

GREAT AYTON COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT

AIREYHOLME

a

farm on the slopes



Heritage
Lottery Fund



PEOPLE AND THE FARM

A TIMELINE

South East View of King Holme Farm - near Great Ryton

Aireyholme is a farm in the Parish of Great Ayton in the county of North Yorkshire, previously the North Riding of Yorkshire. Its known roots go back at least 1000 years to the time of the Saxons and beyond.

Today it is well known for its connections with Captain James Cook, in an area of natural beauty standing as it does on the slopes of Roseberry Topping, an outstanding landmark. In an area well documented by artists, and used for leisure by many.

The farm, nestling on Roseberry's lower slopes is about a mile and a half from the centre of Great Ayton, leaving along Station Road.



Aireyholme

Great Ayton

Little Ayton

Very little of Airyholme exists on the ground before the area was enclosed in 1658 other than a hoard of Bronze Age tools found on the slopes of Roseberry Topping and nearby burial cairns dated around 1000 BC.

Aerial photos reveal a possible Iron Age enclosure close to the farm circa 100 BC.

The name, Aireyholme, (or Ergum) is of Scandanavian (Viking) origin from around 500AD and means High or Summer Pasture

The first known documentation is the entry in the Domesday Book in 1087, which states : ' In Ergum, Aldred II car. ad gld.' and 'Tra ad I car'. Which indicates that there was already a settlement at Aireyholme in Anglo Saxon times. There is also evidence of rigg and furrow on the slopes.

The entry indicates that 1 carucate, about 120 acres was regularly ploughed and 2 carucates was not ploughed but still liable for taxation

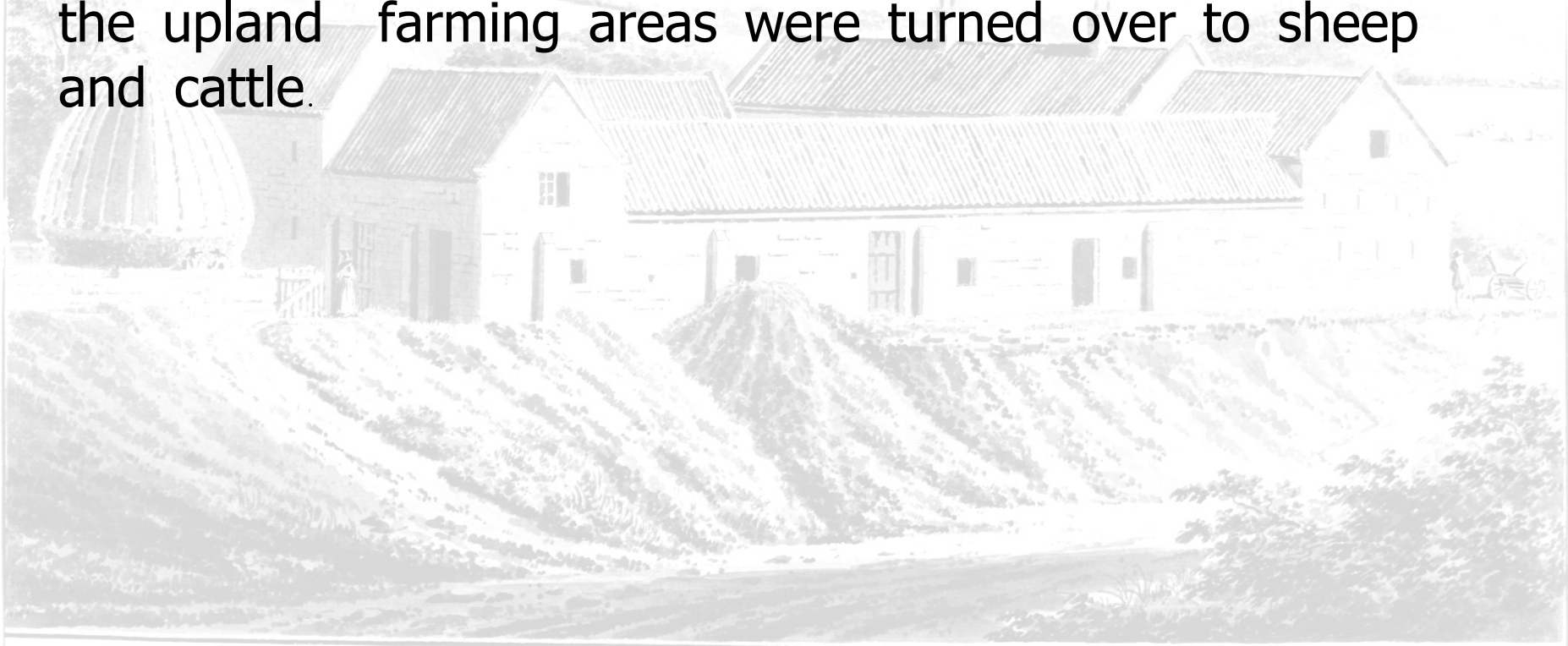
In 1282, at the Inquisition of Baldwin Wake, into what lands he held at his death stated ' There is a plot called Ergum which is sometimes ploughed and is worth 6d'. By this time, 216 years after the Conquest, the value of Aireyholme had declined considerably, possibly a consequence of the Conquerors harrying of the North.

In the Great Ayton Court Records for 1650 it is recorded that Aireyholme now consisted of unploughed Common Land in which some villagers had the right to pasture their beasts at certain times of the year.

1658 saw the end of Common Pasture in the Manor of Great Ayton when it was all privatised or enclosed. In Aireyholme all 484 acres including woodland was awarded to John Coulson, Lord of the Manor, who may have proceeded to erect farm buildings upon it. This happened in the final years of the Commonwealth.

John Coulson one of the prime movers of the enclosure of Great Ayton had ended up owning about half of the newly enclosed lands. New farms including Aireyholme were built on the common pasture

These new farms were a mixture of arable and animal husbandry. By the early part of the eighteenth century the upland farming areas were turned over to sheep and cattle.



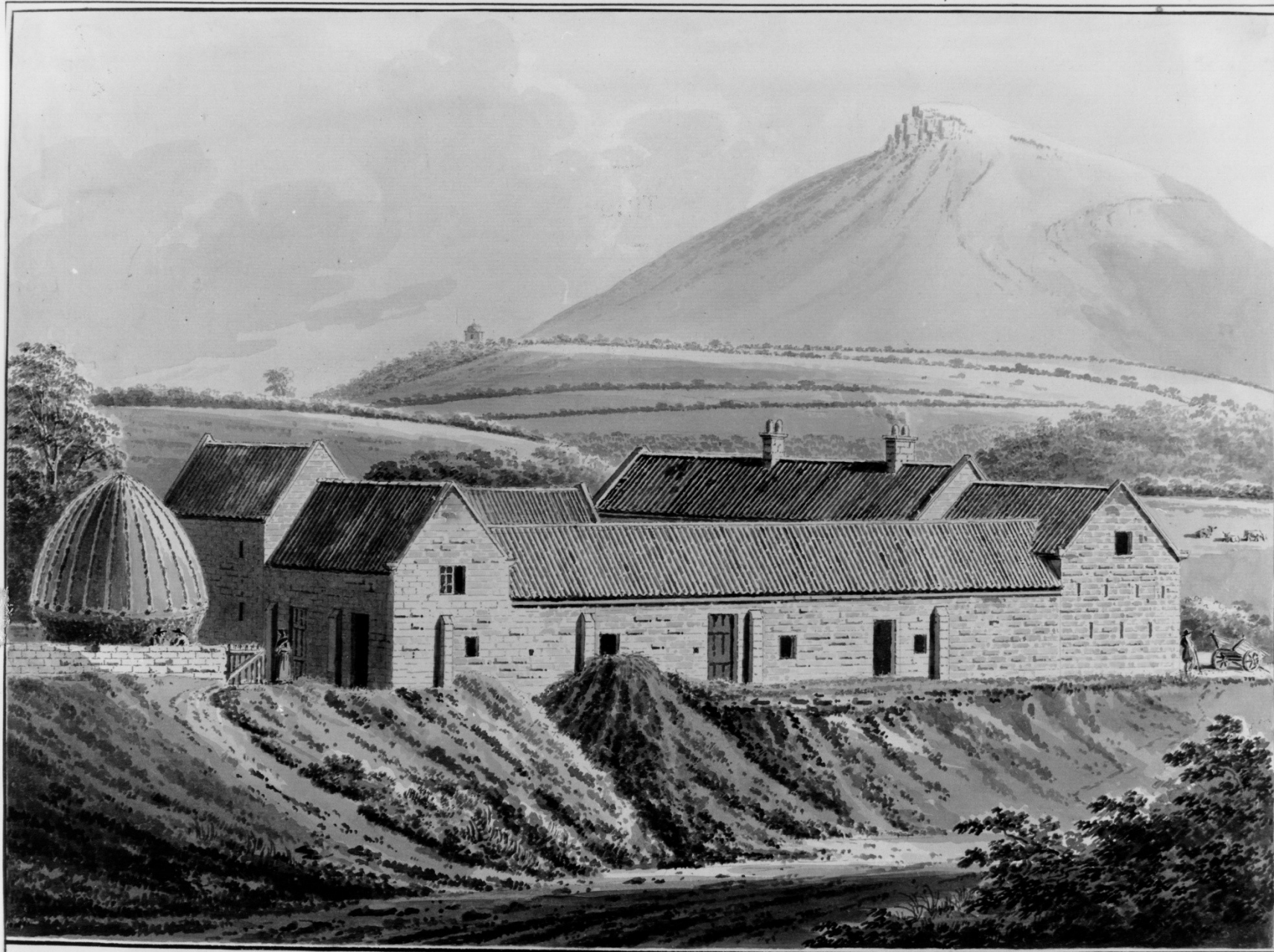
South East View of Airey Holme, showing the farm buildings and the road to the east.

Between 1736 & 1755 James Cook the father of Captain Cook was employed as Farm Bailiff by Thomas Scottowe (heir of the Coulson's). James had come south from Scotland and worked as a day labourer in Marton Village where young James was born. They lived on Aireyholme farm, probably in a nearby cottage – no longer in existence. It was probably during this time that the farm took on most of its present day appearance.

The following sketch by Cuit showing the farm with Roseberry Topping in the background with the hedged fields in front along with grazing cattle. Hay ricks also for winter feed.

It was probably done towards the end of the 1700's. There seem to be a number of well dressed people in the picture.

It seems reasonable to assume they represent visitors visiting the childhood home of Captain James Cook



South East View of Ains Holme Farm near Great Ryton

In 1758, three years after James Cook sen. had moved from the farm into Great Ayton (He removed into the house he had built, now in Melbourne, Australia) The owner Thomas Scottowe was deeply in debt. He sold the farm to Michael Smith of Marske who purchased it on behalf of his grand daughter Susannah Duck. The farm consisted of 424 acres with two dwelling houses.

In 1761 the farm passed into the hands of Bartholemew Rudd sen. of Guisborough on the occasion of his marriage to Susannah Duck. He seems to have taken little interest in the property.

Bartholemew Rudd junior is shown in the Land Tax Returns 1781 to 1824 to own and be managing the farm. However, he did not live on the farm but housed his mistress there whilst he lived at Marton Hall with his wife. It was tenanted by William Curry until 1809 and

~~then by John Jackson from 1822. The end of the 1700's~~

He was enthusiastic about the selective breeding of cattle.

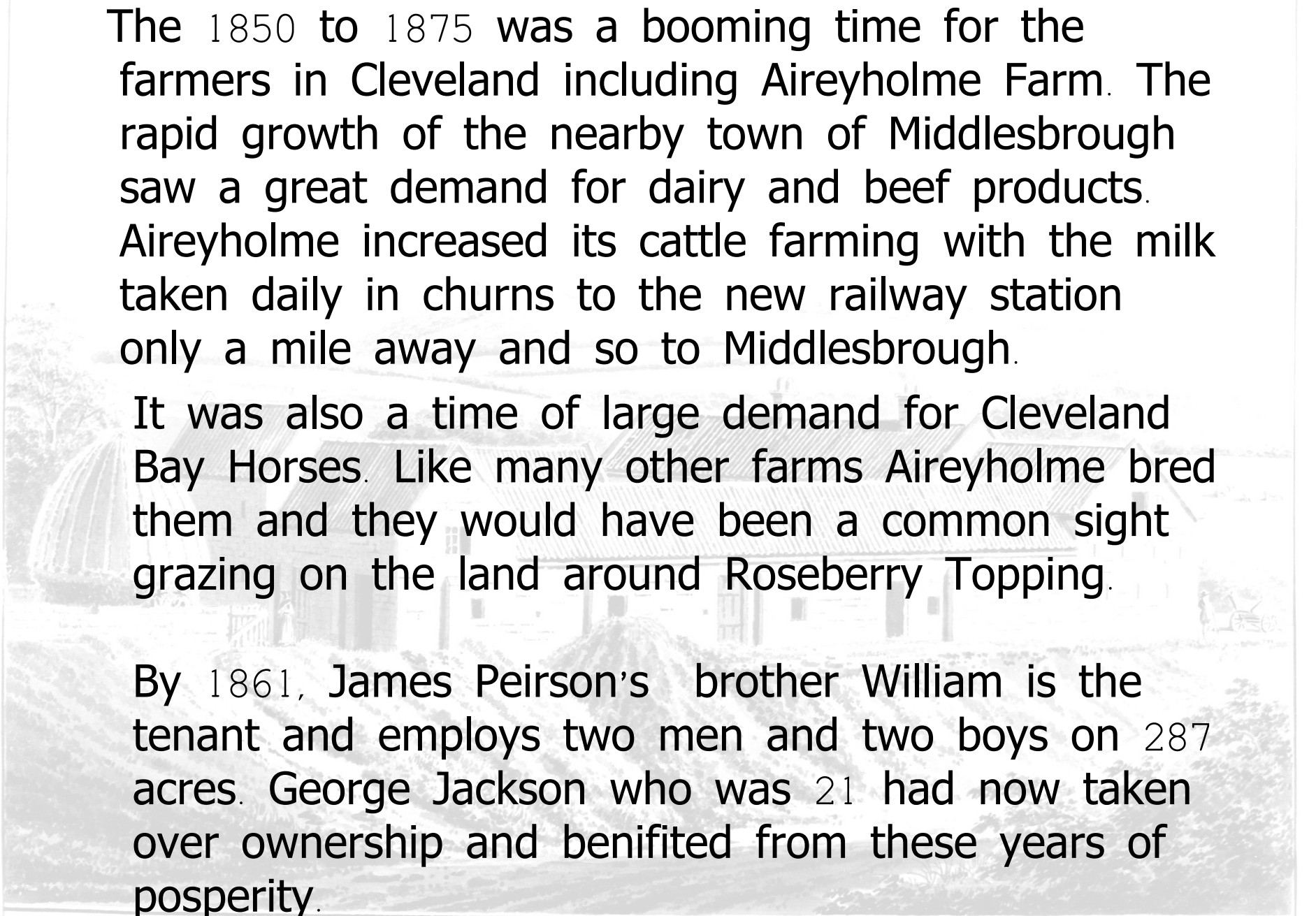
He and his friends Charles and Robert Colling achieved national fame for breeding animals of enormous size. One bred by Bartholemew Rudd was named Roseberry.

In 1824 Bart. Rudd junior of Marton Hall sold the farm to George Jackson of Tanton Hall. It consisted of 434 acres including one farmhouse. He died nine years later in 1843. His son George junior was only four years old, so a trust was set up for him.

1847's Tithe Apportionment the farm consisted of 32 units of land.

Twelve fields are named and all are arable and pasture, more under the plough than for animals. The tenant at this time was John Peirson and the owner George Jackson's trustees.

Old Farm near Great Ayton



The 1850 to 1875 was a booming time for the farmers in Cleveland including Aireyholme Farm. The rapid growth of the nearby town of Middlesbrough saw a great demand for dairy and beef products. Aireyholme increased its cattle farming with the milk taken daily in churns to the new railway station only a mile away and so to Middlesbrough.

It was also a time of large demand for Cleveland Bay Horses. Like many other farms Aireyholme bred them and they would have been a common sight grazing on the land around Roseberry Topping.

By 1861, James Peirson's brother William is the tenant and employs two men and two boys on 287 acres. George Jackson who was 21 had now taken over ownership and benefited from these years of prosperity.

South East View of Airey Holme Farm near Great Ayton

In 1880 the Roseberry ironstone mine was constructed with a drift entrance almost central in Aireyholme's fields making the working of the land and movement of animals very difficult. The farm did benefit from providing feeding for horses in the mine. Miners may Also have lodged at Aireyholme. Mining ceased in the mid 1920's.

1891 Robinson Martin is now the tenant, with eleven people including relations and farm labourers living in the house. Ten years later in 1901, the tenancy is held by William Marin son of Robinson helped by his wife, two sons three labourers and a female servant

Between 1901 and 1910 George Jackson dies leaving the farm to his son Henry C. A. Jackson of Beech Grove. Henry is known in the village as Squire Jackson but was of 'unsound mind' requiring legal documents having to be signed in his name.



South East View of Ains Holme Farm near Great Ayton



SAWING WOOD AT REAR OF AIREYHOLME FARMHOUSE
1929

South East View of Airey Holme Farm near Great Ayton

In 1930 when Henry 'Squire' Jackson died the farm was sold to Sir John Fry of Cleveland Lodge with Stanley Cumbor replacing William Martin as the tenant.

The war years brought many changes to the way farming was carried out. 1941 saw the second national survey of agricultural land. The survey for Airieyholme shows that between 1909 and 1941 the land under the plough had increased by 50%. There were 60 cattle, 46 hens and 16 pigs and 6 horses on the farm. Its first tractor, a Fordson had just arrived (see next photo). These tractors came into use about 1950. The government dictated what farmers had to grow during the war and during the post war years and how it should be done.

In 1942 John and Harry Phelps became the tenants followed by John's son Charles. The tenancy is still held by the Phelps family today (2012). During the war



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The workers included Land Army girls and both German and Italian prisoners of war.

In 2002 the owner Lady Anne Fry passed away and the farm sold to Mr. Farmar of Harrogate.

Today the southern slopes of Roseberry and a small area of National trust property are managed by Charles and Mark Phalps. What is not surprising is that due to the land rising to over 250 metres and in a very exposed situation the government has classified Aireyholme as a Severely Disadvantaged Area!



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