

# ALNHAM NORTHUMBERLAND

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL STUDY OF A BORDER TOWNSHIP

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PART 1  
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

## 1. BACKGROUND, AIMS & METHODS

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The Northumberland National Park Historic Village Atlas Project is a collaborative project between the National Park Authority and local communities,<sup>1</sup> the main product of which is an atlas of Historic Villages in the Northumberland National Park (NNP) area.

Despite a considerable amount of historical and archaeological research within NNP, much of this work has been targeted on outlying sites and areas and there has been little targeted study of the historic villages themselves. Previous studies undertaken into the history of the villages, including those provided by the antiquarian, Hodgson (1820-1840), those contained in the County Histories, as well as the later work of Wrathmell (1975) and Dixon (1985), cover some of the same ground as the present studies, but are now in need of revision in the light of subsequent archaeological discoveries and historical findings, as well as changes to both the built fabric and community of the villages in the National Park area. Even John Grundy's impressive work on the buildings of the National Park completed as recently as 1988 has been rendered out of date by the conservation, renovation, adaptation and, in some cases, demolition of many buildings covered in his report.

The increased pace of modern development within the National Park has put pressure on its cultural heritage resource, specifically its historic buildings and villages. One of the aims of the Historic Village Atlas Project, therefore, is to provide additional information which NNPA can use to further inform its approach to the management of sites of cultural heritage importance.

Changes in the social fabric of the area, often linked to the development work outlined above, mean that traditional lifeways maintained over many generations are now becoming increasingly rare or extinct. In particular, many traditional farming practices and the skills, tools and buildings used to support them have been lost and are being lost, and along with these has gone a regional vocabulary of specific terms and expressions. However, within the same communities there is also a considerable interest in the history and archaeology of the villages. Part of the purpose of the Historic Village Atlas Project, therefore, is to provide information and advice to facilitate not only greater understanding, but also active participation by community members in investigating and preserving aspects of the past. Some of the ways in which this can be achieved is through the presentation of data, guided walks and oral history recordings, all of which have been built into the project brief.

The study presented here was commissioned in order to redress the lack of systematic research into the historic settlements of the Northumberland National Park area, with the intention not only to contribute to the Regional Research Agenda, but to inform the planning and heritage management process, and provide impetus and encouragement for local communities to carry out their own work.

The main aims of the project are as follows:

- To further the study, understanding and enjoyment of the historic villages, both by interested individuals and community-based groups.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Acknowledgments section of the Synthesis volume for a list of institutions and individuals that have provided assistance in various ways.

- To reinforce and develop the existing sense of place and belonging of individuals within the communities of the region.
- To provide a springboard for future community-led initiatives by supplying information which community groups can use to develop their own proposals.
- To facilitate the management of the cultural heritage by the NNPA

Village settlements, traditionally recognisable as clustered assemblies of houses and farmsteads, are scarce within the Park, where most settlements are isolated farms and hamlets. However, on the basis of their current status and what was known about their historic importance, the NNPA identified seventeen historic villages for study:

|                |            |                 |
|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Akeld          | NT 957 296 | Glendale        |
| Alnham         | NT 996 108 | Alndale         |
| Alwinton       | NT 923 065 | Coquetdale      |
| Byrness        | NT 764 026 | Redesdale       |
| Elsdon         | NY 937 934 | Redesdale       |
| Falstone       | NY 724 875 | North Tynedale  |
| Great Tosson   | NU 027 006 | Coquetdale      |
| Greenhaugh     | NY 795 873 | North Tynedale  |
| Harbottle      | NT 935 046 | Coquetdale      |
| Hethpool       | NT 896 284 | College Burn    |
| High Rochester | NY 832 982 | Redesdale       |
| Holystone      | NT 955 026 | Coquetdale      |
| Ingram         | NU 019 164 | Breamish Valley |
| Kilham         | NT 884 325 | Glendale        |
| Kirknewton     | NT 915 303 | Glendale        |
| Tarset         | NY 788 855 | North Tynedale  |
| Westnewton     | NT 903 303 | Glendale        |

Villages do not exist as self-contained units, but rather as focal points within the wider landscape. It is important, therefore, in attempting an understanding of the development of villages themselves, that the study villages are investigated in the context of their wider landscapes which may be definable by bounded areas, such as parishes and townships, or by topographic features such as river valleys.

Modern villages exist within clearly demarcated territories known as civil parishes, which are generally based on the boundaries of earlier territorial units labelled townships – units of settlement with pre-Norman origins which were regarded as discrete communities within each ecclesiastical parish. The ecclesiastical parish represented a unit of land paying tithes to a parish church, and in upland Northumberland, these parishes were often vast, incorporating entire dales and numerous townships. A township has its own settlement nucleus and field system and is thus an area of common agricultural unity and is often equivalent to the medieval *vill* – though the latter frequently refers to a taxation unit or administrative entity, whereas a territorial township refers to the physical fabric of the community (fields, buildings, woods & rivers). Township boundaries sometimes follow pre-Norman estate divisions and in some cases may even be earlier - it seems likely that a system of land organisation based around agricultural territories was in operation in Roman or pre-Roman times. Therefore, in some instances very ancient boundary lines may have been preserved by later land divisions. The various forms of parish and township and their development over time are discussed more extensively in the historical synthesis in Section 3.

In order to carry out a study focussing on the village core whilst attempting also to understand it within the local and regional context, a variety of approaches has been taken using information derived from a wide range of sources, including existing archaeological and historic buildings records, historic maps and documents, historic and aerial photographs and published information. In the present section (Section 1) the location of the village is discussed and an indication is given of the area covered by the present study. Section 2 provides a background to the sources of information used to compile the report, listing the archives consulted and some of the most significant maps, documents and photographs used to compile a list of cultural heritage sites. Section 3 provides a listing of all the historic and archaeological monuments identified within the study area and synthesizes the collected data to provide a summary of the known history of the settlement. Section 4 contains suggestions for future work and sets out the report's conclusions regarding the village's historical development which in turn inform the judgements regarding the levels of archaeological sensitivity applied to different parts of the settlement and displayed graphically on the 'sensitivity map' (figure 61). The appendices contain catalogues of the various categories of collected data. A glossary of historical terms used and a full bibliography are also provided.

One final point cannot be over-emphasized. Too often the completion of a substantial work of this kind tends to create the impression that everything is now known regarding a particular subject and thereby discourages further investigation. In compiling this report, the consultants have on the contrary been all too conscious of barely scratching the surface and aware that many additional avenues of research could have been pursued. The Historic Village Atlas should be a starting point not a conclusion to the exploration of this broad and fascinating field.

## 2. LOCATION AND TOPOGRAPHY

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### 2.1 Location and topography

The village of Alnham lies at the head of Alndale in west-central Northumberland, on the eastern edge of the Northumberland National Park (see figures 1 and 2). Alnham today comprises three farms, now partially disused, and a string of small cottages along the road heading southeast towards Scrainwood, all within a mile of the church and the refurbished tower house situated adjacent to the earthworks of the medieval settlement. The River Aln flows through the village on its way eastward from its source in Cheviot Hills to the west of the settlement, down to the coast.

### 2.2 Area of Study

The area of study adopted is represented by the historic township of Alnham (see figure 3). This was, by far the largest of four townships incorporated in the ecclesiastical parish of Alnham, and covered an area of 9353 acres in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (acreage provided by NCH XIV (1935), 560; Dixon 1985, II, 24 gives 9405 acres), making up the bulk of Alnham Parish. The village's location within the framework of the ecclesiastical parish and the township is shown on figure 3. The township stretched from the head of Alndale as far the border with Scotland at Windy Gyle and Cock Law, about 20km to the west, covering a substantial chunk of the Cheviot Hills and extending over the Aln and Coquet watershed to include much of the south side of the Breamish Valley. The development of parochial and township structures is discussed fully in the following section.

### 3. TERRITORIAL UNITS AND SETTLEMENT TYPES

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#### 3.1 Parishes and Townships, Baronies and Manors

To understand the history of a particular village settlement, like Alnham, it is necessary to distinguish and define the various different territorial units within which the village was incorporated, and which provided the framework for the development of that community. Each of these units related to different aspects of the settlement's communal relations – religious, economic, administrative and seigneurial – and their function changed over time. The development of the institution of the civil township, in particular, was far from straightforward.

**The Parish** was the basic unit of ecclesiastical administration and essentially represented 'a community whose spiritual needs were served by a parish priest, who was supported by tithe and other dues paid by his parishioners' (Winchester 1987, 23). It was the payment of tithes - established as a legal principle since the reign of King Edgar 959-75 (Platt 1981, 47) - which gave the parish a territorial dimension so that the boundaries of the parish came to embrace all that community's landed resources. Only the most remote areas of upland waste or 'forest', such as Kidland and Cheviot Forest, remained 'extra-parochial'. Ecclesiastical parishes in the Northumbrian uplands typically covered extensive areas, sometimes very extensive areas, Simonburn in North Tynedale and Kirknewton in Glendale being amongst the largest parishes in the country. Alnham was not in the same class as Simonburn or Kirknewton, but, in common with almost all the upland parishes, it embraced several of the civil township communities or *vills*, including that centred on Alnham village itself. Others – Falstone, Harbottle, Akeld, Kilham, Hethpool and perhaps Byrness – were the site of dependent chapels of ease. The presence of early medieval carved stonework at Falstone suggests it had long been an ecclesiastical centre and may have had greater significance in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries (as a small monastic site?) than it possessed later on. However several of the study villages studied as part of the project contain no places of worship whatsoever, and it is clear that the traditional, almost unconscious, English equation of village and parish church does not apply in Northumberland, and certainly not in the Northumbrian uplands.

It is thus clear that these large medieval parishes embraced many distinct communities and the church was often too distant to conveniently serve all the spiritual needs of the parishioners in the outlying townships. However there are relatively few instances of new parishes being carved out of a well-established parish and practically none after 1150. The payment of tithes created a strong disincentive to do so since creating a new parochial territory would inevitably reduce the income of the priest in the existing parish. This relatively early fossilisation of parish territories was given added impetus once ownership of parish churches was largely transferred from the hereditary priests and local lay lords – whose predecessors had founded the churches – over to monastic communities in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, since the new ecclesiastical corporate proprietors strenuously defended their legal and economic rights (Lomas 1996, 111, 116-7; Dixon 1985 I). Instead the needs of the more distant township communities were catered for by the construction of dependent chapels of ease, which were established either by the monastic institutional patrons or on the individual initiative of local lay lords. Even so many townships had neither a church nor chapel of their own (Lomas 1996, 111-4).

In the medieval era the parish was a purely ecclesiastical institution and was to remain so until the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 made this territorial unit responsible for the maintenance of the poor through the appointment of

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overseers for the poor and the setting of a poor rate (*Statutes* 43 Eliz. I c.2; cf. Winchester 1978, 56; Charlton 1987, 98). This is in many respects typical of the history of English local government whereby 'new administrative units have generally been created by giving new functions to existing territorial divisions' (Winchester 1987, 27). Thereafter parochial administration of poor law was particularly prevalent in southern and midland England, where parishes were generally smaller and often coterminous with the civil townships. However in northern England even these additional functions tended to devolve down to the constituent townships which were a more convenient and manageable size than the extensive parishes. The modern civil parishes were established by the Local Government Act of 1889 and were substantially based on the earlier townships rather than the ecclesiastical parishes (*Statutes* 52/53 Vict. c.63).

**The Township or Vill** (in Medieval Latin) was the basic territorial unit in Northumberland, instead of the ecclesiastical parish. The term *vill* can be defined in two ways, on the one hand as a territorial community, which may be labelled the *territorial vill*, and on the other as the basic unit of civil administration in medieval England, the *administrative vill*. The two units were related and they could indeed be cover identical territorial divisions, but this was not always the case and they must therefore be carefully distinguished.

**The territorial vill** is synonymous with the English words *town* or *township*, deriving from the Old English *tun*, the commonest element in English placenames, i.e. a settlement with a distinct, delimited territory, the latter representing the expanse of land in which that particular community of peasants lived and practised agriculture. A township/territorial vill was not the same as the village itself, which was simply the nucleated settlement which commonly lay at the heart (though not necessarily the geographical centre) of the township, and where the bulk of the individuals who made up the community might reside. A classic township, centred on a nucleated village settlement, was composed of three main elements, the village itself, the cultivated arable land and meadows, and the moorland waste or common. However a township community might live scattered about in dispersed farms instead of or as well as being grouped together in a nucleated village or hamlet. Any combination of these elements was possible, but some permanent settlement was required for there had to be a community for a township to exist. Writing between 1235 and 1259, the lawyer Henry de Bracton defined the township thus (*De Legibus et Consuetudinibus Angliae*, iii, 394-5; cited by Winchester 1978, 69; Dixon 1985, I):

"If a person should build a single edifice in the fields, there will not be a *vill*, but when in the process of time several edifices have begun to be built adjoining to or neighbouring to one another, there begins to be a *vill*."

A township's consciousness of itself as a distinct community would have been reinforced by the communal agricultural labour required to work the land. This is particularly obvious in the cases where the township was centred on a nucleated village, like Alnham, its members living and working alongside one another, but even in townships composed of scattered hamlets or farmsteads it was just as vital to regulate access to the use of communal resources such as the upland waste or commons. Such activities would have generated a sense of communal cohesion however fragmented the framework of manorial lordship and estate management in the township might have become over time (see below).

The boundaries of such township communities would have become fixed when the land appropriated by one community extended up to that belonging to neighbouring settlements (Winchester 1987, 29). In the lowlands intensive cultivation had been practised for millennia prior to the medieval period, when townships are first documented. It is therefore conceivable/has been argued that many of these boundaries were of considerable antiquity, particularly where obvious natural features such as rivers and streams and watersheds were

followed, although such antiquity is difficult to prove conclusively. In the uplands, settlement is thought to have experienced successive cycles of expansion and contraction in response to a variety of stimuli, including environmental factors such as climatic change, but doubtless also political and economic issues. This may have resulted in periodic obscuring of the boundaries when communities were not fully exploiting the available resources and hence had less need to precisely define their limits. In all areas the definitive boundary network recorded by the first Ordnance Survey maps is obviously a composite pattern, in which precise delineation occurred in a piecemeal fashion over the centuries.

**The administrative vill:** The term vill also designated the basic unit of civil administration in medieval England, representing a village or grouping of hamlets or farmsteads which were obliged to perform a range of communal administrative duties. The latter included the delivery of evidence at inquests, the upkeep of roads and bridges, the apprehension of criminals within its bounds and the assessment and collection of taxes (Vinogradoff 1908, 475; Winchester 1978, 61; 1987, 32; Dixon 1985 I). The most comprehensive listing of these administrative villas is provided by the occasional tax returns known as Lay Subsidy Rolls. The assessment units recorded therein essentially correspond to the villas and, although clearly incomplete, sufficient survives of the 1296 and 1336 Northumberland rolls to provide a good impression of the number and distribution of the administrative units in many parts of the county (*cf.* Fraser (ed.) 1968, xv-xvi).<sup>2</sup> In many areas these administrative villas correspond very closely to the territorial villas and with the later poor law townships (see below). Dixon has shown this to be the largely case in north Northumberland (north of the Coquet), for example (1985 I). This was by no means the case everywhere in the border counties, however. In the district of Copeland in West Cumbria, where a predominantly dispersed settlement pattern of scattered 'single farmsteads, small hamlets and looser groupings of farms' prevails, Winchester has demonstrated that the administrative villas had a composite structure, frequently embracing several 'members' or 'hamlets' which correspond to the basic territorial townships (1978, 61-5). In many instances administrative villas were significantly larger than the later poor law townships. These relatively large, composite administrative villas correspond to what were termed *villae integrae* ('entire villas') elsewhere in England. It is possible that a similar pattern of composite administrative villas might have been introduced in areas of the Northumbrian uplands such as Redesdale and North Tynedale, where hamlets and farmsteads were more common than nucleated villages. However these areas were liberties or franchises, like the lands of the Bishops of Durham, i.e. the normal apparatus of royal government was absent and their administration was entrusted instead to the baronial or ecclesiastical lord. This may have resulted in administration and justice being exercised through the structures of manorial lordship rather than a separate tier of specifically administrative land units. Finally, Winchester also suggests that the term vill gradually acquired a more specific administrative connotation as the organisation of local government became more standardised after the Statute of Winchester in 1285, with the result that in his study area, from the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the term was restricted to the administrative units and no longer applied to the basic territorial townships (1978, 66-7).

This idea of the vill as an area of land with defined boundaries, potentially enclosing a number of settlements, rather than a the territorial resource of a single community, is expressed in a passage by Sir John Fortescue, writing towards the end of the medieval period, and makes an interesting contrast with Bracton's description over two hundred years earlier (Fortescue, 54-55; *cf.* Winchester *ibid.* n.27):

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<sup>2</sup> The 1296 roll omits Alnham, as well as Fawdon and Farnham (two of the 'ten towns of Coquetdale'), Castron, Wreighill, Prendwick and Unthank and probably Branton, Hedgeley, Glanton, Little Ryle and Shawdon (Fraser (ed.) 1968, xv-xvi), but this is most likely simply to reflect the loss of parts of the original roll rather than the absorption of these villas in a larger 'villa integra'.

On the other hand the regalian liberties of Redesdale, upper Tynedale and the Northumbrian holdings of the Prince Bishops of Durham were never included in the roll (*ibid.*, xiii).

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*Hundreds again are divided into vills . . . the boundaries of vills are not marked by walls, buildings, or streets, but by the confines of fields, by large tracts of land, by certain hamlets and by many other things such as the limits of water courses, woods and wastes . . . there is scarcely any place in England that is not contained within the ambits of vills*

**The Poor Law Township**, to use Winchester's term (1978), is the form of township community most familiar today through in the works such as the Northumberland County History and Hodgson's *History of Northumberland*, where, along with the parish, it provides the framework for the historical narrative of individual localities. The boundaries of these territorial communities were mapped by the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and they have generally been presumed to have had a long and largely uninterrupted history stretching back in most cases to the townships of the medieval period. They are conveniently depicted on the maps which front of each volume of the Northumberland County History, from which figure 3 in each of the individual village reports is derived. A more detailed record of each township territory is provided by their respective tithe and enclosure maps and other historic maps catalogued and reproduced in the village reports.

The assumption that the medieval administrative vill was the direct ancestor of these post-medieval poor law townships, and hence of the modern civil parish, was a reasonable one since functionally they are somewhat similar, representing the most basic level of civil administration. However the actual line of descent is much more complex.

The administration of poor relief was originally established at parochial rather than township level, with the requirement of the Elizabethan Poor Law Act of 1601 that overseers for the poor be appointed in every ecclesiastical parish in England (*Statutes* 43 Eliz. I c.2; cf. Winchester 1978, 56). Following pressure in parliament to permit the subdivision of the huge ecclesiastical parishes in the northern counties into smaller, more convenient units, the 1662 Poor Law Act allowed 'every Township or Village' in northern England to become a unit for poor-rate assessment and collection with their own overseers (*Statutes* 14 Charles II c.12, s.21; cf. Winchester 1987, 27). Winchester has argued, on the basis of the arrangements he documented in the Copeland district of west Cumbria, that it was the territorial townships rather than the administrative vills which were most frequently adopted to serve as the new poor law townships. However in Northumberland north of the Coquet there was in any case relatively little difference between the medieval territorial and administrative units, as noted above, and about three quarters of the townships identifiable in the 13<sup>th</sup> century may be equated with the poor law townships recorded by the Ordnance Survey. The disappearance or radical alteration of the remaining 25 percent was the result of settlement abandonment or colonisation during the late medieval period and estate reorganisation in the post-medieval period (Dixon 1985, I)<sup>3</sup>. The upland dales south of the Coquet were a very different matter. Redesdale and North Tynedale fell within the vast parishes of Elsdon and Simonburn respectively, the latter with a dependent chapelry at Bellingham which itself embraced all of upper North Tynedale. In Redesdale, six large 'wards' or townships are found, namely Elsdon, Otterburn, Woodside, Rochester, Troughen and Monkridge, plus the small extra-parochial township of Ramshope (Hodgson 1827, 82-3). The wards were almost certainly created in response to the 1662 act and presumably represent subdivision of the parish to facilitate the administration of poor relief. There is no indication that they existed at an earlier date. They are not recorded in the 1604 border survey, which instead lists a great number of 'places' or 'parts of the manor' within the constituent parishes of the Manor of Harbottle. These places were in most cases more than hamlets, groups of farms or individual farmsteads, the kind of small early territorial township found in upland areas. The twelve

<sup>3</sup> Dixon (1985, I) provides a comprehensive summary of these changes for north Northumberland, including lists of abandoned early townships, new townships and identifiable boundary shifts or rationalisations.

townships of upper North Tynedale, described in the County History (NCH XV (1940), 234-80), were established in 1729 by Thomas Sharp, Archdeacon of Northumberland, specifically to administer poor relief, each township being responsible for the maintenance of its own poor and setting a separate poor rate (Charlton 1987, 98-9).<sup>4</sup> Some of these townships may have been based on earlier territorial units, but others have rather artificial names – West Tarsset or Plashetts and Tynehead- indicative of institutions established by bureaucratic fiat.

It is from these ‘poor law townships’, however ancient or recent their origins, rather than the medieval administrative vill, that the modern civil parish is directly derived in northern England. The Local Government Act of 1889, which established the civil parish, specifically stated it was to be ‘a place for which a separate poor rate is or can be made’ (*Statutes 52/53 Vict. c.63 sec. 5*). Today’s civil parishes, however, are generally somewhat larger than the preceding townships, in part as a result of more recent amalgamations.

**The Manor** was a territorial unit of lordship and the basic unit of seigniorial estate administration. Jurisdiction was exercised by the manorial lord over the estate, its assets, economic activities and customary and legal rights, through his manor court sometimes termed the *court baron*.

Manorial lordship thus represented only one link in the chain of feudal and tenurial relationships which extended from the lowly peasant through to the baronial superior lord and ultimately right up to the king himself. In its simplest form a township would be encapsulated within a single manor and would therefore have the same territorial limits. In fact Alnham was just such a classic manor and was moreover held by the baronial lords, the de Vescis, who in feudal terms were the tenants-in-chief (*in capite*) of the king with respect to that land. However such ‘classic’ manors were much rarer than primary school history lessons might have us believe. Then as now, the processes of succession and inheritance and the inevitable variability in human fortunes resulted in the amalgamation or, more often, fragmentation of estates. Most townships therefore were divided between a number of manorial landholders. Thus neighbouring Scrainwood was held jointly by Walter Bataill and Thomas Bunte in 1242, having been granted by the de Vescis to these subordinate lords, or their predecessors, in return for ‘homage and fealty’ (which might involve military or other personal service), a process known as ‘subinfeudation’. An even more striking example of fragmented landholding is provided by Prendwick, also in Alnham parish, which was split between half a dozen freehold tenancies, known as socage holdings, in 1242. Most were relatively small, 30 acre holdings, perhaps equivalent to one husbandland, but a couple were larger, each amounting to a carucate (100-120 acres) of ploughland, whilst the de Vescis may have retained some land in the vill. However no individual lord appears to have had a dominant holding and as a result the township’s manorial structure must have been very complex (*Liber Feodorum II*, 1117-9, 1126-7; see below *Selected Sources and Surveys 1*). In a final contrast, the one and half carucates of land (equivalent to 150-180 acres) in Unthank, held by John of Unthank as a socage freehold in 1242, probably correspond to the full extent of that small township.

Thus a parish, township and manor could all be coterminous, with a small parish serving the spiritual needs of a single township community whose landed resources formed a single manorial estate and whose members were bound by a variety of personal and tenurial relationships to a single lord. However this simple arrangement was highly unusual in Northumberland, and particularly so in the upland areas of the county, where, as we have seen, the parishes were often very large (e.g. Simonburn, Elsdon, Alwinton, Holystone, and Kirknewton). Thus there were only 63 parishes in the county in 1295, whilst the total number

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<sup>4</sup> Prior to 1729, the Chapelry of Bellingham had been subdivided into four wards for more convenient collection of the poor rate, but these wards had not set a separate rate.

of townships at the same time, although not precisely quantifiable, was probably not far short of 450 (Lomas 1996, 71, 108-10). The number of manors would have been greater still.

### 3.2 Villages, Hamlets and Farmsteads

The territorial labels discussed above can all be defined with relative ease, despite the complexity caused by their changing role over time (which is especially marked in the case of the township), since they describe specific entities which figure in legislation and other formal records from the medieval period onwards. However it is a very different matter when it comes to precisely defining the terms used to describe different types of settlement, such as 'village' or 'hamlet'. As the foremost scholars of landscape and settlement studies have admitted (e.g. Roberts 1996, 14) it is extraordinarily difficult to define these terms with precision in such a way as to impose any absolute consistency of usage upon them.

For the purposes of this study the following definitions of settlement were used, all drawn from Brian Roberts' extensive work, in particular the succinct discussion provided in *Landscapes of Settlement* (1996, 15-19):

**VILLAGE:** A clustered assembly of dwellings and farmsteads, larger than a hamlet, but smaller than a town

and

A rural settlement with sufficient dwellings to possess a recognisable form (Roberts 1976, 256).

**HAMLET:** A small cluster of farmsteads

**FARMSTEAD:** 'An assemblage of agricultural buildings from which the land is worked'

**TOWN:** A relatively large concentration of people possessing rights and skills which separate them from direct food production.

The most substantial body of work on village morphology is that undertaken by Brian Roberts (e.g. 1972; 1976; 1977; 1990). Roberts has identified a complex series of village types based on two main forms, termed 'rows' and 'agglomerations', multiplied by a series of variable factors:

- Regular or irregular
- The presence or absence of greens
- Complexity – e.g. multiple row villages
- Building density – infilling of toft areas
- Fragmentation – 'exploded' versions of row villages and village agglomerations

This provides a useful schema for classifying villages, but it is difficult to determine what these different morphological characteristics actually signify. Dixon (1985, I.) is sceptical of regularity or irregularity as a significant factor, noting that irregularity does not necessarily mean that a village was not laid out in a particular order at a particular time; that the regularity of a layout is a subjective judgement; and that an irregular row may simply be a consequence of local terrain or topography. He also points out that however irregular it might appear, by its very existence the row constitutes an element of regularity. He is especially dismissive of the presence or absence of a green as a significant factor in village morphology, arguing that a green is simply an intrusion of the common waste into the settlement; if such a space is broad it is called a green, if narrow it is a street or gate.

In the case of the Historic Village Atlas Project a still more substantial problem is posed by the lack of detailed mapping earlier than c. 1800 for many of the 17 villages considered. In other words, there is no reliable cartographic evidence which predates the late 18th-19th century transformation of populous village communities of the medieval and early modern era into 'farm hamlets', i.e. settlements focussed on one or two large integrated farm complexes. In Northumberland, particularly in the northern half of the county, the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey – so often the first resort in analysing settlement morphology – and even the relevant tithe map do not provide a reliable guide to the early modern or medieval form of any given village. Moreover the documentary evidence assembled by Wrathmell and Dixon suggests there was often a marked reduction in the size of the village population in the later 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, accompanying a gradual reduction in the number of tenancies. Thus, even where 18<sup>th</sup> –century mapping does survive for a particular village, it may actually under-represent the extent of the earlier, medieval and 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century phases of that settlement.

If Brian Roberts, using the methods of historical geography, has perhaps done more to shape current thinking on the overall pattern of medieval village settlement than any other scholar, at the micro level of the individual village and its components the seminal investigation in Northumberland has been Michael Jarrett's archaeological excavation of West Whelpington village. Conducted over a period of fifteen years from 1966 onwards this revealed a substantial proportion of a medieval village (Jarrett et al. 1987; 1988). Lomas (1996, 71-86) has recently emphasised the fundamental degree to which our understanding of life in a medieval Northumbrian village rests on the programme of research at West Whelpington.

Two major studies (both regrettably unpublished), which to some degree were able to draw on the work of Roberts and Jarrett, comprise Stuart Wrathmell's PhD thesis on medieval village settlement in south Northumberland (Wrathmell 1975) and Piers Dixon's equivalent doctoral research on the medieval villages of north Northumberland (Dixon 1985). Dixon's work, in particular is of fundamental importance for the Historic Village Atlas, as the citations in the text of the individual reports and the synthesis makes clear, since it covered many of the settlements in the northern half of the Northumberland National Park included in the Project. The villages in the central band of the county between the River Coquet and the North Tyne catchment remain as yet uncovered by any equivalent study, however.

This lacuna particularly unfortunate because a similar level of coverage of the south side of the Coquet and Redesdale would have served to emphasise how similar the settlement pattern in these areas was to that prevailing in upper North Tynedale and how different from that encountered in north Northumberland, even in the Cheviot uplands and Glendale. Lomas (1996, 86), has characterised the long Pennine dales in the eastern half of the county as areas of 'commons with settlements' rather than 'settlements with commons'. These areas – North Tynedale, Redesdale, and the south side of Coquetdale, along with South Tynedale, and East and West Allendale largely outside the National Park – were distinguished by a prevailing settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets. In marked contrast, a more nucleated pattern predominated in the upland Cheviot valleys of north Northumberland, although the density of such settlements was inevitably reduced by comparison with the lowland districts in the northern part of the county. The excellent fertility of the Cheviot soils permitted intensive agricultural cultivation during optimal climatic phases, but only at locations within the massif where there was sufficient level ground – such as Hethpool – and even there substantial terracing of the adjacent hillsides was required to create enough ploughland to make the settlement viable.

To some extent the gap left by Wrathmell and Dixon in Redesdale and southern Coquetdale has been filled by the programme of investigation conducted by Beryl Charlton, John Day and others on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, which resulted in a series of synthetic discussions of various aspects of settlement in the two valleys (Charlton & Day 1978; 1979; 1982; Day &

Charlton 1981; all summarised in Charlton & Day 1976 and Charlton 1996 and 2004). These may be compared with the summary of the development of medieval and early modern settlement in upper North Tynedale provided by Harbottle and Newman (1973). However the former was restricted in scope by its emphasis for the most part on the Otterburn Training Area (although the authors did extend their scope beyond the confines of the military range where this obviously provided a more coherent analysis<sup>5</sup>), whilst the principal focus of Harbottle and Newman's work was the rescue excavation of a series of early modern and later farmsteads threatened by the construction of Kielder Water, to which the settlement overview provided an invaluable but all too brief introduction. Hence all three valleys still merit comprehensive syntheses of their medieval/early modern settlement patterns, combining analysis of the historic maps and documents – including what is known regarding the pattern of seigneurial and ecclesiastical landholding – with the evidence of the surviving physical remains and site layouts.

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<sup>5</sup> In particular the initial overview provided by Charlton & Day 1976, plus Charlton & Day 1978, covering the late prehistoric and Romano-British settlements, and Charlton & Day 1982, dealing with the corn mills and drying kilns, extend their treatment well beyond the Otterburn Training Area.

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## PART 2

# SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

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## 4. LOCATION OF EVIDENCE

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Accessible regional and national archives, libraries and record offices consulted for documentary, cartographic and pictorial material relevant to the present study include the following:

- Northumberland Record Office, Melton Park, Gosforth (NRO-MP)
- Northumberland Record Office, The Kylins, Morpeth (NRO-TK)
- Northumberland County Council Sites & Monuments Record, County Hall, Morpeth (NCC-SMR)
- Morpeth County Library, Local Studies Section (ML)
- Museum of Antiquities Records Room, University of Newcastle upon Tyne (MA)
- Newcastle Central Library, Local Studies Section (NCL)
- The Robinson Library, Newcastle University (NUL)
- Palace Green Library, University of Durham (DUL)
- The Public Record Office, Kew (PRO)
- National Monuments Record (NMR)

### 4.1 Compiling the project database

Assembly of the research material required to produce the Atlas has been achieved by the following methods:

#### 4.1.1 Air Photographic coverage

All locally accessible air photographic coverage of the listed villages was inspected and catalogued, including photographs held by Northumberland National Park, the Northumberland County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), Newcastle Central Library and the Museum of Antiquities at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. In addition, a considerable body of new oblique aerial photography, specifically commissioned for the project and covering all the designated villages was analysed in order to provide pointers for further research both within and outside the scope of the present study.

#### 4.1.2 Documentary survey

A wide range of medieval and early modern documentation, including inquisitions post mortem, ecclesiastical chartularies, royal charters and judicial proceedings, Border Surveys and other official correspondence, has been used to illuminate the history and development of the village and its setting. In addition several categories of more recent archival material - maps, sketches, photographs - and local historical descriptions, have proved informative.

Documentary sources provide most of our information on certain aspects of the village's past, notably its medieval origins and development, and its tenurial and ecclesiastical framework. A targeted approach to the analysis of data from such sources was adopted in order to maximise the amount of information gained in the available timescale. Accordingly, data gathering focussed on cartographic, pictorial and photographic evidence, whilst the County History volumes and other historical syntheses covering sub-regional geographic units or settlements were used to identify particularly important documentary source material worthy of further scrutiny.

### ***Historic Maps***

All available historic maps and plans were examined and, where possible, copied. Alnham is covered by the most extensive and informative sequence of historic maps and plans, of any of the villages included in this study. Most of these are preserved in the Duke of Northumberland's archives. They include a comprehensive set of 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century examples (see figures 19-25), but the earliest item and undoubtedly the highlight of the collection is the very large and finely illustrated map of the entire township produced in 1619 by Robert Norton (figures 12-14), which allows us to reconstruct the form of the medieval/early modern village with some confidence. The map evidence is supplemented by a series of detailed descriptive surveys from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, again preserved in the Duke's archives at Alnwick Castle. In addition there is the usual material, including the successive county maps – Saxton 1576 (the earliest map to show Alnham – fig. 10), Speed 1611 (fig. 11), Armstrong 1769 (fig. 20a), Smith 1808, Fryer 1820 (fig. 20b), Greenwood 1828, etc. – but more importantly the Tithe (1845 – fig. 26) and Inclosure (1777 – see fig. 64) maps and Ordnance Survey editions (figs. 27-30), which bring the coverage right up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### ***Pictorial representations***

Pictorial representations - prints, sketches and paintings - and early photographs, were examined and, where possible, copied. The principal source of such representations was the NRO Photographic archive. Such photographs show the appearance of buildings shown in plan on historic maps, as well as features not included on such plans. In some cases they also provide useful information on the function of such buildings. The participation of local individuals who have made available their collections of earlier photographs, postcards or paintings, has been particularly useful and may provide a source of additional material in the future. Thus Hodgson's sketch of the vicar's tower in 1821 provides important evidence for its appearance prior to refurbishment in the 1840s.

### ***Published syntheses and published collections of sources***

Existing published research covering the historic village has been summarised for inclusion in the historical synthesis, including information from David Dippie Dixon's celebrated history of Whittingham Vale (Dixon 1895), from the Volume XIV of the Northumberland County History (NCH XIV (1935)) and from P.J. Dixon's unpublished PhD thesis on medieval settlement in north Northumberland (Dixon 1985). The County History volume, in particular, contains useful excerpts from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century surveys of the Percy estates, in particular Clarkson's survey of 1566, Stockdale's survey of 1586 and Mayson's survey of 1622 (which was associated with Robert Norton's map of 1619, figure 12). These contain very detailed information regarding landholding, tenurial relations farming and settlement in the township. Other published sources include: de Vesci and Percy Inquisitions Post Mortem (IPMs), reproduced in chronological order in calendar volumes published by the Public Record Office, the *Calendars of Inquisitions Post Mortem (Cal IPM)*, the *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous (CalMisc)* and the *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland (CalDocScot)*. Also useful are the Northumberland Lay Subsidy Roll for 1296 (Fraser 1968) and Bowes and Ellerker's Border survey of 1541 (reproduced in Bates 1891).

#### **4.1.3 Archaeological Survey**

The Northumberland County Sites and Monuments Record was consulted in order to prepare a summary gazetteer of all archaeological sites recorded in each township, including industrial archaeological monuments, find spots and communications routes. Sites newly identified during the course of the study have also been added to the gazetteer.

Listed Building Records were consulted through the NMR along with Grundy's survey of the historic buildings in the National Park (1988) in order to compile a gazetteer of historic buildings in the township. Photographs of the exterior of each building have been

incorporated in the archive gazetteer. A small number of structures, which by virtue of their importance and complexity of fabric are considered by the project team to merit stone-by-stone recording, have also been identified.

#### **4.1.4 Survey of Village environs**

The wider setting of the villages have been assessed, using the territorial framework of the historic township where relevant, through a combination of aerial photographs, historic maps, documents, previous historical syntheses and site visits. Where possible the various components - infield arable and meadow, outfield pasture, woodland – have been identified and different phases of activity evidence of change over time have been noted in the historical synthesis. Information regarding the extent of outlying settlement has also been summarised in the synthesis, and particular attention has been paid to essential components as watermills which could often be located some distance from the main settlement.

More detailed recording of the surrounding field systems could form the basis of future community-led studies. These might involve recording the wavelength of ridge-and-furrow, examining field boundary walls to detect different structural phases present (sometimes evident in longstanding walls such as the head-dyke separating enclosed infields from the rough pasture (outfield) beyond, for example) or noting where a wall or sod-cast hedge has been replaced by more recent fencing and identifying ancient hedgelines by the variety of flora present. The data gathered could then be interpreted using the assembled resource of historic maps, aerial photographs and documented history provided by this report.

#### **4.1.5 Site inspections**

Site visits were undertaken to examine the village and wider township area, their principal monuments, built environment and field systems. Rather than being a comprehensive field survey, this was carried out to enable the project team to characterise the built fabric, archaeological landscape features and wider landscape setting of the village and to examine features which other data collection methods (air photography/documentary survey etc.) identified as being of particular importance. Photographs were taken of all the historic buildings and other sites or features of especial significance.

#### **4.1.6 Public information and involvement**

The NNPA Archaeologist organised presentations or guided walks at six of the largest villages under study. At least one member of the project team participated in these presentations/walks. It was anticipated that this would help to identify knowledgeable local informants who could be interviewed further during the site visits. This proved to be the case. A more informal process of gathering such local information was undertaken during the site visits at the smaller communities under study. This process in turn assisted in selection of suitable individuals for an associated oral history project, focussed on the communities of upper North Tynedale, Redesdale and upper Coquetdale, which was established as an important adjunct to the material Atlas research.<sup>6</sup>

It was also anticipated that these methods would also identify questions concerning the historical past of the villages which were of particular interest to members of the local community and which the project might address in its report, or alternatively might form the basis for follow-on community based projects. It was clear from the meetings and presentations that there was a significant degree of interest amongst several communities in the past of their settlements. It is hoped that this engagement with the past can be supported through future community-led projects, aimed at facilitating more detailed, long term studies of these villages and their landscape settings. The meetings and presentations were

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<sup>6</sup> See *A Report on the Oral History Recording made for the Historic Village Atlas Project 2004*. The Archaeological Practice Ltd & Northumberland National Park Authority; 2004.

particularly successful in prompting local participation in data collection, inspiring the villagers to assemble and bring in for copying numerous privately-held photographs, historic maps, photographs, deeds and other documents. These have all been scanned and incorporated in the project archive and many have been included in the individual Historic Atlas Village Reports. Northumberland Record Office have also made digital copies of the maps and documents to ensure the preservation of this valuable record. Although much new material has been come to light by this means, it is doubtful that the potential has been exhausted.

PART 3  
SYNTHESIS  
&  
ANALYSIS

## 5. GAZETTEER OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES

A summary site gazetteer is set out below. Fuller descriptions are provided in Appendix 4 and complete entries for those sites listed in the Northumberland Sites and Monuments Record (NSMR) may be consulted by contacting the Conservation Team at County Hall, Morpeth. The gazetteer sites are all located on figure 4 and, in the case of those in the immediate vicinity of the village and in the village core, on figures 5 and 6 respectively. For convenience figures 4 and 5 are reproduced in this section as figures 59 and 60, whilst the village core sites are marked on the archaeological sensitivity plan in Part 4 (fig. 62). For further ease of identifiability the site catalogue numbers are placed between square brackets when cited in the report text. Thus catalogue number 20 would normally appear as [20], although in some cases a site may be more fully identified.

*Table 1: Known sites of cultural heritage importance within the wider study area.*

| Catalogue No. | SMR No. | Period            | Site Name  | Grid Ref.        | Status   |
|---------------|---------|-------------------|--|------------------|----------|
| 1             | 1253    | BRONZE AGE        | Spearhead from High Blakehope  | NT 392000 615000 |          |
| 2             | 1255    | IRON AGE          | Enclosures on Meggrim's Knowe  | NT 396440 615910 | SAM      |
| 3             | 1256    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Foundations of a long house  | NT 396320 615860 |          |
| 4             | 1260    | ROMAN             | Enclosed Romano-British settlement   | NT 396130 615270 |          |
| 5             | 1261    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Deserted medieval settlement on the Rowhope Burn   | NT 396400 615400 | SAM      |
| 6             | 1261    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Deserted medieval settlement on the Rowhope Burn   | NT 396400 615400 | SAM      |
| 7             | 1262    | ROMAN             | Probable Romano-British enclosed settlement  | NT 396350 615320 |          |
| 8             | 1263    | UNKNOWN           | Probable round cairn   | NT 396460 615400 |          |
| 9             | 1272    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Alnham-Moor ruined farmstead   | NT 397200 615200 |          |
| 10            | 1328    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Salters Road   | NT 393800 614990 |          |
| 11            | 1328    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Salters Road   | NT 393800 614990 |          |
| 12            | 1329    | BRONZE AGE        | Dow Cleugh, possible field system  | NT 394900 614300 |          |
| 13            | 1330    | UNKNOWN           | Enclosures   | NT 395850 614370 |          |
| 14            | 1331    | ROMAN             | Romano-British homestead   | NT 396020 614930 |          |
| 15            | 1333    | MEDIEVAL          | Deserted village at Het Hill   | NT 397000 614990 |          |
| 16            | 1335    | UNKNOWN           | Bronze cauldron  | NT 396000 613000 |          |
| 17            | 1336    | MEDIEVAL          | Alnham Castle  | NT 399180 610810 | SAM      |
| 18            | 1337    | MEDIEVAL          | Tower House, Alnham  | NT 399020 610980 | Grade II |
| 19            | 1338    | ROMAN             | Castle Hill camp   | NT 398000 610940 | SAM      |
| 20            | 1339    | MEDIEVAL          | Medieval earthwork   | NT 399110 610990 |          |
| 21            | 1340    | LATER PREHISTORIC | High Knowes palisaded settlement   | NT 397070 612440 | SAM      |
| 22            | 1341    | POST MEDIEVAL     | Cobdon Cross ?   | NT 398210 613300 |          |
| 23            | 1342    | MEDIEVAL          | Three cross bases  | NT 399080 610950 | Grade II |
| 24            | 1343    | MEDIEVAL          | St Andrew Well or Wells  | NT 399300 611300 |          |
| 25            | 1344    | UNKNOWN           | Castle Hill, jet bead  | NT 398000 610940 |          |
| 26            | 1345    | MEDIEVAL          | Deserted medieval village of Alnham  | NT 399080 610900 | SAM      |
| 27            | 1346    | ROMAN             | Romano-British settlement  | NT 398000 611100 |          |
| 28            | 1347    | LATER PREHISTORIC | High Knowes palisaded settlement   | NT 397250 612500 | SAM      |
| 29            | 1349    | ROMAN             | Enclosed settlement 310m south west of White Gate  | NT 397700 612290 | SAM      |
| 30            | 1350    | MEDIEVAL          | Medieval farmstead   | NT 396490 611730 | SAM      |
| 31            | 1351    | UNKNOWN           | Turf built sheep stall destroyed by ploughing  | NT 395980 613150 |          |
| 32            | 1352    | ROMAN             | Cairnfield, unenclosed hut circle settlement and area of cord rig 190m north east of Pigdon's Leap | NT 396750 612150 | SAM      |
| 33            | 12604   | BRONZE AGE        | Unenclosed hut circle settlement 655m south  | NT 397370 612130 | SAM      |

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|    |       |                      |  |                  |          |
|----|-------|----------------------|--|------------------|----------|
|    |       |                      | west of White Gate   |                  |          |
| 34 | 1353  | MEDIEVAL             | Spartley Burn Medieval Settlements                                     | NT 397200 611790 |          |
| 35 | 1353  | MEDIEVAL             | Spartley Burn Medieval Settlements                                     | NT 397200 611790 |          |
| 36 | 1354  | UNKNOWN              | Spartley Burn 1  | NT 396030 612150 |          |
| 37 | 1355  | IRON AGE             | Iron Age settlement on Northfieldhead Hill                             | NT 398380 611980 |          |
| 38 | 1356  | UNKNOWN              | Site of cross  | NT 398500 612500 |          |
| 39 | 1357  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Hazeltonrig Hill 2, unenclosed round house<br>and field system         | NT 396400 611320 |          |
| 40 | 1358  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Hart Law palisaded settlement  | NT 398850 612820 | SAM      |
| 41 | 1360  | POST MEDIEVAL        | Leaffield Edge deserted medieval village and<br>field system           | NT 398500 613500 | SAM      |
| 42 | 1361  | POST MEDIEVAL        | Spartley Burn 2, post-medieval steadings                               | NT 396490 611880 |          |
| 43 | 1362  | ROMAN                | Enclosed stone-built settlement  | NT 395100 614100 |          |
| 44 | 1363  | BRONZE AGE           | Cobden Sike, cairn   | NT 397600 614200 |          |
| 45 | 1363  | BRONZE AGE           | Cobden Sike, cairn   | NT 397600 614200 |          |
| 46 | 1364  | UNKNOWN              | Hazeltonrig Hill 1, unenclosed round house                             | NT 396100 611800 |          |
| 47 | 1365  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Palisaded settlement 125m south of North Pike<br>cairn                 | NT 396920 613690 | SAM      |
| 48 | 1366  | BRONZE AGE           | Prehistoric Settlement at Scaud Knowe                                  | NT 395700 614400 |          |
| 49 | 1368  | MEDIEVAL             | Deserted medieval village of Old Hazelton                              | NT 397700 610600 |          |
| 50 | 1369  | MEDIEVAL             | Deserted medieval village of Hazeltonrig                               | NT 398200 610200 |          |
| 51 | 1370  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | High Knowes field system   | NT 397300 612450 | SAM      |
| 52 | 1371  | UNKNOWN              | Hazeltonrig Hill, cairnfield   | NT 396350 611650 |          |
| 53 | 1372  | MEDIEVAL             | Shank Burn, steading and lazy beds                                     | NT 396110 614040 |          |
| 54 | 1373  | MEDIEVAL             | Shank Burn, steading   | NT 395760 613760 |          |
| 55 | 1374  | UNKNOWN              | Rectangular enclosure of uncertain date                                | NT 395470 613830 |          |
| 56 | 1375  | BRONZE AGE           | Clearance cairns   | NT 397440 614190 |          |
| 57 | 1376  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Scaud Knowe, unenclosed settlement and<br>round houses                 | NT 396130 614540 |          |
| 58 | 1379  | MEDIEVAL             | Shank Burn, steading   | NT 396010 614000 |          |
| 59 | 1380  | ROMAN                | Little Dod, Romano-British enclosed<br>settlement                      | NT 395230 613890 |          |
| 60 | 1381  | POST MEDIEVAL        | Church of St Michael and All Angels, Alnham                            | NT 399090 610990 | Grade II |
| 61 | 1382  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Hazeltonrig Hill 1, bronze age unenclosed<br>settlement                | NT 396100 611680 |          |
| 62 | 1383  | LATER<br>PREHISTORIC | Settlement   | NT 396940 611680 |          |
| 63 | 1384  | IRON AGE             | Hazeltonrig Hill, cord rig   | NT 396700 611700 |          |
| 64 | 1385  | IRON AGE             | Scaud Knowe  | NT 395400 614500 |          |
| 65 | 1386  | NEOLITHIC            | Alnham Northfield cup marked stone                                     | NT 398500 611670 |          |
| 66 | 3210  | ROMAN                | Blackchester   | NT 400340 610230 |          |
| 67 | 12605 | BRONZE AGE           | Round cairn 830m SSE of Ewartly  | NT 396360 612720 | SAM      |
| 68 | 12606 | PREHISTORIC          | Unenclosed hut circle settlement 950m south<br>west of Linhope         | NT 395710 615500 | SAM      |
| 69 | 13600 | POST MEDIEVAL        | Pennywells (East Cottage and West Cottage)                             | NT 399481 610832 | Grade II |
| 70 | 13601 | POST MEDIEVAL        | Garden wall attached to front of Pennywells                            | NT 399485 610823 | Grade II |
| 71 | 13602 | POST MEDIEVAL        | Farmbuildings c.10 yards east of Pennywells                            | NT 399498 610852 | Grade II |
| 72 | 13905 | POST MEDIEVAL        | Alnham Moor House farm and buildings                                   | NT 397160 615358 |          |
| 73 |       | MEDIEVAL             | Building remains possible associated with<br>Alnham Manor House/Castle | NT 3991 6109     |          |
| 74 |       | MEDIEVAL             | Possible Mill site   | NT 3994 6109     |          |
| 75 |       | MEDIEVAL             | Holloways /Salters Road  | NT 3988 6111     |          |

## 6. HISTORICAL SYNTHESIS

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### 6.1 Standard works

Dixon 1895, 26-54; NCH XIV (1935), 561-77; Dixon 1985 ,II, 24-35.

### 6.2 Introduction<sup>7</sup>

Today Alnham comprises a historic church, a vicarage incorporating an equally historic tower house, plus three farms, now partially disused, and a string of small cottages along the road heading southeast towards Scrainwood. As such it can be paralleled by many of the villages of North Northumberland. However it was once a more populous settlement laid out around and within a village green. That we can say this with such certainty is a result of Alnham having the most extensive and informative historic map coverage of any of the villages included in this study. The sequence of maps and plans, most of which are preserved in the Duke of Northumberland's archives, includes a comprehensive set of 18<sup>th</sup>-early 19<sup>th</sup> century examples (see figs. 19-25) and begins with a very large and finely illustrated map of the entire township produced in 1619 (figs. 12-14), which allows us to reconstruct the form of the medieval village with some confidence. This is supplemented by a series of detailed descriptive surveys from the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, again preserved in the Duke's archives at Alnwick Castle. Together this provides a clear evidence of just how radically the village settlement pattern in the northern part of the county has been altered since the medieval period.

### 6.3 Prehistoric Archaeology

#### 6.3.1 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic (500,000 BC – 5000 BC)

There are no recorded sites on the Northumberland Sites and Monuments Record for either the Palaeolithic or Mesolithic periods within the Alnham study area, though this probably reflects the lack of detailed research in the area, rather than genuine absence of occupation. Detailed research undertaken in the Milfield basin to the north indicates that Mesolithic populations inhabited a wide range of environments and ecological zones (Waddington 1999, 104 -6). The Cheviot slopes to the west of Alnham, in common with other upland areas in the Cheviots, would have been wooded throughout the Mesolithic, and it is possible that hunting and foraging parties may have visited these areas on a seasonal basis.

#### 6.3.2 Neolithic (c. 5000 BC – c. 2000 BC)

Neolithic sites are likewise scarce in this area, and evidence from this period is confined to a cup-marked stone found at Alnham Northfield (catalogue number [65] NT 985 116). Cup marks are a type of prehistoric art that takes the form of distinctive cup-shaped hollows pecked and ground into boulders and outcrops. They are commonest on the sandstone uplands of Northumberland, particularly around the summit of Lordenshaw, near Great Tosson, often in association with spiral carvings known as ring marks. Most cup and ring marks are on sandstone, though a few examples like that found at West Hill, Kirknewton, utilise volcanic rocks such as andesite. This example is also volcanic, which makes it very unusual. Cup and

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<sup>7</sup> The gazetteer sites referred to in the text are all located on figures 4 and 59. Those in the immediate vicinity of the village and in the village core are also shown on figures 5 & 60 and 6 & 61-62, respectively. For ease of identifiability the site catalogue numbers are placed between square brackets in the report text; thus catalogue number 26 would normally appear as [26].

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ring marks are known to have been in existence in some parts of the British Isles by 4000 BC (Earlier Neolithic), and they continue to be used in varying contexts until around 1800 BC (Middle Bronze Age). It has been suggested that cup and ring marked stones may have been used to define particular territories, such as clearings and woodland glades, perhaps indicating religious or cult significance (Waddington 1998, 35). Unfortunately, the cup-marked stone from Alnham Northfield was found among stones from field clearance, and had perhaps been buried for some time. Its original context is therefore unknown, though the use of volcanic rock does suggest a Cheviot source.

### **6.3.3 Bronze Age (c. 2000 BC – 700 BC)**

The Bronze Age is markedly better represented in the Alnham study area. The bronze spearhead found at High Bleakhope (Site. [1] NT 920150) is perhaps of similar type to the spearhead with lunate openings in the blade from the Whittingham hoard (Cowen 1935: 28, Plate II). Bronze weapons such as this are extremely rare, and are likely to have been very valuable, perhaps the exclusive preserve of an elite social class (Higham 1986, 104). Though the circumstances and exact provenance of this find are unknown, High Bleakhope occupies an elevated and remote position. This may indicate that the spear may have been deliberately deposited, perhaps as an offering to a deity, rather than accidentally lost. As in the preceding Neolithic, religion and ritual was extremely important in Bronze Age society, and this is reflected in the complex burial traditions of the period.

Cairns are usually attributed to the Bronze Age, though many examples are not precisely dated, and they are known to have existed in the Neolithic period. The round cairn discovered by aerial photography at Cobden Sike ([44, 45] NT 976142) has been badly robbed, but was originally 35m in diameter, and may have been constructed for burial of an individual of considerable status. The large, outer cairn seems to have replaced a smaller (11m diameter) cairn of earlier origin. Another cairn, in much better state of preservation, is recorded near Ewarty ([67] NT 963127), and is also likely to have contained a burial.

Not all cairns of this period contained burials. Cairns occur in considerable numbers as a result of field clearance in association with early agricultural remains. These are much more difficult to date, though, on the basis of their association with Bronze Age settlements or burial cairns, a Bronze Age date can sometimes be established (Higham 1986, 92). The cairnfield at Hazeltonrig Hill ([52] NT 963116) may be associated with the unenclosed settlement nearby ([61] NT 961116).

The unenclosed settlement at Hazeltonrig Hill is one of several such settlements of possible Bronze Age date known from within Alnham Township. South-west of White Gate, ([33] NT 977122), an unenclosed settlement was excavated by the University of Newcastle in 1962-3, revealing pits containing burnt wood and bone. Although firmly assigned to the Bronze Age, in the absence of radiocarbon dates this chronology seems insecure, particularly as some of the pottery may be Romano-British. To the south west of Linhope at ([68] NT 957155), four unenclosed, stone-founded houses are all that remains of a further prehistoric, though not certainly Bronze Age, settlement.

Settlements of this kind are common in the Cheviots throughout the Bronze and Iron Ages, and were traditionally distinguished on the basis of type, particularly the presence or absence of an enclosure. However, recent research has suggested that enclosures themselves may have had little chronological significance (Welfare 2002, 72). As most of the difficulties with these earlier models are attributable to lack of excavated, well-dated examples, the Bronze Age date often attributed to unenclosed sites such as these should be treated with caution.

### 6.3.4 Iron Age (700 BC – AD 70)

The two palisaded enclosures on the south-eastern slopes of High Knowes ([21] NT 970124, [28] NT 970125) have been attributed to the Early Iron Age, or second half of the first millennium BC on the basis of type, though precise dating was not possible due to the scarcity of finds from excavations of these sites (Jobey & Tait 1966, 20). There is some evidence that the construction of a timber palisade may have been a precursor of more substantial fortifications, such as stone walls or ramparts, and this does seem to have been the case at several sites, such as Yeavinger Bell, Hownam Rings, Roxburghshire, and Wether Hill, near Ingram (McOmish, 1999, 14). At many Iron Age sites, however, the situation seems to have been rather more complex, and it is unsafe to assume that multivallate hillforts such as Castle Hill, west of Alnham village ([19] NT 980109) necessarily originated as palisaded enclosures (Welfare 2002, 74).

Castle Hill, Alnham is one of the best examples of a Cheviot multivallate hillfort, and is likely to have been in existence by the mid-first millennium BC. The strong multiple ramparts suggest that defensive criteria may have been important, though the hillfort is not ideally situated from a defensive point of view. In some instances (e.g. Wether Hill, Ingram; St. Gregory's Hill, Kirknewton), massive outworks and ramparts may have been primarily to demonstrate power and status through public display, with defence a secondary consideration (McOmish 1999, 113, Oswald & McOmish 2002, 30).

The remains of hut circles within the inner enclosure indicate that Castle Hill served as a settlement at some point, though this may have been after the ramparts had fallen out of use (Jobey & Tait 1966, 21; *cf.* Jobey 1965, 24, fig.1). The small interior area of most Cheviot hill forts indicates that they cannot have supported any sizeable population, and many may simply have been defended farmsteads (Oswald *et al.*), though the poorly defended examples, such as Harehope Hill, near Akeld, rather stretch this interpretation.

In all likelihood, there is no single explanation for all so-called hillforts in the Cheviots; they may have served as animal enclosures, market places or trading stations, defensive enclosures, community centres, places of worship and expressions of power and status in a competitive society. Only detailed work, such as that recently undertaken by English Heritage as part of the "Discovering Our Hillfort Heritage" project, has the potential to understand this very complex situation.

## 6.4 Romano-British period and after (AD 70-410)

Towards the end of the first millennium BC, pollen evidence suggests that all remaining upland forest had been cleared, and small-enclosed settlements or "homesteads" were established in increasing numbers on slopes and high moorland. Some of these new settlements seem to have been established within the ramparts of earlier hillforts, or overlying the defences, which in some cases were seen to have been abandoned for some time (Welfare 2002, 75). The stone-built huts at Castle Hill may date to this period. The partially scooped enclosure containing house platforms at NT 961152 [4] may also be Romano-British, though there is no evidence for dating. Settlements of this type are very common in this region, their distinctive appearance being the result of digging out or "scooping" house platforms and stockyards directly into the hill slopes. Though they are usually considered Romano-British, it is possible that they may have originated in the late Pre-Roman Iron Age and are likely to have been in use for a considerable period. Precise distinctions between the Late Iron Age and Roman period are in any case of questionable value in the eastern Cheviots, where the influence of Roman culture is likely to have been limited and intermittent (Higham 1986, 224-6).

In total, nine enclosed settlements, considered on morphological grounds to be broadly contemporary with the Roman occupation of northern Britain, have been identified in area surrounding Alnham [Site catalogue nos. 4, 7, 14, 19, 27, 28, 29, 43, 59]. Of these, the closest to the present village is that located on Castle Hill [19], where one stone-built settlement overlies the earlier defences of the Iron Age hillfort on the north-east side and the remains of other, similar sites [27] can be seen in the immediate vicinity (*cf.* Jobey 1974, 39, no. 32).

More speculatively, earlier scholars even argued that the churchyard was the site of a Roman fortlet (*Archaeologia Aeliana* 1<sup>st</sup> series, I, (1822) 240; Dixon 1895, 32; NCH XIV (1935), 562), on the basis of the remains of a ditch on the east side of the enclosure and the terraced form of the churchyard [20]. However a Roman military origin for these earthworks is now considered very unlikely (see below). The closest firm evidence of official Roman military activity is represented by the link road between Dere Street and the Devil's Causeway which passed over three miles (5.2km) to the south of Alnham. The nearest fort was situated at Low Learchild (*Alauna*), at the junction of the Link Road with the Devil's Causeway and at the point where the latter crosses the Aln. The existence of a Roman temporary camp on the summit of Blackchester Hill ([66] NU 003102) has also been postulated. Armstrong marks a site there, using the square symbol he normally reserves for Roman military fortifications - forts or temporary camps (fig. 20a). This is intriguing, particularly when found in conjunction with a *chesters* placename, as in this case, and suggests that the remains some kind of ancient rectangular or rectilinear enclosure were formerly visible on the hill. The situation is certainly a commanding one, with a nearby source of water. No trace of such a camp can be identified today, but the hilltop has been extensively quarried, which may have destroyed all traces of earthworks.

Dixon (1895, 32) and other sources (*Bulmer's Directory* 1886, 671; *Kelly's Directory* 1910, 44) also report that the paved stones of an ancient roadway, six feet wide, were observed 'under a peat bog 9 inches deep' ('nearly two feet' or 'several feet below the surface' according to the trade directories) by the local vicar, the Rev. G. S. Thomson, when some workmen were cutting a drain in the glebe field during 1850. Although Dixon declares the road was 'similar to the causeways made by the Romans,' it is more likely that it was associated with the medieval village since it lay within the latter's limits.

Nevertheless people will have needed to cross the high Cheviot moorlands throughout the prehistoric period and Romano-British periods and it has been suggested that some of the cross-border trackways and drove routes which figure so prominently in the historical sources from the medieval period onwards, such as the Salters' Road [10,11] through Alnham township, may have originated as prehistoric ridgeways. Such routeways would have constituted a powerful element of continuity in the use of the landscape.

This part of Northumberland lay beyond the Roman frontier for much of the period of occupation, and the influence of Roman culture is consequently likely to have been slight and very indirect (Higham 1986, 224-6), below the level of the tribal or chiefdom elites at any rate. Small enclosed homesteads such as these are likely to have continued to be used for several centuries, and were perhaps only eventually abandoned in favour of lower-lying hamlets and villages, many of which are in existence today, in the Early medieval period.

## 6.5 The Early Medieval Period

Little is known of settlement patterns in the Northumbrian uplands in the centuries following the collapse of Roman imperial authority. It is likely that the enclosed farmsteads which were

such a feature of rural settlement in the preceding period, continued to be occupied well into the early medieval era, but diagnostic dating evidence is lacking.

The first piece of firm evidence relating to the development of Alnham itself is provided by the large quoins (corner stones), at the NE and SE corners of the nave in St Michael's Church (see Ryder below: *The Church of St Michael the Archangel* for more detail). Their size and form is characteristic of Anglo-Saxon construction, demonstrating that there was already a church on this site by the 11<sup>th</sup> century or even earlier. This church or chapel may have been founded by the local lord to serve an extensive upland estate perhaps coterminous with the later parish. Alternatively the building may have been established and owned by a line of hereditary priests.

Many medieval parish churches are thought to have begun life as estate chapels established by local landowners during the 9th-11th centuries, with the possible result that the parishes associated with those churches may, effectively, have fossilised the boundaries of the original estates (cf. Winchester 1987, 13, 22-7). Alnham does not fall into the toponymic pattern observable in the case of the parochial centres of Redesdale and North Tynedale which all have toponyms incorporating personal names, e.g. Elsdon (*Ellesden* in the earliest sources, i.e. Elli's or perhaps Aelf's valley), Corsenside (*Crossensete*, i.e. Crossan's, *saetr*, combining an Irish personal name with the Norse term for hill pasture; Beckensall 1992; Mawer 1920, 55, 74) or Simonburn ('Simondeburn' in 1228-9, i.e., Sigemund's burn; Mawer 1920, 180). In such cases it is tempting to infer that such placenames preserve some memory of early estate holders. Nevertheless the presence of Saxon architectural features in the church not only confirms the latter's antiquity, but also strongly implies that the site of Alnham was already established as the centre of the surrounding district before the Norman conquest.

One other feature associated with the church is noteworthy. Reference was made above to the ditch along the east edge of the churchyard [20]. The church stands on westward sloping summit of a rounded ridge which separates the river Aln from an almost parallel tributary. The broad flat-bottomed trench effectively cuts off the west end of this ridge. A possible causeway interrupting the ditch has been recognised opposite the east end of the church.. The apparent terracing on the other sides may, however, have been accentuated by the typical build up of the level of the churchyard and was perhaps nothing like as pronounced originally. Nevertheless the evidence that the church was located within some kind of ditched enclosure at the west end of the ridge remains intriguing. If the suggestion that this was a Roman fortlet can now be rejected, an alternative possibility that the ditch represents a defensive enclosure around the original church and an associated late-Saxon thegn's hall is more interesting. It has also been suggested that it could represent some kind of late-medieval defensive work (a ditched barmkin?) enclosing both the church and the adjacent vicar's tower (SMR no. 1339). However no trace of such a combined enclosure is shown on Norton's map of Alnham Township in 1619, where the roughly square churchyard is very clear.

## **6.6 Township and Parish, Barony and Manor**

Before discussing further the medieval origins and development of Alnham village, it is necessary to define the various different territorial units within which it was incorporated, and which provided the framework for the development of the community. Each of these related to different aspects of the settlement's communal relations, both internal and external. More extensive definition and discussion of the different types of territorial unit and their development over time is contained in Section 1, above.

### 6.6.1 Alnham Parish and Township

The 19<sup>th</sup> century parish of Alnham, which forms the basic framework for the historical summary set out in volume XIV of the Northumberland County History edited by Madeleine Hope Dodds (NCH XIV (1935), 560-82), embraced the townships of Scrainwood, Prendwick and Unthank, as well that of Alnham itself. These are recorded as separate localities in the feudal aid of 1242 preserved in the Book of Fees and may therefore be considered territorial vills or townships by this date (*Liber Feodorum* II, 1117-9, 1126-7; see below *Selected Sources and Surveys I*). At the late 13<sup>th</sup> century zenith of medieval settlement expansion the parish appears to have incorporated a further vill, Alnhamshelles, which as its name suggests, probably originated as a summer seasonal settlement, inhabited by transhumant shepherds. It was covered much of the southern Breamish catchment, the settlement lying near the present Alnham Moor Farm on the northern edge of the parish. Following the settlement's abandonment in the late medieval period the township was reabsorbed by Alnham. Of all these townships, Alnham was by far the largest, covering an area of 9353 acres in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (acreage provided by NCH XIV (1935), 560; Dixon 1985, II, 24 gives 9405 acres), making up the bulk of Alnham Parish. Scrainwood and Prendwick covered 1071 acres and 1611 acres respectively, whilst Unthank was tiny (only 172 acres).

### 6.6.2 The Barony of Alnwick and Manor of Alnham

Alnham also formed one of the constituent manors of the barony of Alnwick which was held by the Vesci lineage. The Vescis were probably granted their barony by Henry I (1100-35), in common with the great majority of Anglo-Norman barons established in Northumberland (Kapelle 1979, 199, 207, 284, 287). They were certainly well established by 1166 when Henry II ordered all his barons, or 'tenants-in-chief', to render account of the service by which they held their lands and the holdings of all knights enfeoffed by them (*Liber Niger Scaccarii*, 329-39; cf. Hedley 1968, 21, 209; 1970, 90, 272). In the return he made for the barony, William de Vesci listed a total of 13 knights' fees created before 1135, plus a couple more established in the intervening thirty or so years, making it the single largest of all the Northumbrian lordships in these terms.

The earliest Vesci baron of Alnwick was probably Eustace fitz John, William's father, one of the 'principal agents of (the first) Henry's government in Northumberland' (Kapelle 1979, 207). Eustace witnessed his first act concerning Northumberland in 1119 and by 1121 he certainly held land north of the Tyne (Kapelle 1979, 287, n.80), suggesting that the barony was established around this time, when Henry I was finally tightening the Anglo-Norman grip on Northumberland, fifty or so years after the initial conquest<sup>8</sup>.

The Vesci line was extinguished when William de Vesci III died leaving no legitimate male heirs in 1297. Possession of the barony of Alnwick then passed to Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham, and in 1310 the bishop in turn sold the barony to Henry de Percy, who was establishing his family's position on the border at that stage (Bean 1954; Tuck 1971, 33-5). Thereafter the Alnwick barony has remained in Percy hands to this day, forming the core of their Northumbrian holdings.

Alnham was held and managed directly (in 'demesne') by the lords of Alnwick, rather than being granted, either entirely or in part, to one or more of the dependent knights in the Vesci retinue, as was the case with many of the *vills* which made up the barony, such as neighbouring Scrainwood for example. The seigniorial estate represented a classic manor, incorporating the entire vill, or township, with no feudal sub-tenants and only one significant, free 'socage' tenant recorded in 1242 (*Liber Feodorum* II, 1127). The majority of the estate

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<sup>8</sup> It has often be argued that an earlier member of the Vesci lineage, Ivo de Vesci, was the first to hold the Alnwick barony (cf. Hedley 1968, I: 34, 198-9), but Kapelle's arguments, particularly with regard to Eustace's significant position in the Henrician regime in Northumberland, appear convincing.

was subdivided between a number of free and unfree peasant tenants who actually farmed the land. The remainder was held in demesne and directly managed by the lord's officials, whose operations were centred on the manor house at the west end of the village. As well as working their own holdings, for which they paid rent to the lord in cash or kind, the peasant tenantry also had to perform a set amount of labour on the manorial demesne, at least in the case of the unfree tenants, as well as a range of other services (see below: *Population and land tenure*, for more detail).

## 6.7 The components of the medieval settlement

The clearest evidence for the form of the village in the medieval period is provided by a very large and detailed map of the township (Aln Cas O.XI.1-1a, see figs. 12-14 here) completed by the engineer Robert Norton in 1619, to accompany Mayson's detailed descriptive survey of Alnham and the other townships of the Percy estate compiled between 1612-30 (Aln Cas A.V.5). Unlike so many of the maps assembled in the Village Atlas this one predates the radical changes which transformed the pattern of nucleated rural settlement in the Northumbrian uplands during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Instead of looking for clues in the later settlement pattern to reconstruct the late medieval and early modern village plan, it is laid out before our eyes.

### 6.7.1 The village layout

The 1619 map shows a village of four rows of dwellings and toft enclosures. Three of these rows defined a large triangular green, which was considerably longer from east to west than it was from north to south. The Aln ran along the south side of the green entering at the western end and exiting at the southeast angle. The fourth row sat within the green on the north side of the burn. At its east end, this row further divided into two, with houses facing one another across a lane.

The church and the manor house were located at the west end of the village, at the apex of the triangular green, and faced one another across the burn. The manorial centre is shown schematically as a large house, although documentary references and the evidence of the surviving turf-covered footings demonstrate that it actually took the form of a tower during the later medieval period. The same is true of the vicar's residence, depicted immediately to the west of the church, where the remains of a tower-house still stand today, forming a classic 'vicar's pele'.

***Surviving remains [26]:*** The single freehold toft shown on the south side of the burn, in the area between the manorial tower and the church, can still be traced as a set of well-defined earthworks, comprising an earthen enclosure with two house-sites in its northeast corner. To the west, a further enclosure devoid of buildings is evident both on the map and on the aerial photographs. Beyond that another toft with associated remains of buildings, which is not shown on the map, is revealed by surviving earthworks, its layout clearly evident on the aerial photographs in the form of a triangular enclosure and as many as three house-sites (see figs. 7-9; cf. Dixon 1985, II, 27-8, with plan on p. 31, reproduced here as fig. 42). In contrast none of the tofts and house plots to the north of the burn are apparent on aerial photographs (cf. figs. 7-9). Surviving ridge and furrow covering the area immediately to the east of the church shows this area was ploughed at some stage after the tenements were abandoned. No ridge and furrow is evident in the next field to the east, which has probably been levelled and reseeded at some subsequent period. However a ridge of land extending to the north east of the church probably represents the alignment of the north row whilst a second ridge on the north side of the modern road to the church matches the position of the middle row. In the latter area (NT 99271095), a rectangular enclosure formed by fragmentary banks of earth and stone has been identified, with an internal dividing bank suggesting it represents a block of

two cottages (*cf.* Site catalogue [26], SMR no. 1345). The remains are surrounded by a scatter of large undressed stones.

**Extent:** The map attached to the Inclosure Award of 1776-7 (NRO QRA 7-1; fig. 64) overlays the present road layout (newly established at this time as part of the enclosure) over the earlier pattern of toft enclosures showing precisely how the two relate. The village of 1619 extended from the church and its adjacent vicarage tower as far as present-day farmsteads of Pennylaws and Castle Farm, covering most of the two intervening fields on the north side of the road as well as the south side of the burn from Castle Farm to the site of the manorial tower and beyond to the ford at the western end of the village. This evidence demonstrates that Alnham was clearly a far more populous, but also more compact settlement than the present village.

It is tempting to suggest that the row located within the green was a secondary development, representing a partial infilling of what was perhaps initially a large undivided green. Conversely, the westernmost of the surviving toft earthworks, on the south side of the burn, is not represented on Norton's map, implying it had already been abandoned some time before 1619. The south row of the village is depicted as being noticeably less densely settled than the other three rows and does not extend right up to the manor house. Given the evidence for abandonment represented by the westernmost toft, it is conceivable that the southern row was at one stage more extensive than it appears on the 1619 map. These observations emphasise the point that medieval villages were dynamic living communities and their layout did not necessarily remain static over the centuries.

### 6.7.2 Population and land tenure

The evidence for the population levels and tenorial development of the township has been collated by Dixon (1985, II, 24-8). It is clear that Alnham was a relatively populous village in the medieval period. It was probably at the peak of its prosperity in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, before the onset of the Anglo-Scottish wars, the climatic deterioration of the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, with its attendant failed harvests and livestock diseases, and the Black Death. Successive 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century Inquisitions Post Mortem show there was then a fixed complement of 18 bondage holdings and 16 cottage smallholdings (see below *Selected Sources and Surveys* 2-6). The bondages each comprised a messuage (building plot) and 24 acres of arable and meadow, the standard size for such holdings in Northumberland. With their viable tenancies, the bondmen formed the core of the township community and the foundation of the manor's financial productivity. The *cottagia* would have been much smaller holdings, probably comprising no more than a cottage dwelling within a fenced enclosure garth, and perhaps a few acres of land (figures recorded in other Northumberland townships range from half an acre up to 6 acres, *cf.* Lomas 1996, 77; Winchester 1987, 66-7). These cottagers, cotmen or *cottars*, as they were known, must have formed a pool of additional labour available for work for day wages or performed specialised non-agricultural tasks, since their holdings alone would not have fully supported them. Both bondmen and cotmen, were categories of 'unfree' tenants, also known as customary tenants, villeins or tenants in villeinage. In addition there was an unspecified number of freeholders in the *vill*. Unfree tenants generally bore a greater weight of rents, labour services and other obligations to their lord, by comparison with free tenants, although it should be noted that even the latter did not 'own' their holdings outright, in the modern sense of the term. Most importantly, whilst unfree tenure was determined by the custom of the manor, regulated through the lord's manorial court, free tenure was governed by common law, with the result that free tenants paid rents fixed in perpetuity, could sell or grant their holdings without seigniorial interference and could sue their lord in the royal courts (Lomas 1996, 76-7; Bailey 2002, 26). The earliest free or 'socage' tenant known to us at Alnham, one Roger Balistarius ('the Crossbowman'), is named in the feudal return made in 1242, where he is listed as holding three bovates of land at Alnham for an annual rent of seven shillings (*Liber Feodorum* II, 1127; a bovate being generally equivalent to about 12-15 acres, *cf.* Bailey 2002, 242). Socage

was a form of free peasant tenure whereby land was held in return for performing certain limited services, principally attendance at the baron's court and support for its operations (an obligation known as 'suit of court'), and sometimes, as in this case, the payment of a fixed cash rent or a pound of spices (Lomas 1996, 19; Bailey 2002, 27-8).

The warfare and other crises of the 14<sup>th</sup> century reduced the population significantly. Inquisition held in 1352 recorded that six of the eighteen bondages and eleven of the sixteen cottage smallholdings were unoccupied, i.e. half of the combined total number of tenancies in the township core. Even so, the Poll Tax return of 1377 records sixty adults, one of the highest populations for a vill in Coquetdale Ward. Although such reductions in the number of tenants obviously presented problems for the manorial landowner, in this case the Percy lords, since their revenue was reduced, for those tenants who managed to survive the difficult conditions of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the consequent labour shortages proved beneficial and resulted in a gradual improvement in their tenurial rights. Thus the Inquisition Post Mortem for Henry de Percy in 1368 indicates that the bondages and cottages were all held by 'tenants-at-will' (see below *Selected Sources and Surveys* 6). This may imply that the earlier, non-contractual unfree tenancies, which owed substantial and unpopular labour services to their lord, had, presumably under steady pressure from the local peasantry, been converted into or were in the process of evolving into contractual tenancies held 'at the will of the lord, according to the custom of the manor', which predominantly owed cash rents. Although such contractual tenancies theoretically had less security of tenure than the customary bondage or cottage holdings, which were effectively hereditary and alienable, in practice the general shortage of tenants after c. 1350 meant that tenants-at-will enjoyed relative security of occupation as well as less onerous rental terms (cf. Bailey 2002, 35-6).

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century the tenurial distinctions of bondage and cottage holdings, so carefully recorded in the earlier inquisitions, had largely disappeared. Clarkson's Survey of the Alnwick barony in 1566/7 records 31 tenants-at-will holding varying proportions of land in the common fields, two free tenants and two demesne tenants. This picture is largely echoed twenty years later in Stockdale's survey (29 tenants-at-will, two demesne tenants and three freeholders). Mayson's survey in 1615 lists 22 tenants-at-will, one cottager, two demesne tenants and three freeholders. This would suggest that the number of tenancies (and presumably therefore the population level?) had largely recovered by the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, though they appear to have been declining again by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (cf. Dixon 1985, 24-5).

### **6.7.3 The Church of St Michael the Archangel [60],**

*Documentary history* (cf. Dixon 1895, 40-50; NCH XIV (1935), 560-72)

Alnham church is first mentioned in a charter of 1184, in which William de Vesci granted the church and all the tithes belonging to it to Alnwick Abbey (Cal. Charter R. 1300-26, p.87; cf. Tate 1866, I, 64; Dixon 1895, 42; NCH XIV (1935), 560). This formed part of a widespread pattern of transferring the advowson – the right to nominate the new incumbent parish priest – from the lay manorial proprietor to monastic and other ecclesiastical institutions (Lomas 1996, 116-8). This was a relatively cheap means for manorial lords with churches on their estates to gain monastic gratitude and the important spiritual benefits which could flow from such donations, in the form of the prayers offered by the monks for the souls of the patrons. It has been suggested that the church was substantially rebuilt following its acquisition by the abbey (Dixon 1895, 42; cf. NCH XIV (1935), 562).

In taxation levied by Pope Nicholas in 1291, the rectory (i.e. the Abbey's share of the parochial income) was valued at 46 marks 6s 8d (or £31, a mark being equivalent to two thirds of a pound, i.e. 13s 4d), the resultant tax (at a rate of one mark in 40) was 15s 6d. At the same time the vicarage (i.e. the resident priest's share) was valued at 10 marks (£6 13s 4d) and taxed at 3s 4d (*Reg. Pal. Dun.* (R.S.), iii, 92, cf. NCH XIV (1935), 560). The valuation of

the combined parochial revenue was thus £37 13s 4d. To put these figures into context, the highest valuations in Northumberland for Bamburgh and Holy Island parishes were just over £264 and almost £231 respectively. Alnham's valuation is well below the average for the county as a whole (£56) and indeed below average value for the deanery of Alnwick (£65) which included Alnham parish (Lomas 1996, 119). The reason for the lower valuation is not difficult to determine. Alnham parish covered a sparsely populated upland area and, moreover, was not even as extensive as some of the other upland parishes such as Simonburn, Elsdon or Kirknewton. There were quite simply fewer tithes, wedding, christening and burial fees etc., per square mile than their lowland counterparts. Whereas Alnham had only four or five constituent townships, no fewer than 28 Northumbrian parishes contained ten or more townships, whilst lowland Bamburgh had as many as 24 (Lomas 1996, 108). Nevertheless Alnham compares much more favourably with the average value for parishes in Corbridge deanery (£39), which contained a higher proportion of upland parishes than other three deaneries of the Archdiocese of Northumberland.

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century valuations seem to have declined, perhaps reflecting the unsettled conditions along the border. The vicarage was valued at £3 7s in 1535 and the same figure is given in 1577 and 1615 (*cf.* NCH XIV (1935), 560). In 1650 parliamentary commissioners conducting a survey of church livings in Northumberland valued the living at £20. This seems to have been considered inadequate for the commissioners suggested that 'the said Parish of Alnham being but a small parish, may fittly be annexed and united to the said parish of Ingram' (also valued at £20).<sup>9</sup> This recommendation was never implemented, but in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the vicarage was combined with that of Ilderton, with services held in each parish church on alternate Sundays (NCH XIV (1935), 561; see below, *Selected Sources and Surveys* 12). At that stage the vicar of the two parishes resided at Ilderton, the vicarage at Alnham – the towerhouse beside the church – being uninhabitable due to its ruinous condition.

The modern dedication of the church is in honour of St Michael the Archangel, but there is no evidence this predates the reformation (NCH XIV (1935), 562).

**Description** (see figs. 43, 48, 57-58)

by P. F. Ryder

Alnham church consists of an aisleless nave with a south porch and a pair of transept-like chapels (the northern now a vestry) at its east end, and an aisleless chancel

The west end of the **Nave** is of coursed roughly squared stone, and is supported by four big stepped buttresses, the outer ones having 19<sup>th</sup>-century caps of overlapping slabs. A broad plinth c 1.2 m above the ground extends along the wall and round all the buttresses. In the centre of the wall is a tall round-headed window with a chamfered surround; above it, at the level of the eaves of the side walls, is a set back. The gable above is of more regularly coursed stone, and may be a 19<sup>th</sup>-century rebuild; the corbelled-out bellcote with its round arch and gabled top is all of c1870.

The south wall of the nave has a large stepped buttress at its west end; between this and the south porch is a round-arched window of 1870 with a chamfered surround and dressings of tooled yellow ashlar. East of the porch is another window of the same date and style, this time of two lights with a circular opening in the spandrel. The southeastern quoin includes some very large squared blocks, laid in an irregular side-alternate manner.

The north wall of the nave is more complex. At its west end is a very large stepped buttress, which probably incorporates part of the west wall of the former north aisle. Three blocked arches of the aisle arcade are visible, the fourth being concealed by the north transept. The arches are of two-centred form,

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<sup>9</sup> The 1650 Survey of Church Livings is reproduced in Hodgson 1835, lxxvi ff.

only the outer order and the abaci of the capitals being visible. The western arch for some reason is much larger than the others; in the eastern part of the wall blocking it is a square-headed doorway, itself now walled up, with some very large blocks in its jambs. Buttresses have been set against the centres of the blocking walls of the western and central arches; the western buttress seems of some age, but its overlapped-slab coping, and the whole of the eastern, appear of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. In the blocking of the third arch, above the roof of the lean-to on the west side of the transept, is quite a large round-headed window, again now blocked, with part of a medieval cross-slab re-used in its west jamb, and another adjacent, set in its blocking. The northeastern nave quoin, like the southeastern, includes some very large blocks.

The east gable of the nave has an old coping chamfered on its underside, and is capped by the base of a broken finial. The wall below shows the raised roof tabling of a previous chancel roof, c 1 m higher and of a steeper pitch than the present one. A small 19<sup>th</sup>-century chimney rises from the northern part of the wall.

The **South Porch** is of coursed squared stone; its round-headed archway has a continuous roll moulding only broken by a keystone; the gable above has a flat coping and quite elaborate disc cross finial, both of 1870.

The **South Transept** is of coursed squared stone. Its west wall has a rough square plinth that widens towards its south end, broadening southwards. The south wall also has a projecting footing that seems to bow out from the wall, and of its greatest projection - c 0.4 m - in its centre. Above is a round-headed window of 1870, with tooled-and-margined dressings, and a shallow-pitched gable with an old coping chamfered on its lower angle and a 19<sup>th</sup>-century cross finial. The low side walls do not have any openings.

The east and north walls of the North Transept are built of large coursed blocks; the west wall is covered externally by a lean-to outbuilding. Only the north end wall has a chamfered plinth; set centrally above it is a small blocked square-headed window c 0.4 m wide and perhaps c 0.7 m high, under a gable with an old coping chamfered on its lower angle. The east wall has a round-headed light of 1870 near its south end. The outbuilding has a plain square-headed window in its north wall.

The south wall of the **Chancel** is built of large roughly coursed and roughly tooled blocks, some of the largest ones being in the uppermost courses. Near each end are round-arched windows of 1870, with dressings of yellow tooled-and-margined ashlar; below the western is some disturbed fabric, with a few bricks, probably indicating the position of a former low-side window. To the east of it is an old priest's door with a chamfered surround and a Tudor-arched head.

The east end of the chancel has some substantial quoins (perhaps re-used) in its lower parts, and a window of 1870 of two round-arched lights; the gable has an old coping, chamfered on its underside, and a broken cross fleury finial. There is a possible blocked opening, small and without cut dressings, at ground level near the north end of the wall, perhaps relating to a vault.

The north wall of the chancel is heavily pointed; midway along it is a large buttress with bold chamfered plinth, probably of 19<sup>th</sup>-century date. To the east of it is a small blocked square-headed window with a chamfered surround, c 0.6 m high and 0.35 m wide..

### ***The Interior***

The internal walls of the church are plastered, except for exposed dressings. The **South Porch** has a tunnel vault, and benches on each side with wooden tops; set at the south end of the eastern bench is what appears to be a stoup<sup>10</sup>, with carving in relief including cable moulding at the angles and a damaged relief carving of what may be a vernacular version of the Sacred Monogram on the front. The inner doorway of the porch has a semicircular arch with a continuous chamfer. On the west wall is a tablet commemorating a 1953 restoration by Gustav Adolph Renwick.

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<sup>10</sup>Although it does bear a close resemblance to a creeing trough, a stone mortar of 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century date which were often carved, and are occasionally donated to churches under the mistaken belief that they are 'old fonts'

In the **Nave** the west window is set within a larger arch of distorted segmental form, that has jamb shafts with scallop capitals (the southern apparently authentic) with moulded rings at mid height and old moulded bases. On the south the doorway has a shallow segmental rear arch and the two 19<sup>th</sup>-century semicircular ones; at the east end of the wall the arch to the transept is of rough two-centred form with a chamfer continued down the west jamb to the floor, but on the east carried uneasily on a respond rising from a projecting platform at the same level as the chancel floor, c 0.5 m above that of the nave. The lower part of the respond is semicircular in section and the upper part semi-octagonal, and it has as moulded capital.

On the north side of the nave, facing the south door is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century fireplace with a joggled lintel (perhaps modelled on that in the tower at Edlingham Castle) carried on shaped corbels, with its projecting hearth still intact. At the east end of the

The **South Transept** has stoothed walls, with an opening left to expose a piscina at the east end of the south wall, which has a rough square head and a circular bowl within the thickness of the wall is the arch to the **North Transept**, now the vestry (interior not seen). This is of two-centred form and of two chamfered orders; the eastern respond is semi-octagonal, with a moulded capital but no exposed base, whilst the western respond is clearly an octagonal pier, with its moulded base partly cut away and a moulded capital. The arch is now blocked by a thinner wall containing the vestry door in a timber surround which has an arched head with open spandrels and a brattished lintel.

The nave roof is of seven bays including a narrower one at each end; there are old slightly cambered tie-beams with collars, the ceiling being underdrawn at the level of the collars. The south transept has a very crude central truss that has its principals crossed at the apex to carry a ridge board, and a single purlin just above the sidewalls.

Three steps lead up from the nave into the **Chancel**, which is entered under a chancel arch of distorted semicircular form, and of two chamfered orders. There is now no hoodmould, but on either side of the arch are rough projecting blocks that may either be former hoodmould stops of parts of a former projecting impost band. The responds, of semicircular plan, have 19<sup>th</sup>-century 'holdwater' bases at the level of present chancel floor, and older capitals with a roll at the neck and an octagonal abacus, re-cut.

Both windows in the south wall of the chancel have shouldered rear arches, and the priest's door a plain square head; to its east is an old tomb recess that has an elliptical arch of two hollow chamfered orders, the inner with big broach stops on its short vertical jambs. The outer order has raised shields at its centre and on a block at each end, all very worn. A sill may have been cut away.

One further step leads up into the sanctuary; the sill of the south window here is carried down internally to hold a wooden sedile, of 20<sup>th</sup>-century date in its present form. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century east window has a shouldered rear arch.

### **Discussion**

The structural history of the church is set out in some detail by Honeyman in the County History account (NCH XIV (1935), 562-9). As often, Honeyman identifies rather more constructional phases than there seems to be solid evidence for. These are here listed, with comments (in italics) added:

1. Anglo Saxon; the eastern quoins of the nave. *These are substantial side-alternate blocks, of generally Saxon character and probably indicate a date before 1100.*
2. Late 12<sup>th</sup> century. After William de Vesci gave the church to Alnwick Abbey, it was remodelled with a new west front, south chapel, north aisle, chancel arch and chancel. *Honeyman's only evidence of the north aisle being as early as this seems to be in his interpretation of its broader western arch as having probably 'succeeded a smaller Norman or pre-Conquest arch with a long respond as at Whittingham'.*
3. Mid 13<sup>th</sup> century. The north arcade was replaced by pointed arches and the north aisle widened; it was intended to add a south aisle as well, but works may have got no further than the heightening of the eastern respond of the south transept arch, before the outbreak of war with Scotland. *The earlier lower part of the respond might in fact indicate a former south aisle, removed either at this time or more likely as a consequence of the Scottish wars.*

4. In the later medieval period the ruined church was restored, the chancel being heightened (probably in the 15<sup>th</sup> century), the present south transept arch built, and the ruined north aisle demolished except for a section at its east end left as a chapel, and part of its west wall utilised as a buttress.
5. At some time after the Reformation the south porch was built, and a round-headed window inserted in the blocked central arch of the north arcade. A restoration is recorded in 1664, from which the upper parts of the South Transept walls may date.
6. In 1759 a belfry was constructed in the gable of the south porch.
7. In 1840 the church was re-roofed and the upper portions of its gables rebuilt. The north chapel was rebuilt and widened, for use as Sunday school and vestry, at around this time.
8. In 1870-71 the church was restored, F.R.Wilson of Alnwick being the architect. Several sash windows were replaced by new ones in a Transitional style, and a new bell cote built on the west gable of the nave.

#### **6.7.4 The Towerhouses**

Two medieval towers are known to have stood at Alnham. The turf-covered remains of the 'castle' [17], as it is often termed, situated on the knoll opposite the church. This functioned as the manorial centre and was held by the Earl of Northumberland. The other tower [18] still stands beside the Church of St Michael and was built to house the vicar.

##### ***The Earl of Northumberland's Tower***

There must have been a manor house of some kind in the village, perhaps a hall house, prior to the construction of the tower. The Inquisition Post Mortem for John de Vesci in 1289 (see below *Selected Sources & Surveys* 2) explicitly refers to the existence at Alnham of a capital messuage (i.e. a plot of land containing a high status dwelling). The earliest reference to the Earl's tower occurs in 1405 when it figures as one of Harry Hotspur's strongholds which was surrendered to Henry IV, probably without resistance (Hardyng, 364; cf. Bates 1891, 12, Cathcart-King 1983, 325, 364). This would suggest the tower was constructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. A 'turre de Alneham', held by the Earl of Northumberland, was subsequently included in the list of Northumbrian fortifications compiled for Henry V, in 1415, before his departure for France. 'Elnam' also features in a return of 'holds and townships to lay in garrisons of horsemen', made at the beginning of Henry VIII reign in 1509, in which it was recommended that 40 men be stationed there (presumably either lodged in the tower itself or billeted in the village).

The 1509 survey also indicates that no one was residing in the tower at this date, a state of affairs, which probably prevailed throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century. With so many other vast and palatial castles in his possession, the Earl had no need to use the tower as a dwelling. The fortification could still serve a useful purpose as a refuge for the villagers in time of crisis, but the lack of a resident proprietor meant that there was nobody on the spot with an immediate vested interest in ensuring that necessary repairs were swiftly undertaken and this is reflected in repeated references to the building's poor state or repair and decayed condition in surveys undertaken later in the century. Thus it is described as a little tower in need of repair in Bowes and Ellerker's survey of 1541 (see below *Selected Sources and Surveys* 7). There is no evidence that the repairs required in 1541 were carried out. Instead its condition may have further deteriorated. Stockdale's survey of the manor for the Earl of Northumberland, in 1586, described the building as 'a fair strong stone tower . . . strongly vaulted over' with 'gates and doors . . . of great strong iron bars and a good demesne adjoining thereto', but then added the remarkable information that the house was now ruinous and in some decay because the farmer *used to carry his sheep up the stairs and to lay them in the chambers*, with the

result that the vaults had rotted. This would shortly result in the ‘utter decay’ of the house unless restoration was undertaken, the survey declared.

The surviving remains [17] are located in a good defensive position on the summit of a low ridge/knoll at the western end of the village. The site is overlooked by higher ground to the southeast, but has a good view in other directions. It comprises banks of earth and stone standing up to two metres high and forming a roughly square enclosure, which measures c. 17m by 20m. A survey of the earthworks is included in Dixon’s PhD thesis on Villages of North Northumberland (1985, II, 31). To the east and south, traces of banks and lynchets defining a small level platform appear to represent a small, roughly triangular annex attached to the building. Further to the north, below the summit, another well-defined lynchet bank, which merges with the bank of a small stream to the northwest, marks course of an outer enclosure surrounding the tower. This is shown on the 1619 map and probably represents the ‘garden and two acres of meadow’ associated with ‘the site of the manor’ in the Inquisition Post Mortem of Henry de Percy in 1368 (see below *Selected Sources and Surveys* 6). Dippie Dixon claimed that traces of a barmkin were visible in his day, along with the remains of outer buildings (1895, 28; cf. *Selected Sources and Surveys* 13), although Bowes and Ellerker’s give no indication that the earl’s tower was furnished with a barmkin enclosure for the protection of the community’s livestock in 1541, when they undertook their detailed itemisation of the border’s defences (*Selected Sources and Surveys* 7). It is unclear whether Dixon was referring to the outer enclosure which appears too extensive to be truly defensive in function or the inner annex, which only enclosed a very restricted area.

#### *The vicar’s pele*

The second tower [18], which still stands today, served from the start as the vicarage. It is first mentioned as a ‘lytle toure’ in Bowes and Ellerker’s survey of 1541 (*Selected Sources and Surveys* 7). The lack of any reference to it in the 1415 list of Northumbrian strongholds would suggest that it was built at some time after that date, in the 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Like the earl’s tower, the vicar’s pele was in need of maintenance by the time of the 1541 survey. There is no evidence that it received the necessary repairs and probably suffered steady deterioration instead. A terrier of the glebe land (the land endowment of the parish church), cited by Dixon (1895, 43; *Selected Sources and Surveys* 11), indicates the ‘vicaridge-house which is an old tower’ was in a ruinous state by 1663, having collapsed c. 1651, while the Rev. Robert Thomson was vicar. Warburton’s description in 1715 shows its condition had not improved by that date (Hodgson 1916, 3) and no significant repair seems to have been attempted during the 18<sup>th</sup> century:

Near to the church is the ruins of an ancient well-built pile seemingly to have been a building of note, but, at present, claim’d by the parson of the vicaridge.

In 1758 the vicar was recorded as residing at Ilderton (NCH XIV (1935), 572) and this was still the case in 1828 when Archdeacon Singleton described the ‘old tower’ as ‘long uninhabited and uninhabitable’ (*Selected Sources and Surveys* 12; cf. NCH XIV (1935), 561). However it was in use once more by 1844, when the vicarage house and glebe were valued together at £33 (NCH XIV (1935), 561), having been rebuilt in the intervening period with the addition of the current battlements, corner turrets, window openings and a completely new L-plan residential wing in the Tudor style (Grundy 1988, 54: ALN 3). The tower’s appearance prior to the rebuilding is shown in a sketch by John Hodgson in 1821, who described it as ‘rather low and squat’ (NRO ZAN M15/A3\*, *Journal* vol. U).

See figures 40-41, above, for by Peter Ryder’s detailed descriptions of the two towers, with accompanying plans.

### 6.7.5 Field system

The township's arable and meadowland principally comprised four large common fields in 1619 (cf. Dixon 1985, II, 25), located to the north, south and east of the village, namely Northfield (312 acres), Eastfield (180 acres), Middle Field (171 acres) and Southfield (238 acres). A further block, consisting of 70 acres of demesne arable, lay adjacent to the manor house. Beyond that, to the south west of the village, was a further large parcel of land, embracing 168 acres of 'Alnham ox pasture', labelled Milne Way (i.e. Mill Way) and Castle Field. A watermill was located the south west corner of this 'parcel' beside the Hazeltonrig Burn (see below).

It is clear that some of the land in 1619 was still held and presumably cultivated in the narrow strips, or riggs, typical of medieval cultivation patterns. Those held by freeholders show up particularly clearly on Norton's map, being shown in white as opposed to the great mass of green denoting the ploughland and meadow held by the Percy estate's tenants-at-will. However many strips appear to have been amalgamated to form larger plots. In some cases these preserve the inverted S-form characteristic of medieval ridge and furrow, caused by ploughing with long teams of oxen which required a wide turning circle, but other plots had been formed into larger, squarer fields. Amongst the field names, two adjacent enclosures labelled 'Abbott acres' and 'Nynelandes' (i.e. Nun lands?), lying on the eastern edge of Northfield, hint at possession or lease by monastic institutions at some stage prior to the Dissolution. Alnwick Abbey, in particular, is known to have held 24 acres of land (i.e. the equivalent of one bondage or husbandland) in the township from 1329 (NCH XIV (1935), 576; *Cal Pat R* 1327-30, 449).

### 6.7.6 Outlying farmsteads and settlements<sup>11</sup>

In addition to the main nucleated village complex, the sites of several outlying settlements have been identified within the bounds of Alnham township, beside the Rowhope Burn [5-6], at Het Hill [15] and at Leafield Edge [41], along with a number of individual, isolated farmsteads on the Spartley Burn [30, 34-35] and the Shank Burn [53-54, 58]. With the exception of those identified beside the Spartley Burn, these farmsteads or hamlets were all situated along tributaries of the Breamish, which provided substantial additional resources for the medieval community of Alnham.

***Alnhamsheles and Alnham Moor*** (cf. Dixon 1985, II, 32-5): The scattered complex of steadings and garths on either side of the Rowhope Burn [5-6] has been identified with the settlement of Alnhamsheles (cf. Dixon 1985, II, 32-3), which figures in several medieval documents and for a time seems to have acquired the status of a separate township itself. The earliest document to mention it, the Inquisition Post Mortem of John de Vesci in 1265, refers to the 'Seles of Alnham Moor' as part of the manor of Alnham (*Cal IPM*; PRO C145/29/38) and this is repeated in another Vesci inquisition in 1289 (Dixon 1985, II, 32), suggesting that the settlement originated as a cluster of seasonally-occupied cottages (shielings or 'shiels') used by the villagers while 'summering' their livestock in the Breamish catchment. It was certainly established as a permanent community by 1314/5, when the Inquisition of Henry de Percy reveals there were eleven tenants at Alnhamsheles who paid £6 rent in time of peace (PRO C134/41/1). However it is not documented in any later Percy IPMs suggesting its life as a distinct township may have been relatively short. The farm of the Moor was worth £10 per annum in time of peace in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century (Bean 1958, 30), but in 1472 it was let for only £4 because it had been devastated and its buildings destroyed ('*edifca . . . ad terram corruuntur*', cf. *Percy Bailiff's Rolls*, 83). The same annual valuation is recorded in Clarkson's Survey of the Percy estate in 1566/7 in respect of the demesne lands of 'Alnham Moor' leased by John Horsley. On this basis Dixon argues the village was abandoned by the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>11</sup> See the Gazetteer in the previous section and Appendix 4 for individual site descriptions. The sites are located on figures 4 and 59.

A firm correlation between Alnhamsholes and the remains beside the Rowhope Burn, upstream of Alnham Moor Farm, is demonstrated by Norton's map which inserts the caption 'Here stode the Towne' at this point. John Bell's survey of the Alnham Moor enclosed lands in December 1809 (Aln Cas O XI 9; see fig. 24) notes the 'ruins of a village' in the same area, which it labels 'Boutlands', and shows the outline of the field system. The remains visible today comprise perhaps up to twenty steadings with attendant garths, though not all the dwellings need have been occupied contemporaneously or been of equivalent status or function (planned by Dixon 1985, II, 34). Ten are clearly more sizeable than the remainder (Dixon 1985, II, 33). The village is surrounded by broad ridge and furrow ploughlands.

In the late medieval period, settlement in this area appears to have been concentrated into a single farmstead further downstream at Alnham Moor Farm. Thus Norton's map of 1619 shows only a single building message in this part of the township, and this was clearly situated on the north side of the Shank Burn (the 'Eu-erdeane burne') roughly where the modern farm of Alnham Moor stands. The farm is depicted at the centre of a large parcel of demesne infields, listed by Mayson's survey of 1615 as comprising 229 acres. Only two other buildings are shown in the northern part of the township. One, located slightly further south east at Cobden or 'Coppeden', clearly represents another farmstead, although it is illustrated in a less prominent fashion than Alnham Moor, and is attached to another 20-acre parcel of demesne land, 'Coppeden alias Cobdon Leas'. Several other tracts of enclosed demesne lie adjacent to Cobdon Leas, including 'Cobdon Hawgh' (i.e. Haugh), Barresse (together comprising over 129 acres) and Todlaw (6 acres). A third much smaller building, labelled 'S[.] Sheild', is shown c. 600m to the south east of the Cobdon message, at the south end of a 14 acre enclosure of freehold ground, 'Cobdon Head', held by Thomas Collingwood. The depiction of this building is much smaller and less elaborate than any of the other messages shown on the map, lacking their stylised elements such the red (pantile?) roofs, suggesting that it was no more than a seasonally occupied cottage, as is also implied by the 'shield' name.

With the return of peaceful conditions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, permanent settlement may have expanded once more along the Breamish. Three rows of cottages, situated on both the north and south sides of the Shank Burn, are marked on a Percy estate map of 1726 (Aln Cas O XI 3) and these can still be traced on the ground [9]. Other settlements attributed to the post-medieval period in the south catchment of the Breamish included the foundations of a longhouse [3] with adjacent ridge and furrow at NT 96321584 on the north side of Meggrim's Knowe, whilst an intriguing group of rectangular stone buildings has been surveyed by Tim Gates and Stuart Ainsworth at Tod Stones on the north bank of the Spartley Burn [42]. A sub-circular stone structure at the west end of the largest of the buildings could be a kiln, raising the possibility that this might represent an illicit whiskey still of the kind known locally in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

**Barresses and Leafield:** Two other settlements which have been identified on the ground, represented sizeable sites on the evidence of the extant remains. Thus the foundations of as many as thirteen steadings, surrounded by broad ridge and furrow, have been traced running up the slope of Het Hill in an irregular string [15]. This area, located opposite Alnham Moor, is labelled 'Barresse' on the 1619 map, 'The Barresses' or similar on a succession of 18<sup>th</sup>-early-19<sup>th</sup> century plans. John Bell's 1809 survey of Alnham Moor (Aln Cas O XI 9) notes the 'ruins of several houses' at this point and depicts the outlines of abandoned field enclosures. At Leafield Edge [41] three distinct groups of earthworks, comprising the foundations of perhaps ten or more rectangular buildings with associated paddocks or garths, were recorded by Gates and Ainsworth. The settlement was located on the western edge of a unified block of broad ridge ploughing, which corresponds remarkably closely to the 115 acre parcel of demesne labelled 'Alnham Moore Lea feilde', shown on the 1619 map on either side

of Leaffield Burn. However, neither Leaffield Edge nor the Barresses/Het Hill is marked as a settlement or even as a farmstead on that map suggesting they had already been abandoned by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

**Freehold lands:** Similarly extensive areas of broad ridge and furrow can be still traced through aerial photographs and ground observation at Hartlaw field on the north side of township's Northfield, where Norton's map marks a substantial building messuage similar to Alnham Moor, and at Aldersfield and Bromley to the west of Hazeltonrig. These too correspond to late-16<sup>th</sup> and early 17<sup>th</sup> century demesne parcels or freeholds, comprising 94, 39 and 53 acres respectively (cf. Dixon 1985, II, 25). All these outlying areas of broad ridging, including Leaffield and Alnham Moor mentioned above, have been plotted out by Dixon (1985, I, based on RAF 1948 CPE Scot 319). This arable cultivation had apparently ceased by beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, if not earlier, since the demesne parcels and freeholdings all figure as pasture closes in Mayson's Survey (1615) and Norton's associated 'plat'. The tenurial history of certain of these freehold lands, notably Cobden Head and Aldersfield, which was earlier known as Farnylees or Farneley, can be traced through a series of deeds and related documents, including two newly discovered by Tim Gates during the research for this Atlas (see below, *Evidence for Specific Landholdings*).

### 6.7.7 The 'waste'

Norton's map of 1619 (see fig. 12) shows a corridor of waste or common leading out of the west end of the village, providing the community with access to its plentiful resources of upland grazing on the moors to the north and west. The township's 'waste' stretched well beyond the watershed of the Aln over into the Breamish valley and incorporated the entire south side of that valley above Alnhammoor. By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century the latter was no longer the site of a separate township community, Alnhamshelles, as it had been in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but was simply a single farmstead.

A track, named 'Kirke Waye', ran northward across the moors to reach the outlying farmsteads and demesne grounds of Leaffield, Cobden and Alnham Moor (see above). The route was marked by two crosses, Lang Cross and Cobden Cross [22], depicted on the map of 1619. No trace has survived of either of these crosses *in situ*, but three socketted cross bases [23], one of which is *c.* 2ft (*c.* 0.6m) high, are preserved in Alnham churchyard (cf. fig. 47). These are said to have been removed from the side of roads and hill tracks in the parish (NCH XIV (1935), 569) and one or two may derive from the locations shown on the 1619 map. In 1825 one of these was in the churchyard and another was standing by the roadside not far away.

The corridor was also the route taken by the Salters' Road, which led from the saltpans of the Northumberland coast through Rothbury to Alnham and then heading northwestward across the moors to follow the upper course of the Breamish before eventually linking up with one of the major cross-border routes, Clennell Street, 'the great road of Yarnspeth' in medieval charters. Salters' Road was also one of many routes used by drovers who moved large cattle from Scotland to the markets of England in the period between in the 17<sup>th</sup> century when peaceful conditions returned and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when enclosure, turnpikes and finally the advent of the railways put a stop to this remarkable traffic. Where the 'road' negotiated the steep hillside, northwest of the village, the numerous holloways created by the packhorses and livestock are still very evident today and can be seen clearly on the aerial photographs (figs. 7-9; cf. fig. 49).

### 6.7.8 Watermills

There is evidence for two historic mills in Alnham Township. The clearest evidence relates to the mill at Hazeltonrig, just below the confluence of the Hazeltonrig Burn and Harden Burn. This is depicted on a series of maps held in Duke of Northumberland's archives at Alnwick

Castle, beginning with Norton's plan of 1619 (Aln Cas O.XI.1; figs. 12-13). Such is the artistic quality of this splendid example of early 17<sup>th</sup>-century cartography that it not only illustrates (schematically) the mill as a standing building, in common with the other structures of the village, but even depicts it with a waterwheel attached to the side of the building. Thereafter the mill figures on several 18<sup>th</sup>-century maps. It still appears in the same location on a very clear plan of the enclosed land of the township produced by John Bell in 1809 (Aln Cas O.XI.8; cf. NRO ZAN Bell 58/13a – fig. 25), which adds further detail in the form of a race leading from a dam located further upstream, just below the confluence of the Hazeltonrig Burn and the Spartley Burn. On Fryer's map of 1820 (fig. 20b) it is labelled the 'Old Mill' and located on the west bank of the Hazeltonrig Burn (probably erroneously), which may indicate that it was then falling out of use, perhaps supplanted by the various farm mills, e.g. Castle Farm mill, which appear to have been in existence by the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see below). Dixon suggests that the Hazeltonrig site was a fulling mill on the basis of an adjacent fieldname 'Dyer's Field' (Dixon 1895, 35).

A second site may be implied by two fields called 'Milnesides', marked on the 1619 map on the eastern edge of the township's arable fields, right beside the Aln. No building is actually shown at this spot, however, so the mill had presumably either already gone out of use or may conceivably have been situated just over the boundary in the small neighbouring township of Unthank (which is not illustrated).

### **6.7.9 Conclusions: Medieval and early modern settlement at Alnham**

Cultivation and settlement probably reached their peak in and around Alnham towards the latter stages of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The pressure of an expanding population combined with favourable climatic conditions saw permanent settlement spread well beyond the nucleated village core. New farmsteads, hamlets and villages were established in the upland districts of the township, most notably at Alnhamshelles, Leafield and Barrasses/Het Hill. In at least some instances, Alnhamshelles being the obvious example, these settlements were established at what had evidently previously been the sites of seasonal shieling grounds. Furthermore Alnhamshelles was to become sufficiently large enough to form a township of its own, for a time.

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century this picture had changed radically as a result of border conflict, plague and a deteriorating climate. All the outlying villages and hamlets had been abandoned and settlement was concentrated on the nucleated village. Norton's map, drawn up early in the following century, shows only four permanent dwellings outside the village core, namely Alnham Moor, Cobden, Hartlaw House and the mill at Hazeltonrig. This highly nucleated settlement pattern forms a very marked contrast with that pertaining in the similarly upland terrain of North Tynedale and Redesdale, or even along the south side of Coquetdale, where small villages, hamlets and dispersed farmsteads with prevalent, with only a few sizeable villages, such as Elsdon, Otterburn and Harbottle, serving as manorial centres and marketplaces. Alnham itself was still a significant agricultural population centre in the late-16<sup>th</sup> and early-17<sup>th</sup> centuries, with as many as 31 tenants in 1566 and 22 still in 1615. However this too was to change dramatically over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

## **6.8 Later history**

The later history of the Alnham village and township, covering its decay and dramatic transformation from the compact, populous settlement of the late-medieval/early modern era into its present form has been well summarised by Dixon (1985, II, 25-7).

A map of the township in 1726 (Aln Cas O XI 3; fig. 19 here) shows, somewhat schematically, that the village had contracted to just two rows on either side of the burn, the

south and central rows of the earlier layout, whilst new farm steadings had also been established at Blackchesters and Northfieldhead to the south and north of the village respectively. An undated map (but pre-1750) appears to show a further stage in this process with a dwindling number of cottages and no longer clear row structure (Aln Cas O XI 2; fig 18). All the old toft rows were still evident, albeit mostly unoccupied, when the village plan was recorded on the Enclosure Award of 1776 (NRO QRA 7; fig. 64). By this stage there were just two farms at the east end of the village, Castle and Pennylaws Farms, and three cottages. In the wider township, the boundaries and overall arrangement of the demesne pastures, parcels of freehold and the common remained unchanged up to the Enclosure Award (*cf.* Aln Cas O XI 3 (1726), 4, 5, 12 (1775-77); NRO QRA 7 – figs. 19, 21 and 64).

By the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century what remained of the village was in a state of widespread decay. Seymour's Survey of *c.* 1756, commissioned by the first Smithson Duke of Northumberland, reveals that five cottages and Hall-house farm were in ruins. Only two cottages were 'in tolerable repair' and one farm had a proper 'tiled stone house'. Of the two steadings established outside the village in the 17<sup>th</sup>-early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, only Blackchesters was habitable (Aln Cas A I 6). Moreover the undated mid 18<sup>th</sup> century map (Aln Cas O XI 2; fig 18) reveals that only a small proportion of the ingrounds of Northfieldhead and Blackchesters was cultivated and that lay close to the two steadings, whilst a survey of 1769 indicates the infield fields were divided between four farms – the Castles (freehold), Northfieldhead, Blackchesters and Alnham (later Pennylaws). Dixon attributes this decay to the policy of leasing the tenement lands to a single tenant during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, which enabled the leasee to amalgamate the lands of former tenants-at-will to form larger farmholdings (1985 II, 26). Thus in 1702 the demesne was all leased to Robert and Thomas Alder of Prendwick, whilst the twelve tenements and cottages in the village were leased separately to Robert Clavering. In 1727 the entire township was leased to George Alder (NCH XIV (1935), 576; Aln Cas A VI I & A I 4). It was only with the advent of the Smithson Dukes of Northumberland in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century that there was a change of policy.

The key measure in bringing about a transformation was the enclosure of the township's commons, which was finally effected by Act of Parliament in 1776 (NRO QRA 7; *cf.* Aln Cas O XI 4-5 & 12; see figs. 64 and 21). Enclosure had been discussed from the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, following a survey of the common around that time (Aln Cas A VII 10), but had hitherto been obstructed by the failure of all the commoners to agree (NCH XIV (1935), 576-7). In particular, whilst Robert and George Alder were said to be in agreement with the proposal, Mistress Anne Davison was reported to have refused 'to divide the common. though she keeps 14 score of sheep, 30 head of beasts (cattle) and 6 horses in the common or moore'. In 1720, following renewed pressure, she complained that Alexander Collingwood, Robert Arthur (Alder?) and George Arthur (Alder?) proposed to enclose the moor and deprive of her share (Aln Cas J III 3e).

The map attached to the enclosure award demonstrates very clearly how extensive was the transformation wrought by this measure (NRO QRA 7; fig. 64). The infield grounds were divided into a series of coherent holdings along the east and southeast sides of the township. The largest of these parcels, at 1379 acres, remained in the hands of the Duke of Northumberland, comprising Castle Farm and all the land on the south side of the farm. The north part of the village was divided between the vicar's glebe land (7 acres) and Percivall Clennell's 52 acre farm. Alexander Collingwood's holding lay at the very SE extremity of the township, adjoining Unthank, whilst Charles Byne held the old parcels of demesne along the eastern edge of the township to the north of the village. The latter was also assigned 366 acres of the adjacent common. However the lion's share of the open moorland, (6590 acres) was allotted to the Duke of Northumberland, and as a result was left undivided. In the settlement itself, the remaining cottages with their associated toft enclosures were swept away. A new road was built through the site of the village, between the church and the two

farms at the east end of the village. A further new road led towards Scrainwood, replacing an earlier meandering track (*cf.* Aln Cas O XI 1; fig. 12), and six cottages-holdings for the tenants of the Duke were laid out along this road at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

The enclosure award did not pass without dispute. Alexander Collingwood of Unthank failed to substantiate his freehold claim to the tract of land called Long Crag and Fridgemoor which had been enclosed or he claimed had been enclosed by his father. This lay in the SW corner of the township, to the north of Collingwood's parcel of land called Aldersfield. Fridgemoor is marked on Robert Norton's survey in 1619 (Aln Cas O XI 1; fig. 12) and Long Crag figures on several 18<sup>th</sup> century maps (now called Hazeltonrig Hill). The Commissioners appointed to enclose and divide the common decided this was all part of the common. Collingwood's agent or lawyer James Murray commented in a letter to Collingwood 'Damm them all for a pack of rogues! They deserve to be transported to the top of Longcrag there to be employed during the day perambulating the boundary and at night to be sent to the Old Tower (Alnham Castle? Or the vicar's tower?) there to remain in Dunny's hole haunted by his ghost'.<sup>13</sup> The identity of the ghostly Dunny is unclear. The disputed enclosure is actually shown, stretching from Aldersfield northward to Spartley Burn, on a couple of maps surveyed by Thomas Wilkin in 1775 and 1777 (O XI 4 & 5) before and after the enclosure award. The earlier of the two suggests that only a relatively small part of the enclosure boundary had been finished at that stage, although it appears complete on the second. Perhaps enclosure had only just begun or had been begun much earlier but abandoned. In his letter Murray mentions the stones collected by Alex Collingwood's father in terms which suggest they might still be collected rather than constructed.

The new form of the village and township is shown in maps surveyed by John Bell in 1809 (Aln Cas O XI 8-9; NRO ZAN Bell 58/13a (reduced copy of 1846); see figs 23-26). A new farm at Alnham House was established between 1797-1809 (*cf.* Aln Cas O XI 7, NRO ZAN 58/13a). Confusingly this initially appears to have been named Pennylaws (NRO ZAN 58/13a), which was subsequently applied to the long-established farm situated immediately to the north of Castle Farm, at the east end of the former village site. The map of the Duke's holding of infield grounds in 1797 (Aln Cas O XI 7; fig 22) confirms that the field to the east of the former village, squeezed between the new road and the north side of the burn, was already labelled Pennylaws in 1797, before the new farm was established. The old farm subsequently given this name may have been labelled Alnham Farm at this stage. However the definitive pattern of farm names was in use by the time the tithe map was drawn up in 1845. Further additions to buildings of Alnham House are shown on later maps, in particular the tithe map (NRO DT 9L; see fig. 26) and 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey (figs. 27-28).

In 1825, after the completion of this reorganisation, Mackenzie summarised, somewhat brusquely, the impact on the village of nearly two hundred years/two centuries of decay, rationalisation and reconstruction, describing it thus (1825, II, 22):

'formerly a pretty large town, though now a place of no consequence'.

The 1762 Militia List (fig. 31), which lists 26 adult males (including two crossed out) in the Alnham Constabulary of Alnham Parish,<sup>14</sup> demonstrates that the bulk of the population was employed in pastoralist farming, as might be expected. The most common occupation

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<sup>12</sup> A date-stone of 1800 is recorded above doorway of one of these cottages (Dixon 1895, 33), which do not figure on a plan of the Duke's infield grounds in 1797 (Aln Cas O XI 7), but do appear on Bell's plans of 1809 (Aln Cas O XI 8-9; NRO ZAN 58/13a).

<sup>13</sup> This information derives from a collection of documents relating to Collingwood's holdings at Alnham which has been discovered by Tim Gates. The authors are grateful to Mr Gates for providing summaries and transcriptions of this material.

<sup>14</sup> The constabulary covered an equivalent area to Alnham township.

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recorded was that of shepherd (15), whilst one farmer, two farmer's sons and a husbandman were also listed. The other trades mentioned included those of tailor, shoemaker, weaver (2) and miller, all directly related to local agriculture or servicing the basic needs of the rural population. More unexpectedly, a schoolmaster was also listed. If George Hugen taught locally, perhaps the church was used for the purpose. A Sunday school was certainly held there during the next century, although the north chapel had to be rebuilt and widened c. 1840, partly to accommodate that function. The most prevalent surname born by the listed men was Rutherford. Their number included the Petty Constable, John Rutherford, entered at the bottom of the roll.

### **6.8.1 The 19<sup>th</sup>-century Village**

Alnham in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was thus a settlement comprising three farms, a church, a vicarage and a string of half a dozen cottages. A Church of England elementary school complete with a master's house, paid for by the Duke of Northumberland and Ralph Carr-Ellison, was built beside the road to Scrainwood in 1870, at the same time as the church was restored. The school could accommodate 60 children of both sexes, but in 1886 it was reportedly attended by about 40 children (*Bulmer's Directory*) and in 1910 by only 27 (*Kelly's Directory*). A fascinating glimpse into the working life of the school is provided by the weekly logbooks maintained by the schoolmaster (see for example figs. 33-34), with their references to smallpox scares, the impact of snowstorms on attendance in this remote upland area, the maintenance of discipline and the range and progress of teaching. The school attendance rolls quoted above hint at a population that was already beginning to decline. The census figures support this. In the first quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the total inhabitants in both the township of Alnham and in the wider parish were gradually climbing upward reaching 143 for the township and 269 in the parish in 1821 (up from 124 and 233 respectively at the beginning of the century), but by 1881 the parish contained only 226 inhabitants and by 1901 there were only 177 in the parish and 110 in the township:

### **6.8.2 Railway Schemes**

One event which might have spurred population growth and an increase in the built-up area of the village was the formation of Northumberland Central Railway. This was one of a number of schemes promoted in the mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century for a railway line through central Northumberland, to enable the North British Railway to gain direct access to the lucrative markets of industrial Tyneside. The line was projected to run between a junction with NBR's Wansbeck Railway at Scots Gap, via Rothbury, Alnham, Glanton, Wooler and Millfield culminating in a junction with the North Eastern Railway's Tweedmouth-Kelso branch at Cornhill. The proposed route, surveyed in 1862, would have taken the line immediately to the east of Pennylaws and Castle Farms (NRO QRU p108; Jenkins 1991, 21). Had the railway come to fruition in its entirety, the village could have been provided with a very convenient station, considerably better sited than many of those to be found on Northumbrian branch or cross-country lines, which purported to serve villages miles distant. This in turn would have made it the transport node for the surrounding estates. In the final event, however, only the section between Rothbury and Scots Gap was constructed (Warn 1975, 29-31; Jenkins 1991, 9-26; Sewell 1992, 82-5; Mackichan 1998, 39ff). A later scheme, the Central Northumberland Railway, promoted in 1881, which was also projected to run from Rothbury to Wooler via Alnham (QRU p152), similarly came to nothing (Warn 1975, 41, 43; Jenkins 1991, 45-6; Mackichan 1998, 129-54). The Star Inn at Nethererton is said to have been built, as the Star Hotel, in anticipation of the eventual arrival of this particular line (Mackichan 1998, 133).

### **6.8.3 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century Farms**

Increasingly from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and certainly by the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Alnham's social and economic centre of gravity was provided by a small number of the integrated farm complexes rather than a community of roughly equal bondmen or tenants-at-will as had

previously been the case. The farms now represented the focus of agricultural production and economic activity, with the emphasis on the rearing of livestock, with oats, barley and turnips were grown as fodder. The Duke's cottage tenants may be compared with the cottagers of the medieval period – smallholders who provided waged labour on the larger farms just as their predecessors must have worked on the manorial demesne and the more substantial of the freehold plots.

Castle Farm demonstrates this development. Now known as Pennywells and divided into two cottages (fig. 51), the farmhouse [69] dates to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century when the amalgamation of tenancies was already well underway. The adjacent farm buildings [71], consisting of byres, stable and shelter sheds, were built as three ranges around a courtyard between around 1830 and 1840 (figs. 52-54).

However, the best surviving example in the locality of this kind of 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century farm complex, lies at Prendwick, in the neighbouring township of the same name. It has been described as 'a classic Northumbrian farmstead, unusual in its grandeur so close to the mountains and still comparatively complete' (Grundy 1988, 51, cf. 55-6: ALN 4-7). The buildings all date to the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, including the farmhouse itself, the main ranges of farm buildings enclosing a broad yard, plus a smithy of c. 1800 at the NW corner of that group, and a U-plan, two-storey group of four cottages.

#### 6.8.4 Farm Mills

The larger and more important of these farms were provided with their own water mills during the 19<sup>th</sup> century to power various agricultural activities, such as threshing and grinding of corn. These appear to have replaced the old mill at Hazeltonrig. The latter is still labelled 'Alnham Mill' on the plans surveyed by John Bell in 1809 (*cf.* fig. 25), but is referred to as 'Old Mill' on Fryer's map of Northumberland in 1820 (fig. 20b). The new mills are catalogued below:<sup>15</sup>

Site Name: Castle Farm, Alnham  
 Grid Reference: NT995108  
 First recorded: 1845  
 Last recorded: 1890

The tithe map (1845) and early Ordnance Survey maps of the area clearly show a mill dam behind the buildings of Castle Farm in Alnham. It seems that the race must have been culverted and there is no direct evidence of which building housed what is presumed to have been a farm mill by this date at least (see fig. 56 - photograph of the mill leat).

Site Name: Prendwick Farm  
 Grid Reference: NU002123  
 First recorded: 1860  
 Last recorded: 1890

Once again the evidence for this farm mill comes from early Ordnance Survey maps of the area. A long "Mill Lead" leads to a small dam which is still shown as an open area in a small plantation.

Site Name: Scrainwood Farm  
 Grid Reference: NT991095  
 First recorded: 1860  
 Last recorded: 1920s

While shown on the 1860s Ordnance Survey a small dam and aqueduct taking water to a farm mill are more clearly shown in the 1890s and 1920s editions.

<sup>15</sup> Information supplied by the Northumberland Mills Group.

### **6.8.5 Alnham in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond**

The development of the village in the twentieth century can be traced in the photographs and maps reproduced in this study. Comparison of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and later editions of the Ordnance Survey demonstrates the layout of the village changed relatively little in these years. The only significant new structure shown on the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey published in 1921 is the War Memorial Hall built just to the north of the school beside the road to Scrainwood, a testament to the terrible conflict of the previous decade and the human cost the Great War inflicted in small rural communities like Alnham.

The overall picture during the 20<sup>th</sup> century is one of a gradually declining population. Mechanisation and the decline in farming incomes means that agriculture no longer employs the bulk of the village's population. Two of the farms in the village are now disused, with Castle Farm having been converted into two cottages and renamed Pennywells. A definitive history of Alnham in this period remains to be written. Such a project, most appropriately undertaken by the local community, could incorporate a range of map, photographic, census and other documentary evidence. Perhaps more importantly, however, through the collation and recording of oral testimonies and recollections it would be able to capture the personalities who enriched the life of Alnham in the last century, just as David Dippie Dixon was able to do for the village and the wider valley in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an achievement which has made his history of Whittingham Vale (1895) such a sought-after classic – a local history in the truest sense.

## 7. SELECTED SOURCES AND SURVEYS

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### 1 *Liber Feodorum (The Book of Fees) II, 1117-9, 1126-7; Northumberland, 1242*

#### **Baronia de Vescy:**

*Willelmus de Vescy tenet in capite de domino rege Aunewic, Aunemue, Denwye, Haukehall, Bylton, Lescebyr, Schippingbothill, Neuton super Moram, Heysandan, Gynis, Ruggeley, Morewyc, Chivington' del Est, Houcton' Magnam, Houcton' Parvam, Howyc, Renigton', Rok', Charleton' del North', Charleton del Suth, Falwedon, Burneton Batayll, Neuton super Mare, Preston, Tughal, Swinhou, Neuham Cumyn, Lukre cum Hopum membro suo, Hetheriston, Spinlastan, Ewrth, Dodington cum Nesebit membro suo, Horton, Turbervill, Hesilrig, Leum, Chatton, Folebir, Wetwod, Caldemerton, Yherdhill, Angreham, cum Reveley et Hertishevid membris suis, Faudon Batayll, Prendewic, **Alneham**, Chirmundisden, Bidlisden, Clenhill, Nedderton, Burweton, Alwemton, Hetton, Ambell, Scharberton, Thirnum, Scravenwood, Hauekislawe, Chevelingham et Hibburn.*

.....

*Walterus Bataill et Thomas Bunte tenent Scravenwod per terciam partem unius feodi de veteri feoffamento.*

#### **Socagium Baronie de Vescy:**

.....

*Willelmus le Walays tenet unam carucatam terre in Prendwye pro ii. s.*

*Walterus de Prendwye tenet unam carucatam terre in eadem pro dimidia marca.*

*Willelmus Cocus tenet xxx acras terre in eadem pro i libra piperis.*

*Johannes de Unthanc tenet xxx acras terre in Prendwye et in Unthanc unam carucatam terre et dimidiam carucatam pro dimidia marca.*

*Gilbertus de Glentedon tenet xxx acras terre in Prendwye pro i libra piperis.*

*Walterus filius Edmundi tenet xxx acras terre in eadem pro v. s*

.....

*Rogerus Balistarius tenet tres bovatas terre in **Aunelam** pro vii. s.*

Translation:

#### **Barony of Vesci:**

William de Vesci holds in chief from the lord king Alnwick, Alnmouth, Denwick, Hawkhill, Bilton, Lesbury, Shilbottle, Newton-on-the-Moor, Hazon, Guyzance, Rugley, Morwick, East Chevington, Longhoughton, Littlehoughton, Howick, Rennington, Rock, North Charlton, South Charleton, Fallodon, Brunton, Newton-by-the-Sea, Preston, Tughall, Swinhoe, Newham, Lucker with its member Hoppen, Adderstone, Spindlestone, Ewart, Doddington with its member Nesbit, Horton, Turvelaws, Hazelrigg, Lyham, Chatton, Fowberry, Weetwood, Coldmartin, Earle, Ingram, with its members Reaveley and Hartside, Fawdon, Prendwick, **Alnham**, 'Chirmundesden' (Peels), Biddlestone, Clennell, Netherton, Burradon, Alwinton, Hetton, Amble, Sharperton, Farnham, Scrainwood, Hauxley, Chillingham and Hepburn.

.....

Walter Bataill and Thomas Bunte hold Scrainwood for a third part of a (knight's) fee by ancient enfeoffment.

#### **Socage holdings of the Barony of Vesci:**

.....

William le Walays holds one carucate of land in Prendwick for 2 shillings.

Walter of Prendwick holds one carucate of land in that same (vill) for half a mark..

---

William the Cook (*Cocus*) holds 30 acres of land in that same (vill) for one pound of pepper. John of Unthank holds 30 acres of land in Prendwick and one and a half carucates of land in Unthank for half a mark.

Gilbert of Glanton holds 30 acres of land in Prendwick for one pound of pepper.

Walter son of Edmund (or FitzEdmund) holds 30 acres of land in that same (vill) for 5s.

....

Roger the Crossbowman holds three bovates of land in Alnham (vill) for 7s..

**2. Cal Inq Misc I, no. 847: John de Vesci, 1265** (PRO C145/29/38; cf. Dixon 1985, II, 24 & 32)

Alnham: The manor said to contain 348 acres of demesne land, the rents of 18 bondagers, cottage rents, the brewery, rents of freemen and the 'Seles' (shiels) of Alnham Moor.

**3. Cal IPM II (Edward I, 1-19), no. 723: John de Vesci 1289** (cf. Hartshorne 1852, I, cxviii-ix; Tate 1866, I, 88; Dixon 1895, 27; NCH XIV (1935), 575; Dixon 1985, II, 32)

John died seised of:

*Alnham with shealings of this vill (township), and of a capital messuage, demesne lands, farm of free tenants, of bond tenants, of cotmen, and of mills and of rents, yearly value £51 7s 6d..*

**4. Cal IPM V (Edward II, 1-9), no. 536: Henry de Percy 1314/5** (PRO C134/41/1; cf. Dixon 1985, II, 24, 32)

Alnham:

A capital messuage and 214 acres of land in demesne, a mill, rents etc.

18 bondagers listed in possession of 24 acres of land each.

Alnham sheles: [The hamlet]

There were 11 tenants who paid £6 in time of peace

**5. Cal IPM X (Edward III, 26-34), no.43: Henry de Percy 1352** (cf. Hartshorne 1852, I, ccxviii; NCH XIV (1935), 575; Dixon 1985, II, 24)

**The vill of Alnham:**

- ❖ *Site of the manor with garden and 2 acres of meadow worth yearly in herbage 6s 8d;*
- ❖ *180 acres of demesne each acre of yearly value of 8d;*
- ❖ *15 acres of demesne meadow each acre of yearly value of 1s 6d;*
- ❖ *18 bondage tenements each containing a messuage and 24 acres of arable and meadow, of which pay 13s 4d each per annum and 6 are waste through lack of tenants and are worth in herbage 6s p.a.;*
- ❖ *16 cottages of which 5 pay 2s p.a. each and 11 are waste through lack of tenants and worth nothing;*
- ❖ *a water-mill worth 40s p.a.;*
- ❖ *rents of free tenants 24s 3d p.a..*

**6. Cal IPM XII (Edward III, 39-43), no. 242: Henry de Percy 1368** (cf. Tate 1866, I, 138; Dixon 1895, 27-8)

Alnham was held as a member of the Barony of Alnwick

- ❖ *The town of Alnham he held in his own demesne;*
- ❖ *the site of the manor, with a garden and two acres of meadow, render in herbage 6s;*
- ❖ *180 acres of demesne land in the hands of tenants at will render 6d per acre, and 15 acres of demesne meadow 12d per acre;*

- ❖ of 18 bondages (bondagia), 12 are in the hands of tenants at will, each yielding 13s 4d, and the other six are wasted and render in herbage 12s;
- ❖ 12 cottages (cotagia) in the hands of tenants at will render 24s, and six, which are wasted, render in herbage 12s;
- ❖ one water mill renders 43s 4d;
- ❖ free tenants render 24s 3d.

**7. A View and Survey . . . of the borders or frontier of the East and Middle Marches of England, Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Ralph Ellerker'1541** (cf. Hodgson 1828, 211; Bates 1891, 43)

*Margin*

Aylnane  
two little towers oute of  
reparacons

*Description*

At Alname be two lytle toures whereof th(e) one ys the mansion of the vycaredege and th(e) other of the inheritaunce of the kinges majestie, parcell of the late Erle of Northumb'landes landes being scarcely in good reparac'ons.

**8. Clarkson's Survey 1566 (Aln Cas A I i m)**

31 tenants-at-will listed, holding varying proportions of land in the common fields  
Two free tenants and two demesne tenants.

**9. Stockdale's Survey 1586 (Aln Cas A II no.1)**

*Alnham.* The lord hath there a faire stronge stone tower of ancient tyme builded & strongly vaulted over & the gates and dores be all of great stronge iron barres and a good demayne adjoining thereto, and the house is now ruinous and in some decay by reason the farmer useth to carry his sheep up the stares and to lay them in the chambers which rotteth the vaults and will in shorte time be the utter decay of the same house if other reformacion be not had.

*Demesnes.* Thomas Horsley holdeth scyte of manor of Alneham with stone tower well builded with toft and croft and certain lands lying together called Hobcroftes and one cottage with toft and croft called Aymers land. Rent p.a. 40d.

*The Manor.* John Horsley holdeth certain demesne lands called Alneham Moore.

*Freeholders.* Cuthbert Rutherford holds a toft which Robert, sometime the chaplain of the chantry of Eland [Holy Island] held by fealty and suit of court.

George Alder gent. holds one toft which Richard Alder lately held, and before, the chaplain aforesaid by like service.

Thomas Brockett and John Wattson hold 24 acres of land sometime in the possession of the monjastery of Alnwick which William Carver did hold.

The names of 29 tenants-at-will are given.

**10. Mayson's Survey of 1615 (Aln Cas A V no.5)**

The toun and manor of Alneham is parcell of the Barony of Alnewicke. The soyle thereof is good and fertile but the tenants have been greatly impoverished and disabled by the Scots and often English thieves by reason that the said toun lieth open to the great wastes between the two realms.

29 tenants were listed, comprising 22 tenants at will, one cottager, two demesne tenants and three freeholders

**11. A Terrier of the Gleeb Land belonging to the Vicaridge of Alneham in the County of Northumberland and Diocese of Durham (1663) (cf. PSAN<sup>2</sup>, 4, 235; Dixon 1895, 43)**

There is a vicaridge-house which is an old tower but ruinous and so hath been these twelve years by past it fell in Mr Thompson's time.

2ndly. Another low house where the Clerk lives at present.

3rdly. A little close called the Church Meadow joyning the church-yard and lying upon the north side of the church.

4thly. A priviledge in Alneham Common.

Given under our hands at Alneham the eight day of December 1663

Archibald Forster        X his mark        Church Wardens

Chistopher Jamison    X his mark

**12. Archdeacon Singleton's parochial description, 1828: Archdeacon's Church Notes, vol II (cf. NCH XIV (1935), 561)**

Alnham (parish) is usually but not of necessity united with Ilderton. The Church is in the patronage of the Duke of Northumberland. The population of the Parish is about 130 and the church is fully equal to the accommodation of all those who may wish to frequent it. The service is on alternate Sundays with the service at Ilderton; the sacrament is administered three times a year. There is no parsonage house but an old tower long uninhabited and uninhabitable . . . The revenues amount to £59.

**13. Description of the remains of Earl of Northumberland's tower: D.D. Dixon (1895), 28.**

The foundations of an extensive fortress are yet visible on a green knoll opposite to the church, shewing traces of a square tower and the remains of other buildings, probably the outer offices, the dwellings of the servants, and the wall of the barmekyn (*sic.*). Mr William Brown, of Alnham, says that his father, the late Edward Brown, excavated a large quantity of stones out of the 'castle mound' with which to build walls around the fields on the adjoining farms, and he himself remembers having seen a number of door heads, window heads, and mullions, along with other dressed stones, amongst the ruins.

**14. Descriptions of Alnham moor,**

*1702 Survey* (Aln. Cas. A VI 1)

"There is a large and good Common or Moor might be improved but a great distance from Coales and severall intercomers."

**15. Undated survey - written in the 1702 Survey (Aln. Cas. VII10),:**

"The most part of his Graces large common is a very good soyle; if inclosed were as good as their inground having no heather or linge. Divers adjacent freeholders claim intercommen as followeth:

HestletonRigg. Mr Robert Alder jnr., at Alneham Court anno 1633 before Michael Feary, steward.

Hartlaw House. Mr George Alder quo jure.

Unthank Mr Thos. Unthank formerly kept a shield or herde house in the midst of his Grace's common which is decayed but Mr Robert Alder payes now about £4 per annum for his right of intercommon which was formerly presented at the court as an incroachment as

appears by Court Rolls ann. 1633, who keeps what Unthank could feed in winter att stobb and stake now pleads prescription.

Prendick. Mr Robert Alder and his goods is suffered to depasture dayly on Alnham common at the Lee field which in process of time may come to claim a right there as intercommon.

One Robert Alder's son has a ½ a farm of freehold values it to £10 with rake in common."

**16. The Division of the Common 1776 (NCH XIV (1935) 577)**

|                                       |                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Duke of Northumberland</i>         | <i>infield ground</i> | <i>1379 acres</i> |
|                                       | <i>common</i>         | <i>6590 acres</i> |
| <i>Alexander Collingwood</i>          | <i>infield</i>        | <i>178 acres</i>  |
| <i>Charles Byrne</i>                  | <i>infield</i>        | <i>470 acres</i>  |
|                                       | <i>Common</i>         | <i>366 acres</i>  |
| <i>Percival Clennell</i>              | <i>infield</i>        | <i>52 acres</i>   |
| <i>Vicar of Alnham</i>                | <i>infield</i>        | <i>7 acres</i>    |
| <i>Ground sold to defray expenses</i> |                       | <i>20 acres</i>   |
|                                       | <i>Total</i>          | <i>9162 acres</i> |

## 8. EVIDENCE FOR SPECIFIC LANDHOLDINGS

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### 8.1 Farnley, Aldersfield, Cobden and Todlaw

Two original early 17<sup>th</sup> century documents relating to Alnham - a bond of 1604 and an indenture of 1609 - have been unearthed by Tim Gates during the course of this study. They clearly belong to the same archive and detail the acquisition of several parcels of land in Alnham township by Thomas Collingwood, of Little Ryle, from George Alder and his son Francis Alder, of Hobberlaw near Alnwick. These landholdings are described in the 1604 Bond as follows:

A halfe a husbunde lande in Alnham, fortie acres of waste grounde lyeinge at Farneley and Coppeden nigh to the said commons of Alnham, as also certaine groundes called Todlaye Fields, Todlaye leazes & Todlaye Walles.

The indenture of 1609 provides fuller description:

All that halfe husbandland or halfe tenement knowne by the name of Halfe a Husband Lande scituate lying & being in the Towne fields & territories of Alneham in the said County of Northumberland nowe or late in the possession of him the said Thomas Collingwood or of his assignes . . . . . , And also all those parcell of lande grounde & closes lying near or bounding unto the aforesaid common of Alneham containinge by estimat[i]on Forty acres, Thirty whereof doe adjoyne, and are neare bounding on the east syde of Bromeley alias Bromelaw and the other ten acres thereof are scytuate and lyinge at a certaine place called Coppedeane by their right meates and boundes with Common of pasture for all manner of beastes, and Cattell in the common of Alneham aforesaid And also all those landes and groundes called Todd Law or knowne by that name lyinge nere the said place or parcell of grounde called Coppeden aforesaid . . . . .

The parcels of land mentioned in these documents figure on Robert Norton's map of the township in 1619, by which stage they were in the hands of Thomas Collingwood. The half husbandland cannot be identified, but presumably represents one of the freehold riggs in the town fields (shown in white on the map)<sup>16</sup>. The Coppedeane plot may well be the plot shown as 'Coppeden alias Cobdon head' - 14 acres of freehold land in the hands of Tho Collingwood, rather than Cobdon Leas (29 acres of leased out demesne pasture). Sandwiched between the two is 'Todlaw' 6 acres, but shown as demesne not freehold. Referred to on the map as 'Farnileys now called Alders Feilde' - 39 acres of freehold in the possession of the same Tho Collingwood. This is covered by broad rigg and lies immediately on the east side of 'Bromye Leyes', to the east of Broomy Sike and north of Hazeltonrig Burn ('Benck burne'). The name Aldersfield was obviously relatively new in 1619 and reflected the fact that the parcel of land had only recently been transferred from George and Francis Alder to Thomas Collingwood, and, having done so, acquired the name of its former proprietors, having previously been known as Farnylees or Farneley. 'Bromeley' is shown as a 53 acre parcel of demesne pasture to the west of the village and Hazeltonrig and situated between the Broomy Sike and Hazeltonrig Burn (NT 9610). This too had once been under cultivation, the whole plot being covered with broad rigg, and presumably abandoned in the late medieval period or 16<sup>th</sup> century (see Dixon 1985, I).

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<sup>16</sup> However identification of the half husbandland may be possible through further scrutiny of the map in conjunction with the text of Mayson's accompanying survey.

These lands had been in the hand hands of the Alders of Hobberlaw for a considerable period of time. An inquisition post mortem held in 1533, following the death of Richard Alder of Hobberlaw, records the same land and properties in his possession (italicised here):

(IPM 25 Henry VIII, v. o.; cited in Hodgson 1908, 27-30) Inquisition taken in the castle of Newcastle upon Tyne on Thursday, 20 October 1533, after the death of Richard Alder of Hedburnlaw [Hobberlaw], gentleman. The jury found that the said Richard, some time before his death, was seised of (. . . various land and property in Alnwick, Hobberlaw and Bertwell near Alnwick); six messuages and six bovates in the town and territories of Prendwik; *one messuage and one bovat<sup>17</sup> of land in Alnham; one messuage and one bovat of land in Todlaw; three messuages and three bovates of land in Bromley and Farnylees. . . .*

The premises in Prendwik, Alneham, Todlawe, Bromelawe and Farnyley are held of the said earl (Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland), by what service the jury know not at all, and are worth yearly in time of peace £4, and now are laid waste by the Scotch.

Indeed, two further documents, the existence of which is reported by the County History (NCH XIV (1935), 576, citing *John Hodgson MSS - Alnham Guard Book*; cf. Hodgson 1908, 17), strongly imply that the 40 acre Farnyley/Cobden parcel can be traced right back to the 13th century as an discrete landholding. An undated copy of a charter records an exchange between John de Vesci and Alexander, son and heir of Walter of Prendwick, during the late 13th century (between 1253 and 1288), of 40 acres of waste land in fee simple (i.e. freehold), in Alnham, with all liberties, free customs and easements belonging to the common of the town of Alnham. A further document of 1604 contains an explicit reference indicating the 40 acre parcel of waste land detailed therein was the same as that exchanged between John de Vesci and Alexander, son of Walter of Prendwick, in the late 13th century. This evidence for the continuous existence of the 40 acre Farnyley/Cobden holding over a period of around three and a half centuries makes this entire collection of deeds especially significant.

The senior branch of the Alder lineage, which had traditionally resided at Prendwick and constituted the principal landowners in that township (Hodgson 1908, 17-23), also held land in Alnham township. Robert Alder of Prendwick, held a 54 acre parcel of pasture and a steading at Hartlaw Field shown to the north of the townfields on the 1619 map ('Harteclaye feilde howse alias Harclaye feilde Rente vi.s (or vii.s) vi.d'). This they too had held for a considerable duration, as it is cited in the IPM of Thomas Alder of Prendwick, convened in 1554:

(IPM 1 and 2 Phillip and Mary, part 2, No 55; cited in Hodgson 1908, 18). Inquisition taken at Morpeth, Monday 21 September 1554, after the death of Thomas Alder of Prendwick. The jury found that he died seised of a capital messuage called 'la Toure' (the tower) in the town of Prendwick and also of four messuages, four cottages, 200 acres of arable land, 100 acres of meadow, 400 acres of pasture, and three hundred acres of heath in the said town and territories and hamlets of Prendwik *and Hartleyfeld*, of the yearly value of £5 beyond reprises, in time of peace; they are held of the king and queen in socage as of their castle of Alnwick, late belonging to Henry, late earl of Northumberland, and pay free rent, yearly 8s. 8d. and 1 lb pepper, viz., for one ploughland 2s. and for one ploughland 1lb. Pepper and *for 'le Hertleyfeld' 6s. 8d.* The said Thomas Alder died 5 May last, 1554; Richard Alder is his son and heir and is now aged five years.

The historical context for the creation and subsequent development of these parcels of land has been analysed by Dixon (1985, I). They were associated with the expansion in the area of cultivation in the 13th century, involving the colonisation of new areas in the township, outside the original village and town fields. In this case of Farnleys/Aldersfield, Cobden and Hartlaw, this expansion was achieved by leasing out the new lands or assarts as freehold, but

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<sup>17</sup> A bovat generally equated to c. 12-15 acres, two bovates forming a standard Northumberland 24-acre husbandland or bondland.

other parcels, such as Bromeley and Leafield were directly managed as part of the lord's demesne and worked by wage labour. Finally, one of the intakes, at Alnhamshelles on the south side of the Breamish, was sufficiently large and distant from Alnham village to merit planting a new village of bond tenants to form the core of a new township. Dixon's calculations show that all these parcels of land were under arable cultivation in the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century, but by the early 17<sup>th</sup> century they were used as improved pasture. The village of Alnhamshelles had eventually been abandoned and the associated township reincorporated into Alnham township, with the only permanent settlement recorded in that area in 1619 being represented by the single farmstead at nearby Alnham Moor.

## 8.2 The Documents

The texts of the two newly discovered documents are reproduced in full below and, where necessary, translated.

### 8.2.1 The Deed of 1604

Noverint universi per presentes nos Georgius Alder de Hobberlaw in Comitatu Northumb- / gen[erosus] et Franciscus Alder filius et heredes apparentem Georgius Alder predicti teneris et firmiter obligari Thomas / Collingwood de Lytle Ryle in dicto Comitatu gen[erosus] Execut[or] Administrat et assignatis suis in quadraginta libris / bone et leg[al]is monete Angliae solven[dis] eidem Thomas Collingwoode heredibus Exeuntor administrat vel Assignatus / suis ad quamquid[em] solute[i]onem bene et fideliter faciend[am] obligamus nos et utr[um]q[ue] n[ost]ru[m] per se per toto et in solid[um] heredes executores et administratores nos[tr]os coniunctim et divisim firmiter per presentes sigillis n[ost]ris sigillat[as] dat[um] / --- ----- die ----- Anno R[eg]ni d[omi]ni Jacobi dei grat[ia] Anglie Franc[ie] et hib[er]nie Regis fidei defensoris / secundo et Scotiae thicesimo septimo 1604

[Know all men by (these) presents that we, George Alder of Hobberlaw in the County of Northumberland gentleman and Francis Alder son and heir apparent of George Alder aforesaid are held and firmly bound to Thomas Collingwood of Lytle Ryle in the said County gentleman his executors administrators and assigns in forty pounds of good and lawful money of England to be paid to the same Thomas Collingwoode [or to his] heirs executors administrators or assigns to making which payment indeed well and faithfully we bind ourselves and each of us by himself for the whole [sum] and [we bind] for the whole our heirs executors and administrators jointly and separately firmly by these presents sealed with our seals given ----- day ----- of the reign of our Lord James by the grace of God King of the English French and Irish defender of the faith the second and of the Scots the thirty seventh 1604]

The condition of this obligation is such, That whereas the above bounden George and Francis Alder have Conditioned and / Covenanted in wryteinge by Indentt bearinge the date hereof for them selves their heires and assignees to and with the / above named Thomas Collingwoode his heires executors administrators and assignees That they the said George and Francis / their heires or assignees or the survivors of them, his, or their heires shall uppon the expiration of a lease indented dated as aforesaid / remaineinge interchangeable in the hands of the said parties contineweinge for the tearme of twentie and one yeares / (wherein the said covenant is contayned) further assuer demise and to ferme lett uppon the expirat[i]on of the said lease / now executed beareinge the date hereof as aforesaid, unto the above named Thomas Collingwood his heires execut[ors] / administrat[ors] or assignees, and other seconde lease for the lyke tearme of twentie and one yeares of certaine Landes and / tenem[en]ts viz A halfe a husbände lande in Alnham fortie acres of waste grounde lyeinge at Farneley and Coppeden / nighe to the said commons of Alnham as also certaine groundes called Todlaye Fields Todlaye leazes & Todlaye Walles / as more at large by the said writings by indent

interchangable remaininge in the handes of the said parties wyll and may / appeare If therefore the said George and Francis or eyther of them havinge lawfull power and authoritie their heires / or assignes or anie of them doe upon the expiration of the aforesaid lease or within two monthes next after the / expiration thereof, assuer convaye and further graunte unto the said Thomas Collingwood his heires executors / administrators or assignes as by his or their Learned Counsell in the Lawes at the costs and charges of the said / Thomas Collingwood his heires executors administrat[ors] or assignes shallbe demised advised or required a new / and second lease to continue and endure for the tearme of twentie and one yeares thence next to come, freed / and exonerated of and from all incumbrances what soever (the renttes, services and other duties in the aforesaid / Indentures reserved, and therein only and in no other sortte, to be reserved excepted) And under such conditones / covenantes and articles the said George and Francis and their heires are inioyned thereby for the quiett / peacable, and secure holdinge, and inioyeing of the premises as aforesaid as more and larger by the said indentures may and / wyll appeare, That the present obligation to be voyd frustrate[d] and of none effect in the Lawe / otherwise to remain in force strength and virtue .  
Signed George Alder

Tertium signat sigillat et deliberatin  
presentia n[ost]ri subsequend[um]

Daniel Galton

John Collingwood

Richard Alder

Ro: Kerke [?]

Francis Alder

### 8.2.2 The Indenture of 1609

This indenture made the eleventh day of August in the yeares of the raygne of our soveraygne lord James by the grace of God of England Scotland France & Ireland King Defender of the faith etc of his kingdoms of England France & / Ireland the sixt and of Scotland the two & fortith BETWEEN Franncis Alder of Hobberlawe in the County of Northumberland gentleman of the one partie And Thomas Collingwood of Little Ryell in the said County gentleman / of thother partie WITNESSETH that the said Franncis Alder for and in consideracon of a competent some of lawfull English money to him in hand paid by the said Thomas Collingwood before thensealing and deliv[er]ie of these presents of which / said somme & of ev[er]y parte and parcell thereof he doth acquite and discharg the said Thomas Collingwood his heires executors and administrators by these presents, hath given granted bargai[n]ed and sold & by these presents for him and his heires doth give grannt bargaine and sell unto / the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes for ever ALL that halfe husbandland or halfe tenement knowne by the name of Halfe a Husband Lande scituate lying & being in the Towne fields & territories of Aleneham in the said County of Northumberland nowe or late / in the possession of him the said Thomas Collingwood or of his assignes with

all houses edifices buildings garthes gardyns meadowes moors pastures and common of pastures someringe places in and upon the common of Alnham aforesaid with all other / hereditaments thereunto belonging or in any wise appertaininge, And also all those parcells of lande grounde & closes lying near or bounding unto the aforesaid common of Alnham containinge by estimat[i]on Forty acres, Thirty whereof doe adjoyne, and are neare / bounding on the east syde of Bromeley alias Bromelaw and the other ten acres thereof are scytuate and lyinge at a certaine place called Coppedeane by their right meates and boundes with Common of pasture for all manner of beastes, and Cattell in the common / of Alnham aforesaid And also all those landes and groundes called Todd Law or knowne by that name lyinge nere the said place or parcell of grounde called Coppeden aforesaid with all groundes profits, easements waies waieleaves liberties passaiges rights profitts comodities / and hereditaments to the said premises and to everie or any parte thereof belonginge or appertaininge, with the reversion and reversions remaynder and remaynders of the said premises and of everie parte thereof, Together also with all and singuler deedes / evidences charters exemplifications escripts muniments and writings onely concerninge the premises or onely concerninge any parte or parcell of the same, All which deedes writings charters evidences, escripts and muniments together with true coppies of all and singuler / other deedes indentures escripts muniments and writings concerninge the premises or any parte thereof together with other landes which the said Franncis Alder or any other personn or personnes to his use or by his delivery haith or have in his or their hands custody / or possession or which he the said Franncis his heires or assignes may lawfully come by without suite in law, The same coppies to be made & written att the onely costs & charges of the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes The / said Franncis Alder for him his herires executors administrators and assignes covenanteth and grannteth to and with the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes to deliver or cause to be delivered to him the said Thomas Collingwood / his heires or assignes on this syde the feast of St Michaell the archangell next ensewing the date thereof TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Halfe Husband Land or halfe tenement, and all and singuler other the premises with their and / everie of their severall appurtenances before by these presents mencioned to be given granted bargained or sould to him the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes to the onely proper use and behoofe of him the said Thomas Collingwood / his heires and assignes for ever. AND THE SADE Francis Alder for him his heires executors administrators and assignes and for every of them dothe covenante promise and grannte to and with the said Thomas Collingwood his heires executors / administrators and assignes and to and with everie of them by these presents That he the said Franncis Alder att thensealinge and delivery of these presents is, and att the tyme when the first estaite shallbe exequed by virtue hereof shallbe /

the verie true and right owner of the premises by these presents given grannted bargayned or sould, or mencioned to be given grannted bargayned or sould, and now is and then shallbe thereof, and of everie parte & parcell thereof lawfully seized of a good lawfull / perfect and absolute estaite in fee simple or in fee taill generall or speciall with the remaynder of the fee thereof to him the said Franncis his heires and assignes, And that he hath good lawfull and rightfull power and authority to give grannte / bargaine and sell all and singuler the said premises with the appurtenances and everie parte & parcell thereof to the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes and everie of them in manner and forme aforesaid, And also that he the said / Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes & everie of them shall or may at all tymes hereafter for evermore lawfully quietly & peaceably have hould use occupye and enjoy all and singuler the said premises before mencioned to be grannted bargayned / or sould with all and singuler their appurtenances clearly exonerated acquitted and discharged or otherwise sufficiently saved and kept harmeless by him the said Franncis Alder his heires executors and administrators of and from all and all manner of / former bargaynes sailes feoffments mortgaiges joyntures dowers leases estaites fynes amerциaments issues Statutes Marchant and of the staple intrusions rents charge rents seck recognizances bondes penalties forfeitures, judgements / executions wills intayles, and of and from all and everie other burdens charges and incumbrances whatsoever had made donne knowledged suffered or procured or to be had made donne knowledged suffered or procured by him the said Franncis Alder his heires or assignes / or any of them or by any other personne or personnes whatsoever by or under his or their consent tyle estaite act meanes or procurement in any wise (One lease of the premises heretofore made by the said Franncis and by George Alder his father deceased onely excepted ) . / AND ALSO the said Francis Alder for him and his heires executors and assignes covenanteth promiseth and grannteth to & with the said Thomas Collingwood his heires and assignes that he the said Franncis Alder and all & everie other personne & personnes / whatsoever having or clayminge, or which att any tyme hereafter shall or may lawfully have or clayme any estaite right tyle interest or demande of in to or out of the said premises or any parte or parcell thereof before mencioned to be bargayned or sould / by from or under him the said Franncis Alder his heires or assignes or any of them shall and will from tyme to tyme, and att all tymes hereafter duringe the space of ten yeares next ensewing the date of these presents upon reasonable request to him or / them or any of them to be had or made by the said Thomas Collingwood his heires or assignes or any of them, make do, knowledge, suffer & execute, or cause to be made done knowledged suffered & executed all and everie such reasonable act / and acts, thynges & thynges device & devices in the law whatsoever for the further and better assurance and sure makinge of the said bargayned premises to be had made assured & conveyed to him the said Thomas Collingwood his heires

& assignes to his / and their use as aforesaid be it by fyne feoffment recovery deede or deedes indented and inrolled the acknowledgement and inrollment of these presents confirmacion or release with warranty against all men or without warranty or by all and any the waies / or meanes aforesaid Or by any other kynde of lawfull waie or meane assurances or conveyances whatsoever as by the said Thomas Collingwood his heires or assignes or any of them or by any of his or their Counsell learned in the Lawes of this realme / att the onely costs & charges in the Law of him the said Thomas Collingwood his heires or assignes or any of them shallbe reasonably devised or advised. AND the said Francis Alder and his heires the said halfe husband lande landes tenements hereditaments / and premises aforesaid with their appurtenances to him the said Thomas Collingwood his heires & assignes against all men shall warrant & for ever defend by these presents AND LASTLY to the end and intent that the said halfe husband lande landes tenements / hereditaments & premises aforesaid, and a good & perfect estaite of Fee simple therein may be settled and vested in him the said Thomas Collingwood his heires & assignes accordinge to the true meaninge hereof, The said Franncis Alder doth / hereby ordeyne & make his wellbeloved Henry Collingwood, and Cuthbert Collingwood gent his true & lawfull Attorneys jointly & severally, & unto them & either of them jointly and severally he dothe hereby give & grannte full power / and authority as well for him and in his name to enter into the said halfe husband lande & premises aforesaid, and into everie or any parte thereof in the name of the whole, And therein & thereof in the name of the whole to deliver full and / peaceable possession Livery & Seizin to the said Thomas Collingwood or his certaine Attorney in the name of the whole, as also for him & in his name in any of his Majesty's Courts of Record at Westminster or before any Judge Justice or / person havinge power in such caises or before any Justice of the peace & Clerk of the peace in the said County of Northumberland to acknowledge these presents to be the act & deed of him the said Franncis Alder whereby the same / may be enrolled & entered of Record, according to the forme of the statute in such caises made & provyded IN WITNESS whereof the said parties to these indentures interchangeably have sett their handes and seales the daie & / yeare first above written

(Signed and sealed) Francis Alder

[On the reverse]

Sealed and delivered in the presence of

Jo. Browne

Luke Collingwood his mark

William Wall [or Wallis ?]

John Lowther

Memorandum that peaceable possession livery & seizing of the within /  
named tenement & premises in this indenture mentioned was taken /  
& delivered by the within named Attorneys Henry Collingwood /  
& Cuthbert Collingwood, to the within named Thomas Collingwood /  
according to the purport of the within written Indenture the /  
xxii st of August day of August [sic] in the yeares within written in /  
the presence of ..... (?)

Luk[e] Collingwood

Steven[?] Bryse

Thomas U[n]thank

Henry Watso[n? or Watho ?]

Robertu[s] Chartteris [?]

Robertus Hors[?]en

Androw Robsone

Robertum Atchesone

Robert Bryse

**PART 4:**

**SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS  
& RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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## 9. POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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The quality of map evidence coupled with surpasses that of any other village in the study. In addition there is a good sequence of 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century inquisitions and exceptionally detailed information in the Percy estate records, including 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century surveys. Mayson's early 17<sup>th</sup> century survey is accompanied by the finest (and largest!) map or plan encountered during the course of the Historic Village Atlas Project – Robert Norton's plan of 1619 (figs. 12-14).

Together these provide a more detailed history than is possible in many of the other villages studied. However the potential of this source material, particularly that housed in the Duke of Northumberland's records at Alnwick Castle, has not been exhausted and would repay more intensive study.

The position of the early modern layout of tofts and crofts in relation to the modern roads and village can be precisely determined by reference to Norton's plan of 1619 (figures 12-13, 63) and, in particular, the map associated with the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Inclosure Award (figure 64), which shows the earlier crofts in relation to the post-enclosure roads and fields.

The medieval and early modern village was located between the church and the two farms to the southeast, Castle Farm and Pennylaws. It had a compact, roughly triangular layout consisting of three rows, one south of the Aln where earthworks can still be clearly traced. There is no cartographic, documentary or earthwork evidence for the presence of medieval/early modern settlement in the area of Alnham House, to the east of the medieval village core, or along to the road to Scrainwood where the cottages built in 1800 are strung out.

Whilst the earthworks on the south side of the burn, below the castle, are very evident, it would be difficult for the casual or uninformed observer today to appreciate that there had been a village containing numerous houses and crofts in the fields immediately to the east of the church. This is salutary reminder of the dangers of using the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition as the basis of any investigation of a historic village, particularly in north Northumberland, where the transformation into integrated farm complexes has been so thorough.

The open field systems outlying settlements and assarts, watermill sites and moorland trackways with waymarker crosses can all be traced from the historic map evidence. One watermill is clearly shown on Norton's map, at Hazeltonrig to the south west of the village. The location of a second, at the eastern edge of the township, is suggested by fieldnames on the 1619 map. No mill building is shown at this point and it must be presumed that it had either already ceased to exist by this time or lay just outside Alnham township in neighbouring Unthank township, which is not depicted on Norton's map.

## 10. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SENSITIVITY ISSUES

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The grades of sensitivity shown on the accompanying archaeological sensitivity map are based on the conclusions set out above, drawn from the available archaeological, documentary and cartographic evidence. The following guidelines have been adopted as the basis of classifying the sensitivity areas. Sites or areas where the survival of archaeological remains can be demonstrated are accorded high sensitivity. Areas where the former existence of historic settlement is known or suspected, but the degree of survival of any associated archaeological deposits is uncertain, are accorded medium sensitivity.

1. The extant remains of Alnham parish church, with its attendant vicars towerhouse, and the 'castle' (the manorial towerhouse) to the south, plus the intervening well preserved earthworks of house platforms and crofts, are all accorded high sensitivity.
2. The area of the remainder of the medieval/early modern village clearly defined by the map evidence and by less distinct earthworks plus the droveways to the northwest are accorded medium sensitivity.

PART 5:  
APPENDICES  
&  
BIBLIOGRAPHY

## 11. GLOSSARY

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|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Advowson</b>         | the legal right to appoint a priest to a parish church.  |
| <b>Agistment</b>        | the grazing of livestock on pasture belonging to someone else.   |
| <b>Alienate</b>         | to grant land to someone else or to an institution.  |
| <b>Assart</b>           | land cleared for cultivation.  |
| <b>Assize</b>           | a legal procedure  |
| <b>Barony</b>           | the estate of a major feudal lord, normally held of the Crown by military tenure.  |
| <b>Borough</b>          | a town characterised by the presence of burgage tenure and some trading privileges for certain tenants.  |
| <b>Bovate</b>           | measure of arable land, normally equivalent to approx. 12-15 acres. This measurement especially popular in eastern and northern counties of England. |
| <b>Burgage</b>          | A form of property within a <b>borough</b>   |
| <b>Capital Messuage</b> | A <b>messuage</b> containing a high status dwelling house, often the manor house itself.   |
| <b>Cartulary</b>        | a book containing copies of deeds, charters, and other legal records.  |
| <b>Carucate</b>         | a unit of taxation in northern and eastern counties of England, equivalent to eight <b>bovates</b> or one <b>hide</b> (120 acres).                   |
| <b>Charter</b>          | a legal document recording the grant of land or privileges.  |
| <b>Chattels</b>         | movable personal property.   |
| <b>Common land</b>      | land over which tenants and perhaps villagers possessed certain rights, for example to graze animals, collect fuel etc.                              |
| <b>Common law</b>       | a body of laws that overrode local custom.   |
| <b>Copyhold</b>         | a tenure in which land was held by copy of an entry recording admittance made in the record of the manor court.                                      |
| <b>Cotland</b>          | a smallholding held on <b>customary tenure</b> .   |
| <b>Cottar</b>           | an <b>unfree</b> smallholder.  |
| <b>Croft</b>            | an enclosed plot of land, often adjacent to a dwelling house.  |
| <b>Custom</b>           | a framework of local practices, rules and/or expectations pertaining to various economic or social activities.                                       |

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| <b>Customary tenure</b> | an unfree tenure in which land was held “at the will of the lord, according to the custom of the manor’. In practice usually a copyhold of inheritance in Cumbria by the sixteenth century.                       |
| <b>Deanery</b>          | unit of ecclesiastical administration consisting of a group of parishes under the oversight of a rural dean.  |
| <b>Demesne</b>          | land within a manor allocated to the lord for his own use.  |
| <b>Domain</b>           | all the land pertaining to a manor.   |
| <b>Dower</b>            | widow’s right to hold a proportion (normally one-third) of her deceased husband’s land for the rest of her life.  |
| <b>Dowry</b>            | land or money handed over with the bride at marriage.   |
| <b>Enfeoff</b>          | to grant land as a <b>fief</b> .  |
| <b>Engross</b>          | to amalgamate holdings or farms.  |
| <b>Farm</b>             | in medieval usage, a fixed sum paid for leasing land, a <b>farmer</b> therefore being the lessee.   |
| <b>Fealty</b>           | an oath of fidelity sworn by a new tenant to the lord in recognition of his obligations.  |
| <b>Fee/Fief</b>         | hereditary land held from a superior lord in return for <b>homage</b> and often, military service.  |
| <b>Fine</b>             | money payment to the lord to obtain a specific concession   |
| <b>Forest</b>           | a Crown or Palatinate hunting preserve consisting of land subject to Forest Law, which aimed to preserve game.  |
| <b>Free chase</b>       | a forest belonging to a private landholder.   |
| <b>Freehold</b>         | a tenure by which property is held “for ever”, in that it is free to descend to the tenant’s heirs or assigns without being subject to the will of the lord or the customs of the manor.                          |
| <b>Free tenure</b>      | tenure or status that denoted greater freedom of time and action than, say, customary tenure or status, a <b>freeman</b> was entitled to use the royal courts, and the title to free tenure was defensible there. |
| <b>Free warren</b>      | a royal franchise granted to a manorial lord allowing the holder to hunt small game, especially rabbit, hare, pheasant and partridge, within a designated <b>vill</b> .   |
| <b>Furlong</b>          | a subdivision of open arable fields.  |
| <b>Glebe</b>            | the landed endowment of a parish church.  |
| <b>Headland</b>         | a ridge of unploughed land at the head of arable strips in open fields providing access to each strip and a turning place for the plough.   |

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| <b>Heriot</b>          | a death duty, normally the best beast, levied by the manorial lord on the estate of the deceased tenant.         |
| <b>Hide, hideage</b>   | Angl-Saxon land measurement, notionally 120 acres, used for calculating liability for geld. <i>See carucate.</i> |
| <b>Homage</b>          | act by which a <b>vassal</b> acknowledges a superior lord.   |
| <b>Knight's fee</b>    | land held from a superior lord for the service of a knight.  |
| <b>Labour services</b> | the duty to work for the lord, often on the demesne land, as part of the tenant's rent package.                  |
| <b>Leet</b>            | the court of a vill whose view of frankpledge had been franchised to a local lord by the Crown.                  |
| <b>Manor</b>           | estate over which the owner ("lord") had jurisdiction, exercised through a manor court.                          |
| <b>Mark</b>            | sum of money equivalent to two-thirds of a pound, i.e., 13s. 4d.   |
| <b>Merchet</b>         | a fine paid by <b>villein</b> tenants.   |
| <b>Messuage</b>        | a plot of land containing a dwelling house and outbuildings.   |
| <b>Moot</b>            | a meeting.   |
| <b>Multure</b>         | a fee for grinding corn, normally paid in kind: multure can also refer to the corn thus rendered.                |
| <b>Neif</b>            | a hereditary serf by blood.  |
| <b>Pannage</b>         | payment for the fattening of domestic pigs on acorns etc. in woodland.   |
| <b>Perch</b>           | a linear measure of 16½ feet and a square measure equivalent to one fortieth of a <b>rood</b> .                  |
| <b>Quitclaim</b>       | a charter formally renouncing a claim to land.   |
| <b>Relief</b>          | payment made by a free tenant on entering a holding.   |
| <b>Rood</b>            | measure of land equivalent to one quarter of an acre; and forty perches.   |
| <b>Serf</b>            | an unfree peasant characterised by onerous personal servility.   |
| <b>Severalty</b>       | land in separate ownership, that is not subject to common rights, divided into hedged etc., fields.              |
| <b>Sheriff</b>         | official responsible for the administration of a county by the Crown.  |
| <b>Shieling</b>        | temporary hut on summer pasture at a distance from farmstead.  |

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| <b>Socage</b>          | a form of tenure of peasant land, normally free.  |
| <b>Stint</b>           | limited right, especially on pasture.   |
| <b>Subinfeudate</b>    | the grant of land by on a lord to another to hold as a <b>knight's fee</b> or <b>fief</b> .   |
| <b>Subinfeudation</b>  | the process of granting land in a lordship to be held as <b>fiefs</b>   |
| <b>Suit of court</b>   | the right and obligation to attend a court; the individual so attending is a <b>suitor</b> .  |
| <b>Tenant in chief</b> | a tenant holding land directly from the king, normally termed a baron.  |
| <b>Tenement</b>        | a land holding.   |
| <b>Tenementum</b>      | a land holding (Latin).   |
| <b>Thegn or Thane</b>  | Title given to a local lord during the Anglo-Saxon period, roughly equivalent to a Norman knight. His landholding his term a <b>thane</b> .   |
| <b>Tithe</b>           | a tenth of all issue and profit, mainly grain, fruit, livestock and game, owed by parishioners to their church.   |
| <b>Toft</b>            | an enclosure for a homestead.   |
| <b>Unfree tenure</b>   | see <b>customary tenure</b> .   |
| <b>Vaccary</b>         | a dairy farm.   |
| <b>Vassal</b>          | a tenant, often of lordly status.   |
| <b>Vill</b>            | the local unit of civil administration, also used to designate a territorial township community (prior to the 14 <sup>th</sup> century)   |
| <b>Villein</b>         | peasant whose freedom of time and action is constrained by his lord; a villein was not able to use the royal courts.  |
| <b>Villeinage</b>      | see <b>customary tenure</b> and <b>unfree tenure</b> .  |
| <b>Virgate</b>         | a quarter of a <b>hide</b> ; a standardised <b>villein</b> holding of around 30 acres. Also known as a <b>yardland</b> .  |
| <b>Ward</b>            | administrative division; the word implies a guarded or defended unit. The term most commonly relates to large administrative subdivisions of the county (usually 5 or 6) from the 13 <sup>th</sup> century. Equivalent to a Poor Law township in Redesdale from 1662 onwards and in upper North Tynedale (Bellingham Chapelry) between 1662-1729. |

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- 1826 Poll Book* *The Poll Book of the Contested Election for the County of Northumberland from June 20th to July 6th, 1826*. Alnwick, 1827.
- 1841 Poll Book* *The Poll Book of the Contested Election for Northern Division of the County of Northumberland taken on the 9th and 10th days of July, 1841, to which is added an Appendix with Copies of the Poll Books for 1722 & 1734*. Newcastle upon Tyne, 1841.
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## 12.2 Secondary Bibliography

### Journal and Corpora Abbreviations

|                   |   |
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| AA <sup>1</sup>   | <i>Archaeologia Aeliana</i> , First Series etc.   |
| Corpus            | <i>Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture. Volume I: County Durham and Northumberland.</i> R Cramp, (1984), Oxford University Press for the British Academy; Oxford. |
| CW <sup>2</sup>   | <i>Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society</i> , Second Series etc.  |
| PSAN <sup>4</sup> | <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne</i> , Fourth Series etc.  |
| PSAS              | <i>Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.</i>   |

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## 13. APPENDICES

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*APPENDIX 1: LIST OF HISTORIC DOCUMENTS*

*APPENDIX 2: LIST OF MODERN PHOTOGRAPHS*

*APPENDIX 3: LIST OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS*

*APPENDIX 4: LIST OF SITES AND MONUMENTS*

*APPENDIX 5: LIST OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS (GRUNDY 1988)*

*APPENDIX 6: PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE CATALOGUE*

*APPENDIX 7: NORTHUMBERLAND RECORDS OFFICE  
CATALOGUE*

[**NOTE:** Historic Maps & Documents (M&D), Historic Photographs (HP) and Modern Photographs (MP), listed in Appendices 1 & 2, are archived in digital form with the Northumberland National Park Authority and Northumberland Records Office]