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Lichfield and the Lands of St Chad

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to construct a history for the diocese of Lichfield during the early medieval period. The region is comparatively lacking in evidence, textual or archaeological, when compared to regions further east and south, and so provides a useful case study on which to test the applicability of narratives developed elsewhere. This study analyses what evidence there is from the region, textual (ninth-century episcopal lists, the Lichfield Chronicle, saints' *Lives*), archaeological (ecclesiastical settlements, including Lichfield cathedral, and rural settlement) and topographical (distributions of settlement types, field systems and soils), and asks whether it can be interpreted with reference to two specific narratives: first, the 'minster narrative', in which a framework of minsters, established during the seventh and eighth centuries, provided pastoral care to the local population; and a territorial narrative based upon the 'cultural province', whereby a region defined topographically, usually along watersheds, persistently affected human activity within it, focussing it inwards. The study finds neither narrative entirely satisfactory: early minsters were clustered in the southern and eastern parts of the diocese, suggesting that episcopal agency was more important in ministering to the population than royal or noble minsters, which were founded for other reasons; and several different scales of territory are found to have been influential on the lives of those living in the region. A contextual interpretation is proposed, whereby nodes of habitual practice are identified throughout the landscape, by which people created and negotiated their identities at several different scales; a concept of ecclesiastical lordship is also recommended, by which the diocesan bishop's relationships with other minsters in the diocese might be more fruitfully understood.

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Contents

Abstract	
Acknowledgements	i
Contents	ii
List of Figures	v
Abbreviations	viii
Introduction	x
Chapter 1: The Bishops of Lichfield	1
The Lichfield Chronicle	1
The Episcopal History	2
The Texts	3
Diuma to Ealdwine	7
Hwita to Tunberht	29
Aelfwine to Leofwine	42
The Dates	45
Lichfield and the Word	53
Writing to Rome	55
Chapter 2: The Words of the Saints	64
St Chad	64

The Words of Bede of Jarrow & Stephen of Ripon	64
St Chad in Old English	94
Other Saints in the Diocese of Lichfield	103
St. Werburgh	104
St Wigstan	114
St Modwenna & St Eadgyth	117
Saints with late or no <i>vitae</i>	132
Saints and the Word in the Diocese of Lichfield	134
Chapter 3: The Land of St Chad	146
The Lay of the Land	146
Living on the Land	149
Naming the Land	173
Patterns	198
Early Medieval Settlements	203
Chapter 4: Minsters & Ministry	210
Parish Territories in the Diocese of Lichfield	210
Early Minsters	226
Early Minsters in Roman Settlements	238
Churches and Shrines	243
The Bishop and his Diocese: the Royal Free Chapels	264

Conclusion	280
Modes of historical understanding	281
Characterising the Diocese	284
Colonisation and its social context	287
The minsters of the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries	291
Ecclesiastical lordship	297
Territoriality	307
Bibliography	310
Appendix 1: The Kentish Royal Legend	333
Appendix 2: The <i>Life</i> of St Osgyth	339
Appendix 3: West Midlands Soils Associations Analysis	346
Appendix 4: Place-Names Analysis	350
Appendix 5: Churches and Holywells shown on Figure 26	357

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Distribution of furnished burials to c. 560
- Figure 2: Distribution of Anglo-Saxon saints cults
- Figure 3: Location of the diocese of Lichfield
- Figure 4: Stemma of Kentish Royal Legend versions
- Figure 5: Stemma of texts involving St Modwenna, St Eadgyth
and St Osgyth
- Figure 6: Topography
- Figure 7: Solid Geology
- Figure 8: Drift Geology
- Figure 9: Average Annual Rainfall
- Figure 10: Soils analysis in the diocese of Lichfield
- Figure 11: Settlement dispersal in the Midlands
- Figure 12: Field systems in the West Midlands
- Figure 13: Distribution of sizes of township with Brittonic names
- Figure 14: Distribution of sizes of township with *feld* names
- Figure 15: Distribution of sizes of township with *hām* names
- Figure 16: Distribution of sizes of township with *ēg* names
- Figure 17: Distribution of sizes of township with *dūn* names
- Figure 18: Distribution of sizes of township with *burh* names
- Figure 19: Distribution of place names overlaid on soil analysis
- Figure 20: Archdeanery of Chester
- Figure 21: Archdeanery of Shropshire
- Figure 22: Archdeanery of Stafford

- Figure 23: Archdeanery of Derby
- Figure 24: Archdeanery of Coventry
- Figure 25: Church-scot in Marton hundred
- Figure 26: Distribution of sizes of place names and selected churches overlain on the soils analysis
- Figure 27: Distribution of seventh, eighth and ninth century minsters
- Figure 28: Lichfield, a water-side minster
- Figure 29: Hanbury, a hill top minster
- Figure 30: Derby, a minster in a *worthig*
- Figure 31a: The Anglo-Saxon church and crypt at Repton
- Figure 31b: A conjectural reconstruction of the hypogeum at Repton compared with hypogee des Dunes, Poitiers
- Figure 32: Eighth- and ninth-century churches
- Figure 33a: Repton showing church with hypogeum to the west
- Figure 33b: Repton, plan of western hypogeum
- Figure 34a: Archaeological features recorded beneath Lichfield Cathedral Choir in the nineteenth century
- Figure 34b: Roland Paul's plan of Lichfield cathedral 1891
- Figure 35: Archaeological features beneath Lichfield cathedral, Anglo-Saxon and Norman
- Figure 36: Conjectural reconstruction of Anglo-Saxon church and funerary chapel
- Figure 37a: Plan of Lichfield cathedral nave excavation
- Figure 37b: Photograph of Lichfield cathedral nave excavation
- Figure 38a: Conjectural location of St Peters church, Lichfield
- Figure 38b: Conjectural plan of St Mary's and St Peter's, Lichfield
- Figure 39: Distribution of early minsters in the Midlands

Figure 40: Anglo-Saxon provincial boundaries and forests

Figure 41: Church dedications to St Chad

Abbreviations

- Alcuin Ep.* Alcuin sive Albini Epistolae: E. Dümmler (ed.), 1895. In *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolarum*, Vol. 4, pp 1-493
- ASC* Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: Swanton, Michael (trans.). 1996. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*. Phoenix Press, London
- DB Chesh* Domesday Book, referenced by number in Phillimore edition
- DB Derbs.* Domesday Book, referenced by number in Phillimore edition
- DB Salop* Domesday Book, referenced by number in Phillimore edition
- DB Staffs.* Domesday Book, referenced by number in Phillimore edition
- DB Warws.* Domesday Book, referenced by number in Phillimore edition
- Derbs. HER* Derbyshire County Council, Historic Environment Record; reference given by record number
- EHD I* Whitelock, Dorothy. 1955. *English Historical Documents. Volume I. c. 500-1042*. Eyre & Spottiswode, London
- GP* *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*:
- GR* *Gesta Regum Anglorum*: Mynors, R. A. B., Thomson, R. M. & Winterbottom, M. 1998. *William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum Anglorum*. Clarendon Press, Oxford
- HB* *Historia Brittonum*: Morris, John (ed. & trans.). 1980. *Nennius. British History and the Welsh Annals*. Arthurian Period Sources Vol. 8, Phillimore, London & Chichester
- HE* *Historia Ecclesiastica*: Plummer, Charles. 1896. *Venerabilis Bedae Opera Historica*. Clarendon, Oxford; Colgrave, Bertram and Mynors, R. A. B. (eds.). 1969. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Clarendon Press, Oxford

- Salop. HER* Shropshire County Council, Historic Environment Record; reference given by record number
- SHC* Collections for a History of Staffordshire: reference by relevant volume
- Staffs. HER* Staffordshire County Council, Historic Environment Record; reference given by record number
- VCH Chesh.* Victoria County History, referenced by volume
- VCH Derbs.* Victoria County History, referenced by volume
- VCH Salop.* Victoria County History, referenced by volume
- VCH Staffs.* Victoria County History, referenced by volume
- VCH Warws.* Victoria County History, referenced by volume
- VM* *Vita Sancte Monenne*: Esposito, Mario. 1910. 'Conchubrani Vita S. Monenna', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. XXVIII, Section C, pp 202-251; reprinted in M. Lapidge (ed.), 1990, *Irish Books and Learning in Medieval Europe*, Variorum, Aldershot, No. XV
- VMM* *Vita et Miracula Sancte Modwenne*: Bartlett, Robert. 2002. *Geoffrey of Burton; Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
- VSW* *Vita Sancte Werburge*: Love, Rosalind C. 2004. *Goscelin of Saint-Bertin. The Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely*
- VW* *Vita Wilfridi*: Colgrave, Bertram. 1927. *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus. Text, Translation, and Notes*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Introduction

The Mercian Hole

There is a hole in the kingdom of Mercia: the northwest Midlands of England lies largely bereft of many of the comforts that textual and archaeological sources provide to the south and east. For example, the distribution of furnished burials, long appreciated as characteristic of Anglo-Saxon culture during the fifth, sixth and early-seventh centuries, tails off at the eastern edges of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, and the northern edge of Warwickshire, excepting only the enigmatic barrow-burials of the Derbyshire Peak (Figure 1).¹ As for the special burials of the seventh-century onwards, the distribution of known Anglo-Saxon saints approximately reproduces this pattern (Figure 2). Likewise, the voluminous corpus of charters, surviving from the seventh century, preserved in the archive of Worcester cathedral, largely concern lands within the former kingdom of the Hwicce, in Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Worcestershire to the south, whilst the textual exuberance associated with the Benedictine monasteries founded in the tenth century again concern places to the east and south, with a single outlier in Burton-on-Trent; Lichfield, the Anglo-Saxon cathedral of the northwest Midlands, preserves only a single pre-Conquest text, an illuminated eighth-century gospel book today known as St Chad's Gospels, after the seventh-century founder of the cathedral there. Bede, whose *Historia Ecclesiastica* has provided so much material to those who would construct a narrative of seventh- and early eighth-

¹ For the Peak burials, see Ozanne, Audrey. 1962/3. 'The Peak Dwellers', in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 6/7, pp 15-52

century history, has scarcely anything to say about the area, other than his tribute to Chad.² What are we to make of this forgotten region?

There are sources of evidence to be had. For example, archaeological investigation has recently made great headway at Lichfield cathedral, and some texts do concern the region, such as the will of Wulfric, the founder of Burton Abbey, which reveals his extensive landholdings in the area, or the so-called *Mercian Register*, inserted into some versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which relates a series of early tenth-century events connected with Æthelflæd, Lady of the Mercians, and her fortification of the region. Nevertheless, it is necessary to enquire what kind of historical narrative can be constructed that provides the region with an early medieval past without generalising overwhelmingly on the basis of evidence from elsewhere. This thesis tackles that question by focussing on the diocese of Lichfield, which encompassed the region during the thirteenth century, when its boundaries can first be reconstructed in detail, and probably had done since St Chad's seventh-century episcopate (Figure 3).³ Bede's narrative concerning Chad, and a series of subsequent references to bishops of the see, make it possible to envisage an ecclesiastical territory that lasted throughout the early medieval period; it is tempting to use this as an institutional net that we can stretch across this Mercian hole, and so establish a basis for the construction of a narrative. However, whilst such institutional histories have a long history of their own, more recent studies have demonstrated

² *HE* iv.3

³ The Papal taxation of 1291 enables the episcopal allegiance of individual parishes to be determined, although the earliest delineation of their boundaries must be sought in nineteenth-century tithe maps; for useful searchable access to the taxation see the following webpage hosted by the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield: <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/taxatio/> (accessed 16th August 2011)

the necessity of attempting to understand the social and cultural worlds in which such institutions were suspended, and this approach is adopted here.

In particular, whilst much has been accomplished elsewhere with the aid of charters, chronicles and other textual sources, the comparative lack of such evidence within the diocese of Lichfield is problematic.⁴ Clearly a broader approach, including consideration of archaeological and topographical evidence, is necessary, and the collection and analysis of diffuse sources of all kinds is the only way forward. In his study of relationships between archaeology and text, John Moreland draws a broad distinction between the different media that were used to communicate meaning in the past, classifying them as Object, Word or Voice. Word represents written texts of all kinds, and obviously occupies a special position in this scheme, as it can be considered to represent a fusion of Object and Voice. Nevertheless, Moreland's objective is not to privilege the Word in any way, but to situate it more equally within this wider field of different media through which people live meaningful lives. Moreland attempts to trace the rise of the Word as a privileged carrier of meaning in western European and American historiography, and then to reset the balance by seeking out "the way in which people, in historically specific contexts, used, manipulated and confronted both texts and objects".⁵ Crucial here is the idea that meaning is created in 'historically specific contexts' by particular structures of Word, Object and Voice, which inform, and are

⁴ Regional studies in Britain and beyond have relied overwhelmingly on more plentiful textual evidence; examples include: Brooks, Nicholas. 1984. *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*. Leicester University Press, Leicester; Sims-Williams, Patrick. 1990. *Religion and Literature in Western England 600-800*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Davies, Wendy, 1978. *An Early Welsh Microcosm; Studies in the Llandaff Charters*. Royal Historical Society, London; Innes, Matthew. 2000. *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages. The Middle Rhine Valley, 400-1000*. Cambridge University Press, London; Hummer, Hans. J. 2005. *Politics and Power in Early Medieval Europe. Alsace and the Frankish Realm, 600-1000*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

⁵ Moreland, John. 2001. *Archaeology and Text*. Duckworth, London, p 97

subsequently transformed by, the human relationships that they articulate; none of these media passively represent these contexts, instead all help to create them. This contextual approach has provided inspiration for the methodology followed here, and to Word, Object and Voice, I have added Place, in the belief that the landscape itself can also usefully be considered a medium of communication.

This is not the first study to attempt the synthesis of archaeological and textual evidence; however, previous attempts to write a history of the region have largely presented a central dynamic of interaction and conflict with the Welsh and later the Vikings, making use of undated Welsh poetry, periodical chronicle entries marking battles between Mercian kings and their Welsh and Viking counterparts, archaeological and topographical analysis of Offa's Dyke, and the material evidence of interconnections between the northwest part of the region and the wider Irish Sea province.⁶ Whilst these studies are valuable in themselves, and it would be foolish to ignore the borderland dynamic on which they are focused, none of them provides a broader-based consideration of the Mercian side of the border, and of whether it possessed an identity independent of relations with the neighbours. Excepting the Welsh Question, the excellent collections of essays on Mercia published in 1977 and 2001 hardly mention the region, focussing instead on the more plentiful evidence to the south and east, and particularly on the sculptural and archaeological riches of the East Midlands.⁷

⁶ Kirby, D. P. 1977. 'Welsh Bards and the Border', in A. Dornier, *Mercian Studies*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 31-42; Charles-Edwards, T. M. 2001. 'Wales and Mercia, 613-918', in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr, *Mercia; An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, pp 89-105; Hill, David. 2001. 'Mercians: The Dwellers on the Boundary', in Brown & Farr pp 173-182; Hill, David & Worthington, Margaret. 2003. *Offa's Dyke; History and Guide*. Tempus, Stroud; Griffiths, David Wyn. 1991. *Anglo-Saxon England and the Irish Sea Region AD 800-1100; An Archaeological Study of the Lower Dee and Mersey as a Border Area*. Unpublished PhD Thesis

⁷ Dornier, Ann. 1977. *Mercian Studies*. Leicester University Press, Leicester; Brown, Michelle P. & Farr, Carol A. 2001. *Mercia; An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*. Continuum, London; exceptions

Lacking the plentiful textual records of people and events beloved of writers of political history, and ignoring for now the brute punctuation of Offa's Dyke along the western edge of the region, what other kind of narrative might we otherwise construct for the diocese? John Blair's recent study, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, provided early inspiration for this project, and in its topographical approach to ecclesiastical organisation opens another door through which we might glimpse the early medieval past.⁸ The fundamental unit of Blair's approach is the Anglo-Saxon 'minster', a label modernised from Old English *mynster*, derived from Latin *monasterium*, and his definition of this entity deserves full quotation:

A complex ecclesiastical settlement which is headed by an abbess, abbot, or man in priest's orders; which contains nuns, monks, priests, or laity in a variety of possible combinations, and is united to a greater or lesser extent by their liturgy and devotions; which may perform or supervise pastoral care to the laity, perhaps receiving dues and exerting parochial authority; and which may sometimes act as a bishop's seat, while not depending for its existence or importance on that function.⁹

The inclusive scope of this passage is intended to capture the ambiguity of Anglo-Saxon terminology, and to distinguish such places from the more confined, contemplative ideal of a later medieval monastery.

to this neglect in the latter include Jane Hawkes' exploration of the Sandbach crosses (Hawkes, Jane. 2001. 'Constructing Iconographies: Questions of Identity in Mercian Sculpture', in Brown & Farr, pp 230-245) and Michelle Brown's consideration of the possibilities offered by the cathedral at Lichfield as a centre of Mercian manuscript production in the eighth and ninth centuries (Brown, Michelle P. 2001. 'Mercian Manuscripts? The 'Tiberius' Group and Its Historical Context', in Brown & Farr, pp 278-291)

⁸ Blair, John. 2005. *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

⁹ *ibid.*, p 3

Whilst Blair desires the abolishment of the 'minster model' as a rigid framework of historical interpretation, which would define a web of minsters across the entire country providing pastoral care to the entire Anglo-Saxon nation, it is fair to say that his study proposes an early medieval 'minster narrative', albeit a flexible one, in which "the evolution of institutions through the whole period is a central argument".¹⁰ The argument is, moreover, a general one, which explicitly obscures the more fine-grained elements of regional variation, and Blair's call for "another generation of local studies" to flesh out the narrative was enthusiastically heeded in the early stages of research for this thesis; the identification of minsters in the diocese, the locations of some in the eastern half already hinted at by the presence there of Anglo-Saxon saints, and the evolution of these places through the early medieval period, held out the hope of a more extensive net with which to cover the Mercian hole.¹¹ Nevertheless, a more holistic approach to the region was also considered desirable, drawing inspiration from Charles Phythian-Adams' work on 'cultural provinces', which emphasises that a region is only as real as the societies that live within it, where a society is defined as "people who are regularly interacting according to a broadly shared habitual code."¹² Such societies, existing in space, must be the main target of historical enquiry, in as far as their history represents the lived experience of the majority of the population.

Phythian-Adams defines a cultural province as an area "spatially greater in compass than that occupied by any one local society, yet of sufficiently limited

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p 7

¹¹ Blair 2005, p 7

¹² Phythian-Adams, Charles. 1993. 'Introduction: an Agenda for English Local History', in *idem* (ed.), *Societies, Cultures and Kinship, 1580-1850; Cultural Provinces and English Local History*, Leicester University Press, London, pp 1-23, this reference p 5

geographical extent as still to represent a meaningful context for its inhabitants, and with which may be associated a set of distinguishable cultural traits, not the least of which will be a shared susceptibility to the same outside influences.”¹³ He suggests that these provinces have a persistent existence, defined by the major watersheds of Britain, and so by the river basins between them, asserting that “broad patterns of drainage have always tended to provide the most influential matrices for the creation of human territories”, and that they “pre-dispose their inhabitants to look inwards, to look along a broad natural axis, and to face towards, and then to share reactions to, prevailing incoming influences which tend to emanate from the same general (often foreign) direction.”¹⁴ Although such an approach is undoubtedly useful, and whilst Phythian-Adams insists that “the perimeter of each province is best regarded as a broad transitional zone (whereby, of course, the province integrates with its neighbours) rather than as a ring-fence”, the territory enclosed by the medieval diocese of Lichfield creates a problem: it encompasses parts of three of Phythian-Adams’ cultural provinces, which separate the Dee basin of Cheshire in the northwest (the ‘Irish Sea’ cultural province) from the Severn basin of the northern part of Shropshire in the southwest (the ‘Severn/Avon’ cultural province) and both from the Trent basin of Staffordshire, Derbyshire and northern Warwickshire in the east (the ‘Trent’ cultural province).¹⁵ Clearly, if the diocese of Lichfield acted as a coherent social territory over many centuries, then these cultural provinces are not as distinctive, or as significant, Phythian-Adams would argue.

¹³ *ibid.*, p 9

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp 12 & 13

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p 14

These two approaches to the territory of the diocese of Lichfield, the first broadly ecclesiastical, focussed on the religious communities of the region, the second more generally social, attempting to characterise the entire population, inform the dynamic of this thesis. However, the mismatches evident in both, the first hindered by any evidence for saints, and thus perhaps early minsters, in the northwest of the diocese, the second by the presence of major watersheds across the middle of the territory, were causes for concern. Ultimately, it was decided to turn these curses into a blessing, and to use the Mercian hole as a test-case by which to evaluate the validity of these ecclesiastical and territorial narratives. Consequently, the first four chapters of the thesis analyse and discuss the various textual, archaeological and topographical sources for the region: Chapter 1 begins with the diocese itself, and the textual lists, chronicles and fragments by which the institution can be identified across the early medieval period; Chapter 2 focuses on another kind of medieval textual narrative from within the diocese, namely saints' Lives; Chapter 3 shifts the emphasis to the landscape itself, using primarily archaeological and topographical sources to characterise the diocese in terms of the local communities living within it; Chapter 4 continues this analysis, but focuses on the churches and parishes of the diocese; finally, the Discussion attempts to synthesise this evidence within a critique of the historical narratives introduced above, and attempts to construct a fresh narrative to fill the Mercian hole, which may in turn have utility beyond the confines of the region.

Chapter 1: The Bishops of Lichfield

The Lichfield Chronicle

In an extension to his original ideas, John Moreland has argued that, as with the rest of material culture, “texts are resources that can be drawn on in pursuit of human projects”,¹ and as such they constitute part of the web that binds communities together in shared practice. Therefore, by studying texts, so Moreland suggested, we can attempt to identify the ‘textual communities’ for which the production, presentation, appreciation of or confrontation with writing provided some form of mutual understanding. This chapter aims to identify some of the textual communities within which bishops of Lichfield found membership during the early medieval period, by analysing some of the texts that provide all we know of many of them. The first part of the chapter takes as its starting point the product of an early fourteenth-century textual community, the newly-established professional scriptorium at Lichfield cathedral.² One of the scribes, named Alan of Ashbourne, produced a chronicle during the 1320s; this document is now known as the Lichfield Chronicle, but which was perhaps called the Book of Alan of Ashbourne at the time of its composition, as is written at the top of the first folio.³

¹ Moreland, John. 2006. ‘Archaeology and Texts: Subservience or Enlightenment’, in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol 35, pp 135-51, citation p 145; see also Moreland, John. 2001. *Archaeology and Text*. Duckworth, London

² On the scriptorium and the chronicle see: Savage, H. E. 1915. *The Lichfield Chronicle. An Address given on the Festival of St. Chad*. A.C. Lomax’s Successors, Lichfield; *idem*. 1922. *Book of Alan Asseborn. An Address given on the Festival of St. Chad*. A.C. Lomax’s Successors, Lichfield; Henry Edwin Savage was the dean of Lichfield Cathedral from 1909 until his death in 1934, and from 1913 he gave a series of annual St. Chad’s Day addresses on the history of the cathedral and its diocese that were later published as pamphlets (Greenslade, M. W. 1982. *The Staffordshire Historians*. Collections for a History of Staffordshire, Fourth Series, Volume Eleven. Staffordshire Record Society, p 149).

³ British Library MS Cotton Cleopatra D IX, f.5r (‘Liber Alani de Assheborn, Vicarii Lich.’); a fine copy of the chronicle was produced by Canon Thomas Chesterfield towards the middle of the

The chronicle comprises several distinct parts. 'De Gestis Anglorum' refers to one of the major historical sections of the book, spanning the years 449 to 1322; the other historical parts comprise a set of annals from the Creation to 1292, a catalogue of popes to 1317, a metrical account of the earliest inhabitants of Britain, a list of the archbishops of Canterbury from Augustine (597) to Walter Reynald (1313), and a list of the bishops of Mercia from Diuma (655-58) to Roger Norburgh (1324)⁴. Most of the content of these parts can be recognised in earlier sources. Alan himself named some of his sources for 'De Gestis Anglorum', claiming to have used Gildas, Bede, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*. Henry Savage regarded Alan's work to be substantially a selective copying and reworking of this latter work, with occasional extracts from other writers, such as Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. The Lichfield Chronicle was thus almost entirely a work of synthesis, using fragments of texts that had been produced elsewhere and then copied and distributed to places like Lichfield.

The Episcopal History

In Alan's history of the diocese, he essentially presents an augmented list of bishops, including the length of the episcopate and year of death of each, and adding extra information to specific bishops; this section is no exception to the highly synthetic nature of the rest of the chronicle. Many different textual fragments can be identified, either word for word or with slight reworking, which

fifteenth century, and it was to him that Henry Wharton accredited the chronicle in his *Anglia Sacra* in 1691 (Part 1, p 423) a mistake thereafter perpetuated, and only rectified in the early-twentieth century by Savage (1922, p21)

⁴ Savage 1922, p15

are found in earlier manuscripts dating from the early ninth to the early twelfth centuries, and Alan's work shares with these a consistent nomination and ordering of the bishops of Lichfield. Moreover, it also contains some fragments that cannot be identified in earlier sources, but which may nevertheless have been copied from other items in Lichfield's fourteenth-century archive. Alan's chronicle acts a useful nexus of many earlier texts that together attest to the existence of earlier textual communities involving the bishops of Lichfield throughout the early medieval period. In what follows, Alan's chronicle will be compared and contrasted with the existing versions of three of his source texts: first, a tradition of texts that can be traced to the late-eighth or early-ninth century, containing lists of episcopal successions, which is here labelled the 'Episcopal List Tradition', hereafter referred to as the ELT; second, William of Malmesbury's twelfth-century *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*; and third, John of Worcester's *Chronica Chronicarum*, also written in the twelfth century. Both of the twelfth-century texts also used recensions of the ELT, and all three later texts represent unique historical contexts in their own right, in which the synthesis of fragments from the past has created more chapters in an ongoing quest to reconstruct something of Lichfield's early medieval history. The following discussion is intended to separate the creation of the later texts from their early medieval sources, identifying what belongs to the one context and what to the other, then to discuss the nature of these sources.

The Texts

Manuscripts of the ELT contain lists of episcopal succession arranged by Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Its earliest witnesses comprise the manuscripts Cotton Vespasian B VI and Corpus Christi College Cambridge 183, which David Dumville

has shown were derived from hypothetical exemplars, β and ϵ respectively, directly copied from a hypothetical archetype α , itself compiled in Mercia, in the reign of king Cœnwulf;⁵ both exemplars were probably of Mercian origin. Dumville dates α to 796, on the basis that the final entry in a Northumbrian regnal list is the second reign of King Æthelred (789-796), together with a record of his seven years, whilst the final entry in a Mercian regnal list to include a reign length (one hundred and forty-one days) is King Ecgrith (796), although here the list extends in the earliest witness through subsequent kings to King Berhtwulf (840-852), all without reign lengths, and presumably added to the manuscript's exemplar.⁶ However, this assumes that these kings' successors would have been included in the regnal lists when they were living, showing a tally of their years to-date; rather, it better fits the evidence of the lists that they only included previous kings, not the living king.⁷ Therefore the lists could have been compiled any time between 796 and the earliest subsequent ending of the reign of one of the two kings' successors, in this case the Northumbrian King Eardwulf, who was driven from his kingdom in 808.⁸

The earliest lists in the earliest witness to the tradition, Cotton Vespasian B VI, and thus the latest stage of its exemplar β , were dated by Page, most recent editor of the episcopal lists, to 805x814, and he also noted that they were up to date except for that of Lindisfarne, where the last bishop in the list had died in 802 or 803, and

⁵ Dumville, David. 1976. 'The Anglian collection of royal genealogies and regnal lists', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 5, pp 23-50, in particular pp 38-41

⁶ *ibid.*, p 40

⁷ Ecgrith's reign length must represent his total reign, as adding 141 days to Offa's death on the 26th (from the northern annals in *Historia Regum*) or the 29th July (ASC) gives the 14th or the 17th December 796; as Ecgrith died that year, the length is unlikely to be a living tally, and Cœnwulf's name, following Ecgrith's in the earliest witness, does not include a reign length, thus indicating that a living tally was not the custom, and that Cœnwulf's name was probably added later

⁸ Recorded in the Annals of the Frankish Kingdom: *EDH* 1, p 313

perhaps for those of York and Whithorn, where the obits of the latest bishops in these lists are not known.⁹ This is a small number of bishops, and it seems reasonable to assume that the episcopal lists were up to date when the collection was originally compiled in α , meaning we can narrow the dating bracket for this event to 796x803, with subsequent bishops added to α and/or β before the creation of Cotton Vespasian B VI. The bishop lists of the latter were next partially updated to c. 833, then neglected until the twelfth century, when the lists for the two bishops of Lichfield and Leicester were updated. ϵ was updated to 840 x 845 before providing the exemplar for fresh work beginning in the tenth century, localised in Wessex, possibly Glastonbury, where Corpus Christi College Cambridge 183 may have been produced in 935x937 as a gift from Æthelstan, king of Wessex, to the community of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street;¹⁰ later recensions of ϵ represent activity further activity at Glastonbury, then in Kent during the late tenth century, inspiring new copies into the early twelfth century in both Kent and Wessex.¹¹

During the early twelfth century, both William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester were among a diffuse group of Anglo-Norman writers of historical works, which also included figures such as Orderic Vitalis of St Evroul in Normandy or Eadmer of Christ Church Canterbury, all of whom were educated in monastic environments and displayed a devotion to the Rule of St Benedict in their

⁹ Page, R. I. 1965/6. 'Anglo-Saxon Episcopal Lists', in Nottingham Medieval Studies, Vol. IX, pp 71-95, & Vol. X, pp 2-24, this reference pp 74-75; on β see Dumville 1976, pp 38-39

¹⁰ Dumville 1976, pp 39-42, 25-26 & 42

¹¹ *ibid.*, 38-50; these later copies appear in British Museum MS Cott. Tiberius B V, British Museum MS Stowe 944 (Winchester New Minster *Liber Vitae*), Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 173, and Rochester Cathedral Library MS A.3.5 (*Textus Roffensis*); the lists in Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 140 appears to have been copied from β but with some input from a recension of ϵ

work.¹² Life within this tradition appears to have valued and encouraged documentary expressions of the past, and both John and William brought together the textual litter of centuries to create huge synthetic histories of the English people. Both men used recensions of the ELT, bringing it into contact with other sources, and modifying what they found in ways that would have important effects on the composition of the episcopal list of the Lichfield Chronicle. William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum* were written in a single year, 1125, based on extensive research amongst the archives of many English monasteries.¹³ He adapted the lists of his exemplars by incorporating them in sentences within his narrative, adding further commentary to some of the bishops' names, taken from Bede and other sources. It also seems possible that the ELT provided the inspiration for William's own organisational scheme, which comprises accounts of the English dioceses containing a successive narration of the bishops in each case, arranged within books representing the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.

John of Worcester's *Chronica Chronicarum* was apparently commissioned by Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, in or before the year of his death in 1095, and was compiled over a span of about fifty years. The most recent analysis of the text and surviving manuscripts by R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk has suggested that the 1120s and 1130s were especially important during this period.¹⁴ In particular, this included an intermediate stage of revision, dated 1133 x 1143, which involved the insertion of many passages extracted from the *Gesta Pontificum* and a great many

¹² Gransden, Antonia. 1974. *Historical Writing in England c.550 to c.1307*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, p137 & 157-8

¹³ *ibid.*, pp 168 & 174

¹⁴ Darlington, R. R. & McGurk, P. 1995. *The Chronicle of John of Worcester, Volume II, The Annals from 450 to 1066*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, p lxxxi

entries concerning episcopal succession.¹⁵ However, John did not acquire all his information concerning English bishoprics from William, as his *Chronica* contains substantial preliminary matter set out before the main chronicle, including a set of episcopal lists derived from the ELT, together with significant commentaries, which may have been compiled as early as 1114, or soon after.¹⁶ The earliest witness to John's compilation is a fine copy produced 1128-31, then used as a working copy for subsequent revisions¹⁷. This postdates the publication of William's *Gesta Pontificum*, and thus muddies the waters of respective influences. The following discussion is arranged in three sections, splitting the episcopal succession of the lists into three series, justified below in each case. Within these sections, the texts are analysed chronologically, oldest to most recent, in an attempt to represent the generation of textual stratigraphy over the centuries.

Diuma to Ealdwine

The Episcopal List Tradition

This first section runs from Diuma, the first bishop of the Mercians, to Ealdwine, the ninth in succession, as these men form the subject of an extended rubric found in the earliest recensions of the ELT, quoted below and divided into two halves to aid discussion:

Names of the bishops of the provinces of the Mercians:

The first bishop in the province of the Mercians and the Lindseymen and the Middle Angles [was] 1) *Diuma*, 2) *Cellah*, both from Ireland

¹⁵ *ibid.*, lxix-lxx

¹⁶ *ibid.*, lxxv

¹⁷ MS Oxford Corpus Christi College 157; Darlington and McGurk 1995, pp xxi-xxxv

(*Scottia*), 3) *Trumhere* of the nation of the English, 4) *Gearomon*, 5) *Ceadda*, 6) *ƿynfrið*, 7) *Saexpulf*.

After that however it was divided into five provinces:

After *Sæxuulf* the province of the Mercians had two bishops, *Headda* and *ƿilfrid*.

Later, *Uuilfrid* was banished, and the aforesaid *Headda* ruled both dioceses (*parrochiae*), then *Alduine*, who was also called *Uuor*

A second time it was divided into two dioceses.¹⁸

There follows two lists of bishops, side by side, representing the succession of the two bishops of the province of the Mercians, beginning with *Torthelm* (left-hand column) and *Hwita* (right-hand column). After these, three more successive lists begin, each with an introductory 'Name of the bishops of *N*', then 'after *Saexpulf*' followed by a list of bishops, thus tying in with the second section of the rubric quoted above beginning 'After that however it was divided into five provinces'. It is worth noting here that none of the representative manuscripts of this tradition record the location of the sees, only the people or province (*prouincia*) over which the bishop had authority.

¹⁸ 'Nomina Episcoporum prouinciarum Merciorum. // Primus in prouincia Merciorum et Lindisfarorum ac Mediteranerum Anglorum episcopus j. Diuma .ii Cellah. ambo de Scottia. iii Trumhere de natione Anglorum. iiii Gearomon. v. Ceadda vi. ƿynfrið vii Saexpulf. // Postea vero .in.v.parrochias diuiditur // post Sæxuulfum prouincia Merciorum duos episcopos habuit. Headdan et ƿilfridum. // Postea Uuilfridus eiectus. et Headda praefatus regebat ambas parrochias. DEInde Alduine qui et Uuor nominabatur // Iterum diuisa est in duas parrochias'; MS Cott. Vesp. B VI, fo. 108 v, col. 2, as transcribed and expanded in Page 1966, p 5, here without distinguishing expanded contractions; the same rubric in MS CCCC 183 contains minor variations in orthography and layout that do not effect the following discussion.

The rubric can itself be appreciated as a compilation of at least two different concepts of the Mercian bishopric. The first half, down to *Saexpulf*, concerns the province (*prouincia*, note the singular) of the Mercians and Lindseymen and Middle Angles, whilst the dioceses (*parrochiae*) of the second half, after the division into five, comprise the provinces (*prouinciae*, plural) of the Mercians (two bishops), Lindseymen, Hwicce, and *Uestor E[.]*, where the last province is identifiable with Bede's 'people who dwell beyond the River Severn to the west', later called the Magonsæte.¹⁹ This latter term, although probably anachronistic during this earlier period, will be used hereafter when referring to these people, for the sake of clarity and consistency. One of the two lists for the province of the Mercians of the second half can be understood to represent the Middle Angles of the first half, although this is not explicit, and would assume that the three peoples listed in the first section were members of one province, perhaps supported by the use of the singular term here. However, if this were the case, why is the province of the Lindseymen now a separate province? If, alternatively, the three peoples noted in the first section were all intended there as separate *prouinciae*, which might be implied by the listing of three separate names, why is the province of the Middle Angles apparently subsumed within the province of the Mercians in the second section?²⁰ Additionally, the provinces of the Hwicce and the Magonsæte

¹⁹ *HE* v.23: *populi qui ultra amnem Sabrinam ad occidentem habitant*. The loss of about four letters in the MS (Cott. Vesp. B VI) unfortunately renders illegible what would otherwise be the earliest reference to the name of the people on the western side of the Severn; Page suggests that the traces might be read E[ponu], E[poru], E[ronu], or E[roru]. Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 183, at least a copy of a copy of the original α , has *Uestor Elih*, a contracted name that does not appear to match easily with any of Page's possible readings of the earlier example. Any connection between this name and the later *Hecana* (see below) is purely conjectural. For a recent consideration of the name Magonsæte, first recorded in a charter of 811, see John Freeman, 2008, 'The name of the Magonsæte', in O. J. Padel & David. N. Parsons (eds.), *A Commodity of Good Names, Essays in Honour of Margaret Gelling*, Shaun Tyas, Donington, pp 101-116

²⁰ An assumption apparently made by the scribe of the exemplar of MSS Cott. Vesp. B VI and CCCC 140, copying α , in which the two uses of the word *prouincia* in this rubric were altered to

were not mentioned at all in the first section, but are presented as the product of diocesan division in the second section.

Such a discrepancy in terminology suggests a stratigraphical break within the rubric, and that its two halves derive from separate sources. This is supported by a passage in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, which is extremely similar to the first section of the ELT rubric, indicated here by italics:

*Primus autem in prouincia Merciorum, simul et Lindisfarorum ac Mediterraneorum Anglorum, factus est episcopus Diuma, ut supra diximus, qui apud Mediterraneos Anglos defunctus ac sepultus est; secundus Cellach, qui relicto episcopatus officio uiuens ad Scottiam rediit, uterque de genere Scottorum; tertius Trumheri, de natione quidem Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scottis, qui erat abbas in monasterio quod dicitur Ingetlingum.*²¹

Even where there is no direct correspondence, the rubric's 'ambo de Scottia' and Bede's 'uterque de genere Scottorum', both in relation to Diuma and Ceollach, can be seen, in their specificity of content, to derive from a similar source. Moreover, Seaxwulf is the latest Mercian bishop to receive consideration in Bede's work, excepting a mention for Ealdwine in his contemporary summary at the very end of his work; Bede has nothing to say about Headda.

prouinciæ. The original singular form in α is suggested by comparison with Bede's use of the same material, to be discussed in the following paragraph, above.

²¹ *HE* iii.24: 'The first bishop of the province of the Mercians, and also of the Lindseymen and the Middle Angles was Diuma, as we said above, who died and was buried among the Middle Angles; the second was Ceollach, who resigned his bishopric before his death and returned to Ireland, for both were Irish; the third was Trumhere, of the nation of the English, but who was taught and ordained by the Irish, and who was abbot of the minster called Gilling.'

It might be argued that the rubric was derived from Bede, but, given Bede's explicit enumeration of the bishops, it seems more plausible to suggest, as does R. I. Page, editor of the ELT, that "both they and Bede derive from a common source, presumably a primitive series of bishop's lists."²² Assuming this to be the case, Bede's apparent ignorance of Headda and of a formal division of the see suggest that he possessed the memorandum from which the first half of the rubric was also derived, but nothing concerning the bishopric after Seaxwulf.²³ This is supported by Bede's explicit claim in his preface: 'as to the province of Lindsey, I learned of the growth of their faith in Christ and of the succession of bishops, both through a letter from the reverend Bishop Cyneberht and from the lips of other trustworthy men';²⁴ if Bede was able to copy from a memorandum concerning the earliest Mercian bishops, but received his information concerning the bishops of Lindsey from their bishop, then he cannot have had the second half of the rubric before him, as this sets up the other Mercian lists after Seaxwulf, of which Lindsey forms a part. The date of composition of the memorandum represented by the first half of the ELT rubric is a matter for conjecture, although given Seaxwulf's position at the end of the memorandum, it is possible that it was composed during his episcopate, and thus that it might be dated somewhere in the bracket 672/3 to

²² Page 1965, 84

²³ Bede mentions all the other diocesan divisions that are known to have occurred before his time, and which are noted by the later episcopal lists: the division of the West Saxon see after the death of bishop Hædde (*HE* v.18); the division of the see of the East Angles on the retirement of bishop Bisi (*HE* iv.5); of the various divisions of the Northumbrian see, Bede records far more than is included in the episcopal lists, and the latter appear to be a later rationalisation of a complex series of events.

²⁴ *HE praefatio*: 'At vero in prouincia Lindissi quae sint gesta erga fidem Christi, quaeue successio sacerdotalis extiterit, uel litteris reuerentissimi antistitis Cynibercti uel aliorum fidelium uirorum uiua uoce deducimus.'

692.²⁵ At the very least it was certainly in existence by 731 when it was used by Bede.²⁶

An analysis of Bede's usage of this memorandum is revealing, in particular his use of the people-name 'Middle Angles'. This term occurs eleven times in the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, all of which appear to derive from just two sources: the first is the ELT memorandum, from which Bede used the tag 'Mercians, Lindseymen and Middle Angles' several times to label the jurisdiction of the various Mercian bishops as they appeared in his narrative;²⁷ the second appears to be a separate account of the conversion of Peada and his people, the Middle Angles, over whom he had been created ruler (*princeps*) by his father Penda, king of the Mercians.²⁸ The story can be summarised as follows: in 653 Peada, having been made king of the Middle Angles, requested of King Oswiu of Northumbria the hand of Alhflæd, his daughter, to which the king agreed on the condition that Peada accept the Christian faith; Peada agreed and, having been baptised by Bishop Finan of Lindisfarne, took back with him four priests, to aid in the conversion of his people, one of whom, Diama, was ordained by Bishop Finan as bishop of the Mercians

²⁵ Seaxwulf's episcopate cannot be dated exactly. Bede suggests that Seaxwulf succeeded Winfrith *non multo post* the synod at Hertford (*HE* iv.6), which he explicitly dates to 673, but which his statement that it occurred in the third year of King Ecgfrith, when combined with the date of the synod on 24th September to be found in the decrees that Bede reproduces, suggests took place in 672. Bede also suggests that Wulfhere had Trumhere, Jaruman, Chad and Winfrith as his bishops (*HE* iii.24), perhaps implying that Seaxwulf succeeded Winfrith after Wulfhere's death in 675, although this is not demanded by the context. Stephen of Ripon implies that Seaxwulf had died before Wilfrid went in exile to Mercia (*VW* 44), having held Ripon and the see of York for five years. These latter he received *post intervallum temporis*, after having received Hexham during the second year of King Aldfrith's reign (*VW* 43), which, working from Bede, dates to 686/7 (*HE* iv. 26). He can thus have arrived in Mercia no earlier than 691, and no later than 692, when Berhtwold was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, as Bede states that Wilfrid, whilst 'bishop of the Middle Angles', consecrated Offor bishop of the Hwicce when Theodore was dead and nobody had been appointed in his place (*HE* iv.23).

²⁶ *HE* v.23

²⁷ *HE* iii.24, iv.3, iv.12, iv.23 & iii.21; in the last case Bede omits the Lindseymen, although

²⁸ *HE* iii.21 (x3), iii.22, iii.24 & v.24; one final usage of the term concerns Bede's explanation of the coming of the Anglo-Saxons 'from three very powerful German peoples, the Saxons, Angles and Jutes', of whom the Middle Angles are said unsurprisingly to derive from the Angles (*HE* i.15)

and the Middle Angles in 655, after Oswiu had killed Penda and taken his kingdom; shortly afterwards, Diuma died among the Middle Angles in the region (*regio*) called *Infepingum*.²⁹ The source of this narrative will be discussed in Chapter 2.

Diuma's ordination by Finan is not in the ELT, and must belong to the narrative of Peada's conversion; however, it is likely that Bede lifted the statement of Diuma's jurisdiction from the ELT, having excluded the Lindseymen in this case because they, unlike the Mercians and the Middle Angles, were not the subject of this narrative, and had been converted years before by Paulinus.³⁰ Bede also justifies the multiple jurisdiction by explaining that 'a shortage of bishops made it necessary for one bishop to be set over both peoples.'³¹ Barbara Yorke has argued from passages such as this that 'the primary unit for Bede was the individual kingdom, for which his normal term was *prouincia*, whose inhabitants could also be designated as a *gens* ... the kingdoms were also significant units of religious administration and the equation of *gens*, *prouincia* and bishopric was so central to Bede's conception of the natural order of things that he felt obliged to comment if the conventions were not followed.'³² Bede's comment may thus express his own meditation on the presence of the Middle Angles and the Lindseymen with the Mercians in the ELT: he believed that three separate provinces were intended by the bishop's title, and that all three should have separate bishops.

²⁹ *HE* iii.21

³⁰ Suggested by Patrick Sims-Williams (1990, p 58); Bede had earlier written of Paulinus' success in converting the people of Lindsey around 630 (*HE* iii.21).

³¹ *HE* iii.21: 'Paucitas enim sacerdotum cogebat unum antistitem duobus populis praefici.'

³² Yorke, Barbara. 2000. 'Political and Ethnic Identity: a Case Study of Anglo-Saxon Practice', in William O. Frazer & Andrew Tyrrell (eds.), *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, Leicester University Press, London, pp 69-90, citation p 75

Bede takes up this idea later, when he explains that the exiled Northumbrian Bishop Wilfrid, when asked by King Æthelred of the Mercians to consecrate a bishop for the Hwicce, 'at that time ruled the bishopric of the Middle Angles.'³³ Bede does not record a division of the Mercian see, and when considered with the comment discussed above, seems here to imply that there had always been two separate bishoprics, of which the second had at last been filled. This cannot be accepted without caution however, as Wilfrid's biographer, Stephen of Ripon, states that, after being welcomed by Æthelred, king of the Mercians, he 'remained amid the great reverence of his [Æthelred's] bishopric, which the most reverend bishop Seaxwulf earlier ruled up to his death, continuing under God's and his [Æthelred's] protection.'³⁴ Here, Stephen implies that there was only one Mercian diocese at issue, referring to the bishopric (*episcopatus*) in the singular and associating it with Seaxwulf. Whatever Wilfrid's ambiguous status during his exile in Mercia, it would seem that Stephen and Bede conceptualised it differently. In the case of the tidy-minded Bede, perhaps knowing the location of one of Wilfrid's principle minsters at Oundle, and working within his own concepts concerning provinces and bishoprics, he proposed that Wilfrid ruled a separate see of the Middle Angles.³⁵ Stephen, on the other hand, never explicitly stated that Wilfrid was officially bishop of a Mercian diocese, but rather that he experienced the 'great reverence' of the people of a single diocese whose bishop had died; Stephen presents Wilfrid as the rightful, yet constantly-wronged, claimant to the Northumbrian bishopric, and it is possible that he wanted to distance Wilfrid from

³³ *HE* iv.23: 'tunc temporis Mediterraneorum Anglorum episcopatum gerebat'

³⁴ *VW* 45; 'in multa reverentia episcopatus eius, quam reverentissimus Sexwulfus episcopus vita obeunte ante regebat, sub protectione Dei et illius degens mansit.'

³⁵ *HE* v.19

too official an association with another see. Nevertheless, as both authors had scope for understanding Wilfrid's position differently, it is not possible to choose between them, or to know if such a choice is wise. However, it is worth remembering that the ELT memorandum is the earliest source here, and its author appears to have had no qualms about the grouping of three peoples within one episcopal province.

The second half of the rubric appears structurally to relate to the compilation of the episcopal lists into one manuscript, as it sets up the division of the Mercian bishopric into five dioceses (*parrochiae*) and the subsequent enumeration of their bishops in five lists, in each case following the words 'after Seaxwulf' (*post Sæxwulfum*). As discussed earlier, if the synthesis of the episcopal lists occurred at the same time as their compilation with the regnal lists were created, then the entire operation can be dated 796x803; it is possible that the lists were synthesised earlier and combined with the regnal lists and genealogies later, but such cannot be shown textually. The ELT provides the earliest evidence that the four additional bishoprics of Mercia were founded in a single event; there are, however, problems with this assertion. Patrick Sims-Williams has drawn attention to a Canterbury document purporting to report a session of a papal council of 679, which supports the maintenance of twelve bishops under one archbishop.³⁶ Taking into account the other dioceses that had been founded by that date, there is only room for three additional Mercian bishoprics.³⁷ One of these was doubtless

³⁶ Sims-Williams 1990, 88; the Canterbury document can be found in Haddan & Stubbs, 133, and the relevant charter is S1167

³⁷ From Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, it is possible to establish that, by 679, the sees of Canterbury, Rochester, London, Winchester, Dunwich, Elmham, Lichfield, York, Lindisfarne, Ripon and Lindsey were in existence, leaving two to account for: the charter S1167, dated 680, is signed

the diocese of Lindsey, which, according to Bede, had been founded in 678 by King Ecgrith when Lindsey was in Northumbrian hands, and was taken back soon afterwards by King Æthelred of the Mercians, probably at the battle of the river Trent, which Bede dates to 679, in the ninth year of Ecgrith's reign.³⁸ The other two dioceses were probably those of the Hwicce and the Magonsæte: Sims-Williams has noted that the foundation charter for the minster at Bath in the territory of the Hwicce, dated 675, "indicates that the foundation of the see had recently been accomplished by King Osric", although it was not attested by a bishop of Worcester.³⁹ Moreover, the first bishops of the Hwicce and Magonsæte, Bosel and Putta, attest a charter together in 680.⁴⁰ Finally, we have seen that Wilfrid's status as a bishop in Mercia is rather ambiguous, and in any case, his time there cannot have begun earlier than 691.

In summary, Seaxwulf's episcopate appears to have witnessed the creation of three of the later Mercian dioceses, although almost certainly at different times, whilst the fourth may have come into existence after his death. The decrees of the synod of Hertford, reproduced by Bede, suggest that the creation of more bishoprics was on Theodore's mind as early as 672/3, and the session of the papal council referred to above was apparently deliberating a dispute between Theodore and his bishops about the division of sees in England.⁴¹ Nevertheless, although the creation of the dioceses of Lindsey, the Hwicce, and the Magonsæte might have been part of Theodore's programme, the evidence is against their

by bishops Bosel and Putta, suggesting that the sees of the Hwicce and Magonsæte should complete the list.

³⁸ *HE* iv.12, iv.21 & v.24

³⁹ Sims-Williams 1990, 88; the relevant charter is S51.

⁴⁰ S 1167

⁴¹ *HE* iv.5

creation in a single event. Moreover, the ambiguity of Wilfrid's position must be combined with an entry from the northern chronicle contained in the *Historia Regum* attributed to Simeon of Durham, which states, *sub anno 737*, that 'Bishop Ealdwine, also called Wor, died, and in his place Hwitta and Totta were consecrated bishops for the Mercians and the Middle Angles.'⁴² Whilst this corroborates the ELT as far as it goes, it may also indicate that the diocese of the Middle Angles was first created at this time. The naming of the second see after the Middle Angles suggests an awareness of Bede's narrative, discussed earlier, but the description of both dioceses as bishoprics of the province of the Mercians in the ELT indicates that they were understood to apply to two halves of one people; again the use of the term 'Middle Angles' appears ambiguous. What cannot be denied is that both texts, the chronicle in its labelling, the ELT in its inclusion of Wilfrid, were creating continuity between the two dioceses in existence after 737 and Bede's account of Wilfrid's position in Mercia in the late-seventh century. Whether this assertion accurately describes the earlier situation is less certain, and certainly modern studies that describe Wilfrid as bishop of Leicester go beyond the evidence. Certainly, in describing the creation of the four additional Mercian dioceses in a single event, the author of the second half of the ELT rubric was rationalising a more complex history.

It is appropriate to pause here and consider the earliest historical contexts identified within the ELT. This arguably dates to the later-seventh century, and is represented by the first half of the tradition's Mercian rubric, also to be found in Bede's text. Here, the composer of the text was perhaps looking back from a point

⁴² *EHD* 1, p 240; see also Hunter-Blair, Peter. 1963. 'Some Observations on the *Historia Regum* Attributed to Symeon of Durham, in N. Chadwick (ed.), *Celt and Saxon, Studies in the Early British Border*, Cambridge University Press, pp 63-118

some time during the episcopate of Seaxwulf, and recognised Diurna as the first bishop in a province containing the Mercians, Lindseymen and Middle Angles. The absence of the Hwicce or Magonsaete from this list is instructive; Mercian overlordship of these peoples is difficult to assert based on near-contemporary documentary evidence before the charter of 680 mentioned above, and it is certainly possible the establishment of such overlordship and the creation of the Anglo-Saxon bishoprics of the Hwicce and Magonsæte might be part of the same broad context; additionally, there is some evidence, discussed earlier, that Archbishop Theodore was actively promoting the multiplication of sees during the 670s. Thus, the bishop of the Mercians, Middle Angles and Lindseymen as defined in the first part of the rubric may not, at the time of its composition, have ever considered himself to have had authority over the Hwicce and Magonsaete, either because they had not yet been brought within the power of the Mercian king, or because they had always had separate bishops.

Why might the Word as a medium have been employed at this time? Unfortunately it is not possible to detect stratigraphic breaks in the lists of the other Anglo-Saxon bishoprics that might enable us to assign their earlier parts to an earlier context, and thus establish whether the memorandum identified here was unique or not. However, regardless of this, part of an answer may lie in the concurrence of Seaxwulf's episcopate with that of Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury. The earliest surviving Acts from an Anglo-Saxon Church Council were copied by Bede into his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, and concern the Council of Hertford of 672, assembled under the auspices of Theodore 'after venerable

canonical custom'.⁴³ Seven years later, in his preamble to extracts from the Acts of the Council of Hatfield, called by Theodore in response to the Monophysite heresy, Bede explains that Theodore 'took care to have this recorded in a synodal book to serve as a guide and a record to their successors.'⁴⁴ Thus Theodore appears as a locus of textual activity, employing the Word to memorise conciliar action for future reference in the tradition of canonically-inspired behaviour in which he had been educated. Theodore, as described by Bede, was also very active in administering the Anglo-Saxon churches, dividing several dioceses and assigning or deposing bishops; indeed, it was Theodore who removed Chad from the bishopric of the church of York, considering his consecration to have been irregular, and who then, impressed by Chad's humility, re-consecrated him and, shortly afterwards, assigned him to the bishopric of the Mercians (see Chapter 2).⁴⁵ Bede said of Theodore that he 'was the first of the archbishops whom the whole English Church consented to obey', and it seems likely that the very concept of an Anglo-Saxon Church took on a wider reality through the efforts of Theodore.⁴⁶ It thus appears less surprising to find that our first textual context relating to the bishop of Mercia may well date to Theodore's episcopate, when an integrated textual community encompassing all the Anglo-Saxon bishoprics first developed. The memorandum was perhaps part of his networking activities, one thread in a growing Word-formed web centred on Canterbury, intended as a brief memorandum created to enshrine the history to-date of the diocese of Lichfield in writing, 'to serve as a guide and a record'.

⁴³ *HE* iv.5: 'iuxta morem canonum uenerabilium'

⁴⁴ *HE* iv.17: 'hunc synodalibus litteris ad instructionem memoriamque sequentium commendare curavit.'

⁴⁵ *HE* iv.2-3.

⁴⁶ *HE* iv.2: 'primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret,'

William of Malmesbury

William of Malmesbury presents his accounts of the bishops of the Mercian dioceses in Book IV of his *Gesta Pontificum*, and, in contrast to the ELT, labels each diocese by the location of its cathedral rather than the people it served. His ordering of the dioceses is also different to any surviving example of the ELT, beginning with the bishopric of Worcester (for the Hwicce), then the bishopric of Hereford (for the Magonsæte), the bishopric of Lichfield and Chester and the bishopric of Leicester (for the 'province of the Mercians'), and finishing with the bishopric of Dorchester and Lincoln (for the Lindseymen). In tackling the aforementioned uncertainty surrounding the foundation of the sees of the Hwicce and the Magonsaete in his sources, William appears to have assumed that these dioceses were part of the Mercian scheme from the very beginning. Thus, having completed his chapters on Worcester and Hereford, and beginning his first chapter on the bishops of Lichfield and Chester, he explains that 'apart from the two bishoprics of Mercia reviewed above, all the remainder of the province of Mercia and Lindsey in the first years of Christianity had just one bishop, one man followed by one man.'⁴⁷ There follows a listing of the first bishops from Diuma to Seaxwulf that, in its commentary on the ethnicity of Diuma, Ceollach and Trumhere, is certainly adapted from the first section of the rubric of the ELT. Likewise, the following passage beginning with the two bishops, Headda at Lichfield and Wilfrid at Leicester, is certainly lifted from the second section of the same rubric, with only the locations of the cathedrals added, and the detail inserted that Wilfrid was driven out 'by enemy attacks'. However, where the ELT would have two bishops appointed after Ealdwine, William has three: Hwita at Lichfield, Torthelm at

⁴⁷ GP c. 172

Leicester and Etheard at Dorchester. It seems distinctly probable that, having assumed the prior existence of the cathedrals at Worcester and Hereford, William had ignored the division into five dioceses after Seaxwulf as stated in the ELT, and subsequently, needing to account for the diocese of Lindsey, had decided to insert it at this point. William equated the diocese of Lindsey with the contemporary diocese of Dorchester, which had recently been moved to Lincoln by bishop Remigius.⁴⁸ Needless to say, there need be no early source behind this.

John of Worcester

John of Worcester also reinterpreted the earlier sources, assembling an ordered presentation of his understanding within his preliminary material, much of which was later copied into his chronicle during the revision of 1133x1143. The earliest recension of John's preliminary material⁴⁹ shows that he was aware of six Mercian bishoprics, which he arranged in a block after those of the West Saxon sees, followed by those of the Northumbrian dioceses.⁵⁰ Within this block, John describe the bishops by reference to peoples, in the following order: the Magonsæte (*Magesetenses*), the Hwicce (*Huuicci*), the people of Lichfield (*Licetfeldenses*), the people of Leicester (*Leogerenses*), the people of Lindsey (*Lindisfari*), and the people of Dorchester (*Dorcestrenses*); titles at the top of the folia identify the areas served by these bishops as, respectively, *Hecana*, *Hwiccia*,

⁴⁸ *GP* c. 177

⁴⁹ MS Oxford, Corpus Christi College 157, p 43

⁵⁰ This positioning is maintained by subsequent recensions of the material; most of these recensions also maintain the internal ordering of the bishoprics, the exceptions being the manuscripts London, Lambeth Palace 42, originally an Abingdon product, and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 92 (of which the latter derives from the former), which move the bishops of Lichfield to pole position, reverse the ordering of Leicester and Lindsey, and omit the bishopric of Dorchester; Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 297, originally a Bury manuscript, maintains the original pattern, but adds a seventh see, the *episcopi Elgensium*, after Dorchester.

Mercia, Middanglia, Lindissis and Suthanglia.⁵¹ This arrangement is unique to John's work, although much of the material contained within can be identified in earlier sources, in particular the ELT. The diocese of Dorchester derives from a throwaway remark in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, in which he mentions that a man named *Ætla* was a pupil of Hild at *Streanæshalch*, and that he was consecrated bishop of Dorchester.⁵² Bede does not elaborate, but John appears to have assumed the diocese was a Mercian one, perhaps because in his day Dorchester was part of the diocese of Lincoln. John's vocabulary separates the *praesules* of the Magonsæte and Hwicce from the *episcopi* of Lichfield, Leicester, Lindsey and Dorchester, and is not found in any surviving recensions of the ELT, which always refer to all the Mercian bishops as *episcopi*. These distinctions suggest a stratigraphic boundary between Magonsaete and Hwicce on the one side, and Mercia, Middle Anglia and Lindsey on the other, which may reflect a more complex background to the documents assembled at Worcester by John and his compilers; these sources were certainly related to the ELT, but may have been different from any surviving recensions (see further below)

John made substantial use of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, both directly and indirectly. For example, his initial rubric for the Lichfield diocese in his preliminary material was created by synthesising and summarising several different parts of Bede's narrative, but also by copying small fragments directly, rendered in italics in the following quotation:

Interfecto rege pagano Merciorum Penda *cum Osuiiu rex Christianus regnum ejus acciperet; & gentem Merciorum finitimarumque prouinciarum*

⁵¹ The term *Hecana*, seemingly interchangeable with Magonsaete, is the latest of all the terms to be used of the people living to the west of the Severn.

⁵² *HE* iv.23

anno dominice incarnatione DCLVI ad fidem Christi convertit; factus est
Diuma primus Episcopus Merciorum, Mediteraneorum Anglorum,
Lindisfarorum, contiguarumque prouinciarum.⁵³

The passage essentially sets the scene for the foundation of the bishopric, but the individual elements are probably derived from just two passages in Bede, either directly copied with minor changes, or summarised by John; the first passage is a sentence that Bede begins with the words ‘When he [Penda] was killed and the Christian King Oswiu had gained the throne of Mercia...’;⁵⁴ the second passage is a statement that Oswiu ‘converted the Mercians and the neighbouring provinces to a state of grace in the Christian faith, having destroyed their heathen ruler.’⁵⁵ Finally, at the end of John’s rubric, he includes within Diuma’s bishopric the initial three provinces found in the ELT and Bede, but also adds the ‘adjoining provinces’. The latter is not mentioned in the context of Diuma’s bishopric in any other tradition, although the term is undoubtedly taken from Bede’s passage concerning Oswiu’s assumption of Penda’s kingdom, cited above. John’s dating of these events is odd, as in the body of his chronicle he inserted them *sub anno* 655, which agrees with Bede’s dating, on which it is ultimately based. Despite this slip, John’s synthesis of different parts of his sources was evidently a nuanced operation, but again, appears to have been based on known texts.

⁵³ Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library MS 92, f.11r: ‘When Penda, pagan king of the Mercians was killed, when the Christian king Oswiu took his [Penda’s] kingdom, and converted the Mercian people and the neighbouring provinces to the faith of Christ, 656 years from the Incarnation of the Lord; Diuma was made the first bishop of the Mercians, Middle Angles, Lindseymen, and adjoining provinces’

⁵⁴ *HE* iii.21: ‘Ipso [Penda] autem occiso, cum Osuiu rex Christianus regnum eius acciperet...’

⁵⁵ *HE* iii.24: ‘[Oswiu] ipsam gentem Merciorum finitimarumque prouinciarum, desecto capite perfido, ad fidei Christianae gratiam conuertit.’

Unlike William, John included in his work the division of the see into five dioceses found in the ELT. The rubric associated with the list for the Hwicce includes an extended memorandum on the division of the see suggesting that it was instigated by the persuasive powers of Oshere, under-king (*subregulus*) of the Hwicce upon his overlord Aethelred, who then commissioned Archbishop Theodore to undertake the task. This narrative is not found in any earlier source, and certainly appears rather partisan on behalf of the Worcester community. At the end of his rubric for Lindsey, which contains a summary of his division narrative, John explained that Theodore divided Seaxwulf's bishopric into five dioceses, afterwards adding a sixth. Here, John attempted to reconcile the mismatch between the five dioceses of the ELT and the six that he was aware of. When translating the content of this material to his chronicle in the revision of 1133x1143, John inserted the division into five under the year 679, during Seaxwulf's episcopate;⁵⁶ the five are said to have been Worcester for the Hwicce, held by Bosel, Lichfield and Leicester, with Seaxwulf assigned to Leicester and an otherwise unknown Cuthwine to Lichfield, *Syddena* for Lindsey, appointed to Aethelwine, and Dorchester for the South Anglians, given to Ætla.⁵⁷ The Magonsæte are not included, but John inserted a note about the bishopric of Hereford, presumably the sixth referred to in the rubric for Lindsey, under the year 678, before, not after, the original division. In fact, the ordering of the bishoprics in these insertions, beginning with Hereford under 678, and then moving to the five listed under 679 as above, mirrors that of the lists in the preliminary material, and

⁵⁶ John dates Seaxwulf's death to 705, following the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, although, based on the charter tradition and a comment in Stephen of Ripon's *Vita Wilfridi*, this is too late

⁵⁷ This contradicts John's preliminary material concerning the diocese of Leicester, in which a prefatory list of the earliest bishops, set before the list derived from the ELT, comprises Cuthwine, Wilfrid and Ealdwine; the mistake may have derived from the ambiguous nature of the ELT, wherein the locations of the two bishoprics of the Mercian province are never explicitly identified.

may thus have been inspired by it: that is, Hereford may appear under 678 by virtue of being first on John's list. The method behind John's dating of the division is apparent from his rubric for Lindsey, which states that it occurred after the departure of Eadhæd, whom Ecgrith had installed as bishop of Lindsey in 678, and who was recalled to Northumbria after Æthelred recovered Lindsey in battle the next year. Bede does not explicitly connect Æthelred's capture of Lindsey to the battle of the Trent in 679, but John appears to have deduced such a connection, and assumed that, if Æthelwine succeeded his predecessor in 679, then the division of the Mercian dioceses must also have occurred in this year.

The Lichfield Chronicle

Alan's chronicle drew on all three of the source traditions analysed above to elaborate the basic entries of each bishop's name, length of reign and death date. In addition, Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* also contributed significant material, and passages were either copied precisely, or, often, paraphrased. Some passages, such as that concerned with Chad's episcopate, appear to owe much less to the exact form of Bede's text, but, as with John's work, can nevertheless be clearly recognised as summaries deriving from the events narrated by Bede. Finally, as explained above, some elements of the text cannot be traced to any known source. The list begins with an introductory passage adapted from the rubric to John's preliminary material for the diocese of Lichfield, including the date of its foundation, 656.⁵⁸ The structuring of the episcopal succession and its territorial extent in the Lichfield Chronicle also reproduce John's scheme, beginning by

⁵⁸ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.74v; at a later date an extra minim was added to this date to make it agree with that found on a set of *tabulae* hanging in Lichfield cathedral; the latter date, however, appears to be a simple error

directly copying the latter's comments on the first bishop, Diuma, who was made first bishop of the 'Mercians and Middle Angles, Lindseymen, Hwicce, and neighbouring provinces.'⁵⁹ Again like John, Alan included the division into five dioceses, dating it during the time of King Æthelred and Bishop Seaxwulf, which is found in John's work but not the ELT, and following the ordering of John's preliminary material in his listing of the dioceses: Hereford, Worcester, Lichfield, and Leicester, and Lindsey.⁶⁰ However, Alan omits John's inclusion of an early diocese of Dorchester, suggesting that he checked John's work against the ELT, and so produced an accurate version of the earlier source, adding in details from John and William only when they did not conflict with the former.⁶¹

Alan's entry for Headda begins with a fairly faithful copying of the ELT: 'After Bishop Seaxwulf the province of the Mercians had two bishops, namely Headda of Lichfield and Wilfrid of Leicester; but Wilfrid was afterwards banished; Headda alone ruled both dioceses'.⁶² Immediately afterwards, Alan introduces a textual fragment with no known source, explaining that 'though this Bishop Headda the church of the people of Lichfield was constructed, 31st December 700; and the bones of St Chad, bishop, were translated inside it.'⁶³ The second part of this passage, concerning Chad's translation, is taken almost verbatim from Bede, who

⁵⁹ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.74v: 'factus est primus Episcopus Merciorum & Mediterraneorum Anglorum, Lindisfarorum, Wicciorum, finitimarumque Prouinciarum.'

⁶⁰ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.74v; Darlington & McGurk 1995, 136-7, *sub anno* 680; Haddan & Stubbs III, 1869, p 127, citing the preliminary material for the Hwicce

⁶¹ Oddly, Alan appears to have changed his mind about the division of the see, amending his chronicle so that only Leicester was added during Seaxwulf's episcopate, the creation of the other three dioceses being moved to Ealdwine's episcopate; whilst this is an interesting development of the chronicle, it is not relevant here, as Alan's initial reliance on John and the ELT is plain

⁶² Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.74v: 'Post Sexwulfum episcopum provincia Merciorum duos habuit episcopus, scilicet Heddam Lichesfeldiae & Wilfridum Leogecestrae. Sed Wilfridus postea eiectus. Hedda solus ambas parochias regebat'

⁶³ Cott. Cleo. D IX, ff.74v-75r: 'per istum Heddam Episcopum constructa est Ecclesia Lichesfeldensis ii Kal. Januar. anno Domini DCC. Et ossa Sanctae Ceddae Episcopi translata sunt in eandem'

explains that Chad's remains were moved into the newly-constructed church of St Peter from his initial burial next to the church of St Mary (see Chapter 4). However, in the Chronicle, the citation is obviously tacked onto the end of the note concerning Headda's construction of the *ecclesia Lichesfeldensis*, and the equivalence of Headda's church with Bede's St Peters must be regarded as Alan's synthesis, not necessarily based on any earlier evidence. With this caveat, Headda's construction project is not recorded in any other extant source.

The specific dating of the event to 31st December strongly suggests that it was taken from an earlier source, and the date itself seems most likely to refer to a dedication or consecration ceremony. The record of such a date, ostensibly from such an early context, is rare in England. The most obvious comparison is the dedication inscription preserved at Jarrow on two stone tablets, in which the date is also given in the Roman style (*viii Kal. Mai*), together with the name of the founder (*conditor*). In his study of this inscription, John Higgitt suggested that "the primary purpose of the inscription would seem to have been to furnish a proof that the church had been consecrated and a record of the details and date, so that the anniversary might be kept as a feast."⁶⁴ Such details as are furnished in the Lichfield Chronicle echo these requirements, and the names of the presiding bishop or founder of the church appear to be regular features of the comparata assembled by Higgitt, although these are hardly plentiful.⁶⁵ The only significant omission from the Lichfield passage, based upon this comparison, is the name of the saint in whose honour the church was dedicated. This may not have been part of Alan's exemplar, and a twelfth century example from Castor in

⁶⁴ Higgitt, John. 1979. 'The Dedication Inscription at Jarrow and its Context', in *Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 59, pp 346-374.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pp 367-370

Northamptonshire merely refers to *huius ecclesia*; however, it might also be possible that, if the church was dedicated to St Peter, the absence of such a church from Lichfield in the fourteenth century might have encouraged the copyist to omit this detail. Much of this is speculation, but the presence of dedication inscriptions of this form dating as far back as the seventh century is at least a basis on which to postulate something similar for Lichfield, either as a calendar entry, or a stone tablet. Alan's incarnation date for the construction of the church demands more caution: such a date form would be anachronistic for the early eighth century, although it is possible that it was calculated subsequently from an original expressed as a regnal or episcopal year. If this was not the case, then the event cannot be dated more accurately than Headda's episcopate: the Lichfield Chronicle's dates will be discussed below, but suffice it to say here that they are often poorly synchronised with other sources, and can sometimes be shown to be outright confusions or inventions. It is unfortunately impossible, without the discovery of Alan's source, to decide between these possibilities.

It is interesting to note Alan's use of the term *ecclesia Lichesfeldensis*. He introduces his episcopal history as concerning 'the bishops of the holy church of the Mercians, which is now called Lichfield', and also inserted an extra phrase into John's introduction to the effect that Diuna was made bishop 'when the church of the Mercians was first founded and made a cathedral'.⁶⁶ Thereafter he is careful only to write of 'the bishopric of the Mercians', until Chad's entry, when he begins to write of 'the bishopric' or 'the church of the people of Lichfield', knowing from

⁶⁶ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.71v: 'Incipit de episcopis sancte Merciensis ecclesie qui nunc Lichesfeld dicitur'; 'primo fundata ecclesia Merciensis et facta cathedrali'

Bede that Chad was the first bishop of the Mercians to have his see there.⁶⁷ Whatever he may have thought had happened to Chad's church, Alan appears to have considered that Headda constructed 'the church of the people of Lichfield'. This particular terminology may have been original to his source for Headda's church, and is consistent with several references in the ELT to churches (*ecclesia*) identified by the name of the city in which they were situated, such as the *Uuentana ciuitas ecclesia* (church of Winchester), and by the people of that city, such as *Sciraburnenses ecclesia* (church of the people of Sherborne), although these may date to the later-eighth or early-ninth century, when the ELT was first compiled in the format which has survived in the manuscript tradition. Speaking more generally, these expressions of Place in Word emphasised these cities in a narrative of the foundation of a Christian community: they key into the wider textual community discussed above, and to be discussed below regarding the rest of the ELT; but they may also have keyed into a more local use of text, enshrining in vellum or stone both the beginning of a time of Christian worship (c.700?) and a point in the cyclical time of the turning year, when the people of Lichfield celebrated the dedication of their church on 31st December.

Hwita to Tunberht

The Episcopal List Tradition

The second part of the ELT to be analysed extends from Ealdwine's successor Hwita to the tenth bishop to follow him, Tunberht. In the extant manuscripts of the ELT, the list beginning with Hwita, one of the two lists concerning bishops of the province of the Mercians, survives in three of them; of these three, two extend to

⁶⁷ HE iv.3

Cyneferth, Tunberht's predecessor, and one extends only to Hunberht, Cyneferth's predecessor. Nevertheless, Tunberht has been included in this section because he does appear in twelfth century additions made to the latter manuscript, as well as the lists presented by William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester, and also because the charter evidence suggests that, after Tunberht, a sequence of at least four bishops presided at Lichfield during the second half of the ninth century that is not recorded by any of these lists (see further below). Assuming that the tenth century continuation existed as a separate list, it is quite possible that the later authors used versions of the ELT that had been updated as far as Tunberht. This is particularly interesting, because it suggests a connection between the sources used by John and William. Given the detailed character of John's synthesis, it was perhaps Worcester that acted as the 'collecting house' for a compilation of sources subsequently used by both authors. William certainly had some connection with the community at Worcester, as he was asked by the monks there to translate Coleman's Old English *Life of St Wulfstan* into Latin, so that they could read it.⁶⁸

After the initial compilation of the ELT in 796x803, updating the bishop lists and regnal lists appears to have been a piecemeal affair, presumably depending on the location of any given recension of the tradition and the specific contacts maintained by the community concerned; the final Mercian additions of the extant manuscripts date to c.833 and 840 x 845.⁶⁹ This highlights the decentred, or perhaps multi-centred, nature of the textual community connecting the Anglo-Saxon episcopal sees and minsters for the half-century following the compilation of the collection. However, this latter event expresses a centralised activity,

⁶⁸ Gransden 1974, pp 88-89

⁶⁹ Respectively MS Cott. Vesp. B VI and the ε tradition; see Dumville 1976 pp 24-25 & 41

reaching out to other parts of the web, and we must enquire of the possible context of this moment, and where it occurred. The surviving ninth century recension of the ELT, in Cotton Vespasian B VI, although probably Mercian, was not necessarily a Lichfield product, and was quite probably produced elsewhere.⁷⁰ It should be noted that, in all surviving examples of the ELT, 'after Seaxwulf' the list of bishops of Leicester beginning with Torhthelm precedes the list of bishops of Lichfield beginning with Hwita, either by virtue of its position in the left-hand column or as the second of two lists in one column, depending on the recension. What this primacy might mean is difficult to establish, but a Leicester origin for the particular conceptualisation of the Mercian bishoprics as presented in the ELT should not be ruled out, and might explain the desire to connect what was quite possibly a late-founded see with Wilfrid's activities as described by Bede. Nevertheless, the list of bishops of Lichfield indicates familiarity with the cathedral there, suggesting that Lichfield was either directly in contact with the location of compilation, or relied on an intermediary house, most obviously Leicester, in contact with both.

Again invoking our extensive textual community, it was at this point that the narrative relating the division of the Mercian bishopric into five dioceses entered into textual circulation, possibly for the first time as Word, and it appears to have retained a primary influence ever since; in the late-eighth or early-ninth century the events described would have been over a century in the past, quite long enough for an approximate, more simplified memory of these events to have developed across the intervening generations. The compilation itself, which in its entirety,

⁷⁰ Dumville (1976, p 25, n. 3) notes that a second scribe, updating the Lichfield list in c.833, entered the name *Oeðeluualdus* for Bishop Æthelwald, which would be an unusual variant spelling for a member of the Lichfield community to use

and from its initial inception, appears to have included a list of popes, a list of the seventy-two disciples of Christ, the English episcopal lists, and English royal genealogies and regnal lists, shows concern to establish a framework for the passage of time defined by the spread of a Rome-focussed Christianity, specifically into the Anglo-Saxon lands, where bishoprics were established through the agency of kings.⁷¹ The pegs of this construct are the names of popes, disciples, bishops and kings, listed in sequence. These characters, all figures of particular kinds of authority, when brought together, express a definitive vision of the establishment and propagation of these authorities up to the end of the eighth century. Thus the compilation of the original manuscript of this collection, the hypothetical α , appears designed to express a particular vision of the past. Dumville has provided reasons to suggest that the royal genealogies had already been compiled into a group at some time before the compilation of α ;⁷² moreover, he suggests, they appear more likely to have emerged from a Northumbrian context.⁷³ However, in α itself it is the episcopal participation that impresses more than any royal involvement: the royal genealogies were out of date for Kent, East Anglia and Wessex as much in 765 as in 796x803, but, as argued earlier, the episcopal lists were up to date. Even in c. 833, thirteen of the seventeen

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p 24

⁷² *ibid.*, pp 40 & 45: his argument derives from a comparison between the Mercian royal genealogies of the manuscript tradition with those in the *Historia Brittonum*, which include Ecgrith, consecrated 787, but not Cœnwulf, who succeeded in 796; as this argument uses the genealogies, it is not invalidated by the proposal rehearsed earlier concerning the addition of a king to a regnal list only after his death; however, the *Historia Brittonum* does not contain the genealogy of the kings of Lindsey either, which always follows the fourth Mercian genealogy concerning Cœnwulf in the surviving recensions of the genealogies: there is thus the possibility of an argument that the author of the *Historia Brittonum* omitted these genealogies for some mechanical reason rather than simply failing to possess them (on this possibility see Dumville 1976, p 48, n. 6)

⁷³ *ibid.*, pp 47-50

bishoprics in Cotton Vespasian B VI were brought up to date, strongly indicating a continued episcopal interest in this recension of the collection.⁷⁴

We might therefore search for an episcopal context for the compilation of α . It is relevant here that the lists in all extant manuscripts consistently begin with the archbishops of Canterbury, and that these are the only bishops in the lists credited with metropolitan status, despite Hygeberht of Lichfield's career as an archbishop of that see in the late-eighth century, and, more importantly, despite the metropolitan status of York since 735.⁷⁵ Moreover, although the subsequent ordering varies in some manuscripts, the southern, Saxon bishoprics always precede the northern, Anglian ones, which we might expect from a Canterbury perspective, and the fact that only sees north of the Humber were out of date in the exemplar of Cotton Vespasian B VI again indicates a southern perspective. The compilation thus appears to express an episcopally-driven vision of the ordering of authority through time, with an eye to the primacy of Canterbury, and a subsequent history suggesting a Southumbrian focus. The period 796x803 was a particularly interesting one for both Canterbury and Lichfield, and we will return to it later in the chapter. For now, it is worth emphasising the more general context of an active textual community connecting the Anglo-Saxon bishoprics of the period, and the evidence assembled by Katy Cubitt for regular provincial Church Councils throughout eighth century and into the ninth, building on the traditions

⁷⁴ Page 1965, pp 75-76: curiously, for a Mercian manuscript, this operation omitted Lindsey and Hereford, as well as Rochester and Hexham

⁷⁵ Recorded in the Continuation of Bede: *EHD* 1, p 259; and in the northern chronicle in the *Historia Regum*: *EHD* 1, p 239

established by Theodore a century earlier, in particular the use of the Word in the construction and articulation of such large-scale networks.⁷⁶

William of Malmesbury

All sources containing the episcopal succession from Hwita to Tunberht are in agreement as to the number and ordering of the bishops. William of Malmesbury presents this part as a narrative list with only one comment, namely that Ealdwulf 'received the pallium in the time of Offa'.⁷⁷ The sources of his knowledge about the elevation of Lichfield to an archbishopric certainly included a number of letters from Alcuin to Archbishop Æthelheard of Canterbury, as he quotes passages from them in his *Gesta Pontificum*, and a letter from Pope Leo to king Cœnwulf of Mercia, which he quotes from in the *Gesta Regum*.⁷⁸ However, none of these sources mention the archbishop of Lichfield by name, only by title, and thus William did not realise that it was Hygeberht, Eadlwulf's predecessor, who received the pallium. Nicholas Brooks has suggested that William had seen the decree of the synod of Clofesho of 803, at which the archbishopric of Lichfield was finally abolished;⁷⁹ the twelve attesting bishops included Ealdwulf of Lichfield, who had recently succeeded Hygeberht.⁸⁰ William may have assumed that Ealdwulf had just been demoted by this very synod.

⁷⁶ Cubitt, Catherine. 1995. *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c.650-c.850*. Leicester University Press, London

⁷⁷ *GP* iv.172

⁷⁸ *GP* i.9, 10, 11; *GR* c. 89

⁷⁹ British Library Cotton Augustus MS 2, 61, a ninth century manuscript; Kemble 185; Birch 310; Haddan & Stubbs 1869, 542-4; *EHD* I, no. 210.

⁸⁰ Brooks, Nicholas. 1984. *The Early History of the Church of Canterbury*. Leicester University Press, Leicester, p 119

This suggestion is supported by the six names that William gives to the bishops he claims to have been within Lichfield's metropolitan authority, who all attested the synod decree. If this was William's source, then he added the sees from which these bishops had come, perhaps working them out from a recension of the ELT. Further support comes from the number of attesting bishops, namely twelve, which matches the total number of bishoprics listed by William in his narration of those removed from and those remaining within the metropolitan see at Canterbury. At the end of the eighth century, there were in fact thirteen dioceses south of the Humber, and it was the bishop of Rochester who did not attest the *Clofesho* decree.⁸¹ William does not give the names of the bishops who remained under Canterbury's authority, but he does list their sees, and here he omits Sherborne rather than Rochester. Nevertheless, it is suggestive that both sources omit one bishop, and whereas the bishop of Rochester may not have been present at the synod, it seems unlikely that William's source on the structure of the archbishopric, if he had one, would omit one of the thirteen dioceses south of the Humber, all of which must have been under the authority of either Canterbury or Lichfield.

If it is accepted that William's enumeration of the sees within the archbishopric of Lichfield was worked up from the decree of the *Clofesho* synod, then the only part of his account still requiring explanation is his specific division of the dioceses south of the Humber between the two metropolitan provinces. William assigned the dioceses of Worcester, Leicester, Lindsey, Hereford, Elmham and Dunwich to Lichfield, and London, Winchester, Rochester and Selsey to Canterbury. This division runs along the boundary between Bede's Anglian kingdoms to the north,

⁸¹ Canterbury, Rochester, London, Selsey, Lindsey, Winchester, Sherborne, Elmham, Dunwich, Lichfield, Leicester, Worcester, Hereford.

and those of Jutish and Saxon origin to the south, and is thus a well-established conceptual boundary;⁸² it might equally apply to a decision made in the eighth century as to William's imagination in the twelfth, and cannot therefore be assigned securely to either context. It remains possible that, although he elaborated the names and sees of the dioceses involved, he was working from a source, now lost, which suggested to him the broad nature of the division; the character of this hypothetical source, however, is beyond conjecture, and should probably be treated as speculative wishful thinking.

John of Worcester

John's treatment of the bishops from Hwita to Tunberht is less remarkable, and consists of a list in his preliminary matter, presumably derived from a recension of the ELT (with which it agrees), a short passage copied from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle concerning Hygeberht's election, and later insertions into his chronicle of episcopal deaths and successions based on the list, dateable to the intermediate phase of revision 1133 x 1143 described above. The original passage from the Chronicle, *sub anno 785*, and common to all surviving manuscripts, states:

In this year there was a contentious synod at Chelsea, and Archbishop Jænberht lost a certain part of his province, and Hygeberht was chosen by King Offa. And Ecgrith was consecrated king.⁸³

John's version of this passage, part of the original text of the earliest witness of his work, and also *sub anno 785*, is as follows:

⁸² *HE* i.15; Bede never explicitly comments on the ethnicity of the Hwicce or Magonsaete, but for the Angle-derived people he includes the phrase *ceteri Anglorum populi*, which might include them.

⁸³ *EHD* I, no. 180

In the place which is called Chelsea in English a disputatious synod was held, and because of it Archbishop Jænberht lost a small part of his diocese [*parrochia*]. On the death of Berhthun, bishop of Dorchester, Hygeberht was chosen by Offa, king of the Mercians, for the episcopacy, and Ecgfrith, son of the same king, was consecrated king.⁸⁴

Considering the rather elliptical style of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry, it is possible that John attempted to clarify the passage by expanding it slightly. In doing so, he seems not to have realised that Hygeberht was chosen by Offa to rule that part of the province that Jænberht had lost, which is in any case hardly obvious from the original entry. Instead, John appears to have separated Hygeberht's election from Jænberht's troubles, and has inserted Berhthun's death as Hygeberht's predecessor, presumably taken from his episcopal list, in order to clarify the context of the entry. John's only inexplicable action was to substitute Dorchester for Lichfield, presumably a simple copying mistake. John does not seem to have had access to any additional material concerning the archbishopric of Lichfield, as he does not mention it. Likewise, he did not copy anything from William of Malmesbury's work concerning Ealdwulf and the pallium. When he inserted Hygeberht's death under the year 787, John recorded the succession of Ealdwulf just as he had for other bishops, and likewise with Ealdwulf's death.

Thus, for each bishop from Hwita to Tunberht, and aside from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry discussed above, John appears to have been working solely from the ELT. Interestingly, in his notes on the episcopal lists in his preliminary material, John singled out Tunberht, Ceolred and Beorhtred, for Lichfield,

⁸⁴ Darlington & McGurk 1995, 219

Leicester and Lindsey respectively, as having governed ‘in the time of Burhred king of Mercia and Alfred king of Wessex’. It was argued above that Tunberht may have been the latest update within a now-lost recension of the ELT, as he represents the last bishop of Lichfield before a break in the recording of bishops within this tradition; it is surely not coincidence that the other two bishops also represent the ends of their respective lists in the manuscript Corpus Christi College Cambridge 183, a recension of the ϵ tradition discussed above. Here, we perhaps have evidence of the manner in which John, or one of his colleagues, responded to the ending of the original tradition. The three bishoprics so treated also echo the fault line posited above between John’s treatment of the Hwicce and Magonsaete on one hand, and Lichfield, Leicester and Lindsey on the other. Given that John’s lists for the former two dioceses match those bishops known from the charter tradition, and appear to represent uninterrupted sequences, it is quite possible that a more continuous, or at least geographically stable, tradition lay behind the recording of these two westernmost bishoprics than for those further east, and that John was only reliant on the ELT for the latter three.

The Lichfield Chronicle

The succession between Hwita and Tunberht in the Lichfield Chronicle is unremarkable except for the entries for two of these bishops: Ealdwulf and Æthelwald. The passage attached to Ealdwulf’s entry appears to be a close paraphrase of William of Malmesbury’s narrative concerning the archbishopric of Lichfield, and provides the most obvious evidence that Alan of Ashbourne had seen a copy of the *Gesta Pontificum*. The provincial structure of the list, implicit in William’s version, is made explicit by Alan in his opening comment on Ealdwulf:

‘Archbishop Ealdwulf of Lichfield ruled the province of the Mercians and the East Angles’.⁸⁵ Interestingly, the list of bishops under the archbishop of Lichfield’s authority provided by Alan reorders the Mercian bishoprics, bringing Hereford forward to follow Worcester, thus expressing a common doublet. However, there is no reason to believe he relied on a source other than William.

In contrast, Alan’s entry for Æthelwald contains another textual fragment with no known extant source:

Through this Bishop Æthelwald canons were first instituted in the cathedral church of Lichfield, in the year 822 under King Ceolwulf of the Mercians, *Huicta* [?Hwitta] then being provost of the canons. There were then in the church of the people of Lichfield twenty canons with their provost, of which eleven were priests and nine deacons.⁸⁶

The number of canons was later altered to nineteen, both in the text and in a marginal addition, although the number of priests and deacons was retained, and the correction appears to represent the concern that twenty canons with their provost might be interpreted to mean twenty-one in total. Some of the details of this entry appear too specific not to have come from an earlier source, although whether this was written or verbal, and of what date, are harder to assess. The date, expressed *anno domini*, matches the form of obituary dates throughout the Chronicle (to be discussed further below), although such a date would not be anachronistic in the ninth century.

⁸⁵ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.75r: ‘Aldulfus Lichesfeldensis Archiepiscopus rexit Provinciam Merciorum & Orientalium Anglorum’

⁸⁶ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.75r: ‘Per istum Athelwaldum Episcopum Canonici instituti sunt primo in Ecclesia Cathedrali Lichesfeld anno Domini DCCCXXII sub Chelwfo Rege Merciorum, Huicta tunc existente Canoniorum Praeposito. Erant enim tunc in Ecclesia Lichesfeldensi Canonici xix cum suo Praeposito quorum xi fuerunt Presbiteri & ix Diaconi.’

The entire constitutional structure presented in this passage would have been anachronistic in the fourteenth century, and it has been suggested that it instead bears a resemblance to the eighth-century decretum written by Chrodegang of Metz, wherein canons would live a regular life under the jurisdiction of a provost;⁸⁷ a similar rule was apparently instituted at Canterbury in 808x813 by Archbishop Wulfred, as attested in a grant of privileges to his community.⁸⁸ However, a reassessment of the latter event by Brigitte Langefeld casts doubt on this.⁸⁹ She emphasises the lack of any copy of, or reference to, Chrodegang's Rule in England before the mid-tenth century, and, by way of possible explanation, highlights its continental use amongst the communities of major urban cathedrals, institutions which were lacking in England.⁹⁰ Instead, Langefeld suggests that Wulfred's reform was intended to renew the monastic life of the community at Canterbury, and that it harmonises better with the Rule of St Benedict than with the Rule of Chrodegang; certainly Anglo-Saxon communities during this period display no appreciation of a desire to separate the lives of monks from the lives of clerics (or canons), which inspired Chrodegang's composition on the continent.⁹¹

Langefeld's analysis of ninth-century Canterbury charters demonstrates the widespread presence of the offices of priest (*presbiter*) and deacon (*diaconus*) amongst the signatories of the community, and the comparative infrequency of the offices of provost (*praepositus*) or archdeacon in the same signature lists. Both

⁸⁷ *VCH Staffs*, Vol. III, p 140-166

⁸⁸ Brooks 1984, 155-160

⁸⁹ Langefeld, Brigitte. 1996. '*Regula canonicorum* or *Regula monasterialis vitae*? The Rule of Chrodegang and Archbishop Wulfred's Reforms at Canterbury', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 25, pp 21-36

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p 26

⁹¹ *ibid.*, pp 27-32

priests and deacons are envisaged as members of the monastic community in St Benedict's Rule, in which the provost stands at the head of the community under the abbot; in contrast, the archdeacon headed the community of canons in Chrodegang's Rule. From the limited references to both the latter offices at Canterbury, Langefeld speculated that such offices may have been filled only when the bishop considered them necessary.⁹² Most importantly, there is no reason why the available evidence should not be read to imply a monastic reform as opposed to a canonical one, given that no specific Rule is mentioned in any of the relevant texts.⁹³ In the Lichfield Chronicle fragment, we are told that the bishop's household comprised eleven priests and nine deacons, headed by a provost (presumably one of the priests), all titles that match those in evidence at ninth-century Canterbury and resonate with St Benedict's Rule. Indeed, the enumeration of these offices reads very much as if Alan had simply totted up a witness list like that attached to Wulfred's grant of privileges, in which the names and ranks of the community are given.⁹⁴ It is therefore possible that Alan's source for this passage was such a charter, and that, from the offices given, the structure of the early ninth-century community at Lichfield was similar to that at Canterbury.

Two aspects of this putative charter need further discussion. Firstly, Alan's understanding that Bishop Æthelwald instituted canons suggests that the charter could be read as a foundation or establishment of something, much as Wulfred's charter uses words such as *renouandus*, *restaurandus* and *reaedificandus* to indicate the renewal of a disciplined life at Canterbury.⁹⁵ It is therefore possible to

⁹² *ibid.*, pp 31-35

⁹³ *ibid.*, pp 35-36

⁹⁴ S 1265

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, pp 28-29

suggest an even closer correspondence between the activities of Æthelwald and Wulfred. Secondly, and more problematically, we must seek to understand Alan's use of the word *canonicus* to describe the members of the ninth-century community at Lichfield. We must assume that this is an anachronistic usage on his part, rather than a word found in his source, and certainly his description of the ranks of the community as priests, deacons and a provost might suggest as much. Doubts, however, cannot be entirely expunged without access to the original source. At best, it is possible to suggest that the charter was seen in fourteenth-century Lichfield as part of an origin myth to explain the initial formation of the community of canons then existing; certainly, by the sixteenth century, a list of the cathedral prebends was headed by the statement that they had been established by Bishop Æthelwald.⁹⁶

Ælfwine to Leofwine

The Episcopal List Tradition

The ELT for these bishops concerns only the manuscript Cotton Vespasian B VI. As noted above, the charter evidence indicates at least four bishops between Tunberht and Ælfwine during the second half of the ninth century, but these are not recorded in any traditions of episcopal succession. The twelfth-century additions to the Lichfield list of the manuscript (being the second of the two lists for the province of the Mercians) begin by overwriting *Cineferð*, then adding *Tunbriht*, *Ælle qui dicitur Ælfwine*, *Wlgar se gyldena*, *Cynsi*, *Winsi*, *Ælfeh*, *Godwine*, *Leofgar*, *Brihtmær*, *Wisi*, *Leofwine*, and ending with *Petrus* and *Rodbert*, the first two Norman bishops of Lichfield; the Leicester list was also updated, as far as the

⁹⁶ Wharton 1691, Part 1, pp 444-445

last known bishop of the see, Ceolred, whose floruit is centred on the mid-ninth century.⁹⁷ As suggested above, the source of these additions may well have been a list already compiled from separate sources, almost certainly related to work at the Worcester scriptorium, where the episcopal succession from Ælfwine onwards was probably added from a separate source to a now-lost recension of the ELT ending with Tunberht. Given that Ælfwine's episcopate, on charter evidence, occurred during the first third of the tenth century, it is possible that, as with the list for the see of Dorchester discussed earlier, a list of the later bishops of Lichfield was begun at some time towards the end of the tenth century, when Ælfwine was at the edge of living memory, perhaps at Lichfield, perhaps elsewhere; unfortunately, beyond this rather vague conclusion we cannot go.

William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester

As mentioned earlier, both William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester (in both preliminary material and chronicle) include the same sequence of ten bishops from Ælfwine to Leofwine as is found in the manuscript just described. Indeed, after noting the death of Tunberht and the succession of Ælfwine (called Ælle by both John and William) *sub anno* 928, John's next entry concerning the bishops of Lichfield, *sub anno* 955, is as follows:

From the death of Ælle, bishop of Lichfield, until King William's time there succeeded: Wulfgar, Cynesige, Wynsige, Ælfheah, Godwine, Leofgar, Brihtmær, Wulfsige, and Leofwine.⁹⁸

This alteration in John's format is perhaps suggestive of a change in his source material, although the chronicle entry dates to the intermediate phase of revision

⁹⁷ Published in Dumville 1976, p 25, n. 2

⁹⁸ Darlington & McGurk 1995, 405

discussed above, and it is probably more likely that he copied the list from his preliminary material. Nevertheless, even in the latter source, the list from Ælfwine follows the aforementioned note on the dating of Tunberht's episcopate to the reigns of Alfred and Burhred, expressing John's probable knowledge of a separate source tradition for these last ten bishops of the Lichfield succession. William's only addition to his narrative list concerns the dating of Ælfwine, whom he calls Ælle, and who he places 'in the time of king Æthelstan'.⁹⁹ Ælfwine is certainly well represented in the surviving charter tradition, and it is possible that William had come across a mention of him in a document relating to Æthelstan's reign. Much as John's note on Tunberht marks the end of the older tradition, so William's note may mark his understanding of the beginning of the more recent tradition.

The Lichfield Chronicle

Alan of Ashbourne appears to have taken William's comment concerning Ælfwine (whom he also calls Ælle) for the Lichfield Chronicle entry, appending 'under Æthelstan king of all England' to his baseline of name, length of episcopate and date of death.¹⁰⁰ Thereafter, Alan's succession presents only the baseline for all bishops up to Leofwine, the last Anglo-Saxon bishop. Interestingly, an extended marginal addition was later added to the entry for Wulfsgie (*Wisius*), and was copied into the fine copy of the Lichfield Chronicle commissioned by Canon Thomas Chesterfield in 1439x1452:

In the time of this Bishop Wulfsgie, that is in 1044, Leofric earl of Hereford enlarged and rebuilt as if from new the minster at Coventry, and gave it many riches; and he expelled some holy nuns, who had served God there

⁹⁹ *GP* iv.172

¹⁰⁰ Cott. Cleo. D IX, f.75r: 'sub Athelstano Rege totius Angliae'

from the time of Cnut king of the Danes and the English, the first founder of that minster; the same Leofric first instituted monks there. These monks were ruled by Abbot Leofwine, who, after the death of Bishop Wulfsige, was made bishop of the people of Lichfield by the gift of St Edward the king.¹⁰¹

This addition has no equivalent in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, or the works of John of Worcester or William of Malmesbury. It seems most likely to be a Coventry tradition, possibly communicated to the community at Lichfield by the community at Coventry in the later-fourteenth or earlier-fifteenth centuries. A similar story is told by the sixteenth-century antiquary John Leland, and thus the Lichfield Chronicle supplies an important earlier witness to it, whilst a slightly different version is told by the fifteenth-century Warwickshire writer John Rous (see Chapter 4).

The Dates

The Lichfield Chronicle and John of Worcester's Chronicle are also important because they give dates to the succession of bishops. As explained earlier, the Lichfield Chronicle entries customarily give the length of a given episcopate and the date of the bishop's death, whilst John, at least up to Aelfwine, gives the date at which one bishop died and the next succeeded him. In order to evaluate these dates, it is possible to compare them to dating brackets obtained from the charter tradition. Unlike the list in the *Handbook of British Chronology*, the list below does not attempt to provide a bracket for the complete length of any bishop's

¹⁰¹ Wharton 1691, Part 1, p 433: 'Hujus Wlsii Episcopi tempore, videlicet anno Domini MXLIV, Leofricus Comes Herefordiae ampliavit & quasi de novo reardificavit Monasterium Coventriae, ditavitque illud divitiis amplissimis; & ejectis sanctis Monialibus, quae ibidem Deo servierant a tempore Knuti Regis Dacorum & Anglorum primi fundatoris ejusdem Monasterii, idem Leofricus Monachos ibidem primo fecit institui. Praefecit eisdem Monachis Leofwinum Abbatem; qui postea defuncto Wlsio Episcopo, a Rege Edwardo Sancto datus, Episcopus Lichesfeldensis factus est.'

episcopate, but merely the range of dates during which that bishop was attesting charters;¹⁰² given the vagaries of survival, this bracket may or may not cover most of the relevant episcopate, and may lie anywhere within it, near the beginning, middle or end. The charter tradition cannot ultimately prove a given date, but it can be used to suggest whether the dates given by the chroniclers are in the right part of any given century. The only exception to this is provided by episcopal professions to the archbishop, kept at Canterbury, which are likely to mark the beginning of the relevant bishop's episcopate. Using the data produced by the Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England project, the following table has been produced showing all this dating information together, so that the authority of the two chronicles can be evaluated.¹⁰³ The length of each episcopate, if not stated explicitly in the Lichfield Chronicle, has been calculated from the obituary dates where given, and the latter method has also been applied to John's chronicle where possible.

¹⁰² Fryde, E. B., Greenway, D. E., Porter, S. & Roy, I. (eds.). *Handbook of British Chronology*. Third Edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 218-219

¹⁰³ <http://www.pase.ac.uk/index.html>

Name	Lichfield Chronicle			John of Worcester			Charter Tradition
	L		Ob.	From	To	L	
Diuma		1	658	655	-	4	-
Ceollach		1	659	-	659*		-
Trumhere	iii	3	662	659		10	-
Jaruman	iiii	4	667		669		-
Chad	ii & dimidio	2.5	670	669	672	2.5	-
Winfrith	iii	3	674	672	675	3	-
Seaxwulf	xx	20	694	675	705	30	675 – 691
Headda	xxi†	27	721	705*	-	29	691x699 – 710
Ealdwine	‡	9	730	-	734*		699x716 – 736x737
Hwita	vi	6	736	734*	755*	11	737x740 – 749
Hemele	xv	15	752	755*	760*	5	757
Cuthfrith	tribus	3	755	760*	768*	8	767
Berhthun	iiii	4	759	768*	785	7	774 – 779x790
Hygeberht	v	5	764	785	787*	2	779 – 801
Ealdwulf	xxxvi	36	800	787*	823*	36	799x801 – 814
Herewine	xi	11	812	823*	843*	20	814x816§ – 817
Æthelwald	xxxv	35	847	843*	859*	16	822 – 825
Hunberht	xx	20	866	859*	865*	6	830§
Cyneferth	xxiii	23	890	865*	871/ 906*	6/41	832x836§ – 844x845
Tunberht	xxx	30	920	871/ 906*	928*	57/ 22	841x844§ – 857

Name	Lichfield Chronicle		John of Worcester			Charter Tradition	
	L	Ob.	From	To	L		
Wulfsige						862x962 – 866	
Burgheard or Eadberht						869	
Wulfred						869 – 875	
Wigmund or Wilferth						883 – 889	
						900 – 903	
Ælfwine	xxiii	24	944	928*	955*	27	915 – 932x939
Wulfgar	xvi	16	960	955*	-	84	941 – 946
Cynesige	xiii	14	974	-	-		930 – 963
Wynsige	xviii	18	992	-	-		964 – 974
Ælfheah	xv	15	1007	-	-		975 – 977
Godwine	xiii	13	1020	-	-		1004 – 1021x23
Leofgar	vii	7	1027	-	-		1021x26
Brihtmær	xi	11	1038	-	1039		1026 – 1033x35
Wulfsige	xvi	16	1054	1039	1053		14
Leofwine		12	1066	1053	-		-

L: Length of episcopate

Ob.: Date of death

*: Entry added during revision of 1133x1143

†: *post ecclesiam constructam*; the length of Headda's episcopate given here assumes that he succeeded immediately on Seaxwulf's death, although this is not explicitly stated

‡: The *episcopatus Lichesfeldensis* is said to have been divided in Eadwine's third year, after which he *rexit annis sex*

§: Date taken from an episcopal profession, and therefore likely to represent the beginning of an episcopate

It is immediately apparent that the two chronicles hardly ever agree; the few correspondences that do occur are therefore interesting. The first of these is the year of Ceollach's death, 659, which neither chronicle can have derived from Bede. Indeed, the relevant comments in the latter author's work are ambiguous: at one point he says that Trumhere, Ceollach's successor, was consecrated *tempore Wulfheri regis (658-674/5)*,¹⁰⁴ which would allow Ceollach's death in 659, but later he says that *Wulfhere habuit primum episcopum Trumheri*,¹⁰⁵ suggesting that the reigns of Wulfhere and Ceollach did not overlap. In fact, John dated Wulfhere's reign from 659, not 658, and so avoided this problem, although his own report of the bishops of Lichfield at this point was also rendered ambiguous by a later insertion made during his revisions of 1133x1143, in italics here: '[Wulfhere] had as his first bishop the aforementioned Trumhere, *Bishop Ceollach having died*, his second Jaruman...'¹⁰⁶ This modifies Bede's passage, on which it is closely based, and might suggest that Ceollach could have died during Wulfhere's reign, making Trumhere the first bishop after this event. It seems unlikely that John deliberately intended this; instead he seems to have tried to standardise his formula for recording the succession of bishops by always referring to the death of the previous bishop, and this was probably the intention behind this insertion. In summary, the date of Ceollach's death in John's chronicle, if it can be read as such, was keyed to the accession of Wulfhere by a reading of Bede, and it is possible that Alan followed John's dating at this point.

¹⁰⁴ *HE* iii.21

¹⁰⁵ *HE* iii.24

¹⁰⁶ Darlington & McGurk, 1995, 108-109: '[Wulfhere] habuit primum episcopum prefatum Trumhere, *defuncto iam Ceollah presule, secundum Iaruman...*'

The next correspondence is the assignment of two and a half years to Chad's episcopate, a figure copied directly from Bede's work.¹⁰⁷ This duration is, however, keyed to different start and finish dates in the two chronicles, with John opting for 669, and Alan for 667. John's date can be derived from Bede: Chad's consecration happened after Theodore's arrival in Britain, which Bede dates to the Sunday 27th May in the second year after Theodore's consecration, which he dates to 26th March 668.¹⁰⁸ Thus Theodore arrived on the 27th May 669, which was indeed a Sunday.¹⁰⁹ Chad was dead by the time of the Council of Hertford, of which the decrees were copied by Bede, and at which Chad's successor Winfrith attended; Bede explicitly dated this synod to 673, although he also claimed that it occurred during the third year of King Ecgrith (670-685), and as the decrees date the council to 24th September, this would suggest the year 672.¹¹⁰ Bede reported Chad's death as having occurred on 2nd March after an episcopate of two and a half years; therefore Chad can only have been bishop of Lichfield from around September 669 to 2nd March 672. John may or may not have worked through these calculations, but his dating certainly agrees with their result. Alan, on the other hand, cannot have done so, as he reports Chad's episcopate beginning in 667, two years before Theodore arrived. Instead, Alan's date seems to follow his calculations of the length of the episcopates of Trumhere and Jaruman following the death of Ceollach. These durations, three years and four years respectively, match the numbering of these bishops in the first half of the rubric of the ELT (and, following this, the list compiled by John of Worcester in his preliminary material), and it seems probable that Alan mistakenly derived his figures from this

¹⁰⁷ *HE* iv.3

¹⁰⁸ *HE* iv.2 & *HE* iv.1

¹⁰⁹ Colgrave and Mynors 1969, p 333 n.4

¹¹⁰ See discussion in Cubitt 1995, pp 249 & 252-254

enumeration, which ultimately caused him to date Chad's episcopate two years early.

The two chronicles also agree on the length of Winfrith's episcopate, namely three years, although again their absolute dating is different. Bede does not date Winfrith's deposition explicitly, only reporting that it happened 'not long after' the council of Hertford;¹¹¹ later, he records that Seaxwulf was bishop of the Mercians in 676, when Æthelred devastated Kent.¹¹² John's dating of Winfrith's deposition to 675 thus falls approximately between these two Bedan goal posts, and is probably keyed to the year in which John recorded Wulfhere's death, again working from Bede's statement that Winfrith was Wulfhere's fourth bishop and held the episcopate during his reign.¹¹³ It is possible that Alan used a duration calculated from John's dates, but not the dates themselves. The two chroniclers do not agree on the dating or the duration of Seaxwulf's episcopate, although it is possible that an episcopate of thirty years calculated from John's dates was reduced to twenty, the next decimal down, by Alan, who needed to fit Headda's church construction into the year 700. John's dating of Seaxwulf's death to 705 is also found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, from which he may have derived it. After Seaxwulf's episcopate, no relationships between the two chroniclers, however speculative, can be proposed, excepting the duration of Ealdwine's episcopate, given by Alan as nine years, which matches the numbering of this bishop in John's list (but not the ELT, which does not number the bishops Headda and Ealdwine), and also the duration of Ealdwine's episcopate, which both authors took to be thirty six years. It is interesting to note here that all probable direct relationships

¹¹¹ *HE* iv.6: 'non multo post'

¹¹² *HE* iv.12

¹¹³ *HE* iii.24

between the two chronicles, in which Alan may have used John's work, are confined to the first nine bishops, or to the first seven bishops if we exclude use of John's preliminary material. These bishops are the only ones in John's chronicle proper to form part of the earliest extant recension of his work, before the revisions of 1133x1143, suggesting that Alan was working from an early recension of John's work, which did not include the later revisions.

John's dating of the bishops after Seaxwulf cannot be explained by reference to any extant source material, excepting Hygeberht's appointment in 785, and the deaths of Brihtmær in 1039 and Wulfsig in 1053, all of which appear in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (the first *recte* 787). Alan does not even include these dates, and his dating of the other bishops is similarly opaque, except for the successive bishops Cuthfrith, Berhthun and Hygeberht, of whose episcopates their durations, three, four and five years respectively, match the numbering of these bishops in the ELT (which begins counting again from Hwita), but not in John of Worcester's list (which counts all the way through from Diuma). Given the distinctly shaky reasoning that can be identified behind some of the dates of both authors, and the lack of equivalence between many of the episcopates in the chronicles and the dates of the charter tradition, it seems fairly safe to assume that many of the remaining dates and durations were simply invented, particularly when stretching the bishops of the lists across the discontinuity and omissions in the episcopal lists revealed by the charter tradition to exist in the second half of the ninth century. The only figure remaining to be explained is that of thirty six years for the episcopate of Ealdwulf, common to both authors, and surely no coincidence. In John's chronicle, this number can only be calculated from the dates inserted

during his revisions, and if the argument presented above concerning the nature of Alan's recension of John's work is to hold, he cannot have derived his figure from the latter's chronicle. Unfortunately, pending future discovery, this must remain mysterious.

Lichfield and the Word

So far this chapter has concerned a fairly coherent sequence of historical events, mediated by the Word, that together constitute a story about the diocese of Lichfield; it should by now be clear that this coherence is owed to several episodes of synthesis, wherein fragments from the past were re-deposited in new contexts in the late-eighth or early-ninth, the twelfth, and the fourteenth centuries. Indeed, the moments of composition and synthesis are the real fruit of the above analysis; otherwise, the texts are simply a list of names, marking time. It is important to emphasise that the texts do not give us a linear, evolving history but express a set of historical moments, each with a different view of the past, which may not relate to one another at all, connected only by the use of similar material, bequeathed from one to the next by the passage of time. In each context of manuscript production, the author or compiler was using these textual fragments for his or her own purposes, perhaps completely unrelated to the previous context of creation or use. Nevertheless, the above discussion has identified a structuring element within contexts dated to the late-seventh and the late-eighth or early-ninth centuries, which might be understood to have provided a fairly stable form for these different episodes: namely, the textual community embodied in connections between the Anglo-Saxon episcopal sees, which Archbishop Theodore appears to

have done much to create in the 670s, and which may have been put to good use in the period 796x803.

Far from focussing on the diocese of Lichfield, this community drew the bishop of Lichfield, and presumably his own community, into a wider forum. Its workings might also be visible in the piecemeal updates undertaken to varying degrees on different recensions of the ELT, possibly attesting to more decentralised contacts maintained between individual members of this community, and perhaps other minsters as well. It is these sorts of contacts that perhaps also account for the entries found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle or the northern chronicle within the *Historia Regum*, which mostly record deaths, but occasionally other details, concerning the bishops and cathedrals.¹¹⁴ Notably these primarily fall within the eighth century and the first half of the ninth, the period within which the textual community elucidated above appears to have been active, although there is also an important cluster in the eleventh century. Unfortunately bishops of Lichfield are less visible in texts of the tenth and eleventh centuries, although a record of Ælfheah, 'bishop of the church of the people of Lichfield', as a brother of Æthelwold's Old Minster in Winchester, contained in the *Liber Vitae* of the New

¹¹⁴ Entries in the ASC concerning Lichfield: Bishop Seaxwulf's death in 705 (versions A, B and C); King Ceolred's burial at Lichfield in 716 (all versions); the involvement of Bishop Ealdwine in the consecration of Archbishop Tatwine in 731 (versions D and E); King Offa's establishment of Archbishop Hygeberht over part of Archbishop Jænberht's province at a contentious synod at Chelsea in 785 (*recte* 787; all versions); the death of Bishop Æthelwald in 828 (*recte* 830; all versions); the death of Bishop Brihtmær in 1039, the year of the 'great wind' (version C); the death of Bishop Wulfsig in 1053, followed by the succession of Bishop Leofwine (versions C and D), formerly abbot of Coventry, who sought consecration overseas due to the lack of an archbishop in England (version C); and Bishop Leofwine's consecration of the church of Evesham in 1054, with the permission of Archbishop Ealdred of York, who was in Germany (version D). Entries in the northern chronicle of the *Historia Regum* concerning Lichfield: the death of Bishop Ealdwine, also called Wor, in 737, and consecration in his place of Bishop Hwitta for the Mercians and Bishop Totta for the Middle Angles; and the death of Bishop Hemele in 765, and the consecration in his place at of Bishop Cuthred. The small number of the entries pertaining to Lichfield and its bishops suggests that none of the sources were produced in houses particularly close to the cathedral

Minster composed in 1031;¹¹⁵ and a throwaway comment in the tenth-century Life of St Dunstan written by 'B', to the effect that Bishop Cynesige of Lichfield was his kinsman;¹¹⁶ should alert us to other important networks into which the bishops participated during this period. Moreover, Ælfheah's title reminds us of the description of Headda's church as that 'of the people of Lichfield', and urges us to enquire as to the experience of that community through the centuries. Despite such interesting targets, this chapter finishes with a closer look at our earlier textual community in the period 796x803, during which the ELT was compiled, and which was also textually active in other ways, as revealed by yet another type of text: letters.

Writing to Rome

Not a single letter to or from a bishop of Lichfield has survived. However, a small group of letters written at the end of the eighth century and the beginning of the ninth century concern themselves with the metropolitan see of Lichfield, introduced earlier in this chapter. It will be recalled that the raising of the bishop of Lichfield to archiepiscopal status is recorded in an entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, *sub anno 785 (recte 787)* in which, after a 'contentious' synod at Chelsea, Archbishop Jænberht was deprived of part of his province and King Offa chose Hygeberht to be a second Southumbrian archbishop. Katy Cubitt has suggested that "Alcuin's correspondence shows Offa as the secular head of the Southumbrian church", an

¹¹⁵ Birch, Walter de Gray. 1888. *Liber Vitae: Register and Martyrology of New Minster and Hyde Abbey Winchester*. Hampshire Record Society, London and Winchester, pp 22-23: 'episcopus Licetfeldensis ecclesie'

¹¹⁶ 'Vita Sancti Dunstani, auctore B' in Stubbs, William (ed.). 1874. *Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*. pp 3-52, this reference p 32: *Cynesius*, Dunstan's *consanguineus*, is called a bishop but not given a see, although only one Cynesige appears in charters of the time, and he was the bishop of Lichfield

attitude apparently mirrored by the treatment of the king of Northumbria as head of the Northumbrian church.¹¹⁷ A letter from Charlemagne to Offa, written in 796, refers to his gift to the Mercian king of two silk pallia, which Cubitt suggests were intended for his two archbishops, and would thus appear to demonstrate an acceptance in prestigious circles of the second archbishopric at Lichfield, by then around thirteen years old, at least whilst Offa was alive.¹¹⁸

In 797, after Offa's death and the death of his son and heir Ecgfrith in 796, Alcuin wrote to Archbishop Æthelheard of Canterbury, and recommended the following:

In order that the unity of the Church – which is in part torn asunder, not, as it seems, by reasonable consideration but by a certain desire for power – may, if it can be done, be peacefully united and the rent repaired, it seems right to take counsel of all the priests of Christ and of your fellow-bishop of the church of York; in such a way, however, that the pious father [sc. Hygeberht] be not deprived of the pallium in his lifetime, although the ordination of bishops is to revert to the holy and original see. May your holy wisdom weigh all these matters, that loving concord may result between the chief pastors of the churches of Christ.¹¹⁹

As an influential churchman at the centre of Charlemagne's court, with connections with many of the kings and bishops of England, Alcuin appears from his letters well placed within our textual community to give advice. Here, he displays knowledge of dissatisfaction with the Southumbrian metropolitan arrangement; more importantly, he presents a narrative by which the archbishopric of Lichfield might be condemned without denigrating its incumbent, whom he

¹¹⁷ Cubitt 1995, p 213

¹¹⁸ *Alcuin Ep.* No. 101; Cubitt 1995, p 213

¹¹⁹ *Alcuin Ep.* No. 128; for translation see *EHD* 1, pp 789-790

appears keen to see retain his official dignity. His criticism of Offa, that he had raised Lichfield through desire for power rather than reason, furthers criticism that he had expressed to a Mercian ealdorman, also in 797, to the effect that Ecgfrith had died as a divine judgement on his father, “for you know very well how much blood his father shed to secure the kingdom on his son.”¹²⁰ It also seems probable that, in urging that the consecration of bishops repair to Canterbury, Alcuin expressed an important aspect of Offa’s ‘desire for power’.¹²¹

In 798, King Cœnwulf of the Mercians wrote a letter to Pope Leo III, in which he professes his obedience and desires the Pope’s advice, “lest the traditions of the holy fathers, and the rules handed down by them to us, be corrupted in anything among us, as if unknown”.¹²² He informs the Pope that:

our bishops and certain most learned men among us say that against the canons and apostolic decrees which were established for us by the direction of the most blessed Father Gregory, as you know, the authority of the metropolitan of Canterbury has been divided into two provinces, though twelve bishops ought by that same father’s command to be subject to its rule, as is read throughout out churches in the letter which he sent to his brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, concerning the two metropolitan bishops of London and York, which I do not doubt you also possess.¹²³

Cœnwulf goes on to narrate how Augustine only got as far as Canterbury, where the metropolitan had been stuck ever since. This emphasis on Gregory’s original plan and the importance of the traditions of the holy fathers appears to have been

¹²⁰ *Alcuin Ep.* 122; for translation see *EHD* 1, pp 786-788

¹²¹ Cubitt 2005, p 232

¹²² *GR* c. 88; for translation see *EHD* 1, pp 791-793

¹²³ *ibid.*

part of a request that the Pope allow the metropolitan of Southumbria to be moved to London, although Cœnwulf nowhere specifically states this in his letter; nevertheless, it was perhaps the task of the embassy accompanying his letter to put the question, or the Pope deduced the request from Cœnwulf's narrative, as the pontiff's reply was very clear:

As for what was said in your letter asking us if the authority of the supreme pontificate could by canonical consent be situated in the city of London, where Augustine received the dignity of the pallium sent by St Gregory, we by no means dare to give them the authority of the supreme pontificate; but as that primacy was established at Canterbury, we concede and pronounce it by our decree the first see...¹²⁴

Again, appeal is made to "the canons", and to "the order that was arranged by our predecessors", in order to justify the Pope's decision.

We must here again consider the use of the Word in all this. Cœnwulf clearly desired to maintain some measure of influence or control over the Southumbrian archbishop by moving him to the Mercian city of London, but this was in response to the desires of his 'bishops and certain most learned men' that the archdiocese of Lichfield be dissolved; the latter imperative had evidently been justified by appeal to the 'canons and apostolic decrees' of Pope Gregory, namely texts drawing their authority from the expression of an historical narrative connecting the Anglo-Saxon church with the popes of Rome. Cœnwulf's appears to have resisted this for at least a year, as he refers in his letter to an embassy to Rome undertaken for him the year before by Abbot Wada, who "performed it lazily, nay

¹²⁴ *Alcuin Ep.* No. 127; for translation see *EHD* 1, pp 793-794

foolishly.”¹²⁵ However, by this point, Cœnwulf had already conceded the battlefield to his bishops, fighting papally-authorized texts with a request for papally-authorized texts; his appeal to Gregory’s original plan was perhaps his last manoeuvre. Notably, Cœnwulf appeals to the pope “to deign to examine with pious love the letter in which Archbishop Æthelheard wrote to you in the presence of all our provincial bishops more fully about his own affairs and needs and those of all Britain”, indicating separate issues, which, from the pope’s reply, evidently concerned the apostate king Eadberht Præn of Kent.¹²⁶ Thus, whilst Cœnwulf’s relationship with his bishops, particularly his archbishop, appears from the letters to be amicable, there is no indication that he had support from any of them for his desires for the metropolitan, even from Æthelheard, labelled by Cubitt a “Mercian ecclesiastical stooge.”¹²⁷ In their reverence for the canons, the bishops may have formed a united textual community against the Mercian king.

Meanwhile, Cœnwulf’s letter also contains an extension to the narrative by which Alcuin condemned the metropolitan see of Lichfield, in his relation to the pope of the history of the Southumbrian metropolitan:

The prime honour of this dignity, as you know, King Offa tried to remove and to disperse into two provinces, on account of the enmity he had formed against the venerable Jænberht and the people of Kent; and your most godly fellow-bishop and predecessor Hadrian at the request of the aforesaid king began to do what no one had presumed before and exalted the bishop of the Mercians with the pallium. But we blame neither of these...¹²⁸

¹²⁵ *GR* c. 88

¹²⁶ *ibid.* & *Alcuin Ep.* No. 127

¹²⁷ Cubitt 1995, p 216

¹²⁸ *GR* c. 88

Clearly the received wisdom in England by this time was that the archbishopric of Lichfield was a mistake caused by Offa's desire for power over a man he hated; only such human weakness could explain the disruption of an entity based in canonical authority. Pope Leo, in his reply, also sought to justify why his predecessor's actions were "contrary to custom":

he did this for no other reason than because your most excellent king, Offa, testified in his letter that it was the united wish and unanimous petition of you all, both on account of the vast size of your lands and the extension of your kingdom, and also for many more reasons and advantages.¹²⁹

This indicates that canonical custom could be overridden by unanimous decision, with papal approval, but that it should otherwise be upheld.

Finally, the pope's confirmation of the restoration of the primacy of Canterbury, dated 18th January 802, which Archbishop Æthelheard had travelled to Rome to request, again appeals to texts:

we ought to advise and instruct your brotherly goodness [Æthelheard], for the sake of the dioceses of England committed to you, that is, of the bishops and monasteries, whether of monks, canons, or nuns; just as your church held them in ancient times, as we have learnt from investigations in our sacred archives, so we confirm that they should be held by you and your successors.¹³⁰

It is the contents of the 'sacred archives' that guide the pope's decision. However, just as the restoration of Canterbury's primacy restated the significance and authority of the textual record of the actions of past popes, so that text recording

¹²⁹ *Alcuin Ep.* No. 127

¹³⁰ *GP* c. 37; Æthelheard appears travelling across Frankia to Rome in a letter written by Alcuin to Charlemagne in 801: *Alcuin Ep.* No. 231; *EHD* 1, pp 794-795

Hadrian's division of the province became dangerous, and so merited explicit confrontation in the synod of *Clofesho* in October 803, when the archbishopric of Lichfield was finally abolished:

we [sc. Æthelheard] pronounce, with the consent and permission of the lord apostolic, Pope Leo, that the charter sent from the Roman see by Pope Hadrian about the pallium and the archiepiscopal see in the church of Lichfield is invalid, because it was obtained by deception and misleading suggestion...¹³¹

Again, the justification invokes Offa's weakness, and report of this was apparently what prompted the pope to act, as Æthelheard had told him of "the division that had wrongfully been made of the archiepiscopal see; and the apostolic pope, as he heard and understood that it had been done wrongfully, immediately made a decree by the privilege of his authority..."¹³²

The texts surrounding the abolishment of the archdiocese of Lichfield thus illustrate the workings of our extensive textual community, stretched across the sees of England, but anchored at Rome, in which the members informed and justified their actions with regard to an ever-increasing body of texts authorised by the approval of the popes. The identities and authority of the bishops were partly suspended in these texts, so that their lives were bound up with maintaining textual integrity. This no doubt aroused emotive responses, and Cubitt has suggested that, whilst the division of sees had in fact occurred peacefully in the past after the death of one bishop and before the consecration of successors, Offa's division of Canterbury's province whilst its incumbent, Jænberht, still lived

¹³¹ S 1431a

¹³² *ibid.*

would have been found deeply insulting.¹³³ Indeed, she also suggests that “Hygeberht’s retirement enabled the new province of Lichfield to be demoted”; the subscription of the former archbishop, now an abbot, is found on another decree from the 803 synod of *Clofesho*, he having last subscribed a surviving charter as bishop in 801, indicating that he perhaps retired with his dignity intact.¹³⁴

Hygeberht is conspicuous by his absence in the texts discussed above, and it is worth enquiring after his own experience. In 797 Alcuin sought to maintain his dignity if Lichfield was demoted, and he last attests a charter as archbishop in 799, that for 801 mentioned above simply recording him as bishop, although he is listed before the archbishop of Canterbury, indicating some form of primacy, or perhaps a copying error.¹³⁵ As part of the textual community just discussed, it is difficult to envisage him isolated in resistance, especially as there is no trace of him appealing to the pope, and the fact that he continued to subscribe charters as archbishop after Offa’s death, at least as late as 799 and possibly later, suggests that his position continued to be respected. Of course, it cannot have appeared inevitable that Canterbury’s primacy would be restored, and there is no obvious reason why Hadrian’s charter should not have been added to the stock of English canons as a seal on the third archdiocese. The texts, and the historical narrative they embodied, were not enough on their own to undo what had been done, but when activated in contemporary negotiations they became powerful. Hygeberht, himself a bishop caught in this textual net, would probably have been powerless to do other than support his fellows.

¹³³ Cubitt 1995, p 233

¹³⁴ S 1431b; S 158

¹³⁵ S 155

It will be obvious by now that there is here a context for the compilation of the ELT, with its emphasis on the spread of Christianity from Rome to the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, and the construction of Canterbury's primacy in the episcopal lists. Indeed, the absence of York from this construction is reproduced in Pope Leo's letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, which seeks to confirm Gregory's ordination of Augustine:

[we] concede to you Æthelheard and to your successors all the churches of the English just as they were from former times, to be held for ever in your same metropolitan see by inviolable right, with due acknowledgement of subjection.¹³⁶

The reduction of Archbishop Jænberht's authority must have been felt as a slight not only by him but by others within the episcopal community, themselves suspended by a web of canonical texts, and who, according to Cœnwulf, led the campaign against Lichfield's archdiocese; it was not simply the Word of the canons, which could no doubt have been made to justify Lichfield's status if necessary, but the pervasive sense that the episcopal order they supported had been breached, which inspired Cœnwulf's 'bishops and certain most learned men among us' to campaign for Canterbury's restoration once Offa's dreams had died with his son. One arm of this campaign was, I suggest, the creation of the archetype of the ELT, a new synthesis of fragments from the past, orchestrated at a powerful centre within the textual community, actuating all its connections across the Anglo-Saxon dioceses, and supporting a fresh ordering of the episcopal world.

¹³⁶ *GP* c. 37; *EHD* 1, pp 798-799

Chapter 2: The Words of the Saints

Chad has so far remained a figure in the background of this thesis, a name in an episcopal list. In this chapter he takes pride of place, as the first person in the diocese of Lichfield to have been the subject of a hagiographical composition. The previous chapter focused on a more extensive textual community, which encompassed many different centres across the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, in particular the episcopal sees. This chapter focuses more firmly upon the bishopric of Lichfield, and comprises an analysis of the early medieval textual evidence generated by the saints' cults within the diocese. Each of these might also be considered a textual community, situated in one place, but first the use of texts (or lack of it) during the early medieval period at many of these sites must be demonstrated.

St Chad

The Words of Bede of Jarrow and Stephen of Ripon

St Chad is the only saint of the diocese of Lichfield to appear in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* and Stephen of Ripon's *Life of St Wilfrid*, the two most widely-used Anglo-Saxon eighth-century sources.¹ There is thus much that can be said of Chad, beginning with an analysis of the stratigraphy of the narratives concerning him contained within both works, and an attempt to discern the

¹ Colgrave, Bertram. 1927. *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus. Text, Translation, and Notes*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Plummer, Charles. 1896. *Venerabilis Bedae Opera Historica*. Clarendon, Oxford; Colgrave, Bertram and Mynors, R. A. B. (eds.). 1969. *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Clarendon Press, Oxford

sources of the various elements identified. Stephen's is the earlier of the two works, probably written at Ripon soon after the death of its subject Bishop Wilfrid in 710. Only two manuscripts preserve this work, of which the most recent editor of the *Life*, Bertram Colgrave, suggested that both were copies of another, which was itself not the archetype as it contained several mistakes reproduced by both copies.² One or two decades after Stephen wrote his *Life*, Bede completed a version of his *Ecclesiastical History* at Jarrow in 731, although he appears to have been involved with slight editorial alterations to it up to his death in 735; this process probably resulted in the two recensions, c-type and m-type, of the work that form the basis for all extant manuscript witnesses.³ In contrast to the small number of manuscripts containing Stephen's *Life*, there are over one hundred manuscripts of Bede's work, testifying to its expansive circulation during the medieval period.

In comparison with Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, references to Chad in Stephen's *Life* of St Wilfrid are few.⁴ They concern the consecration of Chad to the see of York, which previously had apparently been given to Wilfrid, and Wilfrid's recovery of this see after Chad's deposition by Archbishop Theodore. Chad is therefore not much more than an extra, one of many whose lives briefly intersected with Wilfrid's. Stephen is nevertheless a useful source here, for he tells this incident slightly differently to Bede, and comments on Chad's character. Stephen may also have remembered the incident personally. He is universally accepted to be

² Colgrave 1927, p xv; the manuscripts are British Library, Cotton Vespasian D. vi, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Fell Vol. III, pp 34a-56b (Colgrave 1927, pp xiii-xv)

³ Story, Joanna. 2009. 'After Bede: continuing the Ecclesiastical History', in Stephen Baxter, Catherine E. Karkov & Janet Nelson (eds.) *Early Medieval Studies in Memory of Patrick Wormald*, Ashgate, Farnham, pp 165-184; this reference pp 166-168.

⁴ *VW*, cc. 14 & 15

identical with 'Aeddi cognomento Stephanus', a master of ecclesiastical chant who Bede states was brought by Wilfrid to Northumbria from Kent; Stephen himself describes this incident, talking of himself in the third person, and relating its occurrence at some time between 666 and 669, at the end of which period Chad was deposed and Wilfrid reinstated. Stephen would thus have been a new arrival in Wilfrid's following at the time, and whether he was present at the events surrounding Chad's deposition, or heard of them indirectly whilst teaching at Wilfrid's minsters, the source of his narration must derive from his proximity to the *dramatis personae*. In contrast, Bede was born in the year of Chad's death, 672, or perhaps the year after, and so never met him; his sources of information about Chad were thus of different form.⁵

It was suggested in Chapter 1 that Bede made use of a memorandum, probably received from Canterbury, concerning the succession of the Mercian bishops up to Bishop Seaxwulf. This putative source would account for one purely nominal reference to Chad in the *Ecclesiastical History*.⁶ All other references to Chad can be grouped into two sets: the first comprises a narrative covering the period 664 to 672, beginning with Chad's succession to the abbacy of Lastingham and ending with his death, and containing, amongst other things, tales told by monks named Owine and Ecgberht;⁷ and the second comprises the reminiscences of Trumberht, one of Bede's teachers at Jarrow, and previously a monk under Chad's rule, who recalled to Bede aspects of Chad's character.⁸ Whilst Bede's source for the second set of references is self-explanatory, the source of the first set of

⁵ HE v.24

⁶ HE iii.24

⁷ HE iii.23, iii.28, iv.2, iv.3, & v.19

⁸ HE iv.3

references can readily be assigned an origin thanks to Bede's preface, in which he states:

I learned from the brethren of the monastery known as Lastingham which was founded by Cedd and Chad, how through the ministry of these devoted priests of Christ, the kingdom of Mercia achieved the faith of Christ which it had never known, and how the kingdom of Essex recovered the faith, which it had formerly neglected. I also learned from the monks of Lastingham about the life and death of these two fathers.⁹

Bede's references to Chad's brother Cedd begin with the latter's assignment to evangelise the Middle Angles, relate his career as bishop of the East Saxons and his foundation of Lastingham, and end with his death, also at Lastingham.¹⁰ Extracting all the references to both saints from Bede's work, it is possible to understand them as deriving from a history of the first two abbots of Lastingham, Cedd, then Chad, composed at Lastingham at some point in the period 672 to 731, possibly in response to Bede's request for information.

Such a house history bears comparison with Bede's *Historia Abbatum* (and the earlier anonymous version) of Wearmouth-Jarrow, or with the house chronicle that informed Bede's narrations concerning the minster at Barking, or with that represented by the Kentish Royal Legend (on which, see more below).¹¹ The outline of Lastingham's putative *Historia Abbatum* can be reconstructed in as

⁹ *HE* preface; translation based on Colgrave & Mynors 1969, pp 4 & 5; Latin text as follows: 'Qualiter uero per ministerium Cediti et Ceadda religiosorum Christi sacerdotum, uel prouincia Merciorum ad fidem Christi, quam non nouerat, peruenerit, uel prouincia Orientalium Saxonum fidem, quam olim exsufflauerat, recuperauerit, qualis etiam ipsorum patrum uita uel obitus extiterit, diligenter a fratribus monasterii, quod ab ipsis conditum Læstingaeu cognominatur, agnouimus.'

¹⁰ *HE* iii.21, iii.22, iii.23, iii.25, iii.26, & iv.3

¹¹ Plummer 1896, I, pp 364-404; Hollis, Stephanie. 1998. 'The Minster-in-Thanet Foundation Story', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 27, pp 41-64, this reference p 57.

much as Bede's text represents it, but there is no way ultimately of discerning whether any given detail was original to Bede's source or was added by him from elsewhere.¹² The history appears to begin with Book III, chapters 21, 22 and 23, of Bede's work, which describes the marriage and conversion of Peada, son of King Penda of the Mercians and himself king of the Middle Angles, and his subsequent receipt of missionaries from his father-in-law, Oswiu of Northumbria, enabling him to convert his kingdom. This is, of course, the narrative referred to in Chapter 1's analysis of Bede's use of the term 'Middle Angles', and Cedd's appearance within it as one of the missionaries renders it likely that it originated with the Lastingham material. The narrative continues with Cedd's assignment to convert the East Saxons, and his time as bishop there, including his influence with the kings; his meeting with King Æthelwald of Deira through the agency of his brother Cælin, the king's priest; his foundation of the minster at Lastingham (*Laestingaeu*), involving a Lenten consecration of the site, aided by a second brother, also a priest, named Cynebill; and his later death of plague and subsequent burial at the minster, leaving the house to his third brother Chad. The narrative also includes an intriguing story concerning arrival at Lastingham of about thirty monks from Cedd's houses among the East Saxons, all but one of whom perished in a second visitation of the plague; we might invoke this lone survivor, although unnamed, as the source of the East Saxon narrative. These three chapters thus encompass Cedd's part of the Lastingham narrative, which then moves on to Chad.

¹² The narrative is contained in *HE* iii.21, iii.22, iii.23, iii.28, iv.2 and iv.3; in addition, some of the details of the narrative are repeated in iii.24. Cedd's appearance as an interpreter at the Council of Whitby (*HE* iii.25 & iii.26) is probably derived from Bede's source for the council rather than the Lastingham material

Chad vs. Wilfrid

Book III, Chapter 28 and Book IV, Chapter 2 of Bede's work concerns Chad's career as a bishop of the Northumbrians in the mid-660s and his encounter with Wilfrid there. As mentioned earlier, this story is also to be found in Stephen of Ripon's *Life of St Wilfrid*, and a comparison of the two is productive.¹³ The two accounts are certainly distinctive, although the importance of Wilfrid in both must open to question whether Bede's narrative came entirely from Lastingham. Nevertheless, Bede's account certainly contains more about Chad than Stephen's, including his journey to Kent for ordination. Bede's account also includes words of praise, such as his assertion that Chad was 'modest in his ways, learned in the scriptures, and zealous in carrying out their teachings', which we might expect from an account focussed on Chad.¹⁴ Additional support for a written account from Lastingham can be derived from the following passage, concerning Chad's activities as a Northumbrian bishop:

[he] immediately devoted himself to the task of keeping the Church in truth and purity, to the practice of humility and temperance, and to study. He visited cities, country districts, towns, villages and homesteads, preaching the gospel, travelling not on horse-back but on foot after the apostolic example. He was one of Aidan's disciples and sought to instruct his hearers in the ways and customs of his master and of his brother Cedd.¹⁵

¹³ *VW* cc. 11, 12, 14 & 15.

¹⁴ *HE* iii.28: 'rex Osuii misit Cantiam uirum sanctum, modestum moribus, scripturarum lectione sufficienter instructum et ea quae in scripturis agenda didicerat operibus sollerter exsequentem'.

¹⁵ *HE* iii.28; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 316-317, with alteration after Breeze, Andrew. 2009. 'Bede's castella and the journeys of St Chad', in *Northern History*, Vol. 46, pp 137-139; 'Consecratus ergo in episcopum Ceadda maximam mox coepit ecclesiasticae ueritati et castitati curam inpendere, humilitati continentiae lectioni operam dare, oppida rura casas uicos castella propter euangelizandum non equitando sed apostolorum more pedibus incendo peregrare. Erat enim discipulis Aidani, eisdemque actibus ac moribus iuxta exemplum eius ac fratris sui Cediti suos instituere curauit auditores.'

It has been suggested that the closely-structured list of locations in which Chad preached is not common in Bede's style, indicating that he copied it from a written source.¹⁶ Moreover, given that both Chad's pedestrian travel and his zeal for the modest life of the holy fathers are also features of the much fuller account of his time as bishop of the Mercians in Book IV, Chapter 3 (see below), it seems best to conclude that they both came from the same source, namely Lastingham.

The differences between the narratives presented by Bede and Stephen can be distilled into three issues: first, the context of the appointment of Wilfrid and then Chad to, apparently, the same see; second, the nature of the irregularity for which Chad was deposed; and thirdly, the context of Chad's reconsecration. Beginning with the first, according to Bede, King Alhfrith sent the abbot Wilfrid to Gaul for consecration as bishop of his people, but the latter lingered there, and King Oswiu, imitating his son, sent Chad, now abbot of Lastingham, to Kent to be consecrated bishop of York. In Stephen's version, no distinction is made between Oswiu and Alhfrith; instead, Wilfrid was elected to the bishopric by both kings and all their counsellors. Oswiu's later decision to forestall Wilfrid in his see was apparently motivated by envy and the devil, and by the counsel of those who followed the Irish customs, 'those who adhered to the Quartodeciman party in opposition to the rule of the Apostolic See'.¹⁷ Ignoring, for the moment, the more hostile attitude of the second account towards Oswiu, it is possible to make some sense of the differences by reference to Alhfrith. It may be that Bede's narrative, in describing King Alhfrith's actions on behalf of his people, intended only the people of Deira;

¹⁶ Breeze 2009, p 137.

¹⁷ VW c.14: 'Oswi rex, male suadente invidia, hostis antiqui instinctu alium praearripere inordinate sedem suam edoctus consensit ab his, qui quartamdeimanam partem contra apostolicae sedis regulam sibi elegerunt'

although never explicitly called king of Deira, Alhfrith is called 'king' (*rex*) alongside his father by both Bede and Stephen, and the kingship of Deira, often under the overlordship of the king of Bernicia, is a recurring feature of Bede's narrative.¹⁸ This would also explain why the bishopric of York appears for the first time here in Bede's narrative, where before the Northumbrian see was always based at Lindisfarne. According to Bede, a bishop named Tuda had recently been elected to the Northumbrian see, but had died shortly afterwards; Stephen does not mention him.¹⁹ Bede calls Tuda's see the bishopric of the Northumbrians (*pontificatum Nordanhymbrorum*), but it is possible that, shortly after Tuda's appointment, Alhfrith prevailed upon his father to have a bishop of his own.²⁰ Either way, it is possible that at the time Wilfrid's appointment represented the division of the Northumbrian see into two, one based at Lindisfarne for Bernicia, and the other at York for Deira.

The lack of clarity here must be due to the fact that, in both narratives, Alhfrith's involvement in Wilfrid's consecration marks his last appearance on the historical stage. His subsequent absence resonates with a cryptic comment made by Bede, to the effect that, at some point during his reign, Oswiu was attacked by Alhfrith.²¹ This must have occurred after Wilfrid's mission to Gaul, and possibly fairly soon afterwards. Alhfrith obviously failed in his attack, and after his removal his father Oswiu may have felt a Deiran bishopric to be irrelevant. It is therefore likely that Chad's consecration to the see of York formed part of the contest between the two

¹⁸ See Plummer 1896, II, pp 119-120 and references to Bede's text therein.

¹⁹ *HE* iii.26.

²⁰ The second possibility may find support from Bede's summary of Wilfrid's life, *HE* v.19, in which Alhfrith's is said to have sent Wilfrid to Gaul for consecration 'with the counsel and consent of his father Oswiu' ('cum consilio atque consensu patris sui Osuii').

²¹ *HE* iii.14

kings, whether in its fury or its aftermath. Either way, Tuda's death, whenever it occurred, opened the way for one of the two candidates to rule the bishopric of the entire Northumbrian people, rather than one half. In omitting the initial division of the Northumbrian see (which is admittedly hypothetical) neither Bede nor Stephen told the whole story; Bede perhaps did not know the whole story, whilst Stephen probably felt it best to suggest that Wilfrid's Northumbrian diocese had always been whole and entire, to the extent that he created an imagined continuity with the past by omitting any suggestion of a bishopric based at Lindisfarne, suggesting instead that Colman, bishop of Lindisfarne before Tuda, had been bishop of York.

These events occurred in 664; thereafter, for five years Chad served as bishop of the Northumbrians, and Wilfrid was a bishop without a see. But when Archbishop Theodore arrived, Chad was promptly deposed. According to Bede's narrative, which does not mention Wilfrid at all, this was because he had been consecrated irregularly: on reaching Kent, Chad had found the archbishop of Canterbury recently deceased, and had continued to the kingdom of the West Saxons, where he was consecrated by Bishop Wine with the assistance of two British bishops; the narrative explains that, although the latter kept Easter from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon, 'there was not a single bishop in the whole of Britain except Wine who had been canonically ordained', and it is this fault that Theodore later corrects by re-consecrating Chad.²² However, according to Stephen, the wrong for which Chad was deposed was an 'offence against the canon law, that one bishop had dared, like a thief, to snatch another bishop's see,' although he also mentions the ignorance of the people who consecrated Chad, grouping them

²² *HE* iii.28: 'Non enim erat tunc ullus, excepto illo Uine, in tota Britannia canonice ordinatus episcopus.'

in his 'Quartodeciman party', and later explains that Chad was re-consecrated, thus adding the fault described in Bede's narrative as a secondary consideration.²³ Bede's account is problematic because, with Chad's irregularity seemingly rectified on the spot by Theodore, no reason is given for Chad's loss of the Northumbrian see, although this loss is implicit in Bede's following chapter, where Chad is depicted in retirement at Lastingham, whilst Wilfrid rules the see of York.²⁴ However, Stephen, in insisting that Chad's crime was the theft of Wilfrid's see, was deliberately ignoring the change in Northumbrian circumstances between Wilfrid's departure for Gaul and his return: it would have been equally valid to suggest that the bishopric to which he had originally been consecrated had ceased to exist. Indeed, this may have been Wilfrid's first reaction, as he retired to Ripon for three years before seizing the opportunity offered by a new archbishop of Canterbury to acquire the Northumbrian see. By emphasising theft, Stephen admitted the existence of only one diocese, to which Wilfrid had exclusive right.

Again, the two accounts differ when describing Chad's reaction. Bede's narrative explains that, having been accused of irregularity:

[Chad] humbly replied, 'If you believe that my consecration was irregular, I gladly resign from the office; indeed I never believed myself to be worthy of it. But I consented to receive it, however unworthy, in obedience to the commands I received.' When Theodore heard his humble reply, he said

²³ *VW* c. 15: 'primoque ingressu regionis illius rem contra canones male gestam a veris testibus audivit, quod praedonis more episcopus alterius episcopi sedem praeeripere ausus sit'; *VW* c. 14: 'ordinantes servum Dei religiosissimum et admirabilem doctorem, de Hibernia insula venientem, nomine Ceadda, adhuc eo ignorante, in sedem episcopalem Eboracae civitatis indocte contra canones constituerunt.'

²⁴ *HE* iv.3

that he ought not to give up his office; but he completed his consecration a second time after the catholic manner.²⁵

Though humble and submissive, Chad's words stubbornly refuse to countenance the accusation, tactfully suggesting Chad's willingness to resign if Theodore believes his consecration irregular, but admitting no such judgement for his own part. In contrast, Stephen relates the following:

Chad, being a true and meek servant of God and fully understanding then the wrongdoing implied in his ordination to another's see by the Quartodecimans, with humble penances confessed his fault in accordance with the decision of the bishops: whereupon Theodore, with Chad's consent, installed St Wilfrid as bishop in his own see of York.²⁶

Here Chad is fully aware of wrong and confesses his fault. However, significantly, despite these differences both accounts emphasise Chad's expression of humility and obedience to Theodore.

We must admit the possibility that Bede, who had read Stephen, incorporated Stephen's description of Chad into his own work, or, even if Bede's account was solely based on Lastingham's narrative, that that narrative may itself have been a reworking of Stephen's narrative. But this does not best explain the almost allusive relations of the episode in both accounts. Rather, their similarities in emphasis, particularly concerning Chad's character, point to separate

²⁵ *HE* iv.2; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 334-335; 'Ceadda episcopum cum argueret non fuisse rite consecratum, respondens ipse uoce humillima 'Si me' inquit 'nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab officio discedo, quippe qui neque me unquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar, sed oboedientiae causa iussus subire hoc quamuis indignus consensi.' At ille audiens humilitatem responsi eius, dixit non eum episcopatum demittere debere, sed ipse ordinationem eius denuo catholica ratione consummauit.'

²⁶ *VW* c.15; Colgrave 1927, pp 32-33; 'Ille vero servus Dei verus et mitissimus tunc peccatum ordinandi a quattuordecimannis in sedem alterius plene intelligens, poenitentia humili secindum iudicium episcoporum confessus, emendavit et cum consensu eius in propriam sedem Eboracae civitas sanctum Wilfrithum episcopum constituit.'

remembrances of a single episode. That episode was almost certainly instigated by Wilfrid, who believed he had a right to the Northumbrian see, and the accusation of irregular consecration by Briton bishops was no doubt intended to secure the support of the new Rome-sent archbishop. However, neither bishop may have wanted to destroy Chad, especially at a time when there were so few bishops in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms.²⁷ Whether or not Chad admitted fault in his consecration we will never know, but that he continued in honourable membership of the Anglo-Saxon church by professing obedience to Theodore is certain. After the initial accusation, the episode was essentially a reconciliation, circumventing the conflict that would have ensued, and which Chad would almost certainly have lost, had he attempted to justify his original consecration. Likewise, Stephen's comment that Wilfrid was installed as bishop of York 'with Chad's consent' emphasises a spirit of negotiation. That the narrative presented by Bede was written at Lastingham in support of Chad is again indicated by the manner in which, in emphasising his obedience to Theodore, Chad was not required to accept his irregularity explicitly, but only to accept Theodore's assertion of it. The episode no doubt had a considerable effect on all concerned, demonstrated at the time by Chad's re-consecration, a ritual act absolving him of any fault, and in the eighth century by parallel remembrance of Chad's humbly obedient character generated by the episode's resolution.

²⁷ Other than Chad and Wilfrid, there remained alive only Wine, probably bishop of London at this date, and the bishop of the East Angles, either Berhtgisl or Bisi; on Wine, see *HE* iii.7 & iii.28; on the East Anglian bishops see ii.15, iii.18, iii.20 & iv.5

The Life of Chad at Lichfield

The manner of Chad's appointment to Lichfield is also described differently in the two narratives. According to Stephen, Chad was made bishop of the Mercians immediately after his deposition, as part of a gesture on Wilfrid's part by which 'he returned good for evil, not evil for evil', by providing him with his own place (*locus*) at Lichfield (*Onlicitfelda*), itself a gift from Wulfhere when Wilfrid had earlier carried out episcopal functions for him:

...a friendly arrangement was made with that true servant of God, Chad, who in all things obeyed the bishops: they thereupon consecrated him fully to the said see through all the ecclesiastical degrees.²⁸

Although we might doubt Wilfrid's purity of heart in this matter, the character of reconciliation is again evident. In contrast, the Lastingham narrative presented by Bede separates the events, explaining that Chad was called from retirement at Lastingham by Oswiu at the archbishop's request, Wulfhere having requested a bishop of Theodore to replace the previous incumbent who had died.²⁹ The narrative does not state who gave Lichfield to Chad, instead simply stating that 'he had his episcopal seat (*sedes episcopalem*) at Lichfield (*Licidfelth*)', and given that it does describe Wulfhere's gift of a 50-hide estate at Barrow (*Adbaruae*) to Chad in the immediately preceding lines, this silence is surely significant.³⁰ Together with Wilfrid's absence from the tale of Chad's deposition, and the constant emphasis on Theodore's agency, whether in judging Chad's consecration irregular, re-consecrating him, or appointing him to the bishopric of the Mercians, this suggests that the author was anxious to omit any mention of Wilfrid's

²⁸ *VW* c.15; Colgrave 1927, pp 32-33; 'ideoque pacifice inito consilio cum vero servo Dei Ceaddan, in omnibus rebus episcopis oboediens, per omnes gradus ecclesiasticos ad sedem praedictam plene eum ordinaverunt'.

²⁹ *HE* iv.3

³⁰ *HE* iv.3

accusations, and to disguise the edges of a reconciliation with Chad's continual obedience to his archbishop. Unfortunately, whilst it is probable that Chad's receipt of Lichfield from Wilfrid was part of their negotiations, the precise chronology of Chad's appointment is forever obscured by the different accounts.

The Lastingham material in Bede's narrative continues with praise for Chad's character, focussed on his humility and his desire to follow the church fathers in all things, both expressed in an anecdote in which Theodore himself lifts Chad onto a horse, forcing him to ride around his diocese where Chad would have preferred to walk. However, the bulk of the remainder of the narrative comprises the tale of his death, which appears to have derived from the account of one of Chad's monks, a man named Owine.³¹ However, the tale originally appears to have been constructed in two parts, the second concerning a holy man named Ecgberht, living in Ireland. Chad had built a 'more retired dwelling-place not far from the church, in which he could read and pray privately with a few of his brothers, that is to say, seven or eight of them; this he did as often as he was free from his labours and from the ministration of the word.'³² It was in this structure, reading or praying alone, that Chad was visited by a heavenly company, angel spirits come to summon him to heavenly joy, who would return for him in seven days.³³ This Chad told solely to Owine, who had heard their singing, to reveal to no one until after his death. However, to his assembled brethren, having commanded them to

³¹ Owine is prominent in the tale, and at one point Owine's actions are followed by the words 'as he afterwards related (*ut postea referebat*)

³² *HE* iv.3: 'Ferat uero sibi mansionem non longe ab ecclesia remotiorem, in qua secretius cum paucis, id est septem siue octo, fratribus, quoties a labore et ministerio Verbi uacabat, orare ac legere solebat.'

³³ *HE* iv.3; "Si uocem carminis audisti et caelestes superuenire coetus cognouisti, praecipio tibi in nomine Domini, ne hoc cuiquam ante meum obitum dicas. Re uera autem angelorum fuere spiritus, qui me ad caelestia, quae semper amabam ac desiderabam, praemia uocare uenerunt, et post dies septem se redituros ac me secum adducturos esse promiserunt."

live in love and peace with all, and to follow the Rule of life which he had taught and demonstrated to them, or which they had learned from the fathers, Chad explained that his death was close, “for”, he said, “the beloved guest who has been in the habit of visiting our brothers has deigned to come today to me also, to summon me from this world.”³⁴ The identity of the ‘beloved guest’ at this point remains mysterious, and sure enough, Chad sickened of a plague that struck the minster, and seven days later, after receiving communion, died, and ‘in the company of angels, as one may rightly believe, sought the joys of heaven.’³⁵

The narrative is then interrupted by an anecdote inserted by Bede, told him by Trumberht, a monk who had been educated in Chad’s minster (unnamed) under his Rule, and who later taught Bede the scriptures at Jarrow. The tale concerns Chad’s reaction to thunderstorms, demonstrating his fear of and love for God. This is followed by a tale concerning the holy man Ecgberht, which is introduced as follows: ‘this brother’s account of the bishop’s death also agrees with the story of a vision related by the most reverend father Ecgberht...’³⁶ As Trumberht’s tale does not concern Chad’s death, this can only refer to Owine’s account preceding it, and thus indicates where Bede had copied from his source directly, not altering it to take account of his own insertion. Moreover, Ecgberht’s vision reveals the identity of the ‘beloved guest’ and thus balances Owine’s story. Ecgberht and Chad had lived the monastic life together as youths (*adulescentes*) in Ireland,

³⁴ *HE* iv.3: “Namque hospes’ inquit ‘ille amabilis, qui fratres nostros uisitare solebat, ad me quoque hodie uenire meque de saeculo euocare dignatus est.”

³⁵ *HE* iv.3: ‘soluta ab ergastulo corporis anima sancta ducentibus, ut credi fas est, angelis comitibus aeterna gaudia petuit.’

³⁶ *HE* iv.3: ‘Conuenit autem reuelationi et relationi praefati fratris de obitu huius antistitis etiam sermo reuerentissimi patris Ecgbercti...’

‘diligently engaged in prayer and fasting and meditating on the divine Scriptures.’³⁷ When Chad returned to Britain, Ecgberht remained in Ireland, and many years later was visited by Hygebald, an abbot from Lindsey. The two men got to talking about the lives of the earlier fathers, whom they desired to imitate, and Chad was mentioned; ‘whereupon Ecgberht said, ‘I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who saw the soul of Chad’s brother Cedd descend from the sky with a host of angels and return to the heavenly kingdom, taking Chad’s soul with him.’³⁸ At this point Bede or his source wonders whether Ecgberht was speaking of his own experience or that of another, and we might well wonder the same.

Bede’s chapter ends with a description of Chad’s burial arrangements, including miracles associated with his shrines (discussed further in Chapter 4), and a statement concerning Chad’s successor, Winfrith, ‘a good and discreet man’, who had been Chad’s deacon for some time.³⁹ In a later chapter, Bede explains that Winfrith was deposed by Theodore, ‘displeased by some act of disobedience’, and replaced by Seaxwulf, and that Winfrith retired to his monastery at Barrow, living there a ‘very holy life until his death.’⁴⁰ These short passages consistently present a good opinion of Winfrith, and the minster at Barrow was earlier introduced in the Lastingham narrative as a gift from Wulfhere to Chad, ‘where up to the present day traces of the monastic Rule which he established still survive.’⁴¹ Evidently given by Chad to his successor, it is possible that the community at Lastingham

³⁷ *HE* iv.3: ‘qui dudum cum eodem Ceadda adolescente et ipse adolescens in Hibernia monachicam in orationibus et contentia et meditatione diuinarum scripturarum uitam sedulus agebat.’

³⁸ *HE* iv.3: ‘dixitque Ecgberct: ‘Scio hominem in hac insula adhuc in carne manentem qui, cum uir ille de mundo transiret, uidit animam Cediti fratris ipsius cum agmine angelorum descendere de caelo, et adsumpta secum anima eius ad caelestia regna redire.’

³⁹ *HE* iv.3

⁴⁰ *HE* iv.6

⁴¹ *HE* iv.3

was still in contact with the community at Barrow when they produced their narrative, regarding Winfrith and his own community as part of St Chad's wider family. Moreover, Theodore was presented in an ambiguous light in the story of Chad's deposition from the bishopric of York, to whom Chad offered unflinching obedience, but whose own opinion of Chad's irregularity was never explicitly endorsed, and perhaps implicitly denied, by the author of the Lastingham narrative. Winfrith's deposition contrasts with Chad's in that its cause was disobedience, but such an act is not condemned in the narrative, which, as noted casts Winfrith in a positive light, and gives the distinct impression of a rather prickly archbishop. All this serves to indicate that the story of Winfrith's deposition and replacement was also part of the Lastingham narrative; it is the last fragment in Bede's work that can be so identified.

Overall, the Lastingham narrative is a distinct synthesis of the memory assembled in the community in the later-seventh or earlier-eighth centuries. The story of the foundation of the minster must have been frequently told, although the other narratives appear to have relied on specific persons, discussed further below. Both St Chad and St Cedd are presented as paragons of holy virtue, drawing on standard perspectives of sanctity, which, as Katy Cubitt has demonstrated, often informed the memory of hagiographers, even those who had known their subject personally.⁴² Other parts of the work are more singular, such as Cedd's ritual cleansing of the Lastingham site, which marked the foundation of the community. In particular, the deposition incident must have formed an important episode in the memories of Chad's disciples, its resolution acting as distinct and powerful

⁴² Cubitt, Catherine. 2000a. 'Memory and narrative in the cult of early Anglo-Saxon saints', in Y. Hen & M. Innes, *The Uses of the past in the Early Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 29-66

expression of the humility and obedience for which Chad was frequently praised thereafter by the Lastingham author, Stephen of Ripon, and Trumberht. This may indeed have been a defining moment in Chad's personal development, and even Stephen, for whom Chad was a thief who wronged his hero Wilfrid, opined that Chad 'performed many good and pious deeds during his life, and at the fitting time he passed to his fathers, awaiting the day when the Lord shall come in judgement, a day which we believe will rightly have no terrors for him.'⁴³ This version of Chad's character was obviously widely appreciated from the early-eighth century, by which time it appears to have attained near-proverbial status within the larger community of the Anglo-Saxon church, no doubt spread abroad by those whose earlier years had included time spent at one of Chad's minsters. Indeed, regarding Stephen's good opinion, it is interesting to note that Wilfrid's prior at Ripon in the early-eighth century was a man named Caelin, who need not, but just might, if aged in his sixties or seventies, have been Chad's clerical brother of the same name.⁴⁴

Connecting with Lichfield

Unlike the later *passiones* and *vitae* of the other saints in the diocese of Lichfield, the wealth of detail in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* enables the construction of chronologies and networks of connection between the many and various characters therein; indeed, the work positively encourages such endeavour, littered as it is with dates, and finishing as it does a chronological summary of what Bede considered to be the most important events between the invasions of Julius

⁴³ VW, c.15

⁴⁴ VW, c.64

Caesar and his own time.⁴⁵ In Chad's case, the fact that he spent time in Ireland with Ecgberht when they were both youths allows us to derive an approximate date of birth for Chad:⁴⁶ Ecgberht died on 24th April 729 at the age of ninety, so must have been born between 25th April 638 and 24th April 639;⁴⁷ Chad was consecrated bishop of the Northumbrians in 664, by which time we might expect him to be getting on for thirty at least;⁴⁸ thus he was probably born during a period centred around 635. We also know from the Lastingham narrative that Chad was a disciple of Bishop Aidan of the Northumbrians, whose period of office proceeded from the establishment of a bishopric on Lindisfarne in 634/5 to his death in 651;⁴⁹ Chad must therefore have spent his childhood with Aidan at Lindisfarne (as did his brother Cedd), and was perhaps in his early- or mid-teens when Aidan died.⁵⁰ It was, perhaps, soon afterwards that Chad went to Ireland, although whether he went with Ecgberht or met him there later cannot be determined from Bede's work.⁵¹ Interestingly, Stephen of Ripon states that Chad had come from Ireland when he was consecrated to the bishopric of Northumbria, which suggests that Chad only returned to Northumbria in 664, perhaps on the death of his brother,

⁴⁵ *HE* v.24

⁴⁶ *HE* iv.3

⁴⁷ *HE* iii.27 & v.22.

⁴⁸ *HE* iii.28.

⁴⁹ For Chad's discipleship, see *HE* iii.28; Aidan died on 31st August 651 (see *HE* iii.14 & v.24), by which time he had completed sixteen or seventeen years as bishop (*HE* iii.17; for the ambiguity see Plummer 1896, II, p 136); Aidan was the second bishop to be sent to Northumbria, after the first had preached to the Angles for some time (*aliquamdiu*) but made no headway (*HE* iii.5); the first bishop was invited by King Oswald as soon as he had succeeded to the Northumbrian throne, at some time in the second half of 634 (*HE* iii.3); all of which serves to indicate that the Aidan arrived in Northumbria and founded Lindisfarne late in 634 or early in 635, and that Aidan had actually completed sixteen years as bishop (see also Plummer 1896, II, p 136).

⁵⁰ For Cedd's upbringing at Lindisfarne see *HE* iii.23. The passage introduces some small confusion, as it first suggests implicitly that Cedd's brother Cynebill (who had completed the consecration of the site at Lastingham when Cedd was summoned by the king) built the minster at Lastingham and established in it the Rule of Lindisfarne, where he had been brought up; however, the next sentence explicitly refers to Cedd's establishment of Lastingham's Rule, suggesting that the subject of the previous sentence was intended to be Cedd, and thus that it was Cedd who had been brought up at Lastingham; it is distinctly probable that all four brothers were raised at Lastingham.

⁵¹ Bede states that many of the English went to Ireland to study or to live an ascetic life during the episcopates of Aidan's successors, Finan and Colman; see *HE* iii.27.

who had bequeathed Lastingham to him.⁵² Finally, Chad may only have been in his mid- to late-thirties when he died of plague in 672.

Thus we have a broad chronological framework for Chad's life. It is, however, possible to go further, and to speculate about connections of kinship, friendship and patronage. For example, by 664, Ecgberht was located at the Irish monastery of *Rathmelsigi*, with his friend Æthelhun, who died in the outbreak of plague that year;⁵³ the latter was the brother of Æthelwine, who later also studied in Ireland and then became bishop of Lindsey, and who is elsewhere described as brother of Ealdwine, abbot of Partney in Lindsey, and of Æthelhild, abbess of a minster close to Partney.⁵⁴ In 664 these achievements were all in the future, but it is interesting to speculate as to whether Chad, who may only have left Ireland that year, also spent time at *Rathmelsigi*, and was also a friend of Æthelhun. In this regard, Hygebald, who later visited Ecgberht and reminisced with him about Chad, was also an abbot in Lindsey. *Rathmelsigi* is usually identified with Clonmelsh in County Carlow, situated firmly in the southern part of Ireland, of which region the people had, according to Bede, 'learned to observe Easter according to canonical custom, through the teaching of the pope', long before the time of King Oswald.⁵⁵ It is thus likely that Roman custom was followed at *Rathmelsigi*, and this conjecture is certainly supported by Ecgberht's successful attempt to convert the community at Iona to this usage in 716.⁵⁶ This raises the intriguing if unverifiable possibility that Chad learned to follow Roman custom in Ireland, and was simply more tolerant of a plurality of custom than the staunch Wilfrid. Ecgberht was later

⁵² *VW*, c.14

⁵³ *HE* iii.27

⁵⁴ *HE* iii.11

⁵⁵ *HE* iii.3; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 218-219.

⁵⁶ *HE* v.22 & v.24

to send the Northumbrian Willibrord and eleven others on a mission to convert the Frisians, in an attempt to follow up on the fruitless mission of his companion Wihthberht, who had earlier tried to evangelise the same region.⁵⁷ From these snippets of his life, Ecgberht appears to have been at the centre of an enduring connection between Ireland and many Northumbrians, perhaps based at *Rathmelsigi* in particular; certainly Ecgberht remained close enough to the Northumbrian royal dynasty to be in a position to offer counsel to King Ecgrith in 684.⁵⁸

Chad's upbringing at Lindisfarne must have brought him into close contact with Aidan's other disciples, amongst them Eata, later to become abbot of Melrose, then Lindisfarne, and later still bishop of Lindisfarne, ending his life as bishop of Hexham.⁵⁹ Eata was one of twelve English boys whom Aidan had taken to raise as Christians when he first became bishop, and although it is tempting to suggest that Chad, and perhaps his brothers, may also have numbered amongst this group, it seems more likely that Chad, at least, would have been too young in 635 (as discussed above).⁶⁰ Interestingly, according to Bede Aidan often redeemed people who had been unjustly sold into slavery, taking them on as his disciples and eventually ordaining them as priests.⁶¹ This might, but need not, pertain to Eata's group of twelve and to Chad and his three brothers. Aidan was also involved with Hild's career as an abbess; he recalled her from East Anglia when she intended to go to a Frankish monastery in c.647, setting her up as abbess first of a small minster on the River Wear, then a year later at Hartlepool, where he

⁵⁷ *HE* v.9 & v.10

⁵⁸ *HE* iv.26

⁵⁹ *HE* iii.26, iv.12, iv.27, iv.28, v.2 & v.9

⁶⁰ *HE* iii.26

⁶¹ *HE* iii.5

often visited her;⁶² his influence must have been substantial, for although Hild, as the daughter of Edwin's nephew Hereric, had been baptised by the Roman missionary Paulinus in 627, she eventually became an important member of the party defending the Irish custom at the Council of Whitby. It is quite conceivable that Chad met Hild during the 640s. However, whether or not Chad befriended Eata, Hild, or any other of Aidan's disciples during his formative years, he may well have been too young to form any lasting connections with most of them before leaving for Ireland. On the other hand, his brother Cedd, appears to have maintained a closer connection with the bishops of Lindisfarne and with Hild, working with Bishop Finan to evangelise the East Saxons, and joining Hild and Bishop Colman to defend the Irish customs at the Council of Whitby.⁶³

When Chad returned to Northumbria, perhaps in 664, Oswiu was the overlord of the entire territory, his son Alhfrith probably acting as sub-king of Deira; thus the Lastingham narrative and Stephen always describe Chad in the service of King Oswiu. However, it is interesting to note that his brothers appear to have had a strong connection with Æthelwald, the king of Deira during the early 650s: Cælin 'had been accustomed to minister the word and the sacraments of the faith to himself [Æthelwald] and his family', suggesting he may have been the king's household priest; Cedd, having been introduced to Æthelwald by Cælin, accepted a grant of land from the king on which to found Lastingham sometime after 653.⁶⁴ Æthelwald's end is not described by Bede, who last mentions his neutral stance at the battle of the Winwæd, a last-minute development following his active support

⁶² *HE* iv.23

⁶³ *HE* iii.22, iii.25 & iii.26

⁶⁴ *HE* iii.23

for Penda.⁶⁵ Æthelwald's opposition to Oswiu may have discomfited Chad's brothers in their patronage networks, although not, apparently, to any lasting effect; Cedd's initial dispatch to the Middle Angles in 653 suggests that he was also in the service of Oswiu, and perhaps always ultimately remained so. In this vein it is interesting to note how Chad, soon after his return, appears to have been caught up in a new struggle between Oswiu and his son Alhfrith, probably the next king of Deira, as discussed earlier. Strikingly, both Æthelwald and Alhfrith appear to have focussed their patronage on Northumbrian churchmen with interests in other kingdoms: Æthelwald looked to Cedd, who had recently been made bishop of the East Saxons, whilst Alhfrith looked to Wilfrid, recently returned from a long sojourn in Rome and the Frankish kingdoms, and a friend of the Frankish bishop of the West Saxons, Agilbert.⁶⁶

A further set of connections concerns the Mercian bishopric more generally. The first two bishops of the Mercians and Middle Angles, Diuma and Ceollach, were Irishmen who owed their appointments to Oswiu during the three-year period after Penda's death, when he was himself king of the Mercians and Middle Angles.⁶⁷ Ceollach resigned his see and returned to Iona, suggesting that he had come direct from there to take up his office. On Ceollach's resignation Trumhere was assigned the post, apparently during the reign of King Wulfhere, after the expulsion of Oswiu from the Mercian kingship.⁶⁸ Bede tells us that Trumhere was the builder and first abbot of the minster at Gilling, the site for which had been given him by Oswiu at the urging of his queen Eanflæd; the queen was second

⁶⁵ *HE* iii.24

⁶⁶ *HE* iii.22, iii.23, iii.25 & v.19

⁶⁷ *HE* iii.21 & iii.24

⁶⁸ *HE* iii.21

cousin on her father King Eadwine's side to King Oswine of Deira, who was murdered on Oswiu's orders at Gilling in 651.⁶⁹ Trumhere, also a close relative of Oswine, established a regime of continual prayer in the minster for the souls of both Oswine and Oswiu.⁷⁰ Eanflæd was baptised as a child by Paulinus in 626, the first of the Northumbrians to undertake the rite, and after Eadwine's death was taken to her mother Æthelburh's family in Kent, where she learned the Roman custom.⁷¹ Whether Trumhere also followed this custom is a moot point; Bede states that he had been educated and consecrated by the Irish (*Scotti*), although this need hardly have been prescriptive, especially as we do not know if these were northern or southern Irish, and more to the point, differences in custom may not have been of much moment in the early 650s. More important is Trumhere's kin; if Wulfhere had any say in choosing his bishop, it is surely significant that Trumhere's connections were with the Deiran royal family rather than that of Oswiu's Bernicians. Just as those Northumbrians who opposed Oswiu tended to base themselves in Deira and look to outside patronage, so Wulfhere, king of a newly independent Mercia, although apparently limited to choosing a Northumbrian bishop, chose one whose connections were, if not opposed to, at least distinct from Oswiu's family. Significantly, Wulfhere later displayed the same behaviour during the period 666 to 669, when, according to Stephen, he frequently called upon Bishop Wilfrid, who was then living as abbot of Ripon, to come into his kingdom to fulfill various episcopal duties (*officia diversa episcopalia*), and granted

⁶⁹ *HE* iii.14

⁷⁰ *HE* iii.24; given the alliterative tendencies of Anglo-Saxon naming patterns, it may be significant that Oswine's faithful *miles*, who was killed with him, was named Tondhere.

⁷¹ *HE* ii.9, ii.20 & iii.25

him several estates for the foundation of minsters, amongst which we can count Lichfield.⁷²

Trumhere's connections can be explored further through the anonymous *Historia Abbatum* from Wearmouth-Jarrow.⁷³ There we learn that Ceolfrith, one day to be abbot of Wearmouth-Jarrow, first became a monk at Gilling c.660, where his brother Cynefrith had been abbot, but shortly before had given the abbacy into the hands of their kinsman Tunberht, so that he could go to Ireland to study.⁷⁴ Trumhere was probably appointed to the bishopric of the Mercians and Middle Angles at the beginning of Wulfhere's reign, in 657/8, and we may assume that Cynefrith was his successor. The name of Cynefrith's kinsman and successor, Tunberht, alliterates with Trumhere, and may indicate that they, and thus Cynefrith and Ceolfrith also, were related, and that Gilling had been kept in the family. Shortly after Ceolfrith's entry to Gilling, he, together with his abbot and other members of the community, were invited by Wilfrid to accept a new home at Ripon, perhaps suggesting that Roman custom was by then in use at Gilling. In 681 Tunberht was made bishop of Hexham by Archbishop Theodore, and at the same time a man named Trumwine was made bishop of those Picts under Northumbrian overlordship, based at Abercorn.⁷⁵ Again, alliteration might suggest that these men were related, although Bede does not mention the fact, despite mentioning their names in the same sentence. Nevertheless, on the death of King Ecgfrith in battle with the Picts in 685, when the Northumbrians lost their Pictish territories, Trumwine retired to the minster at Whitby, then ruled by Eadwine's

⁷² *VW*, c.14

⁷³ Plummer 1896, I, pp 388-404.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, pp 388-389.

⁷⁵ *HE* iv.12

daughter and granddaughter, Eanflæd and Ælfflæd, a fitting home for a man who, if related to Trumhere, was himself related to the Deiran royal family.⁷⁶

Although speculative, these connections would present Trumhere as a member of an influential family, of importance from the 650s into the early eighth century. Thanks to the nature of the sources, its most famous member is Ceolfrith, who assisted Benedict Biscop with the foundation of Wearmouth and Jarrow, and as abbot of the double minster, was responsible for Bede's education.⁷⁷ Although there is no explicit connection to be found between Chad's family and that of Trumhere, there is Bede's teacher Trumberht, whom Bede states was educated in Chad's minster.⁷⁸ Although he does not say which minster, whether Lastingham or Lichfield, we might assume the latter; if so, we might further conjecture, again due to alliteration, that Trumberht was also a member of Trumhere's family, perhaps established in Chad's following thanks to his family's earlier connection with the bishopric of the Mercians. Such a conjecture is supported by the fact that Trumberht must have moved to Wearmouth-Jarrow in the years around 680, where he taught Bede the scriptures, perhaps explained by the presence there of his kinsman Ceolfrith.

What are we to make of these connections? It is one thing to seek to identify them, but quite another to assess their influence. It is possible to take the Lastingham narrative as an example of the kind of connections maintained by a minster community, as expressed by the sources and references of the text. It was suggested earlier that the community's knowledge of Cedd's East Saxon

⁷⁶ *HE* iv.26

⁷⁷ Plummer 1896, I, pp 389-392 (Haa 5-7, 11-12), pp 379 & 386 (Hab 15 & 22); *HE* v.24

⁷⁸ *HE* iv.3

career came a lone East Saxon monk who survived a plague at Lastingham, and there is nothing in the text to suggest that contact with any of Cedd's East Saxon minsters had been maintained. In contrast, the compiler was well-informed about Chad's life at Lichfield, and about the arrangements made there after his death concerning his shrines and the churches built there. This suggests continuing contact with the minster at Lichfield, perhaps through members of the bishop's following who stayed on to serve successive bishops of the Mercians; Owine's story of Chad's death may have been told directly to a contact at Lastingham, or indirectly via another member of the community at Lichfield. Likewise, we are told that traces of Chad's Rule remain at Barrow, suggesting the maintenance of some form of contact there, perhaps via the following of Bishop Winfrith, who had himself been Chad's deacon. The story told by Ecgberht about Chad's death may have come from Ecgberht himself, although it seems significant that it was told to Abbot Hygebald, whose minster in Lindsey was much closer to the community at Lastingham, and even closer to the minster at Barrow. All the author's most immediate contacts can therefore be understood to be members of Chad's following subsequently distributed throughout various minsters; perhaps many had developed friendships during their formative years, in the same way that Cedd may have remained in contact with Hild and the community at Lindisfarne where he was raised.

In contrast to such friendships, royal patronage appears less important in informing lasting connections between minster communities, except in so far as it enabled introductions, such as that which created Chad bishop of York, or that which Cælin arranged between Cedd and Æthelwald. In this case, however,

kinship was equally important, and, next to friendship, this appears to be the other main influence in the formation of binding connections. Chad's own departure from Ireland may well have been demanded by the death of his brother, whose dying gift of the abbacy of Lastingham introduced him to Cedd's Northumbrian networks. Trumhere's kinship with the Deiran royal family may have landed him the position of bishop of the Mercians, and Trumhere's own putative family network may have resulted in Trumberht's education at Lichfield, and subsequent move to Wearmouth-Jarrow. Trumberht is representative of the kind of connection envisaged here as most prevalent: not so much an official connection between minster communities, but a personal connection between monks, nuns, abbots and abbesses and their former colleagues, teachers or students.

Here it is worth considering the extensive textual community discussed in Chapter 1. Apart from such times when it was mobilised in the service of some central concern, such as the metropolitan primacy of Canterbury during the dismantling of the archbishopric of Lichfield, the network was apparently more decentralised, embodied in scattered nodes of connections between different minsters and episcopal sees. The connections that emerge from a study of Bede's work surrounding the successive bishops of Lichfield and their communities offer a more rounded vision of this kind of extensive community. Its textual character, emphasised heavily in this thesis up to this point, is what enables us to define it: the use of the Word by some of its members has left us fragments by which we can attempt to reconstruct it. It is also, in part, as we saw in Chapter 1, what enabled those members, particularly bishops, to define themselves, and also, in the form of letters, articulated communication across the distances characteristic of it.

Nevertheless, for all the connections that can be identified, with more or less tentativeness, from the pages of Bede's work, many others must never have been expressed in ink. Overall, this extensive community was defined by the customs and conventions of bonds of kinship, friendship and patronage, and it was within such relationships that it grew and developed. What can we say of those who did not write, or whose writings have not survived, or who did not feature in the writing of others? It is interesting, in this light, to consider the other Mercian bishops who appear very briefly in Bede's narrative.

Jaruman, Trumhere's successor and Chad's immediate predecessor, is mentioned three times in the work: twice in simple statements to the effect that he held the office, no doubt derived from the episcopal list memorandum, and once in the context of the reconversion of the East Saxons.⁷⁹ This latter incident occurred around the year 664, and followed upon the succession of the East Saxon Kings Sigehere and Sebbi on the death of King Swithelm. Both kings were subject to Wulfhere, and when Sigehere and his part of the people apostatised, due to the terrible effects of plague in the kingdom, Wulfhere sent Jaruman to call them back to the faith. Jaruman 'acted with great discretion, for he was a religious and good man and, travelling far and wide, he succeeded in bringing back both the people and their King Sigehere to the paths of righteousness.'⁸⁰ Significantly, Bede credits this information to a priest who accompanied Jaruman on the mission, and who later told the tale to Bede himself. Otherwise we know next to nothing about Jaruman, probably because Bede did not know any members of his family, or members of any community who looked to Jaruman as their founder and patron.

⁷⁹ *HE* iii.24 & iv.3, and *HE* iii.30 respectively.

⁸⁰ *HE* iii.30; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 322-323.

Likewise Winfrith's successor, Bishop Seaxwulf, credits three brief references in Bede's work.⁸¹ The first of these comes directly after notice of Winfrith's deposition, and was probably, as discussed earlier, the last part of the Lastingham narrative. Here we learn that Seaxwulf was 'the founder and abbot of the monastery known as *Medeshamstede* in the land of the Gyrwe.'⁸² The second concerns the Mercian King Æthelred's devastation of Kent in the year 676, during which Bishop Putta's church at Rochester was destroyed; the homeless prelate went to Seaxwulf, who granted him a church and a small estate where he ended his days.⁸³ The passage comes in a more general discussion of the succession of bishops during the 670s and early 680s, and, as implied by the disapproving tone concerning Æthelred's actions, was no doubt received by Bede from his Kentish sources, probably Abbot Albinus of Canterbury or the priest Nothhelm of London, whom he credits in his preface. The final reference to Seaxwulf is a simple statement of his position as bishop of the Mercians, Middle Angles and Lindsey, certainly derived from the episcopal list memorandum.⁸⁴ If Bede had had an informant at *Medeshamstede*, we might know much more about Seaxwulf. Some of the contacts maintained by the Lastingham community at Lichfield must have served under Seaxwulf's episcopate, but their connection with Lastingham was via a shared history involving Chad; Seaxwulf himself had nothing to do with Lastingham, and thus did not appear in their narrative, excepting a nominal reference to Winfrith's successor.

⁸¹ One in *HE* iv.6, and two in *HE* iv.12.

⁸² *HE* iv.6; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 354-355.

⁸³ *HE* iv.12

⁸⁴ *HE* iv.12

Bede had nothing at all to say about Seaxwulf's successor, Bishop Headda. It was suggested in Chapter 1 that Bede's copy of the episcopal list memorandum finished with Seaxwulf, but this need not have prevented the Lastingham author from mentioning him. In particular, if the statement in the Lichfield Chronicle concerning Headda's construction of a church at Lichfield is to be believed, and if we equate this church with St Peter's as mentioned in the Lastingham narrative, as seems most plausible, then Headda was very much involved with developing St Chad's cult, translating his bones into his new church. The fact that the Lastingham author did not mention Headda, even in this context, emphasises the focus of the text solely on Chad and his contemporary following, to the exclusion of all peripheral characters. The Lastingham community's connection with Lichfield was not to its later bishops, but to those of the cathedral's community who remembered learning and serving under Chad, having perhaps accompanied him there from Lastingham; in the years around 730, the latest date for the composition of the Lastingham narrative, these would probably have been limited to a few aged monks in their seventies or eighties.

St Chad in Old English

Resting-Place Lists

David Rollason has drawn attention to a genre of resting-place lists that was obviously popular in England during the late Anglo-Saxon period, and may have had its origins as early as the seventh century.⁸⁵ Rollason connects the form of these lists to lists of the apostles and their resting-places produced in the

⁸⁵ Rollason, D. W. 1978. 'Lists of saints' resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 11, pp 61-93

Mediterranean world at an early date, and in particular to the association of such lists with an interest in relic-cults expressed by Pope Gregory the Great, whom the Anglo-Saxons came to regard as the father of their own Christianity.⁸⁶ Only one list survives in pre-Conquest manuscripts, namely a text entitled *Secgan be þam Godes sanctum þe on Engla lande ærost reston* (hereafter *Secgan*), witnessed by two eleventh-century documents;⁸⁷ however, Rollason has demonstrated that several post-Conquest resting-place lists, dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, and including a particularly expansive example included in Hugh Candidus' Peterborough Chronicle, must also have owed their contents to pre-Conquest sources with varying degrees of relation to the *Secgan*.⁸⁸

Chad's name appears in the first part of the *Secgan*, a textual stratum characterised by the explicit statement of a nearby topographical feature to aid in locating each saint. This part contains only the names of saints who, where known, lived during the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, the latest probably being St Edmund, king and martyr in East Anglia (d. 869);⁸⁹ the associated resting places generally attest to the locations at which saints could be found before the many translations of the tenth century, and again Edmund's location at Bury, to which he was translated in the early-tenth century, represents the latest dateable event.⁹⁰ Thus the first part of the *Secgan*, in whatever form it appeared to the

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, pp 74-82

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp 61-68

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, pp 68-72

⁸⁹ *ibid.*, p 63, suggests that St Eadgyth of Polesworth was a tenth-century saint, but this will be disputed later in this chapter.

⁹⁰ Rollason suggests that the notice of St Cuthberht at Durham and St Oswald's head with St Cuthberht and his body at Gloucester are later interpolations made to the original tenth-century compilation (see Rollason 1978, pp 63-64, 68 & 81). Rollason's dating of St Eadburh's enshrinement at Southwell to the late-tenth century is based on a charter testifying to the gift of the place to the archbishop of York in 956, where he apparently established a collegiate church (see Rollason 1978, p 63, n. 12); however, this takes no account of the possibility that the archbishop

compilers of the complete eleventh-century list (or its exemplar), probably represents a compilation of the earlier tenth century. Chad's presence within it (as *Ceadda*), along with two other saints, Cedde and Ceatta, therefore attests to the presence of his cult at Lichfield (*Licetfeld*, near the river *Tame[r]*), at around this date. Moreover, this distinctive triad is also included in the post-Conquest resting-place lists discussed by Rollason, suggesting that its formulation predated all the various pre-Conquest sources used by these lists compilers, some of which appear to have predated the list used by the compiler of the *Secgan*.⁹¹

The presence of the body of Cedd, Chad's brother, at Lichfield, is interesting, as the Lastingham narrative describes his burial and elevation at his own house of Lastingham. Blair suggests that the third of the trio, Ceatta, may be a doublet for Ceadda, although, as he points out, if so this occurred at a very early date in the transmission of the text, as it occurs in all surviving resting-place lists to feature the Lichfield saints;⁹² It is of course possible that *Cedde* is also a doublet. However, this does seem unduly cynical, and results only from a lack of any later evidence for Cedd or Ceatta at Lichfield. Moreover, their presence at Lichfield at the time the text was first drawn up (whenever that might have been, but certainly pre-dating the tenth century) may be supported by the surviving relics of St Chad, now in the Roman Catholic cathedral of St Chad in Birmingham. The six surviving bones were removed from the cathedral after Henry VIII's attack on pilgrimage shrines in 1538, and, after a series of adventures involving Jesuit priests, were

simply refounded an older minster already possessing the saint's relics, which, judging by the floruit of all the other saints in the first part of the *Secgan*, seems very likely.

⁹¹ Rollason 1978, pp 70 & 72

⁹² Blair 2002b, p 520

enshrined in Birmingham cathedral in 1841.⁹³ In 1995 the six bones were submitted for osteological analysis and radiocarbon dating: one was dated to the eighth, less probably the ninth century, whilst the other five were dated to the seventh, less probably the sixth century, and comprise a minimum of two individuals, due to the presence of two left femurs.⁹⁴ Altogether there are therefore a minimum of three individuals, of which one of the two from the seventh century is surely St Chad, the other perhaps St Cedd, leaving the eighth century relic possibly that of St Ceatta. Hugh Candidus, in his resting-place list, states that all three were bishops, which certainly applies to Chad and Cedd, although Ceatta is otherwise unknown. David Farmer equated Ceatta with Bishop Headda of Lichfield, which, whilst neat, again assumes an early corruption of the original text.⁹⁵

The Old English *Life and Martyrology*

There exists an Old English homily about St Chad (hereafter *St Chad*), contained in only one manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 116, formerly Junius 24, which was most recently edited by R. Vleeskruyer, over half a century ago.⁹⁶ The manuscript is dated palaeographically to the first half of the twelfth century, written by one scribe, but later glossed by the Worcester 'tremulous hand'; the provenance of the manuscript can thus be ascribed to Worcester, but only from the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, and whilst Vleeskruyer was happy to assume that it had been produced at Worcester, there remains the possibility that

⁹³ Greenslade, M. W. 1996. *Saint Chad of Lichfield and Birmingham*. Archdiocese of Birmingham Historical Commission, Birmingham, pp 14-17

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, pp 25-26

⁹⁵ Farmer, David Hugh. 1978. *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints*. Oxford, p 75

⁹⁶ Vleeskruyer, R. 1953. *The Life of St Chad. An Old English Homily*. North-Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam

it was produced elsewhere.⁹⁷ *St Chad* is the first of eighteen homilies in the manuscript, all, excepting *St Chad*, by Aelfric, which are arranged chronologically to apply to various saints' feasts from March to November; this set is followed by ten exhortatory treatises on a variety of subjects, the first six also by Aelfric.⁹⁸ Vleeskruyer asserted that, excluding *St Chad*, the two sets could be distinguished linguistically and orthographically, suggesting that each was copied from a different exemplar, the saints' *Lives* from a manuscript of the eleventh or twelfth century showing some admixture of late dialectal and orthographical elements, and the treatises from an earlier manuscript lacking these features.⁹⁹ This suggested to him that the twelfth-century scribe copied the orthography of his exemplars quite precisely. Moreover, the lack of eleventh- and twelfth-century features in *St Chad* indicated to Vleeskruyer that it was copied directly from a manuscript of tenth century or earlier date.¹⁰⁰

Vleeskruyer's most significant assertion regarding *St Chad* concerned its 'Anglian', or more specifically 'Mercian', dialect. In particular, Vleeskruyer was concerned to probe the state of Old English prose literature before King Alfred's initiation of vernacular literary activity in the late-ninth century, and to prove that "a vigorous tradition of Mercian vernacular writing preceded his work and, to a large extent, rendered it possible."¹⁰¹ To this end, Vleeskruyer undertook an exhaustive analysis of *St Chad*, assembling a formidable stock of orthographic and lexical evidence; this included certain proposed letter forms in the lost exemplar revealed by later misreadings in the surviving copy, various distinctive spellings and word

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, pp 1-2

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, pp 2-6

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, pp 8-10

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p 9

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p 41

endings, the use of particular cases, styles and syntax, and the presence of particular words, all said to be absent from 'later' West Saxon works, and thus to suggest an 'early' date for a 'Mercian' corpus that shared these features with *St Chad*. Bringing all this together, Vleeskruyer suggested that the exemplar of *St Chad* had been composed between about 850 and 900, himself preferring the third quarter of the ninth century, and that the composition had perhaps been undertaken at Lichfield, the centre of St Chad's regional cult.¹⁰²

More recently the case of Vleeskruyer and his followers for a distinctive pre-Alfredian Mercian vernacular prose tradition has been demolished by Janet Bately, who sets out not to disprove the existence of such a tradition, but to show that Vleeskruyer's evidence was incapable of supporting it.¹⁰³ Bately examines the evidence upon which texts might be dated before 900, and emphasises the importance of historical and, primarily, palaeographical criteria. She refutes the ability of Vleeskruyer's orthographical and lexical features to date any text earlier than about 970 at most, showing that most can be found in various tenth-century texts, and in some cases eleventh-century and Middle English texts also. In particular, Bately questions the utility of ascribing a 'Mercian' label to Vleeskruyer's early corpus, noting that many unique lexical features may not reappear in contemporary 'West Saxon' texts simply because the corpus securely dateable before 900 is so small.¹⁰⁴ This latter corpus essentially consists on the one hand of the 'West Saxon' works of Alfred and translation of Orosius, and on the other the Mercian Old English Martyrology and translations of Bede (although this may

¹⁰² *ibid.*, pp 70-71

¹⁰³ Bately, Janet M. 1988. 'Old English prose before and during the reign of Alfred', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 17, pp 93-138

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, pp 105-112

be early-tenth century) and Gregory's *Dialogues*.¹⁰⁵ Bately concludes that "there is no good reason why any of the so-called early literary Mercian texts other than the *Dialogues* and probably also the Martyrology should be dated late-ninth-century rather than early-tenth-century."¹⁰⁶

However, having ruled out almost all textual grounds for the early dating of *St Chad*, Bately draws attention to the use of the Old English *Scotta ealond* to translate Bede's Latin *Hibernia*, Ireland.¹⁰⁷ She shows that the use of *Scotland* and its variants and *Scottas* to refer to Ireland and the Irish is confined to texts that can be securely dated to the first quarter of the tenth century or earlier, such as the early tenth-century versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; conversely, from the first quarter of the tenth century and later this usage was transferred to the northern part of Britain and its inhabitants, and Ireland was referred to instead as *Iralond* and variants thereof. The presence of the earlier usage in *St Chad* and other homilies identified by Bately allows her to conclude "either that in the dialect of their authors the use of *Scotland* for *Hibernia* persisted longer than in that of the author(s) of the annals for the last years of Edward the Elder, 912-20, or that these works were composed before the second quarter of the tenth century."¹⁰⁸

St Chad may thus legitimately be considered a product of the early tenth century at latest, and whilst there are currently no grounds on which to assert a pre-Alfredian date, there is as yet no reason to rule out such a dating either. Nevertheless, a *terminus ante quem* without a corresponding *terminus post* does

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p 118

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p 114

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, pp 114-118; Vleeskruyer 1953, pp 178-179

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p 118

not enable us to place *St Chad* in any particular historical context without the use of circular reasoning. With the fall of Vleeskruyer's evidence for the early dating of *St Chad* fell also that for other hagiographical works such as the prose *Life* of St Guthlac (hereafter *St Guthlac*) and various homilies contained in the Blickling and Vercelli collections.¹⁰⁹ It is possible, however, to point to some thematic considerations as being of some use. It is important to note that *St Chad* is essentially a translation of the relevant parts of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, and does not introduce any further details of St Chad's cult, which might have been available had the author desired to seek out St Chad's community at Lichfield.¹¹⁰ The production of *St Chad* was thus fundamentally a literary exercise, and in this it bears a close resemblance to the Old English Martyrology, one of the very few Mercian products securely dated before 900.

The early dating of the Martyrology is enabled by its earliest witness, a fragment that has been dated on palaeographical grounds to the second half of the ninth-century.¹¹¹ St Chad's entry, on the 2nd March, is explicitly stated to have been derived from the work of 'Bede in his English History', and contains a very brief summary of that narrative.¹¹² Catherine Cubitt has commented that it is 'striking' "that all the native saints in the Martyrology are known to us from literary sources."¹¹³ Equally striking are the facts that the only other saint's life included in Vleeskruyer's early Mercian corpus is *St Guthlac*, and that St Chad and St Guthlac

¹⁰⁹ See Vleeskruyer 1953, pp 51-61 for his 'early Mercian' corpus

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp 12-13

¹¹¹ Herzfeld, George (ed.). 1900. *An Old English Martyrology*. Early English Text Society, Vol. 116, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., London, p xi

¹¹² *ibid.*, pp 32-33: 'ond þæs wundor ond líf Beda se leornere wrát on Angelcynnes bocum'; it is interesting to note that the compiler describes Chad being called to Lichfield from 'the northern frontier (*nordān gemære*) in the monastery of Lastingham', an interesting expression of the concept of English geography at the time of its production

¹¹³ Cubitt, Catherine. 2002c. 'Universal and Local Saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in Thacker & Sharpe, pp 423-453, this reference p 441

together, along with St Pega, Guthlac's sister who appears in the saint's *Life*, and Hygebald, the abbot who appears in Chad's *Life*, are the only Mercian saints in the Old English Martyrology. *St Guthlac* can no longer be ascribed an exclusively 'early' date on textual grounds, but it would otherwise fit well into this small set of early Old English texts characterised by their derivation from Latin texts and their dating in or before the first quarter of the tenth century. It is thus tempting to envisage a late-ninth and perhaps early-tenth-century milieu, not exclusively Mercian or West Saxon (whatever these terms might mean textually), but certainly initiated or encouraged by King Alfred's endeavours, in which pre-existing hagiographical compilations were translated from their original Latin into Old English. This has ramifications for the extent of written sources available to the Mercian compiler of the Martyrology, and to the authors who produced *St Chad* and perhaps *St Guthlac*; it would suggest that Bede's account of Chad's life and Felix's *Life* of St Guthlac represent, as much in the late-ninth century as in the early-eighth, the only textual hagiographical compositions in Greater Mercia to have enjoyed any circulation beyond their parent communities.

It was noted above that *St Chad* derives from Bede's relation of the saint's *Life*. That it was Bede's version of the Lastingham *libellus* and not the latter itself that formed the base of the Old English homily is demonstrated by the presence in *St Chad* of Trumberht's account of Chad, which, as discussed above, was added by Bede himself. Nevertheless, Vleeskruyer asserted that the Old English *Life* was translated not directly from Bede but from a Latin homily derived from Bede. His case primarily concerns the structure of the homily, which is topped and tailed by short passages derived from Sulpicius Severus' *Life* of St Martin, themselves

connected to the main body of the *Life* by short passages; Vleeskruyer considered that these latter passages, which of course have no basis in either of the Latin sources, nevertheless show signs of translation from Latin, in their use of phraseology both awkward in Old English and reminiscent of certain Latin rhetorical techniques.¹¹⁴ Vleeskruyer further suggested that certain minor omissions in the Old English *Life*, when compared with Bede's and Sulpicius' texts, may have originated with the composer of this Latin exemplar rather than in the agency of the translator, although this is ultimately incapable of proof.¹¹⁵ It is also interesting to note, as does Vleeskruyer, that Felix paraphrased the same part of Sulpicius' *Life* in his early eighth-century *Life* of St Guthlac.¹¹⁶ It is surely not too fanciful to suggest a connection; perhaps the putative Latin homilist was inspired by Felix' use of Sulpicius' *Life* when he composed his own work. The dating parameters of this hypothetical Latin homily are set by Bede's work and the Old English St Chad, so formally between 731 and the first quarter of the tenth century.

Other Saints in the Diocese of Lichfield

The first half of this chapter has focussed on St Chad, both as the patron saint of the diocese, and as the only saint in the diocese for which copious early textual material survives. The remainder of the chapter is concerned to analyse the material available for other saints in the diocese, and to reveal where early medieval texts may have been created as part of the development of their cults.

¹¹⁴ Vleeskruyer 1953, pp 12-17; the relevant parts of Sulpicius' *Life* are cc.1 & 26f

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp 17-18

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p 12, n. 1

St Wærburh

The Kentish Royal Legend

St Wærburh does not appear in any pre-Conquest resting-place lists, by the strict use of the term, and her presence in the resting place list in Hugh Candidus' mid twelfth-century Peterborough Chronicle, in which the saint is said to lie at Chester (*Legecestre*), might as easily be a contemporary note as derived from anything earlier.¹¹⁷ However, the saint does appear in a text known as the Kentish Royal Legend, so-called by its first editor, Felix Liebermann; this is an Old English text that precedes the *Secgan* in both of its witnesses, and is also sometimes referred to as *þa halgan*, from the title under which it appears in the text, 'Her cyð ymbe þa halgan þe on Angelcynne ærost restað'.¹¹⁸ However, as Rollason has shown, the latter nomenclature is not entirely appropriate, as it most satisfactorily describes both the Kentish Royal Legend and the *Secgan* immediately following it, which together, but not separately, enumerate saints all over England.¹¹⁹ The Kentish Royal Legend begins with a genealogical narrative of the descent of the Kentish royal dynasty from the time of St Augustine, in which the various resting-places of its saintly members are enumerated, and follows with hagiographical material concerning the foundation of the minster at Thanet and the installation of its abbess, St Mildrith.

In his study of the legend of St Mildrith, David Rollason demonstrated that the Kentish Royal Legend text represented one of eleven extant variant versions of

¹¹⁷ Mellows 1949, pp 58 & 64.

¹¹⁸ The text is found in the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, Winchester, London, BL Stowe MS 944, and in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 201, and was published as the 'Kentish Royal Legend' in Liebermann, Felix. 1889. *Die Heiligen Englands*. Hanover, pp 1-10.

¹¹⁹ Rollason 1978, p 72-74

this composition, which he called the ‘Mildrith Legend’.¹²⁰ These versions take several different forms, often used as prologues to a number of different saints’ *Lives*, or as genealogical or hagiographical memoranda, and almost always dealing with the Kentish dynasty more widely than just St Mildrith’s story. In what follows I will reuse the earlier term ‘Kentish Royal Legend’ to represent the entire corpus of different versions, as it is more representative of their overall content; hereafter the term is abbreviated to KRL. Figure 4 presents a stemma of the different versions of the KRL: the lower case letters used to denote existing manuscript versions are taken from Rollason’s study, and the full manuscript reference for each is given at the base of the figure;¹²¹ furthermore, the stemma relies on seven hypothetical versions of the KRL, denoted numerically by ‘KRL*n*’, of which it is suggested a recension of each acted as exemplar or model for the succeeding extant versions. A detailed justification of each hypothetical version can be found in Appendix 1.

All extant versions of the KRL descend from KRL2. KRL1 represents a hypothetical version of the legendary material without the addition of resting place information, which Rollason considered to be an additional element due its sometimes awkward positioning, taken from a pre-existing resting-place list; it nevertheless features in all extant versions of the KRL, to varying degrees, and must therefore have been contained in KRL2.¹²² Rollason suggests that the common original of all KRL texts was a product of Minster-in-Thanet, and this has more recently been supported and elaborated by Stephanie Hollis, who considers

¹²⁰ Rollason, D. A. 1982. *The Mildrith Legend. A Study in Early Medieval Hagiography in England*. Leicester University Press, Leicester.

¹²¹ Rollason 1982, pp 15-31.

¹²² Rollason 1978, pp 73-74

the text to have been a foundation story for the minster created in the mould of monastic chronicles such as the two *Historiae Abbatum* from Wearmouth-Jarrow or the *libellus* concerning the abbesses of Barking used by Bede, but with the addition of a royal dynastic genealogy as a prologue such as is found in *Beowulf*.¹²³ Hollis nominates Abbess Eadburh (c. 732-751), Mildrith's successor, as the probable initiator of the chronicle, although she adds that it may have been updated with material concerning Eadburh's successors, Sigeburh and Selethryth.¹²⁴

It seems probable (although is not provable) that this monastic chronicle was originally composed in Latin, whilst the Old English version represented by version j may originally have been created in the ninth or tenth centuries. Meanwhile, recensions of the Thanet text (KRL2) were distributed to other centres. Byrhtferth used one recension in the late-tenth or early-eleventh century at Ramsey to construct his *Life of Sts Æthelred and Æthelberht* (version a), although how and when this recension came to Ramsey cannot be known.¹²⁵ Another recension was probably at Minster-in-Sheppey by the ninth or early-tenth century, where it served as a basis for the construction of another foundation narrative (KRL4, represented by version k), a recension of which was at Winchester by the fourth decade of the eleventh century. A third recension may have been at Lyninge by the late-eighth century (KRL5), although it may have come there later. Finally, a recension was

¹²³ Hollis, Stephanie. 1998. 'The Minster-in-Thalet foundation story', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 27, pp 41-64, this reference p 57

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p 57

¹²⁵ Hollis (1998, pp 44-45) suggests that Byrhtferth's source may have come to from Thanet to Ramsey via Ely, given Seaxburh's presence in the text. However, Byrhtferth's source did not include the additional material about Seaxburh added in relation to the Minster-in-Sheppey narrative, and thus Seaxburh's inclusion in the original text was limited to a mention in the genealogical prologue as Eorcenberht's husband; this information was presumably well-known and need not have come from Ely, so whilst it is possible that Ely possessed a recension of KRL2, there is no particular reason to think that it did.

created at St Augustine's, Canterbury, around the mid-eleventh century (KRL3), and served to provide exemplars for later hagiographical work by an unknown author at Ramsey (version b), and by Goscelin of Saint-Bertin at Ely and Canterbury (versions f and c), and possibly also at or for Wenlock (version e), although this latter work may have been undertaken by another unknown author.¹²⁶

St Wærburh is noted in versions c, e and f, derived from KRL3, in the context of the children of the Kentish king Eorcenberht and his East Anglian queen Seaxburh, who are given as Ecgberht, Hlothhere, Eorcengota and Eormenhild; Eorcengota, we are told, went abroad, where she was buried, whilst Eormenhild was married to King Wulfhere of the Mercians, and bore Wærburh, who rests at Hanbury/Chester. In most of the texts derived from the Sheppey recension (KRL4), notice of Wulfhere and Wærburh is instead to be found in the additional section of the text concerning Seaxburh and her East Anglian relatives. It is possible to argue that this differential placing suggests later independent additions made to both sets of texts; however, the exact correspondence of detail, combined with the lack of obvious opportunities for cross-pollination between derivatives of the two recensions before the late-eleventh century, surely indicates that these notices were part of the original KRL of the early eighth century, and were simply moved to a more appropriate place in KRL4. Wærburh's absence from other extant versions would then be due to the lack of the interest shown by their

¹²⁶ For Goscelin's Ely work, see Love, Rosalind C. 2004. *Goscelin of Saint-Bertin. The Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp xix-xxi, and the discussion of the *Life* of Wærburh below.

authors in peripheral characters contained within the dynastic genealogy.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, Christine Fell has argued that the inclusion of both Eormenhild and Wærburh in the KRL dates to the tenth century, as Bede does not mention them, although he does mention the other children of Eorcenberht and Seaxburh, Ecgberht, Hlothhere and Eorcengota.¹²⁸ However, Fell's case stems from a false assumption, namely that Bede included in his work every piece of information available to him; he may have known about Eormenhild and simply did not find a place to include her. Bede never explicitly enumerates the children of Eorcenberht and Seaxburh, and whilst he does mention Eormenhild's three siblings, these are in specific contexts, in which Eormenhild had no place. In particular, Eorcengota is noted only in a narrative concerning Anglo-Saxon princesses who travelled abroad;¹²⁹ her brothers appear at several points in Bede's work, always primarily in their roles as kings of Kent.

It is also possible that Bede simply did not know about Eormenhild. Whether or not Bede had a version of the KRL available to him is a moot point, although it is worth noting that he has nothing to say about Mildrith of Thanet, her siblings, or her parents either. Just as in the discussion of Bede's knowledge of St Chad earlier in this chapter, it is likely that Bede's lack of direct contact with the minsters at Thanet and Hanbury denied him the benefits of their histories. Likewise, in the case of Thanet, we have in the details of the genealogical prologue a map of the minsters with which the community there must have maintained some form of

¹²⁷ Version a, Byrhtferth's *Life*, includes only the names of the men of the family, unless a female character is crucial to the story, and thus omitting Eormenhild, must also omit Wulfhere and Wærburh; the Old English recension of KRL2 (version j) omits both Eormenhild (and thus Wulfhere and Wærburh) and her sister Eorcengota, perhaps as peripheral characters.

¹²⁸ Fell, Christine. 1994. 'Saint Æthelþryð: a historical dichotomy revisited', in *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, Vol. 38, pp 19-34.

¹²⁹ *HE* iii.8

contact, or at least those they had some knowledge of: in addition to those in Kent, these include Hanbury and Wenlock. Wærburh was Mildrith's second cousin through her mother's line and first cousin through her father's line, so we can assume that, as with Lichfield earlier, so here kinship played an important role in fostering these connections. Patronage may also have played its part, as Hollis suggests that Abbess Eadburh had Mildrith's Mercian connections emphasised in the narrative in order to seek the favour of King Æthelbald of the Mercians, who exercised strong influence in Kent during the first half of the eighth century.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, the fact of this kinship was a necessary precursor of any such political manoeuvring. In summary, the inclusion within the KRL of Wulfhere, Eormenhild, and their daughter Wærburh, with her resting-place at Hanbury, is crucial early testament to St Wærburh, her cult, and links between them and the Kentish community at Minster-in-Thamet.

The *Vita Sanctae Werburgae*

The *Vita Sanctae Werburgae* has recently been edited and analysed by Rosalind Love.¹³¹ A detailed consideration of the manuscript sources will not be repeated here; suffice it to note that the *Life* now exists in six manuscripts, namely three twelfth-century products of Ely's scriptorium, a further twelfth-century manuscript of unknown provenance, a manuscript variously dated from thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth centuries and probably composed in the southwest Midlands, and a manuscript of the early thirteenth century, plausibly assigned by Love to the Ramsey scriptorium.¹³² Moreover, the sixteenth-century contents list for the now-

¹³⁰ Hollis 1998, pp 60-61

¹³¹ Love 2004

¹³² *ibid.*, pp xlvi-lix

lost third volume of a four-volume legendary, written in the early twelfth century at St Werburgh's, Chester, includes an entry for 'Werbung et sic consequenter de Sexburga, Ermenilda, etc.'. Love speculates that this may have been another copy of the *Vita Sancte Werburge*, together with the *Lectiones* for Sts Seaxburh and Eormenhild, which precede Wærburh's *Vita* in two of the Ely manuscripts. She supports this contention by noting that Henry Bradshaw, in his sixteenth-century *Life* of St Wærburh, "refers more than once to the presence of a Latin *Life* of Wærburh in 'the thrid Passionarie' of Chester" and "also makes use of the content of the sets of lessons for Seaxburh and Eormenhild, which he had presumably read in that same volume."¹³³

Love has corroborated Goscelin of Saint Bertin's authorship of Wærburh's Latin *Life* by detailed textual study, suggesting that it dates to an obscure period of his life, largely centred on the 1080s, when Goscelin appears to have travelled between several different monasteries, before ending up at St Augustine's, Canterbury. Love has drawn attention to evidence that suggests Goscelin was at Ely in 1087 or 1088, and it is there, she suggests, that he composed several pieces of still-extant hagiography, namely Lessons for the feasts of St Seaxburh and St Eormenhild, the *Life* of St Wærburh and a set of Lessons abbreviated from it, and, less certainly, a *Life* of St Wihtburh and a reworking a tenth-century account of the Miracles of St Æthelthryth.¹³⁴ Goscelin knew that Wærburh rested at Chester (*in Cestra ciuitate*) when he composed the *Life*, but she appears to have been popular at Ely: she had spent her youth there, and was part of the family of those saints whose relics the monastery did possess, being the daughter

¹³³ *ibid.*, p lviii

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, pp xix-xxi, lviii-ci.

of Eormenhild, herself the daughter of Seaxburh, who was sister to Æthelthryth and Wihtburh.

Goscelin's *Life* of Wærburh's contains several easily separated stratigraphical elements. An initial genealogical prologue is obviously abstracted from the KRL, specifically a recension produced in Canterbury after 1030, as discussed earlier (KRL3), and thus perhaps first attached to his exemplar for Wærburh's *Life* by Goscelin himself.¹³⁵ There follows a narrative of Wærburh's life, death and translation, which appears to stand apart from the two miracle stories set at Weedon in Northamptonshire.¹³⁶ The second of the latter concerns a local hermit, Alnoth, apparently one of Wærburh's herdsmen, and is laden with details concerning Weedon and its locality, indicating that the miracle section derives from there. The first of the miracles, a tale in which Wærburh miraculously rounds up a flock of geese eating the seed in her fields, sending them away never to return, 'is told from generation to generation by all the people there', the present tense suggesting a recent report.¹³⁷ It is, moreover, a tale that Goscelin admits also to have told in his *Life* of the Flemish St Amelberga, and Love comments that an almost identical story can be found in the tenth-century *Miraculi Sancti Walberti* by Adso of Montier-en-Der.¹³⁸ The story thus appears to have been in vogue in the tenth and eleventh centuries, and, unless it really did occur at all these different places in exactly the same way, is almost certainly the product of diffusion during this period. The two miracle stories may thus have been added to the core *Life* by

¹³⁵ VSW, c. 1. All quotations from the *Life* in what follows are taken from Love's edition (2004), both in the original Latin and the English translation

¹³⁶ Life, death and translation: VSW, cc. 2-4 & 8-12; Weedon miracles: VSW, cc. 5-7

¹³⁷ VSW, c. 5: 'hoc miraculum asseritur ab ipsa plebe tota'

¹³⁸ VSW, c. 6; Love 2004, pp 40-41, n. 1).

Goscelin himself, or by a member of the Ely community who initially assembled material for *Wærburh's Life*; either way, they need not detain us further.

The body of the *Life* concerns *Wærburh's* entry to the minster at Ely as a young woman, King *Æthelred's* assignment of Mercian minsters including Hanbury (*Heanburge*) and Threekingham (*Triccengeham*) to her care, her death at the latter, the divinely-aided theft of her body by the people of Hanbury, and the translation there of her incorrupt body nine years later, at the suggestion of her cousin King *Ceolred*, finishing with the final decay of her body in 'the time of the heathens'.¹³⁹ It is possible that Goscelin himself was responsible for much of the earlier part of the *Life*, which articulates around *Wærburh's* relationship with her mother, both before and after the entry of the former into Ely. Love has made a convincing case for Goscelin's authorship of the *Lectiones in Natale Sancte Eormenhilde*, a companion piece to the *Lectiones in Festivitate Sancte Sexburge*.¹⁴⁰ The Readings for the feast of *Eormenhild* follow on from those of her mother *Seaxburh*, and, although waxing lyrical about her virtues, contain little more than a narrative of her marriage to *Wulfhere*, her bearing of *Wærburh*, whom she and her husband sent to Ely to live the life she herself yearned for, and her eventual retirement to Ely on *Wulfhere's* death, where her relics later worked miracles. In fact, it seems most probable that hardly anything was known about *Eormenhild* in the eleventh century, other than the presence of her tomb at Ely and her feast day there, and what was contained in the KRL (her genealogical relationship to the Kentish kings, her marriage to *Wulfhere* and her bearing of *Wærburh*). Goscelin's Readings simply mixed these ingredients with what was

¹³⁹ VSW, c. 12: 'tempus paganorum'

¹⁴⁰ Love 2004, p lxxviii-lxxx.

known from Bede about Wulfhere's involvement in the bringing of Christianity to the Mercians, and with much holy monastic sentiment. Having thus constructed Eormenhild, he imported her into his *Life* of her daughter Wærburh.

One other element of the Readings for Eormenhild must have been amongst Goscelin's sources, namely Wærburh's sojourn at Ely, for which he claimed her mother's encouragement and agency. It seems most probable that this event was contained in his source for Wærburh's *Life*, which need not have contained much more than brief statements about Wærburh's parentage, her young life at Ely, and her uncle's assignment of several minsters to her, before moving onto the more extended tale of her death and the contention between the minsters at Threkingham and Hanbury for her body, followed by her elevation at the latter. Such, in summarised form, is also all that John of Worcester provided in his *Chronica Chronicarum*, excepting a more narrowly-focussed extract from the KRL to act as a prologue; it is thus a possibility that John also possessed a copy of the source used by Goscelin, although he may equally have abbreviated Goscelin's account.¹⁴¹

Rollason puts forward a convincing case for the ultimate composition of Goscelin's source at Hanbury, noting the emphasis on divine aid given to the people of Hanbury in their successful retrieval of Wærburh's body, and the omission of any explanation as to how her relics came to rest at Chester. His suggestion that the dissolution of Wærburh's body in the 'time of the heathens' would not form a satisfactory basis for the claim of the community at Chester to possess her relics is

¹⁴¹ s.a. 675; this was the year of the death of Wulfhere, Wærburh's father, and thus perhaps provided John's peg for the entry

less convincing, as Goscelin's extended treatment of divine justification for this change in state makes it clear that decay, rather than complete dissolution, was meant; in particular, Goscelin contrasts her incorrupt body (*corpus solidus*) with its present decayed condition (*consumptus*).¹⁴² Perhaps the author of the original had been attempting to excuse the difference between memory of Wærburh's incorruption at her original translation, and current knowledge that her shrine contained her bones and nothing else. When this original life was written is uncertain, although Rollason's contention that it dates "before there was any question of a translation to Chester, but after the Danish invasions of the ninth century" succinctly summarises the evidence.¹⁴³ He adds that the translation must have occurred before 958, as a community of St Werburgh in Chester received a grant from King Edgar in this year.¹⁴⁴ Thus the later-ninth or first half of the tenth century is indicated. Beyond this, it is possible that this original *Life* was based on an even earlier text at Hanbury concerning the acquisition and elevation of Wærburh's body.

St Wigstan

The sources testifying to St Wigstan's cult have been extensively analysed by David Rollason, and little more can be added to his conclusions.¹⁴⁵ The earliest manuscript source is the first half of the resting-place list known as the *Secgan*, which may derive from an early tenth-century original, and in which Wigstan is said

¹⁴² VSW, c. 12.

¹⁴³ Rollason 1982, p 27.

¹⁴⁴ S667. See Rollason 1982, pp 26 & 150 n. 66. More is said on these matters in Chapter 4.

¹⁴⁵ Rollason, D. 1981. *The search for St Wigstan, prince-martyr of the kingdom of Mercia*. Vaughan Paper, No. 27; Rollason, D. W. 1983. 'The cults of murdered royal saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 11, pp 1-22, at pp 5-9.

to lie at Repton on the Trent (as *Wigstan* at *Hreopedune* on the *Treonte*).¹⁴⁶ A *Life* or *Passio* of St Wigstan's *passio* now exists in three later versions: one in a manuscript dating to the thirteenth century from Evesham, which also contains the Evesham chronicle, and two from manuscripts dating to the fourteenth century, one of which can be localised to Herefordshire.¹⁴⁷ John of Worcester also provided a short summary of Wigstan's passion *sub anno* 849 in his *Chronica Chronicarum*, and William of Malmesbury included a passage on the saint in his *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, repeated in his *Gesta Pontificum Anglorum*.¹⁴⁸ Rollason judged that all these versions "give substantially the same account, although they differ in detail and wording."¹⁴⁹ Essentially Wigstan, son of King Wigmund of the Mercians, refused succession to the kingship, preferring a religious life, leaving the way open for his kinsman Beorhtfrith, son of another Mercian king, Beorhtwulf, to claim it; Beorhtfrith attempted to marry Wigstan's widowed mother, Queen Ælfflæd, the daughter of King Ceolwulf, but Wigstan refused the match because Beorhtfrith was his godfather, making Beorhtfrith Ælfflæd's co-parent (*compater*), and thus legally ineligible to be her husband. Plotting Wigstan's death, Beorhtfrith invited him to a conference on the 1st June, at a place that 'to this day' is called Wistanstow (*Wistanestowe*), and killed him, cutting off the crown of his head, as they exchanged the kiss of peace. A column of light subsequently marked the spot for thirty days, and Wigstan's body was taken to the minster of Repton (*Rependune*), and buried in the mausoleum of his grandfather Wiglaf.

¹⁴⁶ Rollason 1978, p 89; the resting-place list contained in Hugh Candidus' twelfth-century Peterborough Chronicle places Wigstan (*Winstanus*) at Evesham (*Heuesham*), reflecting his translation

¹⁴⁷ Rollason 1983, pp 6-7; the manuscripts are: Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson A. 287, printed by Macray, William Dunn. 1863. *Chronicon Abbatiae de Evesham ad annum 1418*. Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, London, pp 325-337; Gotha, Landesbibliothek I. 81; London, British Library, Harley 2253 (localised to Herefordshire); see BHL 8975-8.

¹⁴⁸ Darlington and McGurk 1995, pp 262-263; *GP* c. 161

¹⁴⁹ Rollason 1983, p 6.

The Evesham version of the *passio* adds that King Cnut, on hearing that St Wigstan was related to the minster's original patron King Cenred (albeit not closely), advocated that the saint be translated from Repton to Evesham, in order that the martyr's memory be more honourably celebrated. The compiler of the Evesham text, Thomas of Marlborough, explains that the community of the minster at Repton had preserved an account of the life, passion and miracles of St Wigstan, and it is this which his brothers at Evesham had asked him to rewrite without the grammatical mistakes and other defects of the original.¹⁵⁰ Rollason has noted that the other two versions of the *passio* make no mention of the translation of St Wigstan to Evesham, and thus probably derive from a version that antedated that translation, almost certainly originating at Repton, as Thomas indicated in his prologue; he also suggests that the most likely time for the composition of the original *passio* is "the period between Wigstan's death in 849 and the latter years of the ninth century, when the Repton area suffered from the Viking invasions".¹⁵¹ However, assuming the possibility that Repton's community survived these invasions (on which see Chapter 4), it may be more useful to date the composition of the putative original *Passio* to the period between Wigstan's death in 849 and the translation of his relics to Evesham during the reign of Cnut, 1017 to 1035.

¹⁵⁰ Thomas does not explicitly name the community at Repton as the originators of the *vita*, but his reference to *ipsius ecclesiae habitatores quam idem martyr inhabitare dignatus est* must indicate this community.

¹⁵¹ Rollason 1983, p 7.

St Modwenna and St Eadgyth

St Modwenna of Burton was enshrined in a *Life* by Geoffrey, abbot of Burton 1114-50, probably written between 1118 and 1135.¹⁵² This may have raised her profile, as the saint appears in resting-place lists from the twelfth century onwards, beginning with Hugh Candidus' resting-place list (*in Birtuna sancta Moduenna*).¹⁵³ In contrast, no *Life* exists for St Eadgyth of Polesworth, but the two saints are connected through an incident in Geoffrey's *Life*, and so will be considered together here. St Eadgyth's cult is attested in the first part of the *Secgan* resting place list (as *Eadgyð* at *Polleswryð* on the river *Oncer*), which is considered to date to the early tenth century.¹⁵⁴ Later, in Hugh Candidus' resting-place list, an *Edgitha* appears at Tamworth (*Tamuurthe*).¹⁵⁵ The resting place given in the fourteenth-century Book of Hyde also gives Tamworth, and both ascriptions may ultimately derive from a comment in Goscelin of St Bertin's late eleventh-century *Life* of St Eadgyth of Wilton.¹⁵⁶ In his earliest version of this *Life*, Goscelin suggested that an Eadgyth of Tamworth was Eadgyth of Wilton's aunt, and sister of the West Saxon king Edgar (959-75); however, in his revised version of this *Life* he omitted the relevant passage. John of Tynemouth, a fourteenth-century monk of St Albans, abbreviated the earlier version of Goscelin's *Life* in his *Sanctilogium Angliae*, but altered Tamworth to Polesworth, suggesting that by his time Eadgyth was again associated with Polesworth.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, Geoffrey's *Life* of

¹⁵² Bartlett, Robert. 2002. *Geoffrey of Burton; Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p xi, n.1; see BHL 2095-2100b.

¹⁵³ Mellows, W. T. 1949. *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus, a monk of Peterborough*. Oxford University Press, London, p 62; see also Blair 2002b, p 546

¹⁵⁴ Rollason, D. W. 1978. 'Lists of saints' resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 11, pp 61-93.

¹⁵⁵ Mellows 1949, p 62.

¹⁵⁶ *VCH Staffs*. Vol. III, pp 310, n.6

¹⁵⁷ 'Inter multa autem sanctorum exempla que libris legebat, interque presentia sanctum et maxime propinquorum religiosorum lumina, viccius accendebatur virginali palma sanctissime amite sue

Modwenna situated Eadgyth solely at Polesworth, and two early thirteenth-century chroniclers also associated Eadgyth with Polesworth (see below). It thus appears that Eadgyth was associated with Polesworth in perhaps the early tenth century, with Tamworth in the later eleventh century, and then with Polesworth again by the first half of the twelfth century.

The churches at both Tamworth and Polesworth are today dedicated to 'St Editha', and it is generally averred that these are the same saint.¹⁵⁸ It has been suggested by both D. A. Johnson and Jim Gould that a post-Conquest translation from Polesworth to Tamworth, which would explain the difference in recorded resting places, could have been associated with the Marmion family, who held Tamworth and lands surrounding, including Polesworth, by the early twelfth century; the Marmion *caput* was probably at Tamworth castle, and they may at some point have decided to move St Eadgyth's relics there.¹⁵⁹ However, Robert Marmion II and his wife Millicent also founded a nunnery at Polesworth in 1135x1144, transferring nuns there from a nunnery at Oldbury, and when coupled with the references in the works of Geoffrey and the early thirteenth-century chroniclers to St Eadgyth of Polesworth, this strongly suggest that St Eadgyth was primarily associated with Polesworth from the early-twelfth century onwards.¹⁶⁰ The Marmions rebuilt the churches at both Polesworth and Tamworth, and the church at Pulverbach in Shropshire, another holding of the Marmion family, was also

Edithe, Edgari regis patris sui germane, que in monasterio Pollesworth, prouincie Warwici, meritorum signis, sicut et ipsa Wiltonie, refulsit'; in Horstmann, Carl (ed.). 1901. *Nova Legenda Anglie*. Oxford. Vol. I, p 311.

¹⁵⁸ Blair 2002b, pp 527-528.

¹⁵⁹ *VCH Staffs*. Vol. III, pp 309-315; Gould 1987, 37-38.

¹⁶⁰ Foot, S. 2000. *Veiled Women; Female Religious Communities in England, 871-1066*. Ashgate, Aldershot. Vol. II, 141-2; Dugdale, William Arthur. 1817. *Monasticon Anglicanum. A history of the abbies and other monasteries, hospitals, frieries and cathedrals and collegiate churches*. London, Vol. 2, p 366-367

dedicated to St Eadgyth, testifying to the enthusiasm for the saint held by this family. Goscelin's ascription of her to Tamworth may have been due to the latter's position as *caput* of the honour in which Polesworth was situated; at the time Goscelin wrote his *Life*, the condition of the minster at Polesworth to which the *Secgan* alludes is unknown, but it may have been struggling, or even have lapsed entirely, only later providing a kernel for the Marmion foundation of the mid-twelfth century; Geoffrey of Burton, writing in the earlier twelfth-century, was much nearer to Polesworth and Tamworth than Goscelin, may have been more aware of the details. Certainly, Goscelin's later removal of the passage concerning Eadgyth of Tamworth may demonstrate some uncertainty on his part.

Goscelin's assertion that Eadgyth was King Edgar's sister is curious, and is the first of several narratives to suggest that St Eadgyth of Polesworth was a West Saxon princess, although exactly how she was related to this family varies in each telling. Geoffrey of Burton suggested that she was the sister of King Aethelwulf of Wessex (839-58), given by him to St Modwenna along with land for a minster in the Forest of Arden; Modwenna had earlier cured Aethelwulf's son Alfred (later to be king 871-99) when he had sought her help in Ireland.¹⁶¹ Later chronicles that made use of Geoffrey's work, such as Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*,¹⁶² repeated this assertion. However, an alternative to this identification was offered by two early thirteenth-century St Alban's chroniclers, Roger of Wendover in his *Flores Historiarum*, and Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora*, both of whom included Eadgyth of Polesworth in a discussion of Edward the Elder's children. They explained that Eadgyth (*Eadgytha/Edgitha*) was a daughter of Edward and

¹⁶¹ Ch 18, Bartlett 2002, 74-77.

¹⁶² Lumby 1876, Vol. VI, pp 318-321

his second wife Alfflæd;¹⁶³ later, after Edward's death, his son King Athelstan offered Eadgyth to Sihtric, king of Northumbria, on the understanding that he become a Christian, but shortly afterwards he repudiated his wife, apostatised, then died. Eadgyth, having retained her virginity, spent the rest of her life at Polesworth (*Pollesberia*) in prayer and almsgiving.¹⁶⁴

The later chroniclers can be dealt with first. In both texts, Matthew's probably deriving from Roger's, the passage concerning Edward the Elder's children was ultimately taken from William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*; however, William explicitly stated that he did not have a written source for the name of Sihtric's wife, and also suggested that she was a daughter of Edward's first wife Ecgwynn, and thus a full sister to Aethelstan.¹⁶⁵ William does write of an *Edgitha*, daughter of Edward and Alfflæd, as one of two daughters sent to Otto, son of Henry, *Alamannorum imperator*, for him to choose a wife; he chose one of the ladies, and the other was married to 'a certain duke near the Alps.' Thus Eadgyth daughter of Edward cannot have been married to Sihtric. Nevertheless, William gives conflicting information concerning the name of the second lady, variously *Elfgiva* and *Aldgitha*, and also confuses which of the two was married to which foreign potentate; it is possible that this confusion lay behind the later assignment of Eadgyth, daughter of Alfflæd, to Sihtric.¹⁶⁶ Additional inspiration may have come from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: *sub anno* 924 in the Worcester Chronicle

¹⁶³ Luard, H. R. 1872. *Matthæi Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*. London. Vol. I, p 436; Luard, H. R. 1890. *Flores Historiarum*. London. Vol. I, p 479.

¹⁶⁴ Luard 1872, Vol. I, 446; Luard 1890, Vol. I, 490.

¹⁶⁵ *GR* ii.126: 'Primogenitum Ethelstanum habuit ex Egwinna illustri fœmina, et filiam cuius nomen scriptum non in promptu habeo; hanc ipse frater Sihtritio Northanimbrorum regi nuptum dedit...'

¹⁶⁶ See Mynors *et al.* 1998, pp 170-171 & 198-201; in the first passage the sisters are *Aldgitha* and *Edgitha*, and of which Otto is said to have married the latter, whilst in the second passage the sisters are *Edgitha* and *Elfgiva*, of which Otto is said to have married the second.

(ASC (D)) it is related that “Athelstan was chosen by the Mercians as king, and consecrated at Kingston, and he gave his sister in marriage over the sea to the son of the king of the Old Saxons.”¹⁶⁷ Immediately following this, the entry for 925 (*recte* 926) explains that “King Athelstan and Sihtric, king of the Northumbrians, met together at Tamworth on 30 January and Athelstan gave him his sister in marriage.”¹⁶⁸ The two marriages were thus closely associated textually. Perhaps knowledge of a cult of St Eadgyth at Polesworth, so close to Tamworth, inspired the final creative leap at St Alban’s, where Polesworth’s saint was equated with Sihtric’s wife. In conclusion, Eadgyth of Polesworth, daughter to Edward the Elder and sister of King Aethelstan, appears to be a red herring.¹⁶⁹

This leaves us with Geoffrey of Burton’s identification of Eadgyth as the sister of King Aethelwulf, and Goscelin’s as the sister of King Edgar. Jim Gould supported the former option, as the alternatives were too late to be included in the first half of the *Secgan*, and pointed to the closer relations between Mercia and Wessex during the mid-ninth century as a context.¹⁷⁰ Gould was certainly right to emphasise the early tenth-century historical horizon within the *Secgan* as a means of casting doubt on Goscelin’s identification, and Sarah Foot and Barbara Yorke have recently pointed out that Eadgyth’s inclusion in the first half of the *Secgan* indicates that she was almost certainly a saint of the seventh, eighth or ninth

¹⁶⁷ *EHD* 1, p 199.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Alan Thacker was recently inclined to back an identity with Athelstan’s sister, and included Eadgyth in a group of West Saxon scions who were culted during or after Athelstan’s reign, expressing a more enthusiastic attitude to the cult of royal saints on behalf of this royal family, which Athelstan had perhaps acquired during his upbringing at the Mercian court: Thacker, A. 2001. ‘Dynastic Monasteries and Family Cults; Edward the Elder’s sainted kindred’, in N. J. Higham & D. H. Hill (eds.), *Edward the Elder 899-924*, Routledge, London, pp 248-263. Barbara Yorke (2003) offered opposition to this identification for some of the reasons discussed above in *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses*, Conitnum, London, pp 77-8.

¹⁷⁰ Gould, J. 1987. ‘Saint Edith of Polesworth and Tamworth’, in *South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society Transactions*, Vol. 27, pp 35-38.

centuries rather than the tenth.¹⁷¹ Ultimately, the evaluation of candidates for St Eadgyth by reference to the historical context in which she might have lived during any given period involves circular reasoning, as there is always some way of fitting her in, as the activities of our various chroniclers and hagiographers has shown. Whilst possible historical contexts can be sought, this needs to be a secondary process, undertaken after the isolation of the most likely temporal context for St Eadgyth. Therefore we must first discuss the sources of Geoffrey's *Life* of St Modwenna.

In his prologue, Geoffrey explained that he had sought far and wide for information regarding Modwenna, as despite the presence of her relics in the monastery at Burton, not much was known of her there. Finally, he hit upon a book from Ireland, "a hidden treasure containing priceless riches", which, because "the style was displeasing and some parts of the book were, so to speak, a disorderly jumble", he determined to rewrite, adding things "learned from the trustworthy and reliable report of truthful men, who had knowledge of them from their elders or witnessed them at first hand."¹⁷² This book was the *Life* of the Irish St Moninne (also given as Monenna) of Killevy by Conchubranus, of which the only surviving copy survives in a twelfth-century manuscript from Burton, and was probably copied directly from Geoffrey's source.¹⁷³ Mario Esposito, one of its editors, has dated Conchubranus' *Life* to before the time of Geoffrey of Burton, who used his work, but after the early- to mid-tenth century, because Conchubranus used the label *Scottia* to refer to Scotland as well as Ireland, a phenomenon not typically encountered before this date, as discussed earlier in relation to the Old English

¹⁷¹ Foot 2000, Vol. II, p 140-1; Yorke 2003, pp 20, 78 & 39 n. 58.

¹⁷² Bartlett 2002, p 3.

¹⁷³ BL Cotton Cleopatra A. ii; Bartlett 2002, p xiv.

homily about St Chad.¹⁷⁴ Conchubranus united traditions of at least three different saints to form the composite St Moninne of his work:¹⁷⁵ he built on the foundation of an earlier anonymous *Life* of St Moninne (also called Darerca), then added episodes associated with a saint in Scotland and a saint in England. The Scottish episode has been plausibly identified with the reputed activities of St Ninian, whose name lends itself to the Irish hypocoristic form Moninn, whilst the English episode is explicitly set in the Forest of Arden and in the vicinity of the island of Andresey, near Burton.¹⁷⁶

The English associations within Conchubranus' narrative are entirely absent from the earlier *Life* of St Moninne, and so Conchubranus' *Life* represents their earliest textual expression. They begin with a visit to Ireland by Alfredus, 'son of the king of the English', who is seeking Moninne in order that she should heal him; Alfredus is duly healed and returns to England.¹⁷⁷ Later, Moninne visits England, and meets there Alfredus' father, the king, at his villa called *Streneshalen*, next to the forest called *Arderne*. In thanks, the king grants her this estate and gives his sister to her, to be raised a nun.¹⁷⁸ Moninne leaves the king's sister, not explicitly named, with one of her virgins, *Athea*, and returns to Ireland; nevertheless, later, on going to Rome, Moninne passes back through Britain and picks up *Athea* and *Ite*, who we can therefore equate with the king's sister. Returning from Rome, Moninne

¹⁷⁴ Esposito, Mario. 1910. 'Conchubrani Vita S. Monenna', in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Vol. XXVIII, Section C, pp 202-251; reprinted in M. Lapidge (ed.), 1990, *Irish Books and Learning in Medieval Europe*, Variorum, Aldershot, No. XV, this reference p 203. See also Esposito, M. 1920. 'The Sources of Conchubranus' Life of St Monenna', in *English Historical Review*, Vol. XXXV, pp 71-78; this reference, p 71-72.

¹⁷⁵ Conchubranus' synthesis has most recently been discussed in Bartlett 2002, pp xiv-xix.

¹⁷⁶ The early *Life* of St Moninne survives in the fourteenth century Irish *Codex Salmanticensis*, a hagiographical compendium, although the *Life* itself could originate as early as the seventh century; see Bartlett 2002, xiv; for Ninian and Moninn see MacQueen, John (2007), *Ninian and the Picts*, Fifteenth Whithorn Lecture, Friends of the Whithorn Trust, pp 10-11

¹⁷⁷ *VM*, Bk 1, Ch 14: 'filius regis Anglicorum'

¹⁷⁸ *VM*, Bk 1, Ch 15

stays with Athea and Ite for three years, then builds another place (*alium locum*), unnamed, close to the first; she and Athea stay in the new location, whilst Ite and her *puella*, *Osid*, remain in the original.¹⁷⁹ Ite sends *Osid* to take a book to *Moninne*, but she falls into a river swollen by rain lying between the two places, and three days later is miraculously resurrected by *Moninne*'s prayers.¹⁸⁰ Some years later, *Moninne* again visits Britain, forming a company with Athea, *Ede* (an alternate spelling perpetuated in this form, or as *Eda*, throughout the remainder of the work), *Osid* and *Lazar* (probably to be identified with an unnamed girl whom *Moninne* had previously raised from the dead).¹⁸¹ On coming to the river called *Trente*, where it flows past *Mons Calvus*, which the English called *Calvechif*, the ladies build a church, dedicated to St Andrew, on a small island from thence called *Andreseie*; *Moninne* stays here with Athea and *Lazar* for seven years, whilst *Ede* and *Osid* stay at the earlier place in Arden. They then depart for Rome again, and on returning build another church over the water from *Andreseie*, at the foot of *Mons Calvus*, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. After many miracles have been performed by the Trent, *Moninne* decides to return to Ireland, but predicts that her bones will eventually rest on *Andreseie*, where she leaves Athea; this eventually comes to pass.

It is obvious from these details that *Conchubranus* had access to stories originating in the region of Burton and the Forest of Arden. These episodes formed the skeleton of *Geoffrey*'s account, but he streamlined the story, merging the visits to Rome. He also explicitly equated *Ite/Eda/Ede* with *Eadgyth*, suggesting that *Modwenna*'s first foundation on the edge of the forest was at

¹⁷⁹ *VM*, Bk 2, Ch 8

¹⁸⁰ *VM*, Bk 2, Ch 9

¹⁸¹ *VM*, Bk 3, Ch 3; for *Lazar*'s resurrection see Bk 2, Ch 13

Polesworth (*Polesworda*) and that the second was at *Streneshale*. Geoffrey's alterations suggest that he knew Eadgyth belonged at Polesworth, but did not know anything about *Streneshalen*, and so used the name for the unnamed second place in Conchubranus' narrative: his placing there of Modwenna only, where Conchubranus also has Athea, may suggest that, although he called it a *monasterium*, he also envisaged it as a small hermitage, suitable for solitary prayer. He also identifies the river of the miracle with the Anker (*Anchora*), which runs before Polesworth, and the place where Osgyth fell was known in his day as 'Nunpool' (*Nunnepol*).¹⁸² Geoffrey also modified Conchubranus' presentation of the lore of the Burton area, correcting *Calvechif* to *Scaleclif*, present-day Scalpcliff Hill on the eastern bank of the Trent opposite Burton, although he omitted any mention of the church of St Peter and St Paul featured in Conchubranus' account. It is possible that this mirrors the absence of Burton Abbey in Conchubranus' story; we might conjecture that the importance of the church under Scalpcliff declined as Burton's star rose. By the time that Geoffrey wrote, he was able to describe the foundation of the abbey at Burton by Wulfric Spot (*Wlfric Spot*) at the beginning of the eleventh century, and the translation of the relics of Modwenna from Andresey into the church of St Mary there.¹⁸³

Geoffrey also added much local detail to Conchubranus tale, together with another river-based miracle performed by Modwenna when she was alive: according to Geoffrey, whilst living in her hermitage on Andresey, Modwenna often enjoyed the visits of a hermit from Breedon-on-the-Hill (*Bredunia*), particularly because he

¹⁸² *VMM*, c. 20

¹⁸³ *VMM*, c. 43

brought with him a book containing the *Lives of the Saints*.¹⁸⁴ Once, when he had forgotten to bring the book, Modwenna sent two virgins off in a boat to get it, but the boat overturned and sank in the river at a place called Leigh (*Lega*; this place has not been identified), and the girls were only saved when Modwenna's prayers parted the waters of the river above them. This miracle is very similar to Osid's resurrection from the river near *Straneshalen*; in particular, both involved an errand for a book, and it seems quite likely that one story is a transplanted version of the other, with Modwenna as the common denominator. Geoffrey also appended a series of miracles that had occurred in and around Burton, connected with her relics, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. It was furthermore in Geoffrey's hands that the king's son, Alfredus, became 'the son of the noble Æthelwulf, king of the Mercians and West Saxons' (*nobilis filius Athulfi regis Merciorum et Westsaxonum*); there seems little reason to believe that this latter identification was anything other than Geoffrey's own deduction based upon the name. However, given Goscelin's earlier ascription of Eadgyth to the West Saxon royal family, it seems possible that someone, perhaps at Tamworth or even Polesworth, had made a similar connection before Geoffrey's time, although the details of this context will forever remain obscure. In any event, it should be obvious that neither Geoffrey's nor Goscelin's suggestions can be traced to earlier sources and, despite their varied acceptance by more recent scholars, they should now be set aside.

However, perhaps the most important question to be asked here is: was Conchubranus' Ite Eadgyth of Polesworth, or was this also an erroneous

¹⁸⁴ *VMM*, c. 35

connection made by Geoffrey? Answering this question is complicated because a very similar river miracle including a St Eadgyth was told in the *Life* of St Osgyth of Essex. We must thus now consider this *Life* in order to disentangle the likely origin of the river story and its associated characters. Osgyth is possibly another composite saint, in whose stories two separate Osgyths have been discerned, one from Chich in Essex, the other from Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire.¹⁸⁵ In his study of the various surviving manuscripts, Denis Bethell came to the conclusion that a lost *Life*, written at Chich in Essex under the aegis of the twelfth-century Augustinian Priory there, lay behind all of them, with the addition of various elements of local lore, and of elements of Geoffrey's *Life* of Modwenna. Crucially, this lost *Life*, according to Bethell, did not contain the Modwenna-Eadgyth-Osgyth river episode, but a similar event in which Eadgyth was an abbess at Aylesbury, sending one of her virgins, Osgyth, with a book, to Eadburh, abbess of Adderbury, on the other side of a swollen river, with the same tragic and miraculous consequences. In a rather roundabout hypothesis, Bethell suggests that Conchubranus' tale of Moninne, Ite and Osid must have been a retelling of an earlier Buckinghamshire tale concerning St Osgyth of Aylesbury, in which Eadburh was replaced by Moninne, subsequently retold again by Geoffrey, and finally inserted into all but one of the extant recensions of the *Life* of St Osgyth of Essex to replace the earlier Aylesbury-based tale.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ The separation of the two Osgyths was first proposed by Christopher Hohler (1966), 'St Osyth and Aylesbury', in *Records of Buckinghamshire*, Vol. 18, pp 61-72; however, attempting to disentangle the various textual elements of the legends was left to Denis Bethell (1970), 'The Lives of St Osyth of Essex and St Osyth of Aylesbury', in *Analecta Bollandiana*, Vol. 88, pp 75-127. The jury is still out on whether Osgyth is a divided or conflated saint; see Blair 2002b, p 549

¹⁸⁶ Bethell 1970, pp 104-107.

In fact, a much more satisfactory developmental sequence recognises the Buckinghamshire river miracle as a late transplant of the tale in Geoffrey's *Life* of St Modwenna, and is shown in the stemma in Figure 5, intended to amend that given by Bethell, and extended to include known *Lives* of St Modwenna;¹⁸⁷ exposition of the details of the sequence has been consigned to Appendix 2. Here it is important to emphasise that the earliest expression of the river miracle is contained in the text of Conchubranus' *Life* of St Moninne, and it is associated with Moninne and Ite. Here, then, is the crux: did Conchubranus' source for his English episodes contain Sts Modwenna and Eadgyth, rather than Moninne and Ite/Ede/Eda? The activities of his St Moninne around Andresey (*Andreseie*) in the river Trent (*Trente*), and Scalpcliff (*Mons Calvus, Calvechif*) on its bank, must relate to the St Modwenna whose relics rested at Andresey, later Burton, and we can assume Conchubranus' synthesis of Moninne with Modwenna, or perhaps the Old English name Modwynn.¹⁸⁸ The similarity between the names Ite/Ede/Eda and Eadgyth is not quite so close, but certainly well within the realms of possibility. Conchubranus' synthesis of Moninne/Modwenna and the instability of his spellings regarding Ite/Ede/Eda do not encourage us to believe that he strictly reproduced his source material on these points. Conchubranus' versions may represent a hypocoristic shortening of Eadgyth's name, although it is odd that this does not appear anywhere else; alternatively, he may deliberately have altered her name to resonate with the seventh-century Irish St Ita.¹⁸⁹ Certainly the association of this

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*, p 108.

¹⁸⁸ This is Robert Bartlett's suggestion for a plausible, although otherwise unrecorded, Old English name from which Modwenna might have derived (see Bartlett 2002, p xix); a further connection concerns Moninne's staff (*baculus*) that, according to Conchubranus' was buried with her on Andresey, and which turns up centuries later in a sixteenth-century description of St Modwenna's relics, when it was apparently relied upon by pregnant women in the Burton area (Blair 2002b, p 546), although it is of course possible that the relic was invented at Burton in response to the passage in Conchubranus' work

¹⁸⁹ Bartlett 2002, xviii-xix.

character with a monastery founded 'next to the Forest of Arden' ('iuxta silvam que dicitur Arderne') greatly encourages the identification with St Eadgyth whose relics rested at Polesworth. Unfortunately, Conchubranus makes no mention of Polesworth, instead calling Moninne's initial foundation *Streneshalen*; along with an unnamed secondary foundation nearby; this is discussed further in Chapter 4.

If we accept that Conchubranus' source contained St Modwenna of Andresey and St Eadgyth of Polesworth, we must then enquire as to the form and origin of this narrative. Conchubranus' influence on his source is difficult to quantify; he must have written Modwenna's activities in the Midlands into a grander narrative of Moninne's excursions to Rome and over Britain more widely, but where one leaves off and another takes up cannot be clearly pinpointed. The English source appears to have been concerned with the activities of St Modwenna on the edge of the Forest of Arden at *Streneshalen* with Eadgyth and Osgyth, and at Andresey and Scalpcliff, perhaps also including the characters named Athea and Lazar, who almost only ever appear in the English episodes.¹⁹⁰ It is also possible that this source included a relation of Modwenna's burial on Andresey, as despite Conchubranus' presentation of Moninne's activities in England, Ireland and Scotland, he chose to have Moninne prophesy her burial on Andresey with Athea, and described the translation of her body there from Scotland where she died.¹⁹¹ It may also have included the English king and Alfred, his son. Given that it does not appear to have referred to Burton Abbey it is possible to suggest that it was composed in the tenth century or earlier, and if it included the miracle story and a description of Modwenna's burial, then there is no reason to see it as very different

¹⁹⁰ Athea: *VM* Bk 1, cc. 3 & 15; Bk 2, cc. 8 & 16; Bk 3, cc.3, 9 & 11; Lazar: *VM* Bk 2, c. 13; Bk 3, c. 7

¹⁹¹ *VM*, Bk 3, Ch 3, & Bk 3, Ch 11

from the sort of *libellus* discussed earlier in relation to St Mildrith on Thanet. On the other hand, Eadgyth's presence in the *Secgan* may indicate that she was formerly better known, and it is possible that Conchubranus' source was a later *vita* of St Modwenna, which had appropriated the river miracle from Eadgyth; of course, such conjecture assumes more than can safely be known about the criteria for inclusion within the *Secgan*.

It seems likely, although cannot be accepted beyond doubt, that Osgyth in the river story can be identified with St Osgyth of Aylesbury, as the latter was the granddaughter of Penda, patriarch of the Mercian royal family. This Mercian context also allows speculation concerning the king's son, Alfred. Rather than the hero of the Wessex dynasty, the name may represent Old English Alhfrith, in which case the son of King Oswiu of Northumbria may have been intended. Bede tells us (following the Lastingham narrative) that Alhfrith was the friend of Penda's son Peada, and also his brother-in-law, having married Penda's daughter Cyneburh.¹⁹² He thus had some connection with the Mercian royal family, and was in his prime when his father Oswiu ruled the kingdom directly for three years after Penda's death. Cyneburh was known to the composer of the genealogical prologue of St Osgyth's *Life*, and she may appear along with Alhfrith in the eleventh-century *Life* of the Mercian St Rumwold of Buckingham, who is said to have been the son of an unnamed daughter of Penda and her unnamed Northumbrian husband.¹⁹³ Alhfrith had no known aunt named Eadgyth, and further speculation as to the original identities of Eadgyth and Modwenna would be

¹⁹² *HE* iii.21

¹⁹³ Blair, John. 2002b. 'A Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Saints', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe, *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 495-565, this reference, p 553; Parsons, D. 2001. 'The Mercian Church: Archaeology and Topography', in M. Brown & C. Farr (eds.), *Mercia: an Anglo-Saxon kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, p 59.

unproductive. Nevertheless it is certainly possible to suggest that Conchubranus' source belonged to a genre of local Mercian saints' *Lives* with their genesis, whether expressed in Voice or Word, in the eighth century, each composed by an author aware of connections and inter-relationships centred on the Mercian royal family.

Like Goscelin, Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris, Geoffrey appears to have known little more than the fact of a St Eadgyth at Polesworth, whom he identified with the character of Ite/Ede/Eda in Conchubranus' story. The only details Geoffrey was able to add to Conchubranus' narrative concerned the place-name Polesworth, the name of the river Anker next to Polesworth, and the site of the miracle, 'Nunpool'. It is certainly possible that the latter was a pre-existing place-name (unfortunately its location has since been lost), but we must not therefore assume that it represents a connection with the original river legend as communicated to Conchubranus. It is just as possible to envisage Geoffrey, or one of his informants familiar with the local topography, latching onto these names as appropriate details to flesh out the story in Conchubranus' text. Aside from Conchubranus, nobody appears to have known anything about St Eadgyth of Polesworth by the twelfth century except her name and location, whilst, in contrast, Geoffrey's additional knowledge of St Modwenna suggests some continuity of cult in the Burton area, where the agency of the eleventh-century monastery can be readily inferred. It is distinctly possible that Conchubranus' story about Eadgyth and Osgyth had since been forgotten, which leaves us with the interesting prospect that Geoffrey's *Life* of Modwenna contains two different stages of the development of the cult of St Modwenna, represented primarily by the two

versions of the river episode. The later stage must represent later developments of Modwenna's cult manifest in a local legend of the first half of the twelfth century, whilst the earlier stage can be traced back to Conchubranus source, either of the tenth century or earlier.

Saints with late or no *vitae*

There are references to seven other saints in the diocese, for whom only late or no *vitae* exist: St Ealhmund at Derby, St Beorhthelm at Ilam and Stafford, Sts Wulfhad and Ruffin, St Osburh at Coventry, St Barloc at Norbury and St Milred at Berkswell. Of these, St Ealhmund appears in the first part of the *Secgan* resting-place list, which gives his resting-place as 'Northworthy' (*Norðworþig/Norðweorðig*) on the river Derwent (*Deorwentan*);¹⁹⁴ Hugh Candidus' twelfth-century Peterborough Chronicle places St Ealhmund (*Alchmundus*) at Derby (*Derebe*), which, as it lies on the Derwent, must previously have been called Northworthy (also see Chapter 4).¹⁹⁵ The *vita* of St Ealhmund exists in only one manuscript, an early fourteenth-century hagiographical manuscript now held at the Gotha Library.¹⁹⁶ David Rollason has demonstrated that the story was concocted based on a misreading of John of Worcester's chronicle, where the death of Ealhmund is recorded s.a. 800; he has further suggested that a more accurate impression of the saint can be gained from the northern chronicle in the *Historia Regum*, in which it is related that Ealhmund, the son of King Alhred of

¹⁹⁴ Rollason 1978, pp 63 & 89.

¹⁹⁵ Mellows 1949, p 61.

¹⁹⁶ Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, Memb. I.81, ff. 29-30; a discussion of this manuscript and edition of the *Life* can be found in Grosjean, P. 1940. 'De Codice Hagiographico Gothano' and 'Codices Gothani Appendix' in *Analecta Bollandiana*, Vol. 58, respectively pp 90-103 & 177-204 (at pp 178-183); see also BHL 2514m.

Northumbria, was murdered by King Eardwulf.¹⁹⁷ Rollason connects Ealhmund's sanctity to a war recorded in the same chronicle s.a. 801 between Eardwulf and Coenwulf of Mercia, over the latter's sheltering of fugitives from the former's kingdom, amongst whom it is possible Ealhmund may have been numbered.¹⁹⁸ However, it is worth noting that, whilst this no doubt relates to the Ealhmund in John of Worcester's chronicle, there is no guarantee that this character represents the saint at Derby, as the author of the *vita* was no doubt simply mining texts for information. Interestingly, the fourteenth-century chronicler Ranulph Higden did the same, but interpreted John's entry differently; he did however use similar information to the author of the *vita* regarding the contemporary cult at Derby (see Chapter 4).¹⁹⁹

St Beorhthelm is first attested in Hugh Candidus' twelfth-century Peterborough Chronicle, recording him as a martyr who rested at Stafford.²⁰⁰ His *vita*, which does not relate a martyrdom, first appears in a sixteenth-century source, although an internal date suggests it was composed in the fourteenth century.²⁰¹ The story is a mix of folklore and an extract from Felix' *Life* of St Guthlac, although it ends with Beorhthelm wandering into the hills to seek solitude, where he eventually died, possibly a reference to the presence of a tomb-shrine over the grave of St Bertram, which survives in the church at Ilam (see Chapter 4). The *vita* of Sts Wulfhad and Ruffin, apparently the sons of King Wulfhere, is likewise a mix of folklore and pre-existing hagiographical texts, and has been thoroughly discussed

¹⁹⁷ Rollason, D.W. 1983. 'The cults of murdered royal saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 11, pp 1-22, this reference pp 4-5

¹⁹⁸ *ONB s.n.* Ealhmund; *EHD* 1, p 250.

¹⁹⁹ Lumby 1876, pp 290-293.

²⁰⁰ Mellows 1949, p 61: 'in Stefford sanctus Berthelmus martyr'

²⁰¹ Horstmann 1901, Vol. I, pp 162-167

by Alex Rumble.²⁰² His suggestion that the *Life* was composed within the context of the Augustinian priory at Stone, which was founded c.1135, appears most plausible.²⁰³ However, St Wulfhad first appears in early twelfth-century textual sources referring to his church at Stone, suggesting that the *Life* was constructed around a pre-existing set of relics.²⁰⁴ His brother appears less plausible as an Anglo-Saxon saint, and his name may have been lifted from a chapel at Burston, a short distance from Stone and within its medieval parish. The other saints in the diocese do not have *vitae*: St Osburh's cult is first attested in the resting-place list contained in Hugh Candidus' chronicle, wherein she is said to rest at Coventry; a fifteenth-century antiquary thought that her nunnery was destroyed by Cnut, although the fifteenth-century insertion into the Lichfield Chronicle described in Chapter 1 states that Cnut was founder of the nunnery there, demonstrating no very stable tradition.²⁰⁵ Finally, John Blair has noted short references to St Barloc of Norbury in Derbyshire (suggesting a possible relationship to the North Welsh name Barrog, anglicised as Barroc), and St Milred, an eighth-century bishop of Worcester, at Berkswell in Warwickshire²⁰⁶

Saints and the Word in the Diocese of Lichfield

It will be useful now to discuss the texts analysed so far as a group. Although covering in their composition a period from the early eighth century to the fourteenth or even fifteenth centuries, they are all examples of hagiography, texts

²⁰² Rumble, Alexander R. 1997. 'Ad Lapidem in Bede and a Mercian Martyrdom', in Alexander R. Rumble & A. D. Mills (eds.), *Names, Places and People. An Onomastic Miscellany in Memory of John McNeal Dodgson*, Paul Watkins, Stamford, pp 307-319; see also BHL 8735-6a.

²⁰³ *ibid.*, pp 314-315.

²⁰⁴ *ibid.*, pp 316-318: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 470

²⁰⁵ Mellows 1949, p 62: 'in Couentre sancta Osburga'; See Baxter, Stephen. 2007. *The Earls of Mercia, Lordship and Power in Late Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, p 158

²⁰⁶ Blair 2002b, pp 513-514 & 545-546.

written to celebrate the life of a holy man or woman, and thus fall broadly into one long-lived genre of literary expression, which can be split into four phases relevant to the diocese of Lichfield. Beginning with the first phase, Chad's hagiography was, appropriately enough, the earliest; he was depicted in the early eighth century as a much-admired abbot by those who may have remembered him personally, or at least heard stories from those who had. It is thus possible to suggest that some aspects of his depiction derive from the concerns of Chad himself, as well as those amongst whom he lived in the 660s and early 670s, such as his humility and canonical obedience. Nevertheless, the context of the depiction, Lastingham's work of abbatial history, was one example of several such works of the period, such as the two *Historia Abbatum* associated with Wearmouth-Jarrow, and the *libelli* of the abbesses of Barking and, perhaps, the abbesses of Minster-in-Thamet; their subjects were presented as paragons, and so typically Chad's obedience extends to his deep reverence for the learning of the Church Fathers and the fervent expression of his own humility before God. These 'house histories' were also focussed on the death and burial of their subjects, and thus on a continuing focus of veneration in the form of special graves and shrines, often the locus of miracles. It is possible that something similar was produced at Hanbury for St Wærburh in the early-eighth century, which described the divinely-inspired theft of her body for her community there, and the subsequent elevation of her relics; it is just possible that an analogous text existed about St Modwenna, and with her St Eadgyth, although the tenuous nature of the evidence offers very little direct support for this.

Saint Modwenna and St Eadgyth are two of a group of saints who cannot be precisely located chronologically, the others being Beorhthelm, Osburh, Wulfhad and Barloc. Certainly, when they first appear in the textual record, from the tenth century onwards, very little was actually known of them, and yet each appears to have belonged to a place where their body rested, and they may well have found their origins in the seventh, eighth or ninth centuries, in line with the majority of other English saints. This lack of local knowledge (the putative *libellus* concerning Modwenna and Eadgyth aside) hints that the majority of known saints in the diocese of Lichfield did not inspire written texts concerning their origins. Indeed, almost all textual activity in this period subsequent to the late-seventh and early-eighth-century establishment of the cults of St Chad and St Wærburh that can be detected in our sources concerns the elaboration of texts produced about these two saints, comprising a Latin *Life* derived from Bede's account of St Chad produced in the eighth or ninth century, and a *Life* of St Wærburh possibly produced in the late-ninth century, but perhaps later still, during the first half of the tenth century. The only other saint whose textual existence originated during this period is St Wigstan of Repton, whose *passio* may well have been composed at the beginning of his cult in the second half of the ninth century. Wigstan is one of two royal martyrs whose remains were sanctified during the ninth century, although the cult of the other, Ealhmund of Derby, does not appear to have found textual expression at this time.

The second phase of hagiographical activity in the diocese of Lichfield begins during the later ninth century, with the Old English Martyrology, in which the compiler was concerned only with St Chad, about whom the details explicitly came

from Bede's work. Again, Chad was the subject of an Old English *Life*, translated from the earlier Latin version, possibly in the later ninth century but not necessarily earlier than the first quarter of the tenth century. It was during the early tenth century that the existence of other saints from the diocese was first committed to writing. The first half of the *Secgan* probably derives from a compilation of this time, and, in addition to Chad and Wigstan, contains notice of the other royal martyr, St Ealhmund, and of St Eadgyth of Polesworth. Eadgyth's singular presence in this list stands in contrast to her apparently inferior position within the hagiography of St Modwenna, which may also have appeared at some point during the tenth century, if it had not already existed for a century or two. This tenth-century efflorescence is notable in its connection to the flowering of Old English cultural activity during this period. The Old English Martyrology, Chad's *Life*, and the *Secgan* were all produced in Old English, and so comfortably take their place amongst other such products of the tenth century. Of particular interest, the first three of these texts are dateable to the earlier part of the tenth century, if not earlier, and thus predate the period of the Benedictine reform, during which so many of the surviving corpus of Anglo-Saxon Old English texts were produced, and from which there is a distinct lack of texts dealing with the saints and churches of the diocese of Lichfield.²⁰⁷

The third phase of textual activity relevant to the saints of the diocese occurred in the later eleventh century and early twelfth century, at which time several found their way into Latin *Lives* and chronicles. St Wærburh received a new *Life* at the hands of Goscelin, written for the community at Ely rather than any of the

²⁰⁷ See Blair 2002b

churches in the diocese. Nevertheless, this *Life* was apparently quickly taken up by the saint's newly-reformed Benedictine community at Chester, where it formed part of their legendary by the early twelfth century, in which a set of local miracle stories were appended. The only new *Life* written within the diocese was that for St Modwenna, significantly composed at another one of the diocese's few Benedictine abbeys, Burton, by its abbot, Geoffrey. In addition the chroniclers William of Malmesbury and John of Worcester, working outside the diocese, included epitomes of St Wigstan's *Life* in their works. All these writers were using pre-existing texts as the bases for their efforts, even if, especially in Geoffrey's case, they were able to add some local knowledge to them. It is at this point that a lack of detailed local knowledge begins to become apparent. Goscelin probably only added to his exemplar a legend from Weedon that may not itself have been that old, although he transformed much of what he had with reference to pious intentions and Christian humility. Goscelin perhaps had excuse for a lack of further detail, as he was not, as far as can be determined, in contact with the saint's own community. Nevertheless, Geoffrey, himself having care of Modwenna's remains, although adding many recently-performed miracles to his exemplar, was unable to add anything to the saint's life story except a refashioned version of a miracle story already present.

The fourth and final hagiographic phase in the diocese stretches from the second half of the twelfth century to the end of the medieval period. St Beorhthelm of Stafford and St Osburh of Coventry appear for the first time in the resting-place list in Hugh Candidus' Peterborough Chronicle, where they accompany St Chad, St Wærburh, St Ealhmund, St Wigstan, St Eadgyth and St Modwenna. Hugh's

information may have come from lost Old English resting-place lists, conceivably dating to the ninth, tenth or eleventh centuries, but this is conjecture, and it may equally be more recent. Of the diocese's other saints, Wulfhad and Ruffin first appear together in a fourteenth-century resting-place list, and Barloc does not appear in any surviving texts of this genre. *Lives* for St Ealhmund, St Beorhthelm and St Wulfhad and St Ruffin were first composed during this phase, and were all in existence by the end of the fourteenth century. None of these *Lives* appear to have been based on pre-Conquest texts, and all demonstrate the prolific and creative use of contemporary folklore and biblical themes to construct legends around sparse chronicle notices or the silent presence of relics. Such a methodology is first glimpsed in our third phase, in particular with Geoffrey's incorporation of local miracle stories into his *Life* of St Modwenna, and by the appending of miracle stories to Goscelin's *Life* of St Wærburh at Chester, but the difference here is that all compositions of the third phase were building on more expansive written material; the authors of these fourth-phase *Lives* had very little, if any, textual material relating to their own saints to work with.

Liturgically, the only saints in the diocese to appear with any great frequency in pre-Conquest calendars and litanies are St Chad and St Wærburh. In Rebecca Rushforth's collection of twenty-seven pre-1100 calendars, St Chad appears in two thirds of the twenty-four examples that still contain the month of March, on the 2nd day of which his feast was celebrated, testifying to a widespread awareness of him at the southern English centres at which most of the surviving calendars were

created.²⁰⁸ St Wærburh's appearance in seven of them is also a respectable showing, most marking her feast on the 3rd February.²⁰⁹ All the examples containing these saints were compiled from the second half of the tenth century onwards, a period that mirrors the majority of the corpus, which only includes five calendars dated earlier than the second half of the tenth century.²¹⁰ Of the two eighth-century calendars thought to be associated with Northumbrian scriptoria, in which Chad's inclusion might be expected, both are unfortunately fragmentary and no longer contain feasts for March.²¹¹ Chad is however included as an eighth-century addition on the calendar of St Willibrord.²¹² The emphasis in the later calendars on two of the three saints in the diocese for which earlier *Lives* existed is suggestive, indicating a reliance on written sources on the part of the calendar compilers; in particular, Chad's appearance in Bede's work, and the association of Wærburh with the reformed tenth-century community at Ely suggest the importance of networks associated with reform activity. Notably, the only other saint definitely to possess a pre-Conquest *Life*, St Wigstan, is also the only other saint to appear in the calendars; his inclusion in only two, both eleventh-century, one with Evesham connections, may express the obscurity of his cult at Repton before his translation to Evesham during the reign of Cnut.²¹³ If St Chad's feast

²⁰⁸ Rushforth, Rebecca. 2008. *Saints in English Kalendars before A.D. 1100*. Henry Bradshaw Society, Vol. 117, Boydell Press, London; St Chad is found in Nos. 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 (all 2nd March)

²⁰⁹ *ibid.*, Nos. 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22 & 27 (all 3rd February, except no. 19, 4th February, and no. 27, 1st May); whilst the 4th February is probably a simple error, the 1st May perhaps misidentifies the feast of St Wærburh with the feast of the translation of St Walburh (Jones, Graham. 2007. *Saints in the Landscape*. Tempus, Stroud, p 86).

²¹⁰ Rushforth 2008, p 17

²¹¹ *ibid.*, Nos. 2, 3; a ninth-century calendar thought to be Northumbrian does not contain his feast (No. 4)

²¹² Cubitt, Catherine. 2002. 'Universal and Local Saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 423-453, this reference p 439, n. 70

²¹³ Rushforth 2008, Nos. 22 & 25; the first was produced at Evesham, or perhaps Worcester with considerable input from Evesham, is dated to the last third of the eleventh century, and records his feast on 1st June, whilst the second, with strong early connections to southwest England, dated to

day in particular was such a widely appreciated feast in the south of England during the tenth and eleventh centuries, it can only be imagined that he was equally, if not better known by communities in the North Midlands and perhaps Northumbria during this period, areas from which no calendars from this period now survive.

In the forty-six pre-Conquest litanies studied by Michael Lapidge, St Chad and St Wærburh again appear most frequently, although far less than in the calendars, a mere four and two times respectively; of these, the earliest of St Chad's dates to the late tenth century, which represents the early end of the majority of the corpus, whilst the rest date to various periods within the eleventh century.²¹⁴ Lapidge's corpus can be broadly divided into two groups: those in which the presence of a few native saints expresses local concerns, and those in which extensive listing of native saints suggests "acts of scholarly compilation rather than of local devotion."²¹⁵ Three of Chad's appearances and one of Wærburh's fall within the second category, within long lists of a scholarly character; it is instructive to note that many of the scriptoria that produced these litanies, such as New Minster, Winchester, Christ Church, Canterbury, and Worcester, coincide with the centres of production, where known, of the calendars discussed above.²¹⁶ In leaving just one appearance for each saint in litanies of more local character, the two are joined by St Ealhmund and St Beorhthelm, who also appear only once in localised

the second half of the eleventh century, records his feast on 1st January, perhaps a mistake for the correct June date, which is confirmed by later evidence

²¹⁴ Lapidge, Michael (ed.). 1991. *Anglo-Saxon Litanies of the Saints*. Henry Bradshaw Society Vol. CVI, Boydell Press, London; St Chad: XVI.ii.256, XXIII.258, XXIV.174 & XXXIV.46; a fifth, VI.90, represents the twelfth-century re-writing of an eleventh-century litany. References to St Wærburh: XII.162 & XXXII.129; a third, VI.129, represents the twelfth-century re-writing of an eleventh-century litany

²¹⁵ *ibid.*, p 74.

²¹⁶ St Chad: XVI.ii.256, XXIII.258, XXIV.174; St Wærburh: XII.162

pre-Conquest litanies.²¹⁷ The comparative rarity in surviving litanies of saints from the diocese of Lichfield, when compared to more southerly saints, is no doubt due to the lack of surviving litanies from the diocese itself.

What conclusions can be drawn from this review? Firstly, the *Lives* that appear to include the most detail about the life and death of a saint are, perhaps unsurprisingly, those written during the first phase of hagiographic activity, as defined above, during the eighth and ninth centuries. Such *Lives* appeal to us because they are more 'historical' in their focus on events. Nevertheless, they are all also very much construction, demonstrating an adulatory attitude to their subjects and emphasising the holy aspects of their characters and the potency of their relics, and the honour shown to the communities amongst which they then rested. If their subjects seem clearer to us, it is because their lives may have been recalled by those still living when the *Lives* were written, whose personal affection for their spiritual patrons finds some expression in the texts. But it is important also to understand these texts as instrumental: the Lastingham narrative containing Chad's *Life* may have been written in response to Bede's request, whilst Wærburh's *Life* devotes most space to the recovery of her body from Threkingham by the community at Hanbury, and was obviously important to them, perhaps was even required by an outside party, as a justification; Wigstan's *Life* focuses on the dynastic characters and events surrounding his murder. None

²¹⁷ St Chad: XXXIV.46, a mid-eleventh century product with a late Worcester provenance, includes a small and, according to Lapidge (1991, p 79), "curious constellation of Insular saints", namely the martyrs Sts Edward and Ælfheah (killed in 978 and 1012), the confessors Chad, Machutus and Brendan, and the virgin St Æthelthryth, who together do "not readily pertain to any identifiable cult centre."; St Wærburh: XXXII.129, thought to have been produced at or for Crowland Abbey, groups the saint with several fenland virgins, and almost certainly represents her status as one of the saints of Ely; St Ealhmund: XVI.ii.52 (*St Ealchmund*), a litany contained in prayer-book dated to the first half of the eleventh century, which was probably compiled at a nunnery in Wessex; St Beorhthelm: XVI.ii.236, a litany from Leominster, composed in the second quarter of the eleventh century

of the *Lives* is simply a relation of the life and death of the saint written for the sake of some hagiographical impulse. The limited textual evidence suggests that it was generally unusual for a community to produce a written celebration of their saint, and that the idealisation and veneration of these characters, visible in the virtues expressed in the written *Lives*, was probably more consistently displayed in social and ritual practices at the communities concerned, leaving no textual remains: hagiographically, most minster communities in the diocese were not textual communities during the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries. Those that developed in the late-eleventh and early-twelfth centuries appear primarily associated with the Benedictine monasteries at Burton and Chester.

If, after two or three generations, the detailed memories of contemporaries had faded or fallen away across the generations, the saints remained at the hearts of their communities. The activities of ninth- and tenth-century authors relied fundamentally on earlier texts, either updating an older account, as with St Wærburh's *Life*, or translating one into Old English, as with St Chad's. By definition, such activities were confined to the saints who had already found textual expression, but resting-place lists from the same period enable us to gain an awareness of the far larger number of saints who had never been textually enshrined. From the second half of the tenth century, liturgical instruments offer glimpses of the kinds of practice by which the saints were remembered, not in any way biographical, but as spiritual patrons and landmarks in the liturgical round. It is only in the third and fourth phases as defined above, from the late-eleventh century onwards, that we gain further insight into the miraculous powers of the saints' relics, and of the folkloric tales through which local communities celebrated

them. Such patterns in text production appear broadly to have prevailed across much of England, excepting only hagiographic texts produced in association with reformed communities of the later tenth and eleventh centuries, of which the diocese of Lichfield is without example.²¹⁸

It should therefore be little surprise to us that we know so little of the details of the lives of many of the saints in the diocese; it is likely that the same was true in many communities for much of the early medieval period. As discussed in detail above with regards to St Chad, the kinds of personal remembrance that we find, for example, in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, appear to have been limited to contemporaries of the saints concerned, whilst later generations were far more interested in the saints as liturgical, ritualised objects, in their roles as bridges between earth and heaven. If earlier details happened to be caught up in a textual composition, so much the better for us, but we should not expect this except in a minority of cases. Nevertheless, such textual existence tended to beget more. St Chad was treated to an Old English version of his *Life*, and also appeared in the Old English Martyrology, in both cases due to his initial appearance in Bede's work. The three saints in the diocese who appear to have possessed pre-Conquest *Lives*, namely Chad, Wærburh and Wigstan, are the three who can also be found in pre-1100 calendars, which says much about the methods used by the compilers of those calendars. In contrast, litanies appear to express local devotion regardless of previous textual existence, so in addition to Chad and Wærburh we find Ealhmund and Beorhthelm in pre-Conquest examples; however, the appearance of Chad and Wærburh in both genres may testify to a greater

²¹⁸ Blair's handlist provides a useful summary of the present state of knowledge; Blair 2002b

awareness of these important saints during the tenth and eleventh centuries, again due partly to their appearance in texts. Texts were important instruments of memory and activity within minster communities when used, but to talk of a hagiographic record underestimates and limits the kinds of hagiographic activity, more broadly defined to include non-textual instruments, that must have been important within early medieval society.

Chapter 3: The Land of St Chad

The Lay of the Land

Regional studies traditionally begin with a description of the physical nature of the region concerned, and the beginning of this chapter follows such a pattern, if only to provide a consistent terminology to aid discussion. As the next section will demonstrate, it is the soils sitting on top of the solid geology that are of more concern, forming the part of the land with which its human occupants interact directly; this section therefore provides a broad description of the region encompassed by the diocese of Lichfield, as a prelude to considering the land and its people in more detail. Several of the figures used to illustrate these issues throughout this chapter are taken or adapted from those provided in the Soil Survey volume for Midland and Western England, which, in addition to the area covered by the diocese of Lichfield, also includes the surrounding shires of Hereford and Worcester, Lancashire, Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire within its study region.¹ As demonstrated in Figure 6, the region essentially divides between two lowland areas, the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain in the west and the Midland Plain in the east, separated by an interrupted highland belt, comprising the southern end of the Pennine chain, the Peak District, to the northeast, and the South Shropshire Uplands to the southwest, projecting from the Welsh Massif further west. Between the two highland areas is the Midland Gap, centred on Staffordshire, which provides a lowland passage between the two Plains.

¹ Ragg, J. M., Beard, G. R., George, H., Heaven, F. W., Hollis, J. M., Jones, R. J. A., Palmer, R. C., Reeve, M. J., Robson, J. D., & Whitfield, W. A. D. 1984. *Soils and their use in Midland and Western England*. Lawes Agricultural Trust, Harpenden

The highland and lowland areas can be further distinguished geologically, as shown in Figure 7: the highland areas are largely commensurate with Palaeozoic or Primary geology (formed between 250- and 550-million years ago), whilst the Plains are largely formed in Mesozoic or Secondary geology (formed between 150- and 250-million years ago).² The Pennine Massif mainly comprises Carboniferous Limestone topped by Millstone Grit and Coal Measures, the latter especially prevalent on the east and west flanks of the Southern Pennines; the South Shropshire Uplands are principally formed in Old Red Sandstone (Devonian) and Silurian rocks, extending from similar rocks of the adjacent Welsh Massif, with Carboniferous formations again overlying the highland edges. Carboniferous rocks also border the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain to the west, rising towards the Clwydian Hills. Additionally there are three Palaeozoic outcrops in the Midland Plain, all essentially Coal Measures: the South-Staffordshire or Birmingham Plateau, the East Warwickshire Plateau, and Charnwood Forest, the latter just east of the diocesan boundary in western Leicestershire. Occasional outcrops of Pre-Cambrian rocks (older than 550-million years) are also found locally in the South Shropshire Uplands, Charnwood Forest and the South Staffordshire Plateau. In the lowlands, Permo-Triassic formations (200- to 250-million years old), essentially the sandstones and mudstones of the Keuper Marl, Keuper Sandstone and Bunter Beds, constitute the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain and the northwest half of the Midland Plain. The southeast half of the Midland Plain is mainly composed of later Jurassic formations (150- to 200-million years old), the

² The following three paragraphs are informed by Hains, B. A. & Horton, A. 1969. *British Regional Geology: Central England (Third Edition)*. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London; Ragg *et al.* 1984, especially Chapter 1, pp 1-37; Brown, Ian. 2004. *Discovering a Welsh Landscape. Archaeology in the Clwydian Range*. Windgather Press, Macclesfield, pp 5-12.

boundary between the two halves arcing from the Humber in the northeast to the Severn estuary in the southwest.

All Tertiary deposits have been eroded away within the diocesan region, and so the geological narrative resumes in the Quaternary period (one million years ago to the present), with the successive glaciations that deposited various poorly stratified Drift deposits of clay, sand and gravel across the area, primarily on the Plains (see Figure 8). This applies particularly to the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain, which is almost completely covered by such deposits, although substantial parts of the Permo-Triassic Midland Plain are also swathed in them; a clayey and loamy Reddish Till is by far the most extensive deposit across all these areas, whilst large parts of the Jurassic Midland Plain are covered by loamy and clayey Chalky Till. Additionally, several river valleys, in particular the Middle Trent and Tame, and large stretches of till in the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain, are overlain by river terrace, glaciofluvial, and glaciolacustrine drift, deposits of loamy and sandy gravels left by outwash lakes and streams pouring off the retreating glaciers.

The geological history of the region has resulted in a greatly varied landscape of differing landforms, particularly in the highland areas: the high Pennine moors, blanketed with peat, and the broad limestone plateau of the White Peak, are incised with steep-sided river valleys, and the whole massif is edged by ridges of grit and sandstone; to the west and southwest, the incised Carboniferous Flintshire plateau borders the Clwydian peaks, whilst the South Shropshire uplands provide contrasting rocky ridges, high moorlands and rounded hills, separated by deep valleys. The lowland Plains are of more gently undulating character, relieved by

areas of higher ground: the long retreat moraine between Wrexham, Ellesmere and Whitchurch, extending beyond in a broken arc towards northeast Cheshire, is a complex Drift-made landform, and divides the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain between the basins of the Dee and Weaver (the Cheshire Plain) and the Severn (the Shropshire Plain); to the north, the relative flatness of the Cheshire Plain is punctuated by the harder Permo-Triassic sandstone of the Mid-Cheshire Ridge. Meanwhile, the Palaeozoic outliers in the Midland Plain rise as broad islands above the partially till-covered plain, forming distinctive plateaux.

Living on the Land

The historiography of landscape study in England has long been constructed around a division between two broad types of landscape: first, “a land of big villages, wide views, brick farmhouses in exposed positions, flimsy hawthorn hedges, ivied clumps of trees in corners of fields, few busy roads, and above all of straight lines”; second, a land “of hamlets, of medieval farms in hollows of the hills, of lonely moats in the claylands, of immense mileages of little roads and holloways, of intricate footpaths, or irregularly-shaped groves and thick hedges colourful with maple, dogwood and spindle, of pollards and ancient trees.”³ These descriptions are the words of Oliver Rackham, who is also responsible for a widely-known characterisation of these differences, explaining that:

in most of the English Midlands, hedged fields are derived from the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before which the land had been farmed in great open prairie-farming fields. The landscape, laid out hurriedly in a drawing-office at the enclosure of each parish, has a

³ Rackham, Oliver. 2003. *The Illustrated History of the Countryside*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p 11

mass-produced quality of regular fields and straight roads. It may have medieval woods, Anglo-Saxon hedges and ancient trees, but only as isolated antiquities which the enclosure commissioners failed to destroy. This is *Planned Countryside*. The other half of England, *Ancient Countryside*, has a hedged and walled landscape dating from any of forty centuries between the Bronze Age and Queen Anne, with the irregularity resulting from centuries of 'do-it-yourself' enclosure and piecemeal alteration.⁴

As with any convenient summary, this is, paradoxically, on the one hand hopelessly simplistic, and on the other incredibly useful shorthand.

The landscape distinction is usually defined today as that between various different grades of settlement dispersion, from strongly nucleated villages at one end of the scale to highly dispersed hamlets and single farmsteads at the other; this assumes a broad correspondence, largely observed, between large medieval open fields and nucleated villages, and contrastingly, between dispersed settlement and irregularly enclosed landscapes. A definitive mapping project published by Brian Roberts and Stuart Wrathmell in 2000 used the first edition Ordnance Survey maps of the later nineteenth century to plot a the settlements of England on a nuanced scale of relative dispersion, producing a map that supersedes all previous attempts to map landscape distinction, whilst confirming the essential outline.⁵ The validity of using nineteenth-century maps to represent a pattern applicable to the medieval period was supported by an earlier study undertaken by Carezza Lewis, Patrick Mitchell-Fox, and Christopher Dyer, in

⁴ *ibid.*, p 11

⁵ Roberts, Brian K. & Wrathmell, Stuart. 2000. *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England*. English Heritage, London

which such maps were compared with evidence for the medieval landscape derived from archaeological survey, fieldwalking, and aerial photography; they concluded that “the settlement forms observed on the modern maps reflect broadly the medieval settlement plans”, whilst admitting that individual settlements might have changed drastically in the four centuries between the late-medieval period and the production of the maps.⁶ Although Roberts and Wrathmell’s map offers few sudden changes across the landscape, they have defined a ‘Central Province’ of little dispersion, broadly corresponding to Rackham’s Planned Countryside. The diocese of Lichfield overlies this province in its eastern reaches, but lies largely in the western zone of more dispersed settlement.

Studies of this pattern have been undertaken since the late-nineteenth century, and a thorough review of this historiography has recently been undertaken by Tom Williamson, and will not be repeated here.⁷ It will suffice to highlight several of its pertinent features. First and foremost, most interpretations have focussed on explaining the development of the nucleated settlement pattern rather than the dispersed, which, as in Rackham’s scheme, has usually been considered rather timeless, representative of much older historical processes. In 1915 Howard Gray coined the term ‘Midland System’ to describe the well-organised communal farming regime, based on the annual rotation of croplands around two or three large open fields in which farmers had been allocated strips, with the grazing of oxen and stock on the fallows, that has been understood ideally to typify life in the

⁶ Lewis, Carezza, Mitchell-Fox, Patrick, and Dyer, Christopher. 2001. *Village, Hamlet and Field; Changing Medieval Settlement in Central England*. Windgather Press, Macclesfield, in particular p 62

⁷ Williamson, Tom. 2003. *Shaping Medieval Landscapes; Settlement, Society, Environment*. Windgather Press, Macclesfield, pp 1-21

medieval nucleated villages.⁸ The chronology and precise form of the development of nucleated villages and open fields has been examined on the basis of archaeological evidence, determining that the villages began to develop within a landscape of predominantly dispersed settlement during the Middle Saxon period, the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries.⁹ Meanwhile, a study in Northamptonshire, of uncertain applicability elsewhere, has demonstrated that the creation of the open fields was part of a reorganisation dating to the ninth and tenth centuries, separating two processes that were previously assumed to have been one.¹⁰

Explanations of this phenomenon largely fall into two related groups: first, those which understand it as a managed cooperative response to a resource crisis caused by a growing population and the concomitant intensification and extension of arable farming (in particular through assarting and use of the heavy plough);¹¹ second, those which concentrate on social aspects of the phenomenon, usually focussed on partible inheritance and its influence on the equal division of larger holdings into smaller ones, and on the proliferation of landed thegns and knights and thus of the dependent peasantry required to service their demesnes, together

⁸ Gray, Howard Levi. 1915. *English Field Systems*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts

⁹ Foard, Glenn. 1978. 'Systematic Fieldwalking and the Investigation of Saxon Settlement in Northamptonshire', in *World Archaeology*, Vol. 9; Taylor, Christopher. 1981. 'Archaeology and the origins of open-field agriculture', in T. Rowley (ed.), *The Origins of Open-Field Agriculture*, Croom Helm, London, pp 13-22; Taylor, Christopher. 1983. *Village and Farmstead: A History of Rural Settlement in England*. George Philip, United Kingdom

¹⁰ Brown, Tony and Foard, Glenn. 1998. 'The Saxon Landscape: a regional perspective', in P. Everson and T. Williamson (eds.), *The Archaeology of Landscape; Studies presented to Christopher Taylor*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp 67-94

¹¹ On the cooperative use of the heavy plough see: Seebohm, Frederic. 1890. *The English Village Community*. Longmans, Green, and Co., London; Orwin, C. S. and Orwin, C. S. 1938. *The Open Fields*. Clarendon Press, Oxford; for the importance of assarting see: Bishop, T. A. M. 1935. 'Assarting and the growth of the open fields', in *Economic History Review*, Vol. 6, pp 26-40; for the definitive synthetic model of population growth and resource crisis, see: Thirsk, Joan. 1964. 'The Common Fields', in *Past and Present*, Vol. 29, pp 3-29, and eadem. 1966. 'The Origins of the Common Fields', in *Past and Present*, Vol. 33, pp 142-147

with systems of equalised land allocation to support them.¹² However, more recently, Williamson has noted that areas of higher or denser population, identified in Domesday Book, do not correlate with the Central Province of nucleated villages and open-field agriculture, whilst the distribution of sokemen and free men, traditionally understood as 'freer' peasants, does not correlate with the areas of dispersed settlements and enclosed fields, where they might expect to be found if nucleated settlements and open fields were a product of the creation of service tenancies.¹³

Other recent studies have tackled Ancient Countryside. In particular, the Whittlewood Project was developed to investigate the development of nucleated villages in the Northamptonshire-Buckinghamshire borderlands, a region of the Central Province in which these settlements were intermixed with more dispersed types.¹⁴ In their discussion of its results, Richard Jones and Mark Page argue that dispersed hamlets and farmsteads were being founded at the same time as larger nucleated settlements, and thus that the former do not represent a timeless product of an ancient era; indeed, they owed just as little to the Romano-British

¹² On the importance of equitable division and partible inheritance, see: Vinogradoff, Paul. 1892. *Villeinage in England*. London; Gray 1915; Homans, G. C. 1941. *English Villagers of the Thirteenth Century*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts; on the proliferation of demesnes and associated service tenancies, see: Dodgshon, Robert. 1980. *British Field Systems: An Interpretation*. London Academic Press, London; Kerridge, Eric. 1992. *The Common Fields of England*. Manchester University Press, Manchester

¹³ Williamson 2003, pp 6-7; Williamson, Tom. 2007. 'The Distribution of 'Woodland' and 'Champion' Landscapes in Medieval England', in M. Gardiner and S. Rippon (eds.), *Medieval Landscapes: Landscape History after Hoskins, Volume 2*, Windgather Press, Macclesfield, pp 89-104, this reference pp 92-95

¹⁴ Dyer, Christopher. 1999. 'The Medieval Settlement Research Group Whittlewood Project', in *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report 1999*, pp 16-17; Jones, Richard and Page, Mark. 2003. 'Characterising Rural Settlement and Landscape: Whittlewood Forest in the Middle Ages', in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 47, pp 53-83; *idem*. 2006. *Medieval Villages in an English Landscape; Beginnings and Ends*. Windgather Press, Macclesfield; Page, Mark and Jones, Richard. 2007. 'Stability and Instability in Medieval Village Plans: Case Studies in Whittlewood', in M. Gardiner & S. Rippon (eds.), *Medieval Landscapes: Landscape History after Hoskins, Volume 2*, Windgather Press, Macclesfield, pp 139-152

settlement pattern as nucleated settlements. Likewise, in a recent study in Devon, another area of Ancient Countryside, Stephen Rippon, R. M. Fyfe and A. G. Brown have undertaken palaeoenvironmental analysis of pollen cores from small valley mires, demonstrating that the seventh and eighth centuries witnessed a considerable increase in quantities of cereal pollen and improved grassland species, but little or no decrease in woodland species.¹⁵ Rippon suggests that this indicates an intensification of land-use in the nearby medieval settlements, and that, given that the pollen signatures remain unchanged into the central and later medieval periods, this intensification can be connected to the establishment of a form of agriculture called convertible husbandry, based around a permanently-utilised 'infield' and an occasionally-farmed 'outfield', that can be reconstructed from late medieval documentary sources.¹⁶ Moreover, as in Whittlewood, "the vast majority of Romano-British/earliest medieval enclosures and field systems are quite unrelated to the open settlements, roads and fields of the historic landscape."¹⁷

Both studies have redefined the debate surrounding the development of nucleated settlements and open-field farming by recognising the development of both nucleated and dispersed settlements, and their concomitant open fields and closes, as connected phenomena occurring simultaneously.¹⁸ Jones and Page propound positive criteria encouraging dispersed settlement, such as the relative

¹⁵ Rippon, S. J., Fyfe, R. M. & Brown, A. G. 2006. 'Beyond Villages and Open Fields: The Origins and Development of a Historic Landscape Characterised by Dispersed Settlement in South-West England', in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 50, pp 31-70; Rippon, Stephen. 2007. 'Emerging Regional Variation in Historic Landscape Character: The Possible Significance of the 'Long Eighth Century'', in M. Gardiner & S. Rippon (eds.), *Medieval Landscapes: Landscape History after Hoskins, Volume 2*, Windgather Press, Macclesfield, pp 105-121

¹⁶ Rippon 2007, pp 115-117

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p 114

¹⁸ Jones & Page 2007, pp 236-237

proximity of fields and closes to houses, and, in particular, the resultant proximity of livestock, which required greater daily attention than cereals, especially in a more pastorally-based farming regime; the hamlet, notably, combines these advantages with the advantages of communal farming, such as plough-sharing.¹⁹ Meanwhile, Rippon has noted the developments observed in Devon were contemporary with the 'mid-Saxon shift', a phenomenon observed in the archaeology of Anglo-Saxon settlements, particularly in the south and east (where pottery exists to provide dating evidence), in which settlements of the fifth to seventh centuries were abandoned during the eighth and ninth centuries, whilst their replacements often underlie modern villages, especially the medieval church and manor complexes within them.²⁰ Whereas the earlier settlements appear to have moved gradually across the landscape, as houses were renewed over generations in different positions to their antecedents, the settlements founded from the eighth century onwards appear to have remained in the same place, and often feature more rigid boundary markers such as ditches, becoming "more firmly inscribed onto the Anglo-Saxon landscape."²¹ Rippon posits a single historical process that began, around the seventh or eighth centuries, with a refocusing of settlements towards more intensive arable production across most of England; although regionally variable from the start, the greater provincial distinctions discussed above became far more apparent from the tenth century, when evidence suggests that open fields began to be laid out in the Central Province.²²

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp 241-2

²⁰ Rippon 2007, pp 117-120; Hamerow, Helena. 2002. *Early Medieval Settlements; The Archaeology of Rural Communities in North-West Europe 400-900*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 121-124

²¹ *ibid.*, p 97

²² Rippon 2007, p 119

Accepting the importance of proliferating demesnes, arable intensification and expansion, and demographic growth, Williamson has attempted to explain these divergences by emphasising the influence of soil and climate on different kinds of settlement type and farming system, contending “that the character of fields and settlement patterns cannot be understood in isolation from the practice of farming, and that farming can only be understood in the context of the environment.”²³ He proposes a model, based on a case study in East Anglia and the East Midlands, with a central dynamic: that during the 8th and 9th centuries, the intensification of cultivation, in particular the widespread adoption of larger, heavier ploughs pulled by oxen, involved expansion onto different soils; the nature of these soils demanded different farming regimes, which resulted in the patterns observed in the English landscape. The nucleated settlements and open fields of the Central Province were based on two different types of soils. On light, hungry soils, easily leached of nutrients, such as the chalk Wolds and Downs and the Norfolk Breckland, where reliable water sources were scarce, settlement was forced to cluster around areas of damp pasture where cattle and oxen could graze into the winter, forming tight nucleations and encouraging the equal division of land in the surrounding fields to give each farmer a fair share of field strips closer to and further away from the settlement. At the same time, these light soils required intensive manuring to keep them in heart, often accomplished by grazing sheep on the surrounding heaths by day and close-folding them on the fields at night; here, efficiency encouraged communal herds and open fields.²⁴

²³ Williamson 2003, p 199

²⁴ *ibid.*, pp 123-140; Williamson 2007, pp 95-97

The more expansive wetter, heavier, clayey soils of the Midlands vales, less easily leached and thus more fertile, encouraged, where not too intractable, settlement nucleation and equal distribution of field strips, so that plough teams could be assembled quickly during the short spring dry season and ploughing undertaken efficiently and fairly.²⁵ Concomitant with this, alluvial meadows were comparatively plentiful in the Midlands, and so the need to pasture oxen promoted a regime in which hay was closely managed for winter fodder, whilst arable land was extended at the expense of woodland, and the stubble of a fallow field, managed communally, used for summer pasture.²⁶ By contrast, in Ancient Countryside, where the clayey soils were infertile, or, especially in the west, too wet and intractable, or where soils were predominantly lighter and more easily worked, and where alluvial meadows were fewer and further between and rough grazing land and wood pasture more important, there was less scope or encouragement for settlement to nucleate and for large fields to be worked in common. Williamson's model is effectively validated by the close correlation between soils likely to encourage nucleation and Robert and Wrathmell's map of settlement dispersion.

Before turning to consider the diocese of Lichfield in the light of this research, it is worth emphasising two final points. First of all, the varied indicators of intensification in farming considered above largely concern cereal production, and do not have much to say about livestock except in as much as teams of oxen were needed to pull heavy ploughs, and sheep and cattle could be used to manure the fields. Secondly, that despite attempts to explain the difference in form taken by

²⁵ Williamson 2003, pp 141-159; Williamson 2007, pp 97-100

²⁶ Williamson 2003, pp 160-179; Williamson 2007, pp 101-103

landscape developments from the seventh century onwards, no attempt has been made to explain the causal drive for increased production of cereals, beyond vague references to population growth or the rise of kingdoms, or, in the argument propounded by Jones and Page, to ‘organic’ settlement growth “in accordance with natural laws”, which simply begs the question.²⁷

As the work discussed above might suggest, the Northwest Midlands have not been the focus of the recent interpretations of early medieval landscape change. It is proposed here to combine an analysis of the soils of the region with the results of various large-scale analyses of settlement dispersal and field systems, in order to test the validity of Williamson’s observations and so characterise the kinds of settlement community to be found in the diocese. To begin with, a broad-brush indicator of the suitability of clay soils in the region for large open-field agriculture is provided by measurement of annual average rainfall; although such measurements depict the modern climate, the importance of relief and large-scale weather patterns on rainfall suggests that, despite differences between the medieval and modern climates, the relative gradations of rainfall across the region may be relevant for both periods. Williamson notes that where rainfall is above c. 740mm per annum, clay soils were leached of nutrients and lime, rendering them less fertile, and so discouraging the intensification of arable production embodied in large-scale open-field farming²⁸ Moreover, there was simply not enough dry-weather opportunity to plough these soils whilst avoiding compaction and puddling, by which the soils “coalesce into a sticky, intractable mess”, rendering

²⁷ Jones and Page 2006, p 239

²⁸ Williamson 2007, p 97

them impossible to cultivate.²⁹ The average annual rainfall map in Figure 9 shows gradations at 100mm intervals; the map has therefore been colour-coded to give a broad impression of the areas in which clay soils would be more suited to large-scale open fields: areas of annual rainfall below 700mm are green, between 700 and 800mm orange, and over 800mm red.³⁰

In addition to considering climate, it is necessary to consider the types of soil found within the diocese. Williamson's model, as described above, requires that we distinguish soils that are wetter, heavier and less permeable from those that are drier, lighter, and more permeable. However, from further work in East Anglia Williamson has suggested that rather than simplistic comparisons between 'light' and 'heavy' soils "when studying the environmental context of early and middle Saxon settlement, it is more useful to make a rather more subtle distinction: between comparatively light, loamy clays, moderately calcareous sands, and other light loams on the one hand; and heavy impervious clays, and acid, leached and infertile sands on the other."³¹ Williamson notes that such a distinction often coincides with the distribution of early furnished burials and known early political and administrative centres, which tend to be confined to the former landscape. He suggests that this particular characterisation of soils represents the manner in which "zones of well-watered valley land, with tractable and at least moderately fertile soils, formed the cores of social territories which extended up onto the infertile uplands, where tracts of ground were exploited as grazing and woodland"; the outer grazing lands might equally be found on fertile but intractable soils,

²⁹ Williamson 2003, pp 142-147

³⁰ Ragg *et al.* 1984, p 21

³¹ Williamson, Tom. 2008. *Sutton Hoo and its Landscape. The Context of Monuments.* Windgather Press, Oxford, p 128.

especially in our region.³² Essentially, the pattern relates to the ease with which an agrarian base can be established and maintained without the aid of too much heavy stock or equipment. If we accept this as relevant to the motives of early medieval populations across Britain, then such a motive can be represented by a specific presentation of the soil maps. By doing so, we may construct an understanding of earlier medieval settlement before the expansion of open-field farming, but also, by further distinguishing the heavier clays and the lighter, hungrier soils, demonstrate, according to Williamson's model, where such expansion may have been possible.

Figure 10 presents such a scheme in the West Midlands, based on the Soil Survey map for Midland and Western England. The Soil Survey of England and Wales is characterised by a terminology based on 'associations', combinations of different constituent soil series found in varying proportions, which are themselves defined by colour, consistency, structure, water retentiveness, acidity, and inclusions.³³ Given the number of variables, further classification is to some extent subjective, and cannot be based on any absolute measurement of the soils, although specific differences in opinion would be unlikely to change the broader picture. The colour-scheme is intended to represent grades of soil primarily in terms of a scale of water-retentiveness; at one end, coloured dark green, soils, often predominantly clayey, are periodically waterlogged, whilst at the other, coloured red, soils are very permeable, and often include a large sand component; three intermediate colours, light green, yellow, and orange, have been used to represent gradations between these two extremes. However, water retentiveness is not the only

³² *ibid.*, pp 130-1.

³³ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 56-69

attribute to have been considered in this classification. The drier soils are sometimes, although not always, acidic, and such a quality has been used to place soils that might otherwise appear in the yellow or orange categories into the red category. Likewise, separate categories have been established for upland soils, which might by their nature have been placed in one of the less wet categories, but because of the climate or topography of the regions in which they are found, are subject to much wetter conditions (coloured brown); peaty soils, which usually occur on the higher uplands or in areas of very wet soils (coloured purple); and alluvial soils, which occur in major river valleys (coloured blue). It is also important to emphasise that the scale does not represent soil fertility: although acidity reduces fertility, some of the wetter soils provide fertile environments if drained and managed well, but in their 'unimproved' state they are not at all easy to work. Appendix 3 contains a complete listing of the soils that appear in the study region, and the categorisations chosen to represent them in Figure 10.

Finally, the soils and rainfall maps must be compared with analyses of settlement dispersion and nucleation and of types of field system present within the region. Several studies of the regional landscape are used here, and what follows draws much from the work of Dorothy Sylvester, G. Elliott, Brian Roberts and Stuart Wrathmell.³⁴ Figure 11 shows Roberts and Wrathmell's map of relative dispersion, with nucleations shown as black dots, whilst Figure 12 shows an amalgam of two maps depicting the open field systems of the West Midlands, the western part from

³⁴ Sylvester, Dorothy. 1969. *The Rural Landscape of the Welsh Borderland; A Study in Historical Geography*. Macmillan, London; Elliott, G. 1973. 'Field Systems of Northwest England', in A. R. H. Baker & R. A. Butlin (eds.), *Studies of Field Systems in the British Isles*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 41-92; Roberts, Brian K. 1973. 'Field Systems of the West Midlands', in A. R. H. Baker & R. A. Butlin (eds.), *Studies of Field Systems in the British Isles*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 188-231; Roberts and Wrathmell 2000

Sylvester's study of the Welsh borderland, the eastern from Robert's study of Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire; note that this second figure includes two different sets of conventions relating to their different sources.³⁵ Despite their varied origins, the maps are remarkably complimentary. In particular, the difference between the much nucleated, little dispersed Central Province, and the more dispersed, less nucleated Northwest Province, visible on Roberts and Wrathmell's map, is mimicked by the distinction drawn by Roberts between Champion and Woodland field systems, the former describing cases in which up to 80% of the township was covered by large, regular open fields, the latter cases in which open fields were a less dominant part of the township, lying alongside larger proportions of old enclosures, woodlands and heaths.³⁶ Likewise, the zone of Woodland field systems shown by Roberts in west-central Staffordshire continues into north-central Shropshire on Sylvester's map, where individual two- and three-field systems are indicated.

Synthesising these various maps largely validates Williamson's model. The region contains comparatively few areas where the climate is temperate enough to encourage the expansion of open fields. Of these, the largest extends along the south-eastern edge of the diocese, largely coincident with the Middle Trent, Tame and Upper Avon valleys. These areas are located in the Central Province, characterised by many nucleations and very low dispersion, the latter due to the dominance of open fields around the former.³⁷ The boundary between this region and the Western Province is particularly pronounced across Warwickshire, where Domesday statistics show a dominance of ploughlands and ploughteams in the

³⁵ Roberts & Wrathmell 2000, pp 22 & 24; Sylvester 1969, pp 220-221; Roberts 1973, p 204

³⁶ Roberts 1973, pp 194-195

³⁷ Roberts & Wrathmell 2000, pp 48 (Trent Valley sub-province) & 49 (Inner Midlands sub-province)

eastern half of the shire (the so-called 'Feldon' district), and a dominance of woodland in the western half, with a coherent edge between them.³⁸ The soils in these areas are mostly fairly wet, ranging from the slowly permeable soils of the Hodnet, Whimple 3 and Worcester associations (all light green) to the seasonally waterlogged soils of the Salop, Evesham 2 and Denchworth associations (all dark green), and thus encouraged efficient ploughing communal ploughing enabled by large open fields.³⁹ At the same time, the meadows of Trent and Tame washlands, characterised by alluvial soils of the Wharfe, Fladbury 2, and Conway associations (all blue), and those on the Fladbury 1 association (blue) in the Avon floodplain, enabled the expansion of the open fields across other sources of fodder.⁴⁰ Roberts notes the dominance of three-field systems in the later medieval period in all these areas, covering the great majority of each township;⁴¹ he also identifies an interesting eighteenth-century division between the three-field systems of northeast Warwickshire, and the four-field systems of south Warwickshire and Worcestershire, which probably developed from medieval two-field systems.⁴² When this distinction developed is difficult to discern beyond the early post-medieval period, but the fact of the distinction is interesting in light of its approximate correspondence with the division of eastern Warwickshire between the dioceses of Lichfield and Worcester.

The temperate pocket around the lower Dee and Goway valleys and the Wirral in Cheshire also contained an area in which nucleations were far more prominent,

³⁸ Darby & Terrett 1971, pp 286 (Fig. 95), 292 (Fig. 99) & 296 (Fig. 100)

³⁹ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 212-216, 319-323, 344-348, 287-290, 190-193 & 156-159

⁴⁰ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 315-318, 197-199, 139-141 & 195-6

⁴¹ Roberts 1973, pp 212-216

⁴² *ibid.*, pp 195-205 & 206-209

and dispersion far less intense, than elsewhere in the shire.⁴³ Likewise, this area contained the highest proportions of open field land in the shire.⁴⁴ Moreover, it has been estimated that the open fields covered up to three quarters of the area of many of the townships in western Cheshire.⁴⁵ Again, in accordance with Williamson's model, the soils in this region are wet, dominated by seasonally waterlogged soils of the Salop and Clifton associations (dark green) derived from Reddish Till, and exist alongside considerable alluvial soils of the Compton and Teme associations along the Dee and Gowy, suitable for hay meadows; taken together these characteristics rendered significant open-field agriculture more viable here than anywhere else in Cheshire.⁴⁶ In support, Domesday Book records the highest concentrations of ploughlands and ploughteams on the western edge of Cheshire and the Wirral.⁴⁷ In contrast, the final temperate pocket in the diocese, across east-central Shropshire and west-central Staffordshire, did not contain significant nucleations. Instead, this area was dominated by dispersed settlement, although it contained fewer small farmsteads and comparatively more hamlets than the Cheshire Plain (see below); nevertheless, nucleated villages were few, and were usually parochial, as were some of the hamlets, and many were served by small, and sometimes not so small, open fields, although old enclosures remained very significant.⁴⁸ In west-central Staffordshire, Roberts has identified extensive traces of open fields around many settlements, although old enclosures and commons remained very significant; often a set of open fields was attached to each hamlet of a township, and he notes the possibility that a three-

⁴³ Roberts and Wrathmell 2000, p 54 (Cheshire Plain sub-province)

⁴⁴ Sylvester 1969, p 268

⁴⁵ Elliott 1973, p 42; Sylvester 1969, p 266

⁴⁶ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 287-290, 132-137, 137-139 & 302-304

⁴⁷ Darby, H. C. & Maxwell, I. S. 1962. *The Domesday Geography of Northern England*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 340 (Fig. 92), 344 (Fig. 94) & 345 (Fig. 95)

⁴⁸ Sylvester 1969, pp 300-301

field system was initially widespread.⁴⁹ Likewise, three-field systems dominate the Shropshire Plain on Sylvester's map.

It is possible to invoke the lack of concentrated pockets of meadowland to explain the lack of large open fields and nucleated villages in this area, the ribbons of alluvial soils of the Conway association along the Severn providing the only real basis for such provision.⁵⁰ However, more importantly, the soils of this area are more easily worked than the soils of the areas considered above. The Shropshire Plain is only partly characterised by the waterlogged soils of the Salop and Clifton associations; in the northeast quarter of the Plain, exposed Permo-Triassic sandstone supports better-drained soils, in particular the brown earth soils of the Bromsgrove and Wick 1 Associations (both yellow), which occur in the Hales area on the Staffordshire-Shropshire border, and, to the southwest in Shropshire, the brown sands of the Bridgnorth association (orange), which create an area characterised by heaths, providing significant commons;⁵¹ whilst in the western part of the Plain and extending northeast, the glaciofluvial Whitchurch moraine supports more well-drained soils, primarily of the Newport 1 Association (orange), but also including the Wick 1 (yellow), Ellerbeck (orange) Associations, and the acidic Crannymoor and Newport 4 Associations (both red).⁵² The ploughing of these drier soils was less demanding, and did not require so tight a schedule as the wetter soils discussed earlier: large-scale communal farming was therefore not necessary to achieve an effective arable regime, whilst other nearby sources of

⁴⁹ Roberts 1973, pp 218-219; although larger numbers of fields recorded during eighteenth- and nineteenth-century enclosure may sometimes have had medieval antecedents, rather than representing the fragmented remnant of a smaller number of earlier fields

⁵⁰ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 139-141

⁵¹ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 112-116

⁵² *ibid.*, pp 248-252, 323-327, 177-178, 141-142, & 252-254.

fodder, such as heathy commons and the Summer grazing provided by the Weald Moors north of Telford, characterised by peaty soils of the Adventurers' 1 Association, might have been actively maintained as nutrient reserves to keep some of the drier soils in heart.⁵³ Soils and climate thus combined to characterise an area that displays, in its Domesday statistics, a greater density of ploughlands and ploughteams compared to surrounding, less temperate areas.⁵⁴

To the east, in the Midland Gap, exposed Permo-Triassic sandstone also characterises the valleys of the Sow and Upper Trent, where it hosts the well-drained brown earths of the Bromsgrove and Wick 1 associations (both yellow).⁵⁵ In the same areas, and west of Derby, exposed Permo-Triassic mudstone supports slightly wetter brown earth soils, overwhelmingly of the Whimple 3 Association (light green).⁵⁶ All these soils are fairly fertile and easily worked, and were thus amenable to arable agriculture despite being located within a slightly less temperate area than that discussed above. The settlements were similar to those described above, comprising hamlets and farmsteads with small cores of open-field land interspersed with areas of irregular enclosure. Again, Roberts identifies widespread traces of three-field systems around many of the hamlets.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, their ploughteam and ploughlands densities in Domesday Book are less than in the areas to the west and east.⁵⁸ This area was also characterised by the medieval woods of Morfe, Kinver, Cannock Chase, Needwood and Arden; consequently, many settlements had access to extensive commons. The woods

⁵³ On the Weald Moors see Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 75-77, & Sylvester 1969, pp 315-318.

⁵⁴ Darby, H. C. & Terrett, I. B. 1971. *The Domesday Geography of Midland England*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 132 (Fig. 40), 137 (Fig. 44), 184 (Fig. 62) & 195 (Fig. 66)

⁵⁵ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 120-124 & 323-327.

⁵⁶ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 319-323.

⁵⁷ Roberts 1973, pp 212-216

⁵⁸ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp184 (Fig. 62) & 195 (Fig. 66)

occupied both wetter and drier soils: Arden, centred on the Palaeozoic East Warwickshire Plateau, was rooted in seasonally waterlogged soils of the Bardsey association (dark green) and moderately well-drained brown earths of the Whimble 2 association (light green);⁵⁹ Needwood, like much of the Birmingham Plateau to the southwest, was characterised by the seasonally waterlogged soils associated with Reddish Till; whilst Morfe, Kinver and Cannock Chase are all located on exposed Permo-Triassic sandstone, characterised by well-drained brown sands of the Bridgnorth and Newport 1 associations (both orange), and in some cases the acidic soils of the Delamere and Goldstone associations (both red).⁶⁰

Central and eastern Cheshire was characterised by highly dispersed settlement, featuring townships populated with many small hamlets and scattered farmsteads, set within a landscape of old enclosures, the latter including many small areas of formerly open arable fields.⁶¹ The only nucleated villages and hamlets present were usually mid-sized parochial centres with open fields, and whilst some of the smaller non-parochial hamlets also show traces of small open fields, in neither case did the fields cover a large fraction of the township, which were otherwise dominated by heaths, moors and mosses.⁶² This pattern was arrayed on two different kinds of soil. First, the Plain is dominated by the waterlogged soils of the Salop and Clifton associations, joined in central Cheshire, in the basin of the middle Weaver, by the heavy, seasonally waterlogged soils of the Crewe association (dark green), derived from glaciolacustrine clay deposits; the flatness

⁵⁹ *ibid.*, pp 90-92 & 318-319

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, pp 112-116, 248-252, 152-155 & 204-207

⁶¹ Roberts and Wrathmell 2000, p 54 (Cheshire Plain sub-province)

⁶² Sylvester 1969, p 270

of the plain also gives rise to many shallow peat-filled hollows, called mosses.⁶³ Without the benefits of a more temperate climate and alluvial soils for hay meadows, large-scale open-field agriculture was simply not feasible. These soils “are traditionally used for grass production and form the basis of the dairy industry in Cheshire and Shropshire”,⁶⁴ and whilst the importance of livestock is not represented by the Domesday statistics, which are largely a measure of arable criteria, it is possible that a similar pastoral regime was dominant in the early medieval period. Second, better-drained, more easily-worked soils of the Bromsgrove (yellow), Bridgnorth (orange) and Newport 1 (orange) associations on the Permo-Triassic sandstone of the Mid-Cheshire Ridge and the glaciofluvial deposits abutting it, and of the Newport 1 association (orange) on the glaciofluvial deposits of the Whitchurch moraine to the east, elicited similar responses to the Permo-Triassic soils of the Midland Gap discussed above, although the Ridge suffers from an even more intemperate climate.⁶⁵ The Ridge also hosts acidic soils of the Delamere (red) and Crannymoor (red) associations, which underlay Delamere Forest, and similarly acidic soils of the Newport 4 association characterise part of the moraine southwest of Macclesfield, which was dominated by heaths used by the surrounding settlements.⁶⁶

Finally, the Peak District possesses the wettest climate of the region. The above interpretation of east and central Cheshire also applies to the Pennine flanks on both east and west, which also possess broadly similar settlement and field patterns. Soils of the Bardsey and Brickfield 3 associations are common, both

⁶³ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 143-145

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p 289 (specifically in reference to the Salop association); see also *ibid.*, pp 135 (Clifton association) & 144 (Crewe association)

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pp 120-124, 112-116, 248-252 & 248-252

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, pp 152-155, 141-142 & 252-254

formed in Head derived from the underlying sandstones, mudstones, and shales of Millstone Grit and Coal Measures, and both commonly seasonally waterlogged (dark green);⁶⁷ there are also significant occurrences of soils of the Rivington 2 Association, formed from the same parent material, but largely well-drained and tending towards acidity (orange);⁶⁸ and the valley of the River Churnet on the southwest edge of the massif cuts down into underlying Permo-Triassic rocks, thus featuring well-drained brown earths and sands of the Bromsgrove and Bridgnorth Associations (yellow and orange respectively).⁶⁹ On the eastern side, Roberts and Wrathmell suggest that the significant proportion of nucleations along the southeast flank of the Pennines was probably a post-medieval development, connected with the process of industrialisation in this zone.⁷⁰ They suggest that, before this time, there were probably some village-sized nucleations and many hamlets, with a lesser proportion of single farmsteads, set amidst significant common and woodland; there is evidence for planned open fields around some of the villages and hamlets, although the extent and distribution of these is unclear.⁷¹ In the centre of the Peak District the White Peak “possesses its own strong unity.”⁷² It has a higher density of nucleation than the Cheshire Plain, set within an upland landscape of villages and hamlets; many of the nucleations demonstrate traces of planned open field systems based on very long arable strips.⁷³ The climate is not conducive to large-scale arable farming, and the nucleations may owe their existence to the drama of the topography, which forces settlements to cluster in tight valley sites. The limestone plateau of the White Peak is largely

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, pp 90-92 & 109-112.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, pp 275-279.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, pp 120-124 & 112-116.

⁷⁰ Roberts & Wrathmell 2000, pp 47-48 (Pennine Slope sub-province)

⁷¹ *ibid.*, p 48 (Pennine Slope sub-province)

⁷² *ibid.*, p 54 (Cheshire Plain sub-province)

⁷³ *ibid.*, p 54 (Cheshire Plain sub-province)

covered by the upland soils of the Malham 2 Association, formed in Aeolian drift (brown); they are particularly suited to grassland grazing, as they are not easily damaged by the traffic of livestock.⁷⁴

It is thus possible to demonstrate, through application of Williamson's model, that the settlement patterns of the region appear to correlate with the properties of the soils that their inhabitants farmed, at least as far as the intensification of arable agriculture was concerned. By this model, generations of the inhabitants of each settlement had worked to expand their own arable holdings: this was easiest where the soils were more easily worked and the climate amenable, such as substantial parts of the Shropshire Plain; where the soils were more intractable, but the climate amenable, the inhabitants developed complex communal ploughing regimes and expanded the arable towards the edges of the townships, as along the eastern edge of the region and in the vicinity of Chester; elsewhere, where both soils and climate were less amenable, arable intensification was less of an option. It is very important here to emphasise the prevalence of open arable fields in most areas of the entire region, whether they encompassed the majority of a township around one central settlement, as in settlements of the Central Province, or covered a smaller fraction, perhaps associated with several separate hamlets, as in majority of the region, where they coexisted with commonable heaths, mosses, woods and moors. The common use of the various landscapes within a township, and of the heavy ploughs used to work the arable land, appears to have been prevalent, and the large open fields and nucleated villages of the Central Province simply represent an extreme focus in one direction, towards the

⁷⁴ Ragg *et al.* 1984, pp 225-228.

common use of the plough, meadow and stubble to the exclusion of all other types of landscape; elsewhere, practice was more mixed, but always geared towards arable intensification if possible. Scale is very important here, and we should distinguish between the township communities of the Central Province who, encouraged by the fertility of the clay soils but daunted by the difficulty of working them, undertook most of their arable regime collectively, and the smaller families, extended family networks, and groups of neighbours within the townships of the Eastern and Western Provinces who, whilst managing the outlying sources of pasture and other materials with the entire township, preferred to work their ploughlands in these smaller communalities, where easier soils enabled them to do so or intractable soils prohibited anything larger.

Furthermore, it is possible that many of the smaller hamlets and farmsteads across much of the region were the result of post-Conquest expansion; Roberts and Wrathmell note that the hamlets with their small open fields represent the earlier cores of the landscape, and that whereas the clearance of new arable during the eleventh century and before tended to contribute to these open fields, assarting during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries occurred outside these cores, and increasingly added separate enclosed lands to the landscape.⁷⁵ Roberts notes that it is not usually possible to demonstrate the expansion of the open fields after 1250, suggesting that these entities:

remained throughout the Middle Ages sharply distinct from the newer enclosures in severalty. Throughout the whole of the woodland zone the rise of the doctrine of the lord's ownership of the waste during the twelfth

⁷⁵ Roberts and Wrathmell 2000, pp 54-55 (Shropshire Plain and Severn Hills sub-province)

and thirteenth centuries, and the provision of a defence against actions of Novel Disseisin by the Statute of Merton in 1235, are key factors in explaining the swing to individual colonisation and emphasis on personal rather than communal rights.⁷⁶

Even in central and eastern Cheshire, it is worth bearing in mind that the 'old' and 'ancient' enclosures of much of the landscape may in fact owe much to the post-Conquest period.

The preceding analysis is based on settlement and field patterns dating, at the earliest, to the late medieval period, combined with information on the current properties of the soils in the region. There has been no discussion of archaeological evidence for early medieval settlement, of which the diocese is, in any case, largely lacking, although two examples will be discussed at the end of the chapter. Assembling a model on the basis of current historiography, we might suppose that the settlement pattern of the fifth and sixth centuries, whatever it may have been, began to alter during the seventh century at the earliest, when arable intensification began at certain sites, and that the essential components of the patterns discussed above were in place by the tenth or eleventh centuries, with subsequent centuries witnessing the addition of a large number of smaller enclosures and scattered farmsteads. Whilst, this illuminates the settlement history of the later end of the early medieval period, the earlier and middle parts are still largely formless. To investigate this earlier period, we need to change our source material, and so we move now to consider place-name evidence.

⁷⁶ Roberts 1973, p 229

Naming the Land

In a recent review, Alaric Hall has noted that the chronology and form of language change is largely dependent on how stable we understand Anglo-Saxon place-naming practices to have been; he cites Margaret Gelling's assertion that many topographical names, at least in southern and eastern England, were in place by the fifth century, noting that they must therefore have remained stable from that time and, by extension, the language of the vast majority of the population there must have been Old English from that time.⁷⁷ In contrast, Hall sympathises with the view "that place-names in large parts of Britain shifted only gradually to English, with competing names co-existing in variation perhaps for long periods, but with the establishment of a linguistically English place-name stock largely before the time of our earliest documentation"⁷⁸ He thus accepts, as elsewhere does Gelling, that spoken Brittonic, or Primitive Welsh, had probably disappeared in England by the end of the ninth century; crucial in this respect is Gelling's observation that tenth-century boundary clauses for charters relating to the West Midlands "indicate that with very few exceptions the smallest features of the landscape had English names by this time."⁷⁹ Nevertheless we should be aware of the possibility that many such small-scale place-names were coined for the first time by the boundary-walkers, an act that was itself an important part of naming the landscape. The important point here is that the coining of such names was undertaken in the Old English language, and the sheer density of such names, on

⁷⁷ Hall, Alaric. 2010. 'The Instability of Place-Names in Anglo-Saxon England and Early Medieval Wales and the Loss of Roman Toponymy', working paper located at http://www.alarichall.org.uk/alaric_hall_instability_of_anglo-saxon_place-names_working_paper.pdf, p 3 (viewed 4th August 2011); Hall cites Gelling, Margaret & Cole, Ann. 2000. *The Landscape of Place-Names*. Shaun Tyas, Stamford, p xix

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p 2

⁷⁹ Gelling 1992, p 70

and off boundaries, demonstrates that the vast majority of the population was speaking Old English.

Hall investigates the relative stability of place-names through a preliminary study of the loss to the modern landscape of place-names in existing data sets, comprising Anglo-Saxon charters of the seventh to eleventh centuries, Domesday Book, and place-names appearing in early Anglo-Saxon texts up to and including Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. Although the sample size is fairly small, two clear trends are revealed: that the place-names of small places or topographical features are less stable than those for larger places or topographical features; and that from a third to a half of recorded place-names from the seventh century are now lost, but that this proportion declines through subsequent centuries, so that only about a tenth of tenth-century place-names are lost.⁸⁰ Hall carries out the same analysis on the charter boundaries in the Book of Landaff in order to compare the English sample with one from south Wales, and whilst the relation between place size and the likelihood of its loss remains similar, the proportions lost by period is dramatically different, just under two thirds of places recorded in the early-tenth century are now lost, declining gradually to just over a third in the early-twelfth century, with place-names connected with churches proving the most stable.⁸¹ These differences remind us that the corpus of place-names is inextricably linked to place-naming practice, and that, far from simply providing a convenient description of early medieval landscapes, it challenges us to attempt to understand how place-naming was used. The apparent dominance of the English landscape by Old English names from an early date may be due to the relative

⁸⁰ Hall 2010, pp 3-10

⁸¹ *ibid.*, pp 10-15

stability of English names over Welsh ones, and whilst the dominance of Old English-speaking in England by the tenth or eleventh centuries is likely, the disappearance of Welsh names, and therefore of Welsh-speakers, may have occurred across a longer period beforehand.

The place-names of the diocese of Lichfield have received much attention, and are covered by complete series of English Place-Name Society volumes for Cheshire, Shropshire, Derbyshire, and Warwickshire, only Staffordshire remaining incomplete; nevertheless, the recent work of David Horovitz in the latter shire aids in filling the gap.⁸² In the past, scholars have fixed early importance to specific types of name, and have thus attempted to map the advance of Old English-speaking Anglo-Saxon populations from the east via river valleys or along Roman roads, Sylvester picturing the immigrants inexorably cutting their way through the Midland forests to reach the Shropshire-Cheshire Plain.⁸³ The following discussion focuses on several specific place-name elements, not to reconstruct an Anglo-Saxon advance, but to discuss the relative stability of place-names in the landscape of the diocese, and from this to attempt to shed light on the settlement pattern of the region during the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries.

⁸² Dodgson, John McNeal. 1970-1997. *The Place-Names of Cheshire*. Five Parts in Severn Volumes (Part 1 1970, Part 2 1970, Part 3 1977, Part 4 1972, Part 5.1 (2 volumes) 1981, Part 5.2 1997), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Gelling, Margaret. 1990-2006. *The Place-Names of Shropshire*. Five parts (Part 1 1990, Part 2 1995, Part 3 2001, Part 4 2004, Part 5 2006), English Place-Name Society, Nottingham; Cameron, Kenneth. 1959. *The Place-Names of Derbyshire*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Gover, J. E. B., Mawr, A. & Stenton, F. M. 1936. *The Place-Names of Warwickshire*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Horovitz, David. 2005. *The Place-Names of Staffordshire*. David Horovitz, Brewood; see also: Gelling, Margaret. 1974. 'Some Notes on Warwickshire Place-Names', in *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 86, pp 59-79; *eadem*. 1981. 'Some Thoughts on Staffordshire Place-Names', in *North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies*, Vol. 21, pp 1-20

⁸³ Sylvester 1969, pp 90-91

Margaret Gelling has noted that most of the few Brittonic place-names in the region refer largely to significant landscape features such as rivers, mountains or conspicuous hills, and forests.⁸⁴ This is perhaps an extreme case of the trend, noted by Hall, for larger places to possess more stable names. But this in itself does not explain why such names should be more stable, it simply notes a pattern. To investigate this further, we will begin with Lichfield, both for its obvious centrality in this study, and for the light it sheds on the other names. The place-name is first recorded in two eighth-century sources: Stephen of Ripon's *Life* of Wilfrid and, shortly afterwards, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*.⁸⁵ Henry Bradley was the first to suggest a connection between the first element of the name, namely Old English **Lyccid*, the city name *Cair Luitcoyt*, twenty-eighth in a list contained in the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, and the name of the Roman station at Wall, given in the Antonine Itinerary as *Etocetum*, almost certainly originally *Letocetum*, itself a Latinised form of a Brittonic original.⁸⁶ The Brittonic name, now reconstructed as **Letocaiton*, simply means 'grey wood', and as such must originally have been coined as descriptive of the local area; whether it continued to refer to the locality more generally after it had been applied to the Roman settlement is uncertain.⁸⁷ Accordingly, exactly what was meant by the name *Cair Luitcoyt* is also ambiguous, depending as it does on whether the Roman station itself, or the district in which it was situated, provided the context for the location of the city. However, support for the continuing regional application of the name into the early medieval period is provided by a suggestion that the Brittonic name was more widely used as a designation for surviving areas of wildwood, and as such

⁸⁴ Gelling 1992, pp 53-71

⁸⁵ Stephen provides the forms *Onlicitfelda* (or *Anlicitfelda*) and *Lyccitfelda*, whilst Bede gives *Lyccidfelth* (or *Lyccitfeld*), and *Liccitfeld* (or *Liccidfeld*)

⁸⁶ Bradley 1886

⁸⁷ *VCH Staffs.*, Vol. 14, pp 37-38; Gelling 1978, pp 54, 57-59

inspired similar usage of its English translation 'Harwood', using Old English *har*, meaning grey.⁸⁸

Similar problems attach to the Old English place name. Like the Brittonic name, the Old English name is not explicitly habitative, and Douglas Johnson notes that the prefix *on* (or *an*) of Stephen of Ripon's *Onlicitfelda* (or *Anliccitfelda*) indicates that the place given to Chad by Wilfrid was 'in Lichfield', suggesting a regional application of the name.⁸⁹ However, this regional meaning is provided by the widespread yet ambiguous suffix *feld*, for which several variations of meaning have been proposed; moreover, Old English **Lyccid* remains problematic, as it might refer either to the Roman station at Wall or the district in which it is situated, regardless of the suggested regional application of the equivalent Brittonic element. It is possible to tackle this second issue by means of the first. Gelling has suggested that early usage of the term *feld* referred generally to open country, and more specifically to areas of common pasture, the term later attaching to settlements when they were founded within such areas.⁹⁰ Johnson notes that, if *feld* is interpreted as common pasture, it does not aid in deciding between the district name and settlement name interpretations of **Lyccid*, as in both cases it signifies the associated resource.⁹¹ More recently however, Chris Lewis has suggested that *feld* was also used by English-speakers to rename Welsh territorial districts, citing the examples of Eryng in southwest Herefordshire, which became

⁸⁸ Horovitz 2005, p 300; see also Gelling, Margaret. 1978. *Signposts to the Past; Place-names and the history of England*. J. M. Dent & Sons, London, p 40, for surviving examples of the Brittonic place name.

⁸⁹ *VCH Staffs.*, Vol. 14, p 38

⁹⁰ Gelling 1978, pp 127-128; Gelling, Margaret. 1984. *Place-Names in the Landscape*. J. M. Dent & Sons, London, pp 235-245; Gelling, Margaret & Cole, Ann. 2000. *The Landscape of Place-Names*. Shaun Tyas, Stamford, pp 269-279

⁹¹ *VCH Staffs.*, Vol. 14, pp 37-38

Archenfield, and Tegeingl in northeast Wales, which became Englefield.⁹² Ightfield in Shropshire, which shares the unexplained, pre-English name *Gihl* with the nearby river, may provide another example.⁹³ Moreover, Lewis suggests that it is worth reconsidering “names where *feld* is preceded by what has hitherto been regarded as an otherwise unrecorded personal-name, such as the Maccel said to have given his name to Macclesfield”.⁹⁴ For our purposes here however, it is most important that Lichfield, as Lewis points out, also fits this pattern.

Although certainty on this point is elusive, current etymological arguments tend to suggest that **Letocaiton/Letocetum/Luitcoyd/Luitcoed/*Lyccid* was consistently applied to a region or territory. This is more difficult to prove one way or the other during the Romano-British period, but it is quite plausible to envisage the name serving both to name the settlement at Wall, in all its evolving forms through the first to fourth centuries, and the district that it administered. Given the above discussion, it seems more likely that ‘Lichfield’ represents an Old English rendering of a Brittonic territorial name, and thus does not contain a direct reference to the Roman station at Wall. It is also possible to attempt to date when the Old English formulation was created: Margaret Gelling has suggested that Old English **Lyccid* was borrowed from the Primitive Welsh form **Luitged*, a specific development of the Primitive Welsh **Letged*, which derived ultimately from Brittonic **Letocaiton*; current understanding of the sound changes by which Welsh *e* became *ui* date the transformation to c. 675, suggesting that the English borrowing occurred not long before Wilfrid was given the place by Wulfhere, and

⁹² Lewis, C. P. 2007. ‘Welsh Territories and Welsh Identities in Late Anglo-Saxon England’, in N. Higham (ed.), *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 130-143, this reference pp 137-140

⁹³ Gelling 2000, p 275; Gelling 1992, p 69

⁹⁴ Lewis 2007, p 139

perhaps at the establishment of an Old English-speaking population at Lichfield.⁹⁵

The importance of successive settlements as hosts of the district name is crucial here, and indicates the wider importance of larger-scale administration in place-naming practice.

At Lichfield, to use the term *feld*, 'open country', to label a territory with a Brittonic name meaning 'grey wood' may seem contradictory, especially as "place-name and documentary evidence all suggest that this was a sparsely populated region of woodland and heathland in the early medieval period."⁹⁶ The association of a Brittonic name with woodland is in fact fairly common in this region, in which many of these place-names were connected to later medieval forests. The woods (*silvae*) at Morfe and Kinver were mentioned in an eighth-century charter, although the derivation of neither is absolutely secure, the former assumed to be Brittonic but with no obvious meaning, the latter probably descending from Brittonic **Cunobriga*, 'hound hill'.⁹⁷ Brewood and Cannock also appear to derive from names for hills, the former a compound from Brittonic **briga*, 'hill' with a second element Old English *wudu*, 'wood', the latter probably from Welsh *cnwc*, 'hill, lump, hillock', but perhaps from the Old English loanword *cnocc*.⁹⁸ Although some of the individual derivations are not as secure as we might want, together they suggest a consistent practice of naming wooded territories using partially or wholly Brittonic names, which were either cast after the nature of the wood itself, as with

⁹⁵ Gelling 1978, p 100

⁹⁶ Dean, Stephen, Hooke, Della, & Jones, Alex. 2010. 'The 'Staffordshire Hoard': the Fieldwork', in *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 90, pp 139-152, this reference p 148

⁹⁷ Horovitz 2005, pp 346-347 & 396-396; suggestions for Morfe include Primitive Welsh **mor* + *dref*, 'large village', Welsh *morfa*, 'marsh, upland moor', and Brittonic **morhev* 'great summer-place', none of which is obviously relevant to the location; both elements of Kinver have been rationalised under the influence of Old English, the first from Old English *cyne*, 'royal', the second from *fare*, *fær*, 'road', so giving a false etymology 'royal road'

⁹⁸ Horovitz 2005, pp 146 & 172-173

**Letocaiton*, or after a prominent feature within it, hills in the case listed above. There may be two different place-naming practices here: at Lichfield, as argued above, a pre-existing Brittonic territory name was employed, whereas in the other examples it is possible that the territories were established later by Old English speakers, who used the Brittonic names of the focal places within these territories to name them.

However, there is an example of a similar kind of topographical feature being employed to name a territory that certainly existed before the introduction of Old English into the area: Penkrige. The place-name derives from a Brittonic name **Pennocroucion*, assembled from the elements **penno*, 'head, end, headland, chief', and **crug*, meaning 'hill, mound, tumulus', thus meaning 'headland tumulus', 'chief hill' or 'chief mound'.⁹⁹ Its earliest recorded use applies to the Roman station 2 miles south of Penkrige, which was called Pennocrucium, a Latinisation of the Brittonic name, and may refer to a prominent tumulus in that area. The transfer of the name, without additional Old English elements, to Penkrige, necessarily away from both tumulus and Roman station, indicates that the territory already existed, and simply gained a new administrative centre at Penkrige, much like Lichfield. This example suggests that it was quite acceptable for Brittonic territories in this region to be named after features within them, and thus that the wooded territories named after hills described above might also have been Brittonic territories. We can therefore begin to explain the stability of some of the corpus of Brittonic names in the English landscape not simply by their reference to large topographic features, as Hall suggested, but also by their

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, pp 21-22

use to name territories, which may have been defined by or included topographic features such as woods and hills.

Once this is accepted, it is possible to propose the existence of more such territories, centred on later settlements. Penkhull in Staffordshire refers to a wood and a hill, coming from Brittonic *pencet*, 'end of the wood', with Old English *hyll*, 'hill', whilst two more high places in Staffordshire are referenced at Penn, which derives from the same word as the first element of Penkrige, **penno*, and Barr, from Brittonic **barro*, 'top, summit'.¹⁰⁰ Like **Letocaiton*, Prees and Hodnet in Shropshire are both descriptive of local landscapes, meaning respectively 'brushwood' or 'grove', and 'pleasant valley'.¹⁰¹ We should also consider whether settlements sharing a Brittonic name with a nearby river, such as Cound in Shropshire, might also have been given a territorial name rather than, or as well as, the name of the river. Cound is of uncertain meaning, and thus it is not possible to decide whether it was initially applied to the river or some other feature. An example of the latter case is provided by the River Penk, which was earlier the River Penkrige (perhaps originally the River *Pencruc*), taking its name from the territory through which it flowed.¹⁰² That rivers could also give their names to Brittonic territories is indicated by the territory named Tren in the early medieval Welsh poetry of the *Marwnad Cynddylan* and the *Canu Heledd*, which is universally accepted to derive its appellation from the River Tern in eastern Shropshire, the later English form displaying metathesis.¹⁰³ The name is used

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p 433

¹⁰¹ Gelling 1992, pp 68-69

¹⁰² Horowitz 2005, p 432; it is not possible to state when this back formation occurred, whether it was created by Brittonic-speakers or Old English-speakers

¹⁰³ Rowland, Jenny. 1990. *Early Welsh Saga Poetry. A Study and Edition of the Englynion*. D. S. Brewer, Cambridge, p 576

ambiguously in the former poem, which simply states that Cynddylan brought violence 'beyond Tren', possibly (although probably not) referring to the river.¹⁰⁴ However, in the ninth-century *Canu Heledd* Tren is certainly used to refer to a town and a territory, explicitly described as Cynddylan's patrimony.¹⁰⁵ Bassett proposes that the territory can be identified with a later English territory named Ercall, which also features in the *Canu Heledd*.¹⁰⁶ Whether or not this is the case, the use of name derived from a landscape feature to describe both a territory and its administrative centre has clear resonance with the place-names discussed above.

The term 'territory' has been used frequently in the above discussion to describe the areas referred to by the place-names concerned, but the exact nature of these territories has been left deliberately vague. It is possible to explore this by reference to the Domesday survey, and to the manors or estates located at the corpus of places named with Brittonic words. Interestingly, a significant proportion comprised the centres of important royal, comital or episcopal estates: these comprise Lichfield, Penkridge, Kinver, Cannock, Penkhull, Penn, and Eccleshall in Staffordshire, Prees and Hodnet in Shropshire, and Tarvin in Cheshire.¹⁰⁷ Others were held by thegns, but also comprised significant estates, such as Morfe, assessed at a sizeable 5-hides, or Barr, a 9-hide estate split into three 3-hide

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p 175

¹⁰⁵ Rowland 1990, pp 483 & 576

¹⁰⁶ Bassett, Steven. 1992a. 'Medieval Ecclesiastical Organisation in the vicinity of Wroxeter and British Antecedents', in *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Vol. CXLV, pp 1-28, pp 19-23

¹⁰⁷ *DB Staffs.* 2.16, 2.22, 1.7, 1.27, 1.25, 1.16, 12.5-12.6, 2.10-2.13 & 2.20-2.21; *DB Salop.* 4.1.4 & 1.8; *DB Chesh.* B4; Tarvin derives from Welsh *terfyn*, a loanword from Latin *terminus* meaning 'boundary', possibly referring to the River Gowy, although Gelling suggests that it might have applied to a boundary region instead (Gelling 1992, p 65)

thegn's portions.¹⁰⁸ Figure 13 is a graph showing the distribution of Brittonic-derived place-names across different township sizes as recorded in the Domesday survey, calculated as a percentage of the regional corpus, and compared to the distribution of all estates in the survey.¹⁰⁹ Whilst the overall corpus is dominated by estates of a hide or less, falling off quite smoothly as estate-size increases, the curve representing Brittonic names clearly divides into two peaks, and shows that, whilst some of the townships appear to conform to the overall distribution of estate sizes, a significant proportion are distributed within the 4 to 10 hide bracket. Even the smaller townships are, on average, slightly larger than the overall average, centring on 1 to 2 hides rather than 0 to 1; they include some of the place-names discussed above, such as Hodnet, Penkhull and Cannock, as well as others also derived from Brittonic words for topographical features or woods, such as Gnosall and Cheadle in Staffordshire, and Cheadle in Cheshire.¹¹⁰ Indeed, it may be significant that Penkhull, Cannock, and the two Cheadles were all recorded with substantially more ploughlands than hides, suggesting a degree of under-assessment.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ *DB Staffs.* 12.2, 12.25, 12.27 & 12.28

¹⁰⁹ For the purpose of this exercise, the region is defined as the entire shires of Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, and the northern hundreds of Shropshire (Mersete, Baschurch, Hodnet, Wrockwardine, Shrewsbury, Patton and Alnothstree) and Warwickshire (Brinklow, Coleshill, Hunsbury, Marton and Stoneleigh). A comparison of township size against estate size introduces some imbalance, as some townships were split between more than one estate, however this was not nearly as common in these shires as in many of those further east; moreover, in the few cases in which the Brittonic-named townships have been reassembled from more than one estate, the division is probably more likely to have occurred recently in 1086, or to be more apparent than real, as it is to represent an ancient estate morphology, and the reconstructed township is more likely to represent the original land unit

¹¹⁰ Gnosall: *DB Staffs.* 7.18, 2 hides and 3 virgates held by the clerics at Penkrigde in 1066; Cheadle: *DB Staffs.* 1.57 & 11.42, in 1066 1 carucate held by Wulfheah and 1 virgate held by Godgifu in 1066; Cheadle: *DB Chesh.* 26.9, 2 hides held by Gamel in 1066

¹¹¹ Penkhull: 2 hides and 11 ploughlands; Cannock: 1 hide and 15 ploughlands; Cheadle, Staffs.: 1 virgate and 4 ploughlands; Cheadle, Chesh.: 2 hides and 6 ploughlands

In summary, it is productive to understand the stability of many, perhaps most, surviving Brittonic place-names as resulting from their application to territories of importance to Old English-speakers at a time before Welsh-speaking died out, so largely before the ninth century, and quite possibly of importance before the establishment of Old English in the region. The fact that most of these names refer to woods, hills or rivers says more about how these populations named territories than about the relative importance of larger landscape features as against smaller ones.¹¹² Moreover, the importance of Anglo-Saxon estate centres at many of them, even as late as the eleventh century, suggests that the continuity of use of the names may well relate to their complementary attachment, perhaps from the beginning, to administrative centres within these territories, of which the Roman stations near Lichfield and Penkridge simply provide the most obvious earlier examples. The territories themselves appear to have ranged across a broad bracket of sizes, although most were larger than the average estate recorded in Domesday Book. Given the existence of such territories, it is important to enquire whether, from the sixth or seventh centuries, they existed side by side with similar territories with purely Old English names, and it is to this question that we next turn.

It was noted above that the wooded territory of **Letocaiton* might not be expected to have attracted the suffix *-feld*, ‘open country, common pasture’. Perhaps *-lēah* might have been more appropriate; Della Hooke has recently argued convincingly that this term denoted “the kind of open woodland produced when accessible to stock”, “often initially associated with a wood-pasture usage”, and that it was

¹¹² In an analogous example, Bede, in his Ecclesiastical History (ii.14), attaches the name of the Brittonic kingdom of Elmet, described as such in the ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, to a wood, describing the location of a minster “in the forest of Elmet” (‘in silua Elmete’)

employed to describe territories at a variety of scales, from the large Weald of Kent and Sussex (*Andredesleage*), through parishes, manors and townships, to “local woods or patches of wood-pasture that gave their names to lesser medieval settlements or remained wood names.”¹¹³ In our region, we can see this term applied to the proposed territories of Cheadle, in Staffordshire and Cheshire. As mentioned above, Margaret Gelling defines *feld* as ‘open country’, more specifically as a comparative term: “land without trees as opposed to forest, level ground as opposed to hills, or land without buildings.”¹¹⁴ Gelling posits a change in the meaning of *feld*, centred on the tenth century, in which it came much more to refer to the large open arable fields of the growing medieval villages, and whilst this was no doubt the case, she then suggests that, before this time, *feld* was predominantly associated with open, common pasture, onto which the arable fields of settlements labelled with the term had gradually ‘encroached’.¹¹⁵ The latter is misleading, for across this semantic change *feld* remained generally descriptive of ‘open country’, even if this was increasingly arable, and as Gelling herself states, “for most of the pre-Conquest period it was used indifferently of land which might or might not be under the plough.”¹¹⁶ Given Lewis’ hypothesis, rehearsed earlier, that *feld* could be applied to fairly large territories, it appears probable that it could be used in much the same way as *lēah*, from large territories, through townships and estates, to the fields of a single settlement. Moreover, there may have been some overlap in the meaning of the two terms: Hooke notes that *lēah* is glossed with both *silva* and *campus* in pre-Conquest texts, and as the latter term usually provides the Latin gloss for *feld*, it may be advisable to envisage a continuum of

¹¹³ Hooke, Della. 2008. ‘Early medieval woodland and the place-name term *lēah*’, in Padel & Parsons, pp 365-376, quotations from pp 368 & 374

¹¹⁴ Gelling 1984, pp 235

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp 236-237

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p 236

meaning, with the least open wood pasture (*lēah*) at one end, the most open country (*feld*) at the other, and a murky overlap somewhere in the middle.

If this explains how the perhaps moderately-wooded, moderately open territory of Lichfield was understood in the seventh century as a *feld* rather than a *lēah*, it also hints at the reasons for the expansive use of both terms across the region. Gelling suggests that *feld* was particularly productive of settlement names during the sixth and seventh centuries, and if so it may provide a way to identify other early territories to set beside those with Brittonic names discussed above. However, the large numbers of *feld* place-names in our region, and nationally, together with later examples such as Archenfield and Englefield, indicate that the term continued to produce place-names after the seventh century, and perhaps predominantly during the later centuries, as did the even more numerous elements *tūn* and *lēah*; the alternative, that *feld* place-names have remained far more stable since the seventh century than other exclusively early name elements (to be discussed below) and is thus more widely represented, seems rather unlikely. It is certain that *feld* was in use during the earlier period, but it also seems most likely that it continued to be used, and thus it is far less useful for investigating early territories than the Brittonic names discussed above. Like the Brittonic names, a distribution analysis of *feld* (see Figure 14) shows a second peak, but the first peak conforms more closely to the overall distribution, indicating that it is less representative of larger territories than the Brittonic names, and instead largely groups with the more modest estates that, as mentioned above, are dominated by more recent name elements such as *tūn* and *lēah*.

If *feld* and *lēah* should be seen as complimentary terms, they should also be considered together with the word *tūn* ('enclosure, farmstead, settlement, estate'), which, as mentioned above, provides one of the most common place-name elements.¹¹⁷ In a pioneer study of the terms *tūn* and *lēah*, Gelling established the overall mutual exclusivity of the two terms, and the absence of both from late settlement, perhaps from the twelfth century.¹¹⁸ Given the discussion of *feld* above, it is interesting to note that this element tends to group with *lēah*, as against *tūn*, in distribution maps.¹¹⁹ Gelling has noted the "growing and quite impressive number of instances in which an 'x's *tūn*' place-name is firmly connected with a man or woman mentioned in a charter of tenth- or eleventh-century date", suggesting that many of these names, and perhaps the settlements to which they were attached, should be associated with the landholding practices of these later centuries.¹²⁰ We should here recall Hall's findings, namely that on average only ten percent of place-names in tenth-century texts have since been lost; the dominance of *tūn*, *lēah* and *feld* can thus be understood as an expression of the stability of place-names that were of most significance during the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries. Based on a study of place-names in the Chilterns and Essex region, John Baker has recently speculated that *tūn* and *lēah* might also have been used during the sixth and seventh centuries almost as frequently as the habitative and topographical names to be discussed below, but that they do not appear so much in early textual sources because the latter focussed on

¹¹⁷ For *lēah*, see: Hooke 2008, Gelling 1984, pp 198-207, & Gelling 2000, pp 237-242

¹¹⁸ Gelling, Margaret. 1974. 'Some Notes on Warwickshire Place-Names', in *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 86, pp 59-79

¹¹⁹ See further below

¹²⁰ Gelling 1978, p 183

minsters and meeting places rather than more mundane settlements.¹²¹ This should alert us to the fact that some *tūn* and *lēah* names may be associated with the kind of early territories discussed earlier, such as Cheadle, mentioned above, or *Tomtūn*, thought to be an earlier name for Tamworth, which appears in a charter of King Æthelred dated 675x691, witnessed in a twelfth-century copy in the Peterborough archive;¹²² nevertheless, the dominance of the terms in later place-naming practice renders them far less useful when investigating earlier territories.

The mutual exclusivity of *tūn* against *feld* and *lēah* is also demonstrable at the national level: the national distribution of *feld* and *lēah*, which, as mentioned above, tend to group together, comprises a high density band running down the length of England, approximately commensurate with the eastern half of Roberts and Wrathmell's Northern and Western Province, and another higher density cluster in their Southern and Eastern Province, with lower densities in the Central Province and down the north-western edge of the country; in contrast, *tūn*, although widespread across the country, clusters at the highest densities in the Central Province and the north-western edge of the country, essentially areas where wide vales, large plains, and predominantly open country prohibited the use of terms more descriptive of a varied landscape.¹²³ To these distributions we can add the place-name element *halh*, 'nook, hollow, dry ground in a marsh, administrative salient', which is common in our region, and nationally tends to group with *feld* and *lēah*, although it is far denser in the western cluster of these names than the south-eastern; it appears to fill a semantic gap left by *feld* and

¹²¹ Baker, John T. 2006. *Cultural Transition in the Chilterns and Essex Region, 350 AD to 650 AD*. University of Hertfordshire Press, Hatfield, p 229-230

¹²² Kelly 2009, No. 4c, pp 178-185; Stenton 1933, p 315

¹²³ See the distribution maps at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/english/ins> (accessed 10th August 2011)

lēah, describing a landscape not particularly wooded, but confined in some way, so not open either. Gelling's research again suggests that, as with *feld*, *lēah* and *tūn*, the term began to be used in place-name formation early, but continued in use into the eleventh century.¹²⁴ These patterns indicate that all these terms were essentially being used in the same way, and in line with the earlier discussion we should understand this usage as the naming of territories, together with their focal settlements, the majority of which in our region comprised the dominant estate type, assessed at around a hide or less, forming many of the later townships, and initially established in the ninth, tenth or eleventh centuries.

Far more useful in probing earlier territories are a set of so-called habitative terms. It has been common for place-name scholars to attempt to identify early place-name elements in the south and east by comparing them to the locations of furnished burials, supposedly the calling-cards of the earliest Anglo-Saxons. For example, in 1966, in a negative version of this process, John McNeal Dodgson demolished the previously well-regarded theory that *-ingas* and *-ingahām* place-names, meaning respectively 'followers of *n*' and 'homestead of the followers of *n*', marked the earliest settlement locations of Anglo-Saxon tribes, by demonstrating that they were almost mutually exclusive with the locations of furnished inhumation and cremation cemeteries; he consequently suggested that, given the predominance of these names in the south and east, they must have been coined fairly early but represent secondary colonisation away from the initial colonisation sites represented by the burials.¹²⁵ Such a methodology is not possible in our region, as it contains very few furnished burials. However, it may in any case

¹²⁴ Gelling 1984, pp 100-111; Gelling 2000, pp 123-133

¹²⁵ Dodgson, John McNeal. 1966. 'The significance of the distribution of English place-names in *-ingas*, *-inga-* in south-east England', in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 10, pp 1-29

proceed from a false assumption: that wherever Old-English speakers were found during the fifth, sixth and early-seventh centuries, they were bound to be burying their dead in furnished burials. It would be perverse to deny a connection between first-generation immigrants and furnished burial culture, especially cremations close to the eastern seaboard, and it does seem to have been the case that most populations living within the sphere of *-ingas* and *-inga-* place-names did not practice these rites, whilst many of those living within the sphere of *-hām* place-names (‘village, manor, homestead’) did, but this does not necessarily mean that a substantial number of either were not speaking Old English from the fifth or sixth centuries. It is possible that the names were coined during the same period but for different reasons, and the fact that both have survived in reasonable quantities, despite their southerly and easterly distribution indicating early coinage, suggests that both types denoted settlements that continued to remain important.

It is these latter points that are of most importance in the northwest Midlands. Indeed, it is this difference between the south and east on one hand and the north and west on the other that is more remarkable, and probably, as assumed above, indicates an important temporal distinction between the periods that places were named. However, the region does include a few *-hām* names and a very few *-ingahām* names, and these are thus likely to represent early-established territories. Furthermore, Dodgson has also made a case for the noun-forming suffix *-ing*, when it appears “in a specialised form, a palatalized and assibilated form with the pronunciation *-indge*, *-inch*, which represents an archaic locative-inflected form of a common-noun or place-name containing the *-ing* suffix”, and

which he suggests was obsolete by 700.¹²⁶ Of these three terms, the *hām* names best lend themselves to the sort of distribution analysis used above for the Brittonic names, the other two terms being too little represented in the region for such an analysis to be meaningful. The graph for *hām* (see Figure 15) is somewhat disappointing, displaying a very modest second peak that nevertheless includes a small set of particularly large townships, in a bracket from 5 hides to 20 and beyond.

The names formed from these three terms are not the only purely early Old English names in the region for which we can posit long-term stability. Gelling has drawn attention to the importance of topographical names in place-name formation from an early period, in particular the importance of such elements in the names of central settlements in large estates.¹²⁷ We will focus on two of these. The first, *ēg*, meaning ‘island, dry ground in a marsh’, is particularly important, as it is overall not a particularly common place-name element, especially in minor names and field names, but was the most common place-name element in the corpus of English texts composed before 735, and is therefore likely to have had a fairly exclusively early usage, and to have proved quite stable subsequently.¹²⁸ Moreover, Gelling suggests that, as nearly half the number of compound *-ēg* place-names contain a personal name as their first element, the term may have had a “quasi-habitative meaning”, which, following the above discussion, we can understand to describe its usage in naming focal settlements and their associated estates or territories.¹²⁹ Overlapping to a small extent with the meaning of *ēg* is

¹²⁶ Dodgson 1997, p 279

¹²⁷ Gelling 1978, pp 118-126; Gelling 1984; Gelling 2000

¹²⁸ Gelling 1984, pp 34-40; Gelling 2000, pp 37-44

¹²⁹ Gelling 1984, p 39

the second term, *dūn*, which Gelling suggests most commonly meant ‘hill with a summit suitable for settlement’, and was thus another ‘quasi-habitative’ topographical term, used in a territorial sense; she also suggests that it was not employed for major place-names much after 800, as it is not found in areas of ninth-century and later Anglo-Saxon colonisation, such as Cornwall or the Weald of Kent and Sussex.¹³⁰

Whilst neither of these terms is particularly common in the region, they are considerably more so than the early habitative names. Figures 16 and 17 show their distributions in our region across different township sizes, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared to the distribution of all estates in the survey.¹³¹ Yet again, it is immediately apparent that distributions of *-ēg* and *-dūn* names is very similar to that of the Brittonic, *hām* and *feld* names, with two peaks, one conforming with the overall distribution, although here demonstrating a slightly larger average township size, and the other ranged across a bracket from 4 to 10 hides and occasionally more. Again, some of the townships represented by the second peak, such as Eyton-on-Severn, Repton, Long Eaton and Bupton were held by the earls or the bishop in 1066, but others, such as Caldy, Edgmond, Spondon and Seisdon were held by thegns.¹³² Likewise, some of the smaller townships, such as Puleston, Quarndon, Sandon and Cauldon were in royal or

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, pp 140-158; Gelling 2000, pp 164-173

¹³¹ The total regional corpus is identical to that used earlier

¹³² Eyton-on-Severn: *DB Salop.* 3b.2, 8.5 hides held by Earl Leofric in 1066; Repton: *DB Derbs.* 1.20-1.26, just over 16 carucates held by Earl Ælfgar in 1066; Long Eaton: *DB Derbs.* 2.2, 12 carucates held by the bishop in 1066, soke of the caput at Sawley; Bupton: *DB Derbs.* 2.3, just over 5 carucates held by the bishop in 1066; Caldy: *DB Chesh.* 3.8 & 10.4, in 1066 3 hides held by Leofnoth and 1 hide held by Earngeat; Edgmond: *DB Salop.* 4.1.23, 14 hides held by Leofwin Young in 1066; Spondon: *DB Derbs.* 6.67, 5 carucates held by Stori in 1066; Seisdon: *DB Staffs.* 5 hides held by four men, probably thegns of the king, in 1066

comital hands in 1066, whilst, again, others were in the hands of thegns.¹³³ Given the similarities in distribution, and in the earlier date at which the names were probably coined, it is likely that a similar explanation applies: namely, that these territories were named at some point in the seventh, eighth, or possibly ninth centuries, and remained sufficiently significant in some way for their names to maintain stability into the eleventh century.

One other potentially early, and therefore more stable, place-name term is *burh*, 'defended place', later 'defended manor house, town'.¹³⁴ As this semantic change indicates, *burh* continued in use throughout the early medieval period, and its common presence as the second element in a compound name beginning with a personal name suggests that it maintained an association with estate or territorial identity throughout that period. Another form of compound is provided by *burh-tūn*, modern Burton or Bourton, which might either describe a settlement near a defended place, perhaps an old fortification such as a hill fort, or a defended settlement; either way this may be a predominantly later development, to be counted amongst the uses of *tūn* as described above. A distribution analysis of the occurrence of the term in Domesday Book across the region, as a simplex name or as the second element in a compound name, produces familiar results (see Figure 18), namely two peaks, the first suggesting a slightly larger than average size for the smaller territories, and the second spread across a range of larger estates from 4 to 10 hides. Again, we have in *burh* a corpus of significant

¹³³ Puleston: *DB Salop.* 4.19.3, 1 hide held by Earl Edwin in 1066; Quarndon: *DB Derbs.* B1, held with Little Eaton at 9 bovates by a church in the king's lordship in 1066; Sandon: *DB Staffs.* 1.13, 1 hide held by Earl Ælfgar in 1066; Cauldon: *DB Staffs.* 11.4, 1 virgate held by Godgifu in 1066

¹³⁴ Gelling 1978, pp 143-146

place-names, many of which are likely to have been coined in the ninth century or before, and subsequently to have remained stable.

Another important place-name element in our region is *eccles*, which derives from the Primitive Welsh **egles*, deriving ultimately from Latin *ecclesia* meaning 'a body of Christians, a church'.¹³⁵ In our region it occurs at Eccleshall in Staffordshire and Exhall in Warwickshire, in which it is compounded with Old English *halh*; at Eccleston in Cheshire, where it is compounded with Old English *tun*; and twice in north Derbyshire, where it is in simplex form.¹³⁶ In his seminal study of the place-name element, Kenneth Cameron noted that *tun* and *halh* were the commonest second elements within his sample of fourteen compounded place-names in Britain containing *eccles* as the first element, and that compounded names substantially outweigh simplex names.¹³⁷ Cameron's study also revealed that these examples were part of a larger cluster of place-names containing *eccles* that also includes examples in south Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire; in contrast, there are no examples in the other ridings of Yorkshire, in Cumbria, the East Midlands, the central south or southwest of England, and only one or two examples in Norfolk, Kent and County Durham.¹³⁸ Cameron omitted all but three examples of *eccles* names in Scotland, considering them problematic in that they might more easily derive from Gaelic *eaglais*.¹³⁹ It is important to note, however, that the element is quite extensively distributed across Lowland Scotland, almost

¹³⁵ Horovitz 2005, p 243; Cameron, Kenneth. 1968. 'Eccles in English Place-Names', in M. W. Barley & R. P. C. Hanson (eds.), *Christianity in Britain, 300-700*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 87-92

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, pp 87 & 88

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p 88

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, p 89

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, p 90

all examples located south of the Mounth, both in its simplex form and compounded with English and Gaelic elements.¹⁴⁰

The import of the place-name element is not entirely clear. Cameron followed Ekwall and Jackson in asserting that it may indicate the presence of a Brittonic centre of worship, which Primitive Welsh-speakers had called *egles* when speaking to incoming Old English-speakers. Gelling has maintained a suggestion that the compounds with *halh* may have utilised that term in its sense of 'administrative salient', perhaps referring to the protected or exempted nature of Christian communities at these locations; she supported this with reference to G. W. S. Barrow's work on northern shires, in which he noted the proximity of *eccles* place-names in Lancashire and Kent to centres of later secular authority.¹⁴¹ The possibility should be noted, however, that these compound names, in both *halh* and *tūn*, might have remained more stable than their fellows in other areas precisely because of such proximity, rather than because of any innate quality of the *eccles* concerned. Cameron also aired the possibility, on the basis of the clustering of *eccles* place-names, that the term might have been borrowed into Old English as a localised loan word, although admitted that "there is no independent evidence that it was ever taken over into colloquial use".¹⁴² Nevertheless, Richard Sharpe has noted that the element is not attested amongst the early place-names of Celtic Britain or Ireland: "in Wales and Cornwall *eglwys* and *eglos* are slow to become productive of place-names, and in Irish the word *eclais*, common from an early date to mean an ecclesiastical institution, is late to appear as a place-name

¹⁴⁰ MacQueen, John. 2007. *Ninian and the Picts*. Fifteenth Whithorn Lecture, Friends of the Whithorn Trust, Whithorn, pp 7-8 & 20

¹⁴¹ Gelling 1978, pp 96-99 (citing Barrow, G. W. S. 1973. 'Pre-feudal Scotland: shires and thanes', in *idem*, *The Kingdom of the Scots*, pp 7-68, her reference pp 26ff); Gelling 1984, p 109

¹⁴² Cameron 1968, p 88-89

element”]; he thus argues that the English place-names were not simply reproductions of Brittonic place-names, and supports Cameron’s suggestion that *eccles* may instead have been an Old English loan word “being (however briefly) productive of place-names in English rather than Brittonic.”¹⁴³

If we assume that *eccles* was a short-lived loanword into Old English, then it cannot necessarily be used to suggest the presence of an earlier Brittonic territory, unless the presence of a church amounted to the same thing. Moreover, given the prominence of the element as a descriptive word used in relation to the common settlement terms *tun* and *halh*, it is probably more likely that such a church or place of worship was simply the most notable landmark at the site of the settlement concerned. However, the derivation of the loanword from Brittonic indicates that we are here dealing with some of the earlier examples of *tūn* and *halh* names, and the stability of these names must argue for some sort of importance, if only at a local scale, after their coinage; certainly some of the *eccles* names were located at the centre of modest estates in 1066. Unfortunately, it is simply not possible, for obvious reasons, to quantify how many *eccles* place-names did not survive. Furthermore, whereas it is possible that some of the Brittonic churches fell out of use at the same time as they entered the place-name record, it is also possible that in some cases, such as Eccleshall in Staffordshire, the church was appropriated as the basis for a minster, just as Wilfrid did at ‘consecrated places’ (*loca sancta*) vacated by Briton clerics in Northumbria.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Sharpe, Richard. 2002. ‘Martyrs and Local Saints in Late Antique Britain’, in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 75-154, this reference p 147

¹⁴⁴ VW c. 17

An explanation for the cluster of such names in the northwest Midlands must be constructed around the specific context of the introduction of Old English speech to that area, when Primitive Welsh was an important living language. Cameron noted that “all the compound names are situated in areas of Britain not settled by the Anglo-Saxons at an early date, *in the main* from about 600 onwards.”¹⁴⁵ In fact, if we assume that a term denoting a Brittonic church is most likely to have become an English loanword at a time when Old English speakers were new to the area, then it is possible to correlate the names in the West Riding of Yorkshire with the introduction of Old English into the territory of Elmet, whose king, according to the *Historia Brittonum*, was deposed by King Eadwine of Northumbria (616-633).¹⁴⁶ If the use of the name is to be confined to a short period, perhaps we should consider the first half of the seventh century, and those Old English-speaking groups involved in pushing Northumbrian networks westwards at this time. Alternatively, the examples in Yorkshire are outliers of the cluster, which is centred in south Lancashire, and it is possible that it first developed here; there is no textual evidence to aid in identifying the time when Old English speakers first arrived here, although it is not likely to have been much later than the early- to mid-seventh century. It can also be tentatively suggested that the numerous examples in southern Scotland derive from English usage, forming a distinct but perhaps related phenomenon, and dated to the mid- to later-seventh century when King Oswiu of Northumbria gained overlordship of the Britons and Picts, and perhaps granted lands to his thegns there.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Cameron 1968, pp 89

¹⁴⁶ *HB* c. 63

¹⁴⁷ *HE* ii.5

Patterns

Figure 19 shows all the place-names containing Brittonic elements, the Old English elements *hām*, *ingahām*, Dodgson's specialised *ing*, *ēg*, *dūn*, *burh*, and *eccles* across the region, overlaid on the soil map discussed earlier. In all cases it is intended to indicate the locations stable place-names, which are likely to have been established before the tenth century at the latest, and which correspondingly illustrate the areas that are most likely to have witnessed some form of stable Old English-speaking habitation since perhaps the sixth or seventh centuries. It is immediately notable that there is a fairly even distribution of place-names across the entire diocese, with regional concentrations of specific elements, such as *dūn* in the Peak District, which might be expected from the topography. Areas not represented in the plotted place-name corpus may suffer from the modest size of the set of place-name elements utilised: for example, the probably early district name Hales, applied to an area on the Staffordshire-Shropshire border and largely commensurate with an area of Bromsgrove association soils (yellow) southwest of Stoke upon Trent on the map, would have helped to fill a notable gap in the figure if the place-name element *halh* had been plotted.¹⁴⁸ The western edge of the diocese of Lichfield corresponds fairly well with the edge of purely English place-names, there being a zone beyond in which both English and modern Welsh names coexist, beyond which the toponymy is purely Welsh.¹⁴⁹ There is not space

¹⁴⁸ Horovitz 2005, p 290

¹⁴⁹ See Sylvester 1969, p 106, and Morgan, Richard. 2008. 'Place-names in the Northern Marches of Wales', in O. J. Padel & D. N. Parsons (eds.), *A Commodity of Good Names; Essays in Honour of Margaret Gelling*, Shaun Tyas, Donington, pp 204-216; the latter notes (p 207) that most Welsh place-names without corresponding English forms are only recorded after the later thirteenth century, but assembles evidence for the coexistence of English and Welsh speakers for a substantial time beforehand. Morgan concludes that (p 215) that Welsh-speakers were not common east of Offa's Dyke before the eleventh century, but the relative instability of Welsh names demonstrated by Hall suggests that a multi-lingual region may have existed for longer, and Lewis'

here to discuss this zone in detail, but suffice it to note that English kings had pushed English administration beyond the current western edge of the diocese by the early-eleventh century, and that Offa's Dyke demonstrates that a Mercian king certainly attempted to extend Mercian influence beyond it in the later-eighth century; it is arguably the case that the current edge of the diocese corresponds with the initial extent of the establishment of Old English speech in the area by the eighth century, and that English-speakers were not firmly established beyond it before the mid-ninth century at the earliest.¹⁵⁰ All place-names in the figure might therefore have been coined as early as the seventh century, although may date to the subsequent two centuries, and a small few may even be later than that.

A second observation concerns the locations of the place-names with respect to the soil types. Earlier in the chapter reference was made to Williamson's work in East Anglia, which had demonstrated the preference of Anglo-Saxon furnished burials and political and administrative centres of the fifth to seventh centuries for more easily-worked soils. A similar preference is apparent here, as the vast majority of the place-names are located on patches of soils with moderate qualities, neither too wet nor too dry or acidic. A notable exception is the Peak District, although here the grouping of place-names around the upland Aeolian soils of the White Peak may express the importance of a pastoral regime, as discussed earlier. Furthermore, whilst the scale of the figure precludes detailed

study of *Mersete* hundred on the Shropshire border (2007, pp 134-136) suggests that, here at least, English-speakers were the interlopers

¹⁵⁰ The mid-ninth century horizon is based on a comparison with other areas and assumes a general parity of experience: the northern part of the Welsh kingdom of Eryng was lost to the English around the mid-eighth century, and its toponymy was completely anglicised (Sims-Williams, Patrick. 1990. *Religion and Literature in Western England 600-800*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p 45), whilst Cornwall, conquered by the English from the early-ninth century, retained a Cornish toponymy and speech (Woolf, Alex. 2007. 'Apartheid and Economics in Anglo-Saxon England', in N. J. Higham (ed.), *Britons in Anglo-Saxon England*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp 115-129, this reference p 120)

observations, and many of the patches of moderate soils are small or ribbon-like, where larger areas of such soils exist it is a notable feature of many of the place-names that they are located on or towards the edges of such deposits. Finally, several areas, for example the Weaver valley around Northwich, or the Sow valley northwest of Stafford, or the Severn valley southeast of Shrewsbury, or the Derwent valley north of Derby, display distinct clusters of place-names, and it is possible that more such clusters would be apparent if, for example, the earlier, more stable instances of the place-name elements *tūn*, *lēah* and *feld* could be separated from their later fellows and plotted on the figure.

What might these patterns express? It has been suggested several times above that these place-name elements should be considered to refer both to focal administrative settlements and to their associated territories, whether of a modest size (perhaps around a hide) or of a much greater extent. The second peak in their township-size distribution charts probably indicates that such stable place-names were often associated with larger territories, but it is difficult to distinguish whether their stability derived solely from their size, or their size was one aspect of a more complex set of reasons for their stability. Any advocate of the former assertion must acknowledge that many of the estates were smaller in 1066, more comparable with the average size of the majority of estates in the survey, and the latter assertion may be supported by the observation that a significant proportion of the estates, although by no means all, were in the hands of the king, earls or bishop in that year. Explanations along both lines can be couched as follows: firstly, most of the estates were once toward the large end of the size range, but within a century or so of the Domesday survey a proportion were reduced in size,

perhaps through the granting away of outlying parts of the estate, quite drastically in the case of some of the *hām* places; or secondly, the estates were always spread across a range of sizes, but most were once in the hands of socially significant landholders, and a proportion had since been granted away to thegns by 1066. Such a simplistic dichotomy is not entirely satisfactory, as it no doubt obscures greater complexities, but it provides a useful basis for discussion of the evidence at hand.

Ultimately, the suggestion that all the earlier and more stable place-names denoted large territories is not supported by their distribution, as their tendency to cluster denies a substantial portion the room for such an expansive meaning. It is perhaps more useful to envisage a set of overlapping territories, of which Lichfield provides a useful example: as discussed above, the Brittonic-derived district name applied to both the settlement and its attached territory, which, if the later medieval manorial arrangement is at all representative, included within it the townships of Hints, another Brittonic-derived name, and Longdon, the 'long hill', which later became the centre of the manorial demesne.¹⁵¹ Here, the latter two territories were nested within the larger territory of Lichfield, and it can be suggested that they owe the stability of their names to their long-term association with the important episcopal centre at Lichfield. Such an interpretation can be applied more generally to the other clusters of stable place-names, indicating that we should understand the distribution map to show the locations of early (seventh- to ninth-century) territorial centres together with their penumbrae of dependent settlements.

¹⁵¹ For Hints and Longdon see Horovitz 2005, pp 317-318 & 369

It is more difficult to identify the former amongst the latter, especially considering that this is an incomplete corpus of stable place-names and that arrangements may have changed across the centuries, although those places in the hands of royal, comital and episcopal persons in 1066 may provide a useful starting place. Most importantly, such an interpretation connects the stability of place-names with the bonds of patronage and clientage that defined territories during the early medieval period, and suggests that, whilst the conventions of place-naming at any given time were no doubt generally understood amongst regional communities, those place-names that lasted across generations were dependent for their success on association with the people who managed to maintain and transmit a more widespread social importance. The corollary of this is that place-names containing these elements may once have been more widespread, but those associated with the less socially influential parts of the community were less stable, and were renamed as *tūn*, *lēah*, *feld*, *halh* and other terms became more popular, eventually gaining greater stability, along with the settlement pattern itself, from the tenth century onwards.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, it appears likely that the core of the later medieval settlement and field patterns in the diocese were the result of an intensification of arable farming regimes, undertaken at varying scales of cooperation within township communities depending on soil and climatic conditions, which, from comparison with other areas of the country, probably began in the seventh or eighth centuries, but perhaps only became a dominant trend during the tenth century. The place-name evidence correlates with this

picture, in so far as Hall's study at a national scale has suggested that place-names became far more stable through the ninth and tenth centuries, whilst place-name elements with a more exclusively early use appear, within the diocese, to have been associated with the territories of the more socially influential, such as kings, ealdormen and bishops, based at focal settlements on easier soils, which must have acted as centres of local patronage, and where we might expect the earliest phases of arable intensification to have occurred. Whilst this gives the settlement history of the early medieval period from the sixth or seventh centuries a general shape, a synthetic interpretive framework in which to set it, and by which the drive for arable intensification might be better understood, is still lacking. This will be tackled in the concluding chapter; here, to complete this study of settlement history, we must consider the meagre archaeological evidence for early medieval settlement in the diocese.

Early Medieval Settlements

Given the generalised, and somewhat impressionistic nature of the picture built on the evidence discussed above, it is instructive to enquire whether it is supported by specific site histories. Two sites in the diocese have been subject to comparatively large-scale excavation: Tatton Park in northwest Cheshire, published by N. J. Higham and T. Cane, and Catholme in southeast Staffordshire, published by Stuart Losco-Bradley and Gavin Kinsley.¹⁵² Tatton is located on a

¹⁵² Higham, N. J. & Cane, T. 1996/7. 'The Tatton Park Project, Part I: Prehistoric to Sub-Roman Settlement and Land Use', in *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, Vol. 74, pp 1-61; Higham, N. J. 1998/9. 'The Tatton Park Project, Part 2: The Medieval Estates, Settlements and Halls', in *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, Vol. 75, pp 61-133; Losco-Bradley, Stuart & Kinsley, Gavin. 2002. *Catholme. An Anglo-Saxon Settlement on the Trent Gravels in Staffordshire*. Department of Archaeology, University of Nottingham, Nottingham; Buteux, Simon &

small deposit of glaciofluvial soils of the Wick 1 association (yellow on the figure), and is thus a place where we might expect a more stable settlement context. The entire township was emparked in the eighteenth century, preserving the earthwork remains of a deserted medieval village from the ravages of later agricultural improvements.¹⁵³ The excavation included the sampling and analysis of peat cores from two valley mires close to the village, which provides evidence for a late-prehistoric phase of agriculture followed by woodland regeneration for much of the Roman period, and the subsequent re-establishment of arable agriculture in the late- or post-Roman period, including the cultivation of rye, wheat and hemp, continuing alongside a grass-based pastoral regime that increasingly dominates the sample into the post-Conquest period.¹⁵⁴ The horizon demonstrating the beginning of the early medieval arable regime was radiocarbon dated to AD 430-780, and whilst this might support an intensification of arable production in the area in the eighth century, it might equally apply to the situation three centuries before.

In support of the latter option, Higham and Cane excavated an early medieval settlement, comprising an elongated rectangular building, perhaps a house, and a smaller subsidiary building, perhaps a store, enclosed by a sub-rectangular enclosure defined by a palisade or hedge, which, on the basis of several radiocarbon dates, they dated to the period AD 300-600.¹⁵⁵ The settlement was almost totally lacking in finds, the exception comprising fragments of a rotary quern, testifying to the process of grain on the site, which was also supported by

Chapman, Henry. 2009. *Where Rivers Meet. The archaeology of Catholme and the Trent-Tame confluence*. CBA Research Report 161, Council for British Archaeology, York

¹⁵³ Higham & Cane 1996/7, pp 1 & 4

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*, pp 8-10

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, pp 45-56

the discovery of a possible threshing floor; it thus appears likely that the post-Roman arable history of the site begins with this settlement, and whilst a subsequent expansion of arable farming cannot be demonstrated from the pollen core, we should probably not expect it, given the intemperate climate of this part of Cheshire. Higham and Cane suggest that this settlement was abandoned after about a century at most, but continuity of the pollen signatures suggests that some form of settlement and arable activity also continued in the vicinity. The next medieval occupation on the excavation site included a sherd of 'Chester Ware' (tenth to eleventh centuries) and a mid- to late-Saxon clay loomweight, both in later contexts, but indicating nearby occupation perhaps from the tenth century; indeed, the first building of this phase could not be precisely dated, and may have belonged to this period.¹⁵⁶ From this point, occupation on the site was continuous into the fourteenth century, and can thus be associated with the medieval landscapes identifiable around the village.¹⁵⁷ These largely conform to the general description given earlier for central and east Cheshire: the township contained the main village and a smaller hamlet to the north, each with distinct yet contiguous open fields, which were fairly small and were surrounded by areas of woodland, marsh, moss, moor and heath.¹⁵⁸ We thus have, at Tatton, a settlement that appears to have stabilised its position by the twelfth century, perhaps as early as the tenth, but with evidence of occupation as early as the immediate post-Roman period, demonstrating a continuous arable regime from around this time. This at least fits within the model presented above, although it contributes nothing to the

¹⁵⁶ Higham 1998/9, pp 85-86

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*, pp 86-88

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, pp 71-78

concept of arable intensification, instead demonstrating an increasing reliance on stock farming that must have characterised much of this part of Cheshire.¹⁵⁹

The early medieval settlement at Catholme was also located on a patch of soils of the Wick 1 association, on the edge of a gravel terrace immediately above the alluvial floodplain of the River Trent, close to the latter's confluence with the Tame. This area had witnessed extensive activity during the prehistoric and Roman periods, and local excavations include a Neolithic cursus and circular monuments, many Bronze Age barrows, and Iron Age and Roman trackways and enclosures located along the edge of the terrace; the field immediately south of the early medieval settlement produced pottery of the third and fourth centuries, indicating the presence of a late-Roman settlement in the area that might have attracted the succeeding early medieval activity.¹⁶⁰ Half a kilometre south of the settlement, in Wychnor a furnished early medieval cemetery was located during nineteenth-century gravel extraction, containing artefacts dated to a period between the fifth and early-seventh centuries.¹⁶¹

We may thus assume the presence in the vicinity of a settlement whose inhabitants buried their dead here; however, radiocarbon dates from the Catholme settlement, which was notably lacking in dateable finds, suggest that occupation there began around the early-seventh century and thus that it largely post-dated the life of the cemetery.¹⁶² The excavators suggest that the Catholme settlement may be the final stage in a series of settlement shifts beginning with a late-Roman settlement and continuing through a fifth- and sixth-century settlement, both

¹⁵⁹ *ibid.*, p 101

¹⁶⁰ For the prehistoric activity see Buteux & Chapman 2009, and for the late-Roman pottery at Catholme, see *ibid.* p 143 & Losco-Bradley & Kinsley 2002, pp 20-21

¹⁶¹ Losco-Bradley & Kinsley 2002, pp 23-27

¹⁶² *ibid.*, pp 120-123

somewhere nearby to the south.¹⁶³ If so, the seventh century appears to have inaugurated a more stable period of settlement, as the radiocarbon dates suggest that it continued to be occupied on this site until at least the late-ninth century, although probably not much longer beyond, as there was a lack of later, more widespread pottery types on the site.

The settlement was arranged around a trackway leading from the west to the floodplain; at the terrace edge this trackway passed through a ditched enclosure, whilst to either side of the trackway other areas of the settlement were defined by more ditches, fences and subsidiary trackways. Structures, ditches and fences across the settlement were subject to periodic recut and rebuilding, a process particularly focussed on the enclosure straddling the trackway, demonstrating both the long life of the settlement and the focal importance of the central enclosure.¹⁶⁴ Helena Hamerow suggests that the trackways imply the movement of stock, and several holloways leading down from the terrace to the floodplain were noted at the southern end of the settlement.¹⁶⁵ Explicit associations with arable production were lacking, although, as Hamerow suggests, grain storage may have been one of many uses of the ubiquitous sunken-featured buildings found at Catholme as at many other Anglo-Saxon settlement sites across the country.¹⁶⁶ In any case, the siting of the settlement on easily-worked soils suggests that arable production was an important part of its landed regime.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*, p 123

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, pp 115-120

¹⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p 127

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p 127

Indeed, it is important to note that the site of the settlement is located at the edge of the township of Barton-under-Needwood, to which settlement it is connected by an ancient lane that may once, if early medieval in origin, have coupled with the central trackway of the early medieval settlement. The place-name derives from *bær-tun*, 'barley farm', later indicating a demesne farm or outlying grange, and it is perhaps not too fanciful to see the settlement at Catholme as a predecessor to Barton, later replaced, perhaps in the tenth century, by the extant settlement to the northwest.¹⁶⁷ The latter settlement is located on the wetter soils of the Wigton Moor and Clifton associations (both dark green on the figure), and the temperate climate and proximity of good meadowland in the Trent floodplain may have encouraged the exploitation of these more demanding soils along the lines of Williamson's model. Domesday Book records that Barton 'with its dependencies' was held by Earl Ælfgar in 1066, for 3 hides but with a huge 18 ploughlands.¹⁶⁸ The township lay in the parish of Tatenhill ('Tata's hill'), which was not recorded in the survey, but may have provided the original manorial focus of the barton; it may even have been included within the Domesday statistics for Barton, if the latter acted as the focus of the estate's demesne.¹⁶⁹ The settlement at Catholme is extraordinary in that it can be placed at the very beginning of the phase of settlement stabilisation described earlier, and also lies at the earliest end of the period during which Anglo-Saxon settlements in England began to make use of ditches to define space, which tends to occur for the first time in the seventh and eighth centuries.¹⁷⁰ Given the place-name evidence, both features may well express its tight association with a nearby territorial focus, perhaps Tatenhill, and

¹⁶⁷ Horovitz 2005, p 104

¹⁶⁸ *DB Staffs.* 1.20

¹⁶⁹ Horovitz 2005, p 530

¹⁷⁰ Hamerow, Helena. 2002. *Early Medieval Settlements. The Archaeology of Rural Communities in Northwest Europe 400-900*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p 97

this may also be supported by the poverty of material culture found at Catholme, which largely comprises an assemblage of handmade pottery.¹⁷¹ If it was populated by land-working families more closely dependent on a local territorial authority rather than more independent families, not much more might be expected, whilst the more planned form of the settlement may have been due to a certain amount of external oversight, and its stability derived from more intensive working of the surrounding arable fields.

Both early medieval settlements in the diocese that have been subjected to large-scale excavation can therefore be fitted into the model derived from larger scale settlement distribution, place-name evidence and national comparison outlined earlier in the chapter. In each case, a more intensely local focus highlights the particularities of the settlements concerned, emphasising the relationships developed between the inhabitants, the local soils and the climate, and, in the case of Catholme, enabling the proposition of a hypothesis concerning the community's relationship to other local settlements. Nevertheless, the general model must remain hypothetical until a larger amount of archaeological data can be raised in support or refutation of it. By far the majority of the communities inhabiting the diocese of Lichfield during the early medieval period must continue to be understood at this more general level. However, communities associated with minsters can be explored further. This chapter has had nothing to say of the archaeological evidence recently excavated at Lichfield, but this is best discussed in the context of the early medieval churches of the diocese together with their associated parishes, and it is to these we now turn.

¹⁷¹ Losco-Bradley & Kinsley 2002, pp 100-110

Chapter 4: Minsters and Ministry

Parish territories in the diocese of Lichfield

Since the 1980s John Blair has been the foremost champion of an early parochial system based on minsters, to which the surrounding laity paid ecclesiastical tribute ('church-scot') in return for the ministration of pastoral care.¹ The concept, though not without its critics, has been widely accepted, and the identification of early minsters and their associated territories has been attempted across much of the country, not least within the diocese of Lichfield, where Steven Bassett, Nick Higham and Jane Croom have each studied parts of the parochial landscape.² Blair's latest restatement of the idea emphasises the relationship of such a system to the secular tributary territories of the seventh and eighth centuries, called variously *provinciae*, *regiones*, or 'small shires' by scholars, assessed in quantities of hides, by which kings or other potentates organised the render of tribute.³ It is frequently assumed that these territories and the ecclesiastical territories of minsters founded within them (usually labelled *parochiae*) were coincident, and

¹ For example: Blair, John. 1988a. 'Minster Churches in the Landscape', in D. Hooke (ed.), *Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, Blackwell's Book Services, Oxford, pp 35-58; *idem*. 1988c. 'Introduction: from Minster to Parish Church', in *idem* (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches, the Local Church in Transition 950-1200*, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Oxford, pp 1-19; Blair, John. 1995. 'Ecclesiastical Organisation and Pastoral Care in Anglo-Saxon England', in *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 4, pp 193-212; *idem*. 2005. *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

² Higham, Nick. 1993. *The Origins of Cheshire*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, especially Chapter 5, pp 126-181; Bassett, Steven. 1991. 'Anglo-Saxon Shrewsbury and its Churches', in *Medieval History*, Vol. XVI, pp 1-23; Bassett 1992a; Bassett, Steven. 1992b. 'Church and diocese in the West Midlands: the transition from British to Anglo-Saxon control', in J. Blair & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 13-40; Bassett, Steven. 2000. 'Anglo-Saxon Birmingham', in *Midland History*, Vol. XXV, pp 1-27; Bassett, Steven. 2001. *Anglo-Saxon Coventry and its Churches*. The Dugdale Society Occasional Papers No. 41; Croom, Jane. 1988. 'The Fragmentation of the Minster Parochiae of South-East Shropshire', in Blair 1988b pp 67-81

³ Blair 2005, pp 154-155

that their contemporary fragmentation during the later Anglo-Saxon period resulted in the more numerous, smaller manors recorded in the Domesday survey on the one hand, and the later medieval system of local church parishes on the other. Such an assumption is important, because it enables the earlier territories to be reconstructed by a combination of tenurial evidence, often from Domesday Book, and parochial evidence, often the dependence of later medieval chapels on nearby mother churches, or pensions paid from one church to another, indicative of earlier dependence.

The assumption is also dangerous, as, even if there was a close connection between ecclesiastical and secular territories, the use of late evidence to reconstruct them does not necessarily illuminate the seventh and eighth centuries; Eric Cambridge and David Rollason have suggested that the pattern of minster parishes may be largely the work of the West Saxon kings in the tenth century, at which time documentary evidence of coherent, if often eccentric, systems of church renders becomes more plentiful.⁴ As Blair, notes, it is easiest to take the middle position: “that there was indeed fundamental reorganisation in the tenth century, but that it probably did make use of earlier quasi-parochial structures of some kind.”⁵ Whilst questions of chronology are crucial, it seems primarily important, from the point of view of a regional study such as this, to focus on the nature of the connection between ecclesiastical and secular territories, as it is this that enables assertions to be made regarding the earlier existence of minsters; we must therefore clarify exactly what these *parochiae*, as reconstructed, represent. In what follows, the later medieval parishes of the diocese have been analysed in

⁴ Cambridge, Eric & Rollason, David. 1995. ‘The Pastoral Organisation of the Anglo-Saxon Church: A Review of the ‘Minster Hypothesis’’, in *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 4, pp 87-104

⁵ Blair 2005, p 153

relation to the estates located at the sites of their churches as recorded in Domesday Book. Blair has developed a set of criteria, such as the presence of two or more priests, or attached land of a hide or more, by which 'superior' churches might be identified in the Domesday survey data.⁶ However, in an attempt to make less constricting assumptions about the earlier status of the churches, a broader scheme has been adopted here.

Figures 20 to 24 show the five archdeaneries into which the diocese had been divided by the earlier twelfth century, and within each the parishes are coloured to represent the holders in 1066 of the estates at which the churches were located.⁷ It must be remembered that, in many cases, we have no evidence that the church concerned had been established by that date, and an attempt has been made to correlate the later presence of a church with the Domesday statistics by indicating only those parishes in which the associated estate was assessed in, approximately, the top third of the hidage range for all estates within that particular shire.⁸ In Cheshire, such estates were larger than 1 hide, in Shropshire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire they were larger than 2 hides, and in Warwickshire they were larger than 3 hides. The only exception made to this policy is the presence of a church or priest recorded explicitly in the survey, in which case the parish has been coloured regardless of its size; across the archdeaneries, the proportion of recorded churches attached to estates smaller than the sizes just

⁶ Blair, John. 1985. 'Secular Minster Churches in Domesday Book', in P. Sawyer (ed.), *Domesday Book: A Reassessment*, Arnold, London, pp 104-142, this reference p 106

⁷ The deanery boundaries have been reconstructed from the 1291 papal taxation; the only alterations concern the peculiar jurisdictions in Staffordshire, which have been extended in some cases to encompass the entire parishes of churches that later lost some of their outlying regions

⁸ This exercise covers the entire shires of Staffordshire and Derbyshire, the Cheshire hundreds east of the Dee (Willaston, Chester, *Dudestan*, *Warmundestrou*, Rushton, Ruloe, *Tunendune*, Bucklow, Middlewich and *Hamestan*), the northern hundreds of Shropshire (Wrockwardine, Conover, Baschurch, Alnothstree, Hodnet, Shrewsbury and *Mereset*) and Warwickshire (Coleshill, Brinklow, Hunsbury, Marton and Stoneleigh)

given ranges from 19% to 43%, suggesting that, whilst estate size does correlate with the presence of a church, the largest third is perhaps slightly too small a set.⁹ Nevertheless, the fact that the vast majority of the parishes in each archdeanery have been coloured illustrates that such a correlation is historically meaningful.

The great majority of parishes centred on thegns' estates encompass only those manors, especially in the eastern half of the diocese, strongly indicating that church and manor were closely connected. Such often explains the occasional more convoluted parochial geography, such as Hampton in Arden in Warwickshire, which possessed several detached chapelries to the south and a detached portion to the northeast, corresponding precisely with detached parts of the manor at Hampton.¹⁰ Furthermore, a significant group of such parishes, especially in northeast Derbyshire, are based at manors that also feature in the will of the important thegn, Wulfric Spot, dated 1002x1004.¹¹ The recombinations, disintegrations and amalgamations demonstrated by these estates over slightly more than half a century suggest that the strong parallels between many Domesday estates and medieval parishes are indicative of the foundation of these churches in a period centred on the survey, perhaps the tenth, eleventh or twelfth centuries; this extensive, comparatively short phase of church building has been compared to the appearance of 'mushrooms in the night' by Richard Morris, who also emphasises the association of many of them with manor houses.¹²

⁹ The proportions are: Cheshire 43%; Derbyshire 30%; Shropshire 32%; Staffordshire 38%; Warwickshire 19%

¹⁰ *DB Warws.* 31.6; *VCH Warws.* Vol. 4, pp 81-86

¹¹ Sawyer, Peter H. 1979. *Charters of Burton Abbey.* Anglo-Saxon Charters Vol. 2, Oxford University Press, Oxford, No. 29, pp 53-56

¹² Morris, Richard. 1989. *Churches in the Landscape.* J. M. Dent & Sons, London, chapters 4 & 6

Estates at Rolleston and Elford in Staffordshire were bequeathed by Wulfric to, respectively, his brother Ælfhelm and his daughter; in 1066, Rolleston was held by Earl Morcar, whilst Earl Ælfgar was recorded as holding Elford.¹³ Both estates also supported coincident parishes, like those just discussed, and the same applies to several other estates held by members of comital families across the diocese in 1066.¹⁴ However, another type of parish found in the diocese was centred on a comital estate but included other estates within its bounds; these are therefore less obviously associated with the holding of a manor. Due to their size, examples are particularly obvious in Cheshire, where Frodsham, Weaverham, Acton, Malpas (*Depenbech* in Domesday Book), Bromborough (focused on the estate at Eastham) and Prestbury (focused on the estates at Adlington and Macclesfield) fit this description. Nevertheless, such parishes are present in all other shires except Warwickshire: in Shropshire, Whitchurch, Ellesmere, Ercall Magna, Wellington, Cound and Shifnal; in Staffordshire, Wolstanton, Leek, Uttoxeter, Tatenhill (focused on the estate at Barton-under-Needwood) and Kinver; and in Derbyshire, Repton. The same characteristic applies to many of the parishes focused on royal estates in the diocese, in particular those in Shropshire at the centres of their eponymous hundreds, at Baschurch, Hodnet and Conover, as well as the royal churches of St Mary and St Alkmund in Shrewsbury, but also in the other shires: in Staffordshire at Trentham, St Mary's church in Stafford,

¹³ *DB Staffs.* 10.3 & 10.6

¹⁴ Cheshire: Tilston (Earl Edwin); Shropshire: Tong (Earl Morcar), Donington (Earl Edwin), Longford (Earl Edwin), Chetwynd (Lady Godgifu); Staffordshire: King's Bromley (Earl Harold), Alrewas (Earl Ælfgar), Clifton Campville with Harlaston (both Earl Ælfgar), Pattingham (Earl Ælfgar), Worfield (Earl Ælfgar), Claverley (Earl Ælfgar), Alveley (Earl Ælfgar), Upper and Lower Penn (in Penn, respectively Earl Ælfgar and Lady Godgifu), Sedgley (Earl Ælfgar), Sheriff Hales (Earl Ælfgar), Mayfield (Earl Ælfgar), Rocester (Earl Ælfgar); Derbyshire: Doveridge (Earl Edwin), Brailsford (Earl Waltheof), Markeaton (Earl Siward), Weston upon Trent with Aston upon Trent (both Earl Ælfgar), Walton upon Trent with Rosliston and Coton in the Elms (all Earl Ælfgar); Warwickshire: Sutton Coldfield (Earl Edwin), Aston with Erdington (both Earl Edwin), Kingsbury (Lady Godgifu), Ulverley (in Solihull, Earl Edwin), Chilvers Coton (Earl Ralph), Alspath (in Meriden, Lady Godgifu), Bedworth (Earl Edwin), Burton Dassett (Earl Harold), Radway (Earl Ralph)

Gnosall, Penkrige, Tetterhall, Kingswinford, and Tamworth; in Derbyshire, at the Derby churches of St Mary (mother church of the estate at Mickleover), All Saints and St Alkmund, at Melbourne (with a possible chapelry on its dependent estate at Barrow upon Trent), Chesterfield, and the Peak District parishes of Ashbourne, Wirksworth, Darley, Bakewell and Hope;¹⁵ and in Warwickshire at Coleshill and Stoneleigh (with a possible chapelry at the dependent estate at *Optone*, probably to be equated with Leek Wootton).¹⁶

Of the royal churches listed above, St Mary's in Shrewsbury, All Saints' and St Alkmund's in Derby, St Mary's in Stafford, Tetterhall and Penkrige emerged as royal free chapels in the later medieval period; these will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, but suffice it to note here that they belong to a larger class of large parishes based on royal and comital estates. Many episcopal parishes also belong to this group: in Cheshire at Tarvin, Farndon and Wybunbury; in Shropshire at Prees; in Staffordshire at Eccleshall, Brewwood, Baswich, Colwich (focused on Great Haywood) and Lichfield; and in Derbyshire at Longford (focused on Bupton) and Wilne (focused on Sawley) with Long Eaton.¹⁷ Furthermore, some parishes focused on thegns' estates can also be included, particularly in Cheshire, where Bunbury, Barthomley, Runcorn (focused at Halton), Great Budworth, Rostherne, Bowdon, Davenham, Middlewich (focused at Newton), Sandbach, Astbury, Cheadle and Mottram in Longdendale all encompassed more than just their titular estates. However, it is quite probable that many of these have much in

¹⁵ For the relationship between St Mary's, Derby and Mickleover see Roffe, David. 1986b. *The Derbyshire Domesday*. Derbyshire Museum Service, Matlock, p 23

¹⁶ *VCH Warws*. Vol. 6 , pp 167-170

¹⁷ Under the bishop's estate at Sawley, the Domesday survey recorded two churches and dependent land at Long Eaton; considering the later emergence of parishes at Wilne and Long Eaton, the second church was probably located at the latter place: *DB Derbs*. 2.1 & 2.2

common with the multi-estate royal and comital parishes, in that both groups were held by important officers of the king or earls. Higham has argued that several of the estates hosting the Cheshire parishes just listed were held by such men: Dedol at Bunbury may have been the reeve of Earl Edwin who held the adjacent estate at Alpraham; Orm at Halton may have been responsible for policing the Middle Mersey fords, a role ultimately assumed from a tenth-century royal concern expressed in the foundation of a burh at Runcorn.¹⁸ Others were held by thegns whose importance is indicated by their each holding several manors, either focused in a group or distributed across the shire, such as Edward (Great Budworth), Siward (Barthomley), Wulfgeat (Rostherne, Astbury), Alfweard (Bowdon), Osmer (Davenham), Dunning (Sandbach), and Gamel's father (Cheadle and Mottram in Longdendale).

Some of these men may appear holding estates with parishes, some of them encompassing several estates, in other shires within the diocese: for example, Wulfgeat held Market Drayton in Shropshire and Checkley in Staffordshire, whilst Edward and Dunning were two thegns in a group of eight who together held Barton Blount in Derbyshire. Siward was recorded holding estates at Myddle, Child's Ercall, and Upton Magna in Shropshire, Standon in Staffordshire, Breadsall, Duffield, Croxall, Cubley and Norbury in Derbyshire, and Burton Hastings in Warwickshire. It is of course quite possible that more than one man is represented here, but even if only some of the estates belonged to one man, he was still a prolific landholder, and may have been identical with Siward son of Æthelgar, a kinsman of King Edward the Confessor, who features in Orderic

¹⁸ Higham 1993, pp 148-149, 158

Vitalis' *Ecclesiastical History*, and who founded the church of St Peter outside Shrewsbury, which later formed the basis for Earl Roger's post-Conquest abbey there; according to an analysis by Steven Bassett, St Peter's was founded in the southwest corner of the mother parish of Upton, which was held by Siward in 1066.¹⁹ Another such man may be represented by Leofnoth, who we have already encountered in Derbyshire, holding estates once bequeathed by Wulfric Spot, and who also held Pentrich and Kirk Langley in that shire and, if the same man, Berkswell and Napton in Warwickshire; moreover, he held Crich, Ashover, St Peter's in Derby with its attached estate at Boulton, Hathersage and Blackwell (focused on Newton) jointly with a man name Leofric, perhaps a kinsman, who himself held Bolsover, Shirland, and Willington. We may glimpse here some of the members of a regional set of important thegns, with significant connections of patronage and sometimes family to royal and comital personages.

It is therefore notable that so many of the larger parishes encompassing several manors conform to the holdings of important eleventh-century personages, whether king, earls, bishop or important thegns; it can therefore be reasonably hypothesised that these parishes, and the churches supporting them, also originated during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries. The greater remit of these parishes can be constructively compared with the privilege of holding 'sake and soke', a formula often encountered in Domesday Book attached to a manor, and investigated thoroughly by C. A. Joy, who emphasised that, in this sense, it referred materially to the right to collect the profits of justice arising from a particular area of land, sometimes the manor concerned, sometimes a region

¹⁹ Bassett 1991, pp 13-14; Bassett 1992, pp 9-10

extending beyond it; it appears conceptually to have been in the king's gift, but a large series of writs from the tenth century onwards demonstrate that it was often granted by the king to his earls and thegns.²⁰ David Roffe, in his study of the Domesday survey, has suggested that sake and soke was conferred by the gift of land by charter ('bookland'), and, whilst agreeing that this appears often to have been the case, Stephen Baxter has asserted that "grants of bookland were not the only source of royal patronage in late Anglo-Saxon England: the king could also grant estates to officials without issuing a royal diploma, and it is probable that many of the manors to which soke [i.e. the profits of justice] was rendered in Domesday England were 'comital' manors of this kind."²¹ It appears distinctly probable that the multi-manor parishes identified above often expressed the right of sake and soke belonging to the focal estate over the others within the territory, and this would certainly explain the prominence of 'hundredal' churches, as most local pleas were heard in those courts. It would be wise at this point to run the category of multi-manor parishes partly into that of single-manor parishes, many of which may also have been held with sake and soke, especially those held by the comital family and the more prestigious thegns, whilst also admitting that we cannot rule out for sure the establishment of churches on manors that were not held with sake and soke.

The independent minsters, those holding directly from the king, which were certainly established in the tenth century, those at St Werburgh's, Chester,

²⁰ Joy, C. A. 1972. *Sokeright*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leeds, pp 120 - 134

²¹ Roffe, David. 2000. *Domesday. The Inquest and the Book*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 32-33 ; Baxter, Stephen. 2007. *The Earls of Mercia. Lordship and Power in Late Anglo-Saxon England*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, p 239; Baxter's use of the term soke in this quotation is perhaps ill-advised, given his own assertion of the plurality of meanings inherent in this word (*ibid.* pp 210-211), also emphasised by Joy (1972, p 134)

Wolverhampton, Burton upon Trent and Coventry, also appear to have relied on landholdings, granted by charter and almost certainly held with sake and soke, to form their parishes. The parishes under the control of Wolverhampton and Burton can be matched to the charters contained in the pre-Conquest archives of these minsters, whilst Steven Bassett has demonstrated that the portion of Coventry Abbey's mother parish covering lands not held by the minster itself almost entirely conformed to the lands held by Lady Godgifu, one of its founders, around Coventry in 1066.²² Bassett asserts that the mother parish is likely to have been older than the eleventh century, but only on the basis of the assumed antiquity of the arrangements by which a separate church, St Michael's, administered to the lands outside the minster's holding; *contra* this assumption, there is no reason not to believe that these arrangements could have been made in the eleventh century.²³ Likewise, at Chester, despite Higham's suggestion that "the extensive but unconsolidated parish of St Oswald's was clearly the result of a partial amalgamation of St Werburgh's territorial acquisitions of the tenth to twelfth centuries with the pre-existing interests of this minster", it is notable that the parish in fact solely encompasses the manors in the vicinity of the city recorded to be in the hands of St Werburgh's in 1066.²⁴ It is interesting to note that, whilst the local hundred boundaries at Chester and Coventry, which may date to the first half of the tenth century, cut through the middle of their respective mother parishes, the later deanery boundaries, which are otherwise often based on the hundred boundaries, were arranged so as to include the entire parishes; this suggests that

²² Bassett 2001, pp 19-24

²³ *ibid.*, pp 29-30

²⁴ Higham 1993, p 131; *DB Chesh.* A2-A9

territorial divisions important in the early twelfth century were less so in the early tenth.²⁵

It is therefore possible to conclude that many of the parishes created within the diocese in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries were based on a common principle, namely the parent estates' holding of sake and soke over the territories encompassed within them. Conceptually a royal right, almost all royal estates within the diocese were the focus of significant parishes, and it is possible to investigate this further. At the eastern edge of Warwickshire, Marton hundred (and the corresponding deanery) contained no royal holdings in 1066, but a singular twelfth-century source is highly illuminating. An episcopal actum of 1160x1176 establishes the church-scot (called 'church-amber') due to the church of Marton, and the various estates listed cover well over half the hundred (see Figure 25).²⁶ The hundred is dominated by thegns' estates, interspersed with holdings of Coventry Abbey, and it is interesting to note that estates at Dunchurch, Leamington Hastings, Wolfhamcote, Napton and Ladbroke were each recorded with a priest in 1086, yet still owed church-scot in the later twelfth century.²⁷ These represent some of the larger estates in the hundred, and this also goes for the remainder of estates listed with priests in 1086: Wolston, Bilton, Clifton-on-Dunsmore and Long Itchington.²⁸ These churches were located in areas of the

²⁵ Compare the hundreds of Willaston and *Dudestan* with the deanery of Chester, and the hundreds of Stoneleigh and Brinklow with the deanery of Coventry

²⁶ Franklin, M. J. 1998. *English Episcopal Acta, Vol. 16: Coventry and Lichfield 1160-1182*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, No. 80, pp 73-75; the estates are: Rugby, Causton, Dunchurch, Thurlaston of the fee of the Earl of Warwick, Willoughby, Leamington Hastings, Hulla (in Leamington Hastings) of the fee of Abingdon, Grandborough of the fee of Walter Croc, Wolfhamcote, Flecknoe, Calcutt, Napton (Moysi's land), Ladbroke (William's land), Ladbroke of the fee of Henry Boscherville, Hodnell of Hugh son of Richard's fee, Hodnell (Gurmund's land), the third holding in Hodnell, Radbourne of the fee of Hugh of Arden, Shuckborough, and Humingham

²⁷ *DB Warws.* 37.3, 39.1, 17.5, 16.31 & 18.9

²⁸ *DB Warws.* 12.4, 12.6, 14.2 & 42.3

hundred from which apparently no church-scot was due to Marton, either because it had been redirected to these churches, or the custom had fallen away. Nevertheless, there is no reason to think any of these churches, except perhaps Long Itchington, were anything other than thegns' churches. Oddly, Marton does not feature in the Domesday survey at all, except as the name of the hundred.

Here, church-scot appears as a relic of a more centralised ecclesiastical arrangement, indicating that Marton, probably once part of a royal estate, was once the superior church for the entire hundred. Assuming this arrangement to date to the foundation of the hundred, during the first half of the tenth century, it follows that the creation of subsequent churches occurred later than this, and whilst their founders were able to establish independent parishes, many were not able to appropriate the church-scot payments. Hardly any evidence survives for the payment of church-scot elsewhere in the diocese, but the little that does is complimentary: a charter of Richard I dated 1189, confirming the gifts of Bishop Roger de Clinton to Buildwas Abbey in 1135, mentions 'church-amber', the same term used in the Marton case, to be rendered to the abbey from the hundreds of Wrockwardine and Condover, attesting to the existence of the same hundred-based assessment practice in Shropshire.²⁹ It is now impossible to say for sure whether church-amber was levied within each hundred in the diocese, although consistent terminology is suggestive. However, it is possible to observe a process analogous to that derived from the evidence in Marton hundred, namely the infilling of exclusively royal parishes by others, in Derbyshire.

²⁹ Bassett 1991, p 6; the relevant part of the charter is printed in Franklin, M. J. 1997. *English Episcopal Acta, Vol. 14: Coventry and Lichfield 1072-1159*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 10-11

David Roffe has suggested that each of the five large estates in the northern half of *Hamenstan* wapentake, Longdendale, Hope, Ashford, Bakewell, and Darley, originally possessed twelve berwicks, of which some had become independent manors held by thegns by 1066.³⁰ He goes on to suggest that, in total, the sixty berwicks equate to the sixty *manentes* at Hope and Ashford confirmed to Uhtred by King Æthelstan in 926, via a charter later stored in the archive of Burton Abbey. The charter explains that Uhtred had bought the lands from ‘the pagans’ for twenty pounds of gold and silver, at the command of King Edward and Ealdorman Æthelred, so at some time between 899 and 911.³¹ Sawyer suggests that this Uhtred was the son of Eadwulf of Bamburgh (d. 912), who attested charters as *dux* between 930 and 949.³² The naming of only Hope and Ashford in the charter may indicate that the region was administered from these two estate centres at the time, with the other three of the Domesday survey probably dependent upon them. In 949 King Eadred granted to Uhtred, presumably the same man, land at Bakewell, so that he could found a minster, and Sawyer has plausibly suggested that this was not a grant of additional territory but simply a method of granting some of the original territory into the hands of the minster.³³ Given that Uhtred’s initial purchase of the territory must have occurred before Ealdorman Æthelred’s death in 911, he must have been aging by 949, and was perhaps preparing for his death. Subsequently the entire estate of 60 *manentes* must have returned to royal hands. This reconstruction allows us to witness the establishment of one of the royal minsters of Domesday Book, that at Bakewell, during the first half of the tenth century, providing an example of one way in which this was accomplished.

³⁰ Roffe 1986a, pp 120-121, n.74; Roffe 1986b, pp 25-27

³¹ S 397; Sawyer 1979, No. 3, pp 5-7

³² Sawyer 1979, p 5

³³ S 548; Sawyer 1979, pp 14-15

We can thus understand the majority of the later medieval parishes in the diocese of Lichfield to embody territorial definitions based upon the holding of land with sake and soke; as a conceptually royal right, this appears to have privileged royal, often hundredal manors within the distribution, extending to the manors of the king's most privileged officers, his earls and leading thegns. We can also point to several instances in which initial dominance by a royal parish appears to have been reduced by, or to have provided the context for, the subsequent creation of smaller parishes based upon the estates of earls and thegns. The chronology of this process may begin approximately with the tenth century: we saw above how the minster at Bakewell was established in the Peak District in 949 by an important thegn. Elsewhere in Derbyshire, Roffe has noted that the parish of Bradbourne must have existed by 963, when one of its chapelries at Ballidon was the subject of a grant; on the model of the other Peak estates discussed above, the estate at Bradbourne, held by a thegn in 1066, may have been created within the context of the royal estate of Ashbourne, itself the centre of an extensive parish that interlocked with Bradbourne's.³⁴ In Shropshire, Wulfgeat of Donington bequeathed two bullocks to the minster at Tong, situated on a 3-hide manor held by Earl Morcar in 1066, in a will that survives in an early-eleventh century manuscript.³⁵ Such a late chronology for the establishment of the largest of these parishes contradicts other studies within the region. In his study of Cheshire, Higham identifies a dominant pair of mother parishes within most of the Domesday hundreds, suggesting that these derived from paired ancient land units or 'shires', with one often "the product of a royal grant of land to the church, resulting in the

³⁴ Roffe, David. 1986a. 'The Origins of Derbyshire', in *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 106, pp 102-122, this reference p 113

³⁵ Whitelock 1930, pp 54-57 & 163-167

fission of pre-existing and larger territories.”³⁶ Likewise, Croom, in her study of southeast Shropshire, and Bassett, in his studies across the diocese, take as their starting point that the larger mother parishes represent ‘Middle-Saxon estates’, royal resource territories centred on *villae regalis*, and were coterminous with contemporary minster churches.³⁷

Of course, it can neither be proved nor disproved that the territories on which the tenth-century hundreds and royal and comital estates were based had earlier antecedents, but the important result of the above discussion is that such is not required in order to explain the tenurial and parochial patterning in our earliest sources. Higham draws a distinction between the ‘minster’ churches in his larger land units, which he considers to be early, possibly pre-Viking, and the ‘manorial’ churches later founded in the tenth and eleventh centuries by important landholders. However, the larger territories might just as easily be understood to represent the extent of sake and soke claimed by the pre-eminent holders of the central manors in the tenth or eleventh centuries, with the smaller ‘manorial’ churches founded by slightly less important thegns at the same time or not long after. Another aspect of Higham’s model concerns the edging of the larger territories by rivers or by woodland and moor, the existence of which in the early medieval period is often indicated by place-names. These landscapes contrast with the crop-lands located at the estate centres, often indicated by their large hidage and ploughland figures, a topographical polarity emphasised by Rosamond Faith in her discussion of Middle-Saxon ‘small shires’.³⁸ Likewise, a “strong correlation between the boundaries of mother-parishes and major geographical

³⁶ Higham 1993, p 176

³⁷ Croom 1988, pp 67-68; Bassett 1992, p 1; Bassett 2000, pp 13-14

³⁸ Faith 1997, pp 8-9

features” is taken by Blair to provide evidence of antiquity.³⁹ Again, however, there is no evidence to suggest that such bio-regional logic did not also operate in the tenth-century; Figure 26 shows the soils map introduced in Chapter 3, with the place-names analysed there, with the addition of the multi-estate parish churches just discussed, on the understanding that they represent centres of sake and soke, in order to demonstrate this bio-regional aspect to their distribution. Finally, whilst Blair considers that evidence for ‘multi-layered complexity’, ‘regional variation’ and ‘anomaly’ in parochial structures, when compared with ‘symmetrical conformity to the structures of late Anglo-Saxon local government’, to imply ‘the re-working of older structures’, he takes a diachronic view of what might equally be considered the complexity of synchronic negotiation with the imposition of model structures.⁴⁰

Rather than distinguishing between earlier ‘minsters’ and later ‘manorial’ churches, it may be more productive to view them as a continuum, often founded within a few decades of each other rather than centuries, and distinguished by scale more than anything else. The collegiate community of the important church of Tettenhall, which emerged as royal free chapel in the later medieval period, held 2 hides of land in 1086, carved out of a royal estate retaining 2½ hides; this is comparable with the 2½ hides held by the church at Baschurch, also collegiate, carved out of a 3½-hide manor.⁴¹ Moving down the scale, we find the royal churches at Ashbourne and Hope in Derbyshire holding 1 carucate (equivalent to a hide), whilst the church at Earl Morcar’s 5-hide manor of Ness, which was a chapelry of Baschurch, held a virgate (¼ hide).⁴² It is surely reasonable to

³⁹ Blair 2005, p 158

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p 158

⁴¹ *DB Staffs.* 1.2, 1.3 & 7.5; *DB Salop.* 4.1.3; Bassett 1992, p 12

⁴² *DB Derbs.* 1.14 & 1.29; *DB Salop.* 4.1.17

understand the single priests recorded with 'manorial' churches as representing small landholdings within their manors, similar to the *villani* with which they were recorded, and perhaps assessed at a virgate or half-virgate. Whilst it is important to recognise a distinction between the collegiate communities supported at the larger churches and the single priests supported at the smaller, the distinction is one of size rather than kind. We should recall that, excepting 'field-churches', Æthelred II's lawcode of 1014 recognised all churches in the kingdom to be 'minsters', reckoned only by size ('head', 'rather smaller' and 'smaller still').⁴³ Nevertheless, before triumphantly concluding that all parishes great and small within the diocese of Lichfield were products of the tenth to twelfth centuries, we must acknowledge that Lichfield at least was founded in the seventh century, and the hagiography discussed in Chapter 2 suggests there existed other early minsters in the diocese. It is to these that we now turn.

Early minsters

If the hagiographical texts provide evidence for saints' cults, and if the maintenance of saints' cults can be assumed only to occur at minsters, then there were minsters, probably founded in the seventh to ninth centuries, at Lichfield (St Chad), Hanbury (St Wærburh), Repton (St Wigstan), Derby (St Ealhmund), Andresey and Polesworth (St Modwenna and St Eadgyth), Ilam (St Beorhthelm), Stone (St Wulfhad), Coventry (St Osburh), Norbury (St Barloc) and Berkswell (St Milred). The above discussion has demonstrated that early minsters in the diocese cannot be distinguished by the extent or nature of their parishes from later minsters, as the right of sake and soke may provide a rationale for those extending

⁴³ Liebermann, F. 1903. *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*. Halle, Vol. 1, p 264

beyond manorial landholdings, and this cannot be reconstructed. For example, the church at Ilam was probably part of the estate given to Burton Abbey by Wulfric Spot in the early-tenth century, and still in the possession of the abbey in the twelfth century; in Wulfric's will it was listed as a dependency of an estate at nearby Okeover, together with Cauldon and Castern, and was perhaps included in the 3-virgate manor of Okeover held by Burton in Domesday Book, as it is not otherwise mentioned.⁴⁴ The medieval parish of Ilam contained Burton's estate at Okeover, as well as estates at Cauldon, Blore, Grindon and Sheen, the latter also given to Burton by Wulfric, but all recorded in the hands of others in the Domesday survey, and each the site of a medieval chapelry.⁴⁵ According to the Burton Chartulary, the parish of Alstonefield was also originally dependent on Ilam; it encompassed the estates of Alstonefield and Warslow held by the thegn Godwin in 1066.⁴⁶ This complex of parishes essentially encompassed the western side of the Dove valley north of Mayfield and the entire valley of the River Manifold. Given such a coherent territory, it is tempting to see it as an early minster parish, but it cannot be ruled out that manors at Cauldon, Blore, Sheen, Grindon, Alstonefield and Warslow were created within the context of the estate at Okeover during the first half of the eleventh century, and that Ilam's parish represents the area over which Okeover originally held sake and soke.

Moreover, a simple dichotomy between early minster parishes or later territories of sake and soke is overly simplistic. It is notable that the parishes of the bishop's churches at Lichfield and Eccleshall encompassed in large part the extensive estates centred at each, and it appears distinctly likely that, perhaps from the tenth

⁴⁴ Sawyer 1979, No. 29, pp 53-56; *DB Staffs.* 4.8

⁴⁵ *DB Staffs.* 4.8, 11.4, 11.40, 1.51 & 11.3; *VCH Staffs.* Vol. 3, pp 199-213

⁴⁶ *SHC* 1916, p 198; *DB Staffs.* 8.28 & 8.29

century when such grants are first evidenced, the surviving older minsters of the diocese attempted, if possible, to maintain earlier territorial claims of lordship, however expressed, by obtaining sake and soke over the land. Nevertheless, Bassett has suggested that the twelfth-century grant to Lichfield of the church of Alrewas with its chapelry King's Bromley, both comital manors in 1066, was a restoration of territories previously in the cathedral's pre-Conquest parochia, and that the parishes of Shenstone, Aston and Walsall might also have lain within it, based on later wrangles over jurisdiction in these churches.⁴⁷ If these episodes do not simply represent the later aggressive assertion of the cathedral's authority, they may hint at a wider parochial remit for the cathedral that dates back to its foundation. In any case, it is worth noting that most of the churches identified as early minsters above had larger than average parishes in the later medieval period, attesting at least to some form of importance during the early medieval period. To these churches we can add the bishop's large, multi-township parishes as recorded in 1086, at Tarvin, Farndon and Wybunbury in Cheshire; Longford (Bupton) and Wilne (Sawley) with Long Eaton in Derbyshire; Prees in Shropshire; and Eccleshall, Brewood, Baswich and Colwich (Great Haywood) in Staffordshire. Although the bishop's acquisition of these estates and the establishment of their churches cannot be demonstrated to have occurred in the seventh, eighth or ninth centuries, comparison with other English bishoprics suggests that a significant proportion of the bishopric's estates had been acquired by the tenth century, and so all will be considered here as possible early minsters.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Bassett 1992b, p 32 & Bassett 2000, pp 20-21

⁴⁸ Giandrea, Mary Frances. 2007. *Episcopal Culture in Late Anglo-Saxon England*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 131-145, especially p 135

Another source of evidence that may aid in identifying earlier minsters is stone sculpture dating to the seventh to ninth centuries, although again it must be assumed, not unreasonably, that such objects were primarily associated with minsters. In her definitive paper on schools of Mercian sculpture, Rosemary Cramp warned that “there is no sculpture datable by absolute or external means”, and indeed the whole edifice of research relies primarily on stylistic dating sequences.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the range of comparative objects, which for early medieval Mercian sculpture often stretches from one end of Europe to the other, inspires confidence in the broad chronology, at least in terms of *termini post quos* the objects might have been produced. The corpus of pre-Viking Mercian stone sculptural productions is considered to cluster in the later-eighth and earlier-ninth centuries, continuing into the second half of the ninth century, and is represented by several groups of monuments. Within the diocese, a sculptural fragment from Ingleby near Repton possesses similarities with a set of architectural strip friezes and relief-carved figural panels from Breedon, Peterborough, Castor and Fletton, supporting Repton’s continuing importance during this period, and the recently-discovered angel panel from Lichfield attaches the bishop’s cathedral to this group.⁵⁰ The Lichfield panel was part of a tomb shrine, and thus also sits functionally within a smaller group of funerary sculpture usually dated to this period, otherwise represented by monolithic coped monuments from Peterborough and Bakewell, a coped lid from Wirksworth, and a carved sarcophagus from St

⁴⁹ Cramp, Rosemary. 1977. ‘Schools of Mercian sculpture’, in A. Dornier (ed.), *Mercian Studies*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 191-233. For important landmarks at the beginning of the modern stylistic approach to Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture see: Collingwood, W. G. 1927. *Northumbrian Crosses of the Pre-Norman Age*. Faber & Gwyer, London; Kendrick, T. D. 1938. *Anglo-Saxon Art to AD 900*. Methuen, London. More recently, Richard Bailey has produced several influential studies on the sculpture of the Viking period; see Bailey, Richard N. 1980. *Viking-Age Sculpture*. Collins, London

⁵⁰ Cramp 1977, pp 194-218 (for Repton see p 207); Rodwell, Warwick, Hawkes, Jane, Howe, Emily & Cramp, Rosemary. 2008. ‘The Lichfield Angel: A Spectacular Anglo-Saxon Painted Sculpture’, in *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 88, pp 48-108

Alkmund's church, Derby.⁵¹ Therefore, whilst these objects support the otherwise attested minsters at Lichfield, Repton and Derby, we can also infer the presence of minsters, at least from the eighth century, at Wirksworth and Bakewell.

However, a study by Philip Sidebottom has questioned the early dating of the Peak District objects, connecting them stylistically with groups of sculpture, primarily crosses, which are usually agreed to be later, and preferring a context within the first half of the tenth century on historical grounds; his conclusions also apply to a group of sculpted crosses at Bakewell, Eyam, Wirksworth, Bradbourne, Sheffield and Rugby that Cramp had dated to the late-eighth and early-ninth centuries.⁵² Whilst it is tempting, in the face of such disagreement, to pick and choose, it is notable that Eyam and Bradbourne were discussed above in the context of tenth-century thegns' estates formed within the royal estates at Hope and Ashbourne respectively, perhaps lending support to Sidebottom's arguments in the case of the Peak crosses. Nevertheless, it will here be assumed for the moment that the grave furniture belongs to the earlier context. Further west, at Sandbach in Cheshire, two crosses that Sidebottom also included in his corpus have more recently been persuasively dated to the earlier ninth century by Jane Hawkes.⁵³ Elsewhere in this shire, sculptural fragments from Over, Chester and Upton in Overchurch have been assigned a pre-Viking date.⁵⁴ At Upton, the presence of an early minster is also supported by the nearby settlement at West

⁵¹ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 65

⁵² Sidebottom, Philip. 1994. *Schools of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture in the North Midlands*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Sheffield, especially pp 170-171; Cramp 1977, pp 218-224

⁵³ Hawkes, Jane. 2001. 'Constructing Iconographies: Questions of Identity in Mercian Sculpture', in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr, *Mercia, An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, pp 230-245

⁵⁴ Austin, T. 1996/7. 'Viking-Period Chester', in *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, Vol. 74, pp 63-87, this reference see Appendix 2 and references therein; for Chester see also Mason, David. 2007. *Chester AD 400-1066. From Roman Fortress to English Town*. Tempus, Stroud, p 63

Kirby, here probably meaning the ‘western settlement dependent on the church’, within a family of place-names derived from the Scandinavian term *kirkjubý*, considered “a standard Norse one for an established minster centre.”⁵⁵ In Shropshire, a cross dated to the late-eighth or early-ninth century once stood in St Andrew’s churchyard at Wroxeter, although it was taken down c. 1750, and part built into the southern wall of the nave of the church.⁵⁶ Finally, the round-shafted pillar at Wolverhampton suffers from being unique, and has been variously dated to the ninth or tenth centuries; it cannot therefore strongly support the case for a pre-Viking minster there.⁵⁷

In addition to those derived from hagiography and episcopal holdings, we can therefore hypothesise minsters at Wirksworth, Bakewell, Wroxeter, Sandbach, Over, Chester and Upton in Overchurch. Taken together, it is notable that the greatest concentration of minsters was located in the southeast part of the diocese, with scattered examples in the north and west (see Figure 27). It can plausibly be argued that this combination of criteria is too limited to locate all pre-Viking minsters in the diocese; however, it is distinctly possible that it is representative of their general distribution. Blair has argued that the absence of saints in the northwest of England may be due to “the lack of local sources, combined with the remoteness of the region from the centres where lists and

⁵⁵ Blair 2005, p 310; see also n. 104, referring to work by Thomas Pickles supporting the application of the term to a minster’s satellite settlements

⁵⁶ White, Roger & Barker, Philip. 1998. *Wroxeter. Life and Death of a Roman City*, Tempus, Stroud, pp 140-141; *Salop. HER*, No. 02883

⁵⁷ Kendrick 1938, p 192 (mid-ninth century); Cramp, Rosemary. 1975. ‘Anglo-Saxon sculpture of the Reform period’, in D. Parsons (ed.), *Tenth-Century Studies, essays in commemoration of the millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, Phillimore, London, pp 184-199, this reference p 189 (tenth century, perhaps ninth century); Wilson, David M. 1984. *Anglo-Saxon Art, from the Seventh Century to the Norman Conquest*. Thames & Hudson, London, p 105 (late-ninth or early-tenth century); Jewell, Richard. 2001. ‘Classicism of Southumbrian Sculpture’, in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr (eds.), *Mercia, an Anglo-Saxon kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, pp 246-262, this reference p 262 (tenth century)

calendars were compiled.”⁵⁸ However, when, c. 1140, Prior Robert of Shrewsbury Abbey wrote his *Life* of St Wenefred, he deplored the lack of a local saint and explained that, hearing of the profusion of saints in Wales, the community decided to acquire one of them, and subsequently translated St Wenefred (or Gwenfrewi) from Gwytherin, Denbighshire, to Shrewsbury.⁵⁹ In the late eleventh century Shrewsbury Abbey acquired, among others, the churches at Baschurch, Berrington, Hodnet, Great Ness, Wrockwardine, Conover, Edgmond, Ercall Magna and Wellington; these were all identified as significant churches earlier in the chapter, and it is difficult to believe that, had one of them contained a relic cult, the Benedictine community would not have latched onto it. The comparative lack of saints in this area is not simply apparent, and if such applied to saints’ cults, it may also have applied to the minsters that supported them, given the lack of any other evidence of their profusion.

It is sensible to enquire, given the corpus of pre-Viking minsters in the diocese identified above, whether they possess any unusual topographical or archaeological signatures that might aid distinguishing them further. In terms of location, Blair has recently synthesised the conclusions of various local studies to propose the popularity of places near rivers of the sea, perhaps peninsulas formed by converging rivers, or stream-side locations a short distance from confluence with a larger river; and of raised places, whether the slight rise of a gravel island in a floodplain, or a higher bluff or hillock, or the dramatic contours of a headland above the sea.⁶⁰ It should be remembered however, that such criteria are not necessarily exclusive of later foundations. Most of our corpus of early minsters

⁵⁸ Blair 2002a, p 467

⁵⁹ *Vita Sanctae Wenefredae*, c. 3, in *Acta Sanctorum*, Nov., I (1887)

⁶⁰ Blair 2005, p 193; see also Morris 1989, pp 110-111

demonstrates locations next to streams or rivers, albeit sometimes quite small ones, and in each case the church is (or was) located on higher ground, including the low hump of the island of Andresey in the Trent floodplain, but more commonly various morphologies of flat or gently rising ground not too far above the relevant watercourse.⁶¹ Our minsters therefore fit within the broader conception of minster location across England, and in the case of Lichfield, the inspiration may be directly traceable.

Lichfield cathedral sits on a bluff with gently rising ground to the rear, above a pool (Minster Pool) created by the damming of the Curborough Brook; a second pool (Stowe Pool) is located just downstream, created by another dam at Stowe. Recent archaeological excavation at the edges of both pools has demonstrated that they achieved their greatest extent in the twelfth century, and that if they had

⁶¹ Lichfield: on a low bluff on the northwest bank of the Curborough Brook; Repton: on a bluff on the south side of the Trent floodplain; St Alkmund, Derby: at the top of the sloping western valley-side of the River Derwent; Andresey an island in the Trent; Polesworth: within a sharp curve of the River Anker; Ilam: on the north bank of the River Manifold, where the valley opens out from a steep-sided gorge; Stone: on gently rising ground on the north side of the Trent, at the foot of a steeper hill; Coventry: within a broad curving sweep of the River Sherbourne; Norbury: on the southern side of the River Dove, at the top of a steep valley-side; Berkswell: in a nook in rising ground on the east side of a tributary stream just under 2 miles above its confluence with the River Blythe; Farnon: on the east bank of the River Dee; Wybunbury: at the end of promontory between the Wybunbury Brook and a tributary stream, about two miles from the latter's confluence with the River Weaver; Longford: between the Shirley Brook and another stream, a short distance above their confluence to form the Longford Brook; Wilne: beside the River Derwent, just under a mile above its confluence with the River Trent; Long Eaton: just above the floodplain of the River Erewash, just over a mile from its confluence with the River Trent; Eccleshall: on the south bank of the River Sow, just above the floodplain; Brewood: on gently rising ground on the north side of a tributary stream, just under a mile from its confluence with the River Penk; Baswich: on a bluff above the River Penk just above its confluence with the River Sow; Colwich: on a bluff above the confluence of a tributary stream with the River Trent; Wirksworth: on a stretch of fairly flat land on the western side of the nascent River Ecclesbourne, the valley sides rising steeply to east and west; Bakewell: on the rising valley side above the River Wye; Wroxeter on the eastern side of the River Severn, above a ford; Sandbach: on gently rising ground on the west side of a tributary stream about a mile above its confluence with the River Wheelock; Over: on the rising southern side of small stream feeding into the River Weaver half a mile to the east; Chester: within a sharp curve of the River Dee

an earlier existence, they must have been substantially smaller;⁶² it appears most likely that for much of the early medieval period the cathedral overlooked the Curborough Brook (see Figure 28).⁶³ This situation parallels that of Lichfield, Chad's minster before his episcopal appointment to Lichfield, which sits on a similar bluff above the Ings Beck, the more substantial slopes of the North Yorkshire Moors rising beyond. Only Tarvin, Prees, Hanbury and Upton depart from this model, all instead emphasising height over proximity to flowing water: Tarvin, Prees and Upton are situated on gentle slopes just below the summits of low hills or plateaux, from quarter to half a mile away from the nearest flowing water;⁶⁴ Hanbury is located on a plateau overlooking a steep slope towards the floodplain of the River Dove, whose winding course is about 1¼ miles to the north.

It has recently been suggested that a monastic enclosure can be traced at Hanbury in the existing road network, perhaps echoing the outline of a prehistoric hillfort reused in the early medieval period, as occurred elsewhere at this time,

⁶² Thorpe, Harry. 1950/1. 'Lichfield: a study of its growth and function', in *SHC* 1950/1, pp 137-211, this reference pp 142-144; Carver, M. O. H. 1981b. 'Excavations south of Lichfield Cathedral', in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. XXII, pp 35-69, this reference pp 37-38; Jones, Alex. 1990. *Lichfield Cathedral Close: Archaeological Evaluation (Stages 1-4) 1989-1990*. Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit, Unpublished Report (Staffs. HER No. 07523; SST 3052), p 3; Stone, Richard. 1999. *The Arts Centre, Bird Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire: Report on an evaluation excavation*. Marches Archaeology, Unpublished Report (Staffs. HER No. 05490; SST 3562); Tavener, Nick. 2010. *Cross Keys car park, Lichfield, Staffordshire: Level 3 archive report on an archaeological excavation and watching brief*. Nick Tavener Archaeological Services, Unpublished Report, pp 53-55

⁶³ The figure includes a consideration of the local road network, much of which may predate or be contemporary with the early medieval minster: Basset, S. R. 1981. 'Medieval Lichfield: a topographical review', in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. XXII, pp 93-121; Slater, T. R. 1984/5. 'The Topography and Planning of Medieval Lichfield: a Critique', in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. XXVI, pp 11-35

⁶⁴ Tarvin: on gently rising ground, just below the top of a low plateau, above the Milton Brook around a quarter mile to the northwest, just over two miles from the latter's confluence with the River Gow; Prees: just below the summit of a low hill, above a feeder stream of the Souton Brook about a third of a mile to the west, about two and a half miles from the latter's confluence with the River Roden; Upton was located not far below the summit of a low hill at the northern end of the Wirral, just over half a mile east of the Arrowe Brook

such as Hanbury's namesake in Worcestershire (see Figure 29).⁶⁵ However, it seems more likely that the putative enclosure is formed from a north-south through road to the east and two roads departing westwards from it, both focussed on the site of the church, which, tellingly, is not located within the bounds of the enclosure. Nevertheless, the presence of a prehistoric earthwork somewhere on the site cannot be ruled out, as the place-name ('high fortification or enclosure') may suggest as much, although it has been suggested that the term *burh* was applied to minsters at this time, perhaps referring to the enclosures surrounding them.⁶⁶ The presence of early enclosures surrounding the minsters of the rest of our corpus can in no case be demonstrated with certainty. At several, the later presence of a cathedral or abbey resulted in the demarcation of large rectangular compounds that may or may not have followed earlier boundaries, although if they did, they will probably have cut away archaeological evidence of the earlier arrangement. For example, at Lichfield the boundary of the close is currently marked by the walls, or the lines of the walls, erected by Bishop Walter Langton in the early-fourteenth century.⁶⁷ These were based on an earlier enclosure, first referenced in a document of c. 1200, which describes the close as a *castellum*, and later, in the early 1290s, by a reference to two gates, perhaps in the same positions as Langton's later gates on the west and southeast.⁶⁸ In the earlier-fourteenth century, Alan of Ashbourne credited Bishop Roger de Clinton with 'enclosing the castle' (*castrum Lichesfeldense muniendum*), which, given a separate reference in the same passage to the town (*villa*), can only be the

⁶⁵ *VCH Staffs.* Vol. 10, pp 122-124

⁶⁶ Horovitz 2005, p 295

⁶⁷ Maddison 1993, pp 65-68

⁶⁸ *VCH Staffs.* Vol. 14, p 60

close.⁶⁹ It is possible that Clinton, if indeed it was he, followed an earlier boundary feature when he erected his enclosure, as, in its walled incarnation, measures approximately 300m northeast-southwest by 200m northwest-southeast, which is comparable with Blair's suggestion that typical minster enclosures of the seventh and eighth centuries measured from 150 to 300m across.

Similar rectangular compounds, although not so dramatically walled and ditched as Lichfield, can be traced around the priories of Coventry and Repton and the abbey at Polesworth, if not always directly, then indirectly from the positions of gates, and the layout of the surrounding features such as watercourses, the road network and the boundaries of tenements.⁷⁰ At Stone Priory, the outline of the monastic compound is less clear, and for most of the other minsters, which were simply parish churches throughout the later medieval period, hypotheses can be erected on the basis of field boundaries and street plans, but nothing concrete asserted. It is, however, notable, that most of these criteria, if they are in any way indicative of earlier medieval arrangements, suggest rectilinear arrangements. Only the churches at Over, Upton and Farndon in Cheshire preserve the outline of curvilinear enclosures, and in this they are joined by a scattering of other Cheshire churches, revealed in a study undertaken by Alan Thacker.⁷¹ It has been suggested that such morphology is indicative of an earlier Brittonic incarnation for the church concerned, perhaps stemming ultimately from Charles Thomas' hypothesis, that the earliest ecclesiastical sites in Britain were enclosed

⁶⁹ British Library MS Cott. Cleo. D IX, f. 72v

⁷⁰ Such also applies at Lichfield, where the southeast side of the close follows the bank of the Minster Pool, once Curborough Brook, the southwest side follows the line of Beacon Street, an early through route, and the northwest side follows Gaia Lane

⁷¹ *VCH Chesh.* Vol. 1, pp 286-292

cemeteries, often with curvilinear, sub-circular boundaries.⁷² However, recent work by David Petts has suggested that such boundaries were actually a fairly late addition to the type sites in western Britain, appearing from the eighth century onwards.⁷³ As Higham points out, “Cheshire’s examples seem to include both ancient and less ancient, medieval church sites, not all of which are likely even to predate the Norman Conquest.”⁷⁴ It is perhaps more likely that the phenomenon here represents a later development in churchyard morphology in England, perhaps less constrained by rectilinear boundaries than landscapes more devoted to arable fields, with their strips and furlongs, and thus able to be provided with boundaries more suitable to the spread of the cemetery.

Another distinctive form of boundary concerns the minster sites with place-names containing the element *worthig*, ‘enclosure’. As discussed in Chapter 2, the details concerning the cult of St Ealhmund at Derby found in the *Life* of the saint and in Ranulph Higden’s chronicle entry were probably current in the thirteenth century, possibly the later-twelfth century. Ranulph asserts that Ealhmund was buried in the ‘northern church’ (*ecclesia aquilonali*), which echoes the name of his resting-place given in the *Secgan*, ‘Northworthy’. Cyril Hart considers that the name ‘Northworthy’ was coined “to distinguish it from Tamworthig (Tamworth), the capital of the South Mercians”, whilst David Roffe suggests that the name was

⁷² Thomas, Charles. 1971. *The Early Christian Archaeology of North Britain*. Oxford University Press, Oxford; see also Brook, D. 1992. ‘The Early Christian church east and west of Offa’s Dyke’, in N. Edwards & A. Lane (eds.), *The Early Church in Wales and the West*, Oxbow Books, Oxford, pp 77-89

⁷³ Petts, David. 2002. ‘Cemeteries and Boundaries in Western Britain’, in S. Lucy & A. Reynolds (eds.), *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, The Society for Medieval Archaeology, London, pp 24-46

⁷⁴ Higham 1993, p 83

used to distinguish Derby from Repton.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, St Alkmund's church was indeed the northernmost church in the settlement at Derby, and it is worth speculating that 'Northworthy' did not refer simply to Derby, but to the northern area of settlement around St Alkmund's church. Encouragingly, St Alkmund's used to sit within a compound clearly defined by the surrounding roads, measuring approximately 100m square, which may later have been incorporated within the defences of the tenth-century burh there (see Figure 30).⁷⁶ This complements the size of the enclosure at Wirksworth, where the large churchyard is approximately 150m long by 100m wide, and remains a readily identifiable element of the town plan. Unfortunately the transformation of Polesworth into a later medieval abbey has obliterated any trace of an earlier compound there. However, at Tamworth, the 'palace enclosure' identified by Bob Meeson at the centre of the surrounding tenth-century *burh* enclosure measures approximately 150m by 100m.⁷⁷ It is therefore possible to advance at least a regional understanding of the typical size of a *worthig*, and to distinguish this from the larger enclosures more typically associated with minsters, including some of those discussed above; we may see here something of a hierarchy of size amongst the early minsters.

Early minsters in Roman settlements

At least two of our minsters were associated with Roman enclosures. Chester possessed two important minsters in 1086: the episcopal church of St John and

⁷⁵ Hart, Cyril. 1977. 'The kingdom of Mercia', in A. Dornier (ed.), *Mercian Studies*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 43-61, this reference p 53; Roffe 1986a, p 111; see Chapter 2 concerning the provincial geography of the Mercian kingdom.

⁷⁶ Evidence for the line of the medieval town ditch along St Helen's Street was discovered in an excavation of 2007; the lowest fill contained twelfth-century pottery, but burh defences often formed prototypes for later town defences, and an earlier ditch may have been re-cut or lie close by: see *Derbs. HER* No. 32651

⁷⁷ *DB Staffs.* 1.30; Meeson, R. 1979. *The Formation of Tamworth*. Unpublished MA Thesis, Figure 10

the church of St Werburgh; the place has been included in our corpus of early minsters because of the presence of pre-Viking sculpture there, although as the findspot was not recorded, we cannot now determine which of the two minsters it came from. A reference to the foundation of St John's in 689 by King Æthelred and Bishop Wilfric (*recte* Wilfrid) is contained in the *Annales Cestrienses*, produced at St Werburgh's Abbey, of which the surviving manuscript witnesses both derive from a lost late-thirteenth-century text that itself derived, with omissions, from annals compiled in 1255.⁷⁸ Although tantalising, the entry is suspiciously close to 690/691, when, according to Bede, Wilfrid sought sanctuary with King Æthelred and was given the bishopric of the Middle Angles; following the custom of labelling bishoprics by the locations of their seats, Wilfrid was often relabelled Bishop of Leicester, in Old English *Legrecestria*, which was easily confused with Chester, *Legecestria*.⁷⁹ A thirteenth-century compiler, believing Wilfrid to have been the first bishop of Chester, may well have attempted to date the foundation of Chester's episcopal church to his appointment. Later medieval tradition assigned the building of St Werburgh's minster to Lady Æthelflæd of the Mercians, or to several of the subsequent Anglo-Saxon kings, probably building on the entry *sub anno* 907 in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, or one of its later derivatives, which states that 'in this year Chester was rebuilt.'⁸⁰ It was only the

⁷⁸ Christie 1887, pp ix-x, xiv

⁷⁹ As suggested in Thacker, A. T. 1982. 'Chester and Gloucester: Early Ecclesiastical Organisation in Two Mercian Burhs', in *Northern History*, Vol. XVIII, pp 199-211, this reference p 200; see the discussion in Chapter 1 for a critical analysis of Wilfrid's connection with this see or its seat at Leicester. See also Tait, J. 1920. *The Chartulary of Chester Abbey*. Chetham Society, New Series, LXXIX, Manchester; this provides the classic critique of Chester's early history as presented in its documentation. The fourteenth-century Chester chronicler Ranulph Higden certainly believed Wilfrid to have been Bishop of Chester, claiming that, after the death of Bishop Seaxwulf, 'Wilfrid, for a long time exiled from Northumbria, succeeded to *Legecestria*, which is now called Chester' ('Wylfridus de Northimbria diu profugatus successit apud Legecestriam quae modo Cestria dicitur': Lumby 1876, Vol. II, p 128; see also Lumby 1876, Vol. VI, p 162 for a second reference)

⁸⁰ John of Worcester's chronicle, s.a. 908, asserts that this was done at the command of Ealdorman Æthelred and Æthelflæd; in the fourteenth century Ranulph Higden ascribed the

sixteenth-century monk Henry Bradshaw who claimed that an earlier church, dedicated to St Peter and St Paul, had been replaced by St Werburgh's minster; given previous silence, this must be fantasy.⁸¹

There is thus no early textual tradition regarding the minsters at Chester, and it is not possible, without archaeological evidence, to assign a pre-Viking date to one or the other. The location of St Werburgh's within the walls of the Roman legionary fortress echoes that of seventh-century churches elsewhere in England, such as that built by Chad's brother Cedd in the fort at Bradwell-on-Sea in Essex, and, more pertinent here, the church of St Andrew, which is located within the southern corner of the city walls at Wroxeter, just above a ford across the River Severn.⁸² Nevertheless, despite considerable excavation within Chester city walls there is very little, if any evidence for activity in the city from the fifth to the ninth centuries other than the gradual decay of the Roman buildings and defences, and perhaps some limited cultivation, and it will be argued below that the church was established in the tenth century.⁸³ St John's is positioned next to the Roman amphitheatre outside the southeast corner of the defences, an unusual arrangement that has prompted the suggestion that the site retained or acquired an association with early Christian martyrdom.⁸⁴ It must certainly remain a possibility, pending archaeological enquiry, that St John's was founded on the site of some form of earlier ecclesiastical structure, although it should also be noted

foundation of St Werburgh's minster of secular canons to Æthelstan (Lumby 1876, Vol. VI, p 128); in the sixteenth century Henry Bradshaw credited Æthelflæd with the foundation, although he also referred to a tabula in St John's that ascribed the foundation to King Edmund (*The Life of Saint Werburge of Chester*, Book II, ll. 583-638 & 1108-1128)

⁸¹ *The Life of Saint Werburge of Chester*, Book II, ll. 449-467

⁸² *HE* iii.22; see also Blair 2005, p 196; Foot, Sarah. 2006. *Monastic Life in England c. 600-900*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p 101

⁸³ Mason 2007, pp 23-34

⁸⁴ Thacker 1982, pp 200-201; Matthews, Keith J. 2003. 'Chester's amphitheatre after Rome: a centre of Christian worship?', in *Cheshire History*, Vol. 43, pp 12-27

that the site, next to the river above the red cliffs that gave the bishop's Domesday manor its name (*Redeclive*; 'Redcliff'), fits the pattern outlined above, and would have avoided the clutter of crumbling Roman buildings within the fortress. St John's is thus likely to be the earliest church in Chester; when considered with Wroxeter, the foundation of early minsters at the two largest Roman settlements in the region must be significant.

We can take this further by considering the evidence for church-scot mentioned earlier: a charter of Richard I dated 1189, confirming the gifts of Bishop Roger de Clinton to Buildwas Abbey in 1135, mentions 'church-amber' to be rendered to the abbey from the hundreds of Wrockwardine and Condober.⁸⁵ Bishop Hugh de Nonant's confirmation of 1192 states that the render was appurtenant to the manor of Buildwas and Meole.⁸⁶ This manor was only formed in 1135, assembled from the bishop's separate holdings at Buildwas and Meole, and to which of these manors, if either, the due pertained before that date cannot be ascertained with certainty.⁸⁷ Bassett suggests that it belonged to the bishop's church of St Chad in Shrewsbury, in which parish the manor of Meole was situated, and for which he attempts to prove an early foundation.⁸⁸ However, given that the bishop's confirmation explicitly states that the due belonged to a manor rather than a church after 1135, there is no reason why it should not have done so earlier, and thus it may equally have belonged to Buildwas as to Meole. Furthermore, there is good reason to favour the former: a manor called Little Buildwas, on the northern

⁸⁵ Bassett 1991, p 6; the relevant part of the charter is printed in Franklin, M. J. 1997. *English Episcopal Acta, Vol. 14: Coventry and Lichfield 1072-1159*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 10-11

⁸⁶ Bassett 1991, p 6

⁸⁷ *VCH Salop*. Vol. 2, pp 50-59

⁸⁸ Bassett 1991, pp 6-7

side of the Severn opposite Buildwas, was given to Buildwas Abbey by William FitzAlan, and, as Bassett argues, the name suggests that it once formed a single township with Buildwas.⁸⁹ Little Buildwas was a dependency of the manor of Wroxeter, which, Bassett has suggested, was originally the mother church for the territories represented by the hundreds of Wrockwardine and Conover, located as it is in the middle of the boundary between them.⁹⁰ It thus appears most likely that the church-scot originated as a due payable to the church at Wroxeter, but later devolved onto the only episcopal manor in the two hundreds: that at Buildwas.

It was argued earlier that church-scot assessed on a hundred basis appears to have been a characteristic of tenth-century parochial structures, and such may have been the case here also. In 1066 Wroxeter with its church was held by a thegn named Thored.⁹¹ In Cheshire, a thegn named Thored held several manors associated with the bishop: at Ashton and Barrow, both near the bishop's manor of Tarvin and included within its mother parish;⁹² at Allington, which is recorded as part of the bishop's manor at Eyton and Sutton;⁹³ and at Gresford both the St Chad's church (presumably a reference to the holdings of the bishopric) and Thored held land.⁹⁴ It can thus be plausibly conjectured that Thored was one of the bishop's thegns and that the bishop had had an interest in Wroxeter in 1066, although if so his successor had lost it by 1086, excepting claim to the church-scot previously rendered to Wroxeter and the land held at Buildwas. Whether or not

⁸⁹ Bassett 1992a, p 17

⁹⁰ Bassett 1992b, pp 35-39

⁹¹ *DB Salop.* 4.3.26

⁹² *DB Chesh.* 5.1 & 9.5

⁹³ *DB Chesh.* 16.1 & 16.2

⁹⁴ *DB Chesh.* 27.3

the church-scot render represented a later incarnation of arrangements dating back centuries, the bishop's interest in Wroxeter may certainly have done so, and in this respect a sixteenth-century comment by John Leland deserves attention: "Tho. Cleobury, sometimes Abbot of Doure, tould me that there was one of the antient bishops of Lichfield, that was in Offa King of Merches tyme, that lived an hermites life at Buldewas, after such tyme as the pall of the Archbishop of Lichfield was taken from Lichfeild and restored againe to Canterbury."⁹⁵ As discussed in Chapter 1, Archbishop Hygeberht's retirement must be inferred from the subscription of a charter of 803, and is mentioned nowhere else; it is thus remarkable that this tradition should involve the archbishop of Lichfield's retirement. The tradition is too late for any sure confidence to be placed in it, but if it is at all possible that there is an earlier medieval kernel in it, we may have a further hint of the nature of the bishops' interest in this area, Buildwas perhaps originating as an outlying hermitage attached to the church at Wroxeter. In any case, when considered with the episcopal minster at Chester, we have an indication that the agency of the early bishops of Lichfield was paramount in establishing minsters at the diocese's two Roman cities.

Churches and Shrines

Harold and Joan Taylor have identified the south wall of the nave of the church at Ilam, pierced by a tall, narrow doorway, as Anglo-Saxon in date, although they include it amongst churches at which the evidence is not satisfactorily diagnostic.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Toulmin-Smith, L. 1906-10. *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535-1543*. London, Vol. II (Part V), p 84

⁹⁶ Taylor, H. M. 1966. 'Anglo-Saxon Architecture and Sculpture in Staffordshire', in *North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies*, Vol. 6, pp 7-11, this reference p 9; Taylor, Harold M. &

Elsewhere, Wroxeter church is one of two in the diocese where pre-Viking fabric has been held certainly to survive, in this case in the north wall of the nave, which the Taylors considered to date to the seventh or eighth century; Cameron Moffett has reconstructed the church as comprising a small nave, about 13m long, with perhaps a porticus at the eastern end.⁹⁷ The other church certainly containing pre-Viking fabric is another of our early minsters: Repton. Here, the chancel of the church and the crypt beneath it are Anglo-Saxon work, as is part of the nave immediately to the west.⁹⁸ Archaeological excavation at the church, undertaken by Harold Taylor, Martin Biddle and Birthe Kjølbye-Biddle, has established that the crypt was originally a free-standing sunken structure, perhaps a burial chamber or *hypogeum*, which was later incorporated beneath the eastern porticus of a church built above it, and was subsequently modified by the insertion of vaulting supported on four pillars with spiral decoration, contemporary with rebuilding of the upper reaches of the church fabric, then by the cutting of stairways leading diagonally downwards from the north and south porticus flanking the church to the west (see Figure 31).⁹⁹

Taylor, Joan. 1965. *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Vol. 2, p 719

⁹⁷ Taylor & Taylor 1966, Vol. 2, pp 694-695; Moffett, Cameron. 1989. 'Archaeological investigations at the Anglo-Saxon church of St Andrew, Wroxeter: 1985-6', in *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 66, pp 1-14

⁹⁸ Taylor & Taylor 1965, Vol. 2, pp 510-516

⁹⁹ Taylor, Harold M. 1971. 'Repton reconsidered: a study in structural criticism', in P. Clemons & K. Hughes (eds.), *England before the Conquest: Studies in primary sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 351-389; Biddle, Martin, Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe & Taylor, M. 1976. In *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 20, p 159; Biddle, Martin & Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe. 1985. 'The Repton Stone', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 14, pp 233-292; Biddle, Martin. 1986. 'Archaeology, architecture, and the cult of saints in Anglo-Saxon England', in L. A. S. Butler & R. K. Morris (eds.), *The Anglo-Saxon Church; Papers on history, architecture, and archaeology in honour of Dr H M Taylor*, Research Report 60, The Council for British Archaeology, London, pp 1-31, this reference pp 14-22; Taylor, Harold M. 1987. 'St Wystan's church, Repton, Derbyshire: A Reconstruction Essay', in *Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 144, pp 205-245; Fernie, Eric. 1982. *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*. B T Batsford, London; Gem, Richard. 1993. 'Architecture of the Anglo-Saxon church, 735 to 870: from Archbishop Ecgberht to Archbishop Ceolnoth', in *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Vol. 146, pp 29-66, this reference pp 51-52; Crook, John. 2000. *The Architectural Setting of the Cult of Saints in the Early Christian West c. 300-1200*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp 62-63 & 128-130

The construction trench for the sunken chamber was cut through an eighth-century occupation layer in an earlier cemetery, suggesting to Taylor that it might have been constructed to receive the body of King Æthelbald, whose death is entered *sub anno 757* in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*; such a *hypogeum* essentially evokes the subterranean burial observed in the Roman catacombs, and John Crook has assembled seventh- and eighth-century Gaulish parallels for the association of such a structure with burial rather than, or as well as, the enshrinement of saints.¹⁰⁰ The church constructed above the hypogeum featured a projecting chambers, or porticus, on the eastern, northern and southern sides of its eastern end; the overall plan is a common one in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms from the mid-seventh century onwards, and Figure 32 shows a set of examples dating from the eighth and ninth centuries.¹⁰¹ The building at Repton cannot be precisely dated, although its partial rebuilding was contemporary with the insertion of vaulting into the burial chamber. Taylor suggested that this marked the burial of King Wiglaf, St Wigstan's grandfather, whose mausoleum was reused for his grandson according to the latter's *Life*, an event that in Taylor's scheme was soon succeeded by the cutting of passageways from the porticus to aid pilgrim circulation at the burgeoning cult site; however Crook has noted that the spiral decoration of the vault piers is used elsewhere to mark the resting place of a saint, not least at St Peter's, Rome, and thus probably also dates to a time after Wigstan's burial.¹⁰² This is usually assumed to have occurred before the wintering of the Danish army at Repton in 872/3, and whilst this may be so, the Viking presence may not have

¹⁰⁰ Crook 2000, pp 61-63

¹⁰¹ Radford 1976, pp 34-35; Fernie 1982, chapters 3 & 4; Gem 1993, p 46 (figure)

¹⁰² Crook 2000, p 130

caused such long-term disruption to the life of the minster as is sometimes assumed.

Another feature commonly discussed in terms of the Vikings is a mass grave buried beneath a mound that almost certainly dates to the winter of 872/3; equally important however, is its reuse of another sunken chamber dating to the late-seventh or eighth century.¹⁰³ This rectangular structure was entered down a set of steps at its western end, and contained two chambers and evidence for stucco decoration was found within.¹⁰⁴ This hypogeum was located over 50m to the west of the church described above, aligned on the same east-west axis (see Figure 33). It thus appears that the bluff overlooking the Trent at Repton hosted, from at least the eighth century, at least two free-standing funerary monuments of a form that may have been inspired by Roman or Gaulish *hypogea*. It might be assumed that a church also formed a part of this alignment from an early date, although it must be remembered that the surviving church fabric described above postdates the *hypogeum* beneath it; this church must have been built by 873/4 at the latest, as it was then incorporated in a defensive earthwork constructed within the minster precinct, perhaps acting as a 'gatehouse', and its modification under the influence of the cult of St Wigstan argues that it had been constructed some time beforehand, in the later-eighth or early-ninth centuries.¹⁰⁵ In any case, the alignment of churches and other funerary structures along an east-west axis has

¹⁰³ Biddle, Martin, Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe & Taylor, M. 1983. In *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 27, pp 172-173; Biddle, Martin, Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe & Taylor, M. 1985. In *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 29, p 168; Biddle, Martin & Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe. 1992. 'Repton and the Vikings', in *Antiquity*, Vol. 66, No. 250, pp 36-51

¹⁰⁴ Hadley, Dawn M. 2006. *The Vikings in England. Settlement, Society and Culture*. Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp 13-15

¹⁰⁵ Biddle & Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, p 40

been observed at several other sites in England, as well as on the continent, and appears to have been a fairly common practice.¹⁰⁶

Archaeological excavation has revealed two more of our early minsters, at Lichfield and Derby. At Derby, the church of St Alkmund, itself a complete Victorian rebuild of its medieval predecessor, was demolished in the late 1960s to make way for a new ring road, enabling C. A. Ralegh Radford to excavate the site.¹⁰⁷ Although substantially truncated by later activity, the remains of an early church were found, comprising a rectangular nave, measuring approximately 15m by 7½m, with an eastern porticus approximately 5½m square; fragmentary evidence was also found for a southern porticus at the eastern end of the nave.¹⁰⁸ Radford conjectures another porticus on the northern side to balance the southern, and whether or not this existed, the plan obviously resembles the common aisleless plan also displayed at Repton. In the southeast corner of the nave the carved sarcophagus mentioned earlier was discovered, buried in a rectangular trench cut for its use; what evidence there is suggests that the altars of earlier Anglo-Saxon churches of this type were often located at the eastern end of the nave, and thus the position of the sarcophagus may have been immediately south of the altar. Radford associates the sarcophagus with St Ealhmund, and compares this to the arrangements made after the death of St Cuthbert, who, according to Bede, was buried in the same place, and eleven years later exhumed and placed in new coffin upon the church floor above his old grave; the elaborate carving along the sides of the Derby sarcophagus suggest that this too once sat

¹⁰⁶ Blair 2005, pp 199-200; Foot 2006, p 111

¹⁰⁷ Radford, C. A. Ralegh. 1976. 'The Church of Saint Alkmund, Derby', in *The Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 96, pp 26-61

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp 31-32

above floor level, before its later burial, probably on or near the same spot, dated to the twelfth century, after which only its lid may have been visible at floor level.¹⁰⁹ Interestingly, an empty grave was found alongside the buried sarcophagus, associated by Radford with the later burial of someone *ad sanctos*; however, it is possible that this represents Ealhmund's earlier grave, above which the sarcophagus initially rested, before being placed in a pit excavated next to it.¹¹⁰ The author of St Ealhmund's *vita*, discussed in Chapter 2, referred to the saint's stone sarcophagus, which could be seen 'to this day', and this monument was doubtless intended.

The presence of carved stonework in rebuilt sections of the eastern porticus walls, and the destruction of the southern porticus and blocking of the door leading to it from the nave, suggested to Radford a period of neglect followed by an episode of renovation, although we should be wary of simplifying what may have been a more lengthy and ongoing process.¹¹¹ Likewise, Radford's dating of this period to the Danish occupation of Derbyshire at the end of the ninth century simply grasps one of the few historical events to be ascribed to the area by the textual sources.¹¹² Nevertheless, the presence of a burial packed with charcoal across the site of the demolished porticus argues for a ninth-century or later date for this event, as such burials tend to appear in ninth- to twelfth-century contexts.¹¹³ Two carved imposts, now lost, but drawn in the mid-nineteenth century, were dated by Radford

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, pp 35 & 37; the wide appeal of the right hand side of the altar is also manifest in Bede's description of St Cedd's burial there, in the church of St Mary at Lavington: *HE* iii.23

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p 33 (grave no. 53)

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, p 34

¹¹² *ibid.*, p 35

¹¹³ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, pp 51-52; Thompson, Victoria. 2004. *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 118-119

stylistically to the late-tenth century, indicating a late episode of elaboration.¹¹⁴

Whilst such dating might be subject to revision, the continued use of the church, and its later extension in the twelfth century and later, testify to its ongoing significance.¹¹⁵

Derby and Repton both display churches of similar plan, and a concern to elaborate the enshrinement of their local saints, in episodes that probably date to the ninth century. This can be compared with the results of archaeological excavations at Lichfield cathedral, which have occurred sporadically over the last thirty years, largely undertaken by the cathedral archaeologist, Warwick Rodwell.¹¹⁶ The foundations of a Romanesque phase of the structure also lie buried beneath the present choir, revealed during renovations of the mid-nineteenth century, and Rodwell has reviewed all existing ground plans from these episodes and combined them with a survey of the choir to produce a new plan, shown in Figure 34 in conjunction with Roland Paul's 1891 plan of the entire building, and used to locate various elements in the following discussion of the archaeology. The Anglo-Saxon archaeology discovered by Rodwell was located in three separate areas: the north choir aisle, the south choir aisle, and the eastern

¹¹⁴ Radford 1976, pp 34 & 45

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*, pp 35-42

¹¹⁶ The relevant reports are: Rodwell, Warwick. 1989. 'Archaeology and the standing fabric: recent studies at Lichfield Cathedral', in *Antiquity*, Vol. 63, No. 239, pp 281-294; *idem.* 1992. *Lichfield Cathedral; Interim Report on Archaeological Excavations in the South Quire Aisle and the Consistory Court*. Unpublished Report (Lichfield Cathedral Library; Staffs. HER No. 07472; SST 2987); *idem.* 1993. 'The Development of the Choir of Lichfield Cathedral: Romanesque and Early English', in J. Maddison (ed.), *Medieval Archaeology and Architecture at Lichfield*, Conference Transactions of the British Archaeological Association, Vol. 13, Oxbow Books, Oxford, pp 17-35; *idem.* 1994. *Lichfield Cathedral; Interim Report on Archaeological Excavations in the North Quire Aisle*. Unpublished Report (Lichfield Cathedral Library); *idem.* 2000. *An Interim Report on Archaeological Investigations in the Nave of Lichfield Cathedral*. Unpublished Report (Lichfield Cathedral Library); *idem.* 2003. *Archaeological Excavation in the Nave of Lichfield Cathedral; An Interim Report*. Unpublished Report (Lichfield Cathedral Library; Staffs. HER No. 07472; SST 1071); Rodwell, Warwick, Hawkes, Jane, Howe, Emily, & Cramp, Rosemary. 2008. 'The Lichfield Angel: A Spectacular Anglo-Saxon Painted Sculpture', in *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol. 88, pp 48-108

end of the nave.¹¹⁷ The various features have here been transferred from Rodwell's plans onto a single plan, Figure 35, which also shows the later Romanesque chancel and the centrelines of the thirteenth-century nave and crossing both for reference and to illustrate how the earlier remains were truncated by the Romanesque building.¹¹⁸

In the north and south choir aisles, the remains comprised mortared rubble foundations, in some areas partially robbed out, but, from their common form, probably all of a similar phase of construction, and all aligned along the same axes as the later cathedral phases.¹¹⁹ The foundations in the north aisle formed the north, east and west sides of a square or rectangular structure truncated by the Romanesque arcade to the south.¹²⁰ In the south aisle the foundations formed the east and west sides of a similar structure, and had been truncated to both north and south by the Romanesque chancel; the east wall aligned with the east wall in the north aisle, but the west wall was slightly further west than its northern counterpart.¹²¹ Burials were located immediately west of the western walls in both aisles, the longer sequence in the south including adults, young children, and several babies, with a couple packed with charcoal in the middle of the sequence.¹²² Two glass beads in one burial and several radiocarbon dates apparently suggest that the period of interment covered the seventh and eighth centuries, although it should be noted that the charcoal burials would therefore be

¹¹⁷ Rodwell 1992, 1994 & 2003

¹¹⁸ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 51, Figure 2 shows a similar plan, although the structural features in the nave excavation appear to be too small when compared to the larger excavation plan shown on p 54, Figure 4

¹¹⁹ Rodwell 1992 & 1994

¹²⁰ Rodwell 1994

¹²¹ Rodwell 1992

¹²² *ibid.*

very early examples of the type.¹²³ Rodwell proposes that the structural remains represent a pair of lateral porticus flanking a church, and although he appears to suggest that that on the south was the easternmost of a series extending westwards, it seems more likely that it, like its northern counterpart, was a singular structure; this is supported by the presence of the babies amongst the dead, as groups of infant burials located around the external walls of churches, so-called 'eaves-drip' burials, have been observed at several other cemeteries across the country.¹²⁴

In the nave of the cathedral, the archaeological excavation located two phases of Anglo-Saxon structural remains.¹²⁵ First, clay-and-pebble foundations formed the west, north and south walls of a large structure that extended eastwards beyond the limit of excavation, and although aligned along the same axes as later phases of the cathedral, its centreline was a short distance to the south of that of the later nave; in contrast to the porticus, burials were found within this structure, although none of them were excavated.¹²⁶ In a secondary development, the foundations of a second structure were laid to abut the western end of the first, and although its western end was beyond the limit of excavation, its dimensions bear comparison with the porticus in the choir aisles; nevertheless, its foundations were of unmortared sandstone rubble, including a sculptured piece displaying interlace design, suggesting it was of a different phase to these.¹²⁷ The second structural

¹²³ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, pp 51-52; Thompson, Victoria. 2004. *Dying and Death in Later Anglo-Saxon England*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 118-119

¹²⁴ Hadley, Dawn M. & Buckberry, Jo. 2005. 'Caring for the Dead in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in F. Tinti (ed.), *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 121-147, this reference pp 144-145

¹²⁵ Rodwell 2003; Rodwell *et al.* 2008, pp 52-55

¹²⁶ Rodwell 2003, p 3

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, pp

phase must have occurred after the demolition of the earlier structures, and comprised two east-west robbed mortared-rubble foundations underlying, and severely truncated by, the foundations of the thirteenth-century nave arcade; whilst accepting that the foundations must have supported the Romanesque nave walls or arcade, Rodwell suggests that they may have been reused from an earlier Anglo-Saxon building, as they are most unlike the poured concrete and rubble foundations associated with the Romanesque building elsewhere in the cathedral.¹²⁸

The stratigraphy of the archaeology in the nave excavation was confused by the presence of so many later medieval graves.¹²⁹ However, a layer of burnt material was found to provide an historical horizon to which other features could be related, and may have been part of a set of levelling layers deposited after the demolition of the first-phase structures but before the construction of the second-phase building.¹³⁰ Sealed beneath this layer in the southwest corner of the earliest structure was a pit containing the fragments of the angel sculpture mentioned earlier.¹³¹ Within the footprint of the earliest building, but located on the centreline of the second-phase structure (and consequently of its post-Conquest successors) was a large rectangular vertically-sided pit, 2m wide and extending beyond the eastern limit of excavation, but certainly over 2m long; its stratigraphical position is ambiguous in Rodwell's reports, but his latest synthesis associates it with the latest Anglo-Saxon structure, probably on the basis of its central position between

¹²⁸ *ibid.*, pp 7-8

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, p 4

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, pp 4-9

¹³¹ *ibid.*, p 6; on p 7 of the same report Rodwell contradicts this statement by suggesting that the pit was dug after the spreading of burnt material across the site, but affirms that the pit was sealed by the burnt material in his later synthesis contained in Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 59

its walls.¹³² The pit remained open until the fourteenth century, and provided the focus for prestigious burials within the later incarnations of the cathedral, and on this basis Rodwell identified it as a small burial crypt associated with the shrine of St Chad.¹³³ Rodwell also observed indications that the pit had once been lined, suggesting timber, whilst at the southwest corner of the pit a socketed block had been set into the ground, cutting through the burnt layer; Rodwell has suggested that this held a corner post for a canopy of honour.¹³⁴ The block was later sealed by several layers; a nearby pit cut through these layers, and contained a near-mint condition silver coin of King Edgar (957/9-975).¹³⁵

The hiatus between first- and second-phase structures cannot be precisely dated, although a bracket can be suggested: the sculptured angel is thought to date to the late-eighth or early-ninth centuries, indicating that the spread of burnt material sealing the pit in which it was placed post-dates this time, perhaps by several decades if the sculpture was above ground for any length of time.¹³⁶ Meanwhile, the socketed block is sealed by layers through which the pit containing the coin of King Edgar was cut; although the coin only supplies a *terminus post quem*, its near-mint condition implies a date somewhere within the mid- to late-tenth century. Assuming that the shrine pit was an internal feature, its excavation must coincide with or post-date the construction of the later Anglo-Saxon structure, and assuming that the socketed block was associated with the pit, this probably happened before the mid-tenth century. Taken together, this gives a bracket of

¹³² Rodwell 2003, p 4 simply states that the pit was “embraced within the earliest part of the Anglo-Saxon stratigraphic sequence”; Rodwell *et al.* 2008, pp 53-54 is more concise

¹³³ Rodwell 2003, pp 8-9

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, pp 4-5

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, p 7

¹³⁶ Rodwell *et al.* 2008

the ninth century and the first half of the tenth century for the demolition of the earlier structures and the construction of the later, with perhaps a more likely window centred on the later-ninth and earlier-tenth centuries; the second phase structure thus belongs with the later churches discussed at the beginning of this chapter. The radiocarbon dates of the burials associated with the porticus in the south choir aisle firmly connect it, together with the porticus in the north aisle, with the earlier buildings in the nave, and this is also supported by a consideration of the building with which they may have been associated.

Rodwell suggests that, “in view of the distance between them, it is unlikely that the foundations discovered in the nave belong to the same structure as those recorded in the quire aisles”, and that they may represent two separate structures.¹³⁷ He also notes that the presence of burials in the western structure “suggests we are not dealing here with the main body of the Anglo-Saxon church”, as such spaces were usually free of burials during this period, and suggests that the structure may have been a smaller building, perhaps a tower.¹³⁸ If the northern porticus in the choir aisle is assumed to have been square, the northern nave wall of the church it belonged to would have aligned with the north wall of the earliest building in the nave excavation, supporting Rodwell’s invocation of the tendency for major Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical sites to feature a series of axially-aligned structures, whether churches, funerary buildings, or other liturgical foci.¹³⁹ In fact, given its association with burials, the western structure might more profitably be compared to the funerary chapel excavated at Whithorn, and the analogous structure at Hexham, or perhaps to the mausoleum at nearby

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p 54; see also Rodwell 1994, p 6

¹³⁸ Rodwell 2003, p 3

¹³⁹ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 54

Repton;¹⁴⁰ at 7m, the structure at Lichfield was slightly wider than these examples, which were 5 or 6m wide, although it may have been deliberately matched to the church to the east, perhaps even abutting it. This is supported by the western porticus attached to the funerary chapel, which, when considered with the two porticus to the east, is reminiscent of a pattern commonly observed elsewhere, including some of the examples in Figure 32, whereby two lateral porticus were joined by a third projecting from the western end of the church. Figure 36 shows a possible reconstruction, the church having been provided with a nave approximately 20.5m long, another common feature of eighth and ninth century churches.¹⁴¹

At this point it is worth considering the Lastingham narrative's description of Chad's burial:

Chad died on 2nd March and was first of all buried close to the church of St Mary; but when the church of St Peter, the most blessed chief of the apostles, was later built, his bones were translated in there. In each place frequent miracles of healing occur as a sign of his virtue ... Furthermore, that same place of burial is covered by a wooden tomb made in the manner of a little house, having an aperture in its side, through which those who visit it out of devotion can insert their hands and take out a little of the dust.

When it is put in water and given either to cattle or people who are ailing,

¹⁴⁰ Hill, Peter H. 1997. *Whithorn and St Ninian: The Excavation of a Monastic Town 1984-91*. Stroud; Cambridge, Eric & Williams, Ann. 1995. 'Hexham Abbey: A review of recent work and its implications', in *Archaeologia Aeliana* (Fifth Series), Vol. 23, pp 51-138, this reference pp 79-80, in which the apsidal structure immediately east of St Andrew's church is argued to be a mortuary chapel, (compare Blair 2005, p 200, Figure 24, where the chapel is argued to represent St Mary's church, known from twelfth-century documentation); Biddle, Martin & Kjølbye-Biddle, Birthe. 1992. 'Repton and the Vikings', in *Antiquity*, Vol. 66, No. 250, pp 36-51

¹⁴¹ See, for example, the churches shown in Gem 1993, Figure 4 (p 42, Brixworth, Nothants. & Wareham, Dorset), Figure 7 (p 47; Edenham, Lincs.), Figure 8 (p 52; Billingham, Cleveland), & Figure 9 (p 54; Deerhurst, Gloucs. & Wing, Bucks.)

they get their wish and are at once freed from their ailments and rejoice in health restored.¹⁴²

The crux of the above passage concerns the ambiguous connection between, on the one hand, the two places where miracles occurred, namely Chad's original burial place and his new place of entombment in St Peter's, and, on the other, the place of burial covered by the wooden tomb. It is commonly assumed that the tomb overlay Chad's new resting place in St Peter's; however, John Blair has recently argued that the covered grave should be identified with Chad's initial burial place by comparing the description to that of the site of St Oswald's death.¹⁴³ Here, people took away soil from where the king fell, and, as with Chad, mixed it with water as a cure for the sick; this became so popular that a hole was made, as deep as a man's height.¹⁴⁴ In both narratives the word *pulvis* is used, and clearly refers to soil in the Oswald narrative. Blair must surely be right in identifying the covered grave of the Lastingham narrative with Chad's initial grave outside St Mary's church, from which soil, after contact with the saint's body, was regarded as a suitable medium for the working of miracles.

Rodwell identifies the shrine pit in the nave excavation with the shrine of St Chad described in Bede's work, contending that the description of Chad's grave as

¹⁴² *HE* iv.3; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 344-347; 'Obiit autem Ceadda sexton die nonarum Martiarum, et sepultus est primo quidem iuxta ecclesiam sanctae Mariae; sed postmodum constructa ibidem ecclesia beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri, in eandem sunt eius ossa translate. In quo utroque loco ad indicium uirtutis illius solent crebra sanitatum miracula operari ... Est autem locus idem sepulchri tumba lignea in modum domunculi facta coopertus, habente foramen in pariete, per quod solent hi qui causa deuotionis illo adueniunt manum suam inmittere ac partem pulueris inde adsumere; quam cum in aquas miserint atque has infirmantibus iumentis siue hominibus gustandas dederint, mox infirmitatis ablata molestia cupitae sospitatis gaudia redibunt.'

¹⁴³ Blair, John. 2002. 'A Saint for Every Minster? Local Cults in Anglo-Saxon England', in A. Thacker & R. Sharpe, *Local Saints and Local Churches in the Early Medieval West*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 455-494, this reference p 491, n.98.

¹⁴⁴ *HE* iii.9; Colgrave and Mynors 1969, pp 242-243; 'Namque in loco ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est, usque hodie sanitates infirmorum et hominum et pecorum celebrari non desinunt. Vnde contigit ut puluerem ipsum, ubi corpus eius in terram conruit, multi auferentes et in aquam mittentes suis per haec infirmis multum commode adferrent.'

'covered' (*coopertus*) is a reference to his hypothesised canopy of honour; however, the participle is associated with an ablative of instrument in Bede's text that describes the wooden house-shaped tomb: that is, the grave was 'covered by' the tomb shrine.¹⁴⁵ Moreover, the shrine pit is associated with the later late-ninth/early-tenth century church, not the funerary chapel, which is more likely to have stood from at least the eighth century. However, the location of the funerary chapel, immediately west of a church, resonates with the position of Chad's initial grave, 'close to the church of St Mary', so it is possible that the funerary chapel was constructed around the site of Chad's original grave, abutting St Mary's church to the east. An unusual feature of the later shrine pit can be used to support such a hypothesis. Although the sides of the pit were "cleanly cut and vertical, and the base was near-level", the east-central part of the excavated portion featured "a tongue of natural clay", upstanding from the base, and continuing eastwards with the rest of the pit beyond the limit of excavation.¹⁴⁶ In fact the site photograph used in publication shows a second tongue a short distance south of the first, the two forming a narrow trough in the bottom of the shrine pit; establishing whether this second tongue is real will have to await the full publication of the excavation (see Figure 37).¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, even a single tongue allows us to consider the possibility that the later shrine pit was excavated around the cut of Chad's original grave, the tongue or tongues representing one or both sides of this sepulchre; perhaps it had previously been truncated by ardent relic-hunters, and the pit was excavated to rationalise what was left, or perhaps to show it off to best advantage. Thanks to the cut of the later shrine pit, there is no

¹⁴⁵ Rodwell 2003, p 6; Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 55; *HE* iv.3

¹⁴⁶ Rodwell 2003, p 4

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, p 15; Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 53

existing stratigraphic relationship that would allow this hypothesis to be confirmed, but it does seem to make best use of all the available evidence.

It also fits with the angel panel, identified as the left half of an Annunciation scene forming the shallowly-gabled end of a shrine chest, which “preserves the return on the left, but retains no sign of having had a base”;¹⁴⁸ as has been recognised, this is a convincing analogue in stone for Bede’s description of the wooden tomb shrine, and may have been created to replace the latter.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, the deposition of the sculpture in the pit predates the construction of the second-phase church and the shrine pit; when in use the sculpture, assuming it did not move very far to its pit, was almost certainly associated with the funerary chapel and the putative open grave of St Chad, the latter accessible through the open base of the shrine chest. In support of this, it has been noted that the left side panel of the shrine – part of which survives as the return mentioned above – is undecorated, prompting the suggestion that “it was designed to stand against a wall or in such a way that the back was inaccessible, only the front and two end panels being on show.” If St Chad’s grave has been correctly located above, then it was not centrally positioned within the funerary chapel, which was aligned on the church to the east, rendering the northern side of the overlying shrine less accessible, and perhaps not worth the trouble of carving. Finally, the iconography of the Annunciation, suggested by Jane Hawkes to express “virginal purity, humility and obedience”, intended to resonate with the memory of Chad’s character, was also particularly apt within a funerary chapel abutting St Mary’s church.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p 60; see also pp 75-80 for a discussion of the probable involvement of the angel in an Annunciation scene

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*, pp 64-66

¹⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p 79

One final mystery concerns the church of St Peter, which received the exhumed remains of St Chad.¹⁵¹ Rodwell, assuming the shrine pit to represent Chad's secondary resting place, suggests that the funerary chapel was also the church of St Peter, the church to the east thus being that of St Mary.¹⁵² Whilst the above analysis supports the latter contention, it does not support the identification of the funerary chapel with St Peter's. Jane Hawkes acknowledges Blair's identification of the holy dust from Chad's tomb with grave-earth, but, unable to relinquish the idea that the tomb described in the Lastingham narrative was that in St Peter's, she suggests that the original grave was incorporated within the latter church when it was built; however, this is contradicted by the Lastingham narrative, which not only explicitly relates the translation of Chad's bones into St Peter's ('in eandem sunt eius ossa translate'), but also refers to miracles occurring 'in each place' ('in quo utroque loco'), the original grave and the new resting place in St Peter's.¹⁵³ Assuming that the funerary chapel has been correctly identified here with the location of Chad's original grave, the only valid conclusion is that the church of St Peter is as yet unrepresented in the archaeology of Lichfield cathedral.

An argument can be made for its location, relying entirely on circumstantial evidence. Before Rodwell's recent campaigns, Nigel Tringham had speculated that the Anglo-Saxon cathedral was positioned in the area north of the chancel of the cathedral, close to or on the site of the Chapter House, where an early eighteenth-century account of the cathedral located a chapel in which were buried

¹⁵¹ *HE* iv.3

¹⁵² Rodwell 2003, p 6; Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 54

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, p 66; *HE* iv.3

two Mercian kings; Tringham noted a door in the wall of the chancel in this position on a map of 1727, which may have led to an external chapel, and Roland Paul's map of 1891 shows the dotted outline of such a structure in the same place, labelled 'traditional site of interment of two Saxon kings' (see Figure 34).¹⁵⁴ The Chapter House was constructed in the later stages of a campaign of building work from the 1220s to the 1240s, which began on the southern side of the choir, where a sacristy-chapel was rebuilt as a chapel and dedicated to St Peter, and followed with the construction of the Chapter House vestibule before moving on to the Chapter House itself, perhaps all under the auspices of the dean William of Mancetter, who was buried in the wall of St Peter's chapel.¹⁵⁵ The dedication of the rebuilt chapel to St Peter may have been a transferral from the old church of St Peter, if the latter was about to be demolished to make way for the new Chapter House.

Such a location might aid in explaining two oddities. First, several early burials, observed but not excavated, were located to the east of the Anglo-Saxon church, perhaps representing part of a cemetery here and were apparently aligned at a similar angle to the later elongated apsidal chapel projecting from the Romanesque apsidal chancel.¹⁵⁶ Both features may have assumed this alignment if they took their bearing from a nearby structure also thus aligned; no other building is known in the vicinity, and thus the church of St Peter, if it stood here would fit the requirement. Secondly, an odd kink in the north wall of the present square-ended chancel, first introduced in the late-twelfth century, might have

¹⁵⁴ Tringham, Nigel J. 1986/7. 'An early eighteenth-century description of Lichfield Cathedral', in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. 28, pp 55-63

¹⁵⁵ Rodwell 1993, pp 24 & 31-33

¹⁵⁶ Rodwell 1992 & 1994

arisen if the original plan of the chancel included a passageway, perhaps similar to the later Chapter House vestibule, leading from the chancel to the south side of the church of St Peter at this point; indeed, Rodwell noted that the inner face of the foundations at this point were oddly stepped, and suggested that there had been a breach in the medieval wall here that caused the misalignment, perhaps the location of a lateral projection or chapel that it was removed in the fourteenth century.¹⁵⁷

Further support for this conjecture is provided by the topography of the close, which slopes markedly down to the east at the eastern end of the cathedral; if St Peter's were located on the site of the Chapter House, it and St Mary's would be arranged along approximately the same contour line, dominating the bluff on which they stand. Figure 38 shows the conjectured plan of St Mary's church, here acting as a 'typical' Anglo-Saxon church, superimposed on the location of the Chapter House, to illustrate the possibilities of this hypothesis; only archaeological work will confirm or deny it. Locating the church of St Peter would also locate the site of St Chad's second shrine, to which his relics were translated by Bishop Headda. This has implications for the St Chad Gospels, an incomplete mid eighth-century gospel book now held by the cathedral.¹⁵⁸ The book's earliest provenance is mid ninth-century Wales, at the church of St Teilo at Llandeilo Fawr, where Welsh marginalia demonstrate that it served as an oath book; by the early tenth century it was at

¹⁵⁷ Rodwell 1994. Rodwell (1993, pp 23-24) had initially suggested that the Romanesque chancel included two additional protruding circular chapels, or apsidioles, either side of the central chapel, and that the retention of the northern chapel had obstructed the correct laying out of the new chancel around the old at this point; however, archaeological excavation in the north and south choir aisles has failed to produce concrete evidence of these subsidiary chapels, and although this may be due to their later destruction by further works, the case for their existence is at best tenuous (Rodwell 1992 & 1994)

¹⁵⁸ Lichfield Cathedral Library, MS 1

Lichfield cathedral, as an English marginal inscription refers to Bishop Leofgar, although it may have been at the cathedral since the second half of the tenth century, as the name ‘Wynsi[ge] pr[e]sul’ is written on the first folio, and may be equated with Bishop Wynsige.¹⁵⁹ Michelle Brown’s analysis has suggested that “the book was decorated by an artist who is likely to have been accorded the privilege of studying the decorated incipits of the Lindisfarne Gospels, prized relic of the shrine of St Cuthbert on Holy Island, at first hand”, whilst “other aspects of the book’s decoration find their closest parallels in works associated with the cult of St Columba, notably the Book of Durrow and the Book of Kells (which may have been made on Iona during the late 7th century and around 800, respectively).”¹⁶⁰ Unfortunately, Brown’s suggestion of a connection between the palette of the St Chad Gospels and the palette surviving on the angel sculpture, both emphasising purple and white, must be set aside, as further work on the latter has demonstrated that the surviving polychromy comprises primarily white and yellow, with red and black detailing.¹⁶¹ However, her suggestion that the gospels formed part of St Chad’s shrine, perhaps looted in the mid-ninth century by Viking or Welsh raiders, remains supported by the connection of both book and cathedral with the Columban family. If so, the book was perhaps more likely to have graced the shrine containing St Chad’s relics in St Peter’s church.

¹⁵⁹ Ker, N. R. 1957. *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford, No. 123, p 158; Jenkins, D. & Owen, M. E. 1983. ‘The Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels. Part I’, in *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, Vol. 5, pp 37-66; *idem*. 1984. ‘The Welsh Marginalia in the Lichfield Gospels. Part II: the ‘Surexit’ Memorandum’, in *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, Vol. 7, pp 91-120; Charles-Edwards, Gifford & McKee, Helen. 2008. ‘Lost voices from Anglo-Saxon Lichfield’, in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 37, pp 79-89; a second ‘book of the Blessed Chad’, perhaps the remainder of St Luke’s Gospel and that of St John, was recorded in the sacrist’s roll of 1345: *SHC* Vol. 6, Part 2 (1886), pp 204 & 211

¹⁶⁰ Brown, Michelle P. 2007. ‘The Lichfield Angel and the Manuscript Context: Lichfield as a Centre of Insular Art’, in *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, Vol. 160, pp 8-19, this reference p 17

¹⁶¹ Rodwell *et al.* 2008, pp 60-64

A small excavation outside the cathedral, at the southern edge of the close, has revealed evidence for a phase of timber building followed by an inhumation cemetery.¹⁶² Considered with the graves east of St Mary's, we have certain evidence for two early medieval cemetery areas within the close, to which might be added an eighteenth-century description of a possible early medieval gypsum burial in a lead coffin found below the nave of the cathedral.¹⁶³ Elsewhere at Lichfield, on the other side of the Curborough Brook, the church of St Michael is located within a large cemetery, which may have been established during the early medieval period to serve Lichfield's large mother parish, whilst a third church at Stowe, further downstream, may also have attracted early burial (see further below).¹⁶⁴ Such extensive early medieval occupation is as yet unparalleled at the other minster sites in the diocese, but is complemented by the extensive scatter of cemetery areas across and around the site of the early Northumbrian minster at Ripon.¹⁶⁵ In other ways, Lichfield corresponds closely with Derby and Repton, in that the plan of one of the early churches there probably echoes that encountered at the other sites, and there is evidence for the elaboration of the shrine of the local saint, including, like Repton, an axially-aligned funerary building. Of the other minsters known to have supported saints' cults, only Ilam now retains any architectural trace of a shrine, in the form of a grave cover-slab surmounted by a 'tomb-shrine', a type of monument "constructed over the graves of saints whose bodies were, for a time at least, left in peace".¹⁶⁶ The Ilam example, identified by

¹⁶² Carver 1981b, pp 37-38; a later excavation a short distance northeast of this location failed to identify any early medieval features (Jones 1990, p 9)

¹⁶³ Gould 1976, p 10

¹⁶⁴ For St Michael's. see Gould, J. and Gould, D. 1975. 'St Michael's Churchyard, Lichfield', in *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. XVI, pp 58-61

¹⁶⁵ Hall, R. A. & Whyman, M. 1996. 'Settlement and monasticism at Ripon, North Yorkshire, from the seventh to eleventh centuries AD', in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol. 40, pp 62-150, especially map p 139

¹⁶⁶ Crook 2000, p 253

John Crook as the only certain example surviving in England, has been dated to the mid-thirteenth century, but can plausibly be considered the latest incarnation of some earlier form of grave marker.¹⁶⁷

The Bishop and his Diocese: the Royal Free Chapels

Having considered evidence for both later and earlier minsters in the diocese, we must now consider how their communities might have related to the bishops of Lichfield. The 'royal free chapels' of the diocese are useful sources here, which have not always received the attention they deserve.¹⁶⁸ Dorothy Styles produced the first detailed study of the Staffordshire examples, and J. H. Denton later produced a definitive 'constitutional study' of the English phenomenon.¹⁶⁹ The label 'royal free chapel' was only used, although then with increasing frequency, from the thirteenth century; beforehand the term 'royal chapel' was applied not only to the royal free chapels of modern scholarship, but also to the Chapel Royal and the kings private oratories and hospitals, nearly all of which, as non-parochial chapels on royal demesne, claimed some form of freedom from episcopal interference.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, by the thirteenth century, the label 'free chapel' was most commonly applied to chapels outside the jurisdiction of the local parish

¹⁶⁷ *ibid.*, pp 262-263; see also Blair 2002a, pp 491-493

¹⁶⁸ For example, David Parsons, in his study of the Mercian church in Brown and Farr 2001, has nothing to say about them. Alan Thacker suggested that the royal free chapels in the diocese of Lichfield represented the survival of Anglo-Saxon secular minsters into the central Middle Ages: Thacker, Alan. 1985. 'Kings, Saints and Monasteries in Pre-Viking Mercia', in *Midland History*, Vol. 10, pp 1-25, this reference p 2; more recently David Horovitz has reconsidered the possible significance of the royal free chapels: Horovitz, David. 2010. Notes and materials on the Battle of Tettenhall 910 A.D. and other researches. David Horovitz, Brewood, at pp 289-310 (Appendix V)

¹⁶⁹ Styles, Dorothy. 1936. 'The Early History of the King's Chapels in Staffordshire', in *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society*, Vol. 60, pp 56-95; Denton 1970; see also Styles, Dorothy. 1950/1. 'The Early History of Penkrigde Church', in *SHC* 1950/1, pp 1-52

¹⁷⁰ Denton 1970, pp 2-8

church whether royal or no; crucially, these chapels had no parochial duties of their own.¹⁷¹ Nevertheless, Denton distinguishes a group of twenty-two royal chapels that were free, in the sense of some form of exemption from episcopal interference, but, unlike the king's oratories and hospitals, also had parochial rights and responsibilities connected with surrounding populations; likewise, these royal free chapels (as they will hereafter be called) were nearly always centred on a college of secular canons.¹⁷² The diocese of Lichfield contained ten, a considerable fraction of the national total, at St Mary's, Stafford, Derby, Penkridge, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, Bridgnorth, St Mary's, Shrewsbury, St Michael's, Shrewsbury, St Juliana's, Shrewsbury, and Gnosall.¹⁷³ Their exempt status can be observed on the maps of archdeaneries in Figures 20 to 24, in which the deanery boundaries skirt around the parishes of the royal free chapels.

Denton's study is largely concerned with the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and he makes clear that explicit assertions of the rights of royal free chapels and the nature of their exemption from episcopal jurisdiction followed on the papal reformation of the second half of the eleventh century. Thereafter the increasing prominence of Canon Law, and an emphasis on exclusive episcopal right within the incipient conceptual space of 'spiritual' jurisdiction, inspired episcopal reorganisation, in particular the elaboration of the roles of archdeacons and rural deans. As ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction were redefined and new

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*, pp 8-9

¹⁷² *ibid.*, pp 12-14

¹⁷³ In addition to these eight, other royal free chapels identified by Denton were established at: Bromfield (Shropshire), St Oswald Gloucester (Gloucestershire), St George in Oxford Castle (Oxfordshire), St Nicholas in Wallingford Castle (Oxfordshire), Waltham (Essex), St Martin-le-Grand London, Dover (Kent), Pevensey (Sussex), Staining (Sussex), Bonham (Sussex), Windborne Minster (Dorset) and St Bryans (Cornwall); Edward I tried and failed to establish Tick hill (formerly Blyth; Nottinghamshire) and Hastings (Sussex) as royal free chapels

prerogatives asserted, they came up against earlier customary relationships between king, college community and bishop; the royal free chapels only began to appear as such an unusual group of institutions as they reacted defensively against such assertions, paradoxically conceiving a pre-existing 'exemption' from the bishop's 'right', even though the original nature of the royal free chapels, whatever that might have been, was not constructed in the light of such authority. A similar phenomenon occurred within the cathedral community, as the dean and chapter created an exempt peculiar to exclude the bishop's new officers from interfering with their customary relationships with the parishioners of the cathedral church; this often extended to the parishes appropriated to prebends within the cathedral.¹⁷⁴ The defensive emergence of the royal free chapels suggests that there was, from at least the eleventh century, something distinctive about these colleges, necessarily different from the distinctiveness of the episcopal college. In Denton's words, "the fact that the status of a royal chapel was so durable argues not only for an ancient origin but also for an early coherence of the royal minsters, if not exactly as a group at least as a genus", and this continued to apply whether the king held them himself or donated them to others.¹⁷⁵

An attempt to construct an understanding of the earlier nature of royal free chapels depends on twelfth- and thirteenth-century depictions of their 'liberties' that might have appeared either obvious or beside the point to their pre-Conquest incarnations. Moreover, the language used to describe these liberties is often rather ambiguous, especially during the twelfth century. The rights of Wolverhampton, the only royal free chapel in the diocese of Lichfield for which

¹⁷⁴ *VCH Staffs*. Vol. 3, pp 143-145; Vol. 14, pp 154-155

¹⁷⁵ Denton 1970, p 139

textual sources survive in any quantity, were described in the late-eleventh and through the twelfth centuries in terms of 'land', 'customs' and 'possessions', held 'liberally and freely', 'quietly', 'perpetually', 'without perturbation', 'free of all customs and exactions', and as 'one of the king's own chapels, which pertained to the crown'.¹⁷⁶ The rights of the dean and canons at Wolverhampton are nowhere spelled out; instead, the charters and confirmations attempt to perpetuate an earlier situation, emphasising connections between the king's absolute ownership of the church, the right of the canons, by long-standing usage, to freedom from all 'customs and exactions', and the bishop's agreement not to disturb this situation.

Things become more specific during the thirteenth century. Around 1200, Peter of Blois, previously dean of Wolverhampton, explained how the church "was not accountable nor subject to any pontiff, except to the archbishop of Canterbury and the king. For by a most ancient custom, considered by many as a right, the kings of England always possessed the donation of the deanery. To the dean belonged the donation of and institution to the prebends."¹⁷⁷ Later, in 1224, an agreement between the dean and the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield went into even more detail, establishing that the bishop should receive canonical obedience from the dean; that the dean should retain his free power, by customary usage ('more consueto'), to confer and institute prebends and to correct his clergy; that the church should be free of all financial exactions and procurations except 2s for

¹⁷⁶ *ibid.*, pp 41-42 & 139: 'cum terra et omnibus aliis rebus et consuetudinibus sicut melius predicta ecclesia habuit tempore regis Edwardi'; 'Hec quidem ecclesia de Wlfr[unehamptona] una erat antiquitus de propriis regis capellis que ad coronam spectabant'; 'sicut illam que proprie et absolute ad coronam regiam pertinebat'; 'precipio ut eadem ecclesia, capella mea, libera sit et quieta ab omnibus consuetudinibus et exactionibus cum omnibus pertinentiis suis, et canonici omnia sua libere et quiete possideant, ne quis eis dampnum vel molestiam vel injuriam aliquam facere presumat'

¹⁷⁷ Translation from Denton 1970, pp 42-43

Peter's pence each year, and except all pleas in its parish (*parochia*) concerning matrimony and sacrilege, difficult pleas, which should be referred to the bishop, and pleas that pass to the bishop through appeal; that the bishop should be free to celebrate, preach, confirm, and impose public penance with due veneration in the church there, and would provide oil and chrism; and that the bishop reserved the customary oblations on the occasion of the Pentecostal procession.¹⁷⁸ Finally, in 1281, after considerable conflict, an agreement was drawn up between the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield and the royal free chapels of the diocese that included many of the same concessions to the bishop, summarised by Denton as follows:

for the sake of good relations the deans and canons should receive the bishop with a procession and all due honour when he happened to pass through the deaneries, and that by their good grace he might preach in their churches, celebrate orders, bless the oil and chrism and confirm the young. Whenever he celebrated orders or blessed chrism in one of the churches the bishop might ordain the clerks presented to him following their examination by the dean and might himself present the oil and chrism to the churches if he so wished.¹⁷⁹

Here, the bishop had lost any claim to pleas and, apparently, all customary payments. However despite the emphasis on the agency of the deans, "there are no indications that the deans and canons were empowered to choose their own bishop";¹⁸⁰ whilst conceptually the royal free chapels were completely free of diocesan jurisdiction, the concessions suggest that, in practice, the diocesan retained an interest.

¹⁷⁸ The agreement is printed in Denton 1970, pp 155-156 (Appendix 2); see also Denton 1970, pp 43-44

¹⁷⁹ Denton 1970, p 109; for the conflict between the bishops and the colleges see *ibid.*, pp 92-114

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p 109

The core of these concessions can be summarised as rights to honourable reception, to celebrate, to preach, to confirm, to ordain, and to bless and provide the oil and chrism. It is possible that these are expressive of an earlier conception of episcopal relations with these minsters, predating the exertions of the twelfth century. Denton certainly considers the narrative of claim and counter-claim to be expressive of certain fundamental assumptions concerning earlier practice:

The defence of the royal chapels in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was asserted as a defence of customary rights. This being so, we should expect, on present evidence, that in some matters, as the provision of chrism and the right to ordain, the bishop's position would be respected.¹⁸¹

Likewise, Denton suggests that the royal free chapels are unlikely to have gained many privileges "as a result of a defensive policy in the face of increased episcopal vigilance", and thus that what they did claim is likely to represent an earlier situation.¹⁸² The concessions tally rather well with two of the bishop's classical powers, as succinctly defined by Frank Barlow, namely the *potestas ordinis* (to act as "the primary dispenser of the sacraments, especially baptism at Easter and Whitsun (but without the exclusive right), confirmation, ordination of priests, and dedication of ecclesiastical buildings, altars, vessels, and chrism") and the *potestas magisterii* ("the office of instructing the clergy and laity").¹⁸³ Conversely, from its recurrence in the sources from the twelfth century, Denton considers that the right of free appointment – belonging to the lord of the royal free chapel (either the king or his donee) in respect of the dean, and to the dean in respect of the canons – was "the central right" amongst the royal free chapels'

¹⁸¹ *ibid.*, p 141

¹⁸² *ibid.*, p 136

¹⁸³ Barlow, Frank. 1963. *The English Church 1000-1066*. Longman, London, p 243

claims to freedom from interference, and that such reservation of jurisdiction also expressed freedom from the bishop's claims to payments and renders ('customs and exactions', 'procurations'), ancient or more recent, in his diocese.¹⁸⁴ This he equates with the bishop's *potestas jurisdictionis* ("the power to govern, legislate, and administer justice for his diocese").¹⁸⁵

Whilst these powers offer an understanding of the conceptual assumptions behind much of the debate concerning the royal free chapels, their definition applies more to the later context of the royal free chapels, dominated by Canon Law. A bishop's right to govern his diocese had been a near-constant assertion throughout the early medieval period, and although the customary 'freedoms' of the royal free chapels may well have been ancient, they do not appear to have caused quite such a problem before the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Essentially, the conflicts surrounding the royal free chapels were debating lordship. By challenging their rights, bishops were asserting their own lordship over customs and practices that had previously formed aspects of the king's lordship over his colleges, the deans' lordship over their canons, and the canons' lordship over their parishioners. For example, from the twelfth century appointment to an ecclesiastical office was cast in two stages, first the presentation of a candidate by the holder of the advowson, often a layman, then institution of the candidate by the diocesan; however, the ruler of a royal free chapel wielded both powers, as such usually labelled collation. In attempting to define these two different aspects, spiritual and temporal, in the lordship of churches, the bishops were reducing what had previously appeared irreducible.

¹⁸⁴ Denton 1970, pp 136-137; see also Denton 1970, pp 49 & 67 for examples from Bromfield and Waltham Holy Cross

¹⁸⁵ Barlow 1963, p 243

This is important, because there is a tendency to define such unitary ecclesiastical lordship in negative terms, as a lack of proper management: Barlow, in his study of the later Anglo-Saxon church, considered that “the bishops were ... hindered by a proprietary pattern ... [and] handicapped by the scarcity of institutions or agents of government.”¹⁸⁶ But it is only if we define the bishops’ new assertions of exclusive spiritual lordship as a yardstick of episcopal government that the earlier situation, and that represented by the royal free chapels, appears a hindrance or handicap, or proprietary in nature. In the eleventh century and earlier the royal free chapels were unchallenged ecclesiastical lordships in their own right; the diocesan bishops need not have understood them as a challenge to their own authority, and may well have considered them to be have been satisfactorily governed by episcopal jurisdiction as they were. It is not necessary to envisage, as Barlow does, a pre-Conquest episcopate lacking the resolve, or warned away from tackling a flouting of episcopal rights.¹⁸⁷

If the royal free chapels are actually expressive of a more normal pre-Conquest situation, it is appropriate to enquire whether such ecclesiastical lordships can be found within other textual sources. One such is the late-eleventh century ‘Domesday Monachorum’ lists of Kentish churches.¹⁸⁸ These lists, *inter alia*, identify mother churches and their dependent daughter churches in the diocese of Canterbury, recording fifteen mother churches that owed certain renders to Christ

¹⁸⁶ Barlow 1963, p 245

¹⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp 244-245

¹⁸⁸ A translation of the lists is provided in Tatton-Brown, Tim. 1988. ‘The Churches of Canterbury Diocese in the 11th Century’, in John Blair (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches. The Local Church in Transition 950-1200*, Monograph No. 17, Oxford University Committee for Archaeology, Oxford, pp 105-118

Church cathedral.¹⁸⁹ The latter arrangement is described as the ‘old institution’, before the coming of Lanfranc in 1070, and comprised food renders and payments for wine and chrism (in multiples of 7d for oil and 6d for wine), to be delivered at Easter, on Maundy Thursday, and, in four cases, a payment of 600d, to be made again on Maundy Thursday in one case, but at Pentecost in the other three. Barlow considered that the food renders were contributions to the archbishop’s Maundy gifts to the poor, “that normally the old minsters collected chrism and wine from the archbishop for distribution among their daughter churches, and that, although they seem to have made payments to Canterbury on behalf of these, the arrangement was lucrative to the minsters.”¹⁹⁰ Brooks asserted that this system was “a jealously maintained relic of an age when the Kentish ‘monasteries’ were true baptismal churches, taking a dominant role in the pastoral work of the diocese”, along the lines of early medieval continental baptismal churches found in Gaul and Italy.¹⁹¹ More recently, Blair has suggested that this system was exclusive to Kent, and that the eleventh-century chrism payments provide “a faint aftertaste of the distinctly Italian flavour of Canterbury under Augustine.”¹⁹²

Denton is similarly cautious about equating the rights of the Kentish minsters deduced from Domesday Monachorum with those of the royal free chapels.¹⁹³ However, such reticence should be reconsidered. As discussed above, the blessing and provision of chrism was an episcopal custom guarded throughout the

¹⁸⁹ The fifteen mother churches were: St Augustine’s in Canterbury, Milton, Maidstone, Charing, Wye, Teynham, Wingham, Eastry, Lyminge, Appledore, Dover, Folkestone, two Broughtons, and Ruckinge; of these, ten are also provided with a list of daughter churches (two others, an unidentified church, possibly Eastry, and Lympe, which may have replaced Appledore, are also provided with such lists; see Tatton-Brown 1988, p 107)

¹⁹⁰ Barlow 1963, pp 181-182

¹⁹¹ Brooks 1984, p 184

¹⁹² Blair 2005, p 69

¹⁹³ Denton 1970, pp 140-141

various agreements between colleges and bishops; the bishop's sacramental powers were, it appears, almost never excluded. In the Kentish example, this is confirmed by St Martin's, Dover, which emerged as a royal free chapel, but is treated similarly to the other Kentish minsters in the Domesday Monachorum. Lanfranc reformed the old arrangement by charging each daughter church 7d for chrism; the money was still collected through the mother churches, but the payments rendered by the latter were thus greatly increased, and no longer brought any benefit beyond logistical efficiency. It is easy to see in this one way in which mother churches might be broken down by the bishop, who could then form more direct relationships with the daughter churches. However, in the case of the royal free chapels, such deconstruction hardly ever occurred, as the colleges were defined by the parishioners they served;¹⁹⁴ distinct terminology expressed this important connection, as the parish of a college was often called its 'deanery', and its dependent churches and chapels, often prebendal, were served by 'chaplains' rather than vicars.¹⁹⁵ Crucially, "the cure of souls and the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction could not be excluded from the deaneries."¹⁹⁶ Therefore, although we have no direct evidence that the royal free chapels in the diocese of Lichfield distributed chrism to their daughter churches, it might be considered likely because of the nature of their parochial authority, which entirely encompassed their chapels and dependent churches. The bishop's role as dispenser of the sacraments was not denied, but it was articulated via his relationship with the colleges. It is thus possible to understand the arrangement expressed by the Domesday Monachorum and the nature of the royal free chapels as broadly

¹⁹⁴ Many of the churches listed under St Martin's, Dover, in the Domesday Monachorum were still part of its deanery in the 1291 papal taxation records: see Denton 1970, p 64

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p 25

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p 25

complementary and mutually illuminating, and to assert that such relationships between bishops and their minsters were more common in the eleventh century and earlier than Blair and Denton accept.

Another equivalence concerns the Pentecostal oblation reserved by the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in his 1224 agreement with the dean of Wolverhampton, and the payment of 600d payable by certain churches to the bishop at Pentecost recorded in the Domesday Monachorum 'old institution' list.¹⁹⁷ Oblations rendered at Pentecost, commonly called 'Pentecostals' in later medieval sources, were commonly required from the parishioners and clergy of daughter churches and their parishioners by their mother church; such oblations rendered to a cathedral came from across its diocese, and later medieval evidence exists for such payments from the dioceses of Chichester, Worcester and Lichfield.¹⁹⁸ Indeed, by the thirteenth century, Pentecostal payments in the diocese of Lichfield were known as Chad-farthings, explicitly connecting them to the patronage of the diocesan saint: essentially, the payments expressed ecclesiastical lordship.¹⁹⁹ The Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield's concern to reserve this payment in the thirteenth century can then be understood as a desire for some customary expression of the royal free chapels' continued place inside the diocese. Barlow understands the establishment of such customary payments to be connected to the minsters' roles as 'intermediaries', in which "each collector raised what he

¹⁹⁷ The date of payment is only recorded for the first church in the list, Milton, but can be plausibly extrapolated to the other two churches from which the payment was due; Barlow (1963, p 180) focuses on the payment due from St Augustine's on Maundy Thursday, plausibly identifying it as representing Maundy hearth-pennies, but appears to have missed the reference to Pentecost in the 'old institution' list; Pentecostals could also be assessed on hearths, and there must be some question as to the broad equivalence of the Maundy and Pentecost customs

¹⁹⁸ Phillimore, Robert. 1873. *The Ecclesiastical Law of the Church of England*. Henry Sweet and Stevens & Sons, London, Vol. 2, pp 1598-1599

¹⁹⁹ *VCH Staffs*. Vol. III, p 150

could and passed on only the traditional sum to the higher authority.”²⁰⁰ However, this presupposes that all parishioners understood the render to go directly to the diocesan; it is perhaps more valid to understand two stages to the process, the first defined by the parishioners of the minsters acknowledging their ecclesiastical authority, then the minsters doing likewise in respect of the bishop. In Kent, the three mother churches owing Pentecostal payments, Milton, Dover and Folkestone, were not held by Christ Church in 1070, the majority of the others having been acquired by the cathedral over the preceding centuries. Whether such oblations were rendered to Christ Church directly by the parishioners and clergy of the other mother churches is difficult to ascertain; nevertheless, being part of the archbishop’s holding may well have made it easier for the cathedral to establish more direct access to these payments, perhaps without the mediation of a ‘traditional sum’.²⁰¹ In contrast, it is possible to understand the three customary Pentecostal payments as an acknowledgement of diocesan lordship on the part of mother churches not within the land-lordship of the archbishop.

Land-lordship introduces one further property of the royal free chapels: all ten in the diocese of Lichfield were recorded in Domesday Book as held directly from the king, either by reference to the body of clerics, or to the church itself. That they had no other lord resonates with later claims to freedom justified by reference to the king’s demesne. Furthermore, the king’s ultimate lordship was sometimes described explicitly; for example, All Saints’ and St Alkmund’s at Derby were ‘in the king’s lordship’, whilst the clerics at Penkridge ‘held from the king’, and the

²⁰⁰ Barlow 1963, p 296

²⁰¹ It could be argued that, in this case, the payments for wine and chrism and the food rents for the poor could also have been accessed directly; nevertheless, there seems to me to be an important difference between renders solely expressing ecclesiastical lordship (Pentecostals) and those involved with the logistics of sacramentary and liturgical provision (chrism, wine and Maundy gifts)

land of Tettenhall church was 'the king's alms'. Of the other churches in the diocese so listed, four were or became Benedictine Abbeys (St Werburgh's at Chester, St Peter's at Shrewsbury, St Mary's at Burton, and the church at Coventry), and never claimed the freedom of royal free chapels;²⁰² St Alkmund's, Shrewsbury, was subsumed into Lilleshall Abbey, a house of Arrouaisian canons;²⁰³ St Chad's, Shrewsbury, was an episcopal college, never claimed by the king; and in Derby, St Alkmund's church appears to have been given to All Saints church, united under the title of the latter.²⁰⁴ It was suggested earlier in this chapter that the royal free chapels should be understood as a sub-set of a larger corpus of royal and comital churches, at the centre of large, multi-estate parishes, but recorded in the survey, if at all, by reference to a priest or a church attached to the relevant estate. The status of the royal free chapels as king's tenants is thus their crucial distinguishing feature from this larger group.

To be a direct tenant of the king in this way expressed a certain relationship with him, equated with the holding of land with sake and soke. We might thus characterise the rulers of the royal free chapels, their deans or equivalent, as holders of sake and soke over the lands with which the churches were endowed, remembering that, as with Coventry Abbey and the holdings of Godgifu, the parishes of royal free chapels often also encompassed the extent of landholdings held with sake and soke by the parent manor, if such existed. In contrast, the rulers of churches who did not hold church lands with sake and soke, such as the

²⁰² St Werburgh's was founded by Earl Hugh of Chester in 1093: *VCH Chesh.* Vol. 3, pp 132-146; St Peter's was founded by Earl Roger of Shrewsbury in 1083: *VCH Salop.* Vol. 2, pp 30-37; Burton Abbey was founded in the early-eleventh century by Wulfric: *VCH Staffs.* Vol. 3, pp 199-213; Coventry Abbey was founded by Earl Leofric and Lady Godgifu in 1043: *VCH Warw.* Vol. 2, pp 52-59

²⁰³ Founded between 1145 and 1148: *VCH Salop.* Vol. 2, pp 70-80

²⁰⁴ *VCH Derbs.* Vol. 2, pp 87-92

priests listed in Domesday Book, or the head of the canons at collegiate churches such as Baschurch, were effectively thegns of the landholder who did, and who effectively held the ecclesiastical lordship officiated by the priest or college. In many ways the rights that went with sake and soke are a land-holding analogue to the ecclesiastical rights embodied in the later 'freedoms' of the royal free chapels from the bishop: in particular, the right to govern within the territories concerned, whether estate or parish, was largely exclusive to the lord of the land or of the head of the chapel, with the relevant pleas understood to lie in their jurisdictions; likewise, both lords had independent right to customs from those within the territory, and could assign them to who they would, whether thegns or canons; also, despite these freedoms, overlordship was recognised, whether royal or episcopal, by rendering certain set customs, such as military service, bridge and burh work, or chrism money and other oblations, and, in both cases, honourable reception, or hospitality; finally, the king's right to donate his headship of the royal free chapels to whom he would parallels his right to do the same with the offices of ealdorman and sheriff.

In summary, it is possible to understand the rights of royal free chapels as expressive of an earlier relationship between bishops and royal colleges which held their lands with sake and soke. This relationship was articulated through a conception of the bishop as diocesan lord and primary dispenser of the sacraments on the one hand, and a conception of the colleges as separately-ruled bodies and primary providers of pastoral care within their territories, governed without interference from the bishop, on the other. It is imperative to distinguish the ecclesiastical lordship asserted by the colleges, and effectively wielded by all

those whose landholdings defined parishes, from the episcopal spiritualities asserted from the twelfth century; beforehand, a bishop's conception of right and proper government in his diocese may well have been limited to the customary recognition of his sacramental and magisterial primacy, as discussed above, from all the ecclesiastical lords within his diocese. As a parallel to the freedom of the royal free chapels, Denton quotes a letter of Pope Leo III to King Cœnwulf of the Mercians, asking him to respect the authority of Archbishop Æthelheard in the dioceses, "both of the bishops and of the minsters"; this use of the term 'diocese' would happily describe the ecclesiastical lordship just defined.²⁰⁵

The origins of the Mercian royal free chapels do not therefore have to be sought in any one event or in the distant past: it is enough that, by the eleventh century, they were royal colleges under the direct lordship of the king, held by their heads and communities with sake and soke over their lands and with ecclesiastical lordship over their parishes. That such status could be gained by more recent foundation is demonstrated by the textual sources relating to Wolverhampton, founded by Lady Wulfrun in the later tenth century, or, outside the diocese, by Earl Harold's foundation of Waltham Holy Cross c. 1060. These appear as independent churches in Domesday Book, but are distinguished from other churches only in as much as they had benefited from royal patronage; the rulers of other churches, even royal ones, did not enjoy the degree of privilege that included reception of sake and soke over their lands, and thus remained more dependent. Thus, whilst it is possible that some of the royal free chapels of the diocese do have their origins during the seventh, eighth or ninth centuries, this is not demanded by the

²⁰⁵ Denton 1970, p 140

fact of their existence. Equally, their status does not demand that their origins as a group be sought together; the lands of the four churches at Wolverhampton, Tettenhall, Penkridge and Gnosall were grouped within the same breve in Domesday Book, and there is evidence, noted by Denton, that later kings considered the royal free chapels of the diocese as a group, but both phenomena can easily be explained by their geographical proximity and common royal lordship.²⁰⁶ Whenever and however they were founded, the crux of their history is the fact that, by the second half of the eleventh century, they were the only autonomous royal colleges in the diocese; this is all that need bind them together.

²⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p 27

Conclusion

In the introduction to this study it was suggested that an analysis of the ‘Mercian hole’ might serve as a case study to test the applicability of early medieval histories constructed around the ‘minster narrative’ and concepts of territorial determinism. Whilst Chapter 1 demonstrated the near-continual validity of a bishopric of Lichfield from the later-seventh century into the central medieval period, Chapters 2 and 4 indicated that minsters founded from the seventh to the mid-ninth centuries were historically concentrated in the southern and eastern parts of the diocese, and thus that a minster-based narrative would apparently exclude many of the local communities considered in Chapter 3 during this earlier period. Moreover, the study has identified several different types of territory of importance within the region: the bishop’s understanding of territory was tied up with the ecclesiastical textual community identified in Chapter 1, which framed its actions with reference to the entire land of the *gens Anglorum*, embodied in texts exchanged by its members and the annual Southumbrian provincial councils of the seventh to ninth centuries studied by Katy Cubitt;¹ however, the bishop also structured his actions with respect to his diocese, in which his community comprised the abbots and abbesses of the minsters, and their inhabitants, whether clergy or otherwise; likewise, the ecclesiastics who ministered to the laity framed their work within concepts of territory that were smaller still, relating to the local communities of the diocese. Whilst each territory embodied different sets of relationships, some of the personnel were common to each; a simple territorial narrative keyed to bio-regions defined by topography does nothing to elucidate

¹ Cubitt 1995

these distinct yet interconnected experiences. To seek to write the societies of the northwest Midlands into the ecclesiastical history of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms requires that we investigate alternative methods of characterising both those societies and the Christian culture available to them.

Modes of historical understanding

A major aspect of this problem concerns scale: the relative influence of a connection between two or more people does not decrease as the distance across which it is maintained increases, and yet to construct a coherent historical understanding demands a focus on the distinctive regional identity of the Mercian hole. It is tempting to keep different scales of connection separate, and to zoom in or out from one to another; however, the crucial point is that they can all be immanent within the momentary experience of one person, and combine to inspire action. As asserted in the Introduction, historical meaning must be considered as the product of historically specific contexts of personal experience, created in the articulation of human relationships within communities. We have seen that communities, at whatever scale, can be defined by the practices that bind their members together, and throughout this study the media employed in such practices have been clearly characterised earlier in general categories of Word, Object and Place. These media, fragments bequeathed by the past, were remembered in inspired refashionings of their significance in the historical present, eventually becoming the sources we use to understand our own past.

Our framework of historical interpretation must therefore seek to understand that 'present significance' in any given historical moment. This resonates with studies

of memory, not as a biological means of internalising impressions of past events, but as a context-specific construction, defined by present concerns, experienced individually but often subject to collective negotiation.² Several recent historical and archaeological studies have analysed the social contexts in which memories were reformed, created, contested or forgotten, often in terms of commemoration of the dead, as enshrined in different media: for example, Patrick Geary focuses on the uses of text within Cluniac monasteries, whilst Howard Williams has proposed that the act of cremation amongst early medieval populations in southern and eastern England be considered a 'technology of remembrance'.³ The concept can be used more generally here: the media of Word, Object and Place form the structure of memory, and their significance at any given moment relies on an act of remembrance that may reproduce their previous significance or transform it.

It is important to stress here a complementary duality between habitual remembrance – the assumptions and expectations learned from previous experience expressed unconsciously in the present – and discursive remembrance, in which such perspectives or frames of reference intersect creatively with present contingent circumstances. This duality has been of recent

² Bartlett, F. C. 1932. *Remembering. A study in experimental and social psychology*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; Halbwachs, M. 1992. *On Collective Memory*. University of Chicago Press, Chicago; Gedi, N. & Elam, Y. 1996. 'Collective memory: what is it?', in *History and Memory*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp 30-50; Engel, S. 1999. *Context is Everything: the Nature of Memory*. Freeman & Co., New York

³ Geary, Patrick R. 1994. *Phantoms of Remembrance. Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium*. Princeton University Press, Princeton; Williams, Howard. 2006. *Death and Memory in Early Medieval Britain*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge; see also: Fentress, J. & Wickham, C. 1992. *Social Memory*. Blackwell, Oxford; Cubitt 2000a; *eadem*. 2000b. 'Monastic Memory and Identity in Early Anglo-Saxon England', in W. O. Frazer & A. Tyrrell, *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 253-276; Devlin, Zoë Louise. 2006. *Remembering the Dead in Anglo-Saxon England: Memory Theory in Archaeology and History*. Unpublished PhD, University of York

concern to archaeologists attempting to understand, *inter alia*, the social use of space, who have built upon the concept of *habitus* espoused by Pierre Bourdieu and the structuration theory propounded by Anthony Giddens.⁴ It is also found in recent studies of educational theory: Etienne Wenger has characterised discursive remembrance as ‘participation’, “the social experience of living in the world...and active involvement in social enterprises”, and suggests that habitual remembrance be understood as ‘reification’, “the process of giving form to our experience ... [creating] points of focus around which the negotiation of meaning becomes organised.”⁵ The latter definition might well apply to a concept of ritual, a term notoriously used by archaeologists to label something otherwise unexplainable, but also subject to productive exploration by both archaeologists and historians.⁶ The ritualisation of practices, whether great or small, accomplishes their reification, creating commonly understood meanings within group experience, resolving uncertainty, and freezing particular forms of memory. It is therefore proposed here to construct an understanding of the history of the diocese by focussing on nodes of remembrance, places where people came together and related to one another, creating and perpetuating ritualised practices; by characterising the development of practice at such nodes, we are able to appreciate how people learned to live in the society and the world around them, and how inspiration and innovation effected their frames of reference.

⁴ Barrett, John C. 2001. ‘Agency, the Duality of Structure, and the Problem of the Archaeological Record’, in I. Hodder (ed.), 2001, *Archaeological Theory Today*, Polity Press, Cambridge, pp 141-164; see more generally the papers in Hodder 2001 and Dobres, Marcia-Anne & Robb, John. 2000. *Agency in Archaeology*. Routledge, London

⁵ Wenger, Etienne. 1998. *Communities of Practice. Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 51-71.

⁶ For example: Insoll, Timothy. 2004. *Archaeology, Ritual, Religion*. Routledge, London; Nelson, Janet L. 1986. *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe*. The Hambledon Press, London; eadem. 2004. ‘England and the continent in the ninth century: III, rights and rituals’, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 14, pp 1-24; Gittos, Helen. 2002. ‘Creating the Sacred: Anglo-Saxon Rites for Consecrating Cemeteries’, in S. Lucy & A. Reynolds (eds.), *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, The Society for Medieval Archaeology, London, pp 195-208

Characterising the Diocese

In what follows, four broadly thematic sections attempt to characterise aspects of the region of the diocese: first, the anglicisation of the area will be discussed in terms of its colonisation by the structures of patronage responsible for the evidence analysed in the previous chapters; second, the context of the establishment of minsters in the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries will be considered; third, the concept of ecclesiastical lordship will be evaluated; and finally, issues of territoriality will be tackled. Our search for nodes of remembrance must begin with the place-names, settlement distributions and farming regimes tackled in Chapter 3, which provide the most extensive coverage of the region. The place-names were characterised in terms of their stability, and thus they most obviously represent persistent practices of remembrance: they were continually remembered from the ninth-century at the latest. One obvious characteristic of these names is that the vast majority are Old English. However, recent genetic research has demonstrated that the modern population of Britain (excluding recent immigrants) is overwhelmingly descended from populations who migrated to the island before the Neolithic.⁷ Therefore, whilst modest immigration to the east coast is crucial in understanding the development of Anglo-Saxon identities, models of mass migration cannot be used to explain cultural change, whether to

⁷ Oppenheimer, Stephen. 2006. *The Origins of the British*. Robinson, London, especially Chapter 11, pp 388-443; Oppenheimer's work is particularly valuable because he uses independent statistical methods to date the genetic genesis of particular populations, only subsequently turning to historical arguments to explain them

the east or in our region, validating recent work on the socially constructed nature of ethnic identity.⁸

The use of the form of burial to define ethnicity is equally suspect, and recent research has demonstrated the lack of fit between different burial styles and the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, whilst emphasising the smaller scale at which such distinctions were important.⁹ Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that furnished burials and the region in which Anglo-Saxon ethnogenesis occurred during the fifth and sixth centuries encompass much the same region, and that, as indicated in Chapter 1, the diocese of Lichfield falls almost completely outside this region. The exception comprises the group of late-sixth and seventh-century barrow-burials in the Peak, with a solitary outlier at Barlaston in Staffordshire.¹⁰ Unfortunately, the dominant contemporary burial rite in western Britain – east-west inhumation, very occasionally with small grave goods, sometimes in coffins or in graves lined with stone slabs – is also largely absent from the diocese, although probably due to an inability to assign such graves to the period without the use of radiocarbon dating.¹¹

The discussion in Chapter 3 suggested that the earliest Old English place-names in our region date to the seventh century, and given the survival of earlier names to the south and east, we might expect Old English as a spoken language to have

⁸ Moreland, John. 2000. 'Ethnicity, Power and the English', in W. O. Frazer & A. Tyrrell, *Social Identity in Early Medieval Britain*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 23-51; Yorke 2000; Henson, Donald. 2006. *The Origins of the Anglo-Saxons*. Anglo-Saxon Books, Hockwold-cum-Wilton

⁹ Lucy, Sam. 2000. *The Anglo-Saxon Way of Death*. Sutton Publishing, Stroud; Lucy, Sam & Reynolds, Andrew (eds.). 2002. *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*. The Society for Medieval Archaeology, London; Williams 2006

¹⁰ Ozanne 1962/3

¹¹ Petts, David. 2000. *Burial, Religion and Identity in sub-Roman and early medieval Britain: AD 400-800*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Reading; Petts, David. 2009. *The Early Medieval Church in Wales*. The History Press, Stroud, pp 109-122

arrived in the region not long before. According to Bede, King Penda of the Mercians was allied with Cædwalla, king of the Britons, in 633, and Old Welsh poetry dated to the ninth-century laments the passing of the dynasty of Cynddylan, who appears to have headed a Brittonic dynasty in western Shropshire and (perhaps) Cheshire, associating him an alliance with Penda, perhaps in the 640s and 650s; assuming that this poetic remembrance evoked real people, the collapse of Brittonic lordship in the region around the mid-seventh century, and the lack of any evidence for further alliance with Mercian kings, would support the appearance of Old English place-names, and thus the arrival of Old English speakers, from around that date.¹² Seventh to eighth century burials across England are radically different from those of the previous two centuries, with a notably sharp transition between the two phases: unfurnished inhumation was more common generally, becoming increasingly so, with furnished burials constituting a smaller subset of cemetery populations; moreover the quantity and form of the grave goods changed, frequently less than before, excepting a few princely burials, with swords and brooches replaced with knives, pins, beads, pendants and rings.¹³ We might thus expect our region from the seventh century to contain a predominance of inhumations and a lesser number of furnished burials with reduced amounts of grave goods; however, aside from the Peak burials mentioned earlier, not a single furnished burial has been found.

¹² *HE* ii.20; Rowland, Jenny. 1990. *Early Welsh Saga Poetry, A Study and Edition of the Englynion*. D. S. Brewer, Cambridge,

¹³ Geake, H. 1992. 'Burial Practice in Seventh- and Eighth-Century England', in M. Carver (ed.), *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, The Boydell Press, Woodbridge, pp 83-94, especially pp 83-89; eadem. 2002. 'Persistent Problems in the Study of Conversion-Period Burials in England', in S. Lucy & A. Reynolds (eds.), *Burial in Early Medieval England and Wales*, The Society for Medieval Archaeology, London, pp 144-155

Explanations for the changes in burial practice in the seventh century often connect it to the increasing dominance of kings and a select court of noblemen and to the influence of Christianity, whilst accepting that textual sources imply very little interest on the part of ecclesiastics in burial rites during this period.¹⁴ Patrick Sims-Williams has explained the lack of furnished burials in the kingdoms of the Hwicce and Magonsæte, south of our region, by their early conversion to Christianity through the agency of Brittonic bishops.¹⁵ However, given that all of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were converted during the course of the seventh century, yet many maintained furnished burial alongside unfurnished burial practices, the absence of the former from our region cannot simply be explained by the influence of Christianity. In fact, the situation parallels the lack of longhouses in fifth- and sixth-century England amongst the immigrant populations from north Germany and southern Scandinavia, where such buildings formed the standard family settlement unit.¹⁶ In both situations we are dealing with colonial societies, which do not reproduce the societies of the colonised or the colonisers, but transform them both.¹⁷

Colonisation and its social context

It was suggested in Chapter 3 that the more stable place-names were associated with estate centres and their dependencies, which suggests that an analysis of the practices of landholding may aid in characterising this colonisation. Study of early medieval landholding in Europe was revolutionised by Susan Reynolds' study

¹⁴ Geake 1992, pp 89-93

¹⁵ Sims-Williams 1990, pp 75-83

¹⁶ Hamerow 2002, pp 46-51

¹⁷ For a recent consideration of these issues: Gosden, Chris. 2004. *Archaeology and Colonialism. Cultural Contact from 5000 BC to the Present*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Fiefs and Vassals, which focussed attention away from the legalistic prescriptions of earlier studies onto the rights and obligations enjoyed by those who claimed to hold land.¹⁸ In the English context, Reynolds clarified that bookland, land granted from the later seventh century by charter for the foundation of minsters, was simply intended in theory to free the land in question from the norms of inheritance; however, what those norms were has been subject to debate, some arguing that all other land was held at the king's pleasure and granted for life to his nobles, whilst others assert the existence of hereditary lands like those found across the rest of western Europe.¹⁹ Here, the debate is circumvented by recognising land as a medium of lordship: those who formed direct relationships of lordship with the king "were probably thought to have had a right in principle to pass on their holdings, provided they were loyal subjects of the king";²⁰ those whose relationships were with other magnates probably assumed likewise subject to their own lords. For our purposes, the important point is the context of such lordship: where and amongst whom was land used as a medium of lordship?

Thomas Charles-Edwards has constructed a model of the 'typical' career path for an Anglo-Saxon nobleman from references in the earlier textual sources, hagiographical and poetical: from adolescence, a young nobleman's son might seek service as a thegn in the household of the king, characterised there as one of the 'youth' (*geoguð*), and if he was the king's son, he might lead a band of his fellows; at some time around his mid-twenties, he was retired from full-time

¹⁸ Reynolds, Susan. 1994. *Fiefs and Vassals*. Clarendon Press, Oxford

¹⁹ In favour of the king's right: John, Eric. 1964. *Land Tenure in Early England. A discussion of some problems*. Leicester University Press, Leicester; Abels, Richard P. 1988. *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*. British Museum Publications, London; in favour of the lord's inheritance: Wormald, Patrick. 1984. *Bede and the Conversion of England: The Charter Evidence*. Jarrow Lecture, Jarrow; Reynolds 1994, pp 324-332

²⁰ Reynolds 1994, p 326

service, henceforth counted amongst the king's 'veterans' (*duguð*), was granted an estate by the king, and married.²¹ This structure was apparently common to much of western Europe during this period, and Matthew Innes has suggested that this time away from the parental household "played a central role in the construction of aristocratic masculinity"; in contrast, "there is very little evidence for aristocratic daughters spending such a period, rather than progressing straight from parental to conjugal household."²² The land grant to veteran thegns may also be mirrored in the continental evidence, where "the granting of benefices was a central part of entry into royal lordship amongst the political elite".²³ As Charles-Edwards suggests, the benefice may have been intended to enable the man to set up his own household at a time when he might not yet have inherited land from his still-living father, but it was also a symbol of royal service, a ritual gift that marked the passage from youth to veteran thegn.²⁴ Nevertheless, as Barbara Raw points out, poetic references credit the king with granting to his thegns their fathers' estates: here we see *de facto* inheritance employed within a context of lordship, and the authority of the king ritually constructed as a confirmation of the passing of identity from one generation to the next.

Anglo-Saxon royal courts thus provided important nodes of remembrance, at which the successive stages of a characteristically aristocratic life-cycle were ritualised. It is possible that in the stable place-names of the region we have the

²¹ Charles-Edwards, Thomas M. 1976. 'The Distinction between Land and Moveable Wealth in Anglo-Saxon England', in P. H. Sawyer (ed.), *Medieval Settlement. Continuity and Change*. Edward Arnold, London, pp 180-187, this reference pp 181-182

²² Innes, Matthew. 2003. 'A Place of Discipline': Carolingian Courts and Aristocratic Youth', in C. Cubitt, *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages, The Proceedings of the First Alcuin Conference*, Brepols, Turnhout, pp 59-76, quotations pp 67 & 66 respectively

²³ Innes 2000, p 89

²⁴ Charles-Edwards 1976, p 183

focal estates, whether benefice or family land, of those who participated in this life, and that their stability derived from the periodic need to employ them as media of lordship within a community drawn from an extensive region focussed on a king whose court may have moved around. Reference to the hide, 'the land of one family', is important here: its use essentially quantified the lordship embodied in land. Rosamond Faith has suggested that noblemen were required to distribute the hides assigned to them throughout their territories, assigning them to particular places; this fixing of the perquisites of lordship provides another context for the stability of place-names.²⁵ In this latter case, the estate centre itself provides another node of remembrance, as the assizing of the territory must have required the creation and maintenance of tributary relationships with the communities living within it. The estate centre, or at least an open-air meeting place nearby, essentially provided a court for these populations, and many perhaps sought service there, just as their lords sought service with the king, the more socially influential of the young men perhaps hoping that their lords might introduce them into royal service. The position of most of the stable place-names on the easier soils of the region supports this characterisation, as such locations were more assured of provisioning large households. Here we have the context for the personal identity of the 'lord', Old English *hlāford*, 'loaf guardian', demonstrating how such identity was dependent on the establishment of such a territory.

The mechanics of our seventh-century colonisation can thus be understood in terms of territorial grants across the region within the context of royal patronage, and of similar relationships of lordship created at the focal places of these

²⁵ Faith, Rosamond. 1997. *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship*. Leicester University Press, Leicester, p 103-104; see also Charles-Edwards, Thomas M. 1972. 'Kinship, status and the origins of the hide', in *Past and Present*, No. 56, pp 3-33

territories, the latter given additional influence by association with the former, supported within the commonly understood rituals of gendered life cycles. As developing nexuses of local lordship, these territorial centres must at first have attracted nearby Brittonic-speaking families desiring to make personal connections in order to safeguard their own local identities, territorial or otherwise; such connections might even have extended to the fosterage of children and the contracting of marriages between such families and members of the lord's *familia*, as is apparent in some of the Frankish textual evidence.²⁶ The dominance of Old English should be understood in this context, the language itself a ritualised medium of engagement within such relationships; its importance can only have been enhanced by exposure to a different language, encouraging the making of distinctions fostered in such media as origin myths.²⁷ As a model this is obviously oversimplified, but there is scope for envisioning a more complex web of patronage relationships developing across the region, involving the ealdormen of the peoples mentioned in the *Tribal Hidage* or charters, such as the *Wrocensæte* (centred on the Wrekin) and the *Tomsæte* (centred in the Tame valley).²⁸

The minsters of the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries

When we consider the foundation of early minsters in this landscape, another pattern emerges. Chapter 4 demonstrated that most of these places, and certainly all those with surviving traces of saints' cults, were founded in the southern and eastern parts of the diocese. When considered as part of the distribution across

²⁶ Innes 2000, p 90

²⁷ See for example Yorke, Barbara. 2008. 'Anglo-Saxon Origin Legends', in J. Barrow & A. Wareham, *Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters*, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp 15-29

²⁸ Featherstone, Peter. 2001. 'The Tribal Hidage and the Ealdormen of Mercia', in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr, *Mercia, An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, pp 23-34

the Midlands more broadly, also identified by textual reference, saints' cults and stone sculpture, this concentration of minsters appears as the western part of a ring of such places surrounding the Mercian heartland in the middle Trent valley, and in particular located within the kingdoms that were under Mercian overlordship from the later seventh century (Figure 39).²⁹ Within the courtly frame of reference just discussed, to grant bookland to found an undying minster was to create a household in perpetual royal service; Mercian kings appear to have been concerned to create such stable nodes of lordship at the edges of their own province and within under-kingdoms, whilst the inhabitants of the latter might have been concerned to found minsters in order to maintain their own lordly identities in the face of Mercian authority. The foundations of the royal family of the Hwicce, preserved in the archive of Worcester cathedral, can be interpreted in this way; Blair has argued that this archive renders visible what was typical elsewhere, but the density of minsters in this region may in fact be far more expressive of relationships between the Mercian and Hwiccian courts than a systematic provision of pastoral bases.³⁰

At the same time, the concentration of minsters in the diocese of Lichfield coincides with an area that was later dominated by medieval hunting forests, and indeed, the wider distribution of minsters broadly coincides with two large northeast-southwest stretches of such forests: the first extending from Sherwood to the Forest of Dean, the second from Kesteven to Wychwood (Figure 40). In our region the dominance of royal landholdings in this region is obvious from Figure 22, where they later formed the basis for extensive parishes. It is instructive to

²⁹ The provincial boundaries in this figure are based on those suggested in Hart 1977, but without the non-historical territory of 'Outer Mercia'

³⁰ Sims-Williams 1990, pp 92-114 & 144-176; Blair 2005, pp 151

compare these features with the 'royal landscapes' of the Frankish kingdoms, in which Carolingian royal palaces were sited close to expansive hunting grounds that would keep the king's court entertained and well-fed through the winter.³¹ In the context of the Mercian king's court, the western part of the region may have remained peripheral, the province of local lords who looked to the king's ealdormen for patronage but were perhaps less concerned, or less able, to enter the royal court. It is worth considering the possibility that the identity of the territorial lord discussed above, relying on the maintenance of a ritualised court life that emphasised the ability to support a retinue of *hlāfætan*, 'loaf-eaters' or dependents, was less viable in a region with fewer pockets of easily-worked soils and a less temperate climate, where the inhabitants may have relied more on cattle-rearing to provide a medium of patronage, as in Ireland, where such relationships were more fluid and smaller scale.³²

The minster at Lichfield may therefore have been founded at the edge of the Mercian kingdom, within territory fast developing into a royal landscape, but newly brought within the orbit of the Mercian king Wulfhere's patronage in 669. Indeed, Stephen Bassett has suggested that St Michael's church at Lichfield represents a Brittonic church.³³ However, his argument is unsound, as it relies on the size of St Michael's parish, and the manner in which the parishes of the other churches at Lichfield interlock with it; in fact this parochial geography only emerged during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and throughout the medieval period the churches of St Michael, St Chad and St Mary (the borough church) were

³¹ Nelson, Janet L. 1995. 'Kingship and Royal Government', in R. McKitterick, *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume II, c. 700-c. 900*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 383-430, this reference pp 385-386

³² Charles-Edwards, Thomas M. 1993. *Early Irish and Welsh Kinship*. Clarendon Press, Oxford

³³ Bassett 1992b, pp 29-35

considered chapels of the cathedral and were served collectively by five chaplains whose parishioners were allocated according to the boundaries of the prebends that supported them.³⁴ Nevertheless, it is probable that some Anglo-Saxon minsters were founded on the sites of Brittonic ones: certainly the latter were recognised, as the discussion of the place-name element *eccles* in Chapter 3 illustrated. Eccleshall was probably an early episcopal acquisition, and thus may have hosted an early minster, perhaps based on the Brittonic church there; we might even envisage some continuity in clergy, if the local ecclesiastical population formed productive relationships with the incomers. Recent excavations at Lichfield have revealed a small structure built over a stone-lined pit, radiocarbon-dated to the sixth century, which indicates that there was some form of settlement at Lichfield before the arrival of St Chad, or St Wilfrid before him.³⁵ Likewise, Wroxeter, for which an episcopal interest was proposed in Chapter 4, is justly famous for the sixth-century settlement constructed there over the remains of its baths basilica; although this was abandoned up to a century before the arrival of the bishop of Lichfield, excavations at Wroxeter church found fragments of hand-made pottery that might date to the fifth or sixth centuries, hinting that the site of the church was already occupied.³⁶ It has also been argued that Chester, the location of the later episcopal church of St John, was a site of importance in the sixth and early-seventh centuries, as it appears to have hosted a Brittonic synod c. 600.³⁷

³⁴ *VCH Staffs*. Vol. XIV, p 136

³⁵ Tavener 2010

³⁶ White & Barker 1998, pp 118-136; Moffett 1989

³⁷ Higham 1993, pp 85-86

Nevertheless, as discussed in Chapter 4, the early minsters of the diocese tend to conform topographically to their fellows to the south and east, and there is no reason to assert that the majority were based on Brittonic foundations. The early territories with Brittonic names discussed in Chapter 3 do not appear to have retained churches, if any such existed there, and whilst Chad was happy to be ordained by Brittonic bishops, the more staunchly Roman attitude of his successors might well have alienated any surviving Brittonic churches from the networks of patronage they had constructed with Anglo-Saxon lords in the area; in any case, the earlier discussion suggests that Brittonic-speakers would also be learning to speak Old English, and as such 'Brittonic' clergy might equally be considered 'Anglo-Saxon' clergy. Such conjecture concerns personal life stories; at a wider level, the early minsters of the diocese were firmly integrated within Anglo-Saxon networks of patronage, whether or not they were built on the site of Brittonic churches. Moreover, whilst the bishop's minsters appear to have focussed on sites with earlier histories of settlement, they are better understood in a territorial context: Wroxeter was probably at or near the focal place of the people of the area, the *Wrocensæte*, and Chester may have acted as a similar focal point further north; it is possible, if Lichfield's later claims to authority over churches to the south express memories of earlier relationships, that the church there initially acted in the same way as regards the *Tomsæte* (see Chapter 4), and it was certainly close to the later royal estate at Tamworth.

The discussion so far suggests that the early minsters of the diocese should be understood primarily in terms of royal patronage, and those who enjoyed it. Royal and noble founders of minsters were mostly no doubt sincere in their religious

intentions, and as Foot has explored, these minsters were no doubt soon tied in to a host of local relationships of patronage and friendship, including the provision of sacraments by the priests amongst their inmates: the rulers of the houses were ecclesiastical lords, at least over their landholdings.³⁸ Concomitantly, the lack of minsters in the west, far from revealing a lack of pastoral provision here, simply reveals a lack of royal patronage, which was focussed further east. Likewise, the dominance of episcopal minsters in the west strongly supports the idea that, as their rhetoric suggests, it was the bishops for whom the provision of ministry to the entire people of the kingdom was an important concern. The anxiety displayed by the writings of devout ecclesiastics from Bede onwards for the episcopal oversight of minsters, and by the charters of the bishops of Worcester to acquire royal and noble minsters in their diocese (which had more than its fair share), indicates a genuine vision on the part of members of the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical community that the bishops should be the ultimate ecclesiastical lords of the people.³⁹ Nevertheless, their identities in respect of their own minsters were defined in terms of royal service, embodied in a grant of land, albeit perpetual, a source of tension that is evident in various attempts across the eighth century to gain immunities for bookland from particular services.⁴⁰ Even here, as Barbara Rosenwein has shown, the granting of an immunity reinforced the patronage relationship between grantor and grantee.⁴¹

³⁸ Foot 2006, pp 283-336

³⁹ Thacker, Alan. 1983. 'Bede's Ideal of Reform', in P. Wormald (ed.), *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society, Studies presented to J. M. Wallace-Hadrill*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, pp 130-153; Brooks 1984; Cubitt 1995; Blair 2005, pp 108-117

⁴⁰ Brooks, Nicholas. 1971. 'The development of military obligations in eighth- and ninth-century England', in P. Clemoes & K. Hughes (eds.), *England Before the Conquest, Studies in primary sources presented to Dorothy Whitelock*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 69-84

⁴¹ Rosenwein, Barbara H. 1999. *Negotiating Space. Power, Restraint and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca

Ecclesiastical lordship

The concept of ecclesiastical lordship was introduced in Chapter 4 in the context of the royal free chapels, to describe the authority constructed around the rulers of these chapels, whether king or someone else, who could appoint the dean and govern ecclesiastical life within his deanery. Above, the concept has been used to describe the authority constructed around rulers of minsters, and it provides a consistent concept hereafter. It can be explored further in terms of pastoral care. One of the most pertinent criticisms of a deliberately-created minster-based system for the provision of pastoral care concerns the variety of motives for foundation displayed in charters, letters and other textual sources from this early period, and thus the variety of minsters subsequently created; many were founded by magnates “to win prayers for themselves and their kindred in this life and the next”, or to act solely as contemplative retreats rather than centres of pastoral care, or even, as Bede complained to Bishop Ecgberht of York, to gain for a worldly household the benefits of bookland.⁴² Likewise, whilst prescriptive texts such as conciliar canons appear to have taken for granted that ordained clergy would live in minsters (*monasteria*) as well as at bishops’ cathedrals (*sedes episcopales, ecclesiae*), and that they might be grouped together with those living a regular life to set beside the laity, they nevertheless consistently distinguished between the clergy (*clerici, ecclesiastici*) and those who had professed vows or committed themselves to a Rule, but were not ordained (*monachi, monasteriales*).⁴³

⁴² Cubitt 1995, pp 116-118, quotation p 117; Foot 2006, pp 77-87

⁴³ Foot, Sarah. 1989. ‘Parochial ministry in early Anglo-Saxon England: the role of monastic communities’, in *Studies in Church History*, No. 26, pp 43-54; Cubitt, Catherine. 1992. ‘Pastoral care and conciliar canons: the provisions of the 747 council of Clofesho’, in J. Blair & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 193-211; Foot,

Both Blair and Sarah Foot have synthesised this literature with references in hagiography, letters and other texts to present a vision of clergy travelling out from whichever minster they had made their home, in order to preach, teach and baptise, although whilst Blair emphasises the autonomy of the minsters, Foot emphasises the connection of the clergy with the diocesan bishop, who ordained them to specific districts throughout his diocese.⁴⁴ Although both visions may be overly prescriptive, although Foot provides a useful corrective to Blair, as the provision of pastoral care is certainly more usefully understood in relation to the clergy, who were encouraged to live at minsters, rather than to the minsters themselves. Some minsters may have been more involved with pastoral duties beyond their walls than others, whilst the places at which travelling clergy performed their ministry outside the minsters form important additional nodes of remembrance, at which the rituals by which the faithful partook of the sacraments provided frames of reference around which a Christian society was articulated. Unfortunately, discerning the nature of such sites is difficult; it is possible they included churches located on thegns' estates, of which Bede describes the foundation of two, or the crosses that an English nun asserted were set up by noblemen outside their houses.⁴⁵

This study has affirmed the distinction between episcopal minsters and those founded by the king and his relatives and magnates; moreover the connection between episcopal minsters and the peoples of the Mercian province – the

Sarah. 1992. 'Anglo-Saxon minsters: a review of terminology, in J. Blair & R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish*, Leicester University Press, Leicester, pp 212-225; Foot 2006, pp 5-10, 61-69, & 285-291

⁴⁴ Blair 2005, pp 160-165; Foot 2006, pp 291-302

⁴⁵ Cubitt 1995, p 116; Blair 2005, pp 118-121

Wrocensæte, the *Tomsæte* – is striking, and suggests the construction of their authority based on that wielded by the ealdormen who ruled these peoples. Blair proposes the establishment, from the late-seventh century, of a reciprocal system in which minsters set up renders to be paid to themselves in return for pastoral care, levied like food-renders ‘according to the custom of the province’, and perhaps including the ‘church-scot’ mentioned in Ine’s Law.⁴⁶ However, the *tributa*, *vectigal* and *sumptus* are only ever mentioned in the textual sources in relation to priests, not the minsters where they lived. As rulers, affirmed by the king, ealdormen and their men appear to have enjoyed customary recognition of their lordship by landholders within it, through various forms of hospitality provided for them, or through tribute, the former perhaps more ‘honourable’ than the latter.⁴⁷ Here we have an extension of the ritualised culture of the lord’s household, by which the construction of his authority is moved into the context of the households of those in his lordship. I suggest we should understand the authority constructed around the clergy in the same way, as something built on ritualised customary relationships, whereby the travelling priests were accorded similar hospitality by those within their lord’s ecclesiastical lordship on their preaching tours. In the diocese of Lichfield, it is the bishop’s minsters that appear to have matched the remit of the ealdormen; the closely-spaced royal and noble minsters may have ministered to little more than the communities living on their own estates. The *tributa* demanded by bishops was probably not church-scot, but simply the hospitality due to them as lords, whose authority was constructed within habitual assumptions concerning royal service.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, pp 154-157

⁴⁷ Faith 1997, pp 102-106; Gautier, Alban. 2009. ‘Hospitality in pre-Viking Anglo-Saxon England’, in *Early Medieval Europe*, Vol. 17, No. 1, pp 23-44

According to Bede and the eighth-century conciliar canons, the bishop was meant to tour his diocese every year, presumably receiving the same kind of hospitality as his servants, the clergy. There is no reason to think that he did not also visit the other minsters of his diocese: a Kentish abbess complained to Boniface that her minster was oppressed by “service of the king and queen, of the bishop and the *prefectus*, the *potestates* and the *comites*”; as a landholder, she was subject to the same duties of hospitality as any other, and significantly those claiming such hospitality include the bishop.⁴⁸ Blair has asserted that “there is no evidence that diocesan bishops seriously involved themselves in reforming the communities, or in regulating the parochial territories, of minsters that were not their own property.”⁴⁹ As we have seen, the evidence adduced from the diocese of Lichfield contradicts this. Moreover, the kind of personal relationships involved, built upon customary, ritualised understandings of patronage, and mediated by face to face encounters in noblemen’s houses, at field churches built nearby, at open-air meeting places, or at the minsters themselves, are very different to the textually-formulated dictates of a later age, and might not be expected to appear textually other than in anecdotes in hagiography and canonical prescriptions.

The notion that the bishop might form productive relationships with the heads of minsters in his diocese receives circumstantial support in our region from the sculptured sarcophagi and grave slabs found at Lichfield, Derby, Wirksworth and Bakewell. It was suggested in Chapter 2 that most saints’ cults in the diocese were not articulated through the medium of the Word, and these decorated Objects obviously offer another means by which the saints were venerated. The

⁴⁸ Cited in Sims-Williams 1990, p 134

⁴⁹ Blair 2005, p 117

fact that most are thought to date to the late-eighth or early-ninth centuries suggests that the contexts of their production were connected, despite their use of different decorative schemes and funerary forms. There is resonance here with the Book of Cerne, an early ninth-century prayer book that has been studied by Michelle Brown.⁵⁰ Brown suggests that it may have been composed at Lichfield, as an acrostic poem features the name of the early-ninth century bishop Æthelwald (although stylistically Worcester is another possibility).⁵¹ The composer of the book drew on “a strong earlier Insular tradition of private devotions”, arranged his or her material thematically to produce an original meditation on the Communion of Saints (*communio sanctorum*), the Church as body of the faithful, past, present and future, headed by Christ, “the prayers of the user serving to invoke the intercession of all the faithful on his behalf and in turn contributing to the common good of all”.⁵² That such was of concern at Lichfield during the period when lavish stone sculpture was applied to the graves of the saints indicates a wider vision of the nature of the connection between the minsters of the diocese: as nodes of remembrance of the saints, they formed a web of intercessory possibility governed by the bishop and the heads of the minsters. Indeed, the saints themselves acted as the ecclesiastical lords of their minsters, with a central role in local patronage relationships, like that elucidated by Peter Brown for the saints of the Mediterranean.⁵³

⁵⁰ Brown, Michelle P. 1996. *The Book of Cerne. Prayer, Patronage and Power in Ninth-Century England*. The British Library, London, pp 164-172; see also eadem. 2001. ‘Mercian Manuscripts? The ‘Tiberius’ Group and Its Historical Context’, in M. P. Brown & C.A. Farr, *Mercia, An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, Continuum, London, pp 278-291

⁵¹ Brown 1996, pp 181-183

⁵² *ibid.*, pp 155 & 148 respectively

⁵³ Brown, Peter. 1981. *The Cult of Saints. Its rise and function in Latin Christianity*. SCM Press, London

Such a context also hints at the complex nature of the interconnections between these different nodes: each sculpture is different, and the shrine-chest at Lichfield appears to have benefited from access to exemplars from the Christian East, similar to those invoked by Rosemary Cramp and Richard Jewell in their studies of the sculptural treasures of Breedon-on-the Hill, Castor, Peterborough and Fletton.⁵⁴ Jane Hawkes has recently emphasised the uniqueness of each context of production, highlighting the Sandbach crosses, subject of her own recent study, which again drew upon existing examples from overseas as well as Insular sources in an original composition.⁵⁵ This emphasises that each place was a unique nexus of connections, many probably articulated around the sorts of relationship elucidated at Lichfield in Chapter 2; nevertheless, some may even so have shared a common vision. Hawkes suggests that “the iconography of the two market-place crosses, taken in their entirety, provides an impressive statement that is repeatedly reiterated, of the power and authority of Christ’s Church in Mercia in the ninth century”, and whilst she proposes a more focussed diocesan context, it is perhaps more likely that Sandbach was another node in the web of minsters discussed above.⁵⁶

We might equally include some of the laity in this web, as although the conflicts between Archbishops Jænberht and Wulfred on the one side and King’s Offa and Cœnwulf on the other have been much discussed, Offa’s connection with the Carolingian court have also been invoked as possible sources of the models for

⁵⁴ Rodwell *et al.* 2008; Cramp 1977; Jewell, Richard. 2001. ‘Classicism of Southumbrian Sculpture’, in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr (eds.), *Mercia, An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, pp 246-262

⁵⁵ Hawkes, Jane. 2001. ‘Constructing Iconographies: Questions of Identity in Mercian Sculpture’, in M. P. Brown & C. A. Farr (eds.), *Mercia, An Anglo-Saxon Kingdom in Europe*, pp 230-245; *eadem.* 2002. *The Sandbach Crosses. Sign and Significance in Anglo-Saxon Sculpture*. Four Courts Press, Dublin

⁵⁶ *ibid.* 2002, pp 147-148

some of the sculptural pieces. Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the importance of individual ecclesiastical contacts across the Channel. This discussion serves to highlight the overlapping form of the connections between different ecclesiastical contexts and communities at all scales, serving to produce common perspectives within a multitude of different contexts of remembrance. In Chapter 1 it was suggested that Bishop Æthelwald might have reformed his community at Lichfield along the same lines as Archbishop Wulfred, perhaps further evidence of a common vision. Returning to the Book of Cerne, Brown has identified a Mercian 'script province', encompassing Mercia, Kent and Wessex during the later-eighth and earlier-ninth centuries, which emphasises the connections between the scriptoria of these regions at this time. In seeking to explain its persistence she points to the archbishop's troubles with King Cœnwulf, suggesting that Wulfred may have sought "to promote a spirit of collaboration and solidarity amongst the Southumbrian episcopacy, to stave off royal and lay encroachment".⁵⁷ Here, it might be fruitful to understand the archbishop responding to present concerns by mobilising pre-existing connections, within a network that may have been as ideologically charged as that later inspired by the Benedictine reformers at the court of King Edgar.

This discussion demonstrates that episcopal lordship and the ecclesiastical lordship of the minsters could quite easily co-exist cooperatively and productively. Nevertheless, just as ealdormen could not demand hospitality from the king's own lands, so bishops found it more difficult to exert authority over royal minsters, as Archbishop Wulfred found. In the tenth century, the extension of royal government

⁵⁷ Brown 2001, p 287; see also Brown 1996, pp 164-172

appears to have had a considerable effect on ecclesiastical lordship. The multitude of churches constructed within the diocese from the tenth century on estates identified in Chapter 4 as those holding land with sake and soke hints at substantial changes within contemporary understandings of pastoral care. This has traditionally been understood as a phenomenon in which the old minster parishes fragmented due to the construction of a host of smaller churches as the authority of landlords was consolidated at a more local scale by “the creation and landed endowment of a many-layered ministerial class”.⁵⁸ As demonstrated in Chapter 3, it also witnessed an increasing focus on the production of grain within rural communities, expressed by the transformation of field systems and the stabilisation of settlement location within them, whether at a single nucleated point or several dispersed hamlets; the connection here is the proliferation of the bread-lord, as more people attempted to take upon the territorial identity previously enjoyed by a few. Such developments were common to much of western Europe, emphasising just how common this particular pattern of patronage was. However, here I will concentrate on the transformation of concepts of ecclesiastical lordship within the diocese, set within a general Anglo-Saxon context, with the intention that such local considerations might have wider applicability.⁵⁹

It is possible that the development of immunities for bookland, by which claims on hospitality were waived, may have provided the means, if desired, for minsters to refuse hospitality to the bishop as much as ealdormen or thegns. This is speculative, but the building of new churches at territorial centres enjoying sake and soke suggests that something about such a landholding encouraged the

⁵⁸ Faith 1997, p 155

⁵⁹ For a magisterial survey of the issues, see Wickham, Chris. 2005. *Framing the Early Middle Ages. Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp 570-588

provision of a church and a priest or priests to serve it. Such foundations were essentially minsters ruled by the landholder: as argued in Chapter 4, these people were ecclesiastical lords as well as lay lords, and although reforming bishops might have disapproved, the arrangement built on previous understandings of lordship, of whatever kind, over people. It is worth suggesting that bookland persistently retained associations with the territory of a minster, even after it began to be granted to laymen from the end of the eighth century. From the tenth-century onwards, during a second colonial phase for our region, this time connected with Wessex, many of those with sake and soke treated their land as bookland on which a minster might be founded. Of course sake and soke is simply a legal jingle, which may have amounted to much the same practices of lordship as existed between an ealdorman and his thegns and dependents two centuries earlier. However, its expression in a textual medium, in particular writs, was one of several changes in the practice of lordship created by the extension of the government of the kings of Wessex from the early-tenth century.⁶⁰ It was argued in Chapter 4 that there was a progression in the practice of founding churches on such land, beginning with royal examples, including those founded by Æthelflæd in the early tenth-century burhs, and proceeding through the more influential magnates before reaching the lesser thegns.⁶¹ It is therefore possible to propose that the idea of building churches on lands of this kind began within Alfred's court, continuing through those of his successors, before the Benedictine reform of Edgar's reign turned the most prestigious aristocratic patronage to

⁶⁰ Keynes, Simon. 1992. 'Royal government and the written word in late Anglo-Saxon England', in R. McKitterick (ed.), *The Uses of Literacy in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp 226-296

⁶¹ Thacker 1982, pp 203-204 & 209-211; Thacker, Alan. 1985. 'Kings, saints, and monasteries in pre-Viking Mercia', in *Midland History*, Vol. 10, pp 1-25, this reference pp 18-19

another form of minster.⁶² By this point, the connection between the proliferating landholding of the king's ealdormen and thegns, held with sake and soke, and the construction of a church to serve its people, may have become the predominant attitude.

The idea that ecclesiastical lordship might be asserted by a layman as much as an ecclesiastic has important consequences for the 'proprietary church'. As discussed in Chapter 4, it has been common for scholars in England to distinguish between 'minsters' and 'manorial churches', whilst in Europe the distinction between the private churches of landlords and the public churches of the bishops has a pedigree stretching back to the early medieval period.⁶³ Distinctions between churches held by their ruling abbot, abbess or priest and those held by external lords, or between the kinds of religious life to be found in them, are obviously important. However, the discussion here has sought to demonstrate that the structures of assumptions concerning patronage and lordship in which relationships between church-rulers and their lords, whether royal or otherwise, were constructed, suggest more of a continuum rather than a sharp divide. The greatest weakness of Blair's minster narrative is essentially that it works as a 'decline and fall' of the great autonomous minsters of the seventh and eighth centuries.⁶⁴ It is contended here that notions of 'secularisation' or terms such as 'proprietary' or 'manorial' church are unhelpful, as they assume a canonical perspective that does nothing to illuminate the relationships of patronage involved. Indeed, such terminology could be applied to England's bishoprics, which, as

⁶² Dumville, David. N. 1992. *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar*. Boydell Press, Woodbridge

⁶³ See in particular: Wood, Susan. 2006. *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

⁶⁴ Blair 2005, pp 323-341

discussed, were essentially held as symbolic of royal service to the king who typically appointed them, from which they never escaped, despite the best efforts of Theodore or Wulfred. Indeed, few probably wanted to, as their identities were also bound up with the king's council, which they regularly attended, essentially as ministers of the king, both before and after the tenth century.⁶⁵ If we had more evidence concerning the identities of the bishops of Lichfield (or most other English bishoprics) we might be able to compare their bishopric productively to the great monasteries of Frankia, such as Lorsch or Weissenburg, where charter collections make the family strategies of its rulers so much clearer.⁶⁶ As it is, it is important to recognise that proprietary behaviour is in the eye of the beholder, and a concept of ecclesiastical lordship, which emphasises the relationships between the ruler of a church or minster and his or her lords and dependents, has certainly proven more useful here when considering the manner in which the bishops of Lichfield might have governed their dioceses.

Territoriality

Finally, this study has demonstrated that territories, or cultural provinces, cannot necessarily be defined geographically to act as a framework for the history of the region, as the networks of relationships by which people developed a shared way of doing things, and coped with change, might cover various different scales. However, the nature of the landscape and its inhabitants' relationship with it has conversely been shown to be extremely important. It can be suggested that the

⁶⁵ For the attendance of Mercian bishops at the courts of Æthelbald, Offa and Cœnwulf see Cubitt 1995, pp 213-215; for the late Anglo-Saxon episcopate and the English royal court, see Giandrea 2007, pp 55-66

⁶⁶ Innes 2000; Hummer 2005; for a productive comparison of Worcester cathedral with Weissenburg, see McKinley, Allan Scott. 2002. *Church-Patron relationships amongst the Anglo-Saxons and Franks, c.650-860*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham

unsuitability of much of the north and western parts of the diocese for intensive arable agriculture affected its inhabitants' ability to adopt the identity of the Anglo-Saxon 'loaf-guardian'. Minsters were fewest here in the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries; the average size of manors in Cheshire was the smallest in the diocese in 1086, attesting to the smaller size of the household that could be comfortably supported; likewise, its parishes were the largest, perhaps testifying to the limited opportunities for thegns to develop large estates on which they might found a church. However, there is no reason why the area should not have been richer in cattle, and the paucity of evidence for the sorts of practices that define much of southern and western England during the early medieval period emphasise the importance of the particular kind of territorial lord promoted by the Anglo-Saxon culture of the region from the seventh century, supporting a retinue at a focal place capable of feeding them. The northern and western half of the diocese is a transition zone between the arable-based lordships of England and the cattle-based lordships exemplified by the early medieval society of Ireland; however, from the seventh century connected by webs of patronage to the lordships of the south and east, it was neither one nor the other.

It is suggested in this thesis that, rather than defining cultural provinces, we should instead identify nodes of remembrance within the landscape, at which ritualised practices persistently defined common frames of reference for the inhabitants, until inspiration or crisis changed them; such a methodology has the advantage of an ability to incorporate both short- and long-distance connections within the same historical interpretation of the region, as demonstrated earlier with regard to the minsters of the diocese, which sometimes reached as far as Rome. More

generally, it is interesting to note that the kinds of place developed by the arable-based lordships of the area from the seventh century were, perhaps not surprisingly, the easier soils and better climates of the region, often close to a stream or river: this is illustrated by the more stable place-names of the region and by the locations of the churches, most founded from the tenth century, the vast majority of which occupy this kind of site.

Figure 41 shows the churches of the diocese dedicated to St Chad, a distribution that does not extend too far outside the diocesan borders, and may have been largely established by the twelfth century. Some are located on the bishop's estates, acknowledging his own particular patron, but others are on thegns' estates, indicating that the Lands of St Chad, established from the seventh century by successive bishops and their clergy, was still a relevant concept at the end of the early medieval period. The diocesan region was a place of many different landscapes, as shown in Chapter 3, but many of the nodes of remembrance embodied in the focal places of these areas were tied into the patronage of St Chad and his priests, giving the territory a certain unity. Only in the north of the diocese does the distribution thin out, perhaps testifying to transition zone identified earlier, and thus emphasising the edge that may have given the kingdom served by the bishops of Lichfield, Mercia, its name.

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Appendix 1: The Kentish Royal Legend

The stemma of versions of the Kentish Royal Legend (hereafter KRL) presented in the text has been assembled based on studies by David Rollason and Stephanie Hollis.¹ None of the extant versions of the KRL can be shown to have derived directly one from the other, and are often sufficiently different to render constructing the history of their derivation rather difficult. Moreover, the presence or absence of any given episode in each version cannot be used as an aid to separating them into families, as the needs of the parent texts may often have dictated whether or not a particular episode was of interest or not. The stemma is therefore based on groupings of similarities and differences of specific content and arrangement within the corpus.

Hollis' work is largely concerned with a fragmentary mid-eleventh-century Old English manuscript of the KRL (version j in the stemma), the two Ramsey-based Latin *Lives* of Sts Æthelred and Æthelberht (versions a and b) and the Latin compositions of Goscelin of Saint-Bertin, namely the *Life* of St Wærburh (version f), the *Life* of St Mildrith (version c), and possibly the *Life* of St Mildburh (version e). By analysing the structure and assumptions of each version, Hollis demonstrates that the Old English text is closest to the original KRL, the others being more heavily modified by their authors to suit their own purposes. In particular, she supports Rollason's assertion that the model of the second Ramsey *Life* (version b; composed between the mid-eleventh and early-thirteenth centuries) and of Goscelin's late eleventh-century *Lives* was a now-lost recension of KRL2 created at St Augustine's, Canterbury, in the middle years of the eleventh century, due to its precise description of a resting place occupied by Mildrith's relics there for only a short period sometime between 1030 (the date of their translation from Thanet to Canterbury) and 1059.² This recension is represented by KRL3 in the stemma.

¹ Rollason, D. A. 1982. *The Mildrith Legend. A Study in Early Medieval Hagiography in England*. Leicester University Press, Leicester; Hollis, Stephanie. 1998. 'The Minster-in-Thanet foundation story', in *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol. 27, pp 41-64

² Rollason 1982, p 19-20; Hollis 1998, p 42

KRL3 is also distinguished by confusion over the names and number of the children of the Kentish prince Eormenred and his wife Oslafa, and by a difference in the assessment of the land granted to Domne Eafe, cousin to the murdered princes, as wergild for their deaths. KRL2, represented by version j, gives four children: Eormenburga *alias* Domne Eafe, Eormengith, and the two martyrs Æthelred and Æthelberht; this enumeration is shared by versions h and perhaps d (which does not feature an enumeration of the children, but does feature Eormenburga *alias* Domne Eafe, suggesting such a list was part of its model).³ KRL3, represented by versions b, c, e and f, gives six children: Æthelred, Æthelberht, Domne Eafe, Ermenberga, Ermenburga and Eormengith.⁴ This suggests that the latter set all feature a common mistake. Meanwhile, whilst versions d, h, i, and j all give 80 units of land, again suggesting originality, versions c and e give 48, and version b, 40.⁵ As Rollason points out, 48 sulungs was the assessment of Minster-in-Thanel's estates as claimed by St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, in Domesday Book, suggesting alteration in an eleventh-century context, with the 40 units of version b perhaps a mistake for 48.⁶ Rollason, suggests that Domne Eafe and Eormenburga were originally separate, as a late-seventh century charter (S20) features the abbesses Æbbe (for Eafe) and Eormenburg, who were perhaps Eormenred's daughters.⁷ If so, the mistake must have occurred, as Rollason acknowledges, at an early date, preceding KRL2.

It is possible that the Ramsey author and Goscelin used the same copy of it, as Goscelin certainly had connections with the community at Ramsey at during the same period as his short tenure at Ely, where he almost certainly composed the *Life* of St Wærburh.⁸ However, the versions associated with Goscelin, versions c, e and f, share an additional similarity not represented in the Ramsey *Life*, in that they contain notices of the Mercian sisters Cyneburh and Cyneswith and their kinswoman Tibba, all of whom are said to rest at Peterborough, having been

³ Rollason 1982, p 86, 83 & 79

⁴ Rollason 1982, pp 75, 77, 80 & 81

⁵ Rollason 1982, pp 76, 78, 79, 81, 84, 85 & 86

⁶ Rollason 1982, p 48

⁷ Rollason 1982, pp 39-40

⁸ Goscelin produced a *Life* of St Ives for Herbert Losinga, Abbot of Ramsey from 1087 to 1091, and was at Ely in 1087 or 1088; see Love, Rosalind C. 2004. *Goscelin of Saint-Bertin. The Hagiography of the Female Saints of Ely*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp xix-xxi, and the discussion of the *Life* of Wærburh below.

translated there at some time in the period c. 1006 to 1041, and of the brothers Wulfhere, Peada, Æthelred and Merewalh, who are said to have spread Christianity throughout Mercia.⁹ It is possible that the Ramsey exemplar also contained these details, which could have been added at any time during or after its production at Canterbury, but that the author of version b considered *Domne Eafe's* Mercian in-laws unimportant; alternatively it is possible to envisage notices concerning the saints of Peterborough and their family being added to the text of KRL3 at nearby Ramsey, before Goscelin saw it; finally it is equally possible that Goscelin and the Ramsey author used different recensions of KRL3, and that only Goscelin's contained the Peterborough notices, added either by himself or at an earlier point in the manuscript's history, or even that Goscelin added the notices directly into his *Lives* in addition to the information contained in the KRL. It should be noted here that Goscelin's authorship of *Life of Mildburh* has not been convincingly determined, and that attempts to argue from the inclusion of details from the KRL are undoubtedly circular; it is possible that an author at Wenlock used one of Goscelin's *Lives* as a source, or alternatively a copy of KRL3 containing the Peterborough notices. The specific unpicking of the group of texts derived from KRL3 is frustratingly elusive; but that they form an isolated group derived from a product of St Augustine's scriptorium *post*-1030 cannot be denied.

Other extant versions of the KRL derive from two further hypothetical recensions of KRL2, namely KRL4 and KRL5. KRL4 is distinguished by its inclusion of much detail concerning Seaxburh, the East Anglian wife of the Kentish king Eorcenberht, her foundation of a minster on the Isle of Sheppey, and her saintly sisters Æthelthryth and Wihtburh. Version k, which is derived from KRL4, is a fragmentary Old English text in which a foundation story for Minster-in-Sheppey is added onto the end of the Minster-in-Thanel foundation story; moreover the narrative structure is modelled on the Thanet tale, including a genealogical

⁹ The three Peterborough saints were translated there during the abbacy of Ælfsige, c.1006-1041, and not in 963, as Rollason (1982) continually maintains; 963 is the year under which an extended history of the monastery at Peterborough is set in the Peterborough version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. The agency of Peada, Wulfhere, Æthelred and Merewalh in spreading Christianity throughout Mercia is prominent in the pseudo-history developed at Peterborough during the early-twelfth century, and thus its presence in the KRL may also indicate an earlier Peterborough source; see Kelly, S.E. (ed.). 2009. *Charters of Peterborough Abbey*. Anglo-Saxon Charters 14, Oxford University Press.

prologue before relating the foundation legend. As with the close relationship between the Old English Minster-in-Thanet recension (version j) and KRL2, version k may well represent quite closely the original KRL4, whilst other extant versions derived from it (versions h, i and g) were subject to greater degrees of transformation, two of them (versions g and i) probably also receiving input from someone with knowledge of KRL3 or one of its derivatives.¹⁰ Rollason dated KRL4 later than the ninth-century Viking raids, as St Seaxburh is said to have received a prophecy concerning them.¹¹ However, Hollis has noted that Kent was subject to earlier Viking raids, and, more importantly, that it is possible the prophecy was meant to refer to the late seventh-century raids of the heathen West Saxon king Cædwalla; nevertheless, she dates KRL4 no earlier than the late-eighth century, on the basis of formulaic wording within the narrative that begins to be found in charters from this period onwards.¹² In any event, KRL4 probably predates 974, as comparison of the similar versions h and k reveals an interpolation in the former concerning Wihtburh's translation to Ely in that year.¹³

KRL4 was therefore almost certainly produced in Kent in the ninth or earlier tenth century, probably at Minster-in-Sheppey, where it was composed around a recension of KRL2. Although St Seaxburh and St Æthelthryth lay at Ely, and St Wihtburh was later to join them, there are good reasons for thinking that KRL4 was not known at that minster. Rosalind Love has made a concise case for considering the *Lectiones in Festivitate Sancte Sexburge* a product of Goscelin's hand, probably composed at Ely in 1087 or 1088, together with its companion piece concerning her daughter, the *Lectiones in Natale Sancte Eormenhilde*.¹⁴ The readings for Seaxburh make no mention of her foundation at Sheppey,

¹⁰ Version g, part of John of Worcester's *Chronica Chronicarum*, gives Eormenberga and Eormenburga in its list of the children of Eormenred and Oslafa, although this list is unique, omitting Domne Eafe and including Æthelthryth, and does not obviously group with the derivatives of KRL3. Version i, part of Hugh Candidus' Peterborough Chronicle, includes information on Cyneburh, Cyneswith and Tibba, although this is the only element that groups with versions c, e and f (derivatives of KRL3), and might be expected from a writer based at Peterborough; Mellows (1949, pp xxx-xxxiii) suggested that a mistake made by Hugh concerning the relationship of Domne Eafe and her siblings to King Eadbald and his queen was due to a misreading of Old English word order, and so adds support to the case for version i's translation from something closer to version k.

¹¹ Rollason 1982, p 31.

¹² Hollis 1998, p 61, n. 76

¹³ Love 2004, p xxxi; see also Rollason 1982, p 28.

¹⁴ Love 2004, pp lxxviii-lxxx.

instead suggesting that she retired to Ely as soon as her husband, King Eorcenberht, died; Goscelin's sources essentially appear to have been his own version of the KRL and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. Likewise, the readings for Eormenhild seem to be based on similar sources, making no mention of her stint as abbess at Sheppey. It was only in the twelfth century that a *Vita Sancte Sexburge* was written at Ely incorporating much of the material contained in KRL4; also in the later twelfth century, a reference to Sheppey was added to a manuscript of the readings for Eormenhild.¹⁵ The most plausible explanation of these elements is that the monks at Ely only became aware of Seaxburh's Sheppey-based history after Goscelin's time there, perhaps in the late-eleventh or early-twelfth century.¹⁶

KRL5 is represented solely by version d, which was itself derived from a set of texts produced by St Gregory's Priory in the later eleventh century. The Canons of St Gregory's Priory claimed that St Mildrith and her successor, St Eadburh, had been buried at Lyminge, where they had gone to escape heathen attacks, and that the bodies had been translated to St Gregory's in 1085. Their claim to St Mildrith was contested, probably correctly, by St Augustine's, where Goscelin was employed to rebut the canons' tenuous assertions. Nevertheless, as Rollason makes clear, the texts produced by St Gregory's, amalgamated in version d, derive much from an earlier recension of the KRL, and Rollason suggests that this latter text came from Lyminge, whence Archbishop Lanfranc certainly translated the relics of St Eadburg, if not St Mildrith, to St Gregory's in 1085.¹⁷ If so, KRL5 itself can be equated with this Lyminge text, although it cannot be easily dated; it need not considerably predate the translation of 1085. Nevertheless, in seeking a context by which to associate the scriptoria of Minster-in-Thamet and Lyminge, Rollason draws attention to Abbess Selethryth, who ruled both minsters in the late-eighth and early-ninth centuries, although given the association of both

¹⁵ Love 2004, pp lxxxix-lxxxvi.

¹⁶ Love (2004, p lxxxiv, civ-cv) speculates that Goscelin knew about Seaxburh's activities at Sheppey, but omitted them from his works because of their focus on Ely, perhaps after strict instructions from the Ely monks. In fact, as the stemma shows, Goscelin's version of the KRL did not possess the additions relating to Sheppey, and thus the problem of his 'omissions' disappears. Love seems unwisely to view the Old English *þa halgan*, Rollason's version h, as the most representative of the KRL texts, although she does admit to the possibility of different versions on p cv.

¹⁷ Rollason 1982, pp 21-25.

communities with St Eadburg, it is not implausible that the connection between them derived from an earlier eighth-century context.¹⁸

¹⁸ Rollason 1982, pp 24-25.

Appendix 2: The *Life* of St Osgyth

As explained in Chapter 2, Denis Bethell has asserted that a lost *Life* of St Osgyth, written at the twelfth-century Augustinian priory at Chich in Essex, lay behind all later hagiography of the saint, and this will not be challenged here; this hypothetical archetype is represented by X_1 in the stemma.¹ Unfortunately none of the extant witnesses to it are copies; instead, we have a series of texts that abbreviated, rewrote, cut and embellished the core *Life* dating from the late-twelfth to the sixteenth centuries. Assumptions about their interrelationships must therefore be made on the grounds of contradictions between them and the general ordering of their story elements, rather than details of word ordering and the presence or absence of specific passages. On this basis, Bethell divided the six surviving witnesses to the Osgyth legend into two groups of three, distinguished by an episode in which two bishops in Essex either refuse or consent to veil Osgyth as a nun. The first, in which the bishops consent, contains: a short *Life* in a late twelfth-century manuscript, probably from Ramsey Abbey (hereafter 'Ramsey *Life*'); a series of lections for the Feast of St Osgyth, which together form a narrative *Life*, contained in a fourteenth-century compilation of saints' *Lives* made at Bury St Edmunds (hereafter 'Bury *Life*'); and the *Life* of St Osgyth by John of Tynemouth, a fourteenth-century monk of St Albans, contained within his *Santilogium Angliae* (hereafter 'Tynemouth's *Life*').² The second group, in which the bishops refuse to veil Osgyth, comprises: an Anglo-Norman French verse *Life*, dated philologically by its editor, A. T. Baker, to the late-twelfth century, but contained within a fourteenth-century compilation of saints' *Lives* (hereafter 'Anglo-Norman *Life*'); an abbreviation of six Hereford lections for the Feast of St Osgyth, which together contain a narrative *Life*, contained within the thirteenth-century *Hereford Breviary* and a fifteenth-century Worcester manuscript (hereafter 'Hereford *Life*'); and notes made by John Leland from a now-lost *Life* written by William de Vere, a twelfth-century canon of St Osgyth's Priory at Chich (hereafter

¹ Bethell, Denis. 1970. 'The Lives of St Osyth of Essex and St Osyth of Aylesbury', in *Analecta Bollandiana*, Vol. 88, pp 75-127

² Ramsey *Life*: Oxford MS Bodley 285, fos. 121-122v; Bury *Life*: Oxford MS Bodley 240, fos. 588-9; see Bethell 1970, 77-78; Horstmann, C. (ed.) 1901. *Nova Legenda Anglie*. Oxford, Vol. I, pp 232-7

'Leland's Notes').³ William de Vere went on to become bishop of Hereford 1186 to 1198, suggesting that he was the source of Hereford's interest in St Osgyth of Essex, and so suggesting a likely connection between the Hereford *Life* and de Vere's *Life* as epitomised in Leland's Notes. Bethell suggested that William de Vere's canon law-minded attitude to the veiling of Osgyth without the consent of Osgyth's husband, king Sighere of Essex, might have prompted him to alter the episode. For these reasons, Bethell suggested that the texts in the second group derived from William de Vere's lost *Life*, whilst this and the texts in the first group derived independently from the earlier archetype, X₁.⁴

Of all the surviving witnesses, only four include the river episode: the Bury *Life* and Tynemouth's *Life* from the first group, and the Anglo-Norman *Life* and Leland's Notes from the second. In each case, it comes early in the *Life*, following an introductory genealogical section and a section concerning Osgyth's holy childhood and virginal vow (this latter section only in the Bury and Anglo-Norman *Lives*), and is itself followed by the story of Osgyth's unwanted marriage to King Sighere of Essex. Leland's Notes form the only one of these four *Lives* to give a version of the river episode that does not involve Modwenna; instead, Leland suggests that Osgyth was taught by her aunts, Eadburh (*Edburga*) of Adderbury (*Edburbiry*) and Eadgyth (*Editha*) of Aylesbury (*Ailesbiry*), and that these two monasteries were separated by a river, "frequently swollen by surging rain and pounding storm, and difficult to cross".⁵ This is as far as Leland's Notes go with the story, and it is only with knowledge of the other *Lives* that we can recognise here a stage set for the drowning and resurrection of Osgyth. Leland abbreviated the *Life* as he saw fit, and, generally, "was not interested in the miraculous, but he took note of what seemed to him of genealogical or topographical interest";⁶ hence the absence of the river miracle. Nevertheless, enough remains to make it clear that the *Life* Leland had before him in the sixteenth century located the river

³ Anglo-Norman *Life*: BL Add.70513; Frere, W. H. & Brown, L. E. G. 1911. *The Hereford Breviary; Edited from the Rouen edition of 1505, with collation of manuscripts; Vol. II: Sanctorale*. Henry Bradshaw Society, Vol. 40, pp 361-4; Toulmin Smith, L. (ed.). 1906-10. *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the Years 1535-1543*. London, Vol. 5, pp 167-72; see Bethell 1970, 75-77

⁴ Bethell 1970, 99-100.

⁵ 'qui saepe turgidus inundatione pluviarum et ventorum impulsione itinerantibus molestum facit transitum', as printed in Bethell 1970, 119.

⁶ Bethell 1970, 75-76.

episode between Adderbury and Aylesbury, and it is this version of the story that Bethell assumed to be original, with the Modwenna version replacing it at some point in the ancestry of the other three texts.⁷

In fact, contrary to Bethell's reconstruction, it appears most likely that de Vere's *Life*, and therefore its exemplar, did not include any river story. The Anglo-Norman *Life* is best placed to demonstrate this, because its verse form is easier to date philologically than Latin prose. A. T. Baker, its editor, was of the opinion that a large block of 199 lines, including the entire Modwenna-based river episode and introductory comments about Osgyth's birth at Quarrendon, were an interpolation of the second half of the thirteenth century into a late twelfth-century poem.⁸ Removing this block of text leaves a poem that proceeds from Osgyth's childhood vow to remain a virgin straight to her parents' arrangement of her marriage; the interpolated text even finishes with a repeat of the last line of original verse preceding its beginning, in order to smooth the join back to the original text, also indicating that the interpolation did not replace an earlier episode. The Anglo-Norman *Life* is full of embellishment on many details of Osgyth's life, and is probably, according to Bethell, "now the best witness" to the complete *Life* written by William de Vere, from which it was most probably derived.⁹ It seems inconceivable that the poet would have left out a large miracle story such as the river episode. Thus de Vere's *Life*, and so its exemplar, began with the genealogical section and a brief description of the holiness of Osgyth's childhood character and her decision to remain a virgin, and immediately continued with the story of her abortive marriage to King Sighere.¹⁰

⁷ In part, Bethell's assumption was informed by his belief that Eadgyth of Polesworth had been a tenth-century West Saxon princess; Bethell 1970, 106 n.1.

⁸ ll. 183-382; Baker, A.T. 1911-12 'An Anglo-French Life of St Osith', in *Modern Languages Review*, Vol. 6, pp 476-502, & Vol. 7, pp 74-93 & 167-192; this reference Vol. 6, p 483.

⁹ Bethell 1970, 102; A. T. Baker's assertion (1911, 479) that the Anglo-Norman *Life* derived its interpolation from Conchubranus was based on his understanding that Geoffrey of Burton does not mention Osgyth accompanying Modwenna to Rome, but this is erroneous: the equivalent passage in Geoffrey's work is contained in chapter 34 (Bartlett 2002, 142-3); Baker's other objection, concerning an apparent translation from the Latin *pontem, erat enim unum lignum* used by Conchubranus to describe the bridge, as opposed to Geoffrey's *pontem ligneum*, is too singular and trivial a match, and ignores more prevalent matches between the Anglo-Norman *Life* and Geoffrey's work, such as the presence of both *Streneshale* and Polesworth in both, as opposed to only *Streneshale* in Conchubranus, and likewise the etymological explanation of 'Nunpool'.

¹⁰ An objection to this might be raised by the presence in the Hereford *Life* of a passage explaining that when Osgyth 'came to adulthood, being fully taught by the holy virgins, her father decided to give her in marriage.' (*Cum igitur ad annos puberes deuenisset, beatarum virginum ad plenum*

Accepting that the river episode was a later interpolation into the *Life* of St Osgyth, we still need to determine whether it originated in Buckinghamshire or the Forest of Arden. A consideration of the information provided in Leland's Notes presents a possible resolution. Leland stated that "Osgyth was devoted to the teaching of Eadgyth and Eadburh, whose niece she was",¹¹ and also, that Eadburh was "Eadgyth's sister",¹² thus implying that Eadgyth was also Penda's daughter. The notes go on to present a series of points of local lore concerning Osgyth's birthplace at Quarrendon, Eadgyth's foundation of the monastery at Aylesbury, and Eadburh's monastery at Adderbury, a section that finishes with Leland's description of the river separating the two monasteries, quoted above. St Eadgyth of Aylesbury is known only from Leland's Notes and is otherwise totally without textual testament;¹³ crucially, she is not mentioned in the genealogical section of Osgyth's *Life*, which must concern St Osgyth of Aylesbury, and includes her parents King Frithewald and Wilburh, daughter of Penda, and, at its fullest extent, Penda's other saintly descendents: Peada, his son,¹⁴ Eadburh and Cyneburh, his daughters,¹⁵ Mildthryth his granddaughter (*neptis*), and Waerburh, *Elfreda/Elstreda* and *Elgida*, supposedly his great granddaughters (*proneptes*).¹⁶ Surely Eadgyth of Aylesbury should also have appeared in this genealogy, especially considering her role in the life of her niece Osgyth of Aylesbury; her absence is damning.

I have already demonstrated that the river episode in the *Life* of St Osgyth, wherever it is set, was a later insertion, and this should be extended to Osgyth's birthplace at Quarrendon, which was also part of the interpolated text in the Anglo-Norman *Life*. Bethell's assertion that Leland's details were original to William de

edocta, decreuit eam nuptiis dare pater eius; W. H. Frere & L.E.G. Brown (eds.). 1911. *The Hereford Breviary*, p 362). The Hereford *Life* omits the river story, and most probably derives directly from William de Vere's *Life*. Nevertheless, the reference to Osgyth's teaching by holy virgins could be understood to refer to her childhood spent away from home, which provides the context of Modwenna's association in the other *Lives*; however, this phrase need imply nothing more than a general reference to Osgyth's education as a child.

¹¹ 'Ositha adhaesit doctrinae Edithae et Edburgae, quarum neptis erat', as printed in Bethell 1970, 118.

¹² 'Edburga soror Edithae', as printed in Bethell 1970, 119.

¹³ Bethell 1970, 83, n. 1; Bethell's faith in Editha's foundation of Aylesbury on the basis of Leland's Notes alone seems premature.

¹⁴ In the Bury and Ramsey *Lives*.

¹⁵ In the Bury, Ramsey and Anglo-Norman *Lives*.

¹⁶ In the Bury and Ramsey *Lives*.

Vere's twelfth-century *Life* and its source simply cannot be sustained, and must be rejected. It seems far more probable that de Vere's *Life* accumulated lore surrounding Osgyth's birthplace and Eadgyth of Aylesbury only after it was first written. The Quarrendon legend must predate the second half of the thirteenth century, when it appeared in the Anglo-Norman *Life*, and importantly relates only to Osgyth. Eadgyth could easily have been invented later, no doubt by the community of St Osgyth at Aylesbury, in an attempt to claim the river episode for the Aylesbury region, wresting it from the better-attested Eadgyth of Polesworth; she might even date as late as the early sixteenth-century elevation of the supposed remains of St Osgyth at Aylesbury, during which festivities the saint's *Life* and the promotion of Aylesbury connections would no doubt have loomed large.¹⁷ Subsequently the revised tale became known at Chich, and was incorporated into de Vere's *Life* before John Leland made his notes in the mid-sixteenth century. Authority should thus be restored to the version of the river episode featuring Eadgyth of Polesworth and Modwenna of Burton.

If the river story is a later interpolation into the *Life* of Osgyth of Essex, then when and how did it get there, and does this have any bearing on the version appearing in Conchubranus and expanded by Geoffrey? The three surviving *Lives* of Osgyth that include the Modwenna-based river story are the Bury *Life*, Tynemouth's *Life* and the Anglo-Norman *Life*. Bethell has shown how Tynemouth's river episode "is taken by abbreviation, close paraphrase, and direct quotation from Geoffrey of Burton's *Life* of Modwenna",¹⁸ and that the similarities between the Anglo-Norman version and Geoffrey's narrative suggest the latter as the source text in this case also.¹⁹ Furthermore, there are two points of similarity between the Anglo-Norman and Tynemouth's *Lives*: both include the statement that Osgyth fell into the river because of a gust of wind, and both explain that Osgyth returned to her parents on Modwenna's death. Neither of these points is included in Geoffrey's *Life* or the

¹⁷ It is at least certain that these details predate Leland: he states that the two monasteries are separated by a distance of ten *stadia*, but appears to have believed *Edburbiry* to have been Ellesborough in the Chilterns; this is approximately ten miles distant, but if *stadia* means league, then Adderbury, etymologically correct and surely the intended location, is also the correct distance away; Bethell 1970, 119, nn. 2 & 3.

¹⁸ Bethell 1970, 100; see also his Appendix V, where he highlights the phrases in Tynemouth directly copied from Geoffrey.

¹⁹ Bethell 1970, 104.

Bury *Life*, both of which explain that Osgyth took fright and fell. It thus seems likely that Tynemouth's *Life* and the Anglo-Norman *Life* share a source as regards the Modwenna episode, and as it included a statement of Modwenna's death and Osgyth's return to her parents, this source must have been another lost *Life* of Osgyth (hereafter X_3) into which the Modwenna episode had already been interpolated, slightly rewritten but largely verbatim, from Geoffrey's *Life* of St Modwenna.

In contrast, Bethell tentatively suggested that, due to small differences found in the Bury *Life*'s rendition of the river episode, and in particular its use of an uninflected 'Modwen' and its provision of an additional legend about 'Nunpool', the compiler of the Bury *Life* had access to a version of the river episode antedating that in Geoffrey's *Life*, and inserted it on his or her own initiative.²⁰ This cannot be ruled out, but the differences are minor enough, and the fact of the Bury *Life*'s abbreviation significant enough, that it is just as likely to have been derived and slightly reworked from Geoffrey's *Life*. Nevertheless, the compiler of the Bury *Life* did not rely on the source X_3 posited above for the Tynemouth and Anglo-Norman Lives, but instead either interpolated the Modwenna episode directly whilst following an exemplar that lacked it, or used a *Life* already containing the episode, but closer to the common source X_1 than X_3 (and therefore labelled X_2). Interestingly, the Bury, Anglo-Norman and Tynemouth's *Lives* of Osgyth all refer to Eadgyth as sister to King Alfred, and not to his father as do Conchubranus and Geoffrey. This strongly suggests that they all relied on the same misrepresentation of Geoffrey's work, probably X_2 . The inclusion of the river episode in this exemplar was presumably due to its compiler's awareness of Geoffrey's work, and his or her equation of Geoffrey's *Osíd* with St Osgyth.

²⁰ Bethell 1970, 104-106; his seventh point, that the resurrection took place on the fourth day in Geoffrey's text as opposed to the third in the Bury *Life*, is overly pedantic, as both texts agree that Osgyth lay beneath the water for three days, and that Modwen went to the river after three days; it is only Geoffrey's expansion of Osgyth's sub-aqua sojourn to three days *and nights* that means Modwenna must in fact have arrived on the fourth day. This is not explicit, and probably not intended, the symbolism of the number three being paramount.

Appendix 3: West Midlands Soils Associations Analysis

For colour key, see Figure 10

Reference	Soil Association	Colour
311a	REVIDGE	Purple
311c	WETTON	Brown
313b	POWYS	Orange
313c	CRWBIN	Brown
342a	UPTON 1	Yellow
342c	WANTAGE 1	Yellow
342d	WANTAGE 2	Yellow
343a	ELMTON 1	Yellow
343b	ELMTON 2	Yellow
343c	ELMTON 3	Green
343d	SHERBORNE	Yellow
343e	MARCHAM	Yellow
343h	ANDOVER 1	Yellow
361	SANDWICH	Red
372	WILLINGHAM	Blue
411a	EVESHAM 1	Dark Green
411b	EVESHAM 2	Dark Green
411c	EVESHAM 3	Dark Green
411d	HANSLOPE	Green
421b	HALSTOW	Dark Green
431	WORCESTER	Green
511a	ABERFORD	Yellow
511b	MORETON	Blue
511e	SWAFFHAM PRIOR	Yellow
511f	COOMBE 1	Yellow
511h	BADSEY 1	Yellow
511i	BADSEY 2	Yellow
512a	ASWARBY	Green
512b	LANDBEACH	Dark Green
512c	RUSKINGTON	Dark Green
512d	GROVE	Green
512e	BLOCK	Green
512f	MILTON	Green
541a	MILFORD	Brown
541b	BROMSGROVE	Yellow
541c	EARDISTON	Yellow
541d	EARDISTON 2	Brown
541e	CREDITON	Brown
541f	RIVINGTON 1	Orange

Reference	Soil Association	Colour
541g	RIVINGTON 2	
541h	NEATH	
541i	MUNSLOW	
541j	DENBIGH 1	
541l	BARTON	
541n	TRUSHAM	
541o	MALHAM 1	
541p	MALHAM 2	
541r	WICK 1	
541u	ELLERBECK	
541w	NEWNHAM	
541x	EAST KESWICK 1	
541y	EAST KESWICK 2	
541z	EAST KESWICK 3	
541A	BEARSTEAD 1	
542	NERCWYS	
543	ARROW	
544	BANBURY	
551a	BRIDGNORTH	
551b	CUCKNEY	
551d	NEWPORT 1	
551g	NEWPORT 4	
552a	KEXBY	
554a	FRILFORD	
561a	WHARFE	
561b	TEME	
561c	ALUN	
571a	STON EASTON	
571b	BROMYARD	
571g	FIFIELD 4	
571o	MELFORD	
571p	ESCRICK 1	
571q	ESCRICK 2	
571r	HUNSTANTON	
571s	EFFORD 1	
571u	SUTTON 1	
571w	HUCKLESBROOKE	
572a	YELD	
572b	MIDDLETON	
572c	HODNET	
572d	WHIMPLE 1	
572e	WHIMPLE 2	
572f	WHIMPLE 3	
572f	BISHAMPTON 2	
572g	DUNNINGTON HEATH	
572h	OXPASTURE	
572i	CURTISDEN	

Reference	Soil Association	Colour
572l	FLINT	
572m	SALWICK	
572o	BURKINGHAM 2	
572q	ASHLEY	
572s	BISHAMPTON	
573a	WATERSTOCK	
581a	NORDRACH	
582a	BATCOMBE	
582c	HORNBEAM 2	
611a	MALVERN	
611c	MANOD	
611d	WITHNELL 1	
611e	WITHNELL 2	
631a	ANGLEZARKE	
631b	DELAMERE	
631e	GOLDSTONE	
631f	GANNYMOOR	
641a	SOLLOM 1	
641c	HOLMEMOOR	
651a	BELMONT	
654a	HAFREN	
654b	LYDCOT	
711a	MARTOCK	
711b	BROCKHURST 1	
711c	BROCKHURST 2	
711f	WICKHAM 2	
711l	CLAVERLEY	
711m	SALOP	
711n	CLIFTON	
711o	RUFFORD	
711p	DUNKESWICK	
711r	BECCLES 1	
711t	BECCLES 3	
712a	DALE	
712b	DENCHWORTH	
712f	CREWE	
712g	RAGDALE	
712i	FOGGATHORPE 2	
713a	BARDSEY	
713d	CEGIN	
713f	BRICKFIELD 2	
713g	BRICKFIELD 3	
714b	OAK 1	
714c	OAK 2	
714d	ESSENDON	
721b	ONECOTE	
721c	WILCOCKS 1	

Reference	Soil Association	Colour
721d	WILCOCKS 2	
721e	WENALLT	
811a	ENBORNE	
811b	CONWAY	
813a	MIDELNEY	
813b	FLADBURY 1	
813c	FLADBURY 2	
813e	COMPTON	
821a	EVERINGHAM	
821b	BLACKWOOD	
831b	SESSAY	
831c	WIGTON MOOR	
832	WELMSCOT	
841a	CURDRIDGE	
841d	SHABBINGTON	
851b	DOWNHOLLAND 2	
861b	ISLEHAM	
1011a	LONGMOSS	
1011b	WINTERHILL	
1013b	CROWDY 2	
1021	TURBARY MOOR	
1022a	ALTCAR 1	
1022b	ALTCAR 2	
1024a	ADVENTURERS' 1	
1024b	ADVENTURERS' 2	

Appendix 4: Place-Names Analysis

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
Staffordshire						
Barr Brewood	Pattingham Audnam	Pattingham	Pattingham	Andressey Bradney	Acton Hill Ankerton	Berth near Maer Bury Bank near Stone
Chatterley	Burnaham			Broadeye	Brereton	Knotbury near Flash
Cheadle	Trentham			Chebsey	Butterton (E of Leek)	Archberry near Whiston
Crakelow				Doxey	Cauldon	Bunbury near Alton
Creighton				Church Eaton	Hill Chorlton	Brough Hall near Gnosall
Gnosall				Goldie	Elkstone	Berry Ring south of Stafford
Hints Ingestre Kiddemore Kinver Leamonsley Lichfield Lizard				Kemsey Tuppenhurst Wood Eaton	Endon Grindon Haddon Haden Hill Hatherton Highdown Hixon	Shugborough Norbury Bloomsbury Oldbury Burf Castle Bury near Kinver Bushbury

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
Minnbank Minnie Farm					Huntington Longdon	Wednesbury Bury Farm near Aldridge
Bosley Minn/ Wincle Minn					Longsdon	Gainsborough Hill Farm near Shenstone
Morfe Penkhull					Ludstone Lyndon	Padbury Borough Lane (ref. to Castle Ring)
Penkridge					Ribden	Broadfields near Alrewas
Penn Ridware Saverley Green Seisdon Talke Trysull R. Anker R. Churnet R. Dane R. Dork R. Dove R. Hamps R. Penk R. Tame R. Tern R. Trent R. Tean					Rowden Lanes Sandon Saredon Seisdon Shebdon Slindon Snowdon Standon Swindon Wetton Woundon Wredon	Blithbury Hanbury Tutbury

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
<u>Shropshire</u>						
Knockin	Atcham			Kinnersley	Edgmond	The Berth in Baschurch
Ightfield	Edgebold			Adeney	Longdon upon Tern	Bury Walls in Weston under Redcastle
Prees Hodnet	Edgebolton Uppingham			Easton Mascott Eaton Constantine Emstrey	Merrington Puleston	Shawbury Shrewsbury
Crudgington						Beckbury inShrewsbury
Wroxeter				Eyton in Baschurch		
Wrekin R. Perry				Eyton on Severn Eyton upon the Weald Moors		
R. Roden R. Tern R. Cound R. Severn						
<u>Cheshire</u>						
Liscard	Altrincham	Dane in Shaw in Congleton		Eaton nr Davenham	Dunham	Greasby
Arrowe	Davenham	Iddinshall		Eaton nr Tarpoley	Dunham	Bromborough

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
Pensby	Dunham on the Hill	Wallenge Bridge in Stanthorpe		Earl's Eye in Chester St Brigit	Dutton	Whitby
Ince	Dunham Massey	Walerscote		Caldy	Bowdon	Daresbury
Crewe	Eastham	Altrincham		Denamere in Farndon	Hommerton in Wincle	Finney Hill
Crewe nr Farndon	Higham	Benchill in Northern Etchells		Morphaney Hall Farm in Newton by Daresbury	Huntington	Marbury near Northwich
Barhill (in Tushingham)	Kermincham	Kermincham		Roodee Gt & Ltle in Chester Holy Trinity	Siddington	Eddisbury Hill
Bryn	Tushingham	Tushingham		Saltney in Chester St Mary on the Hill	Bosden	Kelsborrow Castle
Tarvin Cheadle	Warmingham Weaverham	Warmingham Wincham		Stanney Wallasey	Duddon	Bunbury Norbury in Marbury Marbury Wrenbury Wybunbury Norbury in Alderley Edge Bredbury Norbury Prestbury Eddisbury Hill in Rainow Henbury
Werneth Low R. Dee R. Gowy R. Wheelock	Wincham Alraham Frodsham Ledsham					
R. Dane R. Peover R. Minn R. Tame	Swettenham					

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
						Newbold Astbury
<u>Derbyshire</u>						
Baslow Barr in Baslow & Bubwell Chevin Ho in Milfird	Clownholm in Marston Montgomery Higham			Little Eaton	Bladon Ho in Newton Solney	Brough
Clowne	Measeham			Long Eaton	Bowden Hall in Chapel en le Frith	Pilsbury
Clowneholme in Marston Montgomery Cown Edge Rocks in New Mills Crook Hill in Hope Woodlands Dinting in Glossop	Needham in Hartington Middle Quarter Brailsford (-ham in DB)			Eaton & Alsop	Bupton in Longford Calton in Blackwell	Conkesbury
Humberholme in Osmaston by Derby				Eaton Dovedale in Doveridge	Chelmorton	Mosborough
Kinder in Hayfield				Edale	Cobden in Mellor	Barlborough
Limb Hill in Dore				Eyam	Green Cowden in Bakewell Cronkston Grange in Hartington Middle Quarter	Harboro' Rocks in Brassington Stainsboro' Hall in Callow
				Abney	Fin Cop (Findon) in Ashford Haddon Nether & Ovr	Norbury
				Kentney Barn in Offerton		Sudbury
				Makeney in Milford		

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
Lime Farm & Morley Lime in Morley Losk Corner in Glapwell					Hammerton in Litton	Dalbury
Mam Tor in Castleton					Hanson Grange in Newton Grange Hartington (Middle, Nether, Upper & Town Qtr Ilkeston	The Buries in Repton
Mellor					Longstone Gt and Ltle Quarndon Repton Spondon Staden in Kingsterndale High Wheeldon in Hartington Middle Quarter	Borough Hill in Walton upon Trent Curbar
Parwich						
Pentrich Press in Ashover						
Warwickshire						
Mancetter	Southam	Birmingham	Birmingham	Foul End in Kingsbury	Dunton in Curdworth	Arbury in Chilvers Coton

Brittonic	<i>hām</i>	<i>ing</i>	<i>ingaham</i>	<i>ēg</i>	<i>dūn</i>	<i>burh</i>
Coundon	Newnham	Wiggins Hill	Hunningham	Gosta Green in Erdington	Blackdown Hill in Lillington	Oldbury
Arden	King's Newnham			Wolvey	Brandon W. Bretford	Birdingbury
Leonte (stream)	Birmingham			Binley	Caludon Ho in Wyken	Harbury
Avon	Hunningham			Maney in Sutton Coldfield	Dordon in Polesworth	Kingsbury
R. Tame					Elmdon	Wappenbury
R. Cole					Grendon	Hawkesbury in Walsgrave on Sowe
R. Anker					Longdon Hall in Solihull	
?R. Sowe					Ryton End in Barston	
R. Avon					Sheldon	
R. Leam					Shirne Hill in Worleighton	
R. Itchen					Weddington Hill in Chapel Ascote	
					Gaydon	
					Gilson in Coleshill	
					Seckington	
					Winson Green in Birmingham	

Appendix 5: Churches and Holywells shown on Figure 26

Churches	Holywells
<u>Staffordshire</u>	
Wolstanton Leek Uttoxeter Tatenhill Kinver Trentham Stafford St Mary Gnosall Penkridge Tettenhall Kingswinford Tamworth Eccleshall Brewood Baswich Colwich Lichfield Wombourne Stone Ilam Alstonfield Burton upon Trent	Castle Church Penkridge Blymhill Wolverhampton Chipnal Tunstall
<u>Shropshire</u>	
Whitchurch Ellesmere Ercall Magna Wellington Cound Shifnal Baschurch Hodnet Condover Shrewsbury St Mary & St Alkmund	Tibberton Harcourt Baschurch Shrewsbury Berrington Harnage Dawley

Churches	Holywells
Prees Myddle Shawbury Market Drayton Edmond Wroxeter Upton Magna Berrington	
<u>Cheshire</u>	
Frodsham Weaverham Acton Malpas Bromborough Prestbury Tarvin Farndon Wybunbury Bunbury Barthomley Runcorn Great Budworth Rostherne Bowdon Davenham Middlewich Sandbach Astbury Cheadle Mottram Chester St Werburgh	Cluaghton on Wirral Daresbury Aston Alvanley Poulton Clutton Tushingham Faddiley Waigherton Cogshall in Great Budworth Hale Mobberley Alderley Edge Werneth Low Charlesworth
<u>Derbyshire</u>	
Repton Derby St Mary Derby All Saints Derby St Alkmund Melbourne Chesterfield Ashbourne Wirksworth	Buxton Chesterfield Shirebrook Stretton Tibshelf Matlock Crich Bradbourne

Churches	Holywells
Darley Bakewell Hope Longford Wilne Long Eaton Glossop Hathersage Hartington Dronfield Heanor Horsley Breadsall Spondon Stapenhill Walton upon Trent	Hognaston Kniveton Sneiston Kilburn Spondon Breaston King's Newton Repton
<u>Warwickshire</u>	
Coleshill Stoneleigh Coventry Aston Sutton Coldfield Solihull Bulkington Monks Kirby	Austrey Middle Bickenhill Solihull Holywell in Churchover Southam

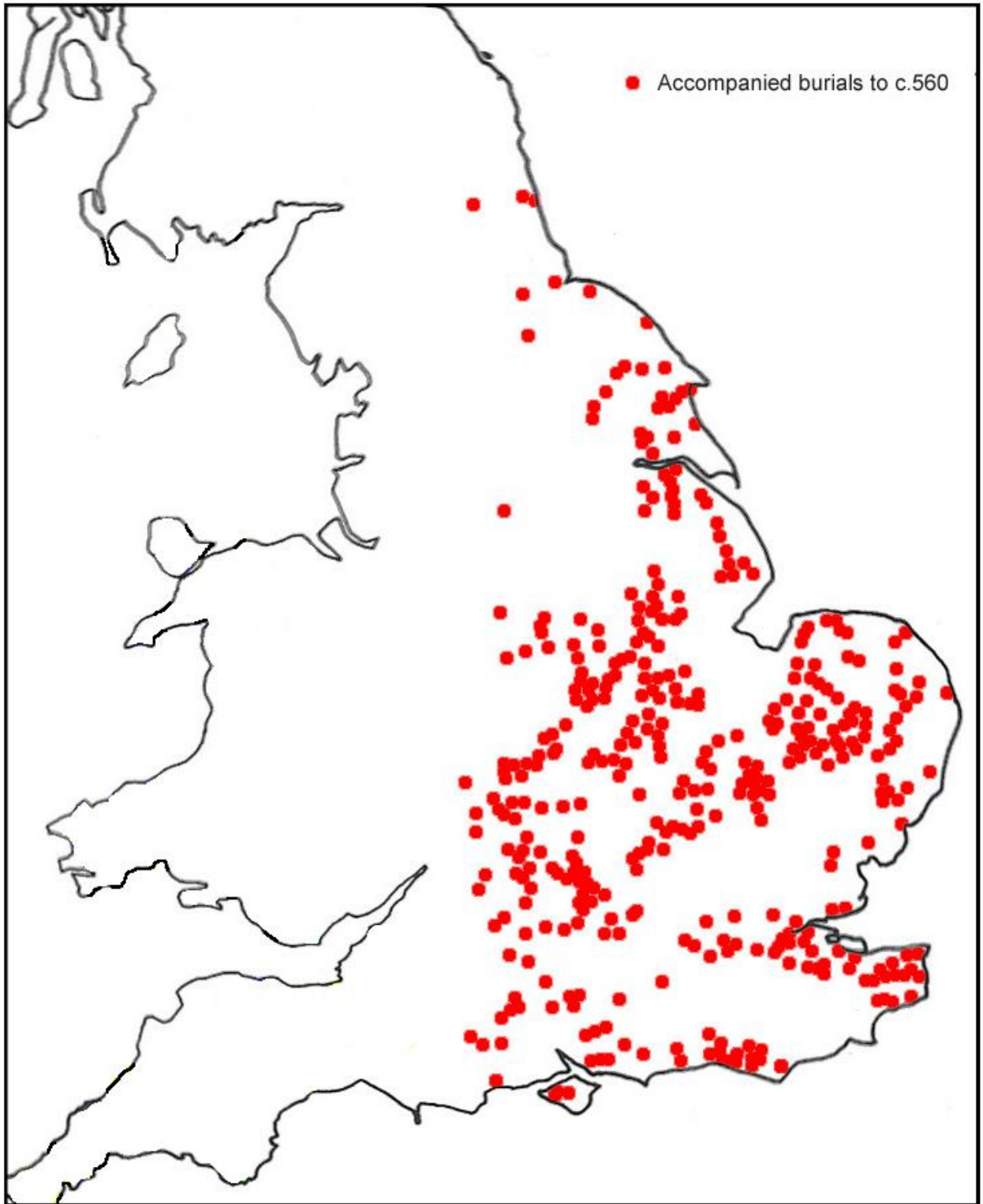


Figure 1: Distribution of furnished burials to c. 560 (adapted from Hines 1990, p36)

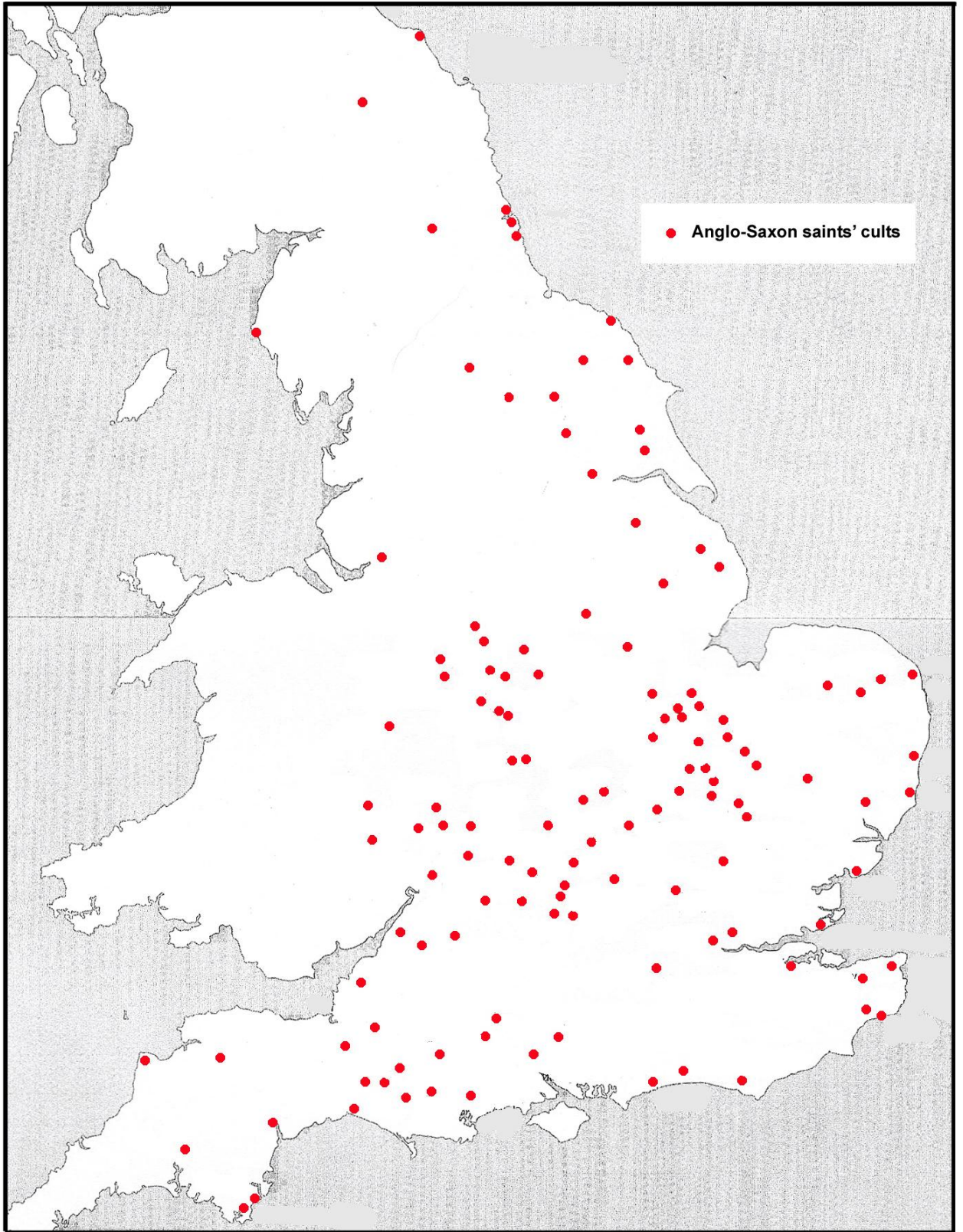
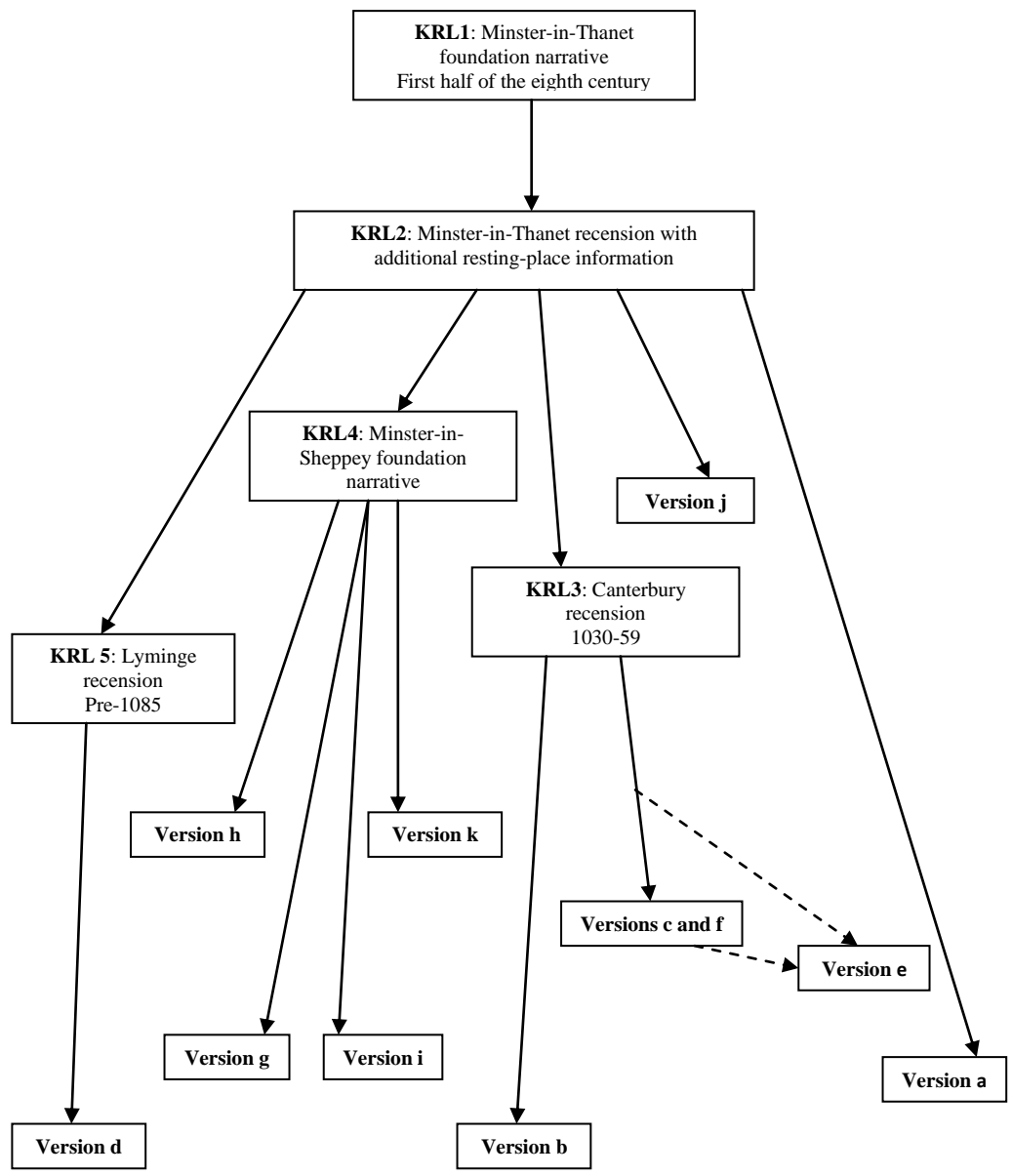


Figure 2: Distribution of Anglo-Saxon saints' cults (adapted from Blair 2002a, pp 457-45)



Figure 3: Location of the diocese of Lichfield



Version a: *Passio sanctorum Ethelberti atque Ethelredi regiae stirpis puerorum*, part of the *Historia Regum*; see Arnold, T. (ed.), 1882-5, *Symeonis Monachi Opera Omnia*, Rolls Series, Vol. II, pp 3-13.

Version b: *Passio Beatorum Martyrum Etheldredi atque Eithelbricti*, composed at Ramsey, in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 285, ff. 116-21.

Version c: *Vita Deo dilectae virginis Mildrethae*, by Goscelin of Saint-Bertin; see edition in Rollason 1982, pp 105-143.

Version d: *Vita sanctorum Æthelredi et Æthelberti martirum et sanctorum virginum Miltrudis et Edburgis*, in Gotha, Forschungsbibliothek, MS I.81, ff. 185v-188v.

Version e: *Vita beatae ac Deo dilectae virginis Mildburgae*, in London, British Library, Additional MS 34, 633, ff. 206-9.

Version f: *Vita Sancte Werburge Virginis*, by Goscelin of Saint-Bertin; see edition in Love 2004, pp 25-51.

Version g: *Genealogia Regum Cantuariorum*, in the preliminary material of John of Worcester's *Chronicon ex Chronicis*

Version h: *Her cyð ymbe þa halgan þe on Angelcynne restað*; see edition in Liebermann, Felix. 1889. *Die Heiligen Englands*. Hanover, pp 1-10.

Version i: Hugh Candidus' Peterborough Chronicle; see Mellows, W. T. 1949. *The Chronicle of Hugh Candidus, a monk of Peterborough*. Oxford University Press, London, pp 56-59.

Version j: *S. Mildryð*, in London, British Library, Cotton MS Caligula A.xiv, ff. 121v-124v.

Version k: 'Lambeth Fragment', in London, Lambeth Palace, MS 427, f. 211.

Figure 4: Stemma of Kentish Royal Legend versions

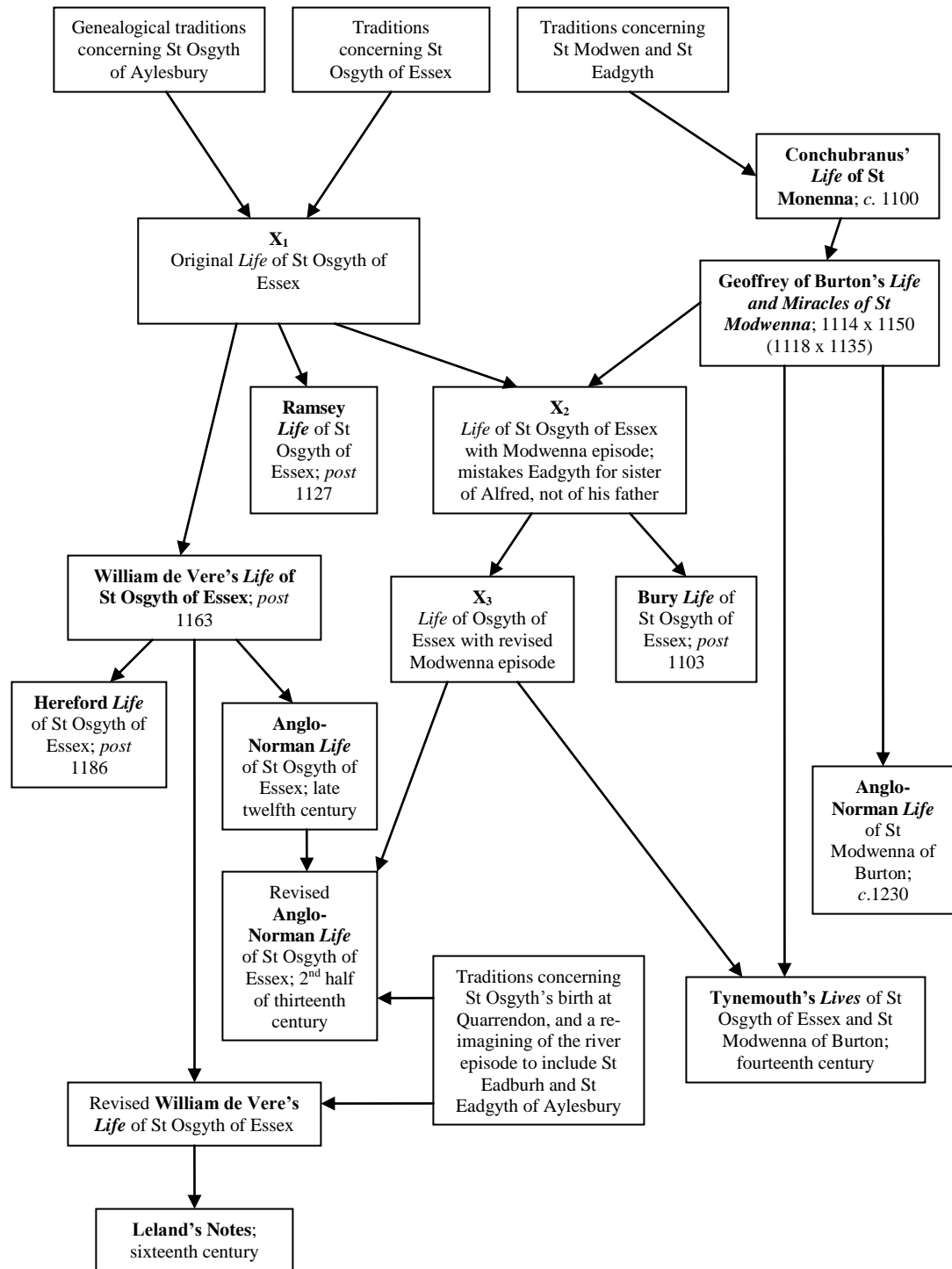


Figure 5: Stemma of texts involving St Modwenna, St Eadgyth and St Osgyth

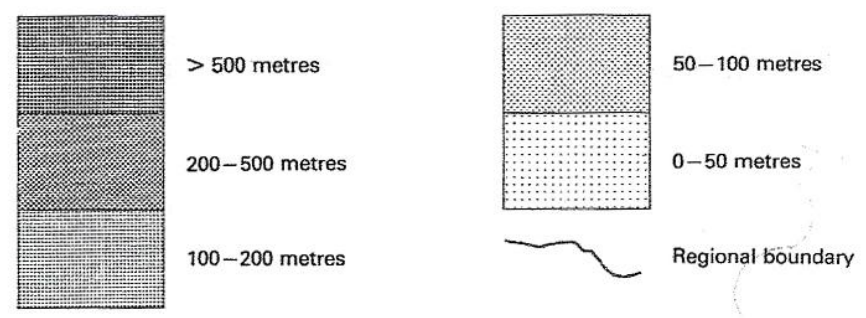
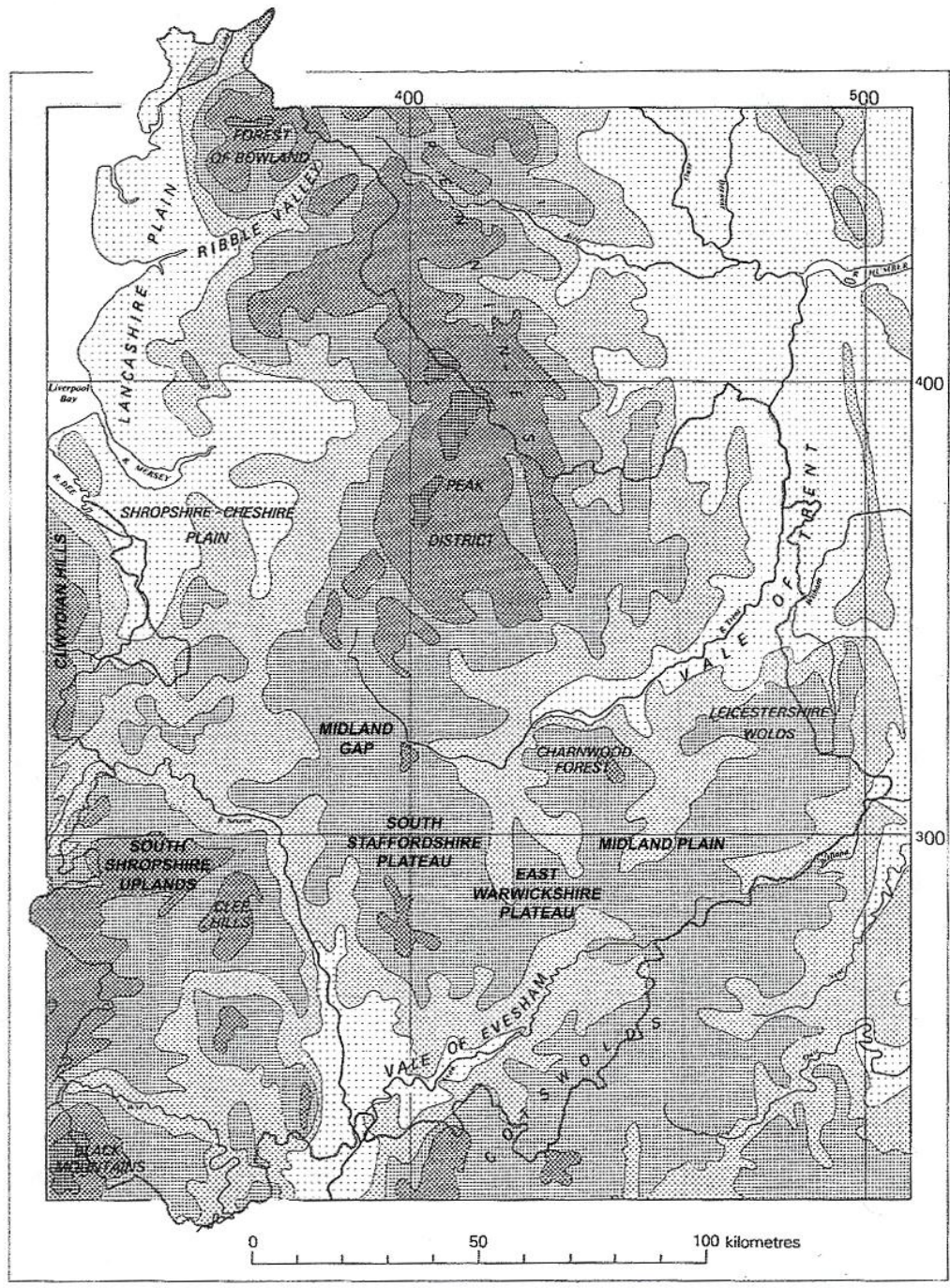


Figure 6: Topography (adapted from Ragg et al. 1984, p 16, Figure 4)

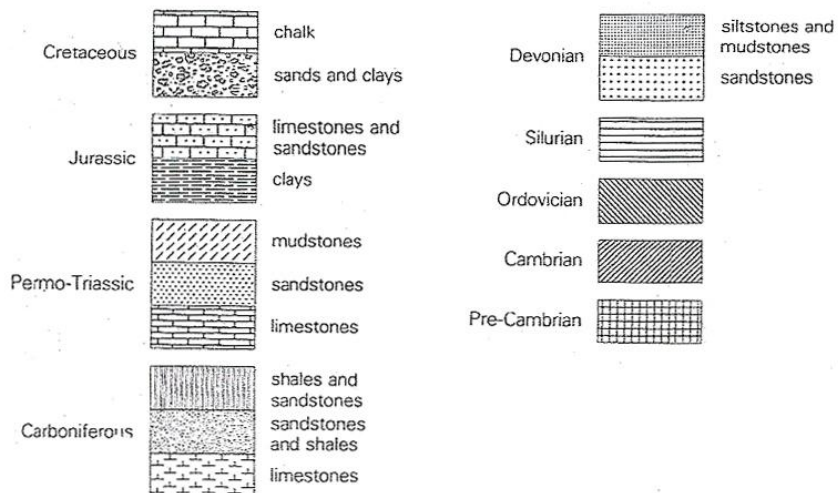
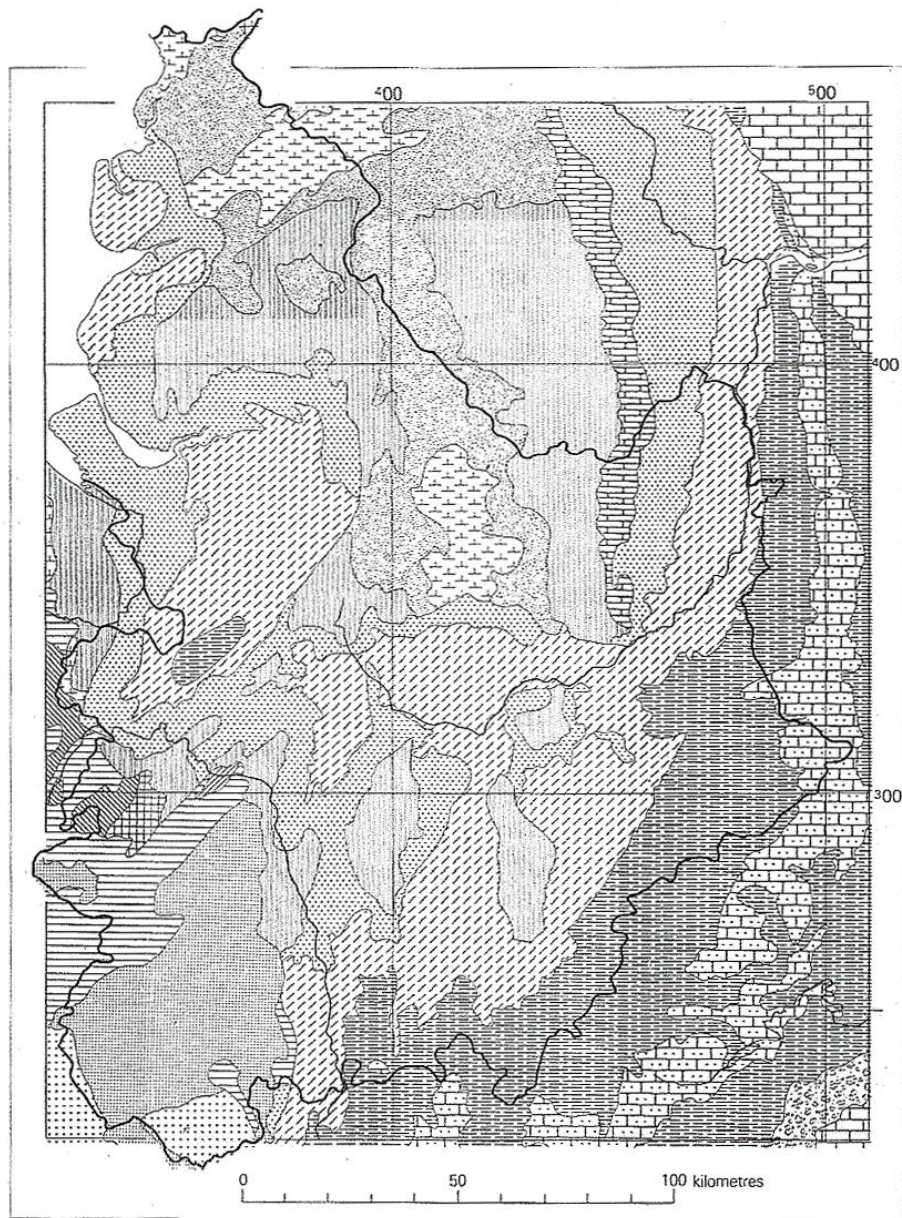


Figure 7: Solid Geology (from Ragg *et al.* 1984, p 5, Figure 2)

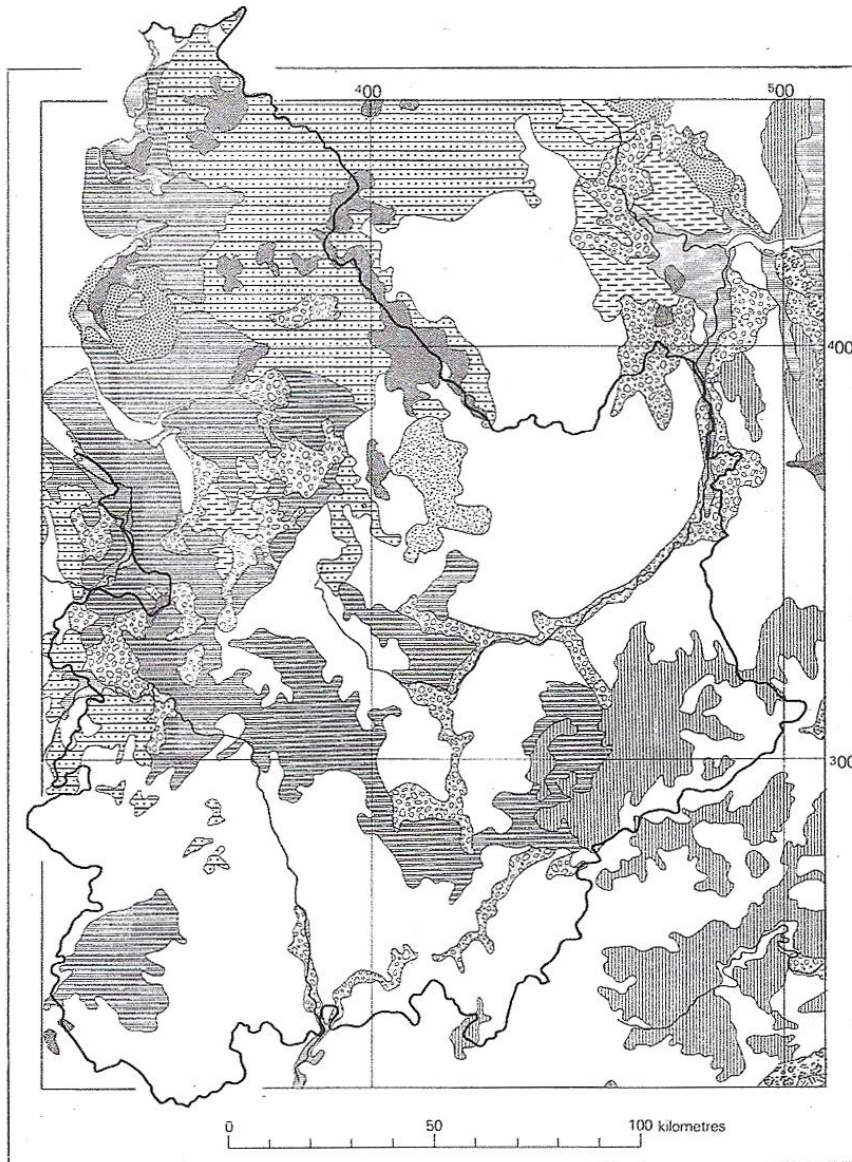


Figure 8: Drift Geology (from Ragg *et al.* 1984, p 8, Figure 3)

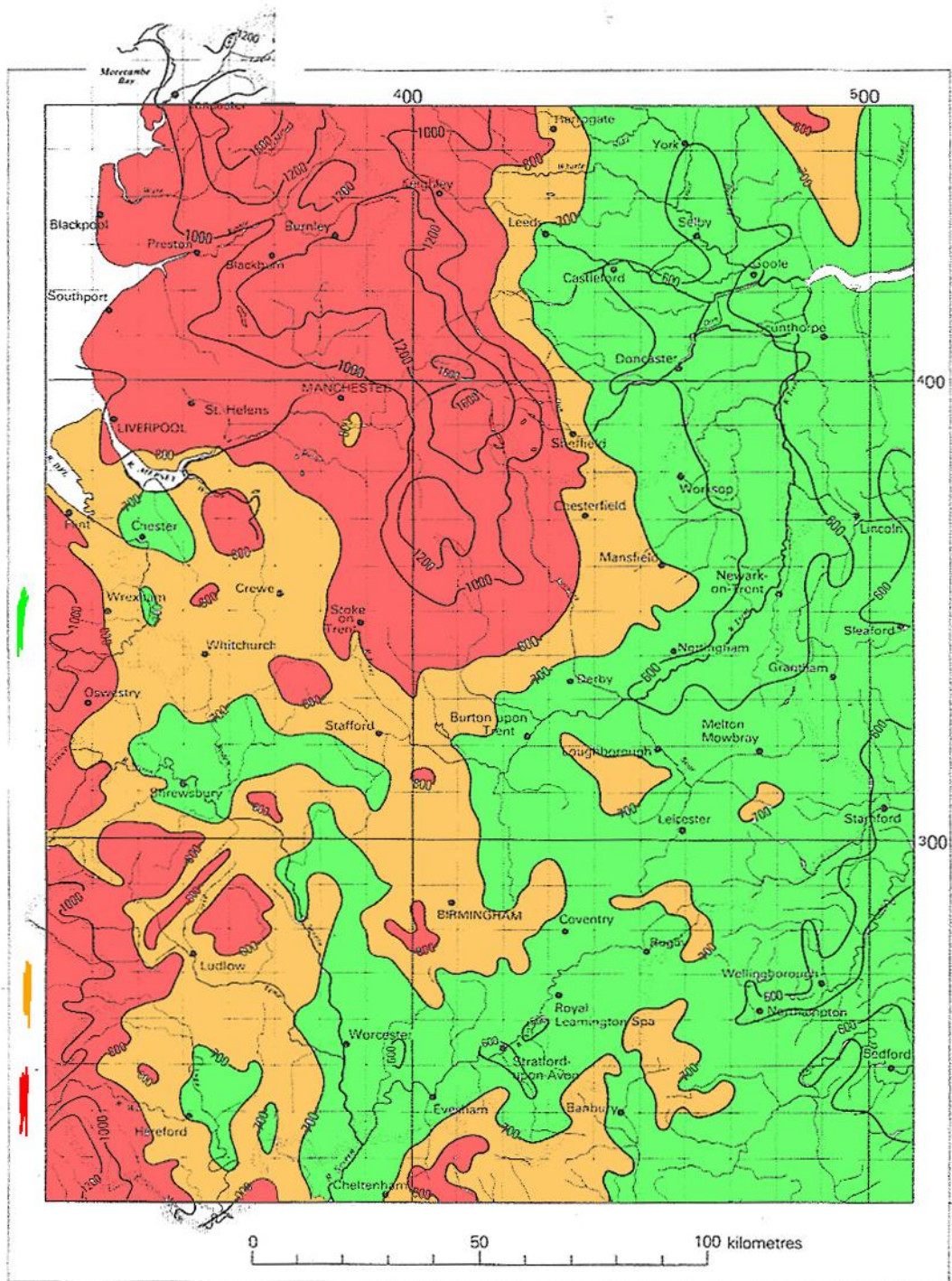


Figure 9: Average Annual Rainfall (mm)
 (adapted from Ragg et al. 1984, p 21, Figure 6)

Figure 10: Soils analysis in the diocese of Lichfield

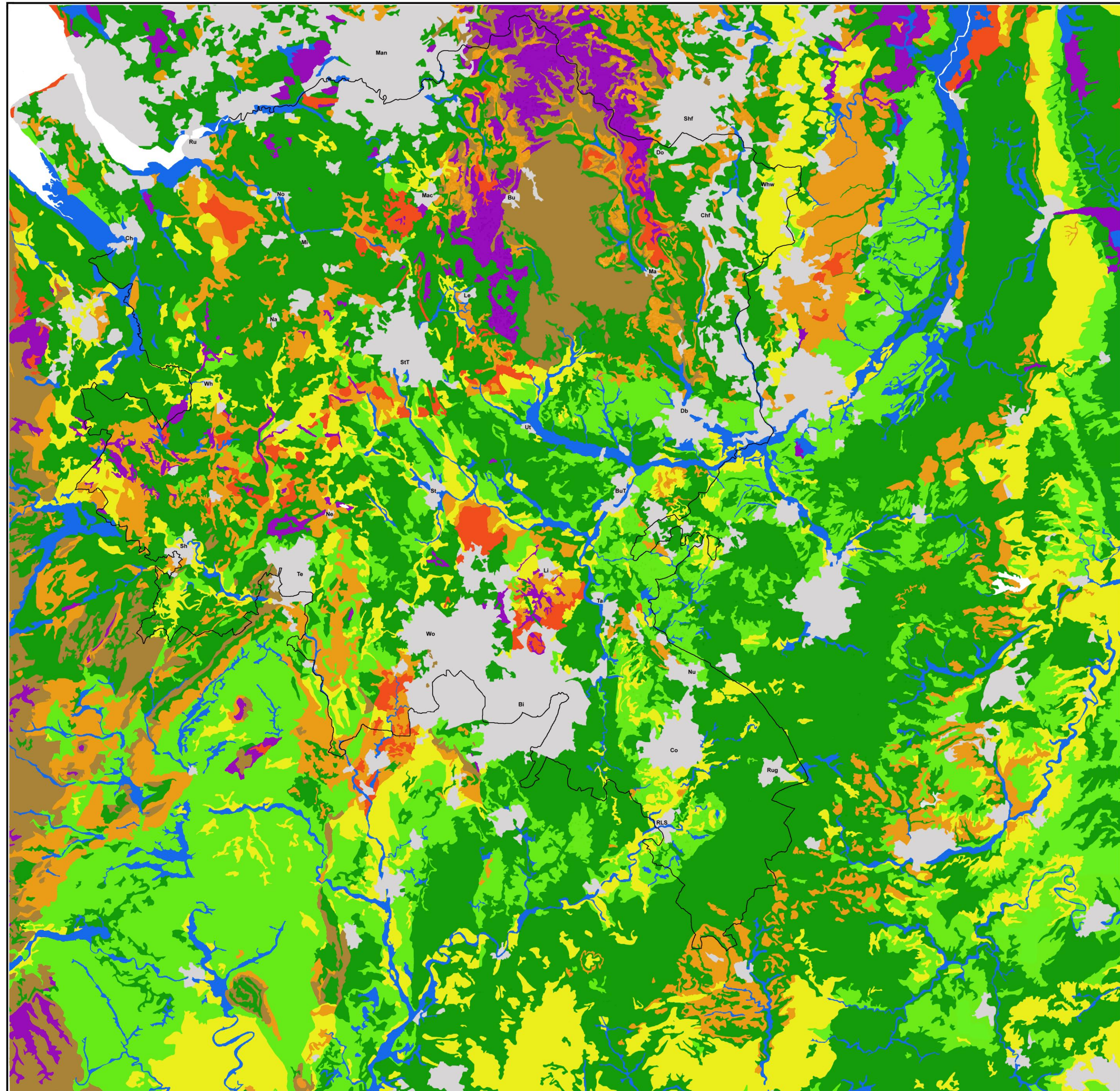
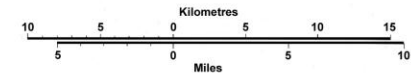
Key

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bi: Birmingham | No: Northwich |
| Bu: Buxton | Nu: Nuneaton |
| BuT: Burton upon Trent | RLS: Royal Leamington Spa |
| Ch: Chester | Ru: Runcorn |
| Chf: Chesterfield | Rug: Rugby |
| Co: Coventry | Sh: Shrewsbury |
| Db: Derby | Shf: Sheffield |
| Do: Dore | St: Stafford |
| Le: Leek | SIT: Stoke upon Trent |
| Li: Lichfield | Ta: Tamworth |
| Ma: Matlock | Te: Telford |
| Mac: Macclesfield | Ut: Uttoxeter |
| Man: Manchester | Wh: Whitchurch |
| Mi: Middleswich | Whw: Whitwell |
| Na: Nantwich | Wo: Wolverhampton |
| Ne: Newport | |

Soil types:

- Light, dry soils, often acidic
- Heavy, wet soils
- Alluvial soils
- Upland soils
- Peaty soils
- Soils obscured by modern development

Scale:



**Figure 11: Settlement Dispersion
in the Midlands**

(adapted from Roberts & Wrathmell 2000,
pp 22 & 24)

DISPERSION

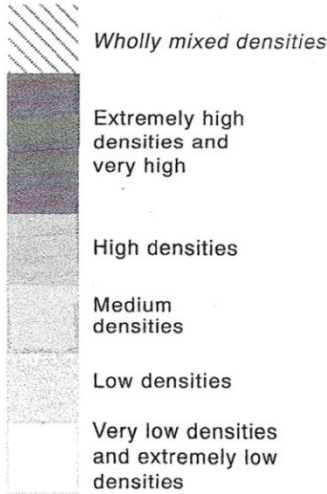
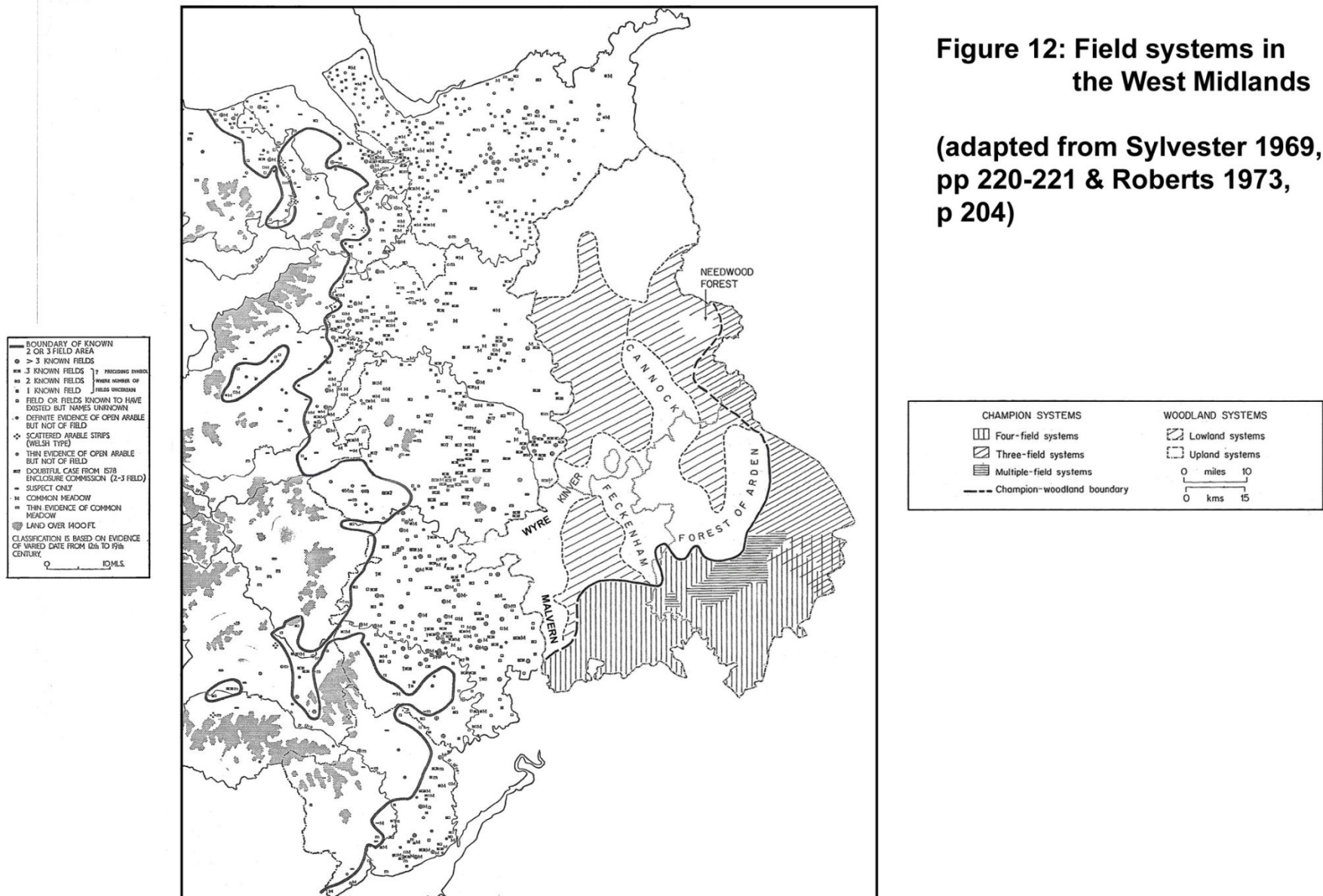


Figure 12: Field systems in the West Midlands

(adapted from Sylvester 1969, pp 220-221 & Roberts 1973, p 204)



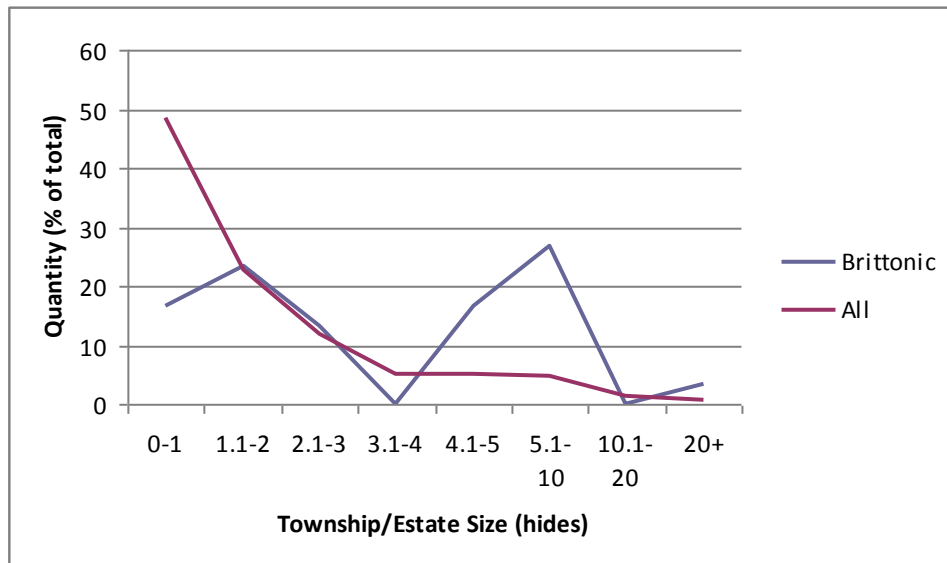


Figure 13: Distribution of sizes of townships with Brittonic names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

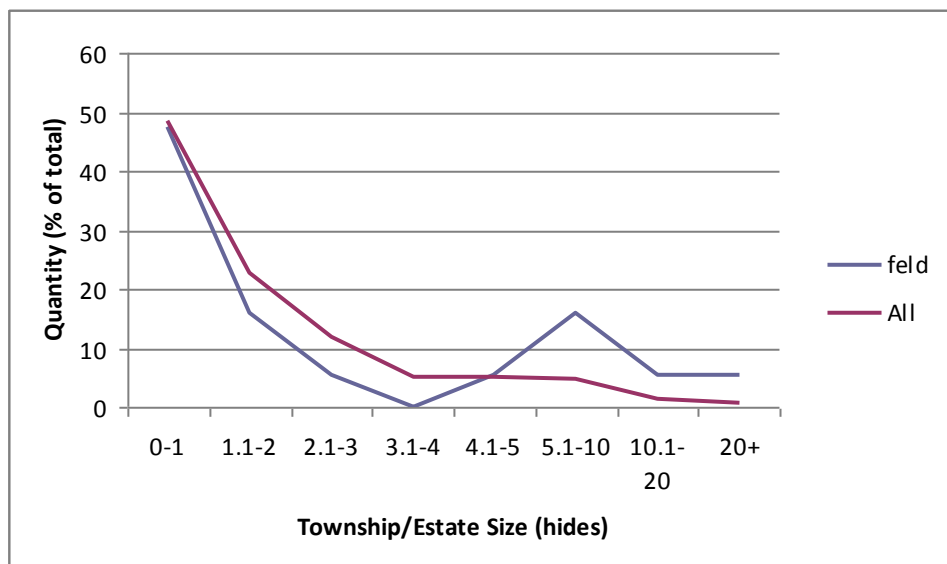


Figure 14: Distribution of sizes of townships with *feld* names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

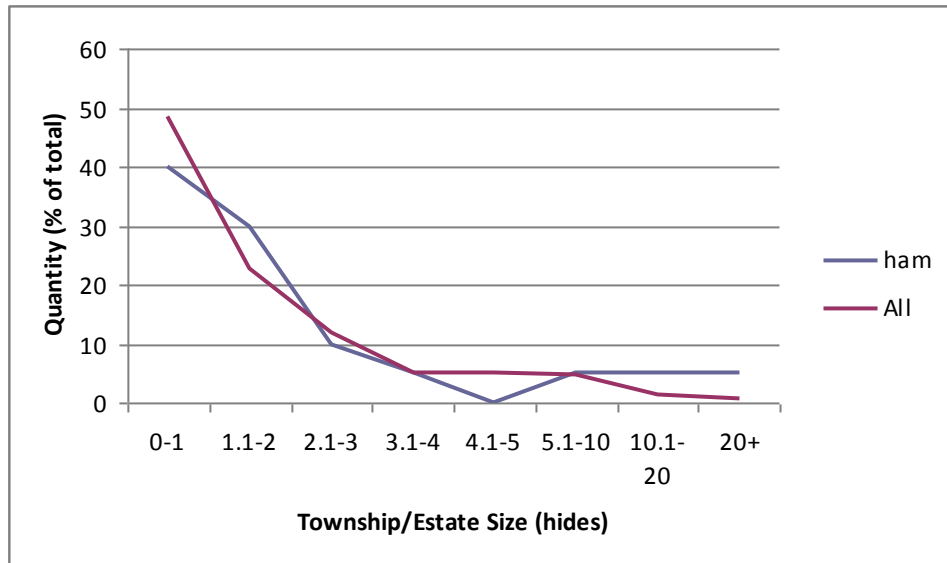


Figure 15: Distribution of sizes of townships with *hām* names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

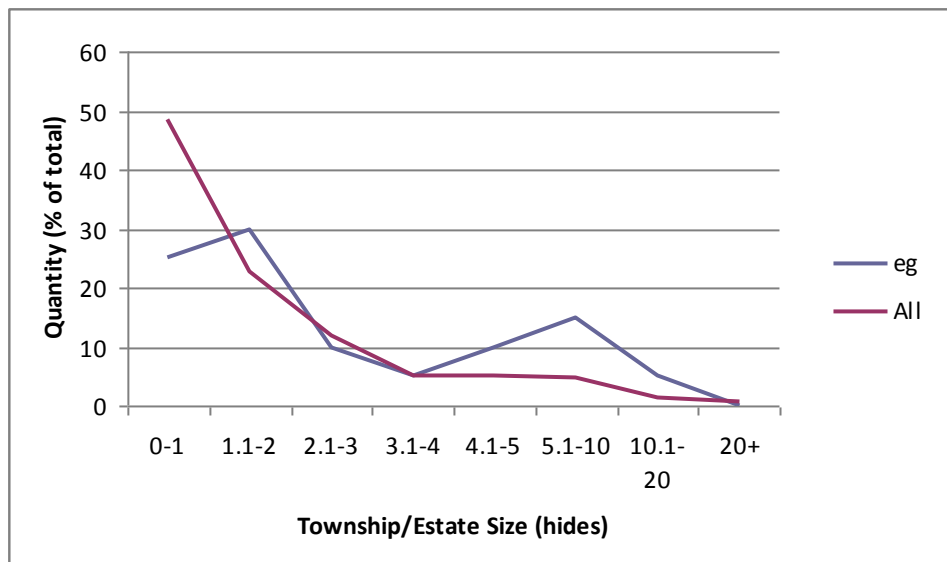


Figure 16: Distribution of sizes of townships with *ĕg* names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

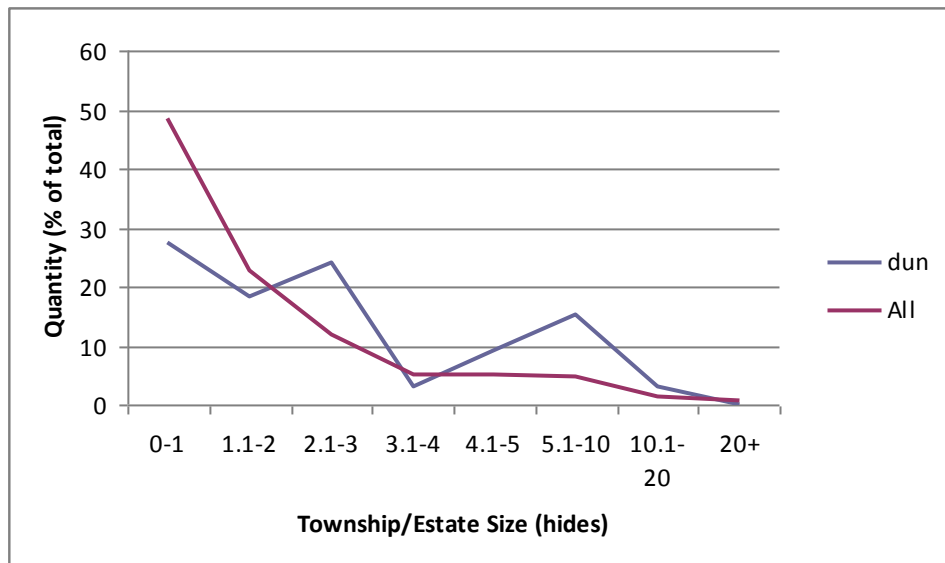


Figure 17: Distribution of sizes of townships with *dūn* names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

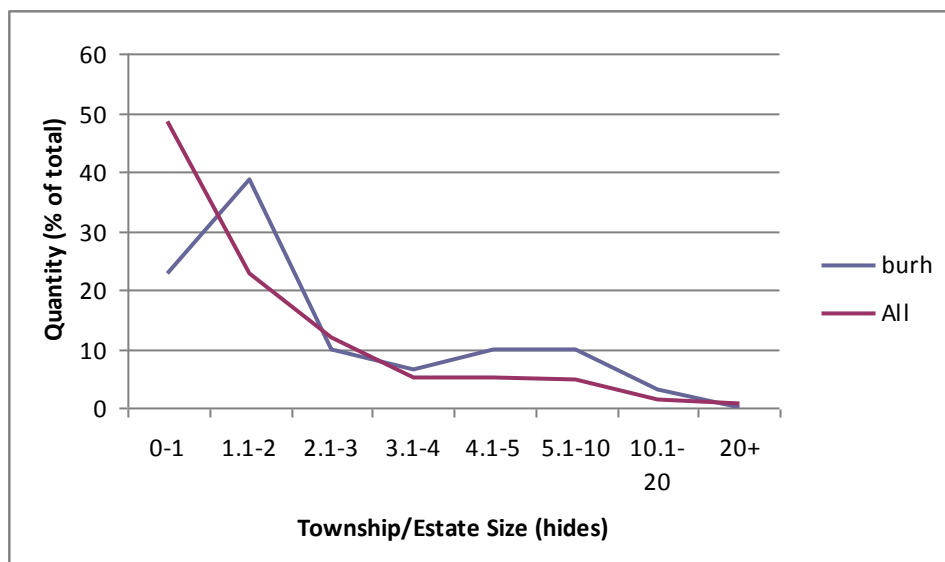


Figure 18: Distribution of sizes of townships with *burh* names, as recorded in the Domesday survey, compared with the distribution of all recorded estates

Figure 19: Distribution of place-names overlaid on soils analysis

Key

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bi: Birmingham | No: Northwich |
| Bu: Buxton | Nu: Nuneaton |
| BuT: Burton upon Trent | RLS: Royal Leamington Spa |
| Ch: Chester | Ru: Runcorn |
| Chf: Chesterfield | Rug: Rugby |
| Co: Coventry | Sh: Shrewsbury |
| Db: Derby | Shf: Sheffield |
| Do: Dore | St: Stafford |
| Le: Leek | StT: Stoke upon Trent |
| Lj: Lichfield | Ta: Tamworth |
| Ma: Matlock | Te: Telford |
| Mac: Macclesfield | Ut: Uttoxeter |
| Man: Manchester | Wh: Whitchurch |
| Mi: Middleswich | Whw: Whitwell |
| Na: Nantwich | Wo: Wolverhampton |
| Ne: Newport | |

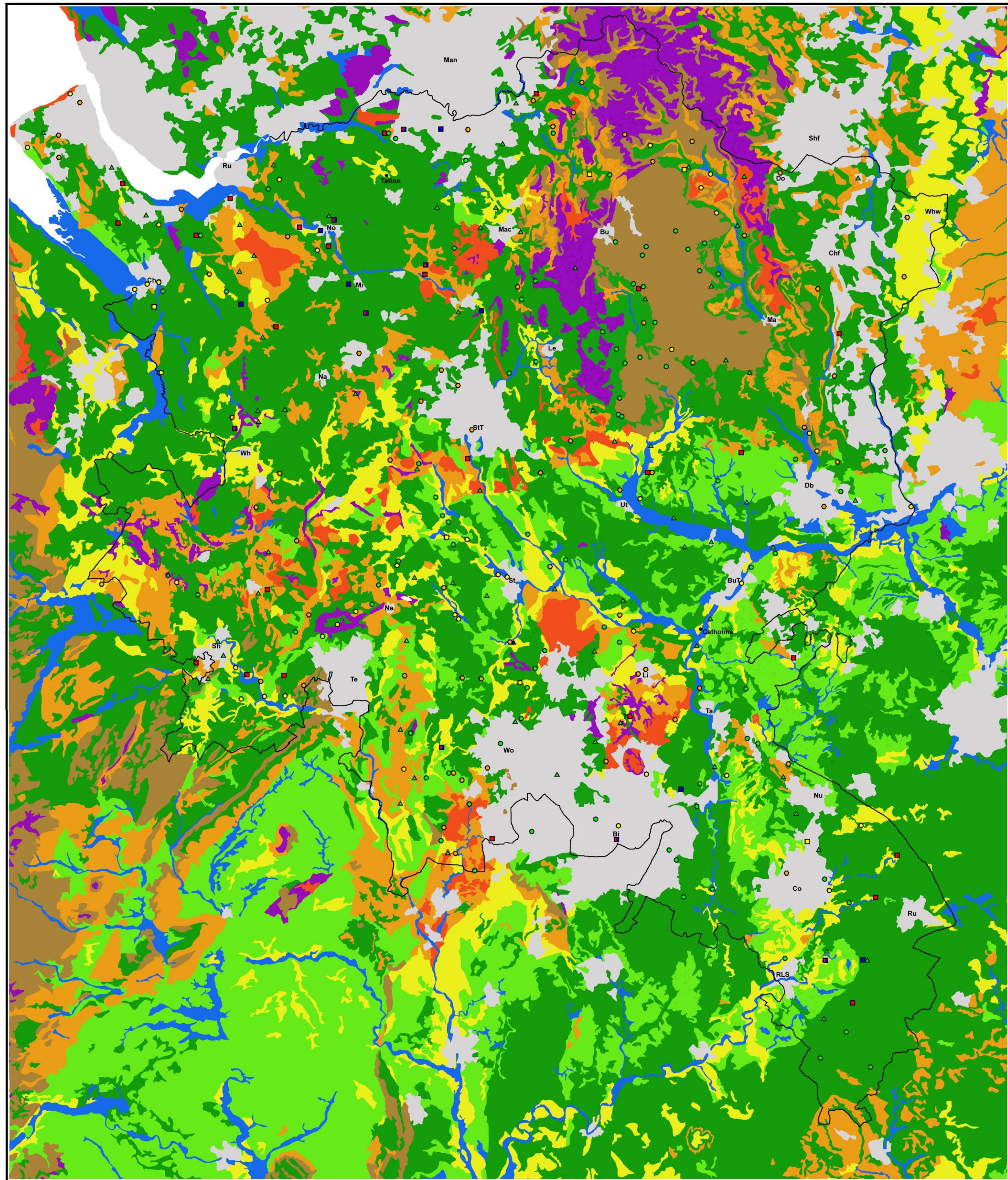
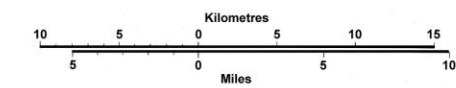
Soil types:

- Light, dry soils, often acidic
- Heavy, wet soils
- Alluvial soils
- Upland soils
- Peaty soils
- Soils obscured by modern development

Place-name elements:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ham | Brittonic element | burh |
| ing | eg | eccles |
| Ingaham | dun | |

Scale:



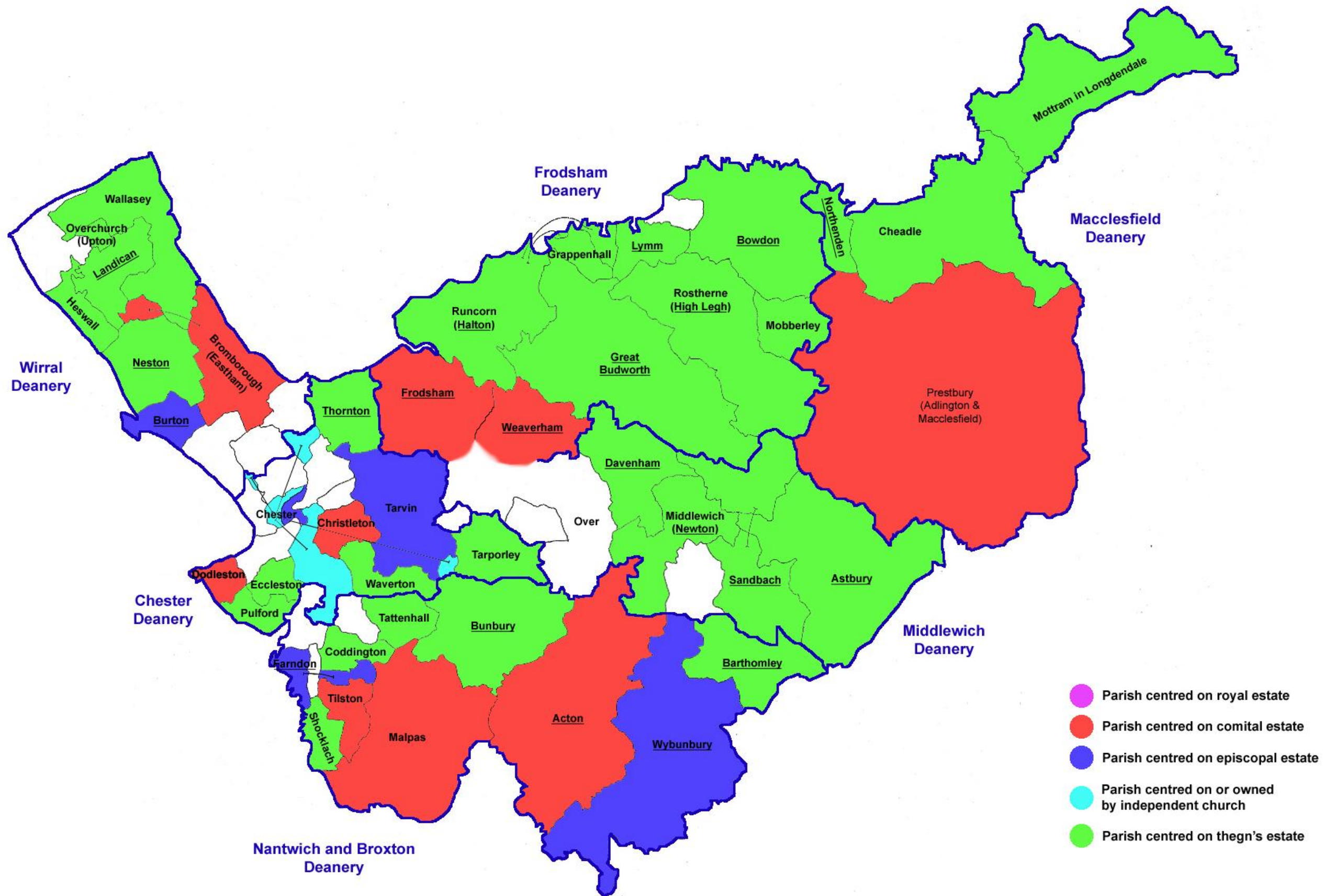


Figure 20: Archdeanery of Chester

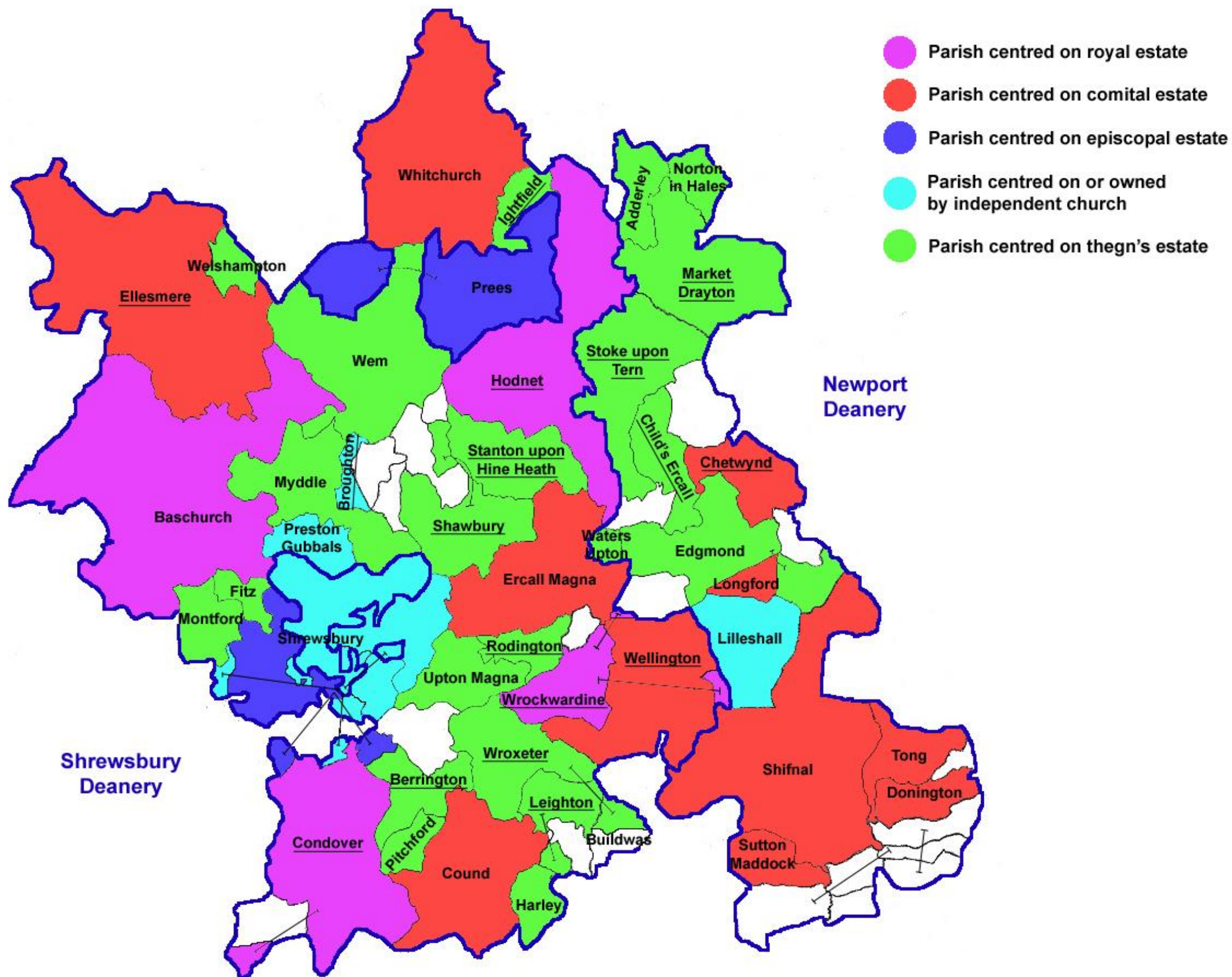


Figure 21: Archdeanery of Shropshire

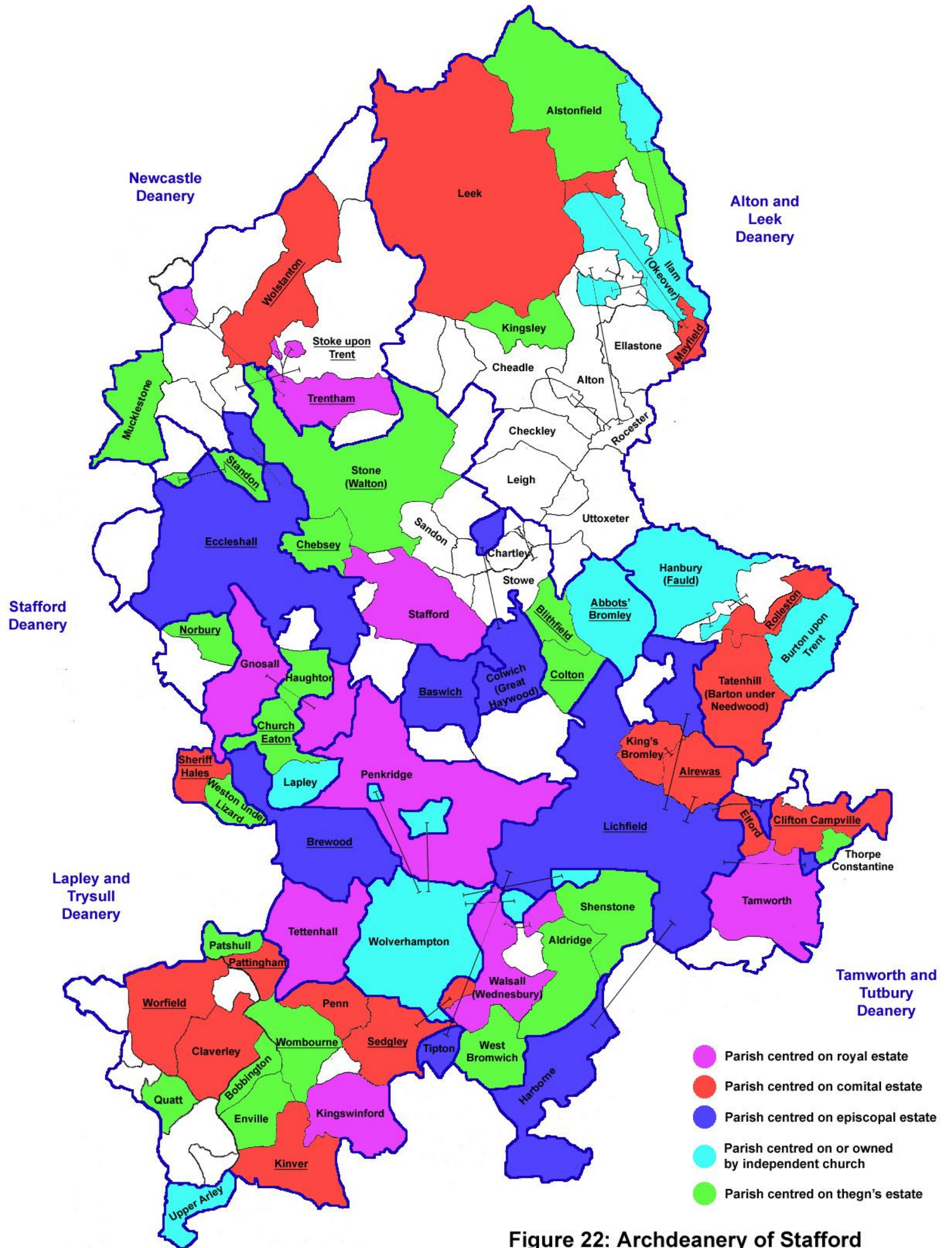


Figure 22: Archdeanery of Stafford

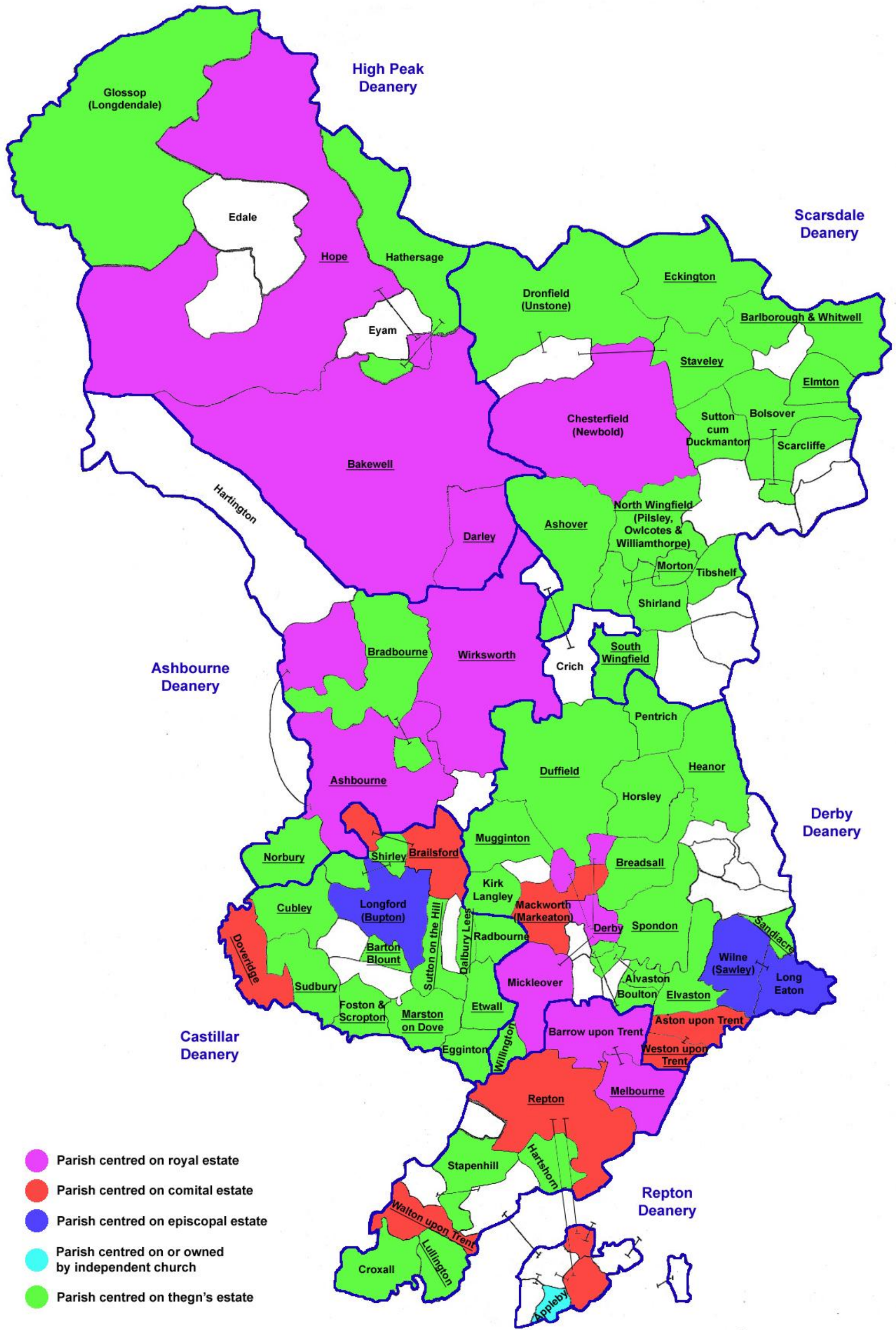


Figure 23: Archdeanery of Derby

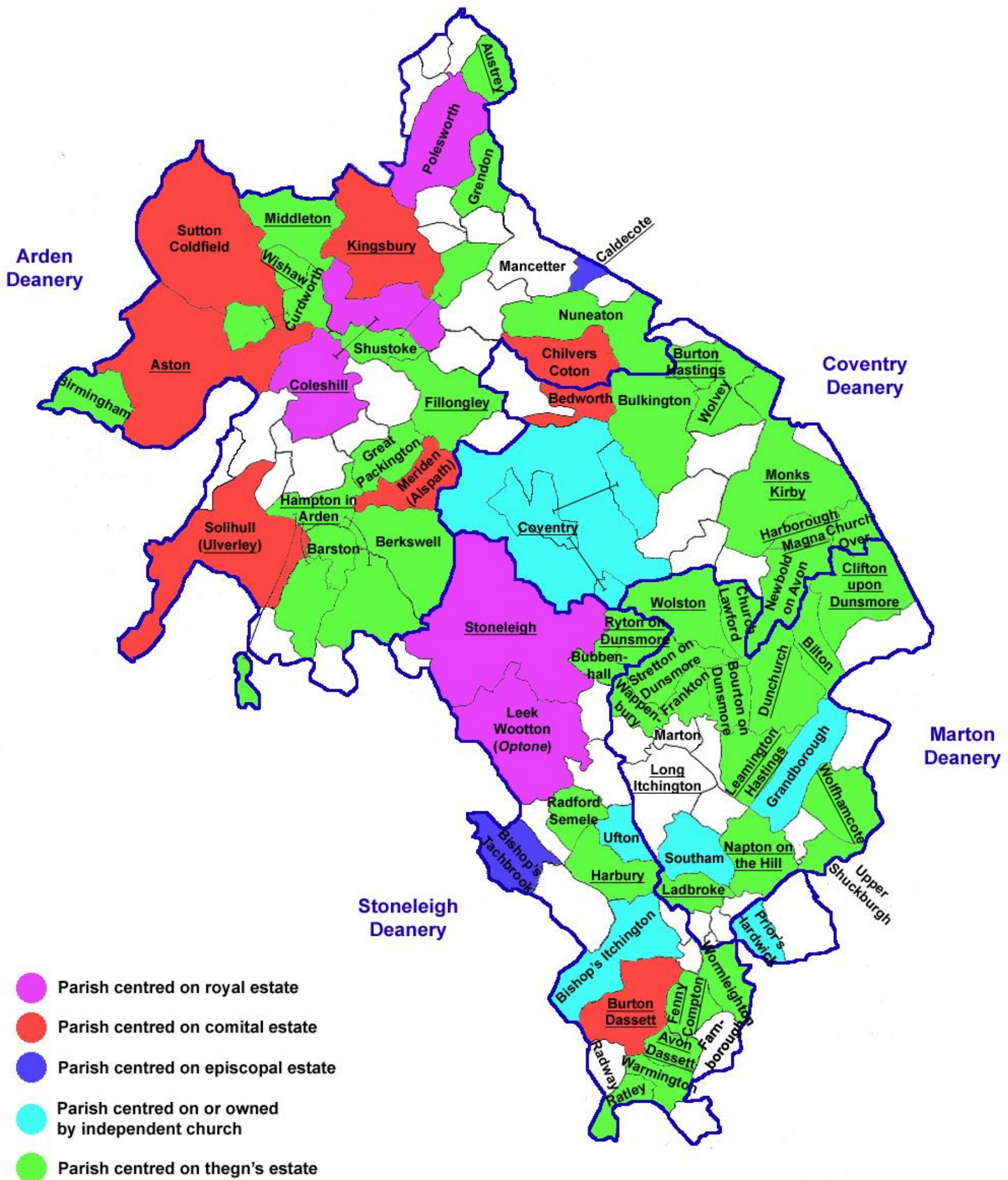


Figure 24: Archdeanery of Coventry

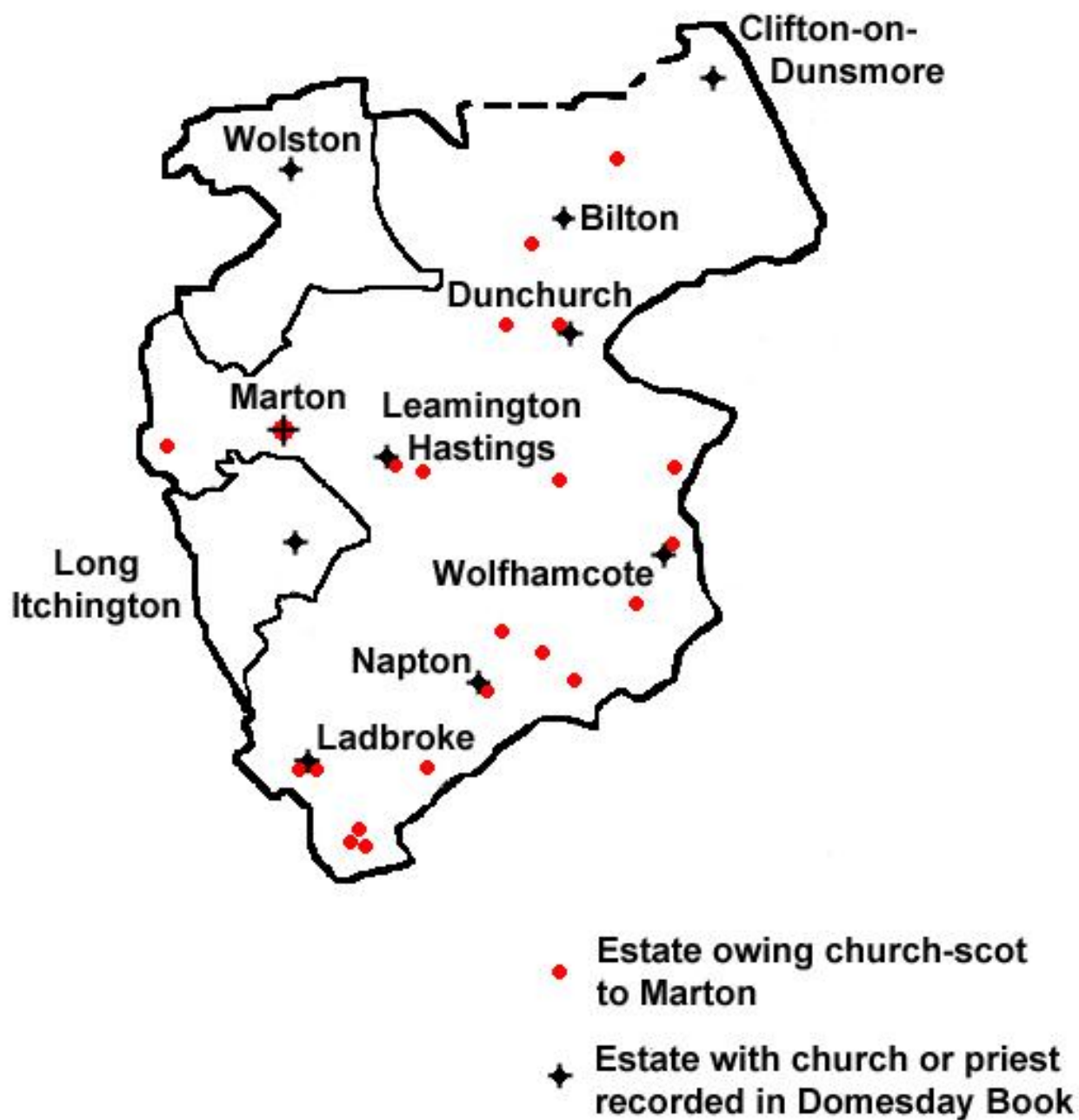


Figure 25: Church-scot in Marton Hundred

Figure 26: Distribution of place-names and selected churches overlaid on soils analysis

Key

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Bi: Birmingham | No: Northwich |
| Bu: Buxton | Nu: Nuneaton |
| BuT: Burton upon Trent | RLS: Royal Leamington Spa |
| Ch: Chester | Ru: Runcorn |
| Chf: Chesterfield | Rug: Rugby |
| Co: Coventry | Sh: Shrewsbury |
| Db: Derby | Shf: Sheffield |
| Do: Dore | St: Stafford |
| Le: Leek | STT: Stoke upon Trent |
| Li: Lichfield | Ta: Tamworth |
| Ma: Matlock | Te: Telford |
| Mac: Macclesfield | Ut: Uttoxeter |
| Man: Manchester | Wh: Whitchurch |
| Mi: Middleswich | Whw: Whitwell |
| Na: Nantwich | Wo: Wolverhampton |
| Ne: Newport | |

Soil types:

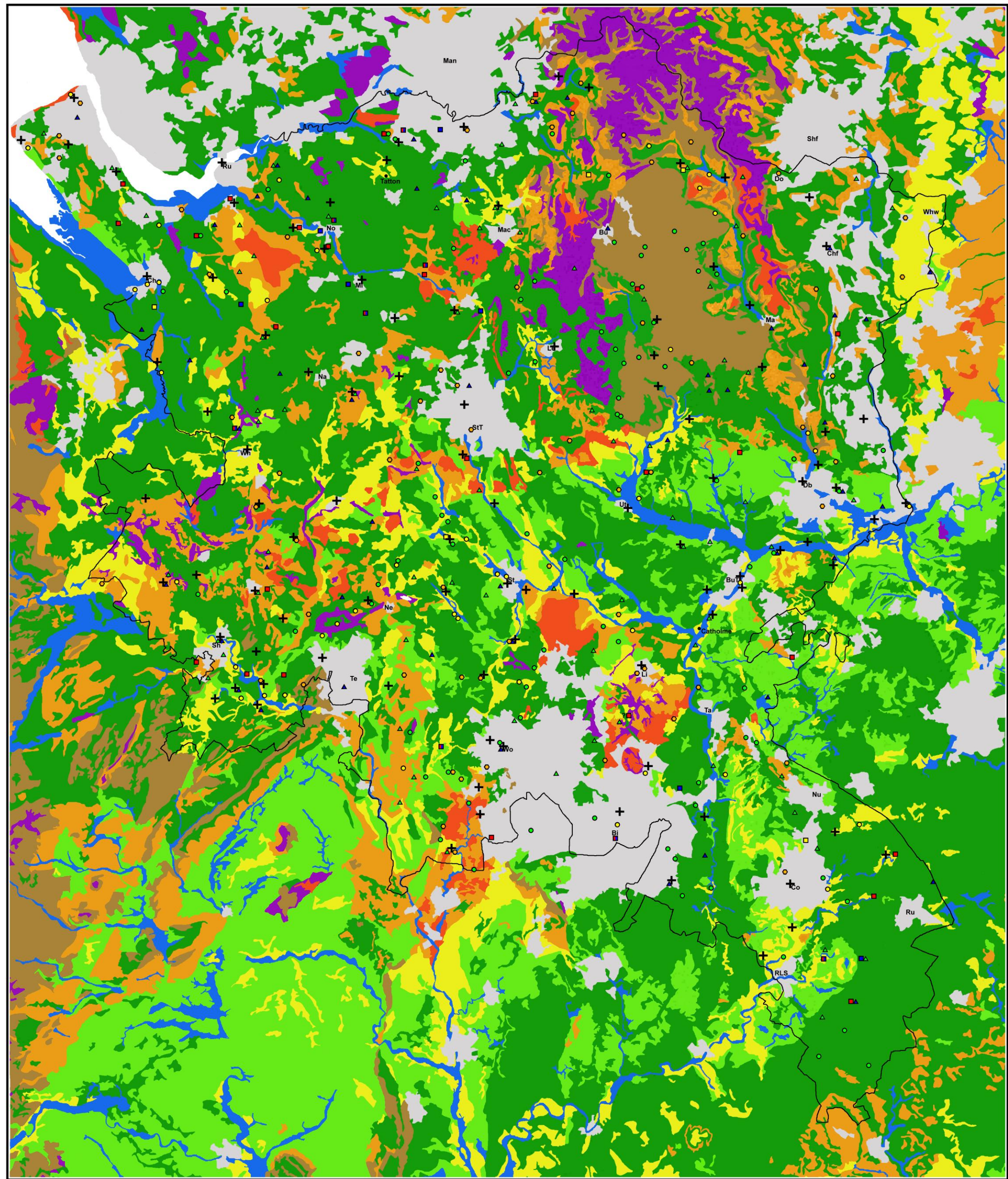
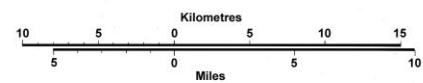
- Light, dry soils, often acidic
- Heavy, wet soils
- Alluvial soils
- Upland soils
- Peaty soils
- Soils obscured by modern development

Place-name elements:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ham | Brittonic element | burh |
| ing | eg | eccles |
| ingaham | dun | holywell |

+ Churches with parishes containing several distinct estates recorded in Domesday Book

Scale:



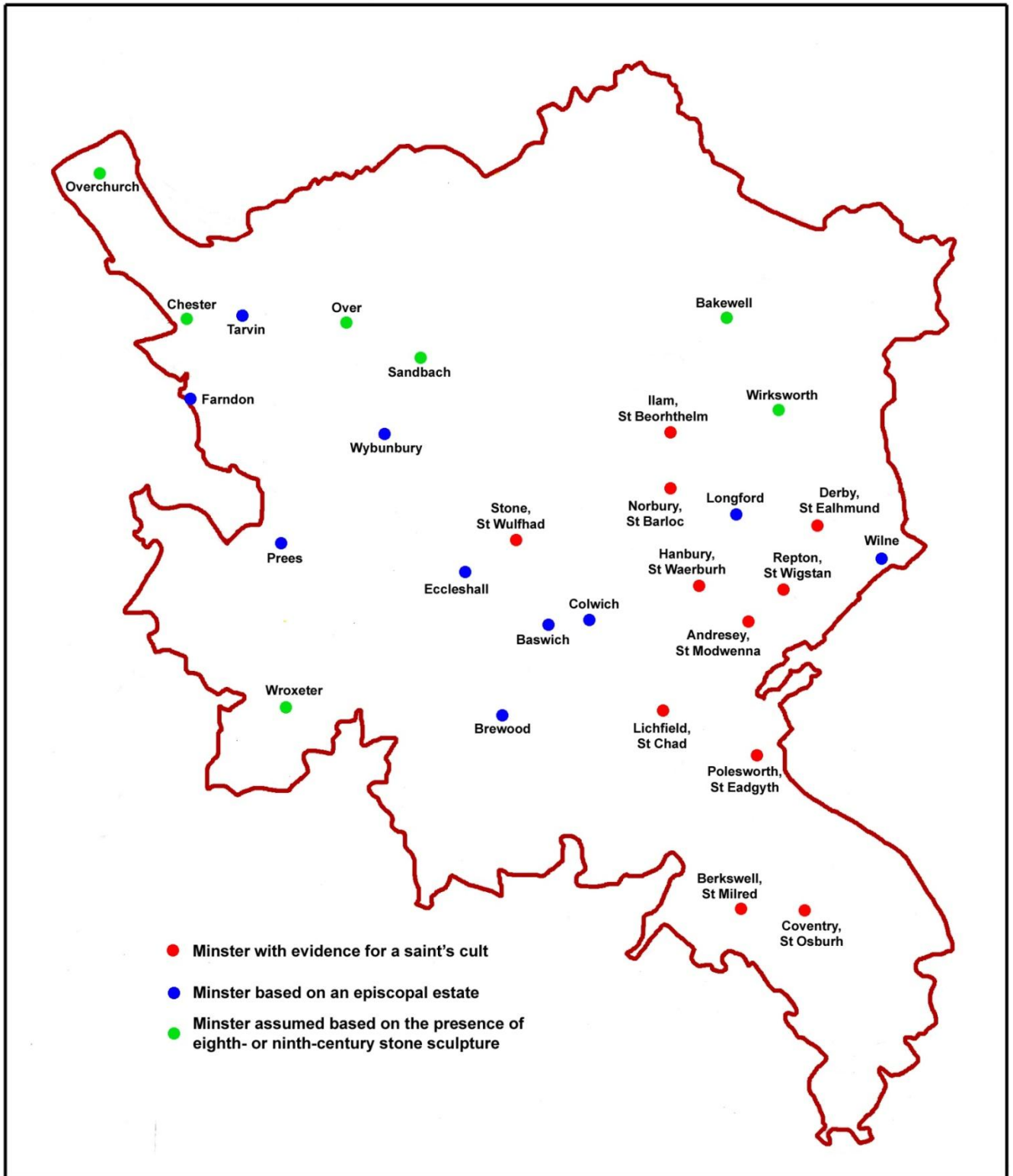


Figure 27: Distribution of seventh-, eighth- and ninth-century minsters

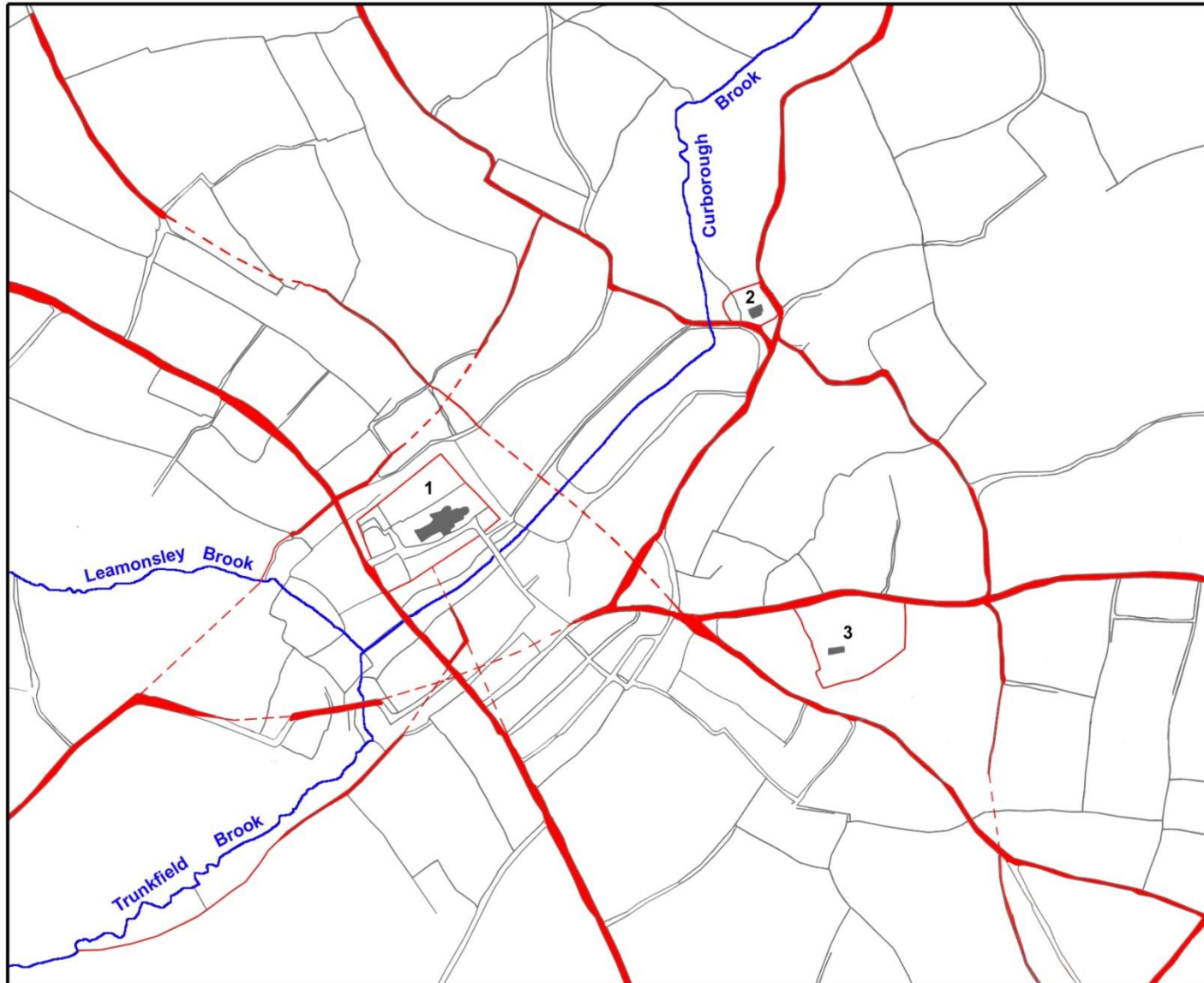


Figure 28: Lichfield, a water-side minster

— Roads and field boundaries, 1st ed. OS map

— Possible early medieval roads

- - - Possible course of early medieval roads

1: Cathedral

2: St Chad's church, Stowe

3: St Michael's church, Greenhill

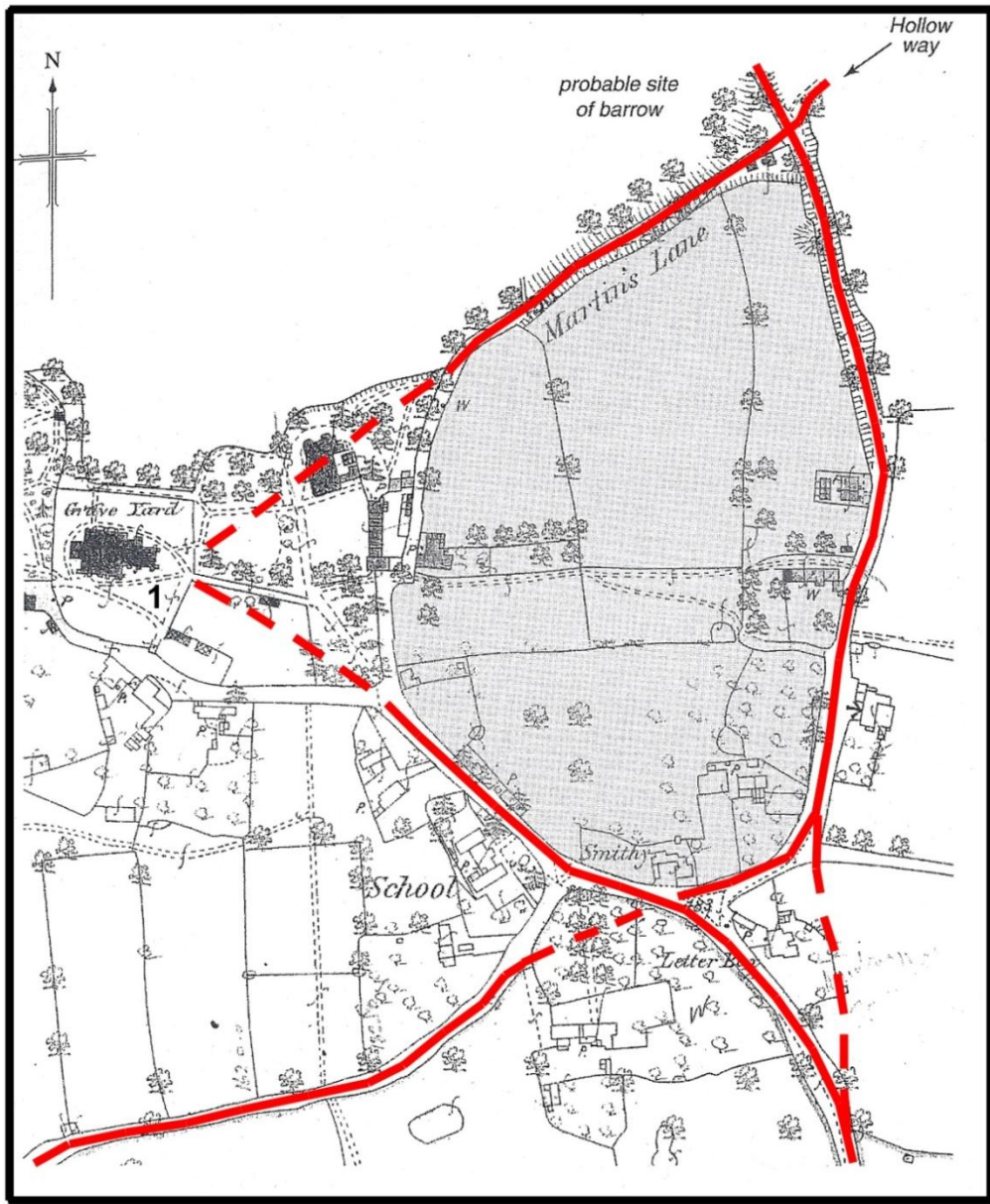





Figure 29: Hanbury, a hill-top minster

-  Conjectured enclosure
-  Possible early medieval roads
-  Possible course of early medieval roads
- 1: St Werburgh's church**



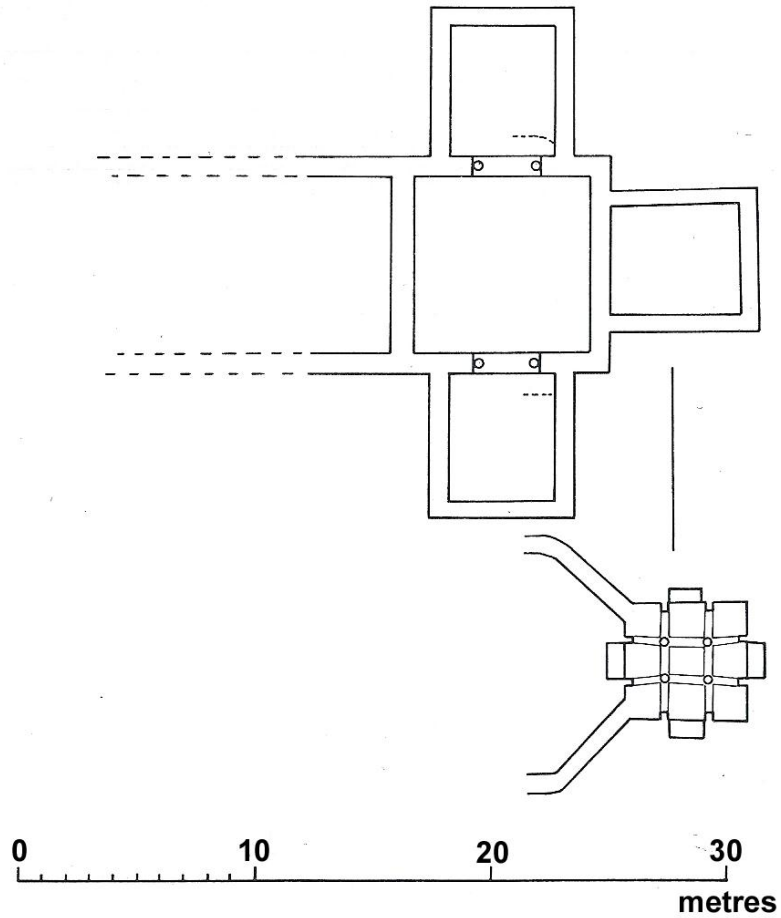


Figure 31a: The Anglo-Saxon church and crypt at Repton
 (from Gem 1993, p 52)

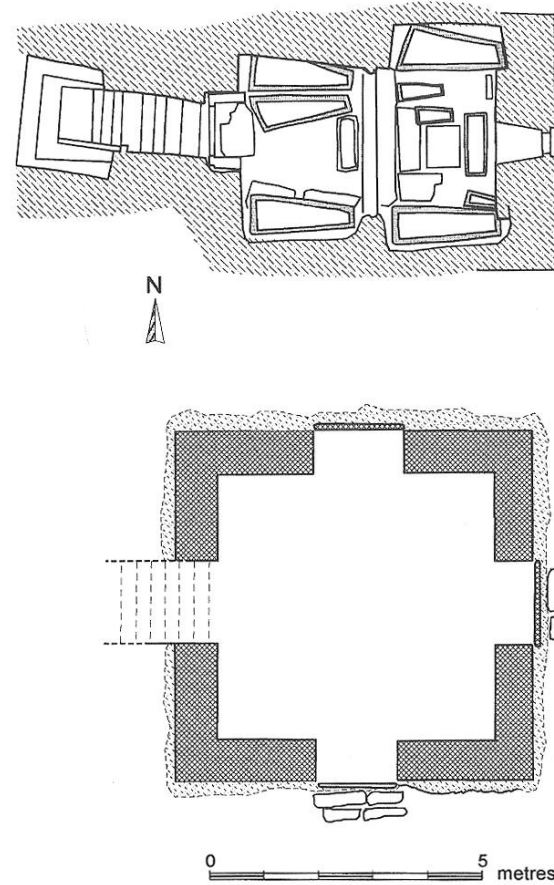


Figure 31b: A conjectural reconstruction of the hypogeum at Repton compared with the Hypogee des Dunes, Poitiers
 (from Crook 2000, p 62)

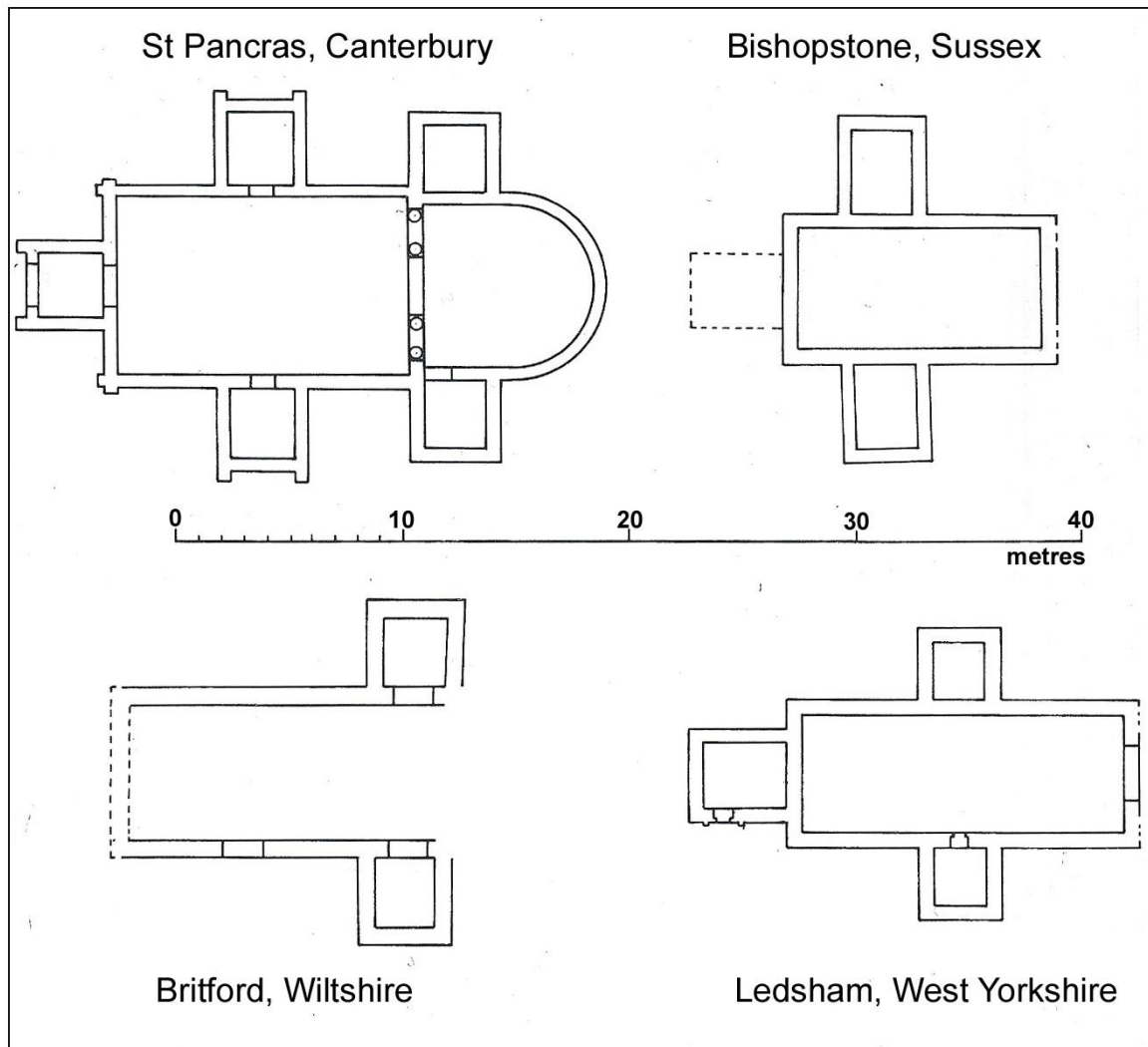


Figure 32: Eighth- and ninth-century churches
(Gem 1993, p 46)

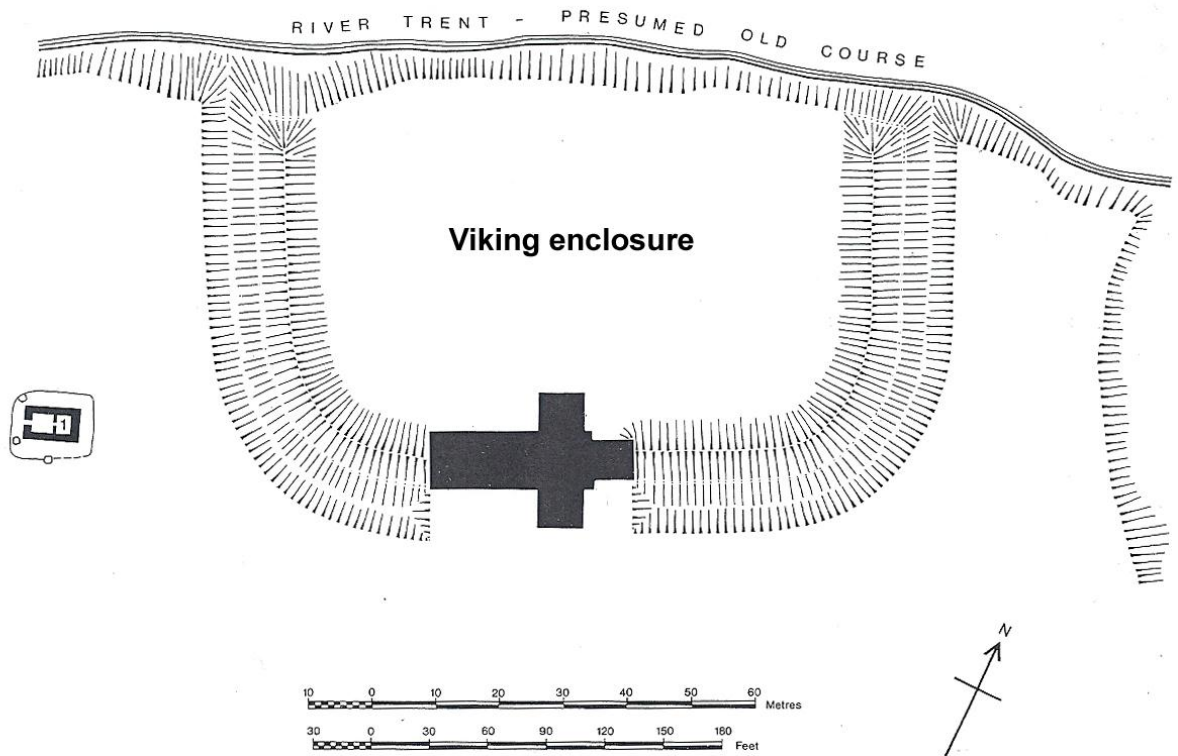


Figure 33a: Repton, showing church with *hypogeum* to the west
 (adapted from Biddle & Kjolbye-Biddle 1992, p 39)

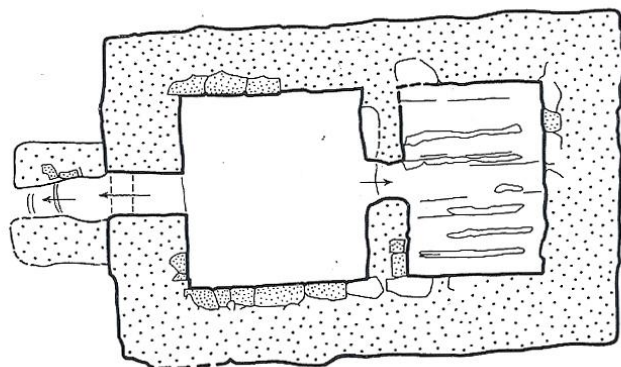


Figure 33b: Repton, plan of western *hypogeum*
 (from Biddle & Kjolbye-Biddle 1992, p 46)

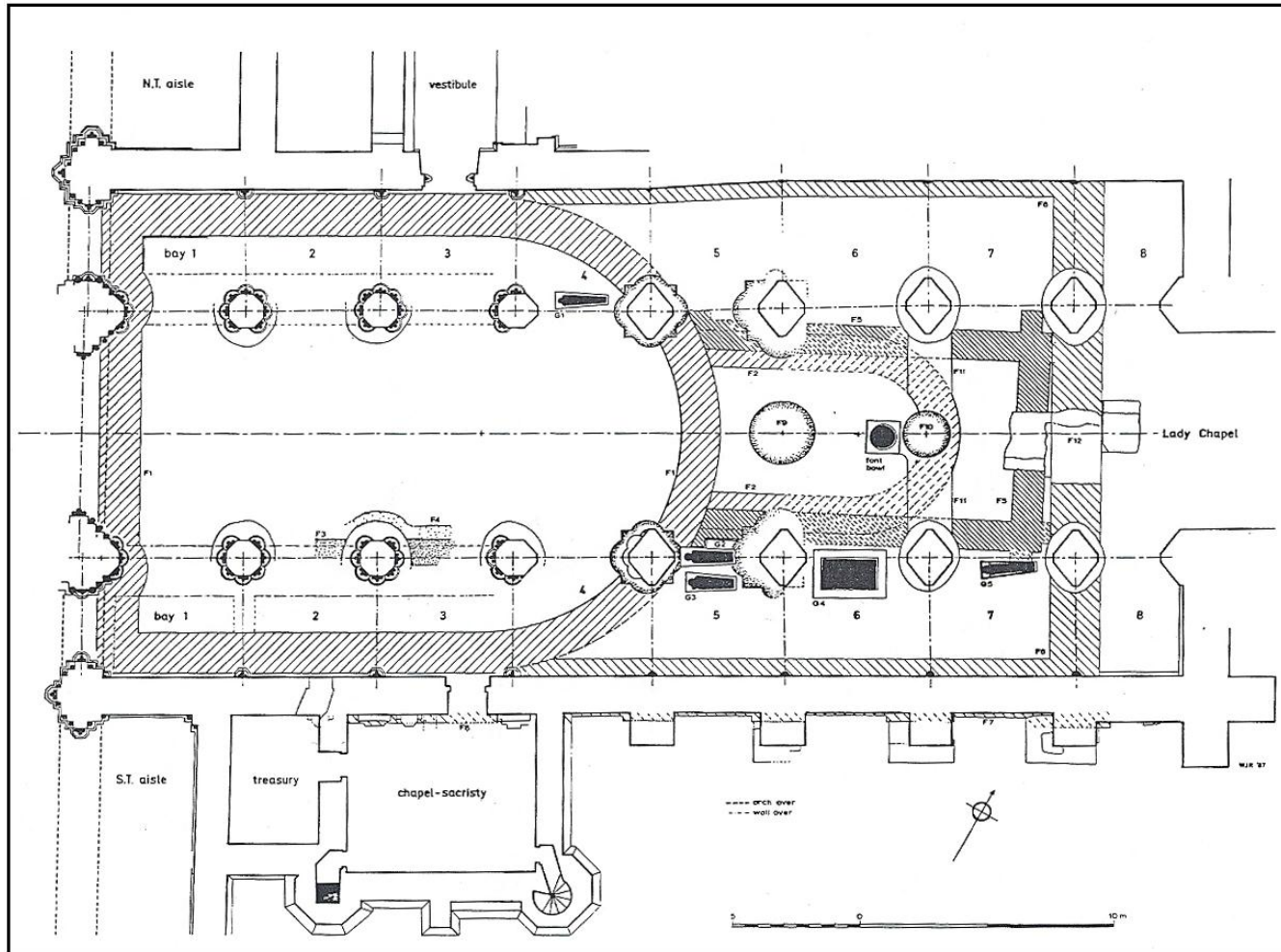


Figure 34a: Archaeological features recorded beneath Lichfield cathedral choir in the nineteenth century (Rodwell 1989, p 283)

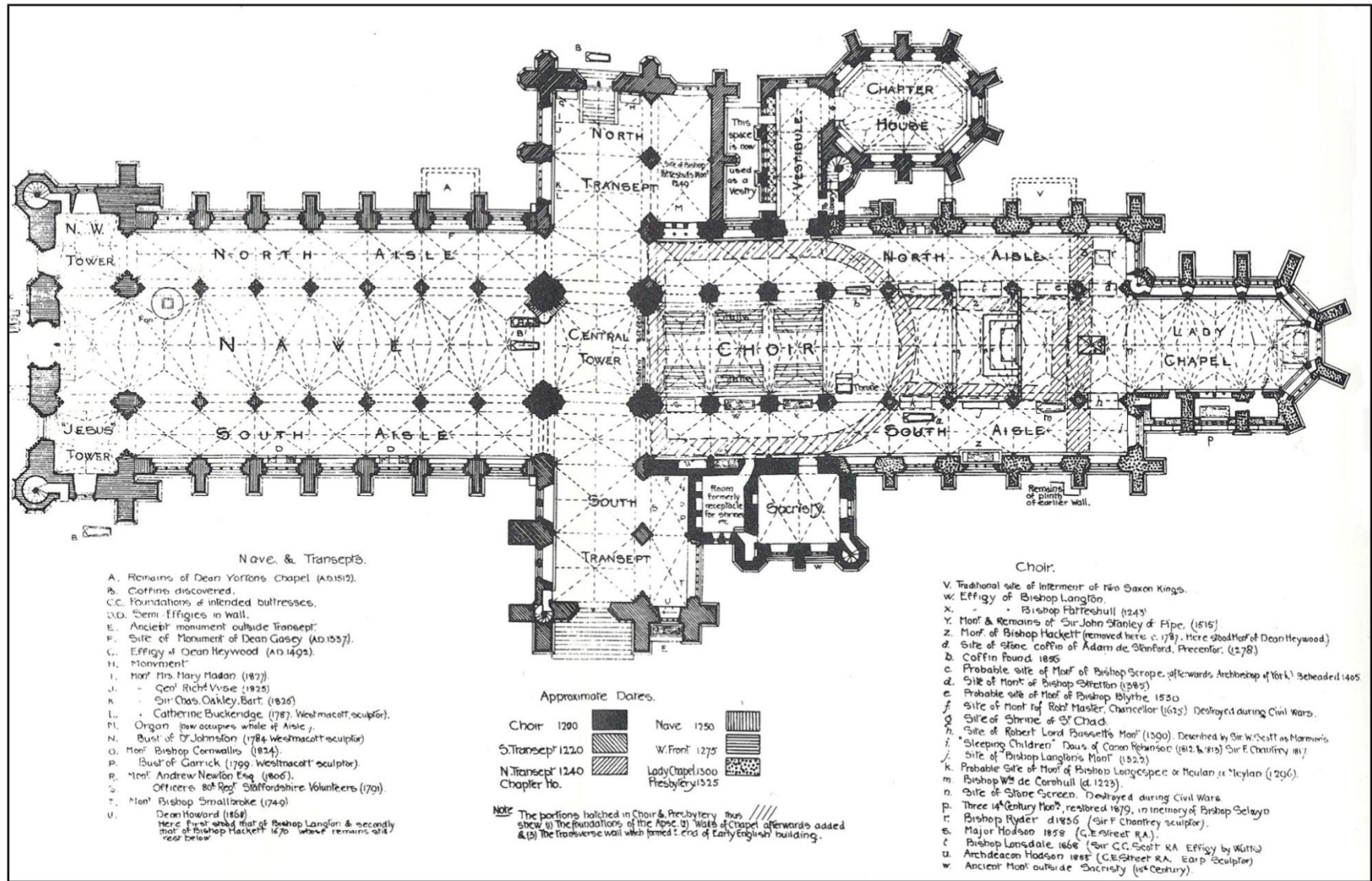
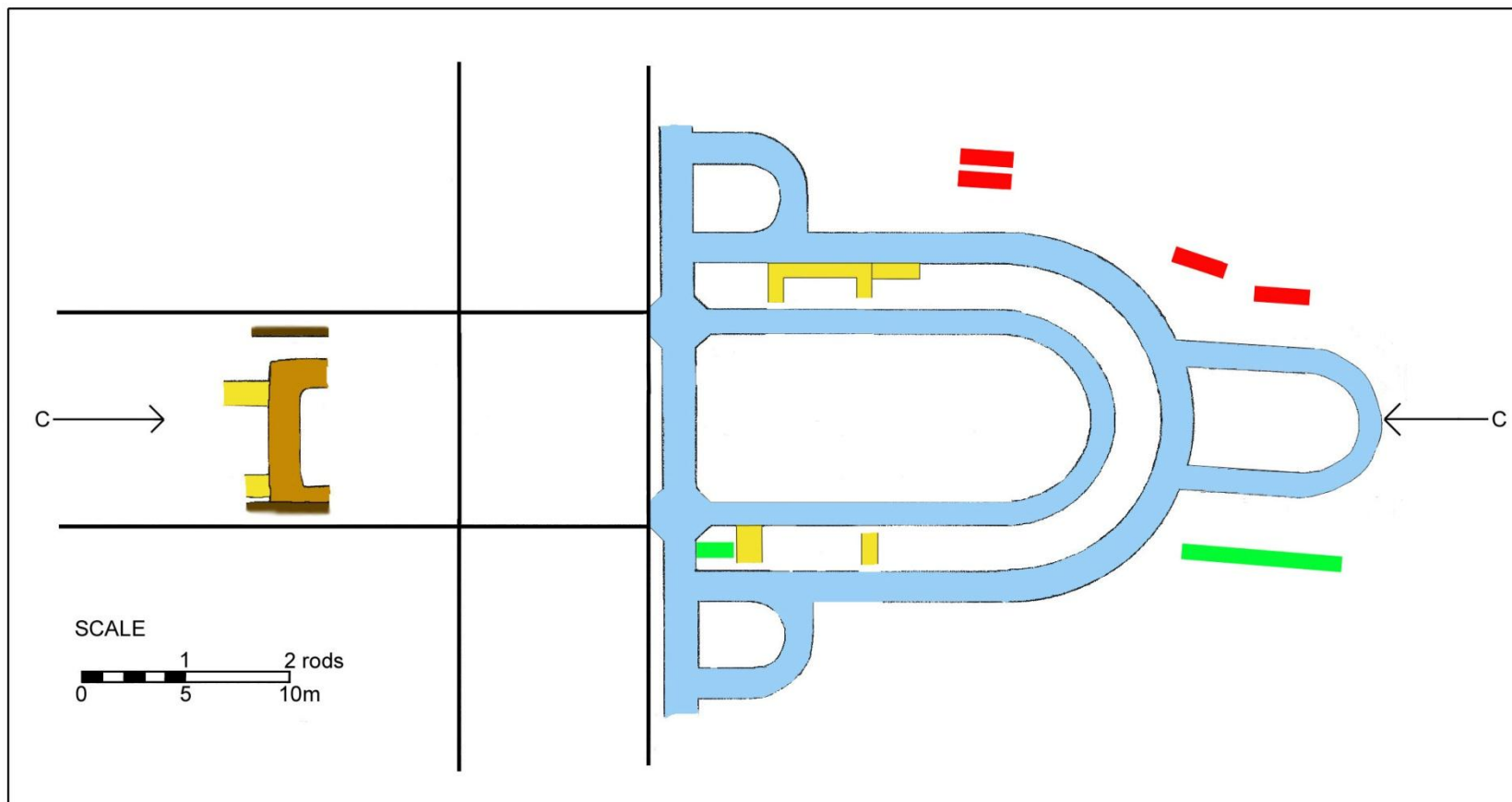
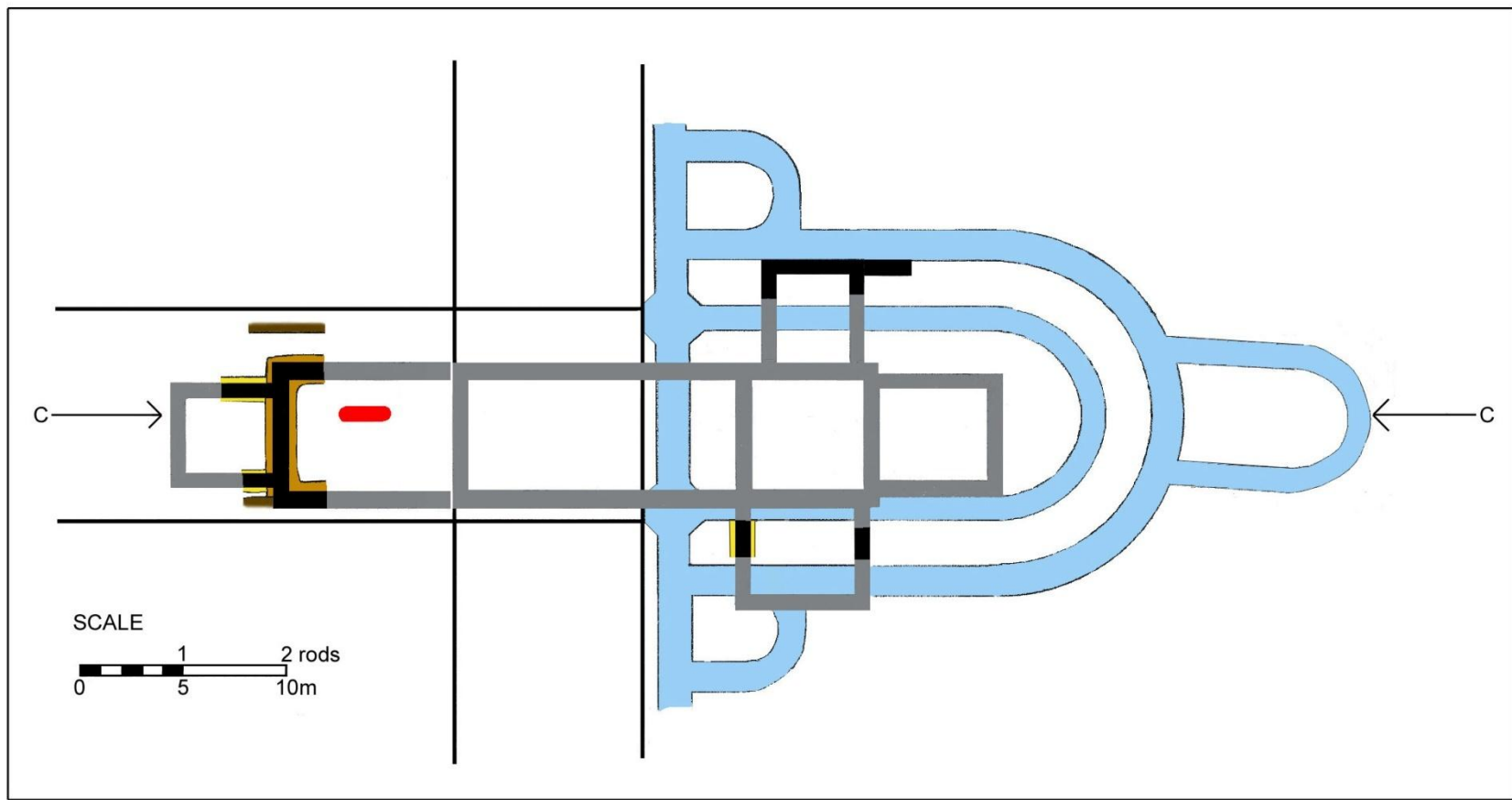


Figure 34b: Roland Paul's plan of Lichfield cathedral, 1891



- | | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Foundations of Anglo-Saxon funerary chapel |  | Positions of burials |
|  | Foundations of Anglo-Saxon porticus |  | Approximate positions of burials |
|  | Foundations of later Anglo-Saxon church |  | Foundations of Romanesque chancel |

Figure 35: Archaeological features beneath Lichfield cathedral, Anglo-Saxon and Norman



- Anglo-Saxon walls, certain
- Anglo-Saxon walls, conjectural
- Position of St Chad's original grave

Figure 36: Conjectural reconstruction of Anglo-Saxon church and funerary chapel

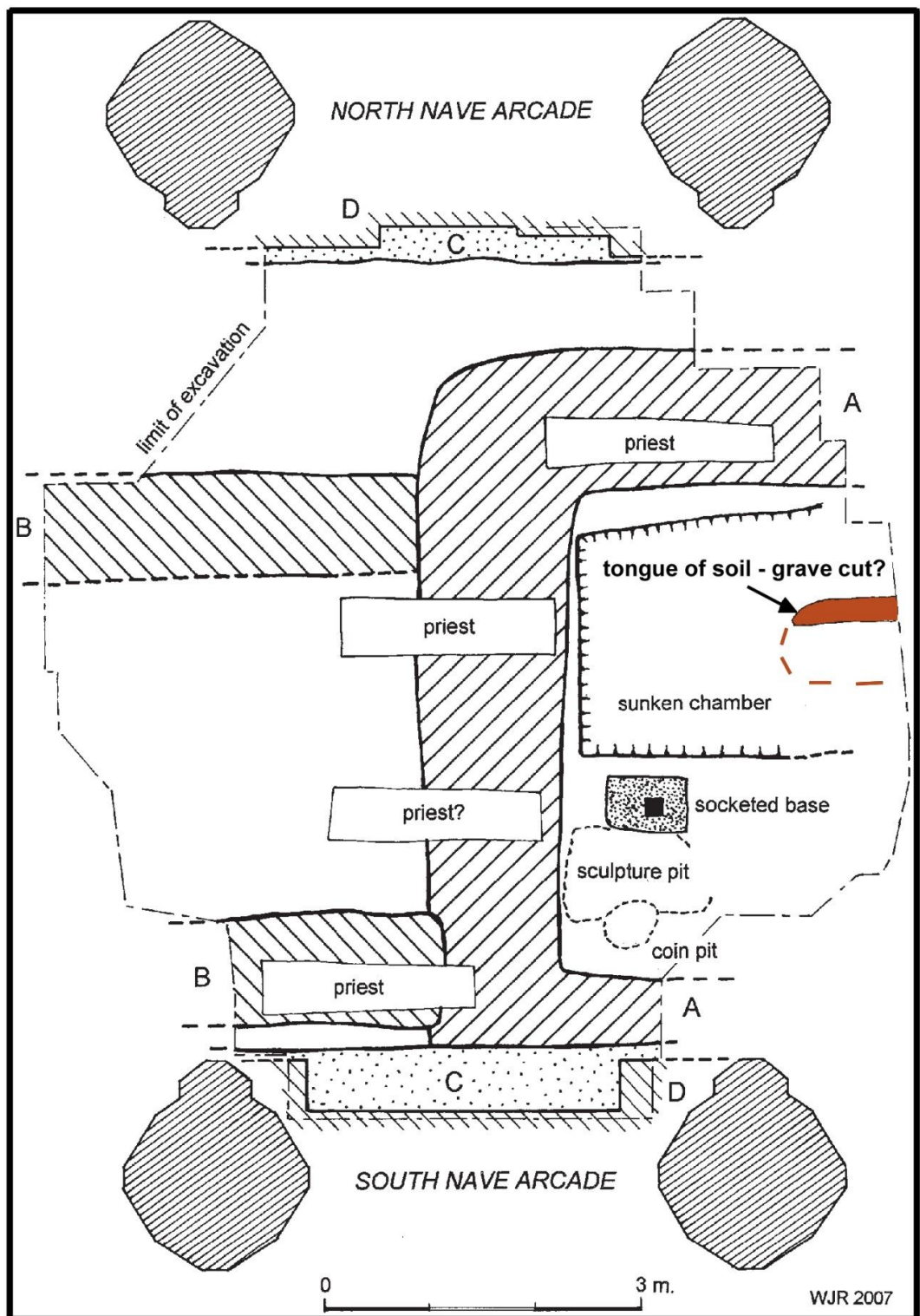
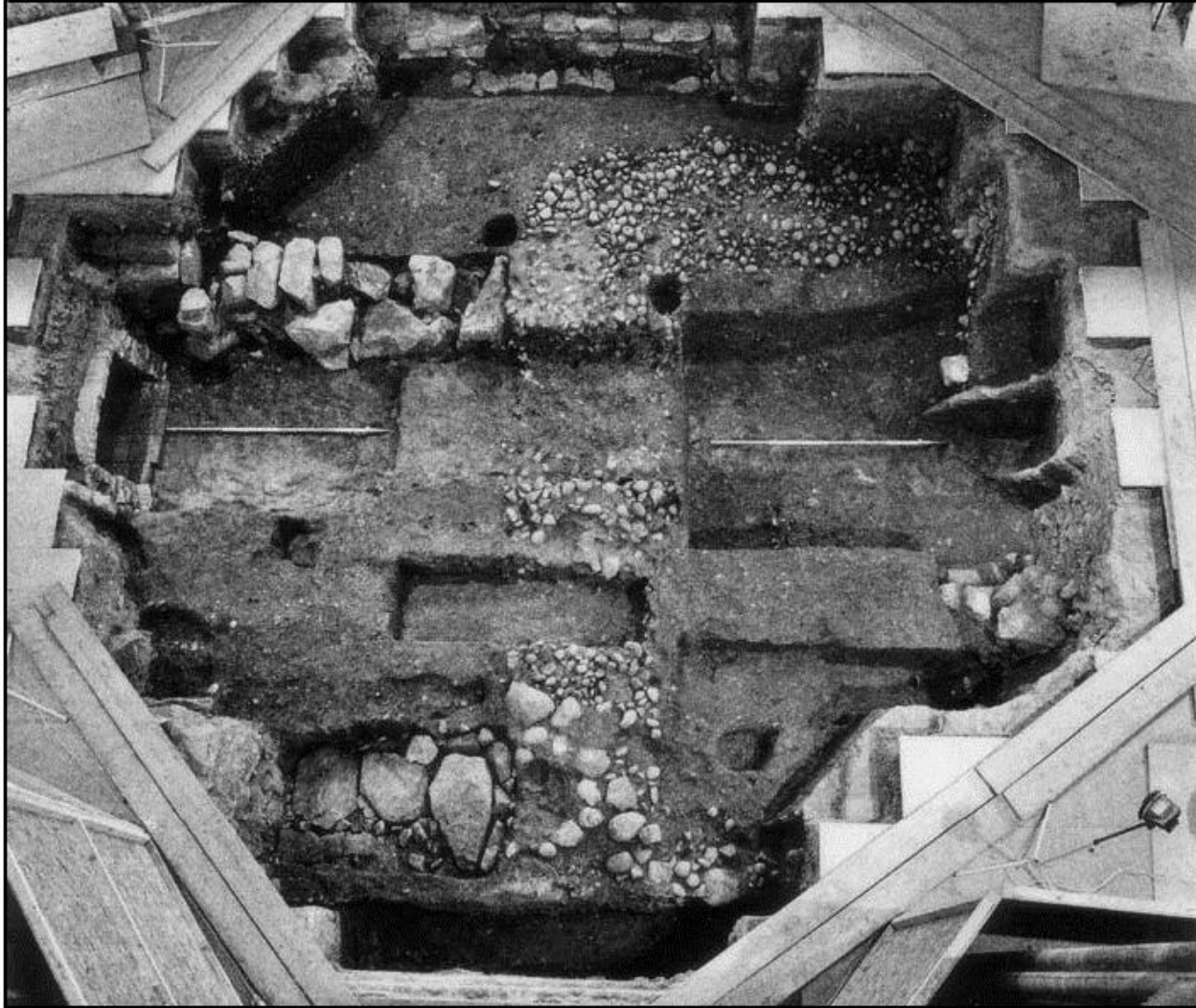


Figure 37a: Plan of Lichfield cathedral nave excavation
 (adapted from Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 54)



**Figure 37b: Photograph of
Lichfield cathedral nave
excavation**
(from Rodwell *et al.* 2008, p 53)

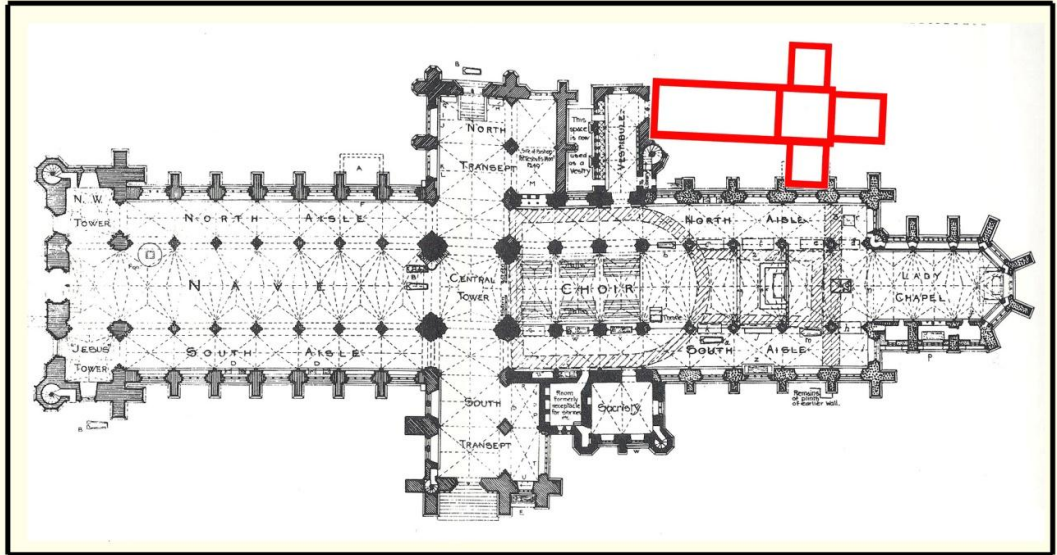


Figure 38a: Conjectural location of St Peter's church, Lichfield

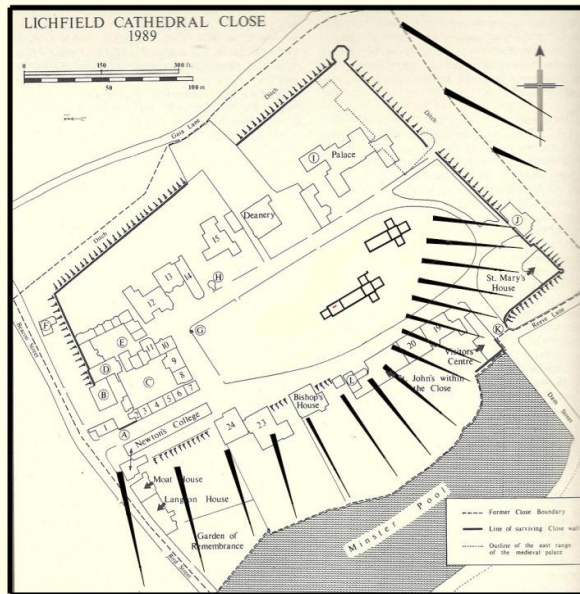


Figure 38b: Conjectural plan of St Mary's and St Peter's, Lichfield

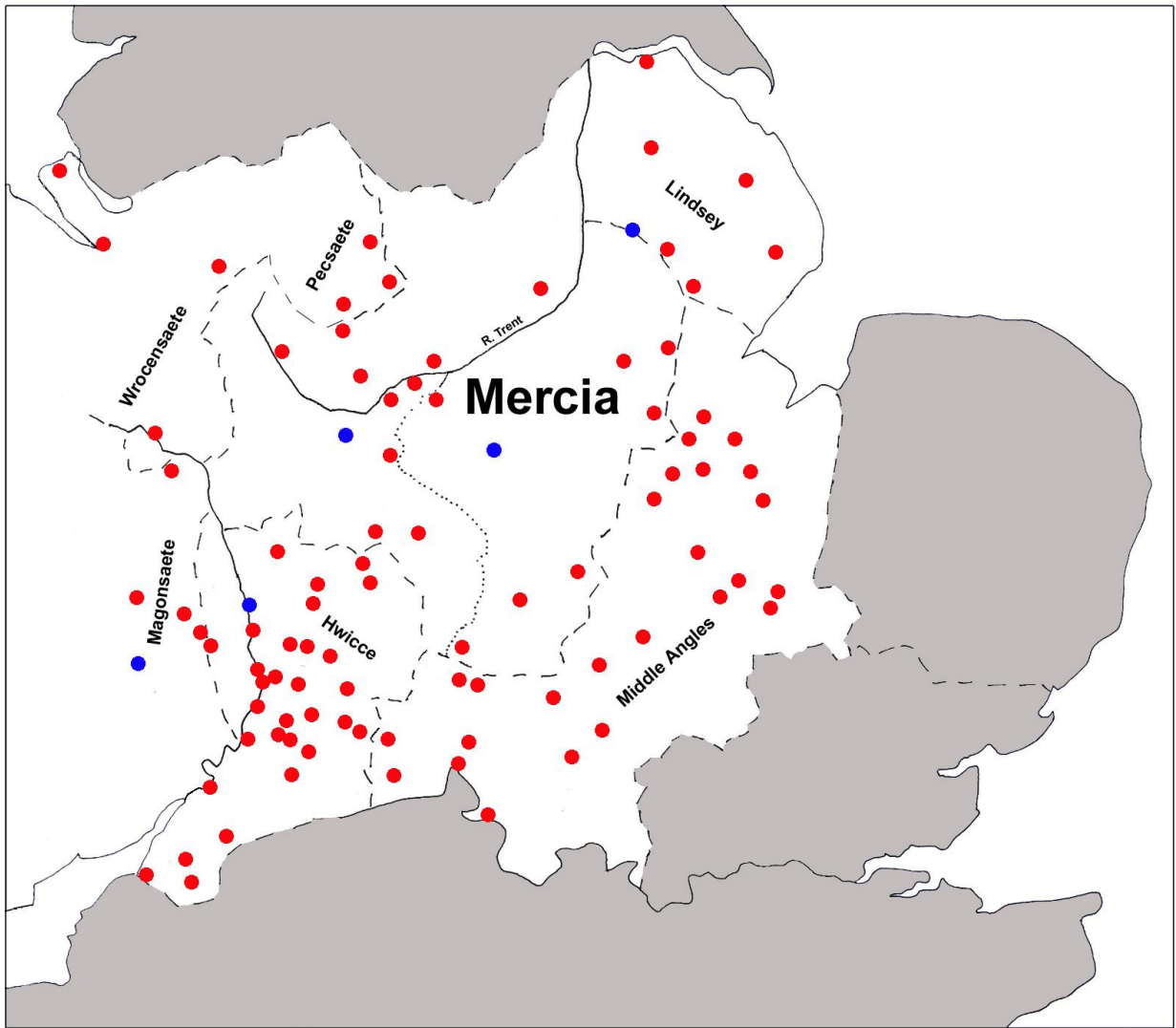


Figure 39: Distribution of early minsters in the Midlands

- Minster identified in textual source or by saint's cult or stone sculpture
- Episcopal see

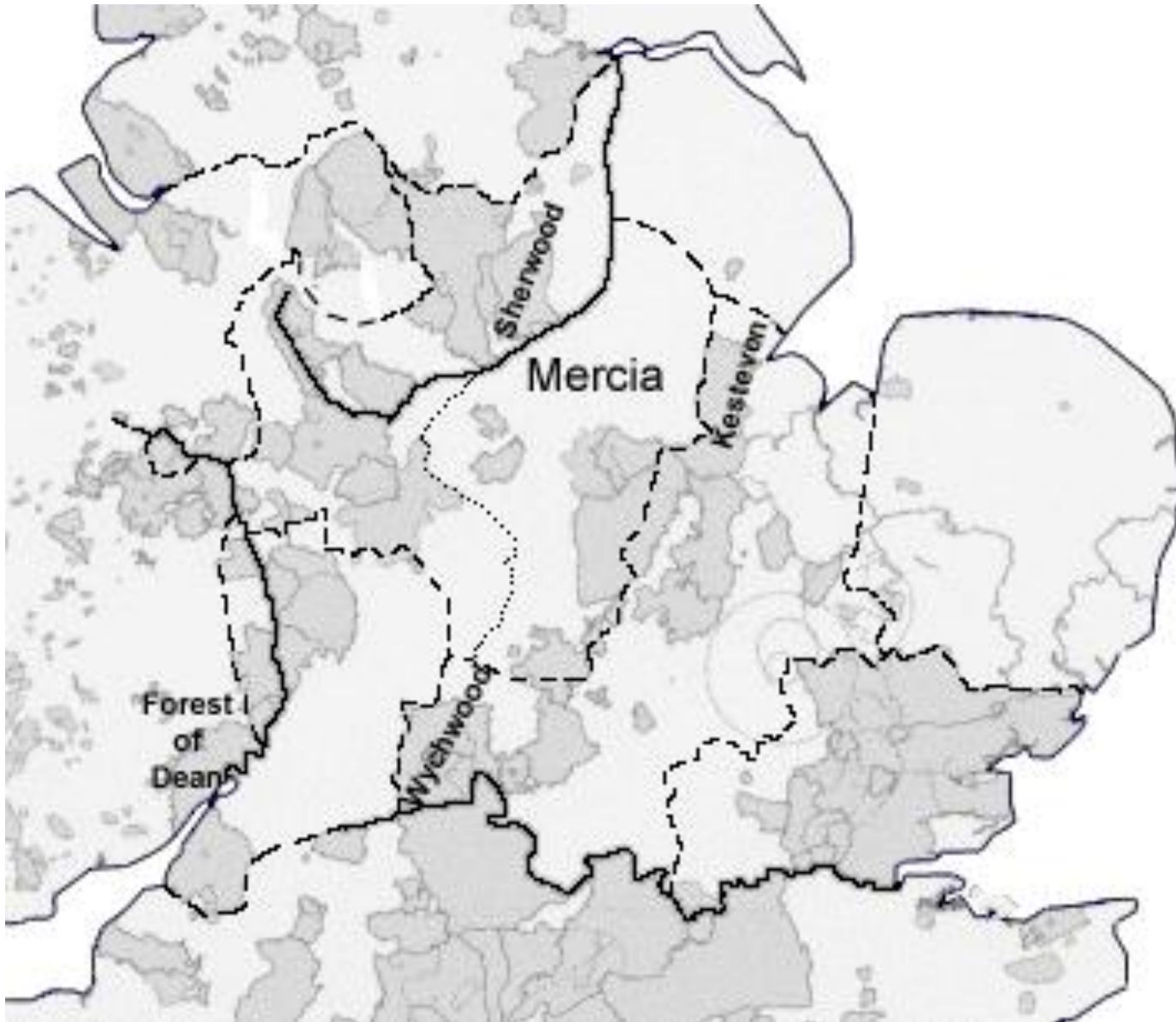


Figure 40: Anglo-Saxon provincial boundaries overlaid on later medieval hunting forests

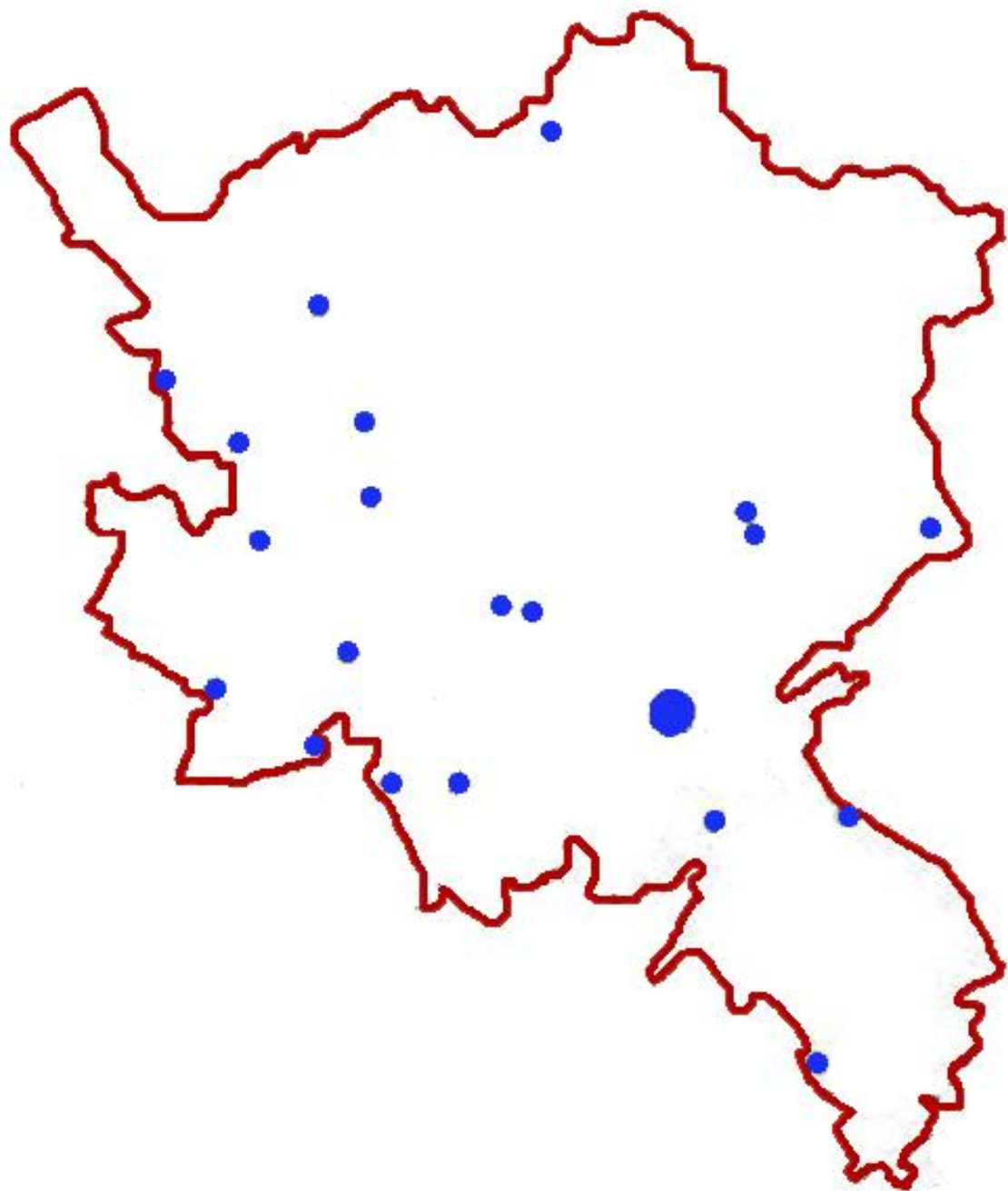


Figure 41: Church dedications to St Chad