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Thomas Jeffery's Map of "The County of Westmoreland" (1770): an evaluation of its contribution to understanding late eighteenth century landscape

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Abstract

Thomas Jeffery's map of Westmorland was one of the new county maps published in the late eighteenth century. Apart from the pursuit of profit, Jefferys' motives in producing his map were unclear, though its contents provide clues as to what he was attempting to portray in the Westmorland landscape of the late eighteenth century. His depiction of the landscape (broadly conceived) was different in crucial respects from that provided by earlier and later cartographers. An attempt is made to evaluate his map in relation to its possible purpose.

Key words

Westmorland, map, landscape, evaluation, motive

Introduction

"Maps are children of their time ... Maps are drawn on a blank surface, not with a blank mind. They represent points of view, not simply a physical viewpoint" (Delano-Smith and Kain, 1999 1, 6). They are historically-situated, cultural constructs whose interpretation has to be informed by an understanding of the perspectives and motives of both those who created them and those who used them. In a similar way landscapes are culturally determined – interestingly, in small part by the very maps used to delineate them. Both landscapes and maps need to be "understood through sets of perceptions that are themselves culturally and historically conditioned" (Whyte 2002, 18). Therein lies a major part of the problem of evaluating how far Jefferys' map of Westmorland provides insights in to the late eighteenth century landscape of the county – the focus of this article and itself a follow-up to Hindle's article on Thomas Donald's map of Cumberland 1774 published in *North West Geography* in 2002.

Evaluation is a dangerous and value-laden enterprise. This paper raises issues of how to evaluate maps published at different times, using different techniques, based on different scales and, crucially, by produced different map makers with different perspectives and motives. The approach adopted here is a modified version of the advice offered by Cannadine (2008) i.e. to place, describe, compare and evaluate the map. The main maps used for comparative purposes are those of Saxton (1576), Speed (1610 – essentially

a copy of Saxton's map), and the Ordnance Survey Old Series (1861-66)¹; passing reference is made to Donald's map of Cumberland of 1774.

Placing Jefferys' map

Modifying Hindle's classification (2001a), Jefferys' map of Westmorland can be taken as representative of the second of the four stages in the cartography of English counties: (1) Saxton's and Norden's maps of the late 16th century; (2) the large-scale surveys of the late 18th century; (3) the Ordnance Survey Old Series of the 19th century; and (4) the Ordnance Survey Series of the 20th century. Jefferys' map, surveyed in 1768 and published in 1770, was one of the new county maps published in the late 18th century involving the use of triangulation to replace the less accurate method of road traverse. Crucially for the purposes of map interpretation it was funded by subscription and dedicated "To the Nobility Gentry Clergy and Freeholders of the County of Westmoreland Subscribers to this Survey"². Unfortunately there is no extant copy of the original proposal and therefore the motives (apart from the pursuit of profit) of the map-maker can only be inferred. It seems likely that the map was made with the "political" (with a small "p") classes in mind to depict the main sources of local power (lay and to some extent ecclesiastical) in the county, to indicate the main areas of settlement and to delineate the changing communication links. The motives of the map purchasers are also undocumented and therefore unknown. In some

cases the map may have been purchased simply as a work of art or to satisfy intellectual curiosity but in most cases it was probably bought, in part at least, as a symbol of prestige, influence and perhaps local pride.

Describing and comparing Jefferys' map

Orientation, scale and distance

Jefferys' map (Fig. 1) is orientated more or less due north, as were the maps of Saxton and Speed (Fig. 2); in contrast Donald's map of Cumberland (Fig. 4) is rotated by almost 45 degrees so that the county could better fit the six sheets on which it was printed. Showing both latitude and longitude (not altogether accurately), Jefferys' map is drawn to a scale of approximately 1 inch to 1 mile and in consequence its detail can be compared more appropriately with that shown on the Ordnance Survey Old Series (at the same scale) than with those of Saxton or Speed which were drawn at much smaller scales. Road distances measured by perambulator are reasonably accurate, but distances away from main routes and especially in the more remote upland areas are more problematic – presumably due in part to far less detailed surveying.

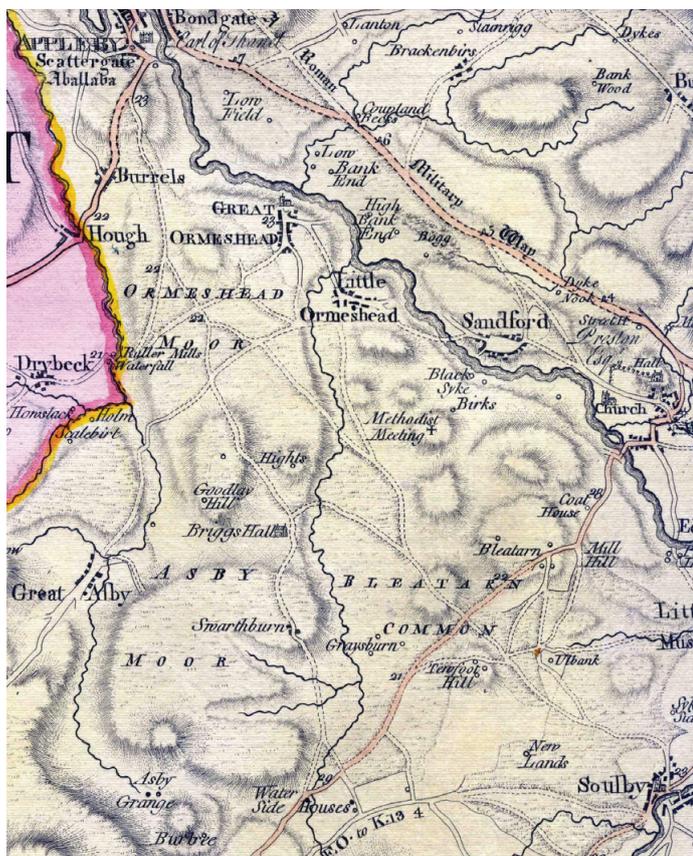


Figure 1: Jefferys' Westmorland, 1770

Topography

As with those of Saxton and Speed, Jefferys' map shows and names the major rivers, valleys, lakes and forests but also shows more detail of tributary streams and woods,³ though not to the same extent as the later Ordnance Survey maps drawn at the same scale. In contrast to the "sugarloaf" topography on the two earlier maps Jefferys' has a more realistic and somewhat more accurate depiction of upland areas including fells, moor and commons, aided by the selective use of simple hachuring but the topography is far less detailed, accurate or evocative than the later Ordnance Survey maps, especially the splendidly hachured 1861-66 version. No spot heights are given by Jefferys, nor are contours shown. Some important physical features (for example in the Helvellyn range) are not named; others such as Sumbiggin Tarn are inaccurately located.⁴

Settlement

Market-towns and major villages feature prominently on all of the maps. Compared with Saxton and Speed, Jefferys' map shows much greater settlement detail including the names of hamlets, some individual farms and even

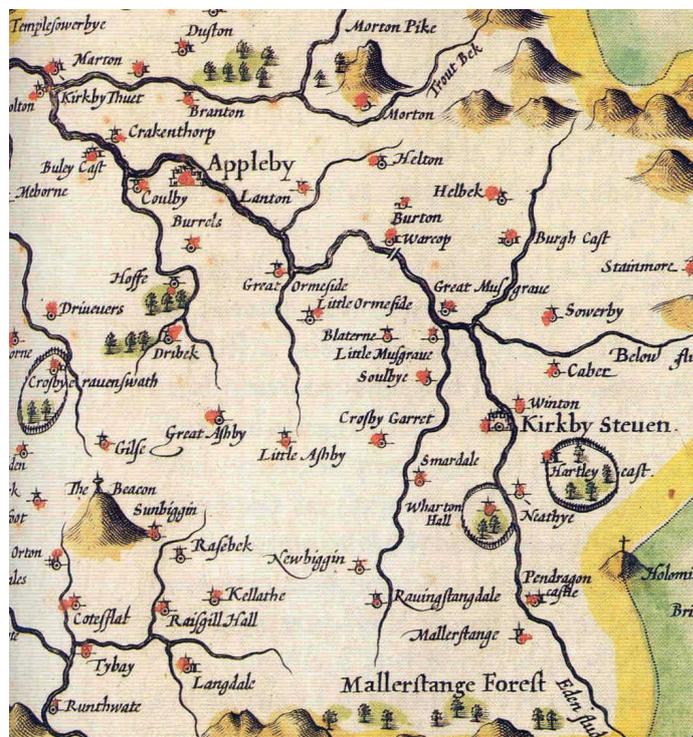


Figure 2: Speed's Westmorland, 1612

inns.⁵ Through the use of different lettering⁶ it attempts a more sophisticated depiction of the settlement hierarchy compared to its predecessors. There is some attempt at providing plans of major settlements but these are largely conventional and contain pictorial elements. Compared with the later Ordnance Survey maps there is far less comprehensive coverage and the town outlines featured are crudely depicted with the exception of Kendal which shows evidence of more detailed surveying.

Compared with Saxton and Speed, Jefferys gives much greater prominence to, and provides far more examples of, the residences (“seats”) of the aristocracy, gentry and, to a lesser extent, clergy. The subscribers themselves (Table 1) are named and their names placed alongside the depiction of their residences and parks which are shown using conventional pictorial symbols. Some at least of the residences of gentry not named as subscribers are shown.⁷ The later Ordnance Survey maps do show the homes of the aristocracy and gentry though these are less prominent and in some cases are not named.

As with both Saxton and Speed Jefferys gives considerable prominence to churches with the large ones shown in conventional pictorial form with some attempt at distinguishing those with spires from those with towers. The presence of local clergy among his subscribers and the possibility of future clerical buyers of the map once it had been published account partly for this prominence.⁸ He does show some nonconformist meeting places and chapels⁹ which had been established since the time of Saxton and Speed; these feature more prominently on the later Ordnance Survey maps.

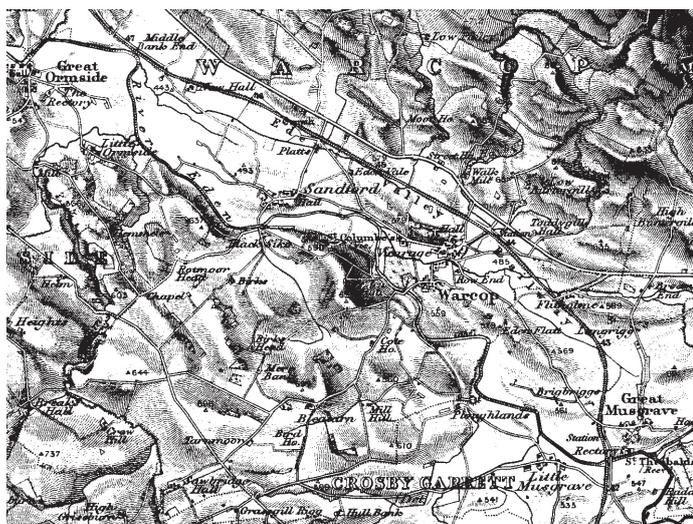


Figure 3: Ordnance Survey Old Series One-Inch, Sheet 102 SE, 1863

Boundaries

Jefferys’ map, like those of Saxton and Speed, delineates the county boundary of Westmorland. Unlike them his map identifies parishes but without showing parish boundaries. The parishes are more prominent than on the 1861-66 Ordnance Survey maps. The latter also show some major field boundaries, none of which are depicted by Jefferys.¹⁰

Transport networks

Unlike those of Saxton and Speed, Jefferys’ map provides very clear depictions of transport networks. Both major roads and lanes are shown including some tracks and footpaths across moors and commons.¹¹ The recently introduced turnpikes along with toll gates are significant features, as on the road from Brough to Appleby. Mileages are given along the main roads from Kendal. Turnpike roads are distinguished from enclosed roads and open roads. Very many river crossings are depicted, including some named bridges.¹² The density (and detail) of transport routes shown are less than those on the later Ordnance Survey maps.

Land Use

None of the three earliest maps gives much indication of land use. Jefferys’ map does indicate and name common land and moor land and provides rather more detail than the others on woodland and parks. The Ordnance Survey maps provide some, though not detailed, evidence of land use, showing some major field boundaries. Unlike Saxton and Speed, Jefferys provides some evidence of industrial sites, especially mills.¹³ Others include coal pits on Stainmore and lead smelting just north of near Dufton. Industrial sites are

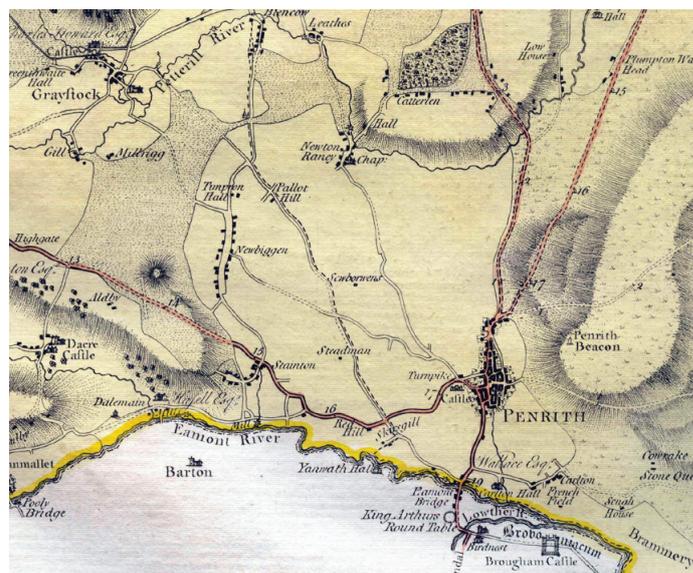


Figure 4: Donald's Cumberland, 1774

far less prominent than on the later Ordnance Survey maps, partly because of Jefferys' earlier publication date when industrial development would have been less advanced and possibly in deference to subscribers' presumed lack of interest in such phenomena.¹⁴

Historic sites

Unlike Saxton Jefferys does cater for subscribers' putative antiquarian interests by featuring Roman roads such as that from Brough to Appleby, a fort at Gallatum and a "Druids' Temple" south of Penrith. Such historic sites are far less frequent than on, for example, the Ordnance Survey maps which identify Roman roads, Roman camps, standing stones, tumuli and "Druidic Circles"

Evaluating Jefferys' map

How useful is Jefferys' map as a source of information on the later eighteenth century landscape of Westmorland? What "standard" should be used in its evaluation? It certainly provides more information than the maps of Saxton and Speed, though these were, of course, drawn to smaller scales and probably with different purposes in mind. Equally it is far less detailed than the Ordnance Survey Old Series, even though these were drawn to approximately the same scale using more advanced and surveying and cartographic techniques but again these were almost certainly produced with different purposes in mind.

Arguably, to evaluate Jefferys' map using an appropriate "standard" requires an understanding of his (and his subscribers') perspectives and motives and also evidence from other contemporary sources about the Westmorland landscape with which his map can be compared. Neither is available to the writer of this paper. However, almost certainly his map was not made primarily to depict the main features of the *natural* landscape or of *agricultural* land-use. It might best be described as a map of the *socio-political* landscape detailing what Jefferys and his subscribers believed to be the most significant features of the county, especially its towns, its road networks, its personages and its elite residences. As such it needs to be complemented by other contemporary sources (literary, artistic and legal) if a fuller picture of the later 18th century landscape of Westmorland is to be drawn.

Table 1: Persons named on Jeffreys' Westmoreland (from Hindle 2001)

Surname	Name	Place
Bird	Rev. Mr Bird	Crosby Garrett
Brougham	Brougham Esq	Brougham Hall
Burn	Rev. Dr Burn	Orton
Chayter	Chayter Esq	Kirkby Stephen
Dalstone	Sir William Dalstone K	Newbiggin
Fenwick	Tho Fenwick Esq	Overborough Hall
Fleming	Sr Michael Fleming	Rydal
Fleming	Fletcher Fleming Esq	Rayrigg
Hassel	Hassell Esq	Dalemain
Honeywood	Gen Honeywood	Hougil Castle
Knot	Knot Esq	Rydal
Lowther	Sr Ja Lowther B	Lowther
Matchell	Matchell Esq	Crackenthorp Hall
Monkhouse	Monkhouse Esq	Winton
Moor	Moor Esq	Grimeshill
Morland	Morland Esq	Capplethwaite
Musgrove	Sr Phil Musgrove Bar	Hartley Castle
Nevison	Nevison Esq	Newby Hall
Preston	Preston Esq	Warcopp Hall (?)
Robinson	Mr (?) Robinson	New Hutton
Strickland	Cha Strickland Esq	Brigsteer/Syzergh
Suffolk	Earl of Suffolk	Levens Hall
Symmonds	Rd Mr Symmonds	Kendal
Tatum	Tatum Esq	Askham
Thanet	Earl of Thanet	Appleby
Thomson	Thomson Esq	Gilse
Upton	Upton Esq	Angmire Hall (?)
Wallace	Wallace Esq	Carelton Hall
Welch	Welch Esq	Leck Hall
Wharton	Jn Wharton Esq	Pendragon Castle
Whinfield	Whinfield Esq	Shap
Wilson	Geo. Wilson Esq	Kendal
Wilson	George Wilson Esq	Kendal
Wilson	Wilson Esq	Casterton
Wilson	Rev M Wilson	Witherslack
Wilson	Rev Mr Wilson	Haversham Hall
Wilson	Daniel Wilson Esq	Dallam Tower
Wybergh	Wybergh Esq	Clifton Hall

Notes

1. Two versions (one with hachures and one with contours) were published. This paper discusses the more evocative hachured version.
2. These thirty-eight subscribers and the approximate location of their residences, which are almost entirely rural, are listed in Table 1. The list includes two earls, four knights, four clergy and a general and only three subscribers out of thirty-eight are located in urban centres (Hindle 2001b).
3. It even includes reference to the odd waterfall e.g. to the east of Drybeck.
4. The relatively sparse treatment accord to upland areas could be due to any of a number of factors such as the nature of the landscape itself; the lack of interest in upland areas by the subscribers (at least as assumed by Jefferys) (Hindle 2001a); the absence of subscribers from these areas; and the difficulty of surveying upland terrain with the available technology.
5. The inns depicted on the road to Stainmore (eg the Punch Bowl) may reflect Jefferys' belief in their importance to travellers in that inhospitable terrain.
6. Major towns are in large emboldened capitals; parishes in capitals; smaller townships in upper and low case letters; and the smallest settlements in fainter italics.
7. For example Brigg Hall – perhaps in hope of attracting further buyers of the map?
8. But only partially; religion remained an important force in most sections of 18th century Westmorland society.
9. Examples include a chapel east of Brough; a Methodist meeting place south of Little Ormeshead; and a Quaker meeting house at Sedbergh.
10. This means that it is not possible to use Jefferys' map as a base-line from which the extent of enclosures can be plotted on later maps. This is particularly unfortunate given the considerable number of parliamentary enclosures in the Appleby area in the period 1770-1789 (Whyte 2003, 19).
11. An example is the track way up to Nine Standards to the east of Kirkby Stephen.
12. For example, Stenkrith Bridge south of Kirkby Stephen.
13. Hindle (2001a) claims that Jefferys identifies 61 in all, including some named mills.
14. Though far from an industrial county, Westmorland may well have had more sites than Jefferys recognises.

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