God One Thousand Six Hundred and Fortyseven'.[3] As a definition of the Manor of Bishop Middleham this would seem to be acceptable since both tenants and landlord recognised it as such. The Halmote Court which regulated the economic activity of the three vills also met there on its thrice-yearly circuit of the bishop's manors within the Palatinate.

According to G. T. Lapsley, however, no use of the word 'manor' to describe the bishops' estates is made until the middle ages is past and he doubts whether we can regard these manors in the same way as manors elsewhere in England. The Halmote Court Rolls in the 14th century show the bishops' vills in groups. These are mapped on Figure 1 showing the extent and dispersion of 'The Great Estate' in the 14th century. The organisation of the possessions was manorial in that the bishop exercised the rights of medieval landlordship through the Halmote Court with the villagers holding their lands in terms of medieval tenure and farming through rules of medieval regulation. Why the vills were grouped in this particular way is a matter for research beyond the scope of this work but the grouping of the Middleham vills seems to present little problem since they were

already a 'great soke' in the 10th century when Bishop Cutheard bought for St. Cuthbert 'Sedgefield and all belonging to it'. The contiguous nature of the vills enable it to be seen as a single estate and so is recognised in later centuries as a manor.[2]

To Lapsley, groupings appear to have been only an administrative convenience for in the 14th century the court appears to have dealt with vills. This was certainly so at the beginning of the 17th century. Halmote Court affairs of the Manor of Bishop Middleham at this time and henceforward are recorded and organised on the basis of the three vills of Sedgefield, Bishop Middleham and Cornforth separately, although they are found grouped and referred to as the manor of Bishop Middleham. In their survey of 1647, the jurors of Bishop Middleham stated, 'We present that there is two water corne milnes belonging to the Lord of this Manor, the one in Sedgefield in the possession of Richard Wrights....We present that the said milne is in great decay and that the copyholders and leaseholders of Sedgefield Township ought to repair the same. And that the several copyholders and leaseholders of Sedgefield are tyde to grind at the aforesaid milne.' Clearly, to Bishop Middleham jurors the responsibility was the township's and not collectively manorial.

In the medieval period the Bishops of Durham claimed the wealth from the Great Estate as heirs of St. Cuthbert whereas their political power was bestowed upon them by the Norman Conquerors to ensure a bulwark in the north against invasions by the Scots. The establishment of monarchical absolutism by the Tudors brought about great changes but although the wealth and political power of the Church was kerbed the Bishops of Durham suffered relatively slightly. The Great Estate was little affected and his regal power was restricted, for example, by the removal of his criminal jurisdiction to the crown

in 1536. As far as territorial organisation is concerned, the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 was probably of greater significance for it established the ecclesiastical parish as a unit of civil administration.

Christian missionary zeal and medieval agricultural prosperity had resulted in the construction and staffing of many substantial stone churches in some but not all of the villages in the Palatinate. These religious 'central places' offered the services of the church to people over large areas outside the townships in which they were situated. Hence villages possessing churches established links with adjacent villages and hamlets having no churches. The jurisdiction of the village church would, therefore, extend over more than one township. The resulting network of parishes, whose boundaries seem to be based on those of the constituent townships, was consolidated by the use the Elizabethans made of this structure to carry out their social policies.

By the beginning of the 19th century the pattern of parish boundaries in Durham were those indicated in Figure 2. At that time the Parish of Sedgefield consisted of the townships of Sedgefield, Bradbury and the Isle, Mordon, Foxton and Shotton, Butterwick and Oldacres, Fishburn and Embleton. The Parish of Bishop Middleham held the townships of Bishop Middleham, Cornforth, Mainsforth, Thrislington and Garmondsway (extra parochial). The resulting patchwork of townships in these parishes is mapped in Figure 3 and their acreage and populations in the first five decades of the 19th century are given in Table 1:1.

These additional townships were manors or estates of considerable antiquity. They were held by individuals, were not governed by the Halmote Court, did not form part of the Great Estate and, therefore,

did not form part of Middleham Manor. Nor did two other manors which, by 1850, had been absorbed into the township of Sedgefield. These were the Layton Estate lying in the south east of the township, and the Hardwick Estate lying to the west of the village.

The pattern of nucleated settlement within the township and parish boundaries formed part of the relatively dense pattern of nucleated rural settlement present in the southern and eastern parts of Durham in 1820. B. K. Roberts points out that, 'throughout the whole of south-eastern Durham, villages and hamlets occurred in a remarkably uniform distribution for when the total is considered, including the deserted settlements, nucleations seem to occur at intervals of between one and a half and two miles'. This is shown clearly on his map, which was based on G. Greenwell's map of the County Palatine of Durham (c1820), and is reproduced in Figure 4. He comments on the marked contrast that existed between the north and west on the one hand, and the south and east on the other, and suggests that perhaps the pattern has emerged in response to zonal distribution of resources.[4]

The zone of sparse nucleation in the north and west offered a very limited range of possibilities to the arable agriculturalist. The high Pennine region (Fig. 5.) with an altitude of over 350 metres presents a landscape of peat moorland covered with heather and bracken and is devoid of settlement for its riches have lain in the pasturage it offered and in the lead, millstone grit and limestone concealed beneath its shallow, moorish soils. Only in the deep valleys of the Tees, Wear and Derwent were found nucleated settlements.

In the foothill area of the Pennines, which lies further east, the eastward flowing rivers have dissected the Coal Measures producing a landscape of sandstone scarps and plateaux separated by wide valleys. If this area was not attractive in terms of agricultural opportunity,

it was at least accessible from the lowlands to the east. Here the pattern of settlement is less controlled by the valleys and appears more scattered, although it is still relatively sparse. The wider-bottomed and sometimes steep-sided valleys have been colonised by such settlements as Lanchester but nucleation has occurred along the interfluves where many settlements appeared between the Boldon Book (1183) and Hatfield (1382) surveys. Some of them bear the place-name ending 'side' or 'set' indicative of a transhumance settlement becoming permanent, for example, Holmside and Hollingside. These interfluves are relatively free of drift with a thin soil cover, and at altitudes of between 180 metres and 350 metres offered only marginal opportunity to the cultivator. Indeed, it was not until 1773, for example, that some 15,000 acres of the waste known as Lanchester Fell was enclosed.

It is the zone of the East Durham Plateau and the Tees Lowland in the southern and eastern part of the county that presents the pattern of closely-spaced nucleated rural settlement. The Magnesian Limestone scarp, which forms the north-western boundary of this zone, has been much-dissected by streams flowing off it to join the Wear to the north-west. Nowhere is it higher than 230 metres and its altitude is fairly uniform between 180 metres and 200 metres. To the south and east the Magnesian Limestone surface dips gently to disappear beneath the Triassic sedimentaries of the Tees Lowlands and to form cliffs some 15 metres high at the coast. Drift cover on the plateau is thin in contrast to glacial deposits of considerable thickness in the Tees Lowlands to the south. Here all the land is below 130 metres and the landscape is one of gently rolling topography typical of lowland glacial deposition. There are occasional areas of post-glacial lacustrine deposits such as Bradbury and Mordon Carrs

(Fig. 6.) which are ill-drained areas of flat land where deposits of peat 15 metres thick are found. Above 35 metres streams flow in incised valleys but these open out into the estuarine lands where topography becomes flat and drainage very poor. There are deposits of boulder-clay up to 35 metres thick which in places are overlain by sands, silts and gravels.

K. Smith uses the term 'Durham's climatic bleakness' in summing up the climate of the county. The major climatic gradient is in a west-east direction in which the mean annual precipitation decreases from over 2030 mm at Moor House to less than 635 mm at Sunderland, and where in August, the mean monthly soil temperature at 30 cms depth increases from 11.5 degrees C. at Moor House to 15.3 degrees C. at Durham. Taking the threshold of 6.1 degrees C. to determine the length of the growing season, in the south east lowlands it lasts some seven months from mid-April to mid-November, while at altitudes of 500 metres in the west this has fallen to five and a half months.[5]

Along the Magnesian Limestone scarp, where the surface is drift-free, limestone soils have developed, the friable, marly limestone weathering to a greater depth than the concretionary limestones and supporting a deeper soil. This well-drained position on the scarp and dip-slope produces a dry, fertile loam. Where the limestone soils are not present, there are usually brown calcareous soils which vary in texture from a sandy clay loam to a clay loam. Elsewhere, there are brown earths and where drainage is good these prove to be good soils. In the Tees-Lowlands the soil types reflect the wide variety of parent materials which include glacial tills, fluvio glacial deposits, lacustrine sediments, aluvium (riverine and marine) and aolian sands.

In summary, then, this south eastern part of the county is a

land of gently sloping and undulating topography, having a south-easterly aspect, with a growing season of seven months an an annual rainfall of less than 700 mm. Such an area with its dry fertile loams of the dip-slope, its fertile loams of the Tees and Skerne valleys, and its patches of sands, silts and gravels on the boulder-clays, must have offered suitable opportunities to settlers seeking agricultural land.

That some settlers had taken the opportunities offered is shown as early as 1183 in the Boldon Book survey of Bishop Pudsey. At that time the southern and eastern parts of the county had developed as a relatively prosperous region settled by servile cultivators. By contrast, the north-western zone was sparsely settled with development limited to a few favoured places such as Wolsingham and Stanhope in the Wear Valley where emphasis lay on the hunting preserves of the bishop and pastoral pursuits, rather than arable farming.

At the beginning of the 17th century the landscape of the south and east was dominated by large open fields worked in common. By the end of that century the landscape had changed to that of a regular pattern of enclosed fields and scattered farmsteads for in this area the climax of the enclosure movement occurred between the years 1625 and 1675, when the strips and furlongs and scattered holdings in the large open fields were replaced. In contrast, the northern and western areas remained a zone which was largely pastoral in nature. Townfields occupied only a small part of the available land. The rest was divided among individual farmholdings with large acreages of unenclosed, unimproved land which had to wait until the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries when the demands for grain provided the impetus for their enclosure by parliamentary act.

The Manor of Bishop Middleham lies in an almost central position in south eastern Durham (Fig. 2.) with the northern Cornforth vill (Fig. 6.) athwart the Magnesian Limestone scarp, Bishop Middleham occupying the dip-slope and the vill of Sedgefield lying on the glacial deposits of the Tees Lowlands. It is at its highest on the scarp at some 150 metres and at its lowest in the southern part of the Sedgefield lands at c80 metres. The gradual descent from the scarp to the lowlands, however, is broken by the Upper Skerne river which flows through the southern part of Middleham vill in an east-west direction before turning south, to the west of Sedgefield, to join the River Tees. The course of this river as it flows through the vill is marked by a deep valley, but more than this, under a previous drainage regime other channels have been cut some 2 kms north of the present stream which have created a number of limestone knolls that form significant physical features. These are illustrated in Figure 6 where the relief of the manor is shown. The village of Bishop Middleham lies at about 100 metres and straddles one of these channels. Cornforth occupies a sloping site on the northward-facing scarp at c115 metres, while Sedgefield is also situated at that altitude but occupies a site on the glacial Tees lowlands.

These physical and cultural environmental factors are important in a study of Middleham Manor for they show the processes that had been operative in producing the landscape features present in 1600. Changes which took place between then and 1850 were not free from the influences of the forces that had been at work in earlier times and nowhere are they more apparent than in an examination of settlement distribution and form.

Chapter 1

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C H A P T E R T W O

S E T T L E M E N T

SETTLEMENT

Middleham Manor - An Overview of Settlement Pattern and Forms

In his study of the green-villages of Durham,[1] H. Thorpe considers site factors and observes that few green-villages are sited directly on boulder-clay, the reason for this being that at the time of establishment such areas would be heavily forested. Where they are sited on boulder-clay it is usually very thin. On the other hand, many are sited on Magnesian Limestone, Coal Measure Sandstone and Millstone Grit rising above the drift cover. This he sees as well-drained ground with a vegetational cover that could be cleared relatively easily. Other sites are found in areas of lighter soils where, for example, sands and gravels occur in the boulder-clays. An examination of the area of Middleham Manor supports his findings (Fig. 7.). Both Cornforth and Bishop Middleham stand on Magnesian Limestone, while Sedgefield occupies a patch of sands and gravels. Of the associated settlements (Fig. 3.) Mainsforth, Bradbury and Mordon lie on sands and gravels, and Fishburn is situated on Magnesian Limestone. But other sites by 1820 were occupied by no more than individual farms in the cases of Layton and Swainston, by small clusters of two or three farms as at Foxton, Shotton, Butterwick, Embleton and Garmondsway, or halls as at Thrislington and Oldacres. In all cases, with the exception of Oldacres, these are deserted village sites and none of them lie on the lighter soils but on heavier boulder-clays, a fact which may have been of importance in a decision to abandon.

By the beginning of the 19th century the townships bore the names of villages or hamlets which existed then, or had existed in the past. Where two settlements were present, then the township bore a double name, for example, Foxton and Shotton, and Butterwick and Oldacres.

Although from medieval documents a name link between the medieval manor and the 19th century township can be established, to establish the presence of a nucleated settlement at the earlier date is more difficult. In medieval sources knowledge of the spatial organisation of the manor is assumed and only rarely is reference made to the existence of a village and its form. To prove the existence of villages at this time requires much detailed research into medieval documents. To show their existence at the beginning of the 17th century, however, enables the use of extant maps.

The earliest map of the county is 'Y Bishoprick' (1569) and the settlements marked on this map are shown on Table 2:1. This was quickly followed by Saxton's map of 1576. On this beautifully produced map the cartographer locates and makes a simple classification of the settlements.

Villages with Church

Sedgefield, Middleham and Embleton (Elmedon)

Villages without Church

Cornforth, Garmondsway, Thrislington, Mainsforth, Bradbury, Mordon, Foxton, Shotton, Old Akers, Butterwick, Fishburn

Halls (a castellated symbol)

The Isle, Layton, Hardwick.

Mordon, on his map of 1695, also makes a kind of classification as follows:

Villages (pictorial symbol)

Mainsforth, Cornforth, Middleham, Sedgefield, Foxton, Shotton, Butterwick, Oldacres, Elmedon

Settlements (marked by a small circle)

Thrislington, Mordon, Bradbury, Layton, Garmondsway

Hall (the symbol of a house)

The Isle, Hardwick

Christopher Maire's Map of the County Palatine of Durham (1711) is more detailed in its classification.

Market Town

Sedgefield

Parishes

Middleham and Sedgefield

Villages

Fishburn, Bradbury, Mordon, Foxton, Elmedon, Cornforth, Swainston

Hamlets

Shotton, Butterwick

Gentlemen's Houses

Mainsforth, The Isle, Oldacres, Layton

Table 2:1 shows the appearance of these settlements in a chronological sequence of these and other historic maps, the distributions are mapped in Figure 8 and reproduction is made of the relevant parts of two of these maps in Figure 9.

From these maps it can be seen that not too much weight can be placed on them as evidence of the kinds of settlements that existed as early as the end of the 16th century, for nothing is known of the criteria used by the cartographers in distinguishing between settlements, nor if they even had first hand knowledge of them. Probably the social status of the person living in the settlement was of more significance than the size of it. However, if the locational pattern of the settlements is compared with that on early 19th century (Fig. 3.) maps, it would appear that in the 16th century, for example, Saxton was looking at a distribution that was similar to that seen

by Greenwell some two hundred and fifty years later. From as early as 1569, then, it is possible to establish the presence of the pattern of nucleated settlement associated with the manor through the persistence of their names and their location on the early historic maps of the county. What these maps do not show with any degree of accuracy is any change of form that has taken place during this period for the information given by the cartographers is too limited to allow us to distinguish with confidence between villages, hamlets, halls and farms.

Another limitation of the maps is the absence of boundaries other than the inclusion of 'fenced' parklands which appear more symbolic than real. Township boundaries appear on Greenwell's map of 1820, but are less precise than those appearing on the 1839 Tithe maps and the first editions of the six inch and twenty-five inch Ordnance survey maps of 1857. It is from an examination of these maps from the first half of the 19th century that the boundaries on the maps of the townships have been based. It is argued that in this zone of relatively dense and early settlement, all available land would have been occupied by the vills and boundaries fixed at an early date. By 1647, there was no waste in Bishop Middleham, The East Moor and South Moor of Sedgefield were enclosed in 1639, as were the fields and moors of Cornforth in 1628. Boundaries would be a fact on the ground and in the minds of villagers long before cartographers recorded them. In the Bishop Middleham enclosure award lands bordering the vill are referred to as 'Cornforth Lands' or 'Mainsforth Ground', etc. The maintaining of the boundaries between the vills would be of great concern to the villagers for they had a much more direct relationship with the land than had the Bishop. They worked the lands and their livelihood depended upon them. The Bishop's itinerant stewards would rely on local knowledge of boundaries, and although their verbal

descriptions are sometimes ambiguous, in documentary sources, nevertheless, to the contemporary farmer there would be no confusion. Vill or township boundaries would tend to persist in this rural agricultural area at least until the spread of coalmining and the increase in population that came in the 19th century, and indeed it is not until the second half of the 19th century that serious adjustments occurred.

In the absence of cartographic evidence it would seem reasonable to use such an argument to allow the township boundaries of the early 19th century to be regarded as the same as those at the beginning of the 17th century. There is in existence, however, 'The platt of the Lodship of Layton in the county of durham measured by instruments in the 14th daye of apryll 1608 by Robert Farrow th'elder'.[15] A copy of this map is shown in Figure 10 alongside a map of the Layton Township fields in 1839. The interesting fact is that the plan shows itself to be remarkably accurate when compared with the later map. The irregular indentations of the township boundary are easily compared and the correlation is seen to be very high. This is not only praise for the skills of this early cartographer, but would also seem to support the thesis that the township boundaries would tend to persist and that the 1600 boundaries would probably be the same as those in 1850.

Figure 3 shows that by 1820 there were four categories of rural settlement that had evolved on the pattern that was already visible in Saxton's 1576 map. First, there were the villages that belonged to the Manor of Bishop Middleham, namely Bishop Middleham, Cornforth and Sedgefield. These were the largest settlements and of these Sedgefield was pre-eminent. Not only does a comparison of the plans (Figs. 12-30.) show this clearly, but reference to the population

table (Table 1:1) will show that the population of Sedgefield township was consistently more than double that of the other two in the first half of the 19th century. (The township of Cornforth saw an increase in population from 353 in 1831 to 1,040 in 1851, but this was due to the establishment of the coal-mining settlement of West Cornforth.)

Secondly, there were three settlements that are called hamlets for they contain within their plan form cottage elements and farmsteads. They are Bradbury, Fishburn and Mordon and, as can be seen from the plans (Figs. 15, 16, 17.) are smaller in size with township populations in 1821 of 152, 192 and 124 respectively.

Thirdly, there were seven settlements that can be described as farm clusters for they consist of groups of two or three farms with no apparent cottage element in their plan (Figs. 18-23.). These were Mainsforth, Butterwick, Embleton, Swainston, Foxton, Shotton and Garmondsway. The 1821 population figures for these townships were small with Mainsforth having 44 persons, Butterwick 54, Embleton (including Swainston) 102, Foxton and Shotton 63, and Garmondsway 35.

Fourthly, there were the sites which carried the names of townships and were occupied by halls or single farmsteads such as Oldacres, Thrislington, Layton, The Isle and Hardwick (Figs. 24, 25.).

The plans of these settlements are taken from the first editions of the twenty-five inch Ordnance Survey maps (1857) and in some cases the Tithe maps (1839) or earlier maps where available. The increase in population between 1821 and the dates of these maps is considered insufficient to alter the basis on which the classification has been made. Farms can be recognised by the angular arrangement of buildings often enclosing a stockyard and frequently by the presence of a circular-shaped protrusion from one of the buildings. This was a gin-gan, a circular-shaped building in which horses travelled round

and round operating a threshing and grinding mechanism. By the beginning of the 19th century this had replaced the communal corn mill of the sort that had caused so much concern to the Middleham Jurors in 1647. The cottage elements are shown as small plots occupied by buildings and usually possessing a separate plot number on the twenty-five inch Ordnance Survey maps.

It is evident when examining the plans of Cornforth, Bishop Middleham, Sedgefield, Mordon and Fishburn that there is regularity in their form which is suggestive of them having been planned and laid out in this fashion. These planned villages have long been recognised by geographers and have been a subject of research by a number of them. For example, H. Thorpe uses the shape of the green as the basis of a classification and recognised a) broad-green villages, b) street-green villages and c) those villages with greens of an indeterminate shape. Under this classification, Cornforth and Sedgefield are broad-green types and Bishop Middleham, Fishburn and Mordon are street-green types. He refers to the concentration of these planned green-villages in the south-eastern part of Durham as being due to the influence of lowland cultures.

The conclusions he came to were that the green villages of Durham developed from defensive enclosures on naturally open sites which would be small in extent in formerly forested country and that from place-name evidence, the sites were occupied in early anglian times. There is no evidence, however, that they had the planned element of the green.[1]

B. K. Robert's Classification of the Nucleated Rural Settlement in Durham County c1820, is much more comprehensive than Thorpe's selective treatment. He places Thorpe's main criterion, the green, in a secondary position. To him, the farms and dwellings and building

seem to be the important elements in a settlement, there-
plots w
,es these and their apparent arrangement in rows as a basis
fore
lassification. He recognises, for example, one row and two
f
lements with and without greens, and multiple row settlements
lygonal greens. The map of settlements so classified is
uced in Figure 4, and in Figure 11 the distribution of nucleated
lement in the Middleham area is produced using the same classifi-
ion.[2]

It is clear that there are irregular as well as regular forms present, but it is the regular forms that attract the interest, not only for the presence of the green and the rows, but also the apparent similarity of widths of building plots and the uniformity of their length in some of the regular settlements indicating a meticulous degree of planning with plots presumably laid out with a measuring rod. When this planned layout was undertaken is a matter of continuing research, but there is a growing body of evidence in favour of dates of origin during the medieval period. June A. Sheppard[3] suggests that the majority of regular villages in Yorkshire are likely to have originated during the 11th and 12th centuries, and that this accords with the findings of Roberts[4] in his work on Durham villages. The Harrying of the North and the laying waste of large numbers of manors by William I is seen as the event that provided some of the need to replace villages by new planned settlements.

In Middleham Manor and the associated vills, the five settlements already mentioned show strong evidence of row development. They have a regularity of layout that places them in the category of planned settlements which, if the suggested chronology is accepted, indicates that their demarcation took place in the 11th or 12th centuries. This would mean that the plot pattern at 1850 was even an inherited form

in 1600.

Other than these settlements, there are two that Roberts classifies as irregular clusters being Mainsforth and Bradbury. Whether these forms, pre-date, post-date, or are contemporary with the planned settlements is unknown.

The remaining settlements, Thrislington, Foxton, Shotton, Layton, Butterwick, Embleton, Swainston and the Isle are classified as deserted villages with form unknown. Of their dates of depopulation there is no record, and there is insufficient evidence from plans or on the ground as to whether they had the regular layout of planned settlements or not.

The village and hamlet settlements mapped in Figure 3 coincide with the planned settlements in Roberts' classification and would, therefore, seem to have an ancestry dating back to the medieval period. Bradbury was the only exception, but examination of the plan (Fig. 16.) shows evidence of row development on the northern side of the village street with tofts of a regular length. There is even a suggestion that toft widths are similar in size if the sub-divisions are ignored. With the exceptions of Mainsforth, Hardwick and Old Acres, the settlements that are shown as farm clusters, individual large farms, or halls, coincide with the deserted village sites. Of the previous form nothing is known, but the early 19th century settlements would seem to be recognisable forms that developed on these sites as a result of the post-medieval agricultural changes. The three exceptions all possess halls but Mainsforth hall also forms part of a farm cluster which sets it apart from the others. It also is an exception among the farm clusters for it has a hall and also because it does not occupy a deserted village site.

There are, clearly, features of the planned villages of the

Middleham Manor that make them unique, but before making individual analyses of the forms of these three settlements it would be well to indicate the general framework within which such an examination is being made, for there are features which also make them typical of nucleated rural settlements within the county at the beginning of the 19th century.

Most of the buildings that are found in Durham villages are post-1700 in date, with buildings older than 1600 being particularly rare. Field evidence from the Middleham villages would support this assertion for, with the exception of the churches, no building, with any degree of certainty, can be dated before 1700. The wall that surrounds the park in Bishop Middleham is probably pre-1600, for the park was reported as walled in 1647.

From an examination of villages and their plans, it can be seen that regular settlements are made up of a number of distinct morphological units. The individual buildings can be arranged in rows, sometimes in a regular fashion with an even building line and with houses or farmsteads abutting each other to form a continuous line of buildings. Alternatively, this building line can be open with gaps between the buildings or it can be uneven. Occasionally the building line may be stepped, which suggests the extension of the row at a later time (see the Sedgefield plan, Figure 12). Where two of these rows face each other across a green, there is established what Roberts has called a two-row settlement, and this form, with variations in individual instances, he sees as the most prevalent form of the planned villages in Durham.

The village green is seen as the product of arranging the village thus in rows. The width of the green may vary from no more than the width of the road to some hundred or more metres, and in area from

about half an acre to four acres. Sometimes the two-row village has the addition of a 'town-head row' at the broadest end of the green (see Sedgefield, Figure 12, and Mordon, Figure 17) which inhibits the extension of the settlement in that direction. Thorpe stressed two aspects about the functioning of the green. First, although it was common land, there were important grazing rights which appeared to belong to those with holdings fronting the green. Secondly, there were controls over the erection of buildings there. Buildings and activities were usually those from which the community benefitted, such as the smithy, the communal bakehouse, ponds, water pumps and stocks. Even games were allowed on the green, but only rarely is there evidence of the church being built there.

Leading from the green there is frequently a number of roads which are probably the later representatives of the driftways or cattle tracks that led to the rough grazing or pastures. Or perhaps they were the remains of the former pattern of tracks leading to the demesne, pasture, open fields and old enclosures that existed in these lowland townships in the middle ages. Examples of these roads can be seen emanating from the greens of Cornforth and Sedgefield, and although they are also present in Bishop Middleham, they are less obvious because other factors have complicated the road and lane network there.

The building plots that make up the territorial pattern of the rows are tofts or garths. A cursory examination of many plans shows that a marked degree of regularity exists with tofts appearing to have similar widths and that are sometimes equal in width proportionately. This is shown clearly in the plans of the Middleham settlements. The lengths of the tofts can vary but within the individual villages in this manor they are remarkably uniform, only deviating where the

toft tails are controlled by some physical or cultural feature such as the drainage channel in Bishop Middleham and the lanes in Sedgefield and Cornforth.

These, then, are the general features of nucleated settlements found in Durham County circa 1820. It is within the framework provided by such observations that an examination will be made of the forms of nucleated settlements within the parishes of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield at c1840.

Settlement Forms: The Evidence

The earliest maps of the settlements in the parishes are those on the Tithe maps of 1839 which were followed in 1857 by the Ordnance Survey First Editions. One exception is a map of Cornforth, c1828. Analysis of the change that had taken place between 1600 and 1850 is hampered from the outset through lack of early cartographic evidence. In the absence of this it would seem useful to adopt a generic approach using the framework of the general body of knowledge on settlement development. In some instances, it has been necessary to go beyond 1600 to the Medieval Period to account for form, while in other cases the method resorted to has been informed conjecture.

i) The Surviving Settlements

Bishop Middleham

Two main groups of factors have influenced the form of Bishop Middleham. They are the physiographic features of the site and those resulting from the presence, in the medieval period, of the Bishop as Lord of the Manor for the effect of t is was more than the inclusion of 'Bishop' in the name of the settlement.

From map inspection (Figs. 13, 26.) it is apparent that this is a planned village with evidence of the green and row development.

Thorpe described it as a street village of rectangular shape well enclosed with houses.[1] Roberts, on the other hand, recognised it as a settlement with well-pronounced row development but with an irregular as opposed to regular form.[2] Both of these descriptions would seem to be supported by plan evidence, but the irregularity of form becomes very apparent when making a field study for the striking feature of the village is a steep-sided, flat-bottomed, channel cutting through the village in a roughly east to west orientation. To the south of the village another drainage channel runs in a south-westerly direction, so isolating a limestone knoll.

Because of this system of drainage channels, the village can be divided into three distinct parts (Fig. 13.). The first is situated on the knoll which was previously the site of the medieval castle manor house but at the beginning of the 19th century held the church, the Old Hall and the Home Farm. The second part occupied the limestone plateau on the northern side of the channel. Here there was a long north row, the eastern portion of which faced a shorter south row across a street. The third part was the cottage development that had taken place in the bottom of the channel. This consisted of a short south row facing the western part of the north row across the green, and row development along the road connecting the green with the church. The green itself was the steeply sloping north side of the channel which had been occupied by a few buildings where it flattened out in the bottom.

There is evidence that the Bishops of Durham used the manor house between the 12th and 14th centuries. Bishop Pudsey may have stayed there when the demesne was in his own hands. From 1241 onwards, charters and letters were frequently dated from Bishop Middleham and Robert of Holy Island died there in 1283 as did Bishop Robert Kellaw in 1316.

But in 1348 the manor house was recorded as worth nothing beyond reprises.[5] After that date the Bishop's occupation closes. In the survey of 1647[6] the jurors reported, 'We present that there is a manor house in the form of a mansion house built of stone with a dove house, but the same totally demolished and the stones thereof not worth the pulling down'.

This castle manor house, lying to the south west of the village, on the knoll and standing in the park, would seem to have had as its means of access the small field Deep Well Close which formed part of the demesne. Roads from this entrance took both easterly and westerly routes across the channel to the demesne arable land to the north. The roads also gave access to the main routeway through the village, allowing communications in both easterly and westerly directions. The westerly of these roads also gave access to Foumards pasture, while the easterly if pursued took the traveller to Cornforth. To the south of Deep Well Close lay the park (Fig. 38.), mentioned above, in which the manor house stood and which probably originally held deer and rabbits for the use of the lord. In the 1647 survey, however, it is described in the following terms, 'We present that there is a park walled about cont by estimation 70 acres worth ann, 7s. every acre in toto £24-10-0. We find no deer, reed or fallow, conyes or other game, the same being disparked many years since, it is good for pasture.....The timber standing and growing on the premises is being all (ash?) is worth to be sold £15-0-0.....' This unit of park, manor house, and arable demesne influenced the form of the village considerably and although the manor house was no longer in existence, it formed a stable landholding unit through to at least 1850 with the wall of the park still present today.

Although the church is nowhere older than 1382, the list of

rectors and vicars dates back to 1146, so there was probably a previous church of a less-substantial nature. Its position on its present site reflects the influence of the bishop's residence at the time of its foundation for it occupies an elevated situation close to the entrance to the park and away from the most populous part of the village.

The building of the manor house and its occupation in the 12th century by the bishops, and the construction of the church at this time, would seem to suggest a period of socio-economic activity which may also have included the planned layout of the village which would accord with the findings of Roberts and Sheppard who suggest this period as the most likely time for the foundation of planned settlements.

If the Bishop's servants did, at this time, take up their rods and demarcate the village plots for the medieval tenants, then the evidence is at its most obvious in the north and south rows lying on the limestone plateau to the north of the channel. Short tofts can be observed in the north row with regular tail boundaries where they abut the demesne arable land. There is a suggestion that they may even have been taken from the demesne arable. Even though the plots have the appearance of being sub-divided, close examination reveals a regularity of width. In the south row the toft lengths are less regular, due to the steep falling away of the land at their tails into the drainage channel. A regularity of width is also displayed here. These plots probably represent the relict village holdings of tenants with husbandlands in the medieval township. R. A. Butlin asserts that in the lowland townships of Northumberland and Durham, these probably numbered between c10 and 30 with holdings of c26 to 80 acres.[7]

The plots lying in the bottom of the channel along the road from the church to the green and those facing the north row across the green

also show a regularity of layout although, in this instance, the plots are much smaller. These, perhaps, can be equated with another category of tenant in the medieval vill. Butlin states that present in the lowland townships there were also usually about 8, 9 or 10 cottagers who held a few acres in common fields and often paid for them in poultry or eggs.[7] According to Boldon Book there were in Middleham and Cornforth 26 villeins, 7 cottagers and 4 borders who held 4 tofts and crofts.

Cornforth

Of the three settlements, Cornforth would seem to be less influenced by factors other than those associated with its function as a planned nucleated rural settlement. That it has the elements of a planned village becomes evident when the maps (Figs 14,27.) are examined and the village is visited. The broad rectangular green, some three and a half acres in extent, is enclosed by rows of inward looking houses and farms. Thorpe's description of it as a broad-green village of rectangular shape enclosed with houses[1] would seem fitting, and Roberts' classification of it as a multi-row settlement with a polygonal green[2] adds a touch of precision. But even this does not indicate the extent of both the regularities and irregularities of this village. One factor more than any other has contributed to the persistence of its form, and that is the absence of a through routeway.

Its alignment along a north-south axis is in contrast to the other two settlements in the manor which have an east-west alignment. Its position on the north facing slope of the valley of the Coxhoe Beck gives it a different aspect from the other settlements. Although there are three access roads to the green, the main routeway passes the village to the east. As in the case of the other villages, by

1857 a building had occupied a place on the green. This was a school.

The village consists of an east and west row facing each other across a broad green with a north row facing the southern end where the south east corner has been occupied by a complex of buildings. Two tofts lying side by side face northwards to enclose the green. A notable feature is the evenness of the plot head line in the east, west and north rows. Regularity is further emphasised in the west row where the length of the tofts is remarkably uniform with an even boundary abutting the fields. This west row may be compared with the north row in Bishop Middleham, which is of a similar continuous nature. In Cornforth, however, the building line is open at the southern end of the row, and there are two empty tofts in the centre. In the east row the length of the tofts is less regular due to the curving nature of the road that bypasses the village, thus affecting the tails of the plots. Plot widths show a remarkable regularity throughout the village, a notable exception being the south eastern corner. This is the most irregular part of the village where the complexity of the building coverage hides any discernable regularity of pattern.

In summary, the west row is the dominant formal element facing, across the green, a shorter less regular, east row, with the north row forming a small head row feature. The irregular complex pattern at the southern end of the green offers some problem of analysis. The shape of the settlement, with the main access road entering this southern end of the green seems to suggest that this may have been the open end of the green which faced the arable fields and common pasture, and on to which the track ways converged. These irregular plots, and corresponding plots in the west row, may have been row extensions.

Sedgefield

In their examination of Sedgefield, both Thorpe and Roberts use the same classification as they do for Cornforth. The main difference between the settlements is their size for, as has been indicated already, and as can be seen from the plans, Sedgefield (Figs. 12,28.) is the largest of the three.

Unlike Bishop Middleham, Sedgefield has not the complications of physical features to inhibit its development, for although the church occupies the highest part of the village, the differences in elevation are small and any resulting slopes very slight. Nor has it the absence of a through routeway to fossilise its form, as is the case with Cornforth. On the contrary, main routes from the surrounding associated settlements converge on Sedgefield and it also lay midway between Stockton and Durham on the turnpike.

In form, it resembles, in a more complex way, the pattern displayed by Cornforth, although its axis is running east-west. The morphological elements comprise a north row, a south row and a west head row, round a broad rectangular green of some 4 acres area. The south row plot head line is broken by the rectory garden, while the north row, although stepped, is continuous. The west head row is of a long continuous nature with its back towards the Hardwick lands. The plot head line and tail line, although gently curving, are even. The eastern end of the green contains the church and displays a complexity of plot pattern similar to that in Cornforth.

Examination of the tofts shows a regularity of width both in the north and south rows and in the west head row. Toft lengths show regularity within small limits, but also show some significant irregularities. In the west head row, the varying lengths of the plot tails are the result of the presence of the lane there. In the

north row there are two steps in the plot head line which have pushed the building line further back.

Specific features of the Sedgefield plan are the occupation of the green by a group of buildings and by the church. The lanes that bound the village to the north and west are examples of the back lanes that are features of many street or green villages, allowing access to the toft tails and in this case, bypassing what must have been a very busy medieval village.

As early as 1312, the importance of Sedgefield as a nodal centre was confirmed when the bishop, while reserving to himself the tolls and customs, granted his tenants in Sedgefield village a Friday market and a five days fair annually on the feast of St. Edmund and the three days following. Before 1343, however, the Friday market had fallen into neglect, and unauthorised buying and selling took place on Sundays, which was subsequently prohibited at the request of the rector. A market was still held on Fridays in 1794, as was a yearly fair on the Friday after the feast of St. Edmund. By 1830, the market was 'but nominal'[8] and a fair for the sale of swine was held on the first Friday of each month. So, although Sedgefield had some claim to market status in the medieval period, its subsequent performance in that field never allowed it to attain any great importance. Roberts[9] recognised some villages that developed functions that set them aside from the mere rural village. These are multiple row settlements with evidence of intensification of building on the plots and the addition of further morphological units. Sedgefield contains much of this kind of evidence as do other settlements in the county. But such villages usually acquired urban status, for example, Stockton and Darlington. Others, like Sedgefield, never attained this status. It would seem, though, that the buildings on the green represent market colonisation

where the temporary market holdings became permanent and were demarcated as occurred in many medieval towns, Newcastle, perhaps, being a good local example.

The position on the green of the church, whose visible structure dates from 1245, is not so readily explained in terms of colonisation. The western boundary of the churchyard and the rectory garden could well have formed an earlier boundary to the extent of the village in the middle of the 13th century, with the eastern end open to the fields and pasture. In the north row there is a significant break in the building line which corresponds to this western boundary of the churchyard, and from then on the tofts to the east are a shorter length than are those to the west. The mid 13th century prosperity probably saw not only the construction of the church, but the extension of the village to the east. If this were so, then the building of the church in this position was not an act of colonisation of the green, but one of village extension.

The influence of Sedgefield as a small market centre is shown in the road pattern which tends to focus on the village (Fig. 29.). The pattern of routes is radial with links to Bradbury, Mordon, Foxton-Shotton, Layton, Butterwick, Embleton and Fishburn. There is no direct route to either Bishop Middleham or Cornforth. The route pattern in Bishop Middleham parish is circular with a road from Bishop Middleham to Mainsforth, Thrislington and Cornforth to the west, and another road back from Cornforth to Bishop Middleham. Whereas, in Bishop Middleham, main routes seem to bypass the villages, such is not the case with Sedgefield. Here the convergence of route-ways has reinforced the nodal advantages this large village had, situated in this open position in the undulating terrain of the Tees lowlands.

ii) The Associated Settlements

The planned layout was not only a feature of the bishop's villages, for both Mordon and Fishburn show the regular morphological elements that are present in the settlements already discussed.

Mordon (Fig. 17.) is a two-row settlement aligned in an east-west direction with a west head row. The green is rectangular in shape, is not so broad as that of Cornforth, but is approximately the same area. The south row has a typical plot pattern with tofts being of a similar length although varying in width. But plan examination would seem to suggest that there are four plots of the same width as plot 123. The building line is not continuous with evidence of empty tofts. The north row is pierced by the road from Bradbury, and the regular plot pattern seems to have disappeared with only traces of toft elements in plot 105. The more substantial farms (plots 94, 95 and 105) are situated here, which may account for the disappearance of the toft pattern for, in the south row, where the predominant form is dwellings, the plot pattern seems to have survived. The short west head row has inhibited extension in that direction, but it is more likely that the village has turned its back on the Mordon Carrs, an ill-drained area of the upper Skerne valley which lies in that direction. The eastern end of the green, which carries the road to Sedgefield, has remained open. This is where previous driftways and tracks would have converged on to the village green.

The rectangular morphological elements of Fishburn (Fig. 15.), another two-row settlement, occur in the south row where there is evidence of tofts of regular widths and lengths, although there is much subdivision by 1857. There is also a back lane joining the toft tails. The north row shows only very slight evidence of a similar toft arrangement in plots 147, 149 and 150. If there has been a

regular plot pattern it has almost disappeared, with substantial 19th century farms occupying irregular plots, a situation showing similarities with Mordon. Extension of the village to the east carries on this difference in plot arrangement between the north and south rows. There is no head row development and the green seems to have been colonised by a small close (plot 143).

Bradbury (Fig. 16.), by 1857, was an irregular cluster of farmsteads with a number of cottages on small plots. There is, however, some evidence of regularity for there is present a small north row of four elongated plots (numbers 70, 73, 74 and 75 on the plan) which have similarities with tofts seen elsewhere. There is also present a small rectangular green. The settlements that have been referred to as farm clusters are similar in form to Bradbury, but do not have the small cottages present which suggests that, had not toft desertion taken place, then Bradbury may have been typical of the smaller settlements in the area. On the plan of Foxton (Fig. 22.), for example, plot numbers 86, 89 and 91 may be the 19th century remains of a plot system similar to that in Bradbury.

The farm clusters are settlement forms that are the product of the change from the co-operative system of medieval agriculture to the methods of the individual yeoman farmer of the 19th century. The farmstead, with its enclosed stockyard, replaced the village with its enclosed green. The gin-gan was an addition to the farmstead that enabled the farmer to grind his own corn, rather than rely on the co-operative mill belonging to the manor. The farmstead also included cottages for labourers in its structure. The labourer had previously held, at least, a village toft as his stake in the land, but changes that came after the 14th century made his presence there anachronistic. The dramatic fall in the medieval population had taken away the

pressure on the landlords to concentrate on arable production in the lowland areas of Durham. The Malthusian check of the 1340s had given agriculture a breathing space during which reorganisation inevitably took place, the weakest elements in the socio-economic structure paying the greatest price. The effect this had on settlement form was the removal of village tofts where the landowner had sufficient individual control. That some, but not all, landlords did this is seen in the form of the associated settlements in the Middleham area. When the depopulation took place is unknown, but in 1857 Mordon, Bradbury and Fishburn, for example, were still in existence as hamlets with cottage settlement. Others, such as Foxton, Shotton, Butterwick, Embleton and Garmondsway had been reduced to farm clusters with no trace of cottage elements.

Yet, although the need to have a nucleated settlement as a nodal place, where the agricultural workers of the township were housed, had disappeared, the new farmsteads continued to be located in clusters. This unwillingness of the farmers to disperse their dwellings seems to have been a typcial response after the enclosures of the 17th century for Roberts[2] points out that there is no evidence for a general movement out of farmsteads to fields after early enclosures in lowland Durham. The patterm of tracks and lanes must have reinforced the village site as a place from where access to the fields was at its easiest. In these small townships the construction of new farmsteads and access lanes would be expensive in terms of land, materials and time. Also, a co-operative system that had functioned for generations would have bred in people a gregarious dependence which would not readily be broken down overnight. The similarities in form of these farm clusters can be seen on the series of plans produced in Figures 18 - 23.

Mainsforth (Fig, 20.) differs from the rest of the settlements in this category for it has a hall. In 1823, Robert Surtees, the owner of the estate, described the settlement in the following terms. 'Mainsforth occupies a dry, gravelly and limestone soil yet girded on the north west and south by the marshy level of the Skerne. The village consists of seven scattered tenements (and four centuries ago it contained no more), and is surrounded by old farm enclosures.' An examination of the 1857 plan shows that his description would well fit the situation then. Apart from the hall, there are four farmstead units and two small tenements (plots 52 and 76). His mentioning that the form of the settlement was the same in 1457 begs the question of whether or not its form changed round about that time. It is at this period that M. W. Beresford maintains that village depopulation was beginning to increase. The hall, according to Pevsner, is probably early 18th century and has had little effect on the form of the settlement other than to add a further morphological element.

The word 'hall' appears on the 1857 maps in describing and locating the residences of the local gentry as opposed to the homesteads of the farmer, who either occupied the land or held a small farm in his own right. These halls are probably better designated by the early 19th century historians when they refer to them as 'mansion houses', or by the cartographer, Maire, who calls them gentlemen's houses.

On the 1857 map, Hardwick Hall forms a prominent feature set in its ornamental park. The estate is mentioned in Boldon Book and the Hatfield survey, but there is no indication as to the nature of the settlement. On Saxton's 1576 map it is shown as a hall and is so shown on subsequent maps until 1768 when Armstrong fails to record it. When Hutchinson wrote in 1794, there was no village of Hardwick

and he described in detail the pleasure gardens a Mr. Burdon had constructed but stated that, 'Mr. Burdon had not yet thought proper to build a mansion house'. Presumably Mr. Burdon had removed a previous hall in order to construct his pleasure gardens. By 1857 the present hall had been built and the estate formed part of the township of Sedgefield, although it had not formed part of Middleham manor.

The Isle was a freehold manor that had been linked with Bradbury as early as 1343. It was recorded as possessing a hall in 1575 by Saxton, and is included as such on the other historical maps up to and including Kitchin in 1750, but on the 1857 map appears as little more than a farmstead.

Of Thrislington Hall, William Hutchinson writes in 1794 that the mansion house was 'that of a superior style in the beginning of the last century. (c1600) The mansion is now going to ruins.' Recent excavations by the University of Durham Archaeology Department have shown this to be the site of a deserted village and the historical maps from 1600 onwards consistently show it as a small nucleated settlement rather than a hall. Desertion seems to have occurred by about 1500 (Fig. 24.).

By 1857, Old Acres is mapped as 'Old Hall', although among the early cartographers it is only seen by Maire as such when he maps it as a gentleman's house along with Mainsforth and The Isle.

The remaining settlements are Layton and Swainston which were recorded on the 1857 maps as individual farmsteads. However, both Saxton in 1576, and Maire in 1711, show Layton as a gentlemen's house.

By 1857 other farmsteads not associated with nucleated settlement sites had been graced by the name of 'hall' and these are shown on the distribution map, Figure 30.

iii) The Deserted Settlements

The settlements discussed above all bear the names of, and are situated in, old townships. They also, with the exceptions of Old Acres and Hardwick, are villages or hamlets, or occupy the sites of deserted villages. The known deserted sites in the parishes of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield are Thrislington, Garmondsway, Butterwick, Layton, Embleton, Swainston, Foxton, Shotton and The Isle (Fig. 11.).[2] When such settlements as these were depopulated is a question that continues to occupy the researches of geographers, historians and archaeologists for the answers lie in documentary evidence and in the soil itself. The inexorable increase of the medieval population in the 12th and 13th centuries reached its peak in the first half of the 14th century. The close pattern of nucleated rural settlements in south east Durham, taking into account the deserted sites, was the result of this period of population boom. Village desertion occurred subsequent to the catestrophic decline in population in the mid-14th century, a process which had accelerated by the time the Tudors were ruling England. M. W. Beresford[10] states that post-plague depopulations in the second half of the 14th century, purely as a result of the reduction of the number of people, were few and far between. The late 14th century saw a continuation of the medieval agricultural system with, perhaps, more land given over to pasture than previously and villages being occupied by fewer people rather than being abandoned. Village tofts would be vacated, rather than whole villages. The great depopulation probably came after 1450, when there was a great change in land-use from arable to pasture to raise sheep to supply the thriving woollen industry. The Tudor anti-enclosure literature of the early 16th century fought against this change in land-use and legislation against village clearance has meant that documentary

evidence proving the existence of many of these settlements has been removed.

It has already been suggested that many of the farm clusters occupying deserted sites are the result of the process of reduction of the village size by the abandonment of the village tofts. In some cases, as at Thrislington, Swainston and Layton, for example, sites were only occupied by one farmstead in 1857 (Figs. 24, 25.). Writing in 1794, William Hutchinson states that Thrislington 'retains no mark of a village, one house only remaining'. This use of words implies the existence of a former village, a fact that has been supported by archaeological findings. 'Of Swainston,' he says, '.....we find nothing memorable except, near one of the farmhouses called Low Swainston, the vestiges of several houses which appear formerly to have been a considerable village.' Because of the lack of documentary and cartographic evidence, the process and date of such abandonment can only be placed within the general framework of Beresford's chronology. In the case of Layton, however, there is available evidence that takes us nearer to the event.

Reference has already been made to the existence of an estate map of Layton, surveyed by instrument in 1608 by Robert Farrow. Accompanying this are also two folios referring to the plan.[11] The map, Figure 10, has been drawn from the original plan, reference being made to the work of M. W. Beresford,[12] and the site of the settlement has been enlarged. 'The scyte of the houshes' probably indicates the place where 'ye garden house and curtledge are not measured', which was stated at the end of Farrow's abstract. This site was occupied by the farmstead of Layton in 1857. In 1608 it was bounded on the west by the Pond Garth and to the south by three closes, one of them Orchard Close, which abut what appears to be a narrow green on the

Stockton to Durham Turnpike. Farrow has named this the Streate Lonng (probably 'lonning'). To the south west of this lie the Hye Garths which, at the present time is a field displaying the typical hummocky ground of a deserted village site. Beresford gives the evidence of crop marks from aerial photographs which indicate the presence of former houses.

Clearly, the village had been deserted by 1608, but further research by Beresford enabled him to report that, 'Deposition in a lawsuit of 1586 stated that the witnesses knew that there had been a town (i.e. village) of East Layton earlier in the century.' Unfortunately, Farrow did not include any buildings on his plan, although there appears to have been one present. In 1576 Saxton's map shows Layton as only a house and along with Beresford's evidence this would suggest that the depopulation of Layton took place, at the latest, in the first half of the 16th century, which would accord with the period of Tudor protestation.

This limited evidence suggests that at least the depopulation of Layton village fell into Beresford's post 1450 period of village desertion. It would seem, on the other hand, slender evidence on which to base a chronology for the depopulation of the other sites under consideration. But in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is assumed that desertion did take place in the Tudor period or earlier, a date after 1600 being unlikely for by that time the royal authority had been established through the parish system and the local magistrates. Illegal acts of depopulation would have been very difficult to get away with. Settlement development on these sites between 1600 and 1850 took place on sites that had already been depopulated by this earlier date.

iv) Dispersed Settlement

The establishment and abandonment of nucleations are not the only processes involved in the creation of the rural settlement pattern of south east Durham. By 1857 the townships were characterised by distributions of individual farmsteads. In some of them, farmsteads formed the vestiges of nucleations (i.e. farm clusters) with only limited dispersion, for example Foxton and Shotton, where only two dispersed farmsteads are present in the township (Fig. 30.). At one extreme, Thrislington only possesses one farmstead occupying the site of the old village with no dispersion, while at the other extreme Sedgefield has some twenty farmsteads scattered throughout its lands.

In the period before 1600, little is known about the process of dispersion in these Durham Lowlands and even in the years after this, the spread of single farms 'is shrouded in a mist of generalisations'.[2] The enclosure of the open fields was perhaps the most overt act that signalled the end of the medieval system of agriculture. In this area the process of enclosure by agreement was underway by about 1585, and was almost completed by the end of the 17th century. A date of about 1600, therefore, is a valid historic marker separating those processes of dispersion belonging to a medieval and Tudor period, and those belonging to the period of Chancery Decree and Parliamentary enclosures.

In Middleham Manor all enclosures were by agreement in the 17th century. Bishop Middleham was the latest to be enclosed in 1693, and Sedgefield award was made in 1634, confirmed by Chancery Decree in 1636. Of Cornforth, some uncertainty seems to surround its date for there is no reference to it in the Halmote Court records. W. E. Tate states, however, that its award was made in 1621 and confirmed by decree in 1624,[13] although E. M. Leonard gives evidence

to support a 1628 date.[14]

There is no evidence that dispersion shown in Figure 30 was an immediate result of enclosure and in some cases farmstalls stayed on the village tofts. In the case of Cornforth, there is evidence of both dispersion and of farmstalls remaining in the village. The map (Fig. 31.) shows that in 1839, on the occasion of the Tithe Award, there were certainly land-ownership links between the toft holdings in the village and landownership units in the fields. Interestingly, the land-ownership units in the distant, peripheral parts of the township have no toft holdings in the village. Correspondingly, the unhatched tofts are held by individuals with no holdings in the fields. The toft marked X, for example, was owned by John Wharton and occupied by the Cornforth Colliery Owners. By 1839, the links between the village tofts and the lands were still strongly in evidence and there were also suggestions that holdings further away from the village had relinquished holdings in the village.

A similar situation can also be seen in Bishop Middleham (Fig. 32.). Although the tithe information on ownership of the village tofts is incomplete and, therefore, the pattern is fragmentary, it is sufficient to show that holdings in the village were associated with old enclosed lands as well as those in the open fields. For example, William Russell's holdings in the east of the township consisted of two farms. East House Farm was an old freehold unit, while Sprucely was a leasehold unit and both have corresponding tofts in the village. Similarly, Island Farm is an old copyhold farm held by the clergy of Pittington, Castle Eden and Hartlepool, and it too has a corresponding village toft. None of these was part of the open fields in 1693 (Fig. 38.).

Dispersion of farmsteads from village toft to enclosed fields

would seem to have been a process that certainly took place from 1628 onwards, where sites in former open fields and common pasture were being occupied. At what date farmsteads were dispersed to the old enclosed lands requires research into pre-1600 documents for evidence which may be very difficult to find.

Conclusions

From the evidence of the distribution of settlement names on the historic maps of the county there would seem little doubt that the settlement pattern that could be mapped in 1820 was essentially the same as that in 1600. The unit of township and settlement bearing the same name would seem to be a product of the medieval period (or even earlier) and has persisted not only until 1850 but until the present day. This is not to say that change has not taken place for, in two instances, the township has disappeared to be amalgamated with a large neighbouring township. The Layton and Hardwick estates, both freeholdings, had been absorbed by Sedgefield township by 1850, although still retaining their old names in the farms and the hall. When this took place is uncertain but neither Hutchinson nor Surtees, in their early histories, mention them as townships, although they treat them as separate estates. Changes in territorial organisation that took place between 1600 and 1850 should be placed within the framework of stability presented by the names, boundaries and settlements sites that persisted throughout these two hundred years.

Although there is much in the forms of the settlements which makes them remarkable, attempts have been made to identify characteristics which would allow general classifications to be made. This has shown that they differ in size, for there are villages, hamlets, farm clusters, single farmsteads and halls, occupying what, in most cases, have been the former township settlement sites. These variations,

in the first instance, are the results of limitations placed upon settlers by favourable or unfavourable site and situation factors. For example, it has been demonstrated that the villages and hamlets occupy the lighter soils of the limestones and sands and gravels, while the smaller settlements are generally situated on boulder clays. Sedgefield has enhanced its status not only because of the physical advantages of its site, but also because of its situation vis-a-vis the surrounding settlements. In the development of a settlement, however, it is the human decision that is the prime initiator of change and this can be the result of the action of the group or of the individual. In any event, it is the result of the complex interaction of environmental forces - physiographic, economic and cultural. Decisions, however, are the result of the analysis of conditions as they are perceived and not necessarily as they are in reality. Historical hindsight enables a vision that allows a much more objective view of process in the past, than was available to contemporaries. It is important to remember that changes in settlement form resulted from decisions that were rational at that time, for it is easy to judge historic decisions in the light of 20th century knowledge which is no less subjective.

When attention is given to the process of change and the settlements are looked at in terms of plot demarcation and abandonment, the results become very evident in the plans. On looking at the process of desertion, for example, on the one hand there are empty tofts visible in a number of the villages and hamlets (e.g. Cornforth and Mordon). On the other hand, the whole village of Layton has been depopulated, the site being occupied by a single farmstead in 1850. In between these two extremes, there are a number of instances where former village sites have been reduced to no more that two or three

farmsteads (e.g. Foxton, Shotton, Embleton). But change was not all of this negative sort, for there is also evidence of stability in the persistence of plot patterns. This is the case in the major settlements of Bishop Middleham, Cornforth and Sedgefield, but is also present, to a lesser degree, in Mordon and Fishburn. Sedgefield shows evidence of intensification of plot development that went with its increased socio-economic status.

Variation in the forms visible in 1850 are not only the results of processes of change operating between the years 1600 and 1850, for they began at the very moment the first agricultural settler built his first temporary shelter. How far the plot layout in 1850 can be traced back in time depends on the availability of cartographic and documentary evicence. Clearly, cartographic evidence is most valuable, but in the Middleham Manor and its associated settlements there is no map earlier than c1820 that gives any indication of settlement form. The question of projecting this pattern backwards is one that presents difficulties in the case of documentary sources for rentals and call books lack the detailed information to allow the plots to be indentified. A detailed study of the Halmote Court Books may offer some reward but this would be a very lengthy piece of research. Failing these approaches, recourse must be made to the general body of knowledge concerning settlement studies.

Although lack of precise historical data prevents a detailed chronology of settlement form, reference to the work of such geographers as H. Thorpe, B. K. Roberts and J. A. Shepperd, has shown that these settlements are typical in their regularities and irregularities of the villages found in Durham and North Yorkshire. On the evidence available, the chronology of desertion and depopulation would seem to equate with that of M. W. Beresford. The forms of the

farm clusters, the single farmsteads and halls on the old village sites, would seem to be the result of processes that began with the agricultural changes of the 15th and early 16th century.

By 1600, the major processes of the planned layout and of village depopulation had been accomplished. Changes that took place between then and 1820 were within the established pattern of 1600 and involved only minor plot subdivisions and amalgamations. Even after 1820, and until 1850, when the pace of industrialisation had increased, there was not a great deal of change in the plans of the settlements. The appearance of the 18th century farmstead with its easily-recognised form, was perhaps the most significant addition to the village toft and enclosed field alike, and must have affected the landscape considerably.

The problem of dating the dispersion of the individual farmstead is closely linked with the process of enclosure which was, in some cases, medieval in origin, and in others, 17th century. It has been shown that the village toft originally held the farmstead and although there is evidence that farms were enclosed in both Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham before the Chancery Decree enclosures, at what date the farmer left his toft to occupy a homestall in his fields is uncertain. Similarly, the date of dispersion after the 17th century enclosures is also uncertain, although a Halmote Court map of 1788 (Fig. 61.) shows the Farnless farmstead in the fields, but this occupied land that had been enclosed at an early date. Other farmsteads remained on their village tofts or in farm clusters occupying the old village sites.

In 1600 the plot patterns in the surviving settlements represented the private, clearly demarcated holdings of the tenants. In the bishop's villages of Cornforth, Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham,

these private plots formed only a fraction of the tenant holdings in the township lands, the greater parts of which were shared consisting of open fields, pastures and moors. The 17th century was to seethe abandonment of the practice of shared lands worked in common in favour of the enclosed farm worked by the individual, a process which will be examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

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C H A P T E R T H R E E

O W N E R S H I P A N D O C C U P A T I O N
O F T H E L A N D

OWNERSHIP OF THE LAND

The Tithe Awards for Cornforth, Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield were made in 1839 and the ownership of the land recorded there enables the construction of the maps Figures 35, 40 and 43. Details of ownership of the land at the beginning of the 17th century is not so readily available. The most useful documents are the enclosure awards of 1636 for Sedgefield and 1693 for Bishop Middleham. Neither of these has a map, the allotments being recorded by verbal description, so identification of the plots presents a problem. However, a reconstruction of the allotments has been made by an earlier research worker.[1] These have been recorded on Halmote Court First Edition 1:2500 and 1:10560 Ordnance Survey maps based on the 1857 field boundaries. Both the allotments at enclosure and the former open fields have been identified. The writer has checked the enclosure awards against these maps and would agree with the conclusions. On this basis, maps of the township lands of Bishop Middleham in 1693 and Sedgefield in 1636 have been drawn (Figs. 33, 34, 38, 39.) and these show the openfields, common pasture, common waste and the allotments at enclosure.

The absence of an enclosure award for Cornforth in the Halmote Court records does not enable a similar treatment for that township. Since the tenure of much of the land in Cornforth is leasehold, then many of the holdings are recorded in Bishop Cosin's Survey (1661), and in Old Notitia Books in the Miscellaneous Books of the Halmote Court, and reference will be made to these to establish existence of the holdings as far back as possible.

These maps give a picture of the township lands before and after the enclosures in the 17th century and also in the mid-19th century. Although these are static cross sections, taken together they do indicate the kinds of changes that had taken place during these two hundred years.

It is acknowledged that much could have occurred that these maps do not show, for example, there may have been a time during this period when engrossing occurred at a rapid pace. It is maintained, however, that they show a general trend in the changes in the ownership of the land in the townships of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield based on the cartographic and documentary evidence available, the limitations of the retrospective projection of boundaries acknowledged, and that such a trend is useful in establishing a framework for the examination of individual farms.

Before proceeding to a detailed discussion of the landownership patterns, it would be useful to comment on the terms being used. Within the manorial boundaries there were those lands which were the bishop's and those that were held freehold and owned by individuals. Of the latter there is little information in the Halmote Court records, since they were relatively free from court control. The bishop's lands were held by individuals in copyhold or leasehold tenure. In copyhold tenure rights to the land were by copy of the court roll. This was the oldest of the tenures and had attached to it, in these lowland townships, labour services or payment in kind, but by the beginning of the 17th century these had been substituted by a money rent. Such owners were customary tenants and in the lowland areas of Northumberland and Durham in the medieval period, usually held farms of between 20 and 80 acres which consisted of riggs or lands (usually less than half an acre) scattered and intermixed in the common arable fields, and dales (strips) in the meadows with rights of pasture in the common pasture and pasture waste. Such a holding was termed a husbandland and each customary tenant held one but could hold two, three or even a half.[2]

Leasehold tenure was by lease and at the beginning of the 17th century these could be for lives or for years, a system which persisted

until the mid-19th century. The bishop's demesne, for example, was not being worked by himself in the 16th century, but was being leased for lives.

A category of very small tenant holding was the cottage. Cottagers only held a few acres in the common fields for which they paid in kind or labour services (other than ploughing), although again, by the 17th century, these had largely been substituted by a money rent. They could be held freehold as well as copy and lease.

In 1600 the bishop held the Great Estate by grace of the monarch. Those holding lands from him on the tenures already described, as well as the freeholders, are termed landowners. They could work the land themselves or lease their holdings to tenant farmers who are termed occupiers.

During the period under study, tenurial changes took place and by the beginning of the 19th century some of the leasehold tenures had been enfranchised by the bishop, usually at a purchase price of twenty-one times the annual rent (Figs. 46,47.). In 1800, the bishop obtained an act of parliament for enfranchising copyhold or customary estates and for the sale of several quit rents, farm rents, acre rents, etc., issuing out of freehold and copyhold estates. Rents out of freehold estates were discontinued at a purchase price of twenty-one times the annual rent and for enfranchisement of copyhold estates the following conditions were to be fulfilled:

a) Twenty-one years purchase to be paid for quit rents, etc.,

b) Three times the amount of demise or admittance fine,

c) One third value of timber trees and wood,

d) One year's purchase or value of premises for the enfranchisement and change of tenure into an absolute freehold estate freed and discharged from all suit of court services and other restrictions,

e) The mines, minerals and quarries within and under the ancient inclosed lands and premises to be enfranchised are to be reserved to the bishop and his successors.[3]

In so doing he presented the opportunity for a change in the system of medieval tenure that had persisted until that date. The tithe system was to linger a further 40 years before the first step in its demise was taken in 1839, when the tithes were commuted for a fixed payment.

These, then, are the historical factors that are of significance to the following examination of the patterns of land-ownership from 1600 to 1840.

Sedgefield

The enclosure award for Sedgefield (1636) dealt with the division of some 2,675 acres of open fields, pasture and moors. These were divided and allotted in lieu of 84 oxgangs and 21 cottages previously held in common. A list of individual holdings in oxgangs and cottages is shown in table 3:1 with the subsequent allotments alongside. Assuming that all cottages received a similar allotment, an attempt has been made to see if there was any standardisation in the acreage awarded for an oxgang (Table 3:2), but there seems to be little consistency for the award per oxgang ranges from 21 acres in the case of Robert Johnson, to 38 acres in the case of Thos Wright, a range of some 17 acres. The large landowner does not seem to have gained at the expense of the small, for Nicholas Freville, the largest, has only an average of 24 acres per oxgang, whereas Richard Rey, holding only one oxgang, has 32 acres 1 rood 38 perches for it. Nor does there seem to be any equality when comparing equal holdings. Thomas Smith, Robert Johnson and Thomas Wright all surrendered 7 oxgangs, yet were allotted 233 acres, 145 acres and 266 acres respectively in lieu. These figures would seem to

suggest that some owners fared better than others in terms of acreage. Whether or not such factors as quality of land, cost of improvement and accessibility were taken into account is not known. Such enclosures are rightly called enclosures by agreement, for such disparity must have been the result of give and take allowing claimants to achieve personal aims.

But under an open-field system of agriculture where holdings and tenure dated back, at least, to the medieval period, the oxgang as a unit was not a constant measure and had come to mean a holding of an approximate size which needed to be estimated and surveyed on enclosure. The recording of a tenant's holding in terms of acres, roods and perches was of major importance in the identification of a landholding. The next important event was to equate this acreage with a territory when the formerly open fields and moors were divided and the holding was given a formal identity, and tenure was linked with a clearly demarcated plot rather than with an individual. What this meant to the township of Sedgefield in terms of reorganisation of territory is shown in Figure 34, where the allotments at enclosure are shown within the pattern of open fields and moors.

There are a number of holdings that did not appear in the award. The largest of these were the lands of the former townships of Hardwick and Layton which were not included in the division. There are two holdings in the northern part of the township (Fig. 33.) on the border and two smaller plots in peripheral positions, one in the South Field and one in the West. Two small closes can also be seen on the East Moor. These old closes are the result of enclosure that probably took place in the medieval period and are a common feature of the township lands of lowland Northumberland and Durham.[2]

When looking at allotment size, it would seem that the smaller

allotments of under 15 acres tend to have two main locations. The first group are those that are situated near the village and can be found in West Field, Cramyre, Ryall and Hauxley. The second group are those found in the East Moor where a series of small allotments of about 5 acres each were laid out and were mapped on the first editions of the Ordnance Survey maps as Cottage Allotments. Thirteen were laid out for the rector and seven for other cottagers in the township.

Attempts have been made to mark out plots so that they would be adjacent to plots held by the same individual. Examples of this can be found in the South Field (S1) and South Moor (SM1) where Roland Nixon's allotments lie side by side, and in East Moor (EM10) and Hauxley (H6) where Richard Rey's two allotments are adjacent. In the West Field (W2) and North Field (N2) Nicholas Freville has obtained allotments next to Hardwick, while in the East Moor the rector has managed to link his allotment and cottages in the East Moor with his Glebe via a narrow field.

The most important landowner in 1636 was Nicholas Freville, for not only did he own Hardwick Estate, but he was also allotted 226 acres situated in the open fields and moors of Sedgefield. He received 72 acres in the West Field and another 72 acres in the North Field, both adjacent to Hardwick, so extending that estate considerably. The presence of a group of small allotments in the West Field prevented him from extending his lands to the village boundary and the turnpike. These small holdings were to disappear by 1839 (Fig. 35.) by which time the extension of the boundary had been achieved. Although it would appear at first glance that these holdings were an inhibiting factor to the extension of Hardwick, the division of this field into such small holdings suggests that this may have been a ploy which gained advantages for all. The total acreages of Conyers and the two Johnsons were

about 150 acres each. It would seem unusual that a small part of each of these should be allotted in the West Field (13, 15 and 15 acres respectively). There are also four allotments of 3, 4, 4 and 8 acres. These may express a desire for a paddock near the village, but other fields near the village could have fulfilled this need. It would seem a stronger probability that the allotments were made so that Nicholas Freville or his successors could buy them so extending Hardwick and at the same time providing capital that would be needed to enclose the allotments and hedge the fields of the vendors.

Nicholas Freville had inherited the Hardwick Estate from George Freville to whom it had been granted by Elizabeth I on 26th May, 1580 for services in the Rebellion of the Earls of Westmorland and Northumberland. It remained in the family through the female line until 1748, when Thomas Lambton died leaving six daughters. The estate was sold to Mr. John Burdon, who later sold it to William Russell in the 1780s. The Layton Estate was also acquired about this time. But the Hardwick estate also proved voracious in the township lands of Sedgefield. In extending the Hardwick Park Lands the following 1636 allotments had been absorbed by 1839 and were in the hands of William Russell:

Owner	Field	A	R	P	Map Reference
John Chipchase	North	33	3	12	N4
John Gregson	North	13	3	36	N6
Robert Johnson	West	15	0	0	W1
Roland Nixon	West	8	0	0	W3
Robert Bellerby	West	3	0	0	
John Johnson	West	15	0	0	W4
Sir Ralph Conyers	West	13	0	0	W5
William Elstobb	West	4	0	0	W6

Robert Watkin	West	4	0	0	W6
	TOTAL	109	3	8	

Other acquisitions of the Hardwick Estate that formed part of the 1636 award were:

Owner	Field	A	R	P	Map Reference
Robert Johnson	South Moor	60	0	0	SM7
Thomas Smith(part)	South Moor	42	2	7	SM5
Leo. Middleton	Cramyre	58	0	5	C2
Sir Ralph Conyers	Hauxley	71	0	19	H5
John Johnson	Ryall	49	2	11	R5
Thomas Wright(part)	Hauxley	40	1	2	H3
John Harrison	Ryall	53	1	1	R4
Ralph Ord	Ryall	16	3	2	R9
Richard Rey	East Moor	21	2	20	EM10
Richard Rey	Hauxley	16	2	18	H6
	TOTAL	429	3	5	

When these Sedgefield acquisitions are added to the award of Nicholas Freville (226.1.13) the total of some 767 acres is the measure of the engrossing achieved by the owners of this estate. In all cases, with the exception of part of Thomas Smith's South Moor allotment and part of John Johnson's Ryall Field allotment, the lands taken over were complete allotments as demarcated in 1636. There is no instance of Hardwick estate getting rid of land.

A 'V' shaped parcel of land in the north of the township is an old copyholding previously enclosed, belonging to William Russell. Reference to the land-ownership map of Bishop Middleham (Fig. 40.) will show that this adjoins William Russell's old enclosed lands in that township.

These also adjoin the northern boundary of the Hardwick Park lands, so enlarging the area by some 371 acres with a further 243 acres elsewhere in Bishop Middleham. In Cornforth, however, he is poorly represented with a holding of only 7A 3R 8P.

This did not represent the total of the Russell estate in 1839, for the tithe awards for Foxton and Shotton, Bradbury and Morden, show considerable holdings there, while there were others elsewhere in the county. The following is a summary of the part of the Russell estate in the parishes of Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham in 1839:

The Russell Estate in the Parishes of Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham in 1839

Township	A	R	P
Sedgefield	754	1	36
Bishop Middleham	614	0	18
Cornforth	7	3	8
Bradbury	99	0	27
Morden	398	2	21
Foxton and Shotton	1770	2	21
TOTAL	3644	3	11

The largest award in the division of 1639 went to Thomas Wright which was (apart from 1 acre in the South Field) in two allotments lying at each side of the Rectorial Glebe, one being the East Close (150A 0R 6P) and the other a part of the Hauxley Field (H3) (126A 3R 22P). By 1839 the Hauxley Field allotment had been divided into three holdings as follows (Fig. 35.):

Owner	A	R	P
William Russell	40	1	2
Frances Newburn John Coates	48	0	3
John Lynn	41	1	24
TOTAL	129	2	29

The East Close had persisted as a stable landholding and was in the hands of the Dowager Lady Elizabeth Barrington who, in 1839, was the second most important landowner in Sedgefield.

Another substantial owner at enclosure was Thomas Smith whose award increased in size by 1839 with the acquisition of seven fields to add to the Ryall allotment (R1). The award by that time, however, was in three hands as follows (Fig, 35.):

Owner	Field	Map Reference	A	R	P
Dowager Lady Barrington	North	N5	38	1	31

Dowager Lady Barrington	South Moor	SM5	98	0	1	
William Russell	South Moor	SM5	42	2	7	
Thomas Davison	Ryall	R1	62	1	28	
			34	0	21	From old enclosure
			6	2	36	From North Field

The importance of the Dowager Lady Barrington as a landowner in 1839 can be seen by the acquisitions already mentioned, but the following 1636 allotments were also part of her estate by them.

Owner	Field	A	R	P	Map Reference
Roland Nixon (part))	South Moor)				SM1
William Elstobb)	South Moor)	183	1	4	SM2
John Chipchase)	South Moor)				SM3
Peter Hodshon) Alice Buckle)	Ryall	57	3	24	R3
Henry Blakeston (part)	Ryall	15	3	27	R7
John Young	Ryall	21	1	9	R6

Along with small cottage holdings in the East Moor and formerly enclosed plots, in 1839 the Dowager's estate was 740 acres in extent. Unlike William Russell, she had holdings in neither Bishop Middleham nor Cornforth. She was the widow of the Right Hon. and Rev. George Viscount Barrington who became Rector of Sedgefield in 1791, received a prebendal stall in Durham in 1796, and died in Rome on 5th March, 1829, aged 68. Such an exalted personage would have held Sedgefield Rectory because it was one of the two wealthiest in the county, the other being Stanhope. The acquisition of this estate in Sedgefield would seem to post-date 1791. By 1841 part of the Dowager's estate was being sold off. This was the East Close with former enclosures and cottages in the East Moor. (Fig. 48.) This represents one of the most stable ownership blocks in the township.

The engrossing that had taken place by 1839 had altered the ownership pattern that had emerged from the 1636 share-out. The largest

estate had expanded because it had as its nucleus the Hardwick lands and the wealth accruing from them enabled Nicholas Freville and his successors to take the opportunities of expansion as they presented themselves. The Dowager's estate did not develop in the same way as the Russell estate, but it, too, reflects the importance of the nucleus of, in this case, the wealth that was accruing from this rich benefice. The importance of them both is in the consolidating of the allotments of 1636 as part of a much larger stable land-ownership block.

Engrossing of this nature was inherent in the apportionment at enclosure. As can be seen from Table 3:1, owners were given allotments in arable open fields and in the common pasture and moors. In most cases, this meant a split holding with compact units of less than 50 acres. The only holding, apart from those of Nicholas Freville, that has remained a stable ownership unit in the hands of an independant individual is Roger Cowlin's award that was made up of adjacent allotments in Dolliop (D2) and the East Moor (EM5). In some instances, as has already been indicated, the total award has been taken over by either the Dowager or William Russell. There are some cases where one or two of the 1636 allotments have been retained and the rest relinquished to the above estates, as follows (Fig. 34 and Fig. 35.):

1636 Owner	Field	A	R	P	Map Reference
Henry Blakeston	East Moor	43	1	3	EM1
John Young	East Moor	28	3	20	EM7
Ralph Crd	East Moor	10	1	9	EM4
Peter Hodshon)	Cramyre	12	2	25	C1
Alice Buckle)	East Moor	39	0	34	EM2
William Elstobb	Hauxley	40	0	0	H4
Sir Ralph Conyers	East Moor	62	0	29	EM6

Of these, the Blakeston allotment has added to it parts of the adjacent old enclosures, but this may have been so in 1636. But this is a minor

adjustment to what have remained as relatively stable land-ownership units based on 1636 allotments and in the hands of independant owners in 1839. But if these remained stable, there were others that did not, for example, after parts of the awards of the following had passed into the hands of William Russell and the Dowager by 1839, their remaining allotments had been split.

1636 Owner	A	R	P	Field	Map Reference
Leo Middleton	47	1	14	South Moor	SM8
Roland Hixon	38	1	6	South	S1
	15 (intact)	0	0	Hauxley (Loaming Dyke)	H2
Thomas Wright	125	3	22	Hauxley	H3

Of the 1636 awards that remained free of the attentions of Hardwick and the Dowager, only one remained intact, being Roger Cowlin's allotments in Dolliop (D2) and the East Moor (EM5). In one award one allotment had remained intact by 1839 while the other had been split as follows:

1636 Owner	A	R	P	Field	Map Reference	1839
Robert Brown	51	1	18	East Moor	EM3	One Owner
	73	1	0	North	N3	Two Owners

while in another case one allotment had remained intact and had been enlarged by taking in adjacent land while the remaining one had been split:

1636 Owner	A	R	P	Field	Map Reference	1839
Robert Watkin	23	0	0	East Moor	EM8	One Owner
	plus part of Robert Hindmers E.M. Allotment				EM9	
	32	1	1	Ryall	R2	Two Owners

The 1636 enclosure allotments of Sedgefield, along with those lands previously enclosed at that time, formed the basis for the pattern of ownership that had emerged by 1839. At that early date, tenurial rights

were linked to clearly demarcated plots which became permanent. Once this was achieved, land became a finite commodity, easily identified and which could be bought or sold with greater facility. This is amply illustrated in engrossing that was undertaken by the Hardwick estate where lands that were in the ownership of those who could not maintain or develop them, passed into the hands of owners who could - a very important process in a period of agricultural improvement. Not only was this so in Sedgefield, but examination of the Bishop Middleham territory will show that enclosure there had a similar influence.

Bishop Middleham

Bishop Middleham fields were enclosed fifty seven years after Sedgefield in 1693. Whereas land previously enclosed in Sedgefield formed only a small part of the total acreage, in Bishop Middleham over two thirds had already been enclosed leaving less than one third of the land in open fields and common pasture or some 622 acres. The location of these fields is shown in Figure 38 and their apportionment in Figure 39 and in table 3:3. The open arable fields were less than half the size of the large fields in Sedgefield and were comparable with two of the smaller fields i.e. Cramyre and West Field.

The old enclosed lands included the Demesne arable and the Park, the Farnless pasture closes and Sprucely and Northleeze Farm, all of which can be identified in the 1647 survey and Bishop Cosin's survey as leaseholdings. Island Farm is an old copyholding which is not mentioned by this name in the 1647 survey. In 1839 it was in the hands of the vicars of Castle Eden, Pittington and Hartlepool. East House Farm was a freeholding and, therefore, does not appear in the surveys or rental lists. There were other lands that had been enclosed before 1693 and reference is made in the enclosure award, for example, to 'land formerly enclosed belonging to Mr. Bradshagh', or 'closes on

the east' and 'His own lames close', indicating attempts to make allotments adjacent to land already held so forming compact units. These lands that were formerly enclosed are shown on the 1693 field map (Fig. 38.) although it has not been possible to give the ownership of precise plots.

As in Sedgefield, the award has been made on the basis of an allotment in the arablefields and one in the common pasture or grazing. There were no large moors left in Bishop Middleham by 1693 and the small areas of common grazing were the North Close, North Close Letch and Merriknowles, while the common pasture was Foumards in the south west of the township lands in the low-lying carr area.

The pattern of ownership change and the persistence of allotments between 1693 and 1839 shows similarities with the situation in Sedgefield. Table 3:3 shows the awards and allotments in 1693 and these can be used in conjunction with Figure 39 and Figure 40 which show land ownership in 1693 and 1839.

Taking aside the holding of Cuthbert Swainston which was the vicarial glebe, there were three main groups of landowners in 1693:

a) those with awards of between 90 acres and 110 acres;

b) those with awards of between 20 acres and 45 acres;

c) those with awards of 10 acres and less.

The first two categories represent the husbandlands in this township and the third, the cottage holdings.

Of the awards in group a), none of them had remained in the hands of one owner by 1839. But while the total awards may have been alienated or split, none of the individual allotments had been divided by that date, and had either remained in the hands of one owner or had been taken over intact by another landowner. For example, William Bradshagh's Middle Field allotment (M4) had survived intact, his North Close Letch

and Foumard's (F6) allotments had been taken over by Anne Surtees by 1839, while his North Close (NC3) allotment had been attached to Robert Brabant's North Close Plot (NC2) to form Luke Estobb's holding in 1839. Robert Brabant's major holding in the West Field (W3) had passed into the hands of the Surtees family and his East Field plot (E2) had been added to John Hutchinson's Middle Field Allotment (M2), along with those of Thomasina Wilson in the Middle Field (M3) and Mary Davison in North Close (NC1). But although the John Hutchinson award showed these signs of engrossing, it had also got rid of the smaller allotments in Foumards (F3) to William Russell and the North Close Letch (NCL) to Anne Surtees. In 1839 this enlarged compact holding was in the hands of George Wheatley.

Of the allotments in group b), that of John Crosby, in the North Close (NC4), remained separate in 1839. It had been enlarged by the addition of Thomasina Wilson's North Close plot (NC5) and was in the hands of Margaret Watkins. Robert Hutchinson's Middle Field allotment (M1) also survived and was owned by John Ralph Tenwick. The rest were either in the hands of William Russell, Anne Surtees or George Wheatley. All allotments had remained intact except John Wood's West Field Allotment (W4), part of which had been absorbed by the Russell estate.

Of the cottage holdings only two remained in the West Field and the two remaining in the East field had been combined to form one holding by 1839. Others had been taken over by the Surtees estate.

This is what had happened to the open fields and pastures, but land elsewhere in the township lay in the hands of four main owners as shown in Figure 40. The most important of these were William Russell and Anne Surtees, for they were the major landowners in the area. William Russell has already been mentioned in relation to Hedgefield, Layton and Hardwick. The Surtees family owned the Mainsforth estate

adjacent to Bishop Middleham on the west (Fig. 3.) This position, coincidently, mirrors the position of Hardwick vis-a-vis Sedgefield and the importance of the family in the ownership pattern of Bishop Middleham is similarly reflected. The 1693 holdings that had passed into the hands of this family by 1839 were as follows, and indicate the engrossing that had taken place during that time:

Owner in 1693	A	R	P	Field	Map Reference
Nicholas Freville (1647)				Demesne Old Enclosure	
William Bradshagh				Old Enclosure in East	
Robert Brabant	39	2	9	West	W3
William Bradshagh	30	3	20	Foumards	F6
Thomas Oswald	10	2	5	East	
Cuthbert Burton	3	0	29	East	
John Middleton	2	2	19	East	
John Cowley	2	2	20	East	
Robert Laws	2	3	1	West	
Barbara Parkinson	3	1	3	West	

The Russell estate showed a similar pattern of engrossing as follows:

Owner in 1693	A	R	P	Field	Map Reference
Nicholas Freville				Sprucely and Northleeze	
?				East House Farm(Freehold)	
?				Old enclosure in the east	
Peter Hutchinson John Hutchinson (Jr)				Old enclosure in West Field	
John Wood	27	1	2	West	W4
Peter Hutchinson	22	0	10	West	W5
John Hutchinson (S)	31	1	1	Foumards	F3
John Hutchinson (J)	15	3	36	Foumards	F2
Edward Fewster	16	2	5	Foumards	F4

The Park and demesne arable formed a stable landholding in the hands of Elizabeth Hallhead in 1838 and of Nicholas Freville in 1647, a holding that seems to have escaped from the Hardwick estate. The other stable unit was the Island Farm in the hands of the three vicars previously mentioned. Once in the hands of these clergy it would tend to persist for it became part of the benefices.

Cornforth

The date and nature of enclosure of the Cornforth township are obscure with only occasional references to the event in the Halmote Court documents. For example, the 1647 survey refers to a tenement in Cornforth, 'as it is now divided'. Durham county is a county of early enclosure and W. E. Tate[4] makes reference to part of Cornforth Moor being enclosed in 1621. Although it was not one of the counties covered by the 1536 depopulation act, it was included in the twenty-two counties to which the 1597 act was to apply which indicates that enclosure must have been taking place in the 16th century. E. M. Leonard[5] suggests that there must have been much piecemeal enclosure taking place at this time. There is no complete record of enclosure in Durham before 1633, but there is evidence for the enclosure of Murton and Dalton as early as 1585, and a great many cases occur between these two dates. So common had enclosure become, that in 1666 a bill to legalise all enclosures made within the last sixty years was passed. Cornforth, according to Miss Leonard, was enclosed by order in Chancery 1628 No. 17, but whether this was the whole of the township lands she does not make clear. The pattern of the 1839 fields suggests that the enclosure was not piecemeal, for there is great regularity of layout which indicates that it was contemporaneous thus seeming to support Miss Leonard's 1628 date.

In the absence of an enclosure award, recourse must be made to the

distribution of ownership in 1839. The 1839 ownership map, Figure 43, is interesting compared with the similar maps of the other townships for, whereas in Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield large areas of the lands are under the ownership of large landowners such as Russell, the Dowager and Surtees, such is not the case in Cornforth. The three largest holdings in Cornforth are as follows:

Large Holdings in Cornforth, 1839

Owner	A	R	P
Thomas Haswell	377	2	17
Charles Garthorne	216	0	17
Jane Bates	189	1	21

As can be seen from the ownership map and the farm map (Fig. 44.) there is a very close correlation between farm and ownership boundaries. With the absence of large scale engrossing this pattern of ownership probably reflects more closely the pattern of allotments in 1628. There is also evidence of holdings in two or more parts, for example:

Owner	Farm No.	Location	A	R	P
Jane Bates	2	N. of village	83	1	27
	1	S. of village	105	3	34
Charles Garthorne	7	S. W. of village	40	1	39
	7	S. E. of village	175	2	18
Thomas Haswell	8	N. W. of village	289	3	25
	9	W. of village	9	0	38
	9	S. of village	78	1	34

It is interesting to note that each of these owners has two or three village tofts linked with these plots in the fields (Fig. 43.) which suggests that engrossing has taken place in these instances. Thomas Haswell's holding, Farm No. 8, is recorded as two separate entries in

the Tithe Award with two separate farmstalls. Reference to the tenure map (Fig. 47.) will show that one of these is leasehold and the other freehold. There seems little evidence in the 1839 pattern that the practice of allotment of an arable and a pasture holding was followed in Cornforth in 1628, although the fragmentation of the land to the west of the village, bordering the Coxhoe Beck, suggests that this part of the township may have been either the common arable or maybe meadow, but this can only be conjecture for the absence of the enclosure award limits any analysis in this direction.

One of the Halmote Court Miscellaneous Books gives a number of plans of Leasehold farms in the manor drawn about the second decade of the 19th century.[10] These plans are linked with entries in Old Notitia Books giving information of leases and fines for the farms going back to the 17th century. Such evidence shows that many of these holdings have been very stable between the 17th century and 1850. The 1839 land of the Rev. Thomas Richard Shepperdson (Fig. 31.), for example, is a leaseholding for years and came into his hands in 1837, but through these references can be traced back to 1716 when it was in the hands of Thomas Laybourne and formerly belonged to Edward Elstob. This last named owner enables a link with this estate as it is recorded in Bishop Cosin's Survey of 1661, when it was John Farrer's Lister's Farm. In this way many of the Leaseholdings in Cornforth and indeed the whole manor, can be traced back to earlier dates in the 17th century and a more detailed study of some of these will be made in Chapter 5 of this work.

The persistence of ownership boundaries from the 17th century seems to accord well with the evidence in Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield and suggests that here, too, the predominant influence on the 1839 pattern of ownership was the division of the township lands into allotments in 1628.

The Farms in 1839

An important aspect in the evolution of patterns of land ownership between 1600 and 1850 was the tenurial framework which formed a stable element in the agrarian changes that were taking place during this period. It was stable in that the tenurial practices of ownership were an inheritance from the medieval period and persisted unchanged until 1800. What did change during this period was the concept of ownership, and although it is arguable that it began to change during the medieval period, in these two hundred and fifty years, during a process that came to be known as the Agricultural Revolution, it proceeded at a more rapid pace. The age of merchantilism, the expanding coal-mining industry, early industrial activity and the development of a monetary system based on stock exchanges and banks, were only a few of the factors that enabled the accumulation of capital for the purchase of land in a market that had been given a boost in the 16th century when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. Capital investment in land became a recognised economic activity. But money for investment came not only from the merchant and commercial classes, but from the substantial landowners who by the beginning of the 17th century were already seeing the kinds of returns that could come from well-managed lands.

In the medieval period the manorial lands of Middleham were owned by the Bishop and held by his tenants in terms of medieval tenure. By the beginning of the 17th century, this two tier system of manorial lord and tenant was already changing, for there is evidence, in the 1647 Parliamentary Survey of the manor, of High Farnless Farm (Fig. 38) being in the hands of Nicholas Freville, but being farmed by Christopher Selby at a rent of £32.5.0. By 1839, a three tier system of this nature was well developed with the owners in many cases paying rents to the Bishop according to their tenures, and in turn leasing their holdings

to tenant farmers. The tenant farmers in Durham, according to John Bailey,[3] held their farms on leases of three and seven years, or sometimes even nine or twelve years, for payment of a money rent. Treating with the tenants was done some six to seven months before expiration of the old lease. The time of entry into the lease he gives as 'old May Day' and the rents were paid half-yearly on 23rd November and 13th May. Other than the tenant farmers, there were the owner-occupiers who held their land directly from the Bishop in 1839 and farmed it themselves.

In 1600 there were consolidated landholdings already in existence in the manor that could be called compact farms. The most easily recognisable are those in Bishop Middleham township where the Bishop's Demesne was granted by lease as early as 1585 to George Freville (Fig. 3[illegible].). According to Bishop Cosin's Survey, Spruceley and Northleeze was also a leasehold farm in the hands of George Freville in 1633. East House Farm was a freeholding not recorded on the Halmote Court records, but there is reason to suppose that this was also a compact farm at the beginning of the 17th century. Other lands had also been enclosed from the moors and open fields by that time, which were also being established as stable farm holdings. There were others, however, that were distributed throughout the open fields and pastures, In the 1647 survey, for example, Thomas Middleton's Copyholding was as follows:

One cottage with a garden

Pasture for one cow in Foumards

Pasture for 12 sheep upon the moor

2 Ridges in the West Field

2 acres in the Midfield upon Todd's Flat

1 acre in Eastfield called Newton Landedge

2 Ridges cont. $\frac{1}{2}$ acre at Grimewell Hole

2 Ridges cont. ½ acre at North Close Gate in the East Field

2 Ridges in Snellthorne cont. ½ acre

1 acre in Myre Knolls called.....

8 Butts 2 Ridges in North Leezes

1 Dayle of Meadow lying in Stinkingletch

One cottage

One house sometimes of waste 10 yds. x 6 yds.

One cottage with garth

One cottage with 1½ acres of land

Total rent 4s.0d.

He also held a piece of land freehold for which his rent was £1.14.0, improved £7.0.0.

Before enclosure, Sedgefield had a much greater proportion of its lands in open fields, moors and pasture than had Bishop Middleham. There was no demesne land in Sedgefield, but by 1636 the Glebe had been enclosed forming the compact farm shown in Figure 33. Reference has already been made to the old enclosures also shown on that map which were also compact holdings at that time.

Although it has not been possible to reconstruct the former open fields and moors of Cornforth, the patterns of ownership and farms seen in 1839 (Figs. 43, 44.) are very largely the result of enclosure in 1628. It is probable, however, that the freeholding in the western part of the township (Fig. 47.) was already enclosed at that date.

The patterns of farms in 1839 in Sedgefield and Cornforth, then, are the result of the early enclosures of 1636 and 1628 with only few compact farms existing before those dates. On the other hand, many of the farms in Bishop Middleham were the result of enclosure that had already taken place by the award of 1693 (Figs. 38, 41.).

In Bishop Middleham, farms which are numbered 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8

in Figure 41 are compact stable farms on land that was not included in the 1693 division and was previously enclosed. There were five farms that were created from the open fields and pastures which by that time were also compact. Highland House Farm (No. 9) has achieved its size and compactness by amalgamation of Middle Field, East Field and North Close allotments. Farm No. 3 is a compact holding composed of former Foumard allotments, a West Field allotment and former old enclosure. Farm No. 13 corresponds with a former Middle Field allotment. In the North Close, two farms have emerged from the allotments there, taking in adjoining old enclosures.

The farm holdings which are not compact and are split are the vicarial glebe (No. 16) in the West Field and Foumards, and Farm No. 10 occupying an old enclosure in the West Field, a Foumard allotment and two cottage allotments in the West Field. The only compact allotment of 1693 that has been split is Robert Brabant's in the West Field where four fields have been taken away to leave farm No. 15.

In Bishop Middleham, the allotment boundaries as demarcated in 1693 have persisted in the farm boundaries with very few examples of allotments being split either between farms or among landowners. None of the farms was owner-occupied in 1839 and the farm patterns reflect closely the ownership patterns with no farmbeing made up of lands of more than one owner. The cottage allotments are still in evidence as small plots in the former East and West Fields.

In Sedgefield, the East Close farm (No. 17) and Glower o'er Him Farm (No. 15) (The Rectorial Glebe) in Figure 36, have the same boundaries as they had before enclosure while farms numbers 23 and 9, for example, coincide with the allotment boundaries. Other farms are made up from a combination of adjacent allotments, for example, farms numbers 14, 12, 8 and 13, or some allotments have combined with parts

of adjacent allotments or former enclosures as can be seen in farms numbers 27 and 3. Farms numbers 2 and 4, on the other hand, together form a former allotment and, therefore, show evidence of a divided allotment as do farms numbers 25 and 26. In general, however, there is a remarkable degree of correspondence between the allotment boundaries of 1636 and the farm boundaries of 1839. The enlargement or decreasing of farm size seems to have been done within the framework of the boundaries made in the 1636 enclosure.

The small holdings tend to be those that were allotted in the East Moor where the cottage allotments persist. The greatest amount of fragmentation seems to be in the former open fields near the village where there are a number of small holdings of two or three closes which probably represent the paddocks where horses would be grazed for where the horse was the motive power there would be a need to have the paddock near the dwelling.

As in Bishop Middleham, the compact farm boundaries correspond closely with the ownership boundaries with the farms falling within the boundaries of ownership plots, for example, farms 34 and 32 in the South Moor holding of the Dowager, or farms 23 and 24 which coincide with ownership boundaries.

There are a number of farms in Sedgefield that are not compact. Farm No. 28, for example, is made up of two plots lying to the south of the village. Farm No. 27 is also made up of two plots, one in the former South Field and the other just to the north of the village in the former North Field. In each case ownership and occupation boundaries coincide, and No. 27 is owner-occupied by Thomas Davison. But not all split farms are a reflection of the ownership holding. Nos. 2 and 7, for example, form a single farm tenanted by William Maxwell, one part being owned by Bryes Walker while the other belongs to the Dowager

Barrington. Fragmentation of this kind tends to be restricted to the smaller farms and they usually have a larger compact block with fragmented additions. Some of the larger farms also follow this pattern of a large compact farm with smaller detached holdings. They are shown in Tables 3:4, 5, 6, where farms and their sizes are listed.

Sometimes farms have been able to extend their compact holdings by acquiring adjacent fields from other landowners. John Bowes has obtained two fields in the south east corner of his farm No. 14 from the Dowager to add to those already held from William Russell.

There are cases where fragmentation both in terms of the holdings and ownership are more scattered than this. Oswald Meggison, for example, holds a farm of 58A 1R 1P but he requires four separate plots from four separate owners to achieve this as follows and marked 'OM' on Figure 36:

Owner	A	R	P	Location
The Dowager Viscountess Barrington	29	3	6	South of Village
Anne Lynne	2	0	36	West part of Village
William Russell	17	1	28	South East of Village
Nicholas Smith	8	2	21	South of Village
	58	1	1	

Conclusions

The compact farms of 1839 seem to have derived from the pattern of land-ownership which was already in existence long before the 17th century enclosures, or was demarcated at that time. The allotments tend to have persisted in their original boundaries sometimes amalgamating with others to form larger farms. In some cases, former allotments have been subdivided but there are few of these. The engrossing of the allotments by the large landowners has tended to consolidate and stabilize

them as farm units, but others have also been consolidated in the hands of owner-occupiers.

The small holdings of two or three closes and less tend to reflect the cottage allotments at enclosure, although there are many small plots occupied by individuals close to the village which can be shown to be the divisions of enclosure allotments or small plots already enclosed at that time. The existence of small dispersed ownership plots in 1839 enabled farmers without compact holdings to assemble a workable unit even though it was scattered.

Farm Sizes in 1839

In 1932, Sir John Clapham showed that the small farm of less than 50 acres was the dominant production unit of the agricultural economy of this country in 1851.(6) As the following figures show, however, if the acreage of land tilled by these small farmers is the criterion used then their position is in no way dominant.

Farms in England and Wales, 1851

Size in Acres	No.	Total Acreage	Percentage
5 - 49	90,000	2,122,800	8.6
50 - 99	44,600	3,206,500	13.0
100 - 299	64,200	11,015,800	44.6
300 - 499	11,600	4,360,900	17.6
500 - 999	4,300	2,841,000	11.5
Over 1,000	771	1,112,300	4.5

(Sir John Clapham)

If a comparison is made between these national figures in 1851 and those for Middleham Manor in 1839, it can be seen that in the latter a greater proportion of the lands were worked by farms of less than 100 acres which he considered small farms.

Farms Less than 100 Acres

National Percentage in 1851 - 21.6%

Township	Percentage of Land under Occupation
Cornforth	56.15
Bishop Middleham	38.06
Sedgefield	30.26

Clapham also considered a farm of between 100 and 300 acres to be middling in size, from 300 to 500 acres to be large, and over 500 acres to be extensive. The importance of the medium to large size farms in the manor is apparent when the percentage of land worked by farms over

100 acres is seen.

Township	Percentage of land in farms over 100 acres
Cornforth	43.85
Bishop Middleham	61.94
Sedgefield	69.74

Of these farms seven were over 200 acres, five in Sedgefield and one each in Bishop Middleham and Cornforth, while of those five in Sedgefield two were over 300 acres (See Tables 3:4, 3:5, 3:6 and Figs. 36, 41 and 44.). The township boundaries proved no barrier to the extension of farm boundaries for the following farm holdings both in Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield formed single farm units of considerable size in 1839.

	Bishop Middleham				Sedgefield				Total		
Farmer	Farm No.	A	R	P	Farm No.	A	R	P	A	R	P
James Lockey	6	56	1	31	38	407	2	33	464	0	24
John Wall	7	76	2	39	36	257	3	38	334	2	37
Michael Tinkler	3	129	1	39	21	326	0	15	455	2	14
John Bewick	4	144	0	38	39	20	0	33	164	1	21

These were all farms under the ownership of William Russell and with the exception of Michael Tinkler's, formed compact units across the boundaries of the township. Michael Tinkler's farm was in two parts, one lying in the Layton Lands and the other in Foumards and the former West Field in Bishop Middleham. A further example of a farm straddling the township boundaries is that of Isabella Stephenson who not only held 127A OR 4P (No. 37) of William Russell's land in Sedgefield, but also 99A OR 7P in Bradbury, adjoining this.

The preponderance of large farms is not only a feature of the Bishop's lands. Table 3:7 shows the large farms that were also in existence in the lands of the other townships in the parishes of Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham in 1839. As can be seen, this table

supports well the findings in the manorial lands.

Farms of over 100 acres tend to be a feature of lands held by large landowners. For example, the following list shows the farm holdings on William Russell's lands in the two parishes.

Farmer	Township	Number on Map	A	R	P
James Lockey	BM & S	6 & 38	464	0	24
John Hall	BM & S	7 & 36	334	2	37
Michael Tinkler	BM & S	3 & 21	455	2	14
John Bewick	BM & S	4 & 39	164	1	31
John Miller	BM	5	193	2	36
Isabella Stephenson	S & Brad.	37	226	0	11
Edward Smith	S	35	94	0	21
John Brown	S	8	138	1	24
Jonathan Milliner	S	33	104	1	7
William Race	S	18	182	1	31
Thos. Richardson	S	20	227	2	25
William Thompson	S	19	235	2	26
Thos. Smith	Morden		236	1	37
Thos. Fleetham	Morden		162	0	24
John Thompson	Foxt. & Sh.		377	3	22
Robert Smith	Foxt. & Sh.		207	0	2
Ralph Peacock	Foxt. & Sh.		165	1	26
William Bayston	Foxt. & Sh.		128	0	12
Matthew Fawell	Foxt. & Sh.		103	0	16
Wm. Mawlam	Foxt. & Sh.		397	2	29
John Applegarth	Foxt. & Sh.		290	3	32

Although William Russell is the largest of the landowners in the area, others with smaller but still considerable holdings show a similar trend in large farm sizes, for example, the Dowager Lady Elizabeth Barrington

Anne Surtees and others that can be seen in Table 3:7.

Another important influence in creating large, compact stable farms was the Church. The farm of Nicholas Ridley (Sedgefield No. 15) was 263A 1R 38P in extent and was a large compact part of the rectorial glebe, still in the rector's hands in 1839. In Bishop Middleham the rectorial glebe had been appropriated and the surviving vicarial glebe (No. 16) was small (59 acres). Island Farm (No. 2), however, formed part of the benefices of Pittington, Hartlepool and Castle Eden (158A 3R 1P). These institutionalised holdings formed very stable units for they could not be devised.

Owner occupied farms formed only a small part of the township lands, being most important in Cornforth where Charles Garthorne held a large farm. There were two other owner occupiers in that township, none in Bishop Middleham and five in Sedgefield as follows:

Owner Occupiers in Middleham Manor, 1839

Owner	Township	A	R	P	Farm No.
Charles Garthorne	Cornforth	216	0	17	7(3 parts)
Joseph Lamas	Cornforth	86	0	9	11
John Moor	Cornforth	41	1	21	12
Thos. Davison	Sedgefield	113	1	16	27
John Arrowsmith	Sedgefield	75	0	17	12
Benjamin Ord	Sedgefield	30	0	14	1
Jane Rutherford	Sedgefield	89	0	16	13
Tim Spark	Sedgefield	25	3	1	26

Owner-occupiers, therefore, did not farm a very large proportion of the manorial lands in 1839, nor, with the exception of Charles Garthorne and Thomas Davison, did they possess large farms.

Large compact farms tended to be a feature of the large estates in the Middleham Manor and surrounding townships, while the smaller farms

reflected the holdings of the smaller landowners. An important aspect of ownership in the Bishop's townships, however, was the kind of tenure under which the land was held. Therefore, an examination will be made of the effect tenure had on the development of farmstalls in the manor.

Land Tenure

It has already been stated, when considering land-ownership patterns, that the influence of medieval tenurial practice continued long after that period came to a close. The strength of this influence is nowhere more apparent than in the examination of the tenurial patterns in the manor. In 1600 land was held from the bishop as lord of the manor in terms of the medieval tenures of copyhold, leasehold and freehold that have previously been described and these were to continue with only little change until 1850 and beyond.

In the early 17th century records, the verbal descriptions of the copyhold tenures are such that they are very difficult to identify on the ground or on the map. The 1647 survey, for example, describes Thomas Middleton's copyholding in terms that have been given elsewhere (p.70). But, less complex holdings than this are nonetheless vague such as:

Elizabeth Botcherby

One Cottage and 2 acres (7 oct 14 Carl)

One Tenement and 6 acres

10s.2d.

The leaseholdings, on the other hand, can sometimes be more specific. That of William Hindmarsh is described as 'Certain lands and meadows called Hollands' with a rent of 19s.0d (£4.10.0 improved) with a fat lamb at pentecost or 5s.0d. in lieu.'

This vagueness on the one hand and relative clearness on the other

was probably inevitable for some holdings were in the open fields with rights to pasture and waste, while others were specific lands, already enclosed (usually leasehold) at the beginning of the 17th century.

Copyhold tenures were of very old origin, being associated with the husbandlands and cottages. Leaseholdings, on the other hand, usually occupied land that had belonged to the bishop as the lord of the manor and was leased at a later date. Tenures in the open fields and pastures were associated with a person rather than with a specifically recorded plot of land. Rights were designated by such words as 'cottage', 'tenement' or 'messuage' which must have had a specific meaning to the tenants and the court officials. Indeed, in Sedgefield, the cottage holders received about five acres each for their cottages when the fields were divided in 1636. Tenements and messuages are a little more difficult for they seem to refer to a landholding including a homestall without reference to size. The construction of the tenure maps (Figs. 46, 47.) then, presented some problems.

The availability of the 1647 Parliamentary Survey and the 1662 Bishop Cosin's Survey along with Old Notitia Books, has enabled the tracing back of the leaseholdings in some cases as far as 1620. These were individual ownership blocks that were established at enclosure and those that were already in existence then, so the pattern of the leasehold tenures is partly post-enclosure and partly pre-enclosure. An 1840 document known as 'Reed's Terrier' along with a map of Bishop Middleham c1833, is in existence, which allows the identification of leasehold lands in Bishop Middleham at that time, along with those that had been enfranchised. This has been checked against other sources and has been found accurate, so has also been used in constructing the pattern of leaseholdings. The Halmote Court maps have also been another source for there are a number of instances where leaseholdings in Sedgefield

are not recorded in the Notitia Books, but are on these 1857 maps.

Sources for the construction of the copyhold and freehold tenure patterns are less reliable. The copyhold distribution is taken from the Halmote Court maps (c1857) and compared with the Call Books, but this is only the situation as seen by the Halmote Court clerks in the mid-19th century. However, if the freeholdings can be identified, then by a method of subtraction, those that are neither leasehold nor freehold are copyhold. Fortunately, the major freeholdings in Sedgefield are the Rectorial Glebe, the Hardwick Estate and the Layton Lands and can be identified on the map. Other freeholdings have been identified from annotations in the enclosure award. The resulting pattern of copyholdings has been checked against similar annotations on this award. In the case of Bishop Middleham, the distinction between copyhold and freehold on the Reed's Terrier has proved inaccurate, so evidence comes mainly from the Halmote Court maps and Call Books. The resulting maps are as accurate as possible using the sources available.

The striking contrast that emerges within the manor is the paucity of copyhold land in Cornforth and the preponderance of it in Sedgefield. The copyhold tenures appear to be more common on the sands, gravels and boulder clays of the Tees Lowlands with a progressive reduction in its occurrence until its relative absence is seen on the magnesian limestone scarp and the higher areas of the dip slope. Conversely, there is a decrease in the amount of leasehold land, at its maximum occurrence on the magnesian limestone soils and at its minimum on the glacial drift of the Tees Lowlands. The freehold estates are notably in Sedgefield with its Hardwick and Layton Lands and the Rectorial Glebe, but are also found in Bishop Middleham where there are old enclosed lands and holdings that were previously in open fields but were consolidated at enclosure. In Cornforth, freehold lands are situated on the north-west periphery

of the township and although designated as freehold, carried a rent in the Halmote Court.

The pattern of tenure in Sedgefield was established in 1636 on enclosure (Fig. 46) when the allotments were given tenurial identity. The location of the tenurial blocks is a function of that event. The preponderance of copyhold tenure would seem to be a measure of the early medieval development of the township where husbandlands and cottages were granted to customary tenants in terms of this medieval tenure, probably to be equated with the suggested planned layout of the village in the 12th century. It has also been suggested that the mid-13th century increases in prosperity and population saw the extension of the village, but it would also see the extension of arable land taken from the waste. The incidence of leasehold land is an indication of this process, for new land taken in from the waste was probably given on new leasehold tenures. The freehold tenures are those associated with Hardwick and Layton, including Nicholas Freville's allotments in the West Field, and the rectorial glebe.

In Bishop Middleham the lord of the manor had his demesne land, his park and his pasture closes which were all leased and formed stable blocks that can be traced back at least to the end of the 16th century (Fig. 38.). Other leasehold plots that were enclosed before 1693 lay in the south eastern part of the township adjoining the Sedgefield lands. The Sprucely and Northleeze farm can be similarly traced back to the beginning of the 16th century. Other plots were designated as leasehold on enclosure and occupy former open field areas along with copyhold plots. The division of the township lands into two tenures is probably to be explained in the same way as that of Sedgefield with leasehold tenures representing land taken in at a later date. This excludes the bishop's demesne and park.

The occurrence of freehold tenure is a little more complex than in Sedgefield. The vicarial glebe is present but this is split between the West Field and Foumard's Pasture and is copyhold. Blocks of freehold land are present in the former open fields, notably William Bradshagh's Middle Field and Foumard's allotments. This formed a large freeholding in 1693 along with an old enclosure, formerly part of the East Field, and a large old enclosure in the east of the township. But the largest freeholding is East House, which formed a stable farm in the east of the township. The presence of such a relatively large amount of freehold land in this township probably reflects the fact that in earlier days this was the bishop's vill and is a measure of the rewards given to his servants.

Other than the copyhold tenure found in the former open fields and given identity on enclosure, there are those copyholdings that already had a tenurial identity by that time. The most important of these was the Island Farm which lay to the south of the village.

The preponderance of leasehold land in Cornforth is probably due to the later date at which these higher lands were taken into cultivation. If this were the mid-13th century and the bishop was at that time granting leases for lives and years in Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham, then this would be the case in Cornforth. Its distribution is the result of enclosure c1628.

Comparing the tenurial maps (Figs. 46, 47.) with the Farm and Ownership maps will show that some farms had a uniform tenurial identity and formed stable territorial divisions, for example, in Bishop Middleham (Fig. 41.), Island Farm (No. 2) was copyhold and Sprucely (No. 4) was leasehold. In Sedgefield (Fig. 36.), Glower o'er Him (No. 15) (the glebe) was freehold, Ryall Farm (No. 8) was copyhold, and Todd's New House (No. 9) was leasehold. In Cornforth (Fig. 44.) there are

numerous examples of farms of uniform leasehold tenure.

On the other hand, some farms have lands of different tenures within their boundaries. In Bishop Middleham, East House Farm (No. 5) has both freehold and copyhold land, Farnless Farm (No. 8) has freehold, leasehold and copyhold, while Highland House (No. 9) has leasehold and copyhold. In Sedgefield, both Hopper House (No. 33) and East Close (No. 17) are made up of leasehold and copyhold. These are all stable farm holdings so although uniform tenure may play some part in stabilizing a farm holding, a farm having a diverse tenurial identity is not necessarily prone to fragmentation, for landownership appears to be a more powerful factor in determining the stability of a farm.

That the medieval tenurial system persisted until 1800 is a measure of the conservatism on the Bishopric estates during the agricultural revolution. But even though the bishop obtained an Act of Parliament in 1800 for the enfranchising of leaseholdings, by 1850 only a few had taken advantage of it as can be seen from the Tenure Maps (Figs. 46, 47). At the present state of research it is difficult to account for this failure, but clearly the customary tenures possessed an attractiveness not apparent to modern eyes.

Conclusions

By 1839 a large proportion of the lands of Middleham Manor had fallen into the hands of a small number of large landowners. The manorial lands did not include Hardwick and Leyton which lay in the hands of William Russell at that date, and formed two large, stable freeholdings. In the manorial lands, proper, although there was freehold land present, the greater part of the holdings were customary tenancies in copyhold or leaseholds for lives or years. The introduction of leases is seen as the attempt of the bishop to retain a greater control over his lands than was possible under copyholds of inheritance. These different tenures, however, seem to have had little influence on the processes of engrossing and the pattern of ownership and farms that had emerged by 1839 for lands of these differing tenures seem to have been equally alienable. Engrossing had been a process which had enlarged and made compact ownership blocks but it had also established, under one owner, large compact farms which had their beginnings in the allotments of the 17th century enclosures. A. H. Johnson[7] writing on the disappearance of the small landowner, recognised this as a general trend from the beginning of the 17th century to c1785. G. E. Mingay[8] also comments that the decline of the small owners and small farmers in general must have occurred before 1760.

It has been shown that the very nature of the allotments on enclosure, based on a division between arable and pasture, created conditions for this engrossing to take place. Awards divided into two or more small plots presented difficulties for the small owner, for the costs of enclosing the plots and making new fields were heavy. The response of the small owner to the inability to maintain his holdings was either to sell one of them and with the capital gained to maintain the other, which has been successful in some cases, or, in the extreme, to sell

the whole award to the large owner who had the financial ability to develop the land. According to A. H. Johnson, the small owner, who was often unable to provide capital to improve his enclosure, found it more economical to sell his holding and rent a farm from the large landowner. That he sometimes fought to hang onto his land is shown by the fact that financial deficiency was often solved by the taking of a mortgage. There is evidence of this in Sedgefield[9] where Thomas Smith mortgaged his land in 1714 to Thomas Wharton. This fell during the period of the closing years of the 17th century and the first fifty years of the 18th century which Johnson considered fatal for the small landowner and during which their numbers declined. Such a mortgage was probably taken to get money to maintain his presence as an owner-occupier and to improve his farm but sometimes money was needed for purposes other than agricultural. Failure to repay mortgages often meant the farm had to be sold.

The willingness of the former owner-occupier to pay rent for a farm rather than own it made it easier for the large landowner to invest in land. On the other hand, the capital gained from the sale of his land enabled the farmer on his newly-enclosed, rented farm, to operate more successfully and sell his produce in the local market centres. This meant good returns to the owners in the form of rents, making investment in land profitable.

In the shifting, and rapidly changing society of England, during this period, ownership of the land had long been considered the only stable and certain proof of position, and this attitude increased during the 18th century. Social position, however, could be expensive when the duties of sheriff and J.P. had to be undertaken, not to mention the cost of belonging to society. Those owning moderately-sized estates could sometimes find this a strain and were also forced to sell to

larger owners.

The economic and social aspects of ownership were, therefore, very important in establishing the pattern that had emerged in 1839. The growth of the large ownership blocks and the diminishing of the number of small owners was a process well marked in the townships of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield, and also to some extent in Cornforth. In the last mentioned, however, the major land holders of the area had no land and the larger holdings there were only moderate by comparison with those of Russell, the Dowager and Surtees.

The influence of the large landowners has also been shown in the size of farms for the large farms tend to be a feature of the large landholdings of the major landowners.with Cornforth, where the major landholders are absent, having a smaller proportion of its lands given over to large farms of over 100 acres.

Tenurial custom changed little during the period, with the major innovation being the linking of tenure with an enclosed plot rather than an open field holding or a right to pasture, although by 1600 this had already happened in some lands previously enclosed. Copyholds of inheritance and leases for lives and years were already established by 1600 and persisted until 1850 with only a small number taking advantage of enfranchisement. These tenures must have been advantageous to the tenants, for there seems to have been little pressure for change and they formed a stable institution throughout the period of the Agricultural Revolution. Their distribution seems to have been of little significance to the degree of compactness of holdings or farms, for while many of the stable enclosed farms display tenurial uniformity, there are others that form stable units but are tenurially diverse.

Chapter 3

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CHAPTER FOUR

FIELD SYSTEMS AND LAND-USE

Field Systems

The field boundaries on the 1839 Tithe maps and the first editions of the Ordnance Survey Maps in 1857 show that by the mid-19th century the process of enclosure had produced a pattern of fields very different from the open fields and moors that had been present at the beginning of the 17th century. In those pre-enclosure days, travellers through the south eastern part of Durham County saw it as a county of open arable fields. Blome, in 1673, described east Durham as the most champion part of the county and the south as the most fertile part. Ogilby, in his Itinerary, in 1675, showed the county in open arable along the road from Whitby to the north.[1] That the lands of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield were no exception can be seen from the reconstructions of these fields, pastures and moors in Figures 38, 33, and tables 3:1 and 3:3, showing the apportionment of land at enclosure. This process has already been discussed earlier in this work as has the fact that there is no copy of the Cornforth enclosure award available to allow a similar construction for that township.

R. A. Butlin[1] comments on the frequency of the occurrence of three-field townships in physiographically favourable locations, notably on lower alluvial flats of the Tees, the Magnesian Limestone plateau and the terraces of the Wear. Patches of lighter soils within the glacial drift of the Tees Lowlands may well be another location favourable to their development for Sedgefield also shows signs of a former three-field system although by 1636 there were seven arable common fields to be divided on enclosure. Bishop Middleham, on the other hand, occupied one of Butlin's favourable sites on the Magnesian Limestone dip-slope and here a three-field system was in existence in 1693.

Bishop Middleham

The township lands of Bishop Middleham in 1693 consisted of the following:

Bishop Middleham Township 1693

	A	R	P			
Open Arable Fields						
West Field	166	3	2			
Middle Field	154	0	14			
East Field	82	3	15	403	2	31
Common Pasture						
North Close Letch	3	3	36			
North Close	75	1	4			
Merriknowles	20	3	25			
Foumards Pasture	118	1	27	218	2	12
Old Enclosures, Village tofts, Lanes, Waste, etc.				1465	1	4
TOTAL				2087	2	7

From this and from reference to the map (Fig. 38) it is evident that much enclosure had already taken place by that date, for only 622 acres out of 2087 acres remained in common. Butlin[1] states that much enclosure took place in these lowland townships of Durham in the medieval period and this would seem to be the case in Bishop Middleham. For example, enclosures appear to have been taken out of the open fields. The demesne arable, lying to the north of the village can be seen to contain three parts of the open arable fields, if their boundaries are projected south (Fig. 42.). When these three enclosures were made is not known but probably coincided with the granting of a lease by the bishop which post dated the abandonment of the Manor House.

It was a common practice, in the open field townships, to put lands into severalty which meant bringing dispersed holdings of a person into fewer pieces and freeing them from all rights of commonage. It is interesting to note that the 1647 Survey describes this demesne arable as, 'Three several platts of arrable land.....'[8] There is also reference in the 1693 enclosure award to Robert Brabant's East Field allotment where an allowance for a highway is made to lead to, 'several closes formerly enclosed'. Another kind of early enclosure was the Lammas close where sometimes large parts of common fields were enclosed by quickset hedges, but had to be thrown open to pasture at Lammas. There is reference to Lammas closes in the enclosure award where John Wood's West Field allotment has an allowance for a highway so that John Crosby can get to, 'his Lames close (formerly divided) in and through John Hutchinson's Lames close'.

But not all old enclosures were taken out of the former arable fields. It is evident that by 1693 most of the common waste had been enclosed for there is nothing in Bishop Middleham that equates with the East and South Moors in Sedgefield. Only Foumards, North Close, North Close Letch and Merriknowles remained. Large enclosed farms had been established in the south and eastern part of the township - Island Farm, Sprucely and East House - while in the north east Farnless, the Bishop's pasture closes, had been enclosed along with other closes in the hands of Robert Brabant at that time. The remaining major enclosure was the Parkland, part of the demesne, and lying to the south of the village.

So, although 1693 saw the enclosure of three common arable fields and common pasture in Bishop Middleham, it was the final act in a process that had been underway for some time.

Sedgefield

The enclosure of Sedgefield occurred in 1636, 57 years before that in Bishop Middleham. The map, therefore, represents a field system at an earlier date. At that time there were the following open fields, common pastures, and wastes:

Sedgefield Township 1636

	A	R	P			
Open Arable Fields						
North Field	342	1	4			
Ryall Field	328	1	15			
Hauxley Field	272	2	19			
West Field	134	0	0			
South Field	117	1	1			
Dolliop	90	1	13			
Cramyre	70	2	30	1355	2	2
Common Pasture						
The East Close	150	0	6	150	0	6
Common Waste						
South Moor	589	2	7			
East Moor	488	1	36	1078	0	3
Old Enclosures						
Incl. Layton, Hardwick and the Glebe						
Village Tofts						
Lanes, Waste, etc.				2675	1	29
TOTAL				5259	0	0

The open arable fields of Sedgefield have less incidence of lands being enclosed in severalty but examination of the map (Fig. 33.) will show that there were early enclosures present in the North and South Fields, Hauxley and East Moor, although a number of these were in

peripheral positions and may represent earlier asserting. The existence of the almost severed plot of the Hauxley Field to the South West of the village suggests that the portion of the glebe there was a severalty taken from the Hauxley Field. But the striking feature of this township was the seven open arable fields which are probably the result of expansion in the 13th century which would coincide with the building of the church and the extension of the village. Whatever their origin these large open fields would certainly earn for Sedgefield the description of a champion landscape.

The East Close is seen as an enclosure of good-quality grassland comparable to the Ox closes referred to by R. A. Butlin[1] as being a feature of such townships. This was common pasturage and was usually situated between the common arable and the common waste. It was enclosed to prevent animals from straying and was stinted.

The South and East Moors were the common waste that still existed in this populour township in 1639, an area over which more inhabitants than those included in the enclosure award would have had interests.

There was no demesne land in Sedgefield but in 1636 the enclosed glebe formed a considerable feature of the township's landscape.

The reconstruction of the 17th century fields of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield portrays a system of cultivation that was essentially medieval in character. Apart from the features already described, examination of the field boundaries of some of the farms previously enclosed shows that a three-field system was probably in operation there aswell. Farnless farm (Fig. 61.) shows a division into three fields, i.e. West Farnless, Middle Farnless and North Farnless, with Two Little Carrs as pasture or meadow land. The field called the Garths seems to have been taken out of North Farnless probably when the farm

stall moved there from the village. The demesne arable is also divided into three fields which reflects the taking in severalty from the three open fields. There is also a suggestion that Island Farm may have been divided into three major fields with its pasture in the Carrs, but by the end of the 18th century (Fig. 60.) the desire to apportion fields to the various clergy had obscured the former boundaries.

The early enclosure of these farms and the taking in of land in severalty, as well as the lammas closes, already signalled a breakdown of the medieval system. Enclosure, when it came in the 17th century, was an act indicating a revolution in terms of territorial organisation. This produced a new pattern of ownership boundaries out of the open fields and common pasture which became fixed, and within which new methods of agricultural practice would evolve. Changes within the two hundred years following this are seen by R. A. Butlin[1] as the result of population pressure, increasing market demands for beef and butter, and a general intolerance of the deficiencies of the old system. There are also the behavioural aspects to be considered, for during this period there was a desire for the major landowners to enlarge their estates, and for new owners to acquire large estates, in a society where landed gentry held an exalted social position. There was also the urge of the individual farmer to improve his lot through his own efforts, a growing attitude that was to lead to the laisser-faire thinking of the 19th century.

Phyllis Deane and W. A. Cole[2] have suggested that the population of England rose from c5.4 million in 1700 to 8.6 million in 1801. The rate of increase in population in the parishes of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield during this period was less than this as can be seen from the following estimates for the mid-17th century[3] and the census figures for 1801 and 1851.

Population of the Parishes of Sedgefield and Bishop Middleham

Parish	Mid 17th Century	1801	1851
Sedgefield	1459	1756	2192
Bishop Middleham	504	738	1719
TOTAL	1963	2494	3911

By 1801, the manorial lands were not directly affected by the coal-mining activity that was taking place in the northern part of the county and where probable population increases of over 100 per cent between 1700 and 1800 are estimated. Although by 1851, the development of the concealed coalfield was being reflected in the populations of the townships, particularly that of Cornforth. But the increase shown by 1801 is a measure of the increased agricultural activity that was successful until 1800 in feeding the growing local population at a sufficiently cheap price to allow income to be left over for spending on goods being produced by the young manufacturing industries.[4] At the same time, the farmers were able to make profits to enable investment in their farms and pay a good return to the landowners who were able to provide the capital for the growing industrial enterprises.

The 17th century enclosures in South East Durham, however, were not the result of the demand for more grain from the growing industrial areas, but rather the realisation of the need to take the continually cropped and exhausted lands out of arable clutivation and put them under pasture. Hay and grass from the newly enclosed farms helped feed the growing horse population and provide dairy products to the local market centres. Although in the early part of the 18th century some markets were further afield for butter was being shipped from Newcastle upon Tyne and Stockton upon Tees.[4]

This suggests that 18th century agriculture in South East Durham was successful in meeting the needs of the growing population. There is doubt, however, whether its practices were in the nature of those associated with the Agricultural Revolution. Two of the chief criteria Eric Kerridge[5] uses for assessing the Agricultural Revolution are the substitution of up-and-down husbandry for permanent tillage and permanent grass or for shifting cultivation, and the introduction of new fallow crops and selected grasses. Robert I. Hodgson[4] comments in reference to the agriculture of Durham in the 18th century, that, 'Efforts to improve the all-round performance of agriculture are hard to find and the range of new husbandry techniques found as late as 1850 is disappointing. Turnips and potatoes were grown only in a limited area at this date and most of the county maintained a basic three-course rotation with bare fallowing.' Evidence for this can be seen in Figure 56 where the crop rotations for farms in the Layton Lands from 1771 to 1776 is reproduced, showing a simple three-course rotation including a fallow. In Middleham East House Farm, in 1812, however, clover and parsnips were being included in the crop rotation, although fallow was still present (Fig. 57.).

So although a general intolerance of the deficiencies of the old system might have been motivation for reorganising the township lands into compact farms, such intolerance did not extend to the cultivation practices that had been inherited for there was no abandonment of the three-course rotation including a bare fallow which was, in all probability, practised in the open fields before enclosure.

Other chief criteria suggested by Kerridge[5] for assessing the Agricultural Revolution were a) the floating of water meadows, b) marsh drainage, c) manuring and d) stock breeding. In an area where there is much low-lying, ill-drained land, the need for drainage was greater

than that for meadow floating and there is much evidence of drainage channels in the Carrs on the 1857 Ordnance Survey maps. Of the practice of manuring in the townships there is no information, and while there is no local evidence of breeding experiments, they were a feature of the region, for in 1796 the Colling brothers bred the famous Durham Ox. Using the criteria of Kerridge, the agricultural revolution in south east Durham cannot be seen as a hyper-dynamic event, for other than the change of field systems on enclosure, processes of change proceeded very slowly with medieval attitudes lingering well into the 19th century.

By the 1830s, the ability to exploit the concealed coal seams was a factor that tended to discourage farmers from improving their husbandry for often the damages paid to owners and tenants for permission to take colliery workings and way leaves through their lands was greater than the rental or commercial value of the land. Robert I. Hodgson[4] quotes the instance of the Dean and Chapter of Durham receiving £44,000 for an eleven years lease of the Rainton Colliery in 1832.

The success that agriculture in south east Durham achieved between enclosure and 1850 seems to have rested on the ability of individual farmers and landowners to respond to market demands in an area where growing industrial activity led to increasing population which provided a local market for produce which tended to be dairy and beef. The part played by enclosure in such a situation was crucial, for without the private, clearly demarcated farms, such a response by the farmers could only have been on a more limited scale.

Field Patterns in 1839

Of particular interest to the geographer is the change that took place in the territorial organisation of the manorial lands between 1600 and 1850, for the field boundaries of 1850 were quite different

from those in 1600. The changes in boundaries, however, should be seen as evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, for the pattern of fields in 1839, mapped in Figures 37, 42 and 45, emerged from a very lengthy process of agricultural, social and economic change. It is extremely difficult to devise a precise chronology for the evolution of this 19th century landscape from that of a medieval system, but there would seem to be three important stages to consider when tracing development between 1600 and 1850.

The first of these is the pattern of fields that had developed within the township boundaries by 1600 before enclosure. By then, although the lands of Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield displayed characteristics of champion field systems, there was also evidence that enclosure had already taken place. On the one hand, there was a pattern of open fields, pastures and moors that, apart from severalties and Lammas closes, had not been divided, and on the other, a pattern of enclosed farms within which field patterns had developed by 1600. Of the latter, there is scant evidence, with the boundaries of 1839 providing the major clues to patterns then, although in some instances there are early estate plans, but these do not usually pre-date about 1820, some of which will be examined in Chapter 5. The pattern of fields at 1636 in Sedgefield and 1693 in Bishop Middleham are shown in Figure 33 and Figure 38, with the boundaries of old enclosed lands shown where possible.

The second stage came when the allotments in the open fields, pastures and wastes were demarcated by boundaries. These enclosures formed the ownership blocks from which farms were to develop during the next two hundred years. Some were to remain intact, some were to be joined to others, while in some instances they were split and attached to other allotments and old enclosures, a process which has

been discussed elsewhere. These are shown in Figures 34 and 39.

The thrid stage was the division of the allotments into fields by the owner or tenant farmer, a process which was not a once-and-for-all act, for changes in field boundaries took place throughout the two centuries, for example, there are differences between the 1839 Tithe Maps and the 1857 first editions of the Ordnance Survey. The 1839 patterns are shown in Figure 37 and Figure 42.

Perhaps a fourth stage should be included for although in 1839 many of the farmholdings had village plots linked to their tenures (Figs. 31 and 32.) very few farmstalls remained in the village. At some stage after enclosure a farmhouse was built on the enclosed allotment. There is no evidence that this was an immediate response to enclosure. It is more probable that the farmstall remained in the village with a temporary structure on the newly enclosed allotment, which would provide shelter for the farmer, his labourers, stock and such equipment as he possessed, which is what happens in the small garden allotments of today. The construction of the farmstalls on the allotments was probably the result of 18th century agricultural prosperity already discussed for many of them were built during that century. The movement out would seem to post-date the demarcation of the fields, for the farmstall usually occupies a small close taken from the corner of a larger close.

The fields in 1850, therefore, formed a composite pattern of boundaries. These included a) those of the former open fields, b) those of the old enclosures such as the severalties and the lammas closes, and c) those of the 17th century enclosure allotments. Within these had appeared the enclosed fields that were the result of the division of the farm holdings so creating the patchwork pattern that characterised the rural landscape in the mid-19th century. Those for

Bishop Middleham, Cornforth and Sedgefield can be seen in Figures 37, 42 and 45.

The recognition of 17th century field boundaries that pre-date the earliest maps by some two hundred years presents problems. The 17th century enclosure awards were verbal in description and can only be based on the boundaried recorded on the mid-19th century Tithe and Ordnance Survey Maps. The 17th century descriptions are of allotments rather than of the open fields themselves, but examination of the 1839 field map of Sedgefield (Fig. 37.) will show that there are instances of long continuous boundaries within which the allotments seem to have been made. Between North Field and Ryall Field (Fig. 33.) for example, there is a continuous boundary which is slightly broken by angular bends in the middle. There are also similar continuous boundaries visible between South Field and Hauxley, and between Hauxley/ Dolliop and the East Moor. The township roads and lanes form obvious continuous boundaries but only in a few cases do they correspond with the formed open field boundaries, for example, Hauxley and Cramyre (south of the village) and Hauxley and the Glebe. But subsequent boundary development has obscured any clear indication of 1636 fields among the 1839 patterns, a situation not helped by the inaccuracies of retrospective projection of the boundaries.

Evidence of the allotment boundaries, however, is much more apparent. Reference to the 1839 map will show that there are clear patterns of fields that have been laid out within the allotment boundaries of 1636. These can be seen in the former Ryall Field, North Field, South Moor and East Moor. Such clarity of boundaries is not so easily seen in the old enclosed lands, other than where they abut the allotment boundaries. This is particularly so in the south east where the glebe, the East Close and the Layton lands lie. But there

is a tendency for these lands to display irregular shaped fields that contrast with the regular fields found elsewhere in the township and so can be seen to form an extensive area of irregular boundaries quite different from those that have developed in the former open fields and moors.

Although irregularity may form a significant part of the field pattern of Sedgefield, it is not a striking feature of the field pattern of Bishop Middleham (Fig. 42.). The fields in the former open fields and indeed the greater part of the township, display great regularity. The irregular fields are found in the east in William Bradshagh's old enclosure, part of the Farnless demesne and the lands of the Poor of Sedgefield, occupying the drainage channel to the south and east of Island Farm.

The former open field boundaries between the West and Middle Fields and the Middle and East Fields (Fig. 38.) are more easily traced and here the roads have played a much more important part as boundaries. But even though the boundary between Foumards and the West Field lammas closes is not marked by a road, it is still clearly seen in the field pattern.

Patterns of fields within the allotment boundaries are easily discernible and, as in Sedgefield, tend to establish the existence of these boundaries. Of the lands formerly enclosed, clear boundaries can be seen in Island Farm and the demesne arable, while the clearest of all is the Park, for this is still surrounded by the stone wall described in the survey of 1647.

In Cornforth (Fig. 45.), there are many signs of continuous boundaries but without supporting evidence it is difficult equating these with former open field boundaries. There is also evidence of field patterns within the 1839 farm boundaries which, if the pattern

in Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield is followed, would represent the enclosure allotments. Irregularity of field shape is more prevalent in the western part of the township in the freeholding, an occurrence which seems to correspond with the irregular fields in Sedgefield, seeming to suggest that this part may have been an early enclosure.

Field Shapes in 1839

There were two categories of field shape in 1839. The first was the geometric shape with straight sides. As can be seen from the maps some of these could be triangular in shape but were more often rectangular in form with the proportions of between 1:1 and about 1:4. There is much evidence of these regular fields in all the townships where they are sometimes formed from elongated rectangular fields that have had boundaries run across from side to side. Such regularity of layout is found mainly on the lands that were enclosed from the open fields, pastures and wastes in the 17th century and usually lie with their long axes at an angle to the road (usually right). Others are long and narrow and are the result of smallholdings of strips, riggs or lands being enclosed in the 17th century, for example, in Bishop Middleham East and West Fields. The curious wedge-shaped arrangement of fields to the west of Cornforth village (Fig. 45.) is probably the area of a former arable field or pasture, for there is fragmentation of ownership and occupation (Figs. 43, 44.).

The second category was the irregular shaped fields and it has already been shown that these are found mainly on the lands that had already been enclosed by the 17th century, or on the freehold estates. The irregularity found in Layton, the glebe, and the East Close suggests enclosure that was piecemeal as opposed to the regular pattern elsewhere where the boundaries were laid down contemporaneously. Often an irregular boundary is the result of a controlling factor such as a stream

or drainage channel, for example the fields belonging to the Poor of Sedgefield in Bishop Middleham and those bordering the Coxhoe Beck in Cornforth. Others abut roads, lanes or tracks, or former old boundaries (e.g. open field) while some represent earlier piecemeal enclosure. There are some, however, that are irregular because of the whim of the owner or surveyor. There is a rectangular block of fields in the former Ryall Field in Sedgefield which seems to suggest this for the pattern of irregularity can only have been a deliberate attempt at non-conformity.

Field Sizes in 1839

An Analysis of Fields of One Acre and Over in the Townships of Sedgefield Bishop Middleham and Cornforth in 1839

Field Size	Township Lands (i.e. in fields of 1 acre and over)		
	Sedgefield	Bishop Middleham	Cornforth
	%	%	%
1 to 5.5 acres	25.68	19.14	28.62
5.75 to 10.5 acres	37.47	45.03	58.22
10.75 to 15.5 acres	19.31	25.27	12.18
15.75 to 20.5 acres	8.83	8.00	0.97
Over 20.5 acres	5.71	2.56	-
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00

As can be seen from the above table the most common field size was between 5.75 and 10.5 acres with 37.47%, 45.03% and 58.22% of the lands of Sedgefield, Bishop Middleham and Cornforth being under fields of this size. Of the fields of 10.5 acres and under the percentages of the lands occupied were as follows: 63.15% (Sedgefield), 64.17%

(Bishop Middleham) and 86.84%(Cornforth). Fields of this size formed the greater proportion of the fields of Cornforth, with only 17 of them over this size and by far the greater number of these were fields of less than 15 acres. The other two townships, however, show a much higher incidence of fields of 10.5 acres and over, 36.85% for Sedgefield and 35.83% for Bishop Middleham. What these percentages meant in numbers of fields is illustrated below where the analysis of the larger fields among landowners suggests that large fields tended to occupy the lands of the large landowners.

An Analysis of the Fields of 10.5 Acres and Over in the Townships of Middleham Manor

Township	Landowner	No. of fields 10.5 acres and over	Total
Sedgefield	William Russell	82	
	Dowager Lady Barrington	20	
	The Glebe	12	
	The Rest	8	122
Bishop Middleham	William Russell	13	
	Anne Surtees	11	
	Elizabeth Hallhead	7	
	The Vicars of Pittington, etc.	5	
	George Wheatley	4	
	Poor of Sedgefield	4	
	The Rest	6	50
Cornforth	Thomas Haswell	9	
	Jane Bates	3	
	The Rest	5	17

A. R. H. Baker and R. A. Butlin[1] state that the distribution of

the smaller fields tends to follow the distribution of the better quality pasture, arable and meadows that are usually found near the settlement. Although there is evidence in the field maps of Sedgefield of this being the case, there is also evidence of small fields being distributed throughout the lands. Similarly, there are large fields near the village. The allotment boundaries seem to have had the greatest influence on the distribution of small and large fields, for it is within these boundaries that decisions on field sizes were made and carried out. Examination of the South Field and South Moor (Figs. 34, 37.), for example, show that allotment boundaries there have greatly affected the distribution of field sizes. But similar effects can also be seen in the North, Ryall and Hauxley Fields and Dolliop, while in the East Moor the cottage allotments have created a distinctive block of small fields. The largest fields have been shown to be in the lands of the more important landowners and reference to the map will show the preponderance of large fields in Hardwick, Layton, East Close, the Rectorial Glebe and the South Moor holdings of the Dowager and William Russell.

In Bishop Middleham (Fig. 42.) and Cornforth (Fig. 45.), there is also a tendency for smaller fields to be near the village, but it is not very marked for, as in Sedgefield, they occur throughout the townships. In Bishop Middleham, as in Sedgefield, the more frequent incidence of large fields can be associated with the large landholdings as can be seen in Highland Farm, Island Farm and Farnless. Large fields are not so common in Cornforth but they again can be associated with the large holdings, for example, Thomas Haswell's lands in the west of the township.

Farm and allotment boundaries seem to be controlling factors in the distribution of field sizes, for as can be seen from examination

of the maps (Figs. 36, 41 and 44.), uniform patterns of small fields occur within farm or allotment boundaries, as do uniform patterns of larger fields, while in other cases there are small and large fields present. It is probable that the allotments that contain patterns of uniformity of size represent the division after enclosure for such regularity is suggestive of contemporaneous layout. Those farms and allotments that show diversity of field size may be the result of developing agricultural practices during the 17th and 18th centuries which demanded fields of varying sizes or it is equally probable that they show a different perception of future requirements by the 17th century farmers when they were laid out after enclosure.

It is suggested by Baker and Butlin[1] that larger fields in townships tend to be found on the poorer land. This being the case, it might be thought that these large fields in Middleham Manor would be given over predominantly to pasture, but this was not the case as the following table shows:

Middleham Manor, land-use of fields of 10.5 acres and over

Township	Number of fields			
	Arable	Grass	Wood or Furze	Total
Sedgefield	70	47	5	122
Bishop Middleham	32	17	1	50
Cornforth	12	5	-	17
Total	114	69	6	189

This brings the discussion to the use of the land.

F. G. Emmerson[6] suggests that any attempt to visualise the land-use patterns of the medieval township must allow for at least five components. These are a) the village which consisted usually of

dwellings clustered together on small home closes, b) the arable fields, c) the meadow, d) the waste or common, and e) the manorial demesne which was usually a compact area near the dwellings. It has been shown that at the beginning of the 17th century this was the inherited pattern of land-use in the manorial townships of Middleham. Both Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield show the components listed above and it is also highly likely that Cornforth showed the same divisions, only absence of the enclosure award does not permit such an assertion to be made with certainty. It is evident, however, that by the time of enclosure, a new component had appeared in the townships. These were lands enclosed by individuals in the form of farms, lands in severalty and lammas closes.

H. Thorpe[7] in his study of Green-villages suggests a three-fold division of the land-use in such townships. First, there was the inner belt of pasture on the green, secondly, the central belt of small garths, yards, crofts, paddocks, etc., and lastly, the great outer belt comprising the main arable land, pasture, meadow, stubble, fallow and waste. This would seem to be a pattern that transcended the changes that occurred as a result of the 17th century enclosures, for by 1839 the greens were still in existence, the central belt of small garths, yards, crofts and paddocks was in evidence, while the great outer belt still displayed the division of use that he postulated, although it was based on the enclosed farm divided into small closes, rather than the township lands divided into large common fields and pasture worked in common. What this meant to the pattern of land-use in 1839 can be seen by reference to Figures 49, 50 and 51. Whereas in 1600, the township of Sedgefield showed a medieval pattern of large arable fields worked in common, enclosed stinted pasture and waste pasture, by 1839 the pattern of land-use had become as dispersed as the pattern of

farmsteads which is not surprising since it was the decisions of the farmers within their enclosed farms that established the land-use pattern at that date.

But although the decisions of the individual farmers were important, the fact that there are large continuous areas where the use of the land is uniform, shows that there were factors influencing its use that were operative on a much larger scale than the farm. Hence, land that is low-lying and ill drained, such as that of the Carrs and the land bordering them, seems to be given over to grass, as is the land occupying the steeper slopes. Conversely, land used for arable cultivation tends to be in the higher, flatter, well-drained parts. In this area of boulder clays, sands and gravels and limestones, local variations in soils are also significant in producing a patchwork pattern. For example, the incidence of extensive arable is noticeably high in the northern part of Bishop Middleham township, and the southern part of Cornforth on the Magnesian Limestone soils of the dip-slope.

Apart from these physical factors, there were also economic factors at work. It is apparent when examining the land-use maps that a greater part of the land near the villages is given over to grass, rather than other uses. One of the purposes of grass was to feed animals that provided traction power, notably horses, so pasture near the village for these animals is indicated. This, coupled with the demands for grass from the dairy and meat producing animals, would certainly mean that large areas would need to be put down to grass.

Of further importance is the presence of Hardwick Hall within the township lands of Sedgefield. The park was given over to grass and monumental gardens which forms a considerable area of pasture in the west.

The following tables show the area and percentage of township lands given over to arable, grass, wood and other uses at the time of the Tithe Award.

Land-Use in Middleham Manor in 1839

Land-use	Cornforth		Bishop Middleham		Sedgefield	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Arable	735	43.5	1227	59.8	2632	50.9
Grass	879	52.0	721	35.1	2200	42.5
Wood	-	-	21	1.0	184	3.6
Etc.	75	4.5	83	4.1	155	3.0
Total	1689	100.0	2052	100.0	5171	100.0

In Bishop Middleham a greater precentage of the land is given over to arable than is the case in the other townships, and is also much greater than that given over to grass. The fields occupying the former open fields were still predominantly arable in 1839, while most of the grass is to be found in the pasture lands that had already been enclosed by 1693. The park and the demesne were still pasture and arable respectively, but some of the park had been converted to arable. It would seem that physical factors were an important consideration for pasture land clearly follows the upper Skerne and Stony Beck valleys, and borders the low-lying Carrs.

The 1839 land-use pattern shows that land that lay outside the three arable fields in 1693 still had a tendency to pasture rather than arable which is largely due to physical controls. The northern part of Foumards pasture had changed its use to arable, but the southern, wetter part had remained as meadowland.

Cornforth differs from the other vills in that more than half its lands were under grass in 1839. The map (Fig. 51.) shows a marked

division between lands predominantly arable and those predominantly grass. If a line is drawn from north to south past the east side of the village, it can be seen that the land to the east is mainly under arable cultivation, while that to the west is largely under grass. With the exception of the block of arable land to the east of the village, the arable tends to be sited away from the village. As far as grass is concerned, this seems to be present in fields bordering the Coxhoe Beck, the steeper areas overlooking the Ferryhill Gap and the dissected scarp face. The higher, gently-sloping, well-drained lands to the east and south are those which are predominantly arable.

The 50.9% of Sedgefield lands under arable and 42.5% under grass represents the average percentage for the manor as a whole. In some ways this is a reflection of the physical landscape and its variations within the manor from north to south. The Sedgefield lands occupy an area of much less-pronounced relief, but the valleys of the small streams form poorly-drained areas of boulder clay where grass predominates. This is particularly so in the area to the east of the village in the former East Moor, where the greater occurrence of pasture can be equated with the badly-drained Redcar Carrs. Similarly, grass to the west of the park is associated with the Carrs and the Upper Skerne. Over the gently undulating lands of this township the nature of glacial deposits has influenced local soil conditions and has played an important part in the use of the land with patches of relatively well-drained sands and gravels providing a better milieu for arable than the wetter boulder clays.

Conclusions

The changes in the field patterns between 1600 and 1850 represent the landscape evidence of agricultural reorganisation that could be termed revolutionary. Although there is much evidence of the process

of enclosure evolving slowly throughout the medieval period with the leasing of the demesne land, severalties and Lammas closes, the Chancery Decree enclosures were an abrupt occurrence and created a territorial organisation based on individual ownership rather than corporate effort. It was a system that allowed the individual owner or farmer to make decisions concerning his landholding without reference to other landholders. For example, it has been shown that variations in the field pattern of 1839 can be attributed to the decisions made within the allotment boundaries.

There is little evidence, however, that this commitment to a reorganisation of the land was linked to a revolutionary fervour for change in agricultural practices during the period for, as has been shown, changes in agricultural methods proceeded very slowly with medieval rotations still being used as late as the 19th century with only limited introduction of such things as convertible husbandry and new crops.

In 1839, as in the 17th century, the use of the land was largely determined by its physical characteristics with the wetter, steeper parts of the townships being given over to pasture, and the drier, better-drained lands given over to arable. The demand for animal fodder is shown in the amount of land under grass as well as the inclusion of oats in the arable rotation. Not only was the fodder required for the dairy and meat animals, but also to feed the growing horse and pony populations in the newly developing mining areas. The traction animals on the farms and in the villages also required pasture and fodder which influenced the amount of grass present on farms and near the village.

Although the landscape had undergone a revolutionary process in terms of the establishment of many enclosed farms within which field

patterns developed, the absence of new crops and rotations indicate that the three-field system of rotation with permanent pasture and meadow, had been retained, albeit on a smaller scale. It was not until the early years of the 19th century that the introduction of fallow crops into rotations was occuring more frequently. More detailed evidence of this will be seen when some individual farms are examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

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CHAPTER FIVE

AN EXAMINATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LAYTON AND SELECTED FARMS IN THE MANOR

The Layton Estate

In 1839 there were farms lying in the south east part of the Sedgefield township occupying lands which have been previously referred to as Layton Lands (Fig. 33.). The Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 editions indicate earth works at Layton and designate these as the site of a Deserted Medieval Village which was the former village belonging to the township of Layton. No mention of these lands is made in the Sedgefield Enclosure Award of 1636, since they were freehold lands forming a small manor on the south eastern borders of the township of Sedgefield. Surtees, in his History of Durham[1] tells of the whole manor being invested in Cuthbert Conyers who died in 1567. His elder son Ralph, who was involved in the 1569 rebellion in the North, was attainted but forfeited only a life interest in the estate, and on his death it passed into the hands of his nephew Sir Ralph Conyers. The estate was in the hands of the Conyers family until John Conyers died without issue in 1748, when John Baker of Elemere and Thomas Maire of Lartington succeeded. In 1771 Maire sold his moiety of the estate to George Baker and at a later date (unknown to Surtees) George Baker conveyed the whole estate to William Russell of Brancepeth. Papers belonging to the Baker family and known as the Baker Baker Papers are deposited in the Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic at Durham University, and from these further information is available which enable a more detailed study of this small manor adjacent to, but not part of, the Manor of Middleham.

From the records it would appear that in 1527 the Layton Lands were leased to Cuthbert Conyers of Butterby. This was the whole manor, with the exception of a certain place pertaining to the heirs of Thomas Fishbourne of Sedgefield. This lease was for 21 years at £20 per annum. In 1529, the estate was leased for ever by Cuthbert

Richardson to Cuthbert Conyers and in 1530 it was sold to Cuthbert Conyers of Layton for £130, to be paid in instalments by Ascension Day 1531.

This record is drawn from a volume of miscellaneous records among the Baker Baker Papers which also includes as an enclosure an estate map of Layton, 'The platt of the Lodship of Layton in the county of durham measured by instruments in the 14th days of apryll 1608 by Robert Farrow th'elder.' Two folios in the book also make reference to the plan. One, 12r, contains, 'An abstract of all ye partikuler grounds in Layton with their severall contents measured by instruments by Robert Farrow of Fishbourne th'elder in comitatu dunelmi gent. ye 14th of April 1608.' The estate totalled 1,013 acres. The other folio, 11v, contains a 'short veu.....of all ye severall closes as nowe they be severed', along with the valuation of each close.[2]

The plan is reproduced in Figure 10, alongside the Layton Township fields in the 1839 Tithe Award. Comment has already been made on the remarkable degree of agreement between the 1608 and the 1839 township boundaries, and comparison between the field boundaries between those dates will show that many of the 1608 boundaries were present at the later date, although by then subdivision of the larger closes had taken place. Alterations to the road from Stockton to Durham as it passed through the township accord with improvements made to this 18th century turnpike.

Reference has already been made to the site of the village which seems to have lain on either side of the road where it widens for aerial photographs show earth works in both places and those to the south west of the road are clearly visible on the ground. From the air, ridge and furrow markings are also clearly visible within the bounds of the 1608 closes, while the moors of 1608 show signs of once having

been under the plough. Beresford[6] suggests that reference to 'severing' and 'severalty' mean that the closes in the plan may have been taken in comparatively recently with some from common ground and some from open fields. The presence of West Corne Feylde, Middle Corne Feylde and Easte Corne Feylde and their relation to the village suggests that these may have been the earlier open arable fields.

Although Farrow makes no direct reference to a manor house being present in 1608, it is highly probable that there was one at that time. The matter of the manor house and the date of the village depopulation was discussed in Chapter 2, when it was stated that the abandonment of the settlement probably took place in the earlier years of the 16th century. Since the whole estate came under the ownership of the Conyers family in 1531, it may be reasonable to assume that the date of depopulation was later than that date and probably as a result of the event. What is seen on the 1608 plan is an early stage in the break-up of a landscape pattern that had emerged as a result of medieval farming practices. The village had been abandoned and the owner of the estate (Cuthbert Conyers of Layton) was established in the manor house. Indeed, the Layton manor house seems to have been occupied by the Conyers family as late as the mid-18th century for no reference is made in the Baker Baker farm leases to Layton House being a farmstall, although by 1839 it was a farmstall on the East Layton Farm. There is no indication as to what happened to the dispossessed villager or as to where Conyers obtained the labour for the working of his estate, although with Sedgefield only two miles to the north west, this may have become a centre for the hiring of labour for two miles would not be too great a distance for him to travel to his work.

A period of 170 years passes before the next detailed reference to the Layton Estate occurs in the records, which is an advertisement

for the sale of the Layton Estate dated 10th May, 1777. This gives particulars of the estate as follows:

	Present Rent			Present Value		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
1. Cowley House Farm containing 352.3.0 A						
George Ward is tenant	170	0	0	181	0	0
2. Layton West Farm containing 262.3.35 A						
William Dewell is tenant	125	0	0	138	16	6
3 Fields being the two Lee Fields and Huggerston's Close are to be added to Lot 3 if sold in lots						
4 Closes on the S.W. side of the turnpike in Lot 3 being Garth Pastures (2 meadow, 1 pasture, 1 arable) to be put in Lot 2 if sold in lots.						
	£	s	d			
Value of 3 closes	33	18	6			
Value of 4 closes	28	0	0			
				5	18	6
				132	18	0
3. Layton East Farm containing 210.3.18 A						
John Tones tenant	100	0	0	110	16	6
Add additional value				5	18	6
				116	15	0
4. Stobbarts West of Layton containing 178.2.11 A						
John Stobbart tenant	85	0	0	89	7	0

All tenants have terms of three years next May Day to come in their farms by agreement in writing.

This estate not to be sold for less than £20,000. The purchase to be completed and the money paid by next Lammas and £2,500 in part of the purchase money to be paid on or before 5th March

(Baker Baker MS 14/41)

There are also present four plans of the farms of the Layton Estate (Figs. 52, 53, 54 and 55.) and from the names of the farmers entered on the plans would seem to post-date the advertisement for in two cases the tenants are different. The Cowley House Farm was tenanted at the time the plan was drawn by George Mann, and Stobbart's Farm by John Ross. George Mann was granted the lease of Cowley House Farm on 2nd January, 1777. Stobbart's Farm was leased to him for three years on 10th October, 1774, so it is assumed John Ross was granted a new lease some time in 1777. There is also a document, 14/120a, which gives schemes of husbandry for the farms of Layton from 1771 - 1777 (Fig. 56.). The names of the farmers for 1777 in these schemes are the same as those in the advertisement. Another schedule of husbandry for the four farms, 18/15a, begins in 1778 (Fig. 58.) with the names of the farmers on the plans. It would seem that the plans were drawn up circa 1777.

Comparison between these plans and the former map of 1608 (Fig. 10.) will show the changes that have taken place in the field boundaries during the intervening 170 years. The farm plans were drawn without instruments and allowing for inaccuracies that result from this, it can be seen that the 1608 boundaries are strongly in evidence in 1778. The greatest changes have occurred in the south east where the 1608 close called the OUTELING has been divided. Further comparison with the field pattern of 1839 shows again the persistence of these earlier boundaries for, as in the Bishop's townships, the pattern of small closes has evolved within the boundaries of larger enclosures.

Comparison between these 1777 farms and those of 1839 can also be made by reference to Figure 36. By that time the Layton Estate was in the hands of William Russell and William Dewell's Farm had lost that part lying north of the turnpike and had gained the part of John Tones' Farm lying to the south of the turnpike in exchange.

The schemes of husbandry for the four farms occupying the Layton Estate from 1771 - 1776, given in Figure 56, should be examined alongside the maps of the farms c1777 (Figs. 52 - 55.) These schemes do not cover all the fields in the farms for in each case there is a footnote which states, 'All the other part of this farm to continue in the situation it is now in.....' One case of a system of convertible husbandry appears with fields being laid down to grass for a number of years then having the grass burned off and a three-course rotation of wheat, oats and fallow established. The dominant pattern is this three-course rotation, which is also carried on in the schemes of 1778 - 1792 (Fig. 58.). In the latter case there is evidence in William Dewell's Farm and George Mann's Farm of the wheat crop being followed by seeding for grass. In general, however, a large number of the fields were laid down to grass which seems to have been permanent (see the Tones' and Fawell schemes). The constraints put on the farmers by the clause in their leases which committed them to an extra rent of £5 per annum per acre for land changed from pasture to tillage without consent, would lessen the incentive to practise convertible husbandry, and land under grass would more likely remain as premanent pasture.

In the earlier schemes there is not much reference to the use of fallow crops with clover only once being sown in Dewell's Farm in 1773. Peas were to be sown in one field on the same farm in 1772, while in 1771 they were also to be grown on Ross's and Tones' Farms. In the later schemes, clover and turnips appear in the rotation, instead of

the fallow in two of the fields of Tones' scheme, where barley is also substituted for wheat. In another field, peas are grown in 1779 instead of wheat. The scheme of Anthony Fawell for the Cowley House Farm is predominantly the wheat, oats, fallow rotation, although in one field for two years, clover is introduced (1787 and 1788), while in two small fields a two course rotation of barley and turnips is followed.

The submission of such schemes of husbandry and the restrictions placed on conversion in the leases indicate that the farmers did not have a free hand. Even the application of manure seems to have been the concern of the owner for the schemes also indicate which fields were to receive the manure and when it was to be applied. It is of interest to note that the length of the period of the lease decreased on the Layton Farms during the 18th century while the rents increased. In 1740, John Conyers leased Layton Moor House Farm (East Layton) for the term of twenty-one years at £15 per annum,[3a] whereas in 1774 Judith Baker leased the same farm to John Tones for the term of three years at £100 per annum plus £5 per annum per acre for every acre converted to tillage without consent.[3b] In the 1740s and 1750s, the terms of the leases had usually been six years. When John Baker and Thomas Maire inherited the estate in 1748, the rents seem to have remained the same as under Conyers until the renewal of the leases in 1754, when rents show an appreciable increase. The John Tones Farm, for example, showed an increase in rent from £15 per annum[3c] to £85 per annum.[3d] It is in some way a measure of the prosperity of the farmers that they were able to pay these much higher rents.

By 1812, the scheme of husbandry for the John Tones Farm (Fig. 59.) was showing a greater use of fallow crops with a more frequent occurrence of clover, rape, beans and turnips, although fields are still allowed

to lie fallow. So, although the farmers may have been relatively prosperous during the 18th century, it would seem to have been a prosperity that was based on a buoyant agricultural market rather than a revolutionised agricultural industry. On the Layton Farms, new crops and new rotations certainly do not appear to have been introduced on any scale before the beginning of the 19th century. Farming practices could not be described as revolutionary according to the criteria laid down by Kerridge[4] for by 1800 they were still following a basic three-course rotation of wheat, oats and fallow which was medieval in concept.

The 1608 plan of Layton showed no farmstalls within the fields and closes, but by 1839, as well as Layton House on the site of the village, there were four of them present. Establishing the date of construction of these farmhouses is as difficult as dating the depopulation of the village. The earliest evidence for the existence of a farmstall is a lease from John Conyers to John Readhead of a messuage, house or tenement called Layton Moor House, on 20th February, 1740[3a] which appeared to be East Layton in 1839 and the John Tones Farm in 1777. In 1754 Thomas Cowley had the lease of a farm which had taken the name of Cowley House by 1774 when it was in the hands of George Ward. It would seem that the farmstall took the family name but the date of construction is still unclear for Thomas Cowley is not necessarily the farmer after whom the house was named. In 1773, George Ward took the lease of another farm (Dewell's in 1777) and George Baker undertook to build a new house for him[3d] which seems to have been Far Layton. Although evidence is slight it would seem that, apart from Far Layton, the farmhouses extant in 1839 dated from the early years of the 18th century. Whether or not they replaced earlier structures is unknown.

That there were Layton farmers before that time and, indeed, before 1608 is shown by the names of the closes on Farrow's plan (Fig. 10.)

such as, 'Robert Wylkynsons Two Cloyses', and 'Widow Chypchayse hyr grondes'. Whether such enclosures took place at the same time as the depopulation of the village, or whether it was a pattern that had emerged by that time is not known. What is certain is that the Conyers family would have needed labour to work this estate during the 17th century. By the 18th century, this took the form of tenant farmers working enclosed farms on leases. Whether this practice went back to 1608 is not certain for there is no documentary evidence available in the Baker Baker Papers that will shed any further light on the practices of the 17th century.

Conclusions

A study of this freehold township is of value on a number of grounds, the most important of which is the presence of the Farrow map of 1608, surveyed by instrument and giving a picture of the landscape as seen by a contemporary rather than a reconstruction using 19th century sources. The Baker Baker collection also provides documentary sources and plans which allow an examination of the farms and fields in 1777 which is earlier than almost all the plans of the farms on the manorial lands. These, with the exception of the Farnless Farm, were drawn mainly in the second and third decades of the 19th century. Details of leases in the Baker Baker Papers enable the presence of the 1777 farms to be established in 1740, although whether the boundaries were the same is not known. The Tithe Award Map and schedule and the first editions of the Ordnance Survey Maps complete a sequence of useful map and documentary sources. Unfortunately, however, there remains a gap of about one hundred and fifty years between 1608 and c1750 for which there is no archive material. For the Layton township this was an important period for by 1750 the farms and farmstalls that were to persist as landscape features until 1850 and beyond had been

established. The missing one hundred and fifty years saw the processes that changed the pattern of 1608 to that of 1750.

The availablilty of documentary sources is not the only factor that makes this examination worthwhile. This was a freehold estate that had existed as a compact ownership unit from at least the early years of the 16th century when it came into the hands of the Conyers family. It contrasted with the Bishop's vills in that the owner/tenant relationship was a two tier system rather than the three tier system of Bishop, owner and occupier that had developed there. The pattern of closes and fields on the 1608 map is probably the result of a Tudor enclosure associated with the depopulation of the village. There is a suggestion on the Farrow map that the closes may have been allotments at enclosure for some of them bear the names of tenants. E. M. Leonard has stated that piecemeal enclosure took place in the county during the 16th century.[5] Since the 1597 Depopulation Act applied to Durham it would be reasonable to assume that depopulation had taken place earlier in the century. In the absence of firmer evidence, it is suggested that this township was enclosed and the village depopulated in the early part of the 16th century. What the system of tenure was before this event is not known but it is evident that the customary tenures did not persist on this freehold estate, as they did on the Bishop's lands for, as early as 1740, the township was in the hands of four tenant farmers who held their leases for six years. This term had been reduced from a term that appears to have been twenty-one years.

The field patterns in 1839 had developed in the same way as the patterns in the Bishop's townships. The 1608 boundaries have tended to persist with smaller fields being laid out within them. By 1608 the village had been abandoned and there is no evidence at that date of farmstalls among the fields and closes. The evidence of the

historic maps discussed in Chapter 2 confirms that the manor house remained on the site and it was present on the 1777 maps, although it did not perform the role of a farmstall. At that time, the manor house and four farmstalls dispersed among the fields formed the settlement pattern.

Although there had been a change in the territorial organisation of Layton between 1608 and 1839, there had not been a corresponding change in the crop and rotational practices of the farmers for by the first decade of the 19th century, only limited use was being made of new crops and new rotations with the old three-course rotation of wheat, oats and fallow being dominant, and permanent pasture forming a considerable portion of the farm lands.

Some Farms in the Manor of Bishop Middleham

The choice of farms discussed in this section is largely determined by the availability of documentary and map sources. The earliest map for a farm in the manor is that of Farnless Farm c1788, and is reproduced in Figure 61. This was a leasehold farm and was part of the Bishop's Demesne. Maps of some other leasehold estates are to be found in a volume of the Miscellaneous Books of the Halmote Court which were drawn in the second and third decades of the 19th century.[7] These, however, are linked with verbal entries in Old Notitia Books[8] in the collection which give, in some instances, descriptions of the estates at earlier times and lists of fines paid on admittance to leases. These can be for lives or years and many go back as far as the 17th century which allows reference to be made to Bishop Cosin's Survey of 1661 and the Parliamentary Survey of 1647. Although it is not possible to say with certainty that the boundaries at c1820 are the same as they were in 1647, the inference is very strong when these documentary sources are taken into account.

Copyhold and freehold estates within the manor are not so well documented. Island Farm is a copyhold estate in Bishop Middleham and the earliest map is dated c1840 or about the time of the Tithe Award, and is reproduced in Figure 60. The main sources of information for the copyhold estates are the rental lists for the years c1619 to 1800 and Call Books from c1712 to 1809, and details here are sparse and sometimes ambiguous. The 1647 Survey records the copyholders but in the case of Bishop Middleham this date is pre-enclosure and many of the farms are scattered among the common fields. Sedgefield at that time was in the stage of immediate post-enclosure, and many of the copyholdings are described in the old terminology.

Of necessity, then, the greater number of farms and estates

discussed in this section will be of leasehold tenure for it is here that the records are fuller. Since Island Farm has been used as an illustration, and since it is the only copyhold farm relatively well documented, this will be the first to be examined.

Island Farm (Bishop Middleham)

Island Farm, situated in the township of Bishop Middleham, (Fig. 38.) is probably so called because it occupies a position on the higher land to the south of the village and is bounded on all sides by low-lying drainage channels. This site is one of the limestone knolls already referred to in an earlier chapter. In 1839, the farm was held copyhold by the incumbents of the vicarage of Pittington, and the perpetual curacies of Castle Eden and Hartlepool, each having a distinct area of the farm as part of his benefice. The map (Fig. 60.) is reproduced from a Halmote Court Map of unknown date, but is probably c1840. Comparison with the 1839 field boundaries (Fig. 42.) will show close agreement. On this map the parts held by the individual clergy are marked.

Map evidence earlier than 1839 is not available, but the existence of the farm can be traced back through the Halmote Court Rentals. The rental for the farm was 14s. 0d. and by identifying this with the known holders in the early 19th century, this can be traced back to 1752. By 1774, however, an entry for Island Farm 14s. 0d. does not coincide with that which has been traced back. The confusion would seem to arise because the copyhold vicarial glebe also had a rental of 14s. 0d. In 1758, Geo. Dixon paid the 14s. 0d. rental for 'Ye Parsons Land'. It would seem that the person who paid the Halmote Court rental was not necessarily the landholder and the confusion that arose when there were two kinds of parsons' land was probably understandable. The earliest reference to Island Farm in the rental lists is 1729 when it is held

by a Mr. Dunn, but it is an additional entry in pencil, which is of a later date, that identifies it. The first original entry as Island Farm is 1731.

Call Book A of the Halmote Court shows that in 1776 the Rev. Mr. Benj. Pye of Hartlepool, the Rev. Mr. John Todd of Castle Eden, and the Rev. Mr. James Deason of Pittington were holders.

In Call Book B, the farm is entered as Call 31 and reference is made to an entry in H. C. Book Vol 1629-35 Fo 389-90 but this could not be traced. The Call Book stated, however, that on 30th November, 1 Geo 2 (1727) Fo 74, Island Farm was augmented with each benefice having a distinct part as follows:

Hartlepool	43.0. 3 Acres
Castle Eden	64.3.15 Acres
Pittington	44.0.26 Acres
Island Farm	152.0. 4 Acres

But Call Book VA Fo 71 for 1722 shows the farm in the ownership of:

Arthur Shipherd	Vicar of Pittington (admitted)
Richard Merge	Clerk, Curate of Hartlepool
Walter Burn	Curate of Castle Eden

The farm, then, can be traced back to 1722, at which time distinct parts had not yet been allocated to the clergy. According to Surtees[1] in his history of the county, their ownership of the farm did not predate this by many years, for it was bought for them with the aid of Queen Anne's Bounty.

The 1647 Parliamentary Survey has an entry showing Nicholas Richardson as a copyholder paying an annual rent of 4s. 0d. but 'producing no fines or coppyes' for a holding which was probably Island

Farm. Another copyholding having the same rent was that of Thomas Middleton, a dispersed holding illustrated earlier in this work. This probably represents the vicarial glebe which was consolidated on enclosure in 1693. By the 18th century these two copyholdings would be the two lots of parson's land referred to in the rentals. Reference to Figure 32 will show that most of the land lying to the south of the village had been glebe. As a result of the Reformation, the Rectorial Glebe had been appropriated in the 16th century. In the absence of positive evidence, it may be conjectured that Island Farm had previously formed part of the Rectorial Glebe which was enclosed on appropriation. The beginning of the 18th century saw its return to the church in the form of assistance to the poorer clergy. There is no mention of this farm in the enclosure award when it formed part of the land that had been previously enclosed.

In examining the pattern of the fields, three fields are worthy of note. They are the 'Cornfield West of the Barn, Middle Island and Old Field East of the Barn'. It is suggested that these fields show that they may have formed an earlier three field system with, perhaps, the 'East side of Middle Island' being formerly part of Middle Island Field forming a split field. Each of these fields is held separately by the clergy probably so they would each benefit from a share of the arable. In 1839, both the 'Cornfield West of the Barn' and the 'Middle Island' were arable while the 'Old Field East of the Barn' was largely under grass, although field boundaries here had changed. These fields were also nearer the village which would be an advantage when the lands were worked from there.

Apart from the arable land, there is also a projection of the farm in a south westerly direction, giving access to lower wetter areas providing meadow pasture for early spring grazing. It would seem that

this farm was organised, agriculturally, in a similar way to the much larger township lands with provision made for a three-course rotation of arable, grazing lands and wet pasture. To the north there is a direct lane link from this farm to the village, which suggests that at an earlier date it was worked from there.

It is most likely, then, that Island Farm originated as a result of Tudor enclosure, following the appropriation of the Rectorial Glebe. When it again passed into the hands of the Church at the beginning of the 18th century, it became institutionalised, a process which consolidated it as a stable unit which persisted until the mid-19th century and beyond. There is slight evidence which suggests that the farm was worked, in earlier times, using a three field system with corresponding meadow and pasture. The plot in the village shows that originally the farm was worked from there, but by 1839 the site of the village homestall was occupied by a brewery. The mid-19th century farmhouse would seem to be a product of the 18th century.

Farnless Farm (Bishop Middleham)

The leasehold farm of Farnless, also in the township of Bishop Middleham (Fig. 38.) resembles in some ways Island Farm. This farm is recorded in the Old Notitia Books.[8] On 26th September, 1765, a new lease was granted to Elizabeth Hallhead (Spr.) 'Of a messuage or tenement called Farnleys consisting of,

3 Fields called Farnleys

2 Little Carrs at the bottom of the two Farnleys Fields

The Upper Part of the Fourteen Riggs

The 9 Acre Carr

Containing by estimation 78 Acres.'

The map (Fig. 61.) shows this farm in 1788 and is reproduced from a map of that date held in the Halmote Court Collection. This is the earliest

map of the farm and it accords well with the verbal description given above. Reference to the map of Farnless Farm in 1839 (Fig. 41.) will show that although by that date it had been enlarged, the 1788 Farm still formed a recognisable part.

A much earlier reference comes from the 1647 Parliamentary Survey when the estate is described as, 'One pasture close called High Farnless with fourteen ridges containing by estimation 48 acres with two low meadows containing 12 acres and one parcel of ground called the Well Close now in the occupation of Christopher Selby as farmer for this present year at the rent of £32.5.0.' This is coupled with, 'One feeding pasture called Low Farnless cont. by estimation 36 acres and one parcel of meadow ground called 9 acres now in the possession of John Hutchinson as farmer for this present year at the rent of £20.5.0.' Together they form 'The Bishop's Closes'. These were part of the Demesne Lands held by Nicholas Freville in 1647. The Survey indicates that these lands were from Queen Elizabeth by indenture, 15th October, 1580, and granted by Richard then Bishop of Durham. They were as follows:

The Bishop's Closes	£	8.00.00
The Parke	£	3.06.00
The Demesne Lands	£	6.13.04
Deepewell Close (1 acre)	£	0.01.00
	£	18.00.00

This lease was confirmed by the Dean and Chapter of Durham under their seals of office bearing the date of the first day of December A. D. 1585 (Ao 28 E.R.) then in the hands of George Freville, Esq., 'without making accompt or doing service or paying rent for same to her majesty but paying the Bishop and his successors an yearly rent in the said lease reserved being per an. £18.0.0'.

The 1788 plan of this farm shows that the larger part of it was divided into three major fields - North, Middle and West Farnless. It is suggested that the field called 'The Garth' would originally have been part of the North Farnless Field and it was so called because the large field had been subdivided when provision was made for a homestall. Since no mention of this field is made in the Old Notia account it is possible that its creation and the establishment of the farmstall may post-date 1765 although this description may have been long in use in the Halmote Court records and continued to be so after the farmstall was built. The presence of these three fields given over to arable farming and the easterly projection of the farm into the low-lying wet carrs to gain access to meadow, begs comparison with the Island Farm. Reference to the land-use map of 1839 (Fig. 50.) will show that the three fields were also given over to arable, with the exception of The Garth which was grass.

The Demesne Arable and Park (Bishop Middleham)

In 1839, Hall Farm, held by Elizabeth Hallhead and farmed by George Dale Trotter (see Farm No. 1 in Fig. 41.) consisted of almost all of the rest of the Bishop's Demesne and Park. The map, Figure 62, is taken from a volume of the Miscellaneous Books in the Halmote Court Collection[7] and is probably dated 1823, since that is the date the estate was viewed. It is to be noted that a small part of the demesne arable had been separated as indicated on the map. The lease for this was granted on 26th September, 1765 to Robert Rawling, Clerk, and consisted of, '2 closes called Rawlings Flatts, containing 12 acres or thereabouts part of the Demesne Lands of Bishop Middleham...' At that same date the rest of the Demesne Land and Park was leased to Nicholas Hallhead, Esq., and consisted of,

'The Park in Eight Parcels containing 82 acres

Hall Garth 12 acres

Swainston's Flatts in 3 closes containing 35 acres

Deepwell 1 acre

Which said Hall Garths &c are parcel of the Demesne Lands there'.

Much earlier reference to these lands is made in the 1647 Parliamentary Survey as has already been indicated above. The jurors stated that, 'We present that there are certain Demesne lands belonging to the aforesaid manor all inclosed the several names of every field, arable, pasture or meadow with the several acres of each respectively are as followeth,

Three several platts of arable land containing by estimation 80 acres worth per an. 4s. each acre. The annual rent £16.0.0 paid to the Bishop....' 'We present that there is one parke walled about cont. by estimation 70 acres worth per an. 7s. every acre. In toto £24.10.0. We find no deer either reed or fallow, conyers or other game, the same being disparked many years since, is good for pasture Nicholas Freville is the tenant thereof. The timber standing and growing upon the premises being all Ash(?) is worth to be sold £15.0.0. It doth appear to us by Mr. Frevilles lease that he is to have liberty to take in and upon the premises sufficient Housebote, hedgeboote, fyreboote, plowboote, cartboote and timber for the repair of the premises and houses there. All the Demesne and premises are worth to be sold above the rent £38.15.0 per ann.' In 1647 the holder was Nicholas Freville and these lands were held in the same lease as the Farnless Farm

It has been suggested elsewhere that the three closes forming the demesne arable were taken in as severalties from the three open fields of the township. The boundary between the East and Middle Fields is the road from the village to the north while map examination (Fig. 38.)

will show the beginnings of a lane that originally divided the West Field from the Middle Field. Examination in the field shows this to be a short sunken lane leading to the demesne arable.

The 1765 account of the farm is a little obscure when it describes Swainston's Flatts in three closes containing 35 acres. This could be a description of only the west field of the demesne for the total area of the former demesne in this farm was some 77 acres in 1839 which would seem to agree with the 1647 estimate. There are no field names on the Tithe Award which would have been helpful, it is assumed, therefore, that there is an error in this 1765 entry.

It should be noted, by reference to the farm map of c1820 (Fig. 62.) and the land-use map of 1839 (Fig. 49.), that at those dates the demesne arable was still under arable cropping and although the jurors pointed out, in 1647, that the park was good for pasture, by 1820 and 1839, much of it was being used for arable. The 1820 map also shows that by that date fallow crops, peas, and turnips, had been introduced.

Sprucely Farm (Bishop Middleham)

A farm of long standing in Bishop Middleham was Sprucely and North Leeze (Fig. 41., farm No. 4) lying to the south east of the village. In 1839 it was owned by William Russell and farmed by John Bewick with an area of some 144 acres. The earliest map available is a sketch map accompanying a rotation schedule dated 1812 (Fig. 63.). This may be compared with that reproduced from the 1839 Tithe Award map in Figure 65. Documentary evidence for the existence of this farm certainly predates this. Notitia Books[8] show that on the 26th November, 1749, John Burdon was leased, 'All the pasture ground called Sprucely and North Leeze divided into 13 closes'. The closes were as follows:

		£	s	d
3 closes called Sprewseley cont	53 acres @ 10d	26	10	0
2 closes called North Leeze or Bush Leeze	14 acres @ 7d	4	18	0
5 closes called North Leeze or Bush Leeze	30 acres @ 10d	15	0	0
2 closes called Middle Moors	33 acres @ 5d	8	5	0
1 close called North Field	4 acres	3	12	0
	134 acres	58	5	0

Earlier mention is made in the 1647 Survey as follows, 'George Freville, son of Nicholas Freville, Esq., Thomas Bell and John Hutchinson by indenture dated 20th July 9 Carole (1638) granted by Thomas late Bishop of Durham. Holdeth all that his pasture ground called Sprusley and Northleeze set lying and being in the townfields and territories of Bishop Middleham with all pastures, feeding, commons, commodities, profits, easements, wayes and appurtenances whatsoever for the natural lives of the said George Freville, Thomas Bell (then aged 13 years) and John Hutchinson (then aged 14 years) paying per annum at the Exchq. Durham at Martinmas and Pentecost. The lease to be void for the non-payment of rent within 20 days, etc. £2.8.9.'

The acreage of the farm in 1839 would seem to accord well with that in 1749 if errors due to mistakes in estimation are taken into account. It is not possible to equate the close names in the 1749 account with those on the 1839 Tithe Award so although it is possible to state that the farm has persisted since 1647, it is not possible to argue the persistence of the closes and the farm boundary itself. With neighbouring farms also being owned by William Russell, boundary adjustments may have been made. Reference to the scheme of husbandry for this farm (Fig. 64.) will show that in 1812, 1813 and 1814 the rotation was still a three-course one of wheat, oats and fallow with

only once the use of clover and once the inclusion of turnips.

Although by 1839 the farmstall had long been established among the fields, this holding still had a plot in the village. Since this farm was already enclosed in 1693 and since it was mentioned as a farm in the 1647 Survey, it is likely that it is a compact enclosed farm that was being worked from a homestall in the village in the 16th century.

Simonsides Farm (Cornforth)

The plan (Fig. 66.) of Simonsides Farm is an example of the many estates of the township of Cornforth that have plans and details in Notitia Book No. 12 of the Miscellaneous Books of the Halmote Court. This plan is described as, 'Sketch and valuation of an estate in the Township of Cornforth, Parish of Bishop Middleham in the County of Durham. Lease from the Lord Bishop of Durham to Mr. George Ewbank for 3 Lives. The life dead is Thomas Raine. The new lease to be granted to Lancelot Lownes of Bishopton nr Stockton - the new life Lancelot son of Thomas Scott of W. Raunton in the North Riding of the County of York, farmer aged 8 years ....' The estate was viewed on the 18th February 1817.

References to Notitia Books[8] show that this estate can be traced back as early as 1680 when it was in the hands of Robert Haswell. The list of fines signifying entry to the estate is as follows;

1680	Robert Haswell
1727	Joan Milner
1728	-
1743	Dr. John Johnson
21st October, 1763	Jane Bland and William Carter
1st May, 1777	G. Ewbank
13th June, 1782	G. Ewbank
5th April, 1817	Lancelot Lownes

25th June, 1827	Anne Scott
11th April, 1831	Anne Scott
23rd September, 1840	Anne Scott

The new lease described above, can be seen to correspond with the dates of entry on the list. On the 23rd August, 1743, Dr. John Johnson took the lease of the estate when it was described as a tenement containing two lands. The 1661 Cosin's Survey places it in the hands of William Colledge and in 1647 it was owned by Robert Haswell. By 1839, the four closes and the village holding were in the hands of Miles Brown and the large compact farm (108.5 acres) was owned by Anne Scott (Figs. 43, 44.).

From the field pattern a three field system is not so readily postulated as is the case with other examples given. The Tithe Award field names show a Middle Field and a South Field which have been shown on the plan. This may be relict verbal evidence of a former three field system on the farm, but it is extremely tenuous. Three fields in the north with the names of Rushy Carr, Pottery Field and Bottom border the Coxhoe Beck providing the wet meadow found in the other farms.

As was the case with Island Farm and Sprucely there is a village holding included in this estate. Mention has already been made of these links which predate the establishment of a homestall in the fields.

As in the cases of the other farms discussed, there is only slight evidence of the introduction of new crops even as late as 1817. Four fields still lay fallow at that date and only one small close was being used for turnips.

Conclusions

Evidence from this group of farms shows that in Middleham Manor the enclosed farm unit was in existence at the beginning of the 17th

century before the great enclosure movement of that century got under way. All the Bishop Middleham farms instanced were present in 1600 being the result of Tudor enclosure or even earlier. Hall Farm and Farnless were established by the Bishop taking his demesne into severalty, his pasture closes from the waste pasture and converting the park to agricultural use. Sprucely Farm was probably established as the result of piecemeal enclosure referred to by E. M. Leonard as having taken place in Durham on a considerable scale in the 16th century. Island Farm most likely formed part of Rectorial Glebe appropriated in the 16th century.

Reference to Figure 38, however, will show that these farms did not constitute all the land of Bishop Middleham that had been taken out of common practice by 1693. The freehold East House Farm, land referred to in 1693 as 'Mr. Bradshaugh's land' as well as unspecified closes, had also been hedged by that time.

Some of these farms that were of early enclosure show signs of a field system based on three large arable fields which were worked in rotation supplemented by pasture and meadow, a pattern similar to that found in the township lands. There is also evidence of plots in the village being linked with these early enclosures and which initially held the homesteads.

These farms, then, illustrate that a break-up of the medieval pattern of common fields and pastures was already advanced in Bishop Middleham by the beginning of the 17th century.

In Cornforth township, to the north, the greater number of the farms of which Simonsides is but a representative sample, were the result of the enclosure in 1624. Here there is little evidence of the earlier patterns of farming practice that was displayed in some of the Bishop Middleham farms. The pattern of links between the farms and the plots

in the village, however, was much more in evidence in 1839 (Fig. 31.) indicating a distribution of village holdings that predated the 1624 pattern of enclosure allotments that produced the 1839 farms.

Since much of the land in Sedgefield was copyhold there is not the documentary evidence available allowing the identification of the farms at earlier dates. Lack of information of freehold farms is similarly restrictive. Of the leasehold farms, the pattern of development is similar to that of the farms in Cornforth, with references in Old Notitia Books, Bishop Cosin's Survey and the Parliamentary Survey of 1647. This takes the researcher back to a post-enclosure situation. Most of the farms were the result of enclosure allotments and this process has been dealt with in Chapter 3.

Chapter 5

References

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C H A P T E R S I X

C O N C L U S I O N S

The historical geographer has little difficulty in recognising the high Middle Ages as a period of agricultural prosperity in England. The 12th and 13th centuries saw the building of many of the historic churches, cathedrals and castles that survive in the villages and market towns that formed the dense network of nucleated settlement that existed in lowland England at that time. Research into field systems and settlement indicate that in the lowland area of North-East England this was probably the time when many of the planned settlements were laid out, a reflection of the confidence placed in the agricultural practices based on the manorial system of regulated co-operative farming. Such prosperity represented a summit in agricultural achievement, for it was the result of a lengthy process of development beginning with the Anglo-Saxon colonisation. The out-stripping of food resources by population increase caused the drastic decline in numbers in the mid-14th century, which was the catalyst which put the medieval system in decline from its peak in the High Middle Ages.

Although there may be debate among economic historians as to the precise dating and nature of the Agricultural Revolution, that it occurred is not in doubt. This formed a second peak of agricultural prosperity based on the capitalistic system of the entrepreneur and a money return for investment and labour. Between the two it is possible to argue the presence of a trough. The period of 1600 to 1850 in South-East Durham represents the climb from the trough up to the new peak and was a period which saw not only the introduction of new kinds of territorial organisation and land-use, but also the final decay of the older system.

This work has been concerned with changes in the organisation of the land as the result of the evolution of an agricultural economy

based on competition from one based on co-operation. This necessarily involves a consideration of the swing from the concepts associated with shared, communal land to a system based on private estates. This summary of findings will concern itself, first of all, with the nature of the inherited pattern of 1600, and then those key changes which finally resulted in the landscape of 1850.

1600 - The Inherited Landscape

The close-spaced pattern of nucleated settlement in the area of Middleham Manor is in evidence on the early maps of the Palatinate and is a pattern which owed its origin to the medieval period. Research has shown, however, that not all settlement was nucleated in 1600. Evidence from Layton suggests that depopulation of that village had taken place early in the 16th century, while archaeological evidence from the Thrislington site has shown similar post-medieval dates of abandonment. If these are accepted as typical then it might be reasonable to assume similar dates of desertion for the other abandoned settlements mapped in Figure 11. E. M. Leonard[1] has suggested that much enclosure took place in Durham in the 16th century, a fact borne out by the application of the 1597 Act against enclosure and depopulation. By 1600 the township lands of the deserted villages had succumbed to enclosure and patterns of closes similar to those seen on the Layton map of 1608 (Fig. 10.) had been established. Whether or not the land was given over to sheep, as the Tudor anti-enclosure literature suggests, is not known, nor is it known where the men who worked the land lived when the villages were depopulated. Evidence from the early maps of the Palatinate suggests that some dwellings were present on the village sites for they are located and named. It is probable, therefore, that some farmstalls or former manor houses remained on or near the sites. Depopulation was well under way before

1600 and the pattern of surviving villages and deserted sites formed the basis of the pattern that was to emerge by 1850.

The manorial villages and townships of Cornforth, Bishop Middleham and Sedgefield survived to display many features of the inherited medieval system. The plot pattern of the villages probably originated in the 12th century with possible extension in the 13th century, and persisted until 1850 with only relatively minor changes. Evidence from Cornforth and Bishop Middleham suggests that in 1600 the farmstall occupied the village toft. Certainly, the dispersion of the farmstalls to the fields on a large scale, to form a dispersed scatter, post-dated enclosure. The village plot represented a private land holding in an inherited system that was predominantly one of shared land. But by 1600, although the manorial lands formed a champion landscape of open fields, pastures and moors worked in common, there were signs that lands were being withdrawn from this shared use. In Bishop Middleham township, land had been taken into severalty and Lammas closes, both from the open fields and the common pasture by the time of the Chancery Decree Award in 1693, and many of these can be traced back to the earlier years of the century. Although the enclosure of neighbouring township lands and the associated depopulation of villages showed a dramatic socio-economic change, progress had been slower in the manorial lands, but none-the-less sure.

By 1600, then, some units in the pattern of nucleated settlement had disappeared and some of the township lands had been enclosed. The manorial settlements and lands survived, largely in their medieval form and practice, but here also enclosure had made incursions into the open fields, common pastures and meadows.

From 1600 to 1850

Although enclosure had occurred before 1600, it was on a limited

scale. The Chancery Decree Awards of the 17th century were the events that caused a revolutionary change in the organisation of the Bishopric lands for they took all the land out of shared occupation and put it under private ownership with clearly demarcated allotments. This change was at its most dramatic in Sedgefield where enclosure took place in 1636 and where it has been shown that large areas of common arable and pasture were affected. By 1693, a great part of the Bishop Middleham lands had suffered piecemeal enclosure and although three open arable fields remained, there was little common pasture.

There were a number of factors resulting from enclosure that affected territorial organisation. The awarding of allotments meant that owners had land with the physical attributes of identifiable location, compact size and soil quality, coupled with tenurial identity, which was freed from all constraints of communal agriculture. This was important for the process of engrossing that was to occur for it made land a more readily saleable commodity. Enclosure allotments proved enduring as alienable blocks in the land market and eventually became consolidated in the estates of the gentry. As far as small farmers were concerned, some were able to maintain their allotments as owner-occupiers, some were able to dispose of one or more allotments and retain one, while others sold out completely to large land-owners, probably to become tenant farmers. The allotments, therefore, had a considerable effect on the pattern of enclosed farms that had emerged by 1850, for the compactness of the latter was usually a reflection of the original allotment boundary. There are cases, however, where allotments have combined to form large farms and there is also evidence of allotments being divided.

Enclosure was not only a means of socio-economic adjustment among land-owners and tenant farmers. The act of enclosing destroyed the

already-ailing field system of a former co-operative method of farming and introduced a system of boundaries within which individual decisions would be operative and which was to produce the pattern of fields seen on the mid-19th century maps. It has been shown that the pattern of fields in 1850 was a composite development based on the allotment enclosures within the common fields and pastures, and the enclosures that were already present at the time of the Chancery Decree Award. However, it is important to emphasise that the creation of small hedged closes, although an overt sign of the change from shared to private occupation, did not presage revolutionary changes in other aspects of agricultural development. Evidence has been given to show that the introduction of new crops and rotations occurred at a relatively late date, with a basic three-course rotation of wheat-oats-fallow being used well into the 19th century. The three tier system of Bishop-owner-occupier with customary copyhold and leasehold tenures persisted as late as 1850 with only few owners taking advantage of the chance to enfranchise in 1800. So, although the early enclosure of the manorial lands provided the necessary infrastructure, the lingering medieval attitude to agricultural practices allowed only a slow evolution of the 'new farming' in the 19th century. By the time the new crops and rotations were being used more regularly, the agricultural depression of the post-Napoleonic War period was occurring.

The creation of a new field system was not the only change in the man-land relationship that enclosure produced. Whereas in 1800 the farmstall had been on the village toft, by 1850 the township lands were dotted with homesteads that occupied sites on the enclosed farms. When this movement out took place is not known, but evidence from Layton suggests the early part of the 19th century. There is no evidence that movement out to the fields quickly followed the hedging of the

allotments. In 1850 these dispersed farmsteads are sometimes designated as 'halls' which is probably an indication of the social aspirations of the farmer. There were, however, substantial mansions that had appeared as significant features of the mid-19th century landscape, along with their grounds, and are more rightly called 'halls', Mainsforth and Hardwick being prominent examples.

The nucleated settlements that had survived by 1600 were also present in 1850 and these included the three Bishop's villages. As a result of the homesteads being located in the fields, changes occurred in the use of the village tofts. There is evidence in Bishop Middleham, for example, of pubs, a school, a brewery, as well as cottages and houses occupying tofts. Sedgefield, as well as displaying similar signs, had developed specialised functions of an embryonic market settlement with intensification of building on the plots and colonisation of the green. The plot patterns of all three settlements was the same as that in 1600, with additional minor sub-divisions.

In the other nucleated settlements, farmsteads in 1850 were present in greater numbers than in the manorial villages. Fishburn and Norden, for example, showed inherited plot patterns that still contained cottage elements, but where other tofts had disappeared to accommodate the 18th century farmsteads. On the deserted sites, individual halls or farmsteads survived, or in some cases there were clusters of two or more farmsteads.

These findings, then, have produced a pattern of development in Middleham Manor between 1600 and 1850 which might best be described as one of adaptive change. Although it has been possible to present a sequential order in which changes in territorial organisation occurred, the establishment of a precise chronology has not been achieved. This has largely been due to the fragmentary nature of documentary and

cartographic sources. However, certain problems, into which more detailed research may be of value, have been highlighted, such as, the dispersion of farmsteads after enclosure, the changes in boundaries and the spatial organisation of the newly enclosed farms.

The distinctive character of Middleham Manor derives ultimately from ownership by the Bishops of Durham and many of the localised and internal contrasts in landscape, farming and territorial arrangement stem directly from the fact that one group of settlements, the manorial villages of Middleham, were held 'in demesne' with tenants answering directly (until 1926) to the Halmote Court, while the remaining settlements were all passed by the Bishop to secular hands from a relatively early date. Land-ownership is too often a forgotten dimension when explaining local variations in settlement and economy.

Chapter 6

References

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