

Holmfirth in the Domesday Book, 1086

Introduction

Historical background

Edward the Confessor died on 5 Jan 1066. William the Conqueror's claim was that he was Edward's rightful heir and had immediately succeeded him, Harold Godwinson being regarded as a usurper. When the Domesday survey was undertaken 20 years later in 1086 the baseline was what William considered to have been the situation immediately prior to his succession: the state of England in the time of King Edward, *Tempore Regis Edwardi* or TRE. The Domesday survey enquired into each estate as it was TRE and "now", the time of the survey. It was written up in a much abbreviated Latin. The main place names are distinguished by a red line through them. This is not to be read as an erasure.

Land divisions

England was divided into shires, forerunners of our familiar counties, with Yorkshire further divided into the Ridings. Here in the Danelaw, the land which Alfred the Great had ceded to the Danes in the late C9th, the subdivisions of the shires and Ridings were called wapentakes; elsewhere they were called hundreds.

The survey proceeded shire by shire. Lords with holdings in a shire were listed. For each lord his holdings were then listed and described manor by manor, the manor being the unit of lordship. In Yorkshire each lord's holding is organised by Riding and wapentake. There was also a listing, the recapitulation, on a geographical basis, wapentake by wapentake (or hundred by hundred) giving the lord of each place as a guide for finding the more detailed account. In practice the recapitulation entry can sometimes be more informative than the supposedly more detailed description.

The survey set out to identify the places in the manor, properties such as churches and mills, the taxable value, the workable land and the various grades and numbers of the peasantry. In simple terms a manor would consist of one or more vills, which were the subdivisions assessed for taxation, geld, and the vills consisted of one or more townships which were the communities with which the individual peasants might identify.

Within the manor land could fall into various categories. Inland was owned by the lord, free of geld; it would be worked under his control by occupiers who held land for such services. Sokeland was owned by its occupiers who nevertheless came under the control of the manorial court and paid customary dues. Thaneland was held by military service.

Manors could also contain berewicks which were outlying, supposedly detached, parts of the manor.

The sizes of the vills are given as carucates and bovates in the Danelaw, hides elsewhere. The sizes may be quoted directly or inter-lined above the name of the vill. A carucate or hide was based on

the area a team of eight oxen could plough in a season; this is reckoned at 120 acres but could vary depending on the nature of the land. A bovate was an eighth of a carucate, the nominal contribution of a single ox. The amount of land suitable for tillage or actually under the plough is given separately. The geld was collected on the basis of the value of the vill which is given at the end of the description.

Sources

The translations here are from Domesday for Yorkshire, Skaife (1895, 1898) published in several parts in vols 13 and 14 of the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal. This translation is the one favoured by Faull, M.L. and Morehouse, S.A. (1981, *West Yorkshire: an Archaeological Survey to A.D. 1500*). Skaife leaves the place names in the original and gives the modern forms in parentheses.

There is a modern printed edition of the complete Domesday in Penguin Classics based on the Alecto Edition. It uses the modern place names and only occasionally gives the original forms; also the index is not completely reliable, pages can be out by one and some entries are missing. The folio numbers are taken from this edition.

The images are from Palmer, J. & Slater, G. at <https://archive.org/details/DomesdayBookYorkshire> based on the photozincography version prepared by the Ordnance Survey in the 1860s (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Photozincography_of_Domesday_Book). The Palmer and Slater edition is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 licence <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/> . This edition does not give the folio numbers but has its own pagination which are given here in Roman numerals.

Wakefield

Most of our area, then as later, fell in the manor of Wakefield. This was a large royal estate. Despite the various categories of holding its complexity seems to have defeated the surveyors. After giving a basic description of the manor various Normanton and Dewsbury are listed as belonging to the manor but with their own descriptions.

The future Holmfirth consisted of several townships which fell into two vills, Cartworth and Holne, each taking the name of one of its townships.

Main description

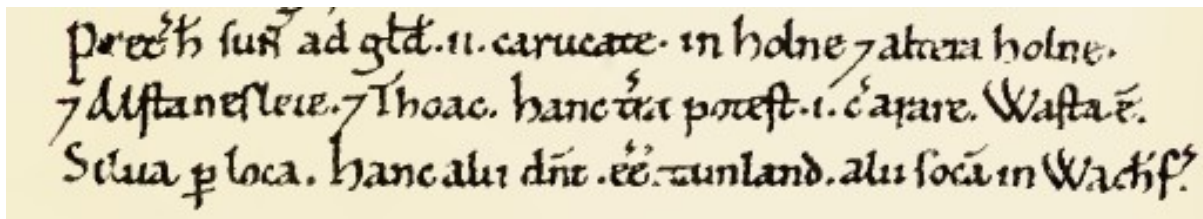
The manor came under the king's lands. This is the first part of it on folio 299v, page IV:

In ~~Wachefeld~~ cū. ix. berewic. Sandala. Sorebi. Werlafeslei. Micleie. Wadesuurde. Cru'betonestun. Langefelt. Stanesfelt. sunt ad gtd. lx. carucate tpe. 7 iii. bouate. 7. iii. pars uni' bouate. Hanc tpa poss' arare xx. caruce. Hoc maner' fuit regis Edw in dno. nō in manu regis sunt ibi. iiii. uilli. 7. ii. pōri. 7. ii. xctē. 7. vii. sochem'. 7. xvi. bord'. Simul hnt. vii. car'. Silua past'. vi. leū lē. 7. iii. leū lat'. Totū vi. leū lē. 7. vi. leū lat'. T.R.E. lx. lib. uat. m. xv. lib. Ad hoc maner' p'ant foca harū t'arū. Crigestone. Brecone. Orberie. Osleset. Etone. Stanleie. Scellimone. Ameleie. Cheteruurde. Bēzone. Seppelie. Sidneleie. Cūbreuurde. G'ostland. Int' om' sunt ad gtd. xxx. carucate. q's poss' arare. xx. car'. Nō wastē sunt p'ter Crigest' 7 orberie. ubi sunt. iiii. sochem'. 7. i. uill's 7. iii. bord'. cū. iiii. car'. Et in Osleset. iiii. uilli. 7. iii. bord'. cū. ii. car'. In Brecone. e silua past'. i. leū lē. 7. dim' lat'. In Orberie silua past'. iiii. q'rent' lē. 7. iii. lat'. In Osleset silua past' dim' leū lē. 7. t'nd' lat'.

In Wachefeld (Wakefield), with nine berewicks, Sandala (Sandal Magna), Sorebi (Sowerby), Werlafeslei (Warley), Micleie (Midgeley), Wadesuurde (Wadsworth), Cru'betonestun (Crosston), Langefelt (Longfield), [and] Stanesfelt (Stansfield), there are sixty carucates and three bovates, and the third part of one bovate of land for geld. Thirty ploughs may till this land. This manor was in the demesne of King Edward; now, [it is] in the King's hands. Four villanes are there, and three priests and two churches and seven sokemen and sixteen bordars. Together, they have seven ploughs. Wood, pasturable, six leugæ in length and four leugæ in breadth. The whole, six leugæ in length and six leugæ in breadth, T.R.E., it was worth sixty pounds now, fifteen pounds.

To this manor belongs the soke of these lands: — Crigestone (Criggleston), ten bovates, Bretone (West Bretton), one carucate, Orberie (Horbury), two [carucates] and seven bovates, Osleset (Ossett), three carucates and a half, Ettone (Earl's Heaton), one carucate, Stanleie (Stanley), three carucates, Scellintone (Shitlington), six bovates, Ameleie (Emley), three carucates, Cheteruorde (Cartworth), six carucates, Bertone (Kirkburton), three carucates, Seppelleie (Shepley), two carucates, Scelneleie (Shelley), one carucate, Cu'breuorde (Upper Cumberworth), one carucate, Crosland (North Crosland), one carucate. In all, there are thirty carucates for geld, which twenty ploughs may till. Now they are waste, except Crigest' (Criggleston), and Orberie (Horbury), where there are four sokemen and one villane and three bordars with four ploughs; and in Osleset (Ossett), four villanes and three bordars with two ploughs.

Immediately following this passage of three lines which raises some issues:



This is the transliteration with the abbreviations expanded:

Praeter hoc sunt ii carucatas in Holne et altera Holne et Alstanesleie et Thoac. Hanc terram i potest i caruca arare. Wasta est . Silva per loca Hanc alii dicunt esse tainland, alii socam in Wachefeld

Skaife's translation is typical of early translations:

Besides these, there are two carucates for geld in Holne (Holme, par. Almondbury), and another Holne (Yateholme), and Alstanesleie (Austonley), and Thoac (Quick). One plough may till this land. It is waste. Wood in places. Some declare this to be thaneland; others, soke in Wach' (Wakefield).

The identification of "another Holne" with Yateholme is generally accepted.

Watson, J. (1775, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Halifax in Yorkshire*) and Morehouse, H.J. (1861, *The History and Topography of the Parish of Kirkburton and of the Graveship of Holme*) suggested that Thoac was Thong, in this context Upperrhong, rather than the township of Quick which is across the Pennines and which was suggested on etymological grounds. This is now accepted as the correct version by most modern translations. It's possible, however, that both the original etymology and the interpretation as Upperrhong may both be correct. In Yorkshire "quick" is often rendered as "wick" and Wickens is a place name in Upperrhong.

Immediately following Holne is:

In ~~Normatune~~ sunt ad gtd. x. carucate. q̄s poss̄ arare
.v. caruce. Ibi habuer̄ .ii. tagn̄. .ii. maner̄. T. R. E. Nē in
manu regis s̄t ibi. vi. uilli 7 .iii. bord̄. p̄br̄ 7 eccl̄a. cū. .iii.
car̄. p̄ra ac̄. .iii. Silua past̄. .vi. q̄rent̄ l̄g. 7 i. q̄rent̄ lat̄.
Tota h̄ t̄ra r̄cet in soca de Wachefelt. p̄t̄ eccl̄am.
T. R. E. uat̄. xii. sol. in. x. sol.
Itē In ~~deusberia~~ sunt ad gtd. .iii. carucate q̄s poss̄ arare
.ii. caruce. h̄ t̄ra p̄inet ad Wachefelt. In ea tam̄ habuit
rex, ^{Edw} maner̄. cū in manu regis. ē. 7 s̄nt̄ ibi. vi. uilli 7 .ii.
bord̄ cū. .iii. car̄. p̄br̄ 7 eccl̄a. Tot̄ man̄. .iiii. q̄rent̄ l̄g.
7 t̄nt̄ lat̄. T. R. E. uat̄. x. sol. in. x. sol.

In Normatune (Norman ton), there are ten carucates for geld, which five ploughs may till. Two thanes had two manors there T.R.E. Now, in the King's hands, six villanes are there, and three bordars, a priest, and a church, with three ploughs. Three acres of meadow. Wood, pasturable, six quarenteens in length and one quarenteen in breadth. The whole of this land lies in the soke of Waciefelt (Wakefield), except the church, T. R.E. it was worth twelve shillings; now, ten shillings.

Also in Deusberia (Dewsbury), there are three carucates for geld, which two ploughs may till. This land belongs to Wachefelt (Wakefield); in it, nevertheless, King Edward had a manor. Now, it is in the King's hands, and six villanes and two bordars are there with four ploughs. A priest and a church. The whole manor, four quarenteens in length and as much in breadth, T.R.E., it was worth ten shillings; now, the same.

Normanton is not relevant here (included for completeness) but the subsequent entry for Dewsbury is in that the Holmfirth area fell within its parish.

Following the main listing of the King's land is a further listing of some places naming tenants. On folio 301, page VII is:

In holne. Dunestan. .ii. c̄ ad gtd. t̄ra ad .i. car̄. hanc
t̄ra alii d̄nt̄ inland. alii socā in Wachefeld

Transliteration:

Manor In Holne Dunestan ii car, ad geldum. Terra ad i carucam. Hanc terram alii dicunt inland, alii socam in Wachefeld.

Skaife's translation is:

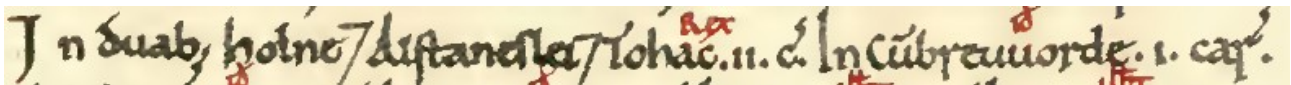
Manor. In Holne (Holme, par. Almondbury), Dunestan [had] two carucates for geld. Land to one plough. This land, some say, is inland, others, soke to Wachefeld (Wakefield).

The Holme listed here has the same extent - 2 carucates, land for one plough - as the two Holmes, Austonley and Thong of the previous entry. Holne here is the name of the vill with the two Holmes, Austonley and Thong being townships.

In this case Holne is described as "inland" as opposed to "tainland". Clearly there is a scribal error in one of these lists. Stenton (1910) has suggested that "inland" is correct and the first version has confused the final 't' of 'dicunt' with the initial 't' of 'tainland'. Thaneland or thegnland is only found in one other Domesday record in the Danelaw counties whereas inland is found in "more than a score of instances".

Recapitulation

Holme and Cartworth are listed under Agbrigg on folio 379v, page LXXXII



In duab, holne / Alstaneslei / Tohac. ii. c. In Cūbreuuorde. i. car.



In Cheteuuorde / Heppuuord / Uuedel / Fugelestun / Tostenland. vi. c.

(Entries for Kirkburton, N Crosland, Hopton and Huddersfield lie between the them.)

In two Holne (Holme and Yateholme) and Alstaneslei (Austonley) and Tohac (Quick), the King two car.

In Cu'breuuorde (Upper Cumberworth), the same one car.

...

In Cheteuuorde (Cartworth) and Heppuuord (Hepworth), Uuedel (Wooldale), Fugelestun (Foulston) and Tostenland (Thurstanland), the King six car.

The five townships in the last entry here have the same extent as Cartworth in the list by owner showing that in that list it was a vill that was being named and the recapitulation is being more detailed and listing the townships.

Dewsbury was listed under Morley on the same folio and page:

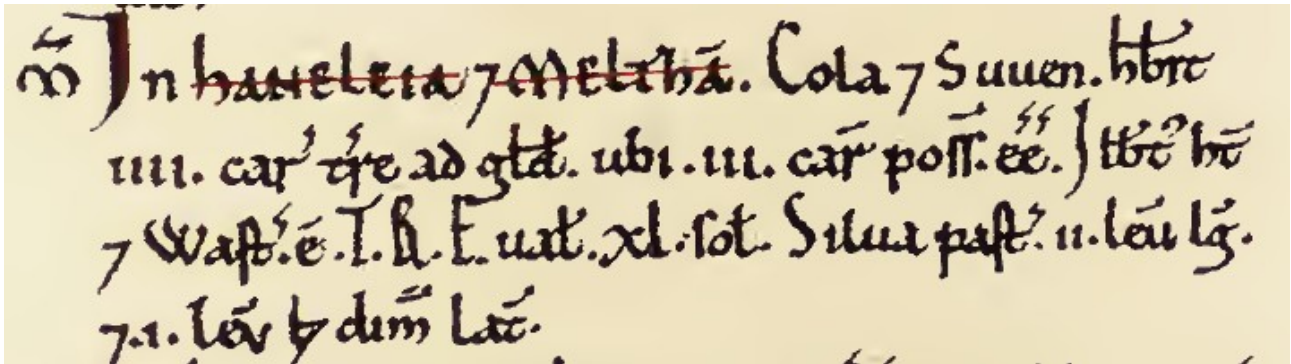
In Deusberie (Dewsbury), the King three car.

Meltham and Honley

Netherthong township was never part of the manor of Wakefield. In the C11th it was part of a manor which contained both Meltham and Honley.

Listing by owner

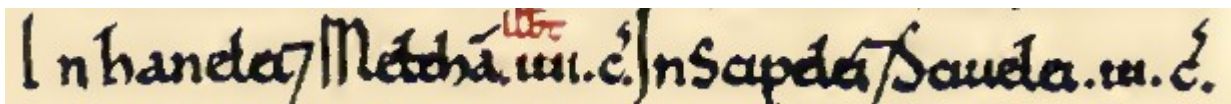
It was listed under Ilbert de Laci on folio 317v, page XL.



Manor. In Haneleia (Honley) and Meltia' (Meltham), Cola and Suuen had four carucates of land for geld, where three ploughs may be. Ilbert has [it], and it is waste. T. R.E., it was worth forty shillings. Wood, pasturable, two leugæ in length and one leuga and a half in breadth.

Recapitulation

It was listed under Agbrigg on folio 379v, page LXXXII



In Hanelei (Honley) and Meltia (Meltham), Ilbert four car.

In Scipelei (Shepley) and Seiuelei (Shelley), [the King three]car.