



NORTH OF THE WALL
**TYNEDALE
ARCHAEOLOGY
GROUP**

Beyond the Wall : Edges Green

Archive Research Group Report



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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Tynedale Archaeology Group has been conducting a long-term study of the archaeology of the area immediately to the north of Hadrian's Wall. The *Beyond the Wall: Edges Green Project* is a part of this endeavour and is a year-long study supported with funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Northumberland National Park Authority. The project has produced an Interim Reports and a Final Report, called *Edges Green Landscape Survey*.

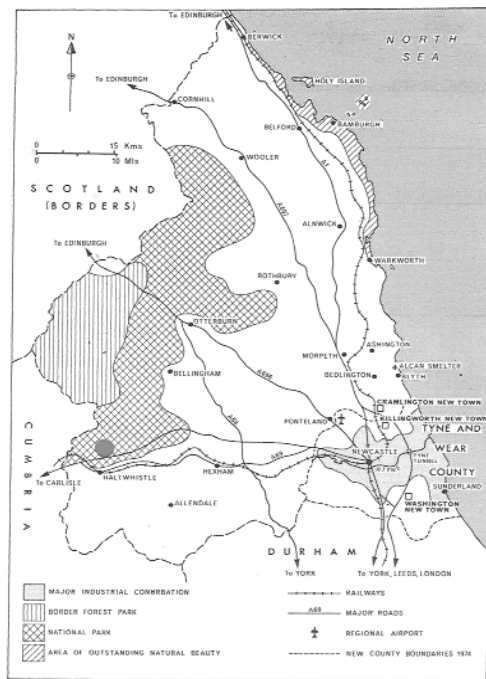
This desk-based study forms part of the final outputs of the Edges Green study as a stand-alone element and seeks to provide the broad historical and archaeological background that helped to shape the Edges Green environment over the last 10,000 years.

A small team was set up to conduct this work that comprised Roger Owen, Ralph Wrighton, Michael Hall, Lynne Bridgett and Derek Gunby. Other members of the Tynedale Archaeology Group also assisted and provided support. Any errors are down to the team involved.

1.2 Location

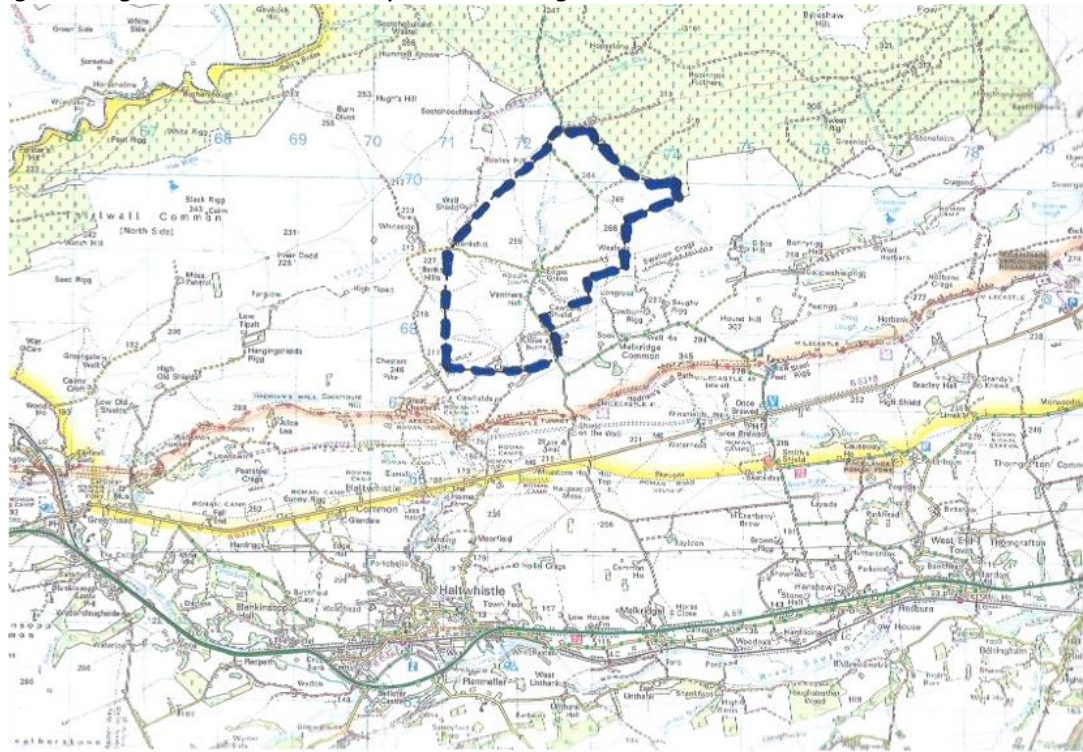
The Map below shows Edges Green (large dot) situated within the North east Region, close to the border with Cumbria and Scotland some 20 miles to the North West.

Fig. 1 Edges Green within the North-East region



The Map below (Fig. 2) shows Edges Green in its more immediate surroundings. The South Tyne and road and rail routes are shown at the base of the map and indicate the proximity of Edges Green to important west-east routes that have always proceeded through the Tyne Gap.

Fig. 2 Edges Green in its West Tynedale Setting



Derived from OS Sheet 86 1: 50,000

The site is also located within the Northumberland National Park, marked as a yellow boundary in the map above. Hadrian's Wall is marked in orange.

Edges Green is well named as it can be seen as an “edge area”. Physically it is on the edge of the Tyne Valley, between the more sheltered and better farming land of the valley and the more difficult and inhospitable upland above 300 metres. In farming terms therefore, it is a marginal upland area.

In historical terms Edges Green can be seen as part of a border zone that has always been between different and often competing entities. In the Iron Age Edges Green was on the edge of the Brigantes territory and very near to that of the Selgovae to the west. In the Roman era, Edges Green was on the very edge of the Roman Empire and later as new Anglo-Saxon kingdoms emerged it was situated on the edge of the Kingdom of Bernicia. For a short period, during the height of the power of the early Northumberland kings, it could be said to have occupied a more central location within the enlarged kingdom. However, after the Norman Conquest, it resumed as a border zone between England and Scotland and was for two centuries ruled by Scottish kings with the agreement of the English kings, and thereafter suffered centuries of raiding and conflict, either due to Scottish/English strife or from border reivers. In more settled, modern times Edges Green has been part of Northumberland County but very close to Cumberland County, now currently Cumbria.

In social and cultural terms it can be seen as marginal and peripheral to the main centres of power throughout most of written history. However, in prehistory this picture is not so clear. Such areas have had little serious archaeological research to

date, a fact that this study seeks to address. Peripheral and marginal it may be but it too has a hidden history that can tell us more about life in such upland areas of northern Britain through the ages.

1.3 Source Material

The source material for this report is derived from researching relevant documents, maps, books, periodicals and reports. Some investigation of primary sources was undertaken from maps and documents held in the Northumberland County Archives at Woodhorn, Ashington. Their assistance is greatly appreciated. The Local Studies section of Hexham Library was also used and their assistance is also acknowledged.

A large amount of material can be accessed from the internet and considerable time has gone into trawling the internet for relevant information, extracts of books and journal articles.

Edges Green and its immediate locality has not been subject to previous research of this kind so it is not possible to review previous work. However, there have been a number of studies that have a basic relevance to the wider area, such as the Northumberland National Park or Northumberland generally and use has been made of these.

1.4 Structure of the Report

Following this Introduction the report is divided into five further chapters. Chapter 2 sets the Natural Landscape background, covering geology, soils, climate, vegetation and topography. Chapters 3-6 provide the story of human activity in the Edges Green area that is within an approximate zone of five kilometres, although reference may be made to specific sites further away if they relate particularly to Edges Green. The material is divided into the traditional periods, commencing with the first hunter-gatherers who came to the Tyne Valley and ending in the modern industrial age.

Chapter 2 The Natural Landscape

2.1 *The Geology of Edges Green*

2.1.1 *Geological History*

The geological story for our area can be said to start some 420 million years ago in a very different latitude and era when much of what is now Britain was located, close to the equator. During this Silurian era the Old Red Sandstone Continent was formed and in that process a major igneous event gave rise to the Cheviot massif. This dome was then subject to considerable erosion over time and radial faults appeared, creating channels along which rivers would later run and forming the region's distinctive radial drainage pattern. These channels also brought materials into massive deltas that would later form part of the subsequent sedimentary succession that underlay Edges Green.

Much of the landscape of Edges Green owes its origins to the Carboniferous period some 350 million years ago when successive changes in sea level, caused layers of sedimentary material to be laid down in warm seas and river beds. In times when the sea level was lower or on land not then submerged, or partially submerged, large forests formed, later to be inundated and to form yet further sediments of rock.

A new event, some 300 million years ago led to a thick layer of igneous material, dolerite, being laid underground between sedimentary rocks. This hard material was later exposed, by tilting and erosion, to create one of the area's most important landscape features, the Great Whin Sill. The sill, upon which part of Hadrian's Wall was built, is more resistant than the surrounding Carboniferous rocks, and runs as a narrow, rolling west-east ridge north of the Tyne valley before turning north-eastwards (and away from the Wall). The dolerite cooled quickly and, like the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland, formed hexagonal columns, which can be seen in exposures such as those at Cawfields quarry near Haltwhistle. (Martin and Farmer, 2007)

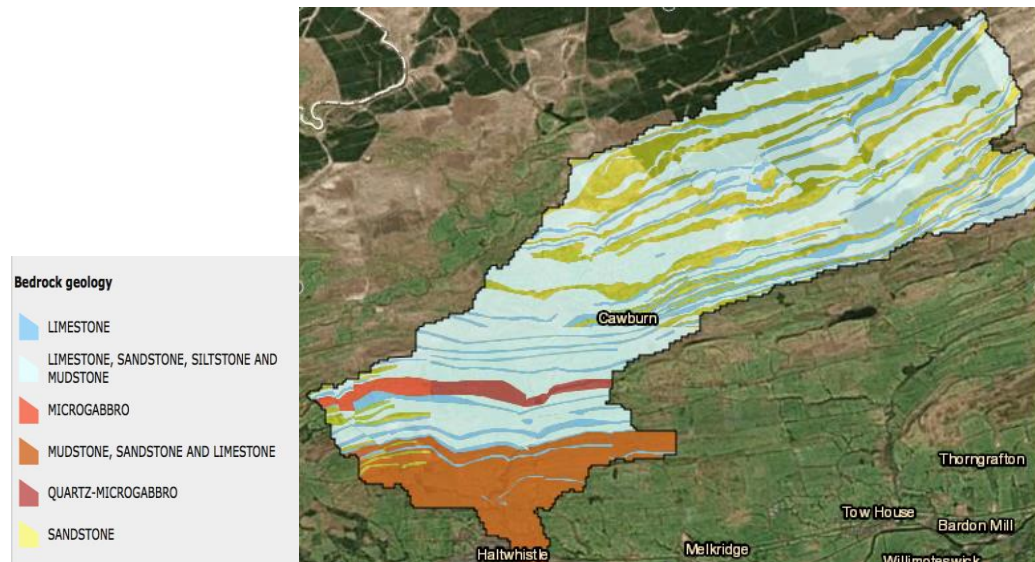
The final, influential phase of geology is the Ice Age, which commenced some 2.6 million years ago and ended from 18,000 years ago. The primary impact of the Ice Age upon the landscape has been the deposit of a layer of soft material on top of the sedimentary rocks, known variously as Boulder Clay or, more recently, as Glacial Till, made up of clay, sand, gravel and boulders. This was formed by the grinding action of the ice sheets upon the older rocks and their subsequent churning-up. The final phase of ice activity occurred as the ice retreated leaving mounds of deposits, known as drumlins, forming the smaller rounded hills seen in the Edges Green vicinity and the melt waters of glaciers forming some deep channels or nicks in the landscape, such as that formed in the valley of the Pont Gallon Burn close the Edges Green Farms.

In more comparatively recent times an additional layer of peat material has been created in many upland areas and within Edges Green. Peat is a compact brownish deposit of partially decomposed vegetable matter, usually saturated with water that arose from the decomposition of the large, post-glacial forests that originally covered much of upland Britain.

2.1.2 Solid Geology

Figure 3 below shows the bedrock geology of the broader area around Edges Green, from Haltwhistle in the south to Greenlee Lough in the east. The study area is situated north of Cawburn.

Fig. 3 Bedrock Geology of Edges Green



Source: *Runoff Management Plan: Haltwhistle Burn Catchment, Starkey etc (2014)*

Figure 4 provides a more detailed illustration of the solid geology of the Edges Green area with the sandstones depicted in brown and the limestones and mudstones in pale blues. The Whin Sill is situated just to the south and is off map.

Fig. 4 Edges Green Solid Geology (detail)



Detail from the Bellingham Solid Geology Map (British Geology Survey)

The sequence described above of different layers of sedimentary rock is known as a cyclothem and Edges Green is a very good example of landscape that derives from Carboniferous cyclothem. The sequence of rocks tends to be limestone (formed from the skeletons of countless millions of tiny sea creatures), sandstones (formed from sand particles and other minerals), shales and mudstones (formed from clays and mud

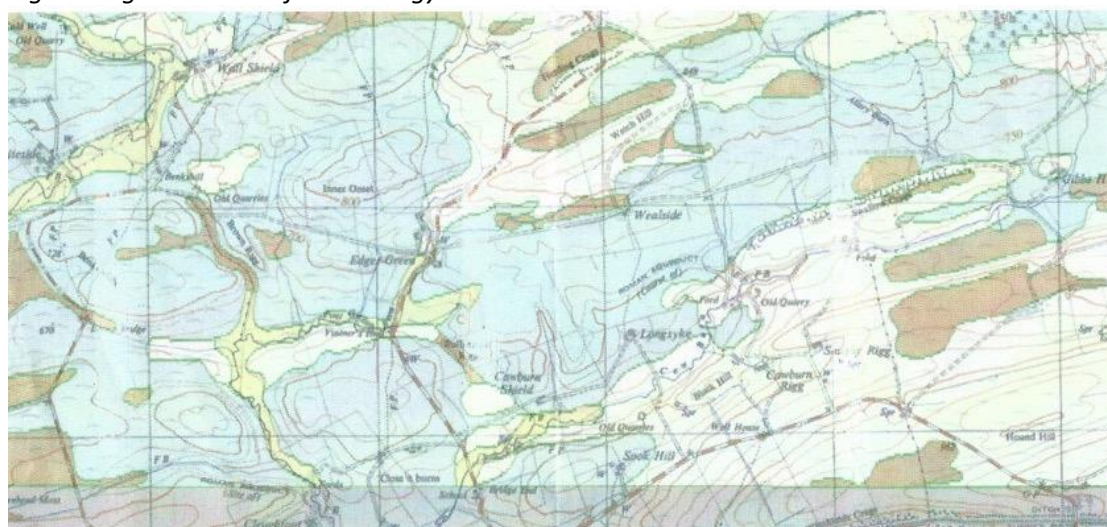
deposits from rivers and lakes) and coal measures, (derived from metamorphosed vegetation deposits). Sedimentary rocks are laid in horizontal strata but become tilted and buckled by earth movements. The cyclothems seen in Edges Green are the result of the tilting that exposes the layers to erosion at differing rates, depending upon the degree of hardness of the rock. The harder rock of sandstone tends to emerge as a series of stony outcrops across the landscape. The limestones, shale and coal seams generally lie below the surface, sometimes exposed in river beds.

The coal seams (from the Middle Limestone and Scremerston Coal Groups) underlying the Edges Green area are generally thin and have not been greatly exploited. However, there has been some mining activity both to the north at Robin Rock and to the west in the Wallshield area. The limestone has been quarried at times in small quantities. There is evidence of limestone burning in local kilns. The local building material tends to be sandstone.

2.1.3 Surface Geology

The surface geology is essentially the predominant soils that usually lie over the solid geology below. The soil composition will generally reflect the predominant rock formations below, except in the case of areas of upland Britain, like the Edges Green area, that were subject to glaciation, surface geology often shows a layer of Glacial Till. This material was long known as Boulder Clay and is essentially the ground material left behind by glaciers as they retreated. Figure 5 below shows the surface geology for the Edges Green area.

Fig. 5 Edges Green Surface Geology



Detail from the Bellingham Surface Geology Map (British Geology Survey)

2.1.4 Soils

Edges Green possesses two main soils. In the upper ground, generally above 250 metres OD, the ground is slowly permeable and wet, producing acid soils with a peaty surface. The lower ground, between 200 and 250 metres OD is also slowly permeable, but seasonally wet producing acid, loamy and clayey soils.

2.2 Topography

The general topographical character of the Edges Green area is that of gradually rising fell lands, from south to north, with scant vegetation and one major river system. In general the land drains from a high point of 311 metres in the north-east to a low exit at 193 in the south and is therefore contained within the 200-300 metre height OD. The water drains off the study area near to Cleughfoot farm, and then into the headwaters of the Haltwhistle Burn, which in turn drains into the South Tyne. The whole area is essentially south-facing, but some slopes and valleys have less favourable aspects.

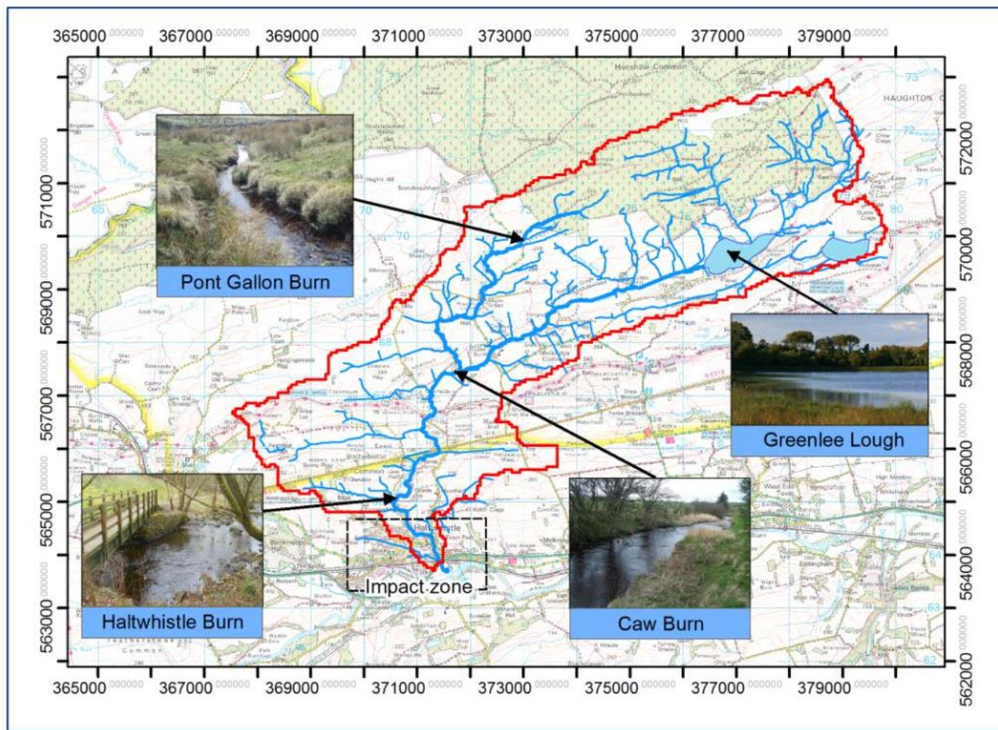
The river Pont Gallon Burn has some steep declivities at certain points, notably close to Edges Green farms and near Cleughfoot farm. This may be due to the river encountering harder sandstone rock, although post-glacial water run-off may have contributed.



Pont Gallon Burn just north of Edges Green Farm. Photo by Andrew Curtis

Figure 6 below illustrates the basic drainage pattern of the Edges Green Area and shows how the Pont Gallon Burn links into the wider Haltwhistle Burn Catchment zone.

Fig. 6 Drainage Pattern of Edges Green



Source: Run-off Management Plan: Haltwhistle Burn Catchment Area (Starkey et al, 2014)

In more detail, the topography of northern half of the area has a series of sandstone ridges or scarps, running broadly west to east and having a dip slope to the south east and presenting a sharp rock face to the north west and west. Slippy Stones to the north and Herding Craggs a few hundred metres south are prominent rocky scarps of this sort, some 2 to 3 metres high. The area further south at Cleughfoot Farm is flatter and has less pronounced ridges as the photo below illustrates. The Whin Sill appears in the distance.



The landscape near Cleughfoot Farm

2.3.1 **Changing Climate and Vegetation**

2.3.1 *Climate and Vegetation Change in the British Isles*

There have been many climate changes since the era of glaciation. Whilst they have all been within the broad parameters of a temperate climate they have had a strong impact upon the vegetation sequence of the area, indeed a primary one until the Bronze Age. Thereafter, a significant and eventually, primary agent of vegetation change was man. The evidence for climate and vegetation change comes from taking core samples of soil and peat from wet and boggy areas that preserve the organic material, especially pollen, over thousands of years. This area of study is known as *Palynology* and has become an established part of archaeological enquiry. A table in Annex 1 summarises the main climatic and vegetation sequence of Britain over the past 50,000 years or so.

2.3.2 Man's impact on Vegetation Change in the Edges Green area: The Palynology Evidence

Palynology provides limited but useful information regarding human activity in a given landscape over time. Off-site analysis of the pollen rain deposited in cores from mires or lakes can not only provide indications of local, extra-local and sometimes more distant flora, but arguably can also provide indications of the type of clearance activities being practiced by early farmers. Moreover, cores taken from such sources also provide material for accurate temporal location through carbon- dating.

Two sites within 5 kilometres of the Edges Green area have been studied in terms of a Palynology analysis. Each provides useful evidence for vegetation change in the area through pollen analysis and thereby evidence of man's activities in tree clearance and farming activity.

Crag Lough is situated immediately north of Hadrian's Wall just over 3 kilometres to the east of Edges Green. Given the prevailing winds from the west this is an ideal location to infer the sequence of vegetation change in Edges Green. Fell End Moss is situated immediately south of the Wall and Walltown Craggs about 4 km to the west of Edges Green. Although not as directly relevant as Crag Lough it does provide useful additional information on the general area within which Edges Green is placed.

2.3.3 Crag Lough Studies

What follows is a timeline and summary of the Crag Lough study findings

2600 cal BC the area was predominantly wooded, with alder and birch growing around the lake, while hazel and oak present on what must have been better drained soils.

2600-2000 BC indicates human intervention when a decline in oak and birch pollen and the appearance of barley and grass is noted. From this time ferns increase and there is an increase in micro- charcoal.

After 2000 cal BC arboreal pollen recovers but the presence of holly and woodland herbs such as dog mercury suggests that the tree canopy remained light.

By 1200cal BC barley and oat pollens are consistently present suggesting a sustained and established arable economy in the Late-Bronze Age.

From 900cal BC to 600cal BC cereal cultivation stops, but a shift towards pastoralism is indicated by an increase in micro-charcoal deposition.

From 600cal BC barley and oat pollens are again noted, together with goosefoot, sheep's sorrel and heather: indicative of a mixed farming economy, with open grassland as well as cereal cultivation.

Around 400cal BC Petra notes a sustained clearance of the alder, while there is seemingly a reciprocal rise in hazel and oak. Dark suspects that the removal of the alder allowed more distant plants to be represented in the pollen-rain as opposed to significant re-forestation. The removal of the alder (together with increased rainfall) might also have contributed to increased mire formation, evidenced by the appearance of wetland herbs and marginal aquatics. *Throughout the period 400-50cal BC* the presence of charcoal and other charred material suggests that burning was part of the land-management strategy.

By the Late-Iron Age (or perhaps with the coming of the Roman military), rye is noted along with a decrease in grass, possibly suggestive of a switch in the use of former pasturelands being used to grow cereal to supply the wall builders. Birch pollen too subsides at this time perhaps as the wood is used as fuel or as part of land clearance. While rye continues to be present throughout the Roman occupation, she suspects that low levels of charcoal through this period suggests a relative decrease in settlement density close to Crag Lough. She questions if this might be indicative of civilians being moved away from the frontier zone.

Towards the Fifth Century AD and coinciding with the Roman withdrawal, rye pollen disappears from the cores, while grass and English plantain once again increase, indicative of a partial return to pastoralism as the region de-militarised. Birch also starts to return at this time, indicating that land use might be rather less intensive in the early medieval period, although there is still barley pollen present throughout the *500 years to 1000AD*.

In the *eleventh century AD* hemp appears in the pollen sequence until about 1700. Rye and oat-type pollens reappear in the thirteenth century and remain a feature of the record until the 1700's when the 'Little Ice Age' again triggered a move away from arable farming.

2.3.4 Fell End Moss Study

Davies, G and Turner, J. (1979) studied the pollen record and peat accumulation rates at Fell End Moss from the Bronze Age to the Medieval period. They found that "during the *Bronze Age* a small amount of forest was cleared, probably in association with increased pastoralism in the area. The peak of this activity is dated to *1738 BC* and, using the average rate of peat formation as a guide, it lasted about 200 years." This backs up Dark's conclusions that farming activity can be detected in the Bronze Age in this kind of locality.

Davies and Turner go on to note that from *1500 BC until AD 2* very little use was made of the land in the vicinity of the bog. But, from that date there is evidence of extensive tree clearance and the creation of pastureland and some arable. This situation is maintained until about *AD 620*. They also noted in this period putative evidence for the construction of Hadrian's Wall in the very high values experienced in herbaceous pollen experienced around *AD 122 and 130*. Davies and Turner were among the first to note that the end of Roman rule did not coincide with a return to forested areas indicating a continuation of previous agricultural activity and therefore some stability.

AD 1005 shows a significant rise in herbaceous pollen indicating a increased cultivation, especially rye and barley along with more extensive pastoral farming.

There is also evidence that hazel was being coppiced. This coincides with the Scandinavian immigration that may have led to populations moving east to avoid conflict and settling in the west Tyne valley. However this is a short-lived phase and the record shows that in the Norman and early Medieval period the area was less densely settled. The wetter climate also produced a faster rate of peat accumulation, culminating in the 14th century and the area around may have been less attractive for farming than the lowlands.

The final phase is dated to 1516 and shows increased forest clearance and increased land use with wheat, barley and rye being grown.

Young, R, Frodsham, P. et al (2010) provide a useful overview of palaeo-environmental research in the Northumberland Park area, which has a broad relevance to Edges Green. Among the specific issues discussed in some detail are the formation of Peat (also discussed in Young, R, 2004); the decline of Elm and the Neolithic; and early cereal cultivation. Moores, A. J. (1998) and his subsequent palynological work with others in Northumberland has also greatly added to knowledge in these areas.

Chapter 3 Pre-Historic Background

3.1 Hunter-Gatherers (10,000- 4000 BC)

For 6,000 years and more the dominant human activity in the upland fells of Tynedale, in which Edges Green is situated, was hunting, fishing and gathering. This period covers the end of the Upper Palaeolithic, the Mesolithic and the early part of the Neolithic. The Neolithic age heralds the start of farming and pastoralism but it would take time to reach the harsher areas of upland Britain and hunting would have continued, along with farming, for some time.

3.1.1 Upper Palaeolithic

There is some putative evidence of later **Palaeolithic** activity some 10,000 years ago in the Tyne Valley near Prudhoe with the discovery of a possible Late Upper Palaeolithic artefact (Tolan-Smith with Cousins, 1995, cited in Shared Visions (2006)). So, it is not impossible that some late Upper Palaeolithic hunters traversed the Edges Green area 10,000-8,000 years ago but again there is no evidence and so this must remain conjecture. It should be noted that the ice retreated quite quickly so that by 12,000 years ago the ice had drawn back to Scotland. (Higham, p.12). Young, R., Frodsham, P. et al (2010) summed up the situation within the National Park area as follows: *“To date there is no recorded evidence for lower and middle Palaeolithic activity in Northumberland. This may be due to problems of identification of material in the field, but it is just as likely to reflect the fact that the Northumberland landscapes have been scoured by ice sheets over the millennia and that these have effectively removed any possible evidence for lower and middle Palaeolithic finds. There have been a few isolated finds of upper Palaeolithic implements in the northern region generally, the most northerly being a large, backed, flint blade found during the course of fieldwalking at Eltringham, Prudhoe (Cousins and Smith, 1995).”*

3.1.2 Mesolithic

Evidence for **Mesolithic** presence in Tynedale is still very sparse. But, as Young, R. (2002) points out this may largely be due to a lack of thorough research. What we do know is that Mesolithic hunter-gatherers were moving through Tynedale. There is evidence for this in finds of Mesolithic microliths near Corbridge and some Mesolithic flint scatters in the Warden Hill area.

North of Edges Green there is also evidence of Mesolithic activity at Kennel Hall Knowe, now submerged beneath the lake at Kielder.

Given the evidence for late Mesolithic summer camps in the North Pennines (Cow Green etc.) it seems reasonable to assume that Mesolithic hunters would have wandered over much of the area, north of Hadrian's Wall. Research by Moores, A.J. (1998) also lends support to the view that there is much more research needed on the Mesolithic period before we get a fuller picture. But the only way for evidence of Mesolithic presence in the Edges Green area to emerge is if the ground is disturbed, either by ploughing or through excavation, archaeological or otherwise.

3.2 Early Farmers (4,000-AD 43)

3.2.1 Neolithic Farmers (4000 BC – 2000 BC)

The first farmers to arrive in the British Isles from Europe did so around 6000 years ago, establishing important and flourishing settlements in both Scotland (especially the Shetland and Orkney islands and in the easier terrains of southern England. Farming occurred rather later in upland England, perhaps 3500-3000 BC. A later wave of colonists came from 2900 BC to 1800BC. These new settlers are known as the Beaker Folk after their characteristic pottery.

Higham (1986) notes that **Neolithic** farming in the upland areas would have been predominantly pastoral (mainly sheep and goats) and can often be linked to elm decline (although more recent studies have suggested that climate change or even Dutch Elm disease may have primarily responsible). North Northumberland offers most evidence of prehistory, around the River Till and Yeavering. Here there was considerable forest clearance, settlement and crop production. Hunting and gathering, especially in upland areas is likely to have been maintained.

Woodside and Crow(1999) looking at the National Trust's Housesteads estate, a similar and adjacent area to Edges Green, suggest that the evidence of pollen records from core samples at Crag Lough (5 km east of Edges Green) point to evidence of Neolithic farming between 3500-3000 BC. The Crag Lough study shows a decline in elm and a growth in grasses and weeds such as plaintains. From the same study, later large-scale wood clearance and growth in grasses is known to date from 2500 BC. (see para 2.3.3 above)

Quartermaine, J. (2002) reviews five upland surveys, including his own Lakeland one and concludes that whilst there is a wealth of evidence for bronze age settlement, very little definable evidence exists for Neolithic activity in these areas. He suggests that later early Bronze Age farming may have obscured such activity. Even around Neolithic monuments there is no reliable evidence of a link to farming. Bradley (2002) raises an interesting question about the relationship of monuments to Neolithic communities: were they in their midst or at pivotal access points for several communities?

There is no direct evidence for early Neolithic presence in the **Edges Green** study area, although the standing stones, known as the "Mare and Foal" are attributed to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age and are situated just over a kilometre from the study area, photo below. Young, R, Frodhsam, P et al (2010) make the following observation concerning the ritual or cultural remains of the Neolithic period,

"In Hadrian's Wall country, 3km north of Sewingshields in a lonely moorland setting appropriately marked on the maps as 'Standingstones Rigg', is another stone row. This may originally have been an 'avenue' of standing stones associated with a burial cairn. It is most unusual in a Northumbrian context, and would be more at home on Dartmoor, where such monuments are relatively commonplace. Other standing stones exist singly or in pairs, such as the intriguingly named Mare and Foal near Cawfields. Some of these may once have formed part of larger monuments such as rows or circles, or may have been associated with now vanished stone cairns or earthworks. To try to interpret such sites without excavation is futile, and none has been excavated in modern times."



Mare and Foal Standing Stone

The discovery of an earth-fast boulder with rock art within the study area provides the first direct evidence for a Neolithic or early Bronze Age presence in the Edges Green area. This finding is consistent with other rock art sites that exist on the south facing slopes of the Tyne Valley, often between 200-300m OD.

3.2.2 Bronze Age farmers (2000 BC- 800 BC)

Higham (1986) suggests that de-forestation was less in Northumberland than Durham or Cumbria during the Bronze Age but accepts that it has not been widely studied. He notes that there is evidence in the North of more a widely distributed population with early concentrations in the Milfield Basin, the Eden Valley and Plain Furness. Milfield has at least 7 hengiforms and a droveway.

Monument building ceased by 1250 BC after which there is more evidence of settlements. Roundhouses occur on the fell sandstones of Northumberland with small field plots, burial and clearance cairns.

Woodside and Crow (1999) also refer to the spread of population during the Bronze Age. They place the monoliths to this period, eg the Mare and Foal stones near Edges Green. They also note nearby stone circles at Goat Stones, Caw Burn and Gibbs Hill as well cairns at Milking Gap and a field boundary through Sycamore Gap. The Black Dyke linear earthwork is also dated to the Bronze Age. All these features are a few kilometres to the east of Edges Green. They note that climate deterioration between 1200-800 BC led to the abandonment of exposed upland sites. The Crag Lough evidence for renewed woodland in this period is also mentioned.

Frodsham (2004) points out that the boundary between late Neolithic and early bronze ages is blurred. Within the Northumberland National Park he says there are over 100 bronze age settlements., usually unenclosed roundhouses often with associated field and burial systems. Frodsham also identifies 2 clear examples of Burnt Mounds, many burial cairns and many monuments with four poster stone rings at Simonburn and Byrness. Further evidence of the Bronze Age in the general area are the Bronze hoards found near Wallington, Whittingham and Farnley, near Corbridge, deposited in wet bogs. And 2 swords found on Simonside dating to 1000 BC.

Tim Gates (2004) in his study of the Hadrian Wall corridor from Chesters to Greenhead, which includes Edges Green, has added considerable knowledge and understanding to the archaeology of this zone. In terms of the early Neolithic and Bronze Age farmers his study cements the view that the southern facing upland slopes of South Tynedale supported farming and associated cultural activity over some thousands of years from the late Neolithic through and beyond the Roman era. The area around Queen's Crag, King's Crag and Davy's Lee with its stone circles, cairns and enclosures denotes a locally significant Bronze Age area only a few kilometres from Edges Green. Cairn field clearances linked to cord rig, indicative of farming activity, have also been identified at Revensheugh Crag, Cow Crag, Haughton Common and within the Edges Green study area at Resting Gap and near Edges Green Farm. Unenclosed Bronze Age settlements in the form of roundhouses at Edges Green and two at Ventner's Hall area with associated cord rig can be approximately dated to 1200-500BC.

Although there are no stone circles, henges or other cultural structures associated with the Bronze Age at Edges Green these do exist within walking distance of the area to the east, near Greenlee Lough and also the regionally important stone circle known as Long Meg and her sisters, situated in the Eden Valley is 25 miles south-west. Edges Green is therefore not remote from known Bronze Age cultural sites.

3.3.3 Iron Age (800 BC- AD 43)

Higham (1986) makes the point that the late Bronze-Age and the early Iron Age are closely correlated periods. This was a time when, to quote Higham,

“ During the Late Bronze Age, northern communities responded to rising social tensions between developing more complex social hierarchies, headed by warrior-nobles, whose weapons dominated the output of late bronze-smiths. Bronze was expensive and generally used to manufacture weapons not tools. Enclosed settlements were constructed to provide a degree of security. The earliest were palisaded and many have been identified on good defensible positions where they form the earliest defensive circuit of later hill-forts. Most were small but, during the middle centuries of the first millennium, defences became progressively larger in scale and more labour-intensive, with stone walls or earth banks and ditches, replacing timber palisades. Most examples were eventually to boast multiple ditch systems and were permanently occupied, perhaps by an aristocracy.

A minority of hill-forts were far larger. A string of them – including Woden Law – stretch along the edge of the Cheviots in Northumberland and along Teviotdale. These can be plausibly interpreted as minor *oppida*, functioning as defensible foci for clans or sections of a tribe. At the very apex of this hierarchy are a small number of widely dispersed and exceptionally large hill-forts.....Hill-forts are very unevenly distributed within Northumbria, with the majority lying on the edges of the Cheviots and Southern uplands.....

By about 450BC, the Pennine communities also seem to have abandoned significant defences...but beyond the Tyne sites were being re-equipped with ramparts for several more centuries.”

In his review of the Iron Age period in the National Park Frodsham (2004) refers to the wider issue of societal development and notes that this period witnessed the emergence of large Celtic tribal groups dominating certain regional zones and

sometimes in conflict with one another. These tribes did not leave any written records and so any knowledge we have comes down to us through a Roman lens. Moreover, the Romans were not especially interested in the historic development of these tribal groupings so we are only aware of the situation, as perceived by the Romans after they had arrived in Britain. From these records we are told that the dominant tribes in the North were the Parisi governing the area of Yorkshire, the Brigantes, strong across the northern Pennines and throughout most of Northumberland and the Votadini operating in south-east Scotland and across the Tweed into northern parts of Northumberland. In addition, the Selgovae controlled south-west Scotland and the Solway Firth. The largest and most dominant force appears to be the Brigantes.

The marked deterioration of the climate after 800 BC reduced the areas of land most suitable to farming, including the fell sandstone areas. Around 400 BC the evidence is that the climate improved again, initially in the south and gradually spreading northwards. By time of Roman Britain there had been further extensive forest clearance of upland Britain and significant areas north of Hadrian's Wall appear to have been ploughed as evidenced by the presence of cord rig. Shared Visions (2006) acknowledges the important work by Tim Gates (2004) in his aerial photographic analyses of the area north of the wall revealing cord rig preceded the Romans occupation, such as at Greenlee Lough and Cawfield Shields.

As stated above many palisaded settlements underlie later hill forts. The hill fort, with its ring ditches may have been a response to a lack of easily available timber. The nearest, still visible hill fort to Edges Green would appear to be Warden Hill, some 9 miles east. This is a multi-vallate fort with evidence of a preceding palisaded settlement. But also close by are the univallate forts at Barcombe Hill and near Greenlee Lough, although Gates notes features about the latter site that make it a less convincing case.

The paucity of iron artefacts from the iron age, except in relation to the Roman occupation, suggests that they were scarce items among the iron age communities in the North. But there was an increase in craftsmanship in wheel making, querns. The market economy in the North lagged that in the south and there is little evidence for trading centres emerging prior to the Romans.

No evidence exists for special burial rites and few remains have been found.

As mentioned above the work of Tim Gates in revealing examples of early pre-Roman farming in areas north of Hadrian's Wall has been important in re-evaluating the archaeological history of this zone. Edges Green falls within this zone and it too has several examples of early cord rig ploughing. It is not possible to date this farming practice from the work undertaken in this study. The presence of roundhouses in one location suggests that the farming may in fact stem from the Bronze Age but farming may have persisted up until the Roman occupation.

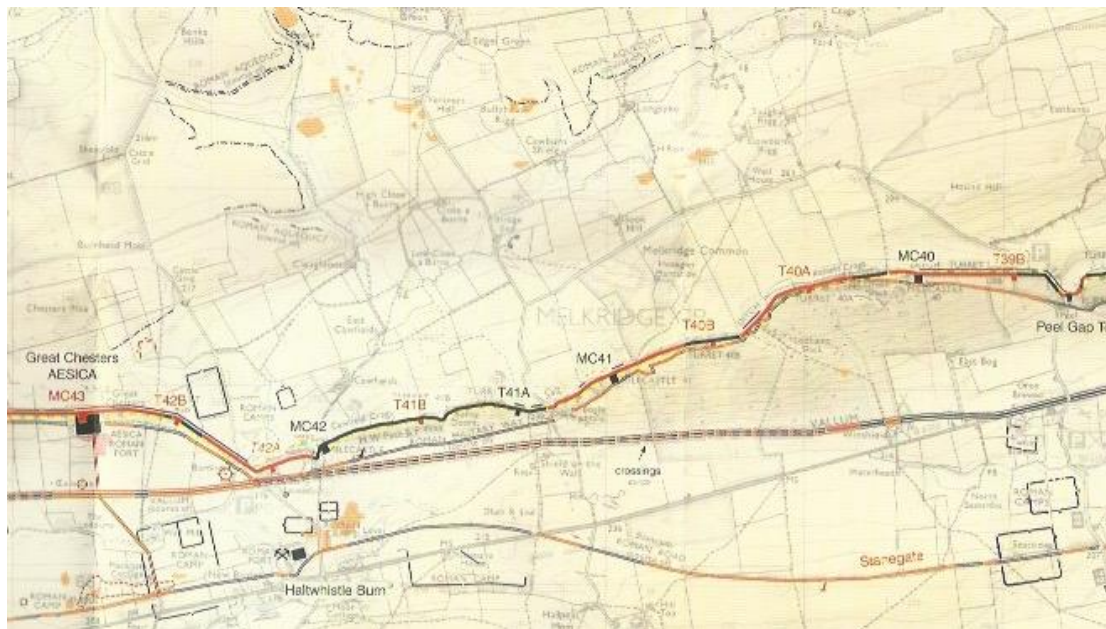
Chapter 4 The Roman Era North of the Wall (AD 43-410)

4.1 The Northern Frontier

Edges Green is situated very close to what became Britain's northern frontier. In the first phase of the Roman occupation the Brigantes, the local tribe dominating the north of England, acted as a client kingdom of the Romans. That situation ended in AD 69 when Queen Cartimunda's authority collapsed and her estranged husband, Venutius organised the Brigantes to oppose Roman authority. The Brigantes were quickly defeated and a number of fort sites in the north probably date to this period. Stanegate, a road connecting Carlisle and Corbridge, was built sometime in the AD 70s and ran just 2 kilometres south of Edges Green. In this early phase the nearest fort would have been at Vindolanda, about 5 kilometres east of Edges Green. For the next 25 years, until the Hadrian Wall complex was constructed, Stanegate represented the northern frontier of Britain. Patrols from Vindolanda would almost certainly have passed close or across Edges Green during these years.

Fig. 7 below shows the key Roman installations in the vicinity of Edges Green and also shows areas of Cord Rig as patches of light orange shading.

Fig. 7: Roman Structures near Edges Green



An Archaeological Map of Hadrian's Wall, 1:25,000, English Heritage

4.2 Hadrian's Wall

Hadrian's Wall was constructed between AD 120 and 130 (Birley, R, 1977). This consisted of a stone wall, of varying width and height, a milecastle every Roman mile and a series of forts, roughly at 6.5 Roman mile intervals. Immediately to the north of the Wall (except where the terrain of the Whin Sill rendered it unnecessary), there was a deep ditch and to the south a broad, flat-bottomed ditch, with small ramparts on each berm. This latter feature is known as the *vallum*. Just to the south of the Wall a supply road connected the forts. Stanegate Road and the Forts along it continued to operate as a further element in this complex frontier system.

Hadrian died in AD138 and his successor, the Emperor Antonius Pius decided shortly after to advance into Scotland and establish a new northern frontier across the Clyde-Forth isthmus. This became the Antonine Wall and was built in AD 140s. It was abandoned in AD 160s and the garrisons returned to Hadrian's Wall.

4.3 Great Chesters (Aesica) Fort and associated Aqueduct

Great Chesters Fort (*Aesica*), a small fort, was built in AD 128 on the site of an earlier Milecastle. It was first excavated in the 1890s, which uncovered a significant part of the defences, as well as, barrack blocks and administrative buildings. The defences were re-examined in the 1920s, with further work by Birley in the 1950s. The granary was seemingly rebuilt in AD 225, and the commanding officer's house also appears to have been rebuilt at this time. An important hoard was published by Allason-Jones in 1996. (Petts, D and Gerrard, C, 2006).

The Great Chesters Aqueduct runs for almost 10 km towards the fort from Saughy Rigg washpool (NY7405 6879), in a circuitous route, as shown in Figure 8 below:

Fig. 8 Great Chester Aqueduct Route

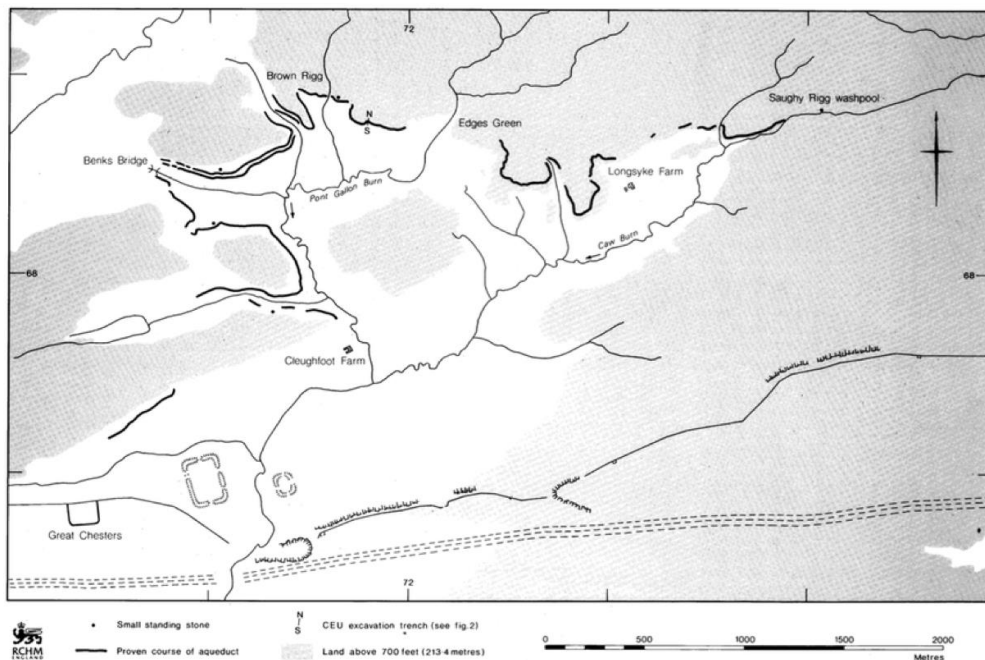


FIG. 6. Great Chesters Aqueduct 1988: the 700 ft. contour has been chosen for illustrative convenience. (Drawn by P. Sinton, RCHME York)

Source: MacKay (1999)

The line of the aqueduct cuts through the Edges Green area and is clearly visible in certain sections. It was first surveyed by I.T.W. Bell in 1850 and the results of this survey were later incorporated into all subsequent maps, including those published by the Ordnance Survey. MacKay, D (1990) undertook a full instrumental re-survey. In general his work confirmed the accuracy of Bell's survey. MacKay confirmed that there were four large gaps in the record and assumed they had been ploughed-out. His description of the aqueduct is as follows:

"As a field monument the aqueduct survives, in various states of preservation, for a

considerable proportion of its original line. Its condition varies greatly. Initially, as it winds its way around the steep rocky hillside, running parallel to the Caw Burn, there are slight traces of the stone revetment which Bell noted on its downhill side.⁸⁷ Otherwise, where best preserved, it survives as a ditch 0.4 m to 0.7 m wide, and a maximum of 0.5 m deep, with an upcast bank on the downward slope. In other places it is a terrace, a faint groove, a break of slope or simply a vegetation mark such as a vivid green band or a line of rushes. Some stretches are considerably obscured by modern land drainage and in a fragile state; the course is extremely vulnerable to erosion by farm vehicles. It is thus very difficult to trace but in each of those stretches where identification was most problematical the accuracy of the plan position could be checked against the narrow limits imposed by the levelling."

MacKay also recorded 5 small standing stones marking the route, including one at the source.

Additional survey work undertaken as part of the Edges Green project concentrated on some of the sections for which previous surveys could not identify any contemporary trace. The evidence seems to be that these sections, including the link into the Great Chesters Fort were never actually constructed. Shortly after the completion of Great Chesters the focus of Roman occupation turned to Scotland where a new line of defence, the Antonine Wall, was established. Hadrian's Wall seems to have been abandoned in this period, perhaps leaving the Aqueduct to Great Chesters unfinished. When the Hadrian Wall complex was resumed as the primary line of northern defence it is possible that the Romans decided that the security of the Aqueduct could not be guaranteed, lying as it does, north of the Wall. Alternatively, it may have been realized that adequate alternative water sources were available for the fort.

A more detailed description of the Aqueduct survey undertaken by Tynedale North of the Wall Archaeology Group is contained in the Final Report.

4.4 The Roman Impact on life North of the Wall

The military arrangements associated with a frontier zone led to a strong Roman presence in the vicinity of Edges Green with Hadrian's Wall situated immediately south of Caw Gap, just one kilometre from the Edges Green area. It is, therefore, clear that whatever farming and other activity was taking place by local people in the Edges Green area would have been powerfully affected by the Roman presence.

There has been a good deal of debate and conjecture concerning the impact of the Roman occupation on further forest clearance. Whilst the Roman presence must have led to an increased need for wood the palaeo-environmental evidence from pollen analysis shows that significant forest clearance pre-dated the Roman period and continued through it into the 5th century (Fenton-Thomas, C,1992). So, whilst the Romans contributed to continued forest clearance they did not initiate the process or cause a significant acceleration in de-forestation.

Dumayne (1992), Tipping (1997) and McCarthy (1995) all agree that the increase in agriculture in areas along Hadrian's Wall dates to the late Iron Age and is not related to the impact of Roman settlement. Evidence from excavations at Walltown vallum in the 1980s revealed cultivation had preceded the ditch construction and that in 2nd century AD the area was open country with only small amounts of alder and hazel

scrub, and cereal cultivation in the vicinity. This provides clues as to the likely picture north of the wall at Edges Green at this time.

Gates (2004,2005) has greatly added to an understanding of the farming activity that occurred in the vicinity of Hadrian's Wall in the Late Iron age by showing from analyses of aerial photos the extensive areas of Cord Rig, some of which clearly pre-dates Roman structures. Edges Green exhibits several such areas as shown in Fig. 8 above. Gates' work over the years has added 90 new cord rig areas to the four examples mentioned in an 1989 study (Topping, 1989). This new evidence also shows that generally the areas of cord rig are small, typically no more than 0.5 ha. This suggests a small-scale subsistence mode of production that preceded Roman occupation and continued during the occupation and after.

4.5 The last period of Roman rule

During the third century there seems to have been an increasing degree of opposition to Roman rule, especially in the North. Certainly there was rebuilding and refurbishment of defences at Housesteads and Aesica in the mid-century and at other centres too such as at Piecebridge. There is some evidence of fort destruction in this period but not as much as previously thought. The prime instigators of raids and attacks seem to emanate from the Picts, Scots and Saxons. In 367 there was a unified attempt by these tribes to overrun the Province, which also seems to have involved some of the southern zones. It was during this period that the Bewcastle bathhouse was destroyed. Bewcastle lies some 18 miles NW of Edges Green, which suggests that the study area may well have been subject to greater Roman security and possible raids may have occurred over the area from the north or west. Young, R., Frodsham, P., et al (2010) provide a useful summary of this period and its possible impact on areas like Edges Green.

“With the visit of the emperor Septimius Severus to Britain in 208AD a further Scottish campaign was planned and the armies again marched up Dere Street. This campaign was brought to a close when the emperor himself died at York in AD 211 and again the Hadrian's Wall line was returned to. Here the 'frontier' line remained until the Roman withdrawal in the fifth century AD (AD 410 and the Rescript of Honorius) (Welfare, 1992, 36-42).

Thus the area to the north of the Wall was a bit like a beach, a liminal zone, 'betwixt and between', repeatedly washed over by the ebb and flow of the military campaigns. We should also not forget that the area of the Wall itself may have been overrun by incursions of 'barbarians' from the northern regions on at least two occasions - first in the 180s and then again in the Barbarian Conspiracy of AD 367 (Welfare, 1992, 36-42). We should not underestimate the effects of all of these activities on the indigenous communities in the region and on their relations with the Roman colonizers. Did the ease with which the Roman army was able to move through the area between the Tyne-Solway and the Forth-Clyde lines imply a compliant native community? Many of these changes of tactics and plans must have left some lasting imprint in both the military and non-military archaeological record north of the Wall.”

The final phase of Roman occupation led to a further re-definition of Provinces in which the area north of the Wall was included as the Province of Valentia.

Chapter 5 The Early Medieval Period: (AD 410-1066)

5.1 Introduction

“The ‘early Medieval’ period here constitutes the six and a half centuries after the end of Roman rule, which include the post-Roman Dark Age, the Anglian period, and period of the Viking incursions from the later eighth century, culminating in the onset of the full Medieval period following the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest of 1066. Most of the history of this period relates to changes in the nature of the ruling elite, and although there were major shifts in settlement pattern, most people probably continued to live lives not greatly differing from those of their Iron Age predecessors. The majority was probably engaged in agricultural work on a day to day basis to provide the surplus necessary to support aristocratic leaders and warriors.”
Young, R, Frodsham, P et al (2010)

The early medieval period saw relatively little change in the way people lived their lives, although there were major shifts in settlement pattern. In the earliest post-Roman phase, the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria ruled from Bamburgh. This period witnessed a change from a settlement pattern based largely on Roman forts, vici and Romano-British farmsteads with roundhouses, to a system of lowland hamlets and villages, many of which still survive today. By the seventh century, these would have consisted of clusters of timber houses, sometimes around timber churches, as this period also saw the rise of Christianity. It is generally thought that the land at this time was divided into townships (parishes after Christianity was adopted), which in turn were grouped into shires.

5.2 Tribal Kingdoms and the rise of Northumbria

Knowledge of the history of the period from the 5th and 6th centuries relies on 8th century accounts, such as that of the Venerable Bede, Gildas and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Epic tales such as *Beowulf* and the *Gododdin* poem add to our understanding of the warrior values of this period. These accounts provide some basic framework but are not reliable in detail. For the Edges Green area the kingdom of Brynaich a part of the Votadini Tribe may have assumed dominance once the Roman military had withdrawn.

5.3 Anglo-Saxon Period (7th-9th Centuries)

There were increasing incursions of new groups from Europe, such as the Angles and Saxons. At this stage there is no evidence for a mass immigration but rather the increasing use of Anglian warrior elites to support kingdoms like Brynaich, later called Bernicia.

The Kingdom of Bernicia, under the leadership of Angles began to slowly assume dominance in the North from the late 6th century. The Edges Green area would have been a part of this Kingdom. Little is known of Anglo-Saxon influence on communities around the Middle lengths of Hadrian’s Wall and the archaeological data is limited. The nearest Anglo-Saxon material discovered in the area comes from Vindloanda, where an annular brooch and a possibly fifth-or-sixth century penannular brooch were discovered in the late 1990s. (Woodside and Crow, 1999)

The Black Dyke situated about 7 km east from Edges Green has traditionally been seen as a frontier between the British and the Anglo-Saxons but there is no direct evidence for this. Gates (2004) postulates that it may have been one, albeit more significant later, of several N-S linear earthwork features dating to the Bronze Age that may have been territorial in purpose. It is known that in the Middle Ages the Black Dyke formed part of the boundary of Wark manor.

The only confirmed Anglo-Saxon settlement in South Tynedale is Beltingham, just south of the Tyne, also about 7 km east of Edges Green. However, some sources (eg., Storey, 1973) state that the villages on the north flank of the South Tyne valley all occupy settlement sites of Anglian or pre-Norman origin: Thorngraston, Henshaw, Melkridge and Haltwhistle.

5.4 *The Danish Influence (9th-11th Centuries)*

The North became subject to raids and incursions from the Norse warriors from the late 8th century onwards, heralding the Viking period of British history. The Danish invasions of the 9th century led to the defeat of the Anglian kings of Northumbria, which fell to the Danes in 875. Danelaw was established south of the Tyne but was never fully established in Northumbria and Anglian kings are likely to have retained some degree of control until Ragnald leading a later Norse force from Ireland and western Britain overcame the Bernician rulers at Corbridge in 914 and 918.

There is no evidence of Viking presence and settlement in the Tyne Valley and the only impact on an area like Edges Green, if there had been any occupation at that time might have been the presence, at times, of opposing armies of Danes and Saxons

5.5 *Early Christian Influences*

There is some evidence for early Christian belief in the 4th and 5th centuries among the Romano-British inhabitants of Roman forts and vici, principally at Vindolanda and Corbridge. However, the more significant date for Christianity is when it takes root among the upper echelons of society of Northumbria after the accession of King Edwin in 616 AD. There is little direct evidence for Christian influence in vicinity of Edges Green during the early medieval period. The nearest religious establishment is Hexham Abbey (AD 674).

The Parish as a unit of Christian organisation started in the Anglo-Saxon period but we have no evidence of the earliest parishes established in the Tyne Valley. Haltwhistle Parish emerges in the Medieval period but may have had some earlier origin in the Early Medieval period.

5.6 *Early Medieval Ownership and Settlement in Edges Green*

There are no records stretching this far back in time and we have only a sketchy notion of how the area was populated and administered. It is likely that most of the land in this area was subject to tribal custom and practice for the first 200 years of post-Roman history. As such the land would have probably been owned as tribal commons with hunting and grazing rights for most local inhabitants, living in small settlements close to the River Tyne. Transhumance may have been practiced in this period, although the shielings that can still be traced are thought to have commenced during the Norman period..

The archaeological evidence for a medieval long house east of Edges Green may date to this period and so there may have been a continued farming presence in this area from the Iron or even the Bronze Age. Other possible early medieval occupation may have been masked by later farmsteads of the 17th century. Storey (1973) suggests that the hill farms along the line of, and to the north of, the Wall, often represent continuation of post-Anglian settlement, with infilling of new farms when South Tynedale became overpopulated in the 15th century. Their names retain the nomenclature of Saxon and Scandinavian tongues. In this description he includes, Wallshield, Cleughfoot, Longsyke, and Cawburn Rigg farms.

Once the post-Roman kingdoms emerged then the king, who gave rights to specific areas of land to chosen relatives and allies, probably owned the land. Certainly, once the Kingdom of Bernicia was established in the 7th century the overall land ownership fell to the Kings of Northumbria, and this situation lasted until the Norman conquest. However, we do not know which local thane or lord held sway over Edges Green until the Norman Conquest.

Chapter 6 The Medieval Period: 1066-1603

6.1 *The Medieval Background*

For the purposes of this part of the report the key factors presented here concern the way Edges Green and its wider locality was governed and utilised. Further detail on Medieval Tynedale is presented in Annex 2.

6.2 *Castles and Fortified Houses*

The strategic importance of the Tyne Valleys and the Irthing River led to a series of fortified houses and castles being constructed during the middle ages along or close to these rivers. Within a dozen miles of Edges Green there were at least 13 castles or fortified towers (see Annex 2). Haltwhistle had an early Norman Castle, which seems to have had little later importance. Bellister Castle on the south of the Tyne, opposite Haltwhistle had a more strategic position by the River Tyne. Thirlwall, 7km west of Edges Green occupies a strategic position by the Tippalt Burn and the Tyne. Melkridge Manor had a fortified tower or Pele. South of the Tyne there were fortified houses or castles at Featherstone, Blenkinsopp and Willimoteswick.

6.3 *Medieval Jurisdiction of Edges Green*

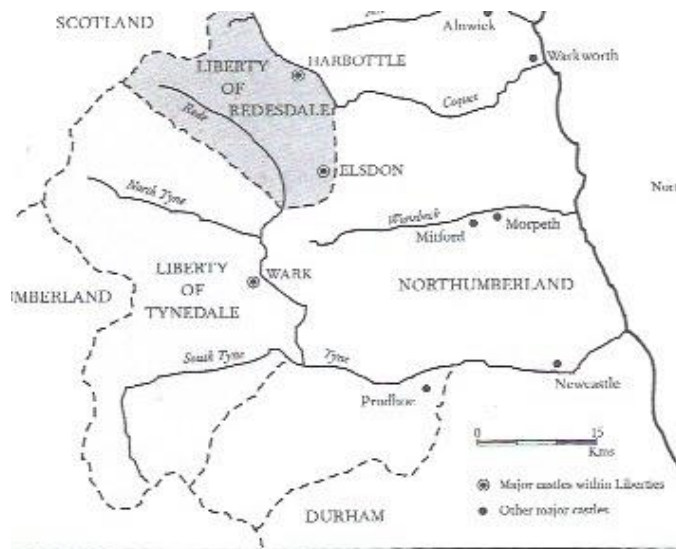
The Edges Green area was situated in layers of medieval jurisdiction, complicated by the fact that being close to the border with Scotland it was subject to special considerations of defence and at times subject to incursions from Scottish armies. In addition, it became from the 14th Century onwards a cross-border zone of lawlessness associated with cattle thieving, robbery and personal feuds that we know as the Reiver problem. This meant that apart from the usual Manorial system of jurisdiction Edges Green came within higher quasi-Military units of administration, such as the Liberty of Tyndale and later the Middle March of England. Had anyone been living in Edges Green at this time then the main impact of this layer of control would have occurred when authorities required manpower and horses to mount defences or undertake action. An added risk was that marauding forces might seize stock, destroy homes and kill and maim those that resisted.

6.4 *The Liberty of Tyndale/ Barony of Wark*

William the Conqueror had appointed Robert de Comyns as the Earl of Northumberland, soon after 1066. His death in a battle with the resisting old Anglo-Saxon elite led to the harrying of the north and the placing of Siward as the new Earl. To provide some measure of devolved power and defend potentially fragile areas the Liberties of Tyndale and Redesdale were established (or according to some records, re-established, as this had been a mechanism of control that had been in existence since the 800s).

The Liberty and Lordship of Tynedale was awarded by Henry II in 1157 to a Scottish aristocrat (William, son of Malcolm IV of Scotland) to compensate him for the loss of the Earldom of Northumbria. Tyndale remained under the control of Scottish Kings (although subject to English Law) until late 13th century. The Liberty of Tyndale was administered from Wark. Following the Scottish-England wars of the 13th century the Liberty of Tyndale ceased to be a Scottish prerogative in 1296 and henceforth fell within the purview of the Dukes of Northumberland. The map below (fig. 9) shows the boundaries of these Liberties.

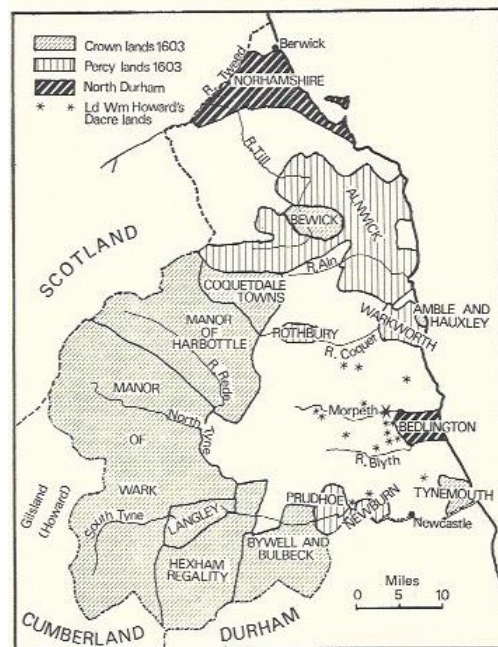
Fig. 9 The Liberties of Tyndale and Redesdale



Source:

At some stage, possibly from 1296, the Liberty of Tyndale is replaced by the Barony of Wark, reduced by excising three areas, known as the Regalities of Langley, Hexham and Bywell and Bulbeck.

Fig. 10 Wark Manor



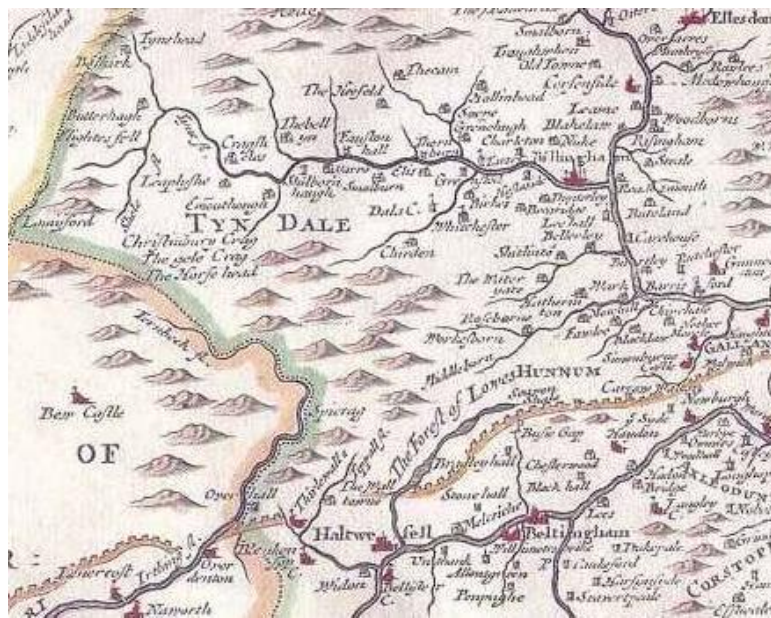
Source: Watts, 1975

6.5 Forest of Lowes

Within the Liberty of Tynedale and later in the Barony of Wark there was a large hunting area, known variously as the Huntlands of Tyndale or the Forest of Lowes. The Forest of Lowes encompassed Edges Green and would have been used for hunting and summer pastures. It is shown on early maps as a generality between the North Tyne and the River Irthing. By the 18th Century the area is no longer marked on contemporary maps and large areas of the former Forest, some covering Edges Green, were designated Outfell Land.

The Forest of Lowes was initially granted by David 1 of Scotland to Hextilda, Countess of Ethelstala, a member of the Cumin (or Comyn) family, who held it for 6 generations from mid-12th century (Woodside and Crow (1999)). According to Hodgson (1827) the Forest of Lowes derives its name from the Loughs or Lowes that characterised the area. The family name, Lowes, later associated with Ridley Hall must be of a later derivation. The following map from the 17th century (Fig. 11) by Morden shows that the Forest of Lowes and the name Tyndale as an area were maintained throughout the medieval period.

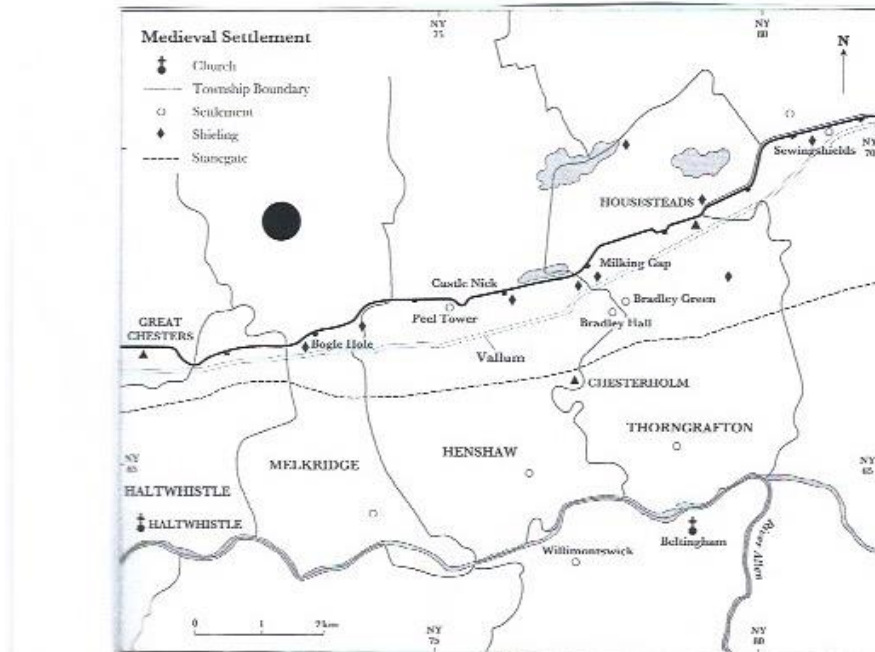
Fig. 11 Morden's map (1695) showing the Forest of Lowes



6.6 Melkridge Township and Manor

A series of townships existed in the medieval period along the Tyne valley at Haltwhistle, Melkridge, Henshaw and Thorngrafton. Each ran from the River Tyne in the south to the Common, Waste or Hunting Lands north of the Wall. Fig. 12 below is a map showing these settlements and Township boundaries along the Tyne near to Edges Green, which is shown as a black dot within Melkridge Township and Manor.

Fig. 12 Medieval Settlement and Townships near Edges Green



Source: adaptation from Woodside and Crow (1999)

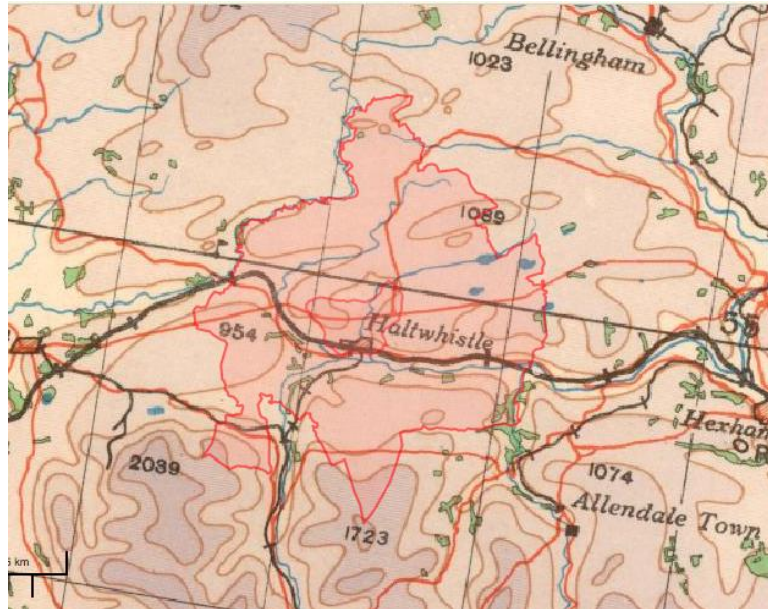
Information concerning Melkridge Manor is sparse and there is no certainty as to either when it was created or who owned it through the early years. Hodgson (1827) states that the Mesne Lords of Melkridge held the Manor of Wark making its history obscure. But Melkridge Manor had become the property of the Ridley family at Willimoteswick by 1568. By 1652 it belonged to Nicholas Ridley who having sided with the Royalist cause was stripped of his lands. Melkridge Manor then passed to Neville of Chevet and thence to the Blackett's of Matfen, who held it thereafter.

The ownership and administration of the Edges Green area does not seem to have impacted very greatly on its use and its landscape. Whether it was the de Comyns family in Wark or the de Roos family in Haltwhistle/Bellister, or the Ridley's at Willimoteswick the land seems to have remained open pasture largely used for summer grazing all through this period. That said it may well be that for three centuries, from 14th to 17th centuries, when the reiver raids were common, the land was largely unused, or at best, periodically used.

6.7 Haltwhistle Parish,

Evidence for a settlement at Haltwhistle emerges by the medieval period but its foundation as Altwesel seems to pre-date that and mostly probably occurs during the Saxon era. Haltwhistle Parish was established some time after the Norman conquest and continued as a large parish covering areas both north and south of the River Tyne until parish re-organisation in the late 19th century. Edges Green was a part of this parish. The map below refers.

Fig. 13 *The Parish of Haltwhistle*



The parish of Haltwhistle included the townships of Bellister, Blenkinsopp, Coanwood (East), Featherstone, Haltwhistle, Hartley Burn, Henshaw, Melkridge, Plainmellor, Ridley, Thirlwall, Thorngrafton, and Wall and encompassing the small hamlets of Allens Green, Beltingham, Willimoteswyke, as well as a number of scattered farms. The largest of the settlements were Beltingham, Willimoteswike and Ridley, all located along the fertile soils of the South Tyne lowlands, while further south were smaller scattered hamlets.

6.8 Haltwhistle Manor

It is possible that in the first century or so after the Norman conquest Haltwhistle Manor was the primary Manor in the area, with Melkridge emerging at a later date. There is a little more data relating to Haltwhistle than Melkridge Manor in this early phase and the following provides some information:

The manor of Haltwhistle passed from the de Roos to the Musgrave family, who held it until Elizabethan times. By 1663 it was in the possession of Mr William Pearson and was then passed on to the Cuthbertsons (Hodgson 1840, 115-116). The rental list of the Cuthbertson estate at Haltwhistle includes Haltwhistle manor house, rented to William Ridley in 1763.

Source: Haltwhistle: Extensive Urban Survey, Northumberland CC (2009)

6.9 Reivers, Conflict and the Border Marches

The border between Scotland and England, which lies approximately 25 miles from the farmhouses at Edges Green, was a zone of continual conflict and raiding for several centuries and this did not finally cease until the mid-17th century.

6.9.1 The Reivers

The Reivers is a term used to describe a large number of families living either side of the border, who often supplemented their income by raiding for cattle, goods and so on in other parts of the border. This was not necessarily an English versus Scottish phenomenon but involved a complex and changing pattern of family allegiances and blood feuds. The key sufferers were the ordinary farmers, forced to leave the area, or, if sufficiently wealthy, to erect powerfully defended farmhouses, known as bastles. The reivers were introduced into the area by Edward III as a means to both repopulate an area that had suffered from two centuries of Anglo-Scottish conflict. The families were chosen as known tough, resilient and warlike people who could provide military support on fell horses when times demanded it. The impact of several centuries of more or less continual raiding was to severely retard the economic development of the Tynedale (along with other vulnerable parts of Northumberland and Scotland).

6.9.2 The English Middle March

In order to try and regulate the border a system of 6 marches was established by the Scottish and English governments, three on either side, with strong military and juridical powers devolved to March Wardens. Edges Green was situated in the English Middle March but the administrative centre was at Harbottle, many remote miles to the north. The boundary between the West and Middle Marches lay along the River Irthing.

The administration of the Marches proved highly problematic as the Wardens were often linked to reiver families, were under-funded and often incompetent. Moreover there were certain remote areas that became convenient bolt holes for outlaws and those in disfavour of the authorities. The Debateable Land was one such area, situated in Solway betwixt England and Scotland that had uncertain jurisdiction and therefore became a haven for the outlawed. Liddesdale was another such area, technically in the Scottish western March but traditionally seen as English. This area was also home to notorious reiver families and a place of refuge for them. It had its own jurisdiction under a Keeper. Both the Debateable Land and Liddesdale are within a days ride of Edges Green (approximately 20 miles).

6.9.3 Security and Medieval farming in Edges Green

The location of Edges Green as a Border area meant that through much of the Medieval period it was subject to either Anglo-Scottish conflict or Border Reiver raiding. The early phase of the consolidation of Norman power in the area took place against a backdrop of Scottish claims to English territory and considerable conflict. This was settled in 1139 when King Stephen bought time and peace by awarding the earldom of Northumberland to the Scots. This allowed for the most peaceful period of the medieval age, approximately 150 years, covering the latter half of the 12th century and most of the 13th century. It is possible that this phase allowed some permanent medieval farmsteads to operate in Edges Green, although there is no documentary evidence and the archaeological evidence is inconclusive.

From 1296 the English once again assumed the Earldom of Northumberland leading to renewed Anglo-Scottish conflict and frequent incursions into western areas of Northumberland, including areas like Edges Green. This was particularly marked in the 14th and 15th centuries

6.10 Upland Farming Practices: Transhumance and Shielings

Whilst the basic manorial system described above would and did apply to small settlements along the Tyne, such as at Haltwhistle, Melkridge and Henshaw the importance of pastoralism to these communities meant that the role of the upland commons was vital to the maintenance of the local economy.

Transhumance may have been practised for some considerable time. The idea of moving between winter and summer locations was a subsistence strategy of the Mesolithic people and perhaps was adopted by the earliest pastoralists. The evidence we tend to find today is most probably of medieval origin. The word shieling is of old English origin and denotes a summer hut or shelter. It finds common mention in the place names with 'shield'. Camden recorded the practice along the Hadrian Wall zone in 1599. Transhumance involved the renting of high summer pastures, usually beyond the existing common land, possibly in Forest lands. The community might move to the shieling, living in small cottages or pay someone else to act as herdsman. This latter practice is called agistment.

Recent archaeological excavations in Yorkshire suggest that Shielings may date back to the Saxon period. The earliest documentary evidence for shielings is the 12th Century, when they were mentioned in charters, leases and acquisitions. The clearest archaeological evidence of shielings close to Edges Green is at Bogle Hole and the name Wall Shield (just outside the study area is also indicative of shielings. (Woodside and Crow. 1999). Ramm, H.G, et al (1970) has excellent plan drawings of shielings, of which the nearest to the study area are a cluster around Greenlee Lough.

Chapter 7 17th and 18th Century Background

7.1 17th Century Tynedale

The date 1603 marks the Union of Crowns when the England and Scotland were united. This effectively marked the beginning of the end of the lawlessness in the border area that had prevailed for several centuries, although it took some time for complete order to reign. King James transported some of the most troublesome families to Ireland in 1616 and this effectively ended any lingering reiver activity.

The Liberties and Regalities of Northumberland, including that of Tyndale as well as the March Warden Areas seem to have lapsed early in the 17th century. But other medieval institutions such as Townships and Manors remained.

The chief impact of the English Civil War (1642-1651) on Tynedale was that some of the leading monarchist families had their lands sequestered and redistributed.

As the banditry of the reivers abated through this century the driving of cattle from Scotland through the Tynedale area for sale to the large cities of Tyneside and further south began. Droving reached its height in the next century and is dealt with below.

There were a number of County maps published in the 17th century but they generally lack any significant detail. Speed produced maps of the counties in the early part of the century. A Northumberland extract covering the study area is shown below:

Fig. 14 *Speed's Map of Northumberland (extract) 1611*



7.2 Farming Practice in 17th Century Edges Green

Farming practice in Edges Green following the settlement of the Anglo-Scottish disputes and the Reiver problem in the early part of the 17th century was driven by a desire to maximise revenues and incomes from land that had been largely unused for

centuries. The granting of customary (or border) tenures to tenant farmers willing to establish cattle and sheep farms in areas such as Edges Green was a means for the landowners, in this case the Blckett family as lords of Melkridge Manor, to improve rental income. The gradual loosening of feudal rights and obligations, from the 14th. century onwards, meant that landowners looked to alternative means to derive support and income for their lands. For the small farmer these upland areas offered distinct advantages for cattle rearing and sheep farming over the old practice of seasonal transhumance. Each small farm had byres and stockyards to maintain herds and flocks during the harshest months as well as small fields to grow oats, potatoes and other means of subsistence. From the records, farm units seem to have been established in the 17th century (or in some cases perhaps re-established after a long gap) at Edges Green, Wealside, High-Close-a-Burns, Close-a-Burns and Cleughfoot. In addition on the edge of our study area farms were established or re-established at Cawburn Shield and Longsyke. Nevertheless the practice of summer pasturing carried on, as shown in the 1604 Survey of the Borders (Barker and Butlin, 1973), parts of which are reproduced in Annex 2.

7.3 Ownership and Families associated with 17th Century Edges Green

William Ridley in 1615 was lessee under the crown of the castle and manor of Wark and other areas. In 1629 he added the manors of Willimoteswick and Melkridge. Musgrave Ridley, a staunch Royalist, had various lands sequestered by parliament in 1652. The immediate beneficiary of Melkridge and other Manors such as Walltown and Henshaw was the Neville family from Chevet in Yorkshire. Hodgson (1839) states that the Neville family were soon in conflict with their new customary tenants in these Manors. They entered into articles of agreement with the tenants but refused to perform the covenants. Courts of Chancery meeting in 1656 and 1661 confirmed the covenants. We do not know if these disputes concerned any tenants in Edges Green but it is possible, as we know that in 1673 William Ridley had granted a lease at Edges Green to John Lamb. (NRO: ZBL 290)

At some point between 1673 and 1680 the Blacketts of Matfen acquired Melkridge Manor from the Nevilles of Chevet. When William Blackett died in 1680 he left the Manor to his son. Sir Edward Blackett. The Blacketts also acquired the Manors of Henshaw, Ridley, Willimoteswick and Thorngraftern, probably at the same time as Melkridge.

The earliest documentary mention of Edges Green discovered so far dates to 1610 and concerns a court case against members of the Armstrong family accused of reiving in Edges Green. The following extract is from the court record:

1610

Aug 15 Indictment: *Andrew Armstrong, alias Ingriss Andrew, f. of le will yeare, Co. Cumberland; Edward Armstrong of Thirlway, yeoman; Andrew Hendersone f. of Liddisdale, a Scot; at Edgesgrene, stole three cows worth 40s., each; and one ox worth 40s., from Hugh Redley of Whitchester; Edward Armstrong of 1e over hall entertained the above at Eges grene beforehand.* [NRO QSI/1, f107v (519)]

But this record only establishes the theft of cattle from the Edges Green area, belonging to a Hugh Redley of Whitchester. This strongly suggests that the cattle were

being pastured there in the summer rather than held on farms permanently occupied. The Armstrong family were one of the most aggressive of the reiver families and one branch lived only a few kilometres from Edges Green at Housesteads (Woodside and Crow, 1999).

7.4 18th Century Tynedale

Between 1670 and 1750, the population of the North East rose much more quickly than in most other parts of the country, where corn-production was outstripping demand and prices were falling. In the North East corn prices were maintained and demand was still strong because of the gradual move of population from the rural villages to the industrial towns and mining areas. Activities such as coal mining and ship-building required substantial investment, and these funds were obtained by arranging mortgages from banks that had to be serviced by increasing the revenues from the family estates, which meant creating more efficient farms. The result was that North East England changed from a region devastated by centuries of warfare and economic chaos to a model for industrial development and agricultural improvement.

More efficient farming meant higher rents could be charged. In contrast to the static rents that remained common elsewhere in England, Northumbrian rents increased markedly during the 18th century. Increased rents forced the farmers in the region to improve their methods of production. Landowners were adopting a more business-like attitude towards their tenants and became increasingly concerned with improving the fertility of the land. They often added clauses to leases to require the liming and manuring of fields, along with other good farming practices. The enclosure of open fields, commons and waste-land created larger, more viable farms and improved profitability for the farmer and the landowner alike. Enclosed land allowed more livestock to be kept, resulting in better manuring of the fields which, in turn, increased crop yields.

7.5 The Military Road

The construction of the Military Road, now called for some of its length the B6318, is cited as one of the most damaging single operations to Hadrian's Wall in recorded history. General George Wade began construction of the road in 1746, in the wake of the recent Jacobite Risings, in which Bonnie Prince Charlie had evaded his forces in Newcastle and had been able to attack Carlisle in the west. In light of this, the road was considered a matter of urgency, as Wade was anxious to move troops from Newcastle to Dumfriesshire and there was no route suitable for troop movements. Much of the material from the wall (primarily limestone and sandstone) was salvaged and used for hardcore in its construction. The road was completed in 1757. It increased access to the upland areas and may have resulted in the establishment of new farms, although no record of this has been discovered for Edges Green. The road was operated as a turnpike

The topography west of Sewingshields made it necessary for the road to diverge from the wall, thus preserving what remains today. The map below is a plan of the intended route near to Edges Green.

Fig. 15 The Military Road in West Tynedale



Source: Lawson (1971)

The above map is one of four sections drawn and published by Armstrong in 1769, a decade or so after the road was built.

The detail of this map (Fig.16 below), produced 14 years before the Enclosure Map of Edges Green, concern roads and farms. Apart from the Military Way and Stanegate the only other roads shown are those in the north of the area. The internal road or trackways linking the farms are not shown, although there must have been established routes from the principal Tyne settlements of Haltwhistle, Melkridge and Henshaw crossing through gaps, such as Caw Gap to reach the higher farms and common lands. The principal road to the north passing north of Burn Divot and thence past Hopealone and east does not today appear as a road, although parts of it are preserved as tracks or footpaths. The route that diverges past Scotch Coulthard, crosses Slippy Stones in Edges Green and thence to Greenlee has also largely ceased. The route past Scotch Coulthard was altered to travel further south than Slippy Stones and today provides the chief south-north route through Edges Green.

Fig. 16 Details of 1769 Military Road Map for Edges Green area



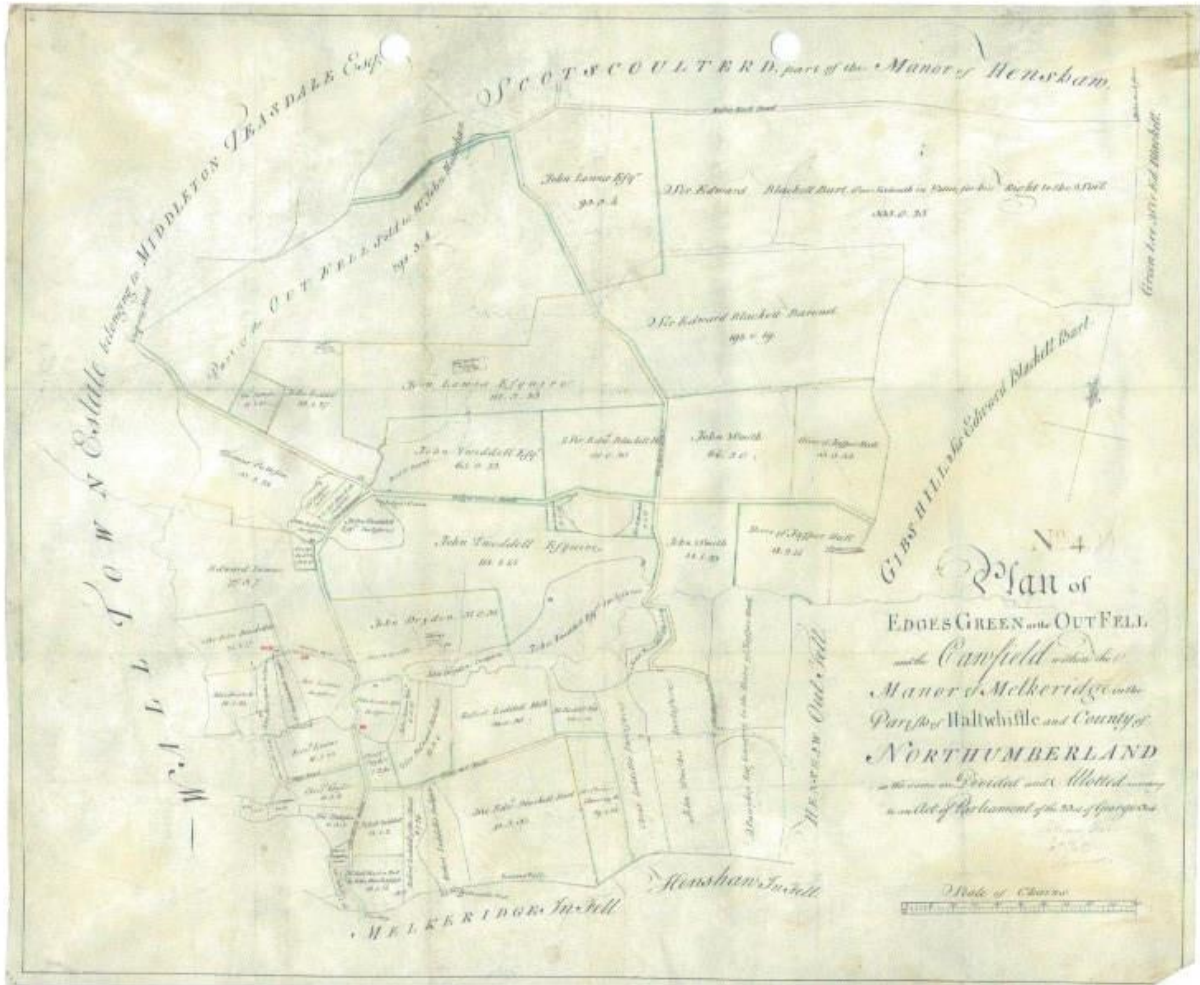
Source: Lawson (1971)

7.6 The Enclosure of Edges Green, 1783

The enclosure of the Edges Green area took place towards the end of the 18th century between 1783 and 1787. The enclosure of Henshaw Common, immediately to the east took place at a similar time. The enclosure to the west, that includes a small part of the study area that contains Cleughfoot farm was part of the enclosure of Walltown Estate, for which no records have yet been located. The area to the south that includes Cawfields Farm appears to have been enclosed as part of Haltwhistle Common enclosure in 1793.

It has not proved possible to appreciate the background to these specific enclosures as no documentation has been discovered. It seems likely that this was an Act based upon the prior agreement of various landowners and tenants. Sir Edward Blackett was the Lord of Melkridge Manor and one can assume had freehold title to most of the land, which was mainly, if not wholly pasture. The nature of the land is primarily governed by the topography, such that the higher land is rougher pasture and moorland and the lower portion has grass fields suitable for cattle rearing and sheep fattening. This is reflected in the field sizes of the Enclosures, which can be seen in the map below (Fig. 17), where the higher fields are large and gradually reduce in size proceeding south.

Fig. 17 Enclosure Plan and Act for Edges Green and Outfell, 1783, 1787



NRO: QRD 7/1/4

The Map above is dated to 1783 but the Act itself was not promulgated until 1787. This time lag was common as there was a process of negotiation after the original plan was drawn up, with possible arbitration for difficult to resolve cases.

Further detail of the north and south sections assists in identifying specific features that relate to activities such as quarrying as well as any relict boundaries (usually curved or irregular) that relate to earlier farm boundaries or other activities. See Figs. 18 and 19 below.

Fig. 18 Detail of North portion of Enclosure Map



NRO: QRD 7/1/4

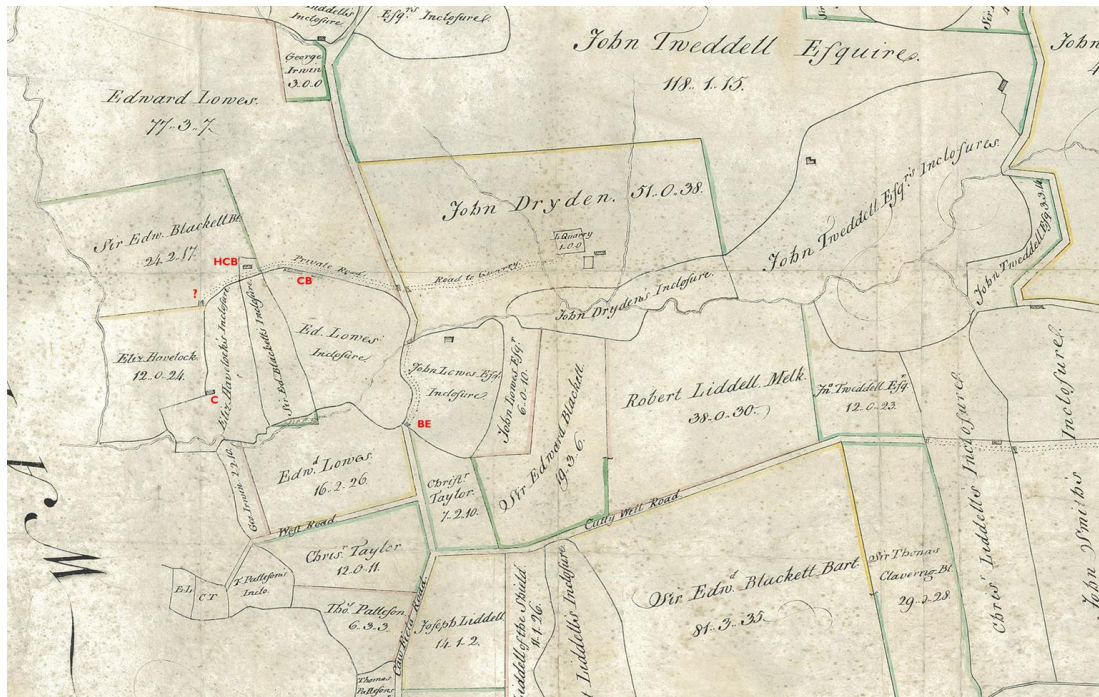
This map shows clearly the contrast between the old curved, relict boundaries of existing tenants and the new, straight boundaries of proposed new enclosures. The Edges Farm area, all to the south of the west-east road and either side of road from the south has three properties marked and presumably under existing tenants rights for John Tweddell, John Liddell and Thomas Patterson.

The most intriguing area is that which lies at the junction between Edges Green and Henshaw Roads. A large irregular area is enclosed in a rectangular field. The area today appears to be the two fields that surround Wealside. It is likely that the irregular area is an old farming Close linked to Wealside Farm. Blackett is awarded this area and so presumably had always retained control, although tenants farmed the area. Strangely, the Enclosure Map does not name Wealside, although a farm building is shown. Wealside had been a substantial sheep farm for some time. Hughes (1963) states that in 1691 the Wealside "tenant and holding were described thus, "Dixon's widow, farmer of a tenement called Wealside, of a close of meadow and (having) common-right (access to) unstinted on Melkridge Common"

The road, running approximately north-south and called Henshaw Road that joins, what is called the Edges Green Road, which runs approximately west to east, is not now the current route.

There are two quarries marked, which no are longer active. One of these lies due north of Edges Green in land assigned to John Lowes and the second lies to the west of that in a field assigned to John Liddell. The Limekiln, situated near the marked quarry is not shown and therefore, may be attributed to the period following the enclosures and can be seen marked on the OS First Edition of 1861

Fig. 19 Detail of South portion of Enclosure Map



NRO: QRD 7/1/4

The other information the map provides relate to the existing structures and other roads or tracks in 1783. There are no buildings shown north of Edges Green, the same as today. Edges Green Farm is clearly the most significant structures and has near to it a number of irregular fields suggesting early farm activities. High Edges Green Farm does not exist at this stage. A building is shown at the Ventner’s Hall location as well as buildings at Close Burns and Bridge End. Cleughfoot farm, as mentioned falls just outside this enclosure area.

By the time of the Edges Green Enclosure Act (1783) it is clear that there were permanently occupied farmsteads in the Edges Green area. The earliest documentary evidence for this is in the late 17th century when we find references to Wealside Farm (Blackett papers cited by Hughes, 1963) and the tenancy at Edges Green granted in 1673 to John Lamb (NRO: ZBL 290).

Less precisely, we can infer some earlier occupation of Edges Green from a close examination of the field boundaries shown on the Enclosure Map of 1783. Here we can note that there are a number of odd-shaped boundaries rather than the rectilinear boundaries of the Enclosure process. These indicate farm and field boundaries that had been established prior to 1783. The areas include the Edges Green Farm area, Wealside, as mentioned and further south the area of High Close Burns and Close-a-Burns. Cawburn Shield and Longsyke farms also appear to have relic boundaries but they lie just outside the study area. Cleughfoot Farm lay just outside the Edges Green Enclosure Map and so far no record has emerged of its enclosure.

7.6.1 Enclosure Awards 1787

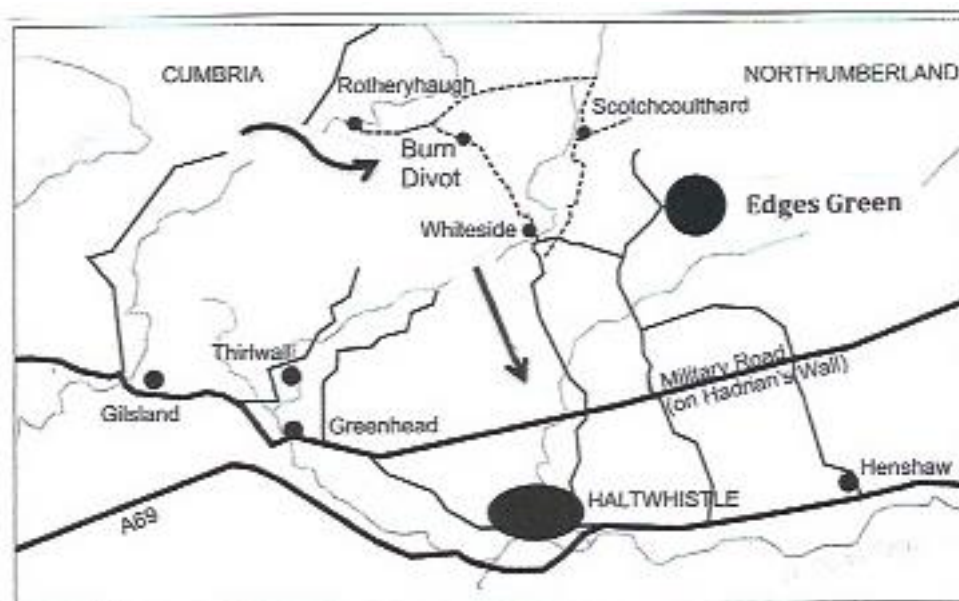
The 1787 Enclosure Awards gave land to several families, as well as the existing Manorial Lord, Sir Edward Blackett. The main names in Edges Green Award are as

follows: John Lowes; John Tweddell; John Liddell; John Smith; Edward Lowes; Thomas Patterson; and Heirs of Jasper Hall. Most, if not all of these probably held some customary tenancies prior to the Act.

7.7 Drovers' Roads

The driving of cattle from Scotland to England along broad tracks, known as Drovers' Roads increased markedly in the 18th century, as demand increased in urban areas of England. The primary drovers roads through Northumberland tended to lie more to the east of the County. One important route identified in the west of the County involved traversing the Spadeadam wastes to Gilsland and thence over the South Tyne to Alston. Roberts, Carlton and Rushworth in their book, *Drove Roads of Northumberland (2010)* identify a Drove Road route that crossed the Northumberland border at Rotherhaugh and proceeded via Burn Divot to Whiteside farm and thence to Haltwhistle. This route is shown below:

Fig. 20 Drovers' Roads near Edges Green



Source: adapted from Roberts, Carlton & Rushworth (2010)

This route essentially skirts the Edges Green area, using the road between Whiteside and Haltwhistle. But a subsidiary route may have traversed Edges Green on the other road to link to the Military Road and thence to Melkridge and Henshaw. The remains of a Drovers Inn is still visible at Burn Divot.

8.0 19th and early 20th Century Developments

8.1 Introduction

Although the 19th and 20th centuries brought massive change to Britain as a whole there was little change to the basic settlement and landscape of Edges Green. The essential land holdings remained the same as those set in the previous centuries, although there was a degree of consolidation of farm units. The roads and infrastructure were modernised at various stages but the system remained the same. New communication channels and modes of transport have undoubtedly impacted on the practice of economic and social life but these have not resulted in any significant physical change on the ground. Nevertheless they are recorded briefly below where they are significant. Mapping improved dramatically in this period and this provides one of the key resources for investigating any changes to field boundaries and farm units. This record is presented below in a series of map extracts. Finally, this chapter also notes the wider impact of modern industrial developments in the Edges Green area.

8.2 1837 Survey Map of Melkridge and Henshaw Manors

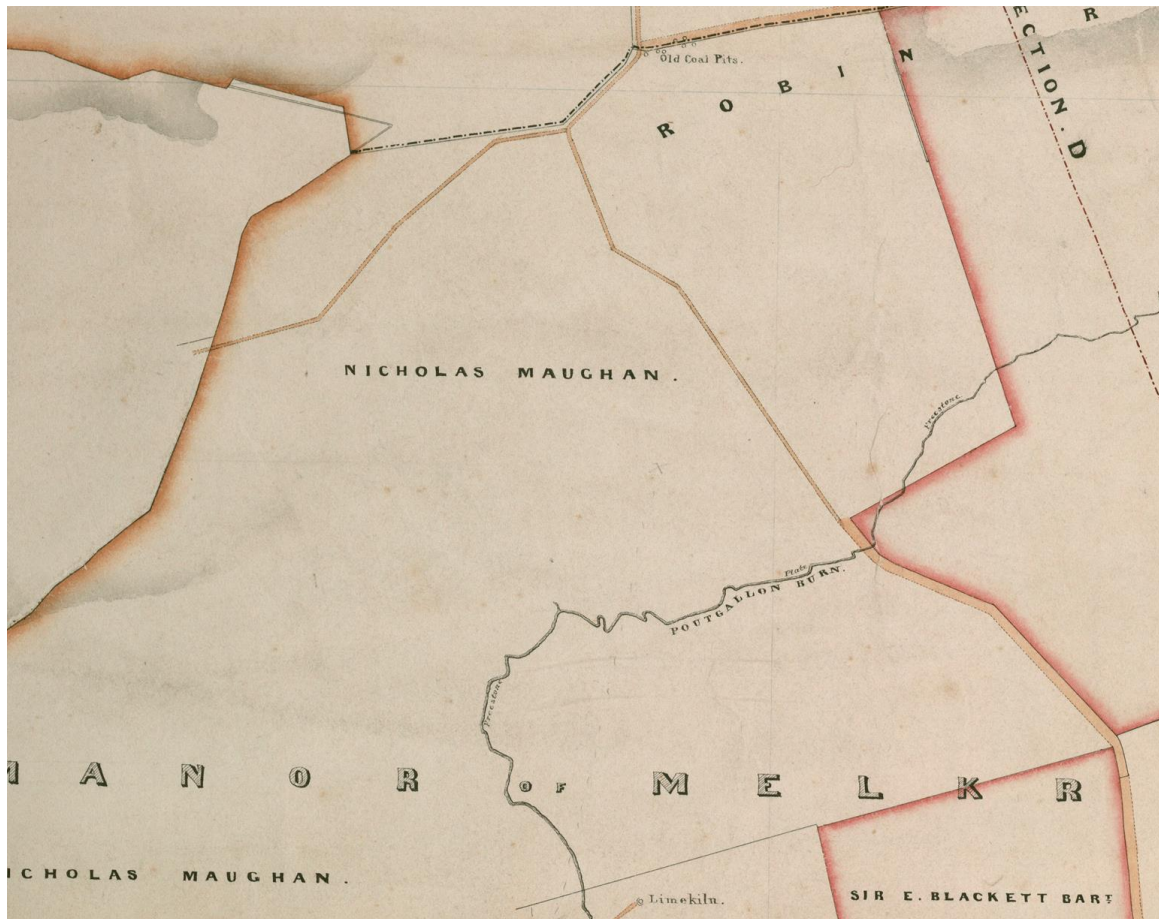
Sir Edward Blackett commissioned a detailed survey of his properties in the Manors of Henshaw and Melkridge, in 1837. The map was drawn to the scale of 8 chains to 1 inch (approximately 6 inches to the mile). It provides a snapshot of the land boundaries and ownerships between the 1787 Enclosure Map and the 1866 Ordnance Survey First Edition. It also clearly demarcates what it calls Ancient Boundaries and allows a more detailed examination of these areas. The map is presented below in different sections to show the detail and allow some commentary on any significant elements. This examination starts in the north and proceeds to the south. One of the features of these maps is the notice made of any mineral potential. Thus, there is attention to coal, ironstone and freestone, wherever they appear.

8.2.1 The Northern section

This area, as shown below in Fig. 21, is the least changed of any part of Edges Green. In appearance and general organisation it would be broadly recognised by huntsmen in the 13th century or reivers in the 16th century. The chief difference would be the road that marches over the rough pasture from the north down in a south-easterly direction. But even in those distant periods there was probably some discernable track. The road shown proceeding southwest towards Wall Shield is now a footpath.

The chief interest are the seven distinct coal pits shown on the north boundary, close to what later became Robin Rock Drift Mine. These are no longer discernable and were probably filled in. The River Pont Gallon Burn is recorded as cutting through freestone and plate.

Fig. 21 North Part of Melkridge Manor, 1837



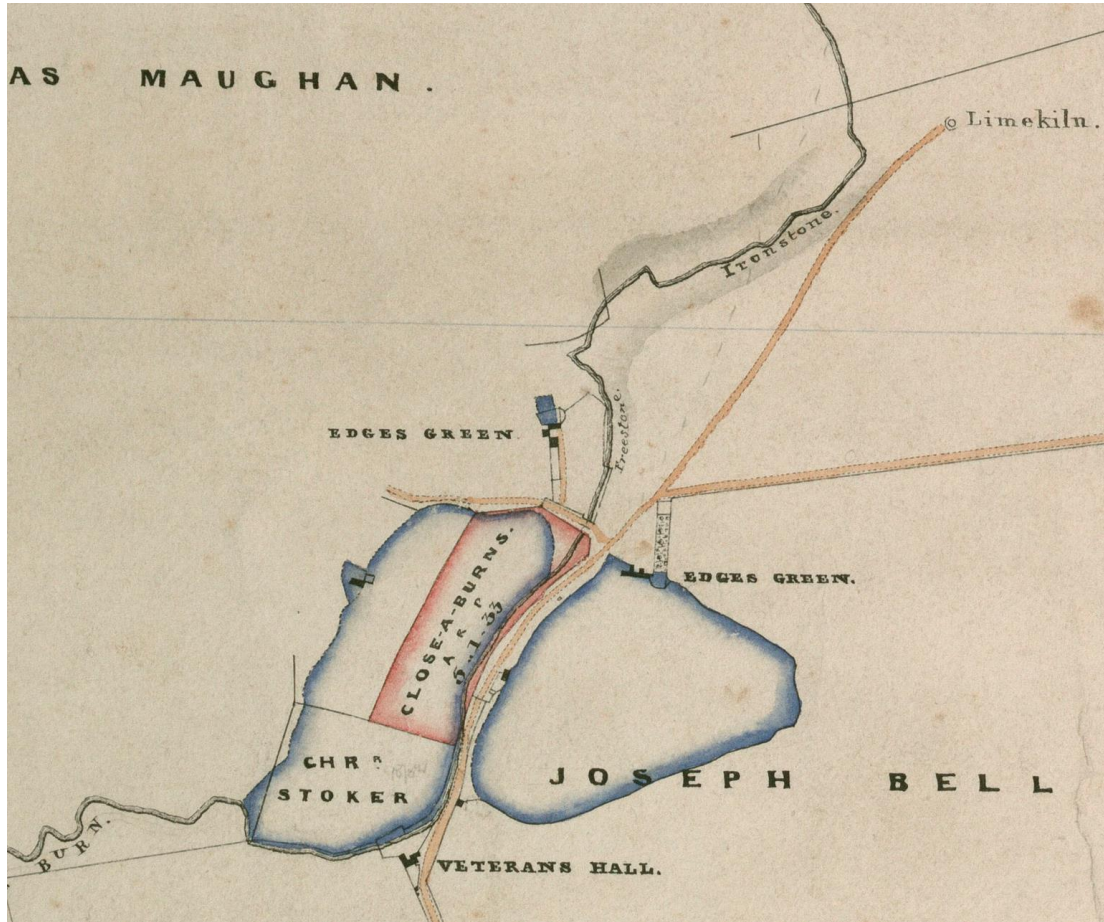
Source: NRO ZBL 291/5

8.2.2 Edges Green Farm and Wealside Farm

Figures 22 and 23 below show the two northernmost farms in Edges Green. Their pre-enclosure boundaries, marked in blue, indicate some early customary tenancy that probably dates back to the 17th century. Interestingly, former medieval boundaries just to the east of Edges Green found during our survey work, do not appear and seem to have been forgotten, suggesting, perhaps, an earlier medieval origin.

Fig. 23 shows the Limekiln to the north of Edges Green and the road to it. . This would seem to be close to the quarry shown in the Enclosure Map of 1783. The road stops at this point and its eventual extension north west to meet the road coming down from the north has not yet been built. The river bed at this point is shown as cutting into both freestone and ironstone. High Edges Green and Edges Green Farm are shown as well as dwellings just south of Edges Green Farm and Ventners Hall (mis-spelt as Veterans Hall). However, a small building shown on the west side no longer exists.

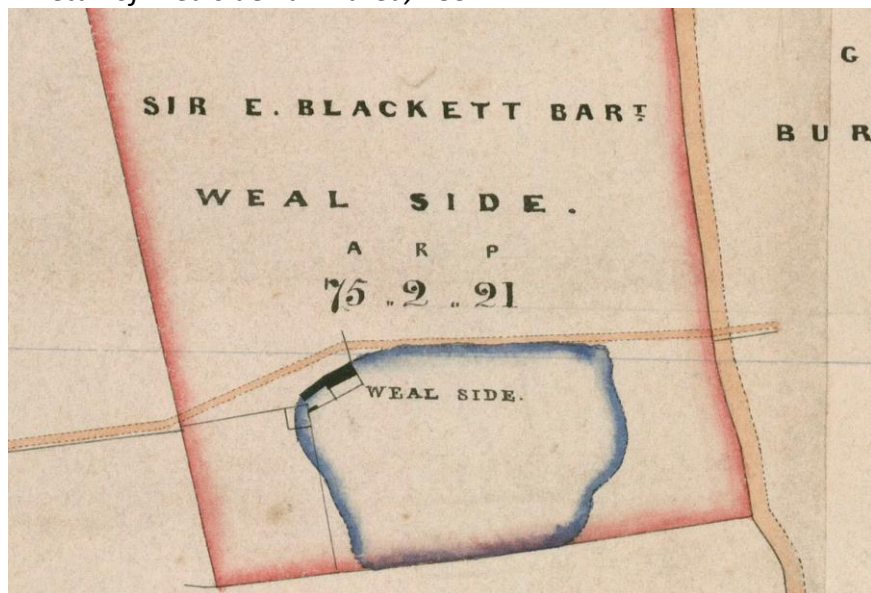
Fig. 22 Detail of Edges Green Farm area, 1837



Source: NRO ZBL 291/5

The detail below in Fig. 24 shows the boundaries at Wealside. Some of the relic boundaries are still clearly visible today.

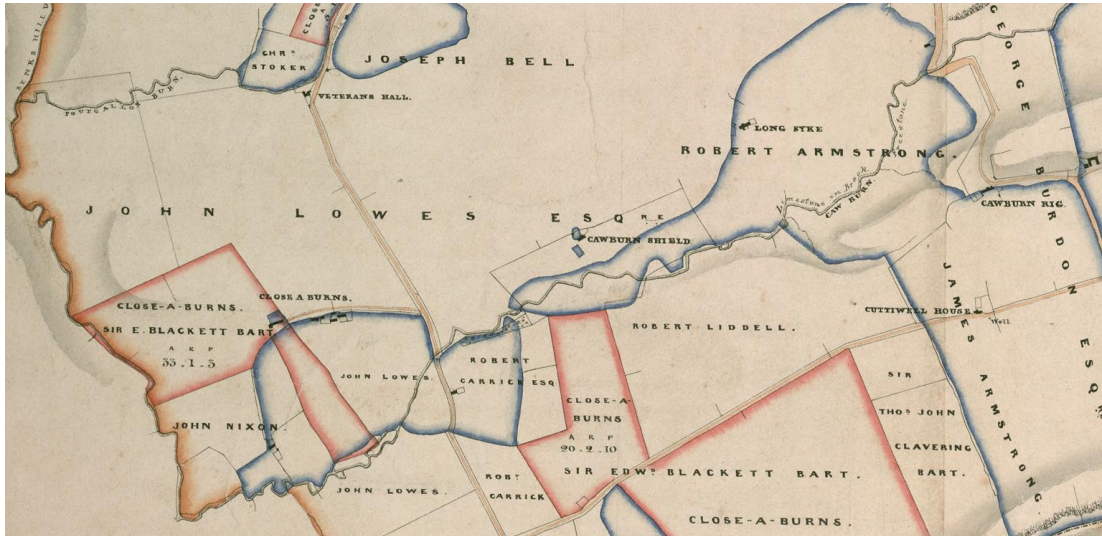
Fig. 23 *Detail of Wealside Farm area, 1837*



Source: NRO ZBL 291/5

8.2.3 Close-a-Burns and the Southern Section

Fig. 24 *Detail of Close-a-Burns Farm area, 1837*



Source: NRO ZBL 291/5

Fig. 24 shows the southern portion of the study area with the Close-a-Burns area on the west, Cawburn Shield Farm in the centre and Longsyke Farm in the east. Little has changed since the Enclosure Map, 50 years earlier, apart from some ownership changes and the ending of the quarry that was just to the north of Cawburn Shield Farm. The Caw Burn is shown as cutting through Limestone in the eastern area.

8.3 Tithe Map, 1842, Surveyed by T. Coulson

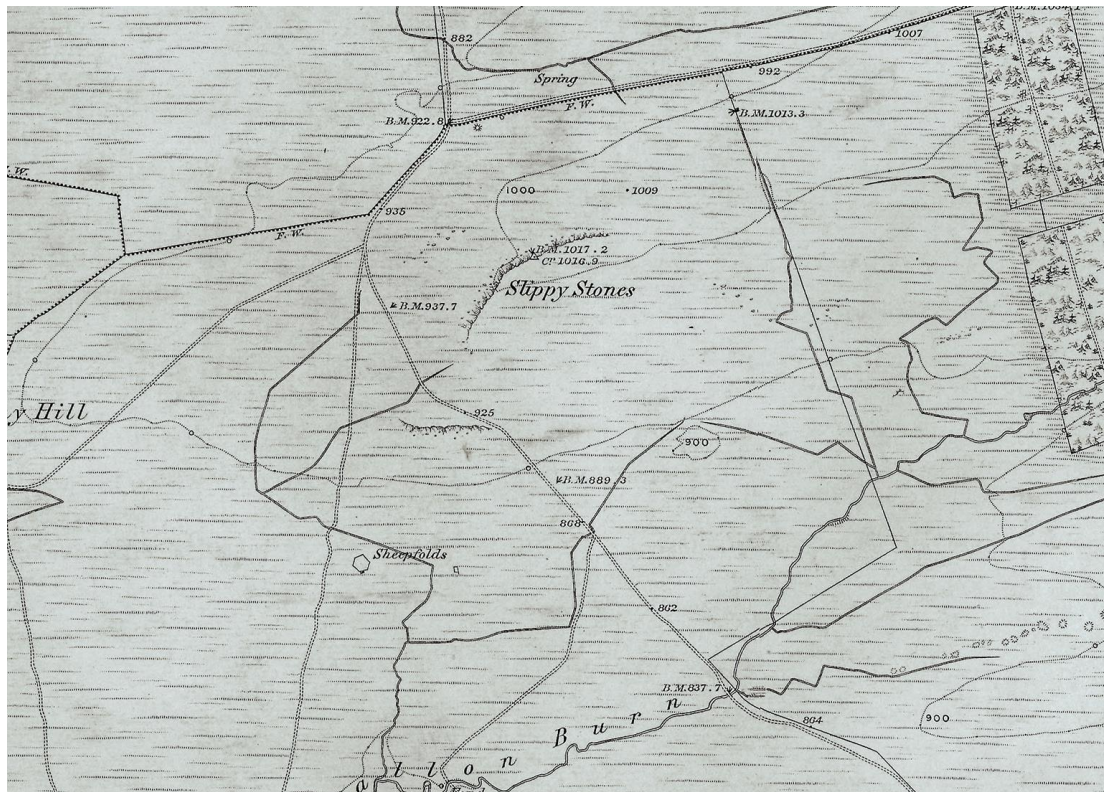
Tithe Maps were produced under the *Tithe Commutation Act of 1837*, which established a procedure whereby ancient tithes could be converted from one tenth of produce to money payments. This required the drawing of an accurate map (the accuracy of which was certified by commissioners) showing all the land in the parish. Each map was accompanied by a schedule listing each map item by number. This showed the owners, occupiers and a description of the land in the parish including individual fields - sometimes with field names. The Tithe Map for the Township of Melkridge in the Parish of Haltwhistle was undertaken in 1842 and shows little difference to the 1837 Map by Sopwith. It does not show Ancient boundaries but does have clearer information on owners and tenants of specific parcels of land.

Edges Green Farm was owned at this time by Nicholas Maughan and his tenants were William and Walter Armstrong. High Edges Green Farm was owned by John Bell and tenanted by William Armstrong. Close-a-Burns Farm (including the portion at Edges Green) was owned by Lord Blakett and tenanted by Thomas Robson. Wealside Farm, also owned by Blakett was tenanted by Adam Little. Ventners Hall was owned by George Kirk. The Quarries are denoted as public.

8.4 First Edition Ordnance Survey Map, 1866

Ordnance Survey mapping can be traced back to the Jacobite and Napoleonic Wars. However, the first County Map series stems for the 1841 Ordnance Survey Act. These County maps were very detailed at 6 inches to the mile (1:10,560). Northumberland was surveyed between 1855 and 1897. The map covering Edges Green dates to 1866 and shows the development of Edges Green in terms of farms, roads and basic field pattern at that time.

Fig. 25 Detail of the OS 6" to the mile (1866) showing North section



Source: NRO: Ordnance Survey, Sheet LXXXIII 1866

The North section above shows little change to the earlier detailed maps. There is an indication of a single coal pit in the far north, within the study area. One new feature is that the road north to the Limekiln proceeds beyond to meet the Scotch Coulthard-Resting Gap road. This is very similar to the modern road arrangement, except the section to Resting Gap no longer exists. The wooded plantation to the east of the study area, just south of Robin Rock, is also shown for the first time. This might be the first new wooded area to re-appear in this upland area since the Bronze Age. It was to remain an isolated plantation for around 100 years until the planting of Wark and other forested areas further north.

At this stage there is an absence of any coal mining activity in this area.

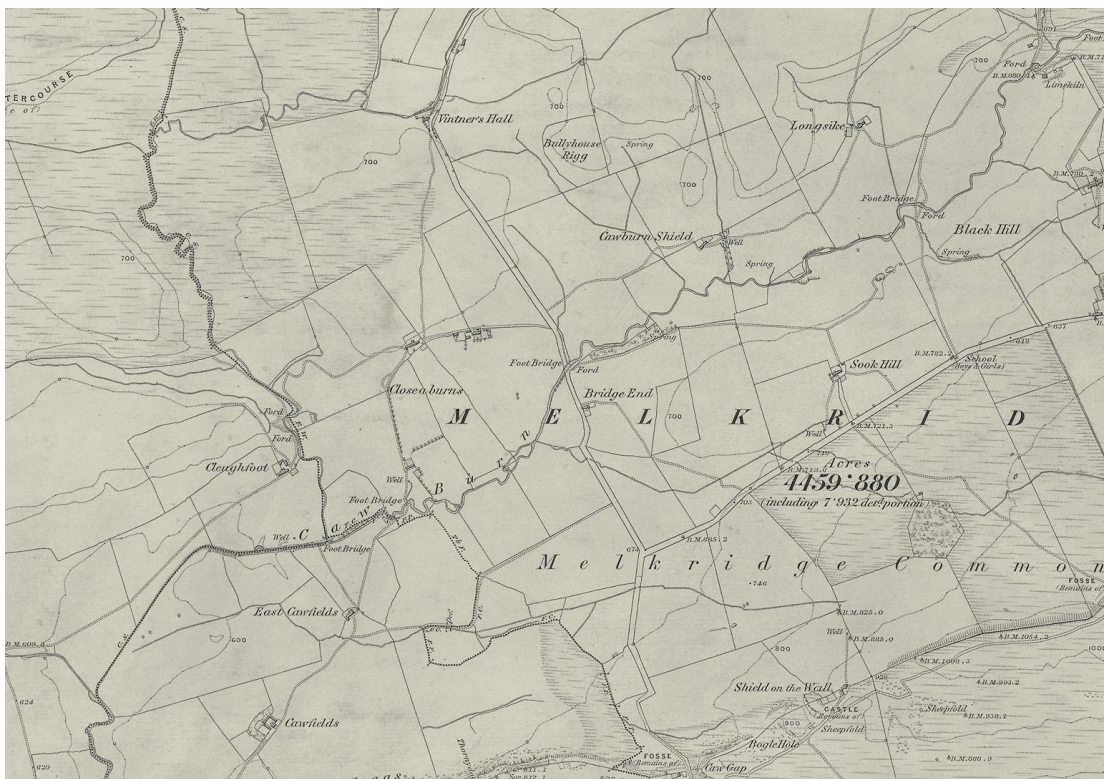
Fig. 26 Detail of the OS 6" to the mile (1866) showing Central section



Source: NRO: Ordnance Survey, Sheet LXXXIII 1866

The central section also shows little change from the earlier survey map. There is an additional limekiln situated south of Walside, but this lies just outside the study area.

Fig. 27 Detail of the OS 6" to the mile (1866) showing Southern section



Source: NRO: Ordnance Survey, Sheet LXXXIII 1866

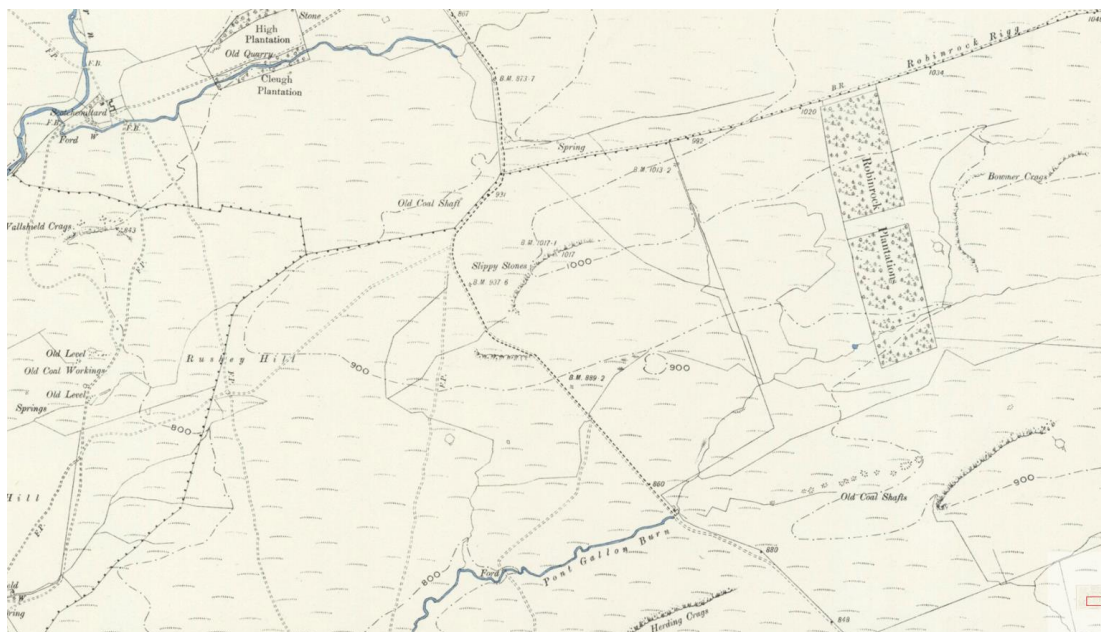
Fig. 27 above provides the first detail available of Cleughfoot Farm, which has always been excluded by virtue of the fact that it lies just outside Melkridge Manor and the Edges Green Enclosure Act. It is not clear if there are some relic boundaries at Cleughfoot Farm. The northern farm boundary is not the usual enclosure straight line and this may indicate an ancient boundary.

A school is shown for the first time, just south of the study area, close to Sook Hill on the road skirting north of Melkridge Common.

8.5 Second Edition OS Map 1898

The second edition of the 6" to 1 mile Ordnance Survey sheets were undertaken in the last period of the 19th century. Their principal interest is that they capture any industrial or other modern developments that occurred in the last half of the 19th century. In the case of Edges Green a number of new features are apparent that are connected to coal mining. Whilst no mining activity took place within the study area Fig. 28 below shows that there had been coal workings between the first and second editions of the Ordnance Survey (1866-1898). All these areas are shown as disused and relate to an old Coal Shaft west of Robin Rock, old workings and levels south of Wallshield Crags. In a new development a series of coal pits are shown to the east of the study area, south of the Robin Rock wood plantation.

Fig. 28 Edges Green, North 1898 O.S. Map extract



National Library of Scotland

The map of the southern portion of the Edges Green area does not show any significant changes and no coal workings are indicated. The School, shown earlier, has gone and a Methodist Chapel has been built at Bridge End. Later 20th century maps do not show any significant changes.

8.6 Changes to Local Government and Civil Parishes in 19th and 20th Centuries

Local administration was radically re-organised towards the end of the 19th century. From the Tudor age onwards, local affairs, from justice to poor relief to road maintenance were managed by a plethora of Local Boards, Parish Vestries and Manorial and County Courts. The first major piece of reform legislation in 1888 created the County Council as an elected body responsible for delivering a number of important local services and justice. This was followed in 1894 by a second Act that created a second tier of elected authority, the Urban and Rural District Councils. Edges Green came within Haltwhistle Rural District Council, which lasted until 1974 when the reform Act of that year created Tynedale District Council. This continued until 2009 when the second tier authorities were abolished in Northumberland to create a single unitary authority, Northumberland County Council.

The medieval parishes were finally reorganised by the 1894 Local Government Act. Prior to this Edges Green had been part of Haltwhistle Parish. At this stage, Melkridge Parish and its Parish Council was formed. Since then Edges Green has been largely contained within Melkridge Parish, with a small part in the west in Haltwhistle Parish. Fig. 29 below shows the extent of Melkridge Parish.

Fig. 29 Melkridge Parish 1911



8.7 Industrial and Modern Developments

8.7.1 Limekilns and Quarrying

There is no evidence for large-scale stone quarrying in Edges Green. However, there is evidence of several small-scale quarries scattered throughout the area, some of which may have origins in the earlier periods. The quarries shown on the 1783 Enclosure Map, to the north and to the south of Edges Green do not appear as active by the time of the Ordnance Survey maps from the second half of the 19th century. The Limekilns marked north of Edges Green and to the south of Wealside on the 1st Edition of the Ordnance Survey have disappeared by the end of the 19th century.

8.7.2 Coal Mining

Coal Mining became important to the Haltwhistle area from the 18th century onwards, although there are records of coal extraction going back further into the 17th century. The primary area of coal mining was to the north of Haltwhistle along and near the Haltwhistle Burn. By the 19th Century there were significant coal mines at Plenmeller Colliery, South Tyne Colliery and Blaxett Colliery. By the 20th century these pits employed several hundred men. Blaxett Mine ceased in the 1920s. South Tyne and Plenmeller mines lasted until 1930, when over a thousand men were made redundant. Further to the west there was also a significant coal mine at Thirwall Common, which operated from 1834 until 1926 and had its own mineral railway line to link to the main Carlisle-Newcastle line.

The 1837 survey map by Sopwith shows early coal pits on the very edge of the survey area in the north. These could not be seen on a walk over survey and have probably been filled in when later coal workings commenced at Robin's Rock. They may have been early 19th century exploratory pits. Coal Mining was conducted on the periphery of the Edges Green area at the following pits and an exploration for a Drift Mine was also conducted within the study area:

- Wallshield Coll. 1902-1985 GR NY715 702

This appears to be the oldest coal mine within the area and also the smallest. It employed only a handful of miners from the outset in 1902. It discontinued in 1935 and re-started during the war in 1940 with 21 miners. It closed in 1985. It remained in private hands throughout.

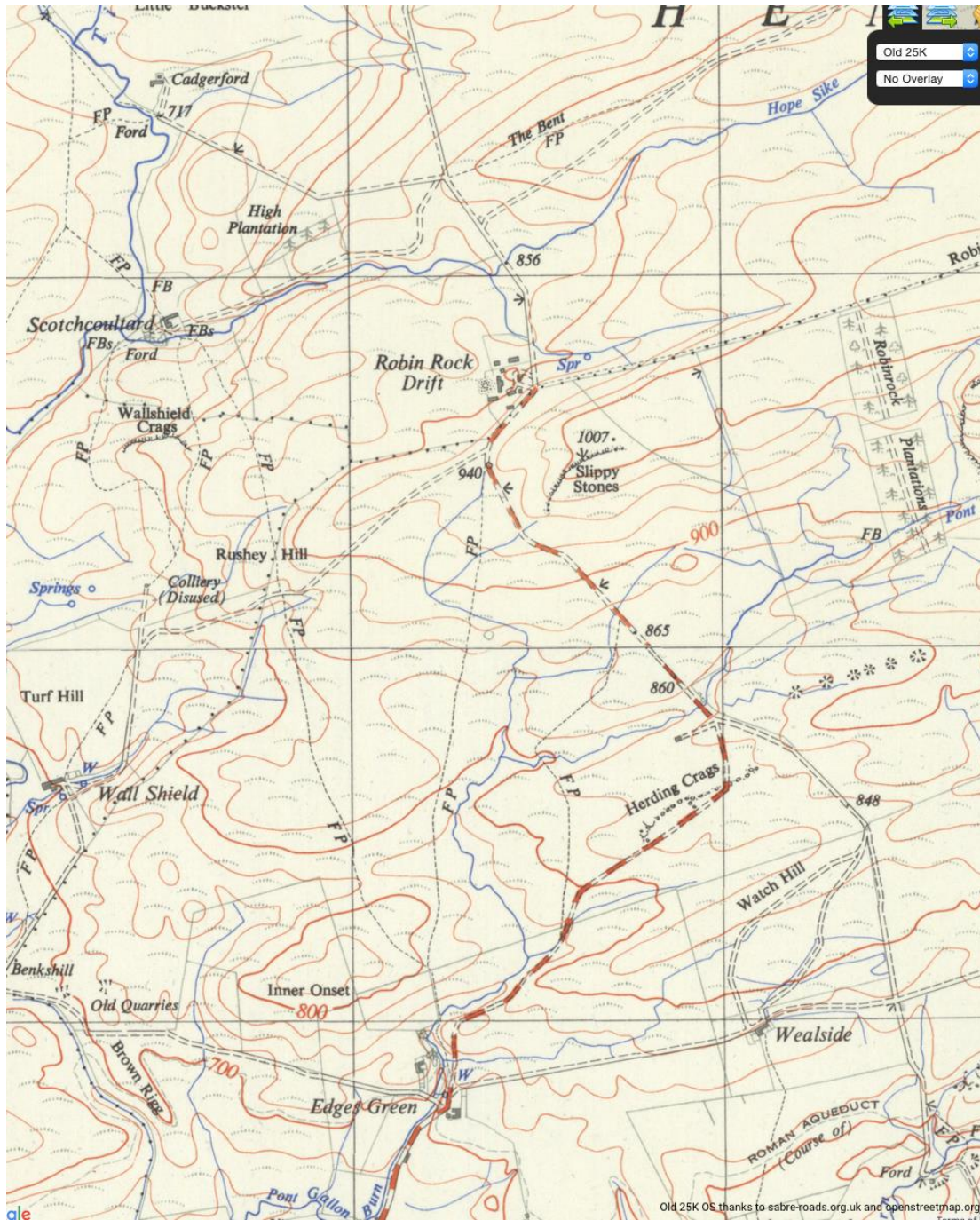
- Ventners Hall Coll. 1937-1959 GR NY725 707

Ventners Hall Colliery, founded by the Ventners Hall Colliery Company was situated to the east of the current road to Scotch Coulthard, just to the north of our study area. Like most collieries it expanded during the war to meet demand. It employed close to 150 miners during the war and achieved peak employment in 1949 when 190 men were employed. They were bused into the site from Haltwhistle. The mine was nationalized in 1947 and eventually closed, still employing 167 men in 1959.

- Robin Rock Drift 1940s-1991 GR. NY729 708

This drift mine is situated to the west of the Scotch Coulthard road, also right on the edge of the study area. It was also owned by the Ventners Hall Colliery Company and opened in response to the war effort in 1940 employing 46. It was nationalised in 1947 and was closed in 1950 when employing 101 men. It re-opened in 1975, employing 13 and finally closed in 1991 employing 6 people at the time. The complex of buildings associated with this mine can be seen in Fig. 30 below.

Fig. 30 Map showing Robin Rock Drift Mine workings, 1954



Source: Ordnance Survey 1:25000 Sheet NY77 1954

- Hilda's Exploration Drift Mine c. 1958 GR NY728698

According to John Parker who was an engineer and worked in the local mines, the Ventners Hall Colliery had been following the Thirlwall coal seam south when they encountered a fault line near to the Pont Gallon Burn in 1956. He refers to the Hilda Drift as an exploration drift and it seems safe to assume that it was undertaken by the NCB as part of their effort to maintain Ventners Hall Colliery. Photos below show some key features of the Drift Mine.



Further detail of employment and the Companies who operated the mines is provided in Annex 3.

8.7.3 Ironstone Mining

Extensive ironstone mining took place just south of the study area on Haltwhistle Common for a brief period from 1856 until 1860. A small mineral line connected to the main railway line.

8.7.4 Railway

Whilst the development of the Newcastle to Carlisle Railway in 1838 is not directly relevant to Edges Green it would have had a significant impact for the farming communities there. The railway provided improved transport for farming inputs as well as cattle and sheep to markets.

8.7.5 Roads

The road system that emerges at the end of the 18th century (as shown in the Enclosure Map of 1783) bears a striking resemblance to the modern network. The primary access from the Military Road (built between 1751 and 1758) through Caw Gap to Edges Green is the same, as is the direction it then takes west towards Whiteside. However, the only way north beyond this point was a trackway to a quarry. This has since become the main route north to Robin Rock and Scots Coulthard. In the late 18th century that route went directly to the east of Edges Green via Wealside and thence north.

Roads indicated on the 18th century Enclosure Maps are all likely to have been unmade tracks, virtually impossible in bad weather. They probably followed ancient trackways that may have been used for millennia.

The metalled roads and decent bridges will not have been a feature until at least the late 19th century when responsibility for road maintenance fell to the County Councils under the 1888 Local Government Act. The earlier Highway Districts and Boards, created in 1862, were usually inadequate and lacked resources and commitment.

8.7.6 Forestry

One of the striking things when comparing the Ordnance Survey maps of Tynedale from the beginning of the 20th century to now is the transformation of the uplands north of Hadrian's Wall from bare moor and fell to the vast tracts of Forest of Wark and Kielder. These forests began to be established in the aftermath of the First World War and then, more assiduously in the period from the 1940s. The road through the Caw Gap past Edges Green to the Forested areas of Wark and Kielder is used regularly by logging companies to transport felled timber from the forests to primary users such as Egger's of Hexham, who, in fact, own large tracts of these forest areas. Thus, while Edges Green does not itself have forests the use of forest resources has a daily impact on the area, in the same way that coal mining also had an impact via the use of the roads.

8.8 Boundary Stones

There are a number of boundary stones situated to the far north of the study area just below Benks Hills (NY 714688). They may be Parish Boundary Stones as they seem to mark the boundary between Melkridge and Haltwhistle Parish. There are about 12 of these stones and they have been set in substantial plinths. Why they are located there is unknown. It may have been a zone of uncertainty. Parish boundaries sought to follow old boundaries or natural features. At this point the landscape is very wet and is also where the Roman Aqueduct follows the contour, compounding the number of small streams flowing there. The stones are shown below in a series of photos.



Another set of stones look as if they have been wedged into cracks on one of the ridges, Herding Crags (NY 727695). There is an outside possibility that they are result of natural weathering but these seems very unlikely as the photos illustrate. If they are boundary stones it is difficult to ascertain a date. There is a possibility that they might be of prehistoric origin.



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7/1/2* Area to north of study area around Robin's Rock

ZBL/68/4/3/1-4 Henshaw and Melkridge Enclosure Claims

ZCL/D/70-73 Melkridge and Henshaw Commons Enclosed 1787

Henshaw

ZLK Box 8* Notebook and perambulation of Boundary

ZG1/29/3 Henshaw

691/62/6* Henshaw 1784 (Award and Plans)

309/M/71* Henshaw 1783-87 (Plans)

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ZCL D/16* Plan of Haltwhistle Manor, 1838

ZCL D/17* Haltwhistle Township

ZCL D/70* Tracing of M & H Encl Plan

QRA 33/1-2* Haltwhistle 1713 Award

ZAD 3/1-2* Haltwhistle 1713 (Award)

ZAD 1-18 Haltwhistle Manor Estates

4922 Plan of lands of Haltwhistle 1653

Melkridge Manor

ZBL 2/13/21 Melkridge Manor 1700

ZBL/1/92-106* Melkridge Manor Award Boundary, 1744

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Annex 1 Vegetation Change and Man's impact

Table of General Climate and Vegetation changes in Upland Britain (12,000 BP to present day)

Period	Climate	Vegetation
Upper Palaeolithic 50,000-8,000BC	Glacial until c.17,000BP Increasing temp. and ice melting, with fluctuations (Dryas and Allerod periods).	No vegetation until ice retreats and then cold tundra conditions with mosses and lichens established and then small plants, some flowering like Dryas.
Mesolithic 8,000-4,000 BC	Warmer climate from 10,000 BP	First trees established: Juniper and Birch. Alder and Hazel in wetter areas. Then oak and elm and some pine. Rising sea levels in east drown lower areas and end land bridge by end of period.
Neolithic 4,000-2,000BC	Climatic Optimum. Warmer on average than in recent times. Periods of high rainfall.	Spread of deciduous forest, even above current tree-line. Oak and elm and lime dominant generally with some Pine in certain areas.
Bronze Age 2,000- 800BC	Waning of temperatures, with seasonal dryness. Deterioration of climate from 1000 BC, cooler and wetter.	Tree-lines retreats. Capacity for re-forestation lessens, especially on thin soils. Peat formation in wetter and boggy areas. Human influence of tree clearance and soil loss
Iron Age 800 BC – AD 43	Colder and wetter period	Increase in oak and elm in lower areas. Loss of trees in higher zones. Continued peat accumulation. Continued impact of human farming.
Iron Age-Roman AD 43-410	Warmer and wetter period with some very cold winters	Increase tree clearance through human activity
Early medieval 410-1066	After AD 550 climate enters cooler and wetter period.	Tree cover recovers, largely due to less farming and to climate conditions. Increase in boggy land in upland areas.
Medieval 1066-1603	Temperatures rise, allowing 3 centuries of warmer and dryer conditions. So-called "Little Ice Age" starts around 1300	Primary influence on vegetation is man's activities.
Post-medieval 1603-Present	Continuation of colder temperatures, with some harsh winters.	Primary influence on vegetation is man's activities.

Compiled from various sources

Early Medieval Tynedale

Extract from *A Landscape Character Assessment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park*, (2007) which was produced for Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park, by Julie Martin Associates and Alison Farmer Associates.

“The early medieval period (410-1066 AD) saw relatively little change in the way people lived their lives, although there were major shifts in settlement pattern. In the earliest post-Roman phase, sometimes called the Dark Age, the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria, established after invasion by the Angles and other Germanic raiders, covered the whole of the study area and was ruled from Bamburgh. This period witnessed a change from a settlement pattern based largely on Roman forts, vici and Romano-British farmsteads with roundhouses, to a system of lowland hamlets and villages, many of which still survive today. By the seventh century, these would have consisted of clusters of timber houses, sometimes around timber churches, as this period also saw the rise of Christianity. It is generally thought that the land at this time was divided into townships (parishes after Christianity was adopted), which in turn were grouped into shires.

The kingdom of Northumbria was converted initially to the Celtic and then to the Roman Church in the mid seventh century. At this time, a magnificent monastery was built at Hexham, parts of which survive beneath the present-day abbey. Church influence was also evident further north, where the Lindisfarne monastery is believed to have owned land in the Cheviots at the Breamish valley. Although stone crosses from this period can still be seen in parts of the study area, very little of the early fabric of the monasteries at Hexham or Lindisfarne survived the catastrophic destruction caused by Viking raids and invasions in the ninth century. The religious community that had been based at Lindisfarne relocated southwards, eventually settling at Durham towards the end of the tenth century, where it amassed great wealth and land holdings.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, much of Northumbria fell to the Danes and the Norse. It appears that there was relatively little Viking settlement in the areas north of the Tyne Gap, although further south, in the North Pennines, place name and other evidence suggests more widespread Viking settlement, particularly in moorland areas, where transhumance was practised. By the early eleventh century, the kingdom of Northumbria had been reduced in status to an earldom, part of the new kingdom of England, and southward expansion of the kingdom of Scotland to the River Tweed had divided Northumbria in two. This new Anglo-Scottish Border would dominate life in the region for centuries to come. “

Medieval Tynedale

The Liberty of Tyndale after 1296 (extract)

The lordship of Tindale was taken by Edward I on the death of Alexander III of Scotland in 1286, which prompted an upsurge in Scottish nationalism (if that is not too modern a term) led by Wallace but with John Balliol and/or Robert Bruce at the official head. Later Edward I restored the liberty to Balliol, who in turn granted the liberty of Wark in Tindale to Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham, upon whose death in 1311 the English crown resumed possession.

Subsequently remaining with the crown the lordship was granted out to many individuals, until James I of England finally disposed of it to George Home, lord Home of Berwick, afterward earl of Dunbar. When he died in 1611 he left two daughters as

coheiresses, and the manor, or lordship, of Wark in Tindale (a major portion of the lordship of Tindale) passed to the earl of Suffolk, who sold it to Francis Radcliffe in 1665 who thus became possessed of considerable lands in Tindale as he was also baron of Dilston, and viscount of Langley, in addition to being the earl of Derwentwater. All these lands, titles and properties were confiscated from James Radcliffe, earl of Derwentwater, when he was attainted and then beheaded at Tower Hill, London, for his part in the Jacobite uprising of 1715. They were eventually granted to the Commissioners of the Greenwich Hospital, and the manor of Wark was sold by them to the Duke of Northumberland, who retains the property to the present time.

Source: <http://www.tyndale.org/tsj07/marsden1.html>

Tynedale in the Medieval period (extract)

The late medieval period (1066-1603 AD) saw a series of great changes in people's lives and in the landscape. These were associated with the consolidation of Norman control after the Conquest, which was followed by a century of relative peace and prosperity and then by three centuries of Anglo-Scottish and internal conflict. Effectively, this meant that much of Northumberland was a lawless waste at what was a very formative time for most English landscapes.

Under William the Conqueror, a feudal system was established whereby land was granted to a small number of loyal barons, who built substantial castles, originally in timber but soon in stone, and established hunting forests in the Cheviots, Coquetdale, Redesdale and North Tynedale. This land holding system of 'baronies' and 'liberties' affected the land north of the Tyne more radically than land to the south, where religious control as part of the Bishopric of Wilfred (covering Allendale, Mid Tynedale, Devil's Water and north-west Hexhamshire) was allowed to remain. In this part of the study area the church, and particularly the monastic orders, were very influential, notably at Blanchland in the North Pennines, where the Premonstratensian order founded a monastery. This area was also characterised by vaccaries (cattle ranches) and medieval parks.

The agricultural landscape in the thirteenth century would have been one of villages, largely with timber buildings, surrounded by rig and furrow open field systems. Beyond the fields around each village were areas of common pasture, woodland and waste. While the medieval population was concentrated in villages and hamlets, the hills, which contained the remains of so many late prehistoric hillforts and settlements, were occupied seasonally, the summer 'sheilings' or pastures having associated temporary dwellings. A system of drove roads, focused on Roman Dere Street, and connecting southwards to Elsdon, provided important links to Scotland and a route for driving Highland cattle to market.

In 1296, however, Edward I attacked Scotland, initiating a period of fighting between the two counties that lasted until the Union of the two Crowns in 1603. As well as major battles such as Otterburn in 1388 and Flodden in 1513, there was constant raiding or 'reiving' across the border; and policies encouraging people to defend themselves encouraged local feuding between powerful families. The result was great suffering and poverty. The area's medieval villages were blighted by Scottish raids, a deteriorating climate (a 'little Ice Age' that lasted for five or six centuries) and the Black Death. These and later other factors (see below) led to the abandonment and shrinkage of many villages. At the same time, however, wealthier families built defensible hall houses and towers or peles of distinctive style (such as the bleak, solid structures of Thirlwall and Aydon Castles, both in the Tyne valley), and major defensive structures such as the Norman castle at Prudhoe were strengthened. Later, towards the end of the sixteenth century, hundreds of bastle houses (fortified

farmhouses) were built, all to the same blueprint and usually within 30km of the border; many of these survive today.

Although the feuding and reiving diminished after the Union, it is fair to say that it took centuries for the Border hills to recover their peace and prosperity. Border ballads, passed down by word of mouth through the generations, still recall the harsh times of the Border reivers.

Source: A Landscape Character Assessment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park, which was produced for Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park in 2007, by Julie Martin Associates and Alison Farmer Associates,

Medieval Haltwhistle (extract)

From the mid 12th century and to the start of the 14th century, Haltwhistle lay within the Liberty or Franchise of Tynedale. This was one of a number of areas of northern England, such as the Umfraville Liberty, the Palatinate of Durham, or the ecclesiastical liberties of Hexhamshire and Tynemouth, within which direct administration by the Crown and its officers was represented by a vice-regal or subordinate authority. In the case of the Liberty of Tynedale, this authority was the King of Scotland and although the liberty was certainly not Scottish territory, this may have seemed a legal nicety to the population. Within much of it, subordinate appointees of the Scottish King held sway. Haltwhistle, for instance, was held by the de Roos (see below), who also held Bellister and Wark-on-Tyne up to the 14th century.

English Kings were careful to retain certain powers within liberties. These included the rights to allow settlements to establish markets and fairs and to be constituted as boroughs. Hodgson (1840, 121) was in no doubt that 'In antient times this town was styled a borough and governed by a bailiff', providing evidence for this assertion in the form of deeds from the 15th century which describe the conveyance of burgage properties and another which records the title of seneschal ('Robert Stevenson, presbyter of the parish and seneschal of Hawtwessil, witness to an admittance to a burgage in that town, 3 July 1473' 1840, fn125)

But no authority by an English King for the establishment of a borough at Haltwhistle has ever been located.

The earliest documentary evidence for Haltwhistle, the 12th century Melrose Chronicle, mentions that William the Lion, King of Scotland, on the marriage of Robert de Roos to Isabella, his natural daughter, gave Robert certain lands at Haltwhistle (Melrose Chronicle, 48). There is also a record of the same king granting a carucate of land in *Hautwysel* to the Priory of Carlisle, a grant confirmed by Henry II (Hodgson 1840, 115). Neither of these necessarily refers to an urban centre. The de Roos also held Bellister Castle (immediately to the south of the Tyne from Haltwhistle) and Wark-on-Tyne from the 12th to the 14th century. From this family, the Manor of Haltwhistle passed to the Musgraves of Hartley Castle and Eden Hall (Hodgson 1840, 115). Other than these references, and a number of surviving deeds, there is little archival material on which to assemble a history of the medieval settlement. Compounding this sparseness of written evidence is the near absence of archaeological investigation in the historic core of the town. As a result, current understanding of the extent and layout of the medieval town is limited. Components of the town are described below.

Source: Haltwhistle: Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey, which was produced by Northumberland County Council with the support of English Heritage in 2009.

Wark Manor (extract)

There is no certain evidence for a settlement at Wark before the 12th century when Wark became the centre or 'caput' of the Lordship of Tynedale. This was administered

by Scottish Kings up until the death of Alexander III in 1286 and not fully integrated into the rest of Northumberland until the late 15th century. An earthwork castle - a motte or a motte and bailey - is thought to have been constructed at Wark on Mote Hill and a prison and assizes for the lordship lay somewhere within the settlement (and the remains of what may have been a very substantial medieval tower within the village were uncovered by workmen in 1804). In 1296, Edward I annexed the lordship of Tynedale during his invasion of Scotland. It was not for many years that the border was stabilised and the North Tyne became an area of endemic lawlessness and reiving until well into the 17th century.

The Barony of Wark was sold by the Radcliffe family to the Earl of Derwentwater. His estates, including Wark, were confiscated by the crown in 1715 after his part in the Jacobite Rebellion. The lands were passed on to the Commissioners of the Greenwich Hospital in 1775 who invested in roads and buildings and some agricultural improvement. There was also coal mining nearby at Suttly Row near Birtley, although Wark never took on the aspect of an industrial settlement it did have a Mechanics Institute. The estate was sold to the Duke of Northumberland in 1833 who continued local improvements.

Source: Wark-on-Tyne: Northumberland Extensive Urban Survey, 2009. This was published by Northumberland County with the support of English Heritage.

Ridley's of Willimoteswick (extract)

Ridley was recorded as a manor within the liberty of Tynedale and fined as a vill in the Iter of Wark in 1279. It was later one of the towns of South Tynedale which claimed exclusion from the manor of Wark in 1314-15. In 1666, twenty seven houses were listed as paying Hearth Tax, and later, in 1673, 7 customary tenements were recorded at Ridley (a further 6 listed at Ridley Hall). However in the 18th century the settlement disappeared, probably as the result of emparking associated with Ridley Hall estate (Wrathmell 1975).

The landholding spans across four medieval townships, and two ecclesiastical parishes - Haltwhistle on the west bank and Warton on the east. Rivers form important natural boundaries and the Allen is no exception. On the west side of the river much of the land formed part of the township of Ridley, a large area extending from the South Tyne in the north to Kingswood Burn in the south. Kingswood itself formed part of the township of Henshaw. On the east bank, the township of Morralee lay to the north, while in the south was the large Deanraw, a sizeable township which encompassed Staward, Harsondale and Cupola.

A township was the basic unit of medieval secular administration, and a number of townships may have operated within a single ecclesiastical parish, especially in marginal areas. The church provided for the spiritual needs of the community while the township served the corporal needs of the people. All secular taxes and legal administration were the jurisdiction of the township, including the maintenance of watercourses, boundaries and common grazing while the church was responsible for the collection of tithes and provisions for the poor.

The parish of Haltwhistle, on the east side of the river, was an extensive ancient parish which included the townships of Bellister, Blenkinsopp, Coanwood (East), Featherstone, Haltwhistle, Hartley Burn, Henshaw, Melkridge, Plainmellor, Ridley, Thirlwall, Thorngrafton, and Wall Town (Whellan 1855). Of these, Ridley was one of the largest, comprising some 4,388 acres¹¹ and encompassing the small hamlets of Allens Green, Beltingham, Willimoteswyke, as well as a number of scattered farms. The largest of the settlements were Beltingham, Willimoteswike and Ridley, all located along the fertile soils of the South Tyne lowlands, while further south were

smaller scattered hamlets. As discussed, this pattern of settlement was probably already well established by the Conquest.

The manor of Ridley was held by the Ridleys, whose family seat was originally at Willimoteswick castle, described in the 1541 survey as 'a good toure & stone house joyninge there unto of the Inherytence of Nycolas Rydley kepte in good rep'ac'ons' (Hodgson 1839, 341). It is traditionally believed to have been the birthplace of Bishop Nicholas Ridley, the Protestant martyr burned at the stake in Oxford with Latimer and Cranmer in 1555. A hall at Ridley is not mentioned until the reign of Elizabeth I, and again during that of Charles I. Hall, castle and lands subsequently fell to parliament following the Civil War (ibid).

Source: Historic Environment Survey Northumberland: Allen Banks Estate, prepared for the estate by the National Trust (2010).

List of Medieval Castles and Fortified Houses in West Tynedale

Wark, 12 Century

Featherstone, 14th Century

Tarset, 1267

Haltwhistle, Norman

Langley, 14th Century

Chipchase, 14th Century

Dally, 13th Century

Thirlwall, 12 Century

Blenkinsopp, 14th Century

Bellister, 14th Century

Bellingham, 12th Century

Haughton, 13th Century

Walltown, 16th Century

Sewingshields, 15th Century

Willimoteswick, 12th Century

Annex 3: Post-Medieval and Modern

1604 The Survey of the Borders

From: King James I and the western Border. By G. P. JONES, M.A., Litt.D. 1968 Paper*

“SHORTLY after his accession to the English throne King James I, wishing to get rid of hindrances to the uniting of his two kingdoms, decided to tackle one of the obstacles, the problem of the Border, by setting up a commission of investigation. The commissioners were instructed in the first place to inquire into and determine the boundary between the two realms; secondly, they were to report on the extent and condition of lands in the Border district; and thirdly to assess the values of the lands, quarries, mines and other resources of the region and consider how the king might derive more benefit from it. Their findings, preserved in the Border Survey of 1604, are of great importance for the study of conditions along the northern edges of Northumberland and Cumberland. The evidence is here considered only in relation to the western end of the Border, including what were called the Debateable Lands. “

Tynedale in 1604 Border Survey from, Barker and Butlin (1973)

(c) Northumberland: the highland west

The western interior regions of Northumberland comprise high peat-covered hills and fells, rising to c. 3,000 feet, penetrated by the valleys of the upper reaches of the Aln, Coquet, Rede, North Tyne, and Allen. The major physiographic contrast between unlimited moorland and limited valley slopes and floors was reflected in the period under consideration in the rural economy, which was based essentially on cattle rearing (and stealing), with small areas of arable land in the valleys providing the essential food and drink grains and the alluvial meadows the winter fodder. Life was made even more difficult and precarious in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries by the continuing state of warfare on the borders. The society of these areas was

‘one where the strong lived on the weak, and where “reiving”, with its attendant arts of blackmail and murder were not thought of as a crime, but as the expression of a way of life. Violence was stimulated by the border, and by a mounting population pressure on available resources.’²

The border clans, according to a sixteenth-century survey, ‘doe inhabite in some places three or fower household, soe that they cannot uppon soe small fermes without any other craftes live truely but either be stealing in England or Scotland’.³ Violence was also conditioned by the strong blood and kinship ties of the border clan families,

‘and in the archaic communities of Redesdale, Tynedale and Coquetdale in the upland of the East and Middle Marches, and in Bewcastle

and Eskdale in the West, the joint family seems to have survived until well into the Tudor period, centring on the "stronge houses" built of "great sware oke trees strongly bounde and joined together with great tenors of the same" occupied by the headsmen of the "graynes" or clans'.¹

A number of characteristic features of rural society and economy in these regions are described in the 1604 survey of the borders.² The most notable features are: the small size of the settlements and the small quantity of arable land; the predominance of cattle rearing, and the practice of transhumance; and the practice of partible inheritance.

The arable land of the isolated farms, hamlets and small villages was located in closes or in small common fields, and the border survey, with reference to the common fields, describes how the tenants in the manor of Harbottle 'soe, reape and moae each man his knowne grownd, and after the first crops they eate all in common without either stynt or number'. In the manor of Wark, which included land in North and South Tynedale, 'they till, reape and moe each their knowne grownde particularly, and often the first crope they eate all in common without stint or number, except in some places where the tenement lyeth in severall'. The most common crops in order of importance were: oats, four-rowed winter barley or 'bigg', rye, and wheat. Pulses were also grown for cattle food. In these districts, the form taken by the common arable fields appears to have varied from small single fields or groups of flatts, cultivated by the tenants of hamlets, to larger fields, occurring in groups of two or three, associated with the larger settlements, for example, of lower North Tynedale. Table 3.3 gives some idea of the relative proportion of land uses of each type in three small settlements in North Tynedale.

In North Tynedale in 1604 there were: sixty-seven farmhouses with eighty outhouses: 468 acres of meadow, 841 acres of arable, 1,140 acres of pasture, and 9,750 acres of waste or common. The larger settlements stand out from the small hamlets and single farms; Wark, for example, having eighteen customary tenants with 111 acres of arable, 183 acres of pasture, and 97 acres of meadow. There can be no doubt, however, that 'the highland farmer's main business was the breeding of cattle,

which were sold as stores into more southerly counties, and the keeping of sheep, which were pastured on the hills and were kept for their wool'.¹ Other animals mentioned in records of the time were horses, goats, pigs, and geese. An essential part of the animal husbandry practised in these regions was the 'summering' of animals, or transhumance, on the sheilings of the high pastures. This practice was a carefully controlled affair: the 1604 survey, referring to the North and South Tynedale tenants, states that 'for their sheiling growndes they doe begyn and end by agreement among themselves according as the season falleth out'.² In the manor of Harbottle, there were eighteen places or 'high landes called Summer growndes', totalling 21,200 acres.³ 'The aforesaide growndes are used as summer and sheildinge grounds by the inhabitants of the Manor, wherein each man knoweth his sheildinge steed; and they sheylde together by surnames, not keepinge catle accordinge to the proporcion of the

rent, but eatinge all in common without stint or number.’¹ The ‘summering’ season normally lasted until August, but could be terminated by unseasonable weather, or the activities of the Scots or of neighbouring clans.

The practice of partible inheritance was a significant factor in the rural life of these regions. This process of equal subdivision of a man’s estate among all his sons, either at his death or at an earlier date when the sons were capable or desirous of owning their own land, is frequently mentioned in documents referring to life in these border areas. A certificate of the musters of the middle marches for 1580 contains a statement that the men of North and South Tynedale ‘have ever had a custom, if a man have issue ten sons, eight, six, five or four, and sits on a holding but of six shillings rent, every son shall have a piece of his father’s holding’.² This practice undoubtedly gave rise to high population pressure on the better quality land. In 1542 Tynedale and Redesdale were described as being ‘overcharged’ with inhabitants, and there can be no doubt that the physiographic population density of these areas was high, and that they were, under the existing conditions, overpopulated. The effects of partible inheritance are clearly seen in the small-sized holdings of tenants – members of the same family – who inhabited the hamlets of North and South Tynedale and Redesdale. Table 3.4 provides illustration of this fact, giving details of the holdings in Carrick, Headshope and Landshot, three small settlements in Redesdale in 1604.

Robin Rock Drift
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Robin Rock Drift

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Robin Rock Drift

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Location: Haltwhistle
 13½ miles [22 km] WNW of Hexham

Map Ref: (Sheet 86, 87, OL43) NY729708, 55° 1' 51" N, 2° 25' 26" W

Opened:

Closed:

Owners: 1940s - [Ventners Hall Collieries Ltd.](#)
 1947 - [National Coal Board \(N.C.B.\)](#)
 1970s - F. Dodd

Output: 1940 - Coal: Household, Steam. (30,000 tons)
 1950 - Coal: Gas, Household, Steam.
 1972 - Coal: Household.
 1975 - Coal: Household.
 1980 - Coal: Household.
 1985 - Coal: Household.
 1990 - Coal: Household, Steam.
 1991 - Coal: Household, Steam.

Employment:

Year	Pit	Total	50	100	150	200	250	Below	Above
1940		46	██████████					35	11
1945		149	████████████████████					107	42
1950		101	██████████████					76	25
1972								<i>Developing</i>	
1975		13	██████					10	3
1980		3	███					3	
1985		4	████					3	1
1990		6	██████					5	1

Seams Worked: 1940 - Thirwell
 1950 - Thirlwall
 1972 - Thirwall [Developing]
 1975 - Thirwall
 1980 - Thirwell
 1985 - Thirwell
 1990 - Thirwell
 1991 - Thirwell

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Ventners Hall Colliery

Summary **Description** **Disasters** **Names** **Local Collieries** **Credits**

Location: Greenhead
14 miles [22 km] WNW of Hexham
(Sheet 86, 87, OL43) NY725707, 55° 1' 48" N, 2° 25' 49" W

Map Ref: [Go to ...](#) 1951 map from the *Guide to the Coalfields* (Colliery Guardian)

Maps:

Opened: 1937

Closed: 20 Feb 1959

Owners: ???? - [Ventners Hall Colliery Ltd.](#)
1947 - [National Coal Board \(N.C.B.\)](#)

Output: 1947 - Coal: Gas, Household, Steam. (45,000 tons)
1951 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1952 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1953 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1954 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1955 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1956 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1957 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1958 - Coal: Household, Steam.
1959 - Coal: Household, Steam.

Employment:	Year	Pit	Total	Below	Above
	1947		150	115	35
	1949		190	160	30
	1951		110	80	30
	1952		110	80	30
	1953		142	104	38
	1954		142	111	31
	1955		142	111	31
	1956		142	111	31
	1957		167	132	35
	1958		167	132	35
	1959		167	132	35

[Go to ...](#) *NCB Employment Figures*

[Go to ...](#) *Colliery Management (prior to 1960)*

Seams Worked: 1951 - Thirlwall
1952 - Thirlwall
1953 - Thirlwall
1954 - Thirlwall
1955 - Thirlwall
1956 - Thirlwall
1957 - Thirlwall
1958 - Thirlwall



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Ventners Hall Collieries Ltd.

Warning: This is not intended to be an exhaustive history of the company, but an indication of the changes of ownership and the links between companies and directors in those companies. The company may own other properties etc. and there may have been other changes of ownership etc. for which we currently do not have details.

1944

Collieries/Mines Owned

Name of Mine	Locality	Manager	Employees	
			Under ground	Above ground
Robin Rock Drift	Haltwhistle	H. L. Wilson	100	35

1945

Collieries/Mines Owned

Name of Mine	Locality	Manager	Employees	
			Under ground	Above ground
Robin Rock Drift	Haltwhistle	J. Boyd	107	42

1947 - at the time of Nationalisation

Company Details

Registered Office: Westgate Chambers, Haltwhistle, Northumberland
Source: 1947 Colliery Year Book and Coal Trades Directory. Published by The Louis Cassier Co. Ltd., from a copy held in the Scottish Mining Museum, Newtongrange, Midlothian

Company Directors

Managing Director: **Wardle, G. R.**, "Dunholme," Haltwhistle
Directors: **Coates, Matthew**, Lornest, Haltwhistle
Reay, J., "Dilbeck," Westwood, Bardon Mill
Robson, B., Tyne View, Haltwhistle
Robson, S., Haltwhistle
Secretary: **Coates, M.**
Source: 1947 Colliery Year Book and Coal Trades Directory. Published by The Louis Cassier Co. Ltd., from a copy held in the Scottish Mining Museum, Newtongrange, Midlothian

www.dmm.org.uk/collnear/w042.htm

Wall Shield Colliery

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ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Wall Shield Colliery

OS Grid Ref: NY 71500 70200

Collieries and Pits within 5 miles (8km)

[Go to...](#) Simulated map showing the immediate vicinity of Wall Shield Colliery

[Go to...](#) main page for Wall Shield Colliery

In the following table the value given for the distance (miles/kilometres) from **Wall Shield Colliery** are "as the crow flies" and are provided as an indication only.

Colliery	Location	Distance	Opened	Closed
Angerton Quarry	Reaygarth	4.8m/7.8km		
Barcombe Colliery	Bardon Mill	4.6m/7.4km		
Barcombe Quarry	Bardon Mill	4.5m/7.2km		
Baydon Colliery	Baydon, nr. Haltwhistle	3.5m/5.7km		
Birkshaw Colliery	Bardon Mill	4.6m/7.5km		
Blackett Colliery	Haltwhistle	4.0m/6.4km		Mar 1927
Blenkinsop Colliery	Haltwhistle	4.6m/7.4km	Bef. 1842	2002
Byron Drift	Greenhead	4.8m/7.7km		05 Aug 1927
Castle Drift (NBL)	Greenhead	4.6m/7.5km	Bef. 1842	2002
Cawfields Quarry	Haltwhistle	2.2m/3.6km		
Cockmount Hill Mine	Waltown	2.5m/4.1km		
Corkton (Ironstone)	Henshaw	3.9m/6.3km		
Fell End Colliery	Haltwhistle	3.9m/6.3km		1951
Greenhead Quarry	Greenhead	3.5m/5.6km		
Harelaw Pit		4.9m/7.9km		
John Pit	Haltwhistle	4.6m/7.4km		
Leeshall Colliery	Haltwhistle	3.1m/5.0km		
Melkridge Colliery	Melkridge, Haltwhistle	3.5m/5.7km		
Melkridge Pit	Melkridge, Haltwhistle	3.2m/5.2km		
Quarry Pit	Haltwhistle	4.6m/7.4km		
Ramshaw Drift	Haltwhistle	4.1m/6.7km		
Ramshawfield Drift	Bardon Mill	4.1m/6.7km		
Robin Rock Drift	Haltwhistle	0.9m/1.5km		
Shawhead Drift	Bardon Mill	3.9m/6.3km		
South Tyne Colliery	Haltwhistle	3.3m/5.4km		1931
Thirlwall Colliery	Haltwhistle	4.1m/6.7km		1926
Ventners Hall Colliery	Greenhead	0.6m/1.1km	1937	20 Feb 1959
Wall Town Quarry (Whinstone)	Greenhead	3.8m/6.1km		
West Crindledykes Quarry	Greenhead	4.6m/7.4km		
Wrytree Colliery	Greenhead	4.2m/6.8km		

[Go to...](#) Simulated map showing the immediate vicinity of Wall Shield Colliery

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