

FISHER (E.J.)

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VOLUME II

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TOPCLIFFE

Section 1

Present Day Survey

The village of Topcliffe lies about eight miles north-east of Ripon and four miles south-east of Thirsk, somewhat south of the main road which to-day links those two towns.

A century and a half ago, the ecclesiastical parish of Topcliffe included besides the town itself, the villages and hamlets of Asenby, Baldersby, Catton, Dalton, Dishforth, Eldmire, Crakehill, Marton le Moor, Rainton with Newby and Skipton on Swale. These villages, some of which have since become separate parishes, are clustered within a four or five mile radius of Topcliffe, which stands about the centre of the rough circle thus indicated.

To describe the area presents certain difficulties and entails working from Topcliffe outwards in different directions. The whole district is low but undulating, rising in most places to only 100 feet, except towards the south-west corner at Marton le Moor on the watershed dividing the valley of the Ure from the Swale valley in or near which most of the lordship lies.

Topcliffe 'town' stands on a ridge about the 75 foot contour on the left bank of the Swale which runs here in a deep-cut channel. When approached from west or south the town presents an exaggerated impression of standing on a height, as the road rises steeply from the old stone bridge¹ to the wide easterly street, on the cobbles of

1 See Photographs 1 and 3.

which stands the stump of the old market cross.¹ The whole village is dominated by a dignified and handsome church, which, along with its graveyard, occupies the crest of the ridge and north-west slope to the river bank. Much of the village is built round a road system like a capital A in plan, with the main road to Thirsk² forming the base of a double triangle. From the apex run two roads, one of which meanders by the riverside via Catton to Skipton, the other striking boldly north-north-west to Northallerton, through the middle of what are still called Topcliffe Parks.³ The majority of the level open space to the east of this road is occupied by Royal Air Force Station, Topcliffe, though there are also two small farms near the perimeter track. The eastern edge of the Parks is marked by the Thirsk road already referred to. About two and a half miles from Topcliffe on the outer edge of the lordship stands the farm house of Thorpefield, originally a separate hamlet, and a little nearer Topcliffe, but on the east of the road, another farm house - Gristhwaite Farm - again, once a separate village.

To return to Topcliffe - at the eastern base of the triangle stands the old Tolbooth - a building whose upper storey is reached by an outside stone staircase, once the

1 See photograph 6.

2 A.168

3 A.167

site of the manorial courtroom and local 'lock-up', whilst the lower storey used to be occupied by shops.¹ At present the whole is being converted into a parish room. A hundred yards or so to the east, an unmetalled road, Whin Lane, leads southwards to the sites of three successive Percy residences, the motte and bailey known as Maiden Bower, Cock Lodge, once a timber and plaster building approached through two sets of ditches, and the present 'Manor House', once a small Percy hunting lodge, which stands on the far side of the Cod Beck, near its junction with the Swale. The area traversed by Whin Lane was once the Little Park which is bounded by the Swale and its north eastern tributary the Cod Beck.

To the east of Topcliffe and reached by a secondary road which leaves the Thirsk road at Gallows Green - the site of the medieval gallows - lies Dalton, a straggling village with a maze of lanes and turnings, which occupies a bowl-shaped, damp valley traversed by half a dozen sluggish streams, all tributaries of the Cod Beck, which is equipped with flood dykes throughout almost all its length. Much of the area between Dalton village, the Cod Beck and the Swale is occupied by Royal Air Force Station, Dalton where so much difficulty was experienced during the 1939-45 war in the matter of satisfactory runways, that the use of the heaviest aircraft had finally to be discontinued as a

1 See photographs 7 and 8.

result of the boggy and unreliable nature of the ground. South of the village a few scattered farms represent the hamlets of Eldmire and Crakehill, both close to the meandering and embanked Swale.

The nearest of Topcliffe's associates is Asenby, on the higher ground - a bluff site - to the south and west of the Swale. Most of the small number of houses lie off the main road from Boroughbridge, and the village is remarkable (a) for the extreme irregularity of its site, which consists of a series of sand and gravel hillocks, between and around which its three roads run, and (b) its possession of an alleged turf maze, the remains of which are to-day unconvincing.¹

South of Asenby, still on the Boroughbridge road, is the village of Dishforth, unremarkable save for one or two dignified stone-built farm houses. To-day the road from Topcliffe passes through only half of the village to reach the Great North Road, but until 1943 it was possible to reach Boroughbridge by a secondary road running almost due south from Dishforth. This road was closed to the public as a result of the extension of new runways on Royal Air Force Station, Dishforth. The terrain here is high and level and has a sand and gravel subsoil.

Beyond the Great North Road the land rises steadily

1 See photograph 17.

from 100 feet to 175 feet and in several isolated places to 200 feet. On this ridge stands Marton le Moor, a hamlet with little of note beyond a picturesque 18th century manor house and a well-marked earthen circle in the north-west corner of the parish. The whole ridge, especially to the north, is rich in prehistoric remains which include at least one other earthen circle and more than a dozen tumuli. Marton le Moor formed the extreme south-west corner of the original parish and manor of Topcliffe.

Between the Great North Road and the Swale, and north of Dishforth stand the three featureless villages of Rainton, Baldersby St. James and Baldersby, all near the spring line on the 100 foot contour. Baldersby St. James and Rainton are linked with Topcliffe by a secondary road system which skirts Baldersby Park - once Newby Park - now a private school.

Baldersby, on the Ripon - Thirsk road, is the only one of the villages in the parish which has a railway station named after and standing near to it. Topcliffe station is two miles from its village, whilst the station near Dalton is named after Sessay, the next village.

North of Baldersby is Skipton on Swale, four miles upstream from Topcliffe, the first crossing of the Swale after Topcliffe bridge. The bridges at both places are of stone and apparently of similar age. Both originally had angular recesses for pedestrians, though Topcliffe

Bridge has undergone frequent and extensive modifications, in the course of which the recesses have disappeared. The village of Skipton is picturesque without being distinguished by anything of note. Its original layout has been partly obscured by the habitation sites and other service buildings of the Royal Air Force Station, the airfield of which returned to agricultural and pastoral purposes in 1946. The road on which the village stands joins the Northallerton road at the crossroads known as Busby Stoop.

Half way along Skipton village street a secondary road leads southwards along the left bank of the Swale to the small hamlet of Catton which stands close to the river at about the same altitude as Topcliffe. From Catton the road winds vaguely through flat, mainly treeless, country containing about half a dozen farms in an area of nearly two square miles. When it nears the Swale again the road follows the southern edge of Topcliffe Great Park. The bank on which the pale used to stand can still be distinguished for some thirty yards on the left of the road just before the mills are reached. The mills are water-powered from the river across which a large weir has been constructed.¹ It seems probable that power was once obtained from the beck called the Old Sike either for the original mill or as a subsidiary for an earlier and smaller structure, as there are the remains of a dyked channel

1 See photographs 14, 15 and 16.

leading from the beck which now joins the Swale some distance downstream at Anchor Dykes. The mills are still working. After passing the mills the road climbs from the river bank up a steep slope to reach the apex of the triangle of Topcliffe Streets. Thus the circuit of the villages making up the lordship and old parish of Topcliffe has been completed.

The whole district, whilst less depressing than that surrounding Leconfield and Wressel, is comparatively featureless, and because of its general aspect, open to the north-east winds whose effect is all the greater since there are few traces of the once extensive woodland in the area.

So far as it is possible to generalise in a district whose geological structure is so mixed, the lands east of the river are mainly heavy, with clay close to the surface, whilst those on the west are lighter, with sand and gravel deposits besides much alluvial soil.

Even the four R.A.F. Stations in the area, two of which are still active,¹ have had only a slight effect upon the quiet countryside since the late war, as they are almost self-contained units whose personnel prefer the larger towns and cities for their relaxation.

1 Topcliffe and Dishforth.

Agriculture and pasture are still the only occupations in the district except for the filling stations, and the small general shops in the villages. Little modern building has been carried out except for a few agricultural labourers' cottages, though this situation might have been very different if the tentative and experimental drilling undertaken in 1947-8, especially in the neighbourhood of Dalton, had proved the existence of workable quantities of shale oil.¹

1 The earliest and most detailed extant survey of the whole lordship was taken by order of the Earl of Northumberland in 1577. The Commission under which the surveyors worked, together with the "Boulder" of Topcliffe, appears as an appendix to the Topcliffe section of this thesis. (p.155) The title pages of the Commission and the four lordships concerned are contained in the map and manuscript folder.

TOPCLIFFE

Section 2

History of the Lordship

The lordship of Topcliffe, with most of its associated hamlets, became Percy property shortly after the Conquest, before which it had been part of the estates of Bernulf, Torchil and Archil. The two villages of Asenby and Baldersby - at any rate in part - belonged to Earl Alan,¹ but both had become Percy possessions by 1284.

The Domesday Survey shows that the lordship as a whole was thriving after twenty years of Percy supervision. Catton and Dishforth had declined in value - the latter to nil - a state which was shared by Earl Alan's estates in Asenby and Baldersby. On the other hand, Topcliffe with its satellites of Crakehill, Rainton, Asenby, Skipton and Dalton, had increased in overall value from £4 to £5 and accommodated 35 villeins and 14 bordars. The church had its own glebe and was served by two priests; the mill was quoted as worth 5/-.²

These first twenty years under the Percies had shown, just as in the case of Spofforth, careful and steady development of the estates.³

1 Bawdwen Domesday 1809 p.116.

2 Op.cit. pp.66,168.

3 During the period the profits of Topcliffe church were granted for the purpose of helping in the building of York minster, in return for which the Dean and Chapter of York undertook to maintain a chaplain for the chapel in the churchyard at Topcliffe. V.C.H. N.R.Yorks. and AHP.I.p.27 and Curia Regis Rolls 1206,m,6d and 13.

In the ensuing dispute between Richard de Percy and his nephew William, Topcliffe formed part of the former's share, though when Richard died in 1244 his lands reverted to William who died in the ensuing year.

During the dispute over the estates occurs the first post-Domesday description of the Topcliffe lordship. According to the inquisition there were 600 acres of demesne arable at 6d. per acre - £15; 53 acres of demesne meadow at 1/- per acre - £2 13s. -d. - a capital messuage "not extended as it is almost fallen down"; a fishery worth 6/8; four water mills worth £9 6s. 8d.; woodland and pasture worth £6 6s. 8d.; 15 cotters who held 15 messuages and paid 26/-; 24 bovates of 6 acres each, held by twelve bondsmen, each of the bovates being worth 6/- - £7 4s. -d.

In Asenby there were 8 bovates, each of 9 acres and worth 10/- each, held by 4 bondsmen - £4. In Carleton there was only one bovate of 8 acres worth 5/-. Seven free tenants made up the total population. The total value of the lordship was £46 15s. -d.¹

This information indicates a continuing state of progress and prosperity in the lordship with which the reported state of the manor house is strangely at variance. "Capital messuage" would hardly be the term chosen to

1 PRO.Cal. of Inq. C.132 File 23/7. n.d. but circa 1220.

describe the old motte and bailey at the southern end of the peninsula between the Swale and the Cod Beck. Such a structure would be quite inadequate for what the Percies would require of their chief seat in the North Riding. The uncertain date of the inquisition further clouds the issue, yet it seems likely either that the temporary building - perhaps timber and plaster on a stone footing - had decayed during the family troubles, or that the prominent part played by the Percies in the Crown - baronial struggle had earned the destructive attentions of King John's troops in the north of England some years before. This second possibility seems the less probable in view of the general prosperity of the rest of the lordship, though the same state of affairs was reported in Spofforth in the same inquisition. A royal instruction to Henry de Neville to supply four oak trees from the Forest of Galtres to the Warden of Topcliffe Bridge so that he can repair that bridge which is broken, is again not entirely conclusive of the trend of events.¹ That the Percies continued to take a lively interest in the estate is shown by the necessity of Marmaduke Darrell's retaining an attorney to represent him in the dispute with Richard de Percy over the Eldmire - Topcliffe boundary a few years later.²

1 Cal.Cl.Rolls.1227 12 Hen.III m.14.

2 Ibid. 1236 20 Hen.III m.3d.

During the remainder of the 13th century little can be found to throw light on the development of Topcliffe. Eleanor Plantagenet, widow of Henry de Percy who died in 1272, was enfeoffed in that year with Petworth and Topcliffe lordships, and the king's escheator was ordered to assign to her a reasonable dower in addition.¹ Her son John was returned as owner in 1284/5,² his younger brother Henry succeeding him almost immediately, though not coming of age until 1294.³ It seems as though Asenby became part of Countess Eleanor's dower, whilst Dalton, Topcliffe, Crakehill, Eldmire, Catton and Skipton were among Henry's share.⁴ He was returned as still holding lands in Topcliffe and Thorpefield in 1302-3.⁵

On Earl Henry's death in 1315 the consequent survey of his lands included the following details of Topcliffe:-

"A capital messuage and a garden worth 6/8 only, as they lack repairs; 105 acres of demesne arable at 1/- per acre - £5 5s. -d.; 70 acres of demesne meadow at 6/8 per acre - £23 6s. 8d.; And in Mikelcar and Thacker 75 acres of demesne meadow at 3/- per acre - £11 5s. -d.; rents of free tenants £8 7s. -d.; rents of tenants at will £8 16s. 8d.; rents of cotters £2 3s. 4d.; a fishery worth 26/8; a watermill at Gristhwaite 40/-; two fulling mills

1 Cal.Cl.R.56 Hen.III m.2. and 1 Ed.I Nov.29 1272 m.11.

2 Cal.Cl.R. 1288/96 p.350 and Bk. of Fees 1284/5 p.45.

3 Cal.Cl.R. 1288/96 p.350.

4 No.Vill.

5 Book of Fees p.47.

(blank); a ferry over the Swale 40/-; agist of the woods and the park £4; sales of underwood 40/-; perquisites of court 60/-;"

Gristhwaite was listed separately:-

Rents of free tenants totalled £1 3s. -d.; 12 bovates of demesne arable at 6/- per bovate were worth £3 12s. -d.; whilst 41 acres of land held by tenants in bondage at 8d. per acre were worth 27/4, bringing Gristhwaite's total to £6 2s. 4d. and that of the lordship to £79 19s. 4d.¹

The inquisition presents some unexpected contrasts with that of 1220 (c) mentioned earlier. The decrease in the acreage of demesne arable - from 600 to 105 acres - is surprising, since the value per acre had doubled. Equally surprising was the great increase in acreage and value of demesne meadow, which alone was worth twice as much as all the demesne land in the earlier account. The omission of the values of the four mills of 1220 is a matter for comment. The earlier account mentioned "quattuor molendina aquatica" without specifying their location or use. The two fulling mills of 1315, whose value is omitted, may have been new erections or converted corn mills. The inclusion of the Gristhwaite mill in the Topcliffe account when there is a later section referring exclusively to Gristhwaite encourages suspicion of a clerical error.

1 PRO.Cal.Inq.p.m. C.134/41/1 8 Ed.II 1315, No.536 held on the Tuesday before All Saints.

Yet the probability seems to be a temporary recession of agriculture, either through the expansion of pastoral activities - which is supported by the greatly enhanced meadow value and the first mention of the fulling mills - or through a lack of tenantry to till the demesne arable. This latter shortage might be caused by the consequences of the disastrous Bannockburn campaign or the national famine of this time,¹ or a combination of both. Yet the totals of rents paid by the bondsmen and cotters would indicate no such shortage, as these rents actually show an increase of 29% on those paid in 1220. The whole problem is made the more puzzling by the item of £6 issuing from the farm of the mills at Topcliffe, which appears in a separate account for the same year.² Four Topcliffe Court Rolls for 1315 are quite uninformative.³

Whatever the explanation of these discrepancies may be, it is clear that the century separating the two inquisitions had been one in which marked progress had been made in developing the potentialities of the estate - a fact which is reflected in the increase in the value of Topcliffe township itself, amounting to 78.5%.

The manor of Topcliffe was immediately placed in the keeping of John de Clavering "ratione minoris aetatis

1 Cunningham I p.388-9 quoting Stowe "Annals" and Denton - England in the 15th Century p.105.

2 PRO.SC.6 1088/5 Account of John de Donecastr Easter 8 Ed.II.

3 PRO.SC.2/211/142 8.Ed.II.

heredis", and John de Doncaster, the late Earl's controller of his Yorkshire estates was ordered to deliver the estate to the royal grantee, who was to pay £120 per year for it, though it was extended at £81 -s. 4d. per year - a figure which fails to agree with that arrived at through the items of the earlier inquisition.¹

Shortly afterwards the Countess Eleanor gained the wardship of her late husband's lands and Clavering was instructed to deliver them to her, whilst she was to compensate him and his officers for any expense incurred by them in the tilling and sowing of the common fields in the lordship.²

The Crown still retained some interest however, since in 1319 the Sheriff of York received instructions to make advances of pay to three royal yeomen who were to take fat venison from royal forests in Yorkshire and from the Parks and Chases of Spofforth, Burstwick, Langstroth, Gisburn, Littondale and Topcliffe.³

1 Fine Rolls 24 Feb. 8 Ed.II 1315 m. 8.

A month earlier the Crown had appointed Peter de Clipston in Sherwood as keeper of Topcliffe woods at a salary of 1d. per day. CPR. Jan.28. 8 Ed.II 1315 p.214.

2 Fine.R.May 1. 1315 8 Ed.IIm4.

The Countess had been given a generous allocation of estates in both Yorkshire and Northumberland which were calculated to realise a total annual sum of £600 5s. 3½d. Amongst them was Dalton. Cal.Cl.R. 8 Ed.II 1315 m.18.

3 The 78 carcasses to be taken from the Percy parks were to be delivered to Carlisle; Topcliffe's contribution was to be 12 bucks. Ibid. July 15. 9 Ed.II m.28.

The lordship felt the full weight of the adverse foreign situation in 1319-20. An enquiry held in 1320 reported that the Scots had spent three days of July in the lordship, burning and destroying Gristhwaite, Newby, Dishforth, carrying off the tenants' property there as well as in Topcliffe and Asenby. Several tenants were killed, others were captured and held to ransom. The fact that in Topcliffe lordship alone that year the Countess's losses were £52 10s. -d. of the £142 16s. 3d. damages in Yorkshire during the last three years shows clearly the severity of the attack.¹ Almost a year earlier the Crown had ordered the Countess to be exempt from the collection of the eighteenth in her estates at Spofforth, in Craven, at Topcliffe and Kirklevington "as the towns had been burnt by the Scots and goods and chattels partly destroyed and partly stolen."² The Countess had then passed on her Yorkshire estates to Crown wardship "owing to the destruction done therein by the Scots",³ but shortly afterwards the heir, Henry, who was aged twenty, was granted by the Crown control of the Yorkshire estates, though he was to pay for them a rent of 400 marks per year until he reached his majority.⁴

1 PRO.Cal.I.p.m. No.453 28 Oct.14 Ed.II.

2 Cal.Cl.R. Nov.25.1319 13 Ed.II.m.13.

3 PRO.Cal.I.p.m. No.536 C.134/41/1 and Fine Rolls 22 Feb.1320 13 Ed.II m.6.

4 Fine.R. 27 Ap.1320 13.Ed.II m.4.

There seems to have been some doubt about Henry's age. The main inquisition reported that he was 16 in 1315, but a deposition by Sir John Hotham in 1323 stated that he was born at Leconfield in February 29 Edward I.

Cal.I.p.m. No.435 26 Feb.16.Ed.II.

The effect of the Scottish raids is clear from the inquisition taken in 1320:-

The capital messuage and garden were worth 2/-; there were in all 320 acres of demesne arable of which 80 acres were in the 'cultura' called the Lund, worth 6d. per acre. 60 acres in the 'cultura' of Northfeld, worth 1/- per acre, 70 acres in the 'cultura' called West Flatts, worth 1/- per acre, 110 acres in 'Alwenker' and 'Fytys' worth 1/- per acre - Total £14 -s. -d.

There were 52 acres of demesne meadow at 2/6 per acre and 6 acres at 1/6 per acre - Total £6 19s. -d.

The herbage of the Park was valued at 2/-; free tenants' rents totalled £10; those of cotters and tenants at will £4 "and no more as the other tenants were killed by the Scots". The sale of underwood realised 20/-; the agist of the 'foreign wood' 10/-; court perquisites 40/-.

The mill at Asenby, with the issues of the fishery and ferry were worth £6 14s. 4d. Eight Asenby tenants in bondage paid £10.

At Gristhwaite the watermill was worth 20/-, whilst four tenants in bondage and six cotters paid £4 "only, as this town was burnt and destroyed and many tenants were killed by the Scots". The total for the lordship was thus £60 7s. 4d.¹

The localisation of the damage implies that at least

1 PRO.Inq.p.m. C.134/41/1. Resurvey after regrant to the Crown, Monday after St. Gregory 13 Ed.II.

two bands of Scottish raiders came into the lordship, one via the Great North Road, the other via Northallerton and/or Thirsk. The former reached the Swale, probably to find that the Topcliffe townsmen had taken the elementary tactical precaution of destroying the wooden bridge, and thus turned their attention to Newby and Dishforth, though it is difficult to see why Asenby should not have suffered more severely, unless its tenants had salvaged many of their possessions and taken them to safety in Topcliffe. The issues of the fishery and ferry were 'indestructibles' - those from the ferry perhaps even enhanced if the supposition about the destruction of the bridge be true. It would have been more informative if the value of the mill had been stated separately. The other Scottish troop perhaps found opposition from Topcliffe too strong for it, and made a detour, after damaging Gristhwaite, so as to rejoin the main body on its road to Boroughbridge and thence into Wharfedale.

Apart from the obvious results of the raids, shown by the decrease in returns from almost every source of income, the most surprising feature of the findings of 1320 is the sudden variation in the acreages of the demesne arable and meadow. The great change of accent from arable to pasture farming suggested by the comparative figures in the inquisitions of 1220 and 1315 has been

noted already. But five years later, when casualties had reduced labour power, and the move to pastoral activity might be expected to become more marked, the exact reverse of this occurred. Demesne arable increased by 200% and demesne meadow receded to a figure close to that of 1220. The total areas of demesne land cannot be reconciled easily - 653 in 1220, 250 in 1315 and 378 in 1320. A partial explanation may lie in the fact that in the 1220 extent no separate entries are made for the subsidiary hamlets so that the large demesne arable acreage may represent not Topcliffe alone, but a composite area. The much lower arable figure in 1315 could be explained partly by the extensive leasing to tenants both free and servile, as is indicated by a comparison of the rentals from those sources, though there is no record of any such leases. Another contributory factor could be the 'improvement' of certain arable to meadow land. In this context it should be noted that in 1320 some demesne arable lay in the Fitts which at a much later date was regularly returned as demesne meadow.

The process suggested for the period 1220 - 1315 was thus reversed in 1315 - 20, much of the supposedly leased demesne arable returning to the lord through lack of tenants, though the value per acre remained practically stable.

The recovery of the lordship in the next thirty years was slow. In 1327 a licence to hold a market and fair at

Topcliffe was granted to Henry de Percy. The market was to be held each Wednesday, whilst the fair was to take place yearly on the 6th - 8th July.¹ This valuable royal concession to the Percies was dictated no doubt by the king's desire both to reward past services and to secure future support in his troubled relations with the Scots.²

It seems as though Henry de Percy gained free warren in all his Yorkshire estates during this period,³ which was also marked by a number of quitclaims by which Henry secured a total of 13 acres of land - all in Dalton - except for one in Skipton on Swale.⁴ These surrenders - 12 in all - conveyed insignificant quantities of land, usually less than a rood each.⁵ As the locations of the plots are not specified, it is impossible to ascertain whether their acquisition was part of a planned policy or not.

The process by which the estates became held in fee tail male was completed in 1334, so far as Topcliffe was

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- 1 Cal.Charter Rolls 1 Ed.III.m.46, and Thoresby Soc.Pub. Vol.XXXIX 1940 "Yorkshire Fairs and Markets to the end of the 18th Century". McCutcheon.
 - 2 If the dating of writs and letters can be relied upon as a proof of the king's whereabouts, Edward III was at Topcliffe from July 7th to 16th, 1327, again in August, 1333 and in October 1334 (Fine Rolls for these dates) - visits which may be construed as a sign of royal favour.
 - 3 AHP.I.p.68 but no reference.
 - 4 PC.DLXVI 1341.
 - 5 P.C. DXXVII,DLI to DLXI inclusive, 1320.

concerned.¹

When Henry the 2nd Lord of Alnwick died in 1353, the extent of Topcliffe recorded the following facts:-

"There is there one capital messuage and it is worthless beyond reprises; there are of demesne lands none cultivated by the lord; but there are one carucate and a half of arable and meadow held by the tenants at will who pay £10 at Michaelmas and Pentecost by equal portions; the cotters pay 30/- per year, and free tenants 2/6 whilst free foreign tenants pay £10, though these belong to both the manors of Topcliffe and Spofforth and their members. There are 50 acres of demesne meadow in Hallikeld Ing each worth 3/- - £7 10s. -d. and there used to be various parcells of meadow called Micklecar and Thakker which are now enclosed in Moskwith Park to feed the deer. There is there a park with deer called Moskwith the herbage of which is worth £5 over and above the maintenance of the deer. And there is a park called Berbelonde with deer, the herbage of which is worth 20/- over and above the maintenance of the deer. They say that the underwood of the two parks is worth 40/- on the average and no more through lack of purchasers. A fishery in the Swale is in the hands of a tenant at will who pays 13/4 per year. Perquisites of court are worth 40/-.

1 P.C. DLXII 1335 & CPR.1334/8 p.62 24 Sept.1334.

worth 20/-, and at Gristhwaite and Asenby the rents of four
nativi and tenants at will total £12. Free rents in Dalton
amount to 26/8 and in Skipton 4/-. There are no profits
from the ferry at Skipton as a bridge has now been built
there. At Newby on Swale, a water mill and a fulling mill
are worth together £10. Total for the Lordship:-
£64 6s. 6d. (Topcliffe only:- £39 15s.10d.)¹

The developments thus displayed show how slow and far
from complete was the recovery of the manor which now
yielded less per year than at its first valuation more
than 130 years before. Demesne arable had disappeared.
The rents paid by the tenants of various kinds showed no
proportionate increase, totalling little more than they had
done in 1315. If the average value per acre of the demesne
arable be reckoned at 1/- - roughly the valuation in 1320 -
the relative increase in tenants' rents represents a
letting to them of some 150 acres. The corresponding
slight increase in the value of the demesne meadow would
indicate an increase of meadow - possibly 'improved'
arable - of some 5-6 acres, if the valuation of about 2/- per
acre is taken as a firm factor. So, at the most, 160 acres
of the 320 acres of demesne meadow of 1320 may be explained.
One is forced to the conclusion that the remainder had
either been allowed to revert to rough pasture, or had been

1 PRO.Cal.Exch.I.p.m. C/135/116/1

Topcliffe Lordship Receipts 1220 - 1413

Source	1220			1315			1320			1353			1413		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Capital Message etc.		nil		-	6	8	-	2	-		nil		-	-	-
Demesne Arable	15	-	-	5	5	-	14	-	-		nil		-	-	-
Demesne Meadow	2	13	-	34	11	8	6	19	-		7	10	-	-	-
Watermill	9	6	8	6	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Fishery	-	6	8	1	6	8	-	-	-		-	13	4	-	6
Fulling Mill	-	-	-		nil		-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Woodsales	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-		2	-	-	18	7
Court Perquisites	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-		2	-	-	15	9
Agist of Parks	-	-	-				-	2	-		6	-	-	22	8
Agist of Outwoods	6	13	4	4	-	-	-	10	-		-	-	-	-	-
Rents of Free tenants				8	7	-	10	-	-		10	2	6	1	7
Rents of Bondsmen	7	4	4	8	16	8					10	-	-	10	10
Rents of Cotters	1	6	-	2	3	4	4	-	-		1	10	-		2½
TOTAL for Topcliffe	42	10	-	75	17	-	38	13	-		39	15	10	68	9
<u>Asenby</u> Mill	-	-	-	-	-	-					-	-	-	-	-
Fishery	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	14	4		-	-	-	-	-
Bondsmen	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-		12	-	-	-	-
<u>Gristhwaite</u> Watermill	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-		1	-	-	-	-
Fulling Mill		nil		-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Demesne	-	-	-	3	12	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Bondsmen	-	-	-	1	7	4	4	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
Free Rents	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-

⌘ Reference - PRO.Min.Acc.SC.1088/5.

Topcliffe Lordship Receipts 1220 - 1413 (Cont'd.)

Source	1220	1315	1320	1353	1413
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
<u>Dalton</u> Free rents	- - -	- - -	- - -	1 6 8	- - -
<u>Skipton</u> Free rents	- - -	- - -	- - -	- 4 -	2 8 2½
Ferry	- - -	2 - -	- - -	nil(bridge)	- - -
<u>Newby</u> Watermill	- - -	- - -	- - -)10 - -	- - -
Fulling Mill	- - -	- - -	- - -		- - -
Rents	- - -	- - -	- - -		7 16 -
References	PRO.I.p.m. C.132 f.23. 7	PRO.I.p.m. 134/4/1	PRO.I.p.m. 13.Ed.II	PRO.Exch.I. p.m. C.135/ 116/1	Pet.MS.D. 9.1. 1.Hen.V.

incorporated with the Parks as had been certain meadows in Thakker and Micklecar, which lay on both sides of the Thirsk road near the stream which is still called Thacker Beck. This suggestion is supported by the great increase - almost the only such item - in the profits from the agist of the Parks. Even the fishery had suffered a decline of 50% on its 1315 figure. On the other hand Asenby and Gristhwaite had shown a recovery all the more startling in its extent by contrast with that of Topcliffe, their issues being within 14% of those of 1320.¹ Whilst no mention of the Topcliffe mill had appeared since 1315, the watermill and fulling mill at Newby together realised more than the four watermills at Topcliffe in 1220. This item, too, may be regarded as the natural result of the letting of more demesne arable, with the consequent increased yields at the soke mill: it may equally well be regarded - insofar as the fulling mill is concerned - as evidence supporting the extension of sheep grazing as an occupation.

Whilst the lordship as a whole showed an increase of 6.5%, Topcliffe's comparative increase was only 3.5%.

The life of the 3rd Lord of Alnwick passed without any reference to Topcliffe history. The inquisition at his death in 1368 is unfortunately incomplete, but such items as it includes are almost identical with those of

1 This result is arrived at by ignoring the value of Asenby Mill and fishery in 1320, which should surely refer to Topcliffe.

the 1353 extent. The free rents in Dalton and Skipton, the 50 acres of meadow in Hallikeld Ing, the two parks and the enclosed meadow in Thakker and Micklecar are accounted as before. There was however a wood called the Outewood, a fishery in the Swale worth $3/4$ instead of $13/4$ (1353), and three water mills and a fulling mill at Newby on Swale. There the MS. becomes illegible and frayed.¹ From this limited information it does not appear that the last 15 years had shown much change in the lordship's condition.

Apart from a complaint in 1375 that widespread damage had been done by poachers and marauders in his Yorkshire parks² - a more serious item in a series of such incidents reported by the owner since 1325³ - there is no further reference to Topcliffe until 1380 when the Earl granted Gristhwaite and Asenby to his son 'Hotspur' and his wife in tail male,⁴ whilst twenty years later Topcliffe amongst other Yorkshire lands was granted, with royal consent, to the Earl's brother Thomas, Earl of Worcester.⁵

In the subsequent troubles between the Percies and the Crown, the Topcliffe townspeople petitioned the King for his protection of their goods and chattels.⁶ The crown consented to this for a period of twelve months,⁷ and

1 PRO.Inq.p.m. No.242 Ed.III.

2 CPR. 24 Nov.48 Ed.III m.10d.

3 CPR.18 Ed.II m.28d.6 Ed.III.m.30d and 18 Ed.III m.43d.

4 CPR.6 March 3 Ric.II m.17 and Cal.Cl.R. 10 May 9 Hen V.m.22.

5 CPR.Rot.Viag. Aug.6. 1 Hen.IV.m.31

6 PRO.Anc.Pet. No.12731.

7 As last ref. & CPR.12 June 1405.

shortly afterwards made at least one appointment - that of William Nutter as Parker of Moskwith at 2d. per day plus the casual profits attached to that office.¹

The lordship, amongst other ex-Percy estates in Northumberland and Yorkshire was granted to John, Duke of Bedford.² The continued loyalty of his tenants to the Earl of Northumberland is indicated by the pardons which the crown found it necessary to issue to twenty-one tenants of Topcliffe, Asenby, Newby and Gristhwaite in 1408,³ and to four more in 1409.⁴

Hotspur's son, the 2nd Earl of Northumberland, regained Topcliffe in 1414.⁵ The lordship seems to have suffered little during the interval since the last assessment of its value, which now totalled £68 3s. 5½d. plus £4 -s. 9d. arrears - a nett increase of 70%. Whilst the account roll is incomplete, as for some unexplained reason no rents are included except those of free tenants, it is to be noted that much of the increased revenue was derived from woodsales, which at £18 7s. 5d. were greater than at any date for which there are records; from greatly expanded letting of the agist of the parks - £22 8s. 7d., and from perquisites of

1 CPR.8 Aug.1405 m.11.

At about the same time Henry IV had appointed Richard 'Nutehawe' as porter and bailiff of Spofforth - possibly a member of the same family. (CPR 4/10/05)

2 The grant to the D. of Bedford was CPR.27 June 1405.

3 CPR.25.May, 20 June, 16 July, 28 Sept, 24 Oct. 1408.

4 CPR. 30 Jan. 1409.

5 Chanc. Inq. p.m. 33 Hen.VI.No.37.

court, which at £15 9s. 6d. constituted another record total.¹ As this account roll contains many alterations besides many items apparently queried and rejected by the auditor, there is thus no really conclusive proof from this source that the lordship had made any marked progress towards its former prosperity.

The 2nd Earl's new-found favour with the new king was not without its disadvantages. The additional responsibilities had led to increased private expenses, so much so that in 1423 by royal licence from Henry VI, the Earl was allowed to enfeoff six 'tenants', the chief of whom were Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland, Thomas, Bishop of Durham and Sir Robert Umfraville, with Topcliffe and certain estates in Craven, to the value of £300 per year. The purpose stated was to allow the Earl to make provision for debts incurred during his acting as ambassador abroad for Henry V.² That this grant took place is also witnessed by the court roll for 1425 which is headed 'The Great Court of Thomas, Bishop of Durham etc.' and by the fact that Edward Darell did homage to Brian Fairfax, one of the feoffees, for lands in Eldmire, Crakehill and Dalton.³ Topcliffe was once more amongst the Earl's possessions at his death in 1455.⁴

1 Pet.MS. MAC.D.9.1. 1 Hen.V.

2 CPR. 7 Feb.1423 m.29.

3 Pet.MS.MCR.D.1.1. 9 Oct.3 Hen.VI.

4 Cal.I.p.m. 33 Hen.VI.

When the 3rd Earl died in 1461, his widow, the Countess Eleanor Poynings received £200 from the issues of Topcliffe and other Percy estates in the North Riding and Craven, until such time as the estates had been valued.¹ The familiar crown grants of offices ensued,² and were followed by a letter patent transferring Topcliffe, Asenby and Gristhwaite inter alia to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.³ Some time after Warwick's death, his lands passed to Edward IV's brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester and his heirs male,⁴ but this award did not include Topcliffe, since the court roll of 1473 is styled as 'of Lord Henry Percy'.⁵

Sixteen years later the 4th Earl was killed in the riot at Topcliffe consequent upon the unpopular taxation which he was compelled reluctantly to try to collect.⁶

Whilst the 5th Earl seems to have been particularly fond of Leconfield and Wressel to the exclusion of Topcliffe,

1 CPR. 3 Aug. 1461 m.23.

2 CPR. 20 Dec. 1461 m.12. & 20 Feb. 1462 m.14.

3 CPR. 1461-7 pp.189 and 434.

4 CPR. 20 Feb. 1475 m.6.

5 Pet.MS.MCR.D.1.1.4.25 Oct.12 Ed.IV.

6 Cam.Misc. Plompton Correspondence & C.S.P.(Ven.)
1202-1509.p.181.

Curiously enough, there is no reference to any untoward happening in the court rolls of that year. (Pet.MS.D.1.2.10)

the 6th Earl was frequently in the lordship.¹

Leland's description of the manor is not very illuminating:-

"... and thens to Topclif an uplandish Towne a 3 myles wher I cam ouer Swale by a Bridge of Tymber. The praty manorplace of Topclif stondith on a Hille aboute halfe a myle from the Towne almost on the ripe of Swale. The last Erle of Northumbreland did cost on this house. Ther long 2 parkes to this mannor the bigger wherof is a 6 or 7 myles in cumpace and is wel woodid."²

The Crown passed the Topcliffe estate, amongst others, to Edward, Archbishop of York in 1543,³ as one knight's fee, for a rent of £54 9s. 7d. per year.⁴ The Archbishop's successor exchanged the property, which thus came again into Crown hands.⁵

Under Edward VI, John Dudley, Earl of Warwick and Earl of Northumberland, received the lordship,⁶ though he

1 In September and October, 1528, (AHP I p.399 quoting Cott.MS.Calig.b.VII.149) in November, 1530 when he received orders to secure Wolsey at Cawood and conduct him south; in November, 1535, (AHP.I.p.432 quoting Chapter House letters to King and Council X.p.34.) and in February, 1537 when he started the correspondence which resulted in the Crown's becoming trustee of the Percy estates. (AHP.I.p.469) The 6th Earl's interest is also shown by his maintenance of a chantry in the manor house, appointing 'Sir' William Toppam to the position of chantry priest in 1531. (AHP.I.App.XLIX. p.558 quoting Syon House MS.B.II.5.)

2 Itin. f.75.

3 L.& P.Hen.VIII.XVIII(1) 226 f.66.

4 PRO.Min.Acc.SC6/4286.1543.

5 L.& P.Hen.VIII Vol.XX(1) 465 f.39.

6 CPR.Vol.IV 5 Jan.1552 p.117.

contracted to pay a number of standing fees and annuities. After the attainder of this Earl of Northumberland, the Percy 7th Earl regained the manor by deed dated 30th April, 1557. Although he played little part in northern affairs according to the Percy biographer, de Fonblanque, the Earl was at Topcliffe when in 1568 there came news of the coming of Mary Queen of Scots to Carlisle.¹ Sir Francis Knollys, the Vice-Chamberlain, described to Cecil in a letter how, near Boroughbridge, he met the Earl who complained that Lowther, the Queen's escort, had refused to hand her over to his keeping.² Some confused plotting seems to have followed. In April the Earl with the Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Talbot and the Earl of Sussex who was Lord President of the North, were at Topcliffe for the hunting, and later the party went to Cawood in September, 1569. In the following November Sussex tried to arrest the Percy Earl at Topcliffe, but according to Sussex's report to Cecil, the Earl escaped through his park at Topcliffe and later joined the Earl of Westmoreland at Brancepeth.³ The rebels' later advance from Northumberland brought them as far south as Wetherby and Tadcaster, after which they retired to Durham and soon dispersed. The Earls had probably received a full measure of support from the Percy tenants in Topcliffe, as well as in the West

1 AHP.II.p.16.

2 *ibid.*p.18.

3 *ibid.*p.34.

Riding manors. The execution of rebels took place at Northallerton, Topcliffe and Thirsk, whilst Cecil, writing to Sussex, instructed:- "I would have you make the examples grete in Rypon and Tadcaster and therefore if you find not sufficient nombres within the Townes that be in the doings of the late rebellyoun take of other townes and bryng thym to the execucon in those places."¹

The 7th Earl attainted and executed, his estates, which had escheated to the Crown, were regranted to the late Earl's brother Henry in 1576, under whom the valuable survey of the Yorkshire estates was taken in 1577.

Thenceforward the lordship descended via the Duke of Somerset to the Earl of Egremont, whose descendant, the 3rd Lord Leconfield disposed of his Topcliffe estates at about the same time as those at Spofforth - shortly after the first World War.

¹ AHP.II p.77 quoting Sharpe - Memorials p.160 Cecil to Sussex, 19 Jan. 1570.

TOPCLIFFE

Section 3

The "Capital Messuages"

Bounded by the deep cut channel of the Swale on the south and by the marshy Cod Beck on the north and east, a spur of higher land ends at a short distance from the confluence of the two streams. This spur formed an ideal natural site for the earliest of the three capital residences which at different times have housed the lords of Topcliffe. The first was a motte and bailey, still well-marked and comparatively unmodified in modern times - probably one of the best unspoilt examples of such a structure in Yorkshire. The suggestion that it was built in the course of the Conqueror's penetration of Northumbria seems likely,¹ when one considers the royal favour which the Percies enjoyed at this period. Apart from the good defensive nature of its position, this stronghold was so sited as to be able to guard the crossings of the Swale for a long distance.²

Probably about a century after its first construction, the castle was placed in a state of defence by Geoffrey, Bishop-elect of Lincoln on behalf of Henry II, to offset the similar stronghold at Thirsk, belonging to the troublesome Mowbray family,³ and was strengthened and garrisoned next year by William de Stuteville.⁴ Though there is no

1 V.C.H.Yorks.N.R. II p.42.

2 O.S. 2½ in. 44/47 SE.409751 and see photographs 12 and 13.

3 Roger Hovedon Chron. Rolls Series II 58 c.1174.

4 Pipe Rolls Soc. 21 Hen.II 165.

detail in the foregoing references it seems likely that the obvious defences over and above the wooden stockading of the old castle structure would be the two sets of ditch and embankments at almost equal distances of 200 yards north of the castle. These straddled the broader width of the ridge, the more southerly stopping short on the escarpment, the northern one being produced eastwards into the valley and stopping at the edge of what was almost certainly a marsh before the building of the flood banks on the Cod Beck. The effect would thus be to supply the motte and bailey castle with two extra baileys. Though there is no record of actual warfare in the immediate locality, the existence of two shallow pits on the right bank of the river immediately south of the castle could possibly be remains of defensive works to cover an assault on the castle. The presence of old gravel pits close by, however, renders this suggestion less conclusive.

When the urgent military necessity of the castle had diminished, the strategic importance of its site remained, whilst the Percy requirement of a suitable residence increased. Before 1220 some sort of a structure had been made in the 'middle ward' though its construction cannot have been of materials of any permanence, since the inquisition of 1220 (c) described the capital messuage as "not extended as it is almost fallen down".¹ A century

1 PRO.Cal.Inq.p.m. C.132 File 23/7.

later it had evidently been repaired, when it was assessed "at 6/8 only, as it lacks repairs".¹ The impression gained is that the building was probably of timber and plaster - materials which needed constant replacement and maintenance if rapid deterioration were not to take place.² The fact that in 1320 the capital message was valued at only 2/- was probably due as much to natural causes as to Scottish raids.

Primarily residential in purpose, the dwelling would yet have strength both in appearance and reality. The deep valleys of the Swale and the Cod Beck on either side would magnify the impression of its lofty position, and persuaded Leland to remark:- "The praty manor place of Topclif stondith on a hille about halfe a myle from the Towne, almost on the Ripe of Swale."³

The house seems to have been of the usual quadrangular type favoured by the Percies in common with other land-owners of the time. The main entrance was probably that still used to-day, via Whin Lane, which leads to the north-west corner of the site, though there is another possible entry further east, where the embankment is breached. Assuming however that the present is also the

1 PRO.Inq.p.m. 134/4/1 1315.

2 cf. Leconfield Manor.

3 Itin. f.75.

original entrance, the approach turned abruptly to the left to avoid a subsidiary inner ditch and bank which thus forms a kind of barbican, past which the ground rises gently to the roughly level enclosure. This would be described more correctly as a platform whose south, east and west sides have been formed by scarping the already steep natural slopes. The west side is still impressive - not to say formidable - in its height above the meadow falling away to the Swale. About half-way along this east side is a small grass-covered knoll which might cover the debris of a tower or building,¹ or alternatively might be one of the 'mountes' in the garden of Leland's description, which as suggested later, would apply much more appositely to Topcliffe than to Wressel.

The only reference to this early house, apart from those in the inquisitions mentioned above, is an account of an inquest at York in 1259 when Roger de la Paneterie who was standing at the porch of the Hall at Topcliffe shot an arrow at a magpie sitting on the wall. As a result, Geoffrey Dagon, who was coming along the wall side, unknown to Roger, was struck in the side by the arrow and died. A verdict of misadventure was returned.²

In all later ministers' accounts the manor house is either omitted from the list of assets or as in 1353 and 1368 returned as valueless.

1 See photograph No. 9.

2 Cal.I.p.m. Misc.VolI No.2102 43 HenIII.

Unspecified repairs were carried out on the manorhouse in 1444, though as they are included in a composite item of £10 for repairs to houses and the mills, it is impossible to gauge their extensiveness.¹ In 1480 a fee of £5 was paid to the Chaplain, "William Playfer, for celebrating service every day in the manor chapel" and in the same year 200 slabs (tabulae) of timber were delivered from the wood 'for the lord's use at the manor house'.² In the Spofforth account of the same year, several loads of 'playt stone' were carted to Topcliffe for repairs to the manor house there.¹ Whether the slabs or planks were for repair is uncertain, but the fact that a large quantity of faggots was delivered there at the same time seems to indicate that the slabs were, in fact, for repair rather than fuel. The Spofforth contribution was undoubtedly for roofing renewal.

At some time during the existence of this house, the old motte and bailey was graded into the 'snailshell' plan which appears on the 18th century estate plan. This was perhaps in the area referred to as the garden which was for some time an appendage of the capital messuage in the early inquisitions. The unusual spiral path makes one wonder whether perhaps Leland was not thinking of Topcliffe when he gave the well-known description of the gardens at

1 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.3.1444.

2 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.8.1479.

Wressel, speaking of the "mountes, opere topiario, writhen aboute with Degrees like Turninges of cockilshilles to come to the top without payn". There is no sign to-day that anything of the kind existed at Wressel, whilst so prominent a feature at Topcliffe would hardly escape Leland's notice.

An undated survey attributable to about 1613 gives the following details of the area in question:-
"Scite of the Mannor House, yarde, gardens, orchardes and walkes 1 ac. 0 r. 20 p. A Hille called Mayden Bowre, which hath vij ascendinge circumferences all quicksette and replenished with sorrie fruite trees 0 ac. 1 r. 9 p. Scite of the Antient mannor place and of the fishpond near the new mannor 2 ac. 1 r. 7 p."¹

This description not only lends credence to the suggestion of Leland's possible aberration but also gives the additional information that a fishpond existed. This would seem to have been located north of the sharp westerly bend in the Cod Beck, since the New Lodge would almost certainly be reached from the old site by a path following the present footpath over the small bridge across the Cod Beck, since otherwise its accessibility would be less easy. The eastern end of the northern entrenchment probably marks the northwesterly extremity of the fishpond.

This house was the one near which the 4th Earl was

1 Pet.MS. 8.D.2.

killed in April, 1489. It was still in use in 1520 when Thomas Horwood was styled keeper of the manor and John Settill received his £5 fee as priest of the chantry in the manor.¹ The 6th Earl was in residence here in 1528, 1530, 1535 and 1537.

A royal survey of 1537 is one of the only two accounts to expand on the for-once-laconic description of Leland - the "praty Mannor Place":-

"The manor place of Topclyff stondith in th lytell pke of Topclyff and ys a metely fayer old howse wth a newe galarye therto anexed and a propre hyghe Tymbre Towre at the ende of the sd Galarye And ther ys allso a fayer large Halle and a parloure wth all other howses off offyce correspondent to the same A proper Chappyll and many fayer Chambres and loggynges therto adioynynge beyng sore decayd and ruynous insomoche that the Reparacons therof wyll amounte by estimacon to 100 li and aboue And in the same Mannor ther ys a chauntrye of an olde Foundacon and a prest syngyng in the same Chappyll which hathe for hys Stipend out of the Lordes Coffirs £5."²

The dilapidated condition indicated by the above extract seems to have been common to all the once-great Yorkshire manor houses of the Percies. This seems to have been the result of the neglect which impelled Robert Southwell's scathing remarks to Thomas Cromwell, that he

1 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.20 1520.

2 PRO.Min.Acc. SC11/959 1537.

"never saw a finer inheritance more blemished", and he had just then returned from a search for valuables in Topcliffe "Castle", where he had found nothing but arms.¹

At some time previous to this, the old building known as Cock Lodge was abandoned as a residence, probably as a result of its advanced state of disrepair. It seems strange that neither Leland nor the Royal Surveyor mentioned it, but there is clear evidence that a New Lodge had been built, since in 1538 Sir Thomas Johnson the farmer of the Little Park was described as the "keeper of the New Lodge" and received a fee for his duties.² Perhaps the new building was so insignificant as to escape their notice, or alternatively it may have been regarded as no more than an attribute of the Little Park.

Whilst the lordship was held in trust by the Crown, further repairs were made to the New Lodge. Two thousand "thack tiles" and the same number of "brecks" were bought, the wages of carpenters and tilers bringing the total cost to £7 16s. 6d.³

Humberston's Survey of 1570 mentions:- "Topcliff.... wherein thErle had his mansyon house in the Littel Parke for the moste part of his owen buyldynge, al of tymbre and coverd wth tyle".⁴ It seems almost inevitable that the surveyor was referring here to the New Lodge. Had

1 L. & P. Vol. XII (II) No. 548 20 Aug. 1537.

2 PRO. Min. Acc. 4287 29/30 Hen. VIII.

3 Ibid. 4289 31/32 Hen. VIII.

4 PRO. Misc. Bks. Exch. K.R. Vol. 37 f. 228 d.

it been in disrepair, of which there is no mention, the damage must have been recent, since the Earl had been there for the hunting, in company with the Earls of Westmoreland and Sussex in September and November, 1569, and had escaped from there to lead the Rising in the North.¹

The Percy Survey of 1577 describes the manor succinctly: "The Antient Manor House there hath scite in the Litle Parke on the West side of the water of Codbekke and Neare unto the Ryver of Swale. The same was habitable in the dayes of Henry late Erle of Northumbreland unckle to the Erle that nowe ys but nowe utterlie ruinated defacyd and decayd And a new mannor house or rather a new lodge hath ben since erected and buyldid in the sd Litle Parke on the Est syde of the sd water of Codbekk²..... Ther ys also in the sd pke a certaine plott of grounde entrenched aboute conteynge by estimacon 3 acres which was the scite of the mannor house termed by the name of the Oulde Mannor And nowe utterlie ruinated and decayd Ther ys allso in the sd Little Parke a verie faire lodge builded of tymber and couered with tyle with dyvers faire lodgynges and buildynges in the same conveniaunt and mete for a noble man to lye att And standith in the said pke verie pleasantlie And for the moste parte ys nowe in verie good repaire Ther be allso divers outhouses as stables barnes garners correspondent to the same".³

1 AHP.II p.34.

2 Pet.MS. 1577 Survey f.6.

3 Ibid. f.11.

The only other documentary clue to the site of the New Lodge is an item in the expense account of 1579 where 18/- was the cost of "proving how high Cawd Beck Springe wold rise to serve the Mannor House viz 2 yeardes hight".¹ This would indicate a site close to or identical with that occupied by the present group of modern buildings called the Manor House,² which lies at about the right altitude above the Cod Beck to make practicable the project of the account item.

In that same account, the New Lodge was obviously being made ready for a visit by its owners - a visit which did not take place, since the 8th Earl was rusticated to Petworth. The items read:- "Ready money paid for repares to the mannor in the Litle Pke: Plumber 13/8, Mason 28/-, glayzer 10/-, carpenters 17/6, for lyme 26/8, for carrying of thack tyles from Nunmunckton to Topclif 8/6, for cord for bedsteads at the mannor 2/6, for three curten rodds 2/6, for lockes 3/8, for 300 gret nayles 1/9, for 200 lath prods 6d., for an iren hooke to cut the quikwode in the gardens ther 1/- Total £5 16s. 8d."³

So far as can be ascertained, the manorhouse was not again inhabited by its owners and was not even visited by them until the 10th Earl toured his northern estates in 1630. He then found that Topcliffe manorhouse was in

1 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.22.'79.

2 O.S.2½ in. 44/47 SE 412753.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.22.1579.

a state of advanced disrepair. There seems little likelihood therefore of the accuracy of the popularly-held tradition that Charles I was lodged here in 1646 before being handed over by the Scots to Parliament.

To-day nothing remains above ground to show the existence of these Percy houses except the irregularities of the site of Cock Lodge,¹ which were perhaps increased somewhat by the use of the area in 1942-3 as a battle training ground for Army and Air Force personnel. The present manor house is completely modern and although in the vicinity there are to be seen possible foundations of buildings, nothing short of excavation could add further light to their identity and extent.²

1 See photographs 10 and 11.

2 An article on "Maiden Bower, nr. Topcliffe" appeared in Y.A.S.J. Vol.IX p.241 and following. Its contents contribute nothing of value.

TOPCLIFFE

Section 4

The Lordship in the 16th Century

(a) General Observations

The absence of any 17th century cartographical record of the manor and the infrequent occurrence of references in the Petworth documents makes difficult the precise identification of the various types of land at a period earlier than 1577.

So far as documentary references can be trusted, the names of the arable fields in the members of the manor were as follows:-

<u>Topcliffe:</u>	Peter,* Coldhagg,* Strangwith Head.
<u>Asenby:</u>	North,* Wood, Harom *(Arram).
<u>Catton:</u>	High, Low/Water, South/Chaldron.*
<u>Carlton:</u>	Howgate, North, West.
<u>Gristhwaite:</u>	Sandysike, West.
<u>Dalton:</u>	West, North, Woodside.
<u>Skipton:</u>	Water, South, North.
<u>Rainton:</u>	Howe (Howlamarr).*

Neither the estate plan of 1767 nor the Ordnance Survey Map gives more than slight help in identifying these areas. Of the twenty-one field names in the list, modern map references can be given only for the six with asterisks. Local information is no more helpful.

In Topcliffe, Peter Field lay to the east of the village bounded by the Topcliffe-Thirsk road on the south and by the lower reaches of Thakker Beck on the east. Next to it on the north lay Cold Hagg - known also as Coal- or

Cole-Hagg Field - bounded on the north by the southern pale of the Great Park. The position of the third common field is uncertain, the only possible place being the northern fringe of the Little Park, between Whin Lane and Gallow Green. It is just possible that part of this third field lay to the north of the Thirsk road.

According to the figures quoted in the 1577 survey, the total arable acreage in Topcliffe was 217 ac. 0 r. 10 p. - indicating an average of some 70 acres per field if the three were about equal in area. This represents a very small average tenant holding, as there were 42 tenants in Topcliffe at that time.

In contrast the twelve tenants of Asenby, with 217 ac. 2 r. 10 p. had far more generous holdings in their fields; the North Field is still marked, between the village and Baldersby Park; Arram Grange indicates roughly the site of Arram Field.¹ The third field probably lay between the North Field and the Carrs - the choice of possible position being limited by the peculiarly irregular nature of the neighbourhood.

At Catton, Caldron Lane perpetuates the name of one field,² and suggests that perhaps the High Field was between Catton Hall and Sugar Hill, whilst the Low Field would thus lie between the Skipton road and the river.

1 O.S. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 44/73.401743.
2 O.S. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. 44/73.379781.

In all cases the meadow land was close by the river - in Anchor Dykes, Applegarth, the Mill Ings, the Fittes,¹ Fletcher's and Chambers' Close.

Common pasture was to be had in the Great Park, in the land known as Thacker, and in Topcliffe Wood or Common, which covered much of the area between the Thirsk road and the Cod Beck.

The Great Park occupied the whole large sector between Catton arable fields and the outlying tenement known as Thorpefield or "Thorpe Underleas" as it was occasionally known. Near this was the Warren - still marked as such.

Many of the land divisions changed their character at different times. In the 13th century Thacker and Micklecarr were demesne meadow; in the 14th century they were enclosed with the Park; yet in the 17th century they were common pasture. Applegarth was meadow in the 15th but at least partly arable in the 17th century. This lack of continuity in the utilisation of a piece of land for the same purpose is more marked in Topcliffe than in any of the other three lordships under survey. The reason for this is perhaps the radical change in policy in the 14th century when the demesne arable, which in 1220 had been 600 acres, was reduced first to 320 acres in 1320 and to none tilled by the lord in 1353. It has already been

1 See photograph 2.

suggested that the redundant arable was allowed partly to revert to pasture, whilst part was enclosed in the Parks. The general trend of occupation thenceforward seems to have been pastoral rather than agricultural.

The early arrangement of Topcliffe village was probably around an open square, at the south-east corner of which stood the Tollbooth, which still remains. On several occasions - the last in 1613 - there were cases recorded of tenants who took in part of the lord's waste i.e. the town street. The 1613 entry reads:- "Anne Marche, widow, holds part of the street of Topcliffe, enclosed with a pale and used for a walk in her garden - 3 perches."

The north side of the original square is to-day marked by a rough lane leading across from Kirkgate¹ to Petergate. The interior of this square is still occupied by outhouses and gardens. No doubt this was the site of the market, licence to hold which was granted in 1237. The enclosure of the market square seems to have taken place before 1554/5 when the licence was repeated, as Petergate and Kirkgate are mentioned in that year as the two streets of the town - a statement which would be unnecessary if the square had still been open then. The market cross had been moved to its present site - the centre of the south side of the old square, near the

1 See photograph 4.

present school.

The Tollbooth was as convenient for the new site as for the old site of the market.

The Marian market grant reads:-

"Be it knowen to all men that Oure Sov'aine Lo & Ladie Kynge Philipe and Quene Marie by the Grace of God hath yeven and graunted to the Righte Honorable Ladie Marie Countesse of Northumbrelande amongste other thynges all the hole mannor towne lordeshipe and libertie of Topclyf wth all charters privileges and tithes belongyng to the same in as large and ample a maner as the said lait Erle her lait husbonde or any hys Auncestors ever had the same Wherfor and in consideracon of the comon welth of our sov'aine Lorde and Ladie the Kynge and Quene and that a lawfull and auncient comon fayre and m'kett hath of auncyent tyme beene ther kepte her Ladyshipe hath thoghte goode to gyve knowledge to all such persones as is disposed and willing to come and report to the sd Towne of Topclyf ther to have a comon markett kepte on the Weddinsday euery weeke from hensfurth and allso one fayre kepte yerelie on the daye of the Translacon of Seynt Thomas the Martyr and that all and euery person or persons reporting and coming to the sd fayer or marketts shall frelie pass and repass without paying anie toll or stalledge for aniethyng solde or delyvered within the sd fayer or markett or anie the precinctes of the same like as of auncyente tyme that they haith bene maynteyned

there withoute lett disturbaunce deprivation or interrupcon
of anie person or persons Yeven at the sd towne of Topclyf
the 23 of Aprill in the sd seconde and thirde yeares of the
sd reygne of the sd sou'aine lorde and ladie the Kynge and
Quenes Maiesties."

On the reverse of this copy of the grant is the
following, which is contemporary in script and spelling
and whose contents are in some degree germane to the
business of fairs and markets.

"The condicions of this recompence is first that if
all the aforesd brewsters and euerie of thym from hensfurth
do baik and brew goode and holesome breade and drinke and
sell the same accordinge to the assise and that there be
no plaing at cardes dice nor tables in ther howses but
onelie in cristinmas And they and euerie of thym keep ij
honest bedds for lodgyng of wayfaring man and have seruinge
men of honest demeanour and that they lodge no vagabunds
nor suffer in ther howses any men servauntes nor other in
the nightes to abide And that they lodge none but such
as they knowe to be of good demeanour and appoyntmente.."¹

The accommodation thus available for those attending
the fairs would thus be considerable, since there were as
many as 27 brewers and bakers, if the ameracements for
breaches of the assize are to be taken as undisputable

1 Pet.MS.D.1.4.40 2/3 P. & M.

evidence.

In 1472 there was evidently a quintain in the village, - an item of training equipment more often associated with the 16th century - since in the decreases of rent recorded in that year, a cottage and two shops are described in each case as "iuxta Cuintornum".¹

The pinfold and stocks were located "at the towne end", and so probably were reasonably near to Gallows Green, where the gallows actually stood until 1601, when Cuthbert Kettlewell was presented and amerced for having cut down and taken the structure away!²

As has been said, there were several shops in the village, besides a couple of smithies, one of which was near the church in Kirkgate. At the western end of the town the road crossed the Swale by a bridge which as late as Leland's time was of timber. A toll seems to have been charged for the crossing and no doubt a toll house would stand much closer to the bridge than the Tollbooth from which it would be impossible to supervise the collection satisfactorily.

Over the bridge, on the right and outside the town is a flat stretch of land in a loop of the Swale, described several times - the last in 1472 - as "prope pontem ubi tentoria scituantur". In 1472 it was the site of two

1 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV.

2 Pet.MS.D.4.1.No.1. 43 Eliz.

fulling mills which had then been disused.¹ Now, when the annual horse fair is held at Topcliffe, this is the site usually occupied by the cars and caravans of the gypsies and pedlars. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that this was for a time the site for the booths of the medieval fair after the market place had grown too small, through enclosure, to accommodate them.

The toll accruing from the fair only appears twice in the accounts - in 1472 and 1480 - in each case only amounting to 7/-.² The bailiff included in his duties the supervision of the fair, and in 1610 received 4/6 "for his chardges in keeping the peace in the tyme of the fayre". The outward sign of his office was the "Blew liuery cloke" which was bought for him that year at a cost of 18/-.³

Several times in the inquisitions there appears the item of ferry toll - usually bracketed with the fishing and sometimes fowling rights. This would appear to refer to the ferry at Skipton on Swale rather than at Topcliffe. The inquisition of 1353, after following the order of the items of the 1315 account, states that there is no toll from the ferry at Skipton this year "as a bridge has recently been built there".⁴

Fishing rights extended the whole length of the Swale within the manor boundary - from Skipton to Eldmire. In the earliest stages the fishery was let to a tenant at

1 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed. IV.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7 and D.9.8.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.28 7 Jac.I.

4 PRO.Exch.Inq.p.m. C.135/116/1

will for a nominal sum varying from 6/8 in 1220 to 26/8 in 1315, though by 1353 the rent had declined to 13/4.

Indiscriminate fishing seems later to have been abandoned in favour of careful preservation and more certain supply by means of two fish garths - one known as Howefishgarthe which was described in 1444 as "in Skipton Field opposite the township of Howe, and newly improved".¹ The other was in Topcliffe immediately upstream from the present mills. On the same side as the mills, the area is now a riverside pasture bounded by the road. The principle on which it worked was no doubt the diverting of the stream through an area in which wooden uprights known as "fish hecks" enabled the fixing of trap nets which could be set and removed at convenient times. The two garths were still let for 6/- and 2/- respectively as late as 1607, although the 1577 survey made it appear as though they were defunct:- "Ther was in the tyme of Henry late Erle of Northumbreland, grandfather of thErle that nowe ys, two Fishegarthes in the sd lordshipe which nowe of late are decayed for want of tymber for the necessarie repair of the same by reason wherof the rent of Auncient reserued upon the same cannot be continued without a supply of tymber and repaire to be made to the sd fishegarthes."²

1 Pet.MS.D.9.4 Feod.Acc.22 Hen.VI.

2 Pet.MS. 1577 Survey f.192.

The only types of fish mentioned in poaching presentments are tench, pike, salmon fry and "Kyppers".¹ The Howe fishgarth was reported as worthless in 1608, through lack of tenants, though the Topcliffe fishgarth was still let for the customary 2/- per year.

In the district was a wealth of chantries and chapels. At the dissolution, there were recorded the following:-

1. The Chantry of Our Lady in the Parish Church - whose incumbent was David Bele. Founded about 1500 by Richard "Grome" and Thomas Allenson, it owned lands worth £4 16s. 5½d. per year. The founder "Grome" was probably one of the Grenes who held Newby at this time.
2. The Chantry of Our Lady in the Chapel within the Churchyard:- The incumbent was Richard Browne. The chantry was founded by one of the Earls of Northumberland, but now "of the presentment of the Church of York". Its income was £5 13s. 6d.
3. Our Lady Service or Gild in the Parish of Topcliffe:- The incumbent was John Bell. The chantry survey reports that it had no foundation but that lands had been granted to it since, to the value of £4 17s. 7d. The priest was to maintain a choir of six children, to teach them to sing and provide them with books so that they could assist in the service in the church on holy days and feast days.

1 Pet.MS.D.1.2.13 Oct. 11 Hen.VII.

4. The Chantry or Service in the Manor of Topcliffe:-

The incumbent was William Toppam, who received a stipend of £5 from the coffers of the Earl of Northumberland whose foundation the chantry was.

The foregoing details are a resume of those given by the Chantry Commissioners of 1548.¹

From the Petworth account rolls the further information is available:- The Earl's chantry priest in 1473 was Edward, whose horse was agisted in the Park for 4/- that year,² whilst in 1480 the incumbent was William Playfer, who received £5 that year "for celebrating mass every day in the manor chapel".³ Playfer's unnamed predecessor in 1444 had received an extra 6/8 for meat and drink.⁴ William Shaw had succeeded Playfer in 1498,⁵ and in 1522 John Settill was still receiving the same £5 stipend.⁶ The royal survey of 1537 mentions the "Chauntrye of an olde foundacon and a prest syngyng in the same chappell which hath for his stipend oute of the lordes cofirs £5."⁷

1 Surtees Soc. Vol.91 Yorkshire Chantry Surveys.No.103

2 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.7.12 Ed.IV.

3 ibid.D.9.8(1) 19.Ed.IV.

4 ibid.D.9.3.22 Hen.VI.

5 ibid.D.1.2.16. 13 Hen.VII.

6 PRO.Misc.Bks.T.R. E.36/226 13 Hen.VIII and Pet.MS. D.9.20 n.d.

7 PRO.Min.Acc. SC.11/959 28 Hen.VIII.

5. The Chapel of St. Giles in Elmore (Eldmire):-

The only legible information in the Commissioners' returns is that its lands were worth £3 6s. 4d. per year. The 1577 survey speaks of "about four acres of land were once attached to this Chappel" and a note of 1602 states that the lands belonging to "Crakehill Chappell have bene exchanged for land in Dalton" with Sir John Dawnay. "Chapel Garth, late of the chantry of Eldmire" was granted to Richard Okeham in 1560.¹ This exhausts the information. A possible site of the chapel is the earthwork marked between Eldmire and Eldmire Ings.

6. The Chapel of Dishforth:- incumbent, Richard Browne, and owning lands worth 21/- per year. No further evidence has been found in the Petworth MS. The site is unidentifiable, unless the name Chapel Trees is significant.

The Petworth court rolls and account rolls suggest or support the existence of five other chapels in the district.

1. At Catton, Henry Bullocke claimed his stipend for saying masses at St. Margaret's Chapel there in 1499.² The 1577 survey memoranda includes the item "four acres of land once belonging to Catton Chapel", whilst there are several other references to "Priest Croft" in Catton.

1 CPR.XV.m.27 2 Eliz.

2 Pet.MS.D.1.2.19 14 Hen.VII.

2. At Skipton, the chapel of St. Michael was mentioned in the 1577 memoranda, with five roods of land and a house and close of 21 perches.
3. At Gristhwaite there is mentioned "the Chapel Field of 33 acres and half an acre of meadow where the chapel stood". Little and Great Chapel Garths still persisted as field names in 1625.¹
4. At Dalton "the chapel had 1½ acres of land" in the 1577 extent, and in 1603 a smithy was recorded as "built at the end of the chapel of Dalton".
5. At Asenby "Walter the Chaplain of Astenby" was fined for trespass in the Great Park in 1425 and was also presented for having misappropriated certain wood supplied for the repair of his grange.² "A litle Rounde Hill called Our Ladye Chapel Hille - one acre" appears in the 1577 memoranda under the Asenby section. Such a name might indicate nothing more than a connection with one of the Topcliffe chantry foundations with that dedication. There is such a little round hill in the triangular field enclosing the site of the maze. In 1518 John Fox was chaplain.³

A further chapel whose only mention is to be found in Burton is that at Rainton, in the possession of the Abbey

1 Topcliffe Leases. 1625 D.2.8.
2 Pet.MS. D.1.1.Oct 3 Hen.VI.
3 Pet.MS.D.1.3.31.9 Hen.VIII.

of Fountains.¹ References to Rainton are rare in the Petworth MS. and then usually to the stone quarry there, but on one occasion - in 1476 - there was a reference to the tithe barn there.²

In the churchyard of Topcliffe there still stands the old Grammar School, a substantially built stone and slate building now in an advanced state of disrepair. The inscription over the door gives its date of construction as 1812, but it has been out of use for the last three generations.³ It is possible that this occupies the site of the chantry described as "within the churchyard" and quite likely that a portion of the endowment of at least one of the chantries was diverted to the maintenance of this school, which perhaps also inherited the duty of training choristers.⁴ Little seems to be known locally about the old school and its history.⁵

1 Mon. Angl. 195.

2 Pet.MS. D.1.1.6.15 Ed.IV.

3 See photograph 5.

4 This suggestion is made both in V.C.H.Yorks.N.R. v. Topcliffe and Surtees Soc. Vol.169 Yorks.Chantry Surveys, Into.p.XV.

5 Throughout the manuscripts consulted there is only one reference to the school - in the Court Book for 1606-7 - when "Petter Wilkinson, ludimagister Schole de Topclyff" brought claims against four deforciantes for his fees in teaching their sons. The fees in question were 1s. -d. per quarter year in each case.
Pet.MS.Court Books D.4.1.No.3. 1606-7.

(b) The Mills

Though the site of the present mills is the most suitable, and although this was probably the site of the original mill of the Domesday Survey, there seems to have been a considerable number of mills in Topcliffe Lordship at different times during the period under survey.

There is a large stretch of waterfront in the lordship, yet satisfactory mill sites are few. The lower reaches of the Cod Beck and the Swale were unsuitable, partly because they were liable to flooding and partly because they formed the boundaries of the Little Park where the principal residence stood. The most satisfactory sites from the townspeople's point of view were to be found on the Swale somewhere between Asenby and the present Salmon Hall. Other sites would entail an unpleasantly long distance to carry corn or grist. Yet even on this stretch difficulties were experienced. Much of the Asenby bank was too high for the wheel housing to be sited satisfactorily, whilst the tendency of the Swale to frequent rises and falls with little notice would complicate the problems. It seems likely that the earliest mill was sited near the present mills on the Catton Road, and that the power was derived from Old Sike (the 'Holsike' of the Petworth MS.), only the overspill from which was allowed to reach the Swale by its present course.

The single mill of Domesday had multiplied to four by

1220. Then the mills were a most lucrative source of revenue, supplying nearly 25% of the whole receipts.

By 1315 a mill was mentioned at Gristhwaite, a fulling mill in Topcliffe and, in 1320, a mill at Asenby. The mill at Gristhwaite was still reported as worth 20/- in 1320 and 1353,¹ but by 1473 it was "utterly destroyed and fallen to the ground a long time past, though it used to yield 54/- per year".² An account of seven years later, whilst repeating the ruinous condition of the mill, states that it used to be worth 5 marks per year.³

In 1413 the bailiff's account includes the rent of a rood of arable next to the Mill House at Newby - the first occasion on which any sign has been given that mills were sited there.⁴ Only twelve years later there is proof that one of the local misfortunes had occurred, when William Raper, the miller, had asked for a survey by the jury, of the extent of the three mills and the fishpond or dam. The purpose of this is not clear, unless it was an attempt to substantiate his objection to a proposed increase in rental. The jury reported to the April Court that they had been "unable to do so because of a great flood which had occurred before Christmas, and the mills had thus stood idle and unapproachable for 13 weeks - six before and seven after

1 See Inquisitions under appropriate dates, already quoted.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.8. 19 Ed.IV.

4 Pet.MS.D.9.1 1 Hen.V.

Christmas, so that there was a loss to the Lord of £6."¹
Perhaps the survey was requested to assess just how much the lord should accept in payment for the miller's interrupted year's tenancy. If £6 is the agreed sum represented by a three month period, the annual rental must have been in the region of £20 - £24.

The next time the mill rental was included was in 1444 when the water corn mill - position unspecified - was valued at £27 and a fulling mill at 26/8.²

Thirty years later, in 1472, there were three water mills at Newby, worth £20, but two fulling mills which had been worth 53/4 were reported as ruined and fallen to the ground.³ The details were the same in 1480, save that the water corn mills were then valued at £24 per year. The fulling mills were "prope pontem et ubi tentoria scituantur",⁴ and thus must have been somewhere either on the right bank of the river just upstream of the bridge, or on the left bank below the bridge. The site indicated could be in either place equally well, since both places have been traditional camping grounds for the gypsies and horse-copers who still attend the annual Topcliffe horse fair.

Although there are no remains to indicate the sites of earlier mills on the stretch of the Swale between Asenby and

1 Pet.MS.D.1.1. 16 Ap.3 Hen.VI.
2 Pet.MS.D.9.3.22 Hen.VI.
3 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV.
4 Pet.MS.D.9.8.19 Ed.IV.

Catton, there are several sites which seem possible. The promontory of Newby in the eastward bulge of the Swale - known as Haver Close - is satisfactory from the viewpoint of bank height above normal water level, but the scour of the stream would tend to build up debris near any mill on the west bank. Another possible site is one slightly upstream from the present Skellfield School. A small plantation by the riverside, at a break in the bank, was marked on the 1767 map as an inlet with an island. On the opposite bank some short distance downstream is marked "Mill Bushes", whilst the left bank is shown as though artificially set back. The suggestion that here or hereabouts was the site of the previous mills is supported by a phrase in the rental dating approximately from 1613, when John Allen "Miller of Topcliffe" held "three gristemilles on Swale near Newbye House."¹

The number of mills in the lordship remained at three, and the annual farm at £20 until at least 1576. The first mention of a farmer of the mills was in 1473 when Richard Mylner held them.² Among the few other mentions of such tenants were John Baitson in 1509; John Blackmantyll in 1523, who held them for seven years starting in 1520, on a sublease from Robert Lek who was the parker of the Great Park;³ John Norton in 1538-9,⁴ and John Oxewell who held

1 Pet.MS. 27.D.6.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7.12 Ed.IV.

3 *ibid.* D.9.14 14Hen.8.

4 *ibid.* D.9.17 33 Hen.VIII.arrears.

them on a 21-year lease in 1542. In this last case there occurs for the first time the item of "40/- paid to the Vicar of Topcliffe as small tythes for the mills."¹

Though the statement has been made that the annual farm of the mills remained at £20 until at least 1576 - a statement which is accurate so far as the Bailiffs' Accounts are concerned - there is other evidence which contradicts this figure, and for which no satisfactory explanation can be advanced. In the course of an enquiry into the lands and possessions of the 7th Earl and Leonard Dacres "who have raised a rebellion against us in November, December, January and February last past", it was stated "that three water corn mills standing on the Swale at Topcliffe, and the fishing of the Swale in the place called the fyshegarth, late in the tenure or occupacon of Oswald Wilkinson for £43, thus let to him by the late Earl's indenture dated 3 February 5 Eliz. for twenty-one years, the farmer to maintain the mills in all repairs of timber, the sd Oswald has failed to do this." The mills thus reverted to crown ownership through the tenant's default. The Crown sold the rights to George Benson for £36 per year, the date of the agreement being 28th November 15 Eliz.² In spite of this, the farm of the mills was returned again at £20 in the following three regnal years.³

1 Pet.MS.D.9.17 33 Hen.VIII.

2 PRO.Sp.Comm.& Ret.in the Exch. E.178/3161.15 Eliz.

3 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.17.16/18 Eliz.

By 1602 the three mills, then held by Peter Wilkinson on a twenty-year lease for £40,¹ had been supplemented by a "little new mylne laitley erected on the lords waste in the Owtewoode, in the tenure of William Robinson, held by indenture 40 Eliz. for 21 years for £2 per year".¹ This, no doubt, was a new mill at Gristhwaite "in the North Field", mentioned in 1613.² Whether this was the fourth of the four mills which John Allen the miller farmed in 1608 is uncertain, but seems likely. He held them on a 21-year lease starting in 1605, paying £42 per year for the first two years, and £50 per year thereafter.³

In this recital of the relevant facts there have been several indications that maintenance of the mills was something of a problem, in one case causing forfeiture. Natural difficulties plus the uncertain habits of the Swale had caused frequent shifting of mill-sites, whilst neglect, political disturbances and the impermanence of timber construction had contributed to the interrupted development of these mills. Details of repairs are usually lacking, though the item is frequently repeated amongst the allowances in the accounts. The notable exception to this general statement is a section of the report of the House- and Wood-graves of 1515/16:-

"Itm they saye that the water haith revyn upp 9 or 10 burds of the lawe dame at the milnes and allso 3 burdes

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- 1 Pet.MS. 1577 Survey note.
 - 2 Pet.MS.1613(c) Survey 27 D.6.
 - 3 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.27 5 Jac.I.

of ye stagn' dike next ye fyshe hekks and buyldid upp ye stanes and mayde j holle in ye sd dike whych moste bee amended at the next litill water that fallith and allso ther ys defallt in theckyng of the garners and milnes in dyvers places and ther wantes burdes of the fayre of the hye dame betwixt ye Granes that moste bee clayd of newe thys somer tyde or els it wilbe more hurte shortely and ther moste bee stalones mayd for ye water clowes".¹

Though not entirely intelligible in detail, the general sense of this seems to indicate that wooden piles, joined by planks, after the fashion of groins, were used to divert the current into artificial backwaters, the "head" of whose water was controllable by clowes or valves. There were two of these groins, and as the general sweep of the main current at the tentatively suggested Newby site would be towards the right bank, it is possible that these groins were arranged at a 30-45 degree angle to the bank, rather than directly from bank to bank. The "stalones" in the preceding passage would appear to be "starlings" - i.e. groups of wooden piles driven into the riverbed upstream of the clows, to act both as breakwaters and to minimise the possibility of blocking or jamming the sliding wooden shutters of the valves.

Some of these repairs - or renewals of these repairs -

1 Pet.MS.MCR.D.1.3.30 6/7 Hen.VIII.

were carried out in 1523. John Blackmantyll, the farmer of the mills, was paid by the woodgraves 11/9 for making three water clowes and for putting seven new planks (tabulas) on the Low Dam, and for sawing stange plankes for the cornmill.¹

The details of expenditure on mill repairs are, however, of uncommon occurrence in the rolls. This fact, together with the uncertainty of the whole position affecting the mills, makes impossible any special attempt to show whether or not the mills were as great a source of profit as the credit items alone would make them appear.

1 Pet.MS. MAC.D.9.14 14/15 Henry VIII.

(c) The Parks

There were two parks at Topcliffe - the Great and Little Parks, known until 1576 by their more assonant names of Moskwith and Barbelonde respectively. First mentioned in 1315, they have formed an integral part of the estate ever since, and the name of Topcliffe Parks exists to the present day.

Of the two, Barbelonde or the Little Park, was some short distance to the south-east of the village. At its south-western corner - since it was roughly oblong - lay the two early Percy residences of Maiden Bower and Cock Lodge. The eastern side was formed by the present Winn (Whin) lane, which probably runs on or close to the line of the old park pale, so that there was a narrow strip of pasture (sometimes meadow land) between it and the river. This was known as the Fyttes - a name still in use in the form Fitches. This seems to have contained a number of trees and thorns, and there was a grange there for the storage of hay from this meadow which for long was demesne land, though really outside the park. The northern boundary of the Little Park probably stopped short of the road between Topcliffe and Gallows Green, following a line produced roughly from Dalton Lane and Dalton Bridges, so as to leave some thirty or forty acres of arable land between the pale and the present road. This area, plus about the same amount north of the Thirsk road, in what is now called

the Poor's Land, would compose that third area of common arable, whose whereabouts are not disclosed until about 1613 when the Laund in the Little Park is cited as arable. Practically the whole of what was until recently Dalton airfield formed the balance of the Little Park, the rest of whose boundary would coincide more or less with the present parish boundary between Eldmire and Dalton on the one hand and Topcliffe on the other. The area thus enclosed would approximate to the 480-500 acres at which the Little Park was assessed in the 1577 Survey.

Of the two parks, Barbelonde would probably be the earlier because of its nearness to the manorhouse, and would therefore be the one referred to in the 1315 inquisition.

A royal survey of 1536 may be summarised as follows:- The pale was three miles in circuit and in good condition; the herbage was let to farm; a 'very proper lodge newly built by the late Erle' stood there. It was reckoned that there were 4,160 oaks in the park which were valued at £200, whilst there were also 160 fallow deer.¹

The Percy survey of 1577 noted:-

"Ther ys in the sd Litle Pke the foure seuerall Hagggs springs or partitions herunder menconed; Dalton Hagg, Elmer Hagg, Chambers Close, The Mannor Woode or the Bodie of the Parke The contentes of euerie of the sd seuerall

1 PRO.Min.Acc.SC 11/959 27 Hen.VIII.

together with the number of trees in the same herunder
 appereth:-

Dalton Hagg $64\frac{1}{2}$ acres 320 ockes
 Elmer Hagg $54\frac{1}{2}$ acres 306 ockes
 Chamber Close 13 acres hertofor occupied as parcell
 of the demaine and lying nowe in the sd pke 94 ockes
 The Mannor Woode and the residue of the sd pke viz the
 Bodie of the pke which is used for pasture 351 ac. 3 r.
 In Mannor Woode 310 ockes in the Bodie of the pke 220
 ockes Total of trees in the Litle Pke 1,250

And prysed at the seuerall pryses accordynge to ther value
 as ys herunder menconed:-

	£	s.	d.
Ockes of the best sorte 100 at 6/8	33	6	8
Ockes of the 2nd sorte 250 at 4/-	62	10	-
Ockes of the 3rd sorte 350 at 3/4	58	6	8
Ockes of the 4th & worste sorte 1,050 at 2/6	131	5	-"

The discrepancy of 500 in the two totals of the number
 of the trees is perhaps explained by the previous passage
 in the survey:-

"A parkelike and semelie grounde for that purpose well
 sett with old gret ocke trees and nowe well plenished with
 deare to the nombre of 280 wherof 60 are deare of antlere.
 The pale of the sd pke ys nowe in good and conveyaunt
 repayre The west syde therof and allso the north syde are
 laitly sett aboute with setts of Thornes and with Yonge
 Ashes a conveyaunt distance one from an other whiche doe
 growe orderlie after the pale syde And in tyme ys like to
 be a great defense unto the same."

So the difference in numbers can be explained by the
 fact that whilst the oaks were the only trees appraised,
 there were others, especially in the pale itself.

The Great Park or Moskwith lay north of the town, and occupied a fan-shaped area whose radii were approximately the Catton road on the west and Thacker Beck on the east. At its widest, the Great Park also included the land on both sides of Thacker Beck and extended to the Thirsk road. The arc of the fan was bounded by the arable fields of Catton and Skipton and the lands of Carlton Minniott and Thorpefield.

The 1536 survey stated that the pale was 6 miles long, in good repair. The herbage was let to farm and there were 240 fallow deer. There were 9,809 trees mostly big and little oaks worth £300. Next to the Great Park on the east was a wood $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles by $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile, containing 1,000 oaks worth £100.

In 1577 the Great Park was described as follows:-

"...on the northe syde of the Towne of Topclyff and distante from the sd Towne one quart' of a myle or therabouts One other parke called the Gret Pke conteyninge by measure 1,340 acres. A lardge parkelike and verie fayer grounde for that purpose conteyninge in circuite as the ringe pale goeth vj myles or therabout The Pale of the sd pke ys nowe in convenyaunt repayre And ther ys in the sd pke at the taking of this survey of fallowe deare 20 score wherof threscore are deare of antlere The syde of the sd pke ys likewise orderlie sett with Thornes and ashes lyke to grow to give purpose for the safegarde and defense of the

sd pale Ther ys allso in the sd pke two kepers lodges nowe
in convenyaunt repayre and ther ys likewise two loughes or
fyshepowles wherin are some store of tenches and pykes¹

Seuerall The sd Parke ys devyded in fyve seuerall Haggas
or partitions herunder seuerally menconed:

		The Cole Hagg or Great Hagg, Topcliffe Firth, Strangwith Head, Catton Firth, Lawnd Head		£	s.	d.
The Cole hagg conteyneth	85 acres with 130 trees	worth	26	5	0	
Topclyff Firth	(blank)	1,900 trees worth	372	10	0	
Strangwith Head	(blank)	900 trees worth	187	10	0	
Lawnd Head	(blank)	120 trees worth	22	10	0	
Catton Firth	(blank)	1,600 trees worth	278	6	8	

Ther ys also in the sd Lordeshipe certain outewodes
adioyninge or lyeinge nigh unto the sd Great Pke nowe
known or usually called by the names of Anderley Hagg or
Will Hagg, Topclyff Common or Outewodes

Topcliffe Common conteyneth 3,000 trees worth £365 16s. 8d.
Anderley Hagg conteyneth 200 trees worth £58 -s. -d."

Throughout the period from 1413 both parks were used
for grazing purposes, the receipts for which were returned
in 1413 and 1473 under the heading of agist, whilst in the
1444 and all other accounts the term used is herbage.

Originally, no doubt, there was a distinction between the
two terms, the former implying in this case the pasturing
by the lord of others' cattle at a certain rate per month
or year, the latter rather more objective and implying the
right to pasture cattle on the ground of a second party.

In the records consulted the distinction seems to have been
lost, "herbage" being used as the more comprehensive term,
to cover the value of the pasture for the lord's cattle and

1 A later (C.1602) marginal note in the Survey states that
the pools had been drained and the fish taken.

the receipts for privileges of pasture enjoyed both by tenants and outsiders.¹

Both parks had their officers, each being supervised by one parker and by a joint palester in 1444,² though by 1520 Moskwith had two parkers and a palester of its own.³ By 1578 there were two parkers and a palester for Moskwith and one parker and a palester for Barbelonde.⁴ On several occasions special agisters were appointed,⁵ but usually their duties appear to have been combined by the parkers with their normal responsibilities. The parker of Barbelonde was often also the keeper of the manorhouse. Over all the park officials was the steward who frequently added to his administrative duties those of master forester and overseer of the game, though those duties may well have been purely nominal. This position had been hereditary in the families of Topcliffe and Stockdale.⁶ This is no doubt the office which the 1577 survey described as follows:-

"Ther ys allso one Richard Stockdale nowe keeper of the Great Parke of Topclyff and hathe the same kepership by inheritaunce and his heyres for ever together with the inheritaunce of the East Lodge⁷ in the same parke The fee

1 e.g. Law Dictionary - Blount, London 1670.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.3.22.H.VI.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.20 n.d.1520(c).

4 Pet.MS.D.9.22.21 Eliz.

5 Pet.MS.D.9.13 8 Hen.VIII.

6 V.C.H.Yorks.N.R.v.Topcliffe.

7 OS.2½ in. 44/37.783397.

of ijd per day one shoulder of euery deare killed by warrante or otherwise Together allso with the pasture of eighte kyne and ther followers until they be one yeare olde with the keepinge allso of two horses And the wayne penies of euery wayne coming into the sd pke Halfe the winde blowne woode in the sd pke (yf the same be not blowen upp by the rootes) With sufficyent woode allso to burne within the same lodge to be spent not elsewhere And allso half the breckons to be cutt downe after the Rode Daye And halfe the rootes of the olde Ockes to be fellyd within the sd pke And allso one loade of Haye for euery beaste to be gotten at the chardges of the sd keper."¹

Stockdale and his family had other grants too. An account of 1579 states that he and his heirs were granted 'in perpetuum' five beast gaites in Thacker and the tenure of Will Hagg, worth together 43/11 $\frac{1}{2}$, by "Richard Percy, once Earl of Northumberland". Whilst this styling is incorrect, since there had never been such a nobleman, the entry still avers the antiquity of the grant, since the only Richard Percy to own Topcliffe was the one who died in 1244 and who had had the long dispute with his nephew William.

The townsmen of Topcliffe had privileges of pasture in the Great Park:- "Ther was an Auncyent custome in the tyme of Henry late Erle of Northumbreland² grandfather unto the

1 Pet.MS.1577 Survey f.194.

2 i.e. 5th Earl, d.1527.

Erle that nowe ys that the Tenaunts and Inhabitaunts of Topclyff should have the which allso they had and enjoyed within the Great Parke of Topclyff pasturing and Comon of pasture for ther oxen after the rate of ls. 2d. the oxe and for ther kyne after the rate of ls. a cowe and likewise for ther horses after the rate of ls. 8d. a horse."¹

The Little Park seems to have been retained mainly for the lord's use until as late as the crown trusteeship which began in 1537. Over at least a fifty-year period between 1473 and 1523 the lord had a considerable stock herd there - in 1473 under the charge of Thomas Rande "staurarius". His account of 1473² is unique amongst the documents inspected unless an imperfect but much shorter document referring to Spofforth is taken into consideration.³ Rande's account shows that he was responsible for the purchase and sale of draught and beef cattle, sheep and tallow from slaughtered stock; he received payments for the herbage and pannage of the Little Park, his receipts amounting to £24 5s.10d. or about 28% of the annual receipts of the lordship that year. Expenses were relatively heavy when allowances for working charges and repairs had been deducted, but an account of this kind is difficult to assess at a fixed figure, since the primary object of the stock herd seems to have been the provision of meat for the

1 Pet.MS.1577 Survey f.194.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11-12 Ed.IV.

3 Same Roll (Spofforth).

lord's household at Leconfield to which some 65 cattle were driven each autumn. Subsidiary stock was held at Helagh and Spofforth in the hands of the local bailiffs, whilst cattle were purchased as far away as Pontefract, besides locally. The year's account showed three carcasses in store at Topcliffe and nine cattle of different types in stock at Topcliffe and Spofforth; so that these had to be added as an asset in kind to the nett trading balance which was £1 18s. 2d.

Judging from the accounts available, expenses connected with the parks seem to have been much less than in the other Yorkshire manors. One of the heaviest items elsewhere - the preservation of the pale - is mentioned in only five of the twelve accounts in which the parks figure. There can be little doubt that this was due in part to the presence of a regularly used residence in the lordship and in part to careful administration. In accounts for 1575 and 1576 charges were shown for making new pale and restoring old sections, but the maximum length concerned at any one time was seventy rods - much smaller than the lengths dealt with, for instance, at Spofforth. It seems as though the idea of substituting live hedges for wooden fencing was adopted since the 1577 survey speaks approvingly of the thorns and ash trees which stood on the line of the pale "to give purpose to the safegarde and defense of the said pale." The account for 1578 showed an extension of this practice:-

"In ready money paid for 19,000 quicksetts and saughes at 1/6 the thousand 28/6; for 2,500 ashes at 1/- the 100 25/-; to certen workmen for setting the said ashes and saughes and for renewing other quicksetts with new earth in the Great Park 49/3; for weeding the quicksett 5/-; for ditching and setting the quicksetts round the new Laund in the same park 18/9; for casting a ditch and setting the same with saughes conteyning 32 roods at Ive Carr in the same park 12/-; for setting 9,000 quicksetts with other repairs conteyning 300 roods in the Little Park 10/-; for weeding 250 roods of quicksett there 13/-; for cutting and switching the thornes and yong trees in the garden and Maden Bowre in the same park 60/-; for making 40 rods of new pale in the Great Park at 3½d. the rood 11/8; for setting upp 36 roods of old pale at 2½d. per rood 7/6; making a new pompe and a swannes nest in Howsyke in the Great Park 38/10; for four bushels of oats for the swannes 4/-; for leading 174 loads of thornes, timber, stones, breckons, earth, morter, hay, straw, tiles and sand about the fencing of the quicksett in both parks, repairing the pales, thatching the deerhouse and litter for the lordes horses and suchelike 26/6; for four new lockes 10/8; for mending sixe old lockes to the park gates 5/-; for playtes, howpes, pykes, haspes and stapyls to the sd park gates 2ld. and for pitch to mark the geysted cattle with 12d."¹

1 Pet.MS.D.9.22 21 Eliz.

Amongst the heaviest expenses were those connected with the provision of fodder for the numerous deer. The getting of 'derefall' was self-supporting since, for example, in 1523 this cost 15/7 to cut, but the remnants after the deer had eaten the foliage, were sold for 59/2.¹ On the other hand, in the same year the rents of land reserved in the two parks for the upkeep of the deer were reckoned at £9 15s. -d., the areas being Eldmire Hagg in the Little Park and the Great Laund, Strangwithhead and Haverlaund in the Great Park. The mowing, leading, stacking and fencing-off of hay from Hallikelding on the borders of the Great Park cost a further 27/6.

In 1578 other expenses of a less frequently recurring nature were recorded:-

"Paid to carpenters for setting up a deerhouse in the Great Park 67/-; and one in the Little Park 62/-; mowing brackens and thatching the two deerhouses 48/-; 6,000 latts, proddes, and duple spikinges 16/-; stones to set under the postes feet 20d.; making two standhecks² in the Body of the Park and for casting a little ditch about the deerhouses 7/10. Total £10 8s. 6d."³

In return for all these miscellaneous expenses the lord was assured of an adequate supply of venison, beef and mutton, of pasture and hay for his stock and of faggots

1 Pet.MS.D.9.14 14/15 Hen.VIII.

2 i.e. feeding troughs.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.22 21 Eliz.

for his household. Timber was provided for repairs of all kinds, and profits were to be made from the letting of pasture to tenants both for cattle and swine. Over and above all this there were the sporting rights which would commend themselves highly to the nobleman of the 15th and 16th centuries.

It seems as though, in addition to the maintenance of deer, an attempt was made to induce a brood of swans to settle near the Old Sike beck. Two references, in 1576 and 1578 mention the buying of 4 and 6 bushels of oats for the swans, and the latter account contains the curious item of making a swan's nest near the Old Sike.¹ The royal survey of 1536 recorded only one swannery amongst the estates - that at Arram Carr, near Leconfield, so presumably no attempt at such a colony had then been made at Topcliffe. If it had been considered successful, such an asset would almost certainly have figured in the 1577 survey, but the omission of any such detail makes it appear either that the experiment was overlooked by the surveyor or that it was still only in its early stages. Perhaps Humberston had all these matters in mind when he wrote:- "And this last Erle dyd moche delyght to lye there for the gret comodyte of huntynge and hawkyng in the felds and smal ryvers nere unto the same manour which are all verie well plenished with

1 See above, p.79.

al kynd of game and fowle apte and mete for that pastyme."¹

In the period between 1585 and 1610, whilst the Earl was confined to his southern estates, the practice of leasing the herbage of the parks became more common. This had started as early as 1534 when the herbage of the Great Park had been leased for life to Stephen Thomasson for a rental which showed a decrease of 33% on the value when last recorded in 1523. This grant was followed in 1536 by an eighty-year lease of the Little Park to Sir Thomas Johnson and his son Henry. The former was appointed keeper of the manor house and held the park at a quite uneconomic rental - £3 6s. 8d. - just one-third of the value at which it had been assessed since 1480.² When both leases lapsed - in the case of the Johnson family this was by forfeiture after the rebellion of 1569 - the receipts from the Parks increased tremendously. The income from the herbage of the Little Park leapt from £3 6s. 8d. to £44 3s. 6d. and that of the Great Park from £20 to £43 2s. 2d. This was the only occasion on which the Little Park is recorded as more valuable than its larger neighbour. Thenceforward the rentals increased steadily, that of the Great Park particularly. A recession in 1578 when herbage values declined by about 8%, was apparent only, and is to be explained by the retention of considerable areas for the lord's use instead of letting to tenants, in anticipation

1 Survey f.228d.

2 PRO.Min.Acc. SC.6 4284 32/33 Hen.VIII.

of a visit by the lord. The 1607 account shows that the rental had increased by 91% and that the herbage of both parks had been let to William Robinson, late bailiff, on twenty-one year leases, that of Barbelonde in 1595 and of Moskwith in 1597.

By 1599 at latest the process of disparking the Great Park had begun - the letting out of sections of the park for use as arable, meadow or pasture. In 1599 there was one tenant only in the little Park and three in the Great Park.¹ By about 1613 the whole of the latter was let in areas varying from two to 252 acres.

The same happened to the Little Park, though more than half was held on lease by Sir William Ingleby, the Chief Steward. His share consisted of the new manorhouse and its precincts which included the sites of the older residences and the gardens. Though the document which gives this information mentions only acreages and tenants' names without the rentals payable,² a rental of 1618 quotes £550 as the receipt total from the Parks.³ This sum had declined to £428 6s. 2d. in 1650.⁴

1 Pet.MS.MCR.D.2.5.57 41 Eliz.

2 Pet.MS. 27 D.6 1613(c).

3 Pet.MS. 8.D.2. Summary of Rents.

4 Pet.MS. 8.D.2 Topcliffe Rental Renewed 1650.

TOPCLIFFE

Section 5.

The Tenantry and Conditions of Tenure.

In one document, instead of the more usual 'lordship' or 'manor', the phrase 'Barony of Topcliffe' is used¹ - a title whose meaning here is evidently a lordship to whose court suit was due from a number of free tenants in villages outside the manor and its immediate members. The table on the following page summarises the scanty and inconclusive information available on the number of free and free 'foreign' tenants of this Barony.

The only list with any pretensions to detail is that given in the 1577 survey. A 16th century note in that survey remarks:- "The nombre of thes freholders is 55 wherof 3 ar in Her Ma'ties handes and claimed by Mr Gaites 9 and so remane 43". The actual total from the list as quoted is 70. Though there is little comfort to be derived from it, one is inclined to sympathise with the Auditor's note of 1602:- "Moste of all the freholders are very uncertenly and absurdely sett doune in this Survey".

Little of real importance can be deduced from an inspection of the tabulated facts. The Barony was composed of villages preponderantly in the North Riding, though there were five in the East and one in the West Riding. The dependence of Scarborough on Topcliffe rather than on Leconfield is even more surprising than the case of Bolton Percy, which, it would seem, would have been more

1 Pet.MS. 27.d.6.Terrier.1613(c)

Table 2.

The Barony of Topcliffe - Free and Free 'Foreign' Tenants

Township	1516	1577	1612	1621
Topcliffe	4	3+	15+	14
Asenby	4	6	14	21
Newby	1	1	1	1
Thorpe Underleas	-	1	1	1
Catton	4	3	17	12
Skipton	15	18	7	7
Dalton	5	5	13	15
Crakehill and Eldmire	2	1	3	2
Dishforth	5	4	7	5
Rainton	4	3	8	7
Baldersby	1	-	-	-
	(45)	(45)	(86)	(85)
Upleatham	2	1		
Marske	2	1		
Studelaye	1	3		
Ayton & Irton	-	8		
Killerby	-	1		
Sneaton	-	1		
Hilderwell, Kilton and Kirkleatham	4	4		
Ugthorpe, Walplewe and S. Lofthouse	2	-		
Seamer	1	-		
Laund on Wold	1	1		
Ganton	-	1		
Scorborough	1	1		
Paddockthorpe	1	1		
Staxton	-	1		
Bolton Percy	1	1		
Coney St., York	1			
	(62)	(70)		
Total of Rents	-	18s. 1¼d.		

conveniently attached to Spofforth. In most cases the holdings of ecclesiastical bodies were not affected by the Dissolution so far as suit of court is concerned. Such tenants included the Abbot of Fountains, the Priors of Drax, Newburgh, Gisburn and St. John of Jerusalem, the Prioress of "Handale" or Grendale and the Master of St. Leonard's Hospital, York. There was a marked increase in the number of Topcliffe free tenants - an increase which coincides with the period at which the disparking had taken place. Asenby was similarly affected at the time of the division and enclosure which took place about 1613. It should be noted that the figures in the table refer rather to holdings than to individuals, so that though there appear to be 62 tenants there were in fact only 41, since nine held lands in different townships. Richard Green of Newby was the best example of a 'pluralist' in 1516, as he held lands in Topcliffe, Asenby, Rainton, Dishforth, Skipton, Catton, Dalton and Crakehill with Eldmire besides Newby.

The tenures - so far as can be told from the rare occasions on which such details are stated - seem to have been by knight service and suit of court. The rents of the free tenants, which had amounted to a considerable sum in the 13th and 14th centuries were in 1577 only 18s. 1½d., together with two pairs of gloves and a pound of cumin - for lands which are mainly unspecified. The

insignificance of this sum in comparison with the total receipts which in 1579 reached £283 perhaps accounts for the "uncerten and absurde" setting down of the list of free tenants and their holdings. Yet when there occur cases, as for example that of John Freer of Catton who held two messuages, a cottage and 40 acres of arable and meadow for which he paid 4d. though they were worth £4 per year,¹ the very discrepancy between actual and real rentable value would have supplied a strong incentive to keep more accurate records in case of an escheat.

The unfree tenants are referred to in the 13th and 14th centuries as bondsmen and cotters, and there were 12 and 15 of these respectively in 1220.² Thereafter, except in the records for 1480, 1577, 1603 and 1608 their feudal ranking is omitted and their payments entitled 'rents and farms'. The account of 1480 speaks of these payments as 'of nativi and tenants at will';³ by 1577 tenants at will only are mentioned;⁴ in 1603 'tenants for life or for a term of years as well tenants at will',⁵ and in 1608 'tenants by indenture and at will' are the phrases used.⁶

During the period on which the rolls give information the tenant population figures seem to have remained reasonably stable. The earliest list of tenants does not occur till

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- 1 Pet.MS.D.1.4(38)5-6 Ed.VI.
 - 2 PRO.I.p.m. C.132 F.23/7.
 - 3 Pet.MS.D.9.8(1) 19 Ed.IV.
 - 4 1577 Survey.
 - 5 Pet.MS.D.2.5.(60).
 - 6 *ibid.*D.9.27 5-6 Jac.I.

Topcliffe Lordship - Fluctuation of Tenant Population 1522 - 1650

Township	1522	1535	1536	1554	1560	1565	1577	1586	1599	1603	1611	1612	1621	1625	1650
Topcliffe	40	37	32	33	39	41	42	38	47	52	52	51	50	51	49
Gristhwaite & Thorpefield	9	9	9	10	7	7	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	10
Dalton and Crakehill	4	4	3	2	6	5	6	5	6	6	7	6	7	8	8
Carlton	2	2	2	1	} 6	} 4	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Skipton	1	1	2	2			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Howfishgarth	2	2	-	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Catton	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	5
Asenby	10	9	10	10	9	10	12	11	10	34	13	13	12	12	12
TOTALS	69	65	58	62	71	71	63	60	69	98	79	77	77	81	87
Dishforth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46	-	-	-	-	-
Rainton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	-	-	25	-	-
Baldersby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	-	-	23	-	-
Marton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	-	-	24	-	-

89.

1522.¹ Earlier lists of presentments for taking greenwood from the parks can not be regarded as sufficiently accurate to constitute a local census. As some names occur more than once in the list, the inference is that some do not occur at all, since the payment for the taking of this greenwood seems in this lordship to have been an amercement for an offence rather than a composition fee in acknowledgment of a privilege, as it was in other manors.

The alienation at different times of such villages as Dishforth, Rainton, Baldersby, and Marton results in the inclusion of their populations only twice between 1522 and 1650. Thus for the purpose of comparison, these have been disregarded, although they are included in the tenant population table. Apart from one case - the list of 1603 - the figures for the 'core' of the lordship varied only between 62 and 87. The 1603 figure of 98 which falls once more to 79 in 1611 is accounted for entirely by the sudden rise in the Asenby figures, for which no adequate explanation can be advanced.

From an examination of the surnames of tenants at the dates for which lists are available, the following results are obtainable:-

Table 4.

In	1522	there were	69	tenants of whom	45	persisted in	1535
"	1535	" "	65	" " "	38	" "	1536
"	1536	" "	58	" " "	58	" "	1554
"	1554	" "	62	" " "	62	" "	1565
"	1565	" "	71	" " "	51	" "	1577
"	1577	" "	63	" " "	58	" "	1586
"	1586	" "	60	" " "	50	" "	1599
"	1599	" "	69	" " "	68	" "	1603
"	1603	" "	98	" " "	78	" "	1611
"	1611	" "	79	" " "	48	" "	1650

This analysis shows a surprising security of tenure or stability of population. The periods at which major changes took place may be located at 1565-1577, the time which included the Rising in the North and which is characterised by the largest nett decline in population; and 1611-50 when 31 new names appear in the tenants' list, though many of the old had plural holdings.

The relative permanence of population is shown with particular clarity by the fact that 26 tenant names of 1522 still persisted in 1611.

Throughout the whole of the 15th and 16th centuries the townsmen of Topcliffe seem to have been content with comparatively small areas of arable land. The comment has been made earlier about the unusual disappearance in the 14th century of the large area of demesne arable, and the possible explanation of its absorption into meadow, pasture and parkland. The three common arable fields, the position of two of which is uncertain to-day, seem to have been of small acreage, though it is impossible to hazard their size before 1577 when the first aggregates of arable and meadow "in service" can be arrived at. From the analysis of that survey, the following tabulation shows the relative proportions of arable and other land in each township:-

Table 5.

Township	Premises	Arable	Meadow	Pasture
	a. r. p.	a. r. p.	a. r. p.	a. r. p.
Topcliffe	13 3 8	214 1 19	38 - 36	
Asenby	5 2 22	217 2 10	19 2 37	6 2 20
Dalton & Crakehill	4 - -	55 3 20	5 - -	
Catton	1 2 -	18 3 20	2 2 -	
Skipton	- 3 -	7 3 20	3 - -	
Crakehill	- 3 -	22 3 -	1 - -	
Carlton	- 1 -	7 3 20	- - -	
Thorpfield	Unspecified lands 194 a. 1 r. 20 p.			
TOTALS	26 2 30	545 - 29	69 1 33	6 2 20
Total acreage of land in service, including Thorpfield, 842 a. 1 r. 12 p.				

Table 7.

Tenants' Holdings 1577

Township	No. of tenants	Without arable and meadow	Under 2½ acres	2½ - 5 acres	5 - 10 acres	10 - 15 acres	15 - 20 acres	20 - 25 acres	25 - 30 acres	30 - 35 acres	35 - 40 acres	Over 40 acres
Topcliffe	48	28	2	6	3	3	1	1	-	1	3	-
Asenby	12	2	-	-	2	-	1	1	3	1	2	-
Thorpefield	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dalton	3	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Catton	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Crakehill	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Skipton	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carlton	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Apportionment of Arable and Meadow 1577

<u>Arable</u>						
Township	Total T'nts	T'nts holding	Total	Average	Max.	Min.
			a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Topcliffe	48	28	214 1 19	7 3 7	32 2 20	- 1 -
Asenby	12	10	217 2 10	21 3 1	32 2 -	7 3 -
Dalton	3	3	55 3 20	18 2 20	40 1 -	3 - 20
Catton	2	2	18 3 20	9 1 30	14 3 20	4 - -
Crakehill	1	1	22 3 -	22 3 -	- - -	- - -
Skipton	1	1	7 3 20	7 3 20	- - -	- - -
Carlton	1	1	7 3 20	7 3 20	- - -	- - -

<u>Meadow</u>						
Township	Total T'nts	T'nts holding	Total	Average	Max.	Min.
			a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Topcliffe	48	16	38 - 36	2 1 22	7 2 10	- 1 2
Asenby	12	8	19 2 37	2 1 34	3 2 15	- 3 -
Dalton	3	2	5 - -	2 2 -	4 - 20	- 3 20
Catton	2	1	2 2 -	2 2 -	- - -	- - -
Crakehill	1	1	1 - -	1 - -	- - -	- - -
Skipton	1	1	3 - -	3 - -	- - -	- - -
Carlton	1	-	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -

Of the 48 Topcliffe tenants whose names appear in the list, six kept shops, another was the miller, another the blacksmith, and another farmed the common bakehouse. Only the smith and the miller were returned as tenants of land in addition to their vocational premises. Of the 41 tenants thus remaining, only 19 held arable land, and of these only 16 held meadow as well, so that of the original 48 tenants, 28 had no land beyond that on which their homes and out-buildings stood. This fact is remarked by a 1602 note in the 1577 survey:- "Md. That the Tenautes at Will in this standes moste upon Howse rentes enioying but a smalle Quantitie of Lande".

Certainly, so far as Topcliffe town is concerned, it seems to have been a community largely consisting of small holders, dependent for food upon garden rather than field produce, and for employment as labourers upon the lands and about the houses of the lord and the few more prosperous tenants.

Although, as has already been said, there are no details available of the size of earlier tenant holdings, it seems that the tenantry had long appreciated the general unsuitability of much of the land east of the Swale for arable purposes, and that many had turned to other pursuits to supplement their earnings from agriculture. In 1425 amongst the special presentments there were listed 20 brewers,

7 bakers, one butcher and one fishmonger; in 1426 there were 29 brewers and 9 bakers.¹

Grazing was much in evidence, stray sheep being reported frequently, and as many as 22 sheep were bought at one time by one tenant who acknowledged his debt in a case in 1426.² Damage to oats and beans growing in Eldmire was caused by two horses and 42 cattle in 1425.³ At about the same date William Fleshewer increased the size of his shambles by taking from the lord a piece of waste land ten feet square for an annual rent of 1/-.⁴ Such are some of the examples of the early growth of occupations other than agriculture in this particular township.

By the middle of the 15th century sheep grazing had so much increased that a pain forbade the keeping on the Common of "more than six shepe per bovate, nor are anie shepe to be taken into the Owtewodes under pain of 6s. 8d. to be forfeited for euery shepe soe offending excepte it be into Lingtwaite or Scagthwate".⁵ At the same time the pasturing of ducks was prohibited in the Laund in the Little Park as it was partly arable, and no cattle were to be admitted "to the furlongs in the separate herbage in the fields there".

Further evidence of extensive pasture and grazing is furnished by the following:- one tenant kept 60 sheep beyond

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- 1 Pet.MS.D.1.1. 2-3 Hen.VI.
 - 2 Pet.MS.D.1.1. March 3 Hen.VI.
 - 3 ibid. Nov.3 Hen.VI.
 - 4 ibid. July 3 H.VI.
 - 5 D.1.1.(3) 29/30H.VI.

his stint in the common pasture in 1491 and was ordered to move them off within the next two days. Another tenant claimed five oxen from the pinfold in 1496,¹ whilst the farmer of the herbage of the Great Park in 1496 "kept so many swine at Geist so that the pale was broken down and he drove 12 swine into Topcliffe common fields to the great damage of the neighbours".¹ Not only the Park but also the Fitts and Castle Hills - the stretch lying between the pale and the Swale from Topcliffe Bridge to the mouth of the Cod Beck - was now stinted pasture. This was partly the result of the inadequacy of the original common pasture between Gristhwaite land and the Outwoods east of the Great Park. Whilst the Castle Hills and the Fitts could be, and were, often closed to pasture, the Common had by custom to be available for use, but its use was limited in 1497 by a special pain attached to the Court Roll for 12/13 Henry VII:-

"Md.that John Tyrwhytt (and eight others) elected and taken by Mayster Grene at the request and desyer of all the Tenauntes of Topcliffe and Grystwayte as cosuynynge the comon weyll of ther pasterz hath ordyr under this forme that no maner of man within these Townes of Topcliffe and Grystwhayte aforesd shall have shepe above theyr stynte of ald tyme hadd and what tyme as hys lande is sparyd he shall with drawe other the laundes that he have Itm euery

1 *ibid.*D.1.2. 12 Hen.VII.

husbandman that setts of xls.ferme to haue vj hogges and
j sowe and vj haldynges Itm he that setts of 20s ferme to
haue 3 hogges j sowe and iij haldyngs Itm he that setts of
6s. 8d. and aboue to haue ij hogges j sowe and ij haldynges
Itm one cotager to haue ij hogges and ij haldynges Itm he
that setts under another mannor as a by tenaunt to haue
j hogg after the way of neghburhed And nocht after a costum
Itm j husbandman to haue iij bayes and j stege Itm he that
setts of xxs ferme to haue ij bayes and j stege Itm the
forsaid John Tyrwhytt and hys felowes thynke that John
Syggeston, John Barbour Henry Stockdale William Bulloke
Thomas Chamer and William Exylby whyche hathe no comon
John France and hys seruaunte Alicksaunder is undergryrsers
of the comon Itm of Grystwayte the sd George Hobeson George
Gristwayte and John Newhous and Henry Skowtrope is four
undergressors of thys comon".

These proofs of the ever-extending occupation of grazing,
with the presumably satisfactory profits accruing to those
who were able to deal on a sufficiently large scale, were
accompanied by contrasting signs of want. Undersettlers
occur for the first time in the court roll for 1497, though
this is not incontrovertible proof, since in the absence
of detailed entries it cannot be certain whether such vagrants
were inhabitants of Topcliffe lordship who had fallen on
evil times or whether they were imported labourers. Yet the

frequency with which poaching offences were reported - in park, warren and streams - the taking of deer and woodcocks,¹ combined with a sudden spate of affrays - as many as twenty-five cases in the Easter Court of 1497 - support the belief that both the landless and those who had such small allotments that their farming must have been perilously close to subsistence level even in good years, were now strenuously showing their objection to the ill-balanced system. One such poaching offence was accompanied by violence and impudence. As reported in the court roll, a number of Thirsk inhabitants seized a doe by main force from two of the parkers of Moskwith, saying in "ynglysch wordes if youre maysteres the herdes will have thys deyre send to us to Sowerbye for it wych deyre by them takyn was hambled and in beyringe towarde the keper lodge upon one "stagium" (hurdle)".² Unfortunately there is no recorded sequel to the offence. The poaching habit seems also to have affected even park officials on occasion. In 1503 Thomas Horseley, one of the six palesters of the Great Park, was charged with a whole series of offences, the first being that he was found in Moskwith at night, walking "sub equo cum arcu et sagittis latis". Other allegations were that he fished with nets in thepools in the Great Park, though how many fish he caught was unknown; that in his house he had "leysters" to

1 Pet.MS. D.1.2.15. 12 Hen.VII.

2 ibid.D.1.2.15 12 Hen.VI.

catch fish, and 'caltropes' to snare deer; he and others had many times hunted rabbits with ferrets in the lord's warren near Thorpfield. The further statement that he had sold all the pale of the Great Park at 10d. per load seems almost too good to be true.¹

Stint breaches became more common and more excessive. In 1499 four tenants had between them 50 more sheep on the common than they ought by pain, whilst eight others had 52 more cattle than their entitlement. In addition, three outsiders "none of whom is an inhabitant of this manor" had 10 cattle, 2 horses, 20 sheep, 4 pigs and 12 ducks on the common.²

Whilst there is thus overwhelming evidence of the preponderance of pasture in Topcliffe township, the first occurrence and frequent recurrence of complaints against the miller, the mention of 21 brewers and 6 bakers, in addition to 5 butchers encourages the theory that agriculture began to revive in the lordship by about 1507. Nine admissions to cottages - the first of this kind since 1495 - may also be taken as a sign of renewed vigour. The formidable report of the Housegraves in 1515 - in which 35 dwellings and buildings in the lordship are described as faulty - leads to the conclusion that for some reason the township had passed through a period of depression from which it was beginning to emerge. Many of the necessary building repairs

1 Pet.MS. D.1.2.(24) 18-19 Hen.VII.

2 *ibid.*D.1.2.19 14 Hen.VII.

refer to 'firehouses'. Whilst village precautions against fire were necessarily stringent, and presumably provision was made for cooking in a structure separate from the main living quarters, the frequent mention of these repairs to these buildings, coinciding with the earliest presentments of offences connected with hemp-processing would indicate that still another subsidiary was being added to the list of local village industries.

The Housegraves' report which contains a total of nineteen dilapidated structures in Topcliffe town alone, indicates not only the reduced circumstances in which some of the tenants found themselves, but also the neglect of manorial officers in the past:

"Also they say that in Colhag John Bynks loge is fawty in playsterynge of the southe ende and yt rayneth into the howse bettwixt the Chymney and the pan and Rotes the pair of the howse and yt is fawty in thekkyng.....
Also that John Carlell howse wantes j throwjist for his fyer howse And that Ysabel Osgodby wantes j whyvell and iij whyvell postes for hir fyer howse wch is very ruinous And that Thomas Chaumer wantes j stove of vij foot for j pare of stub doores for hys laith and j newe pan and dubinge sparres and j nespe for ye same And that John Stevynson wantes j new par of throwjoists for hys fyer howse and j suite for his laythe And that Symon Carleton

wantes ij saltrez and stowres for hys fyer howse And that Elizabeth Fairbarn wantes j soletre for hyr fyer howse And that John Awclam wantes j tre for ij gutterez to lye betwixt hys howses And that John Stevynson wantes ij copill of sperres iij soletres iiij gile postes for hys fyer howse And that William Smyth wantes iij soletres for hys fyer howse and j nespe for stowres And that Thomas Bell wantes j nespe for stowres and j poste for hys layth And that Richard Stevynson wantes j thorow yoist for hys fyer howse the other halfe of hys layth is downe and hys fyer howse is unthecked upon the southe part by a dayes worke And that John Stykenham wantes j pare of stub doores for hys layth and j nespe for et And that John Kirtland wantes iij par of Copilez for hys chaumbr And that Thomas Stevynson wantes j par of stub doyres for hys layth and j nespe for et And that John Newsted wantes ij suytez for hys chaumer And that Henry Osgodby wantes j poste for hys laithe j threw yoist j nele par and stowrez And that Thomas Syggeston laythe is a dede howse and so hathe bene this twentye yere And that William Williamson wantes solez aboute hys howse And that Robert Riche wantes j tre for solez to hys fyer howse and hys howse is unthekyd".¹

The theory of a period of depression is supported too by the arrears of £110 at the head of the account for 1517.²

1 Pet.MS.D.1.3.30

2 ibid.D.9.13.

This was practically the equivalent of the total receipts for the township when last accounted in 1480. These heavy arrears may be explained partly, in the absence of rolls for the years 1480-1517, by the "new rental" mentioned in the 1480 account roll.¹ Receipts from tenants of all kinds increased by 25% on the 1480 figure - a rise which continued in 1520.² The arrears for 1523 were still heavy at £68, but showed the ability of the debtors to discharge some of their dues, though tenants' rents had declined again almost to their 1480 figure.³ The court rolls evince greater care in the method of recording. Whereas in 1500 the transactions of seven courts Baron occupied one side of a short membrane, the maximum business being five pleas and the minimum one - by 1522 each court required at least half a side of the same-sized membrane. It appears thus that the lordship was recovering from its depression, and that this recovery was accompanied by more careful administration and by the construction, about this date, of the New Lodge on the further side of Cod Beck. The 6th Earl's more frequent presence at Topcliffe between 1528 and 1537 must have contributed a good deal to the employment and resultant prosperity of the townspeople - a personal contact with their proprietor which had not been experienced since the tragic last visit of the 4th Earl in April, 1489.

1 Pet.MS.D.9.8.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.20.

3 *ibid.* D.9.14.

The only other member of the manor whose development can be traced with any certain continuity is Asenby. Throughout the 15th and 16th centuries the emphasis there was on agriculture. This was due mainly to its much lighter and more productive soil, its generous acreage, the lack of extensive pasture near the village and its tenants' dependence upon Topcliffe as a market centre. Economically it formed an admirable supplement to Topcliffe in providing arable produce in what was otherwise predominantly a pastoral community. Even in Asenby however, grazing threatened the agricultural bias. In 1422 it was reported that nine acres of land in Asenby Field had been used as pasture for the last nine years, and in 1451 three tenants were charged with overstinting the common (whose locality is unstated) with 10 sheep, 6 oxen and 2 horses. That grazing as an Asenby occupation was discouraged is shown by the pain laid that no Asenby tenants were to lend one another their "grisse" (i.e. grazing rights) in fields, meadows or elsewhere. The implied practice of this surely shows that the need was restricted to only a number of the inhabitants, but that such demand was still present, since fifty years later another Asenby pain forbade tenants to break their stint in the stinted pastures.

There is nothing to show that much change in the development of the lordship was effected by the twenty years of Crown trusteeship between 1537 and 1556. The Crown

accounts show that for the first five years the value remained static, the component items of the accounts varying only slightly.

Topcliffe tenants were referred to in a description of 1570, where it was stated that their 'groundes are not fruteful. They have great commons for the summer tyme for storing cattle upon the mores."¹ The same commentator remarks that "the tenaunts are much dearer rented than those with us", but there seems little to support this statement - at least on the basis of price per acre. The quality of the acres thus let is, of course, another matter.

An analysis of the receipts from the lordship shows that the tenants' payments remained all but constant between 1444 and 1608, the range of fluctuation being from £31 3s. 4d. in 1444 to £45 6s. 4½d. in 1520, after which the total diminished to £33 -s. 7d. in 1608. On the basis of these figures alone it would seem either that the alleged rack renting had been customary for a century and a quarter before Hall reported it, or that the report was based on inaccurate or biased information. Such figures refer only to tenements at will or leasehold. Yet Hall may have been right if his remark is descriptive of the farms charged for leases of the parks or demesne land. Of these, the receipts from the

1 PRO.Misc.Bks.Exch.K.R. Vol.37 Humberston's Survey 1570, and Letter of Edmund Hall to Sir William Cecil (C.S.P. Dom.Add.Eliz.Vol.XVIII Art.46.)

Parks leases increased by over 300% at some date between 1542 (£25 6s. 8d.) and 1574 (£104 9s. 4d.) during which there is a gap in the available records. Humberston's agent then continues:- "We have surveiedTopcliffewherein is not left undemysed so moche groundes as is able to kepe a geldyng more then hys parkes ... He (the Earl) hathe takyn sore fynes from his tenauntes for thynges of smal value."

Throughout the Topcliffe Court and Account Rolls there are very few full records of admissions and only approximately fifty mentions of such transactions. Many of these were natural transfers of tenancy from father to son-in-law or son. It would be injudicious to press these facts too far, in view of the too frequent periods for which no records exist, but they can be taken as supporting still further the impression of stability of population and security of tenure which was indicated by the tenant population figures already discussed. There seems also to have been some competition for tenements, as on two occasions prospective tenants produced the Earl's letters of commendation, the first of which reads:-

"Der and welbeluffed we grete yowe wele lattyng yow wit yt owre s'uaunte John Kaa of Grystwyte hathe p'sued unto us for ye place yt hys fadir holdes in Grystwyte wt yt yt longyth yt he nowe haue yt eftir hys fadyr be for anie oder ye wche we haue graunted hym and yrfor we wyll and chardge yowe yt what tyme hys fadyr will surrend hys syd place yt ye admit

yt to ye sd John Kaa and now oder and as tochyng ye Gressom yrof ye sd John hath fuly content us yrof and yis rede as owre ful truste ys in yowe writen at Pettewoorthe ye viij daye of Aprill".¹

The second, fifteen years later, is endorsed:- "to oure ryghte trustye and welbelofed seruauntes Gy Fayrefaxe and Petrus Wilton stewarde of oure curtes of Topclyf and keper of the pleas there" and continues:- "Ryghte trustye and welbelofed By ye Erle of Northumbr' We gret yowe wele and forasmoche as we haue graunted that owre Thomas Whetelay of Grystwyte shall haue yt cotage of oures in Topclyf yt Stephen Tenannte nowe occupyes after ye disseise of ye sd Stephen for hys ferme and gressom paying aftir the custome of oure mannor there to be holden Wherof we wil and chardge yowe in thys fourme sorte reseigne and admitte the sd Thomas unto the forsd howse and cotage as tenaunt therof Jointely aftir ye decesse of ye sd Stephen by ye vertu of thys owre lre writen at Lekyngfeld ye xx daie of Maye."²

Yet if this procedure indicates a measure of competition for holdings, there is no conclusive sign that the lord took advantage of such a demand to extort either high rents or exorbitant ingress fines. The table overleaf shows the proportion of admission fine to annual rental in the few cases where such details are quoted in the appropriate MSS.

This table³ makes it clear that until the second decade

1 Pet.MS.D.1.1.(2) 14/15 Hen.VI.
2 ibid.D.1.1.(3) 29/30 Hen.VI.
3 Table 9 (p.112) 111.

Topcliffe Lordship - Relation of Rental and Ingress fines

Date	Petworth Ms. Reference	Property	Annual Rental			Ingress Fine		
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1425	D.1.1.(1)	a piece of waste	-	1	-	-	1	-
1436	D.1.1.(2)	a shop for life (twice)	-	1	8	-	-	4
1451	D.1.1.(3)	a cottage for life	-	4	-	-	2	6
1452	"	a cottage for life	-	6	1½	-	1	8
1452	"	a cottage for life	-	4	-	-	1	-
1453	"	1 tenement & 24 ac. arable for life	2	4	-	-	8	-
1476	D.1.1.(6)	1 tenement for life	-	7	-	-	6	8
1476	"	1 tenement for life	1	6	8	-	8	-
1477	"	1 tenement for life	1	15	1	1	-	-
1482	D.1.1.(8)	1 cottage and appurtenances for life	-	7	-	-	3	4
1482	"	1 tenement for life	1	13	-	-	10	-
1495-1507		Several admissions, incomplete in details	1	11	10			No fines
1522	D.3.15	1 mess. 11 a. 1 r. ar., 1 ac. meadow, ½ Pitts	1	11	-	1	11	-
1522	"	1 cottage and croft for life	-	5	-	-	5	-
1522	"	1 mess. 2 ac. 3 r. ar., 1 rd. meadow	-	6	1¾	-	6	1¾
1560	D.2.5.	1 cott. & garth & 2 rd. meadow	-	4	-	-	10	-

Topcliffe Lordship - Comparative Rentals

Date	Petworth MS. Reference	Property	Rent	Survey of 1577	
				Property	Rent
1452	D.1.1.(3)	1 tenement, 24 ac. arable (Top.)	40/-	1 ten. 23½ ac. ar. & m. (Top.)	42/5
1476	D.1.1.(6)	1 mess. 10 ac. arable (Skipton)	16/-	1 ten. 10 a. 3 r. 30 p. (Skipton)	16/-
1477	D.1.1.(6)	1 tenement in Asenby (J. Kay)	35/1	1 ten. in Asenby (Rich. Kay)	35/1
1481	D.1.1.(7)	1 mess. 24 a. land (Crakehill)	21/6	1 ten. 24½ ac. in Crakehill	21/-
1481	D.1.1.(7)	1 cott. and appurt. (Carlton)	7/-	1 cottage in Carlton	7/-
1522	D.3.15	1 mess. 12 a 1 r. in Topcliffe	31/-	1 mess. 11½ ac. (Mowlde)	21/-
1522	D.3.15	1 cott and croft in Topcliffe	5/-	1 cott. and croft (Sanderson)	4/-
1522	D.3.15	1 mess. and 3 ac. in Topcliffe	6/1¼	1 mess. 3 ac. (Wm. Stevenson)	7/-

113.

Table 10.

of the 16th century, ingress fines seem to have been assessed by no fixed mathematical rule, only on two occasions approximating to the annual rental of the property. Under the 5th and 6th Earls the fine appears to have equalled one year's rent. It is unfortunate that no full accounts of admissions occur after 1560, but the multiple of $2\frac{1}{2}$ relating fine with rent in that isolated case seems insufficient proof to establish the accuracy of Hall's statement ten years later about the Earl's "taking of sore Fynes".

Though Hall's remarks about heavy rents are made in so unqualified a form, there seems no real substantiation from the admittedly incomplete sequence of rentals.

Table 10¹ attempts to link earlier rentals with those commanded by the same or similar properties recorded in the survey of 1577.

Whilst in all cases but one the family name has changed, so that the identity of the tenements cannot be affirmed with certainty, the correspondence between property and rents specified cannot be denied. In two cases the rent remained unchanged for a century.

Thus, with static rents and only reasonable admission fines the lord was compelled to realise on the lettable value of parks and demesnes. In 1570 Topcliffe lordship

1 Page 113.

at £136 5s.10d. was the most valuable of the Earl's Yorkshire estates, being almost equal in income to those of the next two most profitable together - Tadcaster and Catton. The total receipts from the Yorkshire estates was £695 7s. 1d.¹ Ten years later the Earl's Yorkshire revenues had reached a total of £1,939 of which Topcliffe contributed £218 13s. 4d. - the majority derived from the farm of the parks which by then were leased in allotments.²

As there are so few detailed accounts of admissions, there is the usual doubt about the customs of the manor. So far as can be deduced, these were of conventional type - suit of court mill and oven suit, the maintenance of roads,³ the Swale bridge⁴ as well as of individual buildings, and participation in other common tasks as the "drift of the common" in the Outwoods and the taking of duty as watchman.⁵ Some of these were statutory rather than customary, but on several occasions breaches of statutory obligations were noted, rightly or wrongly, as "contra consuetudinem manerii".

Privileges appear to have been few. The custom of agist in the Great Park according to an agreed scale of

1 B.Mus. Harl.MS.12.91.Rem.of Exch.1570.

2 AHP. II p.582.App.VIII.

3 Pet.MS.D.1.1.(6) 1477.

4 D.1.1.(3) 1462.

5 D.1.1.(3) 1452.

charges has been noted already, whilst the practice of taking greenwood from the Parks seems generally to have been regarded as a venial offence rather than a customary right. The taking of turves from the common is mentioned only once - in 1500 - and was then limited by pain to two loads per tenant per year.¹ Special obligations were necessitated in the 15th and 16th centuries by the danger from Scottish troubles, so that in 1462 all tenants of the lordship were warned by pain to be sufficiently well armed and to be ready to ride against the Scots,² whilst in 1500, amongst the items of the bailiff's report of the timber felled and sawn that year, there appeared "barres ordained for the defence of the towne against the Scotts".³ Whether this refers to drawbars which were to be issued to each householder for the protection of his own dwelling or whether strategically placed roadblocks were meant is uncertain.

By 1570 most tenure was "by indenture for a terme of certeyne yeres" and the tenants were "very fynable after the expiracon of theyr leases" according to Humberston.⁴

The practice of leasing land and property had started at least as early as 1452 when a cottage was surrendered by

1 Pet.MS.D.1.2.20.1500.

2 D.1.1.3.30 Sept.30 Hen.VI.

3 D.1.2.20 1500.

4 Survey fo.228d.

one tenant and taken by another on a three-year lease.¹ Thereafter, property was taken on lease for nine years in 1476,² 1481³ and 1497;⁴ for six years in 1476 when the bailiff, John Bullock, thus leased the fishing and fowling of the lordship,⁵ and for thirteen years in 1500.⁶ Apart from these instances there are no other mentions of terminal leases prior to 1570. All other admissions, where expanded, are specified as "for life" or "at the will of the Lord".

Nowhere is there any mention of boonworks due from the tenantry, except for two isolated entries; in 1413 the township of Catton paid 20/- or twenty quarters of oats due at Lady Day,⁷ and the 1577 survey recorded that "the tenantes of Catton doe pay yerely for haver money 20s."⁸

Haymaking, cocking and stacking were always duties which were rewarded in money by the bailiffs, though in other lordships these were usually services performed by customary tenants. In outgoing payments a wapentake fine of 6/8 per year for respite of suit to the court of Hallikeld Wapentake was mentioned as payable from the town

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- 1 Pet.MS. D.1.1.3.
 - 2 D.1.1.6.
 - 3 D.1.1.8.
 - 4 D.1.2.13.
 - 5 Pet.MS.D.1.1.(6) 15 Ed.IV.
 - 6 *ibid.* D.1.2.22 15 Hen.VII.
 - 7 *ibid.*D.9.1. 1 Hen.V.
 - 8 Survey f.188.

of Asenby, to John Whytlynge in 1517¹ and to Robert Robinson as in 1542 Bailiffs of the Wapentake.² The 1577 survey speaks of the same sum payable to "Midlam" Castle. Four Asenby tenants paid 1/- each, two 8d., two 6d. and one 4d.³

The lord's necessity to maintain a supply of casual labour for all kinds of tasks which elsewhere were performed as boons perhaps accounts for the abnormally large number of "land-less" tenants shown in the 1577 tenants' list.⁴ That some of these at least were more than unskilled labourers is witnessed by the details given by an interesting selection of bills for house repairs, often attached to or rolled with the contemporary court rolls. The following may be taken as representative:-

"Repayre of Kay Hay Garthe at Gristwayt
To Richerd Wathe 5/6 - for ryveinge of 6 hundreth
latts 4d; for naylles 8d; payd to a thekker 1/3;
for a thrave of gret strawe to theck wth 8d. Total 8/5"⁵

"Repar of Percy Scruton howse in Astenbye
Pd to Thomas Blackmantlyll for stayne and writhicott
of layth 3/-; to John Scrafton for j hundreth writhscott
xiijd; for mett and drynke iij dayes xiijd; for strawe xd;
for a thecker iij daies dyet and hyer xiijd; for other half
daye for pullyng thack of ye sd howse iiiijd Total vijs.iijd."⁵

"Repayres of John Hustwaite howse of Crakall
Pd. to j wright by ij dayes at vd. ye daye for
mending of ye howse j hedd yt was blowen owte wt ye gret
wynde xd; ye sd wryght man by ij dayes at iiiijd. the daye
viiijd; naylles bowte vjd; Item xviiij thryffes of rystra at
j¹/₂d ye threffe ijs.iijd; Itm j thekar heryd for thre dayes
at iiiijd the daye xiijd; Itm j man to helpe ye sayde thekar
by thre dayes at iijd ye daye ixid; Total vs.xd. Billa vera."⁵

1 Pet.MS.D.9.13 8 Hen.VIII.

2 D.9.17 33 Hen.VIII.

3 Survey f.190

4 v. p.

5 Pet.MS.D.1.1.(7) 19 Ed.IV.

"Geo Gristwayt lath mendyng

To Thomas Blakmantlyll for makeinge of j newe hedd of j lath and mendyng of other defawts of ye sd lath by iiij dayes at vjd ye daye ijs; to the sd Thomas ij men for iiij dayes at vd ye daye in ye sd worke iijs iiijd; for 1000 brods and stawryott naylles bowte to the sd lath xijd; Itm for straw for thekkyng and waullyng done by ye sd George wth hys owen laboure he has nowt yrfor butt watt yowre mayster wyll rewarde hym" 1

"Repars of j howse of John Mylnor

Pd to John Thomson for makyng of j neylling to the same howse xxd; and to ye same for makyng of j carthowse faste by xxd; and to ye same for makyng ij browde gatts mad wt barne viijd; itm viij bores bowte viijd; otm for repayr to kylne xiijd." 1

"Repayr of William Holmes Howse

Pd to Thomas Blakmantlyll by iij dayes at vjd the daye for the gestyng and playncing of hys chaumbr fluyr xviijd; itm pd to ye same by iij dayes at iiijd ye daye in ye sd worke xijd; itm for doble spykinges bowte ijd $\frac{1}{2}$; itm pd to John Coulter for sawyng playnks for ye sayd chambr for ij dayes at xd ye daye xxd; itm pd to William Turnere for iij dayes for makyng of j payr of ye dores to hys lath at vjd ye daye ijs; itm j wryghte for makyng of ye sd duyres by j daye at vjd ye daye vjd; itm pd to John Thomson for setyng a howse of ij postes in ye lath and layeing ye duyres to ye sd lath at viijd ye daye xvjd; itm pd to ye sd John for j daye for makyng of j seller duyre and j lofte duyre vjd" 1

Shortly before 1577 - the chosen dividing date in discussing the development of the lordship, since the survey is the one document with most relevant facts clearly stated - certain tendencies were showing themselves. In 1555, whilst the manor was still held by the Countess Mary, widow of the 6th Earl, a pain ordered Topcliffe tenants to make their hedges in the Town Fields.² Whilst this might be regarded as a routine order, especially in view of the time of year, when the winter corn was being or about to be sown,

1 Pet.MS.D.1.2.11 6/7 Hen.VII.

2 *ibid.* D.1.4.41 Oct.3/4 P. & M.

the next extant court roll of 1560-1 enjoined many tenants in Skipton "who have made certain enclosures in Skipton common fields to abate their fences and throw open the land once more to the occupation of all the tenants".¹ The presentment of an unusually large number of poaching offences, and of one tenant who had broken into "the lord's house and taken thence certain chattels without leave" gives the impression of a tenantry rebelling against the old order in more ways than one, but especially showing their impatience with a system which they felt to be obsolete. Five years later a long list of offenders was presented for breaking hedges and removing the pale in the Great Park,² whilst in 1576 several tenants removed thorns from the quickset hedges, possibly for the purpose of making closes of their own, especially as encroachments on the lord's waste were reported at the same court.³

Offences of this kind continued to be reported - 49 cases of pale-breaches and thefts of pale-boards in 1586,⁴ and a number of encroachments on the waste in Skipton and Catton. In the latter it was reported that seven common balks in the Water Field, and twelve balks in the Chaldron Field were being wrongfully used as meadow.⁵ A significant

1 Pet.MS.D.2.5.43. 2-3 Eliz.

2 D.2.5.48.7-8 Eliz.

3 D.2.5.51 18-19 Eliz.

4 D.2.5.53. 28 Eliz.

5 D.2.5.55. 34 Eliz.

pain laid in 1599 ordered Robert Bell of Skipton to plough a "piece of land called a land at Blawfurthe Eshe Gait below the boddom field according to the cursum, Anglice cycle of husbandrie and soe continue it ploughed on pain of forfeiting 10/-".¹ Still another witness of the decay of tradition and traditional behaviour was a somewhat plaintive letter from the Earl in 1597:-

"The seruaunt of Sir William Mallorye displayed in court a warrant to him from hys lorde for the preseruacon of the free warren in the Mannor, asking that it be enrolled by the court; 'Wheras I am ynformed that gret spoyle is maid within the liberties of my Mannor of Topclyf as wel in fyshynge foulinge shooting hunting at unlawfull tymes is otherwise tending to the utter distrucion and decaye of all gentilmanly exercises Theis are to requier and intreat yowe not onelie to haue a speciall regarde and care for the preservacon of the ggame their and to presearue such ordere therin as haue bene heretofor comited but allso to promise such as shall hereafter be takyn in the like offense in such sorte as the case requieryth for wch I shall think my selfe behoulden unto yow and be redie to requite youre paines herein in anie thing I maye. Given at Syon this xvj of June, 1597. Northumberland To my louing frend Sr. Wm Mallorie Kt.' "2

1 Pet.MS.D.2.5.57. 41 Eliz.

2 Pet.MS.Court Book 5.D.10 39 Eliz.

By 1603 the signs of disruption were accompanied by indications that a more orderly arrangement was developing. At the May court in 1603 the Steward noted the following agreement:-

"Whereas the Tenautes of Topcliff have made compleynt to his Lo of some oppression or overstinting of the Common of Topcliff done by John Nelson of Thorpefield the reformacon wherof upon further inquisicon was referred to his Lo Commissioners for the ending of which controversie and quyeting of bothe parties we have thought good (with the good lyking and consent of the sd Tenautes of Topcliff as of the sd John Nelson) to apoynt and allowe unto the sd John Nelson (in regard that herafter he shall not have anie common of pasture upon the sd Common of Topcliff) Tenne acres of grounde to be improved and taken up of the sd Common in that parte which adioyneth to the howse of the sd John Nelson and the hedging ditching and fencing therof to be done at the costes and chardges of the sd John Nelson The same to have and enioye for and during the tyme and tearme which the sd John nowe hathe in the sd Thorpfeld by vertu of the lease to him graunted from the Rt. Hon. the Erle of Northumberlande. Geven at Yorke the 3 Nouember 1602 at the audit there Anno Reg.Eliz 45. Henry Slyngysbye Thomas Percye William Stockdale"

The steward had this decision entered in the rolls of court for 10 May 1603.¹ The jury accepted the ruling about the ten acres which were to be enclosed before the following 25th March.

Whilst the common fields at Topcliffe were unenclosed in 1606 the Parks and other demesnes were let on 21-year leases, several of which dated from 1590 - probably renewals of similar leases which had commenced just before the 7th Earl's implication in the illfated rising of the northern Earls. Thorpefield, originally bought from the Greens of Newby about 1517, had been leased to John Nelson who was Bailiff of both Topcliffe and Gristhwaite and also Collector for Topcliffe.

It was reported in 1607 that Gristhwaite had been depopulated "about thirty years since".² The village was in the hands of three tenants who paid £156 13s. 4d. per year for the lands which were reckoned as in Topcliffe demesnes. Of these tenants Richard Sherburne was the most important, paying £110 per year for closes of arable, meadow and pasture, presumably worked by labourers who were dispossessed former tenants at will.³ An enclosure of rough pasture then called the New Intake was let to the Lord's Auditor for a nominal 20/-, though originally the rent

1 Pet.MS. D.2.5.(60) 1 Jac. 1.

2 North Riding Rec. Soc. Quarter Sessions Records 1884.
Thirsk July 8 1607.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.27 5 Jac.I

had been £20 per year. This reduced the total receipts from Gristhwaite to £137 13s. 4d. - which was still an advance upon the last-quoted receipts of £110 in 1577 and 1588, when the New Intake had been reserved by the Lord to keep his stud of mares, and all the demesnes had been leased for 21 years to one tenant Ellen Walls.¹ In 1613 there were six tenants in Gristhwaite, Sherburne still being the most prominent with a holding of 158 acres out of the 321 which the village had contained. The town gate or street was returned as covering 3 r. 31 p. The other tenant holdings there varied from 19 - 46 acres each. By 1625 there were seven tenants. Sherborne's rent had dropped inexplicably to £33 per year. He was listed as in arrears between 1613 and 1621 to a total of £300.

A terrier of 1613 records the acreages of the Parks, demesnes and the tenements commons and wastes in Topcliffe, Gristhwaite, Asenby, Dalton, Catton, Carlton and Skipton. Unfortunately it does not include annual rentals, nor is there any mention of the date or term of any indentures.²

A comparison between the tables of tenant holdings in 1577³ and 1613⁴ shows a considerable reduction in the number of Topcliffe tenants having neither arable nor meadow, though the number of those with less than 10 acres shows an

1 1577 Survey f. 181.

2 Pet.MS. 27.D.6. N.D. but almost certainly 1613.

3 V. page 97 antea. Table 7.

4 Table 11 (p.125)

Topcliffe Lordship - Tenant Holdings 1613

Township	No. of Tenants	Acreage												
		Without any arable/meadow	Under 2½ ac.	2½ - 5 ac.	5 - 10 ac.	10 - 15 ac.	15 - 20 ac.	20 - 25 ac.	25 - 30 ac.	30 - 35 ac.	35 - 40 ac.	40 - 45 ac.	45 - 50 ac.	Over 50 ac. and acreage.
Topcliffe	47	12	24	3	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	-
Thorpefield	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (216)
Asenby	11	1	-	-	2	-	1	1	1	1	3	1	-	+ 20 ac. held jointly
Dalton	8	1	2	2	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-
Catton	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carlton	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Skipton	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 12.

Proportions of Arable, Meadow and Pasture 1613

Township	Premises			Arable			Meadow			Pasture		
	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.
Topcliffe	15	2	39	152	1	22	47	1	7	38	3	8
Thorpefield	1	1	24	36	2	21	30	2	32	147	3	3
Asenby	7	-	4	212	1	15	46	2	27	21	-	20
Dalton	8	-	19	81	2	9	13	1	37	4	2	32
Catton	1	3	35	24	-	3	2	1	32	-	-	-
Carlton	-	2	-	10	-	4	-	-	-	-	3	24
Skipton	-	3	1	6	2	8	4	2	33	1	-	20
TOTALS	34	-	18	486	3	21	114	2	16	66	2	24

Note: Thorpefield acreages not included in these totals - for purposes of comparison with 1577 table (p. 97 ante)

actual as well as a percentage increase in 1613. At the same time, the size of the larger holdings had increased, so that the marked inequality in the holdings noticed in 1577 was still maintained in 1613.

The comparative acreages of land allocated to arable, meadow and pasture reveal a recession of arable farming in Topcliffe, though in the other townships arable acreage remained relatively stable. The over-all increase in tenant-held meadow land - most clearly demonstrated in Asenby - may be taken as an indication of careful husbandry.¹

All demesne land was available for lease and was fully taken up. Twenty six of those listed in the roll of 72 tenants at will were able to lease demesne land, sometimes in large sections. Of these the most remarkable case was that of John Nelson, Bailiff of Topcliffe and styled "gent", who held a tenement and one acre of arable in Topcliffe as a tenant at will, but was also tenant of Thorpefield and lessee of demesne lands in Gristhwaite, the Great Intake, Will Hagg, Lord Ings and both Parks, which brought his total holding to 561 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres. Edmond Stevenson leased almost twice as much land as his original holding of 25 acres, to bring his total allotment to nearly 73 acres.

An examination of the type of land thus leased by the 15 Topcliffe tenants indicates strongly the pastoral trend

1 Table 15 (page 133)

which has been noticed before. Out of 735 acres of demesne taken up on lease by these tenants, 517 were described as pasture, whilst only 52 were arable. Though some of this land was by nature unsuited to any other purpose, this was not so in all cases, as sections are listed as "verrey goode turffe" and "amongst the best grounde in the Parrock". So the emphasis upon pasture is again clearly marked in the village economy.

Of the 219 acres leased by tenants from the other hamlets, 156 were pasture and 52 arable, so that grazing land was being extended in the rest of the lordship, but not to the same degree as in the centre of the estate.

The opening of the Parks to enclosure had taken place some time earlier than 1613, but exactly when is difficult to decide. Mr. Edmund Norton in 1613 "holdeth as of hys owen inheritaunce by purchase from Richard Stockdale gent. the East Lodge alias Stockdale Lodge and a close called Phillis Close conteyning 75 acres which at the disparking was sett owte unto the sd Stockdale by a former Baliff in satisfaccon of some fewe best yaites graunted to his predecessor and to his heyres in this Parck But he sheweth no confirmacon made by His Lo of the Land so sett furth.¹

This award had been made prior to 1599 when Stockdale sold his position of forester to Edmund Norton for £200.²

1 Pet.MS. 8.D.2 Terrier 1613.

2 Feet of Fines Yorks. Hil.41 El.

Topcliffe Lordship - Demesne Leases 1613

Township	Original Holding			Leased Demesne			Original Total	Leased Total	Final Total
	Arable	Meadow	Pasture	Arable	Meadow	Pasture			
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
J. Allen	25 - 14	10 2 17	9 2 6		5 3 30		45 - 37	5 3 30	51 - 27
P. Stevenson	18 1 13	6 1 20	6 1 3	3 2 32		7 1 7	30 3 36	10 3 39	41 3 35
Ed. Stevenson	5 2 29	10 1 38	8 2 27	5 2 19	22 2 10	19 1 24	24 3 4	47 2 13	72 1 17
H. Kildale	34 1 12	7 2 6				3 2 31	41 3 18	3 2 31	45 2 9
T. Jackson	23 1 30	2 3 36				3 1 29	26 1 26	3 1 29	29 3 25
Jas. Tyreman	10 - 19	4 2 16				3 3 8	14 2 35	3 3 8	18 2 3
Ralph Stubbs	3 - -	- 2 -	12 1 12	2 - 11		15 3 16	15 3 12	17 3 26	33 2 38
T. Johnson	1 - -				- 3 16		1 - -	- 3 16	1 3 16
Franc. Flint	1 - -				- 3 5		1 - -	- 3 5	1 3 5
John Nelson	1 - -			36 2 21	113 2 25	408 2 25	1 - -	557 3 31	558 3 31
W. Dickinson	1 - -				5 1 5		1 - -	5 1 5	6 1 5
W. Wade	1 - -			3 3 -			1 - -	3 3 -	4 3 -
Eliz. Warcop	- - -				12 2 4	50 3 8	- - -	63 1 12	63 1 12
Eliz. Kirtland	1 - -				4 2 7		1 - -	4 2 7	5 2 7
Chas. Cloughe	1 - -					4 - 38	1 - -	4 - 38	5 - 38
<u>Asenby</u>									
R. Kay	25 2 2	3 - 26	7 1 5			6 - 12	35 3 33	6 - 12	42 - 5
Greyne	8 - 12			3 - -	4 - -	40 - 38	8 - 12	47 - 38	55 1 10
Arth. Leadley	26 - 4	6 - 30		7 2 27		10 2 22	32 - 34	18 1 9	50 2 3
J. Sweeting	20 3 4	3 - -	1 1 37		6 - -		25 1 1	6 - -	31 1 1
R. Leadley	17 - 11	3 2 -		16 1 2			20 2 11	16 1 2	36 3 13

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Topcliffe Lordship - Demesne Leases 1613 (Cont'd.)

Township	Original Holding			Leased Demesne			Original Total	Leased Total	Final Total
	Arable	Meadow	Pasture	Arable	Meadow	Pasture			
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
<u>Dalton</u>									
J. Jackson	15 3 4	1 2 13	2 1 14			38 - 4	19 2 31	38 - 4	57 2 35
P. Dale	24 - 28	4 3 7				35 - 15	28 3 35	35 - 15	64 - 10
R. Tebb	2 3 39	- - 16		3 - 28			3 - 15	3 - 28	6 1 3
Chr. Dawson		1 - 34		22 - 28			1 - 34	22 - 28	23 1 22
Robt. Bell		- 1 13				7 - 35	- 1 13	7 - 35	7 2 8
<u>Catton</u>									
T. Horneby	19 2 34	2 1 32				19 1 22	22 - 26	19 1 22	41 2 6
TOTALS				103 3 38	176 - 22	673 3 14			

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Topcliffe Lordship - Holdings of Tenants at Will - 1613

Tenant	Cottage	Messuage	Barn	Oxhouse	Kilnhouse	Stable	Garth	Garden	Croft	Orchard	Premises		Arable		Location	Meadow		Location	Pasture		Location	Total								
											a.	r.	p.	a.		r.	p.		a.	r.		p.	a.	r.	p.	a.	r.	p.		
J. Allen		1	1				1	Mills			-	3	16	25	-	14	Low Ing, Mill Field etc.	10	2	17	Willsons Ing, Low Ing	9	2	6	Pale and Water	47	1	13		
P. Stevenson		1	1		1	1	1			1	-	2	16	18	1	13	Millholme Flat Low Ing etc.	6	1	20	Low Ing, Gallowholme	6	1	3	Colehagg Field	31	2	12		
Edm. Stevenson		1	1				1			1	-	2	-	5	2	29	Kilbargh Hill, Strangwithhead.	10	1	38	Wilsons Ing, Apple garth	8	2	27	Anker Dykes	25	1	14		
H. Kildale	1	1	1	1	1	1			1		2	1	-	34	1	12	Low Ing, Colehagg	7	2	6	Low Ing, Gallowholme	-	-	-		44	-	18		
T. Jackson		1	1	1		1	1				-	2	16	23	1	30	Strangwithhead, Colehag, Peter W	2	3	36	Low Ing, Gallowholme	-	-	-		27	-	2		
James Tyreman		1	1			1	1	1			-	2	16	10	-	19	Strangwithhead, Cocketts, Colehag	4	2	16	Low Ing, Gallowholme	-	-	-		15	1	11		
Ralph Stubbs		1	1	1	1		1	1			-	1	15	3	-	-	L. Fishgarth	-	2	-	Low Ing, Gallowholme	12	1	12	Low Ing, Kilbargh H.	16	-	27		
W. Sigeston		1	1				1	1			-	2	16	4	3	16	Strangwithhead, Colehag Field	1	2	-	Low Ing, Gallowholme	-	-	-		6	3	32		
R. Yates		1	1				1			1	-	2	16																	
J. Spence		1					1				-	-	28	1	2	21	Cocknetts, Colehag Field	1	-	-										
W. Stevenson		1	1				1				-	1	12	2	3	-	Colehag	-	2	30	Gallowholme									
Anne Stevenson		1	1				1	(hemp)			-	1	32																	
Eliz. Lowrie		1	1				1			1	-	-	30	-	1	8	Colehag													
T. Johnson		1	1				1	(h)	1	1	-	2	2	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
Fr. Flint		1	1				1		1	1	-	2	2	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
J. Nelson (B'l'f)		1					1		1	1	-	2	2	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
W. Dickinson		1					1	1	1	1	-	2	2	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
Symon Browne		1					1	1	1		-	2	10	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
Wm. Wade		1	1				1	1	1	1	-	2	16	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
Alice Kettlewell		1					1	(h)	1		-	1	35	1	-	-	Low Flatt													
Anne Maude	1	1	1				1	(h)			-	1	9	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Eliz. Warcop	part of street as a garden																													
Miles Gregg	1	1					1				-	1	16	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Roger Robson	Bakehouse						1				-	-	6	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Eliz. Kirkland	1	1					1				-	-	12	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
J. Dawson	1					1	1				-	-	4																	
Anne Wilson	1										-	-	-																	
Eliz. Nicholson	1	1					1			1	-	2	16	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Charles Clough	1			1			1			1	-	1	14	1	-	-	Chambers Close													
J. Eaglesfield	1						1				-	-	2	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Simon Rounder	1						1				-	1	2	1	-	-	"													
T. Burton	1						1				-	1	2	1	-	-	"													
W. Rayntford	1						1				-	1	8	-	3	30	"													
Henry Hall	1			1			1				-	-	20	1	-	-	"													
Margt. Greeves	1						1	1			-	-	20	1	-	-	"													
J. Easterby	1						1				-	1	-	1	-	-	"													
Francis Duckett	1						1				-	1	20	1	-	-	"													
Robt. Wright	1	1					1	shop			-	-	-																	
Sibyll Yates	1	1			1		1			1	-	-	35																	
T. Kirkland	1						1				-	-	24	1	-	-	Strangwithhead													
Humph. Richmond	1	new, on waste at N. end.																												

That some parts had been disparked by then is proved by the "Parks disparked" item which appears in the 1580 list of the Earl's revenues.¹

Though the Parks were now open to leasing, the outwoods "on the Este side of the Great Parke and on the Este side of the ColeHagg Field and Peter Field" remained common pasture - "very goode grounde wothout bogg or carre wth a few very olde okes dispersedly standing in it."

The acreages of all types of land in Topcliffe lordship are summarised in table 12. In the Great Park, allotments had been made to eight "men of Catton" and 18 "men of Carleton" besides 18 tenants from Topcliffe, Asenby and Dalton. William Bell, a merchant from Thirsk, held Thacker and Will Hagg Close, whilst Sir William Ingleby held on an unspecified lease the sites of the manor houses, the Little Park and Fletcher's Close.

Two dwelling houses had already been built in closes in the Parks, and a "little hovel" stood in the Fitts - signs that permanent tenure was intended.

Later in the same year as the terrier was drafted, the commons in Asenby and Dalton were enclosed. The table overleaf attempts to show the holdings of the Asenby tenants before and after this enclosure.²

The inferences to be drawn are clear. Of the 180 acres newly distributed it is not surprising that in view of the

1 AHP.II p.582 App.VIII.

2 a tabulated form of data contained in Pet.MS.27 D.6. fol.49 (Table 15.)

"A Brief of His Lo. Tenautes in Asenby ther Landes accordinge to the Divisyon made 1613"

Tenant	Prem's	ARABLE		MEADOW		PASTURE		TOTAL	
		Old Area	New Area	Old Area	New Area	Old Area	New Area	Old	New
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Lawr. Leadley	- 3 12	31 3 36	32 1 -	6 3 5	23 3 14	2 3 11	6 3 16	42 1 24	63 3 2
Arth. Leadley	- 1 4	26 - 4	27 - 6	6 - 30	6 - 30		18 - -	32 1 38	51 2 -
Margt. Farmory	1 - 20	28 2 25	30 - 4	5 3 27	12 2 27	- 3 36	12 3 36	36 2 28	56 3 7
J. Shadlock	- 3 -	30 - 14	30 2 26	2 3 17	20 2 1	1 3 28	1 3 28	35 2 19	53 3 15
Kath. Kaye	- 1 15	25 2 2	27 2 -	3 - 26	15 - 25	7 1 5	15 - -	36 1 8	58 - -
Alice Sweeting	- 1 20	20 3 4	24 - 8	3 - -	3 3 -	1 1 37	15 1 -	25 2 21	44 - 28
Chris. Foster	- 1 5	13 2 -	15 2 34	4 2 11	16 2 11			18 1 16	32 2 10
Rich. Leadley	1 2 -	17 - 11	22 - 18	3 2 -	19 2 -			22 - 11	43 - 18
John Ray	1 - 6	8 - 1	10 1 38			- - 30	9 3 -	9 - 37	21 1 4
Edm. Grame	- 1 10	8 - 12	10 - -		3 3 10		4 - -	8 1 22	18 - 20
Robt. Burnett	- - 32						3 3 14	- - 32	4 - 6
Held jointly		2 2 26		10 2 31		6 1 33			
TOTALS	7 - 4	212 1 15	229 3 14	46 2 27	121 3 38	21 - 20	87 2 14	267 1 16	447 - 30

already generous allocations of arable, most should be meadow and pasture. The land thus represented was common land known as the Cowpasture of $93\frac{1}{2}$ acres which was divided amongst 5 tenants, one of whom was a freeholder and acquired nearly 49 acres; the Oxpasture of 149 acres divided amongst 10 tenants in sections varying between six and twenty-six acres; the open common of $124\frac{1}{2}$ acres, divided amongst 10 tenants of whom 8 were freeholders, in sections of 5 - 45 acres; and the Horsepasture of 49 acres, divided amongst 6 tenants in lots of 1 - 18 acres. The total of ex-common land thus divided was nearly 416 acres, of which the tenants at will received 180 and the lord of the manor almost 49 acres.

Several marginal notes are of interest:- "That whereas there were demanded for balks 23 acres the Commissioners would yeild but 10 acres wch they appoynted to be satisfied with the overplus in Midle Hyghe Feild And the reste out of the Open common And for further satisfacion did agree that His Lo should have Hiving Waste in the Lowe Ing and Tullham Hole wch I take it are both graunted by lease Belbusk was gyven by the Commissioners by waye of composicion to Jeffrey Kitchin Harrom Carre to William Kay and the wastes in Wood Feild to Thomas Dodsworth So that His Lo tenants had no proporcion out of these parcels Note: the freholders refused to abate sutably out of ther proporcons

so much quantite of land as the maze and hilley groundes at the Townes Ende near the Horspasture doth amount to (about 4 ac.) notwithstanding they expect the benefit and access to these hilley groundes from tyme to tyme to wynnow ther corne In regarde of which so needful and necessarie an occasion and of a watering place and access to the gravyll pittes all wch are within that 4 acres and are fallen to his Lo lott It might be esteemed at as hyghe a value per acre as anie other landes thereaboutes and if the same were putt from the frehoulders and letten to the Erles tenautes they had ther deserts. The proporcons of Comon agreed uppon by the Commissioners were that for every of the tenne husbandmen there should be 2 acres; for everie of the 9 threpeny men $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres a peece and for everye of the 16 cotagers 1 ac a peece All of these to be taken out of the open comon Out of the Oxpastur and the Cowpastur ther was appoynted 1 ac. 3 r. 14 p. for everye best gaitte Out of Horspastur for everye husbandman 2 ac. - r. 23 p. For a threpeny man 1 ac. 2 r. 7 p. and 7 feete For everye cotager 1 ac. Accordinge to theis rates everye one had his share There accrued to His Lo upon thys divisyon 259 ac. 1 r. 4 p."

The terrier goes on to show that of Dalton Common 148 acres had been enclosed to furnish Crakehill and Eldmire with an Oxpasture each, whilst the freeholders too had enclosed parts to make an Oxpasture of 66 acres. An area of 80 acres

had also been enclosed recently by Sir Thomas Downe, and new cottages built there.

The wastes and baulks in Skipton were "surveyed by Statute measure in the presence of the Jury of Surveye" in preparation for "enclosure and division intended by the freholders". The Earl had already "fenced out with rayles and stoopes 43½ acres next unto Catton Moore together with the way unto Catton Moore".

Though the phrase "statute measure" occurred regularly in the Survey of 1577, it seems doubtful whether a mathematically accurate survey was in fact performed at that date, in view of the variations in acreages quoted for the various demesne lands then and in 1613. The following table makes these discrepancies clear:-

Table 16.

Property	1577	1613	Property	1577	1613
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.		a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Little Park	484 1 -	542 2 30	Great Park	1,340 - -	1,684 1 23
Fletcher Close	7 3 -	14 - 25	Chambers Close	13 2 -	12 2 4
Lord Ings	44 2 -	52 2 17	Anderby Hagg	37 - -	54 - 32
Thacker & Will H.Cl.	74 2 -	87 1 39	Cow Flatt	19 3 20	26 3 26
Fittes	36 - 28	42 - 14	Gristhwaite	267 - 14	315 1 4

The 17th century records leave much to be desired in the matter of completeness. There are four main sources of information:- (1) the terrier of 1613 which gives full

details of size and usage of holdings but no rents or lease details; (2) a summary of receipts for 1618 which provides no more than collective items;¹ (3) a record of leases giving acreages, lease-dates and rents for 1623 and 1625, the two lists being not always clearly distinguishable,² and (4) a book entitled "Rental Renewed 1650", which gives occasional identification of property and the rent due.³ The contents of the last two are summarised in the following pages.

As might be expected, little correlation is possible between the list of lands and rents in 1577 with that of 1613 - much less with that of 1650. An attempt has been made, on the basis of probability and the similarity of size of holding, but the results are not really conclusive.⁴ It would seem that there was an uneven rise in rents between 1577 and 1623, that they then tended to decline slightly by 1625 and to rise again by some 30-34% during the next quarter-century. The data are too few and too unevenly spaced to permit the making of more accurate observations. These very broad conclusions are borne out by the fluctuations in the total receipts from the lordship over the same period, though the changes are not exactly parallel - especially in the later stage.⁵

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- 1 Pet.MS. 8.D.2. Summary of Rents
 - 2 Topcliffe Leases 8.D.2.
 - 3 Rental Renewed 1650 8.D.2.
 - 4 See page 113. Table 10.
 - 5 See Table 20 (page 145)

Topcliffe Demesne Leases - 1625

Tenant	Property	Area	Lease		1623 Rent			1625 Rent		
			Date	Yrs.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
		a. r. p.								
J. Kettlewell	West Lodge, 8 closes in Hollsike	246 - 6	1618	14	60	11	-	60	11	-
Ralph Stubbs	Calf close	13 3 16			4	6	8	4	6	8
Geo. Kettlewell	two closes	23 - -			6	13	4	6	13	4
Wm. Browne	two closes	16 - -			3	17	4	3	17	4
P. Stevenson	two closes	16 1 26			3	6	8	3	6	8
J. Tyreman	one close	19 1 16			5	-	-	5	-	-
Cuthbt. Duckett	house and three closes	26 - -			6	13	4	6	13	4
Edmund Stevenson	two closes	17 2 14			5	14	4	5	14	4
Thomas Bell	two closes	45 1 13			8	13	4	8	13	4
John Stevenson	eight closes	114 - -			25	15	8	25	15	8
Henry Smith	no details				3	6	8	3	6	8
John Nelson	Forest Close in the Great Park				4	-	-	4	-	-
Widow Greyme	no details				-	18	-	-	18	-
Roger Carter	house, barn, stable, 7 closes	109 2 8	1619	13	25	7	6	25	7	6
6 tenants	joint holding, no details				165	16	2	165	16	2
Thomas Bell	a close in the Little Park	- 3 34	1616	15	1	14	-	3	12	-
Matthew Booth	three closes in Little Park	5 1 13			3	6	-	3	6	-
J. Kettlewell	one close	6 - 20			4	-	-	4	-	-
Cuthbt. Kettlewell	one close	4 2 12			2	14	-	2	14	-
John Stoddart	two closes	3 3 2			2	9	4	2	9	4
Edmund Stevenson	three closes	14 3 15			10	14	-	10	14	-
Wm. Stubbs	one close	5 3 -			3	9	-	3	12	-
Cuth. Kettlewell	one close	4 2 -			2	14	-	2	3	4
Wm. Flower & } Marm. Bell }	4 closes, Eldmire Spring, Flet- chers Close and two others	112 2 3	1618	14	35	-	-	35	-	-
Ch. Yates. Wm. Wade	Dalton Plane				not	let		6	18	-
T. Dodsworth	Weardleys Lodge	113 - 36			47	-	-	47	-	-
Ralph Tebb	4 closes	38 - -	1619	14	8	16	8	12	-	4
John Jackson	2 closes	38 1 -			9	13	4	9	13	4

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Table 17.

Topcliffe Demesne Leases - 1625 (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Property	Area	Lease		1623 Rent			1625 Rent		
			Date	Yrs.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
		a. r. p.								
Rhos. Dawson	1 close	21 1 -			5	12	-	5	12	-
William Dale	2 closes	33 - -			8	8	-	8	8	-
6 others	no details				12	2	-	10	2	-
John Nelson	Lords Ings				32	-	-	32	-	-
John Allen	Pale and Swale		1609	21	1	13	4	1	13	4
John Allen	Mills		1608	21	40	-	-	23	6	8
John Nelson	Anderby Hagg				2	-	-	2	-	-
	Fishing and Fowling				-	2	-	-	2	-
Robert Bell	a close in the Fittes	4 1 -			3	13	4	3	13	4
John Tyreman	" "	3 3 -			2	18	-	2	18	-
Laur. Leadley	" "	3 2 31			3	3	4	3	3	4
Thomas Jackson	" "	3 1 29			2	18	6	2	18	6
Eliz. Warcoppe	two closes in the Fittes	7 - 2			6	-	-	4	13	4
Peter Stevenson	" " "	7 1 7			6	4	4	6	3	4
Thomas Kay	a close in the Fittes	7 1 19			6	5	6	6	5	6
Isabel Webster	" "	3 1 20			2	12	-	2	12	-
Ed. Mottershed & Ralph Stubbs	2 closes in Cow Flatt		1614	18	7	12	-	7	12	-
Rich. Browne (York)	1 close "	3 2 12			2	8	-	2	8	-
Widdow Ripley					8	-	-	8	-	-
Rich. Nicholson	2 closes in Thacker & Willowhag		1607	21	26	13	4	26	13	4
John Nelson	The New Intack				26	13	4	26	13	4
William Nelson	closes in Gristwaite				60	18	8	45	-	-
Richard Sherborne	lands in Gristwaite	157 2 25			33	-	-	33	-	-
John Nelson	4 pasture closes	46 - 24			20	10	-	20	10	-
Eliz. Warcoppe	Sandersickes & West Field	42 - 14			20	-	-	20	-	-
John Allen	Messuage & Kayes Close				4	-	-	4	-	-
John Husthwaite	messuage & 5 closes	19 - 37			13	7	4	13	7	4
Edmund Kaye	2 closes, Carter Flatt, Calf Ing, and Hallikeld Close	50 2 15			24	-	-	24	-	-

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Topcliffe Lordship - Holdings of Tenants at Will - 1625

Tenant	Property	Lease		1623 Rent			1625 Rent		
		Date	Yrs.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Ralph Stubbs	tenement (18/10) & 2 closes	1607	21	4	3	4	4	3	4
J. Eglesfield	cott. & Shop	1609	21	1	6	8	1	6	8
Richard Yates	tenement	1611	21	9	1	10	9	1	10
H. Kildale	"	"	"	16	8	9	16	8	9
J. Allen	"	"	"	16	11	-	16	11	-
Peter Stevenson	"	"	"	11	19	-	11	19	-
Thomas Jackson	"	"	"	10	-	-	10	-	-
Edward Stevenson	"	"	"	11	16	-	11	16	-
William Stevenson	"	"	"	10	-	-	10	-	-
John Tyreman	"	"	"	6	6	8	6	6	8
Isabel Nicholson	"	"	"	4	13	4	4	13	4
Chris. Yates	"	"	"	4	6	8	4	6	8
George Kitchin	"	"	"	3	-	-	3	-	-
Anne Wilson	cottage	"	"	-	6	8	-	6	8
Anne Stevenson	"	"	"	2	-	-	2	-	-
John Nelson	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
William Kirtland	"	"	"	-	13	4	-	13	4
Robert Topham	"	"	"	-	13	4	-	13	4
Rhomas Kirtland	"	"	"	-	13	4	-	13	4
Anne Richardson	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Widdow Symonson	"	"	"	1	4	-	1	4	-
Eliz. Nicholson	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Thomas Porter	"	"	"	2	-	-	2	-	-
Cuthbert Kettlewell	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
William Rainforth	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Symon Rowdes	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
John Dickinson	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Margaret Burton	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Thomas Dawson	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Sibyl Yates	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Chris. Ingleton	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Robert Wright	"	"	"	-	14	-	-	14	-
William Allenson	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Widow Greyme	"	"	"	2	4	-	2	3	-
George Belman	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Jasper Kettlewell	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
William Wade	"	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Miles Gregg	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Matthew Booth	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Roger Robson	"	"	"	-	10	-	-	4	-
Humphrey Richmond	"	"	"	-	6	8	-	6	8
William Stevenson	"	"	"	1	13	4	1	13	4
John Easterby	"	1609	20	-	16	-	-	16	-
John Spence	"	1611	21	1	16	8	1	16	8
Francis Duckett	"	"	"	-	16	-	-	16	-
Thos. Rainforth etc.	Tolbooth at will	"	"	-	6	8	-	6	8

Topcliffe Lordship - Holdings of Tenants at Will 1625 (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Property	Lease		1623 Rent			1625 Rent		
		Date	Yrs.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
John Leadley	Smithy			-	2	-	-	2	-
Eliz. Warcoppe	a small garth			-	-	2	-	-	2
Mark Bullock	Smithy			-	1	-	-	1	-
Cuth.Kettlewell etc.	6 ac. arable	1611	21	1	16	-	1	16	-
J. Nelson and others	5 ac. arable	"	"	1	-	-	1	-	-
Roger Robson	5 ac. arable			1	10	-	not let		
Thomas Collyer	3 ac. arable			-	18	-	not let		
William Raynfurth	3a.3r.20p.arable			1	4	-	not let		
<u>Asenby</u>									
Laurence Leadley	two tenements	1607	21	8	13	-	8	13	-
John Kay	one tenement	1611	21	2	13	4	2	13	4
Richard Leadley	" "	"	"	8	13	4	8	13	4
Katherine Ray	" "	"	"	9	-	-	9	-	-
John Shadlocke	" "	"	"	9	-	-	9	-	-
William Sweeting	" "	"	"	7	-	-	7	-	-
Margaret Farmory	" "	"	"	9	-	-	9	-	-
Chris. Foster	" "	"	"	5	-	-	5	-	-
Robert Burnett	cottage	"	"	-	13	4	-	13	4
John Leadley	Tullam Hole	"	"	1	4	-	1	4	-
John Roads	smithy			-	-	-	-	-	6
<u>Asenby Improvements</u>									
Margaret Farmory	Horsepasture and Cowpasture (21ac)	1616	15	1	15	8	1	15	8
Katherine Ray	" (20ac.)	"	"	1	15	6	1	15	6
Chris. Foster	" (15 ac.)	"	"	1	7	-	1	7	-
William Sweeting	" (10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ac.)	"	"	1	8	9	1	8	9
Richard Leadley	" (17 $\frac{1}{2}$ ac.)	"	"	1	9	6	1	9	6
Arthur Leadleys wid.	" (20 $\frac{1}{4}$ ac.)	"	"	1	14	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	14	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Robert Burnett	Hive Ing, Low Ing	"	"	1	-	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	-	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wm.Kettlewell	Middle Field	"	"	2	-	-	1	12	-
John Kay	Hive Ing, Common	"	"	1	4	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	4	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Edward Greyme	Cowpasture	"	"	-	16	6	-	16	6
Laur.Leadley	24ac.Oxpasture	"	"	2	-	2	2	-	-
John Shadlocke				1	14	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	not let		
<u>Dalton</u>									
Wm. Tebb	cottage			1	6	8	1	6	8
Peter Hobson	tenement			7	-	-	7	-	-
William Dale	tenement			12	-	-	12	-	-
Ralph Kay	tenement			16	-	-	16	-	-
Chris. Dawson	cottage			1	2	-	1	2	-
Ralph Stubbs	cottage			-	10	-	-	10	-
Robert Bell	waste near house			-	2	6	-	2	6
Thomas Atkinson	smithy			-	1	-	-	1	-
<u>Catton</u>									
Thomas Horneby	ten.&Priestcroft	1611	21	4	-	-	4	-	-
Richard Ware	cottage	"	"	3	6	8	1	16	8
William Dale	waste near house			-	-	2	-	-	2
<u>Thorpeunderleas</u>									
William Nelson	1 ac. improved			-	2	-	not let		
<u>Skipton</u>									
William Dawson				4	-	-	not let		
Ralph Stubbs				7	-	-	not let		

Topcliffe - Rental Renewed - 1650

Area and Tenant	Rent		
	£	s.	d.
<u>Great Park</u>			
Francis Parkin	50	-	-
Robert Smith	2	-	-
Widow Arthur	4	-	-
William Thompson	3	17	6
Francis Burnett	2	-	-
Chris. Ingleton	11	15	-
Thomas Stevenson	12	-	-
J. Dawson & Wm. Clarke	1	10	-
Jasper Kettlewell	10	13	4
Elizabeth Stubbs	14	8	4
Ralph Greaves & Atkinson	11	10	-
Robert Stevenson (Fittes)	1	10	-
Ralph Stubbs & Jackson	4	-	-
Robert Hopkins	6	13	4
Widow Yates (Round Close)	5	3	4
William Raper	26	13	4
George Parker	43	10	-
William Browne	15	-	-
Ralph Barker	2	-	-
TOTAL	228	4	2
<u>Little Park</u>			
William Barker	102	-	-
(Lord Ing)	57	-	-
Jasper Kettlewell	9	-	-
fish & fowl 2s. -d.	2	2	-
Anderby Hagg £2.	30	-	-
Wm. Strickland (Mills)			
TOTAL	200	2	-
<u>Fittes</u>			
Jasper Kettlewell	4	13	4
Dorothy Yates	2	12	-
Wm. Dale of Catton	2	18	-
Thomas Jackson	2	18	-
George Waide	3	13	4
Thos. Wigglesworth	3	3	4
George Kay	6	5	6
Robert Stevenson	6	5	-
TOTAL	32	8	6

Area and Tenant	Rent		
	£	s.	d.
<u>Gristhwaite</u>			
Robert Workfolke (Thacher)	24	-	-
John Nelson (Intake)	23	6	8
(Thorpefield)	16	13	4
waste	10	12	-
Wm. Dunmore	10	-	-
Robert Baurgh	9	-	-
Francis Thompson	25	-	-
William Tyreman	25	-	-
Richard Husthwaite	12	-	-
Jasper Kettlewell	15	-	-
Wm. Tyreman	4	-	-
William Blithe	3	-	-
TOTAL	177	12	-
<u>Tenants and Cottagers</u>			
Edward Banrish $4\frac{1}{2}$ gates	16	11	-
Robt. Stevenson	11	-	-
Thomas Stevenson $3\frac{1}{2}$ gates	11	16	-
Jasper Kettlewell 5 gates	15	4	9
Thomas Jackson 4 gates	10	-	-
Wm. Dale of Catton $2\frac{1}{2}$ gates	6	6	8
Eliz. Stubbs (Fittes)	4	3	4
Robt. Browne & Wm. Lee 2 gates	3	-	-
Janet Yates	5	10	4
Ralph Stubbs $\frac{1}{2}$ ColeHagg	10	-	-
Robt. Workfolke (Spence)	1	16	8
Dorothy Yates $2\frac{1}{2}$ gates	4	6	8
J. Kettlewell $2\frac{1}{2}$ gates	4	13	4
Widow Bentley $1\frac{1}{2}$ gates	3	11	6
William Porter	2	-	-
Widow Mitchell	1	4	-
George Wilkinson	1	13	4
William Lee	2	-	-
Widow Best	1	-	-
William Allenson	1	6	-
Francis Flint	1	2	-
John Flint	1	2	-
Cuthbert Duckett	1	2	-
William Strickland	1	6	-
George Waide	1	6	-
Widow Kettlewell (waste)	1	6	-
William Gregg	1	2	-
Ralph Steele	-	4	-
Chris. Kirkland	-	19	4
William Atkinson	-	16	-
Widow Day	-	3	4
George Kitchen	1	6	3
Widow Hayton	2	13	4

Area and Tenant	Rent		
	£	s.	d.
<u>Tenants and Cottagers (Continued)</u>			
Widow Eggesfield	-	16	-
Ralph Wilson	1	6	-
Marmaduke Lilifurth	1	-	-
Chris. Dale	1	6	-
Chris. Ingleton	1	2	-
Thomas Greaves	-	19	4
John Easterby	1	2	-
Edmund Barker	1	2	-
John Hoggart (6/8)	-	14	-
Jane Rainfurth (Tollbooth)	1	2	8
William Kirtland jun.	-	13	4
Robt. Humphrey (Richmond)	-	6	8
Mark Bullock (shop)	-	1	-
Widow Leadley "	-	2	-
Widow Oxendale "	-	1	-
TOTAL	146	5	9
<u>Asenby</u>			
Cuthbert Hoggett	10	15	6
Francis Ratcliffe	3	17	11
John Leadley	16	9	8
John Glover	10	15	8
Richard Shadlock	10	14	6
Thomas Wigglesworth	2	9	6
Chris. Foster	6	7	-
John Sweeting	8	18	6
H. Wilkinson (Leadley)	10	17	11½
" Tullam and waste	2	8	-
William Kettlewell	-	8	-
John Reede	-	-	6
Robert Burnett	1	3	11½
TOTAL	15	6	10
<u>Dalton</u>			
William Tebb	1	6	8
Isabel Warde	7	-	-
William Dale	12	-	-
Roger Rainforth	16	-	-
Robert Leadley	1	2	-
Widow Stubbs	-	10	-
Robert Bell (waste)	-	2	6
Peter Cowton smithy	-	1	-
TOTAL	38	2	2

Topcliffe - Rental Renewed - 1650 (Cont'd.)

Area and Tenant	Rent
	£ s. d.
<u>Catton</u>	
Francis Cowper	4 10 -
Richard Whare	1 6 8
Thomas Burnett & Francis Pearson (waste)	1 10 -
William Dale (waste)	- - 2
"Haver Silver"	1 - -
TOTAL	8 6 10
<u>Skipton</u>	
John Whare (late Rimer)	11 - -
Thomas Thorpe (Hall Flat)	- 4 -
<u>Carlton</u>	
Matthew Taylefurth	1 13 4
<u>Topcliffe Common</u>	
"late inclosed but nowe layd open" late £44 18s. 6d.	nil

Table 20.

Date	Total	Date	Total
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
1618	1,188 14 3	1629 ✕	1,032 12 7
1623	1,383 12 8	1630 ✕	622 17 2
1625	1,329 17 7½	1633 ✕	895 14 1
1627 ✕	997 15 6	1650	929 5 10
1628 ✕	1,031 7 10		

✕ from a list of "Receipts from the Yorkshire Estates"¹ in which it is not stated whether the sums are really total receipts or "deliveries" i.e. payments on account.

¹ Pet.MS. 8.D.2.

Topcliffe Lordship - Movement of Rents

Tenant	Property as specified 1613	Earlier specification and rental	Rents								
			1623			1625			1650		
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
J. Allen	tenement	47 1 13	16	11	-	16	11	-			
P. Stevenson	"	31 2 12	11	19	-	11	19	-			
J. Tyreman	"	15 1 11	6	6	8	6	6	8			
J. Spence	"	2 3 9	1	16	8	1	16	8	1	16	8
Humph. Richmond	small cottage on waste		-	6	8	-	6	8	-	6	8
J. Easterby	tenement	1 1 -	-	16	-	-	16	-	1	2	-
Fr. Duckett	"	1 1 20	-	16	-	-	16	-	1	2	-
Raynforth	Tolbooth &	1 - 20	-	6	8	-	6	8	1	2	8
P. Kirtland	cottage &	1 - 12	-	13	4	-	13	4	-	13	4
Wade	tenement &	1 2 16	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	6	-
Wid. Kettlewell	" &	1 1 35	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	6	-
Miles Gregg	" &	1 1 16	-	16	-	-	16	-	1	2	-
Roger Robson	Bakehouse &	1 - 6	-	10	-	-	4	-			
Anne Wilson	cottage		-	6	8	-	6	8	1	6	-
J. Eaglesfield	tenement &	1 - 2	1	6	8	1	6	8	-	16	-
Simon Rounder	cottage &	1 1 2	1	-	-	1	-	-			
Robert Wright	tenement	1 - 24									
	and shop in Kirkgate		-	14	-	-	14	-			
J. Dawson	cottage &	- - 4	-	16	-	-	16	-			
Sibyl Yates	tenement &	- - 35	-	16	-	-	16	-			
Kirtland	" &	1 - 24	-	13	4	-	13	4	-	13	4
Ralph Stubbs	" &	16 - 27	-	13	4	-	13	4	-	13	4
			4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	4
Ed. Stevenson	" &	25 1 14	33a.	Or.	16p. for						
					48/6 in 1577						
Wm. Stevenson	" &	3 3 2	3a.	lr.	22p. for 7/-						
					in 1577						
			10	-	-	10	-	-	11	-	-

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Topcliffe Lordship - Movement of Rents (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Property as specified 1613		Earlier specification and rental	Rents								
				1623		1625		1650				
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
T. Jackson <u>Parks & Demesne</u>	tenement	27 - 2		10	-	-	10	-	-	10	-	-
Ralph Stubbs	Calf Close	14 - 26		4	6	8	4	6	8	14	8	4
J. Nelson	Lord Ing	52 2 17	let for £25.15.-- in 1602	32	-	-	32	-	-	57	-	-
J. Nelson	fish & fowling Thacker	71 - 3	let for £10 in 1577) and 1607	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	-
"	Will Hagg	16 1 36	let for £3 in 1577, £2 in 1585, with Thacker 1607)	26	13	4	26	13	4	24	-	-
"	Intake	173 - 28		26	13	4	26	13	4	24	-	-
Various	land in Grithwaite	41 3 26		20	-	-	20	-	-			
Various <u>Asenby</u>	Mills		let for £40 in 1585	40	-	-	23	6	8	30	-	-
Kay	Tenement	47 2 15	36a.Or.Op. let for 35/1 in 1577	3	17	11½	3	17	11½			
Ray	"	30 3 23	let for £7 in 1607	10	15	6	10	15	6	10	15	6
Laur. Leadley	"	66 2 8		10	13	2	10	13	-	16	9	8
Richard Leadley	"	39 2 37		10	2	10	10	2	10	10	17	11½
Farmory	"	47 2 32		10	15	8	10	15	8	10	15	8
Shadlocke	"	35 2 19+		10	14	6½	9	-	-	10	14	6
Chris. Foster	"	33 1 16		6	7	-	6	7	-	6	7	-

Topcliffe Lordship - Movement of Rents (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Property as specified 1613		Earlier specification and rental	Rents								
				1623		1625		1650				
				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
John Sweeting	tenement	36 1 7		8	8	9	8	8	9	8	18	6
Robt. Burnett	"	2 - 19		1	13	11½	1	13	11½	1	13	11½
<u>Dalton</u>												
Kay	"	45 - 27	46a.1r.0p. let for £2 in 1577	16	-	-	16	-	-	16	-	-
Dale	"	32 1 5		12	-	-	12	-	-	12	-	-
Tebb	"	3 2 35	3a.2r.20p. let for 7/- in 1577	1	6	8	1	6	8	1	6	8
Dawson	"	1 1 24		1	2	-	1	2	-	1	2	-
Stubbs	"	3 3 1		-	10	-	-	10	-	-	10	-
Bell	"	1 13		-	2	6	-	2	6	-	2	6
Atkinson	smithy			-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Hobson (Warde)				7	-	-	7	-	-	7	-	-
<u>Catton</u>												
Horneby	tenement	23 - 38		4	-	-	4	-	-	4	10	-
Ware	"	5 - 32		3	6	8	1	16	8	2	16	8

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Thus in Topcliffe during the 17th century the following developments had taken place:- the continued existence of capitalist farmers primarily interested in pasture, who, like John Nelson, enjoyed official status as bailiff, customary privileges as a tenant at will, and the benefits of capital in the tenure of Thorpefield and other demesne lands which brought his total holding close to a size where it approximated to a manor in itself; the sharing of such pastoral prosperity by other tenants at will who were able to pay annual rentals in 1650 of as much as £56 (e.g. Jasper Kettlewell); the continued wide disparity between holdings of this type and those of the great majority of the tenantry, many of whom must still have been near subsistence level if their rentals are any indication, and whose livelihood must have depended largely on employment as labourers; an increase in the number of female tenants, many of them widows - 11 in 1613, 14 in 1625 and 18 in 1650 - perhaps reflecting the incidence on the township of the epidemic of 1604/5¹ and later, of the Civil Wars; the

1 N.R.Rec.Soc. Quarter Sessions Records, Stokesley, 9 July, 1605. "Topcliffe - ordered that the former assessment of C s. shal be continued for the relief of the infected people there until the next assizes and to be levied presently within the compasse of 5 myles of Topcliffe proportionately as well within the West as the North Riding."

enclosure - apparently by consent - of common and waste land in Asenby, Skipton, Catton and Dalton, and its division among lord and tenantry;¹ the break-up of the common field system in the face of all these tendencies, though in the case of Topcliffe, arable farming had long been on the decline; and, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the abandonment of Topcliffe Manor by its owner, who - with the decay of Leconfield and the dismantling of Wressel - would no longer find on his Yorkshire estates the convenient cycle of residences which had served his predecessors for so long in the past.

1 Apparently the same process was followed and later abandoned in the case of Topcliffe Common. The only clue to this is the last item in the list of 1650 - "Topcliffe Common, late inclosed and then latt at £44 18s. 6d. but nowe layd open and soe at present noe rente".

Topcliffe Lordship - Receipts - 1444-1650

Source	1444		1472		1480		1517		1520		1523								
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.							
Arrears							(110	7	- $\frac{3}{4}$)			(68	6	11 $\frac{3}{4}$)					
Thorpefield							6	-	-			6	-	-					
Demesne Meadow							9	16	-										
Watermill	27	-	-	} 22	13	4	26	13	4	20	-	-	20	-	-				
Fishery								-	2	-				-	2	-			
Fulling Mill(s)	1	6	8	} (rased)			(rased)			2	17	9							
Woodsales						13	5	1	3	18	-	6	18	-	2	19	4		
Court Perquisites						5	-	-				2	6	3	3	14	9		
Agist of Parks	22	-	-	24	5	10	28	-	-	34	9	7			50	10	10		
Agist of Closes(Fittes)	6	13	4	6	13	4	6	13	4						6	13	4		
Rents of Free Tenants	} 31	} 3	} 4	} 31	} 5	} 1	} 31	} 5	} 1	} 39	} 6	} 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 45	} 6	} 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 32	} 1	} 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Rents of other tenants																			
Farm of Oven & Ferry				1	13	8	1	13	8										
TOTAL for Topcliffe	88	3	4	86	11	3	112	10	6	116	9	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	115	19	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	122	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Receipts from <u>Asenby</u>	12	11	10	12	17	6	12	17	2	12	7	6	12	7	6	12	10	6	
Receipts from <u>Gristhwaite</u>	14	1	6	16	-	11	13	3	7	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	13	19	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	
TOTAL	114	16	8	115	9	8	138	11	3	141	-	11	140	10	11	148	11	7	
Expenses	-	-	-	36	3	8	83	17	-	70	15	5	61	4	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	22	19	6	
Reference	D.9.3			D.9.7			D.9.8			D.9.13			D.9.20			D.9.14			

Figures in brackets are not included in the total.

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Table 22.

Topcliffe Lordship - Receipts - 1444-1650 (Cont'd.)

152.

Source	1537			1538			1539			1540			1541			1542		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Arrears				nil						(46	13	4)	(43	6	8)	(40	-	-)
Thorpefield										6	-	-	6	-	-	6	-	-
Demesne Meadow										8	12	-	8	12	-			
Watermill										20	-	-	20	-	-	20	-	-
Fishery										-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	-
Fulling Mill(s)																		
Woodsales										6	18	9	8	9	10	-	14	10
Court Perquisites										3	6	-	3	3	-	5	7	6
Agist of Parks										25	6	8	25	6	8	25	6	8
Agist of Closes (Fittes)										6	13	4	6	13	4	6	13	4
Rents of Free Tenants										32	13	- $\frac{1}{2}$	32	13	- $\frac{1}{2}$	32	13	- $\frac{1}{2}$
Rents of other tenants																		
Farm of Oven & Ferry																		
TOTAL for Topcliffe	104	11	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	75	2	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	73	16	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	109	11	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	110	19	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	99	9	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Receipts from <u>Asenby</u>	12	10	6	12	10	6	12	10	6	12	17	2	12	17	2	12	17	2
Receipts from <u>Gristhwaite</u>	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	3	8	12	3	8	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
TOTAL	129	5	5	99	10	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	98	10	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	134	12	8	136	-	9	124	10	3
Expenses	-	-	-	26	16	-	32	6	-	37	17	8	19	3	- $\frac{1}{2}$	28	4	6
Reference	PRO.Min. Acc.SC. 11/959			PRO.Min. Acc.4287			PRO.Min.A. 4288			PRO.Min.A. 4283 & 4289			PRO.Min.A. 4284 & 4290			PRO.Min.A. 4285 & 4291		

Figures in brackets are not included in the total.

Topcliffe Lordship - Receipts - 1444-1650 (Cont'd.)

Source	1570	1574	1576	1579	1608	1610
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Arrears	nil	nil	(2 6 -)	(30 8 8)	- - -	- - -
Thorpefield		6 - -	6 - -	6 - -	6 - -	
Demesne Meadow		9 9 6	9 16 -	57 7 2½	65 1 5	
Watermill		20 - -	20 - -	20 - -	50 - -	
Fishery		- 2 -	- 2 -	- 8 -	- 8 -	
Fulling Mills						
Woodsales		1 6 5	9 4 -	3 3 3	16 4 2	
Court Perquisites		11 7 7	2 14 9	9 4 11	10 15 -	
Agist of Parks		104 9 4	139 - 2	123 19 2	230 - -	
Agist of Closes						
Rents of Tenants		30 15 2½	30 17 -	30 1 7¼	33 15 3	
Farm of Oven & Ferry		1 6 8	1 6 8	1 6 8	1 6 8	
TOTAL for Topcliffe	136 5 10	184 16 8½	219 - 7	251 10 9¾	413 9 6	362 5 3
Receipts from <u>Asenby</u>		12 17 2	12 17 2	12 17 8	18 - 8	17 14 -
Receipts from <u>Gristhwaite</u>		14 3 8½	14 3 8½	19 12 6	137 13 4	136 6 2
TOTAL		211 17 7	246 1 5½	284 - 11¾	569 3 6	516 5 5
Expenses		36 13 7	55 5 6	82 7 2	67 - 9	
Reference	B.M.Lans. MS.12/91	Pet.MS. D.9.19.	Pet.MS. D.9.19	Pet.MS. D.9.22	Pet.MS. D.9.27	Pet.MS. D.9.28

153.

Figures in brackets are not included in the total.

Topcliffe Lordship - Receipts - 1444-1650 (Cont'd.)

Source	1618			1623			1625			1650		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Arrears	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Thorpefield	6	-	-	1,090	6	4	1,065	19	-	460	14	8
Demesne Meadow	86	18	4									
Watermill	40	-	-									
Fishery												
Fulling Mills												
Woodsales												
Court Perquisites												
Agist of Parks	550	-	-									
Agist of Closes												
Rents of Tenants												
Farm of Oven & Ferry	155	4	4	148	16	5	144	17	5	146	5	9
TOTAL for Topcliffe	838	2	8	1,239	2	9	1,210	16	5	607	-	5
Receipts from <u>Asenby</u>	89	-	1	87	18	11	75	2	2½	85	6	10
Rec. from <u>Gristhwaite</u>	203	9	4	(with Topcliffe Demesnes)						177	12	-
TOTAL	1,130	12	1 ^¾	1,327	1	8 ^¾	1,258	18	7½ ^¾	869	19	3 ^¾
Expenses	28	8	-									
Reference	8.D.2. Pet.MS.			8.D.2. Pet.MS.			8.D.2. Pet.MS.			8.D.2. Pet.MS.		
	¾ with £58.2.2. from land in Dalton etc. total is £1,188.14.3.			¾ with £56.11.- from lands in Dalton etc. total is £1,383.12.8.			¾ with £56.11.- from lands in Dalton etc. total is £1,329.17.7½.			¾ with £59.6.4. from lands in Dalton etc. total is £929.5.7.		

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TOPCLIFFE

Appendix

The Percy Survey of 1577

Commission and the Topcliffe Section

Percy 1577 Survey

The Commission

Henry Erle of Northumbrelande sendeth greetings to Sir William Fayrefax Sir William Babthorpe (and 22 others) assigning the sd Sir William Fayrefax Sir William Babthorpe (and 22 others) or ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four or three of them but essentially Thomas Fitton, Francis Fitton or Thomas Bates to be one, as Commissioners to survey all my honours castles manors lordships houses parkes demesnes landes tenements medowes parkes woodes undemised comons wasts and hereditaments whatsoever scituate lying and being in the Countie of York and in the Countie of the Citie of Yorke and the Towne of Hul According to certain articles and instructions signed with my hande and herunto annexed Holding firme and stable all and everie whatsoever my sd commissioners ten, nine eight, seven, six, five four or three of them wherof I will the sd Thomas Fitton Francis Fitton or Thomas Bates be one shall doe for mee and in my name in the promise according to the effect of the same articles ... bidding and straightelie comanding all my officers to be ayding favoring and helping ... Geven at my Manor of Pettwoorth the firste daye of March Ao Di 1576 Ao R.Eliz. Dei Gratia Angliae Franciae et Hiberniae Reg. Fid Def.

The Articles

First I will that my sd Commissioners before in my sd

commission named or soe many of them as by the sd commission are authorised shall enter into all my Honours castles manors lordships houses parkes demesnes landes tenements and hereditaments whatsoever within the counties aforesd and therof and of everie parcell therof to make survey and keep courts in places where they have been kept accustomedlye as occasion shall requier Itm that they shall chardge the Jurie at everie such court as shalbe kepte as aforesd To enquier what and how manie frehoulders did holde of the sd manor or lordshipe (where suche courtes shalbe kepte) in the tyme of my late grandfather Henry Erle of Northumbrelande by reson of his Tenures made ther sute of apperaunce at the sd courtes and leetes and other services for ther sd landes. Itm they shalbe chardged to enquier what liberties priviledges and customs did at any tyme belong or appertane and were used within the sd manors and lordshipes and in any or everie parte therof And what advowsons of Benefices Chauntries frechappels etc were in the gifte & dispocicon of my sd grandfather as belonging or appendant to the sd manor or lordshipe Itm that they shalbe chardged to present what parkes for deere warrenes for conies waters for fishe fowle or such like thinges were at the sd tyme wthine the sd manor or lordshipe used by my sd grandfather as thinges of plesure or comoditie and generally the statt of all thynges in the sd tyme Itm that the sd Jurie shall then be chardged in al

p'ticlers for the present statt of thynges accordinge to the ordinarie course of survey and as other discrecions shall seem conveniaunt Itm I will that my sd commissioners shall as well by thes meanes as by sight and search of all auneynt p'cedentes and recordes that they can have As allso by all meanes the may to understand the statt of the sd inheritance in my sd grandfathers tyme And how mucche therof by any meanes synce that tyme ys alyenated gyven solde or separated and how much remayneth Itm they shall call before them all suche as hold any landes of me of anie my manors or lordships and to requier a sight of ther evidence and therby to trye oute ther tenures and servyces And to note yf anie of them have come to ther landes sithence the restitution of my late brother And what reliefes herriotes and services of homage is due unto me Itm I will enquiry to be made of the woodes and ghome in everie place And what spoyle and wast of the same hathe been made and by whom And upon the defalt found to devise such punishment and reformacon to the offenders as ther demerits shall justelye deserve And allso to certifiye unto me the value of the harmes by the sd offenders so comytted Itm that they call before them all such as be tenauntes at Will by indenture or by copie of anie of my sd landes or hereditamentes And upon syghte or view of ther leases or interests To consider whether they observe all covenountes and premyses on ther behalfe to be observed and especyalye in reparacons that I be not therwithal chardged in anie parte otherwise than in ther grauntes and dymyssiones

are conteyned Itm that my sd commissioners call before them all my farmers that hold any landes by lease or copies That they may bring before them all such ther leases or copies to be enrolled or entered into a book wherby ther tearme of yeares and what landes they holde may more at lardge appeare And what covenantes they are bounde to doe by ther sd grauntes and in the sd dymyssiones conteyned Finallie that youre Bookes and proceedinges herein be exactly and perfectly made and delivered unto me under youre handes and seales with as much expedicion as you conveniently may"¹

²"The Survey of the sd Manor of Topcliffe and of all the landes priviledges and rentes and services to the same belongyng extending unto the townes villages hamletts herunder mencioned viz Topcliffe Dalton Gristhwate Catton Thorpfeld Craikell Astenby Skipton and Carlton

The sd Manor of Topcliffe ys scituate within the Wapentake of Hallikelde and Alerton or Birdforth and distante Northe (and somethingeto the Westwardes) from the Citie of Yorke 16 myles And from the markett towne of Rippon distant easte 4 myles And ys holden of the Quenes Maiestie in capite Amongst other landes graunted by the Lettres Patentes of the late King and Quene Philip and Marie to Thomas late Erle of Northumbrelande and to the heires males of his bodye lawfully begotten And for defalt of suche issue To Henrie nowe Erle of Northumbrelande

The soyle of the sd lordshippe for the more parte ys

indifferent goode And verie plesant for huntinge and hawkinge
by reson ther ys bothe a faire Ryver (besydes litle Brookes)
that runeth through the same And allso mucche champion and
unenclosed groundes The knowen limittes and boundes of which
sd lordshippe are as foloweth

Begynnye at the Ryver of Swale betwixt the township of
Assonbie being parcell of the sd lordshippe of Topcliffe and
the Townshippes of Cundal and Lettby And going from the sd
Ryver of Swale weste unto Howghall Hill And so directly over
the Moor Steel westward to a place called Harom Wathe And
southe upp Sopper gutter to a place called Stottfolde And so
from Stottfolde weste unto a place called Saint Albanes
Crosse between Dishford parcell of the sd Lordshippe of
Topcliffe and the townshippe of Norton le Claye And so still
westwards over the Quenes Street to another Crosse called
Saint Albanes (as heretofore ther in one place standinge)
between Whitcarris and the boundes of Watling Streete And
there southe along the sd streete to the boundes of Kirkebye
and then west to the Monke Dyke along the townshippe of
Marton parcell of the sd lordshippe of Topcliffe Then west
still to Gyvndale Lordshippe And then north to Hewicke
lordshippe direct unto a place called Throp woode betwixt
Gyvndale and Sharowe And so East to Wiltor Barghe Hill in
Watlinge Streete And so four myles northe along the sd
streete The Townshippes of Raynton Disford Baldersbye Astenbye
and Newbie being betwixt the sd Ryver of Swale and the sd

Watling Streete and then turning east from the sd Streete to the Ryver of Swale betwixt the sd township of Baldersbye parcell of the sd Lordshipp of Topcliffe and the townshipp of Howe All which townes are of the Wapentake of Hallikelde and likewise Alerton And by estimacon 14 myles in circute And then over the Ryver of Swale into the lordshipp of Skipton and then upp the sd Ryver northewarde unto a place called Swale Thornes unto the townshipp of Sand Hutton and so East to Lingall Spring And then southe to Brymall Bridge And southe still to the townshipp of Catton parcell of the Lordshipp of Topcliffe And then southeast over the moore to Catton (vicarie) To the pale of the Gret Parke of Topcliffe aforesaid And east downe by the ringe of the sd Pale to the heade of Thacker Then Northe to the Oxenmoore parcell of the inheritaunce of Richard Stockdale by the outesyde of Thorpe Feild parcell of the sd Lordshipp of Topcliffe and the sd Erle his inheritaunce unto the Quenes Streete going between Topcliffe and Thirske And southe to the comon of Topcliffe called the Owtwoodes joyninge to the Lordshipp of Sewerbye Going east to Scarthwaite Nabb Then southe to the water of Codbekk And so over the water of Codbekk to the pale of Sewerby Parke Still southe to the lordshipp or hamlett of Islebecke extending to one litle bekke called Willowbekk Then east by the sd Willowbekk to Islebecke lande Then southe still over the moore along towardses the parke pale of Seasey and to the wath of the Newe Milles And then west from the sd

Wathe still to the Ryver of Swale against Cundale betwixt
the townshippe of Crakhall parcell of the sd Lordshippe
of Topcliffe and Falldington All wch townes of Skipton
Catton Gristhwate Topcliffe Crakhill Dalton and Ellmor are
wthyn the Wapentake of Birdforth and parcelles of the Lordshipp
of Topcliffe aforesd And so upp the sd Ryver of Swale to
Assenbie feildes to a place called Leckby Wathe neare where
this boulder began The compase of the Lordshipe on the East
syde of the Swale ys aboute 12 myles and soe the circute of
the whole lordshippe ys 26 myles or theraboute

Wthyn the precinctes of wch sd boulder are conteyned the
townes villages and hamletts herunder mencioned

Topcliffe Gristhwate Dalton Eldmore Crakall Skipton
Catton on the East syde of Swale

Assenby Dishford Marton Raynton Newbie Baldersbye on the
west syde of Swale

The Ould Mannor The aunicyent Mannor Howse ther hath scite
in the litle pke on the west syde of the water of Codbekk
and neare unto the type of Swale The same was habitable in
the dayes of Henrie late Erle of Northumbrelande unckle unto
the Erle yt nowe ys but nowe utterlie ruinated defacyd and
decayed And a new mannor howse (or rather a newe lodge) hath
ben since erected and builded in the sd litle pke on the est
syde of the sd water of Codbekk more of bothe of wch after
appereth in the title of the sd litle pke (fo.174)

Priviledges The late Erle of Northumbrelande unckle to the

Erle yt nowe ys And others the Los of the sd Mannor of Top-
cliffe have had and used to have and keep wthin the sd Mannor
Courtes leets courts barron thre weeks courts Sheriffs
Tournes and fre warren and libertye of hunting hawking fishing
and fowling And none other persone the lyke lybertye withoute
a speciall lycence of the Lo of the sd Mannor And allso
wthyn the lymittes and boundes of the sd Mannor extendinge
into the townes villages and hamlettes of Topcliffe Gristhwate
Catton Skipton Eldmore Crakill Dalton Assenbye Dishford
Raynton Baldersbye Marton and Newbye have all wayfes estrayes
felones goodes the goodes of fugitive persones men outlawed
condempned And the penalties of all frayes woundes and
bloodshedes The assize of bread and ale and all fynes
forfeytures and penaltyes due or in aniwise incident unto
the sd leet

Markett and Fayre Ther is allso in the Towne of Topcliffe
a markett weeklie upon the Wednsdaye and allso yerellie one
fayre on the daye of Saint Thomas the Martyr and the two
dayes nexte folowinge In the wche marketts and fayre All
buyers and sellers be acquitted of and for anie toules And
further no sheriff or anie other minister of our Sov'aigne
Ladye the Quene maye execute or follow anie office or
processe wthin the sd lordshippe Otherwise than by precepte
directed to the baylyf of the Lybertye wch sd Lybertye the
sd Erle the grandfather and other hys auncestores have used and
enjoyed

Free Fyshing The sd Erlesgrandfather.... And all those whose estates the sd Erle nowe holdeth had and hath the fre fyshyng & fowlinge of the Ryver of Swale extending from Sand Hutton Holmes unto Crakhall Bekk mouth on both sydes of the sd Ryver of Swale whiche sd fyshyng and fowling ys nowe in the Baylyf hys handes during the Lo plesure And for the same ys reserved the yerelie rent of ijs payable unto the sd Erle as after appereth amongst the tenauntes at Will (fo.187)

Benefice Ther ys wthin the sd Lordshippe one Benefice the Personage of Topcliffe now impropriate and belongyth to the Quenes Maiestye The sd Benefice beinge impropriated ther was a Vicar instituted and inducted And one Mr Midleton ys nowe Vicar there by the p'sentment of (blank) who nowe ys Patron therof (1602 note: "The presentation and patronage of thys belongyth symplye to the Dean and Chapter of York and Raufe Kaye ys nowe vicar ther and ys of £20 value in the Quenes Booke)

Comons Ther ys allso not farr distante from the sd Towne of Topcliffe one great comon or wastegrounde called the Owtwoodes or Comon of Topcliffe The soyle wherof doth onelie belonge to the Lo of the sd Mannor And the sd Lo and hys auncestors And all those whose estates the sd Lo nowe hath have ben accustomed to have the drift of the sd comon at tymes conveniaunt at ther plesures And no other persone or persones

hathe anie ryghte tytle or interest to take the drift of
the comon moores waste or comon feildes in the sd Lordshippe
of Topcliffe other than by the Lo Baylyf or Offycer ther for
the tyme being Wch sd drift ys made yerelie at suche tyme
as the sd Offycer and other inhabitauntes thinkes conveniaunt"

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WRESSEL

Section 1.

The Descent of the Manor

This estate differs from the other three under survey in that it was not part of the original possessions of the Percy family.

Domesday Survey shows that Newsholme, Gribthorpe, Brighton, Thornton and parts of Wressel had been held by Queen Ediva and passed to Ralph Mortimer,¹ whilst other parts of Wressel, along with other neighbouring hamlets, were the post-conquest property of Gilbert Tison.²

By 1284 the de Vescy family was a subtenant of the Mortimers and Mowbrays, to whom part of the Tison inheritance had fallen.³ The family name is perpetuated in the present-day "Vesci Field".⁴

Not until 1315 did any connection between this area and the Percies appear. In that year Wressel figured amongst the fees of William de Percy.⁵ Though no evidence can be advanced to support the suggestion, it seems possible at least that the Percies took advantage of the minority of the de Vescy heir, and the complaisance of his guardian, Bishop Bec of Durham, to acquire not only Alnwick in 1309 but Wressel also. Colour is lent to this thesis by the mention of Isabel de Vescy as Percy subtenant of half one Knight's fee at Scoreby near Stamford Bridge.⁶

1 Bawdwen(p.185)

2 Bawdwen(p.192)

3 Book of Fees 1284/5 p.43.

4 O.S. 2½" 44/73. 717308.

5 Kirkby's Inq.Surtees Soc. XLIX 309.

The only William de Percy whose dates make his ownership possible was the younger brother of Henry 2nd Lord of Alnwick. He died in 1355. (A.H.P. - Pedigree of Percy)

6 Cal.I.P.M. No.536 10.Oct. 8 Ed.II

There had been disputes among the Percies over the possession of Wressel. The first Lord of Alnwick died in 1315, his widow Countess Eleanor bringing a case against William de Percy and claiming parts of Wressel and Arras as her dowry. William, the heir, was able to produce his father's deed of grant. The Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer finally confirmed William in his tenure, provided that the dowager Countess should have their monetary value as her dowry, to issue from the receipts of the Percy Yorkshire estates. Wressel and Arras were extended together at £45 8s.10d. per year.¹

Meanwhile the Percy owner had gained licence for free warren on his demesne lands at Wressel in 1328,² thus raising his liberties there to the level of those which he enjoyed at Tadcaster.³

The de Vescy interest - which was confined now to Newsholme, Brend, Thornton and Willitoft - ceased in 1344.⁴

John Perot,⁵ rector of Wressel, along with William Newport, rector of Wearmouth and Arnelif, was enfeoffed with the manor of Wressel and the advowson of Wressel Church,

1 Cal.Cl.R.30 Apr.8 Ed.II

2 Cal.Rot.Chart. 65.8th May 2 Ed.III

3 Ibid. 8th Apr. 24 Ed.I.

4 References to the de Vescy property at this time are to be found in Fine Rolls 24/6/1333, Cal.Cl.R.6 May 15 Ed.III m.6d., 8 Oct.17 Ed.III m.18., 1344.m.6. Cal.I.p.m. 528. 26 March 18 Ed.III and Feudal Aids VI p. 216/7.

5 In 1353 he was allowed to have alienated to him in mortmain $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land in Brend to enlarge the manse of his rectory (Cal.P.R. 7 Feb.27 Ed.III m.26.)

with reversion to Henry de Percy, as part of the process of converting the tenure from fee simple to fee tail.¹

In 1365 Henry de Percy granted the manor but not the advowson to his younger son, Sir Thomas, who was made Earl of Worcester in 1379.² The grant was for life and the rent one red rose per year. This grant was perhaps felt to make the earlier tenure settlement less secure, and in 1368 the earlier grant to Perot and Newport was repeated, with the same reversion provisions.³

At some time before the end of the 14th century the Castle was built, though no record of a royal licence is to be found. The general plan, the existing masonry and architectural details which conform fairly closely to those of the castles of Sheriff Hutton (1381), Bolton in Wensleydale (1379) and Lumley in County Durham (1392), point to its construction at about this period. The relationship between the Percies and the Lords Neville, Scrope and Lumley respectively, add weight to the possibility of a friendly architectural rivalry at about the same period.⁴

1 Percy.Chart.DCXXVIII.

2 CPR.26 Sept.38 Ed.III and CPR 6 Hen.IV m.33.

3 C.P.R. 1401/5 p.454.

The new lessee, the Earl of Worcester, gained from Richard II in 1379 a licence to grant the advowson of the church to the Prior and Convent of Drax, and for that Priory to appropriate it. (C.P.R. 30 May 2 R.II m.10 p.350.)

4 Y.A.J. Vol XV p.503

but see p. 53 below, under "Castle"; the Percy Survey of 1613 affirms that Wressel belonged to Thomas Percy, Bishop of Norwich, who built the castle in 1331, and later gave the lordship to his nephew Thomas Percy, Earl of Worcester. (See also facimile of 1613 Survey in "Maps, Plans and MSS." folder. p.24) 4.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the documented account of the acquisition of the manor differs from that affirmed by Leland, who, speaking of the castle, says:-

"... yet was yt made by a yonger brother of the Percys, (the) Erle of Wiccester yt was in hygh favore with Kyng Richard and boghte the maner of Wresehil mountting at that tym litle above £30 by the yere."¹

Identity of political interests resulted in an alliance between the discontented Percy family and Edmund Mortimer, who joined Douglas and Glendower in conspiracy against Henry IV. No doubt the marriage between Hotspur and Elizabeth Mortimer and the close proximity of the families' estates in the East Riding contributed to this association. The defeat at Shrewsbury in July 1403 was followed immediately by the execution of the captive Thomas Earl of Worcester and by the prompt reversion of his estates to the Crown.²

The offices of constable of the castle, steward of the lordship and keeper of the Park of Wressel were granted to "the king's esquire Robert Babthorpe".³ A large quantity of goods from Wressel, including altar furniture, was made over to Robert de Waterton, who was further favoured by appointment to the position of steward and master forester of Spofforth and Helagh lordships.⁴

1 Itinerary ff.59-60.

2 CPR 3 July 1404 m.9 and YAJ XXII p.182.

3 CPR 8 Aug.1403 p.247.

4 CPR 26 July 1405.

The Babthorpe and Waterton families were related by marriage. (Thor.Soc.XV p.81)

Henry IV, who visited the Lordship in 1405,¹ had granted the castle and manor for life to his queen Joan of Navarre in September 1404² - a grant which was repeated almost a year later.³

Yet from a lengthy but permanent grant of lands to Joan of Navarre Wressel was omitted.⁴ A grant by the Queen to Robert Babthorpe of seven marks from the issues of "Loftsome, part of Wressel", was later described as "vacated".⁵ In the inquisition of 1408, following the Earl of Northumberland's forfeiture, the Castle and Manor of Wressel was stated to be held by Robert Babthorpe, "though by what title was uncertain".⁶

Although the sequence of these grants is somewhat confusing and in one case conflicting, it seems clear that while some Percy lands were given to John, Duke of Bedford, and others to Queen Joan, the castle and lordship of Wressel became part of a Crown grant for life to Ralph, Earl of Westmoreland and his wife Joan.⁷ This is substantiated when thirty years later, in 1435, on the petition of the Earl of Northumberland, a commission was appointed to enquire into the detention by the Crown of certain of the Percy estates and a reference is made to the grant of Wressel to Ralph

1 CPR 19 July 5 Hen.IV.m.2.

2 CPR 1401-5 p.259.

3 CPR.10.Aug.1405.

This was confirmed by instructions to the Escheators in Yorkshire and eleven other counties to deliver to the Queen the lands of the late Earl of Worcester and Lord Bardolf. (CPR.4 July 7 Hen.IV.m.4.)

4 CPR 1408/13 p.85.

5 CPR 17 May 1409.

6 PRO 142/86/7 I.p.m. 6 May 8 Hen.IV.

7 CPR 1405/8 p.40 27 June 6 Hen.IV m.10.

of Westmoreland and his wife.¹

Yet, to cloud the issue still further - in 1435 the castle and manor of Wressel were returned as part of the lands of John, Duke of Bedford.²

Perhaps some light is thrown on this problem by an entry relating to Helagh. A commission was set up to enquire into a petition by Henry Earl of Northumberland regarding the manor of Helagh with which the late Henry Percy had been seised in the time of Richard II, but this manor had been granted by letters patent on 10th August 6 Henry IV to Joan Queen of England. Then during 7 Henry IV the said Henry Percy was attainted and the king had his lands and regranted them in fee simple to others. By letters patent, 17th June 11 Henry IV, the reversion of the manor of Helagh was granted to John Duke of Bedford. The Queen, by letters patent 20th February 13 Henry IV had granted her estate in Helagh to Robert Waterton and his wife. They died, whereupon the Duke of Bedford gained the reversion. He had since died without heirs so his estates reverted to the Crown.³ This explains the fact that in 1437 Wressel was Crown property and that Henry VI granted the office of porter and parker, first to Henry Langton,

1 CPR.1429/36 p.532.

2 Cal.I.P.M. p.169 and PRO Foreign Accounts of the Great Rolls of the Exchequer 18 Hen.VI.

3 CPR.17 Dec. 1435 m.8d.

with a fee of 6d. per day,¹ and then to Henry Vavasour.² During the same year one third of the issues from the Castle and lordship were granted for life to Jacquetta of Luxemburg, widow of John, Duke of Bedford,³ and the remainder to Ralph, Lord Cromwell. The value of the latter's share was £18 10s. 5d. per year.⁴

For the next fourteen years - until 1454 - Wressel remained in Lord Cromwell's hands, but then, in return for £30 "paid into the Hanaper" he gained licence to enfeoff the Bishops of Winchester, Ely and Coventry, along with twenty-six others with estates which included the Castle and Manor of Wressel.⁵

On his death in 1456 Wressel reverted to the Crown⁶ and was placed in the keeping of Sir John Pickering, to be held for the next ten years.⁷ In spite of this grant Sir John's tenure was only short-lived, as in December 1456 the king committed the castle and lordship to James Talbot, John Joskyn and Robert Croppell as from Michaelmas of that

1 CPR 1436/41 p.95 16 July 1437.

2 CPR 1436/41 5 Jan.1438 p.127.

3 Cal.I.P.M. p.169.

4 CPR 3 Feb.1438.

Two years later Lord Cromwell received further confirmation; the estate was to be held in fee simple by fealty only, and he was assured of the reversion of the remaining one third share when Jacquetta (now Woodville) should die. (CPR. 28 Feb. 1440) This confirmation was reiterated in 1442. (CPR 17 March. 1442 m.12.)

5 CPR.11 Nov.1454.

6 CPR.4 Jan.1456.

7 Fine R.12 March 1456 m.7.

year, in return for a previously paid sum of 8 marks plus an annual payment of one mark. They were to "maintain all houses, enclosures and buildings and support all other charges incumbent, the repairing of the castle only excepted".¹ Sir John Pickering's brief possession of the property is explained perhaps by the issuing to him of a pardon in 1486.²

After more than half a century Wressel returned to its accredited owners when Henry VI leased the castle and lordship to Sir Thomas Percy for life "from Easter last past" for £10 per year, the future Earl of Egremont undertaking "to sustain the houses, closes and buildings and to support all other charges together with the necessary repairs of the castle".³ This royal act of restitution was dictated probably by political necessity and by the king's desire to retain the loyalty of a family whose senior member had died on the king's behalf at St. Albans three years earlier.⁴

The lease of Wressel to the Earl of Egremont was followed two weeks later by a royal licence to him and twelve servants to leave the country to complete pilgrimages which he had promised to make on behalf of himself and the king.⁵

1 Fine R. 12 Dec.35 Hen.VI m.8.

2 CPR. 7 Nov. 1486.

3 CPR.10 June 1458 m.6

4 Another cogent proof of the king's debt to the Percy family was the grant to the 3rd Earl of £16,985 5s. 7½d. due to him for expenses incurred in the defence of Berwick and the East Marches. (CPR 20.Nov.1459 m.20)

5 CPR.23.June 1458.

It seems unlikely that he did, in fact, set off on this laudable expedition, as civil war recurred within a few months and the Earl was killed in July, 1460 at Northampton.

A month later - under Yorkist pressure - Henry VI sent instructions to Henry Earl of Northumberland and his servants and others occupying Pontefract and Wressel Castles to surrender them to Richard Earl of Salisbury.¹ This instruction was repeated two months later, with the additional order that they "procure no congregations, insurrections or combinations without mandate under the Great Seal".² Barely had there been time for this injunction to reach its destination than a final dispatch ordered the arrest of all evildoers in the North and the expulsion of the occupants of Pontefract, Wressel and Penrith Castles.³

By 1462 Edward IV was relatively secure from effective Lancastrian opposition and his revenge on the Percies was made possible. The ownership of Wressel had returned to the Crown through the adherence of the 3rd Earl to the defeated cause, and "the king's manor, castle and lordship of Wressel" was granted - retrospective to 4th March, 1461 - to Lawrence Booth, Bishop of Durham (1457-76) and William, Earl of Kent.⁴ This tenancy lasted only a short time,

1 CPR 24 Aug. 1460.

2 CPR.8 Oct.1460 m.22d.

3 CPR.14 Oct 1460 m.19d.

4 CPR 20.Feb.1462 m.24.

since an account roll, dated 4 Ed.IV describes both the Bishop and the Earl as "late occupiers".¹

Once more Wressel was in Crown hands but formed part of a grant - mainly of Percy Northumbrian lands - to the newly created Earl of Northumberland, John Neville, Lord Montagu.² The grant was confirmed in 1465,³ Wressel being mentioned specifically as a reward for Montagu's help at Hexham and Hedgeley Moor.⁴ With the sudden but temporary reverses in Edward IV's fortunes and the change of sides by the Neville faction, Montagu received confirmation of his Wressel grant by the restored Henry VI,⁵ but after the Earl's death at Barnet Wressel again returned to Edward IV's possession.⁶

The date at which the lordship returned to Percy hands is uncertain, but may be fixed between 1471 and 1472. Certainly it was in the Earl's possession in 1472⁷ and in October 1475,⁸ whilst it was recorded that by deed dated 10th April 15 Edward IV, the Earl gave the castle and manor amongst other property to Sir Thomas Ursewyke, Sir Guy Fairfax, John Gysburgh and others.⁹

1 PRO.SC 6 1088/12.

2 CPR 1 Aug. 1464.

Other Yorkshire properties in the North and West Ridings would revert to Lord Montagu on the death of Eleanor, widow of the third Percy Earl of Northumberland, to whom they had been given as dowry. (CPR. 3 Aug.1461)

3 CPR.16 Nov. 1465 m.5.

4 CPR. 11 July 1468 m.14.

5 CPR.21 March 1471

6 CPR. 14 April 1471

7 Pet.MAC.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV.

8 Pet.MCR.D.3.12 14 Ed.IV.

9 Cal.I.P.M. 477 28 Apr.4 Hen.VII.

The remainder of the estate - Newsholme, Loftsome, Brend, Gribthorpe and Thornton - was apparently demised to William, Marquess Berkeley, Earl Marshall and Nottingham, since the inquisition on the 4th Earl of Northumberland records that the Earl Marshall "suffered a recovery" of those manors which included 10 messuages, 500 acres of arable, 100 acres of meadow, 100 acres of wood and 1,000 acres of moor with 20/- rent.¹

How long Wressel remained in the hands of the lessees cannot be established with accuracy, but certainly until February, 1478 when the last mention of the court of Sir Thomas Ursewyke occurs.² It seems likely that its lease was longer than this, as Wressel does not appear amongst the property of the fourth Earl who was killed at Topcliffe on 28th April, 1489.³ Yet the detailed account of his funeral specifically mentions Wressel as a calling place on the way to the burial at Beverley.⁴

The fifth Earl Henry maintained quasi-royal splendour at Wressel⁵ in spite of the £10,000 fine levied on him by the Crown, and his subsequent imprisonment in the Tower in 1516.⁶ If the dates of the warrants in the Northumberland Household Book are to be taken as factual rather than

1 Cal.I.P.M. 477.28.April 4 Hen.VII.

2 Pet.MCR.D.3.12

3 Cal.I.P.M. as above.

4 The cortege consisted of over 2000 recorded attendants and the final costs of the funeral £1,040 -s. 8d. (AHP.App.XLIV quoting Alnwick MSS.)

5 NHB.passim

6 AHP.I.p.321 quoting letter patent of Hen.VIII.

exemplary, the Earl was in residence at Wressel in October, 1515, February, March and April, 1519, October, 1521, January, 1523 and December, 1525.¹ There also he died in May, 1527, to be buried with so many of his ancestors at Beverley. At his death he left debts calculated by one authority at £17,000 of which £7,000 were privately contracted,² though the total figure quoted in another source is much smaller - £1,761 6s. 1½d.³ The Earl's brother-in-law, the Earl of Cumberland, spoke of the heavy expenses and the excessive number of guests at the funeral; the pledging of the late Earl's plate to St. Mary's Abbey at York to raise the necessary money, and the existence of a surplus of only twenty marks when all was paid.⁴

Despite money shortage, caused allegedly by the infidelity of servants,⁵ the new Earl continued his ownership of Wressel. When, in 1535, agrarian troubles occurred in Craven, Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire, and when hedgebreaking occurred on a large scale,⁶ the Earl as a principal landowner wrote to the king explaining his absence from Craven as a result of illness. He reported however, that 19 of the most notable offenders had been committed to Skipton, Sandal and Wressel Castles.⁷

1 NHB.passim.

2 AHP.I.p.380.

3 L. & P. (F.&D.)Vol. 14 No.3379.

4 AHP.I.p.359/60.

5 NHB.p.413/5.

6 L.&P.Vol VIII.863,972,982,1046.

7 L.& P. VIII 991 5th July, 1535.

When the Pilgrimage of Grace began, Wressel Castle was held for the rebels by the Earl's younger brother, Sir Thomas Percy and by Robert Aske from near-by Aughton, where to-day extensive grass-covered mounds and ditches are all that remain of a motte-and-bailey castle and a large manor-house. Though the Earl was accused of complicity in the insurrection since he was a well-known champion of the old faith,¹ he was able satisfactorily to make his explanations.²

The Earl's dislike of his younger brother Sir Ingelram, now his heir after the execution of Sir Thomas, led him to entrust Wressel and his other estates to the Crown on behalf of his nephew Thomas, son of the late Sir Thomas.³ The estates thus transferred were surveyed, valued and their accounts audited. Prior to the grant to the Crown, Wressel was temporarily (1536) in the hands of feoffees, the chief of whom was Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham (1530-52 and 1559).⁴ This temporary demise was perhaps caused by the sixth Earl's heavy debts - almost as crippling as those of his father. He had died in penury in London - "thes iij wekes he hade no money but by borowyng", and his debts were assessed at £1,689 5s. 5½d.⁵ Moreover, despondency or profligacy had led him to carelessness in the disposal of his belongings. Thomas, Duke of Norfolk, wrote to Thomas

1 L.&P. XII 849-853.

2 L.&P. XII 1062.

3 AHP.I.p.471 and YAS(Rec)II Yorks.Fines.

4 Pet.MS.D.3.18.27th Oct.27.Hen.VIII.

5 L.&P. XII 30 June 1537.

Cromwell "I have just heard that My Lo. of Northumbreland gives away howses and the brick of Wressel and other things so that unless remedy be applied it will be greatly decayed when it comes to the king's hands".¹ Whether this was a canard is not certain, yet the Earl had certainly made other commitments. Among the "decreases of rents in the Late Earl of Northumberland's lands" is noted that "Nicasius Hanon has a lease of the herbage of Newsome Park for 3/4. The old rent was £13 6s. 8d."²

The Crown lost no time in exploiting the value of the estate, granting a lease of 88 acres of demesne land, the castle and lordship of Wressel for 20 years at £4 8s. -d. per year to Stephen Stamforthe, yeoman of the king's wardrobe.³

1 L.& P. XII.1173 10 May 1537 and YAJ XXII p.184.

2 L.& P. XII No.398.

3 CPR.8 Feb.1555 ref. to 2 May 28 Hen.VIII.

Henry VIII visited the manor in person in 1540. The Privy Council met there in September, 1540, a royal grant being dated from there on 30th September. (L&P.XVI 1226/31) The king was hunting in the Park of Newsholme in 1542. (PRO.Min.Acc.4290)

The rectory of Wressel was granted on a twenty-one year lease to Anthony Dunriche, merchant of London, as part of the late Priory of Drax. (L.& P. XVIII.982 f.63b.)

Nicasius Hanon, bailiff of Wressel, (PRO SC/6/4284) and Richard Whalley, Esq. were appointed jointly to the office of keeper of the Castle and parks of Wressel. (L.& P. XXI. 199 f.92.)

Six bovates of land, each bovate containing 12 acres, and two closes of an acre each in Newbald, part of Wressel, were leased by the Crown for 21 years to Robert Smeaton for 14/- per year. (CPR. 16 Aug. 1557)

Six acres of arable in Asselby, late the property of the chantry of St. Cuthbert in the collegiate church of Howden were part of estates sold to Walter Wolflete of Howden and Robert Wright of Great Grimsby, yeomen. (CPR. 25 July 1549)

(Continued on p.16)

For some four months the castle and lordship, together with Newsholme were among the property conferred by the Crown on John, Earl of Warwick,¹ but by indenture Wressel and Newsholme with Thorpe Underwood (late of the Abbey of Fountains) were resold to the Crown.²

The Crown continued the policy of leasing for 21 years certain properties in Wressel for £3 7s. 6d. per year;³ but in the following January of 1552 John, now Duke of Northumberland, received Wressel and Newsholme for an annual rent of £6 4s. 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. though in addition he undertook to pay certain fees and annuities.⁴ A year later the Duke and

3 (Continued from page 15)

One and a half acres of arable in Wressel Common Field, late the property of the "light" in the parish church of Wressle, were sold, amongst extensive but scattered properties, to Edward Pese and William Wynlove.
(CPR.24 Dec.1549)

1 CPR. 20 May 1550.

2 CPR 10 Sept. 1550.

3 CPR 16 Aug. 1557 quoting 4 June 5 Ed.VI.

4 CPR. 5 Jan.1552.

his wife Jane received the manor of Brend.¹

After the attainder of John, Duke of Northumberland, the Manor returned to Crown ownership for the fourth time in twenty years.²

1 CPR. 2 March 1553.

Other Crown grants of ex-Percy property on this lordship were as follows:-

In 1554 the Crown granted one carucate of land and pasture called Brend Leys, once of St. Mary's Abbey York, now in the tenure of a Wressel tenant, to two merchants, Humphrey Colwiche of Bermondsey and William Cleyton of London. (CPR. 7 Sept. 1554.)

The manors of Asselby and Cliff were given to Sir Francis Jobson, Master of the King's Jewels, (CPR. 22 June 1553) whilst late chantry lands in Asselby and Brend passed to various purchasers. (CPR 2 May, 4 July 1553 and 7 Sept. 1554)

Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, one of the feoffees of 1536, was regranted lands in Asselby and Cliff "of which he had been deprived in 6 Edward VI" (CPR.18 June 1553) - perhaps an explanation of Sir Francis Jobson's award of the same month; certainly at the time of the Bishop's temporary deposition.

- 2 Stephen Stamford's 1537 lease of Wressel demesnes was renewed for a further 21 years at the old rent, in return for the payment of a fine of £5; (CPR 8 Feb. 1555) the Crown exploited its rights of wardship and marriage over tenants in Wressel Brighton and Newbald; (CPR 1 Dec. 1556 and 1 July 1557) a generous grant of land in Wressel at a nominal annual fee of £4 10s. -d. was made to Cuthbert Musgrave, gentleman, of Harbottle, Northumberland, in return for his expenditure of £160 in the Queen's service, the grantee undertaking to lease these lands to men "such as can keep a house and household for the defence of the North...with horse and equipment". (CPR. 9 Apr. 1557)

At last, after twenty years of separation, the lordship returned to Percy ownership, the seventh Earl, Thomas Percy, belatedly receiving the estates which had been held by the Crown 'in trust'. The long list included the 'castle, manor and parks of Wressel...the manor of Brind and lands and liberties in Brind...the advowson of Wressel Church...the manor and park of Newsham'.¹

The Earl's grant in francalmoign to Nicholas, Archbishop of York, of various advowsons included that of Wressel² and was followed shortly afterwards by the lease of the Rectory and its appurtenances for 21 years to Nicholas Thornehill at a rent of £10 3s. 4d. per year and a fine of £40 13s. 4d.³

As a result of the Earl's association with the Rising in the North, he was executed in 1572, his estates going to the Crown. The eighth Earl, created in 1576, was implicated in the Throgmorton Plot, but after his unsatisfactorily-explained death in 1585, the inquisition held at Topcliffe recorded that amongst his property were the castle and manor of Wressel and Wressel Park, the manor of Newsholme and Newsholme Park, the manors of Thornton, Brind, Gribthorpe and Loftsome.⁴

1 CPR 30 Apr. 1557

2 CPR 31 Oct. 1558

3 CPR 9 Nov. 1562 m.48

4 PRO.IPM.(Ch.Ser.) C.142/208/167.

The ninth Earl's imprisonment in the Tower between 1605 and 1622 and the negotiations which led to his compounding for a fine to the Crown probably influenced his decision to lease Wressel and its members, with the view of frankpledge of Wressel, Loftsome, Newsholme and Brend, and the advowson of Wressel Church to Francis, Earl of Cumberland, Henry, Earl of Southampton, Robert, Earl of Essex and nine others in 1615.¹ Possibly the lease was one for the now familiar twenty-one years, since in 1636 the estates were once more in Percy hands.

The tenth Earl followed his father's example in opposing the Stuarts at whose hands his family had suffered so severely.

Although the Earl played what was mainly a diplomatic part in the Civil Wars, military necessity compelled the garrisoning of Wressel Castle by the Parliamentarian forces - an essential westerly outpost for the security of Kingston-on-Hull.

No events of prime importance seem to have occurred in the lordship during the Civil Wars, but even the Earl's loyalty to the eventual victors could not prevent the 'sighting' of the Castle in 1649-50.

After the partial destruction of the Castle it became unserviceable as a residence for its owners, and presumably

1 YAS(Rec)II. Yorks. Fines.

the New Lodges at Leconfield and Topcliffe ousted Wressle Castle from its position as premier Yorkshire mansion for the Percies.

In 1684 the Yorkshire estates were conveyed by will to the Earl of Manchester for disposal to Elizabeth, the Percy heiress, who married the Duke of Somerset.

Thenceforward the manor and lordship of Wressel descended, like the majority of the other Yorkshire lands, to the Wyndham family, and thence to the present Lord Leconfield, who disposed of his last property in Wressel in 1952.

WRESSEL

Section 2

The Lordship in 1577 and To-day

(a) Wressel, Loftsome, Newsholme and Brend.

The Percy Survey of 1577 shows that the 16th century lordship occupied relatively the same limits as those representing the present parish boundary.

"The jurie or homage do say and present upon ther othes..... the bounder of Wressle ys conteyned within the bounders and precincts of the vills or hamlets of Newsham Loftsom and Brend which vills or hamlets are bounded as foloweth viz. Begining at the Ryv' of Darwent at a place called Barnabie Clowe and soe up the comon sewer to a pasture called Dyant betwixt Holdenshire and Herthill on the outside of Newsham Park and Brend field to the manor dike and soe east to the Hawthorne dyke betwixt the comon of Spaldington and Newsom And soe along the dyke to Breghton Gate and soe west to West More where they both joyne together ..."

A comparison of the Ordnance Survey map and the 17th century plans reveals few discrepancies save those of nomenclature.

The six main members of the lordship fall into three divisions. The first of these consists of Wressel, Loftsome, Newsholme and Brend - a compact unit whose western boundary is the River Derwent, over which the lords of the manor enjoyed certain privileges, though these also entailed certain obligations touching the navigability of the river.

"Ther is also belonging to the Lo. that now ys...the free fishing of the aforenamed Ryver of Darwent so far as the manor extendith along the same ryver And further the libertie to searche and survey the sd water As well for the preseruation of the fish in the same not to be taken at times unseasonable nor with unlawful nets or engines to the distruction therof but that the same should be used in such sort as hath bene accustomed And also to kepe or cause to be kept the same water free for passage of vessels without suffering any thing to be used or erected in or towards the same which might be a hindrance therof And the same libertie and royaltie hath ben used by the Lords of the sd Mannor and his officers without interruption time out of memory from the mouth of the sd water of Darwent wher the same fallith into the Ryver of Ouse to the bridge called Stamford Bridge

Ther is also within the sd lordship a passage or ferie over the Ryver of Darwent aforesd the one half wherof belongith to the Lo. of the sd Mannor

Ther is also at this present within the sd lordship upon the Lo waters ther now remayning of the Lo swannes onelie sixe"

Throughout its length in the lordship, the Derwent is tidal, navigable only by light craft,¹ though once much used

1 Langdale (1821) says "of 45 tons burthen".

by horse-drawn or sail-driven barges, for whose convenience landings existed on both banks.¹ At the extreme south-west corner of the lordship was a toll swing-bridge, on or near the site of the medieval Loftsome ferry. The old bridge still stands derelict and unsafe; in recent years it has been replaced by a public bridge of concrete, whose low span would make difficult its negotiation by any but the smallest vessels.

According to Savage, Wressel and Loftsome, Newsholme and Brind formed two separate constableries.² This is borne out, in the few cases where jurors' names are recorded in the Court Rolls, by the fact that there was one jury for Wressel and Loftsome and one for Newsholme and Brind, whilst occasionally a third represented Thornton and its associate Milnhouses.³

Whether through cause or effect, Wressel and Loftsome developed as one economic unit. The three common arable fields were known as Flat or Fleet Field, Vescy or Westwood Field and Church or Toft Field, all readily accessible from both villages. The first two fields lay in the positions

1 As early as 1326 "Robert Garinge of Halton killed Walter Mekan of Luddington with a pair of tongs on board the "Bloom" on the Derwent near Wressel". Cal.I.p.m. No. 637 19 Nov. 20 Ed.II.

2 History of the Castle and Parish of Wressel 1805.

3 Pet.MS.MCR 54 20 Hen.VIII.

indicated on the 2½" Ordnance Survey map;¹ the Church Field surrounded the Church and skirted the windmill and the southern ends of the tofts and crofts of Wressel village. All three arable fields were contiguous, but whilst Vescy and Church Fields contained 90 and 118 acres respectively, Fleet Field was somewhat larger - about 130 acres.²

The meadow land was located on the east bank of the Derwent in (a) the North Ings, immediately upstream from the Castle and divided from the Church Field by (b) the Marsh, (c) the South Ings (d) Loftsome Ings.

Common pasture was available to the Wressel tenants in Sandy Field and Wressel Common between Fleet Field and the neighbouring village of Spaldington, whilst Loftsome tenants had access to Loftsome Low Moor and Westwood Common which divided the townships from those of Newsholme and Brind.

Finally, to the north-east of the Castle was the Little Park from which, beyond Sandy Field and the Coney Garth, entry could be gained to the Great Park.

The relevant portions of the 1577 Survey read as follows:-

"Ther is within the sd Mannor or Lordship one comon or wast ground conteyning by estimacon 180 ac. bounded on the

1 O.S. 2½" sheet 44/73.

2 Acreage figures are taken partly from the Surveys and partly from the maps. (Pet.MSS.)

north with the Fleet Dyke and ther ys also one other peice of comon called the Mershe conteyning also by estimacon 3 ac. and adioyneth to the Ryver of Darwent

Ther ys also on the north side of the castle one parcell of ground enclosed with pale called the Litle Parke sett with some old ocke trees which in tymes paste hath bene plenished with dere of dyvers coloures The pale wherof is now in utter decaie and no deare within the same which sd pke conteyneth by mesure 11 ac. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ r. In the sd pke ther is a plott of ground conteyning 3 r. 1 p. moted about and sett with quicksett hedge ordeyned for a garden and bankettinge places or houses of plesure and which is now in great decaye

Ther is also distant from the sd Litle Pke to the north about one furlonge one other parke called the Greate Parke conteyning 184 ac. And in circute about the pale 600 roods or therabouts after the rate of seaven yeardes to the roode The pale wherof by the more part is in great decaye And must be repaired of necessitie if any deere should be kept ther In which sd pke ther is a launde which hath bene kept for a frith for the deare conteyning 36 ac. or therabouts wherof 26 ac. are yet enclosed with rayles and kept for that purpose Ther ys also a spring ther conteyning 51 ac. well sett (amongst other wood) with saplynges of ock which if they were weeded and the worst taken forth a great number would growe to good perfectioun

Ther is also certain olde runte ockes of small value because the lands remayning in the princes hands the best were taken away to the great decaye of the woods Ther is also ther one holte or grove of yonge trees of good groweth and length not unmeet for the breed of heronsewes as yt semeth And ther is within the sd pke a kepers lodge covered with tyle and sclate with stables and owhouses belonging to the same and now in good repaire And also of deare by viewe the number of LXII wherof IX are dere of antler and IX are whyte dere..."

LOFTSOME "is taken and reputed as a hamlet of Wressle and parcell of that Mannor and is scituate and adioyning to the field of Wressle called Kirkfield upon the banks of the Ryver of Darwent and a great part of the arable land belonging to the sd village lyeth in the comon fields with the arrable land of Newsome as appereth in a booke called the Territorie Also ther is a lane or passage from the sd village of Loftsom to Newsom Lowe Moore and by the same passage to the highe Moore wher ther cattel have comon with NewsomWresle and Brend

Demesne landes The demesne called Great Banks lying upon the south field of Loftsom Inges 14 ac. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ r.

The Litle Bank Close betwixt the Great Bank Close and the Pighills 4 ac. $\frac{1}{2}$ r.

The Lowe Moore Breaks on the west side of the Lowe Moore besides the chauntry landes) 9 ac.

The kirkebrigge Breaks lying in the south of Lowe Moore Breaks 2½ ac.

The half acre in the west side of Lowe Moore 3½ r. 14 p.

The Loftsom Breaks on the south of the Lowe Moore 8 ac. 1 r. 12 p."

Newsholme's arable fields are mentioned most infrequently in both manuscript and printed sources, but appear to have lain next to one another on the northern fringe of the manor and at some distance from the village. Their somewhat unusual names were Rowland Field, Howsom or Owsham Field and Sewersby Field. As in the case of Wressel the common fields at Newsholme were markedly unequal in size, the last named being almost as large as the other two combined. Loftsom tenants seem often to have shared these fields with the Newsholme villagers.

The meadows for Newsholme were Newsholme Ings, in the extreme south, watered by a stream running near what was once the old course of the Derwent and which now joins the present river near Loftsom Ferry and the modern road bridge.

The remainder of Newsholme - about half its total acreage - was the Park. Far to the north-east - to the east of Wressel Common - was Newsholme Common, in a position which must have proved very inconvenient for the villagers concerned.

"NEWSOME an auncient mannor of itself and hathe belonginge to the same dyvers villages hamlets and frehoulds And since the time that the sd Mannor with the members therof

came to the hands of thErlle of Nortumbreland in the tyme of King Henrye the 8 the inhabitaunts of the sd Mannor have used to appear at the courts of Wresle And ther by a homage or jurie of the lordship have presented and executed the causes belonginge to the court Ther is within the sd Mannor of Newsome one parcell of grounde called the Hall Garth in which grounde it is verie well knowen the Mannor house in times past hath bene scituate And nowe utterlie ruinated and decayed

Ther are belonginge to the sd towne of Newsome two comons or wast groundes The on called the High Moore is compased on the north side by the metes and bounds of Wresle and Newsome to the groundes of Spaldington and to the comons of Wresle And in the south side to the comons of Holden part of Holdenshire upon which sd High Moore the townes of Newsome Loftsom and Brend doe use ther comon joyntly together And the same conteyneth by estimacon 500 acres or theraboutes The other moore is called Lowe Moore and conteyneth by estimacon 80 ac. wherupon the aforesd townships likewise use to have comon of pasture joyntly and together

Ther is also one park ther called Newsome Pke adioyning the sd town of Newsome which hath bene well plenished with deere both red and fallowe But nowe ther is none remaying in the same And the woods therof are almost utterlie destroyed So that without some provision of springs or copses to be devised in the same for thencrease of woods the whole woods

therof will be in small tyme quite wasted and decayed to the great hurte of the Lo inheritaunce and damage to all the tenants and inhabitaunts adioyning For ther is presently no woodes of any account nowe growing within the same but onelie a few Runte ocks of small value The sd pke is environed on all parts with the groundes of Newsome and Brend saving on the east side where it adioyneth on the sewer betwixt Holdenshire and the same The pale therof is in utter decaye And the sd pke is in circute by the ring pale three myles or theraboutes And conteyneth of groundes within the same 537 acres In the sd pke ther is one keepers lodge scituate in or nighe the pale and neare to the sd town of Newsome If of thē sd 537 acres ther were allowed for a spring or frith 60 acres the Residue valued at 1/6 the acre would arise in toto £35 15s. 6d.

Demesnes Newsom Ings 68 ac. at 4/- per acre

The meadow called the Dyant on the south side of the pke

16 ac. 1½ r. at 1/4 per acre

Hall Garth 5 ac. 2½ r another Hall Garth 3 ac. 1 r.

Hall Riddings three closes 22 ac. 1½ r: one in Westwood Lane

8 ac. 1½ r. Midle Hall Riddings 5 ac. 3½ r. The third 6 ac.

2 r. 10 p. and one litle peice of grounde lying at the north

end of the sd Riddings 1 ac. 2½ r.

The roserow 7 ac. 1½ r. The Great Dumpoole extending north

upon Newsom Moor 51 ac. 1½ r. at 2/- per acre The litle

Dumpoole 5 ac. 1½ r. at 2/- per acre."

Brind, Newsholme's eastern neighbour, appears to have had only two arable fields, the West Field and the Fern or Farm Field, each of between 25 and 35 acres. The meadow was in Brind Ings, to the west of Newsholme Ings, whilst common was shared with Newsholme and known indiscriminately as Newsholme and Brind Common. All land known as common seems to have been used generally by all tenants irrespective of township, a fact which seems to indicate a prolonged interdependence of townships resulting perhaps from their existence en bloc in the same ownership. It is difficult otherwise to understand why their several types of land should have become so inextricably confused.

"BREND ... a member or hamlett of Newsome aforesd scituate in the northeast corner of Newsome Parke It ioyneth to the corner of Holdenshire on the north parte Yt also boundeth upon Burn Lees And toward the west it ioyneth to the parke and groundes in Newsom aforesd And although the sd towne be scituate near unto the sd comon yett so it is that by the negligence of the Inhabitaunts that other towns which have thes comons confyning with the same and therfor do comon together pour cause de vicinage doe take the cheif profitts therof to the damage and hurt of the tanants and inhabitaunts of Brend aforesd

Demains The close called the Hall close, marsh and barren pasture adioyning Newsome field on the south side conteyning 30½ ac. at 1/8 per acre Also five lands or butts of demain

in the field called the Fern Field and in the west side of the same 1 ac. 1 r."

The whole of the lordship thus far described is situated in the broad level valley between the Rivers Derwent and Foulness. At no point does the land rise to the 25-foot contour line in any continuity, though there are a few spot heights of that altitude.

The soil, like that at Leconfield, is mainly boulder clay with its characteristically wide variation of texture. Leland, who approached the lordship from Howden, described his journey "al by lowe Medow and Pasture Ground wherof part is enclosid with hegges".¹ Humberston spoke of the estate as "planted in a country voyde of nothing mete and necessarye for the mayntenaunce of hospitalyte; the soyle about the same very good and batefull for Corne and gresse and great plenty of medowe belongynge to the seyde Castell lying upon the water and ryver of Darwent".²

The prevailing level terrain, combined with the extensive drainage area and tidal nature of the Derwent raised in earlier days the serious problem of flooding at rainy seasons. Leland remarked that "the Ryver at great Raynes ragith and overflowith much of the Ground ther abouts beyng low medowes",¹ and the 1577 Survey contains similar observations.

1 Itin. I.f.59/60

2 YAJ. XVII p.143 f.230.

"The soyle of which sd lordship is for the more part verie good and wold yield the inhabitants great encrease both of corne and grasse saving that the groundes ther are moche subject to the overflowing of the waters of Ouse and Darwent which ryvers ther doe ebb and flow and manie tymes bursteth the banks to the gret damage of the countrie adioyning."

In more recent times the stretch of the river north of Wressel Castle has been provided with flood dikes, whilst at Wressel and Loftsome Cloughs apparatus is available to control the movement of water to and from the Derwent. Otherwise, the district, whilst low-lying, is not now so subject to such widespread flooding as might at first seem probable; such events do still occur, but only under extreme weather conditions and through neglectful usage of the facilities available.¹

The tidal nature of the Derwent, the necessity of maintaining navigational facilities and the lack of streams with sufficient outfall has prevented the use of water-powered mills. The manorial windmill - in the 17th century a post mill, later replaced by a brick tower mill, - now stands derelict.

The whole of the area is so flat that the only wide view can be obtained from the top of the western tower of the Castle, now a somewhat hazardous climb. The modern

¹ as, for example, in 1947.

field boundaries follow closely the lines of those of the 18th century survey.

Though the earlier surveys show a number of trees in the hedgerows and several considerable woods, the great majority of these have disappeared, only Newsholme and Brind Leys Plantations now breaking the rather monotonous landscape; there are however plenty of 50-year-old trees in the hedges, oaks being the most frequently seen.

Most of the present farms are of an acreage rather above average - a not unexpected fact in view of the small population.

With the exception of a modern brick and tile works,¹ the whole area is still pastoral and agricultural. The population is sparse, one village school - in Wressel - sufficing for the needs of the youngest of the 275 inhabitants,² whose spiritual welfare is provided for only by one church - at Wressel - and by an even more uninspiring chapel of ease at Brind.

(b) Gribthorpe

The second division of the lordship consists of one hamlet - Gribthorpe - to the east of the main bloc just described, separated from it by the villages of Willitoft and Spaldington, both of which were for long the property of the Vavasours of Hazelwood, Percy subtenants in the West

1 O.S. 2½ 44/73 724314.

2 1931 Census figure.

Riding.

Gribthorpe is situated in a district even less undulating than the area already referred to, drained by the Seller Dyke, its northern boundary, which flows sluggishly into the River Foulness - the eastern limit - some six hundred yards east of the cluster of cottages.

The hamlet is extremely small, consisting of some eight brick cottages with outbuildings.

The lane leading to the village from the unclassified road between Spaldington and Foggathorpe ends aimlessly at a field gate. From its extremity can be seen, about two hundred yards away, a curious sandy mound with a moat on all four sides. The moat still contains water and encloses an area roughly twenty yards square and about twelve feet above the surrounding level and featureless country. Seven oak trees - four of which are dead stumps, stand in this area.

The surrounding country is employed in mixed farming; besides the normal cereal crops, flax is grown successfully on an increasing scale.

Besides the cottages, all of which except one stand on the north side of the village street, there are no farmsteads.

It would seem that apart from the rebuilding of the cottages in brick to replace the timber or wattle and daub structures on the same sites no real change has occurred in this area for over three hundred years, thanks to the isolation of the hamlet in a naturally unfrequented district.

An inspection of the map bound in with the 1613 survey shows little variation from the field boundaries of the 1947 edition of the 2½" ordnance survey map.

The relevant portion of the 1577 Survey reads as follows:

"GRIBTHORPE ... parcell of the Mannor of Wresle and all the lands belonging to the towne are of the Lo. demain lands wherupon certain tenements are erected and nowe houlden by the tenants there at the will of the Lo. The greatest part of which demains lie in the comon feilds and not enclosed But used and occupied by the nowe tenants and farmers of the same in such manner as the sd groundes hath hertofor been usually allotted placed or demised All which comon feilds or the sd demains are bounded described and measured as foloweth

The Hall Garth adioyneth to the south end of the Inge Feild now in the occupation of Thomas Blancherd in which pasture ther standith a round mounte or hill moated about Wherupon sundry trees doe now growe the topp wherof conteyneth 36 yeards The which sd mounte or hill seemeth by view to have bene the scite of the manor house of Gribthorpe And the sd pasture called the Hall Garth (including the sd mounte) conteyneth by statute measure 6½ ac. 10 p.

The south Feild (being enclosed with a quicksett hedge) ioyneth westward upon the Lordship of Willtofte southward upon Lordship of Spaldington north on the West Feild or Garefeild parcell of Gribthorpe and east on Gribthorpe Carr conteyning by statute measure 172 ac. 3 r.

The North Feild ioyneth wholly on the west side to a

quicksett hedge on the north side to the Lo'ship or township of Adlethorpe And not ther divided from the sd township either with hedge or other fence And extendith estward upon the Lo'ship of Fokerthorpe And there severed with a water sewer called Sellar Dyke and with one other strait or narrow corner of the same feild And adioyneth to the east end of the tenements called Hall Feild conteyning by like measure 161 ac. 1 r.

The Ing Flatts adioyneth to the southeast corner of the North Feild now in the tenure of John Harrison ... 15½ ac.

Ther is a parcell of meadow called the Ings enclosed on the north side with a water sewer called Sellar Dyke On the east and south side with a pasture called the Carre and on the west side by the Hall Garth conteyning 25 ac. 1½ r. Within which feild are certain parcells of groundes called Hempgarths where upon doe now growe divers old runt ocks and other busches And in the sd Inges the Parson of Bubwith hath certain groundes for the firste Mathe or forecroppe in consideracon of all his tyth hay in the sd Town of Gribthorpe

The West Feild or Gare Feild enclosed with quicksett ioyneth west on the Lordshipp of Willtoft and north on the other feild called the North Feild of Gribthorpe and east on the other part of the sd feild and conteyneth 149 ac. 1 r.

Ther is a pasture of demain ther called the Carre environed on the north side with the water sewer called Sellar Dyke On the east with the River of Fowney¹ right over against

1 Foulness

the lordshipp of Holme on Sparr' Moore (Spalding Moor)
And on the south by a hedge of the Lordshipp of Spaldington
And on the west with the South Feild of Gribthorpe aforesd
conteyning 183 ac."

(c) Thornton

The third of the divisions into which the main members of the lordship were placed was made up of Thornton and its subsidiary, Millhouses. The most distant outlier - six miles from the nearest part of the main body of the lordship - Thornton seems to have had little in common with the rest of the community beyond the necessary performance of suit of court. References to the township are comparatively few and non-committal in both court rolls and ministers' accounts. The 1577 Survey affords the only comprehensive description encountered in the sources consulted:

"THORNTON The aforesd Towne of Thornton in times past semeth allso to have bene an auntyent mannor of itself But nowe no parte therof being in service or frehold the Mannor is extinguished And therefor it is at this present reputed and taken as a member or parcell of the aforesd Mannor or Lordshipp of Wresle aforesd Being distant from the same six myles or therabouts Now inclosed within the knowen limittes and boundes folowing Begining at a place called Barnebie Carr and soe extending eastward to Wallplington Gowe Hold And so 'still eastward unto certain groundes called the flett landes And from thence to a place called

Whit Carre and from the sd Whit Carre extending southward to Bielbey Mill Powle And so from thence to the corner of Flaxholme And from thence to a close called Broome Close And so still southward to a place called Flax Hall being the lands of the Erle of Rutland and so west to a place called Gale Carre and so west to a lane called Millers Lane and so west to Fose Head And so thence westward to Woode Head And then extending eastward to Drye Carre And thence going by a dyke called Woodhouse Dyke to the first named place called Barnabie Carre

The Millnhouses which is a hamlet or rather a part of the sd Towne of Thornton lieth at the east end of the sd Towne near unto the same The Croftes and several groundes aboute the sd Mylnehouses be all inclosed And they have certen arrable lands and meadows lying in the comon feilds amongst the landes and meadowes of Thornton And also certen meadowes belonging to the same in severall They parte comon of pasture with the tenants of Thornton"

The boundary thus detailed corresponds exactly with that shown on the Estate Plan of 1616 and with the present parish boundary.¹

Served throughout by unclassified roads, the village consists of a small group of houses standing on the 25-foot contour overlooking Thornton Beck and, beyond, the slightly

1 O.S. 2½" Sheet 44/74.

larger village of Melbourne on the southern side of the shallow valley. Besides the group of cottages forming the hamlet, there are eight scattered farmhouses, five of which are situated in the more pleasant and fertile eastern section of the parish. One of these - the Mill House - is the sole survivor of a small satellite - "Milnhouses" - which consisted in the 17th century of five buildings, and in the mid 18th century of twelve or more if the details of the estate plans may be accepted at face value. The village was well-positioned for convenient access to meadow and pasture ground. Like Brind, it seems to have had only two common arable fields, both of which were easily reached from the habitation centre. The detailed description of the land areas is contained in the relevant section of the 1577 Survey:-

"Ther is a verie good and large comon belonging to the sd Towne lying upon the east and north parts of the same And the tenants of the sd Towne of Thornton have also access or accourse in the wynter tyme by sufferance of the tenants of Woodhouse unto a parcell of grounde ther called Eller Carr with ther Cattell adioyning unto the sd Woodhouse Moor parcell of the township of Thornton And the sd Tenants of Woodhouse with ther Cattell have likewise by licence of the Lo's tenants of Thornton entercomon in the somer tyme in the sd pasture.

The East Inges lying north from the sd Towne of Thornton

In the end wherof is a parcell of the same adioyning to the comons of Thornton and the groundes of Belebye And is devyded from the residue by a litle dyke The croppe wherof as is said belongyth to thErle of Rutland and as at this present taken to his use The soyle and aftermath or after-croppe of the same comonly called Ettage belongyth to the Lo. and his tenants of Thornton

Tenement land bounded in Thornton

The Bekke Close $10\frac{1}{2}$ ac. 2 p. The Moore closes abutting at west upon the Towne Crofts and east on the Towne Moore 5 ac. 1 r. 18 p.

The Gare Close at the upper ende of the Long Moore Close at north and abutting on the west of the croft of Thomas Cowper and east upon Longe Moore Close now Thomas Smith 1 ac. 7 p.

The Tythe Hilles abutting north on Hall Garthes and south on Longworth Ing and lying between Levell Close and Bowgham 10 ac. 3 r.

Whitwell Inges 7 ac. $3\frac{1}{2}$ r. The West Arrable Feild of Thornton being divided into sundrie furlonges 174 ac. $\frac{1}{2}$ r. The East Feild of Thornton in sundrie flatts and furlonges 267 ac. 1 r. Ther is in the southeast end of the East Feild and in the same a peice of waste bounded on the south by the East Inges and on the north by a lande of William Walkers which lies on the south side of a furlong called Long Landes and also upon parte of the same northside with the ende of a furlonge called Crooklandes and at the west ende that

butteth on the Whinnieeastwards 3 ac. 3 r. The Low Feild Closes lying north of the Towne of Thornton and abutting on the Lowe East Moore and at south on the East Arable Feild aforesd 54 ac. $3\frac{1}{2}$ r. 2 p.

Holkar Closes on the north side of the East Feild lying north and south abutting on the Lordshipp of Wappington and south on a furlong called Basse Marris 49 ac. $3\frac{1}{2}$ r. 2 p.

Hauerland Closes lie east and west abutting west on a part of the east Comon of Thornton and east upon part of the East Inges and part of the sd comon 62 ac.

The Inges called Longworth Inges meadowe grounde on the south of the loan extending east and west at the east abutting on Levell Close and Milburn Church way between Walbote Bekke at south and the Tythe Hilles at north 35 ac.

Birkholme Inges butting north on Thakedales and at south on Walbott Bekk The east side loyning upon Milburn Church Way and the west on the Grosse Carr Dales 15 ac. The West Carr butting at north on Farbie Carre and south on Walbutt Bekk lying betwixt Kirkholme at east and the Woodhouse at west wherein is conteyned one parcell of medowe called Kettlefal Hill perfectlie knowen as the Lo medowe ther which belongyth the parson of the Towne of Thornton in consideracon of the tyth hay of all the Lo comon meadowes ther and landes under which sd parcell of medowe called Kettlefal Hill conteyneth 4 ac. $2\frac{1}{2}$ r. 11 p. And over and besydes the sd Kettlefal Hill the West Carr conteyneth 140 ac. 3 r. 9 p.

The medowe called Logarth Side betwixt the Furbye at north and Furbye Carr at south The Furbye Carr butting north on the West Arrable Feild and south on the West Carre conteyning 50 ac.

Meadowe called Woodhead 11 ac. 1 r. The Eastings south of the East Arrable Feild ($3\frac{1}{2}$ ac. belongyng to the parson of Thornton) measure besides 42 ac. 18 p. Odd Land Inge south of the East inges 2 ac. 3 r. 15 p. the first croppe belongyng to the Erle of Rutlande and the etage to the Lo. of the Mannor

Brigge Ockes south of the West Feild 2 ac. $1\frac{1}{2}$ r.

Thirthorne Side south of Brigge lande endes 3 ac.

Dallicarr Seaves south of Dallicarr and north of Westcarr 4 ac.

Pasture called Eller Carr and Dry Carr at the west ende of the West Arrable Feild abutting on the sewer called Fosse on the west and on Woodhead at east for the tenants of Thornton and Millnhouses have each in like portion of pasture according to ther tenures 98 ac. 1 r.

Divers tenants of Thornton hold in the East and West Arrable Feilds 20 butts or riggs rented at 2d. per butt which were concealed before the last survey

John Dyneley gent. holdeth the water corn mill of Thornton and aparcell of grounde adioyning conteyning 2 ac. for £4.

The tenants of Thornton and Millnhouses pay for Turbary and Moore leave on the comon of Thornton 10s."

(d) Sundry Outliers

At various times - certainly as early as 1577 and as late as 1620 - the Percies owned tenanted property in other villages which were thus connected with Wressel lordship as the nearest important Percy estate.

These were:-

- (1) Brighton - the next village north of Wressel, where from 1536 to 1602 some 64 acres of all types of land, a dwelling house and outbuildings were held by a tenant for £3 13s. 4d. per year.
- (2) Asselby - the next village south of Newsholme, where one tenant held for £1 13s. 4d. a dwelling house "near to the chapel of Asselby", and 36 ac. 3 r. 20 p. in the common fields, plus 3 ac. 3 r. of meadow "some of which had been arrable" before 1577. This land was situated close to the old bed of the River Derwent, now almost dry save in times of exceptionally serious flooding.
- (3) Barmby on the Marsh - the next village to the west of Asselby, where one tenant held half an oxgang of land for 3s. 4d.
- (4) Goole - a dwelling house and 20 ac. of land of all types held by one tenant for 20s.
- (5) Snaith, Cowick and Pollington - where one tenant held 24 acres of land of all types for 22s.10d.
- (6) South Cliff, North Cliff, Newbald and Walkington - where several tenants held mixed lands in several townships

for 28s. 2d. per year. In the case of these four townships it seems strange that Wressel rather than Leconfield was chosen as their administrative centre, as all are within easy reach of Beverley.

Over all these areas and their occupants the Earl had privileges described in the 1577 Survey as follows:-

"The sd Erle and all other his auncestorshave had as in his or ther owen ryghte....keeping of courts leets courts baron and threeweeks courts And also ...wayfes estraies felones goodes the goodes of persons outlawed and put in exigent All penalties and forfeitures by reason of woundes made bloodshed or weapon drawn contrary to the Quenes Maiesties peace And all other profits incident by reason of the leet."

WRESSEL

Section 3

Changes in Size of Tenant Population

The Lordship of Wressel - Changes in Tenant Population

Township	1473		1536		1562		1577		1586		1589		1597		1599		1602		1619		1620		1636	
	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W	F	W
Wressel	8	33	12	24	13	27	8	25	29	29	27	8	27	4	29	4	32	4	31	4	31	4	31	
Loftsome	-	-	-	5	-	6	1	7	7	7	7	6	1	5	5	12	5	11	1	7				
Newsholme	-	-	-	20	-	24	8	20	24	24	-	26	4	4	-	29	-	29	4	4				
Brend	-	-	-	12	-	10	4	13	13	13	-	15	3	4	4	4	4	4	3					
Gribthorpe	-	-	-	7	-	7	-	7	8	8	5	6	-	5	-	6	-	7	-	11				
Thornton	-	-	-	46	-	43	-	49	49	49	53	53	51	57	58	51								
Outliers:																								
Brighton																								
N.&S.Cliff																								
Newbald																								
Goole																								
Walkington	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	10	9	9	7	26	8	25	6	26	5	26	5	22	6			
Cowick																								
Snaithe																								
Asselby																								
Barmby																								
Pollington																								
TOTALS	8	33	12	116	13	117	21	131	20	139	20	139	-	140	37	139	38	136	39	156	39	156	34	148

Note:- F = Free tenants; W = Tenants at Will.

Figures are extracted from Tenants' Lists at Michaelmas Courts or from detailed surveys.

47.

The population of the territorial area so far described is shown in the accompanying table.¹

An inspection of the names of tenants in the villages, excluding those fragments grouped under the heading "Outliers", reveals little conclusive information. Unfortunately there are few complete lists of tenants, and from this small number those for 1536 (the earliest), 1577 and 1620 were selected for purposes of comparison.

Taking the six townships or hamlets en bloc, 186 different surnames were recorded, though some counted as variants are probably the same name spelt differently at the whim of the clerk - e.g. Ebotson and Ibbotson; Wilby and Welby; Wilbert and Wilburgh.

Apart from surnames of vocational or occupational type, as Walker, Cooper, Vynter and Slater, there are a few showing locality significance, as Armitt, Bilburgh, Bromflete, Eskrick, Gowle, Gunbie, Hotham, Harwod; whilst other names in this class have a further association with places in Percy ownership - Pocklington, Gowle, Spoford, Stainburne, Underwood, Wilberfosse. This might imply a certain fluidity of movement of tenants between different Percy estates.

Of the 116 families of 1536, 60 still persisted in 1577 and 40 in 1620. But these "persistence percentages" of 51.7% and 34.5% cannot be taken per se to indicate change of tenure through purely economic causes. The

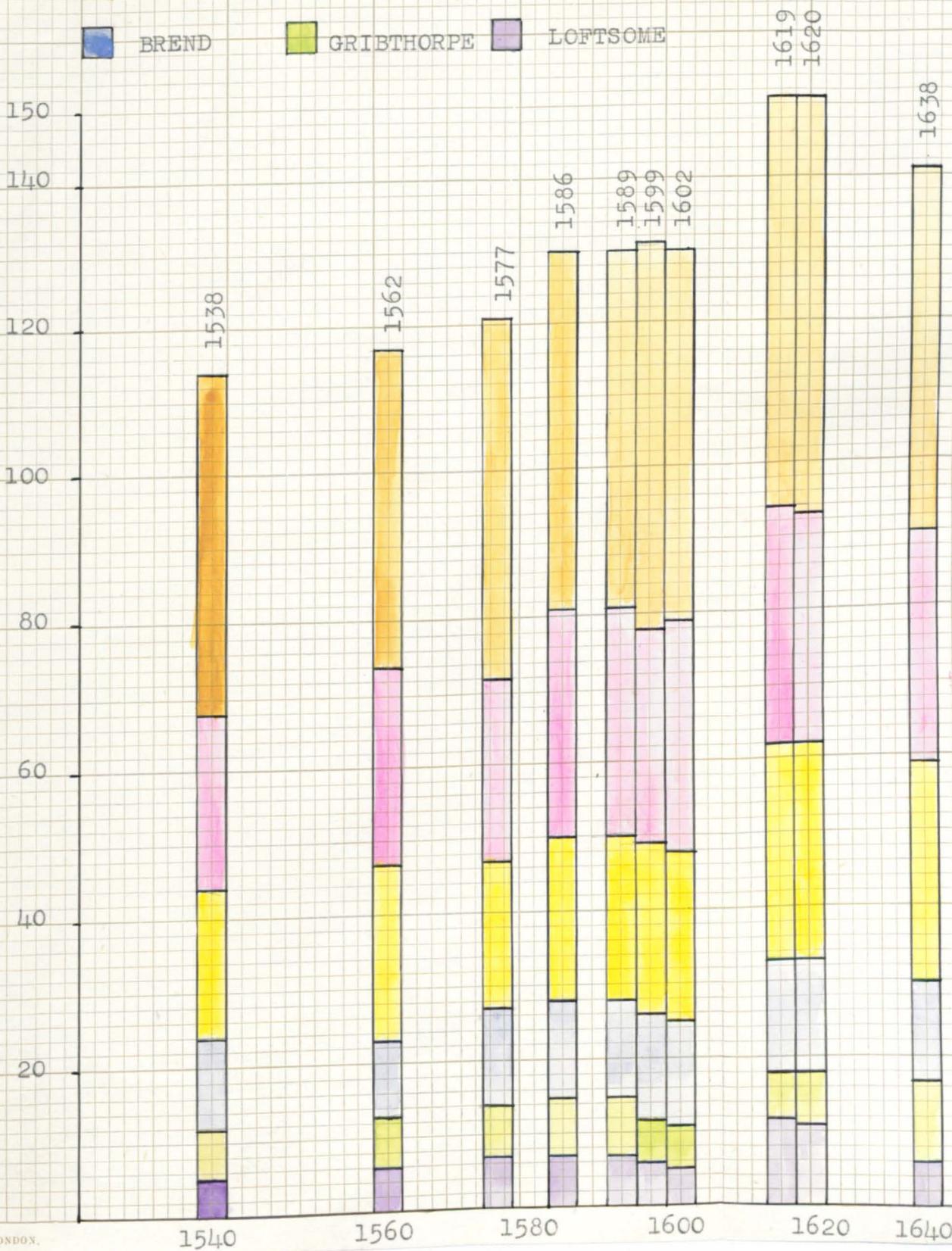
1 See table 1 (page 47)

disappearance, in 40 years of almost half the tenants who were recorded in 1536 seems remarkable until one notices the considerable number of tenants who held "iure uxoris" in 1577. This frequent transfer of property on the distaff side may perhaps indicate the extent to which the Pilgrimage of Grace and the Rising of the Northern Earls had affected the district in their reduction of the male tenants.

The comparative insecurity of this first forty-year period contrasts markedly with the more settled circumstances of the period 1577-1620 indicated by the 66% persistence based on the figures of 1577. A further 60 of the 1577 total of 119 names still recurred in 1620 - the comparative stability in numbers perhaps reflecting the absence of the owner - and therefore of political crises - from his Yorkshire estates during about half that period - i.e. 1585 - 1605, when the estates were administered by officials in a business-like way, and many leases were contracted, on the evidence of marginal notes in the 1577 Survey which was used apparently - at any rate until 1602 - as a basis for further cadastral records.

The conclusion is that fundamentally there was a small core of tenants whose residence persisted throughout the eighty-six years, and that it was political rather than economic or agrarian factors which removed, by 1620, two out of every three of those families who were tenants in 1536. This statement must be qualified by the indeterminate

FLUCTUATIONS OF TENANT POPULATION 1538-1638 GRAPH 1



factor of tenant succession by marriage with daughter or widow of an earlier tenant - almost the "curtesie d'Angleterre" which is referred to in one case.¹

The graphs prepared to show the fluctuation of tenant population in the different members of the lordship have some defects and cannot be regarded as fully reliable.² The figures on which they are based are too few in number and too irregularly spaced, whilst in several cases the township tenant returns are expressed in combined form. When this has occurred it has been presumed that the smaller hamlet of the pair - which has often shown previously an increase in tenant population - has suffered the decline. There has been no reason to do this beyond the necessary adoption of the same procedure in all such cases. If the reverse practice were followed, it could be that in truth Wressel and Newsholme, instead of remaining stable as is implied by the graphs, shared in the slight decline manifested by all other members of the lordship except Gribthorpe.

From the available figures one can conclude (a) that between 1536 and 1562 there was a general slight rise in tenant population throughout the lordship, though this was not shared by Thornton, Brend or Gribthorpe; (b) during the next 25 years the rise became more marked, the overall number of tenants increasing from 117 to 139, though Wressel and Newsholme both declined; (c) at the

1 Pet.MSS.MCR.D.4.4.No.4 April 1609.

2 Facing this page.

beginning of the 17th century, after a decade when numbers remained steady, Thornton and Loftsome showed a decrease of tenants, a fact which could perhaps be linked with a recurrence of the plague so disastrous to York and district in the period 1600-1606; (d) a further marked rise between 1602 and 1620 was followed by a general slight recession of 5% during 1620 - 1636. There seems to be no possibility, however, of linking these tenant-population figures and changes with figures representing true population.

WRESSEL

Section 4

Wressel Castle and Gardens

Wressel Castle enjoys the distinction of being the only surviving example of a fortified structure in the East Riding.

Originally a four-square building with five towers, three of which were on the East Front, all the Castle save the south front and an isolated fragment of the northern range has now disappeared. The existing remains are comparatively well preserved, thanks largely to the soundness of the original construction which a disastrous fire and almost uninterrupted neglect for a century and a half have failed to destroy.¹

In spite of the assertion in most existing accounts that the castle was built towards the end of the 14th century, it seems worth while quoting a hitherto unprinted statement from the official survey held at Wressel on 2nd September, 1613:- "It (the Castle) was sometymes the possessyoun of the Honorable Thomas Percy Bishop of Norwich who builded the Castle ther about the year of Our Lord 1331 in the tyme of King Edward the third and after gave the said castle and Manor to his nephew Thomas Percy then Erle of Worcester".²

This assertion could be true if one judges by the circumstantial nature of the account, which it would be hardly fair to discount as springing from the surveyors'

1 For views of existing remains see folder "Photographs - Topcliffe and Wressel".

2 Pet.MS. Folio Survey of Wressel 1613. See folder "Maps, Plans & MSS." p.24.

imagination without evidence of inaccuracy in the remainder of their findings. Moreover there is no information in the printed sources which would contradict this addition of half a century to the presumed age of the building. There are certain broad similarities between the remains at Wressel and Spofforth, especially in the size and proportions of the embrasures of the great windows. The licence for the crenellation of Spofforth was granted in 1308 though it seems unlikely that it was implemented until after the composure of the Scottish troubles of the time. Speculation regarding the original size, shape and content of the castle is unnecessary as, with great good fortune, there exist two sets of plans, one of which - bound along with a plan of the precincts and a curious 'Upright' of the Castle - is dated 1602.¹

These plans form an admirable supplement to the already full account of Leland.

Whilst the plans drawn to larger scale give detailed information of apartment size and use, the smaller-scale set confines itself to the main building and to naming the apartments. In spaciousness and stateliness the Wressel mansion made possible the maintenance on an appropriately magnificent scale of the huge household detailed by Bishop Percy. In comparison the manor house at Leconfield must

1 These were found by the writer amongst the MSS. of the Sussex estates at Petworth House in 1937, and tracings were made. Since then the plans have been reproduced photostatically by the P.R.O. in 1946. See folder - "Maps Plans and MSS." Set B.

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have been able to accommodate only a part of the large company when the household moved with the lord's progress through his Yorkshire estates. It must be remembered, however, that the site of Leconfield manor house was considerably larger than that of Wressel Castle, though its buildings were less durable and commodious.

At this stage it is interesting to compare the following extracts from descriptions of the castle. The first is that of Leland:-

"...Yet is the ground, that the Castelle of Wresehil standith on, sumwhat high yn respect of the very lough Ground thereabout.

Most Part of the Basse Court of the Castelle of Wresehil, is all of Tymbre.

The Castelle it self is moted about on 3 Partes. The 4 Parte is dry where the entre is ynto the Castelle.

The Castelle is al of very fair and greate squarid Stone, both withyn and withowte; whereof (as sum hold opinion) much was brought owt of France.

In the Castelle be only 5 Towers, One at each corner almost of like beggeness. The Gate House is the 5, having fyve Lougginges yn high. 3 of the other Towers have 4 Highes in Lougginges; The 4 conteineth the Bottery, Pantery, Pastery, Lardery and Kechyn.

The Haule and the Great Chambers be fair; and so is the Chappell, and the Clossettes.

To conclude, the House is one of the most propre beyond Trente, and seemeth as newly made; yet was it made by a youngger Brother of the Percys, Erle of Wiccester, that was yn high favor with Richard the Secunde, and bought the Maner of Wresehil, mountting at that tyme little above 30 li. by the yere; and for lak of Heires of hym, and by the favour of the King, it cam to the Erles of Northumbreland.

The Basse Courte is of a newer Building.

And the last Erle of Northumbreland saving one, made the Brew-House of the Stone without the Castle Waulle, but hard joyning to the Kechyn of it.

One thing I likid exceedingly yn one of the Towers, that was a study, caullid Paradise; wher was a closet in the midle, of 8 squares latished aboute, and at the Toppe of every square was a Desk ledgid to set Bookes on Cofers withyn them, and these semid as yoinid hard to the Toppe of the Closet; and yet by pulling, one or al wold cum downe briste highe in rabettes, and serve for Deskes to lay Bokes on.

The Gard-Robe yn the Castelle was exceedingly fair. And so wer the Gardeins withyn the mote and the Orchardes without. And yn the Orchardes were Mountes Opere topiario, writen about with degrees like Turninges of Cockelshilles, to cum to the Top without payn.

The ryver of Darwent rennith almost hard by the Castelle; and aboute a mile lower goith ynto Owse. This

Ryver at greate Raynes ragith and overflowith much of the Ground there aboute, beyng low Medowes.

There is a Parke hard by the Castelle."¹

A Royal Surveyor in 1537 reported as follows:-

"The Castle of Wressle ys a righte fayer and plesaunte Castell strongelye buyldid alle of frestone and coverd wt lede and the highte therof caste outwarde inuyroned wt a mote al excepte the fore Frunte and ys in veray good state of Repacon having therin a fayre large halle wt a greate chambre and dnyng chambre and many other fayer chambres curyously selyd with Righte goodelye portalls and chymneys in eu'y of thim And almaner of howses of offyce corespondent to the same porcyoned like a quadrante wt a Gaithouse Towre in the fore frunte of the same of 5 storyes highe and at eu'y corner a Squar Towre of 4 Storyes highe wt a fayer Garden verey well kepte and at the end of ye sd garden a propre banketyng howse havynge a bayne therin And ther ys also within the sd Castell a Chaunterye of an old foundacon and a chaunterye prest syngyng in the same which hathe for his salarye 6 li. 13s. 4d. by the yere wherof are lands and tenements to the yerely value of 5 li. 6s. 8d. and oute of the lordes cofers 26s. 8d. And William Babthorpe and Roberte hys son nowe occupye the offyce of Constableshipp of the sd Castell by lres patentes of the sd late Erle for terme of ther lyffs."²

1 Itinerary f. 60.

2 P.R.O. Min.Acc. SC 11/959 1537.

Thirty years later, in 1570, Humberston wrote as follows:-

"...(the Castle of Wressel) ys a very bewtyfull howse buylded aboute a squar courte all of stone and covered wt leade ...The gardens aboute the Castell very well planted with arbors and open walkes and wellkepte and preserved; and wyll soe contynue if the pore man may have his stipend allowed which ys yerely 4 li. 7s. 4d. for 3 large gardeynes And the sd Castell ys in good repayre and ys not like to decaye onles yt be for want of good oversyght the buylding ys soe strong."¹

In contrast, the Survey of 1577 records the following:-

"The Manor House at Wressle ys a Castle builded verie substantiallie and in good and comelie order with free stone and covered throughout with leade It is almost full quadrant The greatest squar wherof on the outside conteyneth 55 yeardes Howbeit the sd howse ys nowe in great decaye both in tymber and leade The sd Castell ys compassed with a mote on all sydes save on the Est side before which lyeth the base courte and in the sd squar is allso the inner gate which leadeth into the sd Castell within which sd mote ther is a garden an orchard and a Bathing house scituate upon the sd moate now in verie great decaye All the grounde within the compass of the sd moate (besydes the scite of the Castell) conteyneth by estimacon 1½ acres Ther is also

1 Survey f. 260 (Y.A.J. XVII p.143)

scituate in the Est side of the base courte aforesd fast by the utter gate one howse of tymber for stables and garners covered with sclate and now in convenient repare And in the north side of the sd Courte neare unto the sd Stable ys a Barne covered with strawe and now also in convenient repare Ther ys an orchard and a garden with certen allies for bowling and walking in the same which lyeth in the south side of the sd Castell and courte and without the sd mote which hath bene compassed and enclosed with a brikke wall nowe utterlie decayed In which sd garden ther standith a house called the Scoole Howse which hath ben verie handsomelie buyldid but nowe in gret decaie And betwixt the garden within the mote and the aforesd garden ther hath ben of late yeres a bridge of tymber over the sd mote verie well placed for conveyance and passage betwen the sd gardens which ys nowe utterlie decayed and fallen doune into the watter And also within the sd utter garden ther are certen ponds for fishe used for plesure".¹

The very different conditions contrasted in the last two extracts indicate the effect caused by the reversion of the lordship to the Crown in 1572 and the subsequent neglect until it returned to the Percies in 1576. The extent of this neglect may be judged by the entry in the Visitation of 1575. "They have had no sermon these X yeres. Exile beneficium."²

1 Pet.MSS.1577 Survey.

2 Tudor Parish Documents of the Diocese of York.
J. S. Purvis p.139.

It seems likely that this rather melancholy state of affairs continued through the next thirty years, partly perhaps as a result of the evil political fortunes of the Percies.

The last available manuscript description of the property exists in the Percy Survey of 1613 which follows closely the wording of the Survey of 1577.

"The Manor House of Wressle is a Castle builded very substantially with free stone and covered throughout with lead It is almost full quadrant and now in very good repayre. It hath bene compassed with a mote on all sides saving the East side before which lyeth the base courte Between which mote and the Castle there hath bene an orchard and garden but now both utterly decayed saveing a small parcell reserved by the keeper of the Castle for his use And upon the Mote was scituated a Bathing Howse but nowe likewise utterly ruined On the East side of the Base Courte adioyninge to the Utter gate is scituated a house builded of Timber for Stables and garners covered with sclate and nowe in good repayre On the north side of the same Courte neere unto the Stables is scituate a large Barne covered withe strawe now also in good repayre There hath beene an orchard and garden on the south side of the Castle without the Mote enclosed with a Brickwall and within the said garden a house called the Schoolhouse but now all decayed There is nowe standing a convenient wooden bridge over the

said Mote betwene the places where the orchards and gardens within the Mote and they without were and the said bridge is kept in reasonable good repayre".

Although the Castle must have played an important part in the life of the community of Wressel lordship, there are surprisingly few references to it - none at all in the Court Rolls and only a dozen in the surviving Account Rolls. The bulk of the information available is thus to be found in the Crown and Percy Surveys already quoted, the two sets of plans and the Northumberland Household Book.

The information from the plans is tabulated overleaf in a form which is more easily understandable than the original.

South West Tower (existing)

3rd Floor } 2nd Floor } 1st Floor	Lord's Lodging Lord's Chamber	40' x 23'
Grd. Floor	High Buttery	40' x 23' x 21' high, with a 'trust' window 39' x 24'

South Range (existing)

2nd Floor	Dining Chamber	44' x 24' x 28' high.
1st Floor	Nether Chapel	
Grd. Floor	Nursery	86' x 23'

South East Tower (existing)

3rd Floor	My Lady's Chamber	21' x 21' x 10' high
2nd Floor	Paradise	
1st Floor	High Chapel	24' x 24' (clerestory 22' high)

South East Range

1st Floor	Stores and Passages	
Grd. Floor	Plumber's Room	17' x 37'

Gatehouse Tower (69' high including battlements)

4th Floor	Leads with turret stair and a lion on the turret.	
3rd Floor	Chamber	16' x 18'
2nd Floor	Barbican	
1st Floor	Portcullis Room	41' x 12'
Grd. Floor	Inner Gateway	34' x 7' x 12'

North East Range

1st Floor	Lodging	36' x 18'
Grd. Floor	Porter's Lodge	13' x 10'

North East Tower (60' high including battlements)

3rd Floor } 2nd Floor } 1st Floor Grd. Floor	Constable's Chamber Lodgings Turfhouse	23' x 24' x 12' high
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North Range

1st Floor	Percy Chamber, two Lodgings, Cook's Lodging.	
Grd. Floor	Wardrobes, Brewer's Chamber, Tanning House, Brewhouse (22' x 27') Bakehouse (18' x 16')	

North West Tower (60' high including battlements)

1st Floor	Kitchen 36' x 20' with clerestory 33' high.	
2nd Floor	Kitchen Cellar (10'6" x 37') Wine Cellar (10'6" x 37')	

West Range

1st Floor	Pastery, Buttery, Great Hall (67' x 33' x 24' high)
Grd. Floor	Beer Cellar, Stores, Outcellar, Bedding Wardrobe, the whole range 86' x 32' x 12' high.

Access to the Great Hall in the West Range was gained by an outside stairway rising northwards parallel with the wall. Under the landing was the entry to the storehouses and vaulted undercroft with its stone pillars. The spring of the arch over this entrance is still to be seen on the front of the bakehouse fragment.¹

The Chapel also was entered by an outer stair rising westwards on the north wall of the south range.

At some distance from the main block were the Bayne or Bathing House within the south west angle of the moat, whilst the Laundry was sited immediately across the moat from the Bayne.

Two more buildings, outer-gatehouse-cum-stable and a barn, adjoined the brick wall surrounding the base court on the east side of the Castle.

The School House in the south garden, mentioned in both Surveys, was quoted amongst the decayed rents of 1472 when its old rent was 1s. 6d. It is possible that this was the "Howse in the Gardynge" in which the "Counsell of Aristotell" was inscribed.

¹ See photograph No. 14.

So large a structure as the Castle required constant and considerable expenditure on repairs and maintenance if the quasi-royal standards of magnificence and comfort were to be preserved. The expenses for repairs appear regularly in the Ministers' Accounts, and between 1538 and 1542 totalled £31 2s. -d. Though the usual formula is no more revealing than "carpentry and leadwork on the towers and buildings", an indication of the usual extent of such repairs can be gauged from one account containing any degree of detailed workmanship and materials. This was in 1541 when there was paid to "George Browne, brecklayr", and two labourers for work on the brick wall on the west of the old garden, the cost of four chalders of slaked lime, (calcis adusti), cartage and the wages of William Fysher, plumber and the cost of buying "sowder" to repair the leads of the Castle" £3 6s.10d.¹ The constant need of repair is also shown by the existence of the Plumber's Room shown on the plan to the south of the Gatehouse Tower.

Further evidence of the essential outlay on repair work is afforded by the account of 1579, when no less than £18 8s. -d. was thus spent - a total made up of the following items:- Carpenters' wages 49/4; carriage of timber 2/4; tilers' wages 5/4; thatchers' wages 5/10; door boards 14/2; ridge tiles 9/-; nails 1/10; plaster 14/-; one fother of lead £7 6s. 8d.; carriage of the lead 13/4; plumbers' wages 40/-; 86 lbs. of solder 43/8; resin 1/-.² The final

1 Pro.Min.Acc.No.4290 32/33 H.VIII

2 Pet.MS.MAC.D.9.22 21 Eliz. 64.

item to complete the total was 21/6 for a new boat which was necessary both for easy communication across the moats and for the regular moat-cleaning operations which took place annually and required twelve days at 1s. 8d. per day. This was apparently the normal duty of the Keeper of the Castle whose yearly fee for that office was a further 20s.

The more lucrative and perhaps less exacting office of Constable and Steward carried the fee of £10 and was thus the subject of many grants, though from 1537 until at least 1542 it was held by Sir William Babthorpe and later by his son Robert.¹

There is only one mention of the porter - in 1472 - when John Vaugh held this position for 2d. per day.² Perhaps the duties were combined with those of some other officer, although the porter is included in the lengthy list of officers essential to the establishment - "a porter to keep my lordes Gaites".³

Originally there were two gardens, one between the Castle and the moat, and the other, known as the Old Garden, to the south of and beyond the moat. The latter was enclosed by a brick wall and contained two ponds for fishing, fruit trees, grass-covered alleys "for bowling and walking" and Leland's "opere topiario" and "Mountes writhen about with Degrees".⁴ In this Old Garden was the School House,

1 PRO SC 6.4283 - 4291

2 Pet.MAC.D.3.12.

3 NHB.p.295.

4 It seems possible that Leland was confusing Wressel with Topcliffe, where Maiden Bower answers this description.

access being gained to it, and no doubt to the Laundry too, by the "bridge of timber" which though "utterly ruined and fallen into the Watter" in 1577, was reported in good repair in 1613.¹

These two gardens were kept in good order by one gardener - John Smeaton in 1472 - for a yearly fee of £3 -s. 8d.² His duties were defined as follows:- "Item. A Gardynner who attendis hourelly in the Garden for setting of Erbis and Clipping of Knottes and Sweping the said Garden hourelly."³

At some time between 1472 and 1517 a third garden was added - the new garden - on the north side of the Castle, in area almost equal to that of the Castle enclosure. This new garden was surrounded by a thorn hedge and a separate moat. There is no clear indication as to its use, nor is any special entrance shown on the various plans. It was enclosed from the Little Park and its special gardener received a fee of 26s. 8d. per year. The "keeper of the New Garden" was first mentioned in the account roll for 1517,⁴ and the recurrence of his name is the sole means of dating the otherwise undated account roll⁵ as between 1518 and 1523, a new name occurring in the latter year. The two keepers of the three gardens were

1 Pet.MS.1613 Survey

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV

By 1577 his fee was £3 (Pet.MS.1577 Survey)

3 NHB.p.316.

4 Pet.MS.D.9.13 8/9 Hen.VIII.

5 Pet.MS.D.9.20.

still mentioned in 1542,¹ but by 1575 the New Garden was omitted and only the fee for the two earlier gardens included.² The presence of the new garden on the village plan dated 1602 may thus be explained by the surveyor's wish to mark a site rather than what was now no longer a reality. An indication of a possible use to which this problematical enclosure was put may be gained from the item: "Money paid by John Emerson (the bailiff) for two quarters of beans bought to feed 31 peacocks in the Park, at 3/- per quarter", and from a similar entry six years later.³

By 1613 the gardens were abandoned except for a part which was "reserved by the Keeper of the Castle for his own use".⁴ This was probably the same small plot to the south of the Castle inside the moat which is shown as still cultivated at the end of the 18th century,⁵ and to-day is a rather neglected orchard and pasture for poultry and cattle.

When in 1630 the tenth Earl visited his northern estates Wressel Castle was stated to be in good repair - the one Percy Yorkshire residence in that condition. The rest had long been neglected, as the ninth Earl had remarked: "I came to be an Earl of Northumbreland soe well lefte for moveables as I was not worth a fyer shovel or a

1 PRO.SC.6.4291.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.19 16/17 Eliz.

3 Pet.MS.D.9.13 and D.9.14.

4 Pet.MS.1613 Survey

5 See illustration in folder.

payre of tongues".¹

On the outbreak of the Civil War the Castle was garrisoned by Parliamentary troops in the eventually successful moves to secure Hull from the offensive of the Marquis of Newcastle. The garrison commander, Captain Goodrick, stalwartly rejected a summons from Sir Hugh Cholmley to quit Wressel Castle or declare his allegiance to the Crown.² With the failure of the Royalist attempt on the East Riding, Wressel Castle appears to have continued as a minor centre of Parliamentary influence. The joint commanders of the garrison in 1644, Thomas Hatcher and Robert Goodwin took it upon themselves to send a clear report to Parliament of the result of Marston Moor.³ Discouraged Royalists submitted to the Governor of the Castle, Major Fenwick, in 1645,⁴ and took the Covenant, a process which continued into 1646.⁵

By this time the tenth Earl had suffered severely, even though he was a prominent supporter of the popular cause. "The damage he sustained there (Wressel) by his own party before Michaelmas 1646 was judged to amount to a Thousand Pounds, in the destruction of his Buildings Leads Outhouses etc. by the Garrison; their havock of his woods

1 AHP.II p.189.

2 CSP.D.June 1643 p.753.

3 CSP.D.July 1644

4 Cal. of Committee for Compounding p.1143

5 do. 1446

Enclosures etc. without including the losses he had sustained in the Non-Payment of his Rents, in consequence of the Contributions levied on his Tenants".¹

The imminence of the Second Civil War led to the precautionary measure, in May 1648, of garrisoning the Castle under the command of Major Charles Fenwick. The Royalist capture of Pontefract, and its siege protracted until March, 1649, persuaded Parliament of the advisability of rendering northern fortresses untenable for military purposes.

Orders were sent to commence the demolition of Wressel Castle, the expenses of which were to be paid out of the sale of the materials thus gained.² The decision to leave only the south front is contained in a letter quoted by Bishop Percy, and is signed by Major Fenwick.⁴ This demolition was ordered to be complete by 17th May, 1650.³

So for close on 150 years the remaining fragment of the Castle continued in use as a farm house. Lady Elizabeth Smithson, daughter of the Earl and Countess of Somerset, visited the Castle of her Percy ancestors about the middle of the 18th century. In a letter which was written to her mother at some date prior to 1754 (the year of the Countess's

1 NHB.p.438.

2 CSP.Dom. Aug. 7th, 1649.

3 do. Aug.14th, 1649.

4 Bishop Percy also quotes other correspondence on the subject.

death) there appears the following account:-

"We have been a long voyage this morning to Wressle Castle by water. The outside of the building is in general very entire. It is situate about two hundred yards from the River Derwent and seems to have been a very fine place. The tenant who inhabits it with his family lives in the offices below which have the Percy, Lucy, Brabant and Poynings arms stained in some of the windows: and all the ceilings are ornamented. From thence you ascend into a little room which has abundance of odd carving about and which leads into the hall. This is a very large and lofty room. The ceiling is carved and from thence about two feet deep a line of coats of arms and other decorations, painted, carved and gilt go quite round the room.² At each corner are some things in a sort of semi-circular shape which project into the room: they reach from the floor to the top and are made of carved oak, and within each of them is a little staircase. There is also a very small and very ordinary chapel in which there is nothing remarkable but Hotspur's motto Esperance, which is to be seen on that ceiling and, indeed, all over the Castle. There are two other large rooms still entire, finished in the same taste as the hall, but not so richly. From the leads there is a fine view over the adjacent country which is well wooded, and the river."¹

1 AHP.II p.522-3.

2 Details of the heraldry are to be found in a MS. book in the possession of the Yorks.Arch. Society, as reported by C. V. Collins in Y.A.S. XXII p.187-8.

Bishop Percy, writing about 1770 described the Castle:-
"...the whole South Front, which was the most considerable, and contained some of the principal State-Rooms, still remains, and is very magnificent. It is flanked by two large square Towers; and these again are mounted by circular turrets of a smaller size; on the top of one of these turrets is still preserved the Iron Pan of the Beacon, anciently used to alarm the country.

The whole Building, which is of the finest masonry, still contains the Great Chamber or Dining-Room, the Drawing-Chamber, and the Chapel, besides many of the inferior Apartments. In all these the finishing and ornaments seem to be left nearly in the same state that they were in the time of this Household Book. The Cielings still appear richly carved, and the sides of the Rooms are ornamented with a great profusion of ancient Sculpture finely executed in wood, exhibiting the ancient Bearings, Crests, Badges and Devises of the Percy Family, in a great variety of forms, set off with all the advantages of Painting, Gilding and Imagery. In the two principal Chambers are small beautiful Staircases of very singular contrivance with octagon Screens, inbattled at the top, and covered with very bold sculpture, containing double flights of Stairs, winding round each other, after the design of Paladio.

The Chapel appears to have been fitted up in a ruder style and at a more early period than the other apartments.

In this the sculptured Badges &c. are still tolerably entire, and some of the painted glass unbroken. The Cieling is inscribed with the following Motto Esperance en Dieu ma Comforte. The Chapel is now used instead of the Parish-Church, which was situate about a bow-shot from the Castle. Of this one ruined end-wall only remains, in which at present hang two bells. The Pulpit now stands as on a pedestal, upon the great stone Altar of the Chapel, and the Communion is administered at a Table in the middle of the Room".¹

A late 18th century account, printed locally,² shows many similarities to that of Bishop Percy:-

³"The Dining Room is in the West Tower. This room is ornamented with a Border of carved Wood round the top, exhibiting various bearings and devices of the Percys. Over the door is a bold carving of a stag with one horn, coming out of a wood, and a man bareheaded with his quiver and buglehorn hung around him, kneeling down with his hands in a supplicating posture, as if he were praying to the stag; on his right a man holding a horse, and on his left two greyhounds, coupled; his cap is on the ground. The hearth in this room is formed of Mosaic Work and in its pristine state has had a beautiful appearance. The carvings, in pannels, on each side of the door represent; St. George and

1 NHB.p.442-3.

2 "An Historical Account of the Parish of Wressle in the E.R. of the County of York." pub. Howden N.D.BM.291.d.2.

3 Op.cit. p.51.

the Dragon: St. Catherine with her wheel, The Crescent, Bugle Horns, a man bearing a standard in one hand and a chain in the other; a large Key with a coronet above it. There is also a carved border of wood round the top of the room representing various devices of the Percys, besides several grotesque figures.

The Antechamber In a window are two escutcheons of painted glass containing the following armorial bearings:- (Described) Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, Monthermer, E. of Gloucester, Nevill Lord Raby. Jocelyn de Louvain, Lord Lucy, Herbert E. of Pembroke.

The Withdrawing Chamber This room has been very magnificent and with the antechamber occupies the space between the towers; a border about six feet deep runs round the top, beautifully carved and gilt, containing armorial bearings, crests and badges of the Percys. Over the door are the following coats (described).

The Stair Cases In the principal chamber are two beautiful small stair cases of very singular contrivance with octagonal screens, embattled at the top and covered with bold sculpture, containing double flights of stairs winding round each other, after the design of Palladio. Arms on the screens of the stair cases (described). The carved work on the pannels of the screens represents a boar chained, a lion, a lion crowned, crescents, buglehorns, helmets, a unicorn

chained with a coronet on his neck, manacles or shackles, and I.H.S. The words Esperance en Dieu ma Comforte, which the Percys used for their motto are painted and carved in several places of different rooms as well as upon these screens.

The Chapel Is in the east tower. It appears to have been fitted up in a ruder style and at a more early period than the other apartments. In this the sculptured badges are still tolerably entire and some of the painted glass on which the crescent is the prevailing figure is yet unbroken. The chapel is used instead of the parish church which was situated at a small distance from the Castle and is now in ruins. The pulpit stands as on a pedestal upon the great stone altar of the chapel and the Communion is administered at a table in the middle of the room.¹ The cieling of the orchestra is ornamented with red roses painted very coarsely and the motto Esperance en Dieu on scrolls.

The Library which is much praised by Leland was in the East Tower above the Chapel. It has been lately used as a pigeon cot, but the floor is now so bad that it is dangerous to go into it. In the window of the best room below stairs is this coat... (described).

'Tis pity but what remains of this once majestic building was kept in better repair. The timber of the roof

1 The similarity between this account and that of Bishop Percy in the appendix to the Household Book will be recognised.

between the towers is in a rotten state and excepting those of the two principal chambers, the chapel and the rooms below stairs, the floors are so bad that it is extremely dangerous to go upon them. Light and air seem to be of no value, for they are nearly totally excluded and the gloom and darkness which pervade most of the rooms serve to impress the mind of the beholder as he passes through them with a degree of solemnity and awe truly reverential. Much of the carved work, through the passage of time, has fallen down, which however might easily be replaced, as the parts are chiefly scattered about in the different rooms. The octagonal staircases that are in the principal chamber (the sculpture upon the screens of which particularly commands the attention of the curious) are in very bad repair.

On the outside, towards the north, trees are suffered to grow out of the walls, which in time will bring to the ground what the Democratical miscreants, acting by the command of Cromwell, had the grace to spare. The castle is now occupied as a farmhouse by William Richardson of Fulford, Esquire, as tenant to the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Egremont. At the distance of about two hundred yards west of the Castle runs the River Derwent which after great rains frequently overflows its banks and inundates the adjacent land; there have been instances of these inundations extending over the country in a radius of four miles and upwards.

Later evidence of the state of the building is given in an estate survey of 1797:-

"The buildings consist of an Ancient stone structure said to have been once the residence of the memorable Earl Percy and till the month of February, 1796 has been used as the DwellingHouse for the Farm, and a part of it as the Parish Church: but it is now entirely a Ruin from an accident by Fire which happened at the time before mentioned and which destroyed the whole of the inside with the Roof which is said to have been covered with Lead. The other buildings are modern Brick & Tile in good repair and contain a very small Dwelling House, Granary, Two Stables, large Barn, Cow House, Pigscots, Dove House; detached are 2 open stables, all of which are in good repair." The tenant was William Richardson who paid £149 8s. -d. rent. In 1798 the premises were let for 21 years to Stephen Marram for £244 per year.¹

The estate Survey for 1811 gave little extra detail:-

"The buildings consist of a very capital Brick and Slate Messuage in excellent repair with Stables of Brick & Tile just erected, and Coach House, two large Barns, one of Brick and Tile, the other of Brick and Thatch, a detached Stable and Pigeon Cote of Brick and Tile in good repair, and a Stable situate in the centre of the Farm of Brick and

1 Pet.MS.1797 Survey.

Tile. The Ruins of Wressel Castle are kept in great preservation by the present tenant".

The tenant was Richard Waterworth who paid £380 per year in rent. A later footnote records that his tenancy was ended on the grounds that he lived elsewhere, and it was considered that a resident tenant was essential for the well-being of the farm.¹

During the period 1649-1796 when the remaining wing of the castle had served as a farm house, the Earl's Library - the 'Paradise' of Leland's account - was used as a pigeon loft,² and the Castle Chapel as the Parish Church. Besides the rather unusual arrangement of the pulpit and communion table described by Bishop Percy, it seems clear from the Castle plans that the Earl had a special seat or pew elevated above the ordinary congregation, level with the clerestory windows and reached by a stair in the south east corner of the Dining Hall.

Even this humbler status of the Castle came to an end with the fire of 1796 when the interior of the building was gutted. The roof, smaller partition walls, and distinctive interior ornamentation were destroyed, though the outer walls and towers stood firm and apparently intact. The present uninspired and uninspiring brick parish church was

1 Pet.MS.1811 Survey.

2 Hist. of Wressle n.d. B.M. p.56-7.

built on the site of the earlier church in 1799.¹ The only reminder of the previous use of the castle chapel is a four-arch arcade erected in what was once the Nursery, embodying the head of a cross with a Crucifixion on the east face and an angel on the west.² The only other remaining fragment of decorative work is on the base of the supports for the oriel window in the south east Tower, and depicts a winged angel holding a shield whose device is too weather-worn to decipher with certainty.³

To-day the whole area presents a melancholy appearance - the inner court a poultry-yard, the interior of the ruins a wilderness of elder bushes and nettles, the wall tops sprouting with saplings and partly covered with ivy. The present tenant, whilst deeply interested and most co-operative - an attitude for which the writer expresses his great appreciation - finds preservation an expense for which there is no compensation.

There seems to be a real opportunity here for the intervention of some national body to preserve for posterity so impressive and important a link with a family which for centuries has played a prominent part in the making of national and county history.

1 See photograph No. 2
2 See photograph No.16.
3 See photograph No. 7.

WRESSEL

Section 5.

The Parks

Though in fact there were two parks at Wressel, the Little Park - adjoining the Castle on the north and east, and only about 11 acres in extent - was almost negligible. It was a Park only in the sense that it was private demesne in the Castle precincts, and seems to have been used for little more than pasture for the Earl's horses, and accommodation for the New Garden enclosure, made perhaps in the early 16th century.

At some distance to the north east - the 1577 Survey says a furlong away - lay the Great Park, estimated at 184 acres in 1577, 160 acres on the 1610 Map, and 163 acres in 1624.

The maps and plans show it to have been wooded in 1602 and 1624¹ and to have contained at its north east extremity a wood known as Vescy Wood, separated by fencing from the body of the Park. There was also a keeper's lodge, now completely destroyed, which stood roughly in the centre of the Park, which was bounded by the present Bubwith Road on the West, Fleet Dyke on the north, Fleet and Vescy arable fields on the east and the common known as Sandy Field to the south. The remains of the bank on which the pale stood can be seen still on the northern boundary, but not elsewhere with certainty.

Whilst both Parks were private enclosures for pleasure

¹ See folder "Maps, Plans and MSS."

and sport, it must be remembered that from a practical standpoint their main functions were as a larder for the storage of meat 'on the hoof', and as a realisable asset in that they could be let for grazing purposes.

Because of its small size, the Great Park was of little value from any standpoint. Though the value of its herbage was assessed at £4 in 1472, when it was reserved for the lord's use, this value decreased progressively, though the surveyors of 1556 and 1577 sought to record an optimistic estimate.

The 1556 survey was made on behalf of Queen Mary and King Philip, and included all parks in the Wapentake of Holderness which had been the late property of the Percies. "Wresell Parke The same conteynith in lengthe halfe a myle and in bredth in euery place one q^rt^r of a myle by estimacon. Itm ther ys in the same pke one spryng conteyning XX acres Itm one pcell of Grounde in the Est end of the same pke thikk sett with fayre yong okes conteyning VIII acres Itm ther ys in the same pke standyng a brode moche grett Tymbr sufficiaunt to kepe the pale Itm the pale ys gode and ther ys in the same pke LXVI fallowe deere by estimacon and by the keprs confessioun LX Itm all the reste of the Grounde ys pasture and moch of it hath ben arrable land and ys worth eu'y acre XVII^d.

Robert Rawson Thomas Wentworth"¹

1 PRO Rentals and Surveys 19/41 1-2 P.& M.

The Percy survey of 1577 is rather more detailed:-¹

"Ther ys also on the north side of the castle one parcell of ground enclosed with pale called the Litle Parke sett with some old Ocke trees which in tymes paste hath bene plenished with dere of dyvers coloures The pale wherof is now in utter decaie and no deare within the same which sd pke conteyneth by mesure 11 ac. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ r. In the sd pke ther is a plott of ground conteyning 3 r. 1 p. moted about and sett with quicksett hedge ordeyned for a garden and bankettinge places or houses of plesure and which is not in great decaye

Ther is also distant from the sd Litle Pke to the north about one furlonge one other parke called the Greate Parke conteyning 184 ac. And in circute about the pale 600 roods or theraboutes after the rate of seaven yeardes to the roode. The pale wherof by the more part is in great decaye And must be repaired of necessitie if any deere should be kept ther In which sd pke ther is a launde which hath bene kept for a frith for the deare conteyning 36 ac or theraboutes wherof 26 ac are yet enclosed with rayles and kept for that purpose Ther ys also a spring ther conteyning 51 ac. well sett (amongst other wood) with saplynges of ock which if they were weeded and the worst taken forth a great number would growe to good perfectioun

Ther is also certain olde runte ockes of small value because the lands remayning in the princes hands the best

1 This has been quoted already on pages 26-27 ante.
82.

were taken away to the great decaye of the woods Ther is also ther one holte or grove of yonge trees of good groweth and length not unmeet for the breed of heronsewes as yt semeth And ther is within the sd pke a kepers lodge covered with tyle and sclate with stables and owhouses belonging to the same and now in good repare And also of deare by viewe the number of LXII wherof IX are dere of antler and IX are whyte dere..."

Sales of wood and bark, on the other hand, proved more profitable. The 'derefall' or 'Browseing' was sold to the local tenants through the medium of fines payable by the tenantry for taking both green and dry wood, their names being presented by the foresters and parkers. Timber was procured for maintenance and repair of buildings from the oaks which seem to have been the predominant type in the district. The tops of these oaks were sold to the tenants separately for their private purposes.

So small an area would accommodate a limited number of deer. There were 50 in 1539,¹ 66 fallow deer in 1553,² and 62 in 1577.³ These modest numbers are reflected by the demand for only one buck from Wressel Park, out of the 49 requisitioned every year by the household from the Yorkshire estates.⁴

Whereas there were certain profits thus attributable to the parks, these had their compensatory expenses. The pale needed constant attention, details of its repairs appearing

1 VCH I.p.520

3 Pet.MS.1577 Survey

2 PRO.Rentals and Surveys 19/41

4 NHB.113/4 and 203/4.

regularly in such account rolls as survive. The damage to the pale was caused not only by high wind and snow,¹ but also by the attentions of tenants in search of firewood and building material.² Such expenses ran high. Labour costs for erecting the uprights and crossbars alone were usually rated at 4d. per rod for new pale, and 2d. per rod for old pale, quite exclusive of the outlay entailed by cutting, sawing and hauling the requisite timber. An account taken at random, for the year 33/34 Henry VIII³ shows the following detail:-

Paid for Repairs to the pale of the Little and Great Parks at Wressle:

Wages of Richard Bilburgh and Michael Marwood for making $4\frac{1}{2}$ rods of new pale at 4d. per rod1/6; and in wages of the aforesd. in mending $143\frac{1}{2}$ rods of old pale round the Little Park at 2d. the rod....23/11; and ... for mending two wide gates 10d.

Wages of Nicholas Saw for felling and carrying 25 loads of pale at 1d. per load, and one load from the Great Park at 2d...2/3.

Paid in wages for making 9 rods of pale in the little Park 3/- for repairing 2 rods of old pale there ..4d; for repairing 26 rods of old pale near the copse in the Great

1 PRO SC/6.4285 32/33 Hen.VIII.

2 Pet.MS.Court Rolls passim temp. Eliz.

3 PRO S/C.6.4285.

Park at 2d. the rod..4/4; for repairing round the Laund in the Great Park and the pale round Vesey Wood as by prior agreement 4/9; in wages of Richard Bilby and labourers for 2 days in roofing the Deer house 1/8; hire of 2 carts to bring the thatching straw 1/-: charged for carrying the thatch 2d. Total 43/9."

The laund or Frith or deer enclosure must be kept well fenced if deer were to be segregated from pasturing cattle and temptation removed from prowling poachers. The Parker's lodge must be maintained out of the lord's coffers. Ditches must be kept clear, both those required for land drainage and those dug at the foot of the embankment to stabilise the mound on which the pale was planted. The rate for this onerous task was 4d. per rod, casual labour being employed - often 'ad dietim' - in addition to the parker and his assistants. Rabbit warrens or 'coney clappers' in the pale bank must be stopped for reasons of security.¹

Nor were the deer self-supporting. When the supply of underwood was insufficient, green boughs were lopped, and during each winter, hay was provided to supplement their fodder. In 1472 the hay from 8½ acres of demesne meadow was reserved and delivered for the use of the deer at a cost of 12/-, besides 2/8 for the provision of 'hay hekks' or feeding stands. Less frequently occurring expenses were the purchase of oats and beans for feeding the peacocks in the Park,² and the provision of firewood or thorns for the

1 Pet.MS.D.9.13.8/9 Hen.VIII and D.9.14 14/15 Hen.VIII.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.13 and 14. 85.

burning of dead deer.¹

Such demands on the available supply of timber, especially for pale repairs which were of such frequent recurrence, must have been especially heavy - so much so that in 1523/4 a quantity had to be imported at considerable cost from Carlton Wood near Snaith and Armin, where the Percies had other property. The following extract reveals the necessary expenses:

"Allowed to William Scott, overseer of Carlton Wood

Felling 360 oaks 30/-; 100 oaks in winter 8/-: 10,100 hardwode from the tops of these trees at 4/2 per 1000 - 43/9; 4000 bundles of wood from these tops, at 5/- per thousand - 20/-; 4000 stakes at 1/3 per 1000 - 5/-; 1000 bundles calle balneware at 4d. per 1000 - 3/4; 12 'gangs' of 'spekys' at 2d. the gang - 2/-; 400 thachbrods at 1/3 per 100 - 5/-: carriage of 694 loads of palewood from Carleton Wood to the banks of the Aire, a distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile at 3/- per score loads, besides 67 loads of palewood from the same place to the Aire last year.

1 shaws of wandes growing in 5 rods of land, bought to tie up the sd bundles 4/-; more paid for delivering 5 oaks for 5 days at 6d. the day and taking them to the Aire to make a gate for Newsham Park 2/6; paid for repairs of the road

1 Pet.MS. D.9.14.

across the meadow between Carlton Wood and the Aire, for 4 days at 8d. the day .. 2/8; paid for buying 300 bundles of broom to fill in the holes in the roads at 1/8 per 100 ..5/-; paid for making each 100 loads of 400 bundles of broom..1/4; and two loads of broken brushwood for the road at 2d. the load..4d.; paid for the hire of a barn for the bark of 4 oaks felled in the wood in 14 H.VIII and to keep it till sold 3/4; paid for ferrying across the Aire at Langrikfery 72 times at 1d. per passage with horse 6/-; paid in wages to William Scott for the sale of the wood 20/-.

Total £13 16s. 4d."¹

By far the largest of the parks was at Newsholme, a lordship which - if the survey of 1613 is to be believed - was gained by the Percies about 1485 from the Marquess Berkeley in exchange for the manors of Slaugham, Sussex and Weshley, Surrey, 'for the enlardging of the sd Mannor of Wressel'.² The park measured approximately 500 acres - the 1577 survey quotes the figure as 537, whilst the 1624 map acreage totals 491.

In 1556 it was described as follows:-

'Newsome Parke late of the Earle of Northumbrelande
Ther ys in the same pke by estymacon XX ac. of pasture thyn sett with Stubbe Thornes Itm ther ys within the sd pke C tymbr tres for palyng XX tres Itm the same pke conteyneth in lengthe 3 qrs of amyle and more And in bredth in the

1 Pet.MS.D.9.14.14/15 H.VIII.

2 Pet.MS.Folio Survey 1613. p.24 of "Maps, Plans & MSS." in folder

middele one halfe myle and halfe a qrtr And at the other ende one halfe myle Itm ther ys in the same pke in mershe grounde LX ac And al the rest a bare pasture grounde and moste pte of ytt hath ben arrable grounde and ev'y acre as wel the mershe grounde as thother ys worth XVID. the acre And ther ys in the same pke V rede deere and XVIII fallowe dere Itm the pale ys clene wasted and noe tymber to pale ytt"¹

The 1577 description has been quoted above and records the complete absence of deer and the equally complete ruin of the pale.

The origin of the Parks must remain obscure. Whether they were built up from waste, pasture or arable land is uncertain. Although the royal survey of 1556 reported that much of Wressel Great Park and Newsholme Park had been at one time arable land, it is quite impossible to determine whether this represents the original or an intermediate stage of development. The close proximity of the common fields to the Park pales in both cases encourages the view that enclosure had taken place at the expense of arable land, but there is no evidence to this effect.

The herbage of Newsholme Park was worth relatively the same as that of Wressel Great Park. In 1472 Newsholme herbage was assessed at £12 14s. 9½d.,² though in 1543³

1 PRO.R & S 19/41 1-2 P.& M.

2 Pet.MS.D.9.7.11 Ed.IV.

3 PRO.SC 6/4286.

and in 1579 its value was returned at only £3 6s. 8d. on long lease to various lessees.¹

The cost of repairs was proportionately heavy - the pale figuring prominently in the expense account. The keeper's lodge was rebuilt in 1543, the bill reading:-

'Paid to Henry Smyth forester of Newsom Pke for rebuilding the Lodge in the King's Pke this year:- In wages of William Moreton carpenter for all kinds of work in the lodge containing VII rooms and XIV postes and one over-chambre £4 10s. -d.

For pulling down the old lodge and levelling the foundation 5/-; wages of Richard Bilby roofer and William Nutbrowne his labourer for roofing for 12 days at 1/2 per day 16/-; and in wages to the same for daubing the lodge wall 8/4; paid for 12 loads straw (wheat and ryestraw) for thatching 1/-; paid for 1100 findulis called latts 6/3; 5000 nails called Quenryngs - 5/10; 300 doublespykyns 1/-; 400 singlspykyns 1/-; 4 derebondes 1/4; paid for carrying 24 loads of timber 4/-; for carrying 1100 latts 6/4; for carrying 66 loads of clay 4/8. Total £7 11s. -d."²

The Household Book warrants of 1516-17 provided for the taking of two bucks and two does yearly from Newsholme Park - a demand which could be fulfilled easily since in 1539 the Park contained 72 fallow and 17 red deer.³ Yet in 1556 the total had fallen to 18 fallow and 5 red deer.⁴

1 Pet.MS.D.9.22.

2 PRO.SC 6 4286.

3 VCH I p.520

4 PRO.R.& S.1/2 P.& M.

By 1577 all the deer had gone.

The following tables are constructed from information in the account rolls, in an attempt to show to what extent the Parks at Wressel and Newsholme might be regarded as an asset. It is to be noted that in almost every case where a credit balance appears, it would be changed to a debit if the fee of the Wressel parker (£3 -s. 8d.) and of the Newsholme parker and palester (£4 11s. -d.) were included in the account.

Perhaps these considerations account for the practice generally adopted by the Percies in the early 16th century, of disparking part or all of many of their parks. The greater supply of fresh meat available as a result of increased pasture farming made the maintenance of deer parks less essential, and many of them were thus divided and freed for the far more profitable purpose of letting as closes for pastoral uses.

Wressel and Newsholme Parks - Asset or Liability ?

Date	RECEIPTS						EXPENSES							BALANCE			
	Herbage	Wood Sales	Bark Sales	Farm of Copses	Agist	Total Receipts	Pale	Gates	Gear	Ditches	Hay	Warren	Lodge Repair	Land reserved	Total spent	Balance +	-
<u>Wressel Park</u>																	
1472	80/-					80/-	-/6	2/4	2/88/-	13/-							
1517	20/-	29/3		6/8	5/-	60/11								4/6	31/-	+	49/-
1520	-	-	-	-	-	-				19/-	30/-				49/-	+	11/11
1523	20/-	578/6	76/8			675/2	15/4			26/4			-				
1541	1/-					1/-	7/4			8/4			5/8	6/8	33/-	+	642/2
1542	1/-					1/-								7/4	14/8	-	13/8
1543	1/-					1/-	39/10	-/10					3/2	7/4	51/2	-	50/2
1574	1/-					1/-	17/7	1/-						7/4	25/11	-	24/11
1579	1/-					1/-											
1608/9	53/4	133/4				200/-	23/8		19/8	18/6				24/-	86/-	-	85/-
<u>Newsholme Park</u>																	
1517	254/9 ¹ / ₂	12/-		6/8	19/9	293/2 ¹ / ₂											
1520					123/5	123/5											
1541	66/8	3/4				70/-								72/11	72/1	+	51/4
1542	66/8					66/8								20/-	20/-	+	50/-
1543	66/8					66/8							37/4		37/4	+	29/4
													151/-		151/-	-	84/4

References are as follows:-

1472 Pet.MS.D.9.7.
 1523 Pet.MS.D.9.20
 1543 PRO.SC.6.4286
 1608 Pet.MS.D.9.27.

1517 Pet.MS.D.9.12.
 1541 PRO.SC.6.4284.
 1574 Pet.MS.D.9.19.

1520 Pet.MS.D.9.13.
 1542 PRO.SC.6.4285.
 1579 Pet.MS.D.9.22.

WRESSEL

Section 6.

The Distribution and Utilisation of Land

The court rolls at Petworth are singularly uninformative on the subject of land utilisation and distribution. The earliest full account is given in the survey of 1577, which shows the following division of land into arable, meadow and pasture:-

Table 3

Township	Arable	Meadow	Pasture
	a. r. p.	a. r. p.	a. r. p.
Wressel	322 - 31	54 2 35	382 - 36
Loftsome	133 3 32	15 - -	Nil
Newsholme	118 3 20	131 - -	1,225 3 -
Brend	68 2 20	14 - -	30 2 -
Gribthorpe	483 1 -	19 - 24	193 - -
Thornton	453 - -	126 2 26	377 3 22
TOTALS	1,579 3 23	337 3 37	2,232 1 31
% of whole area	38%	8.7%	53.2%

The tables on page 95 show the amounts of arable meadow and pasture reserved as demesne, allotted to free tenants and liberated for normal husbandry.

From the point of view of availability to tenants at will, the allocation does not seem to be very generous. Yet the overall average percentages are deceptive if taken out of context. The stage was still set for an agricultural community and the allocations of arable and meadow are - taken overall - adequate. Moreover, in the demesne pasture

figures, the three parks are included; whilst the special case of Gribthorpe where the whole lordship was demesne land is more than compensated by the reverse position in Thornton where all but some 27 acres was let to tenants, though the land was really demesne. As a whole, the estate division gives the impression of being well co-ordinated to permit not only the satisfactory conditions for tenant husbandry, but also the profitable letting of demesne arable - if need be - or the letting of demesne pasture if and when it be clear that such a course was of greater advantage than reservation for Household needs or for the lord's speculation in grazing.

This is the over-all picture. But when the tenants' individual holdings are considered in detail (see page 103¹) much variation in size of tenements is visible as between township and township. A detailed list of tenants and their holdings in 1577 is shown on pages 96-101 and is a digest of the information in the survey of that year.

¹ Table 6.

Availability of Land 1577

<u>Arable</u>																	
Township	Total Area			% of Area of Township	Demesnes			Free		Tenants at Will							
	a.	r.	p.		a.	r.	p.	%	a.	r.	p.	%	a.	r.	p.	%	
Wressel	322	-	31	42	122	1	30	37.9	26	-	-	8.1	173	3	1	53.5	
Loftsome	133	3	32	89	75	3	32	56.7	nil	-	-	-	58	-	-	43.2	
Newsholme	118	3	20	8.2	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	118	3	20	100	
Brend	68	2	20	61.1	1	1	-	2	nil	-	-	-	67	1	20	98	
Gribthorpe	483	1	-	69.8	483	1	-	100	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	
Thornton	453	-	-		nil	-	-	-	11	2	20	2.6	441	1	20	97.3	
Average %								32.8				1.8				65.3	
<u>Meadow</u>																	
Wressel	54	2	35	7	33	2	20	61.1	3	-	-	5.6	18	-	15	33.3	
Loftsome	15	-	-	11	7	-	-	47.	nil	-	-	-	8	-	-	53	
Newsholme	131	-	-	8.9	93	1	-	71	nil	-	-	-	37	3	-	29	
Brend	14	-	-	12.4	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	14	-	-	100	
Gribthorpe	19	-	24	2.6	19	-	24	100	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	
Thornton	126	2	26	12.4	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	126	2	26	100	
Average %								46.5				0.9				52.5	
<u>Pasture</u>																	
Wressel	382	-	36	51	202	-	36	52.8	nil	-	-	-	180	-	-	47.2	
Loftsome					No separate figures are recorded												
Newsholme	1,225	3	-	82.6	1,225	3	-	100	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	
Brend	30	2	-	26.5	30	2	-	100	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	
Gribthorpe	193	-	-	27.6	193	-	-	100	nil	-	-	-	nil	-	-	-	
Thornton	377	3	22	39.5	nil	-	-	-	15	-	20	3.9	362	3	2	96	
Average %								70.5				.78				28.6	
Overall average %								49.9				1.16				48.8	

95.

Table 4

Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey)

Tenant	Cottage	Messuage	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (Cow) House	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Close or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises			Total Area			Rent																				
											a.r.	p.		a.r.	p.		a.r.	p.	£	s.	d.																
WRESSEL																																					
Hugh Ockes		1	1			1			2	2	1	-	-	24	-	36	2	2	10	27	3	6	1	8	-												
Walter Patenson		1	1			1				1	-	2	10	13	2	30	1	-	10	15	1	10	-	16	-												
William Morgan		1	1			1					6	-	1	50	1	30	4	1	-	60	2	31	2	10	6												
Stephen Marwoode		1	1								2	-	34	25	-	-	1	2	10	28	3	4	1	6	-												
William Pocklington		1	1			1	& toft		3		-	3	30	23	1	23	2	2	15	26	3	30	1	4	-												
John Binnes		1	1				a land			1	-	3	1	21	3	30	2	2	10	25	1	1	1	4	2												
John Allenbie	1									1	-	2	2							-	2	2	-	6	8												
Margaret Smith	1					1				1	-	1	5	-	1	20	-	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	6												
Christabel Bastian (vid)	1					1	a toft		1	1	-	2	15							1	-	25	-	4	6												
William Thomson	1									1	-	1	14							-	2	15	-	5	8												
Henry Beilbye	1									1	-	1	10							-	1	14	-	2	2												
Matthew Huchenson	1									1	-	1	10							-	1	10	-	5	5												
Henry Nawton	1					1				1	-	1	18							-	1	18	-	5	5												
John Northbie	1									1	-	1	15							-	1	15	-	4	1												
Richard Harrison	1									1	-	1	25							-	1	25	-	3	6												
Gervis Fowler	1					1				1	-	1	-							-	1	-	-	5	3												
Richard Barton	1									1	-	1	14							-	1	14	-	3	6												
Michael Thirkell Gent.		1	1			1	a land			1	-	-	30							-	-	30	-	2	8												
John Thomson	1					1	a land		1	3	1	2	19	2	1	10	1	2	10	5	1	39	1	8	5												
John Jameson	1					1				1	-	2	10							-	2	10	-	5	6												
Elizabeth Stamford	1									1	-	-	18							-	-	18	-	4	6												
Peter Bilburghe	1									1	-	1	2	6	-	-				-	-	18	-	4	6												
George Thomson	1						a land				-	-	35	4	1	20	1	-	-	6	1	2	-	10	1												
William Cottame	1									1	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	2	-	5	2	15	-	13	4												
Michael Thirkell											-	-	-				-	2	-	2	2	9	-	7	8												
Michael Thirkell																								2	4	-											
The fishing of Derwent in Wressel and Loftsome																																					
The windmill of Wressel																																					

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Table 5

Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey) (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Cottage	Message	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (Cow) Hse	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Close or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises			Meadow			Total Area		Rent						
											a.r.	p.		a.r.	p.		a.r.	p.		a.r.	p.	£	s.	d.	
LOFTSOME																									
William Purvey	1						1			1	2	2	-												
Robert Barker	1	1	1	t & c			1		2	4	6	-	24	18	3	30	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	10	-
Christopher Turner		1	1						1	2	3	3	31	9	3	30	1	-	-	26	3	24	1	-	4
Simon Knowles	1		1				1		4	2	10	1	8	9	2	20	2	-	-	14	3	21	-	10	4
Hugh Massame				one toft							2	3	8	10	1	-	1	-	-	21	3	28	1	-	4
John Massame				one toft					1	2	4	2	30	9	1	-	2	-	-	14	-	8	-	10	10
Thomas Winter																				15	3	30	-	5	-
William Barker																									
a moiety of Derwent Ferry (the other is Sir William Babthorpe's)																									
NEWSHOLME																									
William Pocklington	1		1						2	1	2	2	33	11	2	-	3	-	-	17	-	33	-	11	8
John Pocklington	1		1						1	1	2	1	36	11	3	-	3	3	-	17	3	36	-	15	6
Henry Winter	1		1						2	1	2	1	6	11	-	-	2	2	-	15	3	6	-	10	6
Robert Norwode	1								2	1	4	-	-	12	-	20	3	3	-	19	3	20	-	14	2
John Ockes	1		1						2	1	1	2	12	11	1	-	3	-	-	15	3	12	-	10	6
Robert Goode	1								1	1	1	1	20	11	1	-	3	-	-	15	2	20	-	10	6
Gregory Porter	1		1	one toft					1	1	1	2	24	11	3	20	3	-	-	16	2	4	-	11	10
Thomas Smith	1			one croft					2	1	9	2	29	11	3	20	4	2	-	26	-	9	1	4	3
Robert Nutbrowne	1		1	one croft						1	2	-	-	11	3	30	3	-	-	16	3	30	-	11	2
John Massame	1		1	one croft						1	1	-	14	11	2	10	3	-	-	15	2	24	-	10	6
Hugh Massame	1									1	-	3	20							1	2	20	-	4	-
Elizabeth Sparrow (vid)	1								1	1	1	2	-							2	1	-	-	5	-
Agnes Turner (vid)	1									1	-	1	20			10				1	-	30	-	4	-
John Beilbye	1		1	one croft					1	1	7	-	26							7	-	26	-	6	8
John Brough	1								1	1	-	1	30							1	1	30	-	3	4
Benet & Nich. Sanderson	1		1						1	1	3	-	38	3	-	-	3	-	-	6	3	38	-	4	8

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Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey) (Cont'd.)

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Tenant	Cottage	Message	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (Cow) Hse	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Close or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises		Arable		Meadow		Total Area		Rent						
											a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	£	s.	d.				
<u>NEWSHOLME (Cont'd.)</u>																									
Thomas Bateson	1		1						1	1	-	3	32			-	3	-	1	2	32	-	5	-	
Helen & Thomas Craggs	1								1	1	1	-	16			-	3	-	1	3	16	-	4	6	
William Beilbye	1								1	1	1	1	24			-	3	-	2	-	24	-	2	11 ³ / ₄	
Joan Harwode (vid)	1								1	1	1	1	32						1	1	32	-	2	11 ³ / ₄	
John Goode		1	1	toft		1	croft			1	23	3	16	2	3	-	3	-	29	2	16	-	13	5	
Robert Branton		1	1							2	-	3	26	2	3	-	1	-	4	2	26	-	6	8 ¹ / ₂	
John Knowles	1								1	1	7	1	8						7	1	8	-	6	8	
Thomas Baitson	2		1						2	1	14	2	17	1	3	20	1	-	17	1	37	-	8	4 ¹ / ₂	
Thomas Norwoode	1		1						5	1	28	1	18	7	1	-	1	-	36	2	18	-	12	2 ¹ / ₂	
William Underwood	1		1						1	1	9	2	24	2	3	-	1	-	13	1	24	-	6	8 ¹ / ₂	
John Corneworth	1		1	1		1			1	1	-	1	25	9	-	20	1	-	10	2	5	-	6	8 ¹ / ₂	
Richard Lancaster		1	1	a	croft				2	2	27	1	34	4	1	-	1	-	32	2	34	-	12	2 ¹ / ₂	
Richard Stuthley		1							2	2	5	2	6	2	-	20	1	-	8	2	26	-	8	1	
William Kingrene	1		1	a	toft				3	1	7	3	15	3	-	-	1	-	11	3	15	-	8	1 ¹ / ₂	
John Wood	1	1	1	a	croft				6	1	21	2	19	15	3	-	1	-	38	1	19	-	15	2 ¹ / ₂	
William Sparrow	1		1						6		7	1	12	2	3	-	1	-	11	-	12	-	8	5 ¹ / ₂	
John Wilbert	1		1		1	1			3	1	15	-	30	12	-	-	1	-	28	-	32	-	10	11 ¹ / ₂	
<u>GRIBTHORPE</u>																									
John Harrison			1	1	1				1	3	3	2	24										8	13	5
Thomas Blancher			1	2	1	1			2	3	7	3	18									14	9	-	
John Freeman			1	1	1	1			1	2	4	1	20									7	15	4	
John Rabie			1	1		2			1	3	3	-	26									5	12	8	
John Ramsey (Senior)			1	1	1				2	1	1	-	6									2	3	-	
John Ramsey (Junior)			1	1		1			1	2	1	-	26									6	10	4	
John Gower			1	1		1			2	1	3	-	20									4	16	4	

Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey) (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Cottage	Message	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (cow) Hse.	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Clse or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises		Arable	Meadow	Total Area		Rent	
											a.r.	p.			a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.
THORNTON																		
Thomas Lee		1	1						3	4	9	1	9	} "with such land and meadow as heretofore hath been usually demised with the said tenements."	-	17	5	
John Hodgeson		1	1						2	3	11	-	1		-	19	11	
Nicholas Pickering		1	1	1			1	1	2	3	10	3	37		-	17	5	
John Walker		1	1			1				3	1	1	20		-	17	8	
Ralph Armitt		1	1							2	-	2	4		-	8	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Robert Bounde		1	1							2	-	1	27		-	7	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
John Tinkler	2	1	1	1		1				3	1	3	22		1	5	7	
Richard Wright		1	1							3	1	-	7		-	7	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Thomas Selbarne	1		1							3	-	2	10		-	8	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
William Walker	1		1							3	-	2	34		-	8	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Robert Swan		1	1		1				1	2	1	1	-		-	16	11	
Thomas Palmer		1	1							1	-	2	30		-	7	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Richard Becket		1	1							1	-	1	10		-	6	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Helen Mellor (vid)	1		1							2	-	2	10		-	4	-	
Johne Dyneley		1	1		two	butts				1	-	-	-		-	5	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Robert Madsome		1	1		1					1	-	-	18		-	5	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Edward Bell		1	1			1				1	-	3	24		-	9	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
William Seyton		1	1			1			1	1	1	-	28		-	9	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Joan Grindall (vid)	1					1	a	land		1	-	2	22		-	-	7	
John Robinson		1	1			1	a	land			-	2	4	-	9	5 $\frac{1}{2}$		
Thomas Smith		1	1	1						1	1	1	14	-	18	11		
John Brathwayt		1	1	1		1				1	1	1	13	-	18	11		
George Atkinson		1	1	1	1					1	1	1	13	-	18	11		

Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey) (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Cottage	Messuage	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (cow) House	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Close or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises		Arable		Meadow		Total Area		Rent		
											a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	£	s.	d.
THORNTON (cont.)																					
Robert Gilliott		1	1			1				1	1	13							-	18	11
John Mellor		1	1	1		1				1	1	13							-	18	11
Agnes Taylor	1									2	1	13							-	18	11
George Sawer		1	1	1		1				1	1	8							-	18	11
William Lambert		1	1	1		1	1	1		1	1	16							-	17	11
Richard Walker		1	1							1	1	18							-	14	3
Roger Browne		1	1							1	1	8							-	16	11
Henry Gilliott		1	1							1	1	8							-	16	11
William Mawde		1	1 (in decay)							1	1	8							-	16	11
Thomas Sergison		a plot of waste in the East Field, never before rented																			
Michael Thirkell Gent.		one arable flat(1 acre) in the West Field, and other concealed land																			
Divers tenants		twenty butts of concealed land in the East and West Fields																			
John Dyneley Gent.		the water corn mill of Thornton + 2 acres land adjoining																			
Tenants of Thornton and Milnhouses		Turbarry or Moor Lease																			
Thomas Cooper(Thornton)		a croft																			
" " (M'houses)		1	1			1				1	5	1	25						-	3	5½
William Beilby(Thornton)	1	and hemp		and adjoining															-	7	-
" " (M'houses)		1	1			1				1	3	-	-						-	5	1½
Thomas Smith	1	1	1			1		1	2	1	6	-	36						-	10	-
Robert Watson		1	1	1	toft & croft				1		3	3	15						-	6	2½
William Smith		1	1	a hempgarth							-	1	14						-	16	3½

Wressel Lordship - Tenants at Will and their Holdings (1577 Survey) (Cont'd.)

Tenant	Cottage	Message	Barn	Kilnhouse	Ox (Cow) Hse	Stable	Dovehouse	Workshop	Garden, Clse or Orchard	Garth	Area of Premises		Arable		Meadow		Total Area		Rent									
											a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	a.r.	p.	£	s.	d.							
<u>THORNTON (Cont'd.)</u>																												
Thomas Gunbie		1	1						1	1	3	1	8								-	10	-					
Thomas Scofeld		1	1			1				1	4	2	12								-	7	2					
4 hemplands																												
William Blancherd		1	1	1		1				1	2	3	18								-	7	4					
Thomas Flagge		1	1			1	1			1	3	-	16								-	6	-					
<u>BRIGHTON</u>																												
Isabel Radye (vid)	1	1	1	1		2			4	2	23	3	-	42	1	20	4	-	6	80	-	26	3	13	4			
<u>ASLABY</u>																												
Wm. Barker		1	1			1				2	-	3	-	35	2	20	3	3	-	40	-	20	1	13	4			
2 roods wood																												
Wm. Scotte (Cowick)		1							1	1	-	1	-	10	-	-	5	2	-	15	3	-	1	2	10			
do. (Pollington)						1								5	2	-				5	2	-						
do. (Snaith)														1	-	-				1	-	-						
Wm. Cliff (Goole)		1	1			1				2	1	-	-	11	-	-	3	-	-	15	-	-	1	-	-			
Th. Dalbie (S. Cliff)										1	3	2	-							3	2	-	-	2	10			
George Fowlere (S. Cliff)																												
(N. Cliff, Newbald and Walkington)																							1	5	4			
Wm. Micklefield gent. (lands in Barneby)																												
unspecified lands																												
$\frac{1}{2}$ oxgang of arable and meadow																												

In the table illustrating size of tenement holdings several points are to be noticed. First the fact that Thornton was by far the most populous member of the lordship - larger than any two others added together; second that since in Gribthorpe all land was demesne, no record was kept of the allocations made; third that in Thornton, much the same conditions obtained, and tenement land was habitually demised to the cotters and householders according to some accepted usage so familiar that a record was considered unnecessary.

In Wressel the eleven tenants who held arable land, and - in ten cases - meadow too, shared rather more than 200 acres, with an average holding of 18 ac. 2 r. 30 p., and a range from 1 ac. 0 r. 25 -. to 60 ac. 2 r. 31 p. On the other hand the twelve "landless" tenants sharing some 4 acres, had an average holding of 1 r. 18 p. with a range between 18 p. and 2 r. 15 p.

The conclusion to be drawn is that the "landless" tenants were occupied with duties connected with the Castle, working on the demesne lands and attending to routine estate management - a permanent labour force which could be supplemented by the regular household staff when the Lord was in residence. It seems probable too, that the one tenant with the large holding would be glad to hire the services of this labour force, who would thus find a tenement of normal size something of a liability. This may explain also the other

Wressel Lordship - Size of Tenant Holdings (1577)

Township	Number of Tenants	Cottages only. No arable etc. allocation	Size of Holdings														
			Under 2½ ac.	2½ - 5 acres	5 - 10 acres	10 - 15 acres	15 - 20 acres	20 - 25 acres	25 - 30 acres	30 - 35 acres	35 - 40 acres	40 - 45 acres	45 - 50 acres	50 - 55 acres	55 - 60 acres	60 - 65 acres	
Wressel	23 *	12	1	1	3	-	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Loftsome	6	1	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newsholme	20	3 *	6	-	2 *	-	9	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brend	13	1 *	-	1	2 *	4	1	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gribthorpe	7	- *	2 *	4 *	1 *	No arable or meadow allocations given											
Thornton	48	27	10 *	6	5 *	do. do.											

- Notes:- Wressel 23 * - excludes tenants of fishery and windmill.
- Newsholme 3 * and 2 * - one tenant held 7 acres in crofts and garths only.
- Brend 1 * and 2 * - one tenant held 7 ac. 1 r. as above.
- Gribthorpe * several tenants held more than 2½ acres in closes and garths.
- Thornton * three tenants held more than 9 acres in closes and garths only. 10 * and 5 * were further described:-
"with such land and meadow as heretofore hath been usually demised with the said tenements".

"landless" in near-by Loftsome, Newsholme and Brend.

Whilst the short-comings of the data make deductions uncertain in the cases of Gribthorpe and Thornton, it is possible to produce the following facts regarding the other members:-

Table 7

Township	Total Area	Tenants	Average	Range	
				Min.	Max.
	a.r. p.		a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Wressel	205 2 12	11	18 2 30	1 - 25	60 2 31
Loftsome	93 2 31	5	18 2 38	14 - 8	26 3 34
Newsholme	195 - 34	17	11 1 37	1 2 32	26 - 9
Brend	243 - 24	12	20 1 2	4 2 26	38 1 19

Note:- the number of tenants here quoted does not include those with no allocation of arable or meadow. The number for Newsholme and Brend in each case disregards one of the tenants holding a considerable acreage in closes and garths only.

Thus the average holding throughout these four members was 17 ac. 0 r. 7 p. though this average falls steeply if the gross rather than the nett number of tenants were used as a divisor. Such a figure is much below the average tenant holding on the Percy Northumbrian estates, as quoted by Tawney,¹ and falls far short of the 30-31½ acres which was calculated as the arable area alone on a median sized Leicestershire farm at approximately the same date.²

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- 1 Agrarian Problems in the 16th Century (1912) - R. H. Tawney, Table p. 64/5 mentioning 30-35 acres as average.
 2 "Essays in Leicestershire History" (1950) W. G. Hoskins. Table p. 137.

This discrepancy may be accounted for by the fact that the great majority of the pasture in Wressel lordship was demesne land.

The usual proportion of arable to meadow in the case of the tenants who had both seems to have been about 11:1. This - in contrast to the over-all average holding - is a much more generous fraction than that quoted for Leicestershire at a much earlier date - approximating to 20:1,¹ though not so generous as the 4½:1 for the selected Leicestershire examples in 1607.²

The end of the 15th century was marked by much leasing of land in the lordship. There is no means of telling whether or how much this was a new departure, since the first existing account roll dates from 1472 and the first court roll from 1475. Eight such leases were recorded between 1475 and 1477 - the areas, annual payments and terms varying widely. Whilst the lessees paid no ingress fines, and whilst it seems impossible to arrive at any formula for reckoning rent per acre for either arable or meadow, it would appear that the long-term lessee - 21 years - enjoyed a more advantageous rent assessment than his fellow who agreed for terms of 4, 5, 6, 10 and 12 years.³

Not before 1534 does the "custom of Cumberland" phrase

- 1 Economic Development of some Leicestershire Estates in the 14th and 15th centuries. R. H. Hilton, quoting 1 ac. 0 r. 20 p. meadow to 23 acres 1 rood arable. p. 102.
- 2 Hoskins op.cit. Table III p. 140.
- 3 Pet.MS.MCR.D.3.12 14 Ed.IV and 16 Ed.IV.

appear in a surrender, and then it is used in connection only with Thornton, Millhouses and Brend. For the first time also, ingress fines were required - equal to a year's rental - though in the following case, at Brend, such fine was waived:-

"Richard Wilbert came to court and showed a certain copy made by him of a letter of the lord and sealed by him And asks that it be enrolled here in court And so at once the said Richard is enrolled in these words:-Md. That at the monastery of St. Mary the Virgin of Alnwick in Northumberland came Richard Wilbert before us Henry Earl of Northumberland, Lord of Cockermouth and Petworth, Lord Percy, Lucy, Poynings, FitzPayn and Bryan, Guardian of the East and Middle Marches of England towards Scotland and too Knight of the Order of the Garter, and took from us the aforesd tenement lying in Brind in County York for an annual rent of 20s. late in the tenure of John Tailer and now in our hands, to be held with appurtenances by Richard Wilbert according to the usage and custom of tenures of lands in County Cumberland for 20s. and it was agreed by the Chief Steward that no fine for ingress was to be demanded as this was a gift of the Lords."¹

The last ten years of the 16th century are represented by an uninformative series of court rolls, which include nothing but presentments, few of which are of any historical interest. When, in 1599, the pleas were recorded once more,

1 Pet.MS.D.3.18 MCR.84 18th Apr. 25 Hen.VIII.

a new factor seems to have entered the life of the community. A whole series of complaints relative to trespasses with cattle and to stint breaches swept the court. These offences had been especially severe in Thornton, the court drawing up accurate stint limits for the Thornton tenants:- "Every cottager there is to keep on West Moore 4 beastes and 21 sheep; every gresseman of Millhouses 6 beastes and 20 sheep; every oxgang man 8 beastes and 42 sheep; every two-oxgang man 16 beastes and 84 sheep and no more, on pain of forfeiting 12d. per beast and 2d. per sheep". The Constable and four men were to drive the common every fortnight between May Day and Michaelmas and impound such cattle as were found above the proper stint.¹

Whilst this was the first evidence of the growth of pastoral activity on a large scale, there were further indications of increased agricultural activity, accompanied by greater liveliness in court regulations. The wish to acquire more arable land is shown by the following example which is typical of many entries:-

"That Matthew Rosse shall lye to grasse certaine Balkes and landendes which he has recently plowed up and which used to beare grasse at the next Arrure on paine of 30s. per Balke and 10s. per landend".²

More serious still was the report that there had been

1 Pet.MS.D.3.12 MCR 198 Ap.41 Eliz.

2 Pet.MS.D.3.12 MCR.198 13 Ap.41 Eliz.

enclosed 16 acres and 1 acre in the Vescy Field, four to five, and five to six acres in the Fleet Field and four to five acres in the Church Field of Wressel.¹ No further details were given as to the offenders or the fine imposed. It seems as though the enclosures were allowed to remain however, as two years later Edmund Burrow was amerced for "putting his full stint into the averidge feild though the stint has to be decreased by one beast for each tenant now that there is a new enclosure in the feild."² In the absence of evidence to the contrary it seems likely that these enclosures were of demesne arable and were leased to tenants. Such closes grew mixed crops, a plaintiff claiming damages for trespass by cattle in his close in which corn and grass were growing.³

The court was very busy - that of Lady Day 1602 - hearing no less than 35 pleas,⁴ all of which are more than usually fully reported, though unfortunately their content was of commonplace nature, except for that concerning a tenant charged with trespass with 140 sheep and damaging growing crops in the common field. The deforciant denied the charge, and the case was scheduled for hearing at the October court, whose roll has not survived.

A memorandum of 1602 inserted in the 1577 survey notes the importance of pasture rights to the tenants of Gribthorpe:

"Md. that the tenants of Gribthorpe by custom have had

- 1 Pet.MS. Court Book 8 Oct.41 Eliz.
- 2 Court Bk. 10 Oct. 43 Eliz.
- 3 Ct. Bk. 23 Ap. 43 Eliz.
- 4 Ct. Bk. 14 Ap. 44 Eliz.

and yett quietlie have free comon of pasture in two severall closes called the Kirkeflatt being parcell of the possessions of Mr. Langdale and parcell of the lordship of Adlethorpe lying and being on the west side of the North and West Fields of Gribthorpe At such times as the sd North and West Fields of Gribthorpe lie fallow viz. when the sd West Field is fallow, the sd Tenants of Gribthorpe have free comon of pasture for ther cattell in the sd Kirkefield or Kirkeflatt of Adlethorpe and att such times as the sd North Field of Gribthorpe lyeth fallow have comon and shake with ther cattell in the sd North Kirkefield In consideracon wherof the Tenants and Inhabitants of Adlethorpe have likewise had and do use as of custom to have within the same fields of Gribthorpe comon of pasture for 8 sheep or for one mare and one foal at such times as the tenants of Gribthorpe have comon with them in the sd Field."¹

1 Pet.MS. 1577 Survey f.90.

WRESSEL

Section 7

The New Estate Management

By 1611 the estate policy of leasing had become almost universal throughout the lordship. The information summarised in the following table is contained in a book of leases, "The View of the Account of William Thomson Bailiff there for One whole Yeare ended 1625"¹, and shows the continuation of the policy indicated earlier by addenda to the 1577 Survey book.

These addenda show that leases were granted on a wide scale about 1589 - 1599, whilst the 1625 list records a preponderance of leases in 1611. In both records the grants are usually for 21 years. It seems as though the policy had been embarked upon after careful consideration from an actuarial standpoint and also with a view to convenience of renewal. Several indentures made, for example, in 1613, are for 19 years, though this spacing is not invariable. It was unfortunate perhaps from the owner's point of view that the 9th Earl died in 1632 when the greater number of the leases was due to expire. By the custom of Cumberland, a fine was then due to the lord in any case.

1 Pet.MS. 8.D.2.

Wressel Leases 1625

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a			
			a.r. p.			£	s.	d.	
Wressel	Robt. Stapleton	The Park	63 - 14	1611	21	33	-	-	
		Cunny Garth				1	-	-	
		Little Park						nil	
		Dem. arable	37 1 26	} 1611	21	21	16	-	
		" meadow	4 2 10						
		Waste in Newsham	15 3 13						
		Mess.called Whitehouse, Rowley Close	10 2 20						
		Upper & Nether Ings	17 - 16						
		Meadow in Towne Ings	4 - 12						
		Arable in Vescywood, Fleet & Church Fields	43 3 2						
		Meadow in Wressel Ings	6 2 36						
		Hall Close (pasture) in Brend	52 2 25						
		Dyant (meadow) in Newsham	19 3 -						
		Dumpoole (pasture) in Newsham	19 - -						
		meadow in Newsham Ings	56 3 28	1611	21	60	18	4	
	Ann Rayner, John } Pulleyne, Peter } Womersley, Peter } Bond, Mich. White, } Mat. Rose, John } Thomson, Ann } Richardson. }	certain parcells of demesne arable	16 - 15	1611	21	4	18	-	
	William Thomson } Richard Blamyre } Richard Wodhouse }	The Marsh		1612	21	-	6	8	
		Demesne arable	14 - 24						
		Meadow in fields and ings	- 3 -	1611	21	4	15	6	
	John Sparrow	Demesne arable in Wressel fields	11 2 31	1611	21	3	10	-	

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a		
			a.r. p.			£	s.	d.
<u>Wressel (Continued)</u>								
	William Lowson	Demesne arable in Wressel fields	5 3 33	1611	21	-	16	-
	William Lathame	The windmill		1611	21	4	-	-
	Richard Widhouse	The Seghole		1613	19	-	15	-
	Thos.& Richard Widhouse	Fishing of Darwent at Wressle & Loftsome		1609	21	2	13	4
	Robt.Stapleton	The tithe of the Parks		1611	21	16	-	-
	John Phillips	tenement		1611	21	5	10	-
	Wm. Thompson	"		"	"	6	-	-
	Mat. Cooper	"		"	"	6	-	-
	Mich. Pattison	"		"	"	16	12	-
	Peter Bond	"		"	"	7	6	8
	Ann Richardson)	"		"	"	7	-	-
	Ralph ")	"		"	"	1	16	-
	Luke Harrison	"		"	"	1	-	-
	Rich. Widhouse	cottage		"	"	1	-	-
	Rich. Raynerd	"		"	"	1	-	-
	Mich.Thomson	"		"	"	1	8	-
	Henry Beilby	"		"	"	-	16	-
	Agnes Cooper	"		"	"	1	4	-
	Peter Womersley	"		"	"	-	10	-
	John Halle	"		"	"	-	15	-
	Nich. Husband	"		"	"	-	18	-
	Bernard Palmer	"		"	"	-	16	-
	Peter Nortaby	"		"	"	-	16	-
	Peter Sparrow	tenement		"	"	7	-	-

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a			
						£	s.	d.	
<u>Wressel (Continued)</u>									
	Thos. Slater	cottage	a.r. p.	1609	21	-	5	-	
	Chris. Higgins	"		"	"	-	13	4	
	Nich. Tayler	"		1611	"	-	16	-	
	Alice Buton	"		"	"	-	8	-	
	Bryan Allenby	"		"	"	-	10	-	
	Rich. Widhouse	"		"	"	-	5	-	
	Robt. Stapleton	close in Sandfield at lord's will		"	"	3	9	8	
	John Richardson	close at lord's will		"	"	3	6	3	
	Anne Richardson	close " " "		"	"	2	6	10	
	Mich. Pattison	" " " "		"	"	3	12	6	
	Matthew Rose	" " " "		"	"	-	13	10	
	Peter Bond	" " " "		"	"	1	8	2	
	John Phillips	" " " "		"	"	1	12	4	
	John Tayler	" " " "		"	"	1	1	2	
	Richard Widhouse	" " " "		"	"	-	8	-	
	John Thomson	" " " "		"	"	-	5	-	
<u>Loftsome</u>									
	Mat. Battell	Demesne meadow in Loftsome Ings Demesne arable in Bancks and Breaks	4 - -	1609	21	10	4	-	
	Rich. Blancherd								
	Peter Turner								
	Wm. Lathom								
	Mat. Battell and Rich. Blancherd	Demesne arable	4 - -	1611	"	1	4	-	

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Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a			
			a. r. p.			£	s.	d.	
<u>Loftsome</u> (Continued)	John Phillips	Demesne arable in Loftsome Flatts	7 - -	1609	21	2	2	-	
	John Nicolson	Cowperhearon(demesne) & ½ ferry		"	"	3	3	4	
	Mat. Batayle	messuage		"	"	6	-	-	
	Wm. Robinson	cottage		"	"	1	13	4	
	John Nicolson	tenement		1611	"	2	-	-	
	Thos. Gray	"		"	"	4	-	-	
	Robert Done	"		"	"	5	-	-	
	Peter Cooper	"		"	"	4	6	8	
	Wm. Latham and	}	"		"	"	6	15	-
	Thos. Blancherd								
<u>Newsholme</u>	Henry Phillips	Demesne (Hallriddinge)		1608	"	7	-	-	
	Mat. Battayle	" Roserowe		1609	"	4	-	-	
	Robert Done	" Little Hall Garth		"	"	2	10	-	
	John Carr	" Great " "		"	"	4	-	-	
	Robt. & Stephen Robinson	" The Olde Messuage		1610	"	4	5	-	
	Robert White	" Burnethills		"	"	1	-	-	
	John Phillips	" Dumpooles (pasture)	16 2 2	1611	"	3	5	-	
	Mich. Pattison	" "	12 3 -	"	"	2	11	-	
	Matthew Cooke	" "		"	"	2	8	-	
	Mr. Stapleton	} The Park, divided into closes			"	"	28	-	-
	Mr. Thomson								
	John Edwards & Robt. Harrison								
	Rich. White and	} Closes in the Park			"	"	7	10	-
Thos. Gray									

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a		
<u>Newsholme</u>	(Continued)		a.r. p.			£	s.	d.
	Robert White and John Freeman	} Closes in the Park		1611	21	7	10	-
	Mat. Battayle & Maud Blamyre			"	"	22	-	-
	Henry Blanchard	cottage		"	"	1	6	8
	Richd. Blamire	tenement		"	"	7	-	-
	Robt. Bateson	messuage		"	"	6	15	-
	Richd. Blamire	messuage		"	"	6	-	-
	Mich. Harrison	tenement		"	"	5	5	-
	Alice Pickering	"		"	"	5	-	-
	John Carr	"		"	"	5	-	-
	Anne Porter	tenement		"	"	5	-	-
	Robt. White	"		"	"	5	-	-
	Robt. Dove	"		"	"	5	-	-
	Robt. Okes	"		"	"	5	-	-
	Joane Bullards	messuage		"	"	3	-	-
	Fr. & Alice Turner	cottage		"	"	1	4	-
	Alice Burroughs	"		"	"	-	13	4
	Thos. Sparrow	"		"	"	1	5	-
	John Sparrow	"		"	"	1	6	8
	Thos. Smith	"		"	"	1	10	-
	Robt. White	"		"	"	2	4	-
	John Pearson	"		"	"	1	10	-
	Robt. Goswell	"		"	"	1	6	8
	Richd. Blamire	"		"	"	1	5	-
	Thos. Gray	"		"	"	1	5	-

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a		
			a.r. p.			£	s.	d.
<u>Brend</u>	Mr. Stapleton	Hall Close (incl. in Wressel)		1611	21	6	-	-
	Anthony How	Hall Garth Butts		"	"	-	8	-
	Thos. Wilbert	tenement		"	"	6	-	-
	Anthony Hood	"		"	"	5	-	-
	Wm. Lancaster	"		"	"	10	-	-
	Robt. Tomlinson	messuage		"	"	7	-	-
	Mat. Skelton and)	messuage		"	"	11	-	-
	Wm. Higgins							
	Rich. Richardson	tenement		"	"	5	-	-
	Jn. & Anne Westoby	"		"	"	4	10	-
	Oswald Walker	"		"	"	3	-	-
	John Ramsey	messuage		"	"	4	-	-
	Edwd. Erith	tenement		"	"	3	6	8
	Helen Bell	messuage		"	"	4	-	-
Wm. Studley	"		"	"	2	-	-	
Thos. Westoby	Brend Lane		"	"	1	10	-	
John Pretiouse	tenement		"	"	10	-	-	
<u>Gribthorpe</u>	Hen. Harrison	2 tenements, late £14 9s. & £6 10s. 3d.	315 1 12	"	"	60	-	-
	William Coke	tenement	82 2 23	"	"	24	-	-
	Mgt. & Wm. Ramsey	"	32 - 34	"	"	7	10	-
	Chris Gunby	"	91 2 -	"	"	20	-	-
	" "	" late rent £8 13s. 5d.	156 3 36	1614	18	26	18	6
	John Hotham	" late rent £7 15s. 4d.	150 3 29	1611	21	23	1	6

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a	
			a.r. p.			£ s. d.	
<u>Thornton</u>							
Acct. of R. Pickering bailiff, 1625	Wm. Frier	cot. (7½d.) & 5 ac. to be enclosed of the common called Thornton East Moore		1611	21	1 14 2	
	Richd. Hill	cot. (7s. 5½d.) & 8 ac. as above		"	"	4 8 -	
	Peter Barber	cot. and 8 ac.		"	"	3 8 8	
	Edwd. Gower	tenement & 8 ac.		"	"	4 2 -	
	Thos. Bosse	" & 8 ac.		"	"	5 17 6	
	Alex. Walker	" & 8 ac.		"	"	4 2 -	
	Roger Spofforth	" & 8 ac.		"	"	4 8 -	
	Oliver Chambers	cottage & 5 ac.		"	"	2 5 -	
		Thos. Wilson	cottage & 5 ac.		"	"	5 2 6
		John Madson	" & 5 ac.		"	"	2 17 6
<u>Millhouses</u>	Wm. Emott	" & 2½ ac.		"	"	1 3 9	
	Thos. Selbarne	tenement & 8 ac.		"	"	4 2 -	
	Thos. Beilbye	cottage & 5 ac.		"	"	1 11 6	
	John Arnoldson	tenement & 8 ac.		"	"	4 12 -	
	John Selborne	cottage & 5 ac.		"	"	1 11 6	
	Henry Saxton	tenement & 8 ac.		"	"	4 2 -	
	Thos. Wilberfosse	messuage & 8 ac. East Moore		"	"	4 2 -	
	Thos. Lee	tenement & 5 ac.		"	"	3 2 6	
	Robt. Armitt	" & 8 ac.		"	"	3 15 -	
	Adam Halam	" & 8 ac.		1613	18	5 12 -	
	John Selbarne	cottage & 5 ac.		1611	21	1 11 6	
	Richd. Tate	" & 2½ ac.		"	"	1 10 2	

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs	Rent p/a			
						£	s.	d.	
<u>Thornton</u>			a.r. p.						
	Wm. Bovill	cottage & 5 ac.		1611	21	1	4	2	
	Thos. Walker	" & 5 ac.		"	"	1	17	6	
	Robt. Loftus	tenement & 5 ac.		"	"	4	8	-	
	Thos. Lee	" "		"	"	3	14	2	
	Thos. Halley	" "		"	"	2	9	6	
	Robt. Beilby	" & 8 ac.		"	"	4	12	-	
	Robt. Cooper	" "		"	"	5	2	-	
	George Armitt	" "		"	"	5	12	-	
	Nich. Tod	water corne mill (Walbottle Mill) & piece called Coates to be enclosed out of adjoining common tenement			"	"	15	-	-
	Robt. Walker	"			"	"	6	-	-
	Robt. Mell	"			"	"	5	10	-
	Robt. Selborne	"			"	"	3	-	-
	Eliz. Lambert	"			"	"	6	-	-
	John Lea	"			"	"	6	5	-
	Robt. Walker and Robt. Sawyer }	10 ac. pasture in East Moore	10 - -		"	"	1	-	-
	Robt. Sawyer	tenement	5 - -		"	"	5	10	-
	Roger Spofforth	close called Water Hills			"	"	2	-	-
	Eliz. Atkinson	tenement			"	"	6	-	-
	Mat. Gilliott	"			"	"	5	10	-
Conand Sawyer	"			"	"	5	17	6	
Robert Pickeringe	"			"	"	8	8	-	
Edwd. Staumpter	close called Larepitts (West Moor)	22 - 15		"	"	3	16	8	

Wressel Leases (Continued)

Township	Tenant	Property	Area	Date	Yrs.	Rent p/a		
			a.r. p.			£	s.	d.
<u>Thornton</u> (Continued)								
	Mat. Gilliott	tenement		1611	21	5	10	-
	William Swanne	"		"	"	6	-	-
	Thos. Clerke	"		"	"	5	11	-
	Mat. Brathwaite	"		"	"	6	-	-
	Roger Saunderson	"		"	"	6	-	-
	David Bird	"		"	"	6	13	4
	Richd. Becket	"		"	"	4	2	-
	Ralph Armitt	Crossgatefield(12ac)						
		Birckholmeinges (4ac.2r.) & afterpasture of Deanes Brett		1613	18	1	16	-
	Thos. Bosse et al.	Pasture of West Moore	610 - -	1611	21	56	-	-
	Thos. Bosse and)	Ferby Carr	49 - 18	"	"	4	-	-
	Wm. Pickering)	Arable in Crossegait Field	20 - -	"	"	1	10	-
	Robert Mell	piece of arable as above		"	"	2	10	-
	Thos. Selborne	part of West Moor		"	"	3	10	-
	" "	part of West Moor		"	"	1	10	-
	Eliz. & Mat.Armitt	part of East Moor		"	"	1	10	-
<u>Asselby</u>	John Milner	message		"	"	16	10	-

120.

Wressel Lordship - Receipts - 1577-1633

Township	Rent, Farm, or Property	1577			1589-99			Assessment			1602			1625			1633		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Wressel	Great Park)				-	12	-	30	13	4			33	-	-	33	-	-	
	Little Park)	-	12	-	2	13	4	3	18	4			nil			-	-	-	
	Herbage of Parks							26	13	4	30	-	-						
	TOTAL	-	12	-	3	5	4	61	5	-	30	-	-	33	-	-	33	-	-
	Demesnes Coney Garth	-	3	-	1	-	-							1	-	-	1	-	-
	Whitehouse etc.	10	9	7	10	9	7							21	16	-			
	96ac. arable & meadow	11	9	4	10	13	4										16	-	-
	Extra demesne ar. & mead.													91	19	6	116	18	10
	TOTAL	22	1	11	22	2	11							114	15	6	133	18	10
	Free Tenants	-	6	5	-	6	5							no such item included					
Ten'ts at Will & leaseholds	17	16	2	17	16	2							95	15	5	88	2	1	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	40	16	6	43	10	10							243	10	4	255	10	11	
<u>Loftsome</u>	Demesnes	5	8	-							5	4	10	16	13	4	16	13	4
	Free Tenants	-	1	6							-	1	6						
	Tenants at Will	6	-	2							4	6	10	29	15	-	29	15	-
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	11	9	8							9	11	8	46	8	4	46	8	4
<u>Newsholme</u>	Park	3	6	8	67	13	4	35	15	6			130	-	-	130	-	-	
	Demesnes	29	4	-	38	4	9						30	19	-	31	9	-	
	Free Tenants	-	18	3	-	18	3												
	Tenants at Will	9	2	3 ¹ / ₂	9	2	3 ¹ / ₂						62	16	4	73	1	4	
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	42	11	2 ¹ / ₂	115	18	7 ¹ / ₂						223	15	4	234	10	4	
<u>Brend</u>	Demesnes	2	13	4															
	Free Tenants	-	-	2									-	8	-	-	8	-	
	Tenants at Will	5	14	7									76	6	8	76	6	8	
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	8	8	1									76	14	8	76	14	8	
<u>Gribthorpe</u>	Demesnes rented	50	-	-	50	-	-												
	Tenants at Will				20	19	3				88	18	-	161	10	-	157	10	-
	TOTAL RECEIPTS	50	-	-	70	19	3				88	18	-	161	10	-	157	10	-
<u>Thornton</u>	Tenants at Will	30	18	7	32	3	7				37	8	7	294	12	6	255	18	3
LORDSHIP TOTAL OF RECEIPTS		184	4	- ¹ / ₂									1046	11	9	1026	2	6	

Table 9

It can readily be seen from the Book of Leases as well as from the Table of Receipts (page 121) that the increase of income is remarkable - the average index being 571, taking the 1577 figures as base. Before discussing the methods by which this was effected, it must be noticed that such figures demonstrate with equal clarity the general prosperity of early Stuart England, the acumen of the estate administrators and the inadequacy of the earlier customary payments as a reflection of real land and property values.

Two points make themselves conspicuous. First, the great profits accruing to the lord by the conversion of copyhold to leasehold tenure are clear. Quite apart from the ingress fines which may have been payable, the assured annual yield for 21 years starting in 1611 showed, over the 1577 figure, an increase by the following relative indices of rents paid by Tenants at Will:-

Wressel	538	Loftsome	496	Newsholme	690
Brend	1,328	Gribthorpe	769	Thornton	953

It is easily conceivable that these relative indices would have been exceeded greatly had the same re-assessment been possible in the case of the freehold tenures which presumably continued still to yield a meagre £1 6s. 4d. plus some inconsiderable annuities of 2 lbs. of cumin and 1 lb. of pepper from the whole lordship. The insignificant sum perhaps accounts for the omission of the free rents from the rentals of 1625 and 1633. The increases of the rentals paid by the ex-copyholders - presumably without demur, as

there is no court-book evidence of such - reflect at once the prosperity of that class in the ability to pay such sums, either as a single payment or by six-monthly instalments, and the inadequacy of the earlier customary returns. It would not appear judicious, on the information available, to allocate the steep rise in competitive demand for land to a period any narrower than 1590-1611.

The second point of note is that already indicated in the section dealing with the Parks¹ - the realisation of the greater profits to be gained by the more extensive leasing of parks and demesnes. The indices in the case of five out of the six members are almost as impressive as those quoted above for tenant rent returns.

1 See p.122 ante.

Table 10

Wressel Lordship						
Indices showing Fluctuation of Receipts - 1577-1650						
Source	Base 1577	1589-99	1602	1625	1633	1650
<u>Rents of Tenants at Will</u>						
Wressel	100	100	-	538	499	392
Loftsome	100	-	71	496	496	496
Newsholme	100	100	-	690	802	802
Brend	100	-	-	1,328	1,328	1,328
Gribthorpe	-	100	-	769	750	750
Thornton	100	104	121	953	828	876
<u>Parks</u>						
Wressel & Newsholme	100	1,818	5,000*	4,179	4,179	4,103
<u>Demesnes</u> †						
Wressel	100	100.2	-	519	606	555
Loftsome	100	-	96	308	308	308
Newsholme	100	131	-	107	108	211
<u>TOTAL LORDSHIP RECEIPTS</u>						
	100	-	-	557.3	557.07	639
<u>Wheat prices</u>						
(Thorold Rogers)	100	152	156	183	191	204

* Wressel Park only. † The lack or uncertain nature of the data for the demesnes in the other members of the lordship account for their not being quoted in this table.

How far the land-eagerness - as witnessed by the willingness to pay higher sums both for tenements and demesne (including Parkland) - was a matter of bargain or dictation is not clear, since there is no indication beyond the list of leases and the figures there recorded. Nor is it clear to what extent the demand for land was induced by desire for pastoral activity, nor how long such pastoral occupation had been specially marked. In Wressel, Loftsome, Newsholme and Brend the size of the arable fields remains practically the same in 1625¹ as in 1577. In Thornton, however, the arable figure of 1577 had actually increased by 50 acres in 1613 - from 453 to 503 acres - a rise of 11%.² Whether this may be interpreted as a cause of the 'pain' of 1599 quoted above,³ cannot be said with certainty. It is more likely that the 'pain' was necessitated by the continuation of a situation reported nine years earlier, when in 1590 a tenant was presented for making a new warren on Woodhouse Moor, to the detriment of the pasture for cattle and horses there. At the same time various Thornton tenants were presented for letting their beast gates on the Moor, and fined 3s. 4d. each.⁴

In the same year, the court noted the presence in Thornton of 20 sheep belonging to outsiders; from the whole

-
- 1 the 1625 return is quoted here, since that of 1633 contains no details beyond receipts.
 - 2 See Map of Thornton 1613. "Maps, Plans & MSS." p.16 in folder
 - 3 See p. 107 ante, quoting Pet.MS.MCR.D.3.12.
 - 4 Pet.MS.D.3.12.MCR 189 2 May & 10 Oct.32 Eliz.

lordship came reports of excessive numbers of sheep and horses on the commons, whilst one Wressel tenant paid a shilling for so far forgetting himself as to throw an axe at his neighbours' cattle which were trespassing.¹

An entry of 1592 - unique in these records - reported the death of Robert White, a freeholder, and the ruinous condition of Whitehouse in Newsholme. His son, Thomas, surrendered his father's tenure of 12 ac. arable, 3 ac. meadow and four 'carr gaits', and instead took up the tenure of a cottage, a garth, a three-acre close, 3 roods of meadow, a hempland and one 'carr gait'. No condition of tenure was stated, or this might have furnished an interesting example of the extinction of a freehold.² It may, however, be marshalled amongst the facts indicating a recession of agriculture. Of all these, the most striking is furnished by Gribthorpe. In 1577 its arable lay in the North, West and South Fields, and totalled 483 ac. 1 r. The 1613 map shows that by then the arable had shrunk to 312 ac. 1 r. 12 p. - a decrease of about 30% - the balance becoming pasture. The details appear in the table overleaf.³

1 Pet.MS.D.3.12.MCR 189 9 Ap.36 Eliz.

2 Pet.MS. as above 8 Ap. 34 Eliz.

3 "Maps, Plans & MSS." p. 15 in folder.

Analysis of Gribthorpe Map 1613

Arable	1577 Field	Area a.r. p.	Pasture	1577 Field	Area a.r. p.	Meadow	Area a.r. p.
West Saylandes	North	10 1 10	Far Field	North	48 - 2	Hall Garth	17 - 4
Midle Field	"	32 1 38	East Saylandes	"	25 3 32	Ings	28 - 13
Toft Holmes	"	38 1 16	Carres	-	145 - 11	Carrs	29 1 34
North Garres	West	10 1 16	North Wood Acres	West	9 2 6		
South Garres	"	6 2 1	South Ten Acres	"	12 3 20		
Farre Sheep Field	"	50 3 36	South Stockland	South	8 - 5		
Lang Field	"	64 1 21	Gowle Holme	"	4 2 11		
Hall Field	?	23 - 30	Ox Pasture	"	48 1 12		
God's Croft	?	17 3 21	West Paine Close	"	10 3 37		
North Stockland	South	6 - 1	East Paine Close	"	14 3 8		
Town End	"	17 1 14	Short Milne Gates	"	7 3 26		
West Close	"	3 - 27	Long Milne Gates	"	10 1 7		
Lang Close	"	31 1 21	Square Close	"	4 2 33		
			Milne Hill Close	"	11 2 22		
			Sandland	"	18 1 8		
1613 Totals		312 1 12			383 - -		75 2 11

The 1577 Survey mentioned the South Field ... 172 ac. 3 r.

North Field ... 161 ac. 1 r.

West Field ... 149 ac. 1 r.

1577 Total Arable ... 483 ac. 1 r.

The somewhat conflicting evidences of the preservation of agricultural activity and the existence of pastoral business on an increasing scale may be taken as nothing more than the waging by conservatism of a conflict with the forces which had made themselves felt in the Midlands and South in the mid-16th century. It would not be inappropriate however to read into the same facts the interpretation that the Steward and his officers were striking a balance between the best of both agrarian activities, and were apportioning to pasture those parts of the lordship - especially Gribthorpe - which were particularly well-suited to the maintenance of cattle and sheep, since its tenantry were so few that extensive arable land was less desirable. On the other hand, at Thornton and Millhouses the common pasture was reduced about 1611 by over 190 acres, enclosed or 'improved' from the East Moor - presumably, but not inevitably - for tillage purposes.¹

The most reasonable interpretation is that this East Riding lordship had reached, by 1610, a transition period which had affected the more populous parts of the country in the last decade of the 16th century. Cereal production now held the promise of greater profit than pasture for purposes of wool production, though the latter maintained a consistent price during the majority of the 17th century.²

1 See table 'Wressel Leases' page 118 ante.

2 Cunningham - Growth of English Industry & Commerce II p. 100 and following.

Amongst the leaseholders of 1611, several stand out as examples of capitalist farmers. The first, Robert Stapleton, who perhaps owed his tenancy partly to his family's connection with the Percies, held 351 acres of land in Wressel, Newsholme and Brend for an annual rent of £169.¹ This allotment was composed of 80 acres of arable, 110 acres of meadow and 160 acres of pasture, although nearly 80 acres of the pasture were represented by Wressel Parks and Coney Garth. His intention to follow the occupation of grazier seems clear.²

Henry Harrison of Gribthorpe held two tenements - 315 acres - for £60 per year - again no doubt, a grazier.

Christopher Gunby in the same hamlet held nearly 250 acres for £46 per year - in fact, the whole of Gribthorpe was in the hands of five tenants, four of whom held more than 80 acres each, and the other 32 acres. Though the types of land making up these 1611 and 1614 tenements are not specified, it seems likely that the bulk would be pasture, in view of the shortage of an agricultural labour force in the thinly populated area, unless workers travelled the considerable distance from Brend, which seems improbable.

Many other examples of tenants holding more than one piece of property are evident in the list of leases, but in contrast there are several where a number of tenants hold a quite small quantity of land - the most notable being

1 William Stapleton had been Feodary of Spofforth 1543/5.

2 approximate figures only.

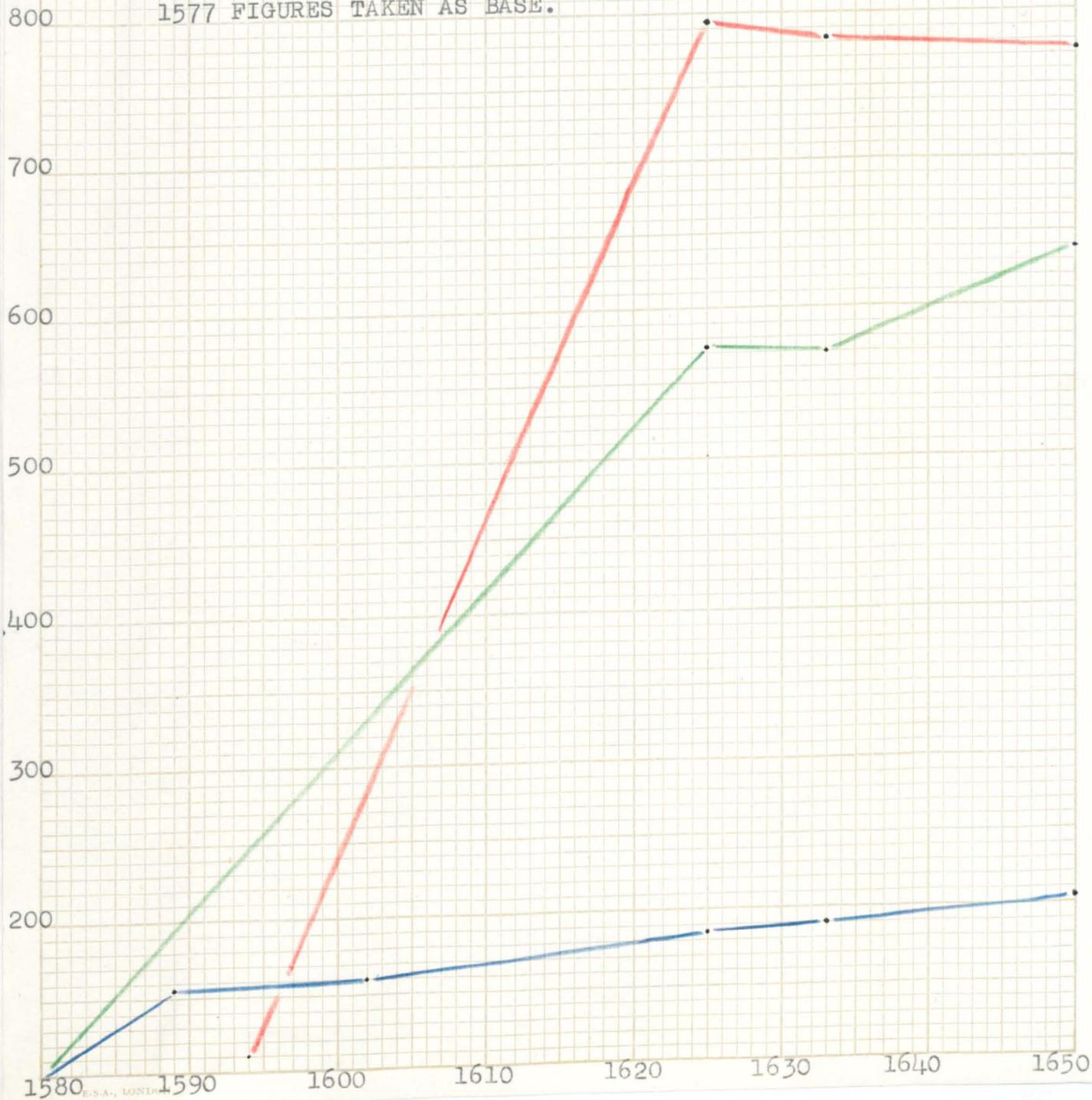
COMPARISON OF CHANGES IN

— COST OF WHEAT

— GROSS LORDSHIP RECEIPTS FROM ALL SOURCES

— RENTS OF TENANTS AT WILL (AVERAGE FIGURES)

1577 FIGURES TAKEN AS BASE.



that of the eight Wressel tenants, two of them women, who shared 16 acres of demesne arable.

The whole picture at the end of the first quarter of the 17th century is one of prosperity and industry, the tenantry able and willing to pay rents which were for the first time for centuries approximating to real land values; the reasonable profits from farming assured for the immediate future; the lord sharing in his turn the benefits enjoyed by his tenants.¹

The available manuscripts covering the remainder of the period up to 1650 are scanty and lacking in information. The Court Books contain material only of a very ordinary nature, and it is not unusual to find that the records of a court's deliberations consist of no more than the title of the Court and the names of the jurymen. This is especially the case in the 1640's.

Amongst the miscellaneous manuscripts is a rental of 1650.² Whereas the total of the 1625 leases had approximated to £1,050 and the undetailed rental of 1633 had shown a decline of some £25 on this figure, the rental of 1650 reached the sum of £1,085. 17s.10d., the increase being accounted for by an item of £36 2s. -d. received for lands purchased from Sir Richard Hawkesworth in Loftsome and Brackenholme.

1 See Graph opposite

2 Pet.MS. 8.D.2.

The receipts from Wressel remained stable, the apparent discrepancy of £16 being caused mainly by a decline in the issues from demesne arable; Loftsome accounts - with the exception of the £35 for the new purchases - tallied to within 4/-; Newsholme receipts were up by some £30 - about 13% - the increase arising from the leasing of demesne on a wider scale; in Brend the great increase of £45 was realised both from the leasing of demesne and the division of the common, neither of which items appeared in the earlier account; Gribthorpe receipts remained stable at the earlier figure, whilst Thornton receipts were up by about 5.5%.

It seems therefore as though the rent rise which had been so marked a characteristic of the 17th century, had been halted, though this inference must be qualified by the fact that this 1650 rental applies effectively only to data for 1632/3, as the 21-year leases of 1611 were not due for a second renewal until 1653.

An earlier list of rent arrears for 1621 indicates that, even as early as that, rentals had risen to such heights that the tenants could not pay promptly. This was particularly the case in Thornton where arrears reached £168 15s. 9d. whilst those in Wressel were £37 18s. 5d.¹

With the dismantling of the Castle in 1650 and its consequent unsuitability as a Percy residence, there is no

1 Pet.MS. 8.D.2.

evidence that after that date Wressel received more than fleeting visits from its owners, who had thus lost the last of their great Yorkshire manor houses. The Castle Chapel became the church for the parish - a transition which perhaps gave rise to Gent's unsubstantiated accusations that Parliamentary troops had been responsible for the destruction of the Parish Church.¹

The grandeur associated with Wressel for over four centuries had passed; the family whose property it was became absentees; the parks and demesnes had become fully available to the tenantry.

The process of change which had started in the Middle Ages was complete, and the lordship so long paternally fostered by the Percies was now in a position to develop more independently along the lines already indicated by the trend of circumstances which made both pastoral and agricultural occupations profitable to this community, the quality of whose geographical situation enabled either variant to be followed without the complete exclusion of the other.

1 T. Gent. "History of Ripon" (1733) App.p. 57.

A full survey of the Lordship of Wressel was carried out in 1613 - "Taken made and examined as well by the exact veiw examination and perambulation of Frauneys Mayson, Surveyor appointed for that purpose as by the Othes of the Tennants and Homage of the sd Mannor".

This survey is presumably the first conducted in this lordship by true mensuration rather than by estimation, so that for the first time acreages can be quoted with authority. Some of the matter below is included solely for the purpose of placing on record local field- and field division names.

The following is a digest of the contents of the survey:-

The Lordship of Wressel extends to:- Lands and tenements part in demesne and part in service, as Wressel Loftsome, Brend and Newsholme; land etc in service only, as Thorpe, Brackenholme, Bubwith, Foggathorpe, Linton, Willitoft; land etc., in demesne only, as Gribthorpe, Thornton, South Cliff, North Cliff, Newbald, Cowick, Walkington, Goole, Snaith, Pollington.

Then follows a list of the houses and garths abutting on the Town Street, with the names of their occupiers.

Field names and acreages appear in tabular form overleaf.

Wressel - Digest of 1613 Survey - Field names and acreages

Name	Acreage	Demesne	Free	T. and C.	Name	Acreage
	a. r. p.	a. r. p.	a. r. p.	a. r. p.		a. r. p.
Far Sand Field					<u>Newsholme</u>	
Coney Garth					<u>Demesne Arable</u>	
Damsell Close	57 3 25	20 - -	16 1 -	21 2 25	E. & W. Hall Garth Hall	
<u>Vescy Wood Field</u>					Riddings	
East Greenes					Rose Raw Close	
The Wrey					Hall Close	
Flatt nr. Vescy Wd.	90 - 14	21 1 23	29 2 21	39 - 10	Dumpool	135 1 20
<u>Toft Field</u>					<u>Demesne Meadow</u>	
New Field Flatt					Old & New Ness Dailes,	
Whitwell Flatt					Gares, Red Acres,	
Cockroftes					Howle Syke, Long and	
Calesticks					Short Acres.	81 1 29
L. & Gt. Bottoms					<u>Demesne Pasture</u>	
Crakehill Flatt	114 2 9	23 - 1	26 - 35	65 1 13	Dyon Close	19 3 1
<u>Fleet Field</u>					<u>The Park</u>	
Lea Crofts					Black Dykeclose	
Fleet Lands					Micklewray	
Bratt Lands	131 - 28	35 3 7	21 - 38	74 - 23	Pricket Hill	
<u>Church Field</u>					Upper Dyon	
Rowling/Burwoods					Launde	541 - 5
Milne Lands						
Butt Lands						
Pinfold Lands						
Forby Lands	118 3 15	33 3 28	21 1 37	63 1 30		
<u>Wressel Ings</u>						
(Continued overleaf)						

133.

Wressel - Digest of 1613 Survey - Field names and acreages (Cont'd.)

Name	Acreage	Demesne	Free	T.and C.
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
<u>Wressel Ings</u>				
North & South Ings				
Ing Closes				
The Marshh				
Thacker Ing	57 2 23	12 2 5	17 - 21	28 - 7
<u>Common</u>	260 2 29			
Street, lanes and Ponds.	10 2 31			

134.

List of houses and garths abutting on the Street

(a) at Newsholme,
(b) at Loftsome.

Name	Acreage	Newsholme		Loftsome	
		Free	T. & C.	Free	T. & C.
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
<u>Mickle Wrey Field</u>	96 1 32	12 - 24	42 1 16	23 1 33	17 3 39
<u>Rowlinges Field</u>	24 - 8	3 1 3	10 1 25	4 3 1	4 3 20
<u>Howsham Field</u>					
Bowdailes	47 1 17	3 3 26	19 2 -	11 2 37	11 3 38
<u>Sewersbie Field</u>	36 - 21	3 - 11	19 1 28	6 - 27	7 - 39
<u>Brackes Field</u>	14 3 7	3 - 14	11 2 33		
<u>Byeland Field</u>	17 1 37	3 - 2	14 1 35		
<u>Awnams Field</u>	17 2 25	3 - 14	14 2 10		
<u>Newsholme Ings</u>					
Brigdailes					
Burnett Hill					
Demesne Meadow	163 3 34				
<u>Newsholme Marsh</u>	(a common Cow pasture) 61 gates of 3 r. 9 p. amongst 24 tenants Total 49 ac. 0 r. 29 p.				
Westwood Low Moor	lately improved out of the common, 41 gates of 2 ac. 5½ p. amongst 39 tenants, i.e. 27 gates for 26 Newsholme tenants, and 14 gates for 13 Loftsome tenants 83 ac. 1 r. 33 p.				
<u>Loftsome Fields</u>	Acreage	Demesne	Free	T. & C.	
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	a.r. p.	
Awnams Field	34 3 3	3 1 1	17 1 14	14 - 27	
Burwoods Field					
Loftsome Brackes	56 3 7	31 1 35	21 3 7	3 2 3	
Kirkbrigg Field					
Loftsome Ings	42 2 11	7 2 5	24 1 38	10 2 6	
Loftsome Banks	36 - 38	16 2 21	19 2 17		

Brend List of houses and garths etc.

No demesne Land.

Field Name	Free	T. & C.
	a.r. p.	a.r. p.
Farm Field	2 1 9	28 3 29
Outgang Field	15 2 19	2 1 20
Brend Ings		
Warlottes	18 - 38	2 3 36
<u>Asselby</u>		
Windmill Field		
Sand Field		
Red Carr Field		
West Warp or		
Clay Field		
Carbrigge Field		
North Field		
<u>Pollington</u>		
West Field		
Mill Field		
East Field		
<u>North Newbald</u>		
North Field		
South Field		
Middle Field		

Thornton List of Houses and lands abutting on street

Name	Acreage a.r. p.	
<u>Arable</u>		
West Field	248 - -	let by the Earl to 16 two-oxgang men (15a. each)
East Field	255 - -	do. 16 oxgang men
Crossgate Field	60 - -	do. 16 two-oxgang men (3a. each) 12a. unlet.
Bownams	8 1 9	
<u>Meadow</u>		
East Ings	47 1 20	do. 16 two-oxgang men (2a.3r.30p. each) 1r.20p. unlet.
West Ings	100 - -	do. 16 two-oxgang men (6a.1r. each)
Birkholm, Langwit	110 - -	do. 1 two-oxgang man (9a.), 16 oxgangmen (5a. each) and to the cottagers (2a.2r.20p. each) 4a.2r.9p.unlet.
Oddland Ing	12 2 33	first crop to Lord Rosse, the aftercrop to the Earl.
Deans Flatt	13 3 24	do. Dean of York, do. do.
Furbye Carr	49 - 18	
Lay Garth Side	3 1 29	
<u>Pasture</u>		
Low Field closes	64 3 17	
Holcarr	61 1 30	
Haverland	9 - 21	
Eller Carr	103 - 18	
West Moor	414 1 21	let to the oxgang men . 179a. 1r. 12p. unlet.
East Moor	192 1 20	do. and gressemen. 15a. 2r.12p. unlet.
Walbutt Mill		
Close & Goates	13 1 24	
Gayle/Red Carr	138 - 33	in dispute between Lord Rosse's tenants of Melbourne & those of Thornton.
<u>Freehold Land</u>		
<u>Gribthorpe</u>		
		Church, Vicarage, Parsonage Farm, Hallgarth Glebe .. 59a.2r.23p. Total acreage 816a.Or.13p. divided amongst 6 tenants. 5½ ac. tithe meadow.

137.

Table 12

In the table showing the size of tenant holdings in 1613, the upper row of figures in each township refers to tenants who were holders of farms, tenements and cottages only. Moreover, those figures are based upon tenements rather than tenants, and pluralists have been disregarded, so that this table may be compared with the previous table showing the situation in 1577.

If the lordship be treated as a unit, and all types of tenant be included and their freeholds, tenements and cottage holdings lumped together, the lower row of figures represents the result.

It should be noted that the same tenant now held a mixed tenure, and in three cases, land in more than one township. In addition 23 free tenants have been incorporated, whilst 13 plural holdings have been included, so as to make a nett increase of 10 in the number of tenants.

Whilst the general distribution is roughly the same in the two rows of totals, it is to be noted (a) that the inclusion of the free tenants increases materially both extremes of the table; (b) that the bulk of the real smallholders still persists in Wressel; (c) that the earlier conclusions regarding pastoral activities in Gribthorpe and Thornton as well as regarding the extensive leasing of demesne and the division of common in those townships are borne out.

Size of Tenant Holdings - 1613

Township		No. of Tenants	Size of Tenant Holdings																					
			Under 2½ ac.	2½- 5 ac.	5-10 ac.	10-15 ac.	15-20 ac.	20-25 ac.	25-30 ac.	30-35 ac.	35-40 ac.	40-45 ac.	45-50 ac.	50-55 ac.	55-60 ac.	60-65 ac.	65-70 ac.	70-75 ac.	75-80 ac.	80-85 ac.	85-90 ac.	90-95 ac.	More than 95 acres	
Wressel		25	15	1	1		2	1	3															
	All	29	15	1	1		2	1	4	1					1	1	1							
Loftsome		7			2		3	1	1															
	All	8			2		3		1	1					2	1	1							
Newsholme		23		6	6	1		6	3	1														1 (134)
	All	27	2	6	4	3		6	4	1	1													
Brend		14	1		1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1												
	All	18	4		1	3	1	3		2	2	1												
Gribthorpe		7			1					1														1 (164)
	All	7			1					1								1	1					3(166,118,315)
Thornton		50			8	4	2	3	12	3		1				11	4	2						3(166,118,315)
	All	47			7	4	2	3	11	3	1					10	5							1 (120)
TOTALS		126	16	7	19	8	8	14	20	6	2	1			1	11	5	2	1	1	3			
		136	21	7	16	10	8	13	20	8	5	1			2	11	6		1	1	6			

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Table 13

CONTENTS

Chapter V S U M M A R Y A N D C O N C L U S I O N S

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The two centuries to which the scope of this thesis has been especially limited, constitute a period of widespread changes in national economy and society. In the history of the Percies the era is one of constantly changing political fortunes, fraught with frequently recurring tragedy. In the story of the four Yorkshire Percy estates the period witnesses a general decline in status. In 1450 they were the chief northern residences of their owners,¹ whereas by 1650 all had become no more than properties with long traditions of association with the Percies, who now favoured their southern estates - and Alnwick Castle, which had by this time lost its hitherto exclusively military character.

Shortly after the beginning of the special period on which attention has been concentrated, the wars between Lancaster and York brought about the deaths of the 2nd Earl in 1455 at St. Albans, of the 3rd Earl in 1461 at Towton, and of his younger brother Thomas Earl of Egremont in 1460 at Northampton. To continue the story of violent deaths, the 4th Earl was killed by a rioting mob at Topcliffe in 1489, whilst the 6th Earl's younger brother Sir Thomas and the 7th Earl were attainted and executed in 1537 and 1572 respectively. The 6th and 8th Earls suffered severely from political misfortunes, the latter dying mysteriously in the Tower, in which the 9th Earl too spent more than a quarter of his life.

¹ Petworth, Syon and Dagenham being their southern counterparts.

Thus, of the ten senior male members of the Percy family whose careers coincide with the two hundred years, only three may be regarded as relatively fortunate - the 5th Earl whose living standards earned for him the title of "the Magnificent", the 6th Earl who died in penury and obscurity, and Algernon the 10th Earl who saw the final ruin of Wressel Castle, his family's last important Yorkshire residence.¹

This most chequered period of the Percy family history is inevitably accompanied by much change in the ownership of the Yorkshire lordships concerned, since they were forfeited to the Crown twice and sublet frequently to lessees, until 1576 when they became once more the property of the Percies and then of their relatives the Wyndhams until the twentieth century.²

Not only is the history of the four lordships complicated by the political troubles of the period but also by a number of other factors which make the tracing of similarities in their development more difficult than the discovery of differences.

The slight military importance of Spofforth probably disappeared shortly after the beginning of the period, after which it became no more than a non-residential administrative centre of an extensive barony.

1 See A.H.P. passim

2 See Descent and Ownership Table in the folder of this thesis.

With the composing of the Percy - Neville quarrels in the second half of the 15th century, Leconfield lost whatever small strategic value it may have possessed and became solely a favourite Yorkshire residence, though one so expensive to maintain that a secondary and smaller lodge was built, after which the old manor house was abandoned and dismantled by the beginning of the 17th century, so that nothing now remains but a moated enclosure.

Topcliffe's position on the Swale made it a site of considerable strategic value, lying as it did on one of the traditional lines of Scottish invasion, but the comparative lack of incident on this northern frontier during the 16th century together with the protracted absenteeism of the Percy owners contributed to the abandonment of Cock Lodge and the substitution of a smaller New Lodge near by - a process similar to that at Leconfield.

Wressel alone preserved its largely untried potential military value until its mutilation at the very close of the period.

Thus by 1650 the close Percy connection with Yorkshire which had lasted from the 11th to the 16th century now became only absentee land-ownership.

Whilst each of the four lordships contained subsidiary members, not all of these remained associated with their capita during the whole time, so that estate valuations at

different stages must be treated with a certain circumspection. Geological conditions too, played their part in influencing the development of the lordships - the relatively high-lying but heavy, clayey and rock-strewn area of Spofforth, the marshy, low terrain of Wressel and Leconfield, the sharply contrasting sandy gravels on the west and the heavy clay on the east of the Swale in Topcliffe lordship determining in no small measure the type of occupation to be followed.

Careful examination of all available sources has failed to reveal any unusual practices in the customs due from the tenantry, save that the "custom of Cumberland" obtained in Leconfield and Wressel, the two East Riding estates.

For these reasons it is clear that the four cannot be treated as parts of a unit but as separate entities, except for the citing of the broadest generalisations.

At the opening of the period all four were communities showing no abnormalities. Their population presumably consisted mainly of copyholders - or tenants at will as they are usually called - though tenants' lists are not available before 1473 (Wressel), 1511 (Leconfield), 1522 (Topcliffe) and 1561 (Spofforth). The following table is based upon figures returned for a period centring on 1560 - the earliest for which data can be found for all the lordships.¹

¹ See Table overleaf.

Table A

Proportions of Free and Customary Tenant Population 16th Cent.

Lordship	Free	%	Tenants at Will	%
Leconfield	1 (1523)	1.3	76 (1561)	98.7
Spofforth	27 (1577)	14.8	155 (1561)	85.1
Topcliffe	45 (1560)	38.8	71 (1560)	61.2
Wressel	13 (1561)	17.0	117 (1562)	90.0
TOTALS	86		419	83.0

As might be expected, the percentage of customary tenants is, in the aggregate, some 8% lower than the 91% quoted by Tawney as characteristic of Northumberland and Lancashire.¹ It is perhaps significant that the two East Riding manors have the highest proportions of tenants at will, since both were in an area where medieval conditions would be likely to survive longest, though it is somewhat surprising that Leconfield should have the largest proportion, when its proximity to Beverley is considered.

The tenures of the freeholders varied but slightly. Whilst occasional mention of free socage occurs, it is more usual to find knight service - often for a clumsy fraction of a knight's fee - fealty, suit of court, and a

1 "Agrarian Problems" p.25. But it is about 20% above the national average as quoted by Bindoff "Tudor England" Penguin Books 1950 p.37. and at least 15% above the figure quoted for Essex at this time "Agricultural and Rural Society in Essex 1560-1640". Univ. of London. Ph.D. thesis (1950) F. E. Hull.

money rent and/or a payment in kind as the conditions of tenure. Such payments in kind included cumin, pepper, oats, gauntlets and gilt spurs. The freeholders' failure to perform suit of court was solemnly noted in the court rolls of all the manors, whilst in the account rolls of the later part of the 16th century the amercements for such failures are included in the "unde super" section. Yet the fact that such freeholders as the heads of monastic corporations were included long after the Dissolution implies that such entries were made for purposes of accountancy rather than with the intention of collecting the sums due. In the Percy Survey of 1577 the freeholds are remarkable in that they lack specific definition and are often the subject of modification or even of cancellation by later auditors or surveyors. This vagueness is also echoed in the court rolls, where, in the reports of "obitus", quantities of land and terms of tenure are more often than not left blank by the clerk. Yet though there is this copious evidence that the freeholder was accorded little attention by the manorial administrator, on occasions it is clear that the former's privileged economic position did not escape notice entirely, as when in 1552 John Freer of Catton in Topcliffe was described as holding land worth £4 per year, for which he actually paid 4d.¹

1 Pet.MS.D.1.4.(38) 5/6 Ed.VI.

The lack of accounts to represent all the lordships and to correspond to the tenants' lists of any particular year makes calculation difficult, but working on the free tenant figures of the previous table¹ and on the account rolls approximating most closely to those years, it appears that the free tenants paid rents totalling £7 12s. - $\frac{1}{4}$ d. excluding rents in kind.² At about the same date the gross receipts from the four manors totalled £428 14s. 6d.

The customary tenants who formed so large a proportion of the tenant population were bound by customs of normal character, i.e. suit of court, of mill and of oven; the maintenance of roads, bridges and their own tenements; the "driving of the lord's drift" on the common; the performance of local official duties when so selected; certain hay-making and carrying tasks (Leconfield and Spofforth) though these last had been commuted for money payments before 1450. In Leonfield and Wressel the "Custom of Cumberland" was in operation, the tenant "doynge sute to the lords courte seruyng hymself and al hys family to the Borderes when necessarye shal requyre and paynge hys fyne at the lordes will after the dethe alyenacon or exchange of euery lorde and tenaunte".³

Tenant privileges were of the usual character - stinted pasture rights on the common and in certain parts of the

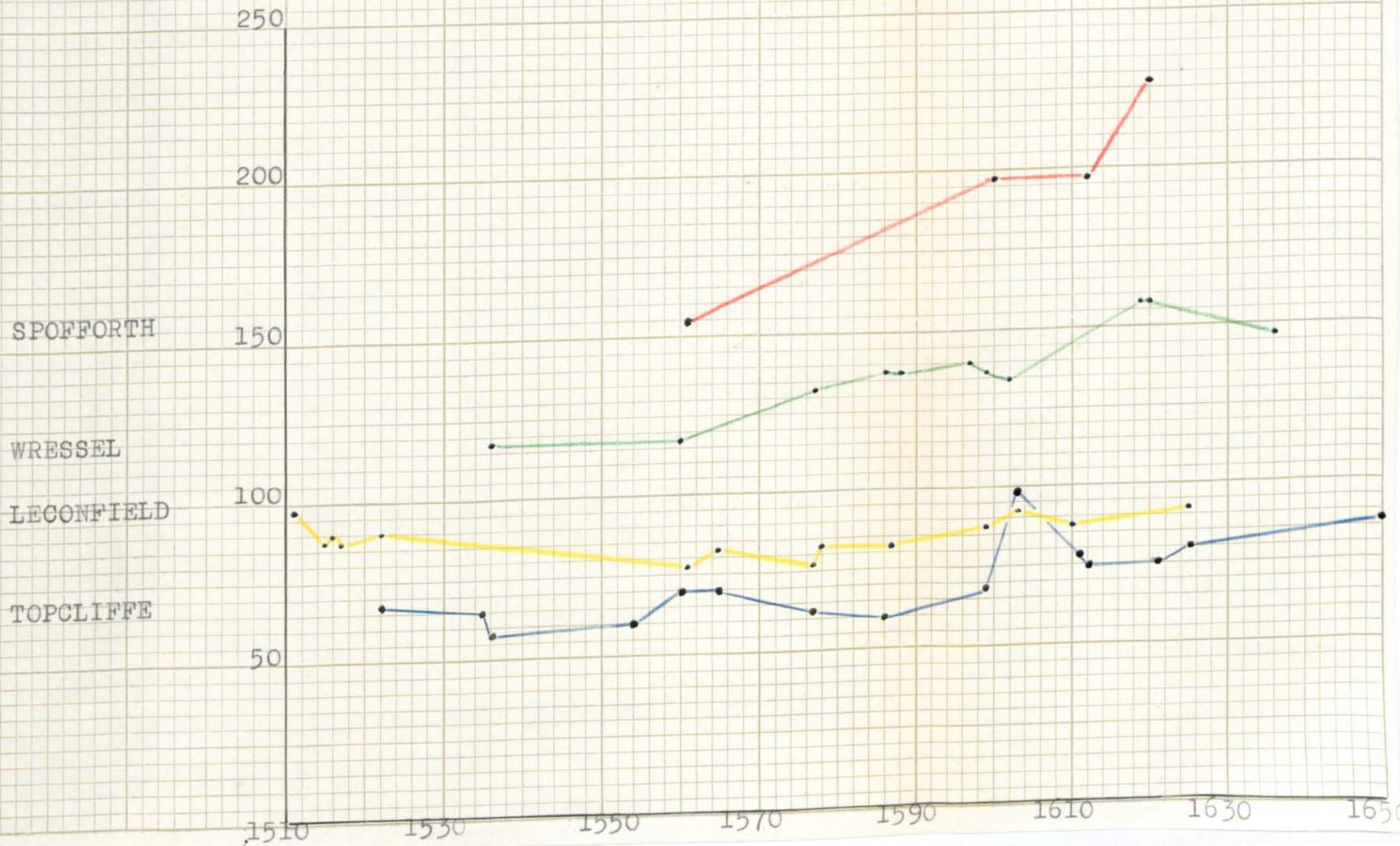
1 Table A

2 Leonfield 6/8, Wressel 24/10, Spofforth £5 2. 5., Topcliffe 18/1 $\frac{1}{4}$.

3 PRO.Misc.Bks.Exch.K.R. Vol.37 (Humberston's Survey f.249d.)

GRAPH A

FLUCTUATION OF TENANT POPULATION 1511-1650
(TENANTS AT WILL ONLY)



parks (Spofforth and Topcliffe); reasonable estover, turbarry rights and freedom to take timber for property repairs or construction "with the view of the lord's officers".

The number of customary tenants shows a remarkable stability throughout the period - an indication that conditions of tenure were satisfactory and tenant-landlord relations reasonably good,² especially as in each of the lordships it has been shown that the 'persistence' of tenant population was considerable.

These four estates were the most valuable Percy possessions in Yorkshire in the middle of the 15th century, their nearest rivals being Tadcaster and Seamer. Until 1536,¹ on the data available, gross receipts rose steadily by 47%.³ The transfer of the estates to the Crown was marked by an abrupt fall in receipts partly due, no doubt, to the Earl's extensive granting of leases on uneconomic terms in the years immediately preceding the transfer. Thereafter until 1577 the receipts rose to 6% above their 1536 level, but to 49% above that of 1542, Leconfield alone showing a decline.⁴

During this period of 130 years the rents of the tenants at will had at first shown only slight increases up to 1517, and thence had declined till 1577 except in the case of Wressel.⁵

1 See Graph B, following page: 9

2 See Graph A, following page: 8

3 This statement is based on gross receipts for Spofforth, Leconfield and Topcliffe only, since no earlier figures are available for Wressel.

4 I can find no explanation for this decline.

5 See Graph C, following page: 10 9.

LECONFIELD SPOFFORTH TOPCLIFFE WRESSEL

DATE: 1444 1517 1536 1542 1577 1580 1602

No figures for Wressel

Pet.Ms. Survey Notes

N.B. CHANGE OF SCALE

1618 1633 1650/1

Pet.Ms. 8.D.2.

REF: Pet.Ms. D.9.3. Pet.Ms. D.9.13. PRO.R. & S. PF 23/52 PRO.Min. Acc.SC. 6/4285 Pet.Ms. Survey A.H.P. APP.XXVI

£400

£300

£200

£100

£1,100

£1,000

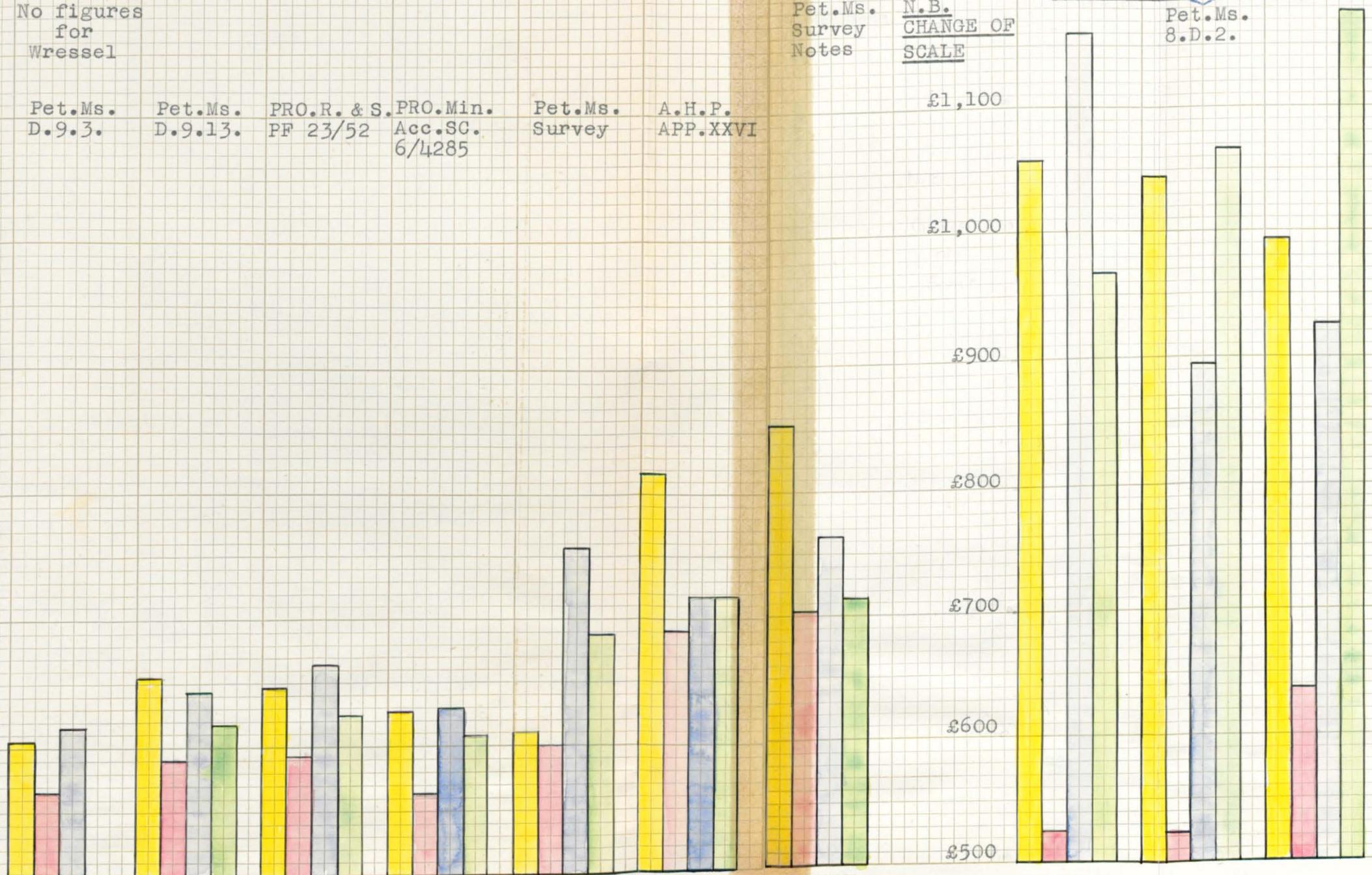
£900

£800

£700

£600

£500



The following table¹ shows the relation between rents paid by tenants at will and the gross receipts of the four manors during the period 1444-1577. Unfortunately there are only four accounts which bear on all four places during this time.

It has already been shown how inelastic were the rents of free tenants and how the payments of tenants at will remained relatively unchanged during the earlier part of the 16th century. The debasement of the currency in the 1540's resulted in a sharp rise in prices which affected especially the 'most important category of fixed-income people those who received customary rents from land'.²

Table B shows the nett receipts and their percentage of the gross actually received by the owner, the column for 1542 representing the period of Crown trusteeship, when debasement was on the point of taking place. At that time the Crown proprietor was receiving some 77% of the gross. It is a matter for regret that no documents have been discovered to throw specific light on the Crown administration of the estates between 1542 and 1555, and that the reign of Mary is represented only by one admission list of leaseholders for Leconfield and an incomplete series for Spofforth.

It is clear that under Edward VI the Crown found it necessary to counter inflation by converting existing tenures

1 See page 11.

2 Bindoff op.cit. p.121.

GRAPH C

DATE 1474 1517 1542 1577 RENTS OF TENANTS AT WILL 1602 1618 1633 1650

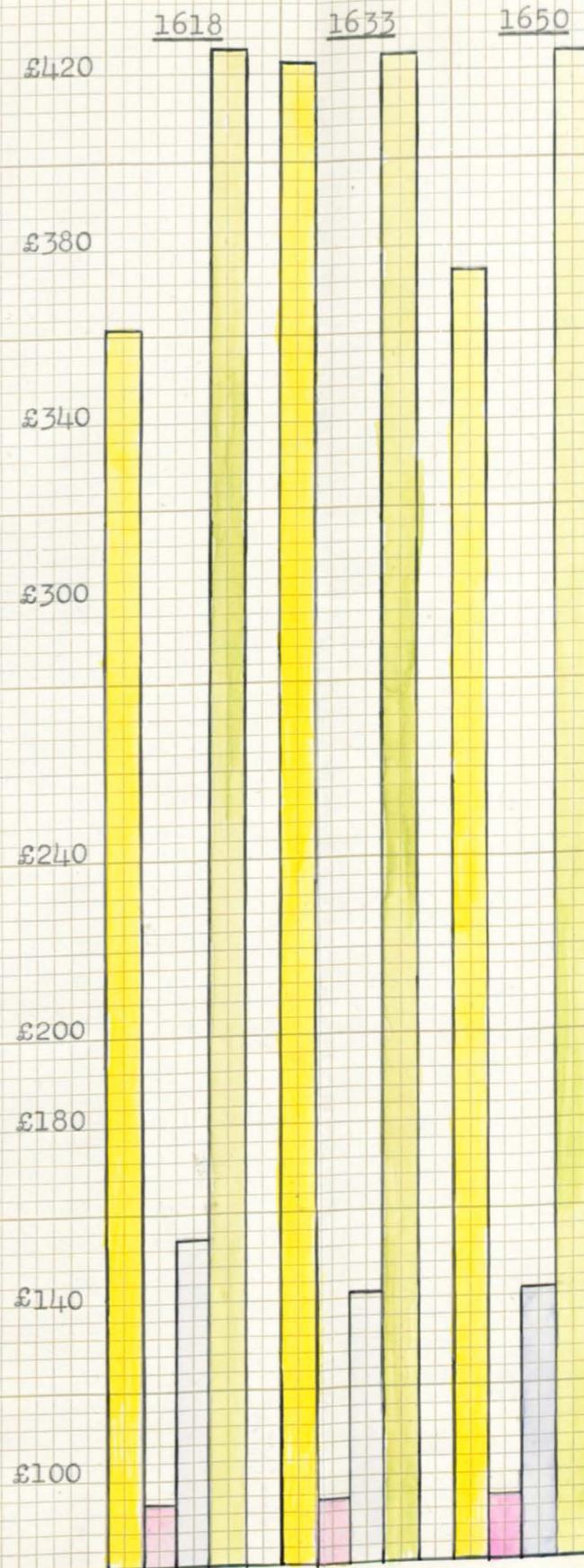
(Wressel
1472)

LECONFIELD SPOFFORTH TOPCLIFFE WRESSEL

REF: Pet.Ms. D.9.3 Pet.Ms. D.9.13 PRO.Min. Acc.SC 6/4285 Pet.Ms. Survey Pet.Ms. Survey Notes



N.B.
CHANGE OF
SCALE.



REFERENCE
1618 } Pet.Ms.
1633 } 8.D.2.
1650 }

Tenants' Rents as proportion of Gross receipts

Lordship	1444		1517		1542		1577	
	Rent	%	Rent	%	Rent	%	Rent	%
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
Leconfield	66 18 5	64	68 15 1	45	60 2 8	47	53 18 2½	48
Spofforth	16 5 6	25	28 2 9	31	28 6 2	46	19 8 8½	19
Topcliffe	31 3 4	27.2	39 6 4½	27.6	32 13 -½	25.8	30 17 -	11.7
Wressel	17 11 -	65.4	87 1 4	73.7	90 15 8	83.3	128 10 9½	67.7
Lordship	1602		1618		1633		1650	
	Rent	%	Rent	%	Rent	%	Rent	%
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	
Leconfield	48 12 8	13.5	363 13 -	34.2	423 10 10	40.5	375 3 2	37.7
Spofforth	29 11 4½	14.3	93 18 7	17.7	94 3 6	18.2	94 3 6	14.7
Topcliffe	33 15 3	11.7	155 4 4	13.1	144 17 5	16.1	146 5 9	15.7
Wressel	137 18 5½	63.7	426 3 5	43.5	424 15 1	39	No	data

* Figure is for Wressel only, i.e. without its component members.

to leasehold and by increasing both rentals and ingress fines, thus continuing on a larger scale a process which had been followed by the Percies in the 1480's and 1490's.¹ This process was further continued by the 7th Earl when he regained his estates in 1556. The Leconfield admission list includes the names of 77 tenants whose rentals were only slightly changed, though the sum realised from admission fines approximated to three times the annual rent roll.² At Spofforth 57 tenants were granted 21-year leases.³ That the same practice operated in the other lordships seems almost certain, the effect on nett receipts being immediately apparent in the column for 1577. As early as 1570 Hall, Humberston's assistant, reported 'We have surveied Tadcaster Spofforth and Topcliffe with their members... wherein is not left undemised so much ground as is able to keep a geldinge more than his Parkes.....(the Earl) hath taken of his tenants ... sore fynes.."⁴

As Professor Bindoff has pointed out, the debasement of the coinage which was a great factor in the price rise of the 1540's also encouraged the export trade and the production of woollen cloth for overseas markets.⁵ Locally this encouraged sheep grazing as an occupation which would assure comfortable profits to those who could engage in it on

1 Under Edward VI there are records of royal leases - Leconfield 6, Wressel 11, Spofforth 5. Topcliffe had been granted in 1543 to the Archbishop of York.

2 Pet.MS.D.3.18 4/5 P.& M.

3 PRO.Cal.Pat.R. c/66 2/3 P.& M. LVII, LVIII, LXII, LXIII, LXVI, LXVIII, LXXII, LXXIII.

4 C.S.P.(Dom.) Add. Eliz.Vol.xviii Art.46.

5 Op.cit. pp.121-122.

sufficiently wide a scale.

Hitherto the bulk of the arable land had been "in service" and most of the meadow and all the parkland retained in demesne, usually for the maintenance of the lord's deer, cattle or horses. Under the pressure both of the proprietor's need for a larger rent roll and the insistent demands for more land from tenants and speculators, demesne land was more extensively thrown into the leasehold market, the parks wholly or partially disparked, continuing the process of enclosure which had earlier affected the outer fringes of the parks. By 1580 the new commercial basis of estate management was well established in the four lordships. Not only were the gross receipts increased but the nett takings were further enhanced by the reduction of overhead costs through the redundancy of some parkers, palesters, foresters and their assistants.¹ The 77% 'efficiency' represented by the proportion of nett to gross receipts in 1542 had leapt to 90% in 1577 and by the opening of the 17th century had advanced a further 4%.²

An essential part of the new business-like policy was the taking of estate surveys. The general survey of 1577, the Yorkshire section of which is at Petworth and the Northumberland section at Alnwick, was necessitated by the 8th Earl's wish for an inventory of his newly regained possessions.

1 See Table C. Fees of Officials p. 14-17.

2 See Table D. p. 18.

Fees of Officials - Leconfield

Office	1444			1541			1542			1579			1603			
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.										
Bailiff	6	1	4	3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8	
Parkers																
Old Park	3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8				
New Park				3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8				
Coursing Park							3	-	8	3	-	8				
Palester	1	6	8	1	6	8				2	-	-				
Keeper of Carr & Outwoods	1	6	8				2	-	-							
Keeper of Manor	2	-	-	2	-	-				2	-	-				
Keeper of New Lodge				4	13	4				1	-	-				
Steward & M'r forester				3	6	8	6	13	4							
Gardener				1	-	-										
Keeper of the Moats				1	-	-										
Keeper of the Thorns				-	3	4										
Swanherds				-	13	4	-	13	4	-	13	4				
Keeper of New Lodge & Old Manor							6	1	4							
Collector				1	6	8										
Agister										2	-	-				
Clerk														-	4	-
TOTALS	13	15	4	24	12	-	27	10	8	19	16	-	3	4	8	

Table C

14.

Fees of Officials - Spofforth

Office	1441	1453	1472	1479	1517	1524	1538	1574	1608
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bailiff	3 - 8	} 4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	3 - 8	3 - 8
Keeper of Outwoods	1 10 4		4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	4 11 -	3 - 8	3 - 8
Parker	3 - 8	3 - 8	1 10 4	3 - -	1 10 4	} 4 11 -	4 11 -	3 - 8	3 - 8
Palester	1 10 4	1 10 4							
Stockman	3 - 8								
Bowbearer in the outwoods							3 - 8		
TOTALS	12 2 8	9 2 -	5 1 4	7 11 -	6 1 4	9 2 -	12 2 8	7 11 8	7 11 8

15.

Fees of Officials - Topcliffe

Office	1444	1472	1480	1517	1520	1527	1538	1574	1608
	£ s. d.								
Bailiff	3 - 8		5 - -	3 - 8		3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8
Keeper of Manor				4 18 -	- 3 4		2 - -		
Parker of Barbelonde	6 7 4		3 - 8			3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8
2nd Parker	3 - 8					3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8
3rd Parker								3 - 8	
Parker of Moskwith	3 - 8		3 - 8	1 10 4		3 - 8	3 - 8	3 - 8	
Palester Barbelonde	3 - 8	3 - 8	1 10 4			3 6 8	3 6 8	1 6 8	
Palester Moskwith									
Agister				- 1 8				2 - -	
Forester					3 - 8				
Chaplain		5 - -	5 6 8						
Valet			4 - -						
Steward			5 - -				4 - -		
Collector			1 10 4						
Clerk			- 4 -						
TOTALS	18 10 -	8 - 8	28 12 8	9 10 8	3 4 -	15 9 4	21 9 4	18 10 -	- 8 - 6 9 4

16.

Table C

Fees of Officers - Wressel

Office	1472			1517			1523			1538			1579			1603		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Constable of the Castle	10	-	-							10	-	-						
Porter of the Castle	3	-	8							1	-	-	2	-	-			
Gardener	3	-	8							3	-	-	3	-	-			
Keeper of the New Garden							1	6	8	1	6	8						
Valet	3	-	8															
Bailiff				3	-	8				3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8
Forester				3	-	8												
Parker							3	-	8	3	-	8	3	-	8			
Parker of Newsholme Park										4	11	-						
Palester													-	10	-			
Clerk																		- 10 -
Chantry Priest at Thornton							1	6	8	1	6	8						
TOTALS	19	2	-	6	1	4	5	14	-	27	5	8	11	11	4	3	10	8

Table C

17.

Fluctuations of Nett Receipts and Percentages of Gross

Lordship	1444	1517	1542	1577	1602	1618
<u>Leconfield</u>	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Nett	71 9 9	116 16 10	54 15 8	90 5 2½	343 19 10	1,052 16 -
% of Gross	67.6	75.8	42.5	81.8	96.5	99.3
<u>Spofforth</u>	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Nett	34 14 8	61 6 6	56 1 8	90 1 10	192 2 10	522 3 8½
% of Gross	53.1	67.7	91.8	90.	95.	99.4
<u>Topcliffe</u>	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Nett	69 12 8	69 4 1	118 8 5	240 3 7¾	263 12 -	1,160 6 3
% of Gross	60.5	48.9	95.1	93.	92.6	97.6
<u>Wressel</u>	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Nett	- - -	87 2 10	97 6 3	178 11 -½	204 18 5½	974 11 6½
% of Gross	-	73.8	89.8	94.1	94.9	99.4
Total Nett Receipts	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	175 15 1	334 10 3	326 12 -	599 1 8½	1,004 13 1½	3,609 17 6
Overall %	61.7	66.2	77.2	90.8	94.7	96.1

Whilst the Commission¹ satisfies in general the instructions recommended by Norden, and whilst occasionally the phrase 'by Measure' appears in the text, one is still inclined to regard the document as an 'extent' rather than a 'survey', which carries with it the connotation of mathematical accuracy. Further surveys followed - for Leconfield in 1614, Topcliffe 1613/14 and Wressel 1613. No doubt Spofforth also was surveyed at about the same time but the text is missing. The only real indication that there was such a survey for Spofforth is in the title of a later Spofforth estate plan of 1767² 'drawn from an Old Plan made about ye Year 1611'. It seems reasonable therefore to assume that this 'old Plan' is the earlier undated Spofforth plan, which in style and colouring is similar to the dated plans of the other lordships.³ The Topcliffe survey of 1613/14 is incomplete and the map is missing.

The character of these Jacobean surveys is entirely different from that of the 1577 survey. Whereas the latter has much picturesque information, those of 1613/14 bear more resemblance to account books or terriers in which all measurements of tenements are carefully recorded. Where the 1577 surveyors - in spite of their assurances to the contrary - had estimated areas, the later records show that

1 See Appendix Topcliffe section.

2 See folder "Maps, Plans & MSS." page 7.

3 See folder "Maps, Plans & MSS." page 5.

they had usually underestimated, especially in the case of waste and parkland.¹

This more accurate surveying was the inevitable companion of the greatly increased rent roll, which in turn had resulted from the opening of waste, common demesne land to competitive tenant demand for larger land areas.

So far as the somewhat imperfect records will permit, Tables E and F² show the relationship between tenants and land in 1577 and 1613/14. The general inferences are that in Topcliffe and Wressel arable farming declined and grazing increased, whilst in Leconfield both branches of activity flourished. The lack of information for Spofforth is to be regretted, but the implication is that there agriculture continued with little change, the common arable fields still remaining until enclosed at the end of the 18th century.³ At the same time in Spofforth cattle grazing and hemp cultivation expanded, the former through the leasing of many closes in the Parks. At Topcliffe and probably also at Spofforth the tenements were small, only one tenant holding more than 50 acres; but at Wressel and Leconfield there were in all 27 tenements of over 60 acres, five of which were above 100 acres.

The process of satisfying the tenant demand for wider

1 See Topcliffe section Table 16 p. 136.

2 See pages 21 and 22.

3 Spofforth thus exemplifies the intermediate type of Yorkshire village at this period, where arable and grazing were co-existent. v.Y.A.J. 1950 'Glebe Terriers and Open Fields' M. W. Beresford.

Land Areas held by Tenants at Will - 1577 and 1613

Lordship	Arable		Meadow		Pasture	
	1577 a.r. p.	1613 a.r. p.	1577 a.r. p.	1613 a.r. p.	1577 a.r. p.	1613 a.r. p.
Leconfield	504 2 -	563 1 12	116 2 17	240 3 38		1946 3 29
Spofforth	207 - -		55 2 -		6 2 - + 42 beast gates	
Topcliffe	545 - 29	486 3 21	69 1 33	114 2 16		66 2 24
Wressel	859 1 21	538 2 29	194 2 1	103 3 20	542 3 2	847 2 24

Size and Distribution of Tenements - 1577 and 1613(c)

	No. of Tenants	No arable or meadow	Up to 2½ ac.	5 ac.	10 ac.	15 ac.	20 ac.	25 ac.	30 ac.	35 ac.	40 ac.	45 ac.	50 ac.	55 ac.	60 ac.	65 ac.	70 ac.	75 ac.	80 ac.	85 ac.	90 ac.	95 ac.	100 ac. and above	
Leconfield																								
1577	76	40	2	2	12	7		3		4	3	1			1								1(101)	
1614	65		23	16	6	2	4	7	1	1			2		1		1						1(290)	
Spofforth																								
1577	46		29	4	4	3	1		2			2	1											
1611			----- No records -----																					
Topcliffe																								
1577	69	30	2	8	6	6	3	3	2	2	5	2												
1613	72	15	26	5	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2										1(216)	
Wressel																								
1577	117	44	19	12	13	6	12	1	8	1	2						1 (See notes on Table 6 Wressel Section.)							
1613	126		16	7	19	8	8	14	20	6	2	1	1			1	11	5	2	1		1	3 (118) (166) (315)	

development was accompanied by a measure of improvement and enclosure. The open fields at Leconfield had practically disappeared by about 1620; the commons of Skipton, Catton, Dalton and Asenby in Topcliffe were divided and enclosed by 1613, whilst in 1602 in Kirkby Overblow, part of Spofforth, reference was made to 'the recent exchange and redivision among the tenants', which especially affected the Rector's glebeland.¹ These improvements were made for both arable and pastoral purposes. Whilst the accent is on cattle rearing in all the four lordships, the only one where sheep grazing does not seem to have been extensive was Spofforth - all the more surprising since it is the one West Riding lordship of the four concerned, and especially as its immediate neighbour on the north-east - North Deighton - is mentioned particularly by Purvis as a sheep-farming parish.²

From about 1618 the demand for land in Topcliffe, Spofforth and Leconfield seems to have been satisfied, so far as this particular period is concerned. Especially in Topcliffe where much land was of inferior quality, rents seem to have been inflated, and there followed a considerable fall in receipts at the next check-point in 1633, echoed less markedly in Leconfield and Spofforth. Thenceforward till 1650, gross receipts in Topcliffe and Spofforth recovered,

- 1 As early as 1597 the Vicar and freeholders of Wressel had interchanged land with the lord (Pet.MS.5.D.10. 40/41 Eliz.
- 2 Y.A.J. 1947 'Notes on 16th Century Farming in Yorkshire' J. S. Purvis.

in Leconfield declined somewhat more steeply, whilst those of Wressel continued the steady and uninterrupted rise which they had shown since 1618 - to a figure which made this the most profit-yielding of the four estates.¹

Throughout the whole period, relations between lord and tenantry seem, from all available evidence, to have been good, save on a very few occasions. The Earls seem to have been considerate landlords, well able to win local support from their tenantry, even when, as in 1569, they undertook a cause whose chances of success were of the slightest. So in 1489 it was not so much opposition to the Earl as to the unpopular king whom he represented, that caused the 4th Earl's death at Topcliffe at the hands of a mob which was probably encouraged to violence by 'foreign' agitators.

It was reported by the Commissioners of 1517 that since Michaelmas 1488 the Earl had enclosed 40 acres of demesne arable and 100 acres of wood and pasture to increase the size of his Park at Leconfield.² Arguments have been advanced to show that this was a matter of exchange of land rather than depopulation.³

About 1577 - it was alleged by the North Riding Justices of 1607 - the 8th Earl had 'enclosed and pitifully depopulated' the village of Gristhwaite in Topcliffe. The accuracy of this allegation can be gauged by reference to the Topcliffe

1 See Graph B, following page: 9

2 Trans.R.Hist.Soc.1892 VI p.177 and 287.

3 See pp.35-37 Leconfield Section.

tenant-population table.¹ Together with Thorpefield, Gristhwaite had supported a maximum of 10 tenants in 1554. True, the number was reduced to 1 in 1577, but by 1611 there were three, by 1621 four, and by 1650 ten tenants again.²

At Spofforth the tenantry acted riotously in destroying in 1592 the enclosure of Parson Hagg which had gone undisputed for the previous thirty years;³ at almost the same time similar demonstrations took place on the Earl's Sussex and Cumberland estates. It seems more than probable therefore, that such incidents were caused by nation-wide dissatisfaction rather than by purely local discontent.

The sole other evidence of strained relations between lord and tenant in these manors is contained in the somewhat debatable statement in Hall's report:-

"The lyke grauntes have ben made by the lordes of manours within the Countye of Cumbrelande wherwith the tenauntes thought themselves well pleased and in good estate And albeit ther fermeholdes were but small yet the comons were great and lardge so as the tenauntes were well hable to lyve to maynteyne themselve and ther famyly and alwaies to have in redynes horse and such armour as the country requyryth for the service of the prynce and defence of ther country; till now of late yeres the gredynes of the lordes hath ben suche and ther practyses so horrible by making conveyance and demyses of ther landes to cause the pore

1 See Table 3, p.89, Topcliffe Section.

2 In 1613 there were six tenants, though this does not appear in the table.

3 Acts of the Privy Council 1891 Vol.XXII p.527.

tenauntes to make fyne somtymes once in two three or four yeres or more as to them seme good as the pore tenauntes are so raunsomed that they are neyther hable to lyve and maynteyne ther famyly or yet to have horse and armour to serve the prynce and maynteyne the country so as the custome which hertofoer they most desyred ys now become so odyous unto them as they are not hable to endure it".¹

That these allegations are, at least, exaggerated has already been stated,² on the grounds that there is no corroborative evidence to be found in the sources consulted.

It has been shown how the lord fared financially in the economic crises which occurred during the selected period. It remains to be seen how the tenant was affected.

Whilst there is no shortage of references to the prices of commodities³ and the rates of remuneration operating in the four lordships during the period, such references have been carefully examined before being included in the list. Claims by plaintiffs have usually been ignored, on the grounds that they were probably exaggerated, unless the plea has been approved and affeered by the jury. Inventory values, especially in the cases of claims under legacies and goods of felons have been accepted. With these subtractions however, the list is much more limited than could be desired. The wide price variations occasionally encountered are to be

1 Y.A.J.Vol.XVII Humberston's Survey Intro. p.135.

2 See Spofforth Section p. 124-126.

3 See list of Commodity prices pp.35-38 following.

explained partly by the fact that figures are taken indiscriminately from the four manors, to whose differences in productive quality and organisation allusion has already been made. The general impression gained is that where, as at Wressel and Topcliffe, there was a larger proportion of very small small-holders, whilst rents were higher in the aggregate, rates of pay were somewhat lower in view of the more plentiful supply of casual labour. On the other hand, in Spofforth, where customary tasks had already been commuted for an annual money payment before the period opens, the rates for employment - at least on demesne lands - could be raised slightly without undue embarrassment. In all cases however, the general demand for labour in the early 16th century had its effect in raising wages, especially those of the more skilled craftsmen such as thatchers, masons and carpenters. In many other occupations, the form in which the information is couched makes precise comparison less possible, as, for instance, in the case of mowing and making hay, where charges are stated 'per acre', 'per day', and 'per load'. Differing areas and seasons, and - not least - the different abilities of individuals, defy accurate correlation in such cases.

With all these limitations and qualifications, the inferences to be drawn with any safety are disappointing in their sparseness.

Table G.Wage-rates

Operative	1450 - 1500	1550(c)	1600-1620
Palemaker	8d. per day	10d. per day	-
Labourer	5d. " "	1/- " "	8d. per day
Thatcher	4d. " " or 8d. " " without food.	9d. " "	1/6 " "
Carpenter	4d. - 6d. " "	9d. " "	
Sawyer	10d. " "	-	-
Mason	6d. " "	9d. " "	-
Woodfeller	5d. " "	8d. - 1/- " "	3/- " "
Board for 1 day	4d.	8d.	1/4d.

Much of the value of the contents of the above table is discounted by the fact that many of the occupations included were seasonable and subject to interruption, so that the day-rate cannot be taken as a basis for calculating annual wage receipts. The only few cases where the mention of annual wages occurs are limited to the 17th century and are of so wide a range as to be of slight value.²

No information has been found to show what yield in money and in kind a tenant farmer could expect, since nowhere in the material consulted is there a record of the utilisation of a tenement for crop production. Only in five cases can

1 The figures in the 17th century column in the above table show a reasonable correlation with those quoted by E. W. J. Kerridge 'Agrarian Development of Wiltshire 1540-1640' Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of London 1951, p.474.

2 Man's wages:- 20/- (1640), 80/- (1603); woman's wages:- 38/- (1644), 14/- (1603).

the yield per acre and its value be computed, and then only for a most limited period.¹

With these extensive limitations, the information to be gained on this subject from a study of these four manors only supports but adds nothing to the existing thesis that the enclosure process of the mid-16th century and its accompanying inflation resulted in hardship and depression for the artisan-tenant-farmer, whose wages failed to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living - so far as that can be indicated by the rise in the cost of wheat.² It is also clear that the subsequent wage-price-rent spiral of the later 16th century resulted in a wider gap between the standards of prosperity of the peasantry and of the capitalist farmer, since the latter class was able to weather with far greater ease the sudden price rise of the 1590's; that the landlord - virtually a monopolist - was able to exploit the land-lease market until about 1620, when the poorer quality land, as at Topcliffe, had reached its ceiling value and rents began to recede; that subsistence farming had declined and that the communal organisation had disappeared in Leconfield and Topcliffe by 1630 if not earlier, though it continued in modified form at Spofforth and Wressel into the 18th century.

1 Topcliffe (1504) 9 bushels of rye per acre (9/-), 9 bushels of Barley per acre (6/-), 12 bushels of Oats per acre (4/-).
Leconfield (1553) 8 bush. of barley per acre (20/-);
(1565) 2 bushels of Beans per acre (12/-).

2 "Six Centuries of Work and Wages" J. E. Thorold Rogers 1903, quoted in graph form in "Study of Prices and the Value of Money" E. V. Morgan 1950. (Helps to Students of History No.53)

The lord of the manor had the right of holding Courts Baron and Great Courts or Views of Frankpledge in each lordship. In all cases these courts acted until at least 1600 as protectors of manorial customs from both internal and external infringement. Throughout the period the courts of these lordships continued to function with energy and virility until the 17th century, except on some few occasions when the voluntary or involuntary absence of the Earl left his northern estates to the mercy of corrupt or negligent officials.

Whilst there is every reason to agree with the view that "the Elizabethan manorial court kept and was intensely proud of its powers",¹ there is overwhelming evidence against extending to these areas of Yorkshire the statement which may be true of Essex, that 'perquisites of court were just sufficient to maintain the courts'.²

The following table represents the expenses and perquisites of all recorded courts of the four manors during the period, arranged in half-century sections. It must be borne in mind that the number of courts recorded varies widely between manor and manor³ and from section to section. The total sums are not so important in themselves since under these circumstances they can give no real quantitative

1 "Agriculture and Rural Society in Essex 1560-1640"
F. E. Hull, Univ. of London Ph.D. Thesis 1950 p.237.

2 Op.cit. p.59.

3 e.g. Wressell no courts 1501-1551;
Spofforth 54 courts 1601-50.

Manorial Courts - Expenses and Perquisites

	1425 - 1500		1501 - 1550		1551 - 1600		1601 - 1650	
	Expenses	Issues	Expenses	Issues	Expenses	Issues	Expenses	Issues
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Leconfield	2 8 3½	5 8 2	1 2 4	2 2 10	7 15 11	15 5 9	9 9 5	19 9 3
Spofforth	17 8 11	105 10 7	4 15 10	62 8 5	19 14 11	131 12 5	47 12 9	408 6 1
Topcliffe	17 4 3	91 10 -½	1 10 -	9 - 4	15 4 5	60 7 4	4 6 -	55 3 -
Wressel	- 12 8	3 11 9			6 6 11	8 12 2	21 8 8	66 14 4

index of the court profits made over any particular period. Yet the overwhelming value of the Spofforth franchise is immediately apparent from the large sums derivable in many cases from the reliefs and other 'incidents' to be expected from so large an administrative area. Only in the cases of Wressel and Leconfield did the courts of any one time-section fail to produce twice its administrative cost - always with the reservation that the annual fees of stewards, auditors, feodaries and minor officials are not here taken into account. Admittedly too, the monetary value of most court perquisites would tend to become less real in the period 1550-1650.

Though many of the earlier functions of the manorial court were progressively transferred to the Justices of the Peace and the parish officers, the courts still performed valuable services to the lord when they acted as courts of survey, thus placing on record ancient rights, privileges and customs, and securing the forfeiture of the property of felons found guilty of murder or manslaughter. The value of many of these services was enjoyed by the tenants too, who continued to appoint their own constables, aletasters, bread and meat inspectors for the regulation of local conditions. Overseers of highways also continued to be appointed where the manor and the parish coincided. The tenantry had in the manor court a convenient and generally impartial body which registered transfers of land, gave rough and ready decisions in local disputes and continued to enforce customary law by

the punishment of petty offenders.

With the passage of time and the arrival in the manors of new leasehold tenants impatient of and financially able to defy tradition, especially when such tradition clashed with their interests, conditions changed.

Thus then, in summarising the information gained from this survey the following points may be made.

Whilst the ownership of the estates changed more often than at any other historical period, tenant population remained stable and marked by a high persistence of family names, only disturbed to any great extent about 1570.

Copyholders predominated in all four areas, mainly engaged in the normal routine of husbandry until the mid-16th century when the balance inclined to a greater proportion of grazing.

From these changes and the consequent demand for demesne land for leasehold purposes the lord benefited, especially by the conversion of customary tenures to leasehold. The resultant receipts rose to an extent which more than compensated the lord for the fall in the value of money caused by the financial crises of the Tudor period.

This "boom" period saw the rise of large leasehold tenements in the hands of gentry such as Nelson, Kettlewell and Sherborn of Topcliffe, Paver of Spofforth and Thorpe of

Leconfield. There thus seems little support for the arguments advanced to show that the Earls of Northumberland were as impoverished as Stone alleges.¹

Although the customary tenant on becoming a leaseholder was obliged to pay rentals which were nearer to the economic and competitive level, there is little evidence in these four manors of the changes in rent per acre, so that the absence of this important factor removes the possibility of an accurate calculation of the prosperity-level of the tenantry. In contrast with the case of Barrow on Humber there is no sign of a 49% increase in rents in the period 1633-50.² Actually with the slight recession in Leconfield, the aggregate advance was only about 15%.³

Improvement and enclosure by agreement took place in parts of all four lordships at the turn of the 16th/17th centuries, so that in Topcliffe and Leconfield the common fields as such had ceased to exist by about 1620.

This decay of the communal system was necessarily accompanied by the decline in vigour of the manorial courts, only that of Spofforth, where enclosure was delayed until the late 18th century, continuing fully to perform its functions to the end of the period.

1 Ec.Hist.Rev. 1948 W. L. Stone 'Anatomy of the Elizabethan Aristocracy'. On the contrary the Earl seems to be one of the "goode husbandes" who "knowe as well how to improve ther landes to the uttermoste" and "lett them oute to those who will give moste". "The State of England 1600." Thos. Wilson. Ed. F. J. Fisher. Camden Misc. Vol LII 1936.

2 Ec.Hist.Rev. 1946 'Professor Lavrovsky's Study of a 17th century Manor'. Christopher Hill.

3 See Graph B, following page: 9

Cereal, Cattle and Poultry Prices

Commodity	1450	1500	1501	1550
Wheat (b'sh)		7½d-1/-(1472-88)		10½d(1517) 2/-(1520)
Rye (b'sh)		9d.(1473) 10d(1483)		1/-(1504)
Barley (b'sh)		6d-1/-(1483-7)		6d-8d(1504) 4d(1522) 1/-(1537)
Oats (b'sh)	1½d(1413)	1/10(1473)		2/-(1517-23) 2/8(1543)
Peas (b'sh)			1/-(1500)	7½-8½(1522)
Beans		4d.(1485)		4½(1517)
Malt (b'sh)		8d(1462) 4½-6(1480)		1/6(1535)
Horse	6/8(1436)	6/4-26/8(1473-99)		5/--10/-(1516) 10/-(1534)
Mare		5/--20/-(1474)		33/4(1537)
Foal(Colt)		3/4(1480)		
Bull				
Ox		9/8-15/-(1473) 9/8(1500)		16/6(1546)
Cow		7/--13/-(1478) 15/-(1499)		10-12/-(1519) 6/8-30/-(1534)
Heifer		2-9/-(1474)		7/6(1507) 14/6(1546)
Calf		1/8(1494)		1/4(1517)
Pig		2/6(1473)		6/-(1517)
Boar				
Sow		2/3(1473)		
Piglet		4d(1474) 5d(1492)		8d(1503)
Sheep	1/6(1425) 10d(1436)	1-1/4(1480)		1-1/6(1515)
Ram		1-1/10(1500)		2/-(1518)
Ewe		1/8(1472) 1/-(1500)		8d-1/-(1515)
Hen		2d(1474-1494)		3d(1517)
Duck	2½d(1451) 4d(1474-94)			
Capon	3d(1451)	4d-5d(1491-6)		
Chicken		1d(1492)		
Cygnets				2/-(1519,1543)

Note: There is reasonable correlation between the above figures for the 15th century and those given in Appendix VI 'Economic Development of some Leicestershire Estates in the 14th and 15th centuries' 1946 R. H. Hilton.
 In comparison the Yorkshire grain prices are somewhat high, but there is no startling contrast in the prices commanded by animals.

Cereal, Cattle and Poultry Prices (Continued)

Commodity	1551	1600	1601	1650
Wheat (b'sh)		2/6(1560)	3/4-5/-(1598)	3/8(1607) 5/-to1/3(1616-1636)
Rye "		3/6(1560)	5/4(1597)	4/-to3/4(1600-1612)
Barley	2/-(1561)	1/-(1579)	5/-to9/-(1597-9)	3/4(1605) 4/4(1621)
Oats		8½d(1576)	4/-(1598)	2/6(1615) 3/9(1639)
Peas			5/4(1598)	2/-(1607) 2/-(1621)
Beans		6/-(1565)	6/-(1597)	2/-(1611) 2/8(1645)
Malt	2/6(1553)	1/6(1565)		2/10(1601) 2/6(1639)
Horse		30/-(1568)	26/8(1576)	26/8(1601) 53/4(1612)
Mare		23/-(1560)	10/-(1599)	40/-(1603)
Foal/Colt			26/2(1599)	39/-(1601) 16/-(1615)
Bull		16/8(1576)		25-30/-(1603) 39/-(1619)
Ox				33/4(1601)
Cow		10-14/-(1587)	30/-(1599)	16/-(1610) 40/-(1639)
Heifer		21/-(1566)		20/-(1602) 13/4(1636)
Calf			6/8(1591)	3/6(1601) 12/-(1616)
Pig				4-9/-(1603) 2/-(1611)
Sow		2/-(1587)		3/4-9/-(1610) 23/4(1621) 29/-(1650)
Piglet		1/4(1584)	1/-(1590)	6/6(1623)
Sheep	3/4(1561)	2/6(1576)	2/3(1585)	2-7/-(1608) 3-10/-(1622) 6/8(1642)
Ram			4/8-10/-(1590)	4-10/-(1600) 9/-(1620)
Ewe				4/3(1624)
Hen				10d(1603) 8d(1617) 6d(1620)
Goose				10/-(1618)

36.

Table J (Cont.)

List of Commodities

The following articles are mentioned in the manuscripts consulted. Prices and dates are included, where available.

Food

Beef 5/- p. quarter (1606) 7/- p. quarter (1612-16).
7/8 per chine (1646).
Calf's Head 8d. (1606)

Mutton 7d. per quarter (1491) 9d. per shoulder (1609)

Bacon 16/- per flitch (1612)

Salt fish 4d. (1491) 1/- (1608)

Salmon 1d. (1451)

Pigeon 1d. (1451)

Bread (2 lb.) 4d. (1519) 2d. (1603)

Ale 1½d. per gallon (1492) 6d. (1611) 4d. (1642)

Parsnips, onions, cheese, honey, butter, milk, eggs, fresh fish, saltwater fish, pastry, rabbits are also mentioned.

Household Goods (15th Century)

Brass jar, copper bowl, silver spoon, cauldron, grate, table, stools.

(16th Century)

2/-(1515) 2/-(1515)
Bedstead and tester, bedposts, coverlet, sheets, chest, mattress 3/4 (1515), cushion 6d. (1515), iron range, table, chair, kettle, cupboard 7/- (1597), curtain rods 10d. (1579), laver 3/- (1515).

(17th Century)

wooden tub, sieve, pan, brewing vessels, press, 'firestirs', churn, loom, 'slaye' (wool comb), etc. table 6/8 (1614), spit 2/11 (1601).

Weapons

Crossbow arrows 2d. each (1599), bow and string 2/6 (1615), sword 10/- (1553) 3/4 (1603), dagger 3/4 (1599), 2/6 (1603), sallet (1/-) (1534), back-piece.

Tools and Implements

Iron Wedges, axe 4½d. (1519) 8d. (1597) 1/7 (1612) 1/- (1636), scythe 2/5 (1451) 2/10 (1597), 3/2 (1603), 3/- (1611), net, harrow teeth, cart, saw 3/- (1598), 2/6 (1613) 4/- (1615), grindstone, hammer, chisel, ladder 5/- (1617) 4/- (1639), anvil 39/- (1618), bellows, wheelbarrow, 2/6 (1620), mattock, gavelock (crowbar).

Clothing and Materials

Shirt 2/1 (1603), kerchief, apron, cloak 10/- (1520), codware, hat 4/2 (1599), gloves 1/- (1607), tunic 10/- (1612), 5/6 (1621), jerkin 3/- (1621-2), shoes 2/4 - 3/4 (1604), highboots 5/- (1610), breeches 10/- (1642), shoes, stockings and subligaciones 8/2 (1623), doublet of millan fustian, 1 pair meal coloured breeches, a white cloak, a grey jerkin, a pair of white stockings, a pair of red stockings and a black leather trunk 39/8 (1599), a pair of knitted stockings 3/8 (1605), brooches, buttons, linen cloth per yard 4d. (1515), 1/4 (1638), flannel broadcloth per yd. 10/6 (1607), black Devonshire kersey per yard 9/- (1607), gray frieze per yard 2/- (1605), coloured woollen cloth per yd. 2/6 (1603).

Building Materials

Clay $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per load (1543), wooden nails 1/2 per 1000 (1543), long nails 3/4 per 1000 (1543), straw 1d. per load (1543) 1/- (1642), rye-straw $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per thrave (1480), wheat straw 10d. per truss (1616), oat straw 7d. per load (1542), lime 5/4 per stone (1603) laths 4d. per 100 (1523), 7d. (1542), 8d. per bundle (1612), 'thackbrods' 1/- per 100 (1480), 5/- (1516), 4/- (1523), 'single-spykynges' 3d. per 100 (1542), 'dublespykynges' $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per 100 (1523), 4d. per 100 (1542), tallow 8d. per stone (1472), 2/- (1603) 3/- (1610), lead 2/4 per stone (1616), solder 6d. per lb. (1579), iron 30/- per load (1602), 2d. per lb. (1616), lathe prods 3d. per 100 (1579), lock 2/10 (1579).

Miscellaneous

Firewood 1/6 per 100 faggots (1503), 1/11 per 100 (1517), 8d. per load (1541).
Hides (Deer) 7/- (1537), hind 5/- (1555), bull 11/- (1604), calf 7d. (1617), sheep 8d. (1638).
Flax or Hemp 5/6 per stone (1601), 7/- per stone (1609).
Hay 1/- per load (1483), 2-3/- (1541), 2/8 (1542), 3/4 (1574), 5/- (1603), 2/- (1616).
Manure 10d. per load (1616), 1/1 (1618).
Saplings quicksets and willows 1/6 per 1000 (1579) ashes 10/- per 1000 (1579).

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