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CHOPWELL : A PROBLEMATIC DURHAM PLACE-NAME

Janet R. Ellis

'A kind of horse-race in which the second or any succeeding horse had to follow accurately the course of the leader, like a flight of wild geese.'¹

So the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary* defines a wild goose chase. The unwary scholar who enters such a chase in the field of onomastics, however, sometimes finds himself pursuing the erratic tracks of wild horses by mistake. The aim of this paper is to determine which, if any, of the following three interpretations of the toponym Chopwell is the leading horse that he should follow accurately.

The township² and village of Chopwell lie in the triangular-shaped parish of Ryton-on-Tyne, close to the Northumberland border, and detached from the rest of Co. Durham by the course of the river Derwent as it flows down towards the river Tyne. Any signs of prosperity have long since vanished as a consequence of local pit-closures and the fate of the Durham coal-mining industry as a whole, leaving as their residue an isolated self-contained community with a high rate of unemployment. The character of the village is paralleled in the surrounding landscape: to the north and west are bleak moorland ridges and tracts of marshland which are quite unsuitable for cultivation;³ to the south and east stretch the extensive Chopwell Plantations.⁴ The historical forms of Chopwell are as follows:

Cheppwell(e) 1153x1159, 1163x1169, 1240x1248, 1261x1283, 1305x1307, 1313, 1315, 1317 (all mid 14th c.) Newm; 1242(p) Ass; 1316 Pat.
Chapwell(') late 12th c. *MC490*; 1315 (twice) *RPD2*; mid 14th c. NewmI.
Chepwall' 1342 *RPD3*.
Chophill' 1530 *HcBk1*.
Chopwell 1564(p), 1586(p), 1574, 1576(p), 1579 Pat; 1562 *DKR37*; 1569 Wills; 1647 PS.
Choppell 1636x1642 *HcBk1*; 1715 *Pansh*.
Chappell 1686x1687.
Choppwell 1697x1699.
Chopple 1794 *Pansh*.

The second element is OE *wella* 'a spring of water, a stream fed by a spring'.⁵ The 1862 O.S. (6") map clearly shows a stream which runs down the steep hillside on which Chopwell stands (see Map 1). A visit to the area reveals that the main part of the modern village has been built beneath the old site on a flat ledge of dry land (marked by the line A-B on Map 1). The old spring and the section of the stream lying between the two village sites, the old and the new, have been

buried by industrial waste. However, a new spring has re-asserted itself just below the newer buildings (close to point A).⁶

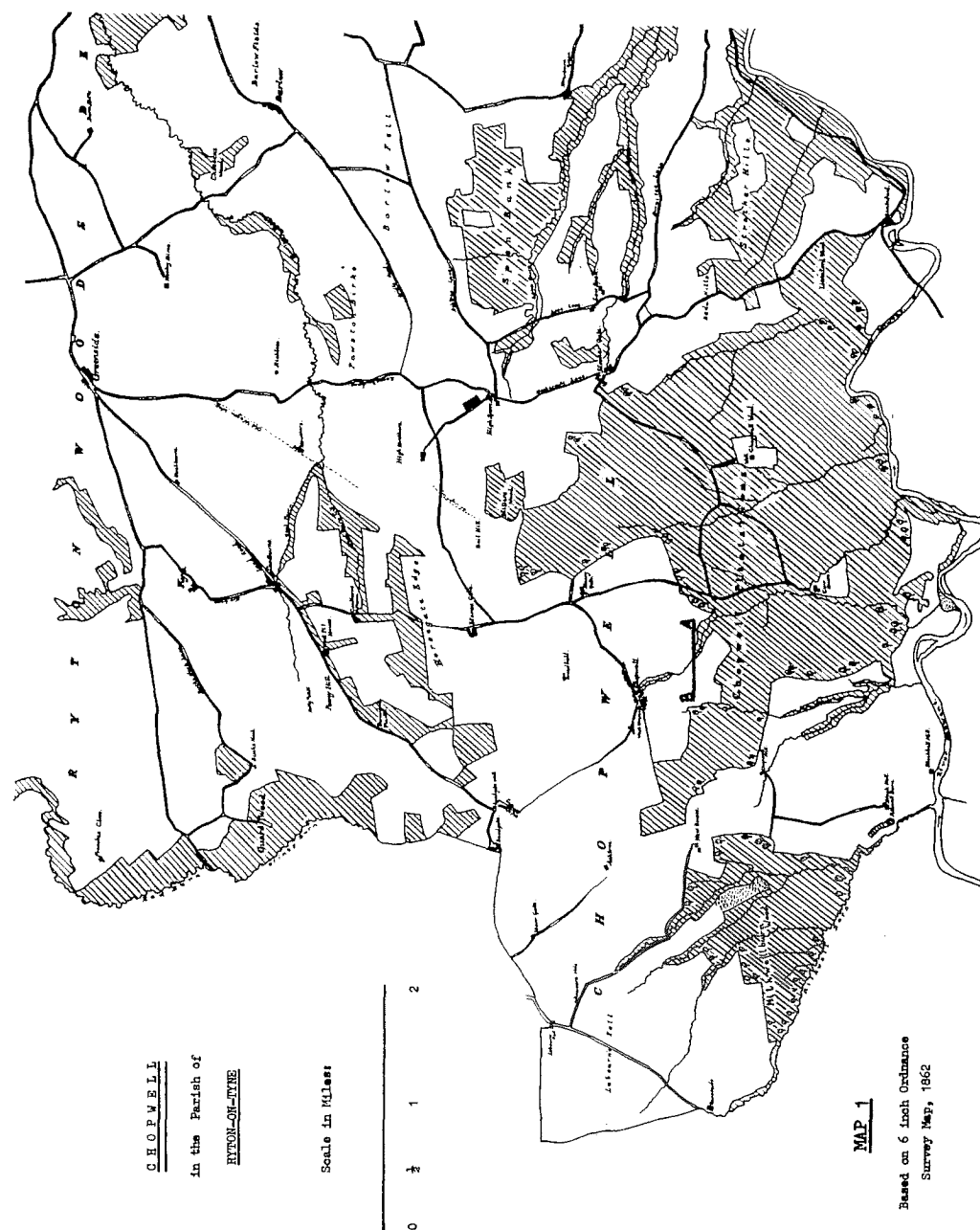
The first element is rather more difficult. In 1920 Mawer suggested, with great confidence and without further comment on the personal name he supplied, that Chopwell was 'Ceappa's well'.⁷ At first glance this seems to be an excellent idea. The double 'p' of the earliest form of the p.n., which recurs in the seventeenth-century spellings, implies that the vowel quality of the first element was short in origin. An OE pers.n. *Ceappa* would contain the required short vowel.

The problem is that there is no trace of such a pers.n. in *PNDB*,⁸ *Redin*,⁹ *OEB*,¹⁰ nor in any of the EPNS volumes. It is only found again in *NbDu* under the entry for Choppington (Nthumb),¹¹ where *Ceapa* would appear to be a variant of an OE pers.n. *Ceabba*,¹² although Mawer does not explain the association. The origin of an OE pers.n. *Ceappa* remains obscure.¹³

A further query is raised by the early 'e' and 'a' spellings in the forms of the p.n. extant in the twelfth century. In the North, Middle English 'e' spellings are normally expected from an element which has an original long vowel quality, for example, $\bar{e}a$ or $\bar{æ}$. The OE $\bar{e}a$, IOE $\bar{æ}$ in an OE pers.n. *Ceappa* would provide only Middle English 'a' spellings.¹⁴

It is more likely that Chopwell is a compound of OE *wella* and OE *cēap* ¹⁵ 'saleable commodities, price, sale, bargain, business, market', corresponding to ON *kaup*; OFris *kāp*; OSax *kōp*. By normal development $\bar{e}a$ in *cēap* becomes 'e' in Middle English orthography, and 'a' if shortening from OE $\bar{e}a$ (to $\bar{e}a$) to IOE $\bar{æ}$ takes place.¹⁶ Thus both ME *chep* and ME *chap* are possible. Indeed, *EDD* ¹⁷ notes that the verb *chap* 'to buy and sell, make a bargain, close with' may be found occasionally as *chep* in the North. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, 'o' spellings proliferate in the p.n., a development which is the inverse of expected patterns in dialect and Standard English.¹⁸ In this case, unless there was a dialect change of /a/ to /o/, the /o/ must be original; thus *chop-well*, associated with *chap-well*, must have been formed in its own right from *chop* rather than *chap*. The verb *chop* 'to exchange, barter'¹⁹ looks like an apophonic variant ²⁰ of *chap* 'to buy and sell', just as *chop* 'to cut with a quick and heavy blow' is of *chap* 'to strike, cause to crack' and *chip* 'to break off small fragments'.²¹

There are no other examples of OE *cēap* compounded with OE *wella*. In 1964 A.H. Smith recorded that the field-name *chep aker* 1286 in Long Marston (Glos.) was one of thirty-three such *chepacres* in the area, 'probably "acres of low



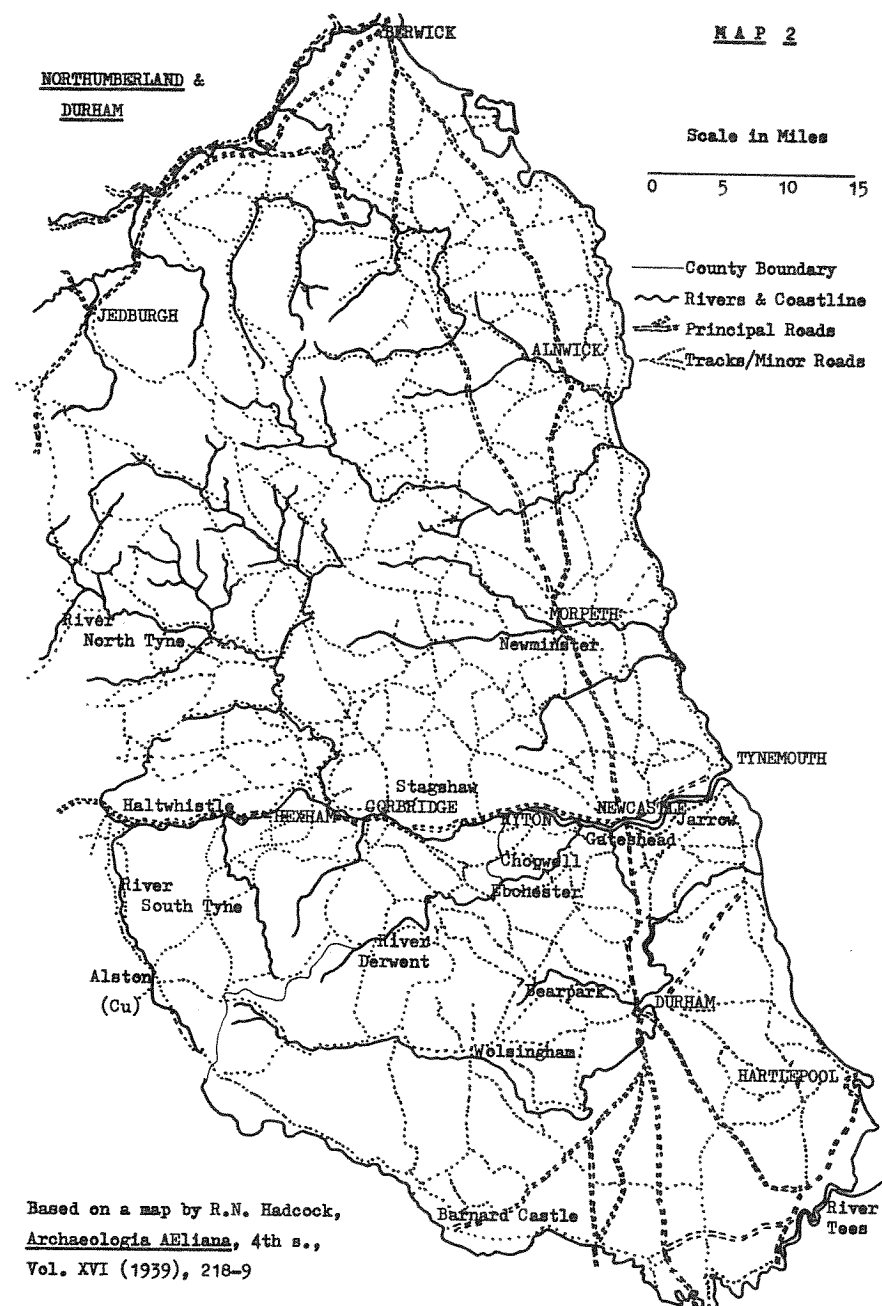
rental".²² This idea is taken up by Dr. Gelling for *cheplond* 1.12th c. in Lambourn (Berks.) and *chep(e)acre* 1519 in Ashbury (Berks.).²³ In addition to Smith's 'of low rental' she suggests 'obtained by bargaining' for OE *cēap*. A similar sense can be found in Chipley (Devon): *Cheplegh* 1333, *Chyplegh* 1505, *Chipleigh* 1597 'woodland clearing which has been bought',²⁴ based on *ceap lond* 'purchased land' in *BCS* 1020 (Sawyer 1527).²⁵ These interpretations may seem plausible for the names cited above, but 'spring of low rental', 'spring obtained by bargaining' and 'spring which has been bought' do not seem to be appropriate for the p.n. Chopwell.

The third explanation was suggested by Ekwall in *DEPN* 26 where he says of Chopwell: 'Perhaps OE *cēap-wella* "spring where commerce took place"?'²⁷ If this is correct, the implication is that medieval Chopwell was a place of some considerable importance in the local area as a centre of trade, in spite of its geographical position.²⁸ The remainder of this paper will outline the historical and toponymic evidence which supports this theory, and will attempt to clarify the connotations of the term 'commerce' in this context.

The mid twelfth-century charter which recorded the initial grant of the lands of Chopwell to Newminster Abbey mentions, in the description of the boundaries thereof, a lost name *Fulscalside* 'land extending along the edge of the dirty shieling',²⁹ which is probably modern Guards Wood (O.S. 114609). Such a name suggests that the abbey was taking possession of an area of land where there was already a well-established practice of shieling economy. The same charter refers to *ledehepes weye*, modern Lead Road (O.S. 159698),³⁰ a track from Corbridge (Nthumb.) which crosses the Northumberland / Durham border at Leadgate (Durham), and then turns north-east towards Greenside and the river Tyne (Map 2). This was probably a drovers' road.³¹ As it runs along the moorland ridge near Leadgate a second medieval track branches off from it towards the east and the farms at Horse Gate and Hooker Gate 'pedlars' road',³² a name which reinforces the idea of trade taking place in the vicinity (Maps 1 and 2). Hooker Gate Farm is situated at the point where the track marks the medieval eastern boundary of Chopwell, and thus where pedlars might enter and leave the area.

In the hands of Newminster Abbey, Chopwell soon became established as an outlying farm of the type favoured by the Cistercian Order. From 1244 (Newm) it was styled *grangia de Cheppwell*, and in the fourteenth century names such as: *Le Escot de Cheppwell*, *Le Estcotlesche*, *le Sto(c)kstall*, *le Tunsteddes*, and *Le Estcroft iuxta le ladgate*,³³ suggest that there was an extensive sheep farm situated a little to the north of Leadgate.

It is significant that pedlars travelling with their wares from Hooker Gate



would find their route converging on a drovers' road close to a shieling, and later a monastic grange, on the top of the hillside above 'cēap-wella'. It would surely be unusual if they did not go down the path (see Map 1) to the flat ledge of dry, sheltered land to trade with each other by the 'spring where commerce took place'. Such meetings might evolve naturally into regular fairs for the buying and selling of livestock and agricultural goods.³⁴ The fact that, by the fourteenth century, trading across the country as a whole was on a scale sufficient to warrant the organization of a regulated market system with rights and privileges granted by the Crown,³⁵ suggests that a great many markets and fairs must have been in existence long before that time. Like the fair at Chopwell, they often do not appear in documentary records because they were simply customary gatherings rather than legal markets.³⁶

In the fourteenth century, the bursarial account rolls of Durham Cathedral Priory show that representatives of the priory were sent almost every year to sell wool at the fair in Boston, and to purchase certain items there. In 1299 they bought goods costing £125 at Boston Fair,³⁷ but in addition to that they spent £120 on livestock, grain, and iron products at local fairs. Livestock, especially cattle, were frequently bought at Stagshaw Bank Fair near Corbridge (Map 2),³⁸ which is only a short distance from Chopwell along the drovers' road *ledehepes weye*. It is probable that a fair existed at Chopwell long before the one at Stagshaw Bank. As traffic on the Haltwhistle to Tynemouth road increased, it would become more important to have a fair situated right next to the main road, and so over a period of time the fair site at Chopwell would gradually have become redundant.

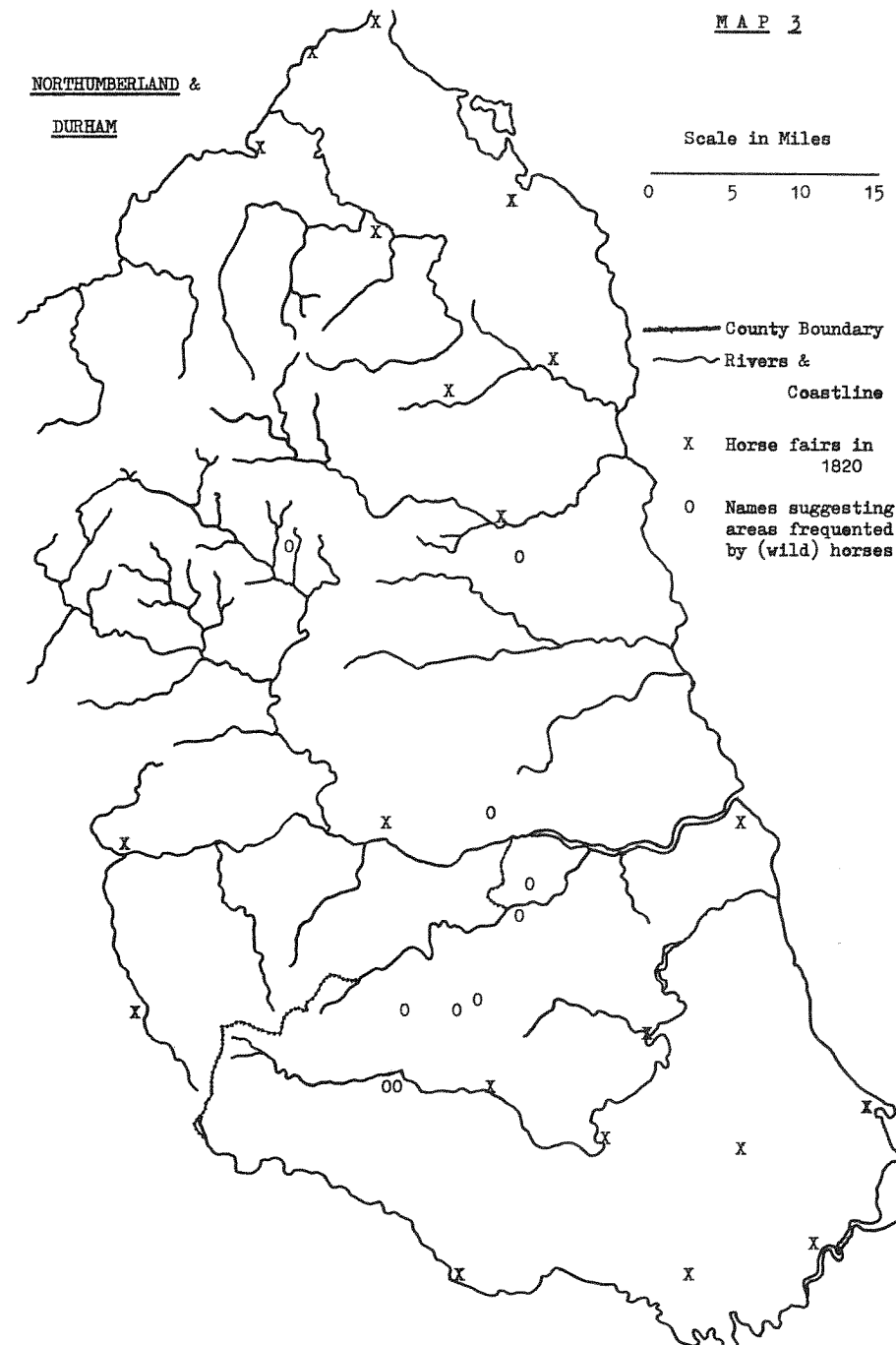
A clue to the reason why the fair might be at Chopwell in the first place lies in the name of the farm just above the village: *Horse Gate* 1685 *Pansh*. This may have been either a road down which wild³⁹ horses were brought from the surrounding moorland (OE hors + ON gata) or a place where they were rounded up and penned before being sold at the fair (OE hors + OE geat).⁴⁰ Other 'horse' names in County Durham are:

(a) Containing the element OE hors 'a horse':

Horsleyburn (O.S. 9637-9738) *Horsleyburnfeld* 1382 Hatf, 'field by the stream in the clearing frequented by horses';

Horsley Head (O.S. 9637) 1647 PS, 'head of the clearing frequented by horses';

Horsleyhope (O.S. 0647) *Horslehope* c.1190 FPD, 'valley of clearing frequented by horses'. Nearby are *Horsleyhopburn* c.1260 Pont, 'Horsleyhope stream', and the minor names *horsleyhopeleys* 1460, *horslebernlezs* 1437 *Mugg Acc*.



(b) Containing ON *hestr* 'a horse, stallion':

Hisehope (O.S. 0146) *Histeshope* 1153x1195 FPD, 'valley frequented by horses';

Hisehope Burn (O.S. 0347) *Hystleyhopburn* c.1260 Pont, 'stream in the clearing and valley frequented by horses';

Histlihalch 1153x1159 Newm, a lost name, 'meadow of the clearing frequented by horses'. This probably lies in the alluvial lands by the Derwent.

When these names are plotted on an area map of Co. Durham (see Map 3) a pattern emerges: all the points lie relatively close together on a marked curve, suggesting that this moorland region was indeed inhabited by fell ponies that were penned and sold at Chopwell Fair.⁴¹ They may also have been an important factor when the bursar of Durham Priory set up a stud farm at Bearpark in the mid fourteenth century, producing colts for sale in local fairs.

The final piece of evidence which reinforces the idea of a fair at Chopwell where horses were sold lies in the fact that the majority of the quotations used to illustrate the meaning of *chap* and *chop* are associated with the buying and selling of horses:

(1) *EDD chop* 'to exchange, barter':⁴²

'He *chopped* his graay mare away at Scotter Shaw for a blind hoss' (Lincs.);

'I *chopped* horses with him' (Norfolk);

'Wur-s buy dhik au's? -Aay ded-n buy un - aay ad-n een u *chap*.' (Som.).

(2) *NED chop* 'to barter':⁴³

'Horses that are jades ... may be *chopt* away ... or sold in Smithfield';

'The same person has *chopp'd* and dispos'd of several horses.' 1706;

'You buy and sell, *chop* and change your ecclesiastical offices ... as horses in a faire.' 1590.

(3) *EDNLS kop* 'good bargain, sale' (Lowland Scottish):⁴⁴

'der'r guid *kop* for de kye or horses de year.'

In conclusion, it does indeed seem most likely that Chopwell is from OE *cēap-wella* 'spring where commerce took place', a fair where traders used to meet to buy and sell livestock, particularly horses, and other goods.⁴⁵

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

This is a revised version of the paper given on 27th March 1988 at the XXth Annual Study Conference organized by the Council for Name Studies, held at the University College of Wales, Swansea.

Apart from the following, all abbreviations used are those listed *ante* X (1986), 210-15 and XI (1987), 212-13:

- Ass K. E. Bayley, 'Two Thirteenth-Century Assize Rolls for the County of Durham', in *Miscellanea* II, Surtees Society CXXVII (1916).
- DKR 'Calendar of the Cursitor's Records: Chancery Enrolments' in *The 37th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* (London, 1876).
- EDD* J. Wright, *The English Dialect Dictionary being the Complete Vocabulary of all Dialect Words still in Use, or Known to have been in Use during the last Two Hundred Years*, 6 vols (London & Oxford, 1898-1905).
- EDNLS* J. Jakobsen, *An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland*, 2 vols (Lerwick, 1985 repr.).
- FPD Rev. Wm. Greenwell, ed., *Feodarium Prioratus Dunelmensis*, Surtees Society LVIII (1871).
- Goth Gothic
- Hatf Rev. Wm. Greenwell, ed., *Bishop Hatfield's Survey*, Surtees Society XXXII (1856).
- l. late (used with dates, e.g. 1.12th c. = late twelfth-century)
- NbDu* A. Mawer, *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge, 1920).
- Newm Rev. J. T. Fowler, ed., *The Newminster Cartulary*, Surtees Society LXVI (1876).
- NewmI mid fourteenth-century Index to Newm
- OFris Old Frisian
- OSax Old Saxon
- Pat *Calendar of Patent Rolls AD 1274-* (London, 1908-).
- PS D. P. Kirby, ed., *Parliamentary Surveys of the Bishopric of Durham II*, Surtees Society CLXXXVIII (1972).
- RPD Sir T. Duffus Hardy, ed., *Registrum Palatinum Dunelmense*, Vols I-IV (London, 1873-6).
- Surt.II R. Surtees, *The History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham*, 4 vols (London, 1816-40).
- Wills J. Raine, ed., *Wills and Inventories Illustrative of the History, Manners, Language, Statistics etc. of the Northern Counties*, Surtees Society II (1835).

Original sources:

- EPRyt* Durham, County Durham Record Office, EP / Ryt3 / 1
- HcBk1* University of Durham, Department of Palaeography and Diplomatic, Halmote Court Book 1, no. 78, fo. 435
- HcMicro* Ibid., Microfilm of Halmote Court Book, fo. 153
- MC* Durham Cathedral, The Prior's Kitchen, Miscellaneous Charters
- MuggAcc* Ibid., Muggleswick Livestock Accounts
- Pont* Ibid., *Pontificales*
- Pansh* Hertford, Hertfordshire County Record Office, Panshanger Papers

¹ *Wild goose chase* 1685. +1 C. T. Onions, ed., *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 2 vols, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1964), II, 2427.

² Co. Durham comprises four *Wards*, each of which contains a number of *parishes* which are subdivided into *townships*.

³ Wherever small stretches of land have been recovered from the waste, we find minor names containing elements such as OE *mōr* 'barren wasteland'; OE *mos* 'a bog, swamp'; ON *fjall* 'moorland ridge'; ON *kjarr* 'marshy ground overgrown with brushwood'; and ME *bog* 'bog, marsh'. Also dialect words such as *struther* 'place overgrown with brushwood'; *swang* 'marsh, swampy land'; and *sike* 'small stream

in marshy land'. See *EPN* II, 42, 43; I, 174; II, 4; I, 40. For dialect words see *EDD*, V, 826, 863, 432.

⁴ The manor of Chopwell belonged to Durham Cathedral Priory until Hugh du Puiset, bishop of Durham, granted it and the saltworks on the river Blyth near Morpeth to Robert, abbot of Newminster in 1153x1159, in exchange for Wolsingham near Durham. The manor remained in the possession of Newminster Abbey until the Dissolution when the woods were retained by the Crown and Chopwell Manor was sold. See Rev. J. T. Fowler, ed, *The Newminster Cartulary*, Surtees Society LXVI (1878), 45-51.

Timber has always been an important commodity in Co. Durham, as is illustrated by the complaint of 1306 that the bishop was laying waste the woods of his see with forges for iron and lead, and for the burning of charcoal. In addition, 14th cent. account rolls of Durham Priory record the sales of bark from Bearpark Wood near Durham City, which was probably used for tanning. See C. M. Fraser, 'The Pattern of Trade in the North-East of England, 1265-1350', *Northern History* IV (1969), 44-65, esp. 53, 64.

⁵ *EPN* II, 250-3.

⁶ I should like to thank my supervisor, Victor Watts, for his unflinching encouragement and support during the preparation of this paper, particularly during our perilous descent of the rubbish dump beneath Chopwell Village, and the removal of sundry items which were obscuring the spring itself (a car bonnet, mattress, tractor tyre, etc.)!

⁷ *NbDu*, 46-7.

⁸ Olof von Feilitzen, *The Pre-Conquest Personal Names of Domesday Book*, *Nomina Germanica* III (Uppsala, 1937).

⁹ M. Redin, *Studies on Uncompounded Personal Names in Old English* (Uppsala, 1919).

¹⁰ G. Tengvik, *Old English Bynames*, *Nomina Germanica* IV (Uppsala, 1938).

¹¹ Choppington (Bedlington), *NbDu*, 46: 'Type I: *Chabiton* 1181; *Chabinton* 1325; Type II: *Chapynnton* 1310; *Chapynnton* 1359. Type I is OE *Ceabbing(a)tūn* = farm of Ceabba or his sons. Type II, if it is not due to an otherwise unparalleled development of medial *b* to *p*, suggests the name *Ceapa* instead of *Ceabba*. (Type III is not relevant to this discussion and has been omitted.)

¹² The OE pers.n. *Ceabba* is also found in Chadnor (Herefs.) and Chobham (Surrey); *DEPN*, 93, 106.

¹³ Hypocoristic names of this sort and *Lallwörter* 'Lall-words' with affective gemination are discussed in H. Krahe and W. Meid, *Einleitung und Lautlehre - Germanische Sprachwissenschaft* I, Sammlung Göschen Band CCXXXVIII (Berlin, 1969), 121-4, § 111.

¹⁴ OE *ēa* > IOE *ǣ* > ME *a*. See R. Jordan and H. Ch. Matthes, *Handbuch der Mittelenglischen Grammatik* I (Heidelberg, 1934), 79, § 58. For Northern English *e* for OE *ǣ* see: 51, § 32 Anm 3.

¹⁵ From the verb OE *cēapian* corresponding to ON *kaupa*; OFris *kāpia*; OSax *kōpon*; and Goth **kaupon*. See J. Bosworth and T. N. Toller, eds, *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* (Oxford, 1898), 148; F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1934), 45; J. de Vries, *Altnordisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden, 1977), 303; W. Lehmann, *A Gothic Etymological Dictionary* (Leiden, 1986), 216.

¹⁶ Jordan and Matthes, *Handbuch der Mittelenglischen Grammatik* I, 43, § 23 Anm 2; 51, § 32 Anm 2.

¹⁷ *EDD*, I, 561.

¹⁸ E. J. Dobson, *English Pronunciation 1500-1700*, 2 vols, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1968), II, 576-8, § 86 (for ME *ō*); 578-81, § 87 (for 'Identification of ME *ō* with ME *ā*').

¹⁹ *EDD*, I, 595.

²⁰ For a full discussion of apophonic variation see G. V. Smithers, 'Some English Ideophones', *Archivum Linguisticum* VI (1954), Fasc. 2, 73-111.

²¹ Dobson, *English Pronunciation*, II, 581, § 87 note 4; 717-18, § 194 note 3; Onions, ed., *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, I, 307, 292, 303.

²² *chep aker* 1286, *-acr*' 1540, *-acres*, *-meadowe* 1575, *the Cheepe acres* 1632. *PNGlos.*, I, 249.

²³ *PNBerks.*, III, 857.

²⁴ *PNDevon*, II, 465.

²⁵ This is based on: '*cēap* st.m. *Kauf, Kauf-, Handels-*; ... *cēap lond* (gekauftes Land) BCS 1020'; H. Middendorff, *Altenglisches Flurnamenbuch* (Halle, 1902), 25. [*BCS* 1020 = Sawyer 1527, D. Whitelock, *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (Cambridge, 1930) 24; a 13th cent. copy of the authentic vernacular will of Thurketel of Palgrave, including bequests of land, made before A.D. 1038. The accents on *cēap* and *cēap lond* were added by Middendorff. (A.R.R.)]

²⁶ *DEPN*, 107.

²⁷ See also: Chipstead (Surrey), *Chepsted* 675 (13th c.), 933 (13th c.), 'Place where a market existed', *PNSurrey*, 290; Chipstead (Kent), *Chepsted* 1191, OE *cēapstede* 'market-place', *DEPN*, 105; and Kepwick (Yorks., NR), *Cap-*, *Chipuic* 1086 GDB, *Chepewic* 1166, 'market-place', *DEPN*, 273. It should be noted that Smith disagrees with Ekwall about this last name: 'On topographical grounds this name cannot reasonably be connected with OE *cēap*, 'market', with Scandinavianised initial consonant'. Smith prefers 'Kæppi's vik' see *PNYorks* (NR), 201.

²⁸ See the introductory paragraphs of this paper, and n. 3 above.

²⁹ *Fulcaleside* 1153x1159 (mid 14th c.) Newm; *Falcaleside* (woodside called) 1563 Surt. II, OE *fūl*, ON *skáli* (ME *scale*), OE *sīde*. A similar name is *Foulscales* 'Dirty shielings', *PNYorks* (WR), VI, 207.

³⁰ *ledehepes weye* 1153x1159 (mid 14th c.) Newm, 'path leading to the lead hills' (?), OE *lēad*, *hēap*, *weg*: *Heddeley-*, *Heddelei wai* 1313 (mid 14th c.) Newm, OE *weg* 'way to Hedley', referring to that section of the track between Corbridge (Nthumb.) and Leadgate (Durham) which passes through Hedley-on-the-Hill (Nthumb.).

³¹ In a most enjoyable paper entitled 'Hollin Names in NW. England' given at the Swansea Conference (printed elsewhere in this volume), and in private discussion afterwards, Mrs Mary Atkin drew my attention to the fact that holly was used by drovers as a foodstuff for their livestock, and as a sign of a good place to camp because it grows in places that are sheltered from frosts. Thus names in OE *holegn*, dial. *hollin*, *holm* are often found in the vicinity of drovers' roads. It is interesting to note that Hollings and Hollings Hill (Nthumb.) (O.S.090577 and 097576), for which I have no early forms, lie about two miles SW. of Chopwell, while Hollin Hill Fm (Durham, O.S. 172594), and Old Hollin(g)side (Durham, O.S. 186599) are approximately four miles NE. of Chopwell.

³² Hooker Gate (O.S. 139591): *Huckergate* 1587 (*NbDu*, 117); *Hookergate* 1593 *EPYr.* ME **hukkere* 'huckster' from ME *hukken* 'to hawk, sell', ON *gata* 'way, road'.

³³ The following names are 1313 (mid 14th c.) Newm: *Le Escot de Cheppwell*, *Le Estcotlesche*, OE *ēast* 'east', cot 'seasonal shelter for livestock', *læc(c)*, (ME *leche*) 'stream, slow-moving water'; *le Sto(c)kstall*, OE *stoc* 'a religious place' or *stoc* 'tree trunk', *stall* 'sheep stall'; *le Tunestedges*, OE *tūn-stede* 'a farmstead' possibly referring to an abandoned farmstead site. *Le Estcroft iuxta le ladgate* c.1394 *HcMicro*, OE *ēast* 'east', *croft* 'small enclosed field'. This lies next to Leadgate.

³⁴ A similar sense may be found in Chipperfield (*PNHerts.*, 45): *Chepervillewode* 1315, *Chiperfeld* 1375, 'probably the OE *cēapere* meaning 'a trader', and the

whole name is to be interpreted as "traders' open land".

³⁵ B. E. Coates, 'The Origin and Distribution of Markets and Fairs in Medieval Derbyshire', in *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal* LXXXV (1965), 95.

³⁶ For example, there is no trace of a commercial centre in Lancashire before the Norman Conquest, nor in Domesday Book, 'though as it is probable that the commissioners who conducted that inquiry were not interested in any market rights which did not yield revenue to the king, such negative evidence is not conclusive.'; G. H. Tupling, 'Markets and Fairs in Medieval Lancashire', in J.G. Edwards *et alii*, eds, *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait* (Manchester, 1935), 345-56, esp. 347.

³⁷ Purchases for the monks included: muslin, canvas, parchment, spices, gloves, hoods lined with squirrel, miniver and lambs' fleeces, and hair shirts; E. W. Moore, *The Fairs of Medieval England: An Introductory Study*, Studies and Texts LXXII (Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto 1985), 60.

³⁸ C. M. Fraser, 'The Pattern of Trade in the North-East of England, 1265-1350', *Northern History* IV (1969), 44-65, esp. 49. As regards the p.n. Stagshaw (Nthumb.) *Stagschawe* 1296, *Staggeshaghe* 1315, Mawer (*NbDu*, 187) suggests 'stag-wood'. In a private discussion, however, Mr George Redmonds observed that the first element may be *staig*, *stag(g)* (1700). This means (a) a young horse from one to three years old, of either sex, and not yet broken to work; (b) a stallion; see W. Grant and D. Murison, eds, *The Scottish National Dictionary* (Edinburgh, 1971). The term is applied to 'a year's old stallion' in Nthumb. and the North, and to 'a three year old horse' in Cumb. and Westm., *EDD*, V, 716.

³⁹ 'Wild horses' is used here in the sense of 'running wild', that is, fell ponies that were unbroken and loose on the moor, rather than inherently wild and incapable of being trained.

⁴⁰ Ms Jennifer Scherr informed me, in private correspondence, of the tradition that the horse fair in Chapel Boughton (Nthants.) which lasted for several days, began with a procession from a holy well near the church.

⁴¹ N. Higham (*The Northern Counties to AD 1000* (London, 1986), 179) discusses the way that Roman forts may have confiscated surrounding land for horse pasturage. Perhaps escaped horses from *Vindomora*, the Roman Station at Ebchester, were the origin of these fell ponies? Map 3 in the present article also shows those horse fair sites recorded in W. Owen, *Owen's New Book of Fairs published by the King's Authority, being A Complete and Authentic Account of all the Fairs in England and Wales* (London, 1820).

⁴² *EDD*, I, 595. Also: 'The last I saw of him he was chipping and *chapping* about at Barnaby' (= the great fair held at Boro'bridge), *ibid.* I, 561.

⁴³ *NED*, 379. Also: *chap* 'a buyer': 'Harry Wakefield was lucky enough to find a *chap* for part of his drove.' (W. Scott, *Two Drovers*, 1827), *NED*, 274.

⁴⁴ *EDNLS*, I, 421.

⁴⁵ Can it be mere coincidence that in such a financially impoverished, though rather attractive, area two fell ponies stand at the west end of the flat ledge on which the village of Chopwell lies, on the very edge of the moorland; two fell ponies, that is, which are cast in concrete? Why are they there if not to serve as a reminder of the fell ponies that used to run loose on the bleak moors? And if they simply commemorate the ponies that were used in the local coal-pits, what we may ask was the origin of such pit ponies?

M. A. Atkin

While¹ I am aware of Spray's admirable paper in which he discusses the possibility that *hollin* place-names may have arisen from the practice, especially in the southern Pennines, of using holly as a winter fodder,² there is another possible, but not necessarily incompatible, derivation of the place-name which ought to be considered. In the course of examining pack-horse tracks and stock-droving routes in Westmorland and parts of the adjacent counties³ it became evident that places with *hollin*⁴ names not only stood beside the stock tracks, but also had highly characteristic sites in relation to these tracks, and were probably associated with their use. It seems possible that they were resting places along the route which offered shelter and fodder for travellers and their animals, and were accordingly signposted with a branch of holly to indicate their significance; the *Hollin bush*, *-root* names may reflect this.

The two principal groups of travellers along the stock tracks had different requirements arising out of their task. Pack-ponies, carrying loads of about 2 cwts (50 kilogrammes) would normally be able to travel as much as 20 miles (32 kilometres) in a day, but at night would need to be unloaded and turned loose to graze, and the packs taken under cover for security. Their drivers therefore required shelter for the night for themselves and their goods, and grazing nearby for their animals. Cattle drovers, who had to give their animals time to graze during the day, moved at a slower pace. Their daily journey therefore was often relatively short, perhaps 5 or 6 miles (8-10 kms) and this may explain the close-spacing of *hollin* sites. The cattle drovers normally slept out of doors with their herds,⁵ but could make use of the pastures at the *hollin* sites, and enjoy the conviviality of the adjacent farmstead in the evening.

I. Characteristics of the *hollin* sites

A typical *hollin* farmstead usually stands alone, facing onto a small green or a group of little paddocks which separate the farm from the stock track (see Fig.1). There is usually an enclosed lane leading to the farm, and a second one returning to the main track. Generous water troughs, or a large pond are often found alongside these access-lanes, making it easy to water many animals at the same time. The farm is usually almost the highest settlement before the open moor. Many of the sites are close to township boundaries. This characteristic may arise purely because of the moor-edge siting, coupled with the tendency of the stock