

FORGOTTEN WOLDS:
LATE PREHISTORIC AND EARLY HISTORIC
LANDSCAPES
ON THE YORKSHIRE CHALK

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CONTENTS: VOLUME ONE

Acknowledgements.....iii-iv

Chapter 1: Multiple Landscapes.....1- 32

Chapter 2: Chalkshire:
An Introduction to the Yorkshire Wolds.....33-62

Chapter 3:
Linear Earthworks and the Late Bronze Age Landscape.....63-109

Chapter 4: Pastures and the Past:
Developing Landscapes of the Iron Age and RB.....110-184

VOLUME TWO

Chapter 5: Historical Landscape and Township Profiles.....1-54

Chapter 5: The Wolds Before Domesday.....56-123

Chapter 6: The Wolds Keep Revolving.....124-184

Bibliography.....I-XXX

Appendix One: Local Descriptions of Wolds Linears.....XXXI-XLII

VOLUME THREE: FIGURES

List of Figures.....i-ix

The Figures.....1-122

VOLUME ONE

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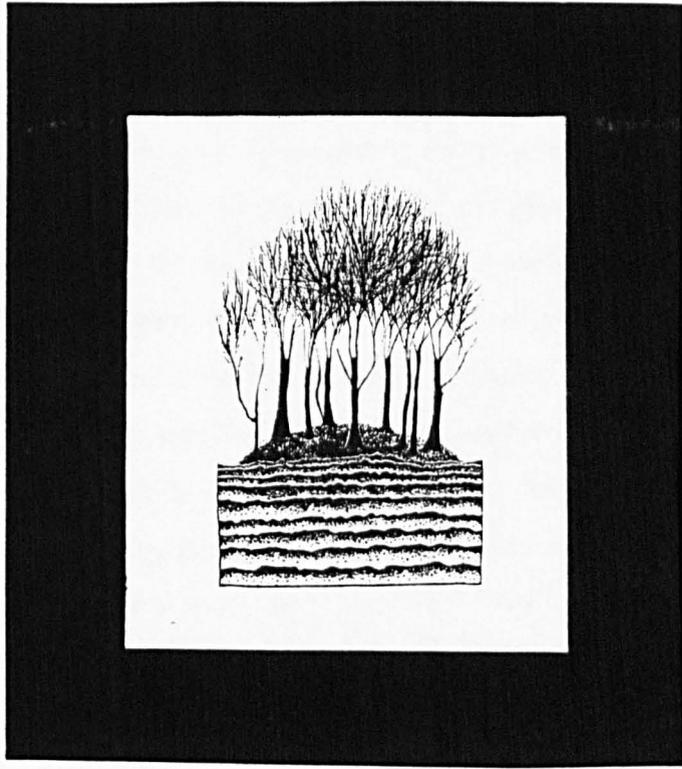
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CHAPTER ONE

MULTIPLE LANDSCAPES

“The outdoor man, away on a cross-country tramp, taking in the uplands, lingering over his midday sandwich on the earthwork of some hilltop camp, will look all round ‘to get the lay of the land’. He will first pick out the hill points: this one bare to the top, another marked by a clump of trees, or less frequently by a single one. Sometimes one or more mounds or tumuli will stand out as pimples on a hill ridge against the sky line and he will remember similar ones which he has passed on his valley route, perhaps belted by a water-moat, built for a purpose so obscure that no one had yet explained it. He will not fail also to look for any entrenched hill-top camp he may know, sometimes with blunt notches on the sky outline where the earthworks run, but only too often quite smothered by trees.”

(Alfred Watkins 1925, *The Old Straight Track*).

CONFLICT AND THE SPIRIT OF THE BRITISH COUNTRYSIDE

It is 1999, and the British government have announced their commitment to a statutory right to roam over the more remote areas of the English and Welsh countryside. At the same time, the Common Agricultural Policy, which has been attributed, as the root cause behind the massive changes in the agricultural landscape of Britain, since WW2, is under serious review. The character of the British countryside is changing, through political decisions. It could be argued that these have been influenced, to no small degree, by public will, springing from the individual personal relationships between people and the landscape. These developments follow a period of crisis in the relationship between government policy and public opinion, with regard to the preservation and character of this countryside. Between the late 1980's and mid 1990's government sanctioned

'development' of this countryside (mainly road-building) has been forcefully and famously resisted by large numbers of people and a varied constituency (e.g. Monbiot 1995). These numerous shows of opposition have highlighted how it was, not only, the beautiful views and aesthetics of the scenery that were going to be lost. The strength of feeling that stirred up this resistance seemed to appeal to a deep-rooted sense of attachment and belonging, that was embodied in the 'spirit' of the British landscape. The Union Jack flag appeared at many protest sites, and sometimes it was subverted into the 'Union Jill' (a rainbow-coloured equivalent). The use of these symbols of 'patria' reflected the fact that the protests had tapped into an almost mystical grassroots patriotism. The issues at stake had little to do with (party) Politics or Nationalism, but was symbolised by people's veneration of the landscape around them. It demonstrated how important the landscape remains for the cultural identity of those communities which inhabit it but also that the identities drawn from it and bound up with it are often conflicting (Bender 1993a).

The anti-road movement, and its spin-offs, concerned with open-cast mining and airport extensions, were always perceived as environmental campaigns. The historical credentials of the landscape, however, did surface now and again as an important contribution to the conservation issue. Many comparisons were made between the hard-core tree-house dwellers and the 'Diggers' movement, of the years surrounding the English Revolution, during the 1640's (Hill 1972;1983). In the years after 1649, several communities had set themselves up on common land in order to use its resources to provide for a self sufficient community. The landscape was here used as the symbolic vehicle for the expression of social and political ideology held by Gerard Winstanley and others. Much was made of the archaeological sites, which were going to be lost to the new motorway at Twyford Down, but the acknowledgement of the wider historical foundations of the landscape was not perhaps made often enough. At another level, the long struggle by ramblers for a right to roam has been based on the premise that landownership, of the kind that exists today in this country, does not have very strong or immovable historical credentials (Shoard 1987). The cultural construction of 'contested' landscapes has been discussed by Bender with regard to Stonehenge, so that competing claims to intellectual and spiritual ownership of this single

ancient monument have become a symbol for wider social tensions and conflicts within modern British society (Bender 1993a). The historical aspect to these political debates about land and identity, in the present, are crucial. However, the movement to protect the British landscape is generally perceived as one concerned mainly with environmental conservation and not the preservation of the historical or archaeological heritage.

Crucial to this understanding is the acknowledgement that the British countryside is a product of millennia of historical development. The environment that we are seeking to protect is not a natural creation. Even the remote marginal lands of upland heath and moor, are products of human history. This is not their natural state, but the result of centuries of intensive clearance and cultivation during prehistory (Dimbleby 1962; Fowler 1983; Jones 1986). Likewise, the characteristic configurations of lanes, hedges, fields, villages, woods and meadows of the British countryside are creations of the long term historical development of each specific local area (i.e. Hoskins 1988; Taylor 1983; Rackham 1994). An appreciation of the importance of history for the particular character of the British landscape is crucial, not only for historical insight, but as a means of situating the modern landscape in its proper place within time. Only then can we really appreciate what is at risk from development in the modern world. Therefore the practice of landscape history, in its broadest sense, has an important contribution to make towards debates on environmental conservation. The suggestions of the Celtic Energy mining company, for instance, to re-instate the natural landscape at Cwmgwrach open-cast in the Neath Valley, following several planned years of mining, were a response to local concerns about the preservation of wildlife and their habitats. The historical depth contained within this landscape, however, could never have been precisely restored or faithfully reconstructed.

The modern landscape is the mutually created product of nature and human action. It can be used to symbolise social and cultural identity. It does not merely carry the imprint of humanity but both portrays and structures its very character. Very often the identities that derive from it are in conflict, and in this way, the cultural landscape can represent the wider social tensions of the nation. The history of the landscape is peppered with situations where competing claims erupted into violent

or direct action. Those that spoke out against enclosure in the 18th and 19th century, as well as the aforementioned Diggers of the 17th, are perhaps the two most celebrated cases. It seems likely that these conflicts and rival claims to cultural ownership of landscape have always existed, although their specific character has largely been lost to documented history. Indeed, it could be argued that it is these very conflicts and contests, in operation throughout history that provide the context for change within the landscape. Therefore, the physical palimpsest that is the archaeological landscape of Britain, or any part thereof, is a document of these contests, played out through history. It is also the actual medium through which and over which these contests are fought. In cases like that of the Diggers, the land and its ownership became a symbol for the whole edifice of social justice and unrest and so was adopted as the medium wherein the protest should be centred. Likewise, in modern times, anti-road protests are often symbolic of a deeper and wider anti-consumerist constituency, fighting for the rights of travellers and squatters, for instance.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

There has been much discussion, since the time of W.G.Hoskins, on the meaning of the term landscape. This applies both to the landscape of the modern world and the kind of landscape we are trying to reconstruct from the past. For Hoskins, the English landscape was a countryside, with history. The countryside was the scenic beauty appreciated and loved by his contemporaries. His landscape, though, contained historical depth, not always obvious to the aesthetes who rambled alongside him down the leafy lanes. What's more, the historical landscape he reconstructs, "*for all its apparent objectivity and foundation in the historical record....represents (his) way of seeing England*" (Cosgrove 1984:13). It is a cultural and subjective construction. Margaret Drabble writes about literature and landscape and seems to prioritise the scenic qualities of the English countryside. She even tries to identify, without success, this peculiarly modern sense of aesthetic voyeurism in past documentary works (1979). For Drabble, the prehistoric and even pre-Norman landscape was somewhere very different, a place of hard work

and nature; in short, an environment in which farming practice was carried out to provide the basics of life. Hoskins' view of the prehistoric landscape is similar to this. It is a functional over-powering back drop to human subsistence activities (1955;1988) (see below) and differs from his view of more recent landscapes.

More recent geographical critiques have problematised these ways of seeing and interpreting the landscape. Cosgrove, in particular has emphasised that landscapes are nothing without cultural meaning, "*it incorporates far more than merely the visual and functional arrangement of natural and human phenomena which the discipline (geography) can identify, classify, map and analyse....landscape carries multiple layers of meaning.*" (Cosgrove 1984:13). The important aspect of this view is that the landscape is culturally constructed and thus carries multiple meanings, depending on the people who inhabit and experience it. This is something which may equally be applied to both present and the past, so that the interpretation of past landscapes is constructed from the specific cultural stand point of the historian or archaeologist. Andrew Fleming's co-operative and collective social landscapes of Dartmoor (1988) are starkly opposed to the hierachical political landscapes of Renfrew's Wessex (1973), for example. These interpretations are linked, in no small way, to the different subjectified political views of these two individuals. The symbolic properties and subjective perspectives of the landscapes that we reconstruct, in the past, should not be ignored. The modern landscape is laden with historical influences, but it is also replete with cultural ones, and its symbolic richness encapsulates the mutliplicity of identities and experiences that characterise human society.

PLANNED AND ANCIENT COUNTRYSIDE

Oliver Rackham has discussed in, *The History of the Countryside*, the distinction between two different kinds of landscape, within modern England, that between Ancient and Planned Countryside. For instance,

" Herefordshire and Essex are lands of hamlets, of medieval farms in hollows of the hills, of lonely moats, in the claylands, of immense mileages of little roads and holloways, of intricate maple, dogwood and spindle, of pollards and

ancient trees. Cambridgeshire is a land of big villages, wide views, brick farmhouses in exposed positions, flimsy hawthorn hedges, ivied clumps of trees in corners of fields, few, busy roads, and above all of straight lines.

The difference is not just the effect of natural variation in hills, soils and rainfall. A simple explanation is that, in Cambridgeshire, as in most of the English Midlands, hedged fields are derived from the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before which the land had been farmed in great open prairie-farming fields.This is Planned Countryside. The other half of England, Ancient Countryside, has a hedged and walled landscape dating from any of the forty centuries between the Bronze Age and Queen Anne. The fields sometimes bear traces of much earlier phases of planning, but in general they have the irregularity resulting from centuries of 'do-it-yourself' enclosure and piecemeal alteration. ” (Rackham 1994:9-10).

The generalised differences in landscape character, between areas of England is clear to see today, and these differences are expressed in the many ways in which the countryside is experienced and inhabited. As modern agricultural methods have intensified, in some areas, the distinctions have become even clearer, as fields are enlarged and whole landscapes are turned into agricultural factories. These processes have taken place most starkly, in areas of planned countryside, thus heightening the distinction. Such experiments in farming on an industrial scale are, perhaps, only possible in these areas because of the historically created landscape inherited by the 20th century. The distribution of settlements, the patterns of landownership and the bareness of such areas, produced through parliamentary enclosure, has made it much easier for these radical dislocations to take place.

It may be easy to identify the distinction between ancient and planned countryside, but it is very difficult to offer satisfactory historical explanations for the existence of the distinction. It is something that is, seemingly, much more deeply rooted than the enclosure movement of the 18th and 19th century, and may go back beyond the Middle Ages (Williamson 1989; Williamson and Bellamy 1987). But, there are problems inherent in these grand generalisations. Should we really be content with the coarse two-fold distinction which divides the landscape of England, neatly in

two, prompting the simplification and reduction of the histories needed to explain its development? Should we uncritically accept that, just as the roots of ‘ancient countryside’ lie firmly in the distant past, the ‘planned countrysides’ of the Midlands and Eastern England are universally of more recent creation? If we are looking for explanations, that lie behind these distinctions, we must have a clear understanding of the development of specific local areas. Without the close-grained understanding of the long term development of individual regions, it will not be possible to make sense of the general picture. Generalisations between ancient and planned countryside have been set up in the absence of any really detailed long term understanding of the regional landscapes in England. The distinction exists as an explanatory device, alternative to a regional picture, not as an accretion of a number of local insights which would make the generalisation more meaningful. As Coones proposed, “*The study of regions, past and present, not only serves to unite people and place but, by doing so, also penetrates near to the very heart of landscape.*” (Coones 1985:10).

The historical foundations of the modern landscape are crucial to our perceptions and experiences of that landscape, in the present. Consciously or not, it is the regional differences in historical development that have created the regional diversity of the British countryside, that so defines the cultural island. These histories have developed over very long periods of time and so, in order to reconstruct the landscape in the past, at any period, we have to appreciate the long term development that precedes and follows. It is perhaps at the level of the region that this long term study is best focused. We will return to the concept of historical regionality and the ‘pays’ in chapter 2.

BREAKING DOWN ACADEMIC BARRIERS

If we consider the ways in which landscape history has been conducted in Britain, it will soon become clear that such long term regional studies, whose aim is to map out the historical foundations of the modern landscape, are few and far between. The problem lies mainly with the existence of academic barriers, which have been thrown up between disciplines, approaches to the past, areas of specialism and

periods of study. The need to break down many of these barriers has been recognised by Coones, with regard to landscape studies:

“Academic specialists...narrow the field, emphasise particular features of interest, and are often over-eager to identify their favourite factor as the central one in a particular instance.”(Coones 1985:6). *“...the call is for a breadth of view which will serve to reap the greatest rewards from such work, rather than compartmentalising it by means of barriers created through differences of philosophy, methodology, technique, topic, period, materials, district, scale, and not least by the sometimes striking contrasts which are apparent in the personal backgrounds, outlooks, working habits and characters of the segregated groups of people involved.”* (ibid:5).

This compartmentalisation is partly borne out of academic disciplinary history, where by research priorities are contained within the intellectual remit of university departments, confined by the perception of their own subject. Thus, it is easier for historians to talk to each other than for them to share their ideas and problems with archaeologists (and vice versa). It extends, of course, to the nature of the evidence itself and personal training in methods of empirical investigation. Archaeologists, for example, are reluctant, in most cases, to grapple with historical sources. In recent decades, the practice of landscape studies, in the historical period, has actually witnessed a cross-pollination of ideas and techniques, between archaeologists and historians (Aston 1985).

More divisive barriers may exist between period specialisms. With regard to the development of the landscape, it is often assumed that the character of the prehistoric landscape has little place in the construction of the landscape for the Medieval period, for that same area or region. Therefore, the two periods are studied and dealt with separately, by different people, and, as a result, with different objectives and theoretical approaches. The methodological, empirical motives that lie behind such a distinction are likely to be an excuse rather than a reason. There is often a sub-conscious assumption that there exists a fault line between the prehistoric and the historical landscape, across which there is little connection. This idea is borne out of the very traditional view of the history of

Britain, characterised by invasions and population replacements, whereby the Roman conquest and Anglo-Saxon settlement represent severe ruptures in the structure of the agrarian landscape. Much recent landscape-based work has identified continuities which extend for very long periods of time and traverse these traditional chronological divisions (Fowler 1975; Williamson 1987; Taylor 1983; Bonney 1976; Hayfield 1987). These long term connections are often fairly shallow illustrations and do not go far enough in explaining the character of the continuity. A surviving field boundary for instance, may be reused several times in very different agrarian regimes. Equally, its survival may reflect a direct ancestral inheritance within a long line of farming generations. However, such assumptions will never be completely jettisoned until the weight of the findings of long term regionally-based landscape studies tip the balance further. There is no doubt that generalised cultural and political changes occur, but it would be wrong to assume their presence is ubiquitously felt, at every level of society and in every aspect of life. Thus, the balance between change and continuity must be struck.

We will consider a number of ways in which archaeologists, historians, geographers and anthropologists have approached the problem of landscape and, in particular the reconstruction of landscapes in the past. In doing so, it will be important to identify, and illustrate in more detail, some of the problems we have already introduced. This will provide support for the methodology of long term, regional, multi-disciplinary landscape investigation.

HISTORICAL APPROACHES

The original conception of landscape studies probably lies with historians and historical geographers, who sought to extend a documentary investigation, outside, and into the field. Several historians, writing a century ago, had perhaps laid the foundations for more detailed work, by paying attention through documentary research, to concerns about everyday agrarian practice in the Middle Ages and its links to feudalism (Maitland 1897; Seebholm 1890). Inevitably, this concern with farming techniques and settlement was easily translated into actual fieldwork, and led to the specific investigation of the history of the landscape. W.G.Hoskins,

Maurice Beresford and HPR Finberg were all working in the period, immediately following WW2. They appreciated the importance of situating their documentary-based findings in the landscape, to which the historical records pertained. Therefore, the delineation of Anglo-Saxon estate boundaries recorded and described in the charters of the 10th and 11th century could come to life, if their lines were to be traced on the ground, preserved in the course of lanes, hedges and walls, now followed by parish boundaries. In some cases, their course may have been marked by a low bank, and through the discovery of such features, the disciplinary chasm between history and archaeology was being crossed.

“The villages have undergone great changes in appearance since they were founded by the Anglo-Saxons, but there is at least one feature in the countryside which is of Saxon origin and often remains more or less intact. I refer to the boundary banks of large Anglo-Saxon estates, which one learns to recognise by laboriously tracing the points named in the surviving charters. This exercise gives one a truer and more detailed knowledge of the English countryside than any other pursuit, not excluding fox-hunting (!). By the time one has scrambled over hedges, leapt across boggy streams in deep woods, traversed narrow green lanes all but blocked with brambles and the luxuriant growth of wet summers, not to mention walked along high airy ridges on a day of tumultuous blue-and-white skies with magnificent views of deep country all round-by the time one has done this, armed with a copy of a Saxon charter and the 2 1/2-inch maps, the topography of some few miles of the English landscape is indelibly printed on the mind and heart.” (Hoskins 1955:66-7).

Revealed here is the true spirit of Hoskins' endeavour, upon which rests much of the subsequent popular and academic interest in landscape history. It is a celebration of the countryside, and everything it stood for to the British people in that immediate post-war decade. Scenic appreciation is inextricably mixed up with historical investigation, in a way also appreciated by Andrew Fleming, writing in his recent book on the history of the Swaledale landscape, *“This landscape has been created by past generations of Swaledale people, and in appreciating the dale's beauty, we are celebrating its history.”* (1998:1). For Hoskins, and his followers, this appreciation and celebration reached an almost religious fervour. A

similar feeling of celebration for the aesthetic beauty and historical depth and mystery of the landscape was felt, much earlier, by Alfred Watkins, who also realised that the two were inextricably linked (1925).

“Many historians stick to the documents and are reluctant to put on their boots and ask questions of the land...” (Rackham 1994:15).

Despite this statement, made only recently, Hoskins and his contemporaries, such as Beresford and Finberg were ‘putting on their boots’ and taking to the land, often armed with medieval documents (i.e. Finberg 1955; Beresford 1971) Most of the time, they were not looking to verify their documentary findings, but to illustrate them. Rarely, was the field evidence used as an end in itself, or as a means of re-evaluating the documents. Most of the time, the documents led the way, and the landscape was used as a physical backdrop to the ‘essential truth’ that they contained.

Much of this early landscape investigation is based within the discipline of History, as characterised by the study of documentary, rather than archaeological sources. As such, it was poorly equipped to deal with the prehistoric origins of the landscapes, so gloriously enjoyed by the recently demobbed scholars, in the late 1940’s and 1950’s. For Hoskins, the foundations of the English landscape lay firmly in the Anglo-Saxon period, when, he argued, the familiar pattern of nucleated village and open field of the medieval countryside did originate (1955). More recent work has unanimously agreed that the origins of open fields and villages actually lie in the centuries surrounding the Norman conquest (i.e. Rowley 1981; Harvey 1983; Hall 1988; Williamson 1989).

The period prior to the Middle Ages was seen generally as a prelude to the historical period, a time which has left little lasting trace on the modern landscape. In, *The Making of the English Landscape*, the chapter on the period before the ‘English Settlement’ reads as equivalent to the description of an environmental background.

“Much, then, of the work of taming and shaping the landscape by the hungry generations from the Belgae onwards had been lost in the weeds, scrub and ruins by the time the Anglo-Saxon colonists had arrived. The work had to

begin all over again.....The great majority of the English settlers faced a virgin country.....” (Hoskins 1955:44).

Such a view appears particularly extreme today, and, admittedly the revised editions of his book make it clear that scholarship has moved on significantly since he wrote this (Hoskins 1988). Nonetheless, these revisions are carried out in the form of additional text, annotated to the original by Christopher Taylor. The original has endured as an icon of landscape appreciation and enquiry and, despite its anachronisms, remains intact.

In many cases, the historical bias of landscape studies remains, and there are still landscape historians who perceive the prehistoric phases of development as less than formative, a prelude to the real story. Alan Everitt, for instance, describes the overall aims of his book on Kentish landscape, as follows, *“It is not about the Romano-British period itself or about the ultimate origins of Kentish settlement in the Iron Age or Bronze Age since those are matters for the Archaeologist.”* (Everitt 1986). If they have an influence on later configuration and character of the Kentish landscape, the form of prehistoric settlement should, surely, be a matter, also, for Alan Everitt.

Now and again, a detailed landscape study, rooted in the rigour of documentary analysis has presumed to offer suggestive glances back toward the dimness of the earlier, prehistoric periods. Invariably, these attempts have suffered because of the lack of attention or respect paid to the archaeological evidence. Glanville Jones, for instance, offers an Romano-British or even Iron Age origin for his early Medieval multiple estates in West Yorkshire, based simply on the location of hill-forts and Roman towns (1976). This was carried out without the slightest acknowledgement of the social or political conditions of the earlier times, nor any detailed analysis of the archaeological evidence. It remains highly speculative, when a more detailed, informed and thorough multi-disciplinary study could have added significant value to his suggestions for the origins of the early Medieval territorial structure. In *Roman and Saxon Withington*, Finberg carried out a similar study in the origins of an early medieval ecclesiastical estate, in Cheshire (Finberg 1955). He argued for the original land holding, as forming the estates belonging to two adjacent

Romano-British villas. For its time, this study stands proud as an example of the successful interaction between documentary analysis, landscape investigation and (limited) archaeological evidence. It also provided a tantalising link between the historically known surviving townships and the more dimly understood Romano-British past.

Much recent work has illustrated the continuities that exist within the British landscape, and this has questioned the strength of actual change at perceived thresholds like the Roman conquest, Anglo-Saxon settlement or indeed the Norman conquest (Taylor 1983; Fowler 1976). These pivotal epochs had traditionally been perceived as watersheds in the development of the landscape, a view embodied in the strict chapter divisions of Hoskins landscape history. No one can doubt the significance of the political or cultural transformations they represent, but it has become clear that these changes need not have been very strongly felt at the level of the local community and its associated agrarian structure. Significant contributions have been made about the suggested ancient origins of historical boundaries and territorial structure (Bonney 1972; 1976; Fowler 1976; Hayfield 1987) and of fields and field boundaries (Fowler and Taylor 1978; Williamson 1987). Chris Taylor's introduction to the history of the English landscape, *Village and Farmstead*, is one of the few general summaries which gives sufficient credit to the influence of the prehistoric and Romano-British periods, and does not treat them as a distant unknown backdrop. He caricatures a persistent view when he writes,

"It would seem that, while prehistory is irrelevant to the present, medieval and later activities are the foundations on which our own landscape is based. Such views are common, but wrong. As we shall see, the reality is rather more complicated." (Taylor 1983:107).

The existence of prehistoric and Romano-British influence in the modern and Medieval landscape is now generally acknowledged. There remain, however, few direct attempts to assess the character of these connections or to scrutinise the nature of these continuities.

"The Norman Conquest has been variously assessed by historians as marking the true beginning of English political history or as a somewhat vulgar interruption of an essential continuity by an unpleasant but largely irrelevant group of people who represented the closest equivalent in western Europe to the continental barbarians." (Coones and Patten 1986:145).

We are now in a position to re-assess the effect on the landscape of such political thresholds. It should not, however, lead us to the opposite extreme of timeless unquestioned continuity (see below). Williamson's work in East Anglia has demonstrated that there are features of the historic landscape which have survived for many centuries, but alongside them lies an equally significant current of change and transformation (1987).

In recent decades, the pursuit of landscape history has developed a great deal. Studies of the Medieval landscape have made great efforts to combine, equally, both archaeological and historical sources. David Hall's work on the layout and origins of open fields (Hall 1988) and the multi-period excavations at Wharram Percy (Beresford and Hurst 1976;1990) are but two examples, where archaeological fieldwork and documentary research have gone hand in hand. Della Hooke's exhaustive work on charter boundaries and historical landscapes of the West Midlands is another example, but one which is steered perhaps more to the historical sources. Likewise, a number of edited volumes have characterised the spirit of the discipline. *Medieval Villages* (Hooke 1985), *Anglo-Saxon Settlements* (Hooke 1988) and *The Rural Settlements of Medieval England* (Aston, Austin and Dyer 1989) contain a wide range of papers, ranging in scope from regional landscape investigations to more general summaries of categories of evidence or wider theoretical issues. In the main, these studies are based around historical sources, and focus on the historical reconstructions of settlement patterns and territorial organisation. Within the medieval period, those landscape studies which combine sources and adopt a multi-disciplinary approach are on the increase. However, there remain relatively few detailed regional investigations, which adopt a long term perspective, rooting their findings for the Middle ages within a prehistoric or Romano-British past. Significantly, one of the standard text books on landscape studies, *Interpreting the Landscape*, which is subtitled, *Landscape*

Archaeology in Local Studies, (Aston 1985), devotes very little of its attention to the prehistoric landscape, or indeed, the Romano-British period (see also Thomas 1993). If we are to take the priorities inherent in this decision, as a reflection of the author's view of the development of the landscape, then, truly, the prehistoric centuries are still viewed as a prelude to the real story, in some quarters.

LANDSCAPE ARCHAEOLOGIES

Some archaeologists had been practising, what became known as landscape archaeology, for many years before the 1970's and early 80's (i.e. Crawford 1928). However, it was at this time that a concerted attempt was made by archaeologists to define a specific agenda and theoretical framework for landscape archaeology. In essence, it reflected a need to move away from an archaeology which was restricted to the excavation of individual sites, and instead to turn attention to the spaces in between. This obviously required both a re-definition of fieldwork techniques and of the aspects of the past which were under scrutiny. A non site-based approach, for instance, was the only way to investigate farming systems in the past, but it could also offer a means of gaining a better understanding of the settlement patterns, within which individual sites were situated. Thomas has suggested that this tendency to situate archaeological findings in space is paralleled by moves to further contextualise social life, at the time (Thomas 1993). In both cases, an increasing concern with the setting of previously isolated artefacts and sites, was highlighted.

The kind of landscape archaeology that was created during the 1970's and 1980's is a product of the dominant theoretical concerns of the new archaeology. Much of this legacy has remained in the character of modern archaeology. Thomas' criticisms of this practice are too severe, when he dismissively refers to, "*a highly empirical school of 'landscape archaeology', dedicated to the surveying and mapping of upstanding cultural features (boundaries, field systems, deserted villages)..(which) emerged as a complement to excavation...*" (Thomas 1993:19). It is hard to see the difference between the landscape archaeology he is criticising here and the basic essentials of archaeological fieldwork. What he is attacking here

is any kind of grounded empirical investigation into the landscape. A view which is surely off the scale of credibility and one which history will not remember with any favour or respect. It is one thing to call for greater theorisation, but quite another to deny the value of fieldwork. However, it must be said that many of the studies that appeared at this time were rooted in the objectification of pieces of landscape, which reduced these inhabited areas to a minimum of archaeological features, often denuded of their temporal and social context. What's more, the interpretative paradigms with which they were associated, very often gave priority to the environmental or economic spheres, as the main influences on the character of landscape and of its development.

Few fieldwork projects, which drew upon the principle of landscape archaeology, have fully lived up to its expectations. The work of Fleming on Dartmoor was able to work with an exceptional data-set, and today exists as a model of the practice (Fleming 1988). A thorough but problem-directed fieldwork programme was centred on the mapping and survey of miles of Bronze Age field systems and land boundaries. Key places were targeted for trial excavation, whose findings placed the whole system within a more secure chronological context. The relationship between settlement sites and their surrounding fields was extended to consider the social and political setting of the communities represented. The landscape setting of the field monuments and spaces they defined was further used as a way in to considerations of the organisation of land-use practice. Here, Fleming succeeded in contextualising the archaeological evidence within the landscape and within time. In doing so, a balance was struck between empirical description and theoretical interpretation.

The work of Barrett and Bradley on Cranborne Chase could be added to this list, as a project where an integrated and targeted regional approach was adopted. Here, some strong theoretical concerns and questions were addressed in the light of one area, rich in archaeological sites and the history of fieldwork (Barrett and Bradley 1991). Again a clever balance was struck between empirical fieldwork and theoretical interpretation. Crucially, the role of the topographic character of monuments was emphasised along with the presence of the past within the landscape. As such, the changes that were observed here during the Neolithic and

early Bronze Age could be viewed in the light of the re-definition of these pasts. This is not possible when a regional landscape is reduced to a series of chronologically separate layers.

Several other projects have appeared which also take on a regional prehistoric landscape and deliberately carry through the past into the present and the future. The Salisbury Plain Linear Ditches Project, for instance has investigated the origins and development of land division here between the middle Bronze Age and the Iron Age. Their story is one of repeated reuse, endurance and deliberate slighting of ditches to fit into new schemes of land division (Bradley et al 1994). Here, a problem-directed fieldwork methodology was framed against the need for salvage recording of features, threatened by the activities of the army, practising for war.

The definition of landscape archaeology drew upon a range of non-destructive fieldwork techniques. Some of these, such as field survey, had been part of the archaeological armoury since the 19th century. Aerial photography had been growing in usefulness since WW2 (Riley 1987) and techniques such as geophysical survey were based on more recent technology (Clark 1990). Systematic fieldwalking was also developed, at this time, and provided an opportunity to identify surface scatters of ceramic or lithic material, without recourse to destructive excavation (Haselgrove, Millett and Smith 1985).

As a result, a whole series of regional archaeological surveys appeared, as a response to the need, in some areas, for an 'objective' picture of the distribution of archaeological sites from all periods (Shennan 1985; Haselgrove et al 1988; Gaffney and Tingle 1989; Richards 1990). The regional archaeological distributions of these areas were seen as un-representative of the actual settlement patterns of the prehistoric and early historic past. This was, variously, because of a bias towards funerary monuments, the invisibility of settlement sites on the surface or from the air, and/or the existence of concentrations of sites, in certain areas, which were not seen to reflect the actual past distribution. They may have been influenced by soil conditions or modern land-use patterns, or else, they were a result of the favoured attentions paid to certain areas by fieldworkers. The data collecting methodologies adopted by these projects were apparently untainted by the biases

inherent in the gradual accretion of archaeological evidence. They comprised mainly fieldwalking surveys and were presented as a series of site distribution maps, set against the backdrop of topography, soils and geology. Far from being situated or contextualised studies, they produced a series of period-based layers, removed from both the previous and subsequent phases of human history. As such, any meaningful understanding of the long term development of these landscapes was very difficult to achieve. The assumption seemed to be that each traditionally defined cultural period enjoyed a separate exclusive history, which was little influenced by its past, and had few implications for subsequent future generations in that area. In this we see a prehistoric equivalent to Hoskins' traditional division of post Roman landscapes into separate chronological slices with no connection to their past.

These landscapes were often perceived as a series of isolated sites or locales of activity, with little understanding of what existed between them. Despite the declared concern with broadening the horizons of archaeological fieldwork, outside of the excavation site, what is produced is a network of sites rather than an understanding of the nature of the surrounding landscape. Within the aim to investigate the setting of the site, lies a concealed agenda that prioritises the understanding of the site over and above the landscape that surrounds it. Why was this not deemed worthy of investigation in its own right? In the main, these kind of archaeological surveys were descriptive accounts of archaeological evidence across space, and seemed to give little priority to interpretation. They were, perhaps more suited to the needs of the archaeological 'manager' than the historian.

Alongside the attention paid to fieldwalking, a range of studies have appeared which deal with the mapping of aerial photographic evidence (Whimster 1989; Riley 1980; Palmer 1984). The RCHM have now developed a national programme for the mapping of crop and soilmarks, to add to these pioneer surveys. *The Emerging Past* (Whimster 1989), went a long way towards setting the agenda for future RCHM policy. It introduced the cropmark compilations from 2 areas of high archaeological quality, the Welsh Marches and the Trent Valley. This study went to great lengths to discuss the analysis of shapes and features revealed by cropmark

formation. The sites that these marks represented were described by their morphology, and classified and grouped accordingly. It has yet to be adequately demonstrated whether such classificatory schemes of cropmarks have any real meaning for the role played and meaning attached to sites, as locales of human activity, in the ancient landscape. There is only so much that can be said about cropmark sites which have not been investigated by excavation or surface survey, on the ground.

The obsession with surveillance and a 'specular' approach to landscape archaeology, has been criticised by both Tilley (1994) and Thomas (1993). I do not want to join in with knee-jerk criticism of the more practical aspects of archaeology. This is unhelpful and divisive and can often come across as arrogant intellectual superiority, as it seems to characterise all traditions of fieldwork as mindless and uncritical. The compilation of AP plots and the creation of site distribution maps, borne out of surface surveys that, crucially, do not intrude destructively below the surface, are essential aspects to any region's archaeological knowledge. Techniques such as fieldwalking have featured as part of very useful problem-led projects which have added significantly to our knowledge of the development of settlement patterns of all periods (e.g. Williamson 1988; Hall 1988). However, the uncritical collection of artefacts and subsequent compilation of site maps is not an end in itself. Neither of the above techniques, on their own, fulfil the aim of reconstructing or understanding past cultural landscapes. These maps, alone, can hardly be described as landscapes, as briefly defined above. They produce a cryptic 2 dimensional configuration of features, which are far removed from the cultural and social process and experience, that characterised the reality of these landscapes, as lived in and understood by people in the past. They are an abstract representation, as much as any high-minded philosophical interpretative rambling, and do not reflect the past as it was experienced. They cater for a scientific, objectified whim for measurement and cataloguing, not for the understanding of the past. Therefore, these kind of reconstructions should not be seen as anything other than a first step towards the reconstruction of ancient landscape. In no way should they be perceived as the end product, or the closest we can get to the past.

INTERPRETATIVE APPROACHES TO PAST LANDSCAPE

During the 1980's, the scientific, objective approach to the interpretation of the past, exemplified by the new archaeology, was repeatedly, called into question and systematically dismantled (Hodder 1986; Shanks and Tilley 1987). The theoretical foundations of new archaeology, which dealt with totalizing social process, hypothesis-testing, grand generalising schemes and environmental determinism were replaced, in many cases, by their binary opposites. The new theoretical critique, instead, identified archaeological enquiry as a subjective process, allowing for multiple narratives on the past to exist. The importance of individual agency, replaced the domineering universal schemes of climate change, and generalising social and economic forces. Actions in the past and their material ramifications were now interpreted as replete with symbolism and active meaning, not as a passive reflection of the social and cultural conditions of life. In many senses, the world had been turned upside down.

In the 1990's, several authors have applied this theoretical critique to the study of past landscapes (Bender 1993a; Tilley 1994; Barrett 1994). The traditional forms of landscape archaeology were often imbued with the mundane descriptive tendencies, which characterised the scientific approach to archaeological investigation, and this objectification of the landscape has been severely criticised.

"....the task of the landscape archaeologist appears to be to detail the titanic forces which surrounded these individuals --- population levels, climate, land-use patterns, technology, settlement patterns, and the organisation of focal places.....Structures, fields, climate, soils are all fitted into place, in the belief that given a totalising knowledge of all other factors the missing term in the equation, the absent human presence, must emerge." (Thomas 1993:26).

Its theoretical underpinnings were also savaged, *"New geography and new archaeology considered space as an abstract dimension or container in which human activities and events took place....Such a view of space decentred it from agency and meaning. It was something that could be objectively measured in terms of an abstracted geometry of scale." (Tilley 1994:9)*

Many of the archaeological interpretations of the prehistoric landscape had been concerned with these 'titanic forces' and had often used environmental change as a device for explaining changes in social and economic life (i.e. Fowler 1983). Likewise, studies of field systems, land boundaries and settlement patterns in prehistory had tended towards economic or agricultural explanations (Fowler 1984; Bowen and Fowler 1978). The way in which the economic or environmental agendas came to dominate interpretations was criticised. Instead, the more emotive and experiential aspects of prehistoric social life were emphasised. "*..the physicality of living in the world, the interlocking habitus of action, belief, experience, engagement..*" (Bender 1993b:248) was now preferred to the evaluation of population curves or hypothetical crop yields.

Prehistoric ceremonial monuments had traditionally been interpreted as expressions of power, through the ability of elites to mobilise large work forces for their construction (i.e. Renfrew 1973;1979). Their distribution had been directly related to the political geography of polities. Many recent discussions have focused instead on the subjective experience of individuals, at these monuments, and within the associated burial rites (Barrett 1994). The specific architectural forms employed in their construction have been discussed, for the way the physical and symbolic presence of the monument both reflects and influences the conditions of social life and experience (Thomas 1993). The experience of engaging with the monument has been stressed, bringing in the importance of their topographic setting. This involves both the views, commanded by the situation of the monument, and the physical and emotional experience of approaching the site (Tilley 1994; Thomas 1993; Barrett and Bradley 1991). Ironically, the influence of the natural topography has been put back into interpretations of the prehistoric experience of landscape by the very people who raged so vociferously against its priority in schemes of environmental determinism.

Much of the re-evaluation of the approach to landscape, in archaeology, has stemmed from the work of cultural geographers, such as Denis Cosgrove (1984; Cosgrove and Daniels 1988). He pointed out that the prevalent modern approach towards landscape, and its understanding, was a product of a particular point in history. It was a creation of the historically specific conditions surrounding the

advent of capitalism and was mirrored by a whole series of other changes in political, economic and social life, that characterised the modern western view of the world (Cosgrove 1984). This view is illustrated with reference to the emergence of the western tradition of landscape painting. It was a medium which was concerned with realism and objectivity, rather than the subjective impression of a place. "*Landscape painting is thus a representation of place which alienates land, such that it can be appropriated by a gaze which looks in from outside.*" (Thomas 1993:22). This reflects the historical genesis of a particular way of looking at and constructing landscape. Under this view, places are viewed and dominated, not experienced from the inside through an "*....impression, feel, significance or meaning*" (Thomas 1993:21). It is this externalising approach to landscape, which was reflected in the landscape archaeology of the 1970's, and which was seen to alienate the evidence from the real historical processes that created these traces.

"The alternative view starts from regarding space as a medium rather than a container for action, something that is involved in action and cannot be divorced from it" (Tilley 1994:9). This, "*...humanised space forms both the medium and the outcome of action, both constraining and enabling it.*" (ibid.).

The 'experience' of landscapes and their meanings to people, in the past, have become important areas of discussion and these ideas have been applied to archaeological traces. There is not a great deal of difference between this kind of acceptance of landscape as emotive and full of esoteric references, and the discussions by landscape historians of the character or spirit of the historical and modern landscape. The latter, too, requires more than an objective distanced gaze and is, rather, about a direct and meaningful engagement with the lanes, meadows and hedgerows and what they mean to people.

The multiple meanings of landscape, depend upon the social and cultural position of the subject experiencing them (Bender 1993b). This appreciation stands in direct opposition to the universal neutral space, which characterised the view of the new archaeology (Tilley 1994). The appreciation that the western perception of landscape had to be jettisoned, for a more centred and subjective 'view from the

inside', was made under influence from ethnographic examples, which described a very different kind of meaningful landscape. Many anthropologists talk about the way that the landscape in small-scale societies acts as a physical medium for a whole range of symbolic layers (Tilley 1994; Devereux 1992). This has nothing to do with objectifying space and everything to do with understanding the world. Very often, the land is a socially constructed embodiment of the world view of the people who inhabit it. Each and every feature is laden with meanings, referring to mythology, ancestors and spirituality. *"Aboriginal Australians superimpose creation myths upon the land, thereby turning a temporal sequence into a spatial grid. That mythological grid locates the individual and the clan and allows them to renew their ancestral inheritance. At the same time, the grid is a topographic map that locates resources, camps and hunting-grounds."* (Bender 1993b:3).

Tilley has also picked up on the aboriginal experience of a *".....sacred, symbolic and mythic space replete with social meanings wrapped around buildings, objects and features of the local topography, providing reference points and planes of emotional orientation for human attachment and involvement."* (Tilley 1994:17). In this way, the mythic foundations of a community become inscribed into the landscape, and, through this inscription, the living are engaged actively with their past. Time itself is present in these landscapes, visible and readable to those who understand the code. *"Human activities become inscribed within a landscape such that every cliff, large tree, stream, swampy area becomes a familiar place. Daily passages through the landscape become biographic encounters for individuals, recalling traces of the past activities and previous events....."* (ibid.: 27).

This quote from Tilley, acknowledges the importance of the inscription of history into the landscape of small-scale societies (see also Gosden and Lock 1998 and chapter 7). Stories about the past were set in the landscape and characters and backdrops imposed on the natural topography. A major criticism of the period-specific reconstructions of landscapes, was that the local past appeared to have no place in them. Amidst the constructions of landscape described by Tilley and Bender lies an implicit indication of the awareness of the past, as it is represented in features of the landscape and very likely, as actual relics, in the form of barrows, earthworks, etc. Barrett hints at the relationship between later Bronze Age

communities and the past represented by the surviving barrows of an earlier and, very different, time.

“By the end of the second millennium the landscape was one of extensive field plots with the widespread enclosure of settlement sites. The round barrow cemeteries now lay on the margins of this arable land. These earlier cemeteries were now formed of monumental turf and chalk-clad mounds, and it was to these that the ashes of the dead were often borne. Such acts were expressive of the now distant and perhaps heroic origins which were claimed by those whose political authority was that of the earthly representatives of the lineages whose own biographies were linked to that of the land and the settlement.” (Barrett 1994:153).

The relationship between communities, in the past, with their past, has received a growing amount of attention, in recent years, and we will consider this body of literature in more detail in chapter 7. It is an issue which has particularly strong resonance for landscape archaeologists, as they too are expressing relationships with the past, in this way. Bender has illustrated the importance of a long term view which appreciates the continuing, but changing, meanings of monuments, in this case that of Stonehenge. Here, she documents the history of the monument, and the many ways in which its significance and meaning was re-invented and subverted, throughout prehistory, the Middle Ages and into the 20th century (1993b). We can only properly address the long term sequence in the landscape if we appreciate that the past is always present. Visible traces of the past in the landscape are drawn upon and given respect, but also ignored and avoided. Both acts operate through a conscious acknowledgement of the place of the features and the landscape within the history of the community involved (i.e. Bradley 1987; Gosden and Locke 1998).

The projects on Salisbury Plain and Cranborne Chase, and others, have added so much to our understanding of the development of the prehistoric landscape partly because they have appreciated the continuing role of the past within these landscapes (see above). They remain, however, studies of the prehistoric period and have not attempted to investigate the enduring role of monuments and linears

beyond prehistory and on into the historical landscape. It is time to take this issue out of its prehistoric origins and carry it on to its logical conclusion. Such an investigation is only possible if the long term perspective is rooted in a regional landscape.

THE WAY FORWARD?

The theoretical developments of the last 10 years or so have provided archaeological research with a much needed shot in the arm, opening up the horizons of enquiry, and freeing researchers from the pressure to conform to a narrowly defined version of scientific method. However, in doing so, a divide has been created between academic and professional archaeology, as well as between the practice of fieldwork and the intellectual musings of social theory. Whether intentional or not, these distinctions are perceived by many archaeologists, although a large number are also active in bridging the gap.

For the investigation of past landscapes, a balanced approach is required. One which is rooted in the best traditions of non-destructive fieldwork, but whose research aims and objectives are informed by a mature understanding of the character and meaning of landscape in small-scale societies. Only then can we begin to overcome the distinction, described by Ingold as, "*between the 'scientific study' of an atemporalised nature, and the 'humanised' study of a dematerialised history*" (Ingold 1993:172).

The overwhelmingly strong influence of economic interpretations in the prehistoric archaeologies of the 1970's reflected a growing interest with agricultural practice, alongside the development of techniques of environmental sampling. Social change was bound up with, and often dictated by, climatically induced alterations in agricultural potential. Likewise, land division was often seen as an entirely economic activity. This paradigm was rightly criticised, but it has been replaced with something that, at times, can appear equally extreme and abstract. The study of prehistoric agriculture is now seen as a theoretically redundant practice and has become the sole concern of the environmental archaeologist. To ignore the more practical aspects of prehistoric social life is to deny the large amounts of time,

inevitably, spent at work by prehistoric people. Agriculture and economic production should not, therefore, be marginalised but addressed and given theoretical potency. The strong concerns with everyday practical work, in the new archaeology, was a deliberate move away from the elitism of a biased emphasis on the graves and monuments of the rich and powerful in prehistory. A politically charged return to some aspects of this 'down to earth' agenda would be welcomed, in many quarters.

This chapter has discussed the many different ways of investigating past landscapes. The true colours of these different approaches are most clearly visible, and vulnerable to criticism, when they are set in contrast to one another. Much of the landscape archaeology of the 1970's and early 80's adopted a spatial perspective that did not restrict investigation to specific sites. It attempted, instead, to situate these sites within space, but the space was an empty white nothingness, inhabited only by other, contemporary sites, represented by black dots on the white paper. In this sense, it was archaeology *in*, rather than *of*, the landscape (Coones 1985). It was neither situated in time nor in experience. An archaeology of the landscape requires an attachment to the meanings and feelings of the place, or at least the will to look for them. In this sense, it does not merely situate itself spatially over a broad canvas but is immersed in the multi-faceted entity. "*..archaeologists study the meaning of the landscape, not by interpreting the many layers of its representation.....but by probing ever more deeply into it.*" (Ingold 1993:172). An examination of the past in a piece of this country, must consider the relationship of that past to the present configuration of the landscape. The past cannot be removed from the existing visible canvas, without an equal loss of opportunity for insight. The appreciation of the reuse of the past, in the past, and its continual reworking and reinvention, must imply that landscape studies should be carried out over a long term chronology. What we can see, outside, today is an accretion of centuries and millennia of reworking. To situate our enquiry, within this landscape, will enhance both the understanding of the present and of the past.

Furthermore, the important influence of the past, must also contribute to the uniqueness of regional landscapes. They are the product of distinctive and separate histories and sequences of development, building up and becoming ever more

distinct as time goes on. It is likely that the prehistoric inhabitants of a given region were more closely in touch with their (perceived) local past than they were with the inhabitants of other parts of Britain. Journeys to the past would have been made regularly, by simply travelling short distances across the local landscape, where engagements would be made with ancestral or mythic elements. On the other hand, journeys to other parts of the country would have been rare, except for the few folk engaged in regular exchange of goods over distance. The close connectedness of communities, in the past, to their landscape and the past within it, further degrades the usefulness of periodisation within the discipline of archaeology. However often scholars declare the traditional division of prehistory to be redundant, in terms of the actual understanding of social change, the whole divisive edifice remains, based ultimately on the three age system. *“Earnest assessments of the value of interdisciplinary research are insufficient to counter the centrifugal tendencies of an era of specialisation in a field in which integration is the very essence, and where the whole does indeed comprise far more than the sum of its parts.”* (Coones 1985:5). Coones’ concerns about the need for interdisciplinary approaches to landscape history could equally be applied to the need for a multi-period regional approach in landscape archaeology.

MY OLD FRIEND THE LANDSCAPE

Michael Shanks’ book *Experiencing the Past* (1992), uses a series of analogies to vividly illustrate the many images, approaches and professional tasks, skills and qualities required of the archaeologist. There are resonances in every one of these eclectic references, and it is an entertaining and enlightening job to associate archaeological work as we have experienced it, with each one. Inspired by this use of analogy, I will try here to construct a view of the kind of landscape archaeology to be adopted, using a further series of closely related analogies. These will perhaps caricature some of the approaches to landscape we have discussed above, but will hopefully clarify the main aim of this chapter, to support the call for an archaeology of the landscape. In short, a multi-disciplinary, long term regional investigation. It

is not that often that such studies appear, but occasionally they do (i.e. Fleming 1998; Hodges 1991; Beresford and Hurst 1990).

In response to a paper by Roymans, on *'The cultural biography of urnfields and the long-term history of a mythical landscape'* (1995), Bender remarks that, *"There is a logic to writing, as Kopytoff suggested, the cultural biography of an object, in which the object is treated like a person, but there is risk in treating landscape in the same way since, at any given moment, it carries different meanings for different people."* (1995). But, so too can individual people be related to, and treated, in different ways by different people (father, neighbour, doctor, friend, rival, customer, stranger, and more, could all apply to the same person). If we consider the language of the landscape historian, the essential attributes of the landscape are repeatedly referred to as its 'character' and even, in some cases, its 'personality' (Fowler 1978; Fox 1959). Equally, it is common archaeological parlance to refer to the 'respect' given by one feature to another, or indeed the 'relationship' between contexts in an excavation sequence. Regularly, therefore, we are in the habit of indirectly treating the object of archaeological enquiry as a person, or at least giving it some human attributes.

Instead of caricaturing the landscape directly as a person, we will try and illustrate different approaches to its study as different kinds of relationship between people. Since we are trying to discover things about our landscape we will treat it as a person, in the same way, characterising approaches as different means of interpersonal communication. Some, of course, are more successful than others!

Interrogation might be one way of extracting information from your subject. The informant is removed from its familiar surroundings and situated within the laboratory-like conditions of the interrogator's choosing. A bright light might be shone into the face of the person, who is intimidated and bullied into revealing their concealed truth. Whatever information might be forthcoming from this process, it will be minimal and of dubious value, having been extracted under significant duress.

The next step might well be to take more intrusive, destructive action. The instruments of torture are only brought out, as a last resort, but sometimes it is the

only way to discover truth from these kind of people. They always know more than they are saying, after all. The danger, with torture as a means of interrogation, of course, is that even if the desired information is eventually forthcoming, it will have been extracted at the cost of the life, or at least good health, of the subject under scrutiny.

As an alternative to the more extreme of the above measures, or indeed because of the psychological damage inflicted by them, it might be useful to try psychoanalysis. Psycho-therapy does actually feature as one of Shanks' analogies and here he describes the principle of the method, "*Psychotherapy is understanding through dialogue*" (Shanks 1992:79). In order to engage in this kind of enquiry a thorough grounding in the complex theoretical arguments of modern psychology are required, rather than the ruder more physical skills needed for interrogation and torture. What comes out of the informant's mouth, of course, will have to be interpreted in the light of the psychologist's particular understanding of these theories, only then will the information become useful.

On the other hand, it would surely make more sense to engage the informant, from the very beginning, in amicable conversation. A much deeper understanding of this person will come from a more intimate and convivial relationship with them and one which is founded on mutual respect. Such a thing will, of course, take time to develop, involving walking, talking, drinking in the pub. But, gradually you will find out all you need to know. Importantly the relationship should be conducted amidst surroundings familiar to the informant, not the enquirer, and you must talk to them in their own language. Only then will their real personality appear. In this way, what comes out of the careful and gradual be-friending is not what was originally expected or required. The information that arises is all the more true, for its uniqueness to this one individual, and is, eventually, much more than the set of rather dry questions, initially, demanded of them through interrogation and torture. The information that came out as a result of the intimate and amicable relationship was truly an insight. If we are to treat the landscape as a multi-textured fabric, richly woven with multiple meanings and layers of history then, it is surely this kind of close-grained intimate reflexive understanding that is needed to unlock its secrets and truly capture its character.

THE THESIS

Following two introductory chapters, the thesis is divided up into chronologically based sections. Each chapter will deal with the development of the landscape on the Wolds for a specified period. Finally, this evidence will be brought together and the last chapter will provide a long term overview.

Chapter 3: Linear earthworks and the Late Bronze Age landscape

The later Bronze Age has been chosen as the starting point. Here, as in many other areas, it marks a significant threshold in prehistory as large areas of land are enclosed and divided by ditches, banks and walls (Barrett 1994). We will critically address how much of a fundamental change this episode actually represents. This chapter will deal primarily with the origins of the pattern of linear ditches, which are first constructed here during the later Bronze Age. A series of descriptions will reconstruct the local patterns and emphasise their relationship to features of the topography as well as other archaeological sites. The enduring role of the linears within this landscape will be outlined. The descriptions will also introduce the results of past work on individual linears, including that of antiquarians such as Mortimer and Cole. In addition to their records, the main sources used here will be the RCHM survey (Stoertz 1997) and the early series of OS maps from 1854 (6") and 1910 (25"). The relationship of the linears to the existing landscape of barrows, trackways, valleys and ponds will be discussed, arguing that these earlier meaningful features were incorporated deliberately into the new scheme of land division.

Chapter 4: Pastures and the Past:

Developing Landscapes of the Iron Age and RB

Here, we are faced with two distinct periods, characterised on the Wolds by very different landscape characters. One is the open, mobile landscape of the early and middle Iron Age, contemporary with the square barrow cemeteries. The later one originates during the later Iron Age, and constitutes an enclosed and occupied landscape. The centuries that precede the Roman conquest are therefore identified

as significant periods of change. The interdependent relationship between the Wolds and the Wold-edge is important to the reconstruction of the Iron Age landscape and the identification of the distinctive character of the Wolds before the later Iron Age changes. It seems to have been a place of predominant pasture, away from the settled and managed lowlands and valleys.

Chapter 5: Historical landscape and township profiles

Here, we present the detailed historical landscape evidence for the 20 townships of the study area. The aim is to identify the character of the landscape before the radical changes of parliamentary enclosure. Aspects such as the location of open field and pasture as well as the course of pre-enclosure roads are reconstructed, using a range of predominantly late historical records. Tithe and enclosure awards, various 18th century maps, estate maps and the first edition OS are all utilised. The information gained will then be used in the following chapter as a means of identifying early elements within this historical landscape. The course of township boundaries, location of early pastures and routes of perennial long distance tracks are emphasised.

Chapter 6: The Wolds before Domesday

Here, we take an overall, more generalised view of the landscape of the Wolds before the Norman conquest. Information from the previous chapter as well as insights gained from historical sources from elsewhere on the Wolds will be used. The archaeological evidence for the Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian periods is also discussed. An open, unenclosed landscape is reconstructed, one which is crossed by trackways. The remnants of these extensive common pastures are glimpsed in the historical landscapes of the Medieval and post-Medieval periods, especially in place-names. The long distance tracks are seen to have structured the pattern of township boundaries. The use of the Wolds during the Anglian period for pasture, removed from the settled areas on the edge, is emphasised and related to the distinctive archaeological patterns found here. Transformations, beginning in the Anglo-Scandinavian period involve the increasing enclosure of the Wolds and the encroachment of settlement.

Chapter 7: The Wolds keep revolving

Here, we are able to take an overall view of the whole period under scrutiny. Long term trends are identified here involving the oscillating dynamic between continuity and change within this landscape which operated at many levels. Structures and features enjoy considerable long term endurance, but are situated alongside periods of radical transformation. The relationship between the Wolds and the Wold-edge is one such structure, which serves to transform itself, repeatedly, highlighting the integrity and separateness of the Wolds, only in certain periods. The repeated persistent importance of certain special places on the Wolds, throughout this period is highlighted. However, their persistence does not reflect a timeless stability, but the continued re-interpretation of their historical significance. The pervasive influence of the past in this landscape is crucial to this chapter and, by extension, is perhaps the most significant structural force in explaining the relationship between continuity and change.

CHAPTER TWO

CHALKSHIRE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE YORKSHIRE WOLDS

The section on a map of shows the central valley of Linton, between

has been long considered

the river and its change

hundred years ago in all

off of a particular section

is considered as a

the range, the village and

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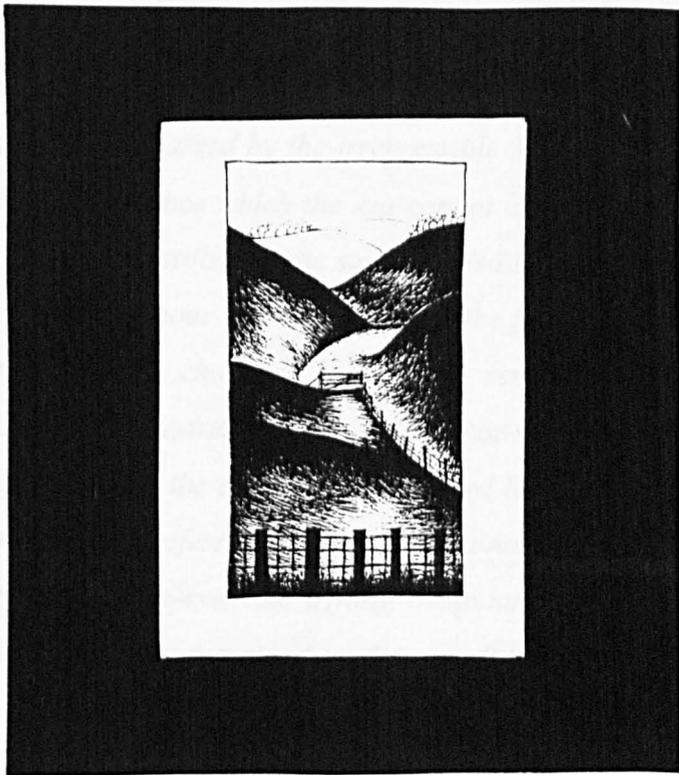
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Chapter Guide The History



EAST YORKSHIRE: GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The region of East Yorkshire contains the most extensive geological series
which have been described by the Yorkshire Geologists. The Yorkshire Wolds
extend from the Tadcaster region in the north to the Wold in
the south, and run from west to east. The Wolds are a series of
hills which are part of a range of hills which extend from the

CHAPTER TWO

CHALKSHIRE: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE YORKSHIRE WOLDS

“To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heathland which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change and, and harassed by the irrepressible New. The great inviolate place had an ancient permanence which the sea cannot claim. Who can say of a particular sea that it is old? Distilled by the sun, kneaded by the moon, it is renewed in a year, in a day, or in an hour. The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the village and the people changed, yet Egdon remained. Those surfaces were neither so steep as to be destructible by weather, nor so flat as to be the victims of floods and deposits. With the exception of an aged highway, and a still more aged barrow presently to be referred to -themselves almost crystallised to natural products by long continuance-even the trifling irregularities were not caused by pickaxe, plough, or spade, but remained as the very finger touches of the last geological change.”

(Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native*)

EAST YORKSHIRE: GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The region of East Yorkshire contains four main topographical-geological zones (Manby 1980; Catt 1990) (fig 1). The Yorkshire Wolds comprise a crescentric outcrop of chalk stretching from the Humber estuary in the south, to the Vale of Pickering, and eastwards from here to hit the coast at Flamborough Head. At Bempton, the chalk cliffs stand to a height of 135m O.D. This area of higher

ground varies from between 50m and 200m in altitude above sea level and forms the most prominent zone in East Yorkshire. It is surrounded by the low-lying Vales of Pickering, to the north, the Vale of York to the west, and the plain of Holderness to the east.

The Vale of York is a low-lying area representing the floodplain of the river Derwent, which drains from the north into the Humber. To the east, between the Derwent and the Wolds escarpment, runs the Foulness. Environmental research surrounding the archaeological discovery of the Hasholme log boat, has shown that, in the 1st millennium BC, this area of the Vale of York was a system of tidal creeks which extended inland for up to 12km, in some places (Millett and Mcgrail 1987). The mean sea level has obviously dropped significantly since this time (Manby 1988). The Vale of York is covered by a mixture of glacial and alluvial deposits. These are, in the main, peats and clays and the area, in general, is poorly drained (Catt 1990). It has only been fully exploited for agriculture through drainage programmes carried out during the last 200 years (Alison 1976). Prior to this, much of the area was waterlogged, but there existed a series of raised sandy ridges which would have been more easily drained and thus suitable for settlement (Halkon 1990).

The drift geology of Holderness overlies the same beds of chalk that outcrop to the west as the Yorkshire Wolds. It comprises glacial tills, borne by glaciers from 2 separate directions which are, therefore, slightly different in character (Catt 1990). The surface of this till, exposed once the ice had melted, was uneven and formed an undulating series of hollows and ridges. Subsequent deposits of peats and alluvial clays have formed over the till, but its uneven character enabled the formation of a mosaic of lakes, islands, marshes and woodland (Gilbertson 1990). This rich and varied landscape of prehistoric and historic times has now been replaced with a more monotonous arable patchwork, through draining schemes and agricultural intensification. The recently published reports of the Humber Wetlands Survey have highlighted the rich environmental and archaeological heritage in Holderness and the Humberhead levels, and in particular this work has forced us to re-consider the idea that this area was a marginal, unoccupied backwater in antiquity (Van der Noort and Ellis 1993).

The Hull Valley is usually classed within Holderness and again, recent archaeological and environmental investigations here, have revealed previously unrecorded prehistoric and Romano-British settlement activity (Didsbury 1988; 1990). There are notable concentrations of peat along the drainage system of the River Hull (Catt 1990).

The Vale of Pickering lies to the north of the chalk, between the Wolds and the Tabular Hills of North Yorkshire. It is a low-lying alluvial plain, which does not rise more than 15m above sea level. Again, there were a series of large lakes here during early prehistory filled by glacial meltwater (Catt 1990). The largest of these, Lake Pickering, was hemmed in on its western side by a moraine of boulder clay. The waters from this lake eventually flowed westwards and south to form the channel now followed by the river Derwent. The sites of these lakes are now filled by peats, one of which provided the anaerobic conditions for the preservation of the remarkable Mesolithic material from Starr Carr (Clark 1954). This area has been systematically drained by farmers over the last few decades and the peat is rapidly drying out (Schadla-Hall 1988). The spring-line along the base of the Wolds escarpment, to the south of the Vale has provided a corridor for settlement between the wet fen and the Wolds, for many centuries. Here, the excavations at Heslerton have revealed multi-period traces of settlement and burial stretching back to the Neolithic and Bronze Age, preserved well under wind-blown sands (Powlesland 1986).

Rising above these three low-lying wet zones, is the chalk outcrop of the Yorkshire Wolds. This forms the northern extension of the chalk belt known from the south of England and Wessex. The highest elevations are found along the top of the western escarpment. From here the rock dips gradually towards the south-east, where it is eventually overlain by the glacial and alluvial deposits of Holderness and the Hull Valley. The northern scarp slope is dramatic and towers above the low-lying flat Vale of Pickering. The eastern margins of the Wolds are much less obvious, as the dip slope gradually descends, the chalky soils slowly merging with the clays and gravels of the Hull Valley. The characteristic rolling, rounded landscape of the Wolds was created by erosion from the thawing of periglacial permafrost, during warm periods within episodes of glacial activity (Catt 1990). This material moved

across the landscape en masse. The more violent and swollen of the meltwater streams flowed viciously along the existing valleys, widening them considerably and carrying away their existing valley bottom deposits. This meltwater activity during the Quaternary has shaped and moulded the Wolds landscape. The sloping tendency of the chalk block meant that drainage mainly flowed towards the south-east, but some of the dry valley systems created do flow in a westerly direction as well. The net result is a landscape in the high western Wolds which is full of deeply incised dry valleys. These no longer carry surface water, as it percolates quickly through the chalk into the underground reservoirs of the water table. These valleys become much less distinct as they travel south and east, where the Wolds landscape becomes more gently rolling and little different in appearance from the flatlands of the surrounding plain. This distinction between a dissected wolds of the western area and the rolling wolds of the eastern dip slope will feature prominently below. These topographic characteristics single out the Wolds from the surrounding flatlands. The sudden steepness of the escarpment ridge and the deep v-shape dry valleys which wind snake-like through the raised lands.

THE WOLDS LANDSCAPE: WATER, DRY VALLEYS AND SETTLEMENT

There is more than just height above sea level, that distinguishes the Wolds from the surrounding plain of Holderness and the Vales of Pickering and York. The dramatic escarpment ridge that rises above the latter Vales marks both the northern and western edges of the Wolds, but thereafter, to the south and east, the relief is gradual and slopes gently as a dip-slope towards the claylands of Holderness. It is the uniform nature of the geology of these chalk downlands that sets the area apart from the mixed deposits which surround it. The free draining nature of the resultant calcareous soils and the subsequent lack of standing or running water has also been hugely significant in terms of the history of human settlement. Colin Hayfield and Pat Wagner have contributed much to the understanding of past hydrology, and its relevance to human activity here, and much of what follows is based on their recent discussion (1995).

The availability of water is obviously critical for settlement and agriculture, although we should be careful about assuming that settlement will always concentrate in wet areas, and avoid those which are more arid. Over the past century, it is clear that the increased volume of water, extracted from the rivers Derwent and Hull, which drain the Wolds, has led to a marked drop in the water table (Hayfield and Wagner 1995). This has led to the diminishment of the only remaining permanent water course which is now even more seasonal than in the past. Descriptions from the 18th and 19th century (Woodward 1985; Crowther 1992) and the results of a recent excavation across its bed at Caythorpe (Abramson 1996), show how extensive the Gipse Race once was. Its very name describes a vibrant and fast flowing stream with a tendency for disappearing underground (Smith 1937). Today, the Wolds are surrounded by a halo of naturally occurring springs which come out of the ground where the chalk bedrock meets clay. These form streams and small rivers which flow into the Derwent to the north and west, and into the Hull to the east. The degree to which these water courses appeared on the surface in the past, actually on the Wolds, is dependent upon the amount by which the water table has fallen. It may be that the hydrological situation of the early nineteenth century is fairly close to that in antiquity but, equally, there may have been climatic fluctuation in the last two millennia which has affected it further. It is very important that we try and understand the ancient hydrology of the Wolds, as the free availability of water would have made it a very different place for ancient settlement and agriculture.

It seems likely that some of the main valleys, which cut into the chalk, did carry running water until quite recently. Folk memories in the now dry village of Fimber (save a pond) still attest to a forgotten water course which is also recorded by the antiquarian J.R.Mortimer (Hayfield and Wagner 1995). This would probably have run intermittently/seasonally, from Thixendale in the west of the Wolds through a natural pond at Burdale to Fimber and beyond to Wetwang and Garton Slack, on the eastern dip-slope. Where a stream occurs today at the lower eastern end of this valley, it is also known as the Gipse Race. The tendency for these chalk streams to disappear underground makes it problematic to assume that such a stream was present on the surface throughout the entirety of its course (fig 2).

It is difficult to envisage the Wold tops as having been endowed with running water in antiquity, but the bottoms of the larger and lower lying dry valleys are likely to have been wet, especially their lower portions. In this scheme, therefore, we can probably add the main Wolds valleys to the areas most favoured to settlement which today consists of the spring-line on the Wold edge. Here, especially at the foot of the northern and western escarpments, lies a string of villages, most of which have at least Medieval origins (fig 4).

Despite the apparent lack of water on the Wolds, all the modern villages here have medieval origins too. Many of these have a village pond which was, in most cases, the only permanent source of surface water. There are many cases of wells being dug to supplement this supply and some have been found in Romano-British contexts (Stead 1980; Brewster 1981). The agricultural improvements of the 18th and 19th centuries brought with them a large number of artificial dewponds, mainly built out in the newly enclosed fields, and it may be a hangover from this experience that most of the village ponds are also traditionally viewed as artificial (Hayfield and Wagner 1995). If this is the case then the ponds described by the Old English names of Fimber and Sledmere are at least Anglo-Saxon in origin. That at Fimber was cleaned out in the last century and here Mortimer records the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon spearhead in the lower silts. It is perhaps more likely that, in some cases, there are naturally occurring ponds where outcrops of clay provide a natural seal around which permanent settlement grew up (Hayfield and Wagner 1995) (fig 5-6). Mortimer, certainly considered the double ponds at Fridaythorpe and Fimber to be of natural origin in this way (1888).

Topographically, the Wolds is further distinguished from the surrounding lower and wetter lands, by its characteristic mixture of open Wold tops with intricate networks of deeply incised dry valleys. These have been formed by the periglacial activity of meltwater streams and most are now totally dry. The colluvial deposits in the valley bottoms have been little studied but have been found in places to be several metres deep (Hayfield and Wagner 1995). The experience of Martin Bell's work on the colluvial deposits in the dry valleys of the southern English chalk shows that a great deal of information regarding the ploughing episodes of an area can be gleaned from these dry valley ploughwash fills (Bell 1983).

The steepness of the dale-sides is not conducive to ploughing, so that most dales are still under permanent grass and exist today as havens for wildlife amidst the arable desert of the Wold tops. The valley floor of some of the larger dales is, however, under plough today and in some cases the ridge and furrow of medieval ploughing episodes is visible on the floors of even small dales, where they are close to medieval settlements (i.e. south of Cowlam). Presumably, the incredibly long runs that the plough team could make along the bottom of some of these narrow valley bottoms would minimise the number of times the team would be required to turn their plough and traction animals. The unploughed dale-sides are also places where archaeological features, such as linear earthworks, have survived (see chapter 3) (fig 7-8).

The influence of the dry valleys was clearly more significant on the landscapes of the pre-industrial age than it has been since the agricultural improvements of the 18th and 19th centuries. The oldest surviving routes and boundaries appear to follow the course of the dale bottoms or sides and only seem to have travelled in straight lines when it was necessary to cross the Wold top, between separate dry valley networks. For this reason it seems that where roads were re-aligned in the post-Medieval era, the existing straight and open stretches were retained, whereas the windy lengths of the same road that followed the dales were disregarded. (see chapter 5-6)

The modern landscape of the Wolds is wholly rural and agricultural, and the vast majority of the field pattern and road system was laid out in the 18th and 19th centuries, by parliamentary enclosure. Some pre-enclosure lines and boundaries remain but many were obliterated at this time and the air photographic cropmark record is characterised, as much by Medieval tracks and boundaries, as by those of more remote antiquity (Stoertz 1997). Although the RCHM plots do not include marks that are obviously Medieval in date. The characteristic isolated farms of the modern Wolds are also products of enclosure, as are the field dew ponds and shelter belt plantations that usually surround them (fig 9-10).

The Medieval settlement pattern was nucleated and, around the villages, were laid extensive open fields that sometimes filled whole parishes, leaving little room for

permanent pasture. Many of these Medieval villages have now become deserted sites and the extent of settlement contraction is even visible as earthworks within the confines of the successful settlements which still remain. All of the existing villages of the Wolds have Medieval origins and most retain the organic and well worn character of their antiquity, in sharp contrast to the ordered freshness of the bleak enclosure landscapes that surround them. Very often the roads that lead out of the villages here are sunken for a short way until they become wider and more level once outside the village limits. Here they have been modified at the time of parliamentary enclosure.

The density of rural settlements today is greatest on the western, northern and eastern edges of the Wolds where villages are strung out along the spring-lines (fig 4). The large amount of deserted settlements in the Wolds interior suggests that the medieval settlement density was greater here than it is today, particularly in the light of the fact that many villages have shrunk in size. (Neave 1990; Hayfield/Brewster 1988) Notable concentrations of settlement occur along the major valleys, that dissect the Wolds, and in particular the Great Wold Valley of the Gipsy Race. This leads from Duggleby in the west through Burton Fleming and Rudston and on to Bridlington on the east coast. A closely set string of villages is laid out along the floor of this valley with strip parishes cutting north-south across the east-west course of the stream and the valley. The second Gipsy Race appears to have occupied the valley which opens out on the eastern edge of the Wolds at Elmswell and Driffield. Here too is a string of settlements which follow the valley. There is less evidence here of a tendency to concentrate along a water course, however, and the villages are more widely spread. This is perhaps an indication that the stream had ceased to exist as a significant water course when these settlements were founded and that the shelter of the valley (or the communications it provided) was the most important attraction for settlement.

The pre-eminence of the Wold-edge as a focus for settlement has already been discussed but it is not only the dense concentrations of villages that set it apart from the interior. The six major market and administrative centres of the recent historic period, Malton, Bridlington, Driffield, Beverley, Market Weighton and Pocklington are all sited on the Wold-edge, at regularly spaced intervals. All of these centres

were already prominent settlements by the time of Domesday Book, and it seems that, at least since this time, the administration of the Wolds and the marketing of agricultural surplus has been organised from the Wold-edge (fig 11). The town of Malton and, perhaps also a site close to Bridlington, had urban origins in the Romano-British period (Ramm 1978). Excavations at Malton show possible later Roman re-fortification and the site soon re-emerges as an important pre-conquest ecclesiastical and political centre (chapter 6-7). Driffield and Beverley are both significant Anglo-Saxon centres and Market Weighton, Bridlington and Pocklington have undoubted importance by Domesday, and perhaps earlier as well (Alison 1976; Hey 1986). The village of Kilham, sited on the north-eastern Wolds, close to Rudston, and to a lesser degree also Hunmanby, are the only Wolds settlements which enjoyed economic or administrative importance in the post-Medieval period. Notably, these villages have not since evolved into towns.

An understanding of the economic role of the Wolds, within a wider settlement pattern and how this may have evolved, would be greatly helped by an idea of the vegetational and land-use history for the area. It is very problematic to reconstruct such an environmental history because of the lack of well preserved pollen profiles. From the few insights we have, which are virtually all from buried soil horizons underneath prehistoric monuments, it is apparent that the landscape was probably already cleared by the Bronze Age (Manby 1980; 1988). The lack of a uniform environmental overview prevents us from making generalisations, however. At the time of the Norman Conquest, the amount of woodland, as recorded in Domesday Book, is very limited and the only concentration that exists is probably in the vicinity of Beverley in the south-east (Brooks 1986).

WILDERNESS RE-DEFINED

It is not enough, perhaps, to characterise the Wolds landscape as an area distinctive from its surroundings, simply through elevation, hydrology or even the character of the settlement pattern. The spirit of the landscape, through experience, in the present day, needs to be added to this discussion. The following is a personal view and would probably differ from the impressions of the experience of the Wolds by

those who live and work there, on a permanent basis. As we have mentioned, the visible configurations of fields, hedges and lanes are products, almost entirely, of parliamentary enclosure. As such, the exposed and open situation of the wold tops is accentuated. The lack of wooded hedges, the isolation of single trees, starkly silhouetted against the sky, the straightness and regularity of the roads, the rigid square fields, all heighten the sense of management and exposure. The experience of walking along the dry valleys is completely different as, here, the ground is covered in grass, the steepness of the slopes softens the bleakness of distant views. Up on the wold tops the wind will carry away much of the sounds generated by animals and people, but down in the valleys the concealing grassy bulk will almost create an echo. The valleys are havens within the vast arable prairies created by modern agribusiness. Some are accessible to everyone, as they are interlaced by public paths. A great number, though, are restricted and remain the exclusive preserve of shooting parties, dead rabbits and sheep (fig 12-15).

This is not a public landscape. Many of the authorised rights of way are deliberately uninviting. They strike out across the arable desert, marked in crops by ruler straight lines of soil, bleached of vegetation. Otherwise they may cling to the side of a low hawthorn hedge. Visitors and tourists are persuaded to drive through rather than stop and wander. A scenic drive route is provided for this express purpose (to avoid unnecessary damage to crops?). The few stands of woodland are plantations created in the 18th and 19th century. They remain away from public access and are rarely available as recreational amenities. Instead, the vast majority of these stands provide shelter for farmhouse complexes or, more usually, for the rearing of colonies of pheasants. One of the main reasons for the fiercely restricted access is the need to protect these populations of pheasants from 'poachers'. The ideal of landownership is so strong that its rights of property extend even to wild animals unfortunate enough to encroach. One attractive recreational aspect to this landscape is its emptiness. Although it often appears empty of wildlife and of wild plants, it is also usually empty of people.

Farming, as industry, has transformed the area and farms are now part of large corporate concerns. The JSR group, for instance, based at Southburn, near Driffield, is run by a local family. They own a large number of farms and many acres

of land on the Wolds. Their programme of pig production, for instance, involves 15 separate sites, each providing a specialist link in the chain in the pig breeding and rearing system. The existence of a chain of processing plants for pigs linked to each other, acts as a reminder of the industrial scale of this kind of farming.

The tendencies toward corporate agriculture, in recent decades, has finally severed the link between the practice of agricultural production and its traditional social and cultural associations and foundations. This process is ubiquitous and has affected the Vale of York, Holderness and Pickering as much as the Wolds. However, if we look back at some of the landscapes of the Wolds from the historical period, it will be clear that the area was consistently regarded as a different and separate place at many times during its history.

Many of the individual features mentioned here are obviously part of the general experience of the modern English countryside. Here they are relentless and taken to extremes. In a sense, the Wolds has re-defined the idea of wilderness. In terms of human presence and aesthetics it could be classed as one, for it is a bleak and empty place. However, there is very little of the presence of wild nature here, as it is all intensively managed. Every corner of this profitable place is wrung dry for the revenue it can produce. Such intensive management of the spaces in between villages, heightens the sense of wilderness, it accentuates the distinction between the organic antiquity of the village community and the lack of history or humanity in the surrounding landscape.

PLANNED AND ANCIENT COUNTRYSIDE

We talked about the problems in over-generalising the distinction between planned and ancient countryside, in the previous chapter. In Rackham's scheme, the spread of planned countryside cuts a great swathe across England, taking in the whole of East Yorkshire. The North York Moors are let off the hook and treated separately as part of the highland zone (Rackham 1994). Can we really accept that the historic landscape of the whole of East Yorkshire shared a common character rooted in a universal history? The Wolds, as recorded on the 1st edition of the OS 6" series, comes across as classic planned countryside. As we have seen, most of its features

are ostensibly the creations of parliamentary enclosure. The surrounding landscapes of the vales, however, seem to be giving a different impression. This distinction is not so clear on the eastern dip slope, as here the more luxuriant and wooded inhabited landscapes of Holderness emerge slowly. On the western margins, however, the difference is very clearly often marked by the topographic barrier of the steep scarp slope. A particularly good example exists in the north western corner of the Wolds, just south of where it connects here with the Howardian Hills. These hills are part of the Jurassic limestone outcrop which borders the western Wolds as a thin strip or bench below the scarp (Catt 1990). Here the limestone extends from the Wolds to the Derwent at Malton, and then across the western end of the Vale of Pickering to the Moors.

The modern civil parish of Kirby Underdale sits on this limestone belt on the edges of the Wolds. One look at the OS 6" map for the area indicates a clear distinction between the limestone and the chalk. The Roman road, that runs along the top edge of the scarp slope, more or less marks the dividing line between 2 different landscapes. One is reminiscent of Rackham's ancient countryside with irregular enclosures, fields bordered by wooded hedges, winding sunken lanes, streams and springs amidst the dispersed but closely spaced villages of Uncleby, Painsthorpe and Kirby Underdale itself. Above the Roman road, however, the patterns of fields and roads and plantations is that of parliamentary enclosure that constitutes planned countryside. Much of the land in the Kirby Underdale area is pasture and was seemingly enclosed at an earlier date, and in a more piecemeal fashion (Harris 1969). This stands in clear contrast to the land up on the Wolds which is today almost entirely arable. This exercise can be carried out across the region outlining exceptions to the over generalised rule, but also reinforcing the separate identity held by the Wolds in the early modern era. This sense of a separate identity for the Wolds has been recognised by Alison (1976) and Harris (1969) and is particularly clear from the contemporary writings and historical developments of the 18th and 19th centuries.

THE COMING OF THE INCLOSURES

Parliamentary enclosure took hold on the Wolds, almost entirely, between 1700 and 1850 (Harris 1969). Before 1700, the townships here contained open fields surrounding large nucleated villages. They were open townships farming under a co-operative collective system which included the organisation of arable cultivation in the open field and the grazing of livestock on the common pasture (ibid.; 1951). Some closes existed in the immediate environs of the village, but most of the land would have been unenclosed. The pastures usually lay on the margins of the open fields. Alongside these inhabited townships were some that had been enclosed and turned into sheep walks or rabbit warrens, probably between the 16th and 18th centuries. These constituted those townships where villages had gradually become depopulated, in places like Cowlam, Cottam, Arras and Wharram Percy (fig 16). By the 1840's, most of the Wolds was under arable cultivation, leaving only isolated areas of steep dry valley or warren under permanent grass (Harris 1969; Alison 1976). The changes of parliamentary enclosure meant the complete transformation of these open townships. Their open fields were enclosed, formerly winding tracks straightened and levelled, plantations and shelter belts imposed on otherwise treeless landscape, new farms built away from the villages. The townships of the Wolds had been more open than those of the surrounding vales as in the latter areas, enclosure had been already gradually encroaching on the open fields. On the Wolds though, the landscape had remained open. For this reason the enclosure commissioners were given free rein to radically transform the pre-existing landscape.

The descriptions of the experiences of travellers to East Yorkshire during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, give us some impression of the view held of the Wolds, at this time, relative to the rest of East Yorkshire. Most tended to avoid the chalk, travelling between populated centres of York, Malton, Weighton, Beverley and Hull. They usually proceeded south, along the western Wold-edge, and thence from Weighton across Arras Hill to Beverley. Some also visited friends who owned stately homes, often with newly laid out 'pleasure grounds'. A strong sense of the separateness of the Wolds colours much of this writing. It is a separateness often distinguished by differences in farming practice and observations on varying degrees

of efficiency in agricultural exploitation. In other words, the Wolds was often seen as under-utilised and in need of improvement, in contrast to the surrounding lowlands where improvement was already well under way. These kind of observations, made during the 17th and 18th century, provide the basis for the radical changes in land-use and landownership, made through parliamentary enclosure, during the 18th and 19th century (fig 17). By the end of the 19th century, there was less of a sense of difference as, by this time, all the Wolds townships had been enclosed.

“That part of it towards the sea and the river Derwent is pretty fruitful, but the middle is nothing but a heap of mountains, called Yorkeswold, which signifies Yorkshire Hills.” (Camden 1586; quoted in Woodward 1985:20).

Several other 17th century writers follow the pattern set by Leland and Camden, in only briefly alluding to the Wolds, as most of their travels took them along the populous Wold-edges. This period (16th-17th century) had witnessed a great deal of gradual desertion of settlements on the Wolds, as many long cultivated lands were turned over to open sheep pasture. As such, the existence of extensive tracts of sheep walk and rabbit warren characterised the post-Medieval landscapes, particularly in those townships whose villages had become depopulated (Harris 1969; Alison 1976; Neave 1990; Beresford and Hurst 1990). Defoe, writing around 1720, recognised the distinction,

“I observed the middle of this riding or division of Yorkshire is very thin of towns and, consequently, of people being overspread with Wolds, that is to say plains and downs, like those of Salisbury; on which they feed great numbers of sheep, and breed also a great many black cattle and horses;..... But the east and west is populous and rich and full of towns, the one lying on the sea coast and the other upon the river Derwent.” (quoted in Woodward 1985:54).

The second half of the 18th century, sees the beginnings of parliamentary enclosure in East Yorkshire. Township by township the formerly extensive open fields and common pastures were transformed into more ‘manageable’ fields, bounded by quick-set hawthorn hedges. Roads were straightened and now confined within hedge lines where formerly they had been wide, open rambling droveways

(Woodward 1985). Much of the descriptions from this period are concerned with the benefits of these agricultural improvements, in terms of the better and more efficient utilisation of land for profit. Very little mention is made of the social implications of enclosure in this district. The landscape of the unenclosed townships is characterised as archaic wilderness, as for instance in this extract by Arthur Young, written in 1769,

“Between Market Weighton and Beverley, I observed several warrens, which must raise the wonder of every traveller, to see such good land left to so woeful an use; the turf is exceedingly rich and fine, and the plentiful crops of thistles scattered about it, prove the natural goodness of the soil....About Bishop Burton is some of the most extraordinary open field land I have met with; for it let while open at 18s and 20s an acre; and now a bill of enclosure has passed, it is said to raised to near 30s per acre.” (quoted in Crowther 1992:19).

Isaac Leatham also recognised the latent inefficiency of the exploitation of the land on the Wolds, but makes little comment on the social characteristics of the common rights which are entrenched within these pre-enclosure agricultural schemes (Harris 1969). Land and farming are seen as entirely economic commodities, and we get very little sense of the human presence in these pre-enclosure landscapes. The roads across the Wolds before inclosure were wide, so as to allow easy access with little attention to maintenance. Leatham comments on the need for closer management,

“Those over the uninclosed part of the Wold division, require but little attention; the traveller however, need not complain, because the room allowed will ever enable him to find a good one; but this is not economical in the occupier of the land, though the land may be let at a low valuation, as great waste is often made by such a free range over it: for a considerable saving would be made by only levelling and keeping in order a suitable part thereof.....” (quoted in Crowther 1992:36).

The voices of opposition to enclosure are not heard in East Yorkshire, but the existence of such voices is occasionally alluded to, as in this passage, again by Leatham.

“Some are of the opinion that inclosures have been the cause of a decrease of population, but a far greater number maintain contrary opinions. Additional labour, an improved air, and an increase of produce are certainly favourable to an increase in population, these are in general the beneficial consequences of inclosures....Many open fields and commons in this district have been inclosed: and the taste for inclosing has been carried on here as rapidly, and to as good a purpose, as in most other countries.” (quoted in Crowther 1992:37).

A poem, written at the turn of the 19th century, also captures the excitement of improvement experienced by those yeoman farmers who came off best, as a result of the changes. They are here likened to a religious striving to make the most of what god has given, as this extract shows,

*“As I look’d round, my wond’ring eye beholds
The vast improvements on the Yorkshire Wolds;
When on the top of Weatrop Hill I stand,
A prospect opens over sea and land....
As o’er this vale I take a wide survey,
And view the hills where I oft us’d to play;
Drove out from thence, my father’s farm was sold;
We Lutton left when I was nine years old;
This seem’d a cross not rightly understood,
But afterward, we saw it work for good,
Tho’it was but eight miles we then remov’d,
To Kilham; a far better place it prov’d;
There all inclos’d, the diff’rence shew’d as plain,
As from the wilderness into Canaan.....”*

(Edward Anderson, quoted in Crowther 1992:50).

Alan Harris has repeatedly emphasised the strong tendency for parliamentary enclosure on the Wolds, in contrast to the surrounding vales and plains (1969). The distinction between the areas already existed before enclosure, through the tendency, on the Wolds, for townships to remain open until a relatively late date. Away from the Wolds, the pattern had been more mixed, with many townships now containing both areas of early (pre 18th century) and parliamentary enclosure (Harris 1969). Strickland recognised the distinction also when he wrote, “.....*But upon the Wold lands of this Riding inclosures have been carried to the greatest extent.*” (quoted in Crowther 1992:59). By the middle of the 19th century, the open barren waste of the Wolds had been transformed (fig 18).

“The country is all inclosed, generally by thorn hedges; and plantations, everywhere grouped over its surface, add beauty to its outline, while they shelter the fields from the cutting blasts of winter and spring. Green pasture fields are occasionally intermixed with corn, or more frequently surround the spacious and comfortable homestead.” (quoted in Harris 1961:97).

MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPES AND VILLAGE DESERTION

There is a massive discrepancy in our knowledge between the post-Medieval Wolds and that of the Middle Ages. The explosion of historical sources from the 17th century onwards has enabled the detailed reconstruction of the agrarian landscape. For the centuries that precede the 17th century, however, the quality and frequency of historical documentation is much lower (Alison 1976). The landscapes of the Medieval Wolds are, therefore, known only in outline. This is through documentary records that are of indirect relevance and archaeological evidence which has not been adequately investigated. The impression that the Medieval landscape is a closed book, because we already know all about it, is common and perhaps reflected in the decision of the RCHM not to map traces of ridge and furrow, identified from the air on AP's (Stoertz 1997). The reconstruction of the layout of open fields is dependent upon their record in very late sources, such as tithe maps or enclosure awards of the early 19th century (chapter 5). It is not straightforward to simply extrapolate these patterns back into the earlier centuries. However,

Harvey's work did show several examples where the mapped field patterns of the 19th century could be matched with furlong layouts recorded in the 13th century (Harvey 1983).

The Medieval Wolds landscape was largely characterised by nucleated villages, surrounded by extensive and unenclosed open fields. Many townships were almost entirely filled with cultivated land, with very long furlongs stretching the full length of the township, in some cases (Alison 1976; Harvey 1983) (fig 19). For the most part, the agricultural regimes of each township community were carried out within the township territory. Many contained specialised areas of pasture often on the margins of the territories. As Leatham described in early 19th century, large pasture zones would straddle adjoining township boundaries and these were not always marked by physical barriers (Crowther 1992) (see fig 9). In these cases, a shepherd would have the job of keeping stock within each township limits. Those townships which did not have designated pasture zones, would have operated rotational systems between the 2 or 3 open fields, allowing animals to graze the fallow lands (Harris 1951; 1969)

A characteristic of the post-Medieval Wolds was the frequency of deserted settlements and depopulated townships. The long term investigations at Wharram Percy were founded on researching this phenomenon, which is evident from 14th-15th century. Many Wolds villages show signs of contraction in this period and, in several cases, the earthworks of abandoned tofts and crofts of former medieval habitation are visible on the ground (S.Neave 1990). The village community at Wharram Percy had ceased to exist by the early 16th century (Beresford and Hurst 1990), following a gradual decline in economic fortunes in the previous century. In many cases, the desertions of villages at this time are caused by their landlords, who turned off the few households left on the site and converted the arable lands to more profitable sheep pastures (Beresford and Hurst 1990). Many similar cases of the gradual desertion of villages during these centuries are found on the Wolds. Although Beresford tended to attribute these desertions to a late medieval horizon, Neave has shown for the eastern Wolds that many settlements were still occupied sparsely during the 17th century (S.Neave 1990). It was over several centuries, following the 15th century, that population levels dropped gradually, and coupled

with economic and agricultural changes, this contributed to the gradual desertion of many villages, on the Wolds.

REGIONAL LANDSCAPES AND 'PAYS'

The landscape history of East Yorkshire has been addressed by Keith Alison and Alan Harris in two very different books. The former is part of the series of regional studies in the series based on Hoskins' *The Making of the English Landscape* (Alison 1976), whilst the latter is a detailed account of the period surrounding parliamentary enclosure (1700-1850), a short but formative age (Harris 1969). They both use the natural topographic divisions of the region as a means of organising the historical landscape. Implicitly and explicitly, the regions are described as different during the Middle Ages, and on into the modern era. The distinctions visible in the configurations of the modern landscape are thus rooted in the historical development, specific to each region. These distinctions are clearly visible at certain historical epochs, but less obvious during others. For instance, the early 18th century saw the Wolds as filled with anachronistic unenclosed townships, alongside those which had become depopulated and turned out to pasture. The land here was perceived as under-utilised, and the whole area was often described as marginal and apart from the improving developments that were going on in the surrounding vales. Following 1850, these very clear distinctions had largely been transformed and, instead, the area was left with more subtle distinguishing features (the lack of 'old enclosure' and the real sense of the very recent creation of the agrarian landscape). During the Middle Ages too there is less evidence for the very obvious distinction between the Wolds and the surrounding lands. In spite of this, the area is described as different by the very use of the term, Wolds and was clearly perceived as a separate place from an early date (see chapter 6).

If we follow the work of Alan Everitt, it could be described as a 'pays' (Everitt 1977; 1986). In terms of identifying regional landscapes this is a useful concept, as it directly reflects the perception of a regional integrity, which is not based on administrative or political structures. Instead the recognition of a 'pays', identifies an area with a common landscape 'character', bound up with topography, land-use

and social and cultural structure, in many different ways. Their recognition and identification derives from references to a certain regional integrity, often by topographers and travellers in the post-Medieval period. In Kent, for example, Everitt recognises clear distinctions of land-use, social structure and wealth which were,

“not scattered at haphazard throughout the country but were grouped in clearly defined regions within it. Essentially they were related to contrasts of pays, to types of countryside in vale and upland whose historic differences often lay far back in the origins of Kentish society: in variations of settlement and farming, of land-forms, siting, soil-types and geology that had shaped the very beginnings of colonisation.” (Everitt 1977:4).

The differences existed between the landscape of the river valleys of the Weald and those of the higher wold land, and could be identified both in 18th century topographical descriptions and in the historical record for the Middle Ages. As we saw in chapter 1, a failing of Everitt’s work is that he did not extend his enquiry back before the Anglo-Saxon period. In fact, he saw much of the early Medieval settlement on the Kentish wold as the colonisation of land which had previously been unoccupied. If we were to extend our enquiry further back in time before the Norman conquest, it could be possible to assess the character of the Yorkshire Wolds during the Anglo-Saxon period and before. If so, this would allow us to consider the earlier origins of the historical ‘pays’, not as something that is determined by the environment and soil type during colonisation after some late Romano-British apocalypse, but moulded by the existing character of landscape and settlement, itself rooted deeply in history. Such an investigation requires a long term perspective which would combine both archaeological and documentary sources and bring them together in the same regional landscape.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPES

Archaeological investigation in East Yorkshire is always traced back to the pioneering work of the local corn merchant-antiquarian, J.R.Mortimer. Born in Fimber, he lived also at Leavening and most of his adult life in Driffield (Hicks 1978). In 1905 he published his life's work, *Forty Years Researches in British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire*. It represents the detailed record of excavations into over 100 barrows, distributed across the central Wolds between Aldro, in the west and Driffield, on the eastern dip-slope. In addition, he investigated Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries and carried out a unique study into the linear earthworks of the area (1905). He worked in close association with his brother, Robert and, at times, with E.Maule-Cole, vicar of Wetwang, who also published extensively in the late 19th century (i.e. 1888; 1889; 1893) (fig 20). More, perhaps than any other antiquarian of his time, Mortimer's work has remained an essential starting point for archaeological research on the Wolds, of any period. This is primarily a reflection of the quality of his work, but it also reflects on the fact that subsequent study has often failed to supersede his findings, or provide an alternative. Tom Sheppard wrote his obituary in 1911,

"Probably no one in England has done so much for the elucidation of the pre-historic antiquities of his district as has Mr. Mortimer. No one has worked so well, so thoroughly, and so exhaustively; and certainly no one has so carefully preserved the records that were obtained. Unquestionably Mr. Mortimer's worth will be much more appreciated in the future even than it is today. Few, very few, yet realise the extreme value and importance of his collections." (Sheppard 1911:330).

If one man had done the same for the southern chalklands he would no doubt have been hailed as a father of British Archaeology. Amongst local archaeologists he remains a mystical figure, the book a religious text. Perhaps, the strength of his influence is indicated by the fact that it was not until the middle of the 20th century that further significant strides were made to add to the archaeological knowledge of the Wolds.

After the second world war, a group of individuals emerges, who have added a significant amount of knowledge to the region, and whose aptitude was borne out of the strength of the local amateur tradition so epitomised by Mortimer (fig 16). Tony Brewster instigated many excavations of many periods, but was perhaps best known for the excavations at Staple Howe, the later Bronze Age enclosure on the northern Wolds escarpment (1963). Similarly, Terry Manby has been active in local archaeological societies and research committees for several decades. His work has involved many Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments, but primarily the long term excavations at Thwing. These excavations, which are yet to be fully published, have investigated another later Bronze Age enclosure, which seems to have been sited on an existing henge monument. It was later reused during the Anglian period, as a probable high status settlement of some kind (Manby 1980; 1982; 1990).

It was also during the post war years that the excavations began at Wharram Percy DMV. Originally an investigation of village desertion in the Medieval period, this project developed to encircle the origins of the Medieval village, its surrounding landscape and its Anglian, Romano-British and prehistoric antecedents (Beresford and Hurst 1990). Colin Hayfield's work on the landscape development of Wharram Percy parish has enabled the findings from the site itself to be set in some kind of context (1986; 1988). The 1970's and 1980's have also witnessed great strides forward in our knowledge of the East Yorkshire Iron Age. Ian Stead has undertaken important excavation projects on Iron Age cemeteries at Burton Fleming, Rudston and Kirkburn (1986; 1991). Dent's work at Wetwang Slack, instigated by Brewster at Garton Slack, involved the combined excavation of cemetery and adjacent settlement (1982; 1983). Just off the Wolds, to the north at Heselton, Dominic Powlesland has been excavating the well preserved deposits on the Vale of Pickering, and has revealed remarkable traces of Anglian settlement and cemetery, as well as earlier Romano-British and prehistoric activity (1986; 1990).

We are still waiting for the final publication of these projects (Wharram Percy, Thwing, Wetwang Slack, Heselton) but much interim information has been made available. It is fair to say that their results have revolutionised our understanding of the archaeology of the Wolds. The most recent addition to the growing body of information is the RCHM volume, *Ancient Landscapes of the Yorkshire Wolds*

(Stoertz 1997). Herein, the vast collection of AP's for the area have been plotted and presented as a series of annotated 1:25000 maps. The quality of cropmark visibility is exceptional and the resulting archaeological landscapes are mindboggling and dense. The text, by Cathy Stoertz, takes the usual RCHM line and attempts to breathe interpretative life into the cropmark shapes through classification by morphology. They are not treated simply as a collection of sites, though. Stoertz acknowledges that here we have a traces of a whole landscape before us and she considers some recurring themes in its organisation. Her discussions, however, count for little if they do not address the problem of chronology. This landscape has been reworked and modified over time and what we are seeing is not a single phase of agrarian practice but a cropmark palimpsest. Our knowledge of the chronology of many of the sites represented by these cropmarks is minimal and each map reflects the accretion of millennia of human activity. It is therefore highly problematic to interpret the AP plots without sufficient investigation on the ground. The intensity of recent arable agriculture on the Wolds has been so great that many of the features visible as cropmarks, have been severely degraded. The background to the survey states that, "*In many respects it is the successor to the extensive fieldwork carried out by Herman Ramm during his years as an investigator for the RCHME.*" (Stoertz 1997:7). This brief allusion to Ramm's fieldwork implies that it produced results and added to our knowledge of the field archaeology of the Wolds. In fact it has remained unpublished and his archive, held by RCHME, is not even available for consultation.

The Yorkshire Wolds is, without doubt, a very rich archaeological landscape. The archaeology of the area is well known and multi-period in character. This makes it a very good place in which to carry out a long term regional investigation. The sites and sequences are well known and researched and densely distributed across the chalkland, which shows up cropmarks extremely well. The recently completed and published RCHM survey is an invaluable source of information. However, there are lacunae in our understanding of regional development. Traditionally, archaeological investigations have been very much restricted in scope and focus, so that a longer term regional perspective has been made more difficult. Certain periods have received favoured attention in recent years, exemplified by the many recent

excavations on Iron Age sites. (Dent 1982;1983; Stead 1986;1991). Very few studies have attempted to look at change over the long term, crucially between late prehistory and the historic period. Those that have adopted a multi-period stance are localised and have not had wide enough spatial focus to assess the long term development of anything other than their immediate vicinity (Beresford and Hurst 1990; Hayfield 1987; Powlesland 1986). Most of all there are clear continuities in this landscape. Prehistoric sites are reused in Anglian centuries, linear earthworks remain potent features of the historic landscape and the same areas are consistently favoured for settlement. Very little work has addressed this awareness of the past and the way that the Wolds communities dealt with the traces of the past in their landscape. Any consideration of long term development of landscape must consider the evidence for continuity and change in the light of ideas about the reworking of the visible past and the reinvention of tradition.

The nature of the archaeological evidence and its visibility has been a crucial factor in influencing our view of the Wolds in prehistoric, Romano-British and Anglian periods. The dominance and preservation of archaeological monuments on the Wolds, in the 19th century, meant that the work of Mortimer and Greenwell was focused here. The preservation of barrows on the Wolds was seen as a product of recent landscape history, as those that survived in sheep walks until the 19th century were mostly levelled during the late 19th century and early 20th. The strong archaeological visibility from the air of features in the chalk soils, as cropmarks, has further heightened the importance of the area and set it apart from the surrounding clays and gravels which tend to mask cropmark formation. As a result of the overwhelming bias of sites towards the Wolds, of all periods, this area has generally been assumed as the regional focus of prehistoric settlement (Alison 1976; Haselgrove 1984). A view enhanced by the idea that the light soils would be easier to work under low agricultural technologies. Although very useful for a close understanding of the Wolds archaeology, the RCHM volume does not help to gain a better understanding of the relative importance of the Wolds in relation to the surrounding lowlands. It is, after all, restricted to the Wolds which provides a very different potential for archaeological visibility.

Much recent archaeological work has been concentrated in the adjacent vales and, in every case, the quality of the archaeological evidence has been as good as that on the Wolds, where actual preservation of archaeological deposits is not very good. Halkon's work in the Vale of York, Didsbury's in the Hull Valley and the Humber Wetlands Survey have all pointed to the un-tapped potential for prehistoric settlement of these areas. Areas, which were previously often viewed as marginal, uninhabited and waterlogged. We can no longer see the Wolds as an isolated island of early clearance and dense continuous settlement from an early date in prehistory, nor indeed a raised area surrounded by primeval swamp. The archaeological sites known from the area are very largely funerary. In the absence of associated evidence habitation the distribution of burial sites has often been assumed as equivalent to the distribution of settlements. What is rarely conceived is whether Iron Age or Anglian communities were burying their dead away from settlements, not alongside them (Lucy 1998). Can we actually use the dense concentrations of burial monuments on the Wolds as a basis for assuming equally dense settlement here? Are we right to envisage the Wolds as the main area for settlement throughout prehistory? Dent, for instance, has recently suggested that the Wolds may have held a special character in the Iron Age, away from the main areas of settlement which were situated along the Wold margins (1995). Have we thought about the relationship between the area and the surrounding lowlands in enough detail? Are we right to simplistically draw a distinction between the Wolds, on the one hand, and the vales on the other? What about the strip of land between wold and vale where, historically, settlement has been based? Could the Wold-edge represent another topographical zone with distinctive cultural credentials in the past?

The long term summarised history of the landscape by Alison is well over due for revision. Written in 1976 it was based firmly in the historical-geographic school of Hoskins which tended to prioritise historical periods over prehistory. In it, much attention was paid to prehistoric, Romano-British and Anglian periods but the archaeological evidence was perhaps not analysed in enough detail. Furthermore, its division into chronological chapters heightened the sense of a long term history punctuated by specific thresholds of transformation and change with little scope for

long term continuity nor indeed the engaging reworking of the past. Much more recent archaeological work has appeared since the date of its publication. In spite of this, the book was recently reprinted with no additions or revisions. Landscape history in general has moved on light years since this book was written, as has our understanding of the archaeological landscapes of the Wolds. These new empirical and theoretical developments need to be incorporated into the landscape history of the area.

Several very important multi-period landscape projects have recently been carried out, but they concentrate on local areas. It is time to draw the information from these studies together to assess the long term regional development of this landscape, not just restrict our investigation to isolated locales. The detailed plots of AP's are invaluable as a resource, but they are not an end in themselves. They do not represent ancient landscapes as we defined the term in the previous chapter. This will only be possible when the information this volume contains is applied meaningfully to an interpretative investigation of the development of this landscape. These cropmarks need to be contextualised within their topographic and cultural setting as well in their chronological context. Only then can we reconstruct a humanised cultural landscape and trace its development. The past has always been an important visible feature of this landscape and its traces are ubiquitous. The barrows and linears were clearly drawn into the historic landscape. We need to think about how these relics were perceived and what meanings were given to them to draw them into the current world.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

We discussed in chapter 1, the need for regional, multi-period, multi-disciplinary investigation, in the wider context of landscape studies. This would deliberately ground the long term development of the landscape, between later prehistory and early history, within a specific region. Importantly, this kind of approach would use the landscape as a framework within which evidence from many different archaeological and historical sources could be incorporated. Its multi-period and multi-disciplinary character would help to break down barriers between disciplines

and period specialisms. It would also allow us to take a less blinkered view of developing landscapes, as approaches are often restricted by narrow specialist concerns. It was recognised that the period between later prehistory and the early Middle Ages has variously been seen as one of significant change but also of essential agrarian continuity in this country. Instead of making vague generalisations based on a selective reading of examples across the country it is important to address the issue within one specified region. In this way the balance between continuities and changes may be identified. The regional approach would also help to consider the applicability of the concept of the 'pays' back into the Romano-British and prehistoric period, to assess the origins, if any, of the regionality of landscape character identified during the later Middle Ages. This would also help to refine the generalised and simplifying impression of ancient and planned countryside whose distinctions are rooted in the late Medieval period also, but whose origins are far from clear.

The Yorkshire Wolds have been identified as a region where such a long term landscape investigation would pay dividends, both for the increased understanding of the region and for the light it would shed on the wider questions raised above. This is not a landscape that will reveal its history very easily, as on the surface it appears to be of recent creation. It is a place where change has been clearly evident in recent centuries more than the surrounding plains and vales. But clearly there are also features that survive these recent changes. The dynamic and balance between continuity and change is an important feature of a rounded view of landscape development.

FIELDWORK POTENTIAL AND THE LANDSCAPE WITHOUT HISTORY

Some landscapes in modern Britain are themselves palimpsests of their own history. Their patterns of field boundaries, lanes and settlements have been built up and modified consistently over centuries. Within the modern pattern of fields in parts of East Anglia, for instance, may be glimpsed fossilised traces of prehistoric field patterns (Williamson 1986). The same is true of many upland areas where modern

hedges are clearly of very long standing. They might sit on top of a visibly ancient bank or enjoy a rich and luxuriant variety of different species, built up over many centuries. Likewise, in many areas of ancient countryside, the sunken character of trackways is a physical reminder of the longevity and endurance of this individual feature. In these landscapes, historical depth is clearly visible on the surface, worn like a heart on the sleeve. The landscape of the Wolds holds very few obvious clues to its ancient history. The severity of the transformations at enclosure made sure that trackways were levelled and straightened, as were field boundaries, and as such the vast majority of hedges are short hawthorns, probably 150 years old. In some places, they follow more ancient lines, along the course of the few ancient features that have survived, usually township boundaries, for instance. On the surface, the antiquity of these lines and their former role as trackways, perhaps, is not obvious, for they are marked only by hawthorn hedge. It is only the sinuous course they adopt that may give the game away. The normal rules of landscape archaeology therefore do not here apply (fig 15). It is rarely possible to make significant discoveries in the field for the antiquity of landscape features has been erased from their physical appearance. The clock has been re-set to zero.

Changes in its recent history have also tampered with the value of the historical landscape, as a window on more ancient practice and character. Because the transformations of enclosure took place separately between townships, their severity and particular effect was different. In some townships, like Sledmere for instance, the changes were indeed radical and pervasive. Here, enclosure went hand in hand with the moving of the village, to make way for the emparkment and gentrification of this landscape. Roads too were re-routed at this time. It seems that many of the field names were lost in the process, along with many of the public footpaths. One look at the late 19th century situation indicates that the names that do survive around Sledmere were probably introduced along with the landscape changes. Names like Keeper's Hill, Triplescore Plantation, Avenue Farm are not apparently, locally-based terms rooted in centuries of farming and engagement with natural features. Large areas of Sledmere parish, around Life Hill are devoid of any names at all. Likewise, very few rights of way have survived in this township, when compared with some of those adjacent to it. It would appear that the strength of

landownership in Sledmere was such that alterations in landscape patterns during the 18th and 19th century were accompanied by re-naming and the obliteration of rights of way. The proximal townships of Wetwang or Huggate also went through the severalties of parliamentary enclosure, but managed to retain a rich compendium of local field names and a network of public footpaths, many of which strike out obliquely across the newly enclosed fields. If we are to be using the place-names and field names as a historical resource, then these distinctions in their survival between townships must be appreciated (chapter 5)

THE STUDY AREA

The study will be concerned with the changing landscapes of the Wolds, but cannot deal in sufficient detail with the whole area. For this reason, a specified study area has been chosen to act as a sample, within which the detailed scrutiny of the historical and archaeological record will be contained and here related to the topography. The area comprises a zone which spans the central Wolds, to the west of Driffield and includes eight modern civil parishes (figs 3, 21-22). It has been chosen for the existence here of several types of wold land: rolling countryside of the eastern dip slope at Bainton and Tibthorpe; the broad sweeping lines of the valley of Wetwang and Garton Slack; the springhead streams of the river Hull at Eastburn, Kirkburn, Southburn, Elmswell and Driffield; the high dissected western wolds at Huggate, Fridaythorpe and Fimber; the western margins of the Wolds at Warter and the high central Wolds watershed at Cottam, Sledmere and Cowlam. This whole areas, therefore includes a broad cross-section of the variety of topographies found in the Wolds, as a whole, and can act as a sample zone for comparisons between wold and wold-edge and between dissected wolds and the more gentle landscapes of the eastern dip slope and the larger valleys (fig 7-15, 23-24).

It was in this area, that Mortimer concentrated his investigations and, in particular, he mapped a dense pattern of linear earthworks. The AP record is strong, especially on the eastern dip slopes in the townships of North Dalton, Wetwang, Garton and Tibthorpe and it reveals a dense distribution of cropmark sites and features from all

periods. More detailed discussion of archaeological sites from this area will appear in the chapters relevant to each period. All of the main periods and types of site found on the Wolds are represented in this area, including linear earthworks, Iron Age square barrow cemeteries, later Iron Age settlements Romano-British enclosures, Anglian burials and cemeteries. The area is bounded on the north-west by the study area used by Hayfield in his fieldwalking survey (1987) and contains within it the confines of the Wetwang and Garton Slack excavations (Dent 1982;1983).

The findings, from this area, will be complemented by examples drawn from all over the Wolds, but especially other part of the northern Wolds. In this way the scales of analysis will extend from an understanding of the Wolds, in general, as a region, down to individual valleys or localities and finally to a consideration of specific features, such as tracks, boundaries burial monuments or settlements.

CHAPTER THREE

LINEAR FEATURES AND THE LATE BRONZE AGE LANDSCAPE

INTRODUCTION: LINEARS IN BRITAIN

The Vale of the Wharfe is one of the few areas in Britain known to contain a

number of linear earthworks. Other

examples are found in the

and the area around of

of England. In the south

the linear earthworks are

generally thought to be

of the late Bronze Age.

The linear earthworks in the

area are thought to be

of the late Bronze Age.

The linear earthworks in the

area are thought to be

of the late Bronze Age.

The linear earthworks in the

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The linear earthworks in the

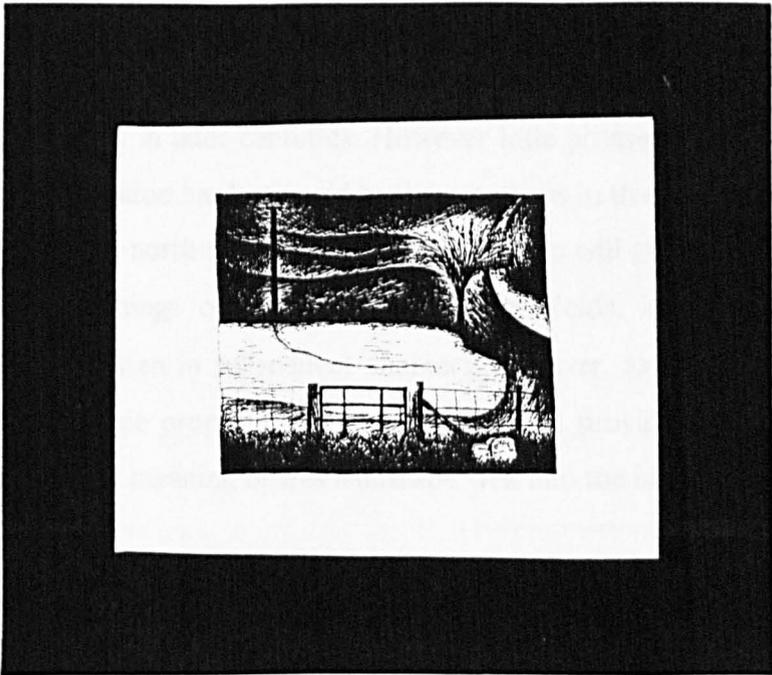
area are thought to be

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The linear earthworks in the

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of the late Bronze Age.



CHAPTER THREE

LINEAR EARTHWORKS AND THE LATE BRONZE AGE LANDSCAPE

INTRODUCTION: LINEARS IN BRITAIN

The Yorkshire Wolds is one of the few areas in Britain known for its complex pattern of linear earthworks. Others include much of the chalklands of southern England as well as the Tabular Hills and Moors of North Yorkshire. These monuments potentially provide a tantalising insight into prehistoric land division and the endurance of such schemes in later centuries. However little progress has been made and the majority of attention has been paid to those systems in the south of England, to the exclusion of the north (fig 25). In this chapter, we will address the place they play in the beginnings of land division on the Wolds, in late prehistory. They will not be forgotten in subsequent chapters, however, as these banks and ditches, often of massive proportions and long distance, provide the framework for the organisation and meaning of this landscape well into the historic period.

For some years now, the archaeological study of linear earthworks in Britain had been groping in the dark. The formative and seminal works of Bowen and others in Wessex were rooted in the post-war fieldwork and survey schools of the RCHM. These studies were able to build on the explosion of aerial photographic information made available during the post war decades and, for the first time, sought to accurately record the extensive systems of linear earthworks and field systems on the Wessex chalk and to view them as an integrated landscape. When it came to questions of interpretation and chronology the problems involved were perhaps overly stressed and seemed to outweigh the potential insight that these monuments could offer the then nascent understanding of the prehistoric landscape. It is only with the recent publication of the work of the Wessex Linear Ditches Project that real progress has been made into understanding the complexities of

chronology and function which lie behind the pattern of land division. The early studies are important as they laid the foundations for later work (Bowen and Fowler 1978; Fowler 1984). However, it is now clear that they were stuck in an interpretative rut, confined by assumptions that they represented one phase of land division and that they were primarily connected to the economic requirements of pastoral agriculture.

The belief that these large monumental linear ditches were primarily designed for the organisation of a pastoral cattle ranching agricultural landscape and that their construction signalled a move away from a more arable economic base, evident in the remains of Celtic Fields, was founded ultimately on false premises. As the recent work on Salisbury Plain has shown there are actually only very few instances of linears cutting Celtic Fields, and those that do represent a later, probably Iron Age episode. The Wessex Linear Ditches Project has indicated that the linears on Salisbury Plain were more intimately connected with the territorial organisation of later Bronze Age settlement than merely acting as ranch boundaries (Bradley, Entwistle and Raymond 1994).

"Far from being a distinctive type of enclosure associated with stock management, these sites were very much part of an arable economy" (Bradley 1994:10)

This project has demonstrated the close link between settlements of the later Bronze Age and the linears, and has allowed for a degree of symbolic demarcation of space in the logic behind their construction and meaning, something missing, not only from the earlier studies but also from most archaeological interpretation at that time. Furthermore, the work of Entwistle and Bradley has emphasised the chronological depth in what has too often been seen as a single-phase pattern. On Salisbury Plain there is good evidence for the initial later Bronze Age system of linears being re-aligned, abandoned and re-cut throughout the first millennium BC, in a complex way that can only be revealed through detailed and close-grained field investigation (one that must include excavation). This process of alteration involved the incorporation of boundaries and ditches, that were already old, into a completely new agenda of cultural landscape, at the same time as others became

infilled and ignored. Things are likely to have continued in this vein into the Romano-British period and beyond, but that phase as yet falls outside the remit of the Linear Ditches Project. The patterns of linear earthworks that survive today and which appear on archaeological maps, are derived from centuries of alteration and adaptation, a point which is also illustrated by the work of Spratt in North Yorkshire, who has identified several Medieval examples of linear earthworks (Spratt 1989). The chronological depth, present in the Wolds linears, and the influence the prehistoric system of land division plays on later periods here, is something we need to devote much attention to, and we will return to it in subsequent chapters.

As with much of the research into British prehistory, investigations into linear earthworks have been focused in southern central England, on the chalk downlands of Wessex. The density of fieldwork in this area has far outweighed that carried out in other areas and it is often tacitly assumed to be representative of lowland Britain as a whole. The publication of Spratt's study of linear earthworks on the Tabular Hills in North Yorkshire brought a welcome redress to that balance as did Blaise Vyner's study of cross ridge dykes on the North Yorkshire Moors (Spratt 1989; Vyner 1991). Needless to say this work, along with the evidence from the Wolds, demonstrates forcefully that there are different things going on in the north and that the quality of the evidence is extremely high.

Discussions of the implications of the linear earthworks (and field systems) for an understanding of the later prehistoric landscape have emphasised the significance of cultural changes that occur in the second half of the Bronze Age. In most areas it is this period which witnesses the earliest, and often very massive, construction of long distance and large scale linear ditches. That this represents a radical re-alignment of the perception of land and landscape is undoubted, as for the first time a sense of territorial organisation finds physical expression and a formal and permanent form. In many parts of Britain there is evidence for the creation of land boundaries from as early as the middle Bronze Age. This period has been seen to mark a watershed within prehistory as hereafter the character of archaeological evidence is altered. The difference between a period of ceremonial monuments and one of enclosed settlements and land organisation has been identified as

fundamental not only to landscape or archaeology but to the very character of humanity (Barrett 1994). The radical character of these changes is without question, but what has not been adequately addressed is the way that these new boundaries may merely be expressing formally what was already informally understood. The linears on Salisbury Plain and on the Tabular Hills, have been shown to have close relationships with existing barrows and both Entwistle and Spratt have suggested that this might reflect the formalisation by the linears of an earlier sense of territorial organisation, based on these barrows. In this way, what appears as a radical threshold, archaeologically datable through the appearance of linear earthworks, may have been the contemporary reality for some time. It may in fact have been a much more gradual process giving rise to a new territorial scheme but one which looked back as well as forward. (see below).

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the way in which the linear earthworks on the Wolds represent a "radical" threshold of land division in the late Bronze Age. In order to do this, it is necessary to consider how the system of land division expressed by the linears here relates to the earlier Bronze Age landscape and the process of change involved in moving from a more open territorial structure to one involving fixed and physical markers. The multi-period character of the linears should also be stressed and it is important to identify those features which were either constructed or reused at a later stage. As Bradley has stressed for Salisbury Plain, it is no longer tenable to view the visible pattern of linears as a coherent uniphase system and from it to reconstruct a single agricultural structure (1994).

As the initial construction of linears in the late Bronze Age marks the beginning of land division as we understand it, it is a convenient place from which to begin a long term study tracing the changes in landscape character. The study will examine the dualities between open and bounded space, communal and private space, trackways and boundaries and systems of local and more extensive settlement and agrarian organisation, throughout this period, but it is here that they first arise in this way.

LINEARS ON THE WOLDS

The linears on the Wolds do not share the illustrious history of investigation evident on the Wessex chalklands of Salisbury Plain, Berkshire Downs or Cranborne Chase. A detailed survey was initiated by the RCHME in the 1960's under Herman Ramm, but its results have never been published and requests to consult this archive are not always granted. The threshold of description and record in this history comes at the beginning of this century when JR Mortimer published his *Forty Years Researches into British and Saxon Burial Mounds of East Yorkshire*, in 1905. Mortimer's work is still incredibly valuable for its thoroughness and detail and for the reliability and accuracy of his recording techniques. It is also fortuitous that his work was carried out at the end of the 19th century before the worst excesses of intensive arable agriculture had vandalised what was left of the upstanding monuments. Mortimer's map of the linears in the central Wolds remains as perhaps the most important source for their study in this area (1905).

In addition to the works of Mortimer, there is a whole host of antiquarian writing relating to the Wolds linears, published throughout the 19th century. Notably the Rev E. Maule-Cole produced several short articles, and pointed attention to a series of published maps by various authors which document the state of archaeological monuments on the Wolds at this time (1889;1890;1891;1892;1894). Although some considerable progress has been made in the present century, into further understanding the Wolds linears, there had not been a self-contained and focused project to match that of Mortimer, until perhaps the publication of the RCHM aerial photographic mapping project (Stoertz 1997). Otherwise, the linears have been investigated, discussed, surveyed and excavated as additional parts of projects, whose main aims and foci have always lain elsewhere, along epistemological avenues that did not lead directly to the elucidation of the enigma that surrounds the linears themselves. Terry Manby has sectioned some of the monumental ditches that lie close to the enclosure at Thwing and has shown that these and several others do belong in origin to the later Bronze Age (Manby 1980;1986). The investigations of both Dent and Stead, into Iron Age settlement and burial, has shown that there is chronological depth in the Wolds system. Whilst in some cases, Iron Age burial respects existing linears there are other cases where

new ditches were dug during the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, and several clearly overlie square barrows (Stead 1986;1991; Dent 1982;1983a;1995). Salvage excavations, along the line of the gas pipeline at Caythorpe, have revealed a keyhole view of a complex series of parallel ditches. This again emphasises the multi-period character of these monuments and the considerable amount of adaptation and re-alignment that took place (Abramson 1996). All this work is disparate and unconnected and, until a unified project appears with a clear and relevant agenda, we will be no closer to answering the basic questions that are being addressed down south.

The recent publication of the RCHM volume for the Wolds has added to and updated the secure basis of description and record first laid by Mortimer. It does not however pursue the interpretative questions surrounding these monuments very much further and still we are faced with un-solved problems of basic dating and function. The results of the Salisbury Plain project are very valuable as a comparative study and an example of what can be achieved. We should not forget, though, that there are many differences between what seems to be happening in the two areas in the later prehistoric (and early historic) periods. Perhaps the main lesson to be learnt from that work is that we should not restrict our investigation to the elucidation of the character of the linears by themselves, but should seek to use them to achieve a more holistic understanding of the late prehistoric landscape, and the ways in which these meanings changed.

We will be concerned with the collation of all the available evidence for the Wolds linears (see appendix one) and will use it along with the results of field observation to address certain key questions. Fundamentally, we will be looking at the part played by the linears in the changing landscape of the Wolds during the later prehistoric and early historic periods. Initially, in this chapter, this is concerned with the inception of the linear system and the question of how much they relate to the existing, but informal, expressions of territorial awareness and bounded space. The consistent reuse of linear ditches for boundaries, trackways, settlements and burials is testament to the continual and persistent re-interpretation of their meaning but also to a constant reverence for the traditional antiquity of their landscape role. Not only do these phases of re-alignment pay a great deal of

respect to existing monuments and the past but also to the natural landforms of the Wolds. Repeatedly, the valley-bottoms, ridges, slopes and viewpoints of this varied landscape played a crucial role in the way it was perceived and inhabited. As we will see, the way in which the linears reflect the topography is remarkable and beyond a merely functional reaction. In responding to the topography, so sympathetically, the builders of the linears were probably doing no more than altering their medium for expressing the potency of certain places and features, which had already been long revered and socialised, and which were to remain so, persistently, throughout antiquity. The features of the Wolds landscape do not dictate or determine human action or perception. Instead its form creates a series of potentials which are made sense of by the Wolds communities in a way that is historically and culturally specific.

SURVIVAL AND DESTRUCTION

Both Cole and Mortimer were witness to the creeping destruction of archaeological monuments on the Wolds, through the increasingly intensive and intrusive character of 19th century post-enclosure agriculture. Both were alarmed by the damage being done, especially to linear earthworks, as arable cultivation encroached onto former pasture and levelled the monuments, at which the two old men had marvelled in their youth. It is often clear from their writing that they see an equation between the loss of field relics and a more general yearning for the lost lifestyles of the old pre-enclosure Wolds landscapes, characterised by wide open common spaces and plenty of pasture.

"The beginning of the present century found the larger portion of the high wolds of East Yorkshire still unenclosed. Large tracts of open common, dotted here and there with furze, afforded herbage for cattle and shelter for the great Bustard, Curlew and Thick-Knee. Then came the Inclosure Act; then the divine turnip; and soon the wild wastes were turned into profitable sheep farms and for many years the 'wool paid the rent'. All this however could not be done without sad destruction to the numberless entrenchments which covered this part of Yorkshire. A few indeed have been preserved where a plantation or a hedge has

offered protection, but the greater number have succumbed to the plough and can only be traced now by artful methods, which for the present we keep concealed from the gaze of the curious." (Cole 1890:109).

Cole had already recognised that the destruction of linears had also been underway during the 18th century, as he refers to the lyrical descriptions of Drake who was awestruck by the extensive large earthworks that then survived,

"On the top of this mountain.... begins a series of such enormous works for fortification, as the like is not to be met with in the whole island." (Drake 1747 (quoted in Cole 1890).

It is clear from this that the survival of the linear earthworks is very much bound up with the landscape history of the Wolds. Many survived extant in the common pastures of the Medieval countryside whilst others were incorporated into the pattern of open fields as furlong boundaries or headlands, or indeed as the basis for the line of trackways. However the radical changes introduced by parliamentary enclosure, during the 18th and early 19th century, were to conclusively re-orientated these old patterns. New hedge-lines and roads rarely took heed of the earlier boundaries and many long-lived stretches of linear earthwork were lost at this time. The process of destruction has continued into the present century with increasingly intensive arable agriculture and fertiliser technology has brought into cultivation even the least attractive soils and terrain. The RCHME mapping programme is a response to the high quality of cropmark visibility on the Wolds, but it should be remembered that this is only possible where a site has already been levelled under the plough. Most of the traces visible on AP's come from cropmarks where the filled-in ditches are revealed as single lines. (Stoertz 1997). In a few cases, the associated banks are revealed as soil marks but as Stoertz points out, "*So great is the damage in some cases that it is difficult to discern any trace of chalk banks.*" (Stoertz 1997:40).

Today, the survival of upstanding linear earthworks is rare and restricted to steep unploughed dale-sides or plantations. Even in cases where a modern hedge-line follows the line of a linear, the plough is likely to have encroached from both sides and whittled the monument down to nothing (fig 26-7). For this reason, the

opportunity for field investigation through surface survey is a rare thing and the character of individual linears is retrievable only really through intrusive means on levelled stretches. The overall pattern of land division represented by these linear ditches is more easily achieved, especially through aerial photography, but without a good knowledge of the form of each monument and the relationships between them, the interpretation of this pattern is problematic (fig 28).

In order both to reconstruct the pattern of linears and to understand their character and form as fully as possible, it is necessary to use the AP information alongside the results of odd excavations and, significantly, the descriptions and investigations of antiquarians. It is important to take advantage of the earliest map sources for this area as the later 19th century found these monuments in much better order than they appear today. The first edition 6" maps were produced in the 1854 and those at 25" scale in the 1890's and, in many cases, these maps provide accurate plans of the stretches of ditch now lost.

RECONSTRUCTING THE PATTERN

(See detailed local descriptions in appendix one for information on: form, character, state of preservation, previous investigation or description, dating information, evidence of re-use or influence on later landscape)

The variety that exists within the Wolds linears or dykes is great and there appear to be many different types, varying in length, scale of construction, multiplicity and arrangement of banks and ditches, topographic location and their tendency to enclose or divide areas of land. Most are made up of a chalk-cut ditch with flanking bank of chalk rubble, but many still have 2 flanking banks, some banks being made up of turves (fig 26). Several examples are more monumental than average and consist of parallel series of 3 or more ditches and banks. An exceptional case at Huggate Dykes contains 6 banks and flanking ditches. For the most part the ditches are massive, up to 2 metres in depth, but some can be as shallow as 1 metre (fig 29-30).

Mortimer identified a class of ditches that he termed hollow ways which are single shallow ditches with ephemeral banks cut into the upper slopes of steep dale-sides (Mortimer 1905) (fig 31). He contrasted these with the longer and more massive linears found more usually on the wold tops and occasionally along the valley floors. Challis and Harding discussed the Wolds linears and offered 3 contrasting interpretations (1975). They see the single dale-side ditches, and some larger long distance examples primarily as road ways, an interpretation supported by the discovery of metalling in the ditch bottom at Riplingham (Wacher 1956-7) and Walkington (Bartlett and Mackey 1973) and by the pattern of linears with oblique angles at Speeton. Incidentally, the use of these ditches as trackways could well belong to a phase of reuse of the monument, some time after the initial date of construction. Others they see as having fulfilled a defensive role, with a flanking bank offering protection to travellers using the sunken road. Thirdly, and perhaps with most emphasis, they point to the use of linears to enclose and divide areas for arable or pastoral land-use (Challis and Harding 1975). Dent discusses the dykes within a wider study of Iron Age settlement and landscape and chooses to distinguish cross ridge dykes, which traverse the high wold tops between valleys, from the rest, which mainly comprise the long distance linears (Dent 1995). Herman Ramm considered much of the pattern of linears found in the northern Wolds to be Romano-British in date and to reflect the imposition of a rigid structure of land division here, soon after the Roman conquest (1978).

As with several other areas where linear earthworks are found, there appears a close relationship between the Pattern of earthworks and the natural topography. On the Tabular Hills of North Yorkshire, the linears tend to follow the ridges that divide a series of north-south valleys. In so doing it is possible to suggest that they are acting as boundaries to territories based on these valleys, territories which would have provided a range of natural resources for the community involved (Spratt 1989). Likewise, on the Berkshire Downs the long distance ditches appear to be dividing up the landscape in a manner which is complementary to the natural landforms, some defining the scarp edge and others dividing the upland into blocks (Ford 1981).

Many writers have pointed out seemingly similar relationships on the Wolds where linears tend to follow the natural lines of the topography, producing an intricate pattern in areas which are deeply incised by dry valleys, and adopting more sweeping lines in other areas characterised by broader and more shallow slopes (Mortimer 1905; Cole 1889; Stoertz 1997). The linears certainly seem to relate closely to topography by enclosing the wold tops between valley systems and by following the long ridges of the larger valleys, but this is not as easily extended to the identification of neat valley-based territories as on the Tabular Hills, because the topography on the Wolds is much more varied and inconsistent.

"The southern and eastern Wolds are more gently rolling and in these areas the layout of linear earthworks appears to have been less constrained by the topography, the longest dykes extending for many kilometres." (Stoertz 1997:41).

The distinction between the southern/eastern wolds and the northern/western Wolds, expressed in this statement, is certainly valid but it is present in both the pattern of linears and the topography. The longer distance linears in the former area are responding to the more gently rolling landscape and follow the long ridges between valleys. Likewise the deeply dissected character of the western Wolds is reflected in the more intricate course that the linears adopt here.

Mortimer considered that the main concentration of linears in the central Wolds (a 20x20 km block between Driffield and Millington) was made up of a basic framework of 3 vaguely parallel axial lines which lay roughly on a south-west-north-east axis. These three linears are the longest and among the most massive, both in the size of their ditches and banks and in the multiplicity of their arrangement (fig 28). They all three follow long, sweeping ridges, associated with the broad valleys in this area, which are Garton/Wetwang Slack in the south and the Great Wold Valley to the north. This axial tendency is to some extent continued by the double/triple linears between Wetwang and Huggate which run alongside 2 parallel dry valleys, Middleham Dale and Cow Dale (fig 32). To the north and west of here, however, the pattern becomes much more varied and less formulaic. Three main concentrations were identified by Mortimer and Cole, where the preservation of earthworks was much greater in 19th century than is now the case. Surrounding the village of Fimber is one such concentration, at a point where

the Garton-Wetwang Slack splits into two subsidiary dales as they extend west and north and become much narrower and more deeply incised. Here the linears seem to create a series of large amorphous enclosures, influenced by the topographic form of the local valleys. To the north-west around the Wharram-Aldro area lies another concentration, based loosely along the top of the Wolds scarp slope. Here, much smaller interlocking enclosures have been formed whilst, from these, many earthworks extend down the steep scarp slopes and often lead directly to springs, at the base of the chalk (Mortimer 1905). To the south of this area but connected to it by 2 long distance multiple earthworks, one of which is curiously terrain oblivious, is another concentration, located on the top of the western scarp slope at Garrowby Hill. The form of enclosures created here are similar in size and character to those at Aldro and again they are linked to more direct linears which extend in all directions from the central focus of activity around Millington Lings.

The plan is a varied and complex one and, in this sense alone, differs from the more predictable pattern of North Yorkshire where the linears largely follow the watersheds of the north-south valleys. There are some similarities between the Wolds linears and those found on the southern English chalk, in their long distance character and tendency for long enclosures defined by parallel lines. The relationship between the scarp-edge and linears on the Berkshire Downs, for instance, finds a parallel here. Indeed, the enclosures that seem to straddle the northern wolds escarpment, have much more in common with the valley-based territories of the Tabular Hills than they do with enclosures elsewhere on the Wolds (see Powlesland 1988a). However, on the Wolds there are fewer examples of the kind of terrain oblivious linears found on Salisbury Plain, and in general they appear to react to the natural topography more closely than in these other areas. The Wolds pattern possesses perhaps more examples of multiply arranged banks and ditches and would seem to contain a greater variety of enclosure types and forms than are to be found in the south.

In Wessex, the linears obtain an intriguing potential because of their relationship with hill-forts, field systems and the later Bronze Age settlement pattern, although in many cases, the hill-forts are built at a later date (Entwhistle and Bradley 1994). The situation on the Wolds is very different, and less encouraging, as there are

much fewer declared relationships. For later Bronze Age enclosed sites such as Thwing, Staple Howe and Devil's Hill an association has been suggested with the pattern of land division represented by some linears (Manby 1980; Powlesland 1988a), whilst other undated enclosed sites can be seen to be connected to linear ditches on AP's (Manby 1980; Dent 1995; Stoertz 1997). All the above writers have stressed the connection between the later Bronze Age enclosed settlements on the Wolds and the pattern of linear earthworks. Powlesland has suggested that the 2 sites at Staple Howe and Devil's Hill which occupy commanding locations on the northern escarpment were located at the centre of clearly defined territories. These areas consisted of enclosed land on the Wolds as well as parts of the low-lying Vale of Pickering, so as to combine a range of resources within a single territorial block (1988a) (fig 33). Manby's excavations at Thwing revealed another later Bronze Age enclosed settlement of massive proportions. It is situated at the junction of 3 major long distance linears, which appear to be contemporary with the enclosure (1980). Stoertz has pointed to several other unexcavated enclosures which may also date from this period. They are often found in similarly commanding locations on the edge of the Wolds, overlooking the Wold-edge and lower lying Vales and may also possess territorial functions. Many are found within areas defined by linears, but this should not automatically confer upon them an later Bronze Age date because of the continuing role played by the linears in this landscape, throughout later prehistory.

As yet, there are no examples of classic Iron Age hill-forts here and no significant arrangements of 'Celtic Fields' either. As indicated above, the intensity of agricultural exploitation over the last 100 years or so has severely affected buried archaeological deposits. Nonetheless, there is much to be gained from the AP record which has so comprehensively been mapped by RCHM. Most of the sites and features represented probably date from the later prehistoric and Romano-British periods and so, as these relate to the linear earthworks, they can help to illustrate the significant continuing role played by these monuments during the Iron Age and Romano-British (see chapter 4).

DATING AND CHRONOLOGY

Linear earthworks are notoriously difficult to date. A long distance boundary which has been reused and adapted for many centuries, changing its role and meaning, is unlikely to reveal very many archaeological clues about the date of its original construction. Any re-cutting involved in this process of re-orientation would have removed potentially datable material deposited soon after the original digging of the ditch and such changes could easily take place intermittently along the length of its original course. Sometimes, material incorporated into bank make-up will provide a more securely datable context than ditch-fill, but it is quite rare for banks to survive intact on the Wolds. It is rarely feasible, or desirable, to excavate long lengths of ditch and so invariably short-width trenches are cut across features such as these. It is only in special circumstances, as on Salisbury Plain, that trench locations can be targeted close to surface scatters of later Bronze Age pottery (Bradley et al 1994).

It is possible to establish some kind of idea on dating based on the relationships between linears and other, more diagnostic, monuments but this will offer only a relative chronology. Likewise, where some dykes have been added to an earlier existing pattern it should be possible to establish an internal relative chronology within the multi-period complex. However, in reality, it is often very difficult to assess the primacy of certain ditches over others without recourse to excavation, as the majority are only visible in 2 dimensions on an aerial photograph.

As more and more dating evidence comes to light for linear earthworks throughout the country, the later Bronze Age is reinforced as the most important threshold for this laying out of land division and its physical formalisation through the construction of earthwork boundaries. The initial foundations of the bounded landscape on Salisbury Plain, Tabular Hills and Berkshire Downs all seem to lie in the later Bronze Age (Bradley et al 1994; Spratt 1989; Ford 1981) and the situation is no different on the Wolds (fig 34).

There are 3 cases where small-scale excavations have revealed pottery in the primary silts of the ditches, pottery which has been identified by Manby as Late Bronze Age in date (Huggate Dykes: Challis and Harding 1975; Ripplingham:

Wacher 1956-7; Walkington: Bartlett and Mackey 1973). His own excavations at Thwing produced several more sherds at the base of the ditch-fill of the 'Great Wold Dyke', a major long distance linear earthwork which forms a junction with others of similar proportions close to the later Bronze Age enclosed site (Manby 1980;1986). Further finds were made by the Granthams in another long distance and multiple earthwork, later followed by the Green Lane between Sledmere and Wetwang, which follows a ridge on the north of Garton-Wetwang Slack (Grantham C and E 1965). The site lies across the road from the Tatton Sykes monument where Mortimer excavated a length of the same earthwork containing a later intrusive Anglian cemetery in its ditch (Mortimer 1905). Here a small group of similar later Bronze Age sherds were found incorporated into the make up of the chalk bank. The excavators considered them to have derived from a single common vessel and so were highly likely to be closely contemporary with the bank's construction (Grantham C and E 1965). Perhaps the most conclusive piece of dating evidence, however, comes from the work of Mortimer. At Fimber Westfield, one of the few sites where the monumental scale of the linears can still be witnessed, he discovered a pit dug into the bank of a triple ditch and bank earthwork which contained a collection of 'curious pieces of burnt clay'. They turned out to be Wilburton Industry moulds and so confirmed a later Bronze Age date or earlier for this stretch of earthwork, another large, long distance multiple dyke (Manby 1980; Ehrenberg and Caple 1985; Adams 1984) (fig 26-7).

The Heslerton Project has also found evidence for the initial construction of the linears during the later Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. Powlesland argues that a series of large land units were laid out and physically enclosed with boundaries at this time through his discovery of pottery of the 7th century BC in pit alignments just off the northern edge of the Wolds. These land units straddle the northern escarpment and seem to relate to the 2 enclosed sites at Devil's Hill and Staple Howe, both sites known to date from the early first millennium BC (Powlesland 1988a). Direct dating evidence, in this case, is only forthcoming from pit alignments below the scarp slope and not from the linears or associated pit alignments on the wold top, to the south.

A further system of multiple ditches has recently been sectioned at Caythorpe on the valley floor of the Gypsy Race (Abramson 1996). Here there was a wide range of pottery recovered from the ditch-fills, suggesting to the excavators that these ditches were largely cut in the 1st millennium BC or later. In most cases, they were closely associated with pit alignments which were invariably earlier than the ditches, one containing middle Neolithic pottery in the fill of 2 of its 18 pits. In this case, the presence of small amounts of Neolithic pottery should not automatically imply a Neolithic date of construction for the pit alignment, as they could be residual from a deposit disturbed during the digging of the pits. Significantly the excavations at Fimber Westfield by Ehrenberg and Caple found that one of the ditches of the major ditch system here also probably began life as a pit alignment (Ehrenberg and Caple 1985). The same sequence has been identified from both excavation and aerial photography in the northern and the western Wolds (Cardwell 1989; Stoertz 1997) (see also Wilson 1978).

There is no doubt that the later Bronze Age witnessed an explosion in the creation and construction of land boundaries, principally ditches, which in some cases were preceded by pit alignments in this, as in other areas. However, it is not enough to assign the bulk of known stretches of linear ditch to this period by extension. Writing in the late 1970's Herman Ramm, who had been responsible for the RCHME investigations of the linears during the 1960's, opted strongly for an Iron Age date for the system, associating it culturally with the Iron Age square barrow-burial tradition (Ramm 1978; Challis and Harding 1975). In doing so he highlighted several examples where linears seem to have been constructed during the Iron Age, through their relationship with square barrows. Indeed John Dent's excavations at Wetwang and Garton Slack have revealed clearly that linear ditches were still being constructed at this time and particularly towards the end of the first millennium BC (chapter 4). Stead's excavations of a group of threatened square barrows at Cowlam also revealed that a double ditched earthwork had been constructed after the middle Iron Age as it cut through one of the square barrows (Stead 1986). In the northern Wolds, Ramm emphasised that many of the linear ditches here were part of a massive system of planned land division dating from the early Romano-British period and associated with the settlement of veteran legionaries (Ramm

1978). He found few clear-cut examples to date individual features from excavation, but identified a series of Romano-British pottery scatters associated with the system which is restricted to the north-eastern wolds. More recently, secure dating evidence has come up from this area to suggest a Romano-British date for some stretches of both pit alignment and linear ditch at Swaythorpe (Mackey pers comm) and at Cat Babbleton (Cardwell 1989). It is fairly ubiquitous for Romano-British pottery to be found in the upper silts of many of the ditch-fills of these monuments, something which appears to illustrate that many were still in use as recognised boundaries during this time (Mortimer 1905; Manby 1980; Bartlett and Mackey 1973). It is only when opportunities arise for large-scale excavations such as at Garton and Wetwang Slack in the 1970's that the true complexity of the history of these monuments becomes clear.

As we have already mentioned, there are also many examples of linear earthworks having been used as boundaries and land divisions in the post-Roman period. Many served as township boundaries and divisions between open field and pasture during the Middle Ages (see below and chapter 5-6), whilst others were used as boundaries of wapentakes and hundreds. It becomes very difficult to assess whether such earthworks were constructed for this purpose or were reused. The building of large linear ditches to act as territorial boundaries during the early Medieval period is fairly common throughout Britain (i.e. Fleming 1998) and the building of ditches and banks as boundaries for pasture and open fields on the Wolds is historically recorded for the Middle Ages, in some cases (Alison 1976; Knox 1855) (see below for detailed descriptions). This chapter sets out to deal primarily with the initial phase of land division represented by the linears, but it is clearly important to be able to identify later examples as far as that is possible, in order to rule them out from the late prehistoric picture. The subject of reuse of linears and later examples is dealt with below and will come up again in subsequent chapters.

Mortimer also pointed out several cases where he was able to observe relationships between linears and other monuments (1905). There are many examples where round barrows of the early Bronze Age are deliberately incorporated into the line of the earthwork and this clearly bestows a later date on the construction of the

ditch and bank. These relationships share similarities with other areas where linears are also seen to align upon or incorporate barrows into the physical structure of ditch and bank. We will discuss below how such connections with the past, on the part of the builders of the linears, are likely to have been deliberate and knowing, not just the convenient use of prominent features of the landscape (i.e. Vyner 1990; Bradley et al 1994; Spratt 1989). These relationships, therefore, suggest that the structure of land division represented by the linears may be grounded in existing patterns of territoriality.

Both Mortimer and Cole pointed out several places where presumed Roman roads cut across the linears, so assigning them to prehistory. The identification of Roman roads is not as simple now as it must have seemed then, complicated by many centuries of reuse, re-modelling and re-orientation of roads on the Wolds. Several straight routes are now seen as post-medieval creations rather than Romano-British in origin (Ramm 1978; Hayfield 1987).

We must be aware of the multi-period character of the pattern of linears, the tendency for old boundaries to be re-used for different purposes, and that the vast majority of linears remain undated. It is, therefore, important to look in detail at the form and character of these monuments as well as their relationship with other sites known from the AP record. It is important also to set the pattern of local linears against the known features of the historic landscape to identify those which may have been constructed rather later than the later Bronze Age.

LINEARS AND THE LAY OF THE LAND

The densest concentration of linear earthworks occurs in the central Wolds between Driffield and Millington. The area under study which is approximately 20km x 20km straddles the chalkland and, as noted above, the pattern can be most fully reconstructed here because of Mortimer's work. The unpredictability of the dry valleys and their steep slopes and the unexpected variation between the sinuously winding dales and the rolling plateaux of the wold tops gives the topography of this area a subtly dramatic quality. To stand on top of a wold it is rarely obvious that the gently undulating landscape is regularly cut by steep valleys

all around and likewise this sense of lofty openness is hidden from view down in the dales. The valley lines appear as lush green corridors whose ceiling is the sky, leading on the traveller and hiding what might be around the next corner. Eventually they will open out onto flat rolling vistas where views are distant and there are no longer secrets, held in the intimacy of the dale. Many of these same deep concealing dales lead ultimately to the more gentle landscapes of the eastern Wolds where the valleys are broad and their ridges difficult to define. The geomorphology is highly characteristic, especially in the western Wolds, and here the linears display a sensitive and self-conscious awareness of their topographic location something illustrated not only by their course but also by the physical structure of the actual monument (fig 32). These are constructed monuments. Ditches were dug by human effort armed with bone, stone or wooden tools, the spoil lifted out in baskets or bags. Their course was designed to follow the lines of the topography and in some cases even to mimic its form. Such sensitive responses must indicate the existing importance of these valleys and slopes to the later Bronze Age populations.

The linears present us with a distinction between long distance axial lines which are acting more like dividing than enclosing boundaries, and others which serve to define enclosed areas of land. The close relationship between the topography and the linears begins at this most generalised level but operates on several others too. The three main axial lines in this area lie in parallel to each other and are all found on major ridges or watersheds. The Green Lane linear overlooks the Garton-Wetwang Slack from the north, located on a false crest and only really visible from the south (fig 34). To the north lies the Great Wold Dyke, itself following the watershed of the Great Wold Valley and further north still another parallel linear following a ridge on the valley's south side. This example is complicated by the presence here of a massive complex of linear ditches, known only from AP which seem to follow the line of the linear which is probably the original feature here (Stoertz 1997; Riley 1990). Together, the three ridge top linears divided this area into three broad strips of land, based on the upper slopes of the 2 neighbouring valleys. Many shorter and often less massive linears come off these three to divide up the land in between. Whilst direct dating evidence is not available for most of

these some of the subsidiary lines would seem to be of later date than the long axials. Two of the latter have yielded later Bronze Age artefacts (see above) and look to represent the initial phase of land division.

The long distance linears are following ridges and watersheds. They appear to run unhindered across open landscape, dividing it neatly into broad swathes. They also define and enclose the high ground or plateaux which are bounded by the steepness of the valleys and dales (fig 51). Within these upland enclosures are further ancillary linears. These are mainly evident on the high ground to the east of Sledmere. They appear to define discrete blocks of land and often link up at right angles to the ridge following dykes to north and south. Within these parameters they still pay great respect to the topography and follow dry valley sides and cross the necks of land between valley-heads. From this example it seems that the long distance linears belong to an early phase of dyke building as they pay little respect to other dykes and define large areas of land (fig 32). Within this framework we see smaller and presumably later acts of division and enclosure. Reinforcing this generalised idea of sequence is the evidence from Cowlam where one of these subsidiary linears within the area bounded by the axial lines, is clearly cutting an Iron Age square barrow (Stead 1986). Likewise, on Life Hill, again an area between axial lines, the linears conform very closely to land divisions recorded on late 18th century estate maps, at the time of enclosure, and may represent Medieval furlong boundaries. This does not of course rule out the possibility that these are reused prehistoric linears, though.

To the west of Wetwang and Fimber, the landscape becomes more incised and here the linears create a series of enclosures containing raised pieces of land between dales, their boundaries following the steep valley sides, in most cases. The axial tendencies are not altogether lost in this area, however, as to the south of Fimber a pair of parallel linears continues the south-west/north-east orientation of the pattern, one especially long line extending the line of the Green Lane linear to the east and ending up at Huggate Dykes on the western edge of the Wolds. For several miles in the western portion of its course it follows closely the upper slopes of a dry valley. Linears that run along valley bottoms are rare as most tend to follow the upper slopes or top of the dale-side. The Wetwang-Garton Slack

example is one of the very few and importantly one which may have been constructed during the Iron Age (Dent 1982). Cross-ridge dykes are fewer than might be expected but are found in most cases as short lengths of ditch cutting off a promontory or spur between steep dale-sides. Examples exist on Huggate Pasture, between Middleham and Cow Dale and also east of Fridaythorpe (see descriptions)

In addition to topographic position the linears can also be categorised according to their form and character. To reconstruct the original number of ditches and banks and their size is not always easy, when dealing with features known only from aerial photographs. More important, in this regard, are the records of antiquarians such as Mortimer and Cole who, with others, went to great pains to record the monuments before they were levelled by the plough. They were also the first to point out the close connections that exist between the form of the linear earthworks and their topographic situations (Mortimer 1905; Cole 1887). The majority of linears here would appear to have been made up of a single ditch and bank, occasionally with 2 ditches or 2 banks, and normally the ditches were between 1 metre and 2 metres deep. More massive constructions do occur and include, significantly, the three long distance axial lines as well as another dated securely to later Bronze Age lying to the north of Fimber village (fig 26-7). These monuments contain up to three ditches and banks and represent a massive undertaking of labour and engineering, especially as they extend for such great distance.

A further category includes Mortimer's 'hollow-ways' which are actually deliberately cut single ditches with small upcast bank on their down-slope side. The ditches themselves are usually no more than 1 metre deep and according to Mortimer's sections very often more shallow than that. They usually have a V-shape profile, narrow flat bottom and sloping sides (fig 30-31). The main point about these ditches is that they are always short in length and are invariably located about 2/3 of the way up the steep slopes of a dale, lying along the contour and following the valley line. They display a remarkable consistency in the relationship between form and topographic situation, something which is also mirrored by other kinds of linear earthwork. For instance, several of the main axial linears

change their form as they encounter different topographic situations. The Green Lane earthwork is a regular triple ditched earthwork for most of its course along open wold until it reaches the head of the Warren Dale, just west of the Sykes Monument, where the multiple arrangements are enhanced and 2 short stretches deviate off the line in a kink (fig 41). From here on, the linear follows the steep side of the dale and becomes merely a single ditch. Once it emerges from the more shallow end of the valley, however, the earthwork again becomes multiple and more massive. At the western end of this long linear, it also reaches the head of a new dry valley system and again the topographic significance of this location is mirrored in the massive arrangement of 6 parallel ditches and banks found here, at Huggate Dykes. Here the parallel banks and ditches lie across a neck of land between 2 dale-heads, that divides 2 separate dry valley systems, one draining east the other west. It is a short but significant watershed in that for travellers crossing the Wolds, in whatever direction, this place would have acted as a magnet. Not only is it furnished with multiple ditches but here too a number of other linears converge from all directions (fig 32, 34).

In a number of other key areas the arrangement and complexity of the linears is similarly most massive and monumental at places of special topographic significance, especially at the narrow necks of land between valley-heads. The valley known as Wetwang-Garton Slack turns northward to the west of Wetwang village and splits into two subsidiary branches between the villages of Sledmere and Fimber. Here too the dale-sides become much steeper and the valley bottoms narrower. Again this important topographic node is marked by the arrangement of linears. The triple dyke seemingly enclosing Fimber village on its northern side may actually be marking this convergence of dales and joining them, reinforcing a separation between north and south here. The earthwork is false crested and can only be seen at distance from the south, looking up from the main valley (fig 45). Furthermore, the specific point at which this linear meets the two dales is elaborated with much more complex and interlocking earthworks. This is most marked on the east at the mouth to Triplescore Dale, where it joins with other longer distance linears, which lead eventually to the axial lines of the Green Lane and Great Wold Dyke. Mortimer describes what he saw as an 'original entrance' in

the triple dyke where it crosses the western dale of Burdale, an opening still used by the modern road between Fimber and Thixendale (Mortimer 1905).

A further series of multiple earthworks have been identified from aerial photographic evidence to the south east and east of the village of Fridaythorpe (fig 44). These linears although incomplete seem to form a link between the two dale-heads that lie to the north and south of the village, in a similar way to those known as Huggate Dykes, although the Fridaythorpe examples also form the western side of a large enclosure, bounded elsewhere by dale-side following linears (fig 32).

So, it would seem that there are a number of places which have been furnished with unusually elaborate and multiple arrangements of ditches and banks and that invariably these are places of topographic significance, either at the head of a dry valley or at the point where valleys converge. In addition there would seem to be a sensitive relationship between the form of the linears and their topographic situation or course (valley-side, open wold, etc.). These relationships do not merely illustrate the functional manner in which the local environment determined the system of land division and the layout of boundaries. They may actually be an important signal of the respect being given by the builders of the linear earthworks to an existing landscape logic. If so, this was linked very closely to natural landform and perhaps based on the importance of certain strategic places in a fluid open landscape whose meaningful places were understood by people on the move, rather than by static settlement and landownership (fig 34). We will go on to further investigate these origins and links with respect to the connection between the linears and other aspects of the earlier landscape, barrows, trackways and water sources.

LINEARS AND BARROWS

An important aspect of Don Spratt's model of Bronze Age territorial organisation on the Tabular Hills was the way in which linear ditches, presumed to be late Bronze Age in date, followed watershed ridges which also contained strings of early Bronze Age barrows (Spratt 1989). He therefore suggested that here, the construction of the linears was a way of formally fixing the boundaries of territories

with permanent physical boundaries. He suggested that valley-based territories were already effectively in existence and their boundaries were the easily identifiable ridges between valleys marked with barrows (ibid.). In this scenario it becomes impossible to disentangle the ridge from the barrows from the conceptual boundary they are seen to have marked, when looking for the reason for placing the linear ditch in that position. However, it seems clear that the linears may be expressing a territorial reality that was already understood, albeit in a more fixed and assertive manner.

In a similar way, the Salisbury Plain linears relate closely to Bronze Age barrows and this has been seen by Entwistle et al as more significant than simply using the existing barrows as convenient siting points or markers in the landscape (Bradley et al 1994). They stress again the replacement of an existing territorial arrangement, expressed through different kinds of markers and perhaps linked to the dead and the supernatural, with one which, "*Unlike the notion of territory implied by the distribution of round barrows, its expression during the later Bronze Age was intimately connected with the presence of a continuous boundary*" (ibid.: 142). The advent of enclosed blocks of land instead of a landscape based on mobility between places has been discussed more fully by Barrett (1994) and we will return to this below. The crucial issue is whether the tendency for linears to respect existing barrows represents the continuity of territorial spaces, previously marked by barrows, or indeed whether these relationships are part of the subversion of an older different system through the appropriation of some of its elements.

Vyner has also recently published ideas on the relationship between linears and barrows. His work, on the moors of North Yorkshire, has revealed that here the cross-ridge dykes may have been used to specifically define an area restricted for barrow building and the preserve of the dead (Vyner 1991). The topographic location of these barrows, which lie on natural promontories, is important and it may be that the linears are a later addition to an understanding of space previously informally expressed through the interplay of sepulchral monuments and natural landforms. Again the linears were used to formally fix in a new medium, a territorial code which had been understood already for many centuries. The lack of

dating evidence from the linears here leaves these questions very open, as their construction may very well be much later than the barrows.

There are numerous examples on the Wolds of the close relationship between linear earthworks and round barrows and these are manifest in different ways. In some cases, clusters of barrows appear to have been marked by a linear ditch and separated from the adjacent space, not occupied by barrows. In others, linears have been constructed along ridges which are also followed by strings of barrows, as on the Tabular hills, although this practice is nowhere near as common on the Wolds (it is seen along the Great Wold Dyke). The most clear-cut examples however were those described by Mortimer who points to two cases on the western Wolds, at Aldro, where the parallel line of a double ditch bulges out to consume a barrow within the monument (Mortimer barrows 88 and 256) (fig 64 and 67). Barrow 256, for instance,

"...was completely within the ramparts of a line of earthworks locally called "Old Dykings". The western fosse of the entrenchments skirts the margin of the barrow, while on the north side the eastern fosse cuts considerably into the mound; so much so that the entrenchment builders had destroyed a large cinerary urn...." (Mortimer 1905:61)

All of these sites lie on a prominent ridge above the northern and western scarp slopes of the Wolds, and two at the junction of two linears at the corner of a D-shaped enclosure. Along the eastern side of the same enclosure a round barrow (no.127) was found to have been cut through by the central ditch of a double dyke and again Mortimer records a section through the feature at this point (fig 65). Manby sees this violent relationship as displaying a lack of respect to the barrow as it was *"ruthlessly cut through by the ditch"* (1980:327). The bank here also contains an intrusive inhumation, presumed to be of Anglian date (Mortimer 1905). There are other examples along the Great Wold Dyke near Thwing where, *"Round barrows are incorporated into this dyke system or used as alignment points"* (Manby 1980:328).

A further example on the western Wolds in the Aldro area, Mortimer's barrow C76 or Aldro Rath, was also, *"surrounded by a large fosse and ridge, and closely*

locked within the rampart of a double entrenchment of great extent..." (1905:71) (fig 66) and another close by (no.113) was respected by the detour of a double entrenchment.

It is not only on the ridges and uplands that the linears respond to existing barrows, as down in the valley bottom at Garton and Wetwang Slack the ditch dug during the Iron Age to confine the later cemetery encircled a large round barrow. Another linear recognised by Mortimer and included in the Garton excavations, encircles a Neolithic long barrow and follows the valley bottom course which had acted as a linear focus for burial monuments since the Neolithic (Dent 1982;1983a).

For Mortimer, the physical link between linears and barrows was useful as a means of relatively dating the ditches which were always later. The phenomenon, however, is not only valuable for the chronological information it offers. As we will see, the respect given by the builders of the linear ditches to existing monuments provides at the very least a link between the new system of land division and the existing or old territorial logic. References to the past, such as these, are consistently present in this landscape throughout the late prehistoric and early historic period. Although they should not be seen as evidence of an unbroken continuity, they at least provide testament to an awareness of the past and the importance of a mythic tradition which makes sense of that past and links it to the natural forms of the landscape and its relics.

The recent work on Salisbury Plain acknowledged the important continuing role of round barrows here for the articulation of a sense of place and sometimes of territorial structure. The pre-linear landscape of the middle Bronze Age was here characterised by, "*a more implicit sense of territory, centred on natural landscape features and on the distributions of monuments already in existence.*" (Bradley et al 1994:139). In this scheme the round barrows of the early Bronze Age were probably respected and used as pivotal nodes in the ordering of the landscape and of the claims of different communities to areas of land. A mythic history may have built up around some barrows which were after all, relics from the past. The original motives behind their construction may well have become blurred and the lineal ancestral connections with their dead occupants replaced with a more

malleable mythical association. But one which was all the more potent for that. If the articulation of claims to land, however flexible, was carried out through some barrows then this mythic importance would become mixed up with a practical function and perhaps tied to community identity. In the absence of other prominent features in this open landscape they would take on even more significance, especially due to their high visibility. The physical incorporation of such a meaningful cultural feature into a ditched boundary would indeed represent a significant appropriation of its power and landscape role.

Not only do linears respect existing barrows but they also provide foci for burials of later periods. In several cases square barrows were arranged along the length of existing linear ditches, as at Danes Graves and a site known from AP at Weaverthorpe (Dent 1982; Stoertz 1997). Such respect is likely to indicate a continued territorial role for the linears into the middle Iron Age. Dent's excavations at Wetwang/Garton showed that a linear here, interpreted as a trackway, acted as a focus for concentrated burial activity along its length, which extended several kilometres down the valley bottom. The round barrows that also concentrate in this area show that it had been an important monumental focus for some time, especially around the natural knoll of Craike Hill (see chapter 7). Here, the communities of different ages were reacting to a latent potency of place in their own cultural media (linear ditch, round barrow, square barrow), something passed down through generations of local people through the mythic associations which this place must have held. In this area too are found Anglian burials (Stead 1991) and they too seem to respect linears. In 2 cases, at Garton Station and Sykes Monument, whole cemeteries were cut into the banks or ditches of these monuments. (see below and chapter 6).

The respect given by some linears to round barrows is unquestioned. However, there are many more barrows which are avoided by the dykes. It tends to be the most visible and prominent barrows that are incorporated into the line of the earthworks. These seem to have remained important features of this landscape for the communities that experienced it.

TRACKWAYS

There has always existed a complicated duality between the interpretation of linear earthworks as boundaries or as trackways. Mortimer actually interpreted some of the Wolds linears (his hollow-ways) as made-up tracks, deep enough to conceal a traveller (Mortimer 1905). Likewise, in Wessex, many of the early studies of linear earthworks saw them as 'covered ways' (Bradley 1994). The winding and meandering course of many linears does in 2 dimensions very often resemble that of a trackway and, as Bradley points out, it is often very difficult to differentiate between a double-ditched trackway or hollow way and a linear ditch, from AP evidence alone (ibid.). Stoertz too has encountered this problem of identification in the course of interpreting the AP data from the Wolds (1997). Irrespective of the original meaning of the newly created boundary, it is clearly the case that many linear ditches on the Wolds were later recognised and used also as tracks. It is however difficult to argue that this was the original primary role of the first linear ditch diggings. The ridge following Green Lane linears and the Great Wold Dyke are two good examples of linears that are historically known as trackways, at least during the early Medieval period (see chapter 5-6). For linear monuments to alter their function in this way it becomes even more difficult to pin them down to a particular role or meaning. In fact it may well be superfluous to do so, as so many possess multiple meanings and fulfil multiple roles at any given time.

Some of the confusion may not have been helped by instances where the earliest linear ditches actually followed existing trackways. John Dent has referred to the respect shown to trackways by some of the early linears, especially with regard to the 2 short stretches of multiple earthwork at the head of Warren Dale on the Green Lane linear (Dent 1984). He suggests that here the linear is respecting an existing track, visible on AP, by leaving a gap in the line of ditches and banks to accommodate its course (fig 83). He acknowledges the pre-existence of a landscape probably dominated by tracks which is then enclosed and bounded by the construction of linears. “*..a complicated network of trackways already existed, and breaks in earthworks may indicate points of intersection.*” (Dent 1984:33).

The Green Lane to the south of Sledmere was identified as a road with 'British' rather than Roman origins by Cole in the 19th century (Cole 1899). It is clearly older than the Medieval township structure, as it is followed by a continuous boundary for over 20 km (chapter 6). Significantly its line is also partly followed by a major long distance linear earthwork. At Blealands Nook, the linear turns northwards along Bessingdale and leaves the historical Green Lane. From here a cropmark continues its line to connect with the linear along the dry valley of Middleham Dale, to the south. Historically, the Green Lane continued, not along this southerly course, but along the higher open ground. It is the southerly route which is followed by linear earthwork and appears to have chronological primacy, as the historical route pays no respect to late prehistoric cropmarks. If it had survived from the later Bronze Age these enclosure sites of the Later Iron Age would respect its line, but they do not (fig 83). The low route follows the dale-side and then rises up to cross the neck of land along the watershed at Huggate Dykes, dropping down finally into the next valley system and eventually to modern Millington and the edge of the Wolds. This route is perhaps the best candidate for an early long distance route-way as its sights are seemingly trained on the distance away from the settled zone on the edge of the Wolds where water supply is plentiful. Many writers have long since viewed it, and the one to the north which passes through Wharram, Towthorpe and Sledmere, as prehistoric ridgeways, but it is obviously very difficult to offer conclusive supporting evidence to back up this claim. Significantly, the RCHM survey of this complex of linears at Harper Dale which lie on this route, concluded that the earliest phase consisted of a hollow-way (Challis and Harding 1975). It seems likely therefore that this linear followed an existing trackway, a route now partly followed by the Sledmere Green Lane.

The Towthorpe example is ridge following and is also followed by continuous township boundaries. Its line is also marked by a string of Bronze Age round barrows and, for a significant distance, a linear earthwork. The recent discovery of early prehistoric flint around a pond lies very close to the line of this proposed route (Hayfield et al 1995). This is the most compelling piece of evidence for its prehistoric date and has implications for what was discussed above about the strings of barrows along the watersheds of valleys in the Tabular hills of North

Yorkshire. Both the Towthorpe ridgeway and the Huggate Dykes-Green Lane trackway are seen to have acted as long distance routes for trade and communications across the Wolds linking the rest of Britain to the west with the eastern coast and the flint sources of the area around Flamborough Head (Cole 1899). Both routes make good sense in this respect as they line up with the two gravel moraines of Escrick and York which would have acted as communication corridors across the otherwise wet and boggy Vale of York (fig 68).

Crucially these lines follow the topographically predicative routes expected for long distance trackways in an open landscape. They run along continuous ridges and head for the narrow necks of land between the heads of dry valleys, in an attempt to avoid the steep sides of the dry valleys. Under such a scheme these dale-head locations would take on especial significance for travellers as they were nodes of communication. The cultural significance of these places may well be reflected by the linear builders, for it is at these places that we find the most multiple and massive short stretches of ditch and bank (see above). The neck of land at Huggate Dykes in particular is crucial for those crossing the Wolds, as it is the only connecting ridge between the east and west Wolds. Here too the long, complex linear which extends eastwards from this point is recorded as beginning life in the form of a hollow-way, following Varley's excavations and the RCHM survey (Challis and Harding 1975). This is generally seen as the first stage in a complex sequence of development at this site (Halkon 1993; Dent 1984) which may well extend into the Iron Age. However it does appear that the main line followed by the long distance earthwork did originate as a trackway linking the western and eastern margins of the Wolds. The track that is followed by the linears at Huggate Dykes, probably extended to the north-east to join with the Green Lane and eventually the head of Warren Dale. Here too the dale-head was later furnished with multiple ditches. Similar embellishment of natural places by linears occurs at Fimber cross-roads where, as mentioned above, the elaborate and interlocking linears mark the convergence of 2 valleys. Original gaps however were supposedly left in the place where they crossed each valley, allowing the continuance of the route of movement and perhaps allowing for its control.

It seems likely then that the earliest linear ditches, several dated to the later Bronze Age, followed axial courses often on ridges, striking out across the landscape very much in the manner of long distance trackways. Indeed these lines are used as such throughout antiquity and continue in this way into the historical period. The early interpretations of linears in Wessex and Yorkshire as trackways has been shown to be flawed as they most definitely served as boundaries, dividing and enclosing areas of land. However they may have only been part wrong, as a number of the early long distance linears on the Wolds may have followed existing trackways and in this sense could provide a real connection between the bounded landscapes of late prehistory and the more mobile landscapes of the Neolithic and early Bronze Age.

The key to the transition from open to enclosed here and the radical alteration in the language of space, may be held in the idea that some of the major trackways replete with their own territorial significance anyway, are actually later used as boundaries and are followed by linear ditches. It is these same ridge following linear ditches that later emerge as long distance trackways in the historical period. Such a connection between the enclosed later Bronze Age landscape and the more open mobile landscapes of the Neolithic and early Bronze Age, raises the question again of the character of change. Does this reflect the evolution of trackway into boundary or the deliberate appropriation of the track as a means of legitimating the new scheme of land division?

WATER SOURCES: PONDS AND SPRINGS

The recently published work by Hayfield and Wagner on the water supply of the wolds is a valuable and refreshing source of information for a more rounded understanding of settlement and landscape here. Their 2 articles have highlighted the scarcity of water sources on the Wolds and the subsequent importance of ponds and springs to communities of all periods. It was only during the Agricultural Revolution that historical records document the construction of dew ponds, so previously, Wolds communities had to rely on what was naturally available (Hayfield and Wagner 1995). Surface water has always been scarce on the chalk Wolds with only one stream, the Gypsey Race, still running, albeit

intermittently. Nineteenth century observers however do record other seasonal streams in some of the major valleys (i.e. between Fimber and Burdale) and it seems that the water table has significantly dropped during the last 150 years. The distribution of Medieval settlement is heavily influenced by water availability as strings of villages lie along the spring-lines on the wold edges and along the Gypsy Race itself. The Wolds interior contains villages whose sole water sources during this time was normally a pond, often supplemented by one or two wells (*ibid.*) (see chapter 2).

The value of the work at Vessey ponds is that here a glacial clay-filled feature which may once have served as a pond, was found to have been surrounded by a varied collection of Mesolithic, Neolithic and early Bronze Age flintwork. Hayfield and Wagner consider this pond to have acted as a magnet for early prehistoric travellers, herders and hunters crossing the Wolds on the nearby ridgeway and a focus for activity which clearly included both use and production of tools from cores (Hayfield et al 1995). That no enduring settlement site continued at this location is seen as an accident of history, as many of the other Wolds villages are clustered around similar ponds, also probably of natural origin, where clay-filled hollows have collected surface water. Cole records three 12th-13th century records of people associated with ponds at Huggate, Sledmere and Wetwang (1892) and the early Old English names of Sledmere and Fimber are both derived from the word for pond or mere (Gelling, forthcoming; Smith 1937) (see chapter 5-6). The locations of these ponds therefore are prime candidates for sites of early prehistoric significance, if not for settlement then at least as places where people came together (fig 2). They become particularly important in a landscape that is largely unoccupied, crossed by tracks and used mainly for pasture and hunting, such as that which is suggested here for the period before the construction of linear earthworks.

The relationship between linear earthworks and springs on the scarp edge of the Wolds has already been noted. It has been seen by Mortimer and Manby as an indication that the linears were involved in the organisation and control of access to water sources. In the light of what we have seen about the respect being shown by linears to existing features it is important to assess the relationship between linears

and water sources in the same way. Not merely as elements in the enclosed and bounded landscape but as significant places in the open landscape to which the new boundaries are responding (fig 69). If large enclosures were created for the organisation of livestock management then this would be necessary in a landscape such as this where surface water is so scarce. However the linears do not enclose areas of land which contain springs, something first pointed out by Phillips (Phillips 1855). Instead, they lead down the scarp slopes of the northern Wolds towards springs, stopping before they reach them, in most cases. At Burdale, there lies a spring-fed pond at the junction of 2 dales and here the linears converge from all directions, enhancing the natural convergence of valleys at this pond.. This could be interpreted as the construction of boundaries which divide up areas of land on the wold edge slopes, giving each equal and shared access to the springs, so that springs lie at the boundaries of land units (Manby pers.comm.). In this way, the collective rights traditionally allocated to the water sources were respected by the early phases of land division and enclosure. The linears themselves of course could also be following the line of trackways leading down to the springs from the upper slopes, or along the valleys.

The linears of the central drier Wolds also have some relationship with water sources and in this case with the ponds (fig 5-6). The antiquity of the village ponds in this area is still open to question but, as we discussed above, it is likely that most if not all surviving examples are natural features and have acted as foci for settlement and congregation for many centuries. At Fimber for example there were originally 2 ponds in the centre of the village, situated alongside a large Bronze Age round barrow. Surrounding the village, as we have seen, are a series of linear earthworks of monumentally massive construction at least on the northern side. There are also a series of smaller ditches which instead of encircling the raised knoll, containing the ponds, they run along the converging valley-sides towards them. It seems likely they are focusing attention on the ponds in the same way as the linears at Burdale converge on the spring-fed mere there, and may well be following trackways which lead to the ponds (fig 44). The desire to focus on a place through the construction of ditches is at odds with the tendency to enclose the place with much more massive constructions and the distinctions between the

two are made more obvious by the suggestion that the smaller ditches are in fact earlier than the enclosing linear (Mortimer 1905). If this were the case then we could have here a sequence which marks the beginnings of the logic of land division and enclosure, beginning with the physical enhancement of tracks or routes of movement, focusing on places of significance, and giving way to the enclosure of those places with further more massive ditches (fig 69). In both cases the existing tracks along valleys were enhanced physically with ditches as a means of drawing them in to a new scheme of land organisation, which later involved the enclosure and division of land.

In several other cases the linears respond positively to the presence of ponds which now lie at the centre of modern villages. The 2 ponds at Fridaythorpe for instance are effectively enclosed by multiple dykes and the Burdale pond sits at the convergence of 3 valley following linears. Likewise the old pond at Sledmere lies alongside the major long distance linear here, a dyke which may have been forced to deviate slightly in order to accommodate its presence (fig 45). It is significant that the linears respond most clearly to those ponds at Fimber, Sledmere, Fridaythorpe and Burdale, all located in the very driest areas of the central Wolds, at greatest distance from the well watered wold edges to east and west.

MOBILE AND DIVIDED LANDSCAPES

The traditional division of prehistory into cultural-chronological compartments is convenient for the organisation of courses and to many scholars for providing chronological limits on their fields of specialism. However, if we want to see beyond the development of technology and try to understand social and cultural transitions in prehistoric Britain we need to look for continuities across these divides and for changes within these Ages. The domestication of animals and plants and the origin of farming has always marked the beginning of settled sedentary communities in Britain. However, questions are now being asked about how sedentary these Neolithic and early Bronze Age communities actually were. Neither is it clear how much domesticated farming actually played a part in their economies or in the totality of their landscapes. Bradley writes of those who equate

the beginnings of farming and the construction of monuments with full-blown sedentism,

"They tend to project the agricultural patterns of the later Bronze Age and Iron Age back into earlier periods and in doing so may lose sight of the importance of mobile economies long after the first experiments with farming." (Bradley 1993b: 270).

He argues for a transitional phase which allows for the presence of some agricultural activity but within a largely mobile landscape,

"The point at issue is mobility rather than the presence or absence of domesticates . For the most part prehistorians working in Britain have failed to observe this distinction, with the result that they have postulated a network of fixed settlements and land boundaries at a much earlier date than much of the evidence warrants" (Bradley 1993b:270)

Barrett has also emphasised the dangers in assuming too much about the immediate implications of farming origins,

"There exists an unwarranted assumption that, because cultivation requires the maintenance of field plots, then the appearance of cultivars at the end of the 5th millennium must also herald the emergence of a predominant concern with the social control of portions of the land surface." (Barrett 1994:143)

A more fundamental change may be represented, in fact, by the radical changes that take place during the Bronze Age when large areas of land were divided and enclosed and when monumental constructions cease to provide accommodation for the dead but instead begin to house the living (Bradley 1984; Barrett 1994). The distinction between the ceremonial landscapes of the Neolithic and early Bronze Age and the agricultural landscapes of later prehistory has long been recognised. Martin Jones describes the distinction thus,

"....a symbolic landscape of the 4th and 3rd millennia BC, marked out by enigmatic monuments and places of the dead was superseded by a series of tangible land boundaries" (Jones 1986:88). At various points during the 2nd

millennium BC, "...vast tracts of land were enclosed within tangible, visible field boundaries and frontiers" (ibid.: 70) and by the first millennium, "...greater energy was devoted to embellishing the settlements of an elite" (Bradley 1984:159) than to the construction of earlier ceremonial monuments.

The distinction between the two great schemes has traditionally been explained in terms of power-dripping economics, where for instance during the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, power manipulation is shackled to an economy based on the value of prestige goods and so also linked to the control of trade (Bradley 1984). Under this scheme the construction of burial monuments and the display of such goods in elaborate funerary rituals is seen as a public expression of this power, so important to its retention and legitimation. Bradley suggested that the power structures of the first millennium BC were based instead on the control of agricultural production through elaborate systems of patronage or on the management of land. So, according to this model the construction of large scale land divisions and enclosed settlements is a reflection of this change and the increasing role of land and agricultural production in late prehistoric social economy. His emphasis on the elite control of this land management arises partly from the assumption that enclosed hill-forts were elite settlements. This interpretation has been called into question through more recent re-interpretation (i.e. Hill 1997)

Fowler considered the advent of land division as a reflection of an increasing need for agricultural efficiency, through a growing pressure on land, caused by population pressure or even climatic factors (Fowler 1984). There is little or no place in this model for social or cultural change and all explanation is cloaked in economic relations. He is undoubtedly guilty of undermining the radical character of these changes. He tends to see them as a blip on an, otherwise progressive trajectory of development in favour of economic efficiency and agricultural management, beginning no doubt with the origins of farming at the beginning of the Neolithic. The parallel he draws with post-Medieval enclosure is revealing, as he uses it as an illustration of another period of land management in the pure interests of agricultural efficiency and rationalisation. To take such view on parliamentary enclosure is to deny the real social and political agenda behind these

changes and to deny the multifarious social and economic implications of the movement.

John Barrett has emphasised the significance of the distinction between the ceremonial and the agricultural landscape.

"The earlier pattern of an open and general community was now fragmented, as was the landscape itself, no longer a constellation of sacred sites linked by paths of access, but a landscape which began to be divided by large tracts of cultivated and enclosed land. Common land and resources undoubtedly remained, but movement across the land might have been curtailed by the physical barriers which appear as an increasingly obvious feature on the upland landscapes from the end of the 2nd millennium BC" (1994:150)

He underlines the fundamental importance of the changes by explaining them not only in economic terms, but as the most important cultural and social transformation in British prehistory. He sees it as a time of cultural change when the very world view of prehistoric communities became altered and the landscape itself was domesticated for the first time. He puts forward a set of opposing characteristics which constitute the contrasting mind-sets embodied in the ceremonial and the agricultural landscapes, involving tenure and rights of access and belonging to land; ancestral heritage in the landscape as well as farming systems. In doing so he is drawing on Ingold's views on the cultural characteristics of the hunter-gatherer landscape; its tenorial concern with trackways and places, in contrast with the logic of the bounded landscape, based on areas of land with more emphasis on permanent settlement sites.

"The difference between the two agricultural systems is between a landscape which was held together by movement across its surface between a constellation of places each of which was loaded with social and religious significances, and a landscape which was viewed from the centre of a domain, with distinct boundaries....." (Barrett 1994:147).

CEREMONIAL LANDSCAPE

- *tenure related to paths and places*
- *rights of access and belonging to places*
- *ancestral heritage through monuments*
- *long fallow systems (shifting)*
- *communal rights to land*

AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE

- *tenure based on rights to areas of land*
- *ancestral heritage through group belonging to land*
- *short fallow systems (intensive and localised)*
- *more socially restricted and defined rights to land*

(from Barrett 1994)

The value of this scheme is that Barrett has recognised, in the advent of land division a fundamental change which is not just concerned with agricultural economics or, indeed, a shift in the economics of power. He suggests that the linears and other boundaries represent something far more significant than a physical barrier to keep out cattle and are a reflection of a new relationship between people and the land. An indication perhaps that landscape is becoming less mythologised and more commodified and that this has enormous implications not only for the structure of society but also for its very spirit.

Incidentally, the evidence for agricultural practice or land-use on the Wolds for this period is negligible. It would be wrong to apply the concept of a change in fallow systems from this model onto the Wolds along with the construction of linears. It is quite possible that more intensive and fixed systems of arable existed, but it is equally possible that the Wolds remained predominantly pastoral following the beginning of land division.

The work of Bradley and Barrett on Cranborne Chase was in part designed to assess the local specificities of these changes in this area. They suggested that moves towards land division and enclosure actually began during the Neolithic in the river valleys surrounding the Chase and that only later were the ceremonial landscapes of the chalk downland taken in. In this way the downs represented an area of ceremonial monuments at a distance from their contemporaneous settlements where the contrast between the ceremonial and agricultural landscape is sharply defined, because of the lateness and suddenness of the changes here (Barrett and Bradley 1991). The high visibility of archaeological monuments on the Wessex chalk is here shown to have been caused by its marginality in prehistory rather than its focal importance for settlement. There is perhaps a lesson in this example for our perceptions of the Wolds in prehistory.

Barrett is keen to stress the radical character of the distinction but the actual process of change from a landscape represented by one world view to the other is not fully addressed by him. If the sharpness of the distinction between ceremonial and agricultural on the chalk is a function of the marginality of the downs to the settled river valleys then the chalklands cannot be used to illustrate a revolutionary and suddenly imposed new order of land enclosure, in general. Parker-Pearson also perhaps overstates the fundamentality of the changes when he writes, "*This was an era of expansion and there was little reference to distant pasts. Ancient sites were avoided or even slighted by new land boundaries cutting across them.*" (1993:132). As we have seen for East Yorkshire there are many instances where the monuments representing the new bounded landscape pay respect to the places (barrows, ponds) and pathways of the ceremonial landscape here and this might seem more likely to illustrate a sympathetic connection to these places than reflecting a complete break with the past.

The first phase of land division on the Wolds represented by the linears may mark the formalisation of territorial structures that had probably been in transition for centuries, before they were physically fixed by ditched and banked boundaries. In this way, the landscape and its tenurial meanings would have been gradually remodelled, not replaced by a wholly novel scheme. However, the connection between the linears and existing landscape features and forms need not imply a

gradual evolution in meaning of these features. The strength of a wholly new system of land division would no doubt be made more potent if it were physically associated with the barrows or tracks of the old landscape. In this sense, the physical incorporation of a barrow into the linear earthwork could suggest a radical subversion of the existing landscape rather than a slow evolution.

CEREMONIAL LANDSCAPES

Tim Ingold's writings on the cultural characteristics of the hunter-gatherer landscape were perhaps the beginning of an interest amongst archaeologists in the character of the open ceremonial landscapes of the Neolithic and Bronze Age. What stems from his work is a use of ethnographic studies as a way in to thinking about the meaning and cultural significance of places and landscapes amongst hunter-gatherers, rather than merely using ethnographic analogy to reconstruct their economic characteristics. Ingold argued that the landscapes of mobile hunter-gatherer groups were replete with cultural significance wherein the most important landscape features were pathways and special places, usually located in dramatic topographic situations and with commanding views (Ingold 1986). The economic advantages of such places to the mobile hunter-gatherer are clear but it is the cultural and social roles these places played that he is concerned with. In the minds of the communities who used these landscapes there was no distinction between the different structures of life anyway. He cites many examples where the "*features of the landscape are seento be the congealed embodiments of the past creative activity of ancestral beings.*" (Ingold 1986:139). Beliefs such as these are widespread and give a clear cognitive context to the existence of special meaningful places in the landscape at topographically distinctive or highly visible places. Tilley re-iterates the same point by describing, "*a sacred, symbolic and mythic space replete with social meanings wrapped around buildings, objects and features of the local topography.*" (Tilley 1994:) Not only do these beliefs apply to points in the landscape but also to larger topographical features as whole valleys, streams, ridges, mountains, etc.

“Features of the natural landscape may be held to have provided a symbolic resource of the utmost significance to prehistoric populations.rather than simply providing a back-drop for human action the natural landscape is a cognized form redolent with place-names, associations and memories that serve to humanise and enculture landscape, linking together topographical features, trees, rocks, rivers, birds and animals with patterns of human intentionality. Significant locations become crystallised out of the environment through the production and recognition of meanings in particular places and through events that have taken place.” (Tilley 1994:24).

The respect shown by early land divisions both to places of specialised topographic character and to topographically dramatic features, such as dry valleys, would in these terms be responding to the beliefs and meanings that surround these places. The very close sympathy that exists between the linears and the topography on the Wolds, both in terms of location and the form of the monuments, can not only be seen as an attempt to embellish natural features but may even represent a desire to mimic or reproduce the characteristic local natural landforms.

The idea of an open landscape dominated by tracks, linking places of spiritual, social and economic import has also been discussed with regard to the archaeology of this period. The persistent importance of certain places continually venerated from the Mesolithic onwards has been illustrated and created a link between the veneration of natural topographic locales and the later construction of monuments. Bradley followed Ingold and illustrated his ideas with archaeological examples (Bradley 1993a). He showed that many locations for some of the earliest Neolithic burial monuments had already existed as places of congregation and veneration throughout the Mesolithic. In other words the structural characteristics of the hunter-gatherer landscape dominated by pathways and places was probably not affected by the beginnings of farming. Some animals and plants had been domesticated but still settlement was mobile and the landscape largely open. The construction of monuments at special locations came about through, *“a need to capture and control what the landscape is about through architectural morphology.”* (Tilley 1994:71), but was often closely responding to an existing sense of place.

OPEN WOLDS LANDSCAPES: NEOLITHIC AND EARLIER BRONZE AGE

Even though we are not primarily concerned with the period of ceremonial landscape on the Wolds, it has made its presence felt through the very clear influence it exerts on the system of linear earthworks and the beginnings of the bounded landscape in the later Bronze Age. As we will see in later chapters the duality between open landscape crossed by trackways and bounded landscape where boundaries and settlements are more important is something that is not restricted to this one threshold of change. Many of the characteristics and components of the ceremonial landscape re-appear during the Iron Age as well as during the Anglo-Saxon period on the Wolds, in contemporaneous contrast with more settled bounded landscapes on the wold edge.

In line with the southern chalk there are very few archaeological indications of settlement on the Wolds during the Neolithic and early-mid Bronze age. *"In contrast to the vast body of barrow evidence, the occupation sites of the earlier Bronze Age are virtually unknown in East Yorkshire"* (Manby 1980:315). Settlement sites of permanence appear at the end of the Bronze Age in the form of enclosures such as those at Thwing, Staple Howe and Grimthorpe. Prior to these there are only ephemeral traces of settlement activity evident through surface scatters of debris such as flintwork and animal bone (Manby 1980;1988). We do not have the luxury, on the Wolds, of recent focused field projects which attempt to identify settlements of this period not visible through aerial photography. Therefore, any general statement on early prehistoric settlement is subject to the biases inherent through archaeological visibility. Nonetheless, the vast number of ceremonial monuments on the Wolds of this period, stands in marked contrast to the lack of settlement evidence. It may well have been used largely as a landscape of burial monuments, especially in the higher reaches away from the larger, watered, valleys. Perhaps it is time to recognise the archaeological record for what it is, and acknowledge that for long periods in prehistory the Wolds were marginal to settlement and were not the focus of domestic activity.

“The theme of a lowland focus, in which the chalk massif features as a topographical inconvenience, was useful in directing attention away from the wold tops as places where people lived, to regarding them as crossing places with special qualities.” (Dent 1995:35)

These realisations have been a long time in coming but are mirrored by developments in the south where, *“It has taken some time to appreciate the disadvantages of this emphasis on chalkland archaeology”* (Bradley 1994:4)

Any settlements that did exist on the Wolds in the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age are likely to have been shifting and temporary with more cultural importance being placed on burial monuments and trackways, but also on water sources such as ponds and springs and other points of topographic significance. Each of these places and the trackways that linked them would have been *‘loaded with social and religious significances’*, and it is in response to these existing meanings that certain places continued to be venerated by the system of land division represented by the linears. It was a mythologised landscape so that features of the topography and relics of the past would both have been woven into a mythic sense of identity and place. In particular, prominent ridges, dry valleys and valley heads seem to have contained significance and this too was reflected in the construction of linears.

All the indications are that the Wolds of the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age was a mobile and open landscape through which individuals and groups moved from place to place, perhaps with more permanent settlements on the wetter low-lying Wold edge. The network of pathways and ponds and springs is perhaps best seen within the context of a predominantly pastoral economy with settled cultivation plots found on lower lying land, close to more reliable water sources and settlements. In such a scheme the landscape would have been structured around ponds and paths with any emergent sense of territoriality worked out with reference to these features as well as perhaps the barrows. *“These sites did not occupy the centres of territories so much as lie at the end of one path and at the beginning of the next”* (Barrett 1994:141). The mythic and economic properties of these places and these tracks was recognised by the new sense of territorial

organisation which was now expressed through bounded areas of land rather than discrete places upon which a tenurial claim had been established.

If the situation on the Wolds, during the Neolithic and Bronze Age, is anything like that around Cranborne Chase, then the chalkland was perceived and treated as a special landscape away from more permanent settlement which may have been situated around the well watered edges.

“...there are indications that the main density of earlier Bronze Age (and Neolithic) activity was in the fertile lowlands, some distance from the well-known barrow cemeteries of the period. It may be that the reorganisation of settlement and land use, that becomes such a prominent feature of chalkland archaeology, started in low-lying areas where much of the archaeological evidence has been hidden or destroyed.” (Bradley 1994:4).

If these suggestions for parts of the Wessex chalk can be applied to the Wolds then the radical character of the land divisions in the later Bronze Age marks a re-organisation of this area alone and sets it apart from the surrounding vales. The enclosed settlements that appear on the Wolds, at the same time, may be part of this re-organisation. Our knowledge of contemporaneous settlement on the Wold-edge is negligible, apart from the later Bronze Age open settlement from West Heselton (Powlesland 1986;1988a).

THE ORIGINS OF THE BOUNDED LANDSCAPE

The change from a territorial system based on tracks to one based on boundaries is not going to happen overnight. As the major features in the landscape, the existing tracks may have slowly evolved and begun to take on boundary functions in parallel to the changing cultural attitude to land and the nature of its control. The evolution of the meaning of lines in the landscape from communicator to boundary is one way of explaining the close relationship between the long distance, early linears and the trackways. The organic network of trackways became formalised by the construction of earthworks which now also performed a boundary role. Furthermore, the embellishment of nodal points in the landscape by multiple linears

which are part of a system of land division, is a further reflection of the continued importance of the old territorial system based on communications and the slow evolution from one cultural perception to another.

The distinction between a landscape filled with individual flexible symbolic markers and one structured around continuous linear features with more fixed meanings was already in existence amidst the logic of the open landscape. It is perhaps embodied in the contrasting logics that lie behind Ingold's 1 dimensional and 2 dimensional tenure, present in the difference between path and place (Ingold 1986). The cursus monuments of the late Neolithic may well be expressing this linearity in monumental form for the first time (Tilley 1994; Barrett and Bradley 1991). As Barrett acknowledges, the 3rd millennium BC is witness to increasingly elaborate metaphorical representations of place and path, but however intricate they become they were still structured by the same spatial logic of approaching a place and leaving it (Barrett 1994). With the construction of linears as boundaries the distinction between linearity and place was extended to consume areas of land, enclosed spaces which may well have begun as swathes of territory lying between trackways newly transformed into dividing boundaries. Some of the Wolds linears seem to have followed the tenurially potent pathways which probably began to take on a boundary role before they were physically embellished with ditches and banks. Others followed and joined symbolic places such as barrows drawing the power and legitimacy of the old meanings given to these places into the new scheme. The elaboration of the arrangement of ditches and banks at valley heads is testament to the enduring significance given to these places through their role as nodes of communication but also to the special meaning given in the mobile landscape to the lie of the land: valleys, ridges, etc.

The communities who used the Wolds must have become, through a process of negotiation, more closely connected with specific areas of land, resulting in a more exclusive right than was previously acknowledged. Earlier belongings had been to places and paths but there must be a period of transition between this stage and one where land units are physically enclosed. More informal ways of expressing the link between community and land area may have involved the siting of burial monuments within these areas or overlooking them, but would have been

emphasised by repeated grazing and other agricultural habits. Barrett puts these changes down to the fragmentation of the cohesion of the wider community as well as a shift from long to short fallow systems of cultivation. As areas of land are more and more exclusively used the boundaries between neighbouring zones require increasing definition through negotiation and expression. Such a process leads inevitably to the demarcation of physical boundaries. In this way, resources that were once collectively held become the preserve of certain groups or communities. It seems likely that, in this case, the tracks and ponds would retain their collective rights longer than most other resources, so that tracks would become boundaries and the new boundaries would respect existing ponds and other water sources.

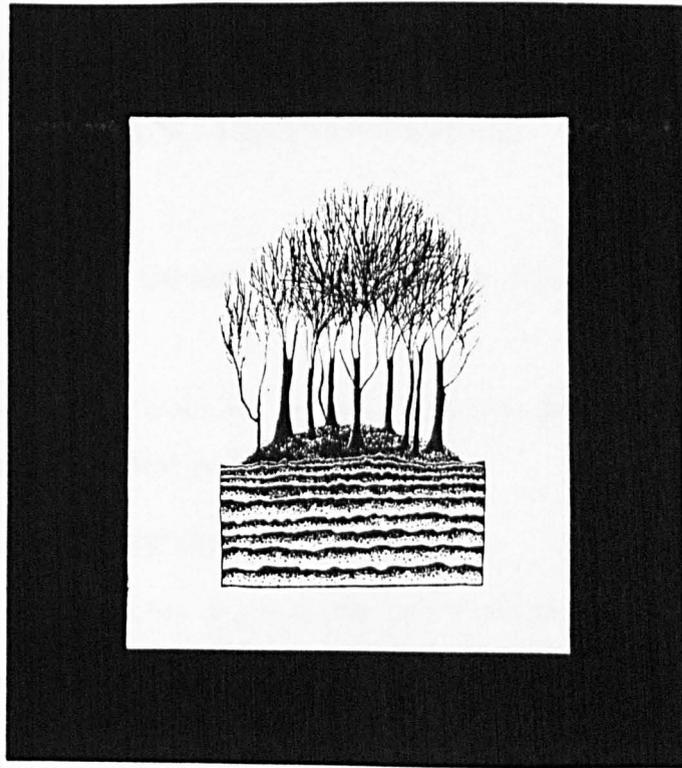
We have tried to show how the linears and the territorial structure they created does not represent a completely new system imposed onto a formerly unstructured landscape. The course of the boundaries and the layout of enclosures and even the arrangements and scale of ditches and banks was influenced to no small degree by the existing features of the landscape. This influence was exerted not by a blunt physical presence but through long held significance of place bound up with topography and history. Meanings already held by places such as barrows, water holes, nodes of communication, viewpoints and the lines of tracks and valleys that connected them were respected by the linear builders. The new structure involved new ideas regarding the relationship between individuals, their community and land which was very different from what had been known before but the physical manifestation of these ideas was rooted in the known cultural landscape and so legitimately softened its novelty. There was probably an element of subversion of the old scheme within these changes whereby meaningful aspects of the open mythic landscape were deliberately incorporated into the new boundaries. By appropriating the physical form of these features, some of their potency and legitimacy would be transferred to the land divisions and all it stood for (see Bradley 1987; Gosden and Lock 1998; and chapter 7) .

If so far we have dwelt for longer than usual on the origins of the linear system it is because of the great debt that the new land division paid to the past landscape. It is easy to explain the new schemes across Britain as radical impositions and a break

with the past, however if we have learned anything from 2 decades of landscape archaeology it is the important and continuing role of the past and its influence on future landscapes. By situating the bounded landscape on the Wolds in its proper temporal context it is much easier to understand some its oddities and to appreciate the enduring influence it has on later landscapes here.

The monumental character of the linears has always presented problems for interpretations because the massive scale of the boundaries had clearly more than functional roles. Therefore, for investigators to talk only in terms of the linears as features in the management of the agricultural landscape was never enough. In allowing for their place within a landscape filled with symbolic places laden with mythic-cultural significance and as agents to continue these long-held traditions we are perhaps offering a context in which their monumental character can be more easily accepted. The enclosure of land was not an economic act, although it had agricultural implications. It was a considerable break with past tradition but not one that replaced a symbolic agenda with an economic one. The old rules still applied but instead of merely enculturing places in the landscape with isolated constructions people began to physically enhance and even mimic the very land itself. How else could this have been done but in a monumental fashion?

The construction of linear earthworks, on the Wolds, marks the beginning of an enduring structure of landscape and perhaps also of community and land use. There is no doubt that it represented a break with the past. However, the decisions about the location and situation of the linears indicated a conscious and deliberate link between the new scheme and the places and features of the existing landscape, laden with cultural significance. In this way, the past was being manipulated and subverted, as it was drawn into a new world (Bradley 1987). The subsequent chapters will document the continuation of this process, but in different ways. The same linears that represent the novelty of the scheme in the later Bronze Age, were much later regarded as relics from the past, themselves manipulated and their meanings subverted.



CHAPTER FOUR

PASTURES AND THE PAST: DEVELOPING LANDSCAPES OF THE IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH PERIOD

“...‘We will not leave,’ she said. ‘We will stay here, because we have had a son here.’

‘We have still not had a death,’ he said,. ‘A person does not belong to a place until there is someone dead under the ground.’

Ursula replied with a soft firmness:

‘If I have to die for the rest of you to stay here, I will die.’ ”

(Gabriel Garcia Marquez, One hundred Years of Solitude)

INTRODUCTION

The first large scale and long distance ditches were dug, probably as boundaries, in the early centuries of the first millennium BC. They followed trackways and paid great respect to the valleys and ridges of the Wolds landscape, as well as to barrows and water sources. The few enclosed settlements which have been excavated also belong to this general period and occupy commanding locations on the Wolds, often in positions which relate closely to the areas enclosed and divided by the linear ditches. The few stretches of linear which have been excavated are the longest and most massive examples and have provided evidence of a date of construction during the later Bronze Age. However, the vast majority of linear ditches remain unexcavated and need not have originally been dug at this time. Many of these are shorter in length and may be less monumental in scale than the axial lines mentioned in chapter 3.

The discussion of the origins of the linear ditches system in chapter 3, highlighted the important and meaningful relationship that these land boundaries had with both their landscape location and the traces of the past, with which they were often physically associated. It was argued that these relationships were not simply borne out of convenience or accident. The existing meanings attached to features of the landscape, tracks and barrows was appropriated by the linears and transferred to them. This involved a degree of selectivity whereby certain features of the old landscape lost their roles and meanings. For instance, a large number of barrows are avoided by linears. So, change in the landscape was carried out through selective subversion of the past. It is, therefore, important for us to continue this line of argument when dealing with the ways in which the linears are incorporated into later schemes of land division. They themselves may become artefacts of the past, and are, themselves, likely to be selectively appropriated or alternatively, forgotten. With this in mind, the reuse and endurance of many of the linear earthworks of the Wolds takes on an added dimension. Similarly, those that become redundant, do so as the outcome of specific decisions to override their once crucial structuring role.

There are some cases where the excavation of ditches has revealed a date of construction during the later centuries of the first millennium BC. The large scale excavations at Wetwang-Garton Slack, for instance, identified a linear earthwork which cut existing square barrows and formed a large enclosure of 2 sq.km, on the slopes of the valley (Dent 1982;1983a) (see below). It can be well dated because it is later respected by further barrows. The northern edge of this enclosure is formed by one of the axial linears (Green Lane), a boundary which had already been in use for 500 years, by this time.

The above example shows the digging of a new ditched enclosure on the slopes of the valley, one which represented a significant break with tradition by cutting across an existing cemetery, physically breaking the link that the community held with those visible barrows. On the other hand the enclosure so created was tacked onto an existing bank and ditch monument. We will argue that this act of respect represents more than the incorporation and use of a conveniently placed bank and ditch earthwork. Instead, the people who created the ditched enclosure were

drawing upon the antiquity of the monument and its historical presence in this landscape. It had for a number of centuries physically represented a very old traditional relationship between the community and this piece of land and through incorporation it lent legitimacy to the new scheme of land division. Change and continuity are here enmeshed and both involve an active relationship with the visible traces of the past. Traces of the recent past were deliberately desecrated during the creation of a new enclosure which itself drew on much older (forgotten) pasts for its legitimacy.

The changes that are evident in the landscape of this period cannot be seen as a monolithic unilineal process but represent the continual re-negotiation of the relationship between communities and their pasts. Similarly, where there is apparent continuity, as features survive for very long periods of time in the landscape, they are likely to have been re-worked to fit the contemporary setting and incorporated into new and different social and spatial agendas. Once the complexity of this relationship has been acknowledged, the clear distinction between traditionally held assumptions of change, on the one hand and continuity, on the other, becomes much blurred.

The later Iron Age has been emphasised as a period of significant change in the Wolds landscape because of the increasing number of ditched boundaries and settlements that arise (Dent 1982;1983b; Bevan 1997). In the above example, the later boundaries appear to have acted as internal infill, dividing and enclosing the large swathes of land originally defined by the earliest long distance lines. The practice of boundary digging seems to have continued throughout the first millennium BC, involving the enclosure of units of land of ever decreasing scale, whilst the original long distance lines continue to be respected. It is important to look at these changes in the context of the long term, as part of a longer term process which began with the original digging of ditches back in the later Bronze Age. At this time, enduring structures of land organisation were established which themselves incorporated and respected an existing ancient system of trackways and special places. A long term view may demonstrate that the Iron Age changes represent the gradual continuation of the land division project which began in later Bronze Age, essentially an infilling of a well established system. It could equally

underline the more fundamental character of these changes, by associating the increasing scale of land division with transformations in land-use and settlement and the very character of the social landscape.

The previous chapter highlighted the important presence of the past through the mythic associations attached to barrows, topography, water and tracks in structuring the layout of linear boundaries. These linears were clearly still present in the Iron Age landscape and, in many cases, were respected and incorporated into new schemes of enclosure and land division, as deliberate acts of engagement with the past. There are many ways in which this relationship with the past can be manifested. The re-digging of ditches and the incorporation of existing boundaries into new schemes are actions which we are able to detect archaeologically, although rarely able to date. Long-lasting and continued respect to ditched boundaries though could also be made by less visible means such as the maintenance and upkeep of ditches (Gosden and Lock 1998) (see below).

The round barrows cannot be ignored as many of them would have been equally visible during the Iron Age. They had been an important structuring part of the open Bronze Age landscape and this significance had been respected by the linears of later Bronze Age, in many cases. The land divisions of the Iron Age however do not seem to have enjoyed such a direct relationship with them. In this respect, the pasts associated with these monuments may have been forgotten. They may equally have been deliberately ignored or avoided to make way for the construction of new histories, inscribed in different ways into the landscape.

The usefulness of a longer term perspective has already been underlined. It helps us to see beyond the artificial barriers that have been thrown up between 'ages' and 'periods' and to view the real historical processes that lie beyond. Dealing with the Iron Age and Roman periods together brings these issues into sharp relief. The Roman conquest represents the beginning of 'history' and the end of prehistory in Britain and is generally seen as a threshold of change. By focusing on a regional landscape and tracing the trajectories of change and continuity across this (c.) 1100 year period, however, we are in a position to critically assess this assumption.

Likewise, having already investigated the later Bronze Age landscape we will be able to set the developments detailed here against those earlier times and processes.

IRON AGE CEMETERIES

East Yorkshire is well known for the extensive remains of Iron Age burial mounds found here, predominantly on the Wolds, and archaeological investigation of these sites has increased in recent years. In spite of this, however, the landscape of which they were a part remains little understood, with minimal information or discussion on the settlements and land-use practices contemporary with them.

Inevitably, an historical summary of the main aspects of Iron Age archaeology, on the Wolds, will always begin with the 19th century antiquarians, Mortimer and Greenwell. Even during the 1930's their legacy had endured strongly enough for Wright to consider that even then, "*...the subject remained under their domination*" (Wright 1990:74). The pre-occupation of Greenwell and Mortimer with funerary sites led them to uncover Iron Age graves, but without the help of aerial photography, they dealt largely with the few barrow cemeteries then left upstanding. Both were involved in the excavation of the cemetery at Danes Graves, where some of the barrows still survive in a plantation, and Mortimer also investigated some of the barrows at Scarborough (Dent 1984; Stead 1979a) (fig 70). All the barrows from the large cemetery at Arras have now been levelled by the plough, but here too, both men were involved, following the initial excavations by Rev. W. Stillingfleet (Stead 1979a). By the end of the 19th century, two of the largest Iron Age cemeteries had been excavated and several cart burials uncovered. Mortimer had also excavated the site of Blealands Nook, where a number of unaccompanied burials were found associated with a series of small ditched enclosures (Mortimer 1888;1905). Mortimer saw these burials as Romano-British because of the pottery, found in the enclosure ditches, but they are perhaps more likely to date from the Anglian period (i.e. Lucy 1998; Eagles 1979). The site lies in an important location beside the Sledmere Green Lane, and close to the cemetery and later ditched settlements at Wetwang Slack. It appears to be the first

of the distinctive late Iron Age/early Romano-British 'ladder' settlements to have been excavated (see below).

Little further progress was made, during the early 20th century, until the construction of the Driffeld aerodrome at Eastburn in the 1930's. Excavations were in front of the building work, which affected a large area, effectively erasing its history from the map. They uncovered another large Iron Age cemetery, of similar size to those at Danes Graves and Arras (Sheppard 1939; Stead 1979a). Eastburn is situated close to the springheads of the river Hull, south of the eastern end of Garton Slack.

The publication of Stead's study of the Arras Culture provided the impetus to encourage further work and interest by highlighting the potential and quality of the East Yorkshire evidence (1979a). The book was a compilation of the results of past work and, in it, discussion focused on the material culture of the grave-goods and the chronology and cultural parallels of the burial rite. His work in East Yorkshire has continued to focus mainly on the burial sites, creating an imbalance within local Iron Age studies towards the funerary evidence. Consequently, contemporary settlements remain very poorly understood.

The turning point came in the late 1960's and early 1970's when excavations began in front of large scale gravel extraction along the floor of the valley known as Garton Slack. Little was known about the archaeology of this area, apart from the limited work of Mortimer at Blealands Nook, to the west and at Garton Station, to the east. The deep gravels of the valley floor have tended to inhibit the formation of cropmarks. The decade or so of excavations here under the direction of first Brewster and then John Dent have contributed more than any other site to the understanding of the Iron Age landscape on the Wolds. In addition, though, the multi-period character of the findings has given a very clear idea of the process of change and development, in this landscape, from the Bronze Age through to the Romano-British period (Brewster 1981; Dent 1982;1983a;1984).

The earliest features here are burial monuments of the Neolithic and Bronze Age, which are scattered along the valley floor and the south-facing slopes of the valley side. Their presence emphasises the long-standing importance of the valley bottom

route, as a link between flat and wet wold-edge to the east, and the dry chalklands of the Wolds further west. This same route was marked by a ditched trackway, encountered in the excavations, which Dent considers to date from before the square barrow cemetery. This contains nearly 450 graves, each surrounded by a square plan ditch and containing a single inhumation. Most are either unaccompanied or furnished with animal bones or pots, but some have brooches. A small minority were given more specialised treatment containing jewellery, weapons and dismantled carts or chariots. Some of these were found away from the main cemetery concentration, by Dent and Brewster and another 2 further down the valley by Stead at Garton Station (Stead 1991; Dent 1985) (fig 71-2). Dent has been able to construct a chronology for the cemetery based partly on the inter-cutting character of the surrounding barrow ditches, but coupled with the typology of brooch forms found within the graves (Dent 1982).

During the 3rd or 2nd century a linear ditch was dug through the cemetery, cutting existing graves. This ditch runs along the valley floor mirroring the course of the trackway but creating an enclosed block of land 2 sq.km. in area. It cuts several of the existing barrows and thereafter seems to serve as a boundary containing all further barrows within the confines of the enclosure. Contemporary with the early phase of the cemetery are a group of scattered round houses some of which were associated with material also found in early graves (see below). The construction of the ditch and large enclosure is taken by Dent to signify the deliberate marked enclosure of land, hemming in the cemetery and putting an end to the open settlement associated with it. Instead, the latter phase of cemetery use may be related to an enclosed settlement found within the large enclosure. Subsequently, following the abandonment of the cemetery, a further group of enclosures were constructed over the site and these were associated with roundhouses.

Stead's excavations have also continued apace, at several sites in the vicinity of Burton Fleming and Kirkburn, the latter at the eastern end of the Wetwang-Garton Slack (Stead 1991). His acknowledged aim, during this 20 years of research, has been to locate and excavate further cart burials, presumably because of the richness of their contents. He has also excavated an Iron Age ladder settlement at Bell Slack, but only because it directly overlay the cemetery here. He writes of the

Burton Fleming excavations, "*In one respect the excavations had been disappointing because no cart burial had been found.*" (Stead 1991:1) The excavations at Garton Station did not reveal associated settlement but, here, there was remarkable evidence for the later reuse of the cemetery site and its barrows and enclosures for Anglian burials, 8 or 9 centuries later (also Lucy 1992 and chapter 6-7) (fig 73). The published report of this work deals exclusively with the Iron Age cemeteries and their contents. The Iron Age settlement and Anglian burial evidence is mentioned in passing but are, "*to be published elsewhere*" (Stead 1991). The published volume remains a milestone in East Yorkshire archaeology and the only fully published account of the excavation of square barrow cemeteries.

The 1979 discussion of the Arras Culture gave real credence to the idea that the burial rite was unique and different enough to imply the movement of people from the continent to East Yorkshire. "*The arrival of artefacts from west central Europe could be explained away by trade, but the arrival of ideas---complex burial rites---must surely mean the arrival and settlement of people.*" (Stead 1979a:93). The discovery of the settlement in association with the cemetery, at Wetwang Slack, went a long way towards refuting this argument as it grounded the rite securely within the traditional range of indigenous Iron Age material culture, once known as the 'Little Woodbury Culture' (Dent 1982). Recent work has further identified indigenous elements within the burial rite and amongst the grave goods, so that the idea of an invasive community bringing with them these new funerary practices is now out of favour (Stead 1991).

The inhumations are normally found with grave-goods, including brooches, pots and animal bones. Occasionally they were furnished with more exotic items such as swords and scabbards, spears, mirrors and other forms of jewellery. In a few cases, the inhumation was buried with a dismantled cart, complete with pieces of decorated bronze horse harness fittings and these characteristic 'chariot burials' remain the most well known aspects of the square barrow burials. It is with these special graves that much of the weaponry and decorated metalwork was found, recently including a coat of chain mail lain over a corpse from the cart burial at Kirkburn (Stead 1991). There are other ways in which some people received

special treatment in death, though, as several corpses appear to have been pierced with spears after their deposition in the grave pit (*ibid.*).

BURIAL RITES AND SOCIETY

Discussion by Stead has identified 3 idealised types of burial rite. Groupings which combine typical aspects including orientation and posture of the corpse in the grave and the kinds of grave-goods that are associated. The 'normal' rite (Stead's type A), he has identified at most sites including Rudston, Burton Fleming and Wetwang Slack. Typically it comprises a crouched or contracted inhumation with head to north, facing east and accompanied by a single brooch and/or joint of lamb, sometimes placed in a pot. Another different rite (type B) was identified and was most numerous at the Makeshift cemetery, Burton Fleming. Here, corpses were flexed or extended, often oriented east-west and only once accompanied by a brooch. Instead they were furnished with swords, spearheads, tools, knives or spindle whorls. Crucially these burials contained bones of pig rather than sheep. A third rite (type C) includes the graves of special status, furnished with carts, swords, etc. which tended not to be accompanied by brooches or pots and which equally favoured pig over sheep (1991).

Mike Parker-Pearson has taken these observations further and, along with the help of a number of his graduate students (A.Piccini, A.Piper and B.Bevan), has looked for more meaningful interpretations within the archaeological patterns left by the burial rite. He began from the standpoint that it is possible to decode the patterning, within the treatment of the body in death, as the way its natural symbolism is manipulated and respected can give an insight into the relationship of the dead person to their world (Parker-Pearson 1999). He argues that the structures that govern the meanings given to animals, cardinal directions and objects, are all part of a perception which explains the world through overlapping and interdependent sets of binary oppositions. He suggests that the tendency for doorways of roundhouses in the Iron Age to face east or south-east indicates that this direction was seen as propitious and associated with life. It is also the direction of the equinoctial and midwinter sunrise. On the other hand, the west may be

associated with death and contain inauspicious properties. For this reason, those houses which face west may actually be the residences of the elites who were then able to inhabit the propitious eastern side of the dwelling (ibid.).

Evidence of similar binary oppositions are apparent in the patterning of graves in East Yorkshire cemeteries, particularly Rudston and Burton Fleming. For instance those east-west oriented graves are accompanied by a completely different set of grave goods than are those oriented north-south. They are also accompanied by pig bones rather than by sheep. Those with the head to west invariably contain the right side of the pig, whilst those with head to east are accompanied by the left side of the pig. This is taken to reflect the symbolic association made between right and east and between west and left. In this way, by recognising patterning within the burial rite, we are not simply identifying particular cultural groupings but recognising a complex symbolic language which represents aspects of the world view of the individuals involved. Aspects of this world view are played out in the grave with reference to the dead human body.

Within this language are indications of the identity of the dead person in life, although these must be read and interpreted very carefully. Parker-Pearson argues that the status of individuals may not be marked by direct association with wealth but more universally through their association with either pigs or sheep, “*..the human relationship between rulers and ruled is mirrored by the ceremonial distinction between pigs and sheep.*” (Parker-Pearson 1999:56). It is the burials with pigs that are sometimes furnished with carts or weaponry or other exotic items, but these are explained in other terms. It is the presence of the pig that marks the status of the dead person, not the richly decorated metalwork. Instead these special graves which also include the ritual killings, are described as, “*dangerous, polluting and destabilising deaths which threatened the well-being of the community at large.*” (ibid.). They remain high status people but also were bad deaths that needed to be marked. This shows that there is some relationship between wealthy items in the grave and status, but it is by no means a direct one. If we take on board these ideas then we have to accept that we are dealing with a society, in which some social stratification may have existed.

There is also some evidence of the indication of kinship affiliation present in the layout of cemeteries. Several cemeteries contain distinct clustering of graves, and others seem to develop in specific linear arrangements. *“The cemeteries form spatial maps of kinship organisation in which each cluster is a lineage of either elite or commoners”* (ibid.). Support for this idea comes from the palaeopathology which has identified pathological conditions in bones specific to certain clusters in the cemeteries at Burton Fleming and Rudston. This might indicate specific kin-based groups in the cemeteries, who shared genetically inherited disorders.

In summary Parker-Pearson writes,

“The ways that the body is laid in the grave are linked to lineage affiliation, class membership and cosmology. The positioning of grave goods may define gender and possibly moiety... (whilst)...pig and sheep bones embody a totemic status distinction between elite and commoners.” (ibid.).

Stead's attitude towards the definition of types of burial rite, was to identify specific cultural groupings within the Arras burials. It was an analytical study which recognised archaeological patterns, but did not seek to explain them in terms of the people who created and used the burial rite. Parker-Pearson has managed to suggest an ideological framework, around which these practices and their symbolism can be fitted, breathing life into a community previously represented by a catalogue of finds. We are still a long way away from reconstructing the character of social groups in Iron Age East Yorkshire but, it seems clear that recent work has identified the existence of social hierarchies and the importance of strong kinship relationships.

The data used by Parker-Pearson came from a restricted set of cemeteries, recently excavated and published by Stead. The area covered by the use of square barrows is large, including all of Eastern Yorkshire and much variation in the treatment of the dead can be found within it. It would be unwise to assume that the shared use of certain aspects of burial ritual justifies their inclusion under the same monolithic cultural umbrella. The term Arras Culture perhaps implies too much homogeneity in other aspects of life like social structure and/or land-use, and should be discarded.

There are some suggestions that the group of burials, which tended to contain extended inhumations, represent a later stage than the rest. This is based, however, on very few dated examples and crucially rests on the assumption that these burials form one contemporaneous group. Dent has argued that the distinction between the different 'rites' is based on difference in social status, implied by distinctions in the quality and range of grave-goods present in the grave (1982). However, it would be dangerous to simply read off social structure in life from the treatment of the dead. As we have seen, there may be more subtle status referents in play.

According to Parker-Pearson, the kind of social formation present in these communities can be glimpsed through their burial rite. However, it is not as simple as interpreting the presence of exotic items in graves as absolute indicators of status. Social stratification is evident and may be marked by the presence of pig bones, with certain members of the community (elites) recognised as of higher status than the rest (commoners). Kinship ties are important here and the cemeteries may have contained specific zones reserved for certain kin groups. Crucially, these may have also had status attribution so that some lineages were of higher status than others. The use of the term commoners by Parker-Pearson suggests a fairly structured hierarchy containing social classes. If the society here revolved around kinship, as seems likely, such a definition would not be applicable.

Dent has argued that the square barrow burials represent a more or less complete record of the population of the area. He argues that a complete cross section of society is represented by the graves, which range from the poorest and lowest status to the most wealthy (1982). However, as we have seen above, there were many factors governing the ways in which the dead were treated, other than simply their social status in life. To view the incorporation of artefacts into graves simply as a reflection of wealth and status would be to deny the complexity of the symbols and actions associated with the burial rite. Many inhabitants of this area, therefore, may well have not been part of this burial tradition at all and instead, along with the rest of Iron Age Britain, dealt with their dead in ways which have left no trace in the archaeological record. Most importantly we should perhaps move away from a rigid idea of status as the key structuring aspect of social life.

THE DEAD IN THE LANDSCAPE

The distribution of square barrows is restricted to Eastern Yorkshire with the majority of examples found on the Wolds, where they cluster on the margins of the eastern dip-slope. They consistently favour low-lying valley locations, something also noted by Dent (1982;1995) and Stoertz (1997), in stark contrast to the distribution of round barrows, which tend to occupy dominant topographic locations with wide visibility. Barrows are found concentrated into cemeteries, as well as in small isolated groups, suggesting that their role as commemorative monuments in the landscape may not have been homogeneous. This is supported by the fact that many of the isolated groups and individual barrows tend to be located on higher ground, in similar locations to the round barrows. If the majority of barrows were placed in low-lying positions to fulfil certain specific landscape roles, then others may have been deliberately placed elsewhere to break away from these conventions. Detailed studies of the location and landscape context of barrows and cemeteries were lacking until recently (Bevan 1999). Yet this information is vital if we are to understand the different roles played by these monuments, in the landscapes of the middle Iron Age (fig 74). In particular, the relationships they had with existing features such as boundaries and trackways.

Bevan has discussed the significance of the landscape context of barrow cemeteries in a recent article, having systematically analysed their topographic location and their relationship to other archaeological features (1999). He argues that "*Making visible a group's ancestors, in this case by creating a mound above the grave gives physical expression to the dead in the affairs of the living.*" (Bevan 1999). By grouping those barrows together, in discrete locations, the sense of an idealised ancestral community was affirmed which was linked to particular lands.

His findings suggest that a significant majority of cemeteries were located close to water sources, particularly the intermittently flowing gypsies. He sees a series of analogies here between water, landscape and life. The seasonal occurrence of water bursting forth from the earth is mirrored by ideas of the regenerative cycles of life and death and coupled with reproductive cycles of seasonal growth. He further

stresses that the *“carriage of water and driving of livestock between settlements and springs would have been a regular, probably daily routine”* (ibid.), involving regular engagement with the barrow cemeteries, stressing the link between living and dead communities. This is an enticing argument but is problematic because of the difficulty in reconstructing the former course of streams and former location of springs on the Wolds (see chapter 2). We know that the water table has dropped in the last 150 years but cannot predict its level during the Iron Age. It is problematic to assume that each dry valley on the wolds contained a seasonal stream in late prehistory, and equally difficult to identify the location where such streams may have sprung out of the ground. There are many cases where the proximity of cemeteries to water can be demonstrated, such as along the course of the Gypsy Race and at Craike Hill/ Garton Station, where barrows lie close to the probable site of former springs. However, this is but one factor amongst many which must have influenced their location.

Bevan's study also highlighted the close proximity between many of the barrows and both trackways and boundaries. The analysis was carried out using RCHM AP plots so that the juxtaposition of barrow cemetery and cropmark ditch was taken to reflect significant contemporaneous respect (1999). The excavated example at Wetwang goes to show how complex these relationships can actually be, and how problematic it is to assume the contemporaneity of juxtaposed features in 2D on an aerial photograph. To distinguish between a trackway and a boundary from AP plots is an even more difficult task, as these features can change their roles over time and sometimes fulfil dual roles. Again, the Wetwang example is informative, as here the cemetery is first aligned on a trackway and then subsequently along a ditched boundary, the change of emphasis mirroring the changes at work in the local landscape.

The presence in the Iron Age landscape of unditched tracks which later become ditched boundaries can also lead to confusion. Nonetheless, there are several examples where tight clusters of barrows appear to have been built up alongside existing ditched boundaries, such as at the Makeshift cemetery, Burton Fleming or a cemetery in Kilham parish. Other cemeteries are distinctly grouped in a linear arrangement, suggesting they have followed a feature which is no longer visible

archaeologically. It seems likely that they were arranged along the sides of a un-marked trackway, raising the possibility that other cemeteries may have initially followed un-marked tracks which were later enhanced by ditches. No doubt, there is some relationship between cemeteries and ditched boundaries, but this might only be a feature of the period after 2nd century BC when land became increasingly enclosed. We will return to these issues below.

The recent studies of the square barrow burials by Bevan and Parker-Pearson have been important in escaping from the tired confines of chronology and cultural identity favoured by Dent and Stead. They have been less concerned with the archaeological study of the cemetery data for its own sake, involving cataloguing and analysing and more interested in the experiences of the people and communities involved. In Parker-Pearson's case the understanding of the complex symbolic language attached to the burial rite and how through it was articulated the dynamic between structure and agency within Iron Age society. For Bevan, how the location and referencing of barrows in the landscape served to express the relationship between living communities, their ancestral dead and their mythic surroundings.

We have dealt with the place of the dead in the Iron Age landscape and now must turn to that of the living. The reconstruction of the complete Iron Age experience on the Wolds, is still a long way off because of the very little information we have about the everyday domestic settlements of these communities.

SETTLEMENT STUDIES

There are many gaps in our knowledge of Iron Age East Yorkshire, but perhaps the most glaring is that caused by the disparity of evidence between funerary sites and domestic settlement. This is particularly acute for the middle Iron Age when, it seems that settlements were unenclosed and are thus very difficult to trace in the archaeological record. The sudden rise in settlements for the later Iron Age and Romano-British may, therefore, have as much to do with their enclosure by deep ditches, as it has to do with an increase in population or expansion of settlement (Dent 1983). In spite of these problems, though, some of the projects that have got

underway in recent years have deliberately set out to address this disparity. Alongside this, the publication by RCHM of the AP plots has further enhanced the potential for future work, especially for the settlement record of the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods (Stoertz 1997).

The following section will introduce a number of the recently completed and ongoing landscape projects of the area. By definition, they are not restricted to one period of investigation but most seem to concentrate on the later Iron Age and Romano-British. As well as focusing on the settlement record, rather than the funerary sites, they have tended to concentrate on the previously overlooked areas on the edges of the Wolds, and in the surrounding vales. Their results, therefore, will be very helpful in assessing the relationship between the Wold-edge and the Wold interior and the more generalised distribution of settlement between these two zones.

Archaeological research in East Yorkshire during the last 20 years, has witnessed a deliberate move away from traditional fields of research, such as Romano-British towns and forts and Iron Age burials. A number of projects have deliberately set out to uncover the more humble, everyday aspects of the late prehistoric and Romano-British settlement pattern. These have tended to emphasise and investigate the landscape surrounding these settlements, using a range of non-destructive fieldwork techniques as well as excavation, and have often adopted a more multi-period approach. They have added significantly to our understanding of later Iron Age and Romano-British settlement patterns. By intensively investigating a restricted area or discrete landscape block, it is possible to reconstruct a fuller and more integrated sample of settlement pattern, rather than to rely on the collation of disparate, partially understood settlement sites from a wider area. The fieldwalking survey carried out at Wharram is a particularly good example (Hayfield 1987) (fig 75). Other projects have provided a more rounded picture by taking attention away from the Wolds, in acknowledgement of the fact that the surrounding vales were not necessarily marginal backwaters in this period. As well as the Holme project (Halkon and Millett 1987;1988; Halkon 1990) the work at West Heslerton (Powlesland 1986;1988b) and Didsbury's excavations in the Hull Valley (Didsbury 1988;1990) have all shown how lively, yet overlooked are the

lowlands when assessing the regional balance of the settlement pattern and the distribution of settlement (see below).

The long term excavations at Wharram Percy began with a solidly Medieval agenda. However, during the later 1970's and 1980's it became clear that the site of the Medieval village had been occupied already for several centuries (Beresford and Hurst 1976;1990). Several sites of Iron Age and Romano-British activity were identified, including a possible ladder settlement, as well as trackways and boundaries that later were incorporated into the layout of the Medieval village. Beresford and Hurst have suggested that the site contained up to 5 settlement foci between the later Iron Age and the late Romano-British period, although the character of the community they formed is still unknown (1990). The origins of the site are earlier than this, as 2 farmstead settlements have been suggested from the evidence for the earlier Iron Age. Late Romano-British evidence is less forthcoming, suggesting a decrease in settlement intensity, but there was a corn drying kiln in the north of the site which apparently expanded its capacity around the 3-4C. Similar discoveries have been made at Langton and other sites, giving rise to a suggestion of arable expansion towards the end of Romano-British (i.e. Ramm 1978).

Leading on from the unexpected findings of the excavations, a landscape project was set up in 1974 to investigate the development of the settlement pattern in this area, through fieldwalking, geophysical survey and sample excavation, under the direction of Colin Hayfield. The workings of the Medieval landscape were relatively well known in this area, through the fieldwork of David Hall. However, the excavations had raised the real possibility of strong continuity from the Romano-British period or even later prehistory, not only in settlement location but also the use of boundaries and tracks. The work is ongoing and still organised under the same voluntary code as the Wharram digs, where involvement was equally for social and archaeological reasons. The results of the fieldwalking programme were published in 1987, a report which concentrates on the Romano-British period, for the vast majority of the surface pottery recovered was Roman in date (Hayfield 1987).

Hayfield has produced a thorough and co-ordinated reconstruction of the Romano-British settlement pattern, as evident from surface scatters of pottery, linking these to geophysical survey and aerial photography. A dispersed pattern of farmsteads, closely spaced along valleys at (approx.) 1km intervals, as well as some wold top settlements and 2 villa sites has been revealed. Many are strung out along trackways and boundaries which seem to have remained in use into the Medieval period. Several of the larger pottery scatters, contain Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon as well as Roman pottery, suggesting a degree of continuity of occupation at these sites.

Hayfield's work gives a strong impression of this 'continuity' of settlement sites and patterns between the late Iron Age and the Romano-British period. "*Neither Roman nor Saxon invasions would at first appear to have had any major impact on settlement patterns in this part of the Yorkshire Wolds.*" (Hayfield 1987:4). Not only does he envisage the unbroken thread of continuous occupation on many sites where Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglian pottery are found on the surface, but he also argues for similar continuity in the territorial and agricultural structures within which these settlements are situated.

"...in terms of their archaeologically identifiable settlements and field systems, there was evidence of considerable stability, perhaps even direct continuity. In this respect the Roman and Saxon invasions may merely have added a surface veneer to the existing indigenous population of the Yorkshire Wolds and may have had little direct impact on the more practical aspects of their existing settlement and agricultural organisation." (ibid: 4).

It should not be forgotten that these bold statements are based on the findings from surface collections only, and no excavation has demonstrated the continuous occupation of any of these sites. Even at Wharram Percy, where there is an Iron Age and Romano-British presence, the excavations revealed considerable change, leading up to the foundation of the village in the early Medieval period (Beresford and Hurst 1990).

Hayfield's survey is extremely valuable because it strengthens the argument that the local communities were minimally affected by the Roman conquest. For some it

has demonstrated continuity. However, the continued use of the location for a settlement site or indeed the continued (or intermittent) respect given to an ancient earthwork does not imply that the countryside was shrouded in a mist of stasis. The resolution of Hayfield's work is crude, given the reliance on surface collections, and no real assessment of the specific character of change can be reached without excavation. The distinction between the deliberate reuse of the past, on the one hand and an unbroken continuity, on the other, is not identifiable under these conditions. In this way, he has perhaps been too quick to infer continuity from this evidence and has not introduced a sufficient problematic into the whole issue of continuity.

Hayfield suggests that the Romano-British settlement pattern of the Wharram area, based on surface pottery scatters, is much more extensive than that of the Iron Age or Anglo-Saxon periods. The sites that seem to show long term occupation are those which he regards as occupying the most convenient settlement locations including those sites which later emerge as Medieval villages. The Romano-British period, then, seems to witness an expansion onto more marginal wold top locations, on the edges of territories, by the creation of small farmsteads. However it would again be difficult to isolate exactly when this expansion and contraction take place without further excavation of particular settlements.

Further fieldwalking has been undertaken by Peter Halkon and Martin Millett in the vicinity of Holme on Spalding Moor and the flat wetlands west of Market Weighton and Shiptonthorpe (Millett and Halkon 1987;1988; Halkon 1990). This area has long been seen as peripheral to the presumed centres of settlement activity, on the drier Wolds, for both the Iron Age and Roman periods. It lies west of the settlement corridor, along the western Wold-edge, marked by the Roman road from Brough to Malton. Their findings have shown that, despite the low-lying and wet ground, the area was densely occupied during the Iron Age, with several sites discovered which contain evidence for the smelting and working of iron. The discovery of the Hasholme boat has underlined the importance of the local inland waterways in this area which formed a dendritic system of creeks feeding into a now dried up tidal inlet of the Humber. This is an illustration of how wetlands should not be seen as inhospitable and unoccupied or indeed as a barrier to

communication (Millett and McGrail 1987). The same area during the Romano-British is home to an intensive pottery industry with many kiln sites known. A spin-off from this intensive survey was the excavation of the previously unknown small Roman 'town' between Shiptonthorpe and Market Weighton, situated close to the main Roman road, below the western Wold escarpment (Millett and Halkon 1987).

The vast multi-period excavations at West Heslerton have so far yielded little Romano-British evidence, with the area later occupied by the Anglian settlement having been probably used for agriculture in this period (Powlesland 1986). Excavations at Sherburn however, 1 km or so away, have revealed a late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement occupying a more low-lying position closer to the peatlands of the valley floor (Powlesland 1988b). AP plots reveal a network of ditched settlements, linked by trackways and boundaries, strung out along this low-lying zone on the southern fen-edge. Late Romano-British and early Anglian levels at Sherburn have pointed to possible waterlogging problems, for the inhabitants, and eventual abandonment, leading to the suggestion that the community were forced to move to a better site closer to the Wold-edge, where the Anglian settlement was founded (Powlesland 1988b). Settlement shift, in this manner, is well known from the Low Countries in this period (Heidinga 1985) but little understood in East Yorkshire. No other local project has been able to suggest the existence of this phenomenon with as much strength.

A similar situation may be suggested by the excavations at Caythorpe, where a late Romano-British settlement was sampled along the course of the gas pipeline (Abramson 1996). It lay close to the Gypsy Race, along the floor of the valley and may have contained buildings with chalk footings. A certain amount of early Anglian activity is evident on this site, revealing similarities with the site at Sherburn. To the west lies the DMV of Low Caythorpe and to the east a site known only from AP, suggesting the potential of settlement shift here over several centuries (*ibid.*).

IRON AGE SETTLEMENTS

It has already been stressed that the traditional funerary bias of archaeological research in this area, has created an imbalance, so that for many years very little was known about prehistoric settlement. This unequal distribution of research resources was identified as recently as 1990 when Millett wrote of the Iron Age situation, "*Disappointingly, the highest profile work remains the hunt for 'rich' burials of the Arras type,.....rather than the pursuit of knowledge about society and the economy within the overall settlement system of the ordinary people.*" (Millett 1990a:348). Prior to 1970, there had been notable and important excavations at Grimthorpe (Stead 1968) and Staple Howe (Brewster 1963), revealing 2 very similar small enclosed settlements complete with round houses and four posters. In date though, they belong to the later Bronze Age-early Iron Age and should be treated alongside others such as Devil's Hill and Thwing (see chapter 3). They all had fallen out of use before the beginning of the square barrow burial tradition, marking a period of several centuries during the middle of the Iron Age for when very few non-funerary sites are known (Dent 1982; Bevan 1997). This lack of settlement evidence prevails until the later Iron Age (2nd century BC to 1st century AD), when several settlements are known from the Wolds and the surrounding area, including the distinctive enclosed ladder (or droveway) settlements (see below). For the middle Iron Age, however, there are very few traces of domestic settlement, setting the area apart from most other areas of Iron Age Britain.

There is middle Iron Age domestic activity at Wetwang, adjacent to the cemetery which Dent regards as representative of a long established settlement, "*..in which there is evidence of zoning for specific activities, such as grain storage, living and burial.*" (Dent 1995:87)). Here, there were 80 roundhouses belonging to this early 'open' phase of settlement. Associated with these, were pits and four posters, the latter producing a few artefacts such as weaving combs, ring-headed pins and brooches, of the same kind as were also present in the early phase of the cemetery (Dent 1983a). There are signs that some of the roundhouses were aligned along a trackway, which itself is no longer visible, but which Dent sees as the main route

along the valley bottom (fig 71-2). The early cemetery grew up along a subsidiary track, to the south. He acknowledges that this group of roundhouses are largely undated and the evidence may represent a long history of settlement here going back as far as the Late Bronze Age. If this were the case, the site would have a parallel in the later Bronze Age open settlement from West Heslerton (Powlesland 1986). As mentioned above, a large enclosure was constructed at Wetwang in 3rd or 2nd century BC, which contained, in its centre, an enclosed settlement (fig 76-7). Dent sees this enclosure and new settlement as coinciding with the abandonment of the 'open' phase. Later roundhouses, dated through artefactual evidence to the later Iron Age and early Romano-British, occupied positions within the ditched enclosures of the later settlement.

The open phase of habitation at Wetwang is the first and only known example of a settlement contemporary with a square barrow cemetery. The Caythorpe pipe-line excavations recently revealed a small group of roundhouses on the high ground by the Woldgate ridge, evident as 3 circles of post holes (Abramson 1996). "*There were no finds associated with the structures,*" so they were "*categorised as Iron Age on the basis of their circular ground plan and the nearby burial.*" (Abramson 1996:18). The smallest of the three structures was no more than 4.5m in diameter but the other two were probably around 7m, more akin to the smaller structures from Wetwang. It is very difficult to say whether the Caythorpe roundhouses were part of a larger settlement, because the excavations were restricted to a 14m wide trench along the route of the pipeline. Their location was targeted to avoid, rather than to encounter, archaeological features. Crucially they were not visible from the air as cropmarks.

Stead's excavations at the Bell Slack cemetery, Burton Fleming, revealed the ring groove of a single round house, with further post holes at the entrance. This, like the Caythorpe examples, is similar in type to others found at Wetwang and may belong to the Iron Age. Stead generally refers to it as earlier than the associated burials, but his final conclusions must await the published report (Stead 1991).

In an attempt to switch attention away from funerary sites, but primarily to establish a pottery chronology to help date the burials, Stead and Rigby began a

project looking at groups of pits. The findings have not yet been published (information from Dent 1995). Pit clusters have been identified from the air and have been assumed to represent the only archaeologically visible traces of open settlements, possibly contemporary with middle Iron Age burials. Several groups have been sampled, but, particularly at Rudston along the Woldgate ridge. Here 2 large clusters of pits contained mainly later Bronze Age pottery whilst others have produced Iron Age and Romano-British sherds. Much is described simply as first millennium in date. Hill has shown for the south how pit deposits during the Iron Age may be interpreted in a number of ways (1995) and, clearly, these features need not represent the rubbish pits of a nearby settlement. Pit groups such as these are often found on high ground close to concentrations of earlier monuments and probably represent expressions of ritual activity which are continuing the long held traditions of the sanctity of these locations. Further groups have been found amidst the funnelled entrances to the open space above Weaverthorpe, away from the valley floor settlements. Their presence indicates that there is more to the monumentalised Iron Age landscape than simply the square barrows and their tendency for wold top situations stands in contrast to the lower lying positions of the barrows.

The roundhouses of open settlements are represented by circles of post holes or shallow ring grooves and are rarely substantial enough to register as cropmarks on AP's. The settlements so far discovered of this kind, on the Wolds, were either salvage excavations in front of gravel extraction (or the gas pipe-line), or were encountered through their association with other more visible features, such as square barrow cemeteries. Most have been found by chance, and not design, and it remains a considerable problem to try and locate the domestic habitations of the people who were burying their dead in square barrows. Given the Wetwang example, of a cemetery lying alongside an open settlement, it has generally been assumed that similar such settlements lay close to many other of the large cemeteries. It is held that the insubstantial nature of the structures and the unenclosed character of the settlements has meant that they have escaped detection so far. However, despite several recent excavations of cemeteries at Burton

Fleming, Rudston and Kirkburn, only at Wetwang has a settlement been encountered.

Several discussions of the settlement pattern of the Iron Age have tended to take these assumptions about cemetery and settlement location further by assuming that indeed the distribution of cemeteries in East Yorkshire mirrors that of settlements and of the population (i.e. Haselgrove 1984; Millett 1990). Millett, for instance, describes a “*predominantly dispersed pattern of settlement on the Yorkshire Wolds with most of the evidence represented by burials within square barrow cemeteries.*” (Millett 1990:348). Haselgrove’s discussion also uses the distribution of cemeteries, on the Wolds, to support his argument that, it was here that settlement during the Iron Age was centred, expanding onto the surrounding lowlands during the 1st century BC and AD (1984a) (fig 2). To date, there are very few known square barrow cemeteries in the low-lying lands of the Hull Valley and Holderness. The clear distinction in distribution, between the eastern Wolds and this area may be partly one of archaeological visibility, as cropmarks do not form well on the clays. However it is unlikely to account for their near total absence, as so far there is only one known example of a square barrow cemetery here, at Scarborough, 3km north of Beverley (Stead 1979a). Likewise, there are very few square barrows and no cemeteries along the western edge of the Wolds, below the escarpment between the Humber, Market Weighton and Pocklington. This is an area where aerial photography has revealed a complex network of sites but, as yet, they do not include square barrows.

Recent archaeological survey and excavation projects have been concentrated on the hitherto overlooked lowland areas which border the wolds (see above). Didsbury’s work on the Hull Valley and particularly the work of Halkon and Millett in the Vale of York have identified extensive Iron Age and Romano-British remains, which tend to take the focus of attention away from the dry Wolds and emphasise the important role of wetlands. Likewise, the excavations at Heslerton, below the northern escarpment and those at North Cave and Brantingham, on the western Wold-edge have identified important settlement evidence for periods when it is rare on the Wolds themselves. A much wider range of domestic evidence seems to be appearing at these low-lying sites from all periods, including traces of

iron smelting from North Cave and the Holme Project, as well as a few sherds of late Iron Age finewares. The latter Dragonby wares are absent from the Wolds and their occurrence in the Vale of York, Hull Valley and on the western Wold-edge support the important role played by the low-lying wetlands for communications and indeed settlement.

Dent has acknowledged that it may well be these well watered lowlands rather than the dry wolds which contained the main areas of settlement during the Iron Age (Dent 1995). He points out that the soils of the Vales of York, Pickering and Holderness are more fertile than those of the Wolds (1995) and also that the presence of surface water is obviously more predictable in the Vales. In particular the low-lying Wold margins would seem to have been well suited for settlement and able to support large communities, as here it would have been most possible to integrate the rich resources of wetland with those of the dry wold. In this light, a middle Iron Age settlement pattern that mirrored that of the cemeteries would require some explanation, and it seems more likely that many settlements did not lie alongside a cemetery. In this case either their inhabitants were performing a different less visible burial rite or they were travelling with the dead from the settlement to their eventual place of rest.

IRON AGE LANDSCAPE: CEMETERIES, TRACKS AND JOURNEYS TO THE PAST

The difficulties of reconstructing the middle Iron Age settlement pattern have been discussed above. In the light of this discussion, we should not assume that the distribution of cemeteries should mirror that of settlements in the centuries before the creation of ditched settlements, up to the 1st century BC. We have questioned the assumptions that settlements usually lay alongside cemeteries and that settlement distribution favoured the Wolds, in this period. Neither are fully supported by the evidence that is available. We will now examine the distribution of cemeteries and their location, to try and understand the landscape of which they were part, considering later their relationship to settlement sites.

Bevan's discussion of the landscape context of square barrow cemeteries has been mentioned above (1999). In it, he suggests that there was a strong relationship between the cemeteries and water sources, as well as with boundaries and trackways. A number of problems were outlined involving the location of former water sources and the interpretation of linear cropmarks as boundaries. Within the study area, there does however seem to be a good relationship between these cemeteries and trackways. Clear illustrations of barrows situated close to ditched tracks occur on AP's from Pocklington and Rillington, both situated below the Wold escarpment (Stoertz 1997). Another can be seen at Loaningdale, this time on the top of the Wold above Londesborough. Tracks, such as these, are often visible as cropmarks on AP's but many longer distance tracks seem to have remained in use to become modern field boundaries, or tracks later followed by township boundaries (see chapter 5-6). Several of these which occupy ridgeway positions are generally seen as, but not proven to be, prehistoric long distance routes (Hayfield 1987; Dent 1995; Long and Pickles 1993). There are some cases where isolated barrows are found alongside these routes, such as the Towthorpe ridgeway at North Plantation (Wharram). Another example may occur along the north-south Wolds ridgeway at Warter (fig 82). Further south, the large cemetery at Arras is also found close to this ancient routeway, in a dominant location and perhaps at the point where it crosses another east-west route now followed by the A1079. Most barrows tend to occupy lower-lying positions and so largely avoid these ridgeways. They do however tend to concentrate close to other long distance routes.

The earlier, larger barrows from the cemetery at Danes Graves are apparently aligned on a short length of linear earthwork (Dent 1984). It probably extended further south-eastwards than it can now be traced, but appears to have terminated at the cemetery site at another linear earthwork aligned east-west. The latter lies on the course of the presumed early trackway followed, further to the west, by the Sledmere Green Lane, and is also followed for much of its course by township boundaries. Dent suggests that the linear bisects an existing cemetery, as barrows occur on both its north and south sides. It seems more likely that the cemetery was built up along a trackway, already marked with ditch and bank.

Many cemeteries are found strung out in clusters along valley bottoms which are likely to have been used as more generalised routes of movement between the Wold-edge and the Wold interior. A large proportion of the total number of barrows are found in such locations, along the Garton-Wetwang Slack and also along the Great Wold Valley, between Rudston and Burton Fleming (fig 74). The definition of these routes with marking ditches seems to have been a late feature of their development and contemporary with the more generalised moves towards enclosure during the later Iron Age. The ladder site known from AP at Elmswell for instance seems to have built up along this same valley-based track, and there are other cases mentioned above where Un-marked long distance routes were incorporated into ladder sites (fig 82).

The tendency for cemeteries and barrows to be found close to trackways has also been noted by Dent (1982) and is apparent through several direct associations between a cemetery and a marked trackway. Perhaps more significantly though is the clustering of barrows and cemeteries along more generalised routes of movement, principally along the communications corridors offered by valley-floors. Their distribution is heavily weighted towards the eastern edge of the Wolds and concentrated in the large broadening valleys that here meet the clays of Holderness. Crucially, these valleys would have provided for the natural channelling of people travelling from the eastern wold edge into the higher ground of the interior.

This kind of distribution does not support the idea that cemetery distribution equates with that of settlement. Bevan had already identified that the cemeteries occupied liminal positions within the landscape, in both physical and metaphorical terms (1999). By definition they were located away from settlements. He also suggested that most were found on longer distance routes, rather than local tracks, something borne out by the above discussion of the study area linking them to cross wold trackways.

It is important to understand that there are changes in the character of both barrows and cemeteries during the currency of the square barrow tradition (Dent 1982; Stead 1979a;1991). The earliest burials so far excavated are from Cowlam and comprise a small group of larger than average barrow platforms with shallow

graves (Stead 1986). The tendency for later graves to be surrounded by smaller barrows, and occupy larger and tightly packed cemeteries, has been illustrated at Wetwang and is shown by the large developed cemeteries at Eastburn and Burton Fleming. Stead has suggested that the majority of burials probably belong to the 2nd century BC (1991). Many of the isolated scattered and small groups of barrows are found at higher altitudes, than the valley hugging later cemeteries, and many of the former lie close to predicted cross Wold trackways or clearly visible double-ditched tracks. The large tight clusters of barrows belong to the later period and more often than not they are associated with enclosures or boundaries. The clustering of cemeteries may mark the beginnings of change in this landscape. Their centralisation and the changing emphasis from upland to lowland locations, for the barrows, may have represented or influenced social changes that later resulted in intensifying land division.

The link between trackways and cemeteries may provide a way out of the restrictive idea that cemetery distribution should be equated with that for settlements. If the landscape we are dealing with in the Iron Age here was a fairly mobile one, then individuals would have been involved in regular movement between home settlement and outlying agricultural land. The presence of their community cemetery alongside these tracks would have served its purpose in expressing the integrity of that community in just the same way as a cemetery alongside a settlement would do so, in the context of a more settled and less mobile landscape.

Bevan suggested that the creation of cemeteries of marked visible barrows was a way of engaging the living community with its recent past (1999). He emphasised the importance of their geographic location and relationship to other features as demonstrating the link to the past, as well as connecting the living community with certain areas of land. In particular it "*demonstrates the importance of the past in the Iron Age present*" (Bevan 1999:82). The historical genealogies, represented by the barrows, provide a link with the recent past of the community, whilst their location, with respect to more ancient features, says something about the relationship of the community with a distant, perhaps mythic past (Bevan 1999). Mel Giles too has remarked that "*..a sense of place and history was generated*

through harnessing particular ancient features, specifically burial mounds into the architectures of the (Wetwang) cemetery." (Giles 1998:). She also recognises a discourse between references to the recent genealogical past and a more remote past, represented by the earlier BA and Neolithic barrows.

Some writers have observed that actually the cemeteries and barrows of the Iron Age tend not to directly associate with traces of the past in this landscape (i.e. Dent 1995; Stoertz 1997). Their macro distribution is a lowland, valley-based one, and very different from that of the round barrows. In some cases, where concentrations of round barrows occupy lower ground, as at Wetwang Slack, the square barrows lie alongside them, but only in one case is direct physical reference actually made. In this case, the one round barrow is encircled by the 2nd to 3rd century BC enclosure ditch. Elsewhere, square and round barrows share territory, but do not directly associate in the same physical way that is found during the Anglian period, where inhumations are inserted into the body of earlier barrows and earthworks (Lucy 1992; see chapter 6-7). Likewise, square barrow cemeteries do not tend to be found alongside the long distance linear earthworks of later Bronze Age origin. These features are respected by later Iron Age settlement, but not very often by Iron Age cemeteries. As argued above, they are more likely to lie alongside an unmarked trackway than an ancient upland linear boundary. Those boundaries they do respect appear to be small-scale divisions of recent origin.

The deliberate avoidance of earlier visible relics by square barrows is as significant as their deliberate incorporation, in later periods. Clearly, the square barrows do not physically touch round barrows, or only in rare cases. In this way, they might be sited close to, but not within, round barrows as a means of heightening the sense of difference and disassociation felt by the Iron Age communities to the past that they represent. This is, in no sense, the result of ignorance or avoidance of the presence of the past, but a reflection of a different kind of relationship with that past. The location of cemeteries does not seem to have made reference to the distant mythic past, represented by the ancient linears and round barrows in the Iron Age landscape (Giles 1998). Instead their markedly different physical form may have reinforced their separate history. In this way, they may have deliberately

evoked more recent genealogical histories to the exclusion of the more ancient. We will come back to these issues at the end of the chapter.

SETTLEMENTS OF THE LATER IRON AGE

The settlement sites of the later Iron Age are much better documented than the earlier periods, and there are several excavated and dated examples. Most of these are known from their interlocking patchwork of square or rectangular enclosures forming a series of paddock-allotment size areas and have become known as 'droveway' or 'ladder' settlements (Stead 1980; Dent 1983b; Stoertz 1997) (fig 76-7). They are, indeed, apparently aligned along a ditched trackway and are easily identified from the air as the ditches are deep and tend to show up as cropmarks. Dating evidence from several examples suggests an origin for these ditched settlements during the later Iron Age, in most cases following the end of the square barrow burial rite. Two separate enclosed settlements were found at Wetwang. One lay in the centre of the late Iron Age enclosure and another alongside the valley floor trackway overlying the cemetery (Dent 1983a;1982). Both contained roundhouses with classic later Iron Age artefacts such as rotary querns, chalk figurines and La Tene 3 brooches (Dent 1983a). They continued in occupation beyond the Roman conquest, with rectangular buildings replacing the roundhouses. The central settlement was abandoned by the 2nd century AD, whereas that alongside the linear/trackway continued up to the 3rd or 4th century AD. Two further ditched settlements of Romano-British date were also found close by (see below).

Further examples have been excavated at Bell Slack (Stead 1976;1991), Rudston (Stead 1980) and Brantingham (Dent 1989) and several similar sites were identified from the air by Hayfield in the Wharram area (Hayfield 1987) (fig 75). All of these, when excavated, revealed both late Iron Age and early Romano-British material and seem to appear generally at the beginning of the first century BC. Those at Maiden's Grave and Bell Slack clearly overlie the square barrow cemeteries and most of the evidence points to a Romano-British date for the ditched enclosures, here. Their construction is not always dated to a period after

the use of square barrows, though, as at Blealands Nook and Bell Slack there are a small group of late burials that may overlie the enclosure ditches (Dent 1983). Initially excavated by Mortimer, who emphasised its Romano-British character, the Blealands Nook site was found by Dent to have origins during the later Iron Age. At Eastburn, a later Iron Age or early Romano-British ditched settlement overlies the large cemetery here (Sheppard 1939; Stead 1979a) (fig 78).

At Brantingham, the series of ditched enclosures of late Iron Age date lay underneath the remains of a lavish Romano-British villa complex (Dent 1989). The material from this site was fairly rich, with Dragonby type finewares, brooches and a coin of Cunobelin all represented, indicating a date in the late 1st century BC or 1st century AD (ibid.). Stead's excavations of the villa at Rudston also uncovered traces of the ditches, hut circles and pits, belonging to one of these distinctive 'ladder' settlements, underneath the 3rd century villa complex (1980). Again he dates the ditches as belonging to the immediate pre-conquest period of the early first century AD.

The recent publication of the RCHM aerial photographic plots has revealed many more unexcavated examples of these distinctive sites, whose characteristics are their tendency for a series of contiguous rectilinear enclosures to be strung out along a trackway or droveway. "*...the disposition of the cropmarks strongly suggests that they represent settlements of village proportions, including small paddocks or individual holdings typically enclosing areas of 0.25-0.5 ha.*" (Stoertz 1997: 51). "*Roughly 125 linear enclosure complexes have been recorded on the Wolds, ranging in length from a few hundred metres to more than 1.5km.*" (ibid.) (fig 82). The variability in length and complexity is very important and testament to the fact that these sites seem to have developed differently over many years, if not centuries (fig 79). The organic accretion of enclosures and their expansion along an axial route at sites like Warter Wold, Butterwick and Wharram (Gypsy Race) seems to indicate this development. It should be remembered that most of the sites mentioned above have only been partially investigated and it would be presumptuous to view them all in the same light.

Associated with these 'linear enclosure complexes' are often found other distinctive arrangements of enclosures known from aerial photography. Several of the 'droveway' settlements are surrounded by larger enclosures and ditches seen by both Dent and Stoertz as representing the fields surrounding a settlement (Dent 1995; Stoertz 1997). Interpretations like these, imposed on poorly understood sites known only from AP should not be imposed on the evidence without sufficient qualification.

Also singled out for comment by Stoertz are broad-ditched or double-ditched enclosures which form an integral part of the linear enclosure complexes. One such example is found at Wharram le Street and turned out to be a Roman villa from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. Another site type she identifies is the large 'subdivided rectilinear enclosure', often found in close proximity to the ladder/droveway site. The Wharram Grange villa is one such example, the ditches laid out in the 2nd-3rd century AD. Stoats tentatively suggests that both the above mentioned classes of site may represent "*Romanced additions or successors to the adjacent linear complexes.*" (Stoats 1997:55). This may be an example of the development of some sites which began as traditional ladder systems. Instead of being overlain by the later villa, the new Romanised buildings were here attached to the existing network of enclosures. In other cases, they seem to have developed in a linear pattern extending further along the axial trackway (i.e. Warter Wold, Butterwick).

Many of the ladder sites, known from AP and excavation, contain traces of both roundhouses and pits within their confines. The Wetwang examples have shown, through excavation, that roundhouses were here contemporary with the surrounding ditches. However, very many are only identified through their ditches and these enclosures may not have always contained settlements. Hayfield's fieldwalking work at Wharram produced no pottery at all over four of the sites revealed from the air as classic ladders. He argues, on the basis of this absence of evidence, that these sites are not settlements but instead acted as stock enclosures or enclosed allotments (Hayfield 1987). However, given the general paucity and fragile nature of coarse Iron Age pottery, its absence on the surface should never be over-emphasised. In any case a series of enclosures used for livestock would

still be likely to yield fragments of pottery vessels associated with the occasional but repeated use of the site, and so this interpretation cannot be supported.

Dent too has tended to see the ladder sites as a series of stock enclosures. Indeed, the repeated use of the term droveway settlement itself implies a certain specified function. He argues, "*That these enclosures were used for stock rearing is implied by animal burials from Wetwang Slack and Garton Slack, where they were found in large numbers, and from Hayton*" (Dent 1983b:39). It hardly needs stressing that the deposition of a dead animal in the ditch of an enclosure does not imply the exclusive use of that enclosure to corral live animals.

The association of the ladder sites with pastoral agriculture has also been emphasised because of their relationships with ditched trackways or droveways. These "*...usually terminate by entering an extensive open area - which suggests good pasturage as opposed to the rectangular ditched fields or domestic plots.*" (Stead 1980:35). Again, if the trackway leads to pasture it does not necessarily follow that the enclosures along it were used for stock control. Their association with pastoralism has led to suggestions of a change in agricultural emphasis towards livestock in the later Iron Age (Dent 1983b). An equally plausible interpretation would be that these enclosures may actually indicate an expansion in the extent of land used for arable production. Livestock would need to be contained within certain physical confines in order to prevent them from straying onto arable fields. An intensification in the organisation of agricultural production with no necessary alteration in emphasis would seem a more likely context (Haselgrove 1984).

They may, of course, have nothing at all to do with the economic practices of agriculture. Instead increased land division and enclosure could be linked to transformations in the social and symbolic relationship between people and land. Where originally, negotiations about land allotment were carried out informally, their increased formalisation would require a greater physical and permanent demarcation of space. Crucially, the need for the permanent definition of enclosed land used for agricultural purposes, may have been a social requirement rather than an economic one (i.e. Hingley 1984; Bevan 1997). The interpretation of ladder

sites, therefore, should not be searching for a common function or role for these sites, but should be looking at the reason for the need for enclosures, where, in previous centuries, open sites had been deemed sufficient. As we have seen, we should be wary of imposing familiar agricultural terms onto ancient sites, whose function is unknown. However, this practice is not restricted to the interpretation of site function. In some cases it has coloured the interpretation of settlement change and the reconstruction of the landscape.

RECONSTRUCTING FAMILIAR LANDSCAPES

Dent's most recent discussion attempted to make sense of the dense pattern of cropmarks, in the area around Rudston and to relate these to transformations of settlement and landscape, during the middle and later Iron Age (1995). His ideas rest on the fact that here, a long established settled zone existed, close to both the Gypsy Race and the Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age monumental focus of monolith and cursus. He argues that this settlement, during the early and middle Iron Age, was surrounded by an area of in-field arable, itself flanked by out-field grazing, the whole territory bounded by the lands belonging to the neighbouring community. He uses the analogy of an upland hill-farm and imposes an agricultural system onto the landscape, without any knowledge of the date or function of any of the individual features. The 2 droveway settlements of Bell Slack and Maiden's Grave, he sees as the result of dramatic transformations in the later Iron Age when, "*...the expansion of settlement may have accompanied radical developments in the social order.*" (Dent 1995:29). He argues that new settlements were created by a dominant authority by "*effectively colonising the margins between existing centres of population.*" (ibid.) and ignoring long held traditions of spatial order.

According to Dent, the 2 dimensional plans of these 2 sites share a superficial similarity with the layout of Medieval villages such as Wetwang or Kilham and, on this basis, he considers it plausible to impose concepts borrowed from Medieval agriculture, onto the late Iron Age landscape. For instance, he suggests that droveway settlements are "*so comparable to medieval settlements in their composition that the term 'village' would seem to be appropriate*" (ibid: 27).

Perhaps even more glaring though is the suggestion that "*The absence of complex field boundaries around these settlements suggest that like medieval villages of the feudal system the arable land was worked as open fields in common*" (ibid: 28). Based on a poorly understood and incomplete record of cropmarks, a complete socio-economic system has been transplanted from the Middle Ages onto the Iron Age, because it was the only way of explaining the lack of internal field divisions around a site; a site which may not even have been a settlement. These agricultural practices and social relations were part of the particular social and economic conditions of the Middle Ages and cannot be justifiably imposed on prehistoric evidence because of a superficial physical similarity. The analogy of an upland hill farm used for the earlier settlement betrays the assumption that the development from organic to formal is something timeless and inevitable. The sense of change from an earlier organic character to a more formalised system is again taken from the stereo-typical history of the English landscape. Here, the ancient irregularity of prehistory is forced to conform to the supposed homogeneity of the Medieval countryside or the later landscapes of parliamentary enclosure.

This interpretation of prehistoric evidence, with recourse to familiar concepts, as if they were historically-neutral, is a common occurrence. Hayfield's work at Wharram, for instance has tended to assume a large amount of unbroken continuity in settlement, agriculture and landscape from the Iron Age into the Medieval period (1987). A three-fold settlement hierarchy is placed on these (Romano-British) sites. It consists of: villages (site lies under Medieval village); villas (surface scatter has evidence of Romanised building materials); and farmsteads (surface scatters of mainly Romano-British date). He suggests that the Medieval layout of townships may have its origin in the Romano-British because the largest Romano-British sites seem to occupy the same locations as the later Medieval villages. However, none of this can be demonstrated outside of the excavations at Wharram Percy. Here, in any case, some Romano-British presence is evident but not as a nucleated settlement. At the sites of the three other Medieval villages, pottery does occur but only in quantities equable with many of the farmstead sites. Although, clearly, later occupation may have masked Romano-British layers, there remains no other grounds for assigning these village sites a superior status, except on deterministic

considerations of the favourability of their environmental location (Hayfield 1987). The determinant characteristics for settlement of the Middle Ages are assumed to enjoy equal applicability in the Romano-British period, without sufficient knowledge of the character of that earlier society or landscape. The familiar model of the nucleated village, surrounded by its fields and bordered by boundaries shared with neighbouring communities, has here been taken from the Middle Ages and forced to fit earlier evidence.

We have already discussed how settlements need not have lain alongside cemeteries in the Iron Age. The assumption that they did is, itself, another illustration of the uncritical application of familiar concepts of landscape back into the past. Likewise, the tendency to assume that the Wolds was comprehensively occupied has also been questioned. A settled, inhabited landscape was assumed for the Wolds, and not the more mobile, less fixed organisation of space that seems to be implied by the evidence.

Having dealt with the nature of the Iron Age archaeology and the character of the landscape, we will now go on to consider the Romano-British period. Following that summary we will be in a better position to fully evaluate the form of later Iron Age change.

IMPERIAL ATTITUDES TO ROMAN EAST YORKSHIRE

Richard Hingley has identified the problems in the traditional approaches to Roman archaeology in Britain, as well as suggesting the course for future work (Hingley 1989). Approaches towards the interpretation of the Roman provinces and their settlement patterns, have been influenced greatly by changing political and cultural attitudes during the 19th and 20th century. Traditionally, British historians and antiquarians interpreted the Roman provinces in the light of their own imperial experience. Their concern with the artefacts, buildings and settlements of elite Roman authority reflected, directly, the fact that they associated with the Roman elites rather than the subjugated indigenous peoples. Consequently, most archaeological work in the 19th century and early 20th has concentrated upon the remains of forts, towns and villas. Since the second world war, however, the

dominant character of political opinion in this country has moved away from a concern with the British Empire and many former colonies have achieved their independence. Likewise, archaeological priorities have changed focus too. Principally, it has been shown that the occupants of Roman villas and towns were not people of Mediterranean origin but native Britons who had taken on the trappings of Roman culture (i.e. Millett 1990b). In addition there has been an increasing desire to escape from the confines of an 'historical approach' which forces the archaeological evidence to fit into a settlement framework derived from classical sources. It is argued that this neither allows for archaeological evidence to be taken at face value nor does it encourage the identification of difference within or between provinces (Hingley 1989).

The concept of Romanization can be traced back to the work of Haverfield in 1912, but has perhaps only been universally adopted since 1970's (Millett 1990b). Millett and others have argued that the experience of social and cultural change, in each Roman province, is unique and should not be forced to fit a universal empire-wide pattern. The character of the archaeology in Roman Britain is not the result of the imposition of new styles and materials onto a passive indigenous population but the fusion of Roman and native practices and attitudes (Millett 1990b; Blagg and Millett 1990). Thus, it is possible that even the social structures of community and family continued in some form from the pre-Roman period, although these are difficult to identify in the archaeological record (Smith 1978; Hingley 1989).

The history of Roman research in East Yorkshire has followed this pattern. For instance, the very few historical or epigraphic references to place-names have dominated discussion of the settlement pattern. The Antonine Itinerary and Ravenna 'Cosmography' mention major towns or forts at Eboracum (York), Derventio (Malton), Delgovitia (?) and Praetorio (Brough); given here with their suggested modern locations according to Ramm (1978). The mileages between these settlements, as recorded in the itineraries, have never fitted the actual distances between their supposed locations and so a certain amount of scribal error has been argued for (ibid.; Creighton 1988). Debate has raged for many years about the site of the town of Delgovitia which still hasn't been conclusively demonstrated (but see Millett and Halkon 1987; Millett 1990b). A recent re-

evaluation of the historical evidence has highlighted the problems in the traditional scheme. It has suggested that Derwentio may refer to a settlement at Stamford Bridge, leaving Malton as Delgovitia (Creighton 1988). In the light of these problems it seems sensible to put the historical record to one side, in this instance, and let the archaeology try and speak for itself.

Eighteenth and early nineteenth century scholars often offered a Roman military interpretation for the linear earthworks (i.e. Drake 1747). It was only until the more considered approaches of Mortimer and Cole that they were seen to date from before the Roman Conquest. At times, however the dating methods were crude, as this remark from Cole illustrates,

“Were the entrenchments on the Wolds the work of the Britons or of the Romans? I have no hesitation in saying of the former; for one reason, and that a good one, that there is not a straight line amongst the whole lot.” (Cole 1888:49).

The work of Mortimer and Greenwell, in the 19th century, had focused on prehistoric funerary evidence, and very little progress had been made in understanding the Roman period in East Yorkshire, by the turn of the century. The exotic remains from the site at Millington had been known, for many years by then, and it had been put forward as a candidate for the lost town of Delgovitia, otherwise located at Wetwang (Cole 1887;1899) and Londesborough, near Market Weighton (Drake 1736). Cole and Mortimer had also discussed the Roman road network of the area putting forward several candidates. It was not until the 1920's and 30's, though, that work began which was primarily focused on Romano-British sites. Most attention was paid to the higher profile more 'Romanised' sites such as the towns of Malton and Brough, excavated under the direction of Phillip Corder as part of a team that often included Dr.J.Kirk, and Mary Kitson-Clark (Stead 1979b). Excavations also took place, in the inter-war years, and under the same team on the villas of Langton and Crambeck, in the Malton area. The rural settlement of Elmswell with its tantalising links between late Romano-British and early Anglian occupation was also investigated by Corder and Kirk and, immediately prior to WW2, excavations began at Rudston villa following the discovery of mosaic pavements (Stead 1980). It was not until after WW2 that

the lower order settlement sites began to be investigated. More recently, attention has focused on integrated multi-period landscape projects from which we are gaining a much more rounded and complete understanding of the settlement pattern and Romano-British landscape (see above).

FORTS AND TOWNS

The historically documented Roman conquest and occupation of this part of Yorkshire began during the 60's AD. During the initial military campaigns forts were established at strategic locations, along lines of communication, between the Humber crossing and the major fortress at York (Ramm 1978) (fig 80). Brough-on-Humber, Hayton and Malton are all known to have had forts during the Flavian period, whilst another probably existed at Stamford Bridge, at the crossing point of the River Derwent, on the road to York (Ramm 1978). It is only the fort at Malton that seems to endure as a military garrison beyond the period of initial conquest, the other three being abandoned early. Despite limited excavations, the site of Brough is known to have developed into a civilian urban settlement from the 2nd century, and was provided with a theatre, whose inscription seems to suggest that the centre was the civitas capital of the Civitas Parisiorum and gives its name as Petuaria (Ramm 1978). This name, incidentally, is not mentioned in the two itineraries but does appear in the 1st century geography by Ptolemy. The town was probably located deliberately close to an existing crossing point and trade centre, at Redcliff, which flourished during the late Iron Age (Crowther et al 1988;1990).

The urban centre seems to decline considerably during the 4th century, something which Ramm put down to the problems of flooding caused by a rising water table (1978). It has become clear, though, that such problems are not ubiquitous of riverside late Romano-British settlements in Eastern Yorkshire and there may well be other reasons for its decline. Malton, on the other hand, continued to flourish throughout the Roman period. Here a prosperous civilian settlement developed outside of the fort, which too remained in use and was probably adopted as a cavalry base in the later period. It existed as one of the few centralised centres of Romanization in this area, its houses furnished with mosaics and hypocausts and its

suburbs busy with trading and industrial activity (Ramm 1978; Wenham 1974). The recent excavations at Shiptonthorpe have revealed traces of a nucleated settlement of rectangular enclosures and buildings stretched out alongside a road associated with a range of pottery, metalwork and many coins (Millett 1985;1987;1990a). The quality and range of material has led the excavators to assign the settlement an urban status, and it has been suggested as the site of the lost town of Delgovitia.

There are no known Roman towns or centres of any nucleation to the east of either Malton or the western Wolds escarpment, although the cluster of villas, inland from Bridlington, may indicate that a former urban centre existed on the coast here, which has since been lost to the sea (Ramm 1978; Creighton 1988). At present, there is no clear idea of the Romano-British status of early Medieval centres of Beverley and Driffield, in whose direction runs the road south across the Wolds out of Malton, although increasing archaeological work in these towns is revealing at least some Romano-British activity.

ROADS

The sites of forts or towns, known from archaeology are all found along the main Roman roads that run along the western edge of the Wolds, below the escarpment (fig 80). Although other roads were suggested by Margary running eastwards from Garrowby Hill towards Bridlington there is increasing doubt about their authenticity as Roman roads in the traditional sense. It is likely that these routes had been in existence throughout later prehistory and remained so with minor modifications as organic trackways or ridgeways, some stretches being straightened and rationalised in the post-Medieval period. It is the regularity imposed on these ancient ways that made them appear as traditional Roman roads.

ROMANO-BRITISH SETTLEMENT AND LANDSCAPE

The settlements of Romano-British Wolds and East Yorkshire are well known, compared to the periods that precede and follow, and this increase in material evidence in the 1st century AD has often given the impression of concomitant

change in landscape and the settlement pattern. A whole array of settlements are known from excavation, surface survey and fieldwalking, which are distributed widely across the area and range from humble native style farms to lavish and extensive villa complexes, complete with Romanised buildings and artefacts. Many Romano-British settlement sites occupy the same location as late Iron Age predecessors and, in these cases, it seems likely that there is a degree of stability in the community and populations who inhabited them. The increasing amounts of Roman pottery and appearance of Romanised buildings would thus be testament to the adoption of new cultural attributes on the part of local people. It would be too simplistic to reconstruct a static unchanging picture of the Romano-British landscape here, based simply on the continued occupation of the same site. The crudeness of much of the data-set does not often allow for changes within the Romano-British period to be identified, especially if sites are known only from AP evidence. From those sites well known through excavation, there are indications of dramatic changes not only in settlement form but also perhaps in economy towards the end of the Roman period.

The large numbers of sites known from Roman period has led to suggestions that the population of Britain increased dramatically during this time (Hingley 1989). Certainly, where detailed studies have been undertaken, the Romano-British landscape appears to have been settled and managed in a more intensive way than is often expected. The poorly preserved or understood settlement record of the Iron Age, however, makes direct comparisons very problematic. East Yorkshire is no exception as the surveys at Wharram and Holme have shown (see above). In both areas the Romano-British occupation is dense, at Wharram for instance there are sites spread out at regular 1km intervals. Sporadic fieldwalking at Southburn, west of Driffield, has also indicated dense Romano-British activity here, close to the springheads on the eastern wolds dip slope. If the density of occupation of these three areas was extended across the Wolds, the number of settlements involved would be very large indeed. However, apart from Wharram and Wetwang, our knowledge of the Wolds interior is based either on individual excavated sites or the undated AP plots. We will return to the interpretation of AP

data below. Furthermore, most of the excavations are of villas, reinforcing the bias in favour of the elite which has been recognised nationally.

The Wetwang and Garton excavations are well known for their contribution to Iron Age studies, but they uncovered settlement traces from the Romano-British period, on the same site as the former Iron Age settlement and cemetery (Dent 1982;1983a). The people who lived here, were either unable or unwilling to construct buildings in stone, but they did choose at some point to build rectangular structures, instead of the traditional roundhouse. They also had access to mass-produced pottery. Here a group of three settlements existed, each within c.500m of its neighbour. They occupied peripheral positions to a large ditched enclosure, originally laid out in the 3rd or 2nd century BC (see above), and were incorporated into the boundary ditch. They originated in the 1st century AD and seem to have continued in use until the 4th century. In the centre of the enclosure, the original later Iron Age settlement probably fell out of use in the 2nd century AD. The sequence of development, here, seems to illustrate very clearly the increasingly dense settlement of certain locations in Romano-British period and, crucially, how this development incorporated the existing structure of land division. "*This layout implies that the farms represent an expansion of the existing settlement with the new sites lying beside the main road and utilising the margins of the village territory*" (Dent 1983b:39) (fig 76-7). Hingley has interpreted the development at Wetwang as the gradual sharing out of land amongst an expanding kin group. "*The three settlements may have shared and had equal rights to the area of arable and/or pasture within the ditched enclosure around which they developed.*" (Hingley 1989: 97) (see below).

Elsewhere, on the Wolds, our knowledge of Romano-British settlement pattern has to rest on sporadic excavations of individual sites, most of these being villas. They are found in concentrations, normally surrounding or close to the Romanised centres, for instance at Brough and Malton, as well as the afore-mentioned cluster west of Bridlington. In addition, and perhaps not surprisingly, there is a significant clustering of Romano-British settlements along the spring-line/ road corridor of the western escarpment. The clustering of Romanised rural settlements, surrounding the centres of population and economic/political organisation, emphasises the

important cultural role played by the towns (fig 80). They become centres of Romanisation and exert an influence on the social and cultural character of the local landscape. As we saw above, there are few, if any, Roman towns, on the Wolds, itself or indeed, between the chalkland and the sea. Similarly, there is a concomitant lack of villas from most of the Wolds and, especially very few along the eastern dip slope.

Occupation at the Rudston site (west of Bridlington), began as a late Iron Age ladder settlement and developed into a rectilinear enclosure, occupied during 1st and 2nd centuries AD. During the 4th century AD, there was built here, a large courtyard villa with bath-house and mosaic floors, as well as a series of more utilitarian buildings including corn drying kilns (Stead 1980). At Langton, (south of Malton) where a much larger proportion of the site was excavated, again the final most elaborate phase of occupation did not take place until the 3rd century AD (Corder and Kirk 1932). The earliest phases of activity here, are represented by a series of three separate much smaller settlements which may have eventually coalesced to form one extensive villa complex (Ramm 1988). Perhaps the most elaborate and lavish example of Roman cultural aspiration, writ large in architectural form, is the villa at Brantingham, (north of Brough) equipped with hypocausts, mosaics and mural paintings (Dent 1989). This is another site which overlies a later Iron Age settlement and, like the other large villas, occupies a location on the edge of the Wolds, with ready access to water sources and close to a range of land types, offering a variety of agricultural potentials.

The majority of settlements, known from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, are only different from their late Iron Age predecessors through the presence of Romano-British pottery and other durables. At many sites, the ditched enclosures of the late Iron Age droveway type persist, as at Garton and Wetwang Slack and Blealands Nook. Other enclosed settlements were provided with more Romanised cultural pretensions, such as the enclosures from the earlier stages of occupation at Langton and at Crossgates, Seamer. Ramm's suggestions that these sites, and others like them, can be described as either Romanised or native is clearly problematic, based as it is on a few durable classes of material culture, from sites only partially excavated. Despite the apparent quality of the evidence for the

Romano-British period, it is still very rare to come across an attempt to translate the site plans, chronologies and finds catalogues into meaningful ideas about the communities that inhabited the settlements, their ethnic identities or social structure.

Ramm considered that the early Romanised sites in the northern Wolds were deliberate foundations for retired veteran soldiers (Ramm 1978), but it is increasingly clear that many of the rectilinear enclosures he equated with this phenomenon, have origins in the pre-conquest period (Dent 1983b). He seems to have over-estimated the influence of the Roman conquest and especially that of the military, on the existing agricultural and settlement patterns. However, his ideas that the bulk of the long distance linear ditches in this area (north of the Great Wold valley) were creations of the Romano-British period have received some support from recent excavations, at Cat Bableton (Cardwell 1989) and Swaythorpe (Mackey pers.comm.). They are perhaps more likely to relate to the agricultural expansion of the 3rd century than the earlier post-conquest century. Without further ground investigation, we will be no closer to disentangling the Romano-British linears from the prehistoric ones. However, it seems indisputable that many linears were used and respected during the Romano-British period. Many excavated sections have identified significant quantities of Romano-British pottery in the upper silts of these ditches (Manby 1980; Mortimer 1905; Bartlett and Mackey 1973).

The most extensive and opulent examples of the classic Romano-British villa do not develop here until at least the 3rd century (Ramm 1978; Dent 1988). There is only one known villa which dates from the early Romano-British period. That at Welton is again constructed on the site of an existing native farm and continued in use from 2nd century to the late Romano-British (Dent 1983b). The rest of the region's villas do not fully develop until the 3rd century. Several sites including Langton, Rudston and Harpham were significantly expanded during the 4th century and it is in these later stages that the most extensive range of material occurs at these sites (Ramm 1978). This includes villa buildings with lavish decoration as well as evidence for metal working and large scale organisation of agriculture. Dent has suggested that their appearance, coupled with the demise in the latter

sites by this time, may indicate an increasing arable element in the agricultural economy. The ubiquitous corn driers at these late sites are used to support this argument. He acknowledges that the changes in the 3rd to 4th century may equally represent an intensification of the existing mixed farming regime (1983b).

AERIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE CENTRAL WOLDS:

CROPMARKS FROM HUGGATE TO ELMSWELL (figs 81-3)

So far, we have not paid much attention to the AP plots from the study area in any systematic way. Now that we have discussed the character of the archaeology, and wider issues of interpretation, we can look at the AP evidence of this area in context. The pattern we are faced with on the RCHM plots is a palimpsest. It represents a partial view of the accumulation of the remains of human activity on this piece of land over three millennia. Most of the features remain un-dated.

The problems of interpreting this kind of evidence, without direct support from excavation are clear. The lack of dating information, from these sites and features, means we have to rely on assumptions about site-types being diagnostic of a certain period. It also means we have little sense of the development of individual sites over time (fig 81). There may well be good reason for assuming that groups of rectilinear settlements aligned along a trackway, date from the later Iron Age or Romano-British. Stoertz takes this further by grouping sites together on the basis of more specific morphological similarities, often assuming their contemporaneity. None of the sites from her group of curvilinear enclosure complexes have been investigated on the ground, and it is not at all clear from which period or periods they date. Morphological analysis of cropmarks can never be a replacement for their investigation through excavation or surface collection. It can rarely add anything to our knowledge of these sites without subsequent work and is more of a convenient tool for ordering AP information than really finding out about the past.

Cropmarks in the area around Wetwang-Garton Slack, are particularly clear and the RCHM plots have enabled an extensive 'ancient landscape' to be reconstructed (Stoertz 1997). Most of the traces of ditch and enclosure are generally seen to date

from the late Iron Age or Romano-British, but it would be foolish to rule out the inclusion of sites from other periods in this palimpsest. Featured are many examples of square and round barrows, as well as lengths of ditch, often associated with small groups of rectilinear enclosures. Many of these sites have been seen as examples of late Iron Age/Romano-British ladder sites. Particularly developed examples occur between Huggate and Tibthorpe and at Fridaythorpe. The south-facing slopes of the Wetwang Slack contain a particularly dense concentration, where short linear ditches are associated with small groups of rectilinear enclosures. In the centre of the valley-side, lies the late Iron Age-Romano-British enclosure and settlements, excavated by Dent. Further west is the settlement at Blealands Nook, also clearly visible from the air. The many square barrows in this area concentrate along the floor of the valley, close to the track.

A major, ordering, feature of this landscape, are the long distance linear earthworks, established here during the later Bronze Age. In several cases, the small-scale ditches and enclosures of the later Iron Age and Romano-British clearly respect these longer distance boundaries. For instance, the Green Lane linear is respected by enclosures to the south, all the way along its course from Blealands Nook to the Sledmere Monument. The settlement at Blealands Nook, itself seems to straddle the linear, at the point where it meets the dale bottom track turning north towards Fimber. In other cases, the ditched settlements seem to have been placed within existing territories, defined both by steep dale-sides and the valley following linears of the later Bronze Age. Examples occur at Holm Field, Fridaythorpe and at North Field, Huggate (fig 81).

As with the linears, there is also some correspondence between cropmark sites and features of the historic landscape, in particular some of the long distance trackways. It has been argued elsewhere that the Green Lane is one of these and, in fact, had its origins as a trackway before the later Bronze Age digging of ditches. Certainly, during the later Iron Age and Romano-British it was also used as a boundary, as it acts as a division between an area of heavy enclosure and a much more 'empty' zone. To the west of Blealands Nook, the course of the historic route, followed by township boundary, is not respected by cropmarks. A series of presumed late Iron Age/ Romano-British enclosures overlie the modern track,

suggesting it was not a contemporary feature. Instead, the late prehistoric course of the Green Lane seems to have extended in a more south-westerly direction than its historic successor. Here the course is visible as an intermittent double ditch which eventually joins up with the double ditch and bank earthwork along Middleham Dale. This is the course of the earliest routeway, suggested in chapter 3, as the pre-earthwork track across the Wolds, which was later followed by the linear. It clearly remained as a significant part of the late prehistoric and Romano-British landscape, until the re-alignment of its course west of Blealands, some time after the early Romano-British. Another suggested long distance trackway, of the historic period, is the north-south ridgeway which follows the Wolds watershed from Wetwang all the way south to Newbald (May and Pickles 1993). The currency of this route, in the later Iron Age, is also clearly shown, as no less than three ladder sites are aligned upon it. In this area this is shown by the example from west of Tibthorpe.

The demarcation of trackways with ditches seems to have taken place during the late BA and it may also have been a feature of the later Iron Age. The ridgeway is one example, as is the track running along the bottom of Wetwang Slack. Although, it seems that some stretches of this latter were already ditched by the middle Iron Age, it was certainly re-cut in the 3rd or 2nd century BC. Furthermore, the ladder site at Elmswell, at the eastern end of the valley, is aligned on the track and may be another illustration of its increased enclosure and marking with ditches. Another would of course be the later Iron Age site at Blealands Nook.

Another feature of this area is the presence of extensive open spaces, which are virtually free of any cropmarks. These areas are often bounded by linears, with smaller ditches and enclosures encroaching up to these boundaries. This suggests that their emptiness is not a function of archaeological visibility. Stoertz backs this up, "*The rate of discovery of cropmarks throughout the Wolds has been consistent enough to support the conclusion that these blank areas are likely to represent true voids..*" (Stoertz 1997:69). The higher slopes of the Wetwang Slack, above the Green Lane, are one striking example. This area, Life Hill, contains very few cropmarks apart from ring ditches of barrows or lengths of linear ditch. These latter may well date from the post-Medieval (see chapter 3 or 5). This piece of high

ground was enclosed by linears, in later Bronze Age, and seems to have remained so without internal division into the Iron Age and Romano-British. It may well have been a zone of open pasture for the settled communities, lower down the valley sides. This is an interpretation also favoured by Stoertz who observes that, "*A number of these empty zones are approached by ditched trackways which end in funnel-like openings.*" (1997:69) and that the droveways organised and channelled the movement of animals between settled and open areas (see also chapter 7).

Another less obvious example lies to the south, on Tibthorpe Wold. Although this is not enclosed by linear boundaries, it is surrounded by short ditches and small enclosures. It is crossed by the linear cropmarks of a presumed Roman road, but no other features are evident. The largest example lies to the north of Sledmere, on the southern slopes of the Great Wold Valley. Here, a strip of land 20km long and 3km wide, is virtually free of cropmarks, save for the odd ring ditch or square barrow (fig 82). Again, the limits of the void are defined by linear ditched boundaries, on the south by the Great Wold Dyke, which is respected by extensive systems of enclosed settlements and trackways. On its northern boundary is a unique system of long sweeping multiple ditches which must have created a significant barrier between the open area and the settled valley-side to the north. Incorporated into this system are a number of double ditches, which appear to link the open area to sites known from AP further down the slope. It has been interpreted as a massive system of pasture management, regulating access between settlements and open pasture (Stoertz 1997). Significantly, all three areas mentioned are also used as open pasture in the Middle Ages (chapter 7).

The oldest features of this cropmark landscape are clearly the longer distance linear earthworks and trackways and all seem to retain some significance into the Iron Age and Romano-British. None of them appear to have been deliberately slighted by the late Iron Age or Romano-British system of land division or settlement. In many cases, they have been incorporated into the new scheme, with lengths of ditch leading up to and respecting them. Their presence, as part of a new enclosure, or proximity to a fresh ditch, must have lent some symbolic weight or perhaps legitimation to the newly created land divisions. The oldest boundaries and

tracks remained the main ordering components of this landscape, defining large areas of land which were often treated and occupied in a different way on either side of the boundary.

REVOLUTION BEFORE THE CONQUEST?

There is little support for the idea that the Roman conquest brought with it any real obvious transformation in the settlement patterns of the Wolds. Ramm's suggestion that the rectilinear enclosures, known from aerial photography, were largely the result of an official Roman policy of farming out retired veteran soldiers onto newly conquered land is no longer tenable (Dent 1983b). Dent states that, "*..very few late Iron Age settlements show any indication of abandonment with the arrival of Roman rule.*" (Dent 1995:88). The vast majority of early Romano-British settlements have origins in the pre-conquest period, indicating a gradual absorption of Romanised lifestyles and material culture on the part of the local communities, without any recognisable rupture in the settled landscape. The ubiquitous ladder settlements occupy a chronological span, which straddles the conquest period and, as a settlement type, have their origins very much in the later Iron Age.

Millett regards the low profile of official Roman presence in this area as an example of the Romanization of the native population and existing power structures, through 'laissez-faire' incorporation (1990b). In this way, the existing settlement pattern and decentralised distribution of power was retained, the forts merely acting as staging posts on the road towards York and the more 'troublesome' Brigantes (ibid.). However, it is difficult to know whether this was so, as we have no idea where the power centres within Iron Age society were located. The level of Romanization, in the early centuries of occupation is low compared to other regions to the south. Little alteration to the settlement pattern is suggested by the continuity evident at many sites. Furthermore, it is not until the 3rd or 4th century that the most developed expressions of Romanization occur. The elite families who chose to express and display their wealth in architectural and artistic form did not do so until at least 200 years after the conquest. If the

conquest did not bring with it any significant change then we should look to the period immediately preceding it, between 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD.

It is a well known feature of the Iron Age of southern and eastern England that great transformations seem to have taken place in the 2 centuries prior to the Roman conquest (i.e. Cunliffe 1991; Haselgrove 1982;1984b;1989). These are most clearly visible in the archaeological record of the south-east, where the increasing economic and political links to the Roman world have been seen as part of the reason for the great social and political transformations. Archaeologically, these are visible as the appearance of oppida, an increase in trade with the continent, an elite burial rite involving imported goods and the importation and minting of coinage. In terms of settlement, however, they are generally perceived as a prelude to the even greater changes that are heralded by the Roman annexation. If that is the case in the south, it does not seem to be so in the Wolds and in East Yorkshire, where changes to the landscape in the later Iron Age would appear to have been more significant than anything attributable to the Roman influence. They do not however take the same form as contemporary developments in the south.

Haselgrove, in a summary of the evidence, has identified changes in the settlement pattern of lowland northern England during the later Iron Age (1984a). On the Magnesian Limestone belt of West Yorkshire, the appearance of late Iron Age enclosed settlements mirrors that in East Yorkshire, but in County Durham and Northumberland, small rectilinear enclosed settlements are known from a much earlier period. He suggests that, around the late 2nd century BC, there begins a general trend in the north-east of England for an expansion of settlement, from long settled areas of light soils, like the Wolds, onto the heavier soils of the surrounding vales. He argues that these changes are encouraged by improved agricultural technology and new crop types, suited to these, previously uncultivated, soils and are mirrored across much of Yorkshire and lowland County Durham. Van der veen's work, north of the Tees, has clearly shown that the changes in settlement here, are associated with agricultural change and a move toward increasingly intensive arable agriculture (Van der Veen 1992).

The connection, through trade links and political alliance, with the political and social transformations going on in the south, are seen by Haselgrove as the main reasons behind the changes in the northern lowland areas. The large enclosed late Iron Age site at Stanwick appears to have acted as the northern equivalent of the southern oppida, rooted in ideas of political and economic centralisation (Haselgrove et al 1990). Incidentally, the absence of similar sites in East Yorkshire remains curiously unexplained as this area is often seen as one of the most important political and economic centres in late prehistoric northern England (i.e. Higham 1987). However, the recently excavated site on the Humber foreshore at Redcliff may have acted as a trading settlement of some size, in the immediate pre-conquest period (Crowther et al 1988;1990).

Haselgrove's scheme, that settlement expanded from light soils to heavier ones, is problematic (1984). It is a generalised theory, applied uniformly across the northern lowlands, and indeed the south, and seems to take little consideration of local peculiarities. Furthermore, his explanations for change are almost totally driven by economic efficiency and assume an unending progressive drive for expansion, once the appropriate technology becomes available. For our area, his ideas are founded on the basic assumption that settlement prior to the later Iron Age, mirroring the distribution of cemeteries, was concentrated on the Wolds, something which we can no longer accept without question (see above). In any case, the integration of upland and lowland resources would have been crucial to the East Yorkshire Iron Age economy, so that we shouldn't talk about certain areas as being unexploited.

Dent's excavations at Wetwang were the starting point for a series of articles which set the changes at the site within the wider regional context (1982;1983a). In these, Dent argues that the increased enclosure of the landscape at Wetwang, in association with the end of the square barrow burial rite and the appearance of ditched settlements, marked a significant threshold of change in the late Iron Age landscape. Bevan has more recently traced these long term threads of change on the Wolds and further highlighted the importance of the later Iron Age developments (1997). He emphasises the changing form of expression for community identity that they may have represented.

Judging from the Wetwang evidence, the increasing tendency for enclosure is not a sudden occurrence, but something that took place gradually with growing intensity over a 200 year period (fig 71-2 and 76-7). The initial creation of a 'centralised nucleated settlement' in the centre of the large 2 sq.km. enclosure took place in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, with subsequent reduction in the area of burial mounds during the late 2nd or early 1st century. It is during the 1st century BC that most of the other large cemeteries are abandoned, and around the same time, a large number of ditched ladder settlements are founded. On the whole, these sites originate after the abandonment of square barrows as many actually overlie former cemeteries. Dent sees there being an "*acceleration of social change*" during the 1st century BC marking the "*end of an era*" in archaeological terms (1983b). The changes are seen to have continued apace into the 1st century AD when further examples of ladder settlements are known.

The radical character of the changes on the wolds is appreciated by both Dent and Bevan, "*It must now be accepted from the number of such enclosures and from the excavated evidence for their date that settlement underwent a considerable change in the last century of the Iron Age.*" (Dent 1983b:35) and "*The enclosure of Wetwang/Garton Slack during the later Iron Age was part of a greater movement of settlement enclosure across the wolds...*" (Bevan 1997:188). It would be very difficult to argue that the changes in burial rite were not related to these changes in settlement, in some way. Dent suggests that the two are caused primarily by a rise in population and increased pressure on land, which intensified during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, forcing communities to physically demarcate land and use that which was available more sparingly (1982). He also argues for an increasingly aggressive atmosphere, in the face of such competition, evident through the rise in weapon graves and appearance of chalk 'warrior' figurines (1983b).

Bevan's discussion of the same evidence, does not seek to explain these changes in terms of economic forces or increasing warfare. Instead, he stresses the role played by the cemeteries and the ditched settlements in affirming community identity and fixing that community in the landscape (1997). The change from visible cemetery to demarcated settlement is described as, "*a shift in the signification of communities in the landscape from the places of the dead back to those of the*

living.” (Bevan 1997:189). In describing developments in this way, Bevan gets inside the changes, but he doesn’t get behind them, by offering an explanation.

The transformations in the later Iron Age landscape of the Wolds were radical and probably much stronger than is suggested by the statement, “*During the first millennium BC, the Wolds became a progressively more enclosed and spatially organised landscape.*” (Bevan 1997:189). The changes may have taken effect over as little as 150 years, during which time settlement sites became enclosed with ditches and, in many cases, the existing open collections of roundhouses were probably abandoned. At the same time, the cemeteries housing the ancestral dead were no longer used for burial and lost their role as the physical representation of community presence. The land surrounding these settlements was also enclosed with ditches, often aligning on and respecting the longer distance divisions, already present in the landscape.

It would be over-simplistic to define a series of specific horizons of change, between which the landscape remained unaltered. Transformations are ongoing, through the continual negotiation and re-negotiation of social roles and relationships, and articulated by, and expressed through, physical action in the landscape. Certain periods, however, are times when these landscape changes become accelerated. Social tension may gradually build up, change may take place in a gradual invisible way until its physical implications are felt and become part of the archaeological record. There had been gradual change in the Iron Age landscape, but it is hard to identify and trace, because of the overwhelming bias of funerary evidence. Both Stead and Dent, however, do agree that early barrows are often larger and more isolated and that the large cemeteries are a late phenomenon. Dent has also shown, at Wetwang, that the late stages of the cemetery are more tightly packed. If these changes can be related to the development of the integrity of community and progress towards a more integrated community group (Bevan 1997), then we could see, in these changes, the origins of the social circumstances behind the radical changes in community expression, witnessed during the later Iron Age. These latter developments would then represent, not only an acceleration of an ongoing process, but a substantive change in the relationship between community and landscape. At another level, of course, the changes actually began

in the later Bronze Age, when the initial long distance land divisions were made. It should have become clear by now that these were very different from the kind of land division, characteristic of the later Iron Age.

It is important to identify, not only the time and rate of change but also its character. If we saw these changes in the later Iron Age, as mainly concerned with land division, it would be possible to argue that they represent the acceleration of an ongoing process. One which began centuries earlier in the later Bronze Age, with the initial enclosure and division of large areas of the Wolds. In these terms, the later Iron Age may have witnessed the final management and allotment of land, at the level of the local settlement, where as the long distance linears were concerned with dividing the lands of larger neighbouring communities, one from another. The respect given to the earlier boundaries, throughout this period would support this view. However, it has been stressed above that the transformations of the later Iron Ages are radical and appear to have had wider implications. They may actually represent more far reaching alterations in society and economy.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Settlement patterns and land division

We have discussed the evidence for changes in the structure of the Wolds landscape during the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. In order to achieve an understanding which is both deep and broad this has operated at a number of scales; from the generalised distribution of settlement within the Wolds, and around its fringes, through the interaction between individual valleys and their adjacent wold tops to the changing role played by a specific monument or linear earthwork. Rarely, is the resolution of the evidence precise enough for us to present specific and detailed site histories. Most of the time, therefore, we have to deal with generalisations as to the overriding character of the landscape, at any one time, as well as the rate and scale of change. It is important that we do not seek to study and describe the changes in the layout of the landscape without discussion of their relationship to society. These patterns are not worthy of study in their own right and are only valuable because of the intimate and sensitive relationship they have with the communities and individuals who created them. The agricultural practice of these people has an obvious link to the configuration of ditches, enclosures, fields and settlements. As we reconstruct the structure of the Wolds landscape and trace the trajectories of change it is important to think about how these changing patterns might reflect the changing social and cultural world of the Wolds communities. For this reason, we will first summarise the findings regarding the changing structure of the landscape and then set these descriptive conclusions within a more explanatory framework. Here, special attention will be paid to the character of the community and its relationship with land-use practice and the past within the local landscape.

We have seen how the character and visibility of the archaeological evidence, changes dramatically in the later Iron Age, beginning probably around the later 2nd and 1st centuries BC. The large amount of funerary sites from before this date contrasts with the increase in settlement sites following it. Faced with this gross imbalance in the nature of evidence it is difficult to draw out consistent long term

patterns. However, it is precisely the change in archaeology which requires explanation, as it signifies a dramatic alteration in the physical inscription of social relationships on the landscape. As in other areas, the last century and a half of the first millennium BC seems to have been a period of remarkable change in the landscape, and these changes are one of the big stories of the chapter. Even though long distance ditches and banks had divided up the Wolds into large blocks of land centuries earlier, it was not until the late Iron Age that further infill land division took place and then apparently on a wide scale. On the Wolds, many of the once open areas, between the later Bronze Age dykes, were divided up, in this period. On the other hand, some of these open spaces were not divided, and were instead respected by the Later Iron Age and Romano-British settlements. Double-ditched trackways also appear as part of this landscape. Many of these are likely to have existed for some time already, but as unmarked ways, often over long distances. The marking with ditches of these routes, whose course may always have been known and taken for granted is a significant indication of the character of change generally. It is not necessarily about the imposition of new boundaries and enclosures onto unclaimed land but the increased need to physically demarcate lines in the landscape that have been in existence for some time. These may have always been respected and acknowledged, as boundaries between different community areas, without the need for a permanent physical reminder of this role. In this way, the need for these ditches, often dug at local levels and over short distances, says more perhaps about the social relationships between neighbouring groups than it does about changing agricultural practice, or the need to keep livestock away from crops, for instance. An informal open landscape of trackways gives way to one of boundaries, formally fixing rights and claims to land.

In amongst this explosion of evidence for the obsession with the physical and visible definition of land was the appearance of a new form of settlement. Many ditched trackways were lined with contiguous ditched enclosures at this time. Some of these sites probably acted as settlements, whilst others may have had only agricultural functions, such as enclosures for stock, to organise and cope with increasingly intensive agricultural regimes. Some remained in use for several centuries into the period of Roman occupation, by which time they had increased in

size and strung out along the axial lane. Others did not develop as far, and became abandoned after 100 years or so.

The dramatic appearance of the ladder sites and the renewed practice of ditch digging focuses the mind on this period, as a time of change. By doing so it forces us to think about the earlier landscape of the early and middle Iron Age. Here we have little to go on, except for the cemeteries, and we have discussed at length the many problems surrounding ideas about where the associated settlements were located. There are very few stretches of linear ditch known to have been dug during the currency of the cemeteries. Those that were, are part of the beginning of the later Iron Age move towards greater division and demarcation of land. The openness of the settlements at this time and the lack of concern with further land division, gives the impression of a landscape whose resources are not up for competition. The groups and communities inhabiting the area, do not have recourse to the digging of ditches for the definition of claims to specified areas of land and must have relied upon alternative media as a means of negotiation. These may well have involved the location of cemeteries, as a visible physical presence of the dead members of a community, which may have affirmed the rights of the living community over adjacent pieces of ground. As noted above, the Wolds landscape at the time was probably crossed by rambling trackways, often located on ridges, which could have been adopted as boundaries if needed. The extensive network of later Bronze Age linear earthworks were clearly present in this landscape, but it is not clear how much they were respected as boundaries, during this period. Contrary to a number of recent discussions, cemeteries and barrows are only rarely placed alongside the old boundaries. Most have a stronger tendency to lie close to trackways and more generalised routes of movement, or else, in their later stages of development, alongside short length ditches of recent creation. All this reinforces the sense of the open, unenclosed character of the Wolds landscape, contemporary with the square barrow burial tradition.

Discussion has also been concerned with an understanding of the location and distribution of settlement sites, contemporary with the Arras cemeteries. The evidence for settlements, before the later Iron Age enclosures, is virtually non-existent, probably because these unenclosed settlements do not show up as

cropmarks on aerial photographs. That said, despite the intensity of archaeological excavations on the Wolds around cemeteries, only one contemporary settlement has shown up, at Wetwang. We should not assume that this was the usual pattern and that cemeteries usually lay alongside or close to the settlement of their associated community. These assumptions arise from the long held view that the Wolds has always been the centre of settlement throughout prehistory because of its wealth of archaeological sites. Most of these are funerary, and it is becoming clear that the wold margins and surrounding vales were equally important for settlement, if not more so, than the interior of the Wolds. Therefore, it is suggested that much of the Iron Age settlement pattern may actually have lain away from the cemeteries, whose distribution in any case is restricted to certain special areas, in the main valleys of the eastern wolds dip-slope. In this way, the burial of the dead members of these communities may have involved a journey to the community cemetery from the home settlement. In fact, in the kind of dispersed settlement pattern which was likely, the cemetery may have represented one of the few centralising places, where all members of that community could come together. The sense of belonging to the cemetery and its ancestors would have been reinforced by their position alongside trackways, used by the community to travel between the Wolds and the settled lands, as part of the agricultural cycle.

The importance of these cemeteries for community expression is outlined by Bevan, who writes, "*The visible marking of the dead in the square barrow cemeteries stressed community identity, linked that community with a geographic location, and could have made a connection with resources believed to be important to the reproduction of the group.*" (Bevan 1999:87). The presence of a number of different kin groups, in each, has been suggested by Parker-Pearson, who shows that clustering of graves in cemeteries may have reinforced the identity of these kin groups within the wider community. These kin groups may of course have shared a common settlement or farmstead, separate to the other members of the wider group who share the cemetery. With the community dispersed across the landscape in life, the role of the cemetery, as a centralised symbol of community bonds, around a group of common ancestors, becomes even more important.

Bevan also referred to the regular movement of people passing by the cemetery and barrows, going about their daily business of work in the fields, herding livestock or fetching water. This repeated action, he sees, as continually re-affirming the presence of the past in their everyday world and that the community was given an ancient legitimacy through association with the cemetery. A daily engagement with the communal cemetery would obviously require it to be located close to the settlement. However, under the scenario painted above, repeated but occasional journeys, passing by the cemeteries, could still have been made, but on a less frequent basis. The fact that the cemeteries tend to lie along routes of movement is important here, especially as the main concentrations are along the floor of the main valleys on the eastern dip-slope. These give access between the flatlands of the Hull Valley and Holderness and the interior of the Wolds.

There undoubtedly was settlement on the slopes of the broad valley at Wetwang Slack, strung out along the trackway here during the middle Iron Age. It may well be though that the majority of settlements lay to the east of this, on the edge of the Wolds, and not in the interior. The changes of the later Iron Age, therefore, involve an explosive century or so when the formerly open landscape was enclosed, at an ever more localised scale. The foundations of these changes had been laid in the later Bronze Age, when large areas of land were defined and divided. These extensive areas were not internally organised, though, until the later Iron Age. Coupled with an increased concern with digging ditches, these changes also seem to have involved an expansion of settlement onto the Wolds from the formerly settled areas, namely the major valleys and the Wold edge. Dent would argue that it is these areas that first witness the appearance of enclosed settlements in the 2nd century BC. The majority of the upland Wolds is seen by Dent as, "*land which had hitherto been avoided*" (Dent 1995:97) and that enclosed settlements found here "*represent the final expansion into the high Wolds.*" (ibid.). In several cases in the area between Huggate and Elmswell, late Iron Age or Romano-British ladder sites seem to occupy units of land already defined by linears, probably in the later Bronze Age. In other cases, these open spaces were respected and remained open. Thus the expansion of settlement from the Wold-edge and larger valleys onto

higher ground was not a ubiquitous phenomenon, but one that is nonetheless visible over the longer term.

Certainly, when the distribution map of Romano-British settlements and finds is compared with that for the Iron Age, then this contrast is clear. Hayfield's work at Wharram also shows up evidence for an Romano-British settlement pattern, which is far more dense than is suggested by the traces of its Iron Age predecessor (1987). As well as the density of settlement, there is much more information about settlements with different status in the Romano-British period, suggesting that an elite class was displaying its wealth in architectural form. The villas reached full maturity in terms of lavish opulence and economic intensification towards the end of the Romano-British period. They may have occupied discrete territories surrounded by marked and recognised boundaries which acted as agricultural estates. Little however is known of the settlements, in this area, which housed the humble majority of society.

Sheep farmers of the Wolds unite

The understanding of Iron Age agriculture in Britain has developed greatly over the last 25 years, helped particularly by the advancement in environmental sampling techniques on excavations (e.g. Jones 1981;1985;1989). The traditional view derived from Cyril Fox's *The Personality of Britain*, saw a sharp economic divide between highland and lowland Britain (Haselgrove 1989; Millett 1990b). Piggott, partly influenced by Caesar's descriptions of the interior of Britain as wooded and wild, sought to portray the northern British Iron Age as an expanse of ranching lands, peopled by nomadic pastoralists (Piggott 1958). This image was in sharp contrast to the south and east, where excavated evidence for crop cultivation and animal husbandry suggested a more stable settled population, practising a mixed economy. Over the last 20 years, excavations in the north at sites like Thorpe Thewles and Stanwick have overturned this idea demonstrating that extensive arable regimes were in play by the later Iron Age (Heslop 1987; van Der Veen 1991). Here, excavations have revealed deposits of carbonised grain, grain storage pits and rotary querns, just as in the south. Furthermore, pollen diagrams in the

north-east indicate the presence of cereal production, on a large scale, by the Roman Conquest, and many of the field systems from South Yorkshire and the Pennines were probably laid out during the later Iron Age. As noted above, there is strong evidence, throughout north-eastern England, for the intensification of agricultural production in the two centuries before the conquest. Haselgrove brings together the evidence for these economic changes and writes, "*In Jones' survey of agricultural developments, the late Iron Age emerges as a more significant period of change than those immediately before or afterwards*" (Haselgrove 1989:2). He points to the introduction of new crop types, iron technology for the tipping of ard-shares, the balanced sickle and the beehive quern as technological innovations which made this expansion of agricultural production possible. This he argues involved the cultivation of heavy clay soils, which hitherto had not been used for arable (1984a). As well as an intensification of arable production, there may have been increasing specialisation in pastoral regimes, as is suggested by the evidence from Wessex, where the faunal assemblages on some sites are dominated by either cattle or sheep (Grant 1989). Likewise, Jones' study of the grain assemblages, from sites in the Thames valley, indicates the pastoral or arable specialisation of some sites, dependent on each other to provide resources they did not produce themselves (Jones 1985).

For the Wolds, it is much more difficult to be specific about the character of the Iron Age agricultural economy. Unlike the north-east, there are few natural deposits bearing pollen and so few diagrams exist, from which we can reconstruct a generalised environmental picture (van der Noort and Ellis 1993). The calcareous soils of the Wolds do not favour the preservation of organic remains, but do allow for the preservation of animal bones. This can lead to a false impression of the greater importance of livestock over crop cultivation, within the agricultural economy. Most crucially though, we have no Iron Age settlement site that has produced large amounts of carbonised grain, from which to reconstruct the character or scale of arable practice.

The early Iron Age enclosure at Staple Howe was excavated in the days before environmental sampling was automatically adopted on excavations, but nonetheless did produce an amount of club wheat (Brewster 1963). Four post structures here,

have also been interpreted as granaries and clearly the processing of crops was going on at the site. Nonetheless, it is the animal bone assemblages that are emphasised in this period, with Grimthorpe and Staple Howe both containing a larger proportion of cattle. At Grimthorpe, the overwintering of cattle, suggested by the kill-off patterning, implies that a reliable source of fodder was available (Stead 1968). Challis and Harding have suggested that a largely pastoral economy on the Wolds, at this time, became gradually more intensive and mixed by the middle or later Iron Age (1975).

The results of the excavations from Wetwang and Garton must await their full publication, but certain aspects of the associated agricultural economy are evident. At Garton Slack, Brewster did uncover pits which may have been used for grain storage and at Wetwang, the four post structures have again been interpreted as above-ground granaries. Few other indications of arable activity are forthcoming from this site, however. In contrast to the cattle dominance of the earlier Iron Age enclosures, middle and later Iron Age sites show a marked preference for sheep. The animal bone assemblage from Garton is repeatedly dominated by sheep and goats, a feature which is consistent throughout its history of occupation (Brewster 1981; Haselgrove 1984a). Likewise, the excavations at Rillington, on the northern edge of the Wolds, also suggested a predominance of sheep in the herding regimes associated with this site. Similarly, the bone assemblages from Rudston, in the Romano-British period also favour sheep over cattle (Haselgrove 1984a).

The evidence from the Wolds remains entirely inadequate to say very much about agricultural practice and emphasis. However, the recurrent dominance of sheep in several Iron Age sites is significant. The dry soils of the Wolds are clearly more suited to the grazing of sheep than cattle. The latter require regular access to water for drinking and would be better suited to the low-lying ground on the surrounding vales. For most of the Iron Age, Haselgrove seems to support the idea that sheep were grazed in large numbers on the Wolds when he writes "*their prevalence (i.e. of sheep) at sites on or near the Wolds from an early date reflects the unsuitability of the local environment for arable cultivation*" (Haselgrove 1984a:18). He adds, "*One area which deviates from this pattern (cattle dominance) in the earlier Iron Age is the Wolds, with its extensive open settlement*

in the dry valleys and dominance of sheep in the Garton Slack faunal assemblage, suggesting the use of the Wold tops for large scale grazing" (Haselgrove 1984a:17). Whilst the infrequency of evidence for crop cultivation should never be taken at face value in these archaeological conditions, the signs from the Wolds are that large areas of the higher ground were being used for sheep grazing during the early and middle Iron Age. The open character of the landscape at this time and the presence of long distance trackways would support this interpretation, as it would allow large flocks of sheep to graze freely, within areas defined by the long distance dykes laid out originally during the later Bronze Age.

The large scale herding of sheep occurs frequently in the anthropological literature but rarely are such practices addressed in the archaeological record. One recent exception is the work of Francis Pryor at Fengate who has re-interpreted some of the enclosure groups found there, in the light of his experience as a sheep farmer (Pryor 1996). He recognised, in the arrangements of enclosure-groups, at the 2 sites of Newark Road and Storeys Bar Road, familiar patterns of holding pens and droveways. Their scale seemed suited to the handling of very large numbers of sheep and they may have served as community stockyards where large flocks were counted, sorted or exchanged on a seasonal basis. The sites lay along the predicted route between areas of summer and winter grazing and would have provided the context for seasonal social gatherings as well. He recognises that other sites in lowland England may also have been designed for large scale sheep grazing and suggests that we may have seriously under-estimated the size of flocks and scale of organisation of herding in prehistory. "*...extensive field systems and large scale land divisions.... show a scale of operation for which a better modelis the large scale sheep-farming of medieval and even of modern farming where flocks run from hundreds into thousands.*" (Pryor 1996:314).

There are two important implications of the large scale grazing of large flocks of sheep, raised by his discussion. Firstly, that the flock represents the individual stock holdings of a large group of people and therefore is an operation that must be organised at the level of the community, rather than the household or local kin group. Secondly, that it normally requires the seasonal movement of flocks between summer and winter pastures. As Pryor has shown this might involve

seasonal gatherings of both people and sheep where animals are perhaps claimed or exchanged. This kind of transhumance has been suggested for the upland pastures of Dartmoor in the Bronze Age by Andrew Fleming (1988). It is also something known for the Middle Ages, in the north of England, where herds of cattle and flocks of sheep moved seasonally over great distances to take advantage of the full annual range of available pasture, according to the growing seasons of the herbage (McDonnell 1989). These movements were repeated each year along the same routes between summer pasture in the uplands and winter grazing in the lower lands, the latter probably close to the home settlement. They formed connections between herders and their pasture areas and linkages between low-lying settlements and distant but discrete territories. It is argued that herein lies the phenomenon of townships with distant detached portions which are often recorded as late as the 19th century (Michelmore 1979; Fleming 1998). This is an illustration of the emergence, in a system of transhumance, of rights to certain pastures located at a distance from the home settlements or territories, of the group or community involved. By repeatedly using these pastures, the rights of the herders become stronger each year resulting eventually in a legally formalised acknowledgement of their right.

In a prehistoric context, the rights of communities over distant areas of pasture are much more difficult to recognise. In the anthropological literature, much discussion is given over to the territorial patterns of pastoralist groups who have wide jurisdiction over extensive open pastures (e.g. Casimir and Rao 1991). This is often recognised at a tribal scale in arid lands and amongst groups who are entirely nomadic. Casimir has discussed the wider question of rights to pasture amongst groups throughout the world and has recognised that they “*punctuate a continuum which runs between one end at which there are no individually recognised rights and another end with inter-generationally transmitted rights of pasture ownership*” (Casimir 1991). At the one end of the scale lies the loose and flexible rights of the Bedouin nomads over large areas of desert and on the other the restricted stunted pasture rights of a Medieval English township community, nonetheless communally held. A key distinction he makes is between areas of

pasture shared between groups on the basis of tribal or kin-based affiliation and those which are specific zones of pasture attached to a home settlement (ibid.).

What we seem to have on the Wolds are large discrete areas of pasture located at a distance from the main area of settlement whose soils are ideally suited for sheep. This would not suggest the freedom for herders to wander aimlessly around the Wolds, because the areas are well defined and structured by long distance dykes and tracks. Nor indeed, would it suggest the apportionment of these areas into household-based units, as small scale land division does not appear until the later Iron Age. Instead, we are probably dealing with large pastures which have become associated with a particular community grouping. The members of this community, who are likely to be settled in dispersed locations on the edge of the Wolds, may each own sheep which are grazed together in the pasture, detached and at a distance from the settled area. Therefore this practice would involve the seasonal movement of large flocks between the Wold-edge and the higher ground of the Wold interior, along prescribed routes of movement. These probably ran along the valley floors or else along the linear ditches which marked the boundaries of the large areas of pasture. In fact, it is a feature of the history of the linears that they are often treated as both boundary and track.

If settlement lay away from the wold tops and concentrated in the larger valleys and Wold-edge, then it is unlikely that much of the Wold land was cultivated. It seems more likely to have been grazed and this was probably organised on a large scale. Cunliffe has stressed the symbiosis between sheep grazing and large scale arable, with respect to the Wessex chalkland. He has also put forward a seasonal cycle of herding practice which might be useful in understanding the regular movement of sheep between the Wolds and the surrounding flat (probably arable) lands:

“From September until December they could have been turned loose on the stubble without the need for special feeding and from December until March or April, when the pastures began to grow again, straw fodder carted to the fields would have been sufficient to keep them alive. For the remainder of the year, from

April to August, there would have been ample pasture for the flocks to grow fat on in the fields left fallow and in the open downland.” (Cunliffe 1991:380).

The Wolds could have provided good pasturage throughout most of the year. The free-draining soil and lack of surface water would not have suited cattle grazing on any scale. Sheep however would have survived very well here for most of the year. Pryor points out that large flocks could not occupy dry pastures all the year round and would require extensive lower lying wet land during the summer. They may have come down off the Wolds in the late summer (September to December) and turned onto recently cut hay fields or allowed to graze the post-harvest stubble of a cereal crop. This may have involved the splitting up of the community flock into household or settlement based groups so that they could be dispersed around the in-grounds close to the settlements.

Even if the integrity of these communities was not represented by a central focal settlement or even a discrete territory, it did exist when the flocks of sheep came together to be herded up to the pastures (late Autumn or Spring?). As we have seen, the routes of movement that connected the settled areas with the Wold interior, passed by the cemeteries and it may have been these seasonal movements that were the principal arenas for engagement between the members of the community and their centralised group of common ancestors. In the same way, their presence alongside the routes into the Wolds which led to specific pasture areas may have acted as the means of displaying the rights of the living community over the pastures to which the trackways led. The importance of common descent amongst the group which shared the pasture is thus physically represented by the earthen vessels which contain the remains of common ancestors.

The suggestion that the Wolds was largely used for extensive grazing during the Iron Age, by communities who were settled on the Wold-edge and in the larger valleys, should not be seen as turning back the clock to Piggott’s view of nomadic Celtic Cowboys in the northern Iron Age. It is argued here, that this practice was part of a well organised economic system which integrated lowland and upland resources and so, in overview, would be described as a mixed economy. It is only the past tendency to view the Wolds as the focus of settlement that has presumed

the presence of arable cultivation here, if anywhere in East Yorkshire. As Dent has noted, the claylands of Holderness are much more fertile lands for crop cultivation (see above).

The evidence for agricultural change on the Wolds, during the later Iron Age, is scanty and indirect. Haselgrove has argued that here as elsewhere there was a *“restructuring of the arable/pastoral relationship to create larger productive territories.”* and that *“by the end of the Iron Age, arable production had increased greatly in its importance..”* (Haselgrove 1984:17). There is very little direct information for the changes on the Wolds and he tends to impose a generalised model of intensification and expansion uniformly across the north-east of England. In particular, his assumptions about the earlier settlement pattern focusing on the Wolds leads to the idea that later Iron Age expansion involved the colonisation of *“heavier soils beyond the foot of the Wolds permitted by the combination of improved technology and climate and suitable crops.”* (Haselgrove 1984a:19). Agricultural intensification is likely but not proven here and any expansion of settlement that did take place is likely to have moved from the Wold-edge areas onto the Wolds, rather than the other way round. In this way, we see the appearance of ladder sites occupying territories already long defined by linears and previously probably used as pastures. Additionally, Haselgrove has perhaps over-emphasised the economic nature of the late Iron Age changes, as well as over-simplifying the generalised relationship between arable and pastoral strategies. As we have already noted, the increased digging of ditches at a more localised level is probably linked to the need to re-define relationships between the groups who use and claim the land. As new enclosures are created and new land division statements made so the practice of square barrow burial slowly dies out. This may well have implications for the economic practices of these communities which were after all bound up with large scale communal sheep pasturage, itself connected to ideological constructs based around the cemeteries. However the changes are also about alterations in the character of the community and with it the relationship between Wold and Wold-edge, an economic relationship which expressed the integrity of that community. Admittedly the model proposed here is a tentative one

but it does fit the little evidence that is available. It further provides an economic basis which can support the construction of social formations.

The end of the Iron Age community

Most commentators agree that the archaeological evidence from the later Iron Age of southern England points to increasingly hierarchical and centralised forms of social and political organisation. The minting of coinage explicitly linked to named rulers and places is fairly unequivocal in this respect. Large tribal groupings or confederations had emerged in the south by the 1st century BC who were apparently ruled by an elite lineage headed by an individual ruler. It is in these areas that the pace of Romanisation is swift and may even have begun in some social circles before the period of annexation.

In East Yorkshire there are none of the archaeological indicators of these social and political transformations, in the period leading up to the conquest. There are no signs of centralised settlements emerging as foci of elite power and residence, neither is there the local minting of coinage, unlike the neighbouring tribe of the Corieltavi to the south in Lincolnshire. It is only during the period of Roman presence in the south after 43 AD, that the political centre of Stanwick emerges in the Tees Valley to the north-west and the trading station at Redcliff begins the task of articulating trade across the Humber, between the Romanised south and the free north.

Millett has made much of the idea that Roman annexation of Iron Age societies was closely linked to their existing complexity and development. Therefore the proto-state structures of the south were quick to adopt Roman cultural values and practices, whereas less complex societies in the north and west held less demand for the material trappings of Romanisation. For this reason, the level of social and political organisation in East Yorkshire, before the conquest, may well be reflected in the slow pace of Romanisation in East Yorkshire following it. As we saw above, there are no immediate transformations in settlement until around 3rd century when most of the region's villas emerge.

There are few indications in the archaeological record of the later Iron Age which can be interpreted as evidence for social organisation. We have seen from the burial evidence of the 4th-1st century BC, that some social differentiation did exist with certain elite lineages distinguishing themselves from the rest of society. However, these are fairly subtle distinctions and the lack of further overt or domineering expressions of power suggest that stratification was not absolute and that communities were probably fairly small and dispersed. Haselgrove argues for the north-east in general that the strongest social group would have been on a local level, probably the household or extended kin group. He suggests that looser bonds existed to gel these small local groups into wider 'clans' or 'tribes' and belonging was probably based on the notion of common descent (1984a). He adds that these larger communities may have shared ritual practices or gatherings and may have had some common territorial ties. The picture that emerges is a series of loosely integrated tribes across northern England, with no real sense of political centralisation until just before the Conquest. For East Yorkshire, Haselgrove tentatively suggests four or five loose 'tribal' groupings informally associated with territories that included both high Wold land and areas of flat vale.

The Roman civitates were imposed onto this existing political map but may not have directly reflected it. There are hints in the documentary record that a further grouping existed within the civitas of the Parisi known as the *Gabrantovices*, located in the northern Wolds (Ramm 1978). Likewise the Brigantes emerge into history in the 1st century AD, probably as a confederation of the many small and large tribes of northern England, outside of East Yorkshire.

Haselgrove's model for the political implications of the archaeological changes of the later Iron Age is again applied uniformly across the north-east. He sees the increasing enclosure and intensifying organisation of the landscape as evidence of economic change linked to increasing political control and centralisation. "...*the overall trend during the later Iron Age must have been towards the formation of larger corporate groupings as settlement expanded and population rose.*" (Haselgrove 1984a:21). His view of increasing control and interference in economy is based largely on the site of Stanwick and the political and economic role it played. As some areas of the north were in contact with the Roman world, moves

towards political centralisation and more absolute forms of ranking were encouraged. Here, “..the formation of a Brigantian confederation, apparently in treaty with Rome, finds physical expression in the complex site of Stanwick” (Haselgrove 1989:17). In East Yorkshire however there is no such expression visible in the settlement record. Millett has emphasised how the Iron Age system was decentralised here, something which is reflected in the Romano-British settlement pattern (1990a). Urban centres are restricted to the western Wold-edge, along the main communications link with the north. Instead of increasing centralisation in the later Iron Age, all the archaeological evidence points to the increasing independence of local household groups and the possible fragmentation of the larger community.

Hingley’s work on the Iron Age settlements of the Thames Valley suggested that the enclosure of a settlement with a ditch may have symbolised the independent attitude of its inhabitants towards their neighbours (Hingley 1984). In this way, he argues that areas of closely spaced open settlement represented a community of domestic groups who were interdependent. He suggested that the integrity of the wider community may have lain in their communal control of resources which were vital to social reproduction. This could easily have included a shared right to community pastures. The changes in the later Iron Age towards increasing enclosure of land and definition of settlements under this scheme may indicate the increasing independence of local settlements and households and the break up of formerly strong community bonds. As Giles puts it “*The scale and character of agricultural craftwork has thus changed and the household is defined both through its architecture and the labour of its inhabitants in a way that sets it apart from others*” (Giles 1998). Bevan too recognises the same phenomenon when he writes, “*(The boundaries) physically and visually separate the community occupying the settlement from the rest of society*” (Bevan 1997:189). Implicit in both these accounts, dealing specifically with East Yorkshire, is the idea that previous community affiliation between groups of settlements and households gives way in the later Iron Age to more socially independent household groups.

The later Iron Age settlements are marked by enclosing ditches, but they are not physically removed or separate from the neighbouring settlements, in the same way

as the isolated enclosures of the Thames Valley. Instead, the ditches serve to connect many of the settlements to each other as well as providing physical demarcation. In this way, the increasingly complex network of ditches might be emphasising the integrity of individual households but equally displaying their membership of a wider community, involving a neighbourhood group of connected local settlements. This is the model proposed for the Romano-British phases at Wetwang Slack by Hingley, where an enclosed area of land is gradually shared out between settlements located around its edge (see above).

The colonisation of land, previously used as common pasture, would have necessarily jarred the traditional bonds within the community. For it was the sharing of this pasture and the seasonal gatherings related to the herding of flocks that had acted as the regular expression of community identity. With the loss of access to extensive pasturage, alternative arrangements would have had to be made for grazing sheep. It is argued that the increasing social integrity of the household is mirrored by a growing economic localisation, where much of the agricultural practice, previously organised by the community group, was now played out and arranged by the local settlement. This would account in some ways for the increasing need for localised land division as each household or settlement would now be responsible for the integration of arable and pastoral practices close to the domestic hearth. These are economic implications of the break up of a large community, but more significant, perhaps, was the abandonment of the cemeteries. It was these special places that symbolised the community and rooted its existence in a common ancestral past. Any erosion of the respect given to these cemeteries would have been bound up with the fragmentation of the social cohesion they represented. The days of transhumant seasonal wanderings may well have come to an end in this period. But this was not all that was changing.

Changing history

Mel Giles has identified, in the changes of land division and settlement during the later Iron Age, a change in the dealings of people with their past (1998). She emphasises how important the use of past was to a sense of identity in the present. The cemeteries of the middle Iron Age represent an expression of ancestral

homage, often to ancestors as particular people who can be remembered by the oldest members of the living community. The end of the square barrow burial rite changes this, and she sees a shift towards association with a more distant mythical past. This is represented perhaps by the chalk figurines, used in story-telling as representations of a mythic idealised ancestor (Giles 1998). In this process, she observes a shift from the wider ties of an integrated community towards a greater concern with the household and smaller family groups. Where as the earlier references to the past were made at community level, in the cemetery, the new references are made in the household. She relates this to other changes in the scale of agricultural organisation (see above).

As we have seen, the model proposed above also involves the fragmentation of a wider community and an increasing concern with more localised social groups. The changes in the way that people now deal with their past, identified by Giles through artefacts and storytelling, may also be evident in the landscapes of the later Iron Age. As we have observed, the land division schemes of the later Iron Age do tend to affirm the independence of more localised groups. However they also may reinforce the community affiliations that groups of settlements shared by linking them into an interconnected network of ditched trackways and boundaries. Therefore, ditches are not simply acting as divisions but may also be bonding settlements which link their domestic enclosures to a longer distance boundary. The physical marking of these social links may have become more necessary with the break down of some practical aspects of communal life (like common pasturage and associated gatherings).

As settlements were created and divided one from another by ditches, these networks of land division often incorporated the lines of very old linear earthworks into them. Many of these lines had probably been used as boundaries to areas of wold land for a very long time, as they were originally dug during the later Bronze Age. The swathes of land they bounded are suggested as pasture zones in this period, specifically associated with particular communities. In the later Iron Age concentrations of enclosed settlements and other ditches clearly align themselves along the length of old earthworks like the Green Lane or the Great Wold Dyke (fig 82-3). By making reference to them each enclosed settlement could have been

affirming its links to other settlements which also respected this shared ancient boundary. In so doing some of the bonds of community which had become much looser in the contemporary world were re-evoked. The linear earthworks may have become directly associated with this archaic sense of community, made more powerful because of their antiquity and scale compared to the many more recent shorter lengths of ditch in the vicinity.

The elaborate constructions of multiple ditches above Weaverthorpe, were probably constructed during the later Iron Age. They faced the existing ancient boundary of the Great Wold Dyke and may well have made up for their lack of weighty symbolic antiquity through exaggerated monumental scale. Later Iron Age groups were perhaps harking back to a more distant mythic past through the relationship with some of the very ancient features of the landscape, where as their predecessors had concentrated upon a more recent genealogical history with reference to square barrow cemeteries. As ancient relics, the linears have become perhaps even more symbolically powerful now than ever. Their continual presence now close to permanent habitations and fields served as a reminder of this past and the old sense of community belonging which it represented.

There is a period of about 100 years when ditches were being dug and the square barrow rite was in use simultaneously. At this time, people were making reference to both the recent past of the cemeteries and the more mythic past of the linears. If traditional claims to land and access to pastures had been regulated for centuries through the location and use of a cemetery, then the claims and rights expressed by the ditches may have presented an alternative, sometimes conflicting strategy. Claims to appropriate pieces of land were perhaps justified by reference to a past which held more antiquity than did the cemeteries. This past was present in the long stretches of linear earthwork whose origins were so remote that they may have become the subject of mythological tales. Herein would have resided their power.

Gosden and Lock have recently discussed this kind of generation of history through inscription into the landscape (1998). They emphasise the importance of the regular maintenance and cleaning of ditches, as a means of strengthening

people's ties to a known past or, alternatively, changing the nature of attachment to that past. In their case study, a system of ditches act as the physical expression of a 500 year old genealogy and by persistently carrying out ritualised acts of maintenance, the connection between the living and the dead was expressed. In this way, the ditches of the Wolds may have taken on a similar social role during the later Iron Age, a role which had, for centuries previously, been fulfilled by the square barrow cemeteries.

Too many discussion of late Iron Age change are prone to over-generalisation. Cunliffe seems to favour simplistic mono-causal explanations usually involving pompous generalising schemes of environmental change or population rise (1991:523). These are applied uniformly across wide areas. They ignore, not only the growing evidence for regional and local diversity, but also the active role played by people in affecting change for themselves. The changes in this area are not necessarily a question of expansion through rising population of settlements onto the Wolds but a change in the relationship between the Wold-edge and the Wold interior. During the Iron Age, communities were largely found around the Wold-edge and major valleys, exploiting the vast expanses of Wold land for pasture. Their agricultural economy was based on this symmetry, as is the scale of organisation of their communities. The late Iron Age changes may see a breakdown in the integration of these communities and the formation of increasingly localised groups. This would provide a social context for the increase in ditch digging, and the breakdown of the burial rite, something which had previously affirmed the existence of wider community ties. This localisation also corresponded to the expansion of settlement onto lands which had formerly been used as community pastures. Now, each settlement had to organise its own arable and pasture and some groupings did respect the bounded pastures of the earlier age. Others were forced to occupy and settle within these former bounded pastures. Therefore, these changes were as much a social transformation as an economic one.

The problem has ceased to be a question simply of population rise or economic change or other forces beyond the control of local communities. Instead we have to acknowledge the active part played by individuals. In this case the new landscapes come about as people coped with (or deliberately influenced) the break

up of traditional community bonds by expressing their identity in new ways through reference to different pasts. To talk about economic or social change would be anachronistic as the social and economic character of these communities was interdependent. We have shown how, on the Wolds, it is difficult to offer mono-causal explanations which would fit other areas. The social and economic fabric here is unique, each aspect woven into a pattern that is peculiar to local people and conditions. The character of social groups is bound up with agricultural practice and these relationships are inscribed into the landscape. This landscape was already heavy with textured histories which are incorporated into enduring ancestral tradition and practice. The way that people relate to these pasts and manipulate them in the present is crucial to the understanding of the transformation of the landscape and the changing character of the living community.