

WEST YORKSHIRE JOINT SERVICES

WEST YORKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY ADVISORY SERVICE

RESEARCH AGENDA

**ARCHAEOLOGY FROM THE END OF THE ROMAN
PERIOD TO THE NORMAN CONQUEST**

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This document is one of a series designed to enable our stakeholders and all those affected by our advice and recommendations to understand the basis on which we have taken a particular view in specific cases. It is also a means by which others can check that our recommendations are justifiable in terms of the current understanding of West Yorkshire's Historic Environment, and are being consistently applied.

As the document is based upon current information, it is anticipated that future discoveries and reassessments will lead to modifications. If any readers wish to comment on the content, the Advisory Service will be glad to take their views into account when developing further versions. Please contact:

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The intention of this short review is to summarise what has been reported in West Yorkshire since the publication in 1981 of *West Yorkshire: An Archaeological Survey to AD1500* (hereafter *WY Survey*) for the period from the early 5th century AD – the end of Roman occupation - to the mid-11th century, and to put forward priorities and approaches for future archaeological work, both research-based and development-control led.

1.2 Since the early 1990s there has been an increasing amount of archaeological fieldwork carried out under the aegis of PPG16, but most of this has been related to the development of 'green-field' sites, rather than concentrated within historic settlements. This has been due partly to the location and nature of new development in West Yorkshire, but also to the perceived archaeological priorities of the time. It has, inevitably, weighted investigations towards patterns of settlement and land-use that preceded (and differ from) the present one, rather than towards an understanding of the medieval settlement and land-use pattern which originated in the Anglo-Saxon period and continues to form the basis of much modern settlement. For these aspects, the present paper should be read in conjunction with that devoted to the period from the mid-11th to the early 16th centuries.

2. WEST YORKSHIRE, 400-650 AD

2.1 In 1981 the *West Yorkshire Survey* concluded that 'There is virtually no evidence about the end of the Roman period in West Yorkshire' (*WY Survey*, 156). This situation has now changed although the evidence is made difficult to decipher as few rural sites have produced material that can be specifically assigned to the late Roman period. Few sites, for instance, have been found to show deposition of late 4th-century East Yorkshire pottery (Evans 2002, 26). Indeed, the broad pattern throughout the Roman period is one of low level usage of pottery (Evans 2001, 173), and coinage. Only 13 Roman coins in total were found on the M1-A1 link road, a 30m wide corridor which extended a distance of about 12 miles (Roberts et al. 2001).

2.2 A recent general survey has suggested that in the aftermath of the Roman withdrawal in the early 5th century, York may have continued as the major centre for a resurgent Brigantian polity during the 5th and 6th centuries, perhaps with a militarily strong over-king and with a Christian elite (Dark 2000, 200). This is seen as an explanation both for an apparent absence of finds connected to local elites outside of York (evidence for which has been found in the south of England) and for the lack of 5th and 6th-century Anglian settlements and burials (other than those that might be argued to be serving the system clustered around York).

2.3 A number of Roman sites are prime candidates for occupation in this period. One is the fort at Ilkley, which appears to have been occupied into the late 4th century AD as a military station (Hartley 1987, 6-7). This must be a key site for investigating the post-Roman transition and beyond. A small

excavation in 1982-3, however, inside the parish church tower on the site of the fort, produced only thick, homogenous humic layers that contained a large quantity of 3rd and 4th-century pottery in the late Roman / post-Roman phase. No structural remains were identified from this period (HER Backlog Report no. 254).

2.4 A late Roman phase (Phase IV) has also been identified on the site of Castleford's fort. This included the re-occupation of the previously abandoned fort site and the construction of a defensive perimeter rampart and ditch on a different alignment for what has been interpreted as a defended settlement. There was evidence for manufacturing and a cemetery (Abramson et al. 1999, 14-15, 20). This settlement is currently thought to have gone out of use in the late Roman period, based on the evidence of pottery and coinage. It is now coming to be accepted, however, that the cessation of coinage and of the mass manufacture of pottery may be an effect of economic collapse, rather than an indicator of the presence or absence of settlement activity (Evans 2000, 41; Cool 2000, 51-5). Indeed, an inhumation found in an excavation at Bradley Street, Castleford, may be 6th to 7th-century in date (Crockett and Fitzpatrick 1998, 58). Unfortunately, it was not radiocarbon-dated.

2.5 H.E.M. Cool has recently analysed late Roman finds from the north of England and suggested that the composition of assemblages may be a better indicator of very late, possibly post-Roman occupation. For example, she has suggested, on the basis of assemblage components, that the occupation at Dalton Parlours villa site extended beyond the terminal date suggested by the coin sequence (Cool 2000, 51-5). This is interesting as Dalton Parlours also produced sherds from a pot interpreted as either post-Roman or Anglian, and a skeleton buried with an annular brooch which is dated between the late 5th and 7th centuries (Wrathmell and Nicholson 1990, 285-7). Cool's analysis focuses on a series of personal ornaments as indicators: the proportions of bracelet and hair pins, copper alloy bangles, the presence of bone bracelets, non-standard glass beads and/or green cylinder segments, of black finger rings and Fowler Type D and E penannular brooches, as well as the re-use of red Samian pottery as spindle whorls. Therefore only a handful of rich Romanised sites in West Yorkshire are likely to provide sufficient material for such analysis.

2.6 The paucity of artefacts elsewhere can to some extent be mitigated by radiocarbon dating. A programme of excavation at Parlington Hollins, north-east of Garforth, was followed by the radiocarbon dating of seven inhumations (Roberts et al. 2001, 101-02). This produced three probable post-Roman candidates and the possibility that six of the seven burials may have dated to the 5th or even 6th century AD. Given the variety of burial rite employed at Parlington Hollins it is clear that such attributes cannot now be used with confidence as a means of dating human remains in this period. It may be significant that the three probable post-Roman inhumations are all extended, though both east-west and north-south alignments were observed in this small group. One of the skeletons had had her head removed and placed between her feet, where hobnails were also recovered. Both these attributes are normally seen as part of a late Roman pagan burial ritual. Another of the

skeletons was found in a grave partially lined with cobbles and limestone blocks. This last attribute echoes a group of eleven burials found west of the church at Wetherby during quarrying operations in 1928-30, where four of the bodies were in cists formed from limestone slabs and a fifth was covered in Roman roofing tiles (*WY Survey*, 145, n. 1).

2.7 In the immediate post-Roman period the whole of what is now West Yorkshire is thought to have been contained within a territorial unit recorded later by Bede as the kingdom of Elmet (*WY Survey*, 171). The one contemporary source shows it was in existence by the late 5th century: a gravestone dated to this period and marking the burial of Aliortus 'the Elmetian', was found in north-west Wales (Jones 1975, 3). Elmet was annexed by King Edwin of Northumbria in 617 (*WY Survey*, 179), effectively bracketing a period of two centuries for post-Roman, pre-Anglo-Saxon archaeology across most of West Yorkshire.

2.8 The name of the kingdom was derived from the Latin, and meant 'elm forest' (Wood 1996, 2). In the early 8th century, the stone altar of a church built a century earlier by King Edwin, was still preserved at the monastery of Abbot Thrythwulf 'in the forest of Elmet' (*WY Survey*, 158). Presumably this is the forest that gave the kingdom its name. A number of places have been suggested as the location of the monastery, among them Ilkley and Otley, on the basis that Elmet had been reduced by the later 7th century to the Aire-Wharfe interfluvium (e.g. Jones 1975, 17, 21-2). Earlier, however, it extended much further south, perhaps as far as the river Don (Jones 1975, 15-16). An alternative candidate is Woodkirk church in West Ardsley township, in the Aire-Calder interfluvium. It appears in Domesday book as 'the church of St Mary, which is in the wood of Morley' (*WY Survey*, 222, n. 28). Morley was the name of a later Anglo-Saxon administrative unit or 'wapentake'. The wapentake's meeting place was Tingley, the place-name meaning 'the mound where the council met' (Smith 1961, pt 2, 173-5). The mound in question, identified by Smith on 19th-century mapping, stands on the watershed between the Aire and Calder valleys, in the medieval parish of Woodkirk and township of West Ardsley. West Ardsley township was, however, in Agbrigg wapentake, not Morley, in the Middle Ages; and the Domesday reference to the church relates to a claim that part of the ecclesiastical revenues belonged to the manor of Wakefield, which also lay in Agbrigg (*WY Survey*, 222, n. 28). The two wapentakes might therefore originally have been one unit, created from the core of Elmet, where the eponymous forest was located (see also Wood 1996, 10). Elmet was still a recognised entity (though much reduced in size) in the late 7th century, when it was listed in the Tribal Hidage as one of the tribes or petty kingdoms that paid tribute to the kingdom of Mercia (*WY Survey*, 158).

2.9 The only other administrative unit recorded from this period, again mentioned by Bede, is the district or *regio* of Loidis (*WY Survey*, 172). It seems to have been a subdivision of Elmet (Wood 1996, 16). Like Elmet, the name is British, in this case referring to 'people dwelling by the river', later becoming the name of the district occupied by those people (*WY Survey*, 158). It survives in the place-names of Leeds, Ledsham and Ledston, all

along the north bank of the Aire, which is therefore presumably the river referred to in the name (Wood 1996, 9). The last two of these place-names are English formations, and may be derived from the period after the Anglo-Saxon takeover of Elmet (*WY Survey*, 159). They are, however, in a zone at the east end of West Yorkshire where ‘-in-Elmet’ names also occur (see 2.11 below), and they may signify communities moving into this region from the east at an earlier date. Leeds itself has been identified with the Roman place-name *Cambodunum*, indicating ‘the fort by the river-bend’, later to become a *villa regia* of King Edwin and perhaps, during the intervening period, a focal settlement in the Elmetian kingdom. The *Survey* offers two possible locations for the fort (*WY Survey*, 161-2). Subsequent investigations at one of them, Quarry Hill, found no trace of defences recorded there by an 18th-century antiquarian, probably because of the extent of later disturbance (HER Backlog Report nos 46 and 701).

2.10 One of the arguments put forward in the *Survey* in support of Leeds as a focal settlement in Elmet was the position of the linear earthwork known as Grim’s Ditch, described as part of the kingdom’s early 7th-century defences (*WY Survey*, 159). More recent investigations of the linear dykes in West Yorkshire have indicated that Grim’s Ditch dates to the Early to Middle Iron Age, with a possible redefinition in the later Roman period: ‘there is no evidence ...to support any notions of redefinition of the monument in the early medieval period’ (Roberts et al. 2001, 131). The Aberford Dykes (a collective name for three earthworks - Becca Banks, South Dyke and The Rein - all of which face south and appear designed to control the north-south route later to become the Great North Road) were the subject of limited work during the same investigations. The South Dyke can now be seen to originate in the late prehistoric period, with no evidence for post-Roman use. Becca Banks is less closely dated (somewhere between the late Iron Age and the 7th century AD), but is believed also to be of late prehistoric date (Roberts et al. 2001, 137, 148).

2.11 The eastern boundary of Elmet is marked by a band of Anglo-Saxon place-names with the affix ‘-in-Elmet’, running north to south on the Magnesian Limestone outcrop, on either side of the Roman road that became the Great North Road (Jones 1975, 17, map 4). These were clearly named by the Anglo-Saxons who lived further east, and may indicate that the north-south zone containing this road – the key route into Northumbria from the south – was once in Elmet but came under control of the Northumbrians before annexation of the kingdom as a whole. Here, too, were the two English place-names referring to Loidis (*WY Survey*, 172).

2.12 If the Magnesian Limestone belt had already been occupied by Anglian communities before the end of the 6th century, this is where (and the only part of West Yorkshire where) early Anglian remains could be expected. It therefore comes as no surprise that all four probable or certain pagan Anglian burials recorded in the *Survey* are from this area (Collingham, Ferry Fryston, Pontefract and North Elmsall), along with brooches possibly from a burial at Kippax. Most of the datable finds are assigned to the 7th century (*WY Survey*, 179-80). Similarly, the only evidence for typically early Anglian settlement – in

the form of buildings of the type known as Grubenhäuser – comes from work at Parlington Hollins and nearby at Brierlands Lane, Garforth. At Parlington Hollins two Grubenhäuser were identified, one of them associated with over 100 sherds of early medieval pottery. A pig skeleton which formed part of the secondary back-filling in the second building gave a mid-5th to mid-7th-century date (Roberts et al. 2001, 102-06). Significantly, the only other Grubenhäuser identified to date in West Yorkshire, was excavated about 0.5km to the south-west. It was cut into the backfill of a Roman quarry (HER Backlog Report no. 708).

2.13 The pottery that was recovered from Parlington Hollins is similar, but not identical, to Anglo-Saxon pottery recovered from Newton Kyme near Tadcaster, and it is suggested that it may have come from a fairly local source. One of the sherds, however, included a stamp that is definitely identified as Mercian. This is particularly interesting as Elmet appears, on the basis of the Tribal Hidage (2.8 above), to have been dominated by Mercia for a time. Mercian dialect appears to have had a significantly greater impact on pronunciation in West Yorkshire than Northumbrian patterns of speech (*WY Survey*, 182), and there are also links marked by place-names such as Dewsbury (Wood 1996, 10). It may be that Anglo-Saxon penetration of West Yorkshire was as much from the Midlands as from the East or North.

2.14 The one possible elite settlement site of this period, again on the eastern edge of West Yorkshire, has been identified on the basis of crop-marks visible on aerial photos (PRN 2454) as a single-aisled structure within an enclosure. It has been Scheduled as a Yeavinger-type hall. The site is close to the Roman fort at Newton Kyme, and to a holy well dedicated to St Helen (see *WY Survey*, 176).

2.15 The Elmetians themselves were at least nominally Christian in the 5th and 6th centuries - certainly Aliortus was - though the evidence from Parlington Hollins suggests that burial in the immediate post-Roman period was not yet confined to what were churchyards at a later date. Various indicators have been put forward for the locations of British churches, notably place-names containing *Eccles* and churches and holy wells dedicated to St Helen (Jones 1995, 24-5). *Ecclesdo* in Kirkheaton is thought to be one example (Jones 1995, 25, n. 11). There was certainly an Anglo-Saxon church or chapel there, evidenced by a surviving window-head (Ryder 1993, 24). On the other hand, even if some *Eccles* names indicate a church nearby, others may simply refer to territorial possessions of a church located elsewhere, one which exercised jurisdiction over a wide area. Jones has argued that the Anglo-Saxon minsters at Otley and Dewsbury had British precursors, and these may have been the *Eccles* to which the place-names referred (Jones 1995, 35-7; see below, 3.2 and 3.8).

2.16 A further indicator of Elmetian church sites may be churchyards that are oval in shape, the most impressive West Yorkshire example being at Bramham. Here, too, the medieval church is Anglo-Saxon in origin, and an Anglo-Scandinavian bone pin has been found in the churchyard (*WY Survey*, 211; Ryder 1993, 17-18). As well as Bramham, we should now perhaps add

to the list Hemsworth parish church, which is clearly shown as having an oval churchyard on 19th-century maps (Tithe Award map A104 and 1st Edition OS Six Inch map) and is dedicated to St. Helen. All Saints Dewsbury also seem to be associated with an oval enclosure on a map of the rectory manor by Parson and Thompson (1761: copy in HER).

2.17 The farming settlements and field systems of Elmet presumably continued the patterns that had existed in late Roman times. The Magnesian Limestone belt probably continued under extensive cultivation in a landscape largely free of extensive tracts of woodland – this is certainly the picture that emerges later in the Anglo-Saxon period, from the marked absence of *lēah* place-names that would have indicated settlement in a woodland context (*WY Survey*, 54). The skeletons at Parlington Hollins were found in graves placed within an enclosure ditch which appeared to be the latest in a sequence that had originated in the late prehistoric and migrated across the site over time. One might therefore suggest that the agricultural landscape of ditched enclosures, trackways and field systems and believed to indicate a mixed farming regime of arable and pasture, originated in the later prehistoric period, continued in use during Roman times and extended into the post-Roman period. When these systems of land division that we can see went out of use is not known, although a radiocarbon date of AD 544 - 685 was obtained at Swillington Common from a ditch, which suggests that this feature did not silt up until well within the post-Roman period (Roberts et al. 2001, 65).

2.18 What environmental evidence we have for the post-Roman/ early Anglian period is also derived from the finds at Parlington Hollins, where evidence for hunting red deer and, possibly, wild boar has been recovered (indicating access to patches of woodland, despite what has been suggested in 2.17 above), as well as the remains of sheep/goat, cattle and (in relatively large quantities) pig. It has been suggested that the evidence for immature cattle amongst the bones recovered suggests an increase in the availability of prime beef in the post-Roman period (although taphonomic processes may explain this apparent difference from the preceding period). However, the relatively fewer sheep/goat remains in the post-Roman period (in contrast to the Roman period) is thought to be a real attribute of the site, unaffected by taphonomy. What evidence there is for horses suggests they were introduced to the settlement as adults and not used as a source of meat. Cattle and sheep also appear to have been traded in, although pigs were bred on site, and slaughtered by the age of three (Richardson 2001, 217-18).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The lesson of recent fieldwork and reviews of data is that early post-Roman activity in West Yorkshire, as elsewhere in the North, is present. The problem is that the collapse of monetary economy and, with it, the mass production of pottery, makes it extraordinarily difficult to recognise this activity. The results at Parlington Hollins indicate that a key to recognition is radiocarbon dating, particularly of human and articulated animal skeletons associated with settlements that were apparently occupied in the late Roman period, as

proposed by Ian Roberts (2001, 286). A significant radiocarbon-dating programme should therefore be integral to projects which may reveal Late Roman occupation sites.

The site at Parlington Hollins was initially targeted because of the discovery of Romano-British pottery, and because subsequent geophysical survey identified conjoined enclosures with internal features (Roberts 2001, 83). One of the problems for the study of settlements of any period is that, if they are not represented by significant quantities of durable pottery (as with Romano-British manufactures) or enclosure ditches of some kind – providing coherent linear shapes distinctive in both the crop-mark and geophysical record - they are very difficult to identify on the basis of the usual archaeological evaluation techniques (Roberts 2001, 288). This is as true of early post-Roman and Anglo-Saxon settlements as it is of prehistoric sites. Current evaluation techniques are known to be deficient and unless caesium vapour gradiometers prove to produce a significantly improved resolution of features, the remaining option is to strip areas of land in the vicinity of ditched enclosures of late Iron Age or Romano-British date in the hope of uncovering unenclosed settlements that either preceded or replaced the enclosed farmsteads.

When the approximately 10 hectare area between the Parlington Hollins and Brierlands Lane sites was fieldwalked, 3 Anglo-Saxon sherds of pottery were recovered (HER Backlog Report no. 371). This was probably the first time that such pottery has been recovered by fieldwalking in West Yorkshire. The use of fieldwalking as a technique is problematic with regard to developer-funded archaeology and the timescales usually available in the planning process. It is, however, a field technique that could usefully be promoted to active local archaeological societies. It should also be carried out, wherever possible, on large-scale developments, especially where it can form part of an environmental assessment.

Since publication of the *Survey*, little additional work has been carried out at the possible sites of early British churches. Given the considerable improvements since 1981 in the geophysical survey techniques, it may now be time to apply these techniques to the sites previously subject rather inconclusively to phosphate analysis (Faull and Smith 1980). Geophysical survey would also be valuable on the site of the putative aisled hall near Newton Kyme.

3. WEST YORKSHIRE, 650-1050 AD

3.1 Anglo-Saxon West Yorkshire was divided into a number of extensive territorial estates, each with an estate centre and subsidiary communities. These estates, in at least some cases inherited from post-Roman Elmet, were provided with networks and hierarchies of churches that largely mirrored the geography of the estates they served. Though there are few Anglo-Saxon

documents that record such estates, a number are revealed in later records. Domesday Book records the administrative linkages between 'central' and subsidiary communities that remained in place in 1086, and later ecclesiastical documents sometimes indicate the continued payment of dues by one church to another, allowing the definition of earlier extensive *parochiae*. In a number of cases, the head or 'minster' church was located in a different place from the secular *caput*. In the archaeological record, minster churches are often marked by significant groups of pre-Viking Age stone sculpture, principally crosses.

3.2 The prime example of a *parochia* defined on the basis of later ecclesiastical records is that of Dewsbury minster (*WY Survey*, map 15). The impressive collection of Anglo-Saxon sculpture found in the walls of the parish church during the course of 18th and 19th-century rebuilding includes pieces with Latin inscriptions, probably indicating a community of priests who could read them. Minor excavations during alterations in 1994 produced a further piece of sculpture, dating to the end of the 8th or early 9th century (Lang and Wrathmell 1997, 379). Probable Anglo-Saxon walling has been identified in the present nave of All Saints (Ryder 1993, 17-19), and in addition to this building there seems to have been another early church in the same churchyard, dedicated to St Peter. It was demolished in the 14th century, by which time its purpose and founder were unknown (Chadwick 1909, 55-6). The estate which the *parochia* served was that centred on the manor of Wakefield. Domesday Book records the manor's outlying dependencies over much the same part of West Yorkshire: the Calder Valley and its tributaries (Hall 1993, 27, 36). Wakefield itself also had a pre-Conquest church, probably on the site of the Cathedral (formerly All Saints parish church: Ryder 1993, 18), where a late Anglo-Saxon burial was excavated in 1974. Some of the estate dependencies themselves gained churches before the Norman Conquest. One was Kirkheaton (see 2.15 above), which also has cross fragments that appear to copy designs on earlier examples from the mother church at Dewsbury (J.T. Lang, *in litt.* 1984).

3.3 East of Wakefield, Domesday Book records an estate centre at Tanshelf, part of the modern Pontefract, with outliers to the south-west, along the southern side of the Wakefield estate (Hall 1993, 27). It is first mentioned in AD 947 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as the place where King Eadred (of Mercia and England) met the *witan* of Northumbria and received their pledges of allegiance (Roberts 2002, 9). At that period it presumably contained a hall of sufficient size and grandeur to host such a meeting. Near Tanshelf was Kirkby, a Scandinavian period settlement named after a church, the church in question probably being the predecessor of the medieval parish church of All Saints. Beyond the north-west corner of the present churchyard, on The Booths, part of a pre-Conquest cemetery has been excavated, the earliest burials dating to the late 7th or 8th century. At a later period a small Anglo-Saxon church was erected there (Roberts 2002, 401-403). A re-appraisal of what was believed to be Roman grey ware from this site has now been identified as Middle Saxon Ipswich Ware, a type of pottery associated with Anglo-Saxon monastic sites (Roberts, forthcoming). The cemetery seems to have extended even further westwards, where graves were cut by the

Norman castle earthworks, and where the castle's chapel may also be pre-Conquest in origin (Roberts 2002, 401-403). Neither this chapel nor the one on The Booths was large, and it was probably the predecessor of the medieval church of All Saints (whether on that precise site or elsewhere) that was the minster for Tanshelf estate. The presence of two neighbouring but apparently separate foci, one secular and the other ecclesiastical, invite comparison with Otley (below, 3.8), and the presence of at least one small subsidiary church is reminiscent of Dewsbury. The very extensive pre-Conquest cemetery, parts of it later overtaken by medieval urban development, is also arguably a sign of minster status, burial requirements receding as new cemeteries were being created in association with the construction of subsidiary churches elsewhere on the estate (see Adams 1996, 186).

3.4 Kippax was the centre of another extensive estate recorded in Domesday (*WY Survey*, 735): it included Ledston, Garforth, Swillington and Barwick in Elmet townships, and others in the medieval parishes of Aberford, Whitkirk and Leeds (Faull and Stinson 1986, SW, Sk 4). The central place or *caput* of the estate is marked by a Norman ringwork (*WY Survey*, 735), perhaps originating in late Anglo-Saxon times (Yarwood 1991). Next to it is a Norman church, housing fragments of a late Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft. This seems at an early period to have been the mother-church of the estate, as the neighbouring parish churches of Garforth, Swillington and Whitkirk, all established by the end of the 11th century, were its dependencies (Ryder 1993, 13, n. 4; Yarwood 1991). Again, therefore, there are at Kippax the indicators of an Anglo-Saxon estate served by a minster church, and Yarwood (1991, fig. 9) has attempted to reconstruct its minimum extent. This may, however, have been a remnant of an even more extensive estate that had been fragmented at an earlier time. On the basis of parallels with early medieval Welsh territorial organisation, G.R.J. Jones has suggested that neighbouring Ledston and Ledsham may originally have been 'the main secular and church settlements at the administrative core of... Loidis'; and that later the *caput* may have later been moved to Kippax, a more defensible site (Jones 1975, 20). The church at Ledsham (All Saints) is in fact the oldest standing building in West Yorkshire, possibly built as early as AD 700 (Ryder 1993, 15-16), and Jones' second suggestion is supported by the inclusion of Ledston (itself in the parish of Ledsham) in the Domesday estate of Kippax.

3.5 As noted above (2.6), Leeds itself is regarded as the most likely site of *Cambodunum*, a *villa regia* of King Edwin of Northumbria. It is said by Bede to have contained a church which was burned down 'with the whole of the buildings' by the pagan Penda of Mercia in AD 633 (*WY Survey*, 158-62). It achieves a mention in the 11th-century *Life of St. Cadroe* (who died in c. 976), as the 'city' whither the saint was escorted by the King of Strathclyde to be taken to the Viking king in York (*WY Survey*, 190-1; Burt and Grady 2002 12). Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft fragments of the 9th and 10th centuries were discovered at the parish church during refurbishment in 1838 (Ryder 1993, 11, 13) and the parish itself, incorporating numerous townships, extended across the river Aire, like Bingley (see 3.7 below). The medieval manor house of Leeds stood half a mile to the west of the church (Jones 1975, 21). If this is

the site of its Anglo-Saxon predecessor, it suggests the kind of 'polyfocal' relationship for the secular and church centres at Leeds similar to that at Tanshelf-Kirkby in Pontefract. No traces of Anglo-Saxon Leeds have been found in the last twenty-five years. In 1995 a stone coffin (identified by Dr Lawrence Butler as either late Roman, British or Anglo-Saxon) was found in the driveway of a house 800m north-west of Headingley church, not far from the site of the Shire Oak which served as the meeting place for Skyrack wapentake).

3.6 Bolton in Bradford Dale was the centre of another Domesday estate, a small one with just a few outliers to the south-west in the Bradford area (Hall 1993, 27). The dependent lands were in the medieval parish of Bradford, but Bolton itself lay in Calverley parish. Its name, from the Anglo-Saxon word meaning 'the buildings' (Smith 1961, pt 3, 244), presumably refers to the most important buildings in the estate - the lord's residence. It recurs at Bolton in Wharfedale, centre of another, much larger Anglo-Saxon estate lying mainly in what is now Craven District. Both Boltons were located close to medieval woodland, the latter on the edge of a large hunting forest. Rather than being a major administrative centre, Bolton in Bradford Dale may have been a hunting lodge and retreat.

3.7 Bingley was another small Domesday estate, co-extensive with the medieval parish of All Saints. Its outlying communities extended along both sides of the river Aire, a river which formed the boundary between two of the Domesday wapentakes. This suggests that the estate predates the formation of the two wapentakes – Skyrack and Craven (Hall 1993, 30-31). Nothing in the fabric of All Saints church has been identified as pre-Conquest, but it does contain a fragment of Anglo-Saxon cross-shaft and a font of that period (Ryder 1993, 142).

3.8 The one estate for which there is significant pre-Conquest documentation is that centred on Otley. It occupied the middle reaches of the Wharfe valley, extending southwards along the Mire Beck to Guiseley, Rawdon and the Aire. It belonged to the archbishops of York and was recorded in the 10th and 11th centuries when some of the dependencies were lost to it during the upheavals of the Viking period (*WY Survey*, 188-9). The archbishops' manor house stood above the south bank of the Wharfe, where an 11th-century chapel has been excavated among other buildings (Le Patourel and Wood 1973, 115-41). All Saints church, which lies some distance south of the manorial centre, contains another important collection of Anglo-Saxon sculpture, the earliest crosses dated to the late 8th and early 9th centuries (Cramp 1970, 62-3). Its nave is another potentially pre-Conquest structure, and if so one of impressive dimensions (Ryder 1993, 22-3). It has been suggested that at the centre of the Otley estate was a community of priests, established to carry out pastoral duties, rather than a community of monks (Wood 1987, 36). This would support its identification as a minster, serving the estate as a whole. Professor Glanville Jones has argued that the core of this estate was one of the donations made to Bishop Wilfrid in the 670s, and furthermore that at even earlier date it had been a British estate with separate secular *caput* and church settlement (Jones 1995, 30-6; but see also Wood 1987, 36-7).

3.9 Ilkley was one of the communities that belonged to the Otley estate. The parish church of All Saints, which stands on the site of the Roman fort, houses mid-9th-century and later crosses which formerly stood in the churchyard, along with two Roman altars which had been recut to form window heads presumably for an Anglo-Saxon church that had stood on this site (Ryder 1993, 7-9).

3.10 The most westerly member of the Otley estate was Addingham. It is also the earliest for which there is direct record: it was named by Simeon of Durham as the place of refuge for Archbishop Wulfhere, when he fled York in 867 (Wood 1987, 20-21). It therefore presumably contained a residence of sufficient status for the Archbishop. The church contains a 10th-century cross-shaft with, on one face, a type of vine-scroll that seems to be characteristic of other cross erected on the Otley estate (Bailey 1980, 189-90). Excavations in the 1970s to the east of the church, in the rectory garden, uncovered a ditch which may have originated in the Romano-British period, but which also contained a decorated bone plate (perhaps a box mount) dated to between the 8th and 11th centuries. In the 1990s, excavations west of the modern churchyard revealed ordered rows of burials dated to the 8th to 10th centuries (Adams 1996, 151-91). The burials seem to have been those of a normal rural community, outside what was, before 19th-century extensions, an oval churchyard. It was perhaps the enclosure that contained the Archbishop's residence and church; or this may have been the location of a small monastic community associated with his residence.

3.11 Progress in understanding the centres of secular and ecclesiastical power has not been matched by increased knowledge of the farming communities controlled by these centres. At the start of this period we can be certain that rural communities took the form of small clusters of farms scattered widely across a mixed farming landscape. By the end of the period, however, at the eastern end of West Yorkshire – broadly that part east of Leeds city – this pattern had been replaced by something new. The landscape had come to be dominated by 'nucleated' settlement: fewer, larger villages centred in extensive 'open fields' comprising the regularly ordered strips of arable land cultivated by the tenant farmers. These settlements and field systems were planned and imposed on the landscape (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002, Ch. 1). The rest of West Yorkshire continued to be dominated by dispersed settlements, often located as strings of farms along boundaries between enclosed fields and unenclosed moor and woodland, though interspersed with occasional planned nucleations as at Clifton near Brighouse (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002, 90-93), and particularly at major administrative centres.

3.12 The development of extensive open-field systems and village settlements occurred broadly between the 9th and 12th centuries, mainly, perhaps, towards the end of that period north of the Humber. Our knowledge of when this took place in West Yorkshire is virtually non-existent. Elsewhere in the country, the process of nucleation has been dated by fieldwalking: concentrations of mid-Saxon pottery in farmland mark the sites of dispersed

settlements abandoned when open fields were created across them; and finds from within and around medieval village settlements have indicated the date when nucleated settlements were founded. Neither strategy has had much impact in West Yorkshire, partly because of the paucity of Anglo-Saxon finds recovered from fieldwalking. A significant collection of metalwork dating from the 9th to 11th centuries has been recovered from fields in the vicinity of North Elmsall and Wrangbrook, suggesting a high-status settlement possibly with monastic associations; but there is nothing as yet to indicate the former location of peasant farming settlements of this period. Within villages, too, the results have so far been disappointing, with the earliest pottery from Collingham village, from a site near the Anglo-Saxon church, dating to the late 11th to mid-12th centuries.

3.13 There is even less information relating to the origins of regular, planned open fields. Ridge and furrow has now been recorded across much of the eastern part of West Yorkshire, thanks to English Heritage's National Mapping Programme, but it is essentially undated. The one useful piece of information is cartographic: the mid-19th-century Ordnance Survey Six Inch map records intermixed parcels of land in the Ferrybridge area, some belonging to the medieval parish of Ferry Fryston, some to Pontefract parish (*WY Survey*, 476 and map 15). The strips in question are clearly open-field strips (or groups of strips). At some stage, perhaps in the early years after the Norman conquest, they were distributed between these two townships and parishes, which had been created through a division of the Tanshelf estate (Roberts 2005, 11-12). The open fields therefore predated this division, and had presumably been created for the Tanshelf estate in the late Anglo-Saxon period.

3.14 Across England, the various zones dominated by dispersed or nucleated settlement broadly reflected the patterning of zones with extensive wooded areas, and those without (Roberts and Wrathmell 2002, Ch. 1). This is certainly true of West Yorkshire, with Anglo-Saxon place-names incorporating – lēah (-ley), indicating the presence of woodland. These are largely absent from the Magnesian Limestone in the east (*WY Survey*, 54), but they are numerous further west. There is, for example, a concentration immediately west of Leeds, in Headingley, Calverley, Bramley, Armley, Farnley and Wortley. The woodland and moorland formed an integral part of the economy of the extensive Anglo-Saxon estates, providing pasturage and access to timber and woodland-based crafts and industries. This explains the linkages seen in sources such as Domesday between lowland centres and upland dependencies; they probably signify transhumance – the seasonal movement of animals from lowlands to upland pastures. None of this, however, appears in the archaeological record for this period.

3.15 Much of the West Yorkshire landscape had probably been dominated by woodland since prehistoric times, hence the name Elmet in the 5th century (2.8 above). There may, however, have been some areas which were cleared by or during Roman times, but which saw woodland regenerate in post-Roman times. At Newland Park, between Wakefield and Normanton, excavations have identified a ditched enclosure, dated from the pottery to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD in an area first documented as 'Newlands', implying

newly-cleared land, in the 13th-century. Other place-names close by are also indicative of woodland, and it has been suggested that this was an area of woodland regeneration (HER Backlog Report no. 405).

3.16 The record of urban development in this period is also slight. Pontefract is the one place that stands out as having an urban character by the mid-11th century, containing the only West Yorkshire burgesses listed in Domesday. The Survey records the manor of Tanshelf, later Pontefract, as having a church and priest, 60 petty burgesses, 16 cottagers, 16 villagers and 8 smallholders with 18 ploughs, a fishery and 3 mills and the provision of alms for the poor and a value of £20 in 1066 (Roberts 2002, 10). The late Anglo-Saxon town remains elusive, and it is likely that some of the assets listed under Tanshelf in Domesday were actually located some distance from the modern town – for example two of the mills were probably at Castleford and Knottingley (*WY Survey*, 195). Nevertheless, there could well have been a fully planned late Anglo-Saxon borough somewhere in the vicinity of the manorial and ecclesiastical administrative centres. Other estate and church centres, such as those at Otley, Leeds and Wakefield, will have generated significant commercial activity - particularly those located on navigable rivers where wharfs could be constructed. Tanshelf itself may have had an associated trading settlement at Ferry Fryston, possibly established by Frisian traders, at the highest point on the Aire that could be reached by sea-going ships (*WY Survey*, 197).

3.17 As indicated above (2.8, 2.13), what is now West Yorkshire seems largely to have been dominated by Mercia between the mid-7th and 10th centuries. Mercian influence is seen in place-names, in dialect and in Anglo-Saxon sculpture (*WY Survey*, 182). The choice of Tanshelf (Pontefract) as the place for Eadred of Mercia to receive the allegiance of Northumbria (3.3 above) is probably significant in this context. In the 10th and 11th centuries the impact of the Vikings – of Scandinavian lords, farmers or both – has to be considered. Their influence can be seen primarily in place-names incorporating Scandinavian elements, and these are spread throughout the eastern end of West Yorkshire, from South Kirkby in the south to Wetherby in the north. Further west, there are a few specific groups of such names in river valleys: a small cluster in the vicinity of Bingley and a much larger one around Huddersfield (*WY Survey*, 206-7 and map 13). The latter group includes one of the relatively few 'pure Scandinavian' place-names (Golcar), and on its eastern edge are two 'Denby' names, named by English speakers as settlements 'of the Danes' (*WY Survey*, 204-5). W.G. Collingwood identified Scandinavian influence in some of the late 9th to 10th-century sculpture at Kirkheaton, at the northern edge of this group of place-names (Collingwood 1929, 43-4), though the existence of such influence on the decorative motifs of this sculpture has since been questioned (J.T. Lang, *in litt.* 1984). More tangibly, two iron keys from the excavations at Castle Hill, Almondbury (itself a name containing a Scandinavian element), find comparison with examples from the Viking period cemetery at Birka, Sweden, and possibly date to the late 9th or 10th century (L. Webster, *in litt.* 1971). These, along with a bead from the excavations dating perhaps to the 8th or 9th century (*WY Survey*, 188), are important finds on a site which has otherwise been thought to have

been abandoned between the later Iron Age and the 12th century (Avery 1993, Appendix A, 4-12). They suggest a Viking presence at the most imposing defensive site in the Calder Valley, lying in the centre of a major cluster of Scandinavian place-names.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Anglo-Saxon estate centres, both secular and ecclesiastical, clearly represent critical resources for understanding Anglo-Saxon West Yorkshire, as do the areas immediately around these foci, particularly towards nearby rivers, where trading centres may have developed. Pre-eminent among them is Tanshelf/Pontefract, where West Yorkshire's only planned Anglo-Saxon urban centre seems to have been located. In the estate centres now represented by small settlements, such as Ledston and Ledsham, even relatively small-scale developments should be the subject of archaeological investigation. The reappraisal of pottery at Tanshelf/Pontefract (3.3 above) emphasises the importance of having artefact assemblages identified by suitably qualified and experienced specialists.

Yet it is not only the estate centres that warrant concern. The dispersed hamlets which formed the dependent territories of these estate centres are arguably at least as important as the centres themselves in terms of the information they could provide on local communities in Anglo-Saxon times. As to the people who formed those communities, stable isotope analysis and other relevant scientific analyses should be used on a regular basis to attempt to distinguish the various immigrant groups. Once again, radiocarbon dating should be used to mitigate the paucity of dating evidence from finds assemblages in West Yorkshire.

The origins of openfield systems and nucleated settlements are equally obscure in West Yorkshire. Fieldwalking by local societies should be encouraged particularly in the areas east of Leeds and Wakefield. Any concentrations of artefacts could then be used to define areas for geophysical evaluation, and ultimately for excavation. In existing nucleated villages there may be opportunities for the investigation of settlement origins within the village fabric when piecemeal development takes place. At Thorner, for example, the planned two-row medieval and later village is set at a distance from the church, and earlier settlement remains may be preserved in the space between; similarly at Barwick in Elmet, the gap between the church and Hall Tower Hill, north of the single row medieval and later village, would be worth investigating, as would that between the Anglo-Saxon church and Castle Hill at Bardsey. Other medieval and later villages will offer similar limited opportunities to explore the origins of nucleation in West Yorkshire.

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