

In 1658 twenty-one freeholders of Great Ayton, headed by the lord of the manor, John Coulson, made an agreement to divide up among themselves the village's three ancient open fields, together with the common pastures. The result was the creation of a new landscape of smaller fields surrounded by hawthorn hedges or fences. With this went the change from community control and occupation of the land to a system of private ownership which in turn would lead to improved farming techniques and the building of new farmsteads. Enclosure was therefore an important and dramatic event, but to understand its significance one needs to consider briefly the entire history of land management in the village.

An Overview: Three Phases

To delve back into the past as far as we can, there must first have been a settlement phase, extending from some unknown prehistoric date, probably until the tenth or eleventh century AD. Towards the end of this phase the shape of the medieval township was becoming established, whilst the surrounding lands were gradually being taken in from forest, marsh and moorland, for permanent farming. The Domesday survey comes near the end of this first phase, but there is a complication here because Domesday also records a set-back to the village's development due to William the Conqueror's harrying of the region in revenge for successive revolts. Ayton like most other villages nearby, suffered a major contraction of its arable due to a loss of available field workers after the devastation of 1069. It has been conjectured that from the late eleventh century the lords of such denuded villages encouraged new settlers from the west by allotting them strips in the open fields. One important piece of evidence that this may have happened in Ayton is the existence of the placename Wandills which is derived from two Old Norse words, voudre, a wand or measure, and deill, a share of land. There are three Wandills or Windills among the furlongs of Applebridge Field. The suggestion is that these could have been the furlongs in which equal shares were allocated to newcomers as part of a planned redevelopment of the open fields.

The second phase in land-management was the open-field phase, which lasted in Ayton's case until the mid-seventeenth century, but very likely, as was the case with so many villages, reached its climax in the early fourteenth, just before the decline of population resulting from the Black Death. We know, for instance, that the village was in a more prosperous state in 1282 when an Inquisition was held into the estate of Baldwin Wake, than in 1353, when a similar Inquisition was held on the estate of John, earl of Kent.[i] These two Inquisitions each describe a substantial part of the medieval village though probably not the whole of it. In the more detailed 1282 inquisition there is mention of 21 'bondmen' and 26 'cottars'. The bondmen, or villeins, paid considerably higher rent to the lord than did the cottars. They had an obligation to work on the lord's demesne, but they each also probably owned a toft and croft as well as one or two oxgangs in the open fields. Cottars, or cottagers, on the other hand, had no land and worked for others as hired labour. In the decades after the Black Death most bondmen would have been able to shed their legal obligation to work for the lord, and become lease-holders, but the crucial distinction between landed and landless remained (see page 7).

During these medieval centuries most of the village's farm land would have been managed communally, under the supervision of one or more manorial courts. Early in this period there might well have been only two open fields, divided up into furlongs and strips, instead of the three that existed by the time of enclosure. One might conjecture that Wood field, to the north-east of the village, was developed later than were Applebridge and Crabtree fields. The name itself suggests the land might have been cleared from woodland, some of which still exists further to the east. Furthermore, the other two fields extended right into the village itself, close to the village green (the Low Green), with its adjacent church and mill, whereas Wood Field was slightly more remote. Crabtree field is unlikely to have

been the most recent of the three because the modern map still shows the fossilised layout of some of its furlongs in the reversed-S shape of very early arable settlement. A final piece of evidence for the later development of Wood Field comes in an early thirteenth century deed from the Guisborough cartulary which states that Nicholas, son of Osbert de Aton, granted to Guisborough Priory one acre of land next to Stubbethorne. If the latter can be equated with Stobell corne, a furlong in Wood Field recorded in an early 17th century deed, it implies that Nicholas's one acre, which may have only just been reclaimed from woodland and had not yet been incorporated into the open field system, was later to form part of Wood field. If so, Wood Field was still in process of being formed in the early thirteenth century. Archaeological field-walking might yield further evidence about the respective dating of the three fields.

The third phase in the township's history, from 1658 onwards, is that of the private ownership of separate, enclosed farmholds. However, the boundary between communal and private ownership is not as distinct as it might seem because in fact several hundred acres of farm land had already been enclosed before the main enclosure of 1658. The enclosure award lists various closes owned by John Coulson which are stated to contain altogether 333 acres, and there is mention of closes owned by other individuals. Such enclosures go back to Tudor times at least, as some are recorded in a survey immediately after the Northern Rebellion of 1569.

The Northern Rebellion

We know something about land-holding in Ayton during the century preceding enclosure due to the fact that the village was involved in this rebellion, whose leaders aimed to replace Elizabeth by Mary, Queen of Scots. Two of Ayton's major landowners at this time were Christopher Neville and John Fulthorpe, both of whom were executed for their part in the rebellion, and it is likely that most of their tenants followed their landlords' call to arms. There exists a list of 31 rebels from Ayton who were fined, and others may well have been executed.[ii] After the rebellion's failure the Neville and Fulthorpe estates were confiscated by the Crown, and the various tenant leases reallocated.[iii] However it seems that most of the old tenants were allowed to renew their leases, even including some who had been fined. But some names are missing from the new leases. For instance, the capital messuage, Ayton Hall, had been leased to Thomas Tedcastle before the rebellion, and Ayton mill to William Wylson, yet these names do not appear among the new lessees. Instead, both Ayton Hall and the mill went in 1571 to Charles Hall, who undertook to repair the Hall, said to be much decayed, at his own expense. It may be that Tedcastle and Wylson were executed – they are not listed among those fined.

From the 1570 survey and the new leases we know there was a sizeable demesne comprising land in the open fields as well as enclosed land. There were also a number of tenants who held leases of two, sometimes four, oxgangs of land, together with a toft or cottage. The leases were all for a term of years – twenty-one in most cases. There was, too, a group of tenants who held no land and were leased merely a cottage. These cottagers presumably worked for those who did have land, or alternatively they might have pursued some of the crafts needed within the village economy.

In 1610 the lordship of Ayton was sold by the Crown to a Scottish lawyer, David Foulis, who in 1633 sold it to a London merchant, Christopher Coulson. It was Coulson's son, John, who was to preside over the 1658 enclosure. By then it is likely that the more prosperous of the former leasehold tenants, or their descendants, had succeeded in purchasing the freehold of their farms, either from the crown or from Foulis or the Coulsons. This progress from leasehold to freehold was typical of this period, and certainly there are several surnames in common between the leaseholders of 1570 and the freeholders who joined together to effect enclosure in 1658.

Disputed Tithes

A tithe dispute of 1616-17 reveals a little more about farming in the village before enclosure.[iv] This was an argument between the impropiator, George Marwood, and half a dozen farmers whom he took to the Consistory court for non-payment of tithe. It appears the point at issue was the legality of levying hay tithe. There exists a legal opinion from the end of the eighteenth century which states that Great Ayton had always been exempt from hay tithe, even before the Reformation, and no doubt these farmers were resisting what they saw as an unprecedented and unjustified demand by Marwood.

The dispute once again shows that a considerable portion of the village's farm land had already been enclosed by this date. Some of the land from which tithe was demanded is described in such a way as to imply it had only recently been separated from the open fields. For instance, Philip Teasdale was charged with having grown and cut "ten wayne loades of hay" in each of the years 1613-15 "upon certaine closes being rigge and fur groundes belonginge to his ferme and part and parcel of his oxgange landes". And in the case of Thomas Hall, a list of various closes from which hay tithe was demanded is followed by a claim that he had also obtained twenty loads of hay "in the common fields of Great Ayton". These were allegations by Marwood, and in these two cases we do not have the defendants' replies.

Two other farmers implicated in the dispute did make affidavits as to what other crops they had grown in recent years. John Ripley of Lounesdale [i.e. Lonsdale], who farmed on the acid uplands to the extreme east of the parish, declared that in 1615 he had produced only "ninetie stokes of rye", together with six wain loads of hay, to feed his 45 sheep and four cows. At the other end of the parish, on the fertile boulder clay to the north-west, John Aynsley of Tunstall admitted to averaging 60 stooks of wheat, 100 of oats, 30 of barley and 20 of "masslegen"[i.e. maslin – rye mixed with wheat] during the years 1610-16. He said that a stook of wheat was worth 2/-; of rye, 18d.; of barley, 14d.; of masslegen, 20d.

The Manorial Court

One valuable source for pre-enclosure Great Ayton are the records of John Coulson's manorial court which have survived for certain years before and just after enclosure.[v] This kind of detail is not available for other villages in the region. It reveals the workings of a complex system of communal control, affecting everyone, and bringing the individual into close contact with his neighbours throughout his working day. For most people this court was probably their most important contact with authority. On occasion it could even oversee the workings of parish administration, as in 1653, when William Leavens, "sexton to the Church", sued John Carter (presumably a churchwarden) for failing to pay him the correct wage for the past four years. We may assume that Little Ayton also had its own manorial court at this time, as certain Little Ayton tenants were said to 'owe suit and service to this Court' - presumably those who had rights in both townships.

The court was held annually at the beginning of October, and was presided over by Coulson's steward or 'seneschal', Nicholas Pearson, gentleman. The procedure was that a jury of thirteen, elected annually from the village, examined a wide range of cases, brought to the court either by the jurors themselves, or by aggrieved individuals. The jurors were not chosen exclusively from among the freeholders. For instance, of the 13 jurors in 1658, six can be identified as freeholders, and five as tenants. The court dealt with all kinds of minor civil and criminal offences, from violent affray and trespass to debt and slander. It had power to judge cases where not more than £2 was at stake, which explains why plaintiffs so often asked for 39/11d. in damages. One task for the jurors was to choose four byelawmen and two constables every year to police the complex system of byelaws governing the open fields and the commons. There was also a pindar to impound any sheep, cows or pigs which had been found in the wrong place at the wrong

time. The worst offenders here seem to have been geese, judging by the number of fines exacted for geese straying onto the open fields. There were 15 cases of trespassing geese in 1653, and 16 in 1654! A pinfold was maintained, where straying animals awaited return to their owners, but “rescues” were not unknown.

Very many fines were exacted from those who exceeded their stint, i.e. pastured more animals than their entitlement, either on the commons or on the open fields when left fallow, or after harvest:

Richard Maukin for putting an unlawfull cow in the common pasture is amerced 10s.

Christopher Ratchatty because he placed overstint in le fallows 3/4d.

Robt. Ripley for putting one mayre with foal in Ariholme contrary to a paine is amerced 6/8d.

Thomas Young for putting one beast overstint on the west Moore. 3/4d.

Apparently it was permissible to rent out one’s own rights of pasture, but Robert Ling was fined “for letting more gates in the Averish than belonged to him”, and so was Henry Gray, “for letting tenn average gates to people who live without the towne”. Certain items give us an idea about activities taking place in the village apart from farming. There was already a tanning industry, because John Balmer was twice fined for “washing and steeping skins in the river”, and there was the spinning of linen, since Jane Tweddle was said to have bought a “Lynt wheel” from William Hewetson, and not paid for it. Naturally there was also brewing: Henry Calvert was found guilty of not paying for 4 bushels of malt he bought off Christopher Young, and four others were fined for brewing ale and selling it “contrary to the form of the statute”.

After enclosure the court’s most important function, the oversight of the open fields and commons, was no longer necessary or possible. In October 1658 the very last penalties were exacted for ancient offences such as “trespass in le cornfield” or “overstint in the acreage”. In the following years the court continued, but it was a shadow of its former self. Even the minor criminal cases and the civil actions were now finding their way to the magistrates and the Quarter Sessions. In 1661 apparently the only case to come before the jury was an accusation of slander. William Hineson accused Anna Hasleton of uttering the words, “Thou art a thief none but thou hath stolen my husbands knife”. Verdict for the plaintiff, who was awarded 3d.

Enclosure

The enclosure of 1658 was arranged by John Coulson, lord of the manor of Great Ayton, who owned about half the arable acreage in the village, together with 20 other freeholders, through a series of fictitious sales to the enclosure commissioners. These were two local gentlemen, Thomas Lascelles of Stainsby, and John Turner of Kirkleatham, who in turn apportioned the land to the respective freeholders in proportion to their previous rights in the commons and the open fields. At the same time the various duties of the new owners was set out in respect of rights new hedges to be planted, and any portions of roads bordering on, or crossing through, their lands to be maintained.

The motive for enclosure was the desire by freeholders to profit from the booming trade in dairy products, by raising cattle on enclosed pasture rather than pursuing arable farming. At this time the export of butter to London and elsewhere via the port of Yarm, some 16 miles from Ayton, had reached a peak. The port books of Yarm show the steady growth of this trade, until, by 1676, some 42,000 firkins of butter (each of 56 pounds) were passing through Yarm.[vi] During the first two thirds of the seventeenth century agreements to enclose were made in numerous townships in the Tees region as a response to this demand for butter. That it was also the motive of the Ayton freeholders is indicated by the legal document from 1782 mentioned above. The anonymous lawyer explains that this was why George Marwood, impropiator of tithes for Great Ayton, insisted that a hay tithe be imposed on the

newly enclosed lands before agreeing to the enclosure. Until then, we are told, the parish had always been exempt from tithes on hay:

And he [Marwood] apprehending that such division would tend to lessen the value of his corn tithes, as it would be likely that such fields when inclosed would be laid to grass, refused to give his assent to such division unless all the lands then unenclosed in the common fields were made subject to the payment of tithe hay in kind.

No doubt a more general motive for this enclosure, as in other cases, was the desire to improve efficiency by introducing methods incompatible with the conservative rhythms of the open field system. And yet another incentive may have been that pasture would require less manpower than arable, at a time when labour costs were rising steeply.

The Enclosure Award

Unfortunately, the document recording the Enclosure Award has disappeared, but we do have a 27-page typed transcription of it, dating from the mid-twentieth century.[vii] The document gives the acreage of each of most of the open fields and areas of common land affected by the enclosure, and also the acreages of the various grants of land to the respective freeholders. The total area enclosed amounted to about 2,500 acres which, when added to the 400 acres or so already enclosed before 1658, is roughly comparable to the total acreage detailed in the tithe apportionment two centuries later. It is important to note that both tithe apportionment and enclosure award are concerned with the township of Great Ayton rather than the ecclesiastical parish. The size of the parish varies over the centuries, including as it does at various times not only Little Ayton, but also Newton-under-Roseberry, Nunthorpe, and, more recently, Easby. None of these were part of the township.

No plan or map accompanies the Award but each grant of land is located by information about its immediate neighbours, whether features such as woods, streams or roads, or the owners of the adjacent lands. At the same time the duties and responsibilities of the new owners in respect of hedges or fences to be made, or highways to be maintained or newly created, are specified. As an example I quote the allocations to Henry Young:

Next wee doe order Appoynt and sett forth to Henry Younge in full of his Right in the lands to be divided Thirty acres three Roods and thirty one poles in the sayd Wood Field boundinge on the street leading towards Gisbrough on the South and East and one parte of the Lordship of Newton to the North and on the Land hereafter sett forth to John Richardson on the West and also nine acres twenty one poles and a half in a pasture called or known by the name of the West Moore boundinge on the lands formerly sett forth to Christopher Richardson on the East and on the River Tame on the North and on the land formerly sett forth to George Marwood Esqr on the West and on the street leadinge towards Nunthorpe on the South and that he his heyres and Assignes shall make and for Ever hereafter mayntayne all the hedge or fence in the sayd West Moore betwixt the ground hereby sett forth to him & the street leadinge towards Nunthorpe.

The Applebridge Survey

Two years before the enclosure, a survey of Applebridge Field, the largest of the three open fields, was undertaken, probably by order of John Coulson, to whom the entire field was to be awarded.[viii] The 544 acres of Applebridge are divided into 36 named furlongs, or flats, varying in size from the 37 acre Great Whinfield to the 7½ acre Priest Hills. The external border of the field is thoroughly irregular and jagged, especially to the south where it runs alongside Little Ayton ground, and also to the north-east where it intersects with the tofts and crofts at the centre of the village. The divisions separating the furlongs are also anything but regular, several being bisected by the River

Leven which crosses Applebridge Field from east to west. There is evidence, too, that a process of consolidation and enclosure within the field itself was already well under way. For example, the large furlong of East Haverker close to the centre of the village is shown as divided into units of private ownership, with labels such as "Michell Poskit His Flat". There are also parcels of land well within the field which are described as "Little Ayton ground". Land belonging to the Lord's demesne is marked, both as strips within particular furlongs and as separate small closes. Three furlongs are labelled "Gayts", which implies they were areas of permanent pasture, not subject to the usual three-fold rotation of crops. In short, the survey challenges the traditional idea of an open field as a large unified area in which every villager simultaneously performed the same tasks. It shows the field as very likely the end product of centuries of piecemeal development and interaction with neighbours. It is also clear, not only from the evidence of this survey, but also from other documents, that by this date strips in the open fields could be bought and sold much as other agricultural land. For instance, a surviving deed of 1625 shows Nicholas Richardson buying from Thomas Stockton an oxgang of land - perhaps about 15 acres - in the fields of Great Ayton.[ix] The 26 strips that comprised this oxgang are identified, and include 12 in Applebridge Field.

Another interesting feature of the survey is the sizeable crofts, or strips of land, shown to the north of Neather Wood Gayts, and just south of the river. These clearly belonged to fairly well-off villagers, and they give rise to the thought that the west end of the village might always have been home to a more affluent element, whereas perhaps most labourers, or cottagers, lived at the east end. A glance at the 1856 OS map shows that there is no place for extensive crofts behind the houses fronting the west side of the High Green. It could also be that some labourers' cottages were situated even further east, possibly along Dikes Lane, if a rather mysterious sentence in the enclosure award is to be believed. This states that John Coulson was to be awarded:

... one hundred and thirty acres of a parcel of ground Called the Bankes in full satisfaction of all Clames and Demands for all those sixteen Cottages formerly Enjoyed by him and his Assignees boundinge on the sayd pastures called Aryholme ordered and appointed to the sayd John Coulson.

From these two sources, the Enclosure Award and the Applebridge survey, it is possible in most cases to make an educated guess at the boundaries of the open fields and the areas of common pasture land, all of which were about to vanish. Armed with this information we can say that the various elements that made up the township of Great Ayton immediately before enclosure were as follows:

I The central area of the village, which was mainly at the west end of the present village, near All Saints church and also to the south of the Low Green, but with a secondary built-up area round the High Green half a mile to the east. These areas included a number of small garths and closes.

II The three open fields: Applebridge (549 acres); Crabtree (418 acres, not including Tanton Whins, a separate enclave to the east); Woodfield (424 acres).

III Some 400 acres of land which had been enclosed previous to the 1658 enclosure, in some cases long before. Most, but not all, of these ancient closes were owned by the lord of the manor, and most were situated in a wide arc stretching north-westwards from Ayton Hall towards the northern boundary of the township.

IV Four areas of stinted common pasture, i.e. areas where the pasturing of beasts and other rights were governed by the custom of the manor. These were: West Moor (262 acres) in the north-east corner of the township; Aireyholme (434 acres), Ayton Banks (305 acres) and the Dikes (46 acres), all on the higher ground to the east.

V An area of high moorland to the extreme east. This was unstinted and did not figure in the award.

From the enclosure award it is also possible in most cases to work out the location of the various awards to the individual freeholders. Sometimes, too, help is available from the Great Ayton tithe map of 1846, in the shape of place names, etc. For example, William Young, one of the 1648 freeholders, was awarded land in both Wood Field and West Moor. Young died in 1678, and from his will we learn that he owned Buck Bank and also Broate Closes.[x] The tithe map shows where these were. Another example relates to George Marwood, the owner of the tithes. Because he also owned pieces of glebe land, which the Marwood family still held when the Ayton tithes were commuted in 1846, it is obvious where his original holdings were. Knowing the location of the lands granted to Young and Marwood at the enclosure means, of course, that we can identify who was given land next to them, and so on. The completed jigsaw shows the approximate locations of some 37 new holdings awarded to the 21 freeholders

Freeholders, and Acreages Allotted to them in 1658

John Coulson Esq: All Aireyholme & Dikes; Banks – 130; all Applebridge; all Crabtree S of Yarm Way – 140; Tanton Whins – 23; Crabtree N of Yarm Way - 80; E side of Crabtree – 30 ; West Moor – 51

George Marwood Esq: Wood Field - 29 ; West Moor – 59.

Tobias Humfrey Esq: Crabtree Field -106; West Moor – 131; Banks – 27.

Mr James Stockton: Wood Field -111.

William Masterman: Wood Field – 4.

Thomas Beane: Wood Field 14.

Robert & Ann Rigge: Wood Field – 15.

Michael Postgate: Wood Field - 47; West Moor 14.

Christopher Richardson: Wood Field – 64; Crabtree Field - 42; West Moor – 31.

Robert Richardson: Wood Field – 24.

James Shields: Wood Field -14.

Matthew Masterman: Wood Field – 16.

William Young: Wood Field - 22; West Moor – 12.

Henry Young: Wood Field - 31; West Moor – 9.

John Richardson: Wood Field - 31; West Moor – 8.

William Linge: Crabtree Field – 13.

William Harrison: Crabtree Field – 14.

Thomas Richardson: Crabtree Field – 20.

John Carter: Crabtree Field - 23; Banks – 10.

Robert Ripley: Crabtree Field – 37.

It is possible to deduce a few facts about some of the freeholders listed here. One source which helps a little are the Hearth Tax returns, among which there are four lists of taxpayers, from Great and Little Ayton combined, for the years 1662, 1664, 1670 and 1673.[xi] The two earlier lists which are closest to 1658, the year of enclosure, contain 63 and 61 names respectively. Most, though not all, of our 21 freeholders appear on one or both of these lists. This does not, of course, prove that they lived in the township, merely that they owned property here. Several of them are among the handful of villagers rated as paying tax for more than one hearth, which implies, as one would expect, that they were among the wealthiest members of the community. In 1662, only eight persons altogether are assessed for more than one hearth, and in 1664, fourteen. They included John Coulson, who was rated for six hearths, James Stockton for five, Christopher Richardson for three, and William Young, John Carter and John Richardson for two each. These six were among the eleven of our freeholders who received more than 30 acres.

To consider some of the freeholders on the list individually, it is clear to start with that John Coulson was in a category of his own. Coulson was the elder son of a prosperous London cloth merchant who had bought the Ayton lordship and estate, which included about half the arable land in the township, from Sir David Foulis of Ingleby Greenhow, but seems never to have lived there. The estate was left to John, and on his father's death in 1641 he came to Ayton Hall with his wife and young family, and thereafter lived the life of a country gentleman. As lord of the manor he controlled the manorial court, and most likely he was the originator of the enclosure project, a complex process involving much negotiation and expenditure. He died in 1674 leaving to his successors a divided inheritance, a fact that was to have a major impact on the village, although perhaps of doubtful relevance here.

Possibly equal to Coulson in status was George Marwood whom we have already met as impropiator of the Ayton tithes. He was from an old-established local family whose seat was Busby Hall near Stokesley. Marwood did well out of the enclosure since he received two large areas of farmland, and also he was granted a new tithe on hay. He was a gentleman of some prestige, serving a term as sheriff of Yorkshire, and becoming a baronet after the Restoration of Charles II.

After Coulson's, the largest award went to Tobias Humphrey who, like Marwood, did not live in the township. He came from Norton, near Pontefract in the West Riding, and he appears to have been purely a speculator in land. His name does not appear subsequently in any documents connected with Ayton including the Hearth Tax assessments, which suggests he may have sold his apportionments straight away. He is associated with another, even more ambitious and wealthier speculator, Sir John Lowther, in whose account books Humphrey's name often appears over the next few years, as a lender, and a buyer of property.[xii]

These three, Coulson, Marwood and Humphrey, were therefore, in their various ways, different from the others. Next to them, in size of award, and possibly in status, comes a group of prosperous yeomen farmers whose surnames crop up repeatedly in various documents, and whose families had probably lived in the village for several generations. The names include Richardson, Postgate, Stockton, Masterman and Young. These old families no doubt had acquired close personal links with each other over the generations. We know, for instance, that James Stockton's son, William, was the godson of William Young, that Matthew Masterman's father and also his aunt married Richardsons, that in his will Matthew Masterman awarded guardianship of his children to James Stockton. We know, too, that both the Masterman family of Nunthorpe (represented here by William Masterman) and certain of the Richardsons became Quakers at about this time, that William Young was a ship owner, John Balmer, a tanner,

John Carter, a farmer from Tunstall, and Robert Ripley, from Lonsdale. It would certainly be interesting to know more about these twenty-one freeholders, for instance, how their portions of land were calculated, whether they had any choice in the locations, and what they did with their holdings.

Results of Enclosure

More work is needed on the results of the 1658 Enclosure. Very likely those granted land were able to increase dairy production and hence profits, but this is yet to be proved. It is also difficult to know how much the poorer villagers suffered. The loss of the open fields was probably not as significant as that of the commons, since workers would still be needed whoever owned the land. However, if there was a general move away from arable and towards pasture, this must have brought about some loss of employment, but it may well have been counteracted by the growth of industrial activities in the village such as tanning and linen production. The Hearth Tax assessment of 1673 has 93 names from Great and Little Ayton combined, a considerable rise on the assessments from the 1660s, which might imply a rapid growth in population. It could also be due, however, merely to changes in the nature or efficiency of the tax collection.

One certain result of enclosure was the creation of new farms and the building of new farmhouses, both on the old open fields and on the commons. Many of these farmsteads have probably remained more or less unchanged in position and acreage to the present day. For instance, John Richardson may have built himself old Langbaugh Hall in the middle of the land he was allocated, and Christopher Richardson might have built a house on the 63 acres of Wood Field which he had been awarded. His may well have been on the site of the present-day Cliff House on the north-east corner of the Roseberry Estate. Both John and Christopher Richardson were taxed for one hearth each in the 1662 Hearth Tax assessment, but in the 1664 assessment John is taxed for two hearths and Christopher for three, which implies they both did their building between those dates. Again, in John Coulson's will of 1674 he left a property called Moore Farm mutually to his son, John, and his daughter, Elizabeth.^[xiii] This was very likely the present-day Greenhow Moor farm. In the will it is stated that this farm was "lately in the occupation of John Waller", and in the 1664 Hearth Tax assessment John Waller is assessed for two hearths. This suggests that Coulson had a farmhouse built on the part of West Moor he was awarded in 1658, and installed Waller as tenant. Further research, both on existing farm buildings and on old farm deeds, might well produce more evidence of this mid-seventeenth century building programme. Other farms which were created out of the land enclosed in 1658 include Aireyholme, Ayton Banks, Summerhill, Rye Hill, Tile Sheds, Greenhow Hill, Bartle Bridge, East and West Angrove, Winley Hill and Applebridge. This list is not comprehensive. Certainly, the Enclosure changed the face of Great Ayton.

Footnotes

1. Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, XII (1892), pp. 237-9; Bulletin of the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society, no. 44 (1983), p.23.
2. Nat. Archives E 137/133/1
3. Nat. Archives E 310/29-33
4. Borthwick Inst., York, Cause Papers, CP.H, 1204-1210, 1356
5. Yorkshire Archaeological Society DD 92; NYCRO Z/630
6. D. Pearce, 'Yarm and the Butter Trade', CTLHS, no. 9 (1970), pp. 9-12
7. Middlesbrough Archives U/S 1216.
8. 'A Survey of Applebridge Field 1656 by William Mason', NYCRO, ZLT (Proctor Trust)
9. NYCRO, ZLT
10. Transcript of William Young's will: Select Vestry Minutes, 1827: NYCRO PR/AYG 4/4

2) Conjectured boundaries of Ayton's three open fields and areas of common land:

http://greatayton.wikidot.com/local-files/enclosure/Ayton_open_fields.jpg

