THE ORIGINS OF SOUTH DERBYSHIRE

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INTRODUCTION

The non-metropolitan district of South Derbyshire was created as recently as AD 1974. Yet for many inhabitants it provides a unique dialect and a strong sense of identity. This distinguishes people here from their fellow county members in North Derbyshire, as well as from their near-neighbours in Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire. One possible origin of this identity is Repton and Gresley Hundred which was a defined area of demarcated local governance for over six hundred years, and with which the area of South Derbyshire south of the Trent is broadly coterminous.

This paper traces the evolution of the region by incrementally stepping back in time, beginning with the emergence of Repton and Gresley Hundred between *c*. AD 1150 and 1400. Superficially it would seem that the growing importance of the town of Gresley during this period was the reason for the Hundred to become recognized as a place of two capital towns when previously it had been called Repton Wapentake or simply Repton Hundred. However, by synthesising local knowledge, topography, place-name evidence and various written sources, this paper explores whether Gresley has a much more long-standing history itself, and a link is examined between Gresley and an as-yet unidentified vill in Domesday called *Bolun*.

Repton Wapentake or Hundred is itself broadly coterminous with *Walecros* Wapentake found in Domesday, whose origins are traced to the period of Wessex conquest in Mercia (AD 918 – 1016) during which the East Midland counties were created. This paper explores why the name of *Walecros* was lost in favour of Repton Wapentake, and questions whether it may be related to the existence of a moot site in the centre of Repton village, and whether the Repton Stone offers clues to the name change. *Walecros* is examined as an earlier origin of the region's sense of place, and it is questioned whether the southern half of *Walecros* around Gresley gained its uniqueness from Repton by remaining in West Mercian control during the years of on-going Danish influence.

Further back still, prior to early Danish arrival in AD 873, South Derbyshire was home to an important part of the Kingdom of Mercia, the vill of Repton being a double monastery with royal mausoleum. An early written record dating from the late 7th century relates that a member of the royal Mercian house gifted 31 *manentes* of land called *Hrepingas* to the Abbot of Breedon-on-the-Hill.[1] By reconstructing which *manentes* these 31 may have been, and by using the topographical relationship with a meeting site at No Man's Heath, this paper explores whether these lands might also be broadly coterminous with South Derbyshire, and whether a planned settlement zone to the south of Gresley already existed as a distinct neighbour or as a part of the single complex of *Hrepingas*.

AD 2011: SOUTH DERBYSHIRE TODAY

Today, the modern demarcation of South Derbyshire marks the territory of a relatively small, devolved governmental unit responsible amongst other things for housing applications and waste disposal services for its residents. In AD 2011, there were 94,611 people living in South Derbyshire. The most densely populated area is the triangle of land between the A511 and the A444 road systems which became a centre of clay and coal mining from the late 18th century onwards. This industrial land is centred on the town of Swadlincote which has gradually become a mini conurbation in the years since it became an unparished area including the contiguous districts of Gresley, Newhall, Midway and Woodville. It is home to 36,000 people, soon to be one half of the South Derbyshire population.

The other half of the inhabitants are spread across a collection of over 30 settlements many of which are small and declining village populations of less than 1000 people. Examples include the village of Ingleby which had 85 inhabitants, Lullington which had 121, Ticknall which had 642 and Netherseal which had 923. Repton is a bigger village, with a population of 2,867 inhabitants partly swelled by several rural businesses and a large private school. The villages topographically form two distinct farming areas either side of the clay and coal mining conurabation; Farming Zone 1 is north of the current A511 and Farming Zone 2 is south of the A444 (Fig. 1).
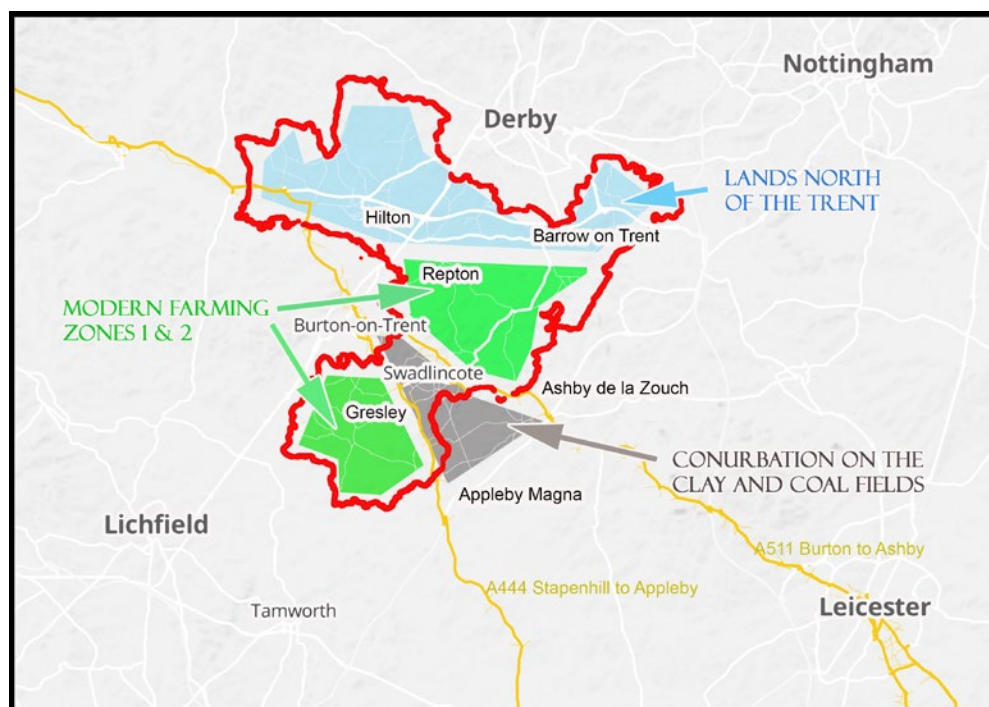

Fig. 1: Modern Borders of South Derbyshire.
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AD 1895: REPTON AND GRESLEY HUNDRED

Prior to important border changes in AD 1974 and AD 1895, South Derbyshire was known as Repton and Gresley Hundred and its border only included those lands south of the River Trent. It was also more clearly demarcated than it is today by the natural landscape features of rivers and ridges. The southern border was the River Mease, the western border was the fast-flowing River Trent. This river turns at Repton and separates the region from northern Derbyshire. The two rivers thus form a 'C' shape which was traditionally the natural southern, western and northern perimeter. Recent border adjustments have added some lands north of the Trent such as those at Hilton and Barrow-on-Trent, and sacrificed land east of the Trent to
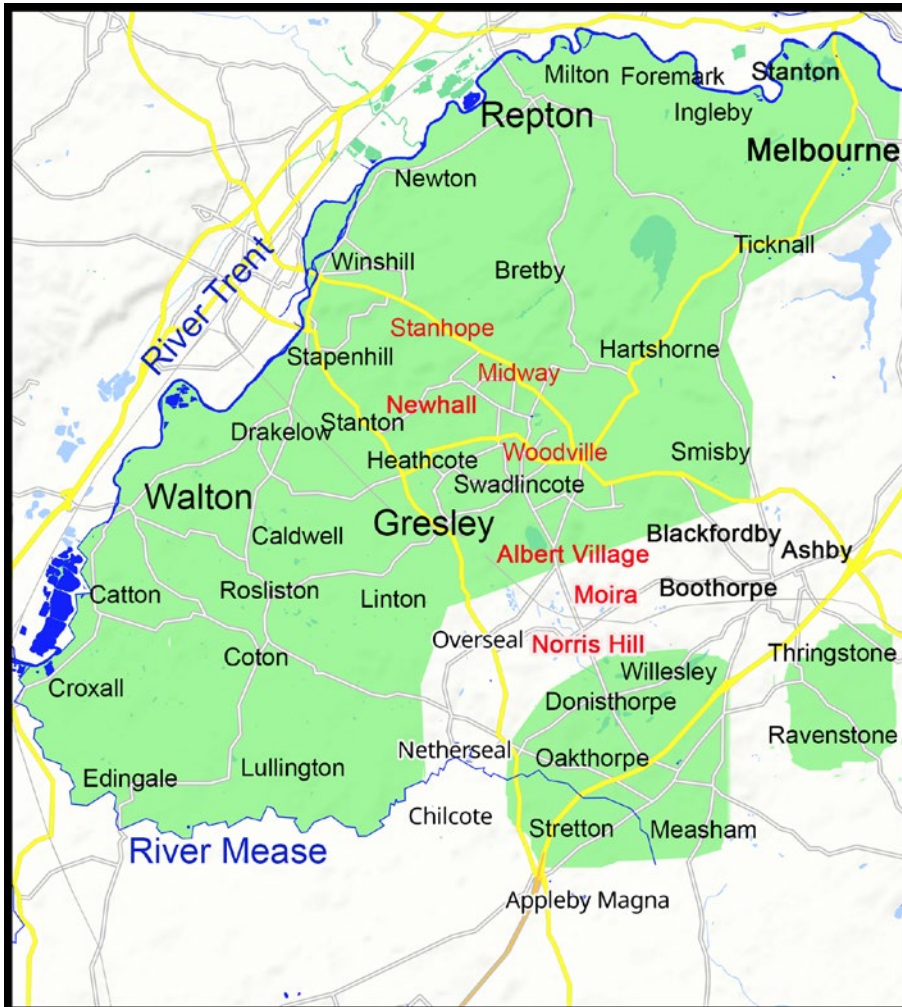

Fig. 2: Borders of Repton and Gresley Hundred Prior to 1895*.
*names in black date to at least AD 1334, names in red occur later.
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Stafforshire such as Stapenhill and Croxall.[2] Until the late 1890s the region also included the island of Derbyshire influence in Leicestershire that was centred on Measham, Ravenstone, Thringstone, Donisthorpe and Appleby Magna. In Figure 2 these borders are shown and the villages existing in the Lay Subsidy report for AD 1334 are shown in black, and the villages that emerged during the industrial revolution are shown in red. Of those in black, only Gresley and Blackfordby are not in Domesday Book.

AD 1150 – 1400: REPTON HUNDRED AND GRESLEY HUNDRED IN REPTON WAPENTAKE

In the 12th century, South Derbyshire was frequently known as Repton Wapentake, or simply Repton Hundred. It should be no surprise that the region be eponymous with Repton because this had been the leading monastic and royal centre in the district since the 7th century. The greater question is why Gresley emerged in equal importance. This process needs to be unpacked slowly because the written sources are potentially contradictory, and the evolution is a protracted one.

The first written history of Gresley recounts a haunting and pestilence at nearby Drakelow that seems to have occurred *c*. AD 1070 – 1085; soon after the Norman arrival but prior to the writing of Domesday Book.[3] The incident results in the Drakelow inhabitants moving to Gresley. The story is part of a hagiographical account by Geoffrey, the Abbot of Burton, some fifty years later and Gresley only has a passing role. The facts are suspect not only because of the vampire-like ghosts that appear but also because the Abbot seems to protect the role of the Abbey as a key protagonist. Nevertheless, the story supports that a community existed at Gresley in AD 1086 despite the omission of the vill from Domesday Book. It also corroborates an important theme which will emerge, namely that Drakelow was originally a location of significance, and that following some catastrophic event there was an exodus to the lesser community of Gresley, resulting in a close connection between the two places.

After Norman settlement, the most senior tenant-in-chief for the lands which neighbour Gresley was Henry de Ferrers. Drakelow Manor itself, one of the more important landholdings, was held in capite by Nigel de Stafford. Nigel and his heir – William fitzNigel - became Knights of the de Ferrers and adopted the surname of de Gresley. The name of Gresley, both as a place and as a family title, then grew in importance alongside the baronial fortunes of the de Ferrers. The Gresley family would build a motte-and-bailey on a mound that became known as Castle Gresley, and a priory on a hill above the valley of Hearthcote which would become Church Gresley. All this was adjacent to the large area known as Gresley Common and Gresley Wood suggesting that the elevated part of Gresley (like nearby Cadley and Goseley) had been an unsettled leah prior to this. Although no mention of Gresley occurs in Domesday, there were soon three or four important places of that name. Over the next 150 years of Norman influence, the Gresley family appear to have enjoyed a private franchise[4] on the tenanted de Ferrers lands south of the Stapenhill to Appleby road, including variously the Manors of Drakelow, Lullington and Croxall[5] (but excluding Walton-on-Trent which retained independence throughout the period). This area of private control on de Ferrer's lands south of Gresley is increasingly referred to as Gresley hundred[6] in written sources.

Its corollary then was Repton hundred (note lower case) to which we find reference at a similar time referring to the lands around Repton including Foremark and Smisby (but

Fig. 3: Late Medieval South Derbyshire.
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excluding Melbourne which like Walton remained independent). It is important not to confuse this entity with Repton Wapentake or Hundred (note upper case); Repton hundred and Gresley hundred formed parts of the greater Repton Wapentake or Hundred (Fig. 3). In Domesday Book, William the Conqueror holds the Manor of Repton, its sokeland and environs (Milton, Ingleby, Ticknall, Willesley, Measham, Chilcote, Thringstone, Newton Solney and Bretby) but from approximately AD 1121 onwards these lands are held by the Earls of Chester. They are referred to as 'the entire hundred of Repton' [7] which the Chesters held until sometime during the reign of King John (AD 1199 – 1216). At this point the 6th Earl of Chester was childless and when his sister Agnes married William de Ferrers (the 4th Earl of Derby), he gifted 'one half of the said hundred of Repingdon' to the de Ferrers.

In baronial tenure terms at least, the de Ferrers swallowed up roughly three quarters of the original Repton Wapentake or (capital 'H') Hundred; their own half known as the Gresley hundred which they had held since soon after Domesday, plus one half of the Repton hundred which had been held by the Chesters. This is proven by an AD 1649 parliamentary survey of Crown lands once owned by the de Ferrers which lists 'the hundred of Gresley' as comprising not only the southern portion of South Derbyshire centred on Lullington, but also half of

the lands north of the A444 including those of Foremark, Smisby and parts of Ingleby.[8] It only excludes the lands of Repton, Bretby and other parts of Ticknall and Ingleby which had formed 'the other moytie of the Repingdon hundred' which can be traced remaining with the 6th Earl of Chester until the dispersement of his lands in AD 1232.[9]

After William de Ferrers' marriage into the Chester family, the growing territory of the Gresley hundred in the first half of the 13th century came to challenge the Repton naming hegemony for the wapentake, and personally benefited the Gresley family. With the undoubted complexities surrounding the question of law versus practice,[10] it seems that the Gresleys had always maintained a relatively violent and instant system of private justice that would later lead to problems under the developing common law.[11] Their management of expanding lands under the powerful protection of the de Ferrers would come to question Derbyshire's shrieval powers of jurisdiction in the south, as well as those of the larger Repton. It is as if the Gresleys were their own Sheriff on behalf of the de Ferrers.

The Second Barons' War (AD 1264 – 1267) was the impetus for clarification of the legal status of the Gresley hundred's liberties and those of the other de Ferrers affiliated Derbyshire lands such as the wapentake of Appletree and 'one half of the hundred of Litchurch'. The de Ferrers were losers in the war and the King transferred their estates to his brother, Edmund Plantagenet. Although the Gresleys were able to buy-back their tenancy of Drakelow, Gresley, Lullington and Norton by virtue of a large gift to the Crown that paid recompense for their own treason, the next seventy-five years would be turbulent ones for the family. They were now tenants of Edmund Plantagenet and later the Crown, and with the accession of Edward I in 1272 there began a more powerful reign notable for the process of *Quo Warranto* by which the King wrested back control from the barons.

The Hundred Rolls inquiry records the liberties at Drakelow, Lullington, Linton and Gresley as represented to it by the Gresley family and as testified by a group of jurors in AD 1306.[12] It is clear from the evidence that a court had existed at Drakelow with the view of frankpledge separately to that held at Repton, presumably as a de Ferrer's liberty prior to AD 1265; this Drakelow liberty seems to be one key definition of what constituted a Gresley hundred perhaps because the court assembly was in Gresley. In relative terms though, Gresley is a lesser court to that at Repton; it is noted that Repton had the requisite pillories and cucking stools for judgements whereas Drakelow only used fines. The Hundred Rolls' recommendation is that the Crown claim the profits on the Gresley hundred's view of frankpledge now the Ferrers are gone; not Edmund Plantagenet's descendants and not the Gresleys, whose wings it seems were being clipped especially if they had claimed rights to profits in the years since AD 1266.

By AD 1334, when the term wapentake had been dropped in favour of Hundreds for most regions of the East Midlands, the Lay Subsidy Roll for that year clearly refers to South Derbyshire with the title of 'Repton Hundred' and the detailed break-out of places within it still includes all the South Derbyshire lands shown in Figure 2. The conflict with the AD 1649 Crown records which show a Gresley hundred that includes three-quarters of the South Derbyshire lands suggests that there had been a bifurcation in administrative definitions whereby the land rents payable to the Ferrers were defined by something that was lastingly entitled the Gresley hundred, whereas the shrieval system still recognized the Repton Wapentake (and now Hundred) in the Lay Subsidy Rolls. We might infer that the function of a wapentake/Hundred at this particular time and place was primarily one of tax accountability whereas the function of a hundred was local jurisdiction and land rents – thus allowing two names with the confusingly common moniker of 'hundred'. Given the more complex legal

overlaps between wapentake and hundred undoubtedly masked by this generalisation, it is possible that the later composite name of 'Repton and Gresley Hundred' might have been found to reduce confusion for everyone.

AD 1086: FINDING GRESLEY IN DOMESDAY BOOK

In AD 1086, only a few centuries earlier, there was no record of Gresley in Domesday Book despite its illustrious post-Norman history. This is especially surprising given the high congruence of local vill names during the late medieval era as compared with the villages of South Derbyhire today. In the AD 1334 Lay Subsidy Roll,[13] only Moira, Woodville, Midway, Norris Hill, Newhall and Albert Village are excluded; all six being settlements within the heathland area of coal-and-clay-deposits that were primarily settled in the 19th century.[14] The two modern farming zones identified in Figure 1 therefore have remarkable continuity with exactly the same vill structure as they do today, although we do not know the nature of settlement dispersion at that time.

There is however one local settlement area listed in Domesday that still does not have a clear identification despite many years of research; *Bolun*. It was a significant place, being its own Manor valued more highly than most other vills in South Derbyshire (four pounds) and with more smallholders and ploughs than most of the Domesday listings for this area. This vill occurs once, listed after Catton and before Linton in a west to east path as a part of what appears to be a small grouping given to Henry de Ferrers. Castle Gresley is a direct neighbour to Linton and Catton today so the possibility that Castle Gresley is *Bolun* is simplistically appealing. Broad geographical proximity within Domesday Book has weaknesses as an identification method though because entry formulation in the East Midlands Circuit VI is mediated by Manors and their dependencies, or by twelve and fifteen carucate hundreds, which implies settlement groupings rather than strict settlement neighbours; *Bolun* may therefore have been distant from Linton.[15]

A more meaningful connection between *Bolun* and Castle Gresley first presented itself by studying places with similar names to that of *Bolun* such as Bolsover and Bolehill in Derbyshire. These were places where lead or iron ore was smelted on a mound or hill-top before the invention of furnaces; 'The hearth was often made on a hill-top so as to utilize the prevailing winds (Kirkham 1949:3) and according to the EDD (*bole* sb) was usually in a round cavity on that hill top. Although formally the element could be confused with *bol* the distribution is conclusive for the names in this county'.[16] The presumed Norman motte and bailey at Castle Gresley is known as Castle Knob, because it is situated on top of an unusual conical eminence like that described. The location and elevated position of the hill would attract prevailing winds from the west which would stoke the fires of a furnace, and the nearby deposits of outlying coal would be an easy source of fuel.[17] Describing the link between *Bolun* and Castle Gresley as conclusive given the mixed linguistic evidence[18] is a little strong but the possibility is clear that Gresley may once have been named *Bolun* due to its function as a site of iron smelting.

A more common technique to establish relationships between Domesday vills and modern settlements is to trace the consequent tenurial holdings. The tenant-in-chief and tenant of *Bolun* at Domesday was Henry de Ferrers whose heirs would later be the tenant-in-chief of the combined Gresley and Drakelow Manor, with the family of de Gresley (presumed heirs

of Nigel de Stafford) holding the tenancy through knight's service.[19] The tenurial circle of linkages between *Bolun* and Gresley is therefore compelling. One deeper connection is also of note. Nigel de Stafford held eleven settlements in Derbyshire, three in Leicestershire and a further twelve in Staffordshire, most of which form united areas of land. One landholding alone is considerably further to the north, and this is Kingsley which was in the Churnet Valley iron mining district. It passed to Gresley heirs for several generations and suggests a source of iron for production. This paper will return to a final argument for why *Bolun* must be Castle Gresley when considering the pattern of hidation in the Anglo-Saxon era. For now, it should be noted that there are other settlements in South Derbyshire which date to the early 12th century that are not in Domesday Book, notably Blackfordby and Calke, but nothing suggests they are *Bolun*.

AD 1086: DECONSTRUCTING HUNDREDS OF JURISDICTION IN DOMESDAY BOOK

If Castle Gresley existed as *Bolun* prior to the Conquest, then it brings new importance to the southern settlement earlier than the Norman years during which it shared the hundred's name. And if Gresley the place is more ancient, then the southern hundred may not have been the product of Anglo-Norman privatization but earlier. The difficulty establishing this is that the Domesday survey was not written with a priority on recording hundreds; they played an important role in jurisdiction at this time but not for taxation and land ownership which were the greater focus of Domesday. Any importance for a *Bolun* or Repton sub-division is therefore somewhat hidden relative to the focus given to estate structures (sokeland, Manors etc).

At Domesday, Repton wapentake was known as *Walecros*. There were three multiple-vill sokes with royal or comital lordship here (Repton, Melbourne and Walton-on-Trent) and each is likely the vestige of royal vills in the period of Mercian Kingship, Melbourne retaining soke liberties in *Litchurch* and Walton in *Morleystone*. Despite the important role that Repton played for Mercia, its own dependent socage settlements by AD 1066 were remarkably few; Milton, a part of Ingleby, a part of Ticknall, Willesley, Measham, Thringstone and Chilcote just west of Appleby. This is an odd mixture of places, cutting across South Derbyshire in a diagonal line deep into what would later be Leicestershire. That Milton was a berewick (subsidiary farm) of Repton makes intuitive sense, it being an immediate neighbour, as do the parts of Ingleby and Ticknall. However, the settlements of Willesley, Measham, Chilcote and Thringstone in the south-east are as far from Repton as allowed by the extent of the wapentake and would seem to be unusual partners in a food tributary system if other lands in between are not included. Assuming the royal estate of Repton once owned tribute from more settlements before they were booked-out or gifted, then one way to make topographical sense would be if Measham were the extremity of a once unified region. To contain Measham within the district of Repton then the logical pattern is to draw a line from Repton along the Trent to Stanton, and then along the road to Ticknall, and on to Smisby, from there to Ashby, continuing on through Willesley towards Appleby Magna, and back up the current A444 to Repton by way of Castle Gresley. Only Chilcote leads to any connection with lands south of the A444, and this is at the apex of the district, and only Thringstone is further to the east.

The Domesday pattern for Repton becomes somewhat like this topographical extrapolation

when a map of the first ecclesiastical parishes is combined with the estate structure recorded in Domesday; a combination that might be termed a parish-estate (Fig. 4). As great estates or *regiones* fragmented into Manor-estates through the process of booking then the parish structure is often, although by no means always, a vestige of the earlier great estate, because the original parish church retained tithes from the land that was booked-out. This methodology adds Foremark, Newton Solney, Bretby and Smisby to Repton lands by virtue of their parish association, rounding out the narrow sokeland and better matching the notion of Repton hundred. Of those vills which are in the soke but still not the topographical outline, Chilcote is revealed as an interstitching with *Offlow* hundred in Staffordshire and Thringstone interstiches with a part of Leicestershire. Of those vills in the topographical outline but not the parish, Winshill and Appleby were gifts to Burton Abbey who as a church would have also gained the tithes once paid to Repton. The other technique for deconstruction of hundreds is to notate the breve or page within which the vill was recorded because Domesday inquest was often compiled by the men of the hundred on behalf of the estate owners, and a given hundred can be associated with a single breve recording. The consistent recording within breve one for Repton is suggestive of a common source for the recording of these vills.

	Derbyshire Domesday Book Walecros Estates						First Recorded Parish	
Breve / Page	1	3	6	10	14	17		
	Royal Repton Estate	Burton Abbey Estate	Ferrers Estate	Minor Estate	Stafford Estate	King's Thanes	**First Parish**	**References**
	Order of Vills Recorded							
Newton	18						Repton	CD iii, 423
Bretby	*18*						Repton	CD iii, 423
Repton	20						Repton	CD iii, 423
Milton	*20*						Repton	CD iii, 423
Willesley	*21*		20				Repton	CD iii, 423
Ticknall	*22*	7			6		Repton	CD iii, 423
Thringstone	*23*				11		Whitwick (Leic)	VCH
Measham	*24*						Repton	CD iii, 423
Chilcot	*25*						Clifton (Staffs)	CD iii, 351
Ingleby	*26*			23	5	23	Repton	CD iii, 423
Foremark					4		Repton	CD iii, 423
Smisby					7		Repton	CD iii, 423
Stanton Bridge						22	Stanton	CD iii, 467
Appleby		2					Appleby	VCH
Winshill		*3*					Burton Abbey	VCH

Fig. 4: Matrix of Estate and Parish Structures, Repton Hundred *c*. AD 1066.[20]

The southern half of the wapentake is harder to read (Fig. 5), and it could be argued that it is defined only by the fact that it is not Repton; there are separate parish-estates at Lullington, Croxall, Stapenhill and Gresley, taking Charles Cox' Churches of Derbyshire as a guide. Although the parish-estate independence of Lullington and Croxall are not yet easily explained since churches existed here in Domesday Book, the recent independence of Gresley as a parish recorded by Cox is more clear; the dispute between the Abbot of Burton and Roger the Poitevin just prior to Domesday and recorded in the hagiograpical account of Geoffrey of Burton seems to have resulted in Church Gresley being chosen by the Normans as the location for a new Augustinian Priory in the 12th century as counterpoint to the original ecclesiastical

centre of Stapenhill. Eliminating this late period parochial fracture, we can assume that prior to this the vills of *Bolun*, Linton, Swadlincote, Donisthorpe and Oakthorpe paid tithes to Stapenhill which identifies the parish estate shown in green.

The matrix also reveals that a combined set of nine vills were each recorded within breve six. This would appear to be a hundredal grouping with a caput at Drakelow/Hearthcote and an ecclesiastical centre at Stapenhill (Drakelow and Hearthcote would later have chapels dependent on Stapenhill in the 13th century). Interestingly it includes Hartshorne which is north of the most obvious topographical area. Importantly, the separate parish-estate of Croxall that includes Catton and Edingale is also a part of this breve recording. Land at Stapenhill, Caldwell and Coton had been gifted to Burton Abbey, whilst Stretton and Ravenstone interstitch with neighbouring counties and hundreds. The Gresley hundred is thus broadly visible at Domesday and might be better termed Drakelow hundred. Despite the ecclesiastical and estate splits, it can be inferred there was an underlying practice of hundredal meetings at Gresley or Drakelow that preceded and outlasted the Normans. The men of this area completed the Domesday inquest for breve six, and it was from their court that the Ferrers and Gresley families would later profit.

	Derbyshire Domesday Book Walecros Estates						First Recorded Parish	
Breve / Page	**1**	**3**	**6**	**10**	**14**	**17**		
	Royal Repton Estate	**Burton Abbey Estate**	**Ferrers Estate**	**Minor Estate**	**Stafford Estate**	**King's Thanes**	**First Parish**	**References**
			Order of Vills Recorded					
Drakelow					1		Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Hearthcote					1		Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Stapenhill	5				2		Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Caldwell	6						Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Stanton			21				Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Hartshorne			22				Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Hartshorne			23				Stapenhill	CD iii, 475
Stretton			16				Stretton (Staffs?)	VCH
Croxall			14				Croxall	CD iii, 355
Edingdale			15		12		Croxall	CD iii, 355
Catton			17				Croxall	CD iii, 355
Bolun			18				Gresley (Stapenhill?)	CD iii, 367
Linton			19				Gresley (Stapenhill?)	CD iii, 367
Swadlincote				3			Gresley (Stapenhill?)	CD iii, 367
Ravenstone				8			Ravenstone (Leic?)	VCH
Donisthorpe				9			Gresley (Stapenhill?)	CD iii, 367
Oakthorpe				10			Gresley (Stapenhill?)	CD iii, 367
Lullington					11		Lullington	CD iii, 387
Coton	4						Lullington	CD iii, 387

Topographical Drakelow & Stapenhill Hundred

Fig. 5: Matrix of Estate and Parish Structures, Drakelow Hundred *c*. AD 1066.

AD 873 – 1016: A DANISH-INFLUENCED REPTON HUNDRED AND WEST MERCIAN DRAKELOW

The Vikings sacked Repton in AD 873, Aethelfled won back Derby for Wessex and West Mercia in AD 918, and the Danes of York once more unsuccessfully attacked the East Midlands in AD 942. Between then and Cnut's invasion of England in AD 1016, the shrieval system of devolved East Midlands government evolved with the creation of Derbyshire and its wapentakes occurring in the context of on-going Danish influence. Writing in 1986, David Roffe concluded that the proto-shire-system for this part of the country had been introduced as part of an administrative solution by the Kingdom of Wessex and the people of West Mercia, soon after they conquered the five boroughs of Nottingham, Derby, Lincoln, Leicester and Stamford from the Danes. The Confederacy of the Five Boroughs, the re-emergence of the Mercian Council in the North-West and the establishment of a shrieval system of taxation and jurisdiction were separate but connected outgrowths of 'a radical reorganization of local government'.[21] It was 'designed to foster a sense of identity' and 'create a buffer zone between southern England and an unstable North'. With this earlier context, Roffe noted that the shires of the East Midlands first occur by name in AD 1016.[22] The *Walecros* Wapentake might be assumed to have been created during the same top-down process.

During this period of rapid and significant change it is perhaps surprising that there are still glimpses of Drakelow hundred in two specific charters and in the resulting distribution of Danish-influenced place-names, although there is no similar record of neighbouring Repton hundred. Charter S484 of the Burton Abbey Chartulary records that in AD 942 King Edmund of Wessex granted the Manors of Walton-on-Trent, Coton-in-the-Elms, Caldwell, Drakelow, Linton and *Newbold* to the West Mercian noble Wulfsige-the-Black. A second charter S1606 granted Croxall, Stapenhill, Rosliston, Walton and Drakelow.[23] Although *Bolun* (Castle Gresley), Catton and Lullington are not mentioned, the charter grants are otherwise coterminous with the later Drakelow hundred and seem to exist as a gift separate to any lands within the Repton estate (Fig. 6). It could be argued that it was done to inaugurate a southern sense of place although the grants themselves cannot prove this. Of the three vills not listed, Lullington was a separate parish-estate in Domesday Book and may already have been so in AD 942 thus explaining it not being granted to Wulfsige. This may also be true of Catton which was part of the Croxall and Edingale parish-estate identified at Domesday. Enigmatically this leaves *Newbold* which has not yet been confidently identified; some have suggested it is the area west of the Trent in Barton-under-Needwood known by this name, but this is topographically unlikely. It is also possible that *Newbold* was an early name for the absent Lullington, Catton or *Bolun*. If so then *Bolun* is the most likely; perhaps the hagiographic story of the Drakelow haunting was based on an earlier pestilence than that of *c.* AD 1085, then the 'new building' implied by the name *Newbold* may fit with this being Castle Gresley, although this would not explain how it then became *Bolun*.

If the Gresley hundred visible at Domesday was a Stapenhill parish with a Drakelow caput then it would logically have been impacted by the estate structure driven by Wulfsige and his heirs between AD 942 and the arrival of the Normans. Much has been written about the motivations that led to Earl Uhtred being given 60 *manentes* of land in Hope and Ashford, North Derbyshire, in AD 926 which can be identified as 60 vills in *Hamenstan* Wapentake;[24] it was a strategic investment in creating a Wessex-aligned region within the Danelaw shortly

after the reconquest of Derby, and it would create a buffer zone with York. Less is said about Wulfsige-the-Black who seems to be a similar implant, representing West Mercian and Wessex control in the southern half of *Walecros* Wapantake.

One manifestation of this West Mercian influence might be that none of the vills in Gresley hundred has a name showing Danish influence, neither in AD 942 or now; the familar pattern of Danish names emanating from the north-east of England and ending at Watling Street appears, in fact, to have petered-out as it reached the Stapenhill to Appleby road (A444) which is fifteen miles to the north-east of the traditional Danelaw line, beyond Wulfsige's lands. Wulfsige's impact on the southern area certainly continued two generations later when in AD 1004, Burton Abbey was founded by Wulfric Spot, thought to be a relation or heir of Wulfsige.[25] Burton eclipsed Repton as an ecclesiastical centre in the next 150 years.[26] More important to the history of the southern lands, Burton Abbey seems to have been in some senses a replacement or expansion of the older ecclesiastical centre at Stapenhill just across the Trent,[27] a confident statement of West Mercian hegemony re-positioned as it is on the west side of the Trent. It would have remained important to the southern hundred until the argument between Roger the Poitevin and the then Abbot in the 1070s or 1080s.
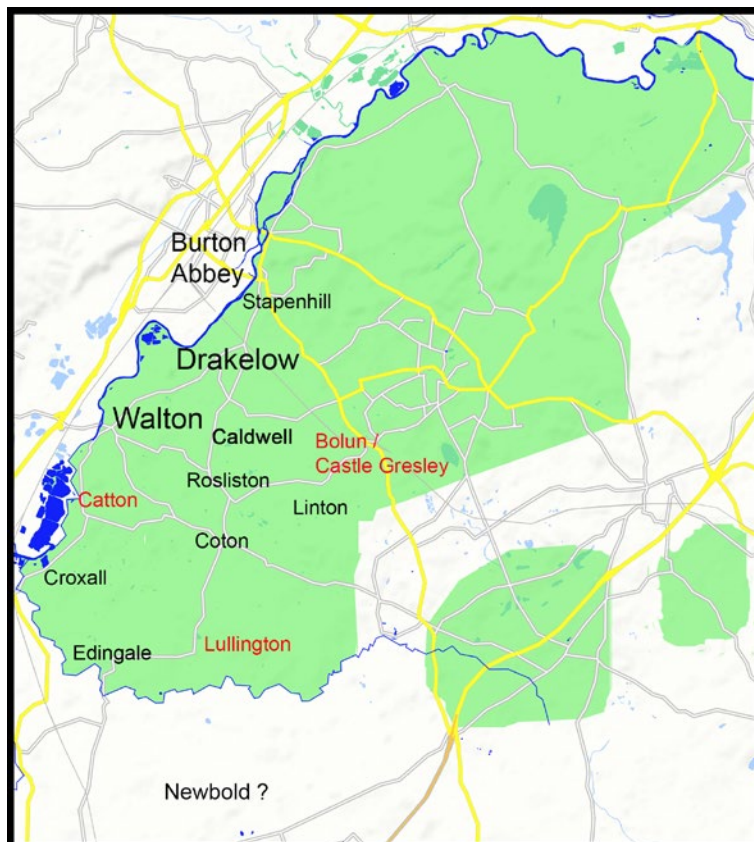

Fig. 6: The AD 942 Drakelow / Gresley Hundred*.
* Vills in black are listed in the Charters, those in red are not.
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Whilst Gresley hundred in the south-west of *Walecros* kept Anglo-Saxon derived naming conventions, the neighbouring Repton hundred did not, and the influence of the Danes can be considered by four geographical groups of place-names. The first set is those in the north-west; Ingleby (Englaby AD 1002 Wulfric Spot's Will, *Engelbi* DB), Bretby (*Bretbi* DB)[28] and Foremark (*Fornewerche* DB) - somehow connecting with the original Viking over-wintering in Repton and the burials in Ingleby during the period immediately following.[29] It is likely these were already Anglo-Saxon settlements with Danish influenced naming. The second set includes Hartshorne (*Heortshorne* DB), Netherseal (Sela DB) and Smisby (*Smidesbi* DB), which are on good agricultural land. In the first two examples, although there is no Danish influence in the vills' names, there is much evidence of Danish farms and fields within them; as a result, it seems probable these were Anglo-Saxon settled prior to Danish arrival.[30]

The third set are on the poorer, unoccupied heathland that would later become the clay and coal landscape between the A511 and the A444, including settlements at Donisthorpe (*Durandestorp* DB), Oakthorpe (*Achetorp* DB), Swadlincote (*Sivardingescotes* DB), Thringstone (*Trangesbi* DB) and Ravenstone (*Ravenestorp* DB) which may have been secondary settlement sites in the period of sustained Danish settlement by Vikings of lesser status and wealth.[31] These five were the only settlements in a wide area of land at Domesday (except possibly Drakelow's berewick of Heathcote whose location was on the edge of this area) and the first three paid only two carucates of geld from the wapentakes total of 90.[32] This suggests the large area between the current A444 and A511 had earlier been unhidated waste, owned commonly by the two pastural hundreds of Repton and Gresley until the period of Danish settlement at which point nominal geld share accountability was devolved to them.

The fourth and final grouping of Danish-influenced names are those in neighbouring Leicestershire including Ashby (*Ascbbi*) and Boothorpe (*Boctrop*). The odd result of the process through which counties were created is that the border of Leicestershire creates a geographical shearing of Derbyshire. The Leicestershire finger of influence extends from Netherseal and parts of Linton in the south through Overseal, Boothorpe, Ashby and on to Diseworth. In Figure 7, this Leicestershire finger is shown in blue and appears to cut through Repton hundred, Gresley hundred and Melbourne's royal lands, leaving the exclave or island of Derbyshire around Measham that is stranded within further blue lands to east. One unproductive line of enquiry was whether these unusual shire borders may relate to an area of Danelaw influence stemming from Leicester and Nottingham, since many of the names in the Leicestershire finger at the point of Domesday, like those on the *Walecros* waste, have Danish influence[33] and lead through Ashby to Nottingham. The place-name evidence is, however, not enough alone to conclude a Danish influence for the border location of Leicestershire, and it seems more likely that both the Derbyshire and Leicestershire lands here were once a continuous area of waste on which late settlement occurred.

Just as Derbyshire contains Repton hundred and Drakelow hundred, the Leicestershire finger contains Seal hundred and Diseworth hundred. Interestingly the hundred borders seem largely to respect those of the complex county arrangement, which suggests they were either created synchronously, or one was mapped with respect to the other. This is unlike the borders of estate structures which clearly were only partially respected by the drawing of wapentake and county borders (Melbourne and Walton-on-Trent being good examples of estates that split the border of *Walecros* [34]). If Drakelow hundred's liberties included some of these Leicestershire lands whilst shrieval Derbyshire did not, then it might imply the county borders were laid over a more ancient hundred that was topographically different to the county. But

whilst Gresley's jurisdiction seems to have extended to the Seal area of Leicestershire in the 12th and 13th centuries this may have stemmed from practice rather than clearly defined liberty[35] and so the evidence is at best slight until one looks further back in time to before the Vikings.
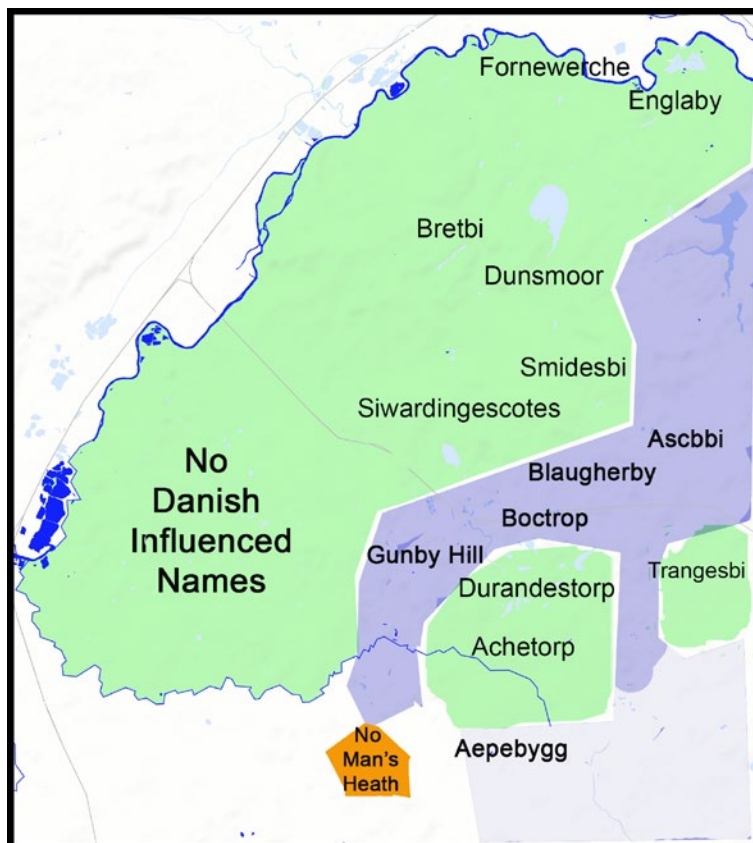

Fig. 7: Leicestershire in blue, with Danish-influenced names.
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AD 750-1050: WHY *WALECROS* WAPENTAKE?

The other great South Derbyshire mystery of Domesday, besides the as-yet unidentified *Bolun*, is why the Hundred of Repton and Gresley, that emerged out of the Repton Wapentake, was prior to that called *Walecros* Wapentake. Roffe concluded that there had been six sub-divisions of local government in the county of Derbyshire which were all known by the Danish term wapentake and which each paid approximately 90 carucates of geld (*Hamenstan, Scarsdale, Appletree, Litchurch, Morleyston* and *Walecros*).[36] Their origins were synchronous with the same top-down administrative restructuring that had created the County in the late 10th century, during which the forces of Wessex sought devolved governance in Danish-influenced Mercia. Few seem to have asked with any real import – 'why *Walecros*?' - possibly because the

name was mysteriously lost so soon after Domesday. Anderson suggested that linguistically it might derive from 'Vali's Cross' by reference to Walshcroft in Lincolnshire,[37] although the reference is not evidenced as more than linguisti*c*. Cameron also offers 'Welshman's cross' as a valid secondary consideration but he concludes that 'Vali' is preferable without giving reason. Historical analysis might give better context to this difficult onomastic assessment of two valid options.

To understand the name in historical context requires going back in time well before the creation of the counties and wapentakes in the late 10th century. Wapentakes were commonly named after the ancient moot site of the district, the place at which courts were held and men assembled to debate and muster. Following Anderson,[38] the Landscapes of Governance project argues that:

> *Place-names of assembly sites and their associated districts indicate varying origins, in some cases referring to pre-Christian gods…while other terms relate to monuments of earlier ages, such as burial mounds and standing stones. Other meeting-places are named after seemingly mundane features such as crossroads, bridges and settlements.*[39]

This formulation has led to the identification of many moot sites,[40] although none have reviewed the ancient monuments, mounds and crossroads of South Derbyshire to understand what may have marked *Walecros* meetings.

There are two leading candidates, the first being at the main Castle Gresley crossroads, the name of which (High Cross Bank) suggests that there was once a cross here. This will be reviewed later as part of an assessment of the earliest Anglo-Saxon settlement. The second option is at the Repton crossroads, and this is the more natural place to look since *Walecros* Wapentake became Repton Wapentake during the 12th century, suggesting that the leading moot was at Repton. From the Repton crossroads a riverside road led to Stanton-by-Bridge in one direction and Gresley in the other, and an inland road led along the brook from Repton to Hartshorne (there was no bridge to Willington[41]). This position was therefore the point at which multiple routes convened and was an accessible, open space for public assembly. At this crossroads today, there is still a cross and recent examination of the lower plinths suggest they date to at least the 13th century (Plate 1).[42] The medieval cross that stood on top was itself destroyed in AD 1806 but the Rev R.R. Rawlins who drew it wrote 'it is rather a singular object to look at, as one would have thought that a little more ambition would have been in the mind of a cross-designer during the era of the florid style'.[43] Nevertheless, the shaft was elevated on steps to a significant height and would seem to have either monumental function or be a platform for speeches.

Between AD 1153 and AD 1172, at roughly the same time that the name of *Walecros* was lost in favor of Repton, a new Austin Priory was established on the devastated site of the earlier Repton monastery. We also know that at roughly this time the locus of political and commercial governance for Repton was conducted at the marketplace crossroads two hundred metres away from the church. There is the possibility therefore that political and building rearrangements occurred which resulted in a new cross being erected at this time. One important consideration regarding what may have existed prior to this is the collection of stone cross fragments found buried near the crypt of St Wystan during August 1979, as part of the excavation of the site at which Vikings had sacked the Mercian monastery of Repton in AD 873. Martin and Birthe Kjolbye-Biddle discovered the pit and wrote a well researched

Plate 1: The Repton Cross. Today's round shaft and ancient plinths, in a late
19th century photo.

paper[44] which has recently been comprehensively supplemented and discussed.[45] They note
that 'the evidence from the relatively small area so far excavated does not show how many
crosses the Vikings destroyed, let alone how many stood around the Anglo-Saxon church,
but does suggest that they were once a striking feature of the Christian landscape at Repton.'
Amongst eleven different crosses discovered, the large sculptured fragment known as the
Repton Stone has since become the flagship of their find, representing the top third of a fuller
standing stone (Fig. 8). The full cross is estimated to have been three to four metres high and
bore the image of an Anglo-Saxon warrior King, as well as a peasant-eating leviathon. The
peculiarity of its design and the sheer impressiveness of its size would have made it locally as
famous then, as it is now.[46]

The side of the Repton Stone fragment which shows a carving of an Anglo-Saxon warrior
on horseback, sword raised, in the style of a classical Roman-emperor-carving is interpreted
as possibly the image of Mercian King Aethelbald at the height of his power. Aethalbald came
to power in the Mercian Kingdom in AD 716, expanding influence to become Bretwalda
(King of all Britain south of the Humber) in AD 731.[47] This possibly included the Powys
lands in the West Midlands including those at Wroxeter, won either by diplomacy or battle.
The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle also records that in AD 743 Aethelbald fought a major battle with
the Kingdom of Powys possibly against a resurgent King Elisedd whose own stone pillar is
renowned.[48] If the interpretation of the warrior figure as Mercian King Aethelbald is accurate
then it might make sense that the Repton Stone had a special status as a gift or monument
resulting from the Welsh campaigns, and therefore an explanation for a Welsh association
with *Walecros* might be hypothesised.

This is supported by an analysis of the leviathon side of the stone, of which the Biddles wrote:

> … difficult as these individual strands are to define, they suggest the presence of a celticizing element in the carvings of the Repton Stone, particularly in the serpent face… It is exactly as we would expect in Mercia in the eighth century. Given the nature of the original conversion of the kingdom in 663-4 and the constant intercourse, not all of it hostile, with the British kingdom of Powys and Gwynedd on its western marches.
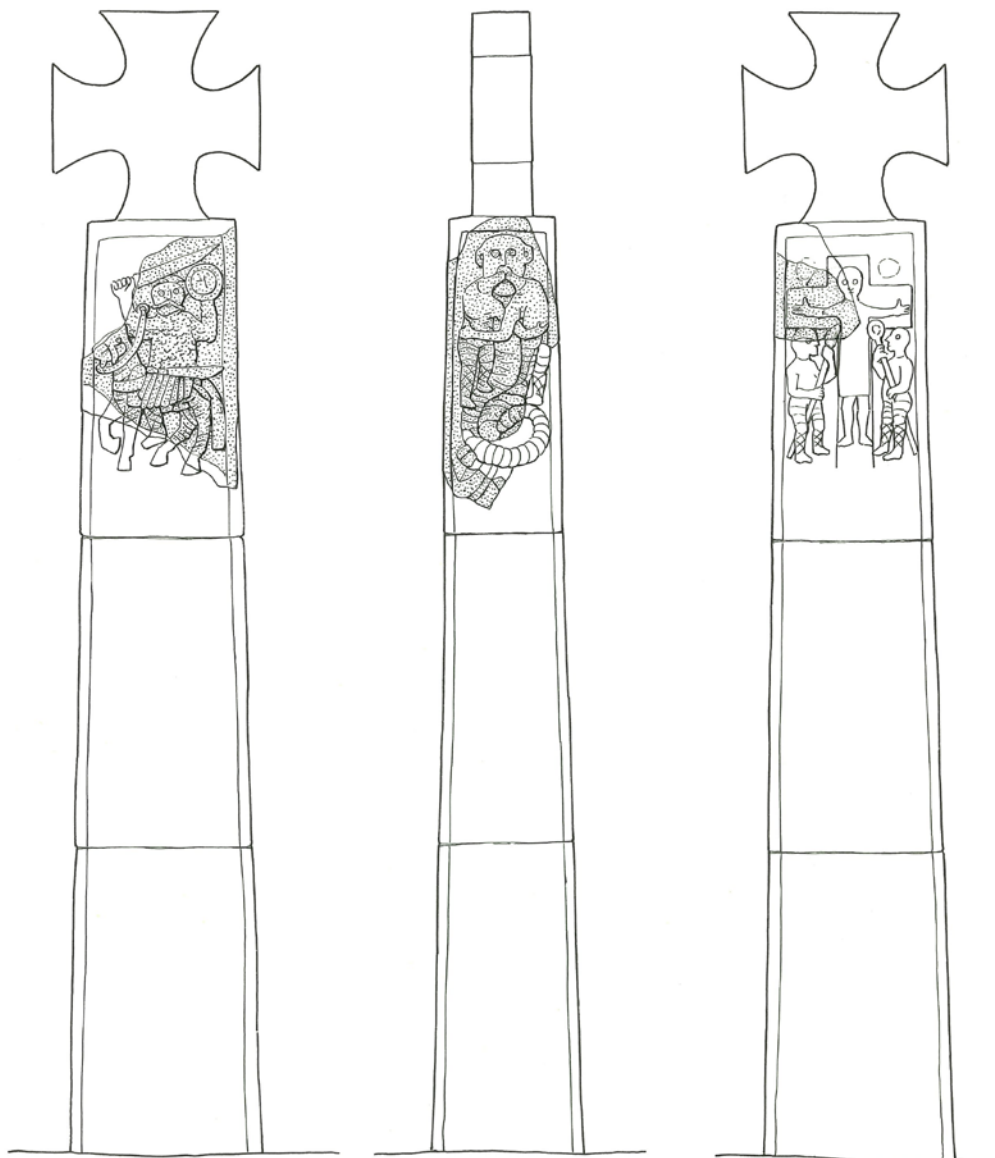
Fig. 8: The Repton Stone.

Despite these possible links with Wales, the Repton Stone risks being an appealing candidate for *Walecros* simply because of its celebrity today, and there are other reasons for caution. The Biddles concluded that the cross was sited next to St Wystans where ultimately it was found buried. This site is not obviously liminal, extraparochial or intercommoned, all frequently observed features of moot sites. There are examples of banleucas, such as that at Bury St Edmunds,[49] where a moot site is located at the ecclesiastical centre of a royal estate rather than a classic shared meeting point for the people, so it is still possible that the *Walecros* moot was outside the monastery church, but examples are rarer. Another concern is that the Repton Stone seems to have been desecrated by the Vikings in AD 873 as part of a wholesale attack on Christian symbols and many of the other cross fragments are found buried with the Vikings which suggests contemporaneity. Since the counties and wapantakes of the East Midlands were not created until the late 10th century it would require that either the name of *Walecros* were somehow retained to that date, or perhaps more likely that the Vikings only broke off the top third of the cross, this being the fragment found, and the lower two-thirds of the cross remnant remained *in situ* as the moot site, later becoming known as *Walecros*. If the latter is correct, then the *Walecros* moot site in the 10th and 11th century would be a salutary reminder of the Danish conquest.

One less rewarding possibility was the notion that Repton Stone had always stood at the market-place, a much more natural moot site, that the Vikings had not destroyed it and that it remained as a visible moot site marker right up until the early 12th century when it became heretical to show leviathans such as Repton Stone's hell-mouth image on Christian statues.[50] In this line of enquiry, the offending hell-mouth might have been safely buried under Church control, the new plain cross may have reflected a deliberate change in values and the *Walecros* name may have become an unspeakable heresy. It fits with Biddle's original 1985 paper which concludes that the Repton Stone was buried not later or earlier than sometime between the late 11th and early 12th century; but it is contradicted by his more recent conclusions from the *Corpus of Anglo Saxon Stone Sculpture* which emphasises the contemporaneity of the stone burials with the Viking attack.

Clear within this exploration is that the Repton Stone as a theory for *Walecros* and the marketplace as an enduring location for it, has a romantic appeal which can result in stretched speculation. It is not conclusive that *Walecros* derived its name from any given cross, nor is the exact location of the cross at any given time conclusive - despite some robust and useful archaeological records. Despite these uncertainties, it does seem likely given the preponderance of crosses in Repton that one of them marked the moot site of *Walecros*, and the strong links between Aethelbald and Powys might suggest that if both 'Vali's cross' and 'Welshman's cross' are linguistically valid, then 'Welshman's cross' is historically preferable. It also seems most likely that the name was lost when the Repton community used the building of the new Priory in the 12th century as the opportunity to move the moot site from St Wystan's to the town crossroads, in line with the growing separation of church and governance, and the emergence of a Repton market.

AD 650 – 700: RECONSTRUCTING *HREPINGAS*

King Aethelred's Charter S1805 records that 31 *manentes* called *Hrepingas* were given to the Abbot of Breedon-on-the-Hill towards the end of the 7th century. Much has already

been written about whether *Hrepingas* relates to Rippingale in Lincolnshire or Repton in Derbyshire, including an onomastic analysis by A.R. Rumble that is largely affirmative of it being Repton.[51] Gavin Smith's later analysis of Surrey place-names suggests that in the 7th century the -ingas form evolved beyond its earlier usage for groups of people, and morphed into a top-down naming convention for a diocese created on royal Anglo-Saxon land, with a count of one *-ingas* per hundred (e.g. Godalming);[52] his analysis would add weight to Rumble's earlier conclusion since each of the factors holds true if *Hrepingas* relates to Repton. However, a more doubtful assessment from Susan Kelly rightly pointed out that a royal monastery on royal lands, like that at Repton, ought not require mediation by neighbouring Breedon in order to establish something akin to a diocese.[53] As a result there remains a question over the identification of *Hrepingas*. As highlighted earlier, one romantic stretch of the knowable, only tangentially touched upon in discussions to date, is the notion that *Hrepingas* did not relate directly to Repton but that it was the entire area of *Walecros*.[54]

As with *Hamenstan*, there seems to be an equivalence between the measure of land earlier known as a *manens* and that later known as a vill.[55] The theory is intuitively appealing since there are 36 vills in *Walecros* at Domesday, tempting hypothetical reconstructions of how it had once been 31 before settlement creep into the area of waste. The most appealing reconstruction turns out to be very credible. In Domesday Book, several areas of *Walecros* are listed as waste. Of those vills which are fully waste there are exactly five, and these are those of Oakthorpe, Donisthorpe, Ravenstone Hartshorne and Measham, reflecting areas of land that were never officially hidated (some vills like Willesley and Thringstone are partial waste implying expansion from hidated areas). Thirty-six less five is the requisite 31 (Fig. 9). Note that for the first time Walton and Melbourne are included because they were clearly once part of the initial royal estate of Repton and would have been two of the first and most important splits in the once united estate structure, probably at the point that *Hrepingas* control of lands north and west of the Trent became important, explaining their own later sokes to the north and west, under devolved royal patronage. The overall logic has strong compulsion especially if Stapenhill were not yet an ecclesiastical centre in the late 7th century, or if it became subsidiary to Repton.

Some caution should be exercised since the proximity of 36 vills to 31 *manentes* could give rise to many similar theories. An analysis of the late settlement of Danish influenced names would question why Swadlincote and Thringstone were earlier hidated when the older Anglo-Saxon names of Measham and Hartshorne were not. Geographically, however, Hartshorne makes sense as waste if one ignores the artificial sense of a hundred border on the ridge forming the current A511. There were no settlements at Woodville or Midway until the Industrial Revolution, as already shown, and even Bretby at Domesday was located as an inland berewick of Newton, rather than close to the A511 ridge as it seems today. Therefore, one could think of the absence of any named five-hide properties as extending a common wasteland beyond Hartshorne during the era of *Hrepingas*, as far as the edges of the later Foremark and Ticknall estates. There are similar arguments for Measham which unites geographically with the wasteland. More importantly for both places, the waste listings of Domesday would seem firmer evidence than place-name analysis, even though it would mean that the record had been preserved for three hundred years by the time of Domesday.

Another more complex route to arrive at the number 31 is to assume that Breedon and Stapenhill were ancient ecclesiastical centres prior to Repton Abbey, and that they remained so including their associated parishes. In this reconstruction, the most logical way to arrive at the

The *Hrepingas* Regio / Sub-Kingdom or Ecclesiastical Grouping

Hundred	Vill	Geld Carucates	*Hrepingas* Vill Count
Repton Hundred	Repton	6	1
	Milton	0	2
	Newton	6	3
	Bretby	1	4
	Willesley	3	5
	Ticknall	4	6
	Ingleby	2.1	7
	Thringstone	3	8
	Chilcote	3	9
	Foremark	2	10
	Smisby	2	11
	Appleby	5	12
	Winshill	2	13
Ancient Waste	Measham	2	N/A
		41.1	

Royal Areas (at carucation?)	Vill	Geld Carucates	*Hrepingas* Vill Count
Royal Vills	Walton	6	27
	Rosliston	N/A	28
	Lullington	5	29
	Melbourne	N/A	30
	Stanton Bridge	1.5	31

Hundred	Vill	Geld Carucates	*Hrepingas* Vill Count
Gresley / Drakelow Hundred	Coton	2	14
	Drakelow	4	15
	Hearthcote	0	16
	Stapenhill	5.1	17
	Caldwell	2	18
	Stanton	0.5	19
	Croxall	3	20
	Edingdale	3	21
	Stretton	1	22
	Catton	3	23
	Bolun	4	24
	Linton	2	25
	Swadlincote	1	26
Ancient Waste	Hartshorne	6	N/A
	Donisthorpe	1	N/A
	Oakthorpe	0.8	N/A
	Ravenstone	1	N/A
		39.4	

Fig. 9: *Hrepingas* Reconstruction.

31 *manentes* of *Hrepingas* land would be to exclude Drakelow hundred entirely and instead include the fifteen vills of Repton soke and add to them the Melbourne soke land north of the Trent, including Barrow and Chellaston. However, this falls short of 31 and requires complex assumptions that *Hrepingas* stretched as far as Derby when it was created (*Northworthy* being an ancient name of Derby and thought to relate it to Repton). On the whole, the more likely option is that *Hrepingas* was indeed the combination of Repton and Gresley hundreds given the longevity of their association in the following millenium, the geographically divisive impact of the River Trent and of course the shared wasteland with coal rights. This would mean that the AD 942 grant of Gresley hundred to Wulfsige had in fact created a fission of *Hrepingas* along the lines of an existing hundredal or tithing demarcation, made possible by

the earlier Viking attack on Repton. It would also mean that *Walecros* Wapentake of the 10th century respected the lines of an earlier border.

AD 650 – 800: THE COMPLEX OF GOVERNANCE AT NO MAN'S HEATH

A final clue to the longevity of Repton and Gresley hundreds and the nature of *Hrepingas* is to be found at nearby No Man's Heath, where a four-county marker recognizes that Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire and Derbyshire meet. A place where borders and roads converge without the presence of a town or habitation can be an indication that outdoor assemblies may have been conducted there on neutral land, to co-ordinate neighbouring groups in governmental witans or courts. There is no strong reason why the county sheriffs of these four counties should meet in the period AD 942 – AD 1016, especially when the larger organizing principle for this area was then the Five Boroughs that included Nottinghamshire. Even if there were such inter-county meetings then representation from Gresley and Repton without similar representation from north Derbyshire hundreds would not make sense. Yet it is close to No Man's Heath that the most complex inter-stitching of Repton and Gresley lands occur, with Ravenstone being parochially linked to Gresley land whilst Thringstone is a Repton soke, each being divided by Leicestershire as exclaves of Derbyshire.

The four-county marker seems, therefore, to overlay a more complex and ancient radial pattern (Fig. 10). There are nine paths and roads that meet here. The centre of the radial pattern at No Man's Heath encompasses the adjacent village of Appleby which itself is located at the centre of a curious radial feature in the River Mease that might be described as an almost complete circle of riverways. This is perhaps evidence of the meeting place emerging at a time when landscape features were more critical than they would later become. It is just north of this river-circle that the most extreme parts of the Derbyshire exclave of Repton and Gresley lands are located and it would seem possible that Thringstone and Ravenstone were encampments where the Mercian leaders rested during meetings at No Man's Heath on the edge of Appleby, receiving food tributes from farms aligned to their lands when distant from their own.

There are several other hundreds which converge here besides those of Repton and Gresley. In this reading, it would be possible that the Leicestershire finger of influence is in fact a series of *c*. 39 - 42 carucate hundreds (Seal hundred, Belton hundred, Diseworth hundred and Tonge hundred) that connect No Man's Heath to the original ecclesiastical centre of Breedon, which figures in the origin story of *Hrepingas*. *C*.F. Slade, using *c*. AD 1130 data, describes this as a topographically discrete block within the larger and more recent grouping known as Goscote Wapentake, and he terms it Western and Central Goscote.[56] It is suggestive of an alternative *regio* or diocese, who also met at Appleby since the finger of their land led to Netherseal[57], a short distance from the meeting place. They would have access to the common wasteland as well as right of passage across it. Although outside the scope of this paper, it seems likely that this finger of land in some way relates to the 20 *manentes* given to Breedon itself in Aethelred's Charter S1803.

Another important area with clearly demarcated borders that converged at No Man's Heath was that later known as the Staffordshire hundred of Offlow, whose meeting point at Weeford some believe to have been a *hlaw* associated with King Offa who died in AD 796 or perhaps in some way the earlier angeln Offa of the Mercian regnal list (Offa-hlaw, *Offelav* DB). These
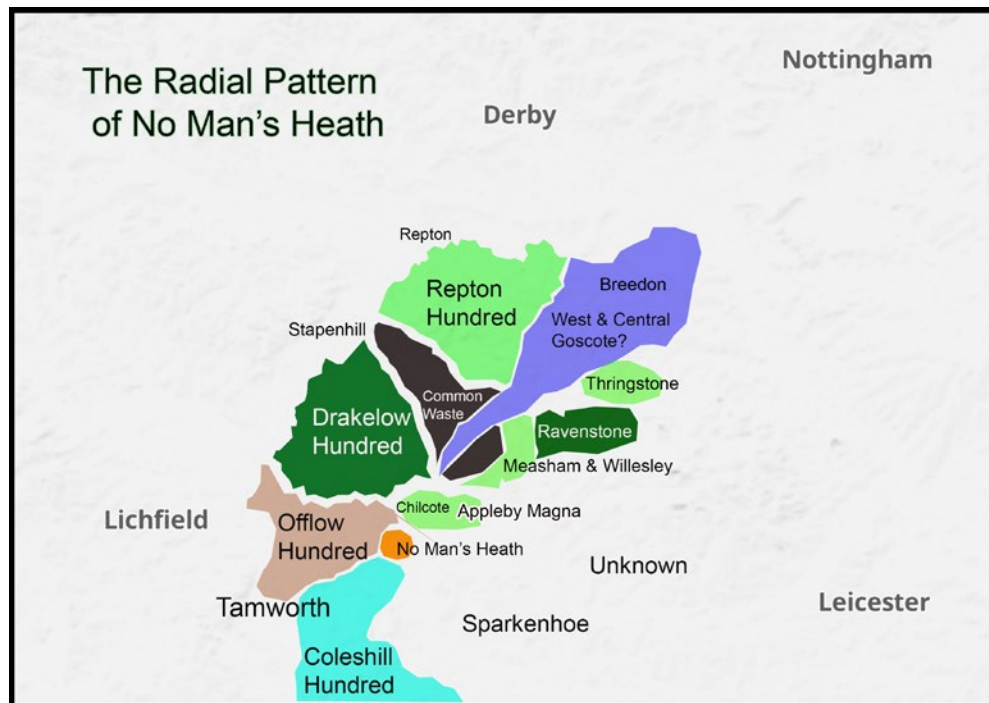
Fig. 10: The Radial Pattern* at Appleby and No Man's Heath.
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As shown here, Offlow and Coleshill western borders end at the line of the Trent and the Tame. In reality, they spread further west at a very early point, as Mercian power crossed into the West Midlands.

lands connected to, and included, the important Mercian minster town of Lichfield implying that this may have been an alternate diocese or *regio* which met the No Man's Heath campsite at the village currently known as Clifton Campville.

Perhaps the most important *regio*, uniting with the radial pattern from the south, was that of Coleshill (*Coleshelle*) which contained the Mercian royal lands and ecclesiastical centre at Tamworth. Coleshill's most northerly vill of Seckington contains a mound not unlike that at Gresley and it was here that King Aethelbald of Mercia was assassinated in AD 757, just a few miles from No Man's Heath. It also seems likely that Coleshill's campground included Newton Regis, the vill not mentioned in Domesday and likely developing later as a small Warwickshire village just south of No Man's Heath on a campsite which its name suggests was still known to have been used by the Mercian kings.

In this analysis, the lands to the east of No Man's Heath in modern Leicestershire are left as "unknown" partly because of their poorly recorded details in both the Leicester survey and in Domesday Book, and partly because construction of the four massive wapentakes of Gartree, Framland, Guthlaxton and Goscote during the late 10th century seems to have wiped out earlier borders. It is tempting to speculate that prior to the creation of Leicestershire there was a complete radial pattern on all the sides of No Man's Heath which formed Mercia, and

that there was a different radial pattern for the Middle Angles further to the east.[58] However, there are no Mercian capitals or ecclesiastical centres within this area immediately to the east so it is also possible that the areas already identified were the full extent of the complex. This would fit with a further characteristic of early meeting places in that they are often on the very edge of a district.

Overall, the meeting place proves that these hundreds predate the creation of counties whose lines were largely drawn around them, and if they each have deep associations with royal vills and ecclesiastical centres then it seems certain that No Man's Heath was a nodal point of importance for at least four united dioceses or *regiones* of Mercia; it may be where the witan elected future Kings, explaining the alternate importance of Repton, Tamworth and Lichfield during the era of Mercian Kingship when a given *regio* may have a leader elected. If this were true, then it might be better to consider each *regio* or diocese as a sub-Kingdom ruled by separate descendants of earlier Kings, managing the Mercian Kingdom in allegiance. The tightly coordinated planning of a single complex may have been organized from Tamworth by King Aethelred himself as a type of inner court, and this might also answer Susan Kelly's concern that Repton as a royal area ought not to have required mediation from Breedon when creating a minster.

Regardless of this speculation, the topographical hundreds of Repton and Gresley were a critical part of this complex of governance, and as gradually reconstructed by peeling each layer of history the two hundreds would each have had a similar tax burden (39 - 42 carucates) at Domesday, once again exempting Melbourne and Walton-on-Trent from the analysis. These districts are quite large but only equivalent in geld value to that of neighbouring Belton, Seal, Diseworth or Tonge hundreds, as recorded in the Leicestershire Survey, and this is suggestive of an earlier Mercian unit of hundredal governance prior to the creation of wapentakes and counties. Just as the four Leicestershire hundreds seem to make-up a single *regio* or diocese connected to Breedon, then the radial pattern at No Man's Heath is further support that Repton and Gresley at this time shared a common sub-governance and minster; this would explain the fact that only Repton of the two is known to have had associations with Mercian Kingship.

AD 450 – 650: ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENT AND HIDATION

Before Mercian Kings Wulfhere and Aethelred became Christian in the late 7th century, before their pagan father King Penda had been victorious in the north and south of England in the early 7th century, and before development of the sophisticated regional governance still visible in the topography at No Man's Heath, there are few traces of the Anglo-Saxon arrival. One of the earliest and most enigmatic however is the find in January 1962 of a miniature pot buried at Drakelow which has been identified as of Frisian-Angle design with Saxon stamps. It has been dated to approximately AD 550.[59] Could this have contained a votive offering for an important Iclingas leader who was buried here at the *hlaw* which would become *Dracan hlawen*? Certainly, Drakelow became associated with pagan superstition, the spirit of the dragon monster protecting the mound and whatever was buried there, potentially giving rise to the rumours and stories of the walking dead (*orcneas*-like creatures) that made Geoffrey of Burton's Drakelow story so compelling.

Whatever the drama surrounding the burial, the *Hrepingas* land grant suggests that little more than one hundred years later Drakelow was one *manens* amongst a planned settlement

of 30 similar places. The evidence for greatest settlement is on the fertile lowland alongside rivers where the land is rich in red loam (Fig. 11).[60] The Trent riverside from Melbourne to Croxall contained twelve settlement groups which, with four inland berewicks, made sixteen named places in AD 1066, each having Anglo-Saxon place-names or even earlier linguistic origins.[61] The positioning of vills has a degree of consistency that may indicate coordinated planning consistent with hidation of great antiquity.[62] To what extent there was a nucleated centre to each place is not known,[63] nor when exactly they were each given a name, but to the degree that they did have a centre or nexus of housing, then their location seems to have been about 1.8 miles apart. This is consistent with properties of five hides and 640 acres (later 6 carucates), often with inland berewicks of smaller dimension. The lowland locations for new settlements like Newton and Drakelow seem to have filled-in the spaces where previously only higher land Walton, Stapenhill, Winshill and Ingleby (and possibly Repton) had existed in the Romano-British era.[64] Thus it is tempting to see the Trent as the planned border which gave 'the merch-dwellers' of Mercia their name, and the line of settlements look-out defensively to the Welsh midlands in the West providing lands for a new type of farming and habitation.
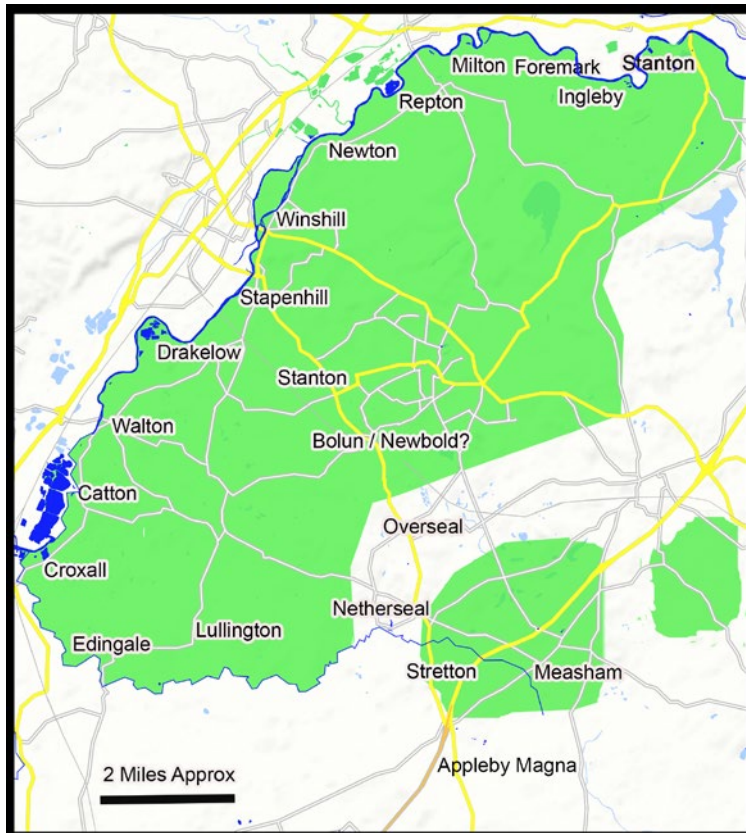

Fig. 11: The River and Road Settlements.
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The six settlements along the Mease at Domesday[65] are also consistently located in distance from each other as are the group of ten inland vills,[66] which together occupy the most productive agricultural lowlands on which ploughs could most easily be employed. The spatial distribution of farming land, as already seen, is topographically dissected by the Stapenhill to Appleby road which would bring reinforcements to the Trent border and these river and road settlements form the backbone of *Walecros*. Along this road the vills of Stanton, Castle Gresley, Seal and Stretton are once again sited approximately two miles apart. This supports Castle Gresley being *Bolun* because without this relationship there would be a missing vill between Stanton and Seal.

Within this context, the man-made mound at *Bolun* that later became a motte and bailey castle may in fact be an Anglo-Saxon boundary marker, delineating that no-one from Gresley should pass to Linton without knowing they were changing territory. It is a location distant from Repton hundred because of the wasteland, and distant from Gresley hundred because of the steepness of the Linton hill, and it is therefore on the edges of both hundreds. This reading as simply a boundary between Repton hundred and Gresley hunded seems unlikely because the mound was also in a significant place for both the southern and northern areas despite its distance to travel. It was on a path that provided a relatively rapid route directly from Icknield Street (A38) to Watling Street (A5), and at Stapenhill the road joined the otherwise separate hundreds as one.

At *Bolun*, the separate hundreds are further united in that the Stapenhill road is crossed by another from Stanton-by-Bridge in Repton hundred. It is at this road crossing that we find another important name-vestige that may indicate a pre-Danish origin and coordination across the hundreds. The modern Castle Gresley roundabout is still known today as High Cross Bank and a small area of Castle Gresley rising-up the hill to Linton was referred to as High Cross many years before.[67] Close to this area is White Lady Spring which would have brought fresh water. Putting these elements together it is possible to see the mound at Castle Gresley as an early Anglo-Saxon moot site around which musterings occurred in times of threat, where in the later Christian era a cross was erected on a nearby bank. It fits many of the factors identified for Anglo-Saxon military mobilization identified by Baker and Brookes[68] and many of the factors for outdoor assembly sites.[69] Standing on the Gresley mound it is possible to see all the way to Stapenhill and across the Trent - a viewshed critical for a region on the borders of Mercia.

Moot sites in Mercia were typically liminal, located on the borders of neighbouring demarcated divisions, providing a location for joint-congress as well as approved gateways into a neighbour's territory and importantly a point of mustering for times when the divisions were called upon to fight together;[70] it would seem therefore that Repton and Gresley hundreds were more co-ordinated than competitive. The 10th century split between West Mercian influenced lands of Wulfsige-the-Black in the south and a Repton hundred under Danish influence in the north would not have been coordinated with such a moot site. Equally, the single complex of *Hrepingas* ought not to have required such a division which is why the *Walecros* and *Hrepingas* moot is more likely to have been that in Repton. This suggests that the Gresley site could have some antiquity, perhaps back to a time before a united authority or organizing governance controlled a single diocese. Although highly uncertain, if it was the original meeting place of the two hundreds then it might also have remained unpopulated until a later date, just like the area of No Man's Heath, explaining its relatively late appearance as *Newbold* or *Bolun*. An early Anglo-Saxon moot site at Gresley, underneath an iron-making-

hearth, buried beneath a Norman castle might seem too much but it has been frequently pointed out that mounds provide a centre of gravity for a variety of historical moments.[71]

AD 450: AND BEFORE

In the period even less knowable before this, there is no evidence of something that would align to a South Derbyshire border. The most significant Roman road nearby is Icknield Street which ran along the other side of the Trent, several hours of travel by boat. The current A38 overlays its course and it is here, outside of *Walecros*, that most evidence for iron-age and Romano-British habitation is found, including at Wall, Catholme,[72] Stretton, Willington,[73] Aston-on-Trent[74] and Little Chester.[75] Each shows levels of abandonment in the Anglo-Saxon settlement years, although there is no space here to speculate on dispersal patterns. The second significant Roman road was Watling Street whose paved surface ran fifteen miles to the south of Derbyshire specifically avoiding the fast-flowing Trent in favour of the Tame. The geographical impact of the Roman roads seems to have exaggerated the isolation naturally created by hard-to-cross rivers. And because cities like Wall and Leicester were built at the apex of important road crossings, no major Roman settlements were established in what would later be *Walecros*. This isolation may explain why Christian hermits chose the hills of Ingleby and Breedon, or the holme at Andressey.[76]

This is not to claim that the Romano-British had no presence as clearly there were settlements such as those on the elevated eastern banks of the Trent at Stapenhill.[77] A Roman military supply route known as the *Via Devana* crossed the region, possibly on the ridge that forms the current A511 in summertime and diverting south through Moira in winter to avoid the Trent.[78] Another Roman road might be that between Tamworth and Ashby, tangentially touching Derbyshire at Stretton-en-le-Field where an excavation revealed a 4th century Roman farm.[79] It may have connected to the Roman road in nearby Moira,[80] or to the Salt Roads at Walton where Borough Hill contains the possible remains of a relatively remote and undeveloped Romano-British habitation.[81] Some speculation and limited coin finds suggest that Repton may also have a Romano-British heritage. Despite these settlements, southern Derbyshire prior to the Anglo-Saxon impact shows little evidence of being a coherent place. Habitation was light on the peripheries of the district and on raised hilltops overlooking the Trent, or where Roman roads entered or exited. Neither a single area nor a division of north and south is visible.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems that *Bolun* is Castle Gresley through the tenurial history and the resulting hole in the map of hidation that otherwise occurs. *Bolun*'s role as a site of ironmaking is possible but not certain, as is the possibility of the place once having been *Newbold*. It also seems certain that *Walecros* derived its name from a moot site in Repton at which stood a cross, and it seems preferable to think that it was a cross with Welsh association, although this is not conclusive; whether it was in the market square before the 12th century seems less likely.

The identification of *Hrepingas* with Repton seems on balance correct, although this paper has not expressly reviewed the Rippingale alternative. Two supporting arguments are clear. Firstly, the vill count within *Walecros* prior to settlement-creep is consistent with the 31

manentes given to the Abbot of Breedon in the late 7th century. Secondly, the meeting place at No Man's Heath suggests that the diocese or sub-kingdom of Repton was a coordinated neighbour with the diocese of Breedon, as indeed these two seem to have been with Lichfield and Tamworth.

It would also seem clear that the origins of Gresley and Repton as separate hundreds are significantly more ancient than the period of Norman privatisation. They are visible in the era of King Edward and were respected during creation of the proto shire in the 10th century. Although it is possible that the hundred borders of Gresley were created with those of the county and wapentake as part of West Mercian and Wessex regional devolution after AD 942, it seems much more likely that the hundred borders are more ancient still and that the *Walecros* Wapentake and the *Hrepingas regio* or diocese were super-structures created after them both. There is significant topographical reason to think that a southern hundred of Drakelow/Gresley and a northern hundred at Repton were early coordinated areas of separate tithings prior to the period that *Hrepingas* parochial control was established, sharing common rights to the coal and clay as well as a common moot site, boundary and assembly point at High Cross Gresley.

The non-metropolitan district of South Derbyshire which is still modestly responsible for planning applications today is, therefore, a direct vestige of a once powerful sub-Kingdom that briefly ruled the whole of Britain. It is unclear whether any of this prestigious lineage has impacted the unique South Derbyshire dialect, or the distinct sense of identity for people from the area today. The growth of clay and coal mining in the 19th century is more commonly thought to underly the region's identity and pride - but I like to think that one thousand and five hundred years of continuous local governance has more impact than we realize.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] S1805. King Aethelred's Charter, The Peterborough Cartulary.
[2] In the 1890s a series of county border realignments had given Appleby Magna, Measham, Packington and Donisthorpe to Leicestershire and Croxall to Staffordshire, whilst in 1974 the district was otherwise expanded with the additions of several areas north of the Trent that had always maintained close governance with Melbourne including Barrow-on-Trent, Aston-on-Trent and Shardlow.
[3] Geoffrey of Burton, *Life and Miracles of St Modwenna*, R. Bartlett (Oxford, 2002), 192-8. Falconer Maden places the event between AD 1090-1094 based on the abbacy of Geoffrey Malaterra but the presence of Roger the Poitevin in the story rather than Nigel de Stafford is suggestive of a pre-1086 occurrence.

[4]   The nature of such a franchise emerged and changed significantly during these years, and the impact on Gresley cannot be fully traced here. See Helen Cam, 'The evolution of the Medieval English franchise', *Speculum* 32 (July 1957), 3.

[5]   Falconer Madan, *The Gresleys of Drakelow,* 33-48. An AD 1201 deed cites William de Ferrers as Lord of Drakelow and William de Gresley as his Knight. Nigel de Stafford held Drakelow in capite at Domesday whereas Henry de Ferrers held *Bolun*, and so the 1201 deed giving de Ferrers ownership of Drakelow may imply that Nigel and his heirs ceded Drakelow to the de Ferrers at some point, or more likely that Drakelow and *Bolun*/Gresley were consistently conflated and the de Stafford/de Gresley service to the de Ferrers was continuous in a combined region.

[6]   The Hundred Rolls record the district as Gresley hundred with an approximate date of AD 1306.

[7]   Rev F.*C*. Hipkins, 'The State of the Repton Manor from the Reign of Henry I to Henry V', *DAJ* 24 (1902), 71. Based on the personal papers of Sir Henry Bemrose.

[8]   S.C Newton, 'The Parliamentary Surveys of the Hundreds of Appletree and Gresley', *DAJ* 81 (1961), 133.

[9]   Op. cit. Rev F.*C*. Hipkins.

[10] John Hudson, 'Maitland and Anglo-Norman Law', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 89 (1996), 37.

[11] In the 1100's, "Dominus Robertus de Greyseley" was asked by Wakelin de Winterton to help turn-out a tenant from Caldwell property. He agreed to do so for the fee of forty shillings. Records at the Burton Cartulary describe how Wakelin failed to pay the forty shillings so thereupon Robert de Gresely killed him ("per eundem Robertum occisus est' Waclynus). Falconer Madan op. cit., 31 from Folio 98 of the Burton Chartulary. This precedes many later murder charges for family members between 1275-1330 which likely reflect the common law catching up.

[12] The Hundred Rolls, 139-141, 156.

[13] A map of South Derbyshire based on the AD 1334 Lay Subsidy Roll can be found in David Roffe's, 'The Origins of Derbyshire', *DAJ* 106 (1986), 102- 122. It combines the 1835 Parish boundaries to create demarcated vill domains that do not assume the nucleated village format associated with Figure 2 in this article. Note that of the AD 1334 vills on Roffe's map, only Castle Gresley & Church Gresley are not in Domesday.

[14] The 1334 Lay Subsidy Roll refers to Repton Hundred and provides the first complete comparative place-name list.

[15] David Roffe, 'Place-Naming in Domesday Book: settlements, estates and communities.' *Nomina* 14 (1990-1), 47-60.

[16] David N. Parsons and Tania Styles, *The Vocabulary of English Place Names: A-Box* (1997), 123.

[17] The possible identification of Gresley as an early iron-making site would be an important off-shoot of this study which it has not been possible to pursue. Is there evidence of slag residues adjacent to castle knob? The site is beneath a large outcrop of coal that would later become Gresley colliery in the 1800's; although logs and charcoal are thought to have been used for lead smelting, might iron have used local coal, making Gresley an ideal place for a primitive hearth site?

[18] Linguistically the evidence is weak because *bole* is not attested in Middle English texts, and so it is a stretch to suggest it is derived from a similar Old English word. The

confusion with *bol* is also a problem linguistically as it would suggest the name derived from 'tree-trunk'. However, Parson & Styles assert the naming convention in places with iron production is conclusive.

[19] See note 5.

[20] Figures 4 and 5 are based on a similar table kindly provided by David Roffe after an early reading of this paper, following a methodology he developed in *Decoding Domesday*. I am much indebted and grateful.

Notation - Numbers: red=breve GDB Derbyshire, black=order of entries in each breve Text: Bold=manor with sake and soke, regular=manor, *italic*=berewick or soke, one indent =berewick, two indents=soke, underlined=explicitly related to Repton Refs: *CD*=Charles Cox, *Churches of Derbyshire*, *VCH*=*Victoria County History* Blue Colour=Repton parish-estate

Exclusions=Melbourne and Walton-on-Trent as royal vills with complex DB recordings

[21] David Roffe's, 'The Origins of Derbyshire', *DAJ* 106 (1986), 114.

[22] Anglo Saxon Chronicle, AD 1016.

[23] S484, S1606, from the records of the Burton Chartulary. Rosliston (*Redlaueston* DB) is listed as *Dulueston*, often transcribed as *Sulueston*. This seems likely a clerical error for *Rulueston*, and therefore Rosliston. It is also possible that either S1606 or S484 were completed by King Edmund and that the other was a later forgery or correction to justify lordship of the entire hundred. Two separate charters for the same area is otherwise odd.

[24] David Roffe, *Decoding Domesday* (2007), Chapter 9.

[25] Speculation based on common land ownership and name alliteration links Wulfric's mother, Wulfrun, to Wulfsige.

[26] Repton continued as a religious centre after the Abbey was sacked by the Danes in AD 873 and there were two priests recorded in Domesday, but it is not clear how important it was until the 12th century Priory was founded.

[27] The date of Stapenhill's foundation is unclear. The hagiographic account of Geoffrey of Burton in the early 12th century records that Modwenna lived on Andressey island in the Trent during the 7th century. This is next to where Burton Abbey would be founded thus establishing that the location of the Abbey was paramount. Geoffrey then relates that she established St Peter's church at Stapenhill on the east of the Trent (therefore in *Walecros*), shortly after visiting Rome, as the first formal place of worship, at which point Andressey was deserted. His choice of locating the first church at Stapenhill may reflect an oral history of this fact, with the Andressey story being a hagographical defense of the later location of the Abbey.

[28] Ingleby is literally the settlement of the 'angles' and Bretby the settlement of the 'britons'. Theories that Bretby was settled by members of the Viking army which was joined on its raids by Scandinavians and Britons from the area of Wales that the Danes called Bretland are possible. It seems just as possible that the names were chosen by the Danes in Repton to distinguish Bretby from Ingleby rather than to distinguish the origins of the people within them.

[29] Julian D Richards *et al*., 'Excavations at the Viking barrow cemetery at Heath Wood, Ingleby', *The Antiquaries Journal* (2004), 23-116.

[30] These include Dunsmoor Farm in Hartshorne, Shorthazels Farm near Smisby and Gunby Hill in Netherseal.

[31] This relationship between 'thorpe' names and secondary settlements is consistent

with Kenneth Cameron's 1966 work '*Scandinavian Settlement in Territory of the Five Boroughs*'. Caution should be taken accepting that Thringstone is the Domesday settlement of Trangesbi although for this work no better explanation can be offered.

[32] The other six towns on the clay and coal area (Woodville, Newhall, Moira, Norris Hill, Midway and Albert Village) as shown in Figure 2 were established later.

[33] Ashby-de-la-Zouche (*Ascbbi/Assebia*), Boothorpe (*Boctrop*), Blackfordby (*Blaugherby*), Gunby Hill (in Netherseal).

[34] The Melbourne sokes included *Litchurch* Wapentake lands, and Walton included two vills in *Morletstone*.

[35] Op. cit., The Gresleys of Drakelowe, 29-45, including unclear references to the Seals.

[36] Litchurch was not listed in Domesday but Roffe shows it was likely to have existed by reference to the 1291 papal taxation records and the 1334 Lay Subsidy Rolls. Debate remains on whether *Hamenstan* was already broken into Wirksworth and High Peak wapentakes.

[37] Olaf S. Anderson, *The English Hundred Names*, 1936, 36. Kenneth Cameron, *The Place Names of Derbyshire* (PND), (1959) iii, 622.

[38] Olaf S. Anderson, op. cit.

[39] http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/assembly

[40] E.g. B.H. Cox, 'Leicestershire Moot Sites: The Place Name Evidence', *Leicester Archaeological Society*, XLVII-4 (1971).

[41] William Fraser, 'Notes on an ancient crossing of the Trent between Repton and Willington', *DAJ* 62 (1941), 8-18.

[42] Speculative sources date the cross-plinth's origins back to Anglo Saxon or medieval times or the first market rights granted in 1330, see 'Monumental Musings: The Fascinating Story Behind the Repton Cross', *Derbyshire Life*, 19th September 2017. Recent advice given to the Repton History Group dates the cross-plinths to early 13th century.

[43] Robert Bigsby, *Historical and Topographical Description of Repton*, 1854, 261.

[44] Martin and Birthe Biddle, 'The Repton Stone', *Anglo-Saxon England* 14 (1985), 233-292.

[45] Jane Hawkes and Philip Sidebottom, *XIIIth Edition of the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture*. Martin Biddle contribution, 198.

[46] Vanessa McLoughlin, *Medieval Rothley, Leicestershire* (2006) PhD paper, 225. The Celtic cross at Rothley (Leicestershire) is in a churchyard associated with a cult of St Wystan and may have been erected in reference to the site of pilgrimage at Repton.

[47] Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, AD 731. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle does not use the term Bretwalda for Aethelbald.

[48] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, AD 743.

[49] Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 446, describes the role of the monastic sacrist which encompasses control of the profits on the portman moot and the court leet.

[50] Ault Hucknall church in Derbyshire has a tympanum remaining that shows the risen Christ having broken the shackle of death fighting evil in the form of Leviathan. At Ilam the font still has four panels which show Christ dragging Adam out of Hell, with Leviathan in pursuit. In the late 11th century Anselm of Canterbury argued it was heresy to believe that God would need to pay the devil's ransom, and associated images, often pagan representations of Satan as a leviathon, were expunged. Anselm helped establish St Werburgh's in Chester at the behest of the Earl of Chester who also held Repton at this time, so the link is relatively more plausible than mere timing.

[51] A.R. Rumble '*Hrepingas Reconsidered*', *Mercian Studies*, Leicester University Press (1977).

[52] Gavin Smith, '-ingas and the Mid-Seventh Century Diocese', *Nomina* 31.

[53] Susan Kelly, *Charters of Peterborough Abbey*, 182-185.

[54] It has been frequently noted that the 12th century form *Repington* Hundred links *Hrepingas* to the regional division rather than the vill, and a similar general speculation is also included in Dawn M. Hadley, 'Multiple estates and the origins of the manorial structure of the northern Danelaw' *Journal of Historical Geography* , 22 1 (1996), 4.

[55] David Roffe, *Decoding Domesday*, in Chapter 9, Metastructures of Lordship.

[56] *C*.F. Slade, *Leicestershire Survey c*. *AD 1130*, 81.

[57] A possible derivation of the name Netherseal is 'summer settlement' from ON Scela. This might further support the idea that the lands around No Man's Heath were extensive campgrounds.

[58] Another possible hundred to the south-east was Sparkenhoe, mentioned in the Leicestershire Survey but incompletely recorded and its meeting place speculated to be at Shericles Farm in Desford, with a possible ecclesiastical centre at Market Bosworth or Polesworth. For the purposes of this study the area east of No Man's Heath is however considered unknown.

[59] R.G. Hughes, 'An Anglo-Saxon Pot from Drakelow, *DAJ* 82 (1962), 107.

[60] Whilst Domesday is not an accurate people-count and is several hundred years later, the vills on the Trent are the most populous, wealthy and well-farmed which suggests long-standing prosperity and settlement along here. The most populous places are 47 households at Walton and Rosliston, 46 at Croxall, 42 at Repton and Milton, 33 at Netherseal, 25 at Lullington, 20 at Newton Solney & Bretby, 19 at Stapenhill, 16 each at Winshill, Edingale and Catton. All the other settlements had less than 15 households except *Bolun* which also had 16, likely benefitting from the much reduced Drakelow and Hearthcote population of 6 households. Most named places on the area of clay and coal are recorded as waste without any household count.

[61] Melbourne (*Mileburne* DB), Stanton-by-Bridge (*Stantun* DB), Ingleby (*Englaby* AD 1002 Wulfric Spot's Will, *Engelbi* DB), Foremark (*Fornewerche* DB), Repton (*Hrepingas* late 7th century, *Hreopandune* ASC AD 755) & its berewick Milton (*Middeltune* DB), Newton Solney (*Niwantune* AD 955 Burton Abbey) and its berewick Bretby (*Bretbi* DB), Winshill (*Wineshyll* Wulfric Spot's Will AD1002), Stapenhill (*Stapenhill* DB), Drakelow (*Dracan hlawen* AD 942 Wulfsige's Royal Charter) and its berewick Hearthcote (*Hedcote* DB), Walton (*Waletune* AD 942 Royal Charter) and its berewick Rosliston (*Redlaueston* DB), Catton (*Cantun* AD 942 Royal Charter, *Chetun* DB) and finally Croxall (*Crokeshall* AD 942 Royal Charter, *Crocheshall* DB).

[62] More detailed place-name analysis to test the antiquity of each vill would supplement this topographical review. Sincere thanks to John Baker for preliminary advice.

[63] Gabor Thomas, 'The pre-history of Medieval farms and villages: from Saxons to Scandinavians', *Medieval Rural Settlement* (Oxbow Books, 2014), 43-62, for a review of the shortage of knowledge on this topi*c*.

[64] See later section headed 'AD 450: AND BEFORE'.

[65] Edingale (*Ednunghalle* DB), Lullington (*Lullitune* DB), Netherseal (Sela/Scela DB), Stretton-en-le-Field (*Steiton/Stretone* DB), Measham (*Messeham* DB) and Appleby (*Aepebygg* Wulfric Spot's Will, *Aepelby/Aplebi* DB)).

66 Ticknall (Ticenheale AD 1002 Wulfric Spot's Will), Hartshorne (*Heortshorne* DB), Smisby (*Smedsbi* DB), Stanton (*Stantun* DB), Linton (*Lintone* AD 942 Royal Charter), Coton-in-the-Elms (*Cotuhalfne* AD 942 Royal Charter), Caldwell (*Caldewaellen* 942 Royal Charter), Chilcote (*Caldecote* DB), Willesley (*Wivleslie* DB) and Castle Gresley (*Bolun* DB).

67 The earliest references seem to be from the late 1800s when it is a separate location within Gresley where a church is built by this name, and an army barracks is housed. https://derbyshireterritorials.wordpress.com/5th-battalion-2/5th-battalion/. Cameron, PNDb, 635, cites a Crosseflatter from 1543 and suggests it may have been named Lyntoncrosse in AD 1406.

68 John Baker and Stuart Brookes, 'Explaining Anglo-Saxon military efficiency: the landscape of mobilisation' *AngloSaxon England*, 44 (2015).

69 John Baker and Stuart Brookes, 'Identifying outdoor assembly sites in early medieval England', *Journal of Field Archaeology*, 40 no. 1 (2015).

70 John Baker and Stuart Brookes, 'Gateways, Gates and gatu: Liminal Spaces at the centre of things', *Neue Studien zur Sachsenforschung,* vol. 6. Also available on UCL Discovery.

71 Alexis Tudor Skinner and Sarah Semple, 'Assembly Mounds in the Danelaw: Place-name and archaeological evidence in the historic landscape', *Journal of North Atlantic*, Special vol. 8, 130.

72 Henry Chapman *et al*., 'The Catholme Ceremonial Complex', *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, 76 (2010), 135-163.

73 Mathew Beamish, 'Neolithic and Bronze Age Activity on the Trent Valley Floor. Excavations at Egginton and Willington, Derbyshire, 1998-1999', *DAJ* 129 (2009), 17-172.

74 Roy Loveday, 'Aston-on-Trent, Excavation of a round barrow and protected cursus land surface', *DAJ* 132 (2012), 80-128.

75 Little Chester Roman Fort Archaeological Evaluation 2014-15/1600 for Derbyshire City Council and Environment Agency.

76 The Anchor Church in Ingleby is reminiscent of 4th century Christian cave retreats found in Turkey, and the hagiographic history of St Modwenna records an Irish nun retreating to the island of Andressey in the Trent in the 7th century where she was visited by a 'hermit' from Breedon. Although the specifics are suspect, the substance is possibly reflective of oral tradition.

77 D.M. Wilson and Margaret J Fowler, 'A Report on the excavation of a Romano-British native settlement at Stapenhill, Staffordshire', *DAJ* 75 (1955), 1-19.

78 P. Liddle and R.F. Hartley, 'A Roman road through north-west Leicestershire', *The Leicestershire Archaeological and History Society* 68 (1994), 186. There are no ancient settlements on the ten mile stretch of the Ashby to Burton section which is interesting given the ridge's prominence; speculation on the *Via Devana* is that its military nature avoided habitation.

79 Richard Dunmore, Appleby Village website. http://www.applebymagna.org.uk/appleby_history/

80 An archaeological excavation on land off Bath Lane, Moira', *Leicestershire County Council, Report 2005/58.*

81 Graeme Guilbert, 'Borough Hill, Walton-upon-Trent – If not a hill fort then what?', *DAJ* 124, (2004), 242-257.