

Sprouston, Roxburghshire: an early Anglian centre of the eastern Tweed Basin*

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ABSTRACT

Evidence for English settlement in the Tweed Basin from the seventh to ninth centuries is mainly circumstantial but on the south side of the Tweed, close to Sprouston, aerial photography since 1970 has contributed a notable picture of a township which can be positively identified as Anglian. This is a site of considerable chronological depth. The cropmark evidence is transcribed and tentatively subdivided into three broad periods. Each is appraised and the elements identified are qualified by reference to parallels drawn from a limited radius in North Britain. The likely origins and status of the township are discussed, and it is suggested that it may have functioned as an 'urbs regis', or royal centre, and as such may have been one of the first to have been founded in the Tweed Basin in the course of westward English expansion in the late sixth, or early seventh century.

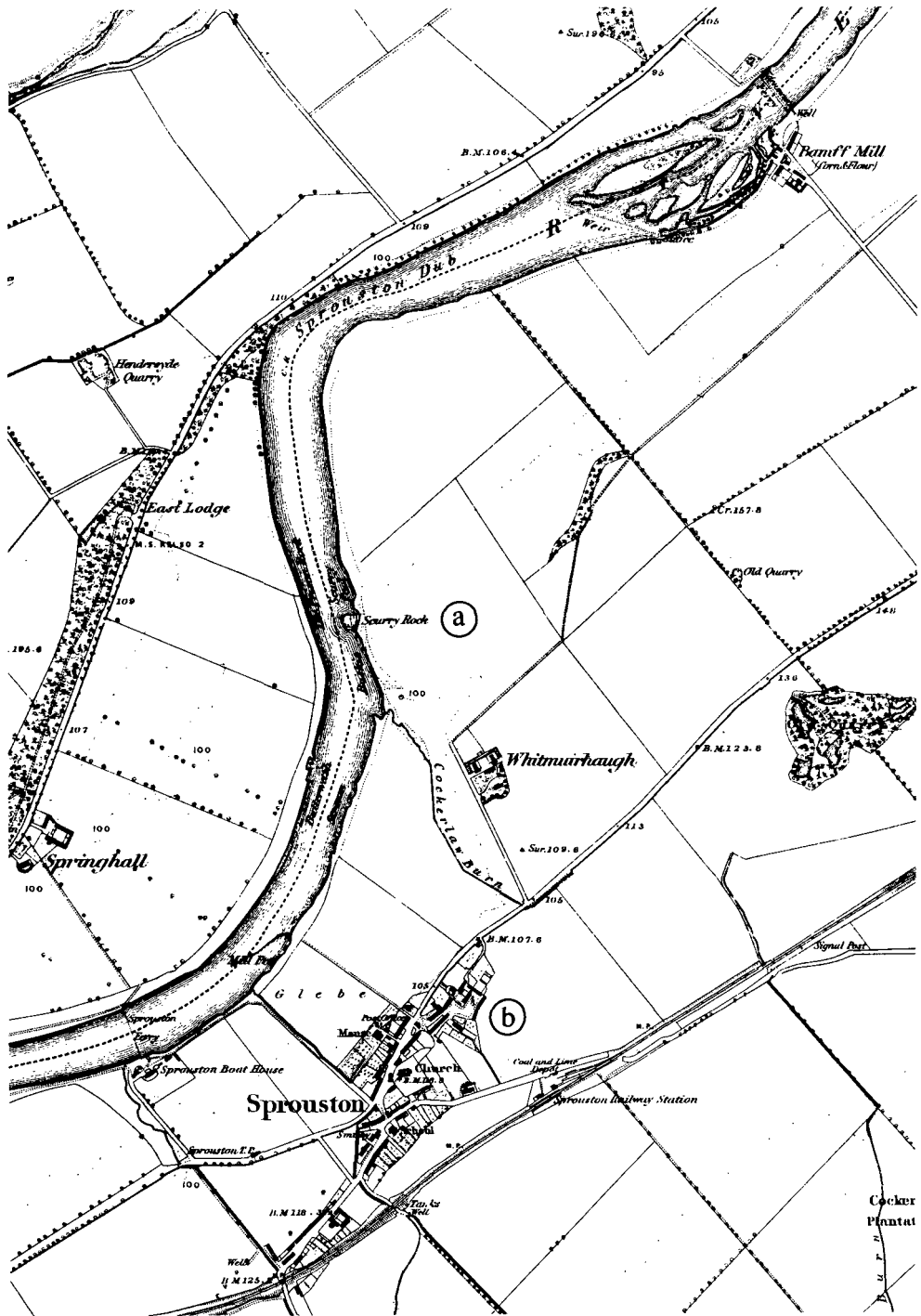
INTRODUCTION

Sprouston is a monothematic place-name (*Sprostona* c 1120) with the first element an Old English personal-name *Sprow* and *tūn* 'farm' (Nicolaisen 1979, 36, 38). It thus belongs with the earliest strata of Anglian place-names in the Tweed Valley. The present village is situated about 300 m south of the Tweed (NT 7578 3623), some 2.8 km to the ENE of Kelso (illus 1). Before considering the cropmark evidence it will be useful to summarize what is known of the status of this district in the medieval period.

Sprouston is on record as a royal manor in the early 12th century. About 1119, lands in Sprouston were granted by Earl David to his newly founded abbey at Selkirk.¹ The regality was confirmed by William the Lion about 1193 to Sir Eustace de Vesci, lord of Alnwick, on his marriage to Margaret, the king's illegitimate daughter.² In 1255, Henry III, accompanied by a numerous retinue of knights, earls and barons, took up residence for some days at Sprouston, while his son-in-law, the young King Alexander III, and his nobles, prepared and delivered a deed into the hands of the English king, for the peace and government of Scotland.³ The barony was forfeited in 1289 and in 1302–3 the fees and forfeitures from it, having been conferred on Isobel de Beaumont 'Dame de Vesci' by Edward I, were granted by the king to Sir Henry de Beaumont.⁴ In 1320, Robert I confirmed the barony on his son⁵ and David II granted it to Thomas Murray and afterwards to Maurice Murray.⁶ In 1402, it was confirmed by

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ILLUS 1 Sprouston: location map showing (a) the cropmark site and (b) the present village (based on OS 6-in. map, Roxburghshire, 1st edn, 1862, sheets 6 & 10)

Henry IV to Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; the town was destroyed by Sir Robert Umfraville in 1418.⁷ James II, in 1451, granted the barony to William, earl of Douglas.⁸ In 1522, the town was destroyed twice, first at the hands of Ross and Dacre and later by the Duke of Norfolk's army; it suffered again in 1545.⁹ In 1606 the lands of Sprouston were granted to Sir Robert Kerr of Cessford; in 1627, to Lord John Cranston; in 1643 to Henry, Lord Kerr, and in 1675 to Robert, earl of Roxburgh.¹⁰ The development of Sprouston can thus be traced from its status as a royal manor in the 12th century to that of a regality later that century, its return to the Crown in the 13th century and re-erection as a temporal lordship in the 14th century. A tower-house is also on record¹¹ but there is no visible evidence to confirm its date or site.

There was evidently already a church at Sprouston about 1128 when it was granted to Kelso Abbey by David I, with the consent of John, bishop of Glasgow (1128–47).¹² This was confirmed by Jocelin, bishop of Glasgow (1175–99); by Bishop Walter in 1232, and by Pope Innocent IV before 1254.¹³ The present church, dedicated to St Michael, was built in 1781, possibly on the site of its medieval predecessor. This is suggested by the presence within the church of a 15th-century memorial and, within the burial-ground (enclosed in 1814), by the fragment of a cross-shaft inserted in a stone base.¹⁴ In 1207, Sir Eustace de Vesci and his wife, were granted leave by Kelso Abbey to erect a chapel in their court at Sprouston;¹⁵ this presumably a chapel-of-ease independent of the parish church.

The land capability map (1949) indicates an extensive tract of first-class arable land in the area of Sprouston. In the 18th century the district was renowned for cereal cultivation, especially the Redden-heughs where the soils, on a substratum of sand, are well drained, deep and fertile (*Stat Acct*, 1, 1790–1, 65; *NSA*, 3 [Roxburgh], 235–6). Today, the fields around Whitmuirhaugh are permanently under rotation, wheat and barley being the principal crops. In addition, until about 1730, the parish had rights to common pasturage at Wark, 6.5 km to the east and, to the south-east, the common of Hadden-rig whose marches lie with the Pressen Burn, the present parish boundary (*Stat Acct*, 1, 1790–1, 66). A clear picture of the agricultural potential of the district may also be derived from the grants given out in the 12th and later centuries and this is probably more relevant in the context of the Anglian township and later royal manor. Earl David's endowment to Selkirk (c 1119) included a ploughgate and 10 acres of arable land at Sprouston and, about 1128, on their removal to Kelso, the monks received a further grant of three acres of meadowland (*Kelso Liber*, nos 1–2). About 1153 × 59, Malcolm IV granted to Kelso two oxgangs of arable land beside 'Prestrebrige' in the territory of Sprouston together with, in 1159, the pastures of Sprouston and moorland for the cutting of fuel (Barrow 1960, 192–3, nos 130–1); Serlo, the king's clerk, received half a ploughgate (*ibid* 283, no 295). About 1189 × 95, the Abbey received confirmation of a grant for a further oxgang of arable land (Barrow & Scott 1971, 321, no 305). A mill at Sprouston is on record in 1207 (*Kelso Liber*, nos 206–8). In the village, in the late 12th century, the monks had six cottages, one with six acres of land attached, with a *braccina* or brewhouse; a further five cottages each had an acre and a half of land (*Kelso Liber*, nos 4–5; Chalmers 1887–1902, iii, 135).

THE CROPMARKS

The cropmark palimpsest, notable for its clarity and detail (illus 2), occupies a series of fields around the farmsteading at Whitmuirhaugh, some 900 m to the north-east of the village. It was first identified by Professor J K S St Joseph in August 1970 and has since been flown



ILLUS 2 Whitmuirhaugh, Sprouston: cropmark palimpsest in fields to north of the farm as recorded by aerial photography in 1970; view from south (BEE 36). (Reproduced by courtesy of Cambridge University Collection)

over repeatedly by RCAHMS, Professor D W Harding, T Gates and others.¹⁶ The cumulative photographs provide an invaluable record for the settlement history of an area in excess of 16 ha, focused principally on the fields to the north of the farm, extending along the relatively level crest of a gravel terrace circumscribed by a wide meander of the Tweed (illus 3). The location is particularly noteworthy in comparison with Yeavinger, Northumberland (Hope-Taylor 1977, 5) and the scope of the gravel terraces bordering the Tweed, in attracting settlement over a long period, is well illustrated at the Hirsell (Cramp 1985).

Nicholas Reynolds (1980a, 50–2, fig 7) was the first to tentatively draw out the

cropmarks, which at least gave the overall picture, though he accepted that it might not be completely accurate in all its details. Professor St Joseph used a computer-rectified plot for his transcription (1982) but the overall picture, which differed little in detail, was overly rationalized.¹⁷ In the same year, having considered all the available coverage in the NMRS, I prepared an independent survey of the cropmark evidence; the aim being to provide the fullest possible transcription of the cropmark evidence. Many of the aerial photographs are obliques and thus the detail had to be converted to the vertical before mapping. For this the 'paper-strip method' was chosen (Scollar 1975, 52–9; Palmer 1976, 391–4; Hogg 1980, 228),¹⁸ in which intersecting rays are used to fix selected points on the archaeological features. The method of defining the rays on the photographs and transferring them to the 1:2500 map was simple, accurate but laborious (see Wilson 1982, 198); the intersection of field-boundaries and the farm buildings themselves provide good local control. Moreover, in the course of fieldwork in May 1982, some of the features were visible as soil marks and could be measured-in to provide an additional check. I owe a particular debt to Gordon Maxwell and Diana Murray for advice and assistance whilst working on the transcription in the NMRS.

Since publication (Smith 1984, 184–8, figs 5–6), the site has been re-examined more than once. An extract from my plan was published by James, Marshall & Millett (1984, fig 3) as an aid to their assessment of an Early Medieval building tradition. In 1985, Peter Hill drew up a portfolio in support of an application to Historic Buildings & Monuments (SDD, now Historic Scotland) for the funding of an excavation (for the problems this would involve see Reynolds 1980a, 52). Christopher Aliaga-Kelly redrew the site for his doctoral thesis (1986), but with little additional detail (pers comm), and, most recently, work on-site has been undertaken by Christopher Loveluck.¹⁹ For present purposes I am re-employing the figures published in 1984 but, in view of the time-lapse, I have looked again at the aerial photographs and those taken since, and have made one or two minor emendations to the plan. In 1989, though the site was flown over, no cropmarks were apparent (M M Brown, pers comm).

In May 1982, I walked the fields to the north of the farm on a 10 m grid in the hope of relating plough-soil scatters to the subsoil features revealed by the cropmarks (for the scope of this approach see papers in Haselgrove *et al* 1985; Radford 1956; Alcock 1987b, 187).²⁰ Finds included a number of flint and chert artefacts (Mesolithic or later), a preponderance of post-medieval pottery and iron work (S Fenton, pers comm) but nothing which could be ascribed to the intervening period. This is probably partly attributable to the removal of floor-levels by the plough; it is also an apparent feature of the cropmark palimpsest that its detail has become fainter over the years which perhaps signifies, despite scheduling and payment for ploughing to a depth no greater than 0.9 m, that truncation of subsoil features is still a significant factor.²¹ The *New Statistical Account* (1845, 237), however, records the tradition that 'hearths and foundations of houses and kitchen utensils have been ploughed up in the field above the Scurry rock' and this probably indicates the date of critical plough-damage. It is also likely that in use the buildings of the Anglian township were continually swept clean, the domestic refuse being either carted away a comfortable distance, perhaps to be spread over neighbouring fields, or else deposited in rubbish-pits, of which there appear to be a great many at Sprouston (see p 274). This too seems to have been the case at Yeavinger, though rubbish-pits were not found (Hope-Taylor 1977, 168).

Illustration 3 provides an overview of the palimpsest around the present steading and underlines the chronological depth of the archaeological features embraced by it. On analogy with Yeavinger, it will be apparent that many of the timber features at Sprouston probably have a more complicated history than is evident from the aerial photographs. Nevertheless,

with the necessary care, the overall form of the buildings can reasonably be deduced. The NMRS catalogue numbers for the aerial photographs principally used in the transcription are stated. However, to appraise the archaeology at this level is difficult and to aid interpretation I have tentatively subdivided the evidence into three broad chronological phases (illus 4). This requires a level of inference and is not without its difficulties; the respective phasing of features can be determined accurately only by excavation.

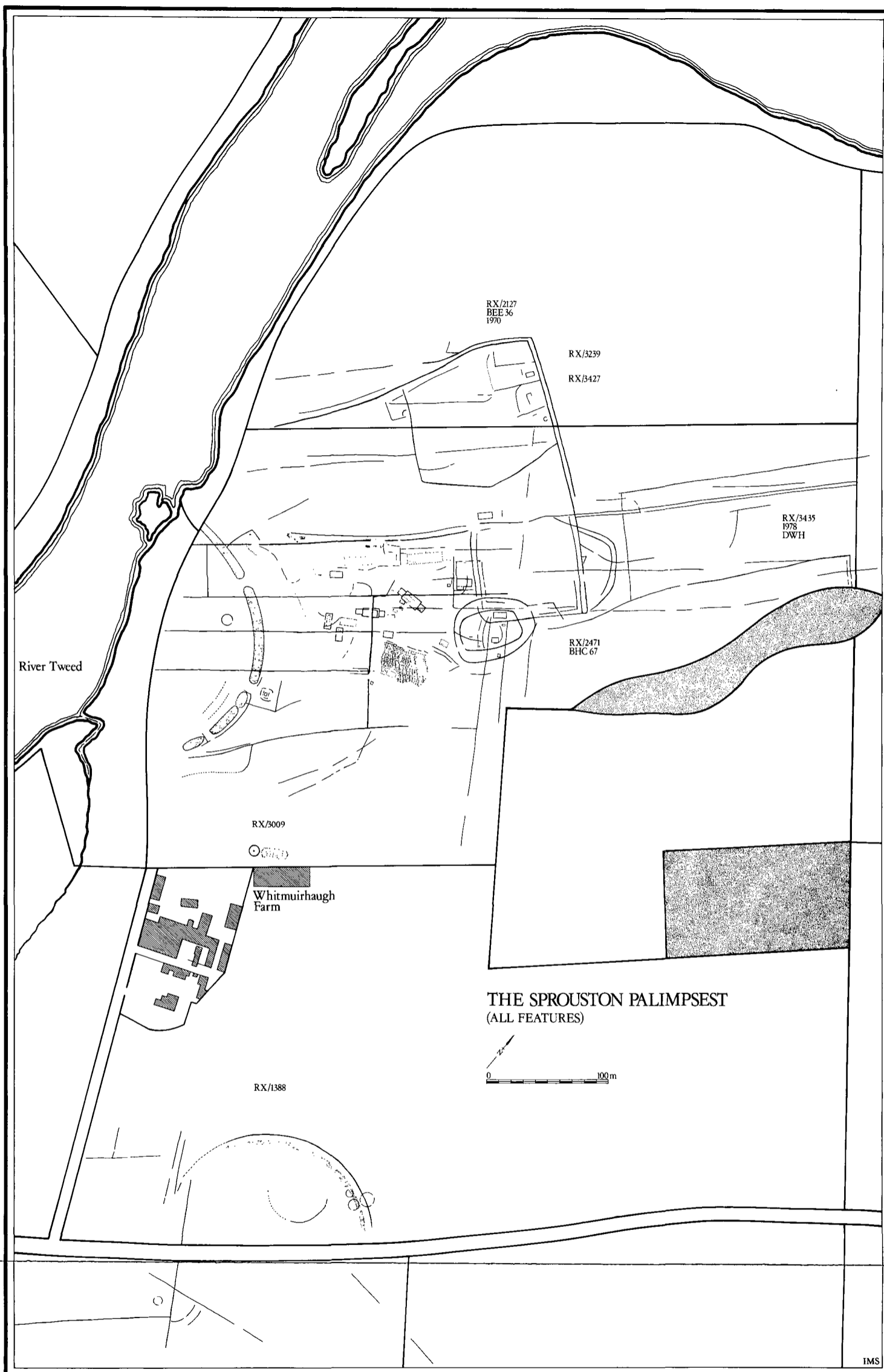
PHASE I

Encompassing an area of marginally higher ground at the south-western edge of the terrace, there is an interrupted ditched enclosure; potentially the earliest feature of the cropmark palimpsest. This has been interpreted as a promontory fort (Reynolds 1980a, 50; St Joseph 1982, 192) and its position, tailored at either end to the river-cliffs of the Tweed, would seem to fit. However, in view of the number of breaks between the ditch-segments, I am inclined to believe that it might be a causewayed camp and thus of Neolithic date.

A close parallel might be Hamildean Hill, Peeblesshire (RCAHMS 1967, 118–19, no 283; Smith 1990, 100) (see also Newman 1976, 184). The ditch-segments on the south-east, where the ground shelves away into a natural hollow, are enclosed by a palisade with in-turned terminals respecting what may be an entrance on the east; to the interior, there are traces of possibly a double palisade and, on the north, a penannular feature, perhaps a round house with an entrance on the east. In addition, in front of the east entrance to the ditched enclosure, there is what appears to be a palisaded homestead of a type perhaps paralleled by that at Graycoat, Roxburghshire (RCAHMS 1956, 441–2, no 994). Further ditch-like features, or gullies, extend laterally from the perimeter of the enclosure; perhaps field-boundaries, their antennae-like character is suggestive of livestock management and, together with the palisaded elements, probably point to the reuse of the ditched enclosure in the late second or early to mid-first millennium BC. Flint and chert artefacts, including burins, points, and scrapers, recovered during field-walking, seem to be related to activity specific to the enclosure. A perforated axe-hammer and a polished stone axe have also been found at Sprouston (Evans 1897, 114–15, 206) and a second axe was found at Lempitlaw (NT 786 327; Anderson & Black 1888, 389). Mulholland notes this as an area producing Mesolithic material (1970, 84).

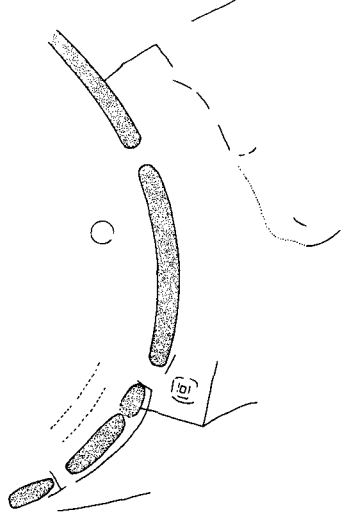
To the south-east of the ditched enclosure, the ground shelves away but rises again in front of the farm buildings where there is a ring-ditch, possibly a ploughed-out barrow, with a primary interment. In the field to the south-east of the farm, three other annular features, possibly ring-ditches, eclipsed by the remains of what may be an embanked palisade with internal quarry ditch, may also be barrows. Corroborative evidence for activity in the second millennium BC is provided by two short cists, each containing a skeleton, which were found in 1932, in the field to the south of the public road (NT 760 354; Craw 1933, 67; Bruce 1986, 37). In 1949, a short cist with skeleton, food-vessel and thin flint blade were found on the neighbouring farm of Redden (NT 7830 3732; Calder & Feachem 1949).

End-on to the steading ring-ditch, immediately to the north-east, there is an unusual structure, probably a building, with V-gable ends (illus 5c). Neither Reynolds (1980a) nor St Joseph (1982) noted this structure, but it is reasonably distinct on two photographs taken by Gates in 1981 (NMRS A 40867, 40871) and is particularly clear on CUCAP AP BEE 35. The building is rectangular on plan, measuring about 21.5 m from south-west to north-east by up to 7.3 m transversely overall (a ratio of roughly 3:1), with end-walls which might aptly be



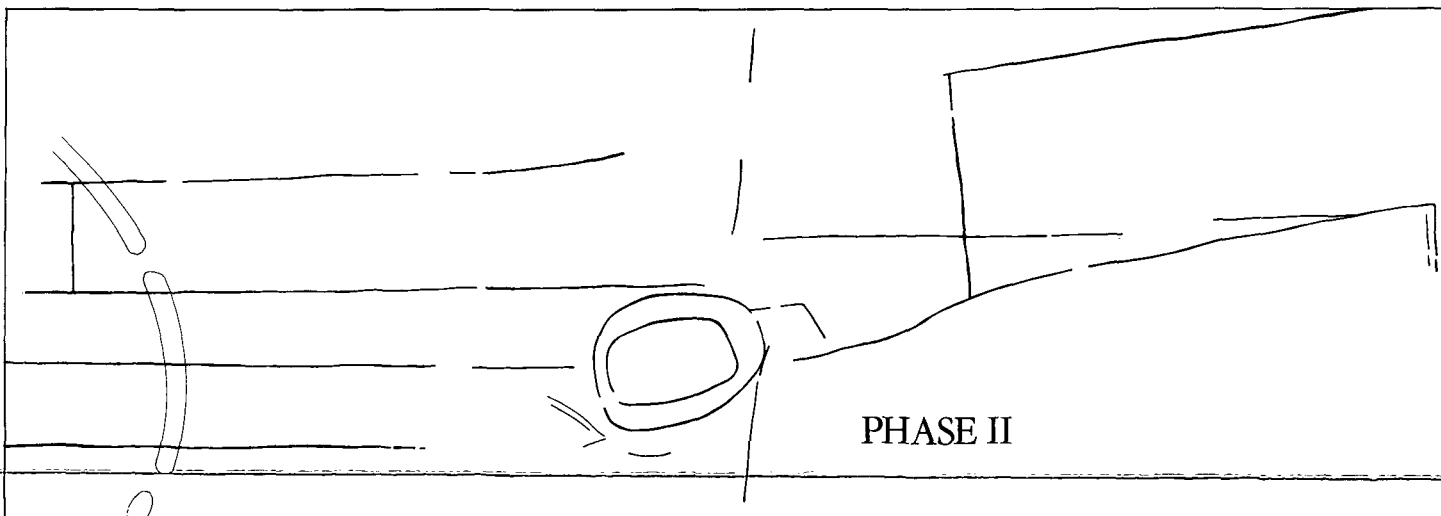
ILLUS 3 Sprouston: transcription of cropmark evidence in fields around Whitmuirhaugh farmstead

THE SPROUSTON PALIMPSEST
(POSSIBLE PHASING)

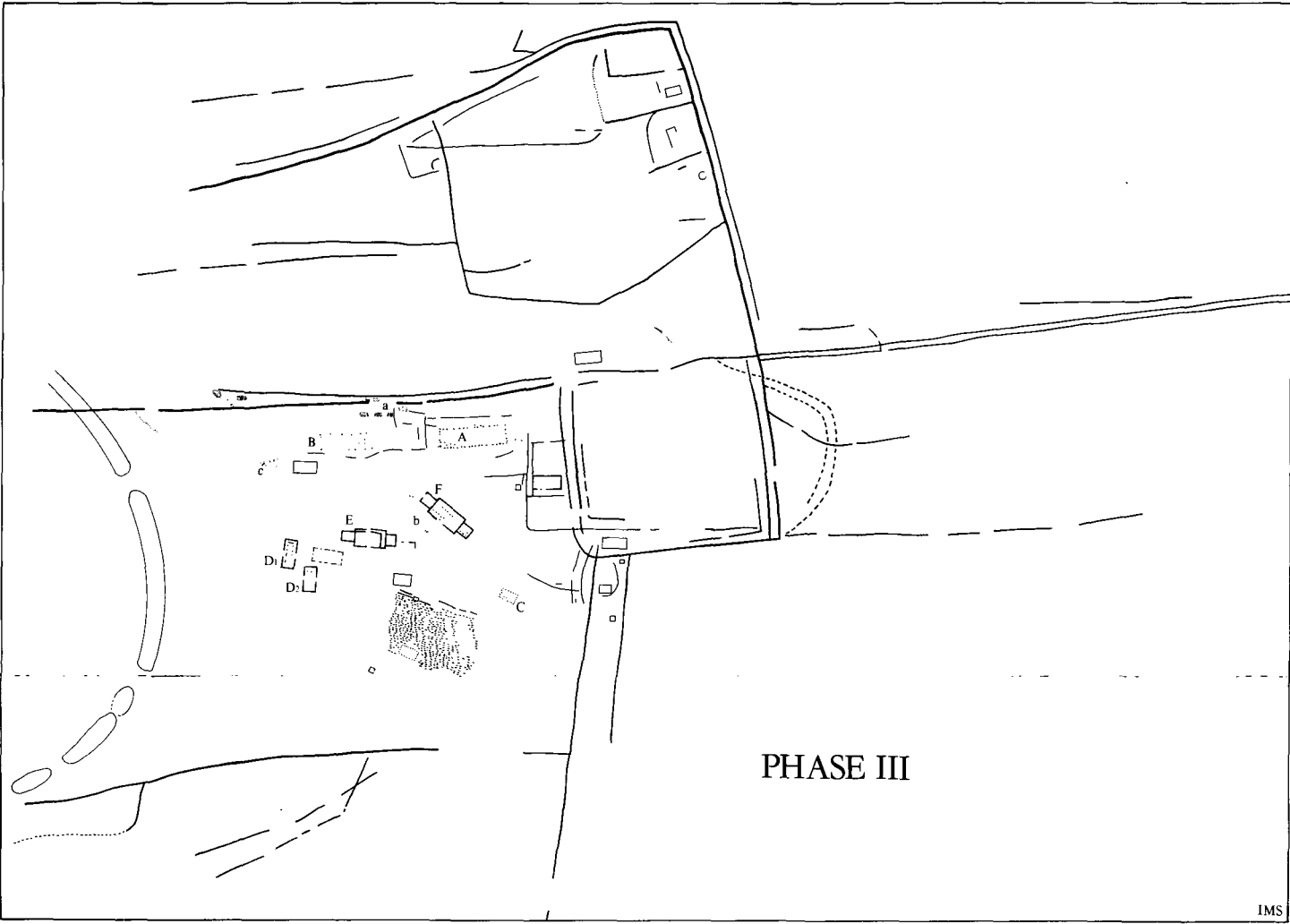


PHASE I

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PHASE II



PHASE III

IMS

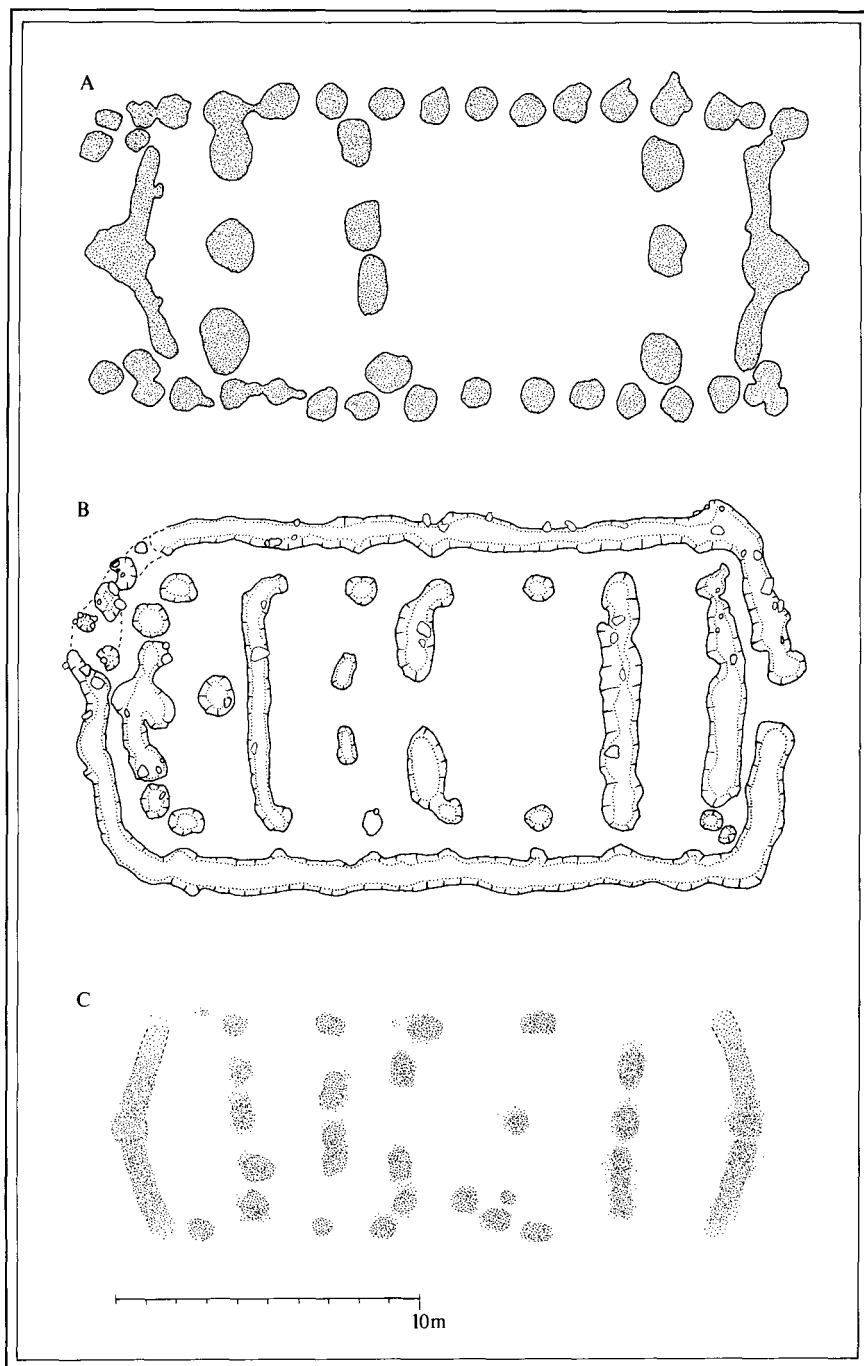
ILLUS 4 Sprouston: a tentative subdivision of the cropmark evidence by phase

described as of 'open-book' type; each end-wall comprising a central posthole and flanking trenches which are respectively drawn-in towards the outer angles of the building. This is the only evidence for the use in this case of post-in-trench construction, though the truncation of subsoil features by later ploughing might account for a perceived loss of other such possibly ephemeral features (detail on the WSW side of the structure is obscured by an intrusion of silts). The long-walls of the building are problematical (see below) but appear to be defined by spaced postholes which are broadly coincident with a number of internal, transverse post-settings which effectively divide the interior into six bays. Only excavation can clarify the form of the building's superstructure, but one may surmise that the walls were made solid with either vertical staves, or planking, or else with clay-daubed wattle braced with the principal uprights, and that the structure was hip-roofed, with each hip consisting of two facets (although there are other possibilities). The purpose of the eccentric end-walls, each with a prominent medial posthole, was presumably intended to overcome the counter-thrust of the building's superstructure; a stress-loading factor countered, for example, in the larger halls at Yeavinger and Milfield by the use of raking timbers to buttress the end- and long-walls (Hope-Taylor 1977, 36–9, 213–31; Gates & O'Brien 1988, 3).

Clearly this is a building of sophisticated character and one whose construction would seem to demand a high degree of expertise. It may be compared on plan with Doon Hill Hall A (23 × 10.4 m) and the buildings known from cropmarks at Crathes and Balbridie, Deeside (RCAHMS 1984, 19, nos 98–9); the latter, excavated by Ralston and Reynolds (1981; Reynolds 1980a, 53–9; 1980b; Ralston 1982), measures 24 × 12 m overall (for comparison see *illus* 5). Comparison might also be made with the structure recently identified from aerial photographs at Auchenlaich, Perthshire, which lies close to what seems to be a substantial Neolithic long cairn (Foster & Stevenson, in prep), though the interpretation of this structure, possibly also a building with V-gable ends, is circumspect.

Radiocarbon dates and pottery from the Balbridie timber hall place it firmly in a Neolithic context (Reynolds 1980b, 326) and, although Neolithic pottery is said to have been found at Doon Hill (N Reynolds, pers comm), the date and status of Hall A is still contested. Hope-Taylor (1980, 19) was unwilling to accept that it might be Neolithic but did not rule out a possible connection with the Deeside buildings. The problem is that Doon Hill Hall A is succeeded by another, Hall B, and by analogy with buildings at Yeavinger (see p 280), this seems to be of seventh-century date. The main timber uprights of Hall B had been dug into the soft fillings of the large pits that had braced the corresponding members of Hall A. This would require, if Hall A is Neolithic, that some 4,000 years later, the dished hollows marking the sunken fillings of its post-pits were observed and used by the builders of Hall B. Hope-Taylor thought this improbable.

However, it occurs to me that the presence of the earlier features might have been apparent to the builders of Hall B if, for instance, the turf had been removed prior to construction as part of the initial layout and preparation of the building stance which would be standard vernacular practice (cf Meirion-Jones 1982, 50); the topsoil on the degraded hill summit is of no great depth and its removal would have revealed the earlier post-pits which could have been reused expeditiously. The presence of a hillfort immediately to one side of the Doon Hill enclosure (RCAHMS 1924, 108, no 106) may have served as a visible reference point for later activity and the discovery and reuse of Hall A could therefore be no more than coincidental. This would allow Doon Hill Hall A and the Deeside buildings to be both manifestations of a common cultural tradition and Neolithic. The same may apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the building beside the steading at Whitmuirhaugh (but see also p 285).



ILLUS 5 Comparative plans of (a) Doon Hill Hall A (after Hope-Taylor 1966b); (b) Balbridie (after Ralston 1982); and (c) the Sprouston building, based on a computer-rectified plot of CUCAP BEE 35, approx. size

Nevertheless, one must be cautious about drawing too much from the significance of one structural element, the V-gable end. If this component is simply a design-element, intended only to offset the counter-thrust of the superstructure, there is no reason why it should not recur in the structural repertoire of large timber halls in any period. If one discounts this feature from a consideration of the Sprouston, Deeside and Doon Hill buildings, their dissimilarity in terms of constructional technique is all the greater and one is left with the possibility that one may no longer be comparing like-with-like (see also Ralston 1982, 247). Nevertheless, whilst specific structural detail is an important point to be reckoned with, on plan the buildings do bear comparison (illus 5). There is a broad coincidence in size, end-post to end-post, and a hint of an apparent correspondence in the position of their transverse bays. The width of the Sprouston building is markedly different, but it may be that its long-walls, perhaps of post-in-trench construction, have been lost as a result of the truncation of subsoil features, or are so severely wasted that they are not apparent as cropmarks. Truncation of subsoil levels was a factor both at Doon Hill and Balbridie, and in the case of the former it is possible that all that visibly remains are the post-impressions left in foundation trenches that have all but been eradicated. However, at Balbridie, it is the very presence of the external wall-trench which seems to set it so clearly apart from Doon Hill Hall A and the Sprouston building. Comparison could be made between its internal structure, if this could be shown to be an independent free-standing element, and Doon Hill Hall A, but this would require a re-assessment of the function of the wall-trench; a feature not easily dismissed. The southern wall-trench at Balbridie, which was well preserved, has a series of indentations along its northern edge which correspond most closely with the internal transverse post-settings and this would imply that the two are structurally integral. However, if the interpretation of the excavated evidence would allow that what gave rise to these trench-side impressions was not the presence of vertical timbers but rather inclined posts used to buttress the internal structure, this would enable us to separate the two components on plan. This would not only serve to bring the three buildings more closely into line, but it might also help to resolve the problem posed by a break in the eastern wall-trench with the presence of a solid timber wall immediately to the interior. This said, there is no evidence to date for the use of external buttressing in any building of Neolithic date either from Britain, or on the Continent. But, this can be no more than special pleading and for the present, satisfaction perhaps lies in noting points of coincidence whilst allowing, in the final analysis, that the critical distinctions between the three buildings will probably lie with specific structural detail.

However, if the tenets of my re-evaluation are plausible, and accepting implicitly the dating evidence obtained for Balbridie, then, on balance, a Neolithic date for all three buildings would seem a reasonable proposition. Moreover, given the apparent pattern of replacement of Doon Hill Hall A by Hall B, one might also ask whether it is really tenable that a recently burnt hall would have been overbuilt in this manner? There may have been some overriding reason which would justify this course of action, but this is no more than an excursion into possibilities. If the V-gable-ended building at Sprouston is Neolithic, one could speculate that the neighbouring ring-ditch was located by reference to it, though this would seem to require the building to have been still in use, or at least apparent, much later; a level of juxtaposition which may, nevertheless, be paralleled at Dalry (Cochran-Patrick 1874; Coles & Simpson 1965, 46; Laing 1969, 113; but see also Scott 1989).

Phase I at Sprouston may thus embrace evidence of Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age activity; the earliest features being probably the interrupted ditched enclosure, perhaps the building beside the steading, the ring-ditch or barrow, together with those in the field to

the south-east. The juxtaposition of palisaded elements, perhaps added to the ditched enclosure before the ditches were fully silted (though they may have been re-cut), probably carries us through to the mid-first millennium BC.

PHASE II

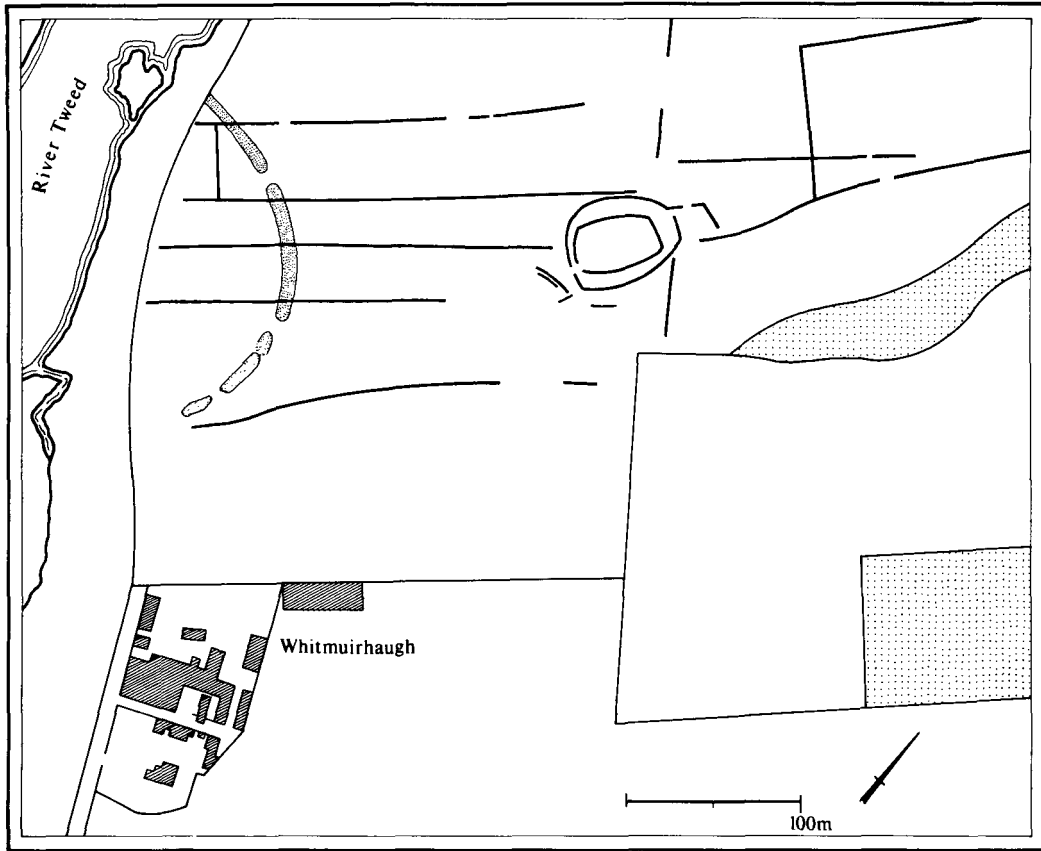
The focal point for activity in this phase would seem to be a double palisade which consists of an inner enclosure and an outer annexe (about 10 m apart) with well-defined entrance-gaps on the SSW.

The interior exhibits no trace of houses and for this one might draw comparison with a number of simple palisaded sites in Roxburghshire, for example, Staneshiel Hill, Henfield and Fasset Hill, where no definite hut-sites are apparent, and that within the hillfort of Blackbrough Hill (RCAHMS 1956, nos 317, 801, 660, 302). For the precise form of the double palisade, there are also a number of good analogies. Palisaded settlements with an internal enclosure and concentric outer annexe are present at Hayhope, Roxburghshire (Piggott 1949; RCAHMS 1956, 242–3, no 665), and, in Peeblesshire, Castle Hill, Horsburgh Castle Farm, and White Hill (RCAHMS 1967, nos 195, 207), and, as earthworks, at the Orchard Rig settlements, Purvis Hill, Chester Hill, Traquair, and Helm End; a stone-walled settlement with round houses randomly disposed to the interior (RCAHMS 1967, nos 239–41, 246, 272, 286). In Berwickshire, the fort on Shannabank Hill might be a close parallel; it has twin ramparts set about 12 m apart (RCAHMS 1980, 27, no 208; Smith 1990, 184).

On the evidence of excavation, the settlement at Hayhope Knowe seems not to have been occupied beyond the late first millennium BC; a date in the mid to late first millennium BC has been suggested for the twin-palisaded enclosure of Harehope I (Feachem 1960, 191). The settlement at Helm End seems to be demonstrably Romano-British, though it may be later, and, given its evolved layout, the fort on Shannabank Hill could be post-Roman (see Smith 1990, 184). One must, nevertheless, bear in mind that as yet no palisades have been scientifically dated to the British period in northern Britain. To this list of sites might also be added the possible double palisade at Kirk Hill, St Abbs, which has been dated to the third quarter of the first millennium AD (Alcock & Foster 1986); this clearly a product of Anglian manufacture. The settlements and outer annexes at Hayhope Knowe, Harehope I and Castle Hill, Horsburgh Castle Farm, are all defined by twin-walled palisades set in continuous wall-trenches with hair-pin terminals. These are absent in the double palisade at Sprouston and it is unclear what weight should be attached to this. Nevertheless, a date in the mid to late first millennium BC or early centuries AD might be anticipated on the basis of the parallels suggested.

The apparent absence of houses to the interior of the Sprouston palisade need not be significant. Shallow ring-grooves would probably be most vulnerable to later activity specific to the enclosure and, with the exception of White Hill, the inner enclosures of all the other sites noted would seem to have been used as settlements. The outer enclosure is probably best interpreted as a hard-standing or corral for livestock together with the activities common to the farmyard. Peripheral to the palisade, on the SSW, there are a series of tangential gullies. The purpose of these may have been to funnel driven stock through the narrow entrance-gaps.

Extending laterally to both sides of the palisade, but specifically on the WSW, there are clear indications of a linear field-system (illus 6); the field-boundaries are orientated with the crest of the gravel ridge and extend over the interrupted ditches of the Phase I enclosure.



ILLUS 6 Sprouston: linear field-system and palisaded fort of Phase II (possibly Romano-British/Early Historic). On the south-west, the fields eclipse the interrupted ditched enclosure of Phase I (perhaps Neolithic)

These fields, which are unlike native field-systems of the uplands in the Romano-British period but nevertheless could owe more to Roman than native influence, seem to conform to a recognizable type. The fields are much longer than wide, up to a ratio of 5:1, and they are grouped together and arranged in parallel. Fields of this type are known on the Wessex Chalklands and in Sussex, on limestone in Wharfedale and Somerset, and in the Fens where they seem to accompany 'peasant' farms rather than villas or larger farm units (Fowler 1976, 26). Their form suggests the use of a one-way plough, rather than a scratch-ard, and that, however remotely, some idea of Roman mensuration was being applied in the layout of the fields. In this context it seems reasonable to interpret the double palisade as a fort and, if the field-system does owe more to Roman than native influence, that the fort and field-system coextensive with it are ultimately Romano-British (see also p 284). Phase II might thus be seen as the product of a community engaged in mixed farming with an emphasis on arable close in. If the site of the settlement is denoted by the palisade this would amount only to a marginal shift in preferred location from activity earlier related to the interrupted ditched enclosure of Phase I.

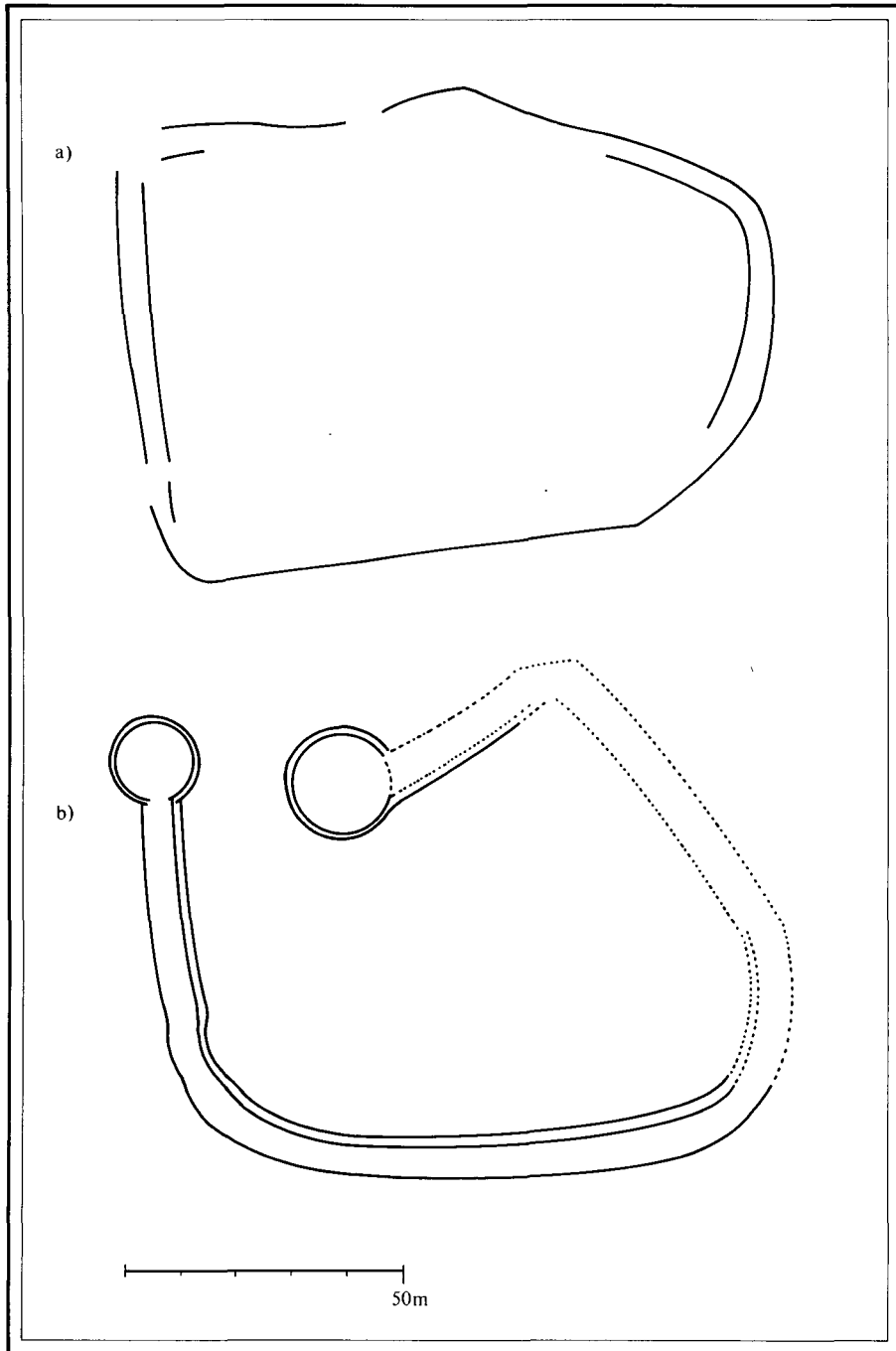
PHASE III

The elements of this phase potentially reflect activity of the Anglian period, most probably the early and middle decades of the seventh century. In view of the data currently accumulating for Anglian sites in North Britain and the exceptionally meticulous excavations undertaken by Hope-Taylor at Yeavinger (1977; see also Cramp 1980; Rahtz 1980), I propose to confine my parallels specifically, wherever possible, to Northumbria and East Lothian; a radius roughly of 40 km from Sprouston.

THE PALISADED ENCLOSURE

The focal point of Sprouston Phase III, for field-boundaries and buildings alike, and the largest single feature of the site, is a large twin-walled palisaded enclosure which appears to have been remodelled more than once. It is demonstrably later than the double palisade of Phase II which it eclipses on the south.²² In what I infer may be its earliest form, denoted by pecked lines on illus 4 (although there is no visible distinction in the cropmarks), it seems to have been roughly square with an extruded side on the north-east stilted with rounded angles. It enclosed an area of about 7200 m² and on plan may be compared to the Great Enclosure or fort at Yeavinger (about 7300 m²), though the Sprouston palisade lacks the bulbous terminals at the entrance which at Yeavinger are diagnostic (see Hope-Taylor 1977, 85–8; Alcock 1987b, 265); for comparison see illus 7. Owing to the discontinuous wall-lines of the Sprouston palisade, it is far from clear where the original entrances may have been, but there are two possibilities: one close to the southern angle of the south-west wall-line, where there are opposed gaps; the other, roughly central to the north-west wall where the line of the palisade is drawn towards the interior and broken. The Yeavinger enclosure, succeeding two earlier ones defined by one or more palisades, was progressively elaborated achieving its maximum structural development in Phase IIIc which is attributed by the excavator to the time of Edwin and Paulinus, about AD 626. Despite doubts which have been expressed about the precise chronology of the structural phases of the palisaded fort and associated timber buildings at Yeavinger, there can be no doubt that they fall in the seventh and earlier post-Roman centuries (Rahtz 1980, 266; Alcock 1988a, 7–8). In common with Yeavinger, the interior of the Sprouston palisade exhibits no trace of houses; a building in the southern angle, which appears to truncate the inner wall-trench, is probably later (see p 286). Although, following Alcock (1987b, 216; 1988a), I interpret the Great Enclosure at Yeavinger as a defensive work, it should be noted that Hope-Taylor's considered view was that it should be seen as a place of assembly (1977, 157, 208–9, 266, 280).

In its remodelled form, the Sprouston palisade was tailored to the square (the form of the enclosure at this level is not in doubt). Boundaries, probably ditches, extend laterally from the four corners; that on the north describing a marked dog-leg with a return to the south-west. The boundaries on the WSW, north and north-east are seen on the aerial photographs as parallel dark lines (or as white lines on the photographs which evidence 'reverse cropmarking') and this perhaps suggests their use as droveways; this is also suggested by the funnelled inflexion of the boundaries opening to the haughland on the WNW and WSW respectively. These boundaries seem to denote cardinal land-divisions which were put to specific use: that to the south-west of the palisaded enclosure was set apart for the nucleus of the township; to the north-west, within the dog-leg of the northern boundary-ditches, the principal feature is a polygonal enclosure exhibiting traces of internal subdivision and ancillary structures, while, on the north-east, the area seems to have been set apart for an array of pits; at least 50 are visible



ILLUS 7 Comparative plans of (a) Phase III Sprouston palisade and (b) Yeaving Great Enclosure (after Hope-Taylor 1977)

on an aerial photograph taken by Harding in 1978 (NMRS RX/3434) – these, perhaps, domestic refuse or rubbish-pits, are possibly symptomatic of a strict policy governing the disposal of unwanted waste. As these lie outwith the SDD scheduled area, excavation here might be feasible.

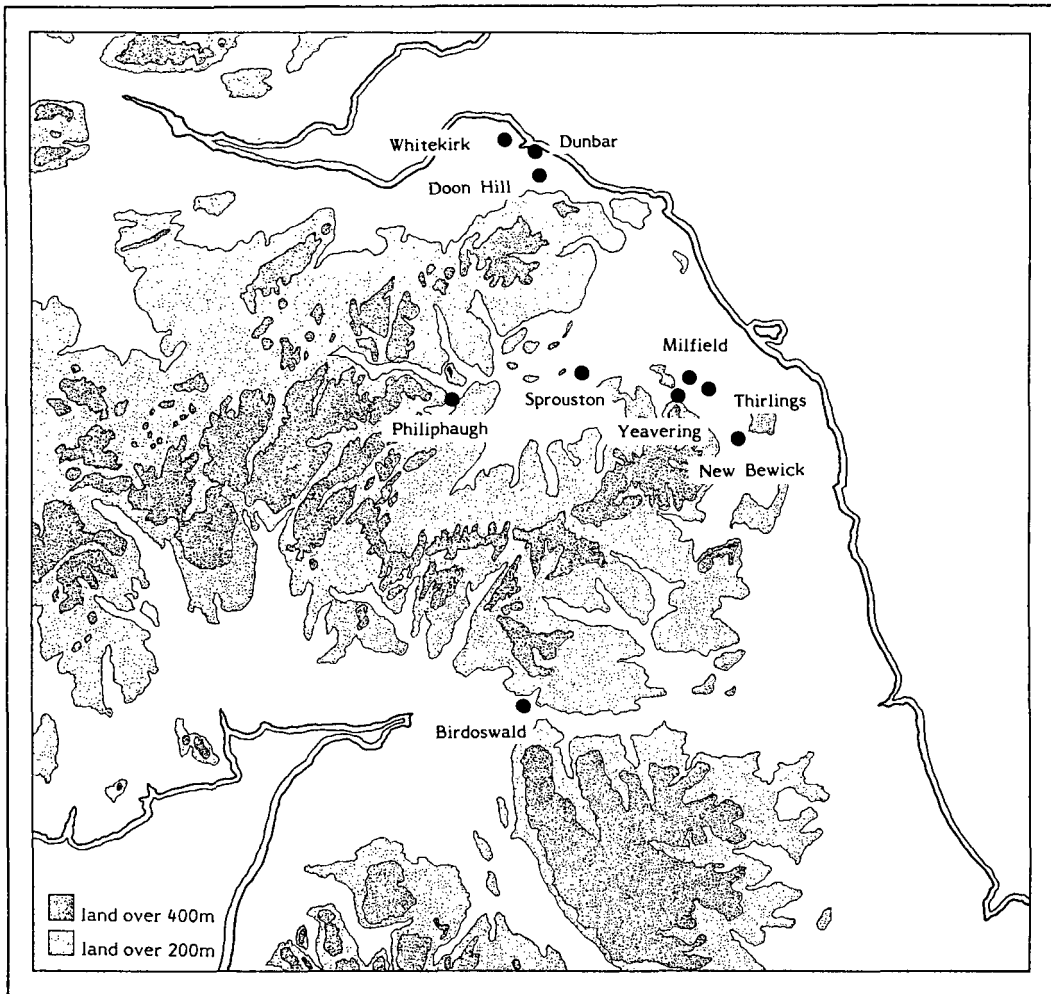
THE TOWNSHIP

Within the area of the township itself, there are what may be a number of sunken-floored structures, at least 10 rectangular buildings, including post-built structures and others with continuous wall-trenches, and an extended inhumation cemetery with over 380 graves orientated ENE/WSW, set in multiple rows. The similarities between Sprouston and Yeavinger, in the overall disposition of buildings in relation to a major palisaded enclosure, are apparent but for the buildings themselves parallels might also be drawn with those known from cropmarks elsewhere in Northumbria and East Lothian, and the excavated sites at New Bewick, Thirlings, Doon Hill and Dunbar (illus 8). At a glance the buildings of the Sprouston township seem to be randomly disposed, but there is a principal axis which appears to be respected by all but one of the buildings. This extends SW/NE from the southern entrance of the palisaded enclosure, cut only by one building aligned east–west (*F*), and is in the form of a corridor roughly 25 m wide – possibly a street or more formal public space (see p 287). The principal buildings are disposed to either side.

GRUBENHÄUSER

The sunken-floored structures are probably amongst the earliest components of the Anglian township. These are apparent on several of the aerial photographs taken in 1981 and 1988 (NMRS A40867, 40871, B16089) but are particularly clear on CUCAP AP BEE 36 (1970). On the basis of comparable cropmark evidence in Northumbria, and a number which have been excavated (see below), it seems reasonable to interpret these as *grubenhäuser*. At Sprouston, there are two distinct groups. The first, a group of six, (*a*) on illus 4, are each set end-on and ranged in parallel; there is at least one other situated within the funnelled terminal to the WSW boundary-ditch. The juxtaposition between the *grubenhäuser* and the paired boundary-ditches extending from the western corner of the remodelled palisaded enclosure suggests that they are probably coeval with the enclosure in its earlier form. The second group (*b*), a cluster of three, lie to the south-east of the public space at the centre of the township, some 60 m to the front of the south entrance to the palisaded enclosure. All are subrectangular, have the appearance of slightly rounded corners and are in the order of size of roughly 3–4 m by about 2 m transversely. It is possible that others are masked as cropmarks owing to an expanse of sandy silts, which prevail over a greater part of the intervening area between the township and the present farm, evident on the aerial photographs as dark amorphous patches. Some 40 m to the WSW of (*a*), there is also a much larger sunken-floored building (*c*), subrectangular on plan (6 × 4 m) with a bowed end-wall and rounded angles.

Although recognized as early as 1970 (McCord & Jobey 1971), the presence of *grubenhäuser* in Northumbria was only confirmed by excavation in 1986 (Gates & O'Brien 1988). Credit is due to Tim Gates for having identified some 40 at Milfield (though not all may be *grubenhäuser*), mainly outwith the massive double palisaded enclosure which, as at Yeavinger and Sprouston, seems to have been a key element of the site and similarly appears to be of more than one phase (*ibid* 3, fig 1). At least eight *grubenhäuser* have been identified within an area of about 2 ha at New Bewick, in the upper reaches of the Till Valley, and others



ILLUS 8 Distribution-map of settlements with timber halls and/or *grubenhäuser* within a 40 km radius of Sprouston

have been recognized at Thirlings where they are set at a discrete distance from the excavated timber buildings (Miket 1981, 138, fig 1). In East Lothian, features tentatively identified as *grubenhäuser* are known at Inveresk, one has been excavated at Dunbar (Holdsworth 1990; 1991) and other sunken-floored structures, known only from aerial photographs, extend over a wide area of the eastern seaboard from Fife to Moray (see Maxwell 1987, 33–4).

Three have been excavated in Northumberland, two at Yeavering (Buildings *C1* and *D3*; Hope-Taylor 1977, 88–91, 103–6) and one at New Bewick (Gates & O'Brien 1988). The latter was of standard form akin to many that have been excavated, since first recognition at Sutton Courtney in the 1920s (Leeds 1923), on a large number of widely separated sites (eg Jones & Jones 1975; Champion 1977; Losco-Bradley & Wheeler 1984, 103–11; Powlesland 1987). The New Bewick *grubenhäuser* consisted of a pit (4.7 × 3.9 m and 0.5 m deep), with posts central to the end-walls and seems to have been of ridge-post construction. It is unclear whether the floor

was at ground level or in the base of the pit (as in the case of the two at Yeavering) but from the interior were recovered fragments of up to 30 annular loomweights and four small sherds of pottery; three body sherds in a sandy oxidized fabric and one reduced and decorated with incised lines and small impressed circles. The Yeavering buildings are atypical. Building *C1* (6.1 × 4 m) had plank walls braced with posts set at intervals along the sides of the pit; a broken loomweight was found on the floor. Building *D3* (12.2 × 6.1 m) was of framed post-and-panel construction with opposed lateral entrances and had two hearths off-centre. It seems to have been relatively short-lived, though the dished hollow left after the pit had been infilled was reused as a working surface. Building *C1* perhaps provides a close parallel for the large sunken-floored building (c) at Sprouston.

The *grubenhäus* excavated at Dunbar consisted of a pit (7.5 × 4.5 m) with near vertical sides and a flat bottom. An irregular line of stakeholes and small postholes defined the long-walls, and central to each end-wall was a single substantial posthole. Two complete and several poorly fired loomweights were recovered from the clay matrix of the floor along with fragments of a blackened coarse ware cooking pot. At least a further 20 loomweights were found beside the western end-wall of the *grubenhäus* and these, together with those from the interior, would accord with the often stated interpretation of weaving and related activities. Although a calibrated radiocarbon date of AD 330–590 was obtained for the phase to which the *grubenhäus* probably belongs, Holdsworth has argued that a date of before AD 500 may not be credible. Artefacts recovered from stratigraphically related deposits, which include the fragment of a gold and garnet pectoral cross and a gilded bronze buckle plate, are indicative of a mid-seventh-century date.

At Sprouston, the presence of *grubenhäuser* in company with other buildings underlines the affinities of the site with the centres at Yeavering, Milfield, Thirlings, and, perhaps too, Dunbar. The *grubenhäuser* are perhaps best interpreted as flimsy, temporary structures erected for a specific purpose and demolished when the occasion has passed (Owen 1981, 45). On the evidence of Yeavering *C1*, New Bewick, and Dunbar, some may have been used for weaving (but see also Rahtz 1976, 76; Cramp 1988, 75). Hope-Taylor suggested that Yeavering *D3* was a kitchen. In Brittany, a considerable number of sunken-floored huts have survived to the late 20th century and thus are of great interest for the light they shed on this long-lived vernacular tradition. They are all used for storage and there is as yet no record of the *grubenhäus* ever having been used as a dwelling, nor is any example yet known from excavation (Meirion-Jones 1982, 174–7). Their floors are invariably of beaten earth and evidence is lacking for the use of planked floors at ground level as inferred, for example, by Stanley West at West Stow (1985) and Powlesland at Heslerton (1982; 1987; 1988, 159). However, there is a danger of pressing too far theories based solely on contemporary evidence.

HALLS AND LESSER BUILDINGS

The timber buildings at Sprouston fall into three categories: post-built structures; those with continuous wall-trenches; and those possessing the latter but with annexes or outshots at either one or both ends.²³ There are three post-built buildings, the largest of which (*A*) is set end-on to the palisaded enclosure and parallel to the main boundary ditch which extends from its western corner. This is a substantial building measuring roughly 28 m from south-west to north-east by up to 9 m transversely, its walls defined by a string of massive postholes. Given its span, this might seem to call for centre-posts and perhaps buttresses but none is apparent on

the aerial photographs. Off-centre to the north-west wall, two external post-pits perhaps indicate the position of an entrance. The building appears to be formally set apart in a court defined by gullies or fence-lines on four sides though open on the south and north-east.

Professor St Joseph (1982, 197) drew parallels for this building with Yeavinger A4 and, in point of technique, with Yeavinger A6 and A7. Building A4 is the largest and most impressive of the Yeavinger halls (25.3 × 14.7 m overall) and is attributed by Hope-Taylor (1977, 161–3) to Phase IIIc, perhaps the reign of the Deiran Edwin. However, A4 is of buttressed post-in-trench construction. Its closest analogy is probably the hall at Milfield (see Gates & O'Brien 1988, 3, fig 1) but, while these buildings bear comparison in size with that at Sprouston, to draw such a parallel probably lays too great a stress on the Yeavinger building-style. For specific structures based on separate posthole construction we have to look farther afield. A parallel might tentatively be drawn with the hall at Cruggleton, Wigtownshire; a building measuring 5.95 × 3.69 m overall whose walls were defined by two parallel rows of posts, the posts being regularly spaced 1.7–2.3 m apart and paired across the building. The interior was subdivided by a partition-wall and an associated radiocarbon date indicates a mid-eighth-century context (Ewart 1985, 15–18), though it is unclear whether this reflects Anglian or British activity.

The excavations at Dunbar are particularly instructive for the light they cast on the development of another key emergent Anglian centre, probably, too, with significant British antecedents (SUAT 1989, Holdsworth 1990; 1991; forthcoming). Dating probably to the mid-seventh century, and probably contemporary with the *grubenhäuser*, there is a post-built building (7 × 3.5 m) with an entrance-doorway in its south-west long-wall. Other buildings of the type, and belonging to the same phase of occupation, may yet remain to be identified from an accompanying palimpsest of postholes. Overlying the first building, there is one of post-in-trench construction (7 × 4.5 m) with substantial double postholes at its north-western and south-western corners; a feature paralleled both at Doon Hill (A) and Cadbury (cf Alcock 1987b, 202–4, fig 13.10). While close by, there is another structure of apparently similar construction (8 × 4 m). Completing the structural sequence, and possibly of ninth-century date, there are three timber buildings raised on stone wall-footings. Buildings of this type, with their structural repertoire of sill-beams, dwarf-walls and post-pads, are present in a post-Roman context at the Dod, Borders Region, and are known from elsewhere in northern Britain, and are probably indicative of a long-standing vernacular tradition (see Smith 1990, 95–6).

We may also bear in mind the three timber halls identified in 1988 at Birdoswald Roman fort (Wilmott 1988; 1989). The first was built after the north granary collapsed using the stubs of the walls as foundations. This was replaced by a second (28.25 × 8 m) built within the ruins of the granary still standing on its south side. Here the floors were made solid and hearths were erected at one end. When this collapsed, a third hall was constructed over the consolidated remains of the north granary and the adjacent road, the *via principalis*. This measured 23 × 8 m overall, with the posts set on post-pads, five down each side. The posts employed in its construction were clearly massive; the weight of the superstructure exerting sufficient pressure to fragment the paving reused as pads. As yet the halls are undated, though sherds of Huntcliff and Crambeck wares – the latest Roman pottery – were found in the make-up of the floors of the southern hall, along with a gold and glass earring (later fourth century). A fifth- or sixth-century date might be inferred, though the third hall may have been in use later (T Wilmott, pers comm).

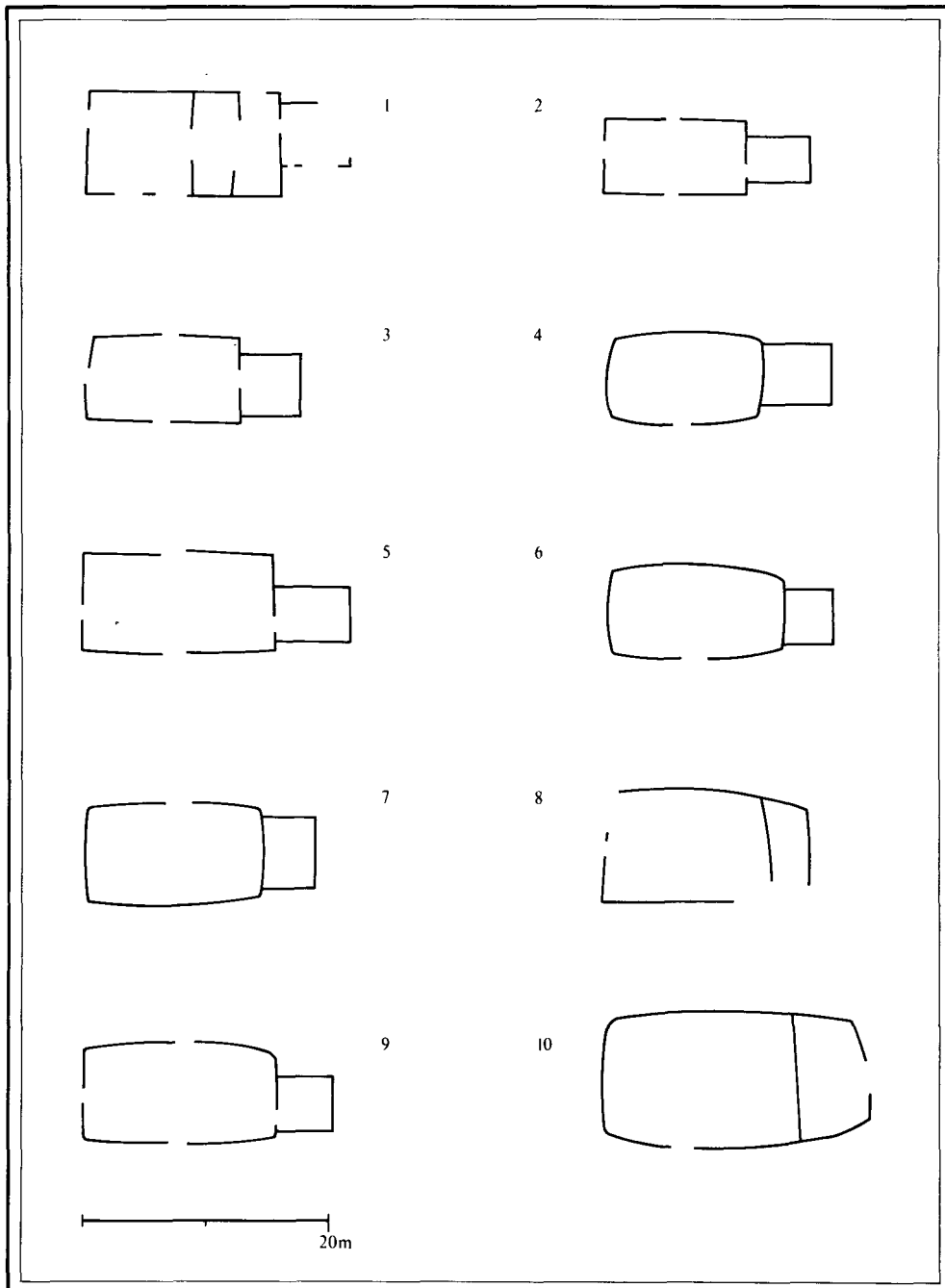
Given the scale of Sprouston (A), it too might reasonably be interpreted as a hall and, in

terms of its proportions and the size of the post-pits medial to the two long-walls (see *illus 2*), it might be regarded, along with the 'Long Hall' at Cheddar, as a double-annexed two-square building (cf Rahtz 1979; and for discussion James *et al* 1984, 206–7). This in itself, setting aside for the present the question of status, might point to a southern Romano-British rather than an Anglian ancestry, for which the Birdoswald halls provide perhaps an apposite parallel. Nevertheless, in the context of North Britain, we should possibly regard such buildings, in point of technique, as essentially British.

Some 30 m to the south-west of Sprouston Hall *A*, there is evidence of another (*B*) which is similarly aligned and apparently also formally set apart by a string of curvilinear gullies coterminous with the forecourt of Hall *A*. The cropmarks for Hall *B* are indistinct and this could perhaps suggest that it is earlier than Hall *A* or else was abandoned before it (later activity truncating its subsoil features). Its juxtaposition with the *grubenhäuser* (*a*) is perhaps of interest (see James *et al* 1984, 198). Hall *B* is denoted by widely spaced post-pits and measures roughly 20 × 7 m overall; it is possible that it had an annexe at its ENE end. A third post-built building (*C*) lies in open ground to the NNE of the cemetery on the south side of the palisaded enclosure. It is much smaller (about 7 × 4 m) and may have had an entrance off-centre to its southern wall. Comparison might be made with buildings *G* and *I* at Thirlings (O'Brien 1982); radiocarbon dates from this site suggest a fifth- or sixth-century context (c AD 470 and c AD 580). Buildings *A6* and *A7* at Yeaveering, similarly defined by spaced posts, are believed to have been of post-and-panel construction with wattle-and-daub walls and are attributed by Hope-Taylor to Yeaveering post-Roman Phase I (1977, 147, 156). They are thus possibly contemporaneous with the layout of the Great Enclosure and their position relative to it is perhaps worthy of note on comparison with Sprouston (*C*) (and see also p 284).

The remaining buildings, denoted by continuous wall-trenches, can be divided into those without and those with annexes at either one or both ends. There are at least 10 simple rectangular buildings within and peripheral to the township. These range in size from about 6 × 3 m to 12 × 6 m and most are of a ratio of 2:1. In addition there are a number of much smaller structures almost square on plan (on average 4 m²), perhaps grain stores. Plain rectangular buildings are standard at Yeaveering, Thirlings and Milfield. At Yeaveering they seem to have achieved their final level of development in Phase IIIC (Hope-Taylor 1977, 148–9, 152).

Of note at Sprouston, peripheral to the nucleus of the township, are two buildings uniquely aligned NNW/SSE and arranged in echelon (*D*). Both have opposed lateral entrances. Building *D1* (roughly 12 × 5 m), on the west, exhibits traces of internal post-settings and slots perhaps indicative of an aisled superstructure, possibly with a screen-wall at its NNW end; Building *D2* (about 10 × 5 m) has two possible post-pits to the interior at its NNW end. For the layout and form of the buildings, though one must bear in mind that the above deductions are based solely on the interpretation of cropmark evidence, comparison can most readily be made with Buildings *C2* and *C3* at Yeaveering (9.2 × 5.5 m and 15.3 × 7.6 m respectively) which are similarly arranged in echelon, have opposed lateral entrances and internal post-settings. Hope-Taylor assigns them to Yeaveering Phase IV, possibly contemporaneous with the return of Oswald, of the Bernician line, from exile among the northern peoples, thus around AD 634 with a possible *terminus ante quem* of AD 651 (1977, 149, 277); but for doubts expressed on Hope-Taylor's use of the historical record to date the key archaeological episodes at Yeaveering see Alcock (1988a, 7–8) and Scull (1991). The buildings of Yeaveering Phase IV are distinctive and strongly suggestive of external influence. In Hope-Taylor's words, 'they appear suddenly and complete, characterized by



ILLUS 9 Comparative plans of timber halls: (1) Doon Hill Hall *B* (after Hope-Taylor 1980); (2) Yeavinger *Bb* (after Hope-Taylor 1977); (3) Yeavinger *A1c* (after Hope-Taylor 1977); (4) Sprouston *E1*; (5) Yeavinger *C4a* (after Hope-Taylor 1977); (6) Thirlings *A* (after O'Brien 1982); (7) Sprouston *E2*; (8) Whitekirk *B* (after Brown 1983); (9) Yeavinger *C4b* (after Hope-Taylor 1977); (10) Whitekirk *A* (after Brown 1983)

diversification of plan, lighter construction and the asymmetrical placing of doorways in the end-walls' (1977, 150). At this date the Great Enclosure or fort seems to have been abandoned, its remains cleared away (*ibid* 164). Although not evident at Milfield, it is conceivable that these changes are reflected in the development of the Sprouston township in the atypical form and layout of Buildings *D1* and *D2*.

Sprouston Building *E*, to the NNE of *D*, consists of two superimposed buildings but on the basis of the cropmarks it is not possible to establish their relative phasing. One is defined by quite a substantial wall-trench (*E1*, roughly 12 m from WSW to ENE by 6 m transversely) and has an annexe (6 × 4 m) at its SSW end; the other (*E2*), which seems to be of slighter build though approximately the same size, has an annexe (4 × 3 m) at its NNE end. Both have slightly bowed long-walls and possibly opposed lateral entrances. The wall-trenches of one appear to have been reutilized for the other with only minor adjustment. Comparable in form and possibly in the pattern of replacement are buildings *C4a* and *C4b* at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977, 93–5). *C4a* was substantially built with thick oak timbers. It was destroyed by fire but reinstated on roughly the same wall-lines using lighter timbers (*C4b*); essentially a series of screens (thickly daubed) supported by a minimal number of heavy timbers. The walls of *C4b* were slightly bowed and Hope-Taylor attributed this to the comparative lightness and flexibility of the materials used in its construction (1977, 94). However, for the provision of an annexe, parallels might also be drawn with Yeavinger *A1c* and *Bb*, which most closely approximates in size to Sprouston (*E*), with Thirlings *A* (O'Brien 1982) and, in East Lothian, with Doon Hill Hall *B* (Hope-Taylor 1966b; 1980) and Whitekirk *A* and *B*; buildings which also seem to have slightly bowed long-walls, for comparison see *illus* 9. Hall *B* at Doon Hill is dated by reference to Yeavinger *C4a*, both are ascribed to about AD 640 (Yeavinger phase IV, but see also p 278); Buildings *C4b*, *A1c* and *Bb* are attributed to Phase V, perhaps AD 651 × 55 to possibly AD 685 (Hope-Taylor 1977, 152, 277). If the bowing of the long-walls is diagnostic (see St Joseph 1982, 194; Brown 1983, 156) then perhaps the closest counterpart for Sprouston (*E*), in point of technique, is Yeavinger *C4b*.

Building *F* at Sprouston, some 20 m to the north-east of *E*, measures approximately 14 m from west to east by 7 m transversely and has an annexe central to its eastern wall and another asymmetric to its western wall. It appears to have opposed lateral entrances (that on the south is distinct) and, to the interior, parallel post-pits point probably to an aisled superstructure. This building is therefore probably best interpreted as an aisled-hall. It most closely resembles in size and form Yeavinger Hall *A1b* but parallels can also be drawn with *A3a*, a larger and more elaborate version of the former and the counterpart for *A3b*. The latter is dated by association with a gold-washed copper alloy copy of a Merovingian *triens* minted probably in the 630s or 640s. Halls *A1b* and *A3a* are ascribed to Yeavinger Phase IV, *A3b* to Phase V (Hope-Taylor 1977, 49, 55–8, 152; Welch 1984; Alcock 1988a, 7–8).

THE CEMETERY

A principal feature of the Sprouston cropmarks, and no doubt a key component of the township, is a cemetery set at a discrete distance to the SSE of aisled-hall *F*. Due to 'reverse cropmarking', a phenomenon of the late summer, almost every one of the graves on CUCAP AP BEE 36 (*illus* 2) is apparent as a light band against a darker mass of colour. Only on the SSE periphery of the cemetery is the detail occluded as a result of the intrusion of silts and sands.

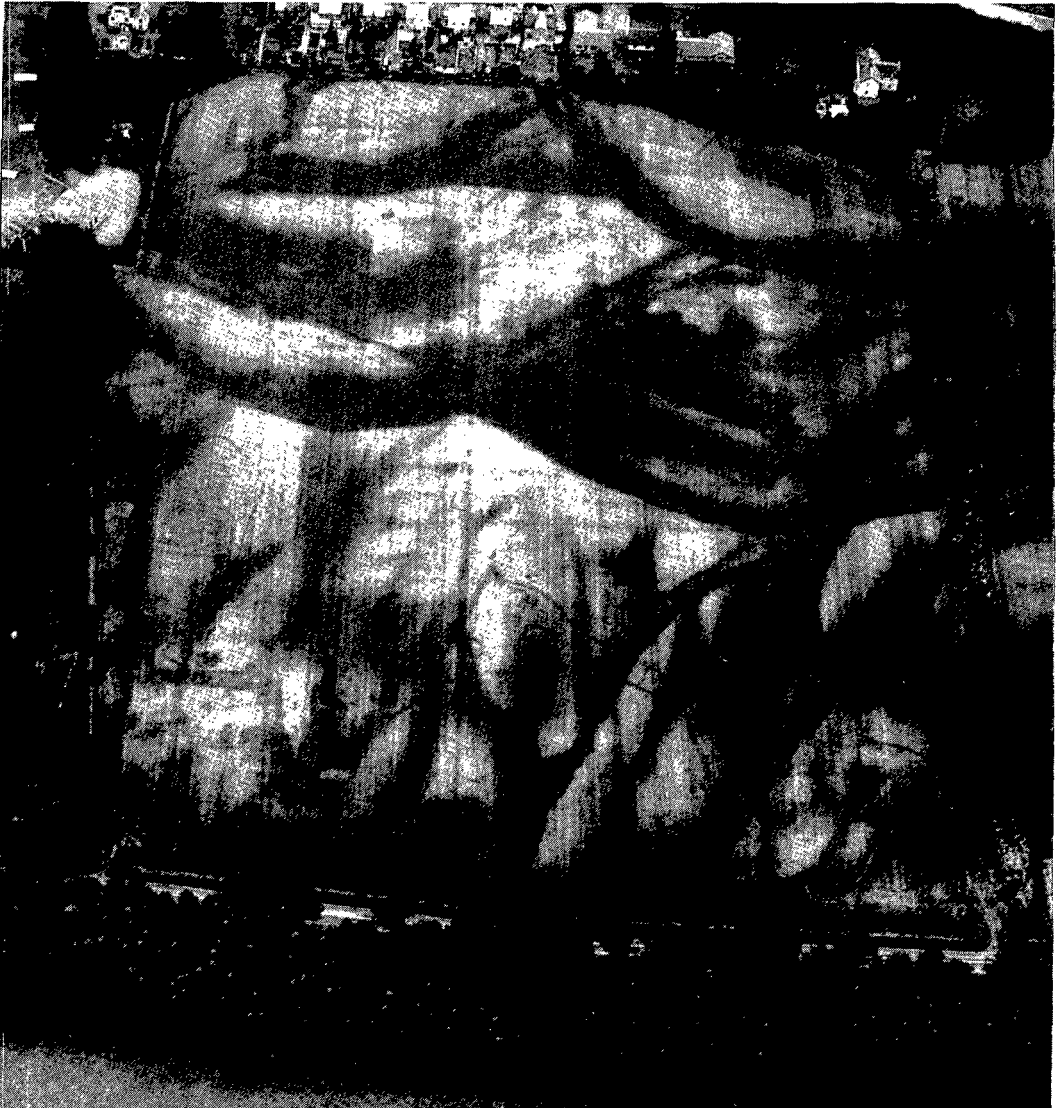
Nevertheless, we possibly have the bulk of the cemetery in view; at least 380 graves can

be counted, the majority orientated ENE/WSW. The cemetery has well-defined edges and on the north is respected by a series of parallel gullies; on the NNE the boundary is defined by what may be a series of string-graves in which the foot of one grave respects the head of the last in a wavering linear pattern. It is possible, as at Yeavering, that the edges of the cemetery were fenced but, unlike Yeavering, the graves at Sprouston are predominantly set in multiple rows laid out in a riparian pattern.

The focus for burials seems to be a building (hitherto unrecognized) inset at the south-west corner of the cemetery.²⁴ This appears to be an ephemeral post-built structure, aligned ENE/WSW and measuring about 7 × 4 m overall. The burials are thickest to the north and for about 20 m to the east of the building and it therefore seems reasonable to interpret it as a Christian church or oratory. A break in the grave-rows running north to a small structure coeval with the boundary gullies on the northern perimeter can perhaps be interpreted as a path giving access from the church either to a secondary focus within the burial-ground, perhaps a mortuary enclosure,²⁵ or else directly to the township. The graves are thinnest and at their most random towards the northern and eastern perimeters of the burial-ground. A row of graves along the ENE perimeter perhaps reflects infilling along a fence-line, while a subrectangular area devoid of burials to the WSW possibly indicates unadopted ground and from this it may be inferred that the cemetery was abandoned before its full carrying capacity had been realized.

For comparison, one might consider the eastern cemetery at Yeavering (Hope-Taylor 1977, 70–8), which has been divided into two phases. To the first phase belong a series of string-graves akin to those identified on the northern perimeter of the cemetery at Sprouston; these are ascribed to Phase IIIc by Hope-Taylor. In Phase IV (the cemetery's second phase), the burials were more tightly nucleated and the cemetery was fenced. However, a closer analogy for the Sprouston cemetery is provided by another identified by aerial photography in July 1989 at Philip Haugh on the north bank of the Ettrick Water close to Selkirk (NT 456 283) (illus 10). Here too, the graves are punctiliously laid out in rows and enclosed. Close by there are at least three rectangular buildings defined by continuous wall-trenches and a substantial square, ditched enclosure; a counterpart, perhaps, for the remodelled enclosure of Sprouston Phase III. Philip Haugh clearly lies outwith the area of early Anglian settlement (see Smith 1990, 205–16) and thus the cemetery, buildings and enclosure are probably best seen as the components of a British site, though the continuous wall-trenches for the buildings perhaps point to some Anglian influence. A church is not apparent.

However, at Yeavering the focus for burials in Phase IV was a simple rectangular building *Ba* (11 × 6 m) identified as a Christian church. In Phase V, it was remodelled and provided with a western annexe, *Bb*. If one can draw even the most tentative parallel with Building *Ba* at Yeavering, it might be inferred that the church at Sprouston was erected about AD 634 (see also p 287). Given that the building at Sprouston seems to have been of elementary posthole construction, one might wonder whether this too reflects the strong external (Hibernian) influence evident in the building style of Yeavering Phase IV (see Hope-Taylor 1977, 238). Bede's reference (*HE* iii.25) to the building in 652 of Finan's church on Lindisfarne 'in the manner of the Irish' (*in more Scottorum*) 'not of stone but of hewn oak . . . with a roof thatched with reeds' is probably quite apposite. Moreover various Irish literary evidences refer to two types of construction in wood: of hewn timber (*dairtheac*) and wattle-work respectively;²⁶ a distinction which is perhaps apparent in the ephemeral character of the building attached to the Sprouston cemetery. In terms of size, comparison might also be made with the single-celled structure identified at the Hirsell (4.45 × 4.65 m), which formed the



ILLUS 10 Philiphaugh, Selkirk (NT 456 283), aerial view from north-west. Identified by aerial reconnaissance in July 1989, this site, though apparently within an area of British influence in the Early Historic period, nevertheless provides the closest known parallel for the Sprouston cemetery. Centre left, a row cemetery contained within a polygonal enclosure; left foreground, what may be a roughly square ditched enclosure (note too, two circular spots, perhaps wells), and, close by, traces of at least three timber halls. Over the intervening ground (centre background), there are traces of rig-and-furrow cultivation. The rigs appear to respect the cemetery, but may terminate on an area of poorly-drained ground. (Reproduced by courtesy of RCAHMS)

nucleus of a church to which an apse was later added (Cramp 1984; 1985). Its date, however, is uncertain, though it seems to be pre-ninth century.

DISCUSSION

Without intensive geophysical prospection backed up by selective excavation, much that I have said must clearly be regarded as tentative. Nevertheless, given the overriding similarities between Sprouston, Yeaveering and Milfield, no less than that counterparts for the Sprouston buildings are apparent elsewhere in the north, it seems reasonable to try to set the evidence in a wider context. At Sprouston, the chronological range of the structural Phase III elements, comprising the twin-walled palisaded enclosure, post-built halls, simple rectangular buildings defined by continuous wall-trenches and those of more evolved type including aisled-halls with opposed lateral entrances and those with annexes at one or both ends, together with what appear from the aerial photographs to be sunken-floored buildings (*grubenhäuser*), suggest that the development of the township runs chronologically parallel with the centres at Yeaveering and Milfield, at least, that is for the major seventh-century phases. There is, too, the same apparent transition in the luxurious use of heavy oak for the earliest phases at Sprouston, and its replacement later by buildings using lighter scantling, highlighted by Hope-Taylor as an important factor in the emergence of the Yeaveering building-style (1977, 95, 394). This possibly points to an early abundance and a latterly growing scarcity of heavy oak, the bulk of which was presumably grown locally.

The paramount feature of Yeaveering Phase IIIc, the Great Enclosure, rebuilt in an elaborate and sophisticated style, and the grouping of all the major buildings outside it, is paralleled most closely at Sprouston, while there is a hint too of the echelon (Sprouston *D*, illus 4) which was used as a calculated device at Yeaveering in the layout of the township rebuilt, following a disastrous fire, in Phase IV. Moreover, the stylistic changes evident in the construction of the Yeaveering halls of Phases IV and V are also apparent at Sprouston (Buildings *D* and *E*). What we do not know is whether the catastrophic fires which presaged the remodelling of the Yeaveering township in its latter phases was also a factor at Sprouston. Given the position of Buildings *D* peripheral to the township, and the apparent lack of *in situ* replacement but for *E* (possibly commensurate respectively with Yeaveering Phases IV and V), it might be inferred that this was not the case and that the pattern at Sprouston is instead one of continual development and infilling on available ground. But the possibility cannot altogether be ruled out that the palisaded enclosure, remodelled to the square, had not itself fallen out of use in the lifetime of the township. The juxtaposition of parallel gullies, boundary ditches (some possibly defining formal courts) and buildings which encroach on the southern side of the enclosure might well suggest that the palisade had been slighted. Thus at Sprouston, as too at Yeaveering and possibly also at Milfield, the presence of a major enclosure might be seen as a formative element in the development of the township, but not an enduring one. At Yeaveering, the Great Enclosure seems not to have been rebuilt after the fire which brought Phase IIIc to an end.

As we move back in time, through the Yeaveering attributed by Hope-Taylor to Aethelfrith (Phases II and IIIab) to the possible British origins of Phase I, we find that while the palisaded fort was a constant feature, the suburban structures become retrogressively simpler and more modest (1977, 159–61; Alcock 1988a, 20). Whilst many of the timber features at Sprouston would seem to best fit in the context of a seventh-century township, one might wonder whether some too are not earlier. Unlike Yeaveering and Milfield (*Ad Gefryn*

and *Maelmin* respectively), Sprouston is denoted by an Anglian and not a Celtic name (see Hope-Taylor 1977, 15–16; Alcock 1988a, 7) and this in itself might seem to preclude its early origins as a British centre. None the less the mode of construction of the Phase III palisaded enclosures and the post-built halls have probably closer affinities with British vernacular tradition than Anglian. Notably absent at Sprouston are the large buttressed halls present at Milfield (Gates & O'Brien 1988, 3) and Yeavinger (A4) in Phase IIIc. The closest counterparts for these at Sprouston, at least in size, would seem to be the buildings of separate posthole construction to the WSW of the palisaded enclosure. In point of technique, buildings of this style are ascribed to the earliest phases at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977, 148–9). What then are we to make of their presence at Sprouston possibly in the middle decades of the seventh century? Perhaps, we should regard them as essentially British, at least in conception if not in use. This is possibly admissible given that Sprouston would seem to lie much closer to the British interface, as revealed by the extent of early Anglian place-names (see Smith 1990, 208–9, fig 7.2), than either Yeavinger or Milfield; this too might account for the post-built halls at Dunbar, again possibly in a seventh-century context. However, there are further underlying similarities between the earliest phases at Yeavinger and Sprouston which need to be examined more closely.

At Sprouston, as too at Yeavinger, the site selected for the Anglian township was one already opened up for agriculture (Sprouston Phase II) evidenced by a linear field-system and a focal point provided by the double-walled palisaded enclosure. The field-system seems to be of Romano-British type but the form of the enclosure is perhaps best seen in the context of the late first millennium BC. None the less, we might accept that it could still have been in use in the earliest centuries AD and, given the parallel with the fort on Shannabank Hill (p 270), that it could be post-Roman. It is not possible to tell whether the field-system had reverted to grass prior to the creation of the township, as seems to have been the case at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977, 154–7), but there is a chance that the outline of the double-walled palisade, if not some upstanding remains, were still apparent at the inception of Sprouston Phase III. We may note the close juxtaposition of C, a building of spaced posthole construction, apparently bound by the outworks accompanying the entrance to the Phase II palisaded enclosure (illus 3), and the comparable position of the post-built structures beside the Great Enclosure at Yeavinger in post-Roman Phases I and II (Hope-Taylor 1977, figs 74–5). Given the radiocarbon dates from Thirlings, we should possibly not rule out a late sixth-century date for the inception of Sprouston Phase III. The relative location of the palisaded enclosures of Sprouston Phases II and III represent only the most minor adjustment on plan and from this it might be inferred that the presence of the earlier enclosure provided a fixed point of reference for the one that followed and, moreover, that the functions of the first were transmitted to the latter albeit on a grander and more elaborate scale. Both palisades exhibit no trace of internal structures and though this need not rule out their presence, as proved to be the case at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977, fig 26; Alcock 1988a, 19), they are perhaps best interpreted as forts but with sufficient hard-standing to befit their dual use as corrals for livestock.

Given that the field-system of Sprouston Phase II is located on prime arable land, which is today permanently under crop-rotation, it is probably unlikely that it had reverted to fallow at the time the Anglian township came into being. Is it then possible that the Anglian elite simply took over a going concern and adopted to their own requirements an existing British fortification? If this was the case, this would bring Sprouston firmly into line with the pattern repeated at *Colodaesburg* (see Smith 1990, 211–13), Doon Hill, on the premise that Hall A is

British, *Dynbaer* (Alcock 1988a, 5, 15–18), *Inbroninis* (probably Beblow, Lindisfarne),²⁷ and Bamburgh, for the take-over of British defended places; the status and administrative functions of which may have been perpetuated under Anglian lordship.

Against this background, we should possibly also reconsider the status of the V-gable-ended building adjacent the steading at Whitmuirhaugh, which I earlier attributed to Sprouston Phase I with the suggestion that it could be Neolithic (p 269). Its closest analogy is Hall A at Doon Hill which Hope-Taylor dated to the fifth or sixth century AD; a view upheld by Alcock (1987b, 244; 1988b, 24). Hall A, it could be argued, is without good parallel in its structural form but, as Alcock notes (1988a, 18), this is to say no more than that major buildings of the period are almost unknown in British contexts. If we accede to the view that it may be British (note, too, the use of bi-lobed corner-posts, a feature of the hall at Cadbury and in use at Dunbar), the same may also be the case for the V-gable-ended building at Sprouston. It would also be easier to reconcile its juxtaposition with the ring-ditch or barrow (illus 3) for, although this might be of Bronze Age date, the practice of burial beneath a barrow or within a circular stone kerb, or ring-ditch, is also not without parallel in the British period (eg the Catstane: Cowie 1978; see also Thomas 1971, 62; Faulk 1977, 5; Close-Brooks 1984, 91–4). As these structures lie outwith the SDD scheduled area, they too could be excavated and the problem resolved. Alcock has suggested that Hall A at Doon Hill would have been a suitable permanent residence for a *praefectus* or thane; in British terms, a princely *neuadd* (1987b, 244; 1988a, 18).

Thus at Sprouston we could perhaps have the nucleus of a British estate: the hall, possibly a ceremonial or religious focus, and, to the north, the fort and field-system. On this basis we can readdress the question, is Sprouston essentially a British or an Anglian site? Given the place-name, I think we must accept that at some date, possibly by the seventh century, it certainly was Anglian. The Phase III palisaded enclosure, though apparently with good British antecedents (cf Cramp 1988, 75), is some three times larger than its predecessor of Phase II and, in view of the presence of comparable enclosures at Yeavinger and Milfield, it seems reasonable to regard this as essentially an Anglian trait. However, on the basis of the large post-built halls A and B, which bear comparison in size and layout with the major halls of Yeavinger Phase IIIc, one might suggest that the visible expression of what is essentially a British vernacular tradition was more long-lasting at Sprouston than was the case at either Yeavinger or Milfield. Given that the first major halls make their appearance at Yeavinger in Phase IIIab (perhaps the reign of Aethelfrith), we should possibly not view their presence at Sprouston at a date much before this. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind the *grubenhäuser* excavated in 1972 by Wachter, at Catterick, for which a date in the fifth or early sixth century may be indicated (*Medieval Archaeol*, 17 [1973], 150; Alcock 1987b, 252–3). We cannot altogether rule out the possibility, given the form of the Phase III palisaded enclosure and the presence of *grubenhäuser* and buildings based on separate posthole construction, that the transition between British and Anglian phases at Sprouston had taken place some time in the late sixth century but, by the same criteria, it is reasonable to infer that the principal layout of the township, with buildings outside the protection of the palisaded fort, approximates with a degree of probability to the period c 605–616; here running parallel with Phases II and IIIab at Yeavinger (Hope-Taylor 1977, 276).

STATUS AND FUNCTION OF THE TOWNSHIP

In determining status and function we have only the timber features to go by, only

excavation can cast light on the ceremonial and ritual aspects of the township's life. Nevertheless, we can possibly interpret the palisaded enclosure in the terms elucidated for Yeavinger and the timber halls, along with the lesser buildings as correlates of status. Bede refers to Edwin *equitatem inter civitates sive villas aut provincias suas cum ministris*, 'riding between his cities, townships and kingdoms with his thegns' (*HE* ii.16; Colgrave & Mynors 1969, 192). Here, perhaps, we have a hint of the specific requirements which would have to be met by the provincial centres, administrative, social and economic; a hall suitable for the permanent residence of a royal official and one which could be adopted for use as a royal residence; buildings for the king's retinue and court officials, and service buildings; an ability to exact an agricultural surplus, to store and process it, thus agricultural buildings, and perhaps too a place for formal assembly (see Alcock 1988a, 23–7).

The predominant feature of the Sprouston township, and the natural focus for the buildings which grew up outside its walls, is the large palisaded enclosure or fort. Its presence perhaps highlights a corporate requirement to have at the community's disposal a defensible place, and one to which they could withdraw if occasion demanded, with the capacity to accommodate residential and other intended functions. Even following the collapse of Celtic supremacy in the north, after the battles of *Catraeth* and *Degsastan* (see Smith 1983, 9, 35–7; 1990, 310–45), these were perhaps still uncertain times, but, given the scale of the enclosing works, the ancillary functions of the palisade in times of peace should not be overlooked. It perhaps served to safeguard communal gatherings and musters of herds. More than this it possibly serves to underline the central role of the township as a key regional centre. The fort should possibly be seen, if not strictly as a royal work, as one built with royal assent and for which labour services may have been provided. This in itself may serve to differentiate the status of Sprouston from the centres at Thirlings, New Bewick and Whitekirk which lack comparable enclosed places. These are possibly best interpreted, at a more modest level, as *villae*, subordinate to the royal centre, the *villa regia* or *vicus regis*, and to those centres denoted by the terms *urbs* and *civitas* which Bede uses of Bamburgh to indicate 'the main royal fortress' (Campbell 1979a, 52; Alcock 1988a, 11–21; 1988b, 32–4). Whilst Stephen (VW 36, 38) uses *urbs regis* with reference to *Inbroninis* and Dunbar, the term normally refers to a lesser fortified place and both these centres were clearly of lesser status than Bamburgh (and Dumbarton).

We can reasonably deduce that a centre such as Sprouston would have been in receipt of a wide range of agricultural products, both arable and pastoral, raw and processed, possibly in the form of food-renders, in part for consumption at the time of the royal progress, but there must also have been a surplus which could have been redirected in payment or kind for the maintenance and construction of the royal works, to support craft specialisms and to secure the other necessary luxuries that appertain to kingship (see Cramp 1988, 77; Alcock 1988a, 22–39). Sprouston was ideally placed to meet many of these requirements with ease of access to first-class arable land on the neighbouring haughlands of Whitmuirhaugh and Redden, and pasture at Haddenrig and Wark. The buildings closest to the enclosure, and juxtaposed with it, along with those to the north-west with their peripheral courts and enclosed yards, are possibly best interpreted as the working components of an agricultural unit; the implement sheds, barns and processing areas, as too, perhaps, discrete areas of craft activity. A major building, immediately to the south-west of the palisaded enclosure and thus occupying a position near central to the township, is perhaps a candidate for something akin to a tithe barn (Alcock 1988b, 25). It is formally set apart with its own yard and though it may post-date the palisaded enclosure, and is itself enclosed by a major boundary ditch, its relative position might indicate

that it succeeded in some measure on the functions of the former. Even in collapse the perimeter of the palisade may have been used as an annexe for stock. This is suggested by the extension of the later boundary ditch as far as its eastern angle (illus 3) and, although later buildings encroach on three sides, the interior of the palisaded court seems to have been respected at all times.

Given the number, layout and permanent character of the suburban buildings at Sprouston, the nucleus of the township seems unacceptably grand simply for a *villa regia*. Not all the buildings need be contemporary and so far as form and style can be used as an index of date, it is possible that the initial focus of the township lay alongside the south-western boundary-ditch and infilled later on the available ground beside the cemetery. The majority of the buildings are probably best seen as halls of greater or lesser extent, perhaps respectively for kings and thanes. Hall *A*, on size alone, is clearly the most ambitious, and perhaps fit for a contemporary king. Its position relative to Hall *B* and the presence of an intervening forecourt, is paralleled most closely in Yeavinger Phase IIIc (Hope-Taylor 1977, 162). It may have been used, too, at other times as the permanent residence of a royal official, perhaps a *praefectus*, or thane, with responsibility for oversight of the estate. In a later phase, the role of *A* may have been superseded by *F*, an aisled-hall central to the township. Whilst all the halls were probably habitable, the *grubenhäuser* perhaps reflect a diversity of support functions; some may have been used as weaving-sheds. Woven cloth was, perhaps, one of the renders exacted from this and other comparable estate centres. There is also an apparent church within the cemetery and an ancillary structure on the northern perimeter; the two perhaps connected by a path. It is worth recalling that Bishop Aidan had a church and cell *ecclesia et cubiculum* on several royal estates (Bede HE iii.3, iii.17).

The presence of formal space within the township is probably also significant; space for the king's bodyguard, or warband, and lesser officials who could not be accommodated in the major buildings and may have encamped close by; space, too, for formal gatherings, fairs, festivals and markets. There is no evidence for such a formal structure as the Yeavinger grandstand. But, until the construction of aisled-hall *F*, perhaps late in the township's history, there was a sizeable free central area. This might conceivably have fulfilled much the same public function as the central area at Yeavinger; a place of assembly, perhaps a folk-moot. On the Continent, no less than in Britain, assemblies were mainly held in the open air and thus we need not necessarily expect to find archaeological traces of this (cf Barrow 1981; Nelson 1983, 220; Adkins & Petchley 1984; Alcock 1988a, 24).

In considering which category Sprouston should best be seen to fit, in terms of the site-hierarchy used by Bede and Stephen to denote secular and royal centres, there is a difficulty as the status of the site may have fluctuated within a relatively short time-span. Without detailed knowledge of the contexts of the buildings, which excavation alone can provide, this question needs to remain open-ended. Given, though, the nucleation of the principal components of the township, the palisaded enclosure and the outstanding size and character of the halls, it would seem natural to think of its being at least an *urbs regis*. Depending on whether or not the function of the palisaded enclosure was perpetuated in the lifetime of the township, one might either allow it to have survived as such or else to have declined, along with Yeavinger and Milfield, to the status of a *villa regia* or *vicus regis*, with the emphasis more firmly on the agrarian aspect of its role as an estate centre.

Unlike Yeavinger and Milfield, Sprouston emerges in the medieval period with the status of a royal manor. Can we perhaps infer that this reflects a carry-over of its administrative and political status in the seventh century? The problem we face is that we do not know whether

the site itself was still in use, or if it had reverted to a centre closer to or coeval with the present village. One would suspect that the medieval church, on record in the 12th century is certainly not that within the cemetery at Whitmuirhaugh. In the 13th century we have evidence of a royal progress to Sprouston (p 261, n 3) and we can only wonder whether some part of the township had survived long enough to be brought into use for this specific purpose. This, nevertheless, seems unlikely, though it can be proved only by excavation, and we should possibly accept that the Sprouston township, along with Yeavinger and Milfield, reached the zenith of its importance in the middle decades of the seventh century and declined rapidly thereafter. The only contra-indication is perhaps the size of the cemetery which seems unacceptably large for a township with a life of perhaps no more than 100 years. The burial-ground could have had a longer currency, perhaps as a traditional place of burial, but again this is probably unlikely. By way of explanation, one might suggest that it served a wider community and outlying villages which lacked formal burial-places of their own.

Thus, at Sprouston, we probably have the nucleus of a British estate adopted for use by the incoming English sometime in the late sixth or early seventh century, and successively elaborated for some 50 years or more thereafter. We should probably not regard Sprouston as in any way atypical but rather that it reflects the means by which the annexed British territories were secured and gradually subtended to Bernician overlordship. Sprouston should perhaps be seen alongside *Colodaesburg*, and possibly also Simprim,²⁸ as one of a number of *urbes regis* established to gain a foothold within the British territories upon which later settlement could evolve. Although, without excavation or evidence of cropmarks, we cannot define the categories to which these sites belong, we may surmise that they included a greater number of *villae* or *viculi* than is at present apparent. The emergence of Coldingham, Sprouston and Simprim (or perhaps a site close by, possibly Swinton or Kimmerghame) as shire centres in the medieval period would seem to bear this out (Barrow 1973, 28–35; Smith 1984, 181; 1990, 434). The presence of Anglian buildings with annexes at Whitekirk and Doon Hill, comparable to those of Yeavinger Phase IV, is possibly consistent with the extension of Anglian control to the Lothians about AD 640 following the siege of *Etin* (Edinburgh) in 638. The significance of this event has in the past, nevertheless, perhaps been unduly stressed and it may yet prove immaterial as a guide to the actual date of Anglian expansion in this direction (cf Dumville 1989, 216). Alcock has suggested that Doon Hill and Dunbar are each best seen as an *urbs regis* (1988a, 15–18) and we may postulate that the buildings at Whitekirk represent the nucleus of a *villa*.

Whilst excavation, though probably impractical, is clearly desirable to clarify much of the foregoing discussion, the clarity of the Sprouston cropmark evidence confirms the scope of aerial photography and holds the promise that systematic flying of the gravel terraces bordering the Tweed may one day contribute a much fuller picture of the English settlements, and one from which we may learn more of the relations between incomer and the indigenous population. Sprouston well underlines the deeply rooted nature of landscape development at a local level, and it is against such a background as this that the pertinent question of Anglo-British *rapprochement* in southern Scotland needs to be set.

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NOTES

- 1 *Kelso Liber*, no 1; Cowan 1967, 186.
- 2 Jeffrey 1864, 193; Barrow & Scott 1971, 362, no 367.
- 3 Jeffrey 1864, 199; Bain 1881–8, i, 386–7. On the English side 15 are mentioned by name, including the provost of Beverley and the earls of Gloucester, Norfolk, Surrey, Albemarle and Warwick, and evidently there were many other dignitaries beside; Jeffrey (*op cit*) states that Henry III was accompanied by his queen.
- 4 Bain 1881–8, ii, 97, 234, 251, 356, nos 395, 895, 983, 1348; iii, 321.
- 5 Robertson 1798, 12, no 62; Duncan 1988, 23–4, 41, 47, no 172.
- 6 Robertson 1798, 12, no 62; Webster 1982, 218, no 187.
- 7 Jeffrey 1864, 199.
- 8 *Reg Mag Sig*, iv, no 148.
- 9 Jeffrey 1864, 199.
- 10 *Retours*, Roxburgh, nos 36, 52, 131, 156, 181, 267.
- 11 Jeffrey 1864, 198.
- 12 *Kelso Liber*, nos 1–2, 23, 382.
- 13 Jeffrey 1864, 198; Cowan 1967, 186–7.
- 14 *NSA*, 3 (Roxburgh), 239; RCAHMS 1956, 433, no 971, fig 406.
- 15 *Kelso Liber*, no 208.
- 16 The following aerial photographs have been studied as a basis for transcription: RCAHMS APs for 1976, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1984, 1986, 1988; CUCAP K17–Y235 BHC 67, BFZ 70; BEE 35–8; Harding 1978/013/1,2,5,8,11; 1978/014/6–11; T Gates 1981 A40842–904.
- 17 The cemetery was detached from St Joseph's main plan and dealt with separately (1982, figs 1 & 2). Computer-rectified plots have their limitations, not least in the transcription of fine detail. Thus in the case of the Sprouston cemetery, St Joseph resorted to an interpretative sketch and noted 'the actual pattern is almost certainly more complicated' (1982, 196). For a site such as Sprouston, where the quality of the aerial photographs offer considerable scope for refinement, alternative methods of transcription commend themselves (compare Reynolds 1980, fig 7; St Joseph 1982, fig 1; Smith 1984, fig 5).
- 18 In my transcription, I have taken account of papers on photo-interpretation by Guy 1962; Soyer 1963; Steiner 1966; Haefner 1966, and Sensenbrenner 1969.
- 19 Christopher Loveluck (1990) has undertaken a phosphate survey as part of his re-analysis of the site.
- 20 My thanks to the Duke of Roxburgh on whose land the site is situated, and to Bryce and Charles McCririck for permission to walk their fields at Whitmuirhaugh, for discussion and hospitality.
- 21 Payments in compensation for ploughing no deeper than 3 ft (0.9 m) had ceased by 1989 (C McCririck, pers comm). The depth of ploughsoil above the subsoil horizon (ie that cut by the archaeological features), visible in an eroded section at the edge of the field, is about 0.4 m.
- 22 St Joseph (1982, 194) identified the palisaded enclosure of Phase II as possibly corresponding in some fashion to the Great Enclosure at Yeaveering, not that of my Phase III.
- 23 To aid comparison, buildings designated (a) to (f), in St Joseph's analysis (1982, 194–6), correspond respectively to *A, F, E, D1, D2* and *C* in mine.
- 24 Although not recognized, the site of the church is apparent on St Joseph's plan as a gap on the south-west side of the cemetery (1982, 196, fig 2), moreover the density of graves in this sector of the cemetery is clear.

- 25 cf Bullough 1983, 194; Cramp 1988, 75.
- 26 de Paor 1958, 57, and general summary of relevant evidence in Ch 2.
- 27 *Inbroninis* (VW 36; Colgrave 1927, 72); on topographical grounds, *Broninis* (Latin 'breast-island', cf Alcock 1988a, 6–7, n 10) is probably to be identified as Lindisfarne. The 'breast' probably being the rock of Beblow, a prominent feature of the island whether seen from Lindisfarne Priory or the mainland opposite (*contra* G R J Jones 1976, 65–6, who argued instead for the hillfort on Kyle Hill, but see also Jones 1990). Beblow was probably the nucleus of an existing British centre, on a par to similar rock strongholds that so characterize the forts of the North Britons (see also Hope-Taylor 1977, n 340).
- 28 The identification of Simprim as a potential *-ingās* name is upheld by Smith (1990, 205–7, 210–11), though Nicolaisen had misgivings (1979, 70–1). If the case is accepted, this would place Simprim amongst the earliest strata of Anglian place-name survivals in the Tweed Basin. Its origin as an estate centre, ranking with that at Coldingham, can therefore reasonably be deduced. A proprietorial church at Simprim is on record in 1153 × 9 (Cowan 1967, 182); the form of the burial-ground, which is circular (RCAHMS 1980, 51, no 450), may also be indicative of an early church site.

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