

NEWLY DISCOVERED ROUND MOUND BESIDE THE TRENT, AT HULL BANK, ON HARGATE PASTURE, EGGINTON

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SUMMARY

A round mound has been identified within a pasture-field appropriately named 'Hull Bank', situated at the very edge of a gravel-terrace within the floor of the Trent Valley, close to the Trent/Dove confluence. It lies within historic common pasture, beyond the reach of open-field agriculture, which may well account for its survival. Contour-survey has shown the mound to exceed 35m in diameter and to attain almost 1m in height. Although low by comparison with some of the few others recorded in lowland Derbyshire, this is a substantial monument and a welcome addition to a degrading stock of extant mounds in this region. Given that the Hull Bank mound is easily seen from a public foot-way of more than 200 years standing, its recent and chance discovery is bound to lead to concern that other earthworks of potential significance could yet await archaeological attention even in so populous a patch of Midland England, where concerted research into such matters, both in the field and among documents, is wanting.

LOCATION

A round mound situated within pasture-land beside the River Trent has recently been recognized and recorded by the writers.¹ Despite being readily visible from an adjacent footpath, from which it is separated by only a post-and-wire fence, this mound seems not to have been remarked previously, at least in archaeological circles. It is located at National Grid Reference SK 279265 and at approximately 43m above Ordnance Datum, alongside the eastern boundary of the parish of Egginton, sitting upon the south-facing edge of a sand-and-gravel terrace at the northern margin of the floodplain (Fig. 1 inset). This spot is approximately 150m from the present course of the Trent and 350m from that of the Dove, while the confluence of those two rivers is now 500m or so to its south. Judging by the superficial evidence of abandoned channels within the plain, the mound could once have lain hard by the river-bank.

TELLING NAMES

The topographical situation of the mound may be reflected in the erstwhile name of the field within which it now stands — *viz.* 'Hull Bank', as listed in the Egginton tithe-apportionment of 1848/9. The meaning of 'Bank' here seems obvious enough (*e.g.* Smith 1956, 19; Field 1993, 44), irrespective of whether the marked slope in question was the current or former river-bank when the name was coined. Even so, Ekwall (1960, 25) has suggested that the Old Danish original, 'banke', could sometimes be used

in the sense ‘hill’ when occurring as a second element,² thus opening the possibility that this field-name is tautological, perhaps for emphasis, because ‘Hull’ would usually be taken to derive from Old English ‘hyll’ (Smith 1956, 274; Ekwall 1960, 256; Field 1993, 43).³ Although evidently not often found as a first element (Cameron 1961, 173; Gelling 1984, 169–71), ‘hyll’ is regarded as ‘very common’ in Derbyshire field-names (Cameron 1959, 686–7, 737). It can mean ‘a slight elevation in flat country’ (Smith 1956, 274), and it seems entirely possible that the hill in this name is our round mound, surmounting the natural scarp made by the river-bank, but itself surely artificial, for natural eminences deserving of such an epithet are generally absent in the landscape of this valley-floor, and none are evident hereabouts.⁴ In short, then, there seem reasonable grounds for construing the field-name as indicating recognition of the existence of the mound by earlier generations.

In 1798, at the drafting of the Egginton enclosure-award, land around and including the field which was soon to be created as ‘Hull Bank’ constituted ‘Hargate Pasture’, denoting pre-enclosure usage as common grazing (Dalton 1991, 88, map 2 — being a reconstruction of certain aspects of a lost map, made to accompany the 1798 award — were it depicted there, the mound would be close to the angle in the eastern margin of the stippled block of ‘former common pasture’ at the southern tip of the parish). Five decades later, at the apportioning of tithes, numerous enclosed fields to north and south of Hull Bank had names like ‘Hargate Close’, ‘Hargate Piece’, ‘Little Hargate’, ‘Hargate Stile’, and ‘Hargate Side’, showing that ‘Hargate’ remained deeply rooted in this landscape, and it is another name of potential significance in the present context. Old English ‘har’ can convey various meanings, said to include hoar, hare, boundary, stony, and ridge (Smith 1956, 234; Ekwall 1960, 217–18).⁵ Some of these are improbable here, though several are feasible — *e.g.* there seems no reason why this pasture should not have been a haunt of hares, and the boundary of Egginton with the neighbouring parish of Newton Solney ran through its midst.⁶ However, a more obvious reference would be to the relative age of the pasture, long-established or, one might say, hoary — or ‘old turf’ as it was termed by the tithe-commissioners. If so, it seems likely to be this status of the land that occasioned circumstances suited to preservation of the Hull Bank mound. As for the second element, it would be commonplace to interpret ‘gate’ as indicative of some related road or route, from Old Norse ‘gata’ (*e.g.* Smith 1956, 196; Ekwall 1960, 193; Cameron 1961, 158; Gelling 1984, 73), and it would be easy to suppose that this arises from the existence of a trackway across the Pasture, running along the Newton side of the parish-boundary, and shown by Dalton (1991, map 1) as formerly leading to ‘fords’ at the confluence.⁷ Although now reduced to the footpath from which the mound was spotted (albeit still a hedged lane to the north of Hull Bank), that route was ‘set out’ as a ‘public highway’, with a ‘breadth of fforty ffeet’, by the enclosure-commissioners late in the 18th century (as in *ibid.*, map 1), calling it ‘Newton Road’; so it can hardly have given rise to a ‘gate’ name apropos of pasture that was by then ancient. Since no other road appears appropriate,⁸ an alternative interpretation of the name-element suggests itself, and one which is again pertinent to the historic usage of this land, for ‘gate’, or ‘gait’, can refer to a north-country version of ‘stinted’, or rationed, pasture, being a right of grazing for a single beast (*e.g.* Smith 1956, 196; Hoskins and Stamp 1963, 9, 36–7, 112; Field 1993, 116, 127; Muir 2000, 60–1); and Dalton (1991, 88) has recounted that certain tenants retained such

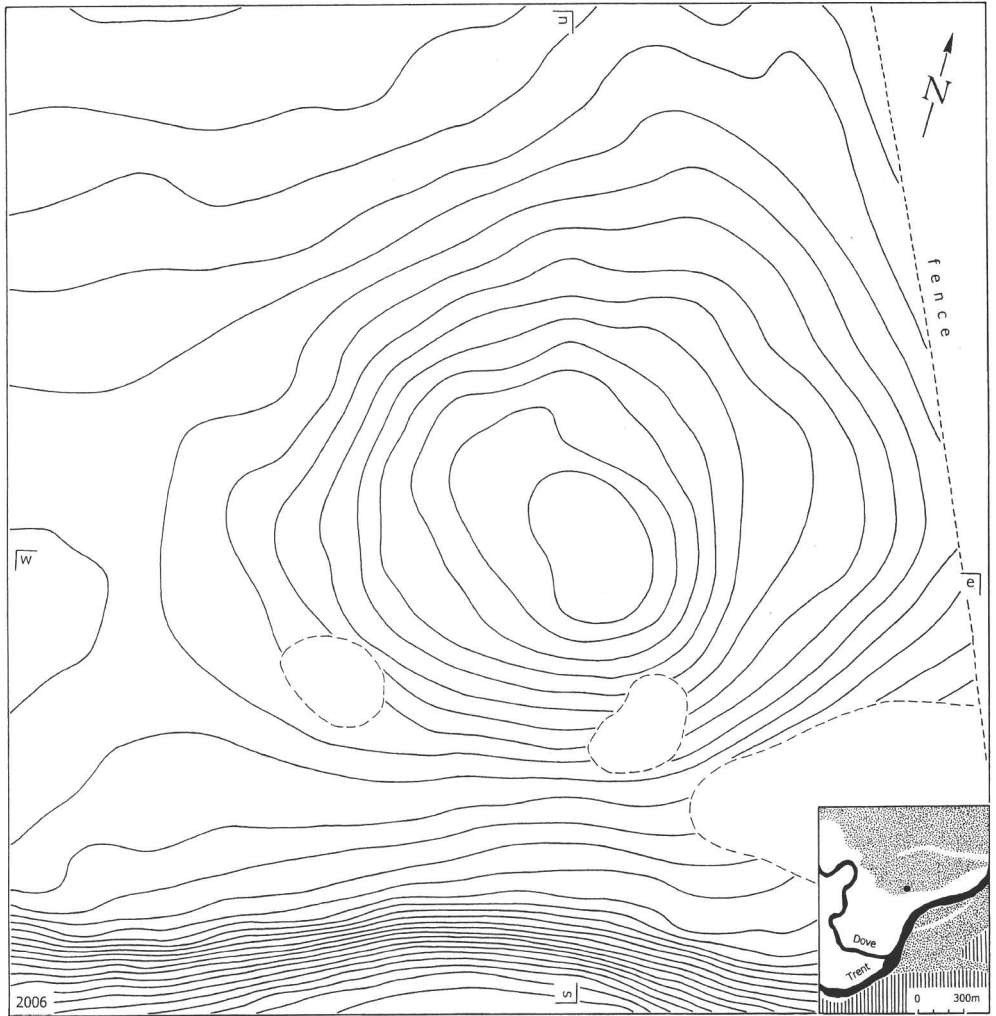
rights in Hargate Pasture in 1827. Thus, 'Hargate' would be the ancient pasture where right of use was allotted in proportion to head of cattle.⁹

CONTOUR-SURVEY

The surface record of the mound made in 2006 (Fig. 1) requires brief explanation. Using electronic distance-measuring equipment, spot-heights were measured at approximately 2m intervals, being the intersections of a grid set out through pacing over an area of *c.* 65 × 80m. Extra spot-heights were taken only where necessary in recording the line of the terrace-edge scarp (bunched contours crossing the southern edge of the plan in Fig. 1) and in outlining several shallow disturbances connected with recent land-use (dashed in Fig. 1, the largest surrounding a holding-pen used by recent herdsmen). From this network of data (1051 spot-heights in all), both contour-plan and profiles were constructed by computer, and these were examined on site to facilitate preparation of a slightly smoothed version of the contours, as presented in Fig. 1.¹⁰ Despite an initial intention to produce a plan extending equidistantly about the mound, it was eventually decided to make no record beyond the fence of Hull Bank field (which marks the eastern limit of the Fig. 1 contouring and, incidentally, the parish-boundary), because the ground there has been heightened artificially in metalling the trackway remarked above.

The mound can thus be gauged to measure some 35m across at the base on its north/south axis, perhaps as much as 45m west/east. It stands little short of 1m in height above the surface of the terrace, which undulates very gently as it extends away from the mound to the north. The height of its rounded summit above the adjacent flood-plain is now fully 3.0m. As viewed in the field, the mound appears to be given some extra prominence through being perched upon a broad, but only slightly raised, ridge that runs westwards along the crest of the terrace-edge scarp (possibly a consequence of natural levee-formation), and this siting may have induced the apparent ovalness of the mound.

Given that there is no superficial indication of an encircling ditch, the immediate impression formed from the contour-plan, as from inspection on the ground, is of a ditchless bowl barrow, and a sizeable one by any reckoning, conceivably not much degraded.¹¹ As such, this mound would be a rare sight on the fluvial terraces of the Trent Basin. Of course, it is frequently inferred that the great number of ring-ditches known from cropmarks along the length of the Trent's terraces shows round barrows to have been far more frequent there at one time, just as it is often assumed that a majority of them were prehistoric in origin. On the other hand, it is noticeable that the few such mounds to have been recognized on these terraces tend to be of considerable size, equivalent to ring-ditches at the larger end of their diameter-range, though the significance of this remains unclear — possibly it is because only the ditches of larger diameter ever encompassed a mound (implying that many smaller ring-ditches, in addition to some of the larger, do not really represent barrows, prehistoric or otherwise); or perhaps it is simply that larger mounds tend to have survived better down the centuries; or maybe it is merely that larger mounds are more likely to get noticed in their present state as earthworks (in spite of other comments made here).



HULL BANK, EGGINTON

0 30m

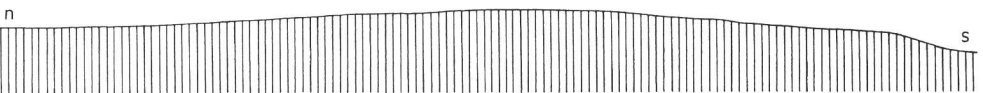


Fig. 1: Contour-plan of the Hull Bank round mound sitting upon the terrace-edge, with horizontal form-lines at 0.10m vertical interval, and disturbed areas within broken lines; profiles, on lines marked n-s and w-e, are shown across the foot of the drawing; all at scale 1:500, except inset map, at 1:50000, in which rivers are solid, alluvium is blank, terrace-deposits are stippled, mudstone is hatched, and a spot marks the mound.

SOME OTHER ROUND MOUNDS IN TRENT VALLEY

Notwithstanding their general rarity in this terrain, extant round mounds are actually more plentiful immediately around the major rivers that pass through southern Derbyshire than they are upstream and downstream into neighbouring counties. Several such monuments lie close to the course of the Trent where it winds through Derbyshire, while one, at first sight the most impressive of them all, overlooks the Dove. As matters stand, the published record of most of these mounds is less than adequate, not even photographs of the more striking examples having appeared in print hitherto.

Surprisingly, Hoon Mount, situated on a mudstone ridge at the northern shoulder of the Dove Valley (at over 80m OD, in Hoon, to the north-west of Hilton — SK 230318), has no recorded excavation and seems never to have been surveyed in detail. Although described as a ‘very fine example’ of *c.* 27m diameter and *c.* 5.5m high (Marsden 1977, 62), its apparent height may be somewhat emphasized by the ridge-top siting and, anyhow, has become considerably exaggerated both by the apparent formation of negative lynchets around the foot of the mound and by a hollowed track adjacent to its south-east margin. These disturbances have created a steepening of the slope closely circumscribing the already steep-sided mound, giving it a squarish appearance at the base (and probably also responsible for Marsden’s ‘suggestion of berm’ — *ibid.*). As seen today, the mound itself can best be estimated at *c.* 23m in diameter and rather less than 4m in height (Pl. 1). Unfortunately, Hoon Mount now appears to be riddled with a labyrinth of animal-burrows, some actively eroding. Its name, Scandinavian in origin,



Plate 1: Hoon Mount, viewed from the south-east in 2006, with figure standing atop the mound.

suggests that Hoon Mount was among a group of mounds at one time, forming a sufficiently prominent feature of that neighbourhood to have lent its identity to the parish (e.g. Cameron 1959, 573; Gelling 1978, 138).

Round Hill, situated on a northern terrace of the Trent (at just over 40m OD, to the east of Twyford — SK 333283), is reputed to be ‘the largest surviving barrow in the region’, and it seems equally extraordinary that it too remains unexcavated and, in so far as we are aware, has never been surveyed usefully.¹² This mound has been variously estimated to measure somewhere between 27m and 40m in diameter and c. 3.0–4.5m in height (Wheeler 1970, 4; Marsden 1977, 98; O’Brien 1978, 8; Wheeler 1979, 78; Harding and Lee 1987, 116; Knight and Howard 2004, 63); our paced measurements of 2006 set it at little less than 30m across at the base, and we estimate its height above the adjacent ground-surface to be 4.5m or so (perhaps including some increase through plough-erosion around the foot).¹³ Quite apart from its sheer bulk (Pl. 2), this trunconic mound assumes considerable significance through its location at the centre of a roughly circular enclosure, revealed through the cropmark of its broad ditch, having opposed entrance-causeways after the style of a Class II henge, and averaging 75–80m in diameter (measured between mid-lines of ditch, as illustrated in Harding and Lee 1987, 117, 119) — so this is no ordinary ring-ditch, and it may still represent the Trent Valley’s best candidate for interpretation as a Neolithic henge.¹⁴ Despite these factors contributing to its obvious interest archaeologically, Round Hill is now in a sorry state of disrepair, the mound having been left to suffer much damage from burrowing-animals, especially on its southern side, where a contorted surface of bare earth and gravel confronts the visitor, appearing more disfigured each time it is viewed. Moreover, the mound is tightly confined by cultivation and, following recent removal of hedgerows, stands amid an extensive field which, sad to relate, has become the scene of ploughing-competitions. In one way and another, both mound and, to a lesser degree,



Plate 2: Round Hill, Twyford, viewed from the south-east in 2006, with figure standing atop the mound (note marquees in the background, erected in readiness for a ploughing-competition around the mound).

ditched enclosure are at risk of virtual effacement as monuments of archaeological worth. Incidentally, the hedged field which, until lately, enclosed this mound was called 'Big Hill Close' in the 19th century (*i.e.* in the 1844 enclosure-award and the 1848 tithe-apportionment for Twyford & Stenson), when another field on this terrace, at *c.* 400m to the west, was 'Hill Burrow', possibly offering a clue to the former location of another mound of some kind, while those in between were then 'Low Fields', perhaps referring to the local 'hlāw', or mound(s), rather than to relative elevation (*e.g.* Smith 1956, 248–50; Cameron 1959, 705, 734; Gelling 1978, 134–7) — so, maybe there was once a group of mounds thereabouts too.

The demonstrable group of mounds upon Swarkestone Lowes (plainly a 'hlāw' name — Cameron 1959, 664), part of a more-elevated northern terrace of the Trent (at around 55m OD, to the north of Swarkestone — SK 3629), has fared better in terms of recording and exploration. Two of them were excavated partially in the 1950s, *inter alia* revealing prehistoric and early medieval burials as well as oft-cited traces of Beaker-age settlement ('Barrows II and IV' — respectively Posnansky 1955a and Greenfield 1960). The unexcavated 'Barrow I', *c.* 40m in diameter and said to be *c.* 3.6m in height (Losco-Bradley 1993, 5 — though his contour-plan, fig. 2, implies a little less), is the largest of the group (Pl. 3), again made squarish at the base through tightness of ploughing, though thankfully its field is now under grass. In contrast, the other five mounds are subject to an arable regime, and they have each been shown to measure 30m or more across through the sort of systematic contoured surveying (undertaken in the 1980s, at 0.20m vertical interval — *ibid.*) which would surely be worthwhile in respect of most other mounds mentioned here. Not the least value of such a record lies in facilitating monitoring of the erosion that seems so often to afflict mounds even after their identification by archaeologists — thus it was Posnansky's foresight in conducting 'preliminary' contour-survey (at 1ft, or 0.30m, vertical interval, of all four of the mounds recognized at that time — 1955a, fig. II) that made it feasible for Losco-Bradley to deduce that some on Swarkestone Lowes had been 'reduced in height by up to 0.8m' through less than 30 years of 'regular cultivation'.¹⁵ The shame of Swarkestone is that such degradation should have been allowed to continue unabated in spite of evidence gathered over 50 years ago that 'remains of Anglo-Saxon interments' were already being 'redistributed from the top of the mound by ploughing' (*ibid.*, 126–7).



Plate 3: Swarkestone Lowes 'Barrow I', viewed from the south-south-west in 2006, with figure standing atop the mound.

Two other mounds, each standing on a low-lying terrace immediately north of the Trent, had become lowered by ploughing, and hence less prominent physically than most of those noted above, by the time of their archaeological discovery. That called 'Willington Barrow 1' (at *c.* 42m OD, to the south-west of Willington — SK 288278) was 'visible as a slight rise in the ground. . . prior to excavation' and was partially investigated during its destruction by quarrying in 1970, but nevertheless remains of uncertain size and date (Wheeler 1979, 73, figs 9–10 — the latter implying that it might have reached almost 1.0m in height). That known as 'Aston 1' (at *c.* 35m OD, to the east of Aston-upon-Trent — SK 421292) is said to have been 'visible as a low mound, rising some 20–24 in. [*i.e.* 0.5–0.6m] above the present surface' in the mid 1960s, by which time 'ploughing had. . . caused it to spread to rather elongated shape' (Reaney 1968, 70 — reporting also that it is reputed to have stood half as high again within living memory). It has been sampled by excavation, allegedly demonstrating Beaker associations for each of two stages in the construction of the mound, which is said to have been increased from 31m to 35m in diameter and to have been preceded by remnants of Neolithic 'occupation', with carinated-bowl pottery, 'hearth', 'pits' and curving 'gullies' (*ibid.*, 70–4 — lacking even an excavation-plan, let alone any record of the superficial form of the mound).¹⁶ For all the ambiguities of the evidence presented by the excavator, the archaeological potential of this site, as a rare local survival of a prehistoric earthwork with underlying surface, is indisputable; and that importance is heightened by the location of this barrow within the precinct of a Neolithic cursus, leading Loveday (2000) not only to appreciate the need of continued preservation of the lower portion of the mound but also to make a successful appeal to the landowners to have it fenced off from the surrounding cultivated land. Even so, the Aston 1 mound, said to be 'now a shadow of its former self' (*ibid.*, 439), is yet in need of the most basic surface survey to establish its current dimensions.

Just across the border into Leicestershire, but still on the Trent gravels (at around 32m OD), a group of ring-ditches and round mounds, all much reduced by ploughing, lies near Lockington, where excavation of two mounds (one partial in 1954, the other total in 1994, respectively at SK 465288 and 471291, over 30m and 25m in diameter) has demonstrated each to be of Early-Bronze-Age construction and to have seen use for burial (Posnansky 1955b; Hughes 2000).¹⁷ It is the mound sampled in the 1950s that commands attention here. Lately known as Lockington 'Site I' (*ibid.*, 1), it was treated to preliminary contour-survey (apparently executed 'at 0.2ft intervals', though published at 0.4 ft, or *c.* 0.12m — Posnansky 1955b, 18, fig. 2), showing it to stand 0.8–0.9m above the general level of the surrounding land, while excavation of cross sections unearthed cremated human remains near its centre, and these were associated with a notable group of artefacts, including a flat knife/dagger of bronze plus plano-convex knives and a barbed-and-tanged arrowhead of flint (*ibid.*, 19–21; Green 1980, 131, 134, 249, 251). Significantly, this burial was incorporated within the mound at some height above an 'old ground level' which, at the time of excavation, was evidently separated from the overriding modern ploughsoil by barely 0.3m of upcast material, while the cremation was actually found to have been 'disturbed by the plough'. Here again, the potential of this precious example of a prehistoric land-surface for archaeological investigation will have increased immeasurably over the ensuing half-century, not least in light of improvements in techniques of palaeo-environmental interrogation of such

soils. Meantime, however, the prospects for survival of that store of information appear to have diminished at an alarming rate — just 53 years after it could be ‘located on the ground as a large low spreading mound’ (Posnansky 1955b, 17), Lockington I has been virtually flattened by cultivation (as predicted — *ibid.*, 18), becoming barely discernible amid the ploughed field, where it would certainly no longer be noticeable without prior knowledge of its exact location coupled with the eye of faith. ‘Numerous eroded sherds’ of Romano-British pottery recovered from some 0.5m above the base of its buried ring-ditch (*ibid.*, 20, fig. 2 — the ditch penetrating gravel by little short of 1.0m in the published sections) suggest that the mound was not greatly eroded over the first two millennia and more of its existence; and a good part of that ditch will probably have escaped denudation to this day. However, given that Posnansky excavated only *c.* 11% of the *c.* 760m² encircled by the ditch (*i.e.* the basal area of the Early-Bronze-Age mound and the principal interest of the site), it must be feared that any additional deposits contemporary with the central cremation, or indeed relevant to other episodes in the history of this mound, will have succumbed by now.

Also on the Trent gravels, but much farther downstream in Nottinghamshire (at less than 10m OD, to the south of Cromwell — SK 798608), partial excavation in 1950 of a round mound, roughly 20m in diameter, provided hints of historic, but conceivably secondary, usage for the foundation of a post-mill, stood within a penannular ditch which some hold to resemble that of a henge (Harding and Lee 1987, 221–4 — there called ‘Elmsley Lodge’; Whimster 1989, 69, figs 39.B and 41); and cartographic evidence of the 17th and 18th centuries confirms the former existence of a windmill thereabouts.¹⁸ This single example may serve as a reminder of one of several possible reasons for constructing round mounds (and other local examples of mill-mounds are known [*e.g.* Oswald 1938, 2, 11], just as other historic purposes could be rehearsed), sounding a further note of caution against presuming either a prehistoric origin or a funerary function for any of the unexcavated Derbyshire mounds remarked above. In similar vein, it bears noting that the most numerous group of round mounds at any point in the Trent Valley, set upon its southern flank at over 100m OD and above the fluvial terracing (within Heath Wood, near Ingleby in Derbyshire — SK 3425), is famous for its burials of Viking age, though admittedly those fifty-nine barrows are comparatively small, few exceeding 10m in diameter, some as little as 5–6m, in so far as can be discerned from reports upon recent fieldwork (Richards *et al.* 1995; Richards 2004).¹⁹

CONCLUSIONS

Although currently under grass, much of the extensive tract of river-terrace lying within Egginton parish has clearly been well suited to cultivation in the past, as witness excellent preservation of sizeable ridge-and-furrow earthworks, presumed medieval in origin and later put down to pasture within a patchwork of hedged fields. These earthworks extend virtually unbroken across much the southern portion of the parish, covering the best part of 2km² of the terrace (*cf.* Dalton 1991, 88, map 3 — combining post-medieval and air-photographic evidence for open-field/ridge-and-furrow agriculture), and ending little more than 150m to the north-west of our mound, with none now apparent in Hull Bank field. This physical evidence correlates with that of the cited

documents in showing that what was to become known as Hull Bank in the 19th century had been part of hoary Hargate Pasture in the 18th century (and who can tell how long before that?). It could well have been this one-time, and probably long-term, usage as common grazing that ensured the survival of the mound, keeping it beyond the reach of the open-field arable.

Now, it should be borne in mind that, even after so long an absence, agriculture could be introduced to Hull Bank at any time, thereby jeopardizing the mound. Moreover, despoliation by gravel-extraction has lately reached to within 600m of the mound, from the north and north-east, and further expansion of quarrying seems likely. These potential threats are a matter for concern because continued survival of any such earthwork, whatever its context of construction, would surely be of benefit to future researchers. So, even though, in the present state of knowledge, there can be no greater certainty of either the date or the purpose of the Hull Bank mound than there is of any other not yet investigated archaeologically, nor even of their great antiquity, it may be felt desirable that Hull Bank should to be afforded the statutory protection that obviously befits any such reservoir of archaeological potential.²⁰ Then again, it can scarcely be argued that many of the mounds discussed above have been well served through acquiring such a status, often decades ago (and yet such bad experiences cannot be permitted to dampen the archaeologist's instinct to preserve where possible).

Our simple contour-plan and profiles of the hitherto-unrecognized mound at Hull Bank, following the lead set first by Posnansky and then by Losco-Bradley, have created a superficial record as good as any so far compiled for any extant earthwork in the Trent Valley. Sadly, this statement qualifies more as an expression of disappointment than compliment, for the potential utility of such a three-dimensional record seems palpable enough, and this makes it perplexing that so many of the other local mounds, all known to exist for so much longer than that at Hull Bank and, in some cases, adduced so frequently in the literature, have yet to be adequately recorded even as surface features.²¹ Perhaps the greatest surprise and discouragement in all this, however, is the fact that the Hull Bank mound should have gone unnoticed by archaeologists for so long — it is hardly as though this were a remote spot or hidden from view — and this can but lead us to wonder whether more of its sort, and maybe other forms of earthwork, remain to be discovered even in so well-trod and overflowed an area of the Midlands. If this should point up an undeniable need for more concerted fieldwork, it may be equally valid to conclude that complementary research into cartographic and other documentary sources could have much to offer in furnishing clues to the likely locations of earthworks that might still survive on historic grazing-land (in neighbouring counties as well as in Derbyshire — *ibid.*, 88), for other blocks of former common pasture on the valley-floor of the Trent and its tributaries may also have come to receive tell-tale field-names following enclosure, just as in the case of Hull Bank on Hargate Pasture.

NOTES

- ¹ We are indebted to Mr J. Archer and Mrs W. Orton for permission to conduct the survey on their land; also to Wayne S. Loe for inadvertently ensuring that we found the mound.
- ² Cameron (1959, 672, 715) regarded 'banke' as 'rare' among field-names in Derbyshire, citing only one instance in the southern part of the county, though he omitted to list 'Hull Bank' (so too 'Hargate') in Egginton (*ibid.*, 460–1).

- ³ In etymology, it seems there are always alternatives — so ‘hull’ might be taken to refer to the adjacent river, ‘deep’ or ‘muddy’, as suggested for the name of the River Hull in eastern Yorkshire (Mills 1998, 207), while there are circumstances in which it can relate to a ‘shed’ (e.g. Smith 1956, 268; Ekwall 1960, 256; Field 1993, 209).
- ⁴ Just as can be stated in respect of the other Derbyshire mounds considered here.
- ⁵ Corruption of ‘haugr’, Old Norse for ‘hill’ or ‘tumulus’, is a tempting explanation in the present context, but we are unsure whether this could be sustained etymologically (e.g. Smith 1956, 235; Ekwall 1960, 225; Gelling 1978, 137–8). Anyway, ‘haugr’ is said to be ‘uncommon’ in Derbyshire (Cameron 1959, 705, 733).
- ⁶ Land between the River Trent and the eastern edge of Egginton’s Hargate Pasture (as per Dalton 1991, map 2) is in Newton Solney parish, but it too was part of ‘Hargate Common Pasture’, as named along the edge of the 1849 ‘plan of the parish of Egginton. . .referred to by the instrument of tithe apportionment’, and as confirmed in the 1846 tithe-apportionment for Newton Solney, wherein the same land is called ‘The Hargate’. These apportionments inform us that Hargate Pasture included over 41 acres in Egginton and over 44 acres in Newton Solney.
- ⁷ Actually, the 1798 enclosure-award specifies that a ‘bridge shall be erected’ on this ‘Newton Road’, presumably to span the Trent, though the 1850 map prepared to accompany the 1846 tithe-apportionment for Newton Solney annotates ‘Ford & Ferry’ at the relevant point, immediately downstream of the Dove confluence — so, if a bridge was ever built, it cannot have lasted the half-century.
- ⁸ The Roman’s Ryknield Street passes through Egginton parish, at some 0.9km to the north-west of Hargate Pasture, surely too distant to have lent its identity to that block of land.
- ⁹ The enclosure-award and tithe-apportionment show that there were other fields named ‘Hargate’ in Egginton, and there seems no reason why they too should not have related to long-term rights of pasture, for most of them remained ‘old turf’ in 1848. Midway up the eastern side of the parish, near its boundary with Willington (about SK 2828), there was a group of enclosures, totalling more than 26 acres, called ‘Elmhurst Hargate’, each with a different prefix; and well to the north, there were 12.4 acres of ‘Hargate Meadow’ (i.e. the central of three small patches of ‘former common pasture’ in the north-western part of the parish in Dalton 1991, map 2). It deserves notice that, just beyond the northern boundary, in Hilton parish, there was ‘Hargate Manor’ (around SK 2629), a name which Cameron (1959, 568) has equated with ‘Herdwic’, through ‘Hardwick’, meaning herd-farm, though he acknowledged that ‘late interchange of *wic* and *geat* or *gata* is unusual’, and it may be that he was mistaken anyway, for Craven and Stanley (1991, 82) tell of a ‘Hargate Manor’ and a ‘Hardwick Manor’ at Egginton. Nevertheless, Cameron’s comment draws attention to another possible reading of the second element of ‘Hargate’, which can sometimes mean literally what it says, being derived from Old English ‘geat’, and said to be difficult to separate from ‘gata’ (e.g. Smith 1956, 198; Cameron 1959, 681, 729–30; Ekwall 1960, 194) — in which case, it is worthy of note too that the ‘highway’ established by the enclosure-award was to ‘. . .extend from the Gate leading into the Hargate. . .’, so maybe that ‘Gate’ was a particularly prominent feature.
- ¹⁰ As compared with the full area recorded in 2006, Fig. 1 excludes a *c.* 10m-wide strip along the south and *c.* 5m along both west and east. The survey-data was compiled over a single day in the field, and it was not possible in that time to relate our spot-heights to Ordnance Datum (there being no bench-mark close at hand) — hence the contour-lines in Fig. 1, rising from all sides of the plan in arbitrary units of 0.10m, are left unnumbered, and the OD height of the location can be estimated no more accurately than *c.* 43m.
- ¹¹ For terminology, see, for example, Ashbee 1960, 24–9 or Woodward 2000, 16–19. The Hull Bank mound seems unlikely to have become sufficiently spread to have entirely masked the existence of a ditch of a size commensurate with that of the mound, though, several among

- those mentioned in this paper (including Swarkestone Lowes II and IV, Aston 1, Lockington I and VI) can give the lie to any supposition that a barrow which appears ditchless superficially today has always been so, for each of those mounds, degraded by ploughing but still evident in the field in the 20th century, has been shown by way of cropmarks and excavation to have spread far enough to smother a ditch.
- 12 David Knight has confirmed that he was mistaken in stating that Round Hill has undergone ‘detailed contour survey and geophysical survey’ (Knight and Howard 2004, 63).
 - 13 Some consider the Round Hill mound to be a ‘possible contender’ for a chambered ‘great barrow’ of the Neolithic (Loveday 2004, 4; Clay 2006, 80), and, if that suggestion were deemed to be valid, there seems no obvious reason why it should not be thought equally apposite to the two other biggest surviving mounds in southern Derbyshire (*i.e.* Hoon Mount and Swarkestone Lowes I) or, for that matter, to some of equivalent diameter that have suffered greater denudation.
 - 14 That said, it has been claimed that upstanding ‘earthworks’ of a ‘henge monument’ are to be seen at Gunthorpe in Nottinghamshire (as noticed in recent general reviews of the period in this region — Knight and Howard 2004, 47, 63; Clay 2006, 70), and, if correctly identified, it would seem desirable that those earthworks should soon be subject to close survey. When seeking to make their own judgement of the form of the Gunthorpe earthwork, the present writers found the landowner unwilling to permit access to the site.
 - 15 Comparison of the Swarkestone Lowes contour-plans of 1955 and 1983–4 suggests that the figures for reduction in height should really have been around 1.0m in respect of Barrow II, nearer 1.4m for Barrow IV. However, Posnansky states of II that the mound was ‘four and a half feet in height above the general field level’ (1955a, 124), which seems to match his section-drawing (*ibid.*, fig. I); while Greenfield states that mound IV was ‘4 ft in height’ before his 1956 excavation (1960, 2), and this too matches his section-drawing (*ibid.*, fig. 3). Alas, all of this suggests that Posnansky’s piecemeal contour-plan (1955a, fig. II) is somehow misleading.
 - 16 Recent comment upon Aston 1, by Loveday (1999, 136; 2000; 2004, 10), has posited, then scotched, a notion that ‘ring gullies. . .sealed by the beaker barrow’ could have represented ‘ephemeral structures’ erected within the Neolithic cursus, concluding that the so-called ‘gullies’ were really ‘probable animal burrows’. This revelation is bound to call into question the integrity both of Reaney’s ‘hearth’ and, more especially, of deposits claimed to have been associated with it, since the ‘hearth’ (actually a sizeable pit bearing ‘clear evidence of fire’) can hardly have been ‘cut into’ one of the gullies/burrows (*pace* Reaney 1968, 70–1; Loveday 1999, 136; 2000, 439), though Loveday’s faith in the ‘hearth’, and the oft-quoted radiocarbon-date taken from carbonized grain believed to have been connected with it, seems undimmed. However, none of this must be allowed to diminish the value of protecting Aston 1 for the further investigation which alone can now be expected to unravel such tricky issues of taphonomy.
 - 17 It is reported that the mound excavated ahead of motorway-construction in 1994, ‘Lockington VI’, ‘could be distinguished within the cultivated field. . .about 0.3m high’, and that ‘a contour survey was undertaken prior to excavation’ (Hughes 2000, 4), but this has not been published.
 - 18 Results of the 1950 excavation into the Cromwell mound are summarized in Dauncey and Hurrell 1951, where the foundation-trenches taken by us to have held the cross-trees of a post-mill are the ‘two intersecting ditchlets’, there interpreted as ‘robber trenches’ — it is intended to explain this re-interpretation more fully in another place. That mound could still be seen as a gentle rise in the midst of a ploughed field when the writers last looked for it (late in the 1990s), but it would not be appropriate here to elaborate upon the condition of a monument situated at such distance beyond the boundary of Derbyshire.

- ¹⁹ Short of recourse to the ground, dimensions of most of the Heath Wood mounds can only be measured from an overall schematic plan of the cemetery, published at a scale (1:2000) that shows little of the shape of individual mounds, which are depicted by sparse hachuring, telling nothing of the third dimension (Richards *et al.* 1995, fig. 2; Richards 2004, fig. 15), though it is an improvement upon the yet smaller and more schematic ‘general plan’ in Clarke and Fraser 1946. As at Swarkestone Lowes and Lockington, Posnansky’s project at Heath Wood included contouring (at 6”, or 0.15m, vertical interval) of each of the six mounds that he was about to excavate (1956, fig. 2), but no contoured plans of the three excavated in 1998–2000 are included in the published account (Richards 2004).
- ²⁰ In present circumstances, scheduling of Hull Bank would seem especially beneficial because, being long out of cultivation, the threat from ploughing, which has done so much harm to the likes of Swarkestone Barrows II–VI, Aston 1 and Lockington I, could be effectively ruled out for the foreseeable future.
- ²¹ This shortcoming of the archaeological record of lowland Derbyshire is not restricted to its round mounds, but extends to other, more complex, forms of earthwork, as one of the present writers has recently had occasion to lament (Guilbert 2004).

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