THE SEARCH FOR THE EARLY MEDIEVAL BURGH OF DERBY

By CHRIS WARDLE

INTRODUCTION

Some 45 years ago, not long after reporting on his excavation of the site of what was to become the site of the 20th century incarnation of Derby's Assembly Rooms, Richard Hall published a paper with the title of *The Pre-Conquest Burgh of Derby,* investigating the likely origins of the town. Hall's article runs to a mere seven pages. Its brevity reflects the dearth of evidence available at the time. Hall suggested three strands of evidence that would have to be pursued in any attempt to understand more about the origins of the town in the early medieval period. (The term 'early medieval' is used in this article to define the period between the departure of the Roman legions in the early 5th century and the Norman Conquest in the 11th century.) The three strands are, the examination of documentary evidence; the analysis of the topography of the area; and the use of archaeological investigation (Hall 1974, 18). This article is an attempt to explore how far our understanding of the origins of Derby has advanced since 1974.

THE ROMAN FORT AT LITTLE CHESTER

In his discussion of the documentary evidence, Hall makes it clear that the role the site of the Roman fort at Little Chester might have played in the history of the early burgh needs to be considered when appraising the early development of the town. Before considering the origins of the burgh on the west side of the River Derwent that eventually developed into today's city, we shall examine what is known about the Roman fort on the other side of the river.

Little Chester lies on the east bank of the River Derwent, roughly 1km upstream of the Cathedral. It is widely accepted that Little Chester was the site named *Derbentione* in the *Ravenna Cosmography*, a 7th century copy of a diagrammatic map of the roads of the Roman Empire. The site of the fort is referred to in *Domesday Book* as *Cestre* and as *Parva Cestria* in a document of the 13th century. Both these names imply that the Roman defences were evident when these documents were produced. So it comes as no surprise to learn that when the antiquary William Stukeley first visited the site in the early 18th century, he witnessed a set of defences in the form of a wall and a ditch. These defences were in the shape of a parallelogram, enclosing an area of 600ft by 500ft (*c*. 2.9 ha.). Unfortunately these defences were destroyed in the 1720s, and no trace of them is visible above ground today.

After Stukeley's day the site seems to have been largely forgotten until chance finds of Roman material began to be reported in the late 19th century (Ward 1889, 81). The first archaeological dig of any kind in the area does not seem to have taken place until the 1920s. This occurred after the discovery of the remains of a substantial Roman building some 137m to the south of the fort. It would appear that this excavation was not particularly scientific, and only a sketchy report was published (Sherwin 1925, 256; Brassington 1982b, 84). Shortly afterwards, five sets of human remains, apparently buried in a manner compatible with them

having been Christian, were found seemingly within the defences of the fort. Unfortunately, what may have been a very significant find was not the subject of a systematic excavation (Clews 1927, 376).

After another lengthy period, during which no excavations appear to have taken place in the vicinity of the fort, there was a burst of archaeological activity that started in the late 1960s and continued into the early 1980s. During these years a series of excavations examined the fort and its associated civil settlements in some detail. Unfortunately, examination of the fort itself was restricted by limitations on what land was accessible within the line of the defences, and by limitations both of time and of funding. Much of the effort went into cutting slot trenches across of the defences, in an attempt to establish a firm chronology. Relatively little of the fort interior was examined, only perhaps in the region of 4% of the total area. Fortunately, one open-area trench was excavated within the defences and several open-area trenches were opened both across the defences and in the extra-mural area to the east of the fort. These excavations were systematic and the resulting reports have been fully published (Webster 1961, 85-110; Todd 1966, 103-104; Brassington 1968, 60-67; Dool 1972a, 5-14; Brassington 1982a, 74-83; Annable and Wheeler 1985, 33-37; Wheeler 1985a, 38-153; Langley and Drage 2000, 123-287; Sparey-Green 2002, 1-326).

These investigations established that the earliest fort at Little Chester was built in the AD 80s and that civil settlements rapidly developed to the east and south of the fort. Activity in the fort and its associated civilian settlements continued into the first half of the 4th century. The fort underwent several reorganizations over the centuries. There appear to have been occasional surges in military activity followed by lengthy periods of relative inactivity. After the mid 4th century, however, both the fort and the associated civil settlements seem to have entered a terminal decline (Wheeler 1985b, 300-304).

In spite of this seemingly terminal decline, there are indications that the fort was used after the Roman legions left Britain in the early 5th century. This evidence comes in the form of the discovery of a part of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery, probably of the 5th and 6th centuries. In all 16 graves were discovered: one cut a Roman well close to the rampart of the fort, there was also a loose scatter of graves amongst the remains of a series of Roman buildings, some 50m from the eastern defences, whilst a tighter cluster lay 10-15m to the north-east. It is unclear as to how the fort was used in this period, as the Anglo-Saxon graves are the only evidence we have for early Anglo-Saxon activity in the fort environs.

There is also evidence from several centuries later for the fort's defences seemingly having been restored in the late 9th and 10th centuries. This evidence is in the form of traces of a bastion added to the north-east corner of the wall (Sparey-Green 2002, 139-146).

THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Having summarised what is known about Little Chester, we now turn to look at what is known about Derby itself, starting with documentary evidence for settlement in the early medieval period. There is little in the way of direct documentary evidence and what direct documentary evidence we have is restricted mainly to a handful of references in Saxon literature to events that appear to have occurred either in the burgh itself, or else in its environs.

The earliest recorded event associated with Derby is the transfer of the remains of St Alkmund from their original location to Derby. Alkmund was a son of Alhred, a King of Northumbria. At the time of his death, Alkmund was living in exile in Mercia. There are two versions of Alkmund's death. One account tells us that, in the year 800, he and his followers

were seized and killed on the orders of Eardwulf, who was at the time King of Northumbria. The other version of his death comes down to us in a chronicle compiled by a 14th century monk. In the 14th century version, in 802 Alkmund joined with Ethelmund, a Mercian sub-king, in a raid on Wessex. They fought a battle against the men of Wiltshire, at Kempsford on the Thames, at which both Ethelmund and Alkmund, who is described as a 'martyr', were killed. There is no way of knowing which of these accounts is the more accurate. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the battle of Kempsford but does not mention Alkmund's role in it. It is the 14th century account which tells us that Alkmund was initially buried at the monastery at Lilleshall (formerly in Staffordshire, now in Shropshire) and that his remains were later removed to Derby to be reburied,

'… in the church on the north side distinguished by his name. In which place he is famed for many miracles and is widely honoured by Northumbrians coming on pilgrimage.'

A similar account of St Alkmund's final resting place comes down to us via an anonymous tract assembled in the late 10th century and compiled and translated into Latin in the 11th century. This informs us that,

'St Alkmund [rests] in the minster called Northworthy, beside the Derwent.'

In neither account is it clear when or why St Alkmund's relics were transferred to Derby, but it is probably safe to assume that it took place in the first half of the 9th century, before the Vikings[1] had made significant incursions (Ralegh Radford 1976, 55).

Next in the sequence of recorded events to be associated with Derby was the transference of another set of human remains from their original resting place for reburial in the town. In this case, the body was that of Æthelwulf, an ealdorman, or high-ranking royal official. Æthelwulf was already an ealdorman when the King of Mercia granted him an estate in Berkshire in the 840s. It seems that he continued to hold office when the West Saxons gained control over that part of Berkshire. In 871 he was killed, near Reading, in a battle against the Vikings. The earliest account of the reburial appears in the chronicle of Æthelweard, which was written towards the end of the 10th century. Æthelweard records that Æthelwulf's body was removed in secret, and reburied at 'Northworthy', although the Danes call it 'Derby' (Hall 1974, 17). Again it is not clear exactly when the remains were removed, apparently at some risk, nor why Derby was chosen as the site of the reburial.

For the next 40 or so years Derby receives no mentioned in the historical record. The area probably fell under Viking control sometime around the winter of 873-4. The Heathen Army, the name given by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* to the Viking invasion force that operated in England in the late 860s and 870s, spent that winter at Repton, which lies only six miles to the south-west of Derby (Biddle & Kjølbye-Biddle 1992, 37). In 878 the forces of Wessex, under Alfred the Great, checked the Viking invasion in a battle that probably took place somewhere in south-western England. As a result, Alfred made a treaty with Guthrum, the Viking commander. Under the terms of this treaty Mercia was divided in two; one portion, in the south and the west, was to be under Saxon control whilst the remainder was to be under Viking control. Later writers often refer to the area under Viking influence under the terms of the treaty as 'The Danelaw'. Derby seems to have lain in The Danelaw at this time, and it is commonly believed that the Vikings began settling The Danelaw in the latter part of the 9th century (Hall 1974, 17).

The next mention of the town comes from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for 917. In spite of the treaty between Alfred and Guthrum, hostilities between those who identified themselves as Saxon and those who saw themselves as Viking had not ended in the 870s.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reveals that the period from the 9th century to the 11th century witnessed several episodes of warfare between Saxons and the Vikings. During the second decade of the 10th century Edward the Elder, King of Wessex and eldest son of Alfred the Great, and his sister, Æthelflæda, wife of the King of Saxon Mercia, embarked on a campaign to recapture those parts of Mercia under Viking influence. According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Æthelflæda's first target was Derby, which she took with the loss of four of her thanes, who died 'within the gates' in 917.

Other than a passing reference to an earthquake, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* only makes one further mention of Derby. This comes in the entry for 942 where it is listed as one of the Five Burghs freed from Viking rule by King Edmund, the King of Wessex. The town had probably fallen-back under Viking control not long after the campaigns of Æthelflæda and Edward the Elder. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* is silent as to when this occurred, but both Æthelflæda and Edward died soon after Æthelflæda had captured Derby. The year 920 witnessed a renewal of Viking military activity in the East Midlands and the Vikings probably retook Derby during the ensuing campaigns (Hall 1974, 17-18).

This takes us to the document that is seen as marking the end of the early medieval period, *The Domesday Book*. *Domesday* provides a record of England twenty years after the Norman Conquest, in the form of details of property holdings, with references to both taxable value and ownership. It also provides evidence for the state of the land immediately before the invasion, before suppression of the opposition to Norman rule. The picture that emerges of Derby in 1066 is of a substantial burgh with,

> '243 resident burgesses, of whom 41 had shares in the 12 carucates of land belonging to the borough. The king owned two collegiate churches … there were 14 mills and the town rendered £24 to the king.'

In 1066 there were two collegiate churches, one of which was St Alkmund's, and the other seems to have been All Saints' (Hall 1974, 18). There were four other churches and all six churches were still in existence twenty years later. The town appears, however, to have suffered greatly in the aftermath of the invasion, for at the time of the *Domesday* survey there were only 140 burgesses, and 130 houses were described as 'waste' (Yeatman 1886, 68).

Discussion of the Documentary Evidence

A number of questions arise when trying to understand the historical account of the transfer of the relics of St Alkmund from Lilleshall to Derby. One question is why were his remains transferred to Derby? We can only speculate that the transfer was the result of a need to raise the prestige either of the church or of the local ruler who controlled the church. Another question is as to whether the relics were placed in an existing church or in an entirely new foundation? Following the spread of a heathen Anglo-Saxon culture across eastern England in the 5th and 6th centuries, it is believed that Christianity was reintroduced into north Mercia in the mid 7th century (Holly 1962, 289). So it would probably be reasonable to assume that St Alkmund's remains were transferred to an existing foundation. Only archaeological excavation has the potential to indicate whether this was in fact the case.

Hall understood the transfer of the body of Æthelwulf to Derby to imply that by the late 9th century the settlement on the western bank on the Derwent was 'of more than local importance', and at that time may have been the seat of a Mercian noble family (Hall 1974, 17). In his discussion of the account in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* of the capture of Derby by Æthelflæda, Hall raises the question as to whether it was the settlement in the vicinity of

St Alkmund's Church which was captured in 917 or whether it was the defended site at Little Chester. Much of Hall's argument hinges on the size of the invading Viking armies. Hall supported the view that the invading armies were numerically small, and imposed themselves as rulers over considerably larger local Anglo-Saxon populations. Recent archaeological findings have cast doubt upon assumptions about the small sizes of invading Viking armies (Hadley and Richards 2016, 58-59). This, however, does not invalidate Hall's view that a Viking military elite may have decided to restore the defences at Little Chester, when faced by attack from Anglo-Saxon armies in the early 10th century, rather than construct a completely new set of defences to the west of the Derwent (Hall 1974, 19). Yet we cannot rule out also the possibility that it was the Saxons who reinforced the defences of the old Roman fort in the face of the threat posed by the Vikings. In the absence of secure evidence for pre-Conquest defences in the area of the medieval town both of these must remain valid hypotheses.

Unquestionably, the picture for the pre-Conquest burgh of Derby presented in *Domesday Book* is one of a considerable town and it would seem that in 1066 Derby was a much larger burgh than Nottingham. In the aftermath of the Conquest, *Domesday Book* seems to indicate that Derby was eclipsed in importance by Nottingham. This eclipse can probably be explained by the advantages Nottingham had in terms of its strategic location close to a major crossing over the River Trent. Yet, Hall raises questions as to how far the picture of the town in 1066 can be relied upon. Some historians point to the fact that the entry for the Burgh of Derby is found in the folio for the County of Nottinghamshire. They suggest that the entries for Derby and for Nottingham might have been conflated in some respects, and as a result they question the accuracy of the entry for Derby as a whole (Hall 1974, 18).

Apart from Hall, the only other writer to discuss the origins of the early medieval town of Derby in any detail is Jane Steer. Steer's account appeared in a series of articles in *Derbyshire Miscellany* in the late 1980s. Her analysis is based almost entirely on documentary evidence, principally cartularies and rentals detailing the land that Burton Abbey held in Derby. She also compares the evidence in the medieval documents to that contained in a series of tithe maps produced in the period 1820-1830 and what they revealed regarding the church parish boundaries within the Borough of Derby. In her intricate discussion Steer traces an outline of the Abbey's holdings in and around the town in the early part of the Middle Ages, and attempts to tie the locations recorded in medieval documents with features on 19th century maps. On the basis of her studies, Steer argues that by the late 8th century Derby consisted of three elements: to the north lay the Church of St Alkmund (presumably together with its own community), to the south-west, across Markeaton Brook, lay the church of St Werburgh, and beyond it another community following the course of the present Wardwick. According to Steer, between the two churches there was a 'royal estate centre' straddling modern Queen Street. Steer also postulates the existence of a market area linking her 'royal estate centre' with St Werburgh's. She goes on to suggest that by AD 900 the western end of modern Sadler Gate had been developed, and that between the early 10th century and mid 11th century, the town had expanded considerably and that the churches of All Saints and St Michael had been established together with the now lost Church of St Mary (Steer 1988, 118-139; Steer 1989, 2-26; Steer 1990, 123-124).

Steer's historiography was challenged by another historian who put forward alternative interpretations before concluding that the subject remained a mystery (Tranter 1990, 52-76). One of the fundamental assumptions underlying Steer's discussion is that the Church of St Werburgh is a considerably older foundation than is the Church of All Saints, now

the Cathedral. In truth there is no basis for this assumption, other than that the former is dedicated to a Saxon saint and the latter is not. According to a document produced in the late 13th century All Saints' church was one of the collegiate churches in the town that were held by the king in 1066 (Hall 1974, 18). Medieval churches on the sites of the current St Werburgh's church and the current All Saints church were torn down in the early 18th century and replaced by new churches. In neither instance was there any form of investigation either of the site or of the medieval church. So all we really know of the foundation dates of both churches is that they both date from some time before 1066.

THE TOPOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

Hall neatly summarised the overall topography of the area where he suspected the early medieval burgh would have lain. He describes the 'relatively elevated' situation of the area occupied by both All Saints and St Alkmund's Churches. On its eastern side, it is a location both defended by the River Derwent, where it overlooked an important ford across the river 'known later as the Causey', and located just to the south of St Mary's bridge. Markeaton Brook would, he suggested, have defended the southern and western flanks of the area (Hall 1974, 21).

With the exception of Markeaton Brook, which she agrees formed a natural barrier, Steer in her discussion of topography chooses to focus on small scale boundaries shown on 19th century maps and identifies a number of such features; the curving property boundaries at the western end of Sadler Gate, what appears to be an 'U-shaped' inlet just to the north-west of the curving property boundaries and what she identifies as 'more or less parallel' parish boundaries (Steer 1989, 3).

It is difficult to readily identify the origins either of the curving property boundaries or of the 'U-shaped' inlet identified by Steer. It may be that both sets of features were products of an area of open land being developed at a time after surrounding areas had already been built upon. This phenomenon often leads to people dividing-up the land in a manner that allows them to maximise the number of street frontages within the area to be developed. Evidence for whether this was the case can only be provided by archaeological investigations.

The most likely reason for Steer's 'more or less parallel' parish boundaries relates to the clustering of pre-Conquest churches along what she describes in her initial article as 'the North/South spine road' (Steer 1988, 129). This thoroughfare was evidently an important aspect in the early development of the town, and is referred to in one medieval document as 'Great Street' (Mallender 1972, 88). This street almost certainly predated Derby's urban development. It is a route that runs north to south through the historic core of the modern city. To the north of the historic core, it begins as King Street which makes a couple of kinks as it proceeds to the south. The northern kink seems to be to allow for the medieval junction with the road running towards the medieval bridge, known as Bridge Gate (Bain 2006). The southern kink was probably to cater for a junction with another, earlier, thoroughfare that led north-east towards the Causey ford, a route which no longer exists. To the south the thoroughfare straightened where it is followed by modern Queen Street and Iron Gate. Further south it crosses the western edge of the modern Market Place and continues along Corn Market. Beyond the route is followed by the current St Peter's Street. The primacy of this route is demonstrated by the fact that all of the property boundaries and nearly all of the routes that meet it do so more or less at right angles. It is the relationship between this long-lived route and the property boundaries identified by Steer that led to the 'more or less parallel'19th century parish boundaries.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE IN 1974

Steer makes few references to archaeological findings. Whereas Hall would probably have wished to make more of any archaeological evidence, but little such evidence was available at the time when he wrote his article. Hall was only able to discuss the findings from the two systematic excavations that had taken place within the core of the medieval town prior to the publication of his article (Fig. 1).

One of these excavations took place on the site of St Alkmund's church (Fig. 1, EDR396). At the time when Hall wrote his article, Ralegh Radford had yet to publish his final report on the excavation which took place between 1967 and 1968. An outline of the findings from the excavation at St Alkmund's was reported in the journal *Medieval Archaeology* (Wilson and Hurst 1968, 151; Wilson and Hurst 1969, 231), so Hall would have been aware that the earliest stone church on the site was believed to date from *c*. 800.

Ralegh Radford published his final report on the excavations on the site in 1976. In this report he informs us that the earliest church he was able to identify on the site was a stone built church. This church consisted of a nave, flanked by two portici, with a narrower annexe to the east. Based on the findings of excavations of the pre-Norman church at Winchester, Ralegh Radford understood that liturgical arrangements of mid Anglo-Saxon churches differed from those of later churches. At this time the altar normally stood at the eastern end of the nave, rather than in a chancel. So it was significant that a richly decorated sarcophagus was unearthed in the south-eastern corner of the nave. The sarcophagus was decorated on four sides and it almost certainly had an equally ornate cover, only a fragment of which survives. Radford believed that the sarcophagus originally stood on open view at a place of high honour beside the altar. He considered it to be very likely that this sarcophagus housed the relics of St Alkmund. This, together with the identification of fragments of a 9th century high cross, indicated that the earliest stone church was a minster. Based on its plan, and on the incorporation of re-used fragments of 9th century sculptured stone in repairs to the earliest walls, the earliest stone church was considered to date 'back to a period before 800' (Ralegh Radford 1976, 34-61). In this case St Alkmund's remains would have been reburied in what was then a relatively new church.

One important issue is whether there had been an earlier, timber church on the site. Ralegh Radford (1976, 34) concedes that traces of such a wooden church may have been missed. His description of the excavations (1976, 29-30) makes it apparent that it was would have been difficult to interpret any such traces even if they had been visible. As a result we do not know for certain whether the Anglo-Saxon stone church identified by Ralegh Radford was in fact the earliest church on the site. If there was an earlier church in the Derby area, it might either have been a timber church on the site of what was to become the Church of St Alkmund, or else it may have been a church, either in wood or stone, built on completely different site. In view of the enigmatic discovery of apparently Christian burials, seemingly within the Roman fort defences (Clews 1927, 374), an earlier church may have been established within the old fort at Little Chester. As further archaeological fieldwork on the site of the Church of St Alkmund is no longer possible, only further archaeological fieldwork within the defences at Little Chester, leading to identification of either an earlier church or else manifestly Christian burials within a 7th or 8th century churchyard, would prove this hypothesis.

The only other excavation that informed Hall's 1974 article was his own dig on the site of the future Assembly Rooms (Fig. 1, EDR395). It is evident that Hall was disappointed by his

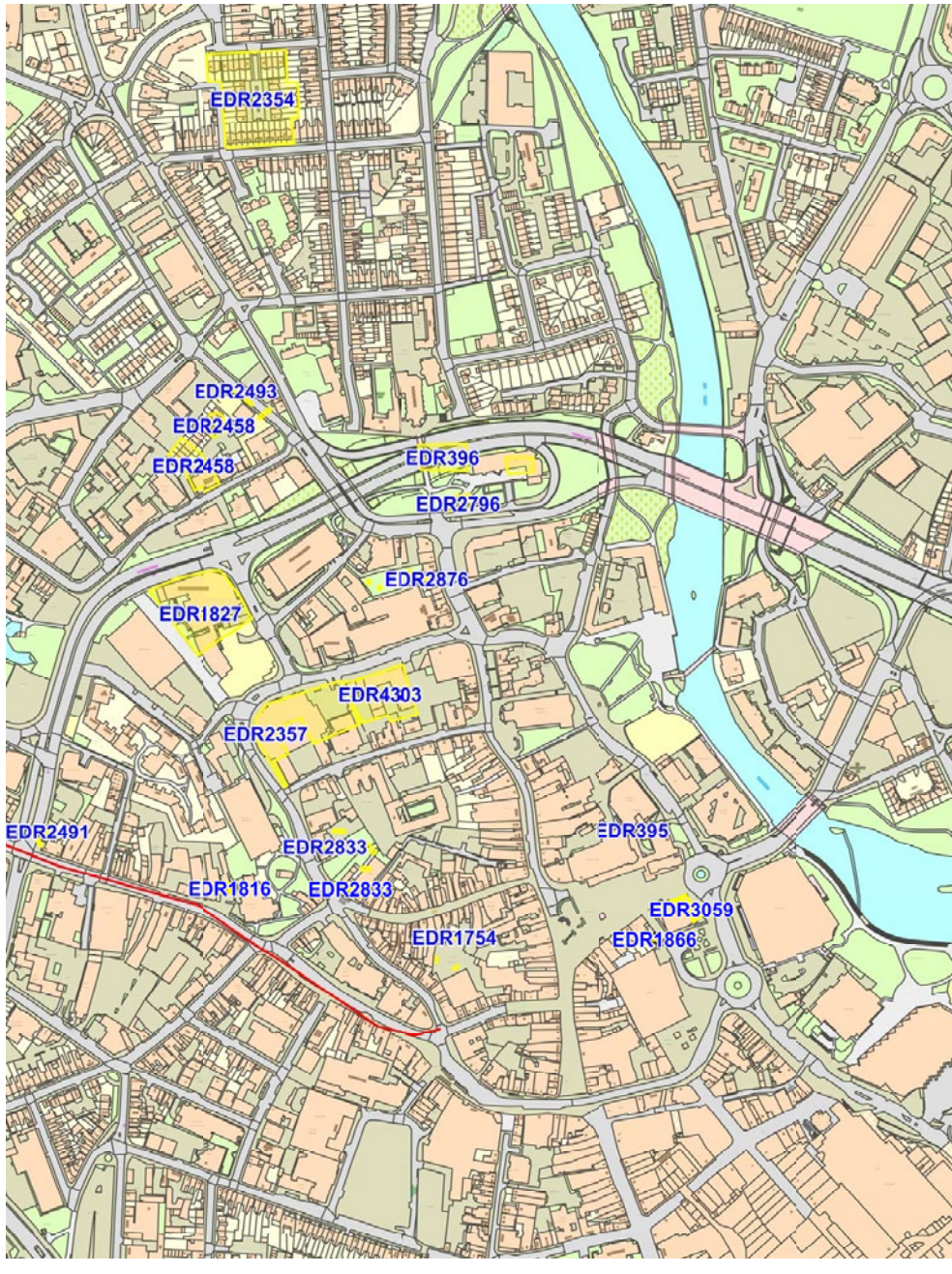

Fig. 1: The locations of archaeological projects in the centre of Derby.

failure to either recover pre-Conquest material or to reveal any features. Two important points have to be made in respect of Hall's excavation. The first is that the failure to find something during an excavation, especially an urban excavation, does not necessarily prove that it never existed. That something may have been destroyed or disguised by more recent activity, such as quarrying, the digging of drains and cellars or the removal and dumping of material (Carver 1987, 9-17). Hall makes it clear that site had been heavily disturbed (Hall and Coppack1972, 30-31). The second point is that the excavation report hints that significant time and resource constraints were imposed upon the excavators. As a consequence the archaeologists had to have a large amount of material removed using a mechanical excavator. After this a team of excavators, composed largely of volunteers, concentrated their work on the least disturbed part of the site (Hall and Coppack 1972, 29-31). It is possible, providing the excavators are highly trained and experienced, to overcome these kinds of constraints and to gain a reasonable understanding of deposits surviving on a heavily disturbed urban site. However, even with a very skilled team of diggers, gaining a full understanding of complex urban deposits is never easy (Carver 1987, 9-17). The report on the 1972 excavation implies that the constraints may have imposed limitations on understanding of the archaeological record.

By 1974 there had been a very few, small scale, excavations carried out within the medieval town. One such was the investigation of a pier of the medieval St Mary's Bridge, but this revealed no early medieval material (Dool 1972b, 28). Other excavations conducted in the city centre before 1974 never received any kind of written report, implying that little or nothing was found. As a result Hall was forced to concede that the questions he posed regarding the origins of Derby would have to be left for archaeologists to answer in the future (Hall 1974, 22).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK IN THE CITY CENTRE SINCE THE 1970s

During the 1950s, '60s and '70s the recording of buried archaeological remains affected by development schemes was not regarded as a priority in Derby. By 1970 all of the other four County Boroughs in the East Midlands region: Lincoln, Nottingham, Leicester and Northampton employed at least one full-time field archaeologist, whose job it was to record the archaeology of the town or city before it was destroyed by development. In Derby no one was charged with that specific responsibility. Although reports on the excavations at Full Street and at St Alkmund's Church indicate that museum officers did play a role in both digs, both projects were largely reliant on external staff and on volunteers (Hall and Coppack1972, 30-31; Ralegh Radford 1976, 26). This almost certainly explains why, during a period of extensive change in and around Derby's historic core, there were only two archaeological excavations of any consequence. It is also worth pointing out that both excavations took place only as a result of the involvement of the Borough Corporation in the developments. In the case of St Alkmund's the construction of a new road resulted in the demolition of a church that was believed to have Anglo-Saxon origins. In the case of Full Street the Corporation was to build a civic centre. Where commercial developers were involved, even when the development lay within the core of the medieval town, as was the case with the original Eagle Centre, there appears to have been no archaeological fieldwork of any consequence.

During the mid and late 1970s the main manifestation of DoE funding of archaeological projects[2] was the series of excavations that took place in and around the Roman fort at Little Chester (see above). Although DoE provided a core staff, these excavations were also heavily

reliant on volunteers and the assistance provided the Borough Corporation. Closure of the local regional research committee, the Trent Valley Archaeological Research Committee, was probably one reason why some of these excavations had to wait more than 40 years before their findings were published (Sparey-Green 2002, 3).

The 1980s were a quite a barren time for archaeological fieldwork in Derby. Without anyone specifically employed to conduct archaeological fieldwork in the city, there was no one to act as a sponsor for any archaeological projects funded by government job creation schemes[3]. Only as a result of the strengthening of legislation protecting Scheduled Monuments was some additional fieldwork conducted within the Roman fort at Little Chester (Langley and Drage 2000, 123-124).

Derby City Council, the name by which the former Borough Corporation has been known since Derby became a city, was one of the more reluctant planning authorities when it came to adopting *Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (PP16)*.[4] By the 1980s the Derby Museum and Art Gallery possessed a basic Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).[5] This was maintained by one of the museum curators, but only when time allowed and was not a part of their official duties. This record formed the basis of the City Council's archaeological advice, which was also provided by the same curator on an *ad hoc* basis until the early 2000s. Eventually the information held in the City's SMR was incorporated into the Derbyshire Historic Environment Record, maintained by full-time staff working for the County Council, and in 2002 the City Council entered into an agreement with the County Council whereby it would use the archaeological advice service, provided by the County Archaeologist and staff.

An examination of the number of archaeological projects entailing fieldwork (building recording, watching briefs, trial trenching and full scale archaeological excavation) undertaken within 1km of the Market Place is revealing. During the 45 years between the end of the Second World War and the publication of PPG16 there appear to have been 8 projects involving fieldwork in this area, including the excavations on Full Street and at the site of St Alkmund's Church. In the years 1990 to 2000 there were 19 such projects. Whilst in the period 2001 to 2010 there were 49 archaeological fieldwork projects in the same area (Derbyshire County Council, 2018).

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OBTAINED SINCE 1974

Of the archaeological projects which have taken place in Derby since 1974 relatively few have had the potential to provide new evidence for the origins of the City. Many, for instance, entailed the recording of standing buildings and many entailing excavation took place well beyond the city's historic core. As a result there has been only a modest number of fieldwork projects in the last 45 years in and around the core of the medieval burgh of Derby that have advanced our understanding of the origins of the town (Fig. 1).

EDR2354. Watching brief, North Street in 1999

Our first project took place well to the north of the area shown on John Speed's map of Derby. North Street lies to the west of the Derwent, roughly halfway between the enigmatic Roman site at Strutt's Park, on an elevated site just across the river from the fort at Little Chester, and the site of St Alkmund's Church. Roman material was first recorded in the Strutt's Park area in the 1920s, but by this time most of the area had been developed. In more recent years there have been a number of very small-scale investigations in the vicinity Strutt's Park (Forest

1967, 162-165; Brassington 1970, 22-30; Dool 1985, 15-30). From this work it is apparent that Roman activity to the west of the Derwent began some 20 years before the fort at Little Chester was established. This has led to the theory that there was a permanent fort established in the Strutt's Park area before the Little Chester fort was established. Whilst this view may be correct, to date the evidence of an earlier fort to the west of the river is slim.

In 1999 small trial trenching and a watching brief was carried out on a site off North Street. This fieldwork identified traces of Roman structures and property boundaries. Roman activity on the site seems to have been quite brief, appearing to have begun in the mid 1st century and ended in the mid 2nd century. Following the mid 2nd century the site was abandoned and the site seems to have been given over to agriculture until the 19th century (Higgins 1999; Hill 1999).

EDR2493: Trial trenching, west of King Street and north of St Helen's Street, 2005

Three trial trenches were excavated on the line of a proposed road, in an area to the north of the area shown as having been developed on Speed's map. The northern trench contained a ditch of uncertain date at its southern end. The rest of the trench was taken up by various agricultural and dumping deposits. The middle trench contained traces of what the excavators believed to be a 'possible east-west aligned ditch' towards its north end. This 'possible … ditch' was considered to be possibly early medieval to mid-medieval in date and was filled by a series of sub-soil deposits. The foundations of a 17th century brick structure cut the northern part of the ditch fill. To the south of this trench a 'sub-rectangular' pit was recorded which was later in date than the ditch. The southern trench contained traces of yet another ditch filled by a series of subsoil deposits, towards the eastern end of the trench. Towards the centre of the trench traces of a series of post-medieval kilns were identified. The excavators believed that for the most part the area had been given over to pasture until the 17th century. After that time Derby's suburbs began to spread northwards along the road to Duffield (Hewitson 2005, 6 and 13-14).

EDR2458: Watching brief, on north side of St Helen's Street 2007: followed by excavation in the same area on the north side of St Helen's Street, 2015

Initially the area was the subject of a watching brief while the area was being decontaminated. The watching brief revealed that deposits in this area had been subject to a considerable degree of truncation. In spite of this disturbance, the archaeologists identified two sections of 'a deep feature'. In places this 'deep feature' was 'more than 2m deep'. The westernmost section of this feature was aligned SW-NE, but further to the north and east the course turned to be aligned WSW-ENE. The lower levels of the ditch fills appear to have dated to the 12th century. The archaeologists believed this feature to be the remains of the town ditch mentioned in 13th century documents (Derbyshire County Council, 2018).

In 2015 archaeologists returned to the site to try to add to the information recovered eight years before. These excavations confirmed that the 'deep feature' was even more substantial than first suspected. It was *c*.7m wide and 3.5m deep. This new information more or less confirmed identification of the deep feature as the medieval town ditch. The ditch appeared to have been backfilled in a single episode. The fill yielded a considerable volume of cultural material, even if organic material was reported as being 'poorly preserved' (Derbyshire Archaeological Advisory Committee, 2015).[6]

Just west of EDR2796: Watching brief, between St Alkmund's Way and King Street, to the west of Jurys Inn, 2000

This was a small-scale watching brief on a site that probably formed the southern part of St Alkmund's churchyard. Four articulated skeletons were recovered, one of which lay within the remains of a wooden coffin. There were also a number of disarticulated skeletal fragments, as might be expected at a location at which many generations of burials had been made. Two 19th century brick built chambers containing various skeletal fragments were also uncovered (Mora-Ottomano *et. al.* 2009). The brick-built chambers may well have been created to house remains that had been disturbed during construction of the Victorian church.

EDR2796: Trail trenching and excavation between St Alkmund's Way and King Street, the Site of Jurys Inn, 2003-4

This project was a result of the proposal to construct a large building on the south side of St Alkmund's Way. Much of the central and western part of the site had coincided with the location of St Alkmund's churchyard. The project began with the excavation of 5 trial trenches, 3 of which were dug on the eastern part of the site whilst the others lay towards in the centre of the site. The westerly trenches demonstrated that the graveyard had been cleared when the Victorian church was demolished in the 1860s. Early medieval and medieval pottery was recovered in the easterly trenches and 2 undated post-holes were recorded.

As a result a further trench, roughly 22m x 18m in area, was opened towards the north-east of the site. The earliest activity identified in this trench was represented by traces of a pebble surface and a number of pits in the central part of the excavated area, and a 'cluster of post-holes and associated features' towards the east of the trench. It was thought that the pebble surface was a part of a larger surface and that the shape and profile of the pits suggested an association with textile production. The cluster of features identified towards the east of the trench was thought to be associated with a property boundary and pottery recovered from these features included two sherds of Late Saxon pottery, but in the main it dated to the late 10th and 11th centuries. Other material recovered from these features included burnt soils and charcoal. Activity on the site appeared to have entered into a decline after the Norman Conquest. A garden or cultivation soil seems to have developed over much of the trench during this period. Only a few features, including a number of pits and a gulley, cut this soil. Activity on the site only appears to have resumed the 17th century. Evidence for the increased activity took the form of a series of intercutting pits in the centre of the trench. Later the site witnessed further industrial activity (Bain, 2003; Bain, 2006; Ramsey, 2004).

EDR1827: Trial trenching and watching brief, between Cathedral Road, Jury Street and Willow Row, 2004

The trial trenching on this site revealed what was likely to have been medieval garden soils, traces of a post-medieval stone structure and an 19th pottery dump (Harvey 2004). When the archaeologists subsequently conducted a watching brief on the same site, they found that, before they arrived on site, sub-contractors had destroyed whatever archaeological remains might have existed on the southern part of the site. As a result their observations were confined to the northern part of the site. Towards the north-west, a substantial ditch was identified running on a south-west to north-east axis. Fragments of medieval pottery were recovered from the ditch. Just to the north of this ditch, and running parallel to it, a line of post-holes was

recorded. Post-mediaeval pottery was found in some of these post-holes. A second ditch was found to the east of the first. This ditch ran on a north-west to south-east axis and contained post-medieval pottery (Hunt and Gnannratnan 2004). The ditches probably represent property boundaries, although the first ditch could conceivably be a part of a medieval or post-medieval town ditch.

EDR2876: Trial trenching, 27-28 Queen Street, 2004

This small scale investigation took place close to the course of 'the North/South spine road'. In all seven small trial trenches were excavated and in total roughly 6% of the site beyond the building standing on the street frontage was investigated. The trial trenches revealed a large number of features; post-holes, pits and hearths. A large volume of material was recovered including pottery, burnt daub, burnt sandstone, tile, slag and charcoal. The pottery included a single Romano-British sherd, but this was contained within the overburden. More significantly a sealed deposit contained pottery from around the time of the Norman Conquest (Baker 2004). Had the development proposal that generated this project resulted in building operations, there would have almost certainly have been further fieldwork on the site. Unfortunately, in terms of our understanding of archaeological remains, the developer ran into financial difficulties at this point. This meant both that the analysis of the findings from the evaluation was cut short, and that no further fieldwork has taken place on the site since 2004.

EDR4303: Trial trenching and excavation, on south side of Cathedral Road, west of the former Shire Hall, 2015

Initially 6 trial trenches were excavated all across the site. This was followed by the excavation of a single 20m x 17m trench in the south-western corner of the site. The trial trenches revealed that much of the site had been heavily disturbed. In the mid 20th century the site became a garage and service station, so much of this disturbance probably occurred at that time. An undated ditch was found in the south-eastern corner of the site, and the southern end of another ditch was found towards the site's centre. The trench excavated at the far south-west of the site suggested that archaeological evidence survived best in this area (Dransfield 2015).

It was as a result of this discovery that a much larger trench was opened up in this part of the site. The principal features identified were two roughly parallel ditches cut into the natural subsoils and running on a roughly north-south axis some 5m apart through the centre of the trench. The easternmost of the ditches ran the entire length of the trench and had a 'U-shaped' profile. The westernmost ditch was of similar width, but only a 7m long section of this ditch could be traced. Material recovered from the easternmost ditch included quantities of animal bone and of 10th and 11th century pottery, along with a single Romano-British sherd. No artefacts were recovered from the westernmost ditch, but it was found to contain grains of wheat and barley. A number of pits or postholes were also identified in this trench. These contained animal bone and pottery ranging in date from the late 11th century to the early 15th century. The excavators considered the single Romano-British sherd could not, of itself, be taken as evidence of Roman activity in the area, and that activity on the site was likely to have begun in the 11th century. They suggested that this activity took the form of stock-keeping and horticulture, but declined after the 13th century, possibly as a result of the Black Death and that activity on the site did not appear to resume until the 19th century (Daniel, 2015; Daniel and Grassam, 2017).

EDR2357: Trial trenching and excavation in the vicinity of the former County Hall, St Mary's Gate, 1994 and 2002

Limited trial trenching took place in advance of the former County Hall and Assize Court being converted to a magistrate's court, and new structures being built next to it. The 7 small trial trenches were too small to allow the excavators to interpret any features found, but did allow the archaeologists to recover a quantity of medieval pottery, as well as a single abraded Romano-British sherd and even larger qualities of post-medieval pottery, clay-pipes and brick. For the most part the medieval pottery dated from the 11th century or later, and the excavators reported 'a lack of later medieval pottery' (Kinsley and Morris 1994).

A larger scale investigation followed on from the trial trenching. Six far larger trenches being opened over all of those parts of the site where new structures were to be built. One of these areas lay to the east of the Grade I listed former County Hall. Another trench was positioned to the north-east of this site. A third trench lay to the north of the County Hall. The other two areas, one far smaller than the others, were opened to the west of the County Hall. The excavators of the larger trenches identified six phases of activity on the site, ranging in date from the 10th and 11th century to the 15th century. The earliest phase of activity was only recognised to the east of the County Hall with evidence for early activity coming in the main from a small number of features in the trench immediately east of the trench located just to the east of the County Hall. These features included a number of pits along with a well. Most of the features contained a 'silty' layer, which the archaeologists thought might be human waste, and all of the features contained dumps of 'rubbish'. The largest pit also contained quantities of the horn-core and animal bone. Two postholes were located at the edge of this pit, which is believed to be associated with butchery, fellmonging[7] and tanning. The well contained a wooden barrel at its base. The only other evidence for this early activity was found in a trench in the north-east of the site in the form of a single pit. Pottery dating from the 10th and 11th centuries was recovered from these early features.

During the phase that followed there appeared to be less activity in the trench immediately to the east of the County Hall. This area was characterised by a thin layer of silt cut by shallow pits, with also a trace of what the excavators describe as a 'clay work surface'. The focus of activity seems to have shifted to the area to the north-east of the site, where the archaeologists identified traces of a 'possible structure' in the form of a cobbled surface surrounded by alignments of postholes. In addition to the 'possible structure' the excavators found in this trench a midden, 2 pits, a ditch running NNE-SSW, two fence lines and what they describe as a 'substantial fence also running NNE-SSW'. The archaeologists found some evidence from this phase of activity in the remainder of the site. A few postholes, a cobbled surface and a shallow ditch were identified to the north of the County Hall, and a linear feature with stake-holes was identified to the west of the County Hall. Features dated to this activity phase yielded pottery from what the excavators described as 'the early part of the medieval period' (i.e. the late 11th and 12th centuries). Subsequent phases of activity on the site can be readily summarized. There seems to have been a hiatus after the second phase, during which the area seems to have been abandoned. This was followed by a resumption of activity, which in turn was followed by a phase towards the end of the medieval period during which there was intense industrial activity. At the start of the post-medieval period activity on the site again went into decline. The excavators found a gadrooned bead dating to 9th and 10th century, but were convinced that a few sherds of Romano-British pottery found were residual (Crooks and Porter 2002).

EDR2833: Trial trenching north of the junction of Bold Lane and Saddler Gate, 2009
Five 10m x 3m trial trenches were excavated across this irregularly shaped site. A trench dug on the street frontage in the south-eastern part of the site revealed only the walls of a brick cellar and 18th or 19th century levelling deposits. A second trench, excavated a little to the north and east of the first trench, revealed three pits cut into the natural clay. All three pits contained medieval pottery, and one also contained a thin layer of charcoal. A third trench excavated towards the north of the site contained two ditches. One of these ditches ran north-east to south-west, and had filled gradually with material. The excavators considered this ditch to have marked a medieval boundary. The other ditch ran at right angles to the first, but was filled by a single deposit. Both ditches were sealed by a soil containing post-medieval pottery. A fourth trench contained a buried soil which overly the natural substrate, contained medieval pottery and had been cut by 3 pits or post-holes. A fifth trench on the street frontage in the far west of the site revealed a recent overburden over a thin levelling deposit. The earliest pottery recovered dated from the 12th or 13th century. Most of the medieval pottery was from the 12th to 14th centuries, although there was some of 15th or 16th century date (Bates 2009).

EDR2491: Trial trenching to the north-east of the junction between Friar Gate and Ford Street (the Inner Ring Road), 2005
Two 2m wide trial trenches were excavated on this small site. The natural subsoil in these trenches was overlain by 'deep silt gravel' overlain by a layer of 'mixed brown silt'. Only one feature, a 'possible pit, cut these layers', and both layers contained a few medieval sherds. Above, a series of sandstone foundations represented the foundations of demolished structures, after which the site had been levelled and a sandstone and brick structure erected. This was taken to indicate that the area was used as pasture until the 17th century, when the first sandstone foundations were laid. The medieval pottery in the lower silts was probably the result of the occasional broken pot being thrown away from a nearby habitation (Hewitson 2005),which was almost certainly the nearby friary established in the 13th century.

EDR1816: Trial trenching, 3 Friar Gate, 2004
Two trial trenches encountered only late 19th and 20th century demolition material (Richards 2004a).

EDR1866: Watching brief on the site of the Quad, Market Place, 2006
During this watching brief the archaeologist was unable to enter the excavations, but nothing was found apart from evidence for recent disturbance (Hunt 2006).

EDR3059: Watching brief, Tennant Street, 2004
Works in three areas of the site were observed, but only traces of recent disturbance were recorded (Richards, 2004b).

EDR1754: Trial trenching to north-west of the junction of The Strand with St James's Street, 2002
Three trial trenches were excavated in a confined space believed to be either on or close to the site of the medieval priory of St James. It was necessary to dig though a considerable depth of recent overburden in order to access the archaeological evidence. The largest of these trial trenches was located towards the north of the site. In this trench, the earliest layer was a

complex of clay and gravel into which a few features, including '3 possible postholes', had been cut. Pottery dating to the 13th century was recovered from these features. Above the clay and gravel complex a late medieval curved wall had been built, running roughly north to south, which had been repaired frequently and then replaced, in the post-medieval period, by a wall on a similar alignment; this wall was probably a property boundary. The depth of modern overburden meant that it was hazardous to enter the two southern trenches and these had to be excavated by machine. Both southern trenches revealed evidence for 17th century structures built on a similar complex of clay and gravel and in all three trenches small quantities of pottery dating from between the 11th and 13th centuries were recovered from this layer. No obvious trace of the medieval priory was identified. Instead the excavators believed that the area had been open pasture until the 13th century and between the 11th and the 13th centuries people living nearby had used the site for rubbish disposal (Atha and Kinsley 2002).

DEVELOPER FUNDED PROJECTS

We have looked at the archaeological evidence from fifteen developer funded fieldwork projects, all of which took place in the wake of *PPG16*. These projects illustrate the huge volume of information generated by developer funding for archaeological work over the last 28 years. They also demonstrate some of the frustrations and pitfalls inherent in developer funded projects: such as sub-contractors who have either not been properly briefed, or refuse to co-operate with the archaeologist; projects that collapse when a developer runs out of money and the fact that so little of the information generated by these projects has been published. There is little doubt, however, that most, and probably the overwhelming majority, of these archaeological projects would not have taken place without developer funding.

A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE

Even with the benefit of all this new archaeological evidence it is not easy to come up with a simple answer to the question of what is the origin of Derby as an urban centre?

Heighway (1972) lists 12 criteria to help indicate whether or not a settlement is a town:

1. *Presence of Urban Defences*
2. *Possession of a Legal Existence;* official recognition as a town (e.g granted a charter).
3. *Existence of Complex Religious Organization;* possession of a range of establishments, more than a single parish church.
4. *Role as a Legal Centre*
5. *Size and Density of Population*
6. *Possession of a Market*
7. *Position;* a nodal point in a communication network.
8. *Internal Street Plan*
9. *Possession of a Mint or Mints*
10. *Possession of a Diversified Economy*
11. *Possession of a Degree of Social Diversity*
12. *Possession of Certain Variety of House Plots;* the presence of long, narrow house plots (e.g. burgage-type plots) (1972, 8-10).

Although it can be argued that some of Heighway's criteria overlap (e.g. population density and having certain types of house plots) and she had to concede that the presence of more than

one of the criteria does not necessarily prove that a particular place had become a town at a given point in time, her criteria do form a reasonable basis for any discussion regarding when Derby became a town.

The evidence as to whether the early medieval burh had defences is unclear. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* suggests that the site Æthelflæda stormed in 917 possessed defences, however, the only early medieval defences thus far unearthed archaeologically are the restored Roman defences at Little Chester. To date no early medieval defences have been identified to the west of the River Derwent. Whilst it is true that traces of what may have been a medieval town ditch have been identified to the north of St Helen's Street, indications are that this was created no earlier than the 12th century.

Neither is it clear when Derby gained official recognition that it was a town. It could be argued that such official recognition was not granted until 1154, when the newly enthroned Henry II granted Derby a charter. Yet the existence of burgesses in 1066 must mean that it had the status of a town by then and its inclusion among Five Burghs captured from the Vikings in 942 probably means it was regarded as a town in the mid 10th century.

The single late 8th or early 9th century stone church identified by Ralegh Radford does not necessarily mean Derby had a complex religious organization by that time. Whereas the Derby recorded in the *Domesday Book*, with six churches two of which were minsters, clearly did have a complex religious organization.

We do not know when Derby became a legal centre. The documentary evidence at our disposal simply does not furnish this level of detail. It may have become one in the 10th century, when Derby became a county town, but we cannot be certain.

We know almost nothing about the size of Derby's population in the early medieval period. The only firm evidence is the reference in *Domesday Book* to there being 243 resident burgesses in the town in 1066. Yet the reliability of the entry for Derby in *Domesday* has been called into question (Holly 1962, 322).

Nor is there is certainty as to when Derby first acquired a market. If the evidence for a sizable town identified in *Domesday Book* can be relied upon, it probably had a market some time before 1066, but we cannot be certain when a market was first established.

It is evident that the early town of Derby occupied a nodal point in the communication network, standing as it did astride an important north-south route leading from the Trent Valley, up the Derwent Valley, into the Peak District and beyond, and close to a fording point across the Derwent which provided an east-west route at the foot of the Pennines. What is less clear is when the ford at the Causey acquired significance. Hall (1974, 22) speculates that the ford really became important when a bridge across the Derwent near to Little Chester fell out of use. Even if this theory is correct, we cannot be certain when it happened.

There is no indication that Derby ever had a planned layout. In so far as we can tell, the town seems to have grown organically, spreading out from an original focus along the North/South spine road. It is worth noting that four of the candidates for the six churches mentioned in *Domesday Book* stood in close proximity towards the northern end of this thoroughfare.

Recent archaeological fieldwork has shown that at least three industries; textile production, tanning and fellmonging were carried out in Derby in the 10th or 11th centuries (Crooks and Porter 2002; Daniel 2015; Daniel and Grassam 2017). It is also believed that potters were active in the town in the 10th century (Dr G. Perry 2018, *pers. comm.* 28th Sept.) although to date no trace of kilns of this date has been found.

The Derbyshire Historic Environment Record suggests that 'A mint at Derby is known to have produced coins between 959 and 973 AD', citing David Wilson as the source (Derbyshire County Council 2018; Wilson 1976, 136). No evidence for the site of a mint has been found in Derby and Wilson's evidence was based on the discovery of coins in Derby and elsewhere believed to have been minted in Derby.

Alas we have no evidence for the degree of social diversity in the early medieval period. No documents have been identified that provide any hint of the extent of social diversity prior to 1066. Neither has archaeological excavation succeeded in identifying an early medieval structure that is manifestly a dwelling.

Long, narrow house plots had the advantage of providing such properties with a narrow street frontage, whilst maximising the areas behind. This allowed the holders of such properties space for their dwellings, shops, workshops and storage areas behind the street frontage. These plots tend to be associated with the medieval period, when such burgage-plots are often associated with the market towns which sprang-up in large numbers in the couple of centuries following the Norman Conquest (Mumby 1987, 160-162).

The advantages of this type of urban plot, however, were just as great in other periods. 18th and 19th century cartographic evidence for Derby indicates that burgage-plots were to be found on several streets in the town. Significantly, such plots are evident along the entire length of the north-south spine road and it is apparent that plots on other roads post-date them. Therefore, urban development in Derby must have begun along the spine road. Unfortunately, the only archaeological excavation close to the line of the spine road was the aborted project to the rear of 27-28 Queen Street. The limited nature of this project restricted the nature of evidence unearthed, nevertheless, it did indicate that there had been intense activity on the site, and that that activity may have started well before the Norman Conquest.

CONCLUSIONS

Examination of all the available evidence; documentary, cartographic, topographic and archaeological, suggests that the origins of the town of Derby began at the northern end of a north-south spine road which runs through the core of the historic city. This evidence is based in the main on the likely clustering of pre-Norman churches in this area, the cartographic evidence which indicates that the burgage-plots along the spine road pre-date those on adjacent streets and on the limited archaeological evidence currently available.

At present there is no clear evidence to show when this urban development began. All one can claim with any certainly is that it was probably sometime after the late 8th or early 9th centuries, when the first stone church was built on the site of the Victorian St Alkmund's Church. Evidence from other, better researched, urban centres such as London and York, both of which were important centres in Roman times, reveals that they did not re-emerge as towns until the late 9th century at the earliest (Hall 1988; Hobley 1988; Vince 1988). Therefore, it is likely that Derby did not start to become urban in character until the 10th century at the earliest.

It is also likely that, after the initial emergence of Derby as a town, urban development began to spread southwards along the same spine road, down present Queen Street and perhaps onto modern Iron Gate but, unfortunately, we do not have archaeological evidence to substantiate this contention. It is also unlikely that many future opportunities will arise to conduct archaeological investigations along this thoroughfare. Many of the buildings along its length are listed and the entire road forms the core of the Derby City Centre Conservation

Area (Derby City Council 2012).

At some point, the town must have spread to the west and to the east of the spine road. Topographic evidence suggests that the area into which the town spread had its eastern flank resting on the River Derwent, and its western flank beside the Markeaton Brook. Cartographic evidence, in the form of the property boundaries shown on 18th and 19th century maps, appears to confirm the topographic evidence. Most streets within the area bounded by Walker Lane (part of modern Cathedral Road), Full Street, the Market Place, Saddler Gate and Bold Lane had burgage-plots along them. This suggests that many streets in this area are likely to have been first developed at an early stage in the town's growth. Such archaeological evidence as is currently available comes mainly from the excavations on the south side of Cathedral Road and around the former County Hall and hints that this expansion took place in the 10th and 11th centuries. Industrial activities revealed by these investigations appear to have started at that time. Some of these processes, especially tanning, were often found on the margins of towns because of the smells and waste associated with them, so it is not at all surprising that such industries have been found on the northern fringes of the town.

What happened on the southern margins of the early medieval burgh is less clear. Historic maps show burgage plots, similar to those to the north, to the west of the Market Place, along Corn Market and continuing along St Peter's Street. Unfortunately, there is even less archaeological evidence available for this area than there is for the north. What evidence there is comes mainly from the site at the junction of The Strand with St James's Street. This site lay beyond the plots along Corn Market, and the evidence recovered suggests that this area lay undeveloped until well after the Norman Conquest. On this basis it may well be that development to the south of the Market Place probably did not take place until after the Norman Conquest. It is likely that, following the disruption of the Conquest period, the town probably continued its expansion south along the Corn Market and St Peter's Street and perhaps along Morledge towards the site by the Derwent where it is believed that the Normans built a castle.

To the west of the core of the early medieval burgh, another street, Friar Gate, extended westwards beyond St Werburgh's Church. This street lay to the south of the Markeaton Brook, and in the 13th century a Franciscan friary was founded towards the western end of this thoroughfare. Historic maps show burgage-plots extending on either side of this road, suggesting that much of it was developed in the Middle Ages. Much the same can be said of The Wardwick, which lies at the eastern end of the same thoroughfare, close to St Werburgh's Church. Steer suggested that the St Werburgh's was the second church to be founded in the town, and that the Wardwick was the site of a distinct early medieval settlement the origins of which may have lain in the 8th or 9th centuries (Steer 1988, 135). Whilst the Wardwick may indeed have been the site of an early medieval suburb, it will require archaeological evidence to demonstrate that Steer's theory regarding the early origins of St Werburgh's and the Wardwick is correct. At present no such evidence has been unearthed.

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NOTES

[1] Where possible the term 'Viking' is used throughout this article, rather than the term 'Danes'. Scientific analysis suggests that the invading 'Danish' armies came from all over Scandinavia rather than just from modern Denmark.

[2] In the early 1970s the Department for the Environment (DoE) provided limited resources for archaeology. This led to the creation of the Central Excavation Unit and regional research committees, charged with conducting rescue excavations when important archaeological remains were under threat from development.

[3] In the 1980s Government funded job creation schemes provided large numbers of fieldworkers to take part in archaeological projects over much of the country.

[4] In 1990 the Government published *Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16)*. This established the principle that archaeological remains and the information they contain are a finite resource that should 'not be needlessly or thoughtlessly destroyed'. Hence, if a development was going to destroy or damage important archaeological remains, local planning authorities had powers to require developers either to avoid that damage, or else to pay to have the relevant remains recorded.

[5] One important development of the 1970s and 1980s was the introduction of a system of county archaeological records, established to record the presence of archaeological remains. By the late 1980s these records, then known as Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) covered much of England. The scope of these records has now widened and they are now known as Historic Environment Records (HERs).

[6] Unfortunately, the Derbyshire HER has yet to receive either the final reports for either the watching brief conducted in 2007, or for the more detailed investigation carried out in 2015. So the account above is reliant of a monument record for the town ditch in the HER (Monument 32651) created as a result of the initial watching brief, and a summary of the investigation carried out in 2015 in the minutes of the Derbyshire Archaeological Advisory Committee.

[7] Fellmongering is the trading in animal hides. It is an occupation closely related with both butchery and tanning.

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